

SIDNEY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



July 17, 2023



Completed with the residents of Sidney, Nebraska by RDG Planning & Design



≡ ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The project team gratefully acknowledge the contributions of Sidney who gave their time, ideas, and expertise for the creation of this plan. It is to them that we dedicate this plan. We would like to express special gratitude to the following:

SIDNEY CITY COUNCIL

Brad Sherman
Mayor (Steering Committee)
Roger Gallaway
Vice Mayor
Burke Radcliffe
Paul Stromman
Brandon Bondegard

STEERING COMMITTEE

Ben Schmitt
Marshall Hall
Lane Kizzire
Tom VonSeggern
Mike Palmer

CITY STAFF

David Scott
City Manager (Steering Committee)
Lori Borchert
City Clerk

PLANNING TEAM

Amy Haase, AICP
Zhahn Bose
Flavia Hauss
Megan Grochal



☰ TABLE OF CONTENTS

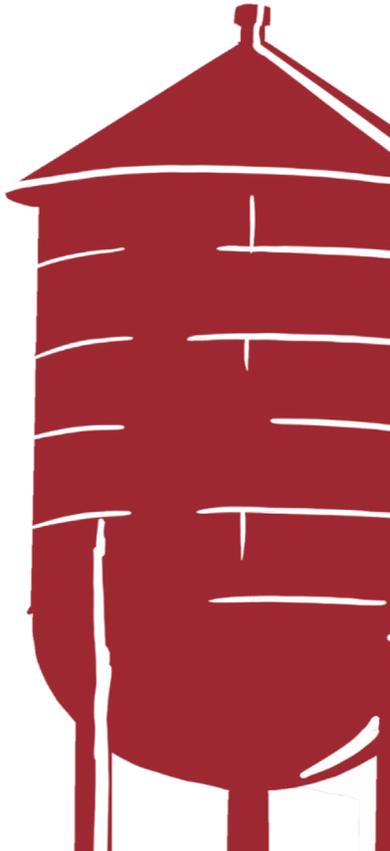
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	1
INTRODUCTION – A PLANNING PROCESS	5
Why Plan?	7
How to Use This Plan	8
CH. 1 – SIDNEY TODAY	13
Population Trends	17
Economic Trends	20
Housing Trends	24
CH. 2 – SIDNEY ENVIRONMENT	29
Parks and Recreation	34
Public Facilities	36
Transportation	37
Utility Infrastructure	39
CH. 3 – FUTURE DEVELOPMENT	41
Land Use Map	42
Land Use Categories	43
CH. 4 – PLAN ELEMENTS	61
Public Engagement	62
A Strategic Approach to Accomplishing Goals	63
Goals & Principles Report	64
CH. 5 – PLAN IMPLEMENTATION	85
Annexation Policy	86
Roles and Responsibilities	87
Plan Maintenance	94





INTRODUCTION

The Sidney Comprehensive plan is constructed to aid in guiding the vision of the city's future. This plan reviews current conditions and trends both within and around Sidney to help inform and yield results for this plan as actions that would best bring the vision into reality.





WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

A comprehensive plan is a tool that explains a future vision with long-term goals and objectives for all activities that affect the local community and government.

WHY PLAN?

The comprehensive plan is the framework of the community's vision for future growth and development. A vision for the plan captures all things that make Sidney a thriving and unique community. Through the vision, the plan provides goals and action steps to achieve the vision over time, with incremental implementation each year. The intent of the plan and its action items are to:

- Identify the community's priorities for growth and areas for development and new land uses.
- Maximize investments through connected and shared direction into community-focused improvements.
- Provide a living document for future implementation and amendments as conditions change.
- Promote and encourage engagement and support throughout the community.

THE LEGAL BASIS FOR LAND USE REGULATIONS

For a city to make zoning adjustments a plan is required. Nebraska Revised Statute 19-901 enables cities to adopt land use zoning to promote the "health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the community" when in conformance with a comprehensive plan.

Land use regulations, such as zoning ordinances, recognize that people in a community live cooperatively and have certain responsibilities to one another. These regulations establish rules that govern how land is developed within a municipality and its extra-territorial jurisdiction. The comprehensive plan creates a vision for how a community should develop and thus should guide land use decisions.

A ROAD MAP FOR DECISION-MAKERS

A plan aids in guiding the future of its community and should be reviewed when decisions are considered. While the City of Sidney helped in crafting this plan, the weight and responsibilities of its implementation fall to a variety of decision-makers across all dimensions of the community including: the city, education leaders, the business community, and neighborhood leaders.

When planning for the future of Sidney the comprehensive plan should be consulted. A few examples include: capital improvements such as roadway and trail improvements, facility expansions and relocations such as schools and community recreation centers, as well as land use and development decisions.

NAVIGATING AN EVER-CHANGING WORLD

As the world and its inhabitants continually evolve a plan provides an anchor point for the community to reference. The world will change – now faster than ever – and the future of our communities will follow suit. By being thoughtful about what Sidney is and knowing what it wants to become, it is possible to discern meaningful advancements and worthy investments that align with the plans vision.

A vision is critical for a community to better understand the implications, opportunities, and challenges presented by emerging trends, preferences, and technologies. The comprehensive plan should provide a reference point for thoughtful consideration of change.





≡ HOW TO USE THE PLAN?

Use the plan as a living document that is consulted often, used as a tool for collaboration, and guides many user groups. The City of Sidney will primarily use this as a way to guide decisions, investments, and operations, the document offers guidance well beyond the scope of city government and should be used by all those interested in the community's development. The critical piece in achieving the vision is implementation through collaboration by the public and private sectors. The plan should then serve as the guidelines of both intent and common-ground for where to begin.

≡ THE GENERAL PUBLIC

The plan was crafted through numerous hours of dialogue and surveys with diverse stakeholders and engaged citizens representing all aspects of the Sidney community. The comprehensive plan serves as a summary of the shared vision of its residents. The public should rally behind the vision expressed in this plan in public forums and in their actions of supporting the improvement of their community.



≡ POLICYMAKERS

Policymakers, are the bodies, empowered by the citizenry, to create and administer the policies that shape the future development in Sidney. Specifically, the City Council and Planning Commission, will help set the course to realize this plan. This plan should be used as a guide to help with decisions related to both large-scale policies but also on individual projects.



≡ DEVELOPERS AND LAND OWNERS

Developers and land owners in charge of buying and selling property are guided by city policy, much of property development is undertaken through private and market-driven development. This plan should serve as a guide to developers who wish to work in Sidney and by land owners. By understanding the city's vision for the future, these stakeholders can approach projects from a place of collaboration to avoid unnecessary delays and negotiations.



≡ NAVIGATING THE PLAN?

The plan is organized in the following: Sidney Today (trends); Sidney Environment (existing conditions); Plan Elements (vision); Future Development and Plan Implementation (how to make the future a reality).

Sidney's plan takes a goal-oriented approach to the future development of Sidney. The plan begins by identifying the city's existing conditions trends, needs, and community vision. Based on this information a strategic vision for the city is established. The traditional sections of a comprehensive plan, such as land use, housing, infrastructure, and transportation, are organized as leading components of the city's vision. This enables the plan to tell the story of the city's existing opportunities and challenges while weaving those into the future vision and development of the community.

≡ SIDNEY TODAY

A review of the public engagement process and existing conditions in Sidney.

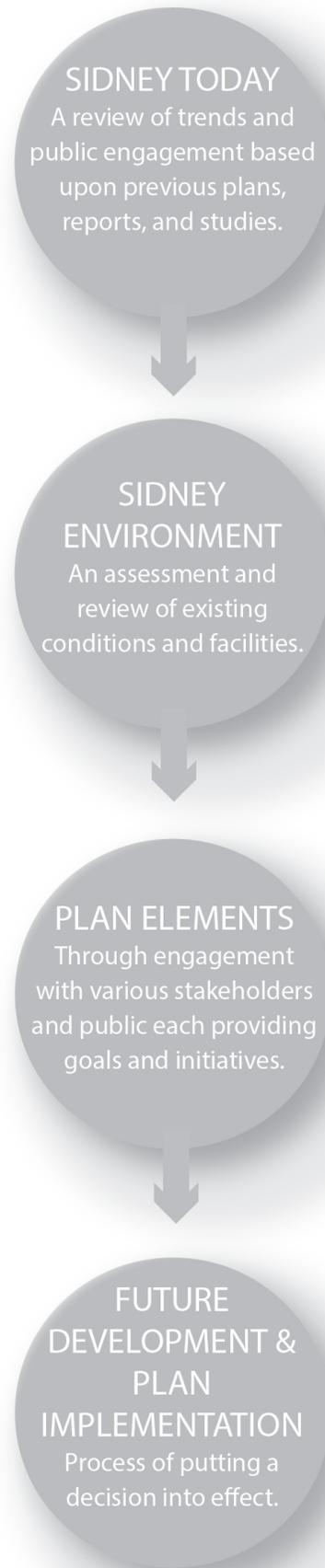
"You have to know the past to understand the present." - Carl Sagan

We must first know where we are before we can understand where we are going. Sidney Today examines public input, previous plans, and trends to set a solid foundation on which the remainder of the comprehensive plan is built upon.

≡ SIDNEY ENVIRONMENT

Community health status is determined by the environmental characteristics and social cohesion in the environment of that community. This section looks to assess existing land use, transportation, energy, and public facilities.

Each community has distinctive assets and features that can strengthen it if used to their greatest advantage. This environmental structure helps define the town's sense of place and inner harmony, and can build a vision for the future that grows from intrinsic character.



“When you do the things in the present that you can see, you are shaping the future that you are yet to see.”

– Idowu Koyenikan

≡ PLAN ELEMENTS

Public participation is an integral part of a comprehensive plan, and the research into its strengths and weaknesses serves as a useful reference to understand how Sidney is doing. It is important to step back and look at the history of successes or failures. This section reviews the goals and initiatives as it relates to various topics of Sidney.

Plan elements are the “comprehensive” part of a comprehensive plan, these elements provide the detail necessary to make the vision a reality. The elements section is organized around the following six topic areas:

1. Placemaking and Image
2. Parks & Recreation
3. Mobility
4. Economic Development
5. Living
6. Energy Use and Sustainability



Placemaking
and Image



Parks &
Recreation



Mobility



Economic
Development



Living



Energy Use
and Sustainability

≡ FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

This section looks at the land use map and future growth of the community.

Land use is typically the central element of a comprehensive plan because it establishes the overall physical configuration of the city between the mix and location of uses and the nature of the community systems that support them. Because the land use plan is a statement of policy, public and private decision makers depend on it to guide individual actions such as land purchases, project design, and the review and approval process.

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

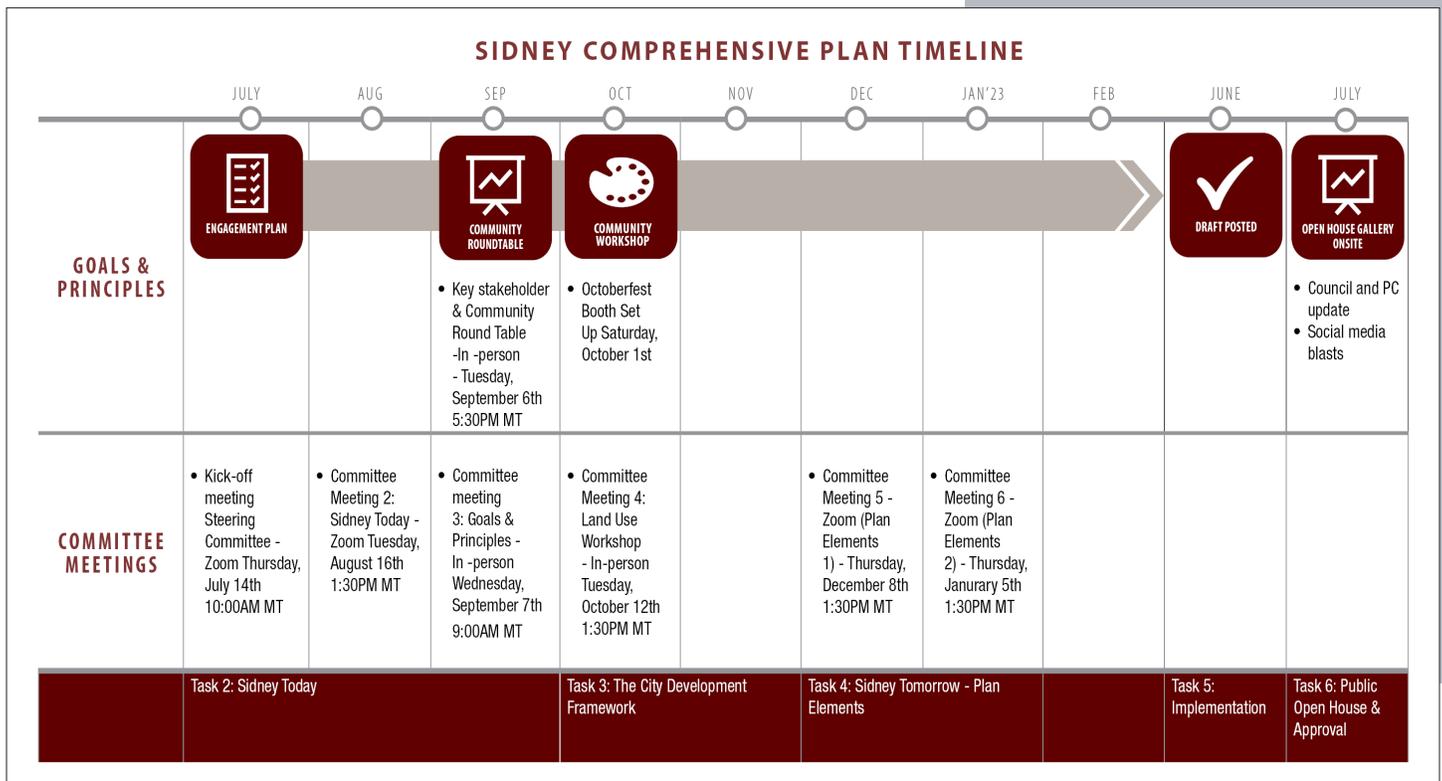
Implementation is the execution or practice of a plan for doing something. As such, implementation is the action that must follow any preliminary thinking for something to actually happen.

Any plan is only as good as the follow-through. Its implementation requires participation from multiple partners with a focus on capital projects, initiatives, and policies. The Sidney comprehensive plan takes the preceding chapters' recommendations with additional guidance on making these individual actions a reality as part of a larger strategy.

On Implementation

“Ideas are useless unless used. The proof of their value is in their implementation. Until then, they are in limbo.”

– Theodore Levitt





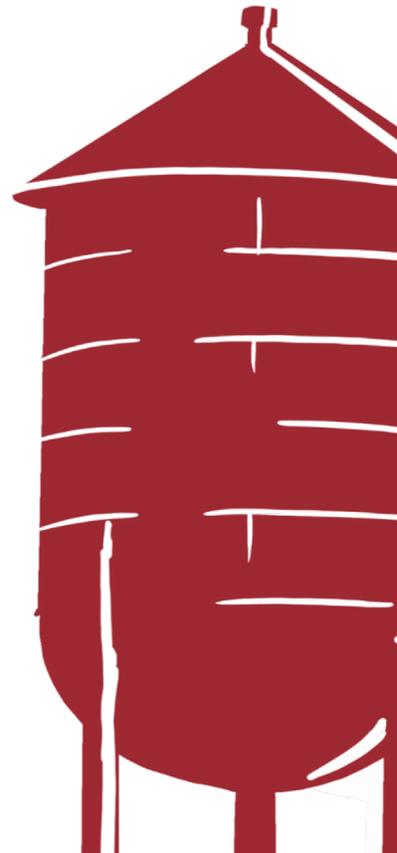


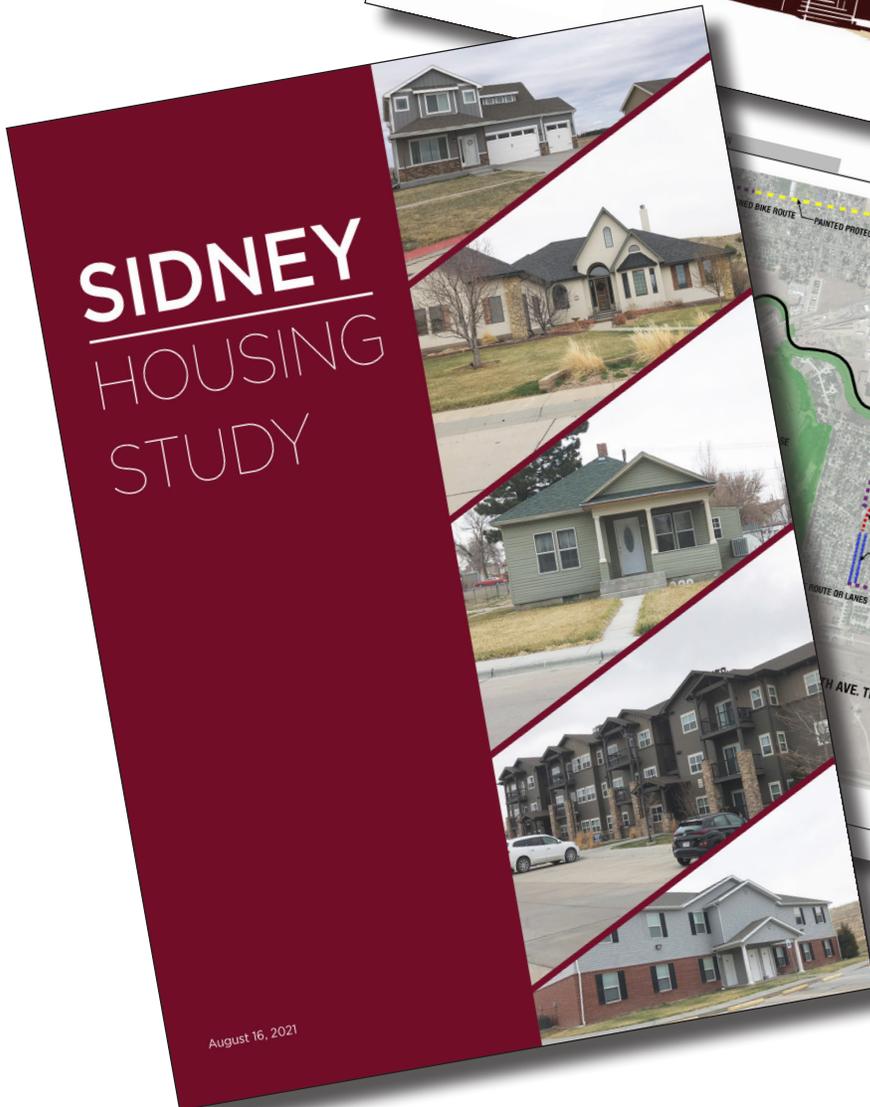
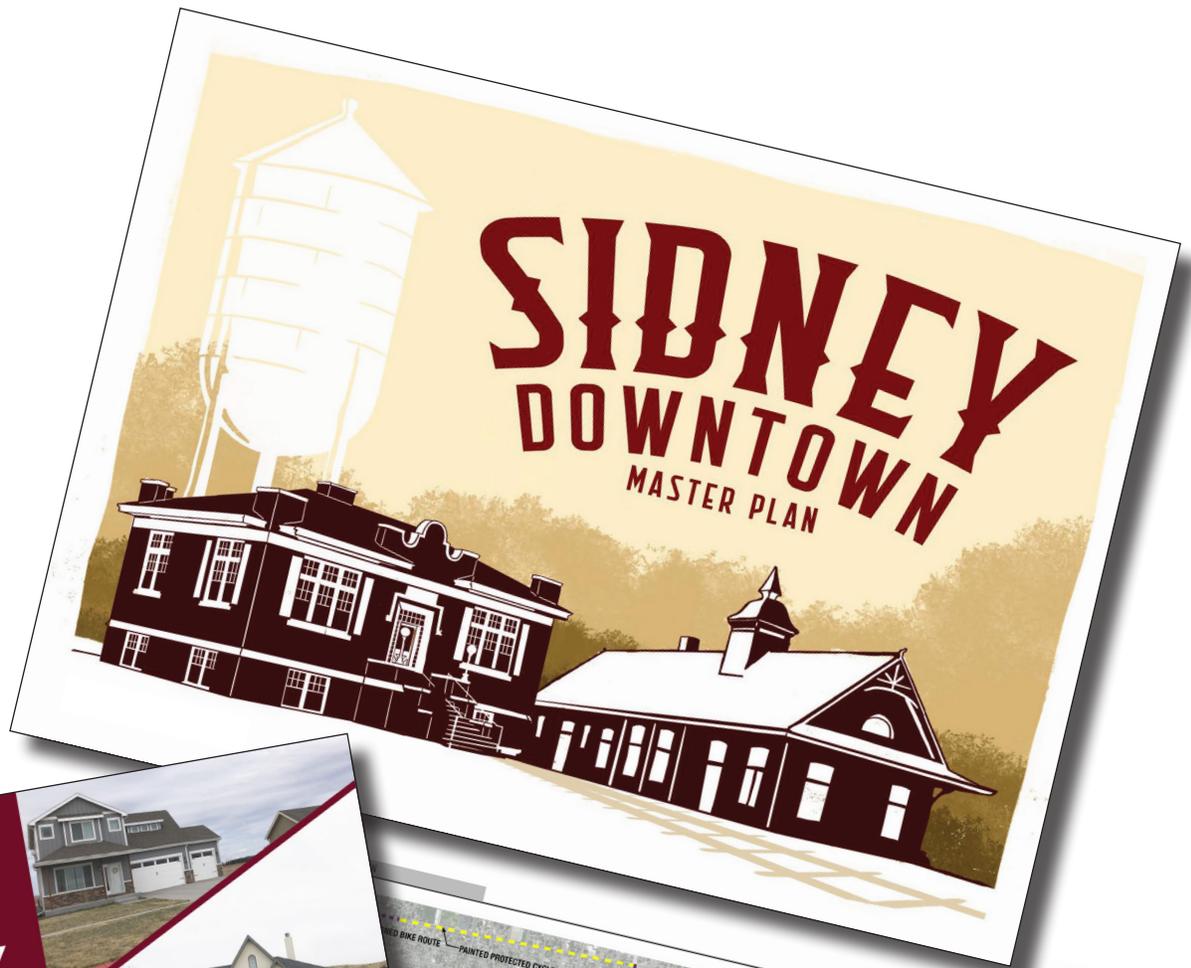
1



SIDNEY TODAY

A community is created through a multitude of weaved elements which form the city's character, economy, and social environment of its many residents. As such, this section examines past community plans, demographics, economics, and housing trends in Sidney





PREVIOUS PLANS & STUDIES

The Sidney Comprehensive Plan builds from a strong foundation of existing work. The process of discovery included reviewing a multitude of previous planning efforts and studies, an assortment of data, and learning from the public and a wide variety of stakeholder groups. From this discovery process, many ideas and insights emerged which form the content of the Sidney Comprehensive Plan.

MAJOR THEMES FROM PREVIOUS PLANS

ON LAND DEVELOPMENT

Encourage downtown growth

To reinforce the central role of the downtown district, a share of new development should be promoted in and around the downtown district.

- 2020 Sidney Downtown Master Plan

Attract and retain residents

Today, communities are looking to quality of life and housing as leading economic development policies. To be successful, the city must provide a variety of housing types.

- 2021 Sidney Housing Study

ON MOBILITY

Connectivity

Propose connections to existing Sidney trail system to complete two loops that are continuous throughout the city and incorporate existing downtown plan suggestions.

- 2021 Old Post Road Corridor Improvement

Transportation network

There are three main entrances into downtown. These provide the first impression to visitors of downtown Sidney and should not be overlooked. Each of the three entrances paints a different picture of what to expect when arriving into downtown, some better than others.

Emphasis should be placed on improving the corridor connection from 17J or directing traffic instead to 11th Avenue where little needs to be done to improve the gateway.

- 2020 Sidney Downtown Master Plan

Plans Reviewed

2020 Sidney Downtown Plan

2021 Sidney Housing Study

2021 Old Post Road Corridor Improvement

Events

Steering Committee
(6 Meetings)

Community Survey
(195 Responses)

Public Open House
(3 Events)

Community Survey
(195 Responses)

≡ ON ECONOMICS

Create a business association

The fundamental mission of a downtown business association is to attract customers, activity, businesses, and investment to the district. A vital downtown has tremendous benefit to the economic strength and quality of the entire community. A business association should have formal leadership that will establish a specific agenda for action. The association should provide a membership program that involves and represents the range of businesses and stakeholders in the district. Leadership should be appointed, which builds partnerships and provides a point of contact with city government and other agencies and organizations

- 2020 Sidney Downtown Master Plan

Share risk to create growth

Preserving the housing stock, expanding housing options, and reinvigorating single-family construction will not occur without some risk-sharing by all players in the local housing market. This includes the city, financial institutions, economic development agencies, and even employers to find new ways to address gaps in the private market.

- 2021 Sidney Housing Study

Attract and retain residents

A healthy housing market offers housing for every stage of life. Sidney has a large stock of entry level housing, but that housing is filled with individuals who see little to no options that are appropriate for them and their stage of life. Increasing the variety of housing types to include small scale multi-family and maintenance free options to bring in and keep residents.

- 2021 Sidney Housing Study

≡ ON QUALITY OF LIFE

Establish a maintenance plan

Maintenance of the public environment is important to the ability of a downtown district to project a quality image. Public space features include curb extensions (bump-outs), plantings and other landscaped areas, street furniture, litter clearance, public parking areas, and sidewalks. Leaving maintenance, such as snow removal, to individual businesses can lead to uneven performance. Clear identification of responsibility between the city and the district becomes very important.

- 2020 Sidney Downtown Master Plan

POPULATION TRENDS

Sidney grew by 0.11% between 2000 and 2020. The positive growth rate is a stable and good sign when looking at the historical population change in Sidney as compared to Cheyenne County, Ogallala, Kimball, Gering, Alliance, Sterling, and North Platte. Figure 1 & 1.1 summarizes the difference in population between Sidney and surrounding counties.

- 1960 marked the decade for Sidney's largest population to date with a period of decline up until 2000.
- The time between 2000 to 2020 for Sidney indicates a positive growth rate. Whereas other surrounding communities such as Ogallala, Kimball, Alliance, North Platte, and Cheyenne County itself have all shown a loss in population.
- Sterling and Gering may serve as the exceptions within the study area that have shown relative steady growth and the highest percentage in growth from 2000-2020. That may suggest the availability of jobs, housing stock, and surrounding amenities of these communities.

Figure 1: Regional Population 2000-2010

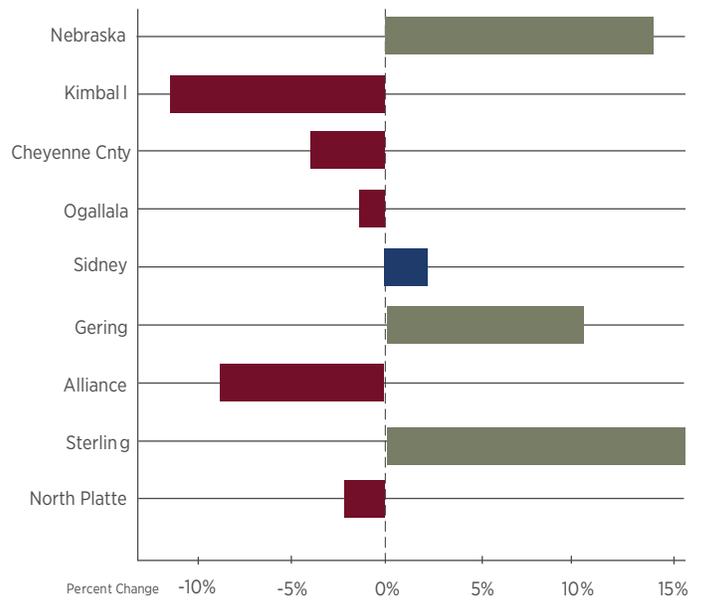


Figure 1.1: Population Change for Sidney and Similar Cities, 1960-2020

	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	% Change, 2000-2020	Annual Growth Rate, 2000-2020
Sidney	8,004	6,403	6,010	5,959	6,282	6,757	6,410	2.0%	0.11%
Cheyenne County	14,828	10,778	10,057	9,494	9,830	9,998	9,468	-3.7%	-0.21%
North Platte	17,184	19,447	24,479	22,605	23,878	24,733	23,390	-2.0%	-0.11%
Ogallala	4,250	4,976	5,638	5,095	4,930	4,737	4,878	-1.1%	-0.06%
Kimball	4,384	3,680	3,120	2,574	2,559	2,496	2,290	-10.5%	-0.62%
Gering	4,585	5,639	7,760	7,946	7,751	8,500	8,564	10.5%	0.56%
Alliance	7,845	6,862	9,869	9,765	8,959	8,491	8,151	-9.0%	-0.52%
Sterling	10,751	10,636	11,385	10,362	11,360	14,777	13,735	20.9%	1.06%
Nebraska	1,411,330	1,483,493	1,569,825	1,578,385	1,711,263	1,826,341	1,961,504	14.6%	0.76%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2020

Figure 1.2: Age Composition as Percent of Total Population, 2010-2020

Age Group	2010		2020		2010-2020 Difference	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
0-14	1,450	21.5%	1,275	19.8%	-175	-1.7%
15-19	401	5.9%	391	6.1%	-10	-0.2%
20-24	327	4.8%	341	5.3%	14	0.5%
25-34	1,009	14.9%	931	14.4%	-78	-0.5%
35-44	850	12.6%	740	11.5%	-110	-1.1%
45-54	966	14.3%	674	10.4%	-292	-3.9%
55-64	723	10.7%	897	13.9%	12	3.2%
65-74	451	6.7%	622	9.6%	174	2.9%
75-84	378	5.6%	367	5.7%	-11	-0.1%
85+	202	3.0%	213	3.3%	11	0.3%
Total	6,757	100.0%	6,451	100.0%	-306	
Median	37.1		37.9			

Source: US Census Bureau, 2020

POPULATION CHANGE 2010 - 2020

Sidney's population over the ten year period has remained fairly consistent.

- Sidney has seen an increase in ages 55-74, which would indicate the population becoming slightly older.
- The loss of higher-level management jobs and potentially the Baby Boomers aging up reflects the larger loss in population of 45-54 olds.
- Sidney has been successful at retaining young workers between the ages of 25 and 34 for the past 10 years. This should support future growth among children under the age of 15.

POPULATION CHANGE PREDICTED VERSUS ACTUAL

An effective way of understanding population change is to use standard birth and death rates to predict the way a population would change, absent of any migration, and then to compare the prediction to actual change.

- Most notably, the predicted forecast indicates:
 - » Enrollment Years (Ages 0 - 15): This cohort grew despite an out-migration among 35-44, likely indicating a higher than predicted birth rate.
 - » Graduation / Relocation Years (15-24): Many of these residents leave a community after graduation from high school but Sidney appears to be attracting them back as they begin their careers and families (25-34).
 - » Retirees (65+): Sidney had more residents in these cohorts than predicted, indicating the community may be viewed as a quality retirement destination.

Figure 1.3: Predicted 2020 Population Versus Actual 2020 Population (2010 Base)

Age group	2020 predicted	2020 actual	Difference	% Variance
0-14	1,240	1,275	35	2.8%
15-19	492	391	-101	-20.6%
20-24	458	341	-117	-25.6%
25-34	722	931	209	29.0%
35-44	998	740	-258	-25.9%
45-54	830	674	-156	-18.8%
55-64	906	897	-9	-1.0%
65-74	615	622	7	1.1%
75-84	311	367	56	18.1%
85+	215	213	-2	-0.9%
Total	6,787	6,451	-336	-5.0%

Source: US Census Bureau

ECONOMIC TRENDS

Sidney's location along the I-80 corridor affords it access to labor, employment, and amenities not normally available to residents in rural Nebraska. The junction of U.S. Highway 385 and I-80 has been a center for growth and interstate services. This includes Cabela's original flagship store and various hotels and restaurants.

TRANSPORTATION & EMPLOYMENT

- **Inflow / Outflow for Primary Employment**
 - » There are over 4,500 employees that live and/or work within Sidney.
 - » Of these employees, 26% of employees live within Sidney but work somewhere else.
 - » Of the nearly 3,300 individuals employed in Sidney, 47% live elsewhere with the remaining 52% live within Sidney.
- **Where Sidney Residents are Employed**
 - » Of Sidney's total labor force (residents aged 16+), 52.8% are employed in Sidney, 1.5% in Kimball 1.3% in Sterling, and 44.5% in other communities.

- **Distance and Direction for Primary Employment**
 - » Of the number of individuals employed in Sidney, 57.8% travel less than 10 miles and 13.2% travel between 10 and 24 miles.
 - » On average, employees within Sidney have a shorter commute time (11.4 minutes) than the normal US worker (26.9 minutes).
 - » For those leaving Sidney for work, the greatest share (28.9%) travels between 25 miles and more northwest toward Kimball and Gering.



Figure 1.4: Commuting Patterns for Sidney and Other Comparable Communities, 2020

	Average Travel Time to Work, in Minutes	% Who Used Active Modes of Transportation (Walking/Biking)
Sidney	11.4	4.5%
Ogallala	11.5	4.8%
Kimball	13.8	3.4%
Gering	14.1	1.4%
Alliance	12.3	0.8%
Sterling	14.5	5.1%
North Platte	14.4	3.2%
Cheyenne County		4.9%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2020

Figure 1.5: Where Sidney Residents are Employed? Aged 16+

Employment Location	2012	2014	2016	2018	Average
Sidney NE	52.5%	51.6%	55.6%	51.4%	52.8%
Kimball City NE	1.4%	1.3%	1.9%	1.4%	1.5%
Sterling City CO	1.3%	1.3%	1.3%	1.1%	1.3%
All Other Communities	44.8%	45.8%	41.2%	46.1%	44.5%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2020 American Community Survey

Figure 1.6 : Employment by Occupation, 2010-2020

Occupation	2010 Jobs	2020 Jobs	% of Jobs	Change	% Change	2020 Median Earnings
Management, business, and financial occupations	1,286	449	13.53%	-837	-65%	\$62,679
Computer, engineering, and science occupations	521	225	6.78%	-296	-57%	\$56,250
Education, legal, community service, arts, and media occupations	223	404	12.17%	181	81%	\$47,946
Healthcare practitioner and technical occupations	374	115	3.46%	-259	-69%	\$59,531
Healthcare support occupations	107	212	6.39%	105	98%	\$29,800
Protective service occupations	55	78	2.35%	23	42%	\$48,462
Food preparation and serving related occupations	112	126	3.80%	14	13%	\$15,357
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance occupations	61	163	4.91%	102	167%	\$32,173
Personal care and service occupations	110	102	3.07%	-8	-7%	\$17,339
Sales and related occupations	583	256	7.71%	-327	-56%	\$22,727
Office and administrative support occupations	665	438	13.20%	-227	-34%	\$33,500
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	19	21	0.63%	2	11%	-
Construction and extraction occupations	90	154	4.64%	64	71%	\$44,783
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations	116	133	4.01%	17	15%	\$37,107
Production occupations	168	115	3.46%	-53	-32%	\$24,241
Transportation occupations	144	176	5.30%	32	22%	\$30,865
Material moving occupations	93	152	4.58%	59	63%	\$30,333
Total	4,727	3,319		-1408	-30%	\$32,837

Source: US Census Bureau, 2020

Within a community employment can be assessed in two forms, employment by occupation and employment by industry. Employment by occupation describes the kind of work a person does on the job to earn a living, as opposed to the type of industry an individual works in, which relates to the kind of business conducted by a person's employer. For example, a person might be an accountant (their occupation) for a major manufacturer (the industry).

Figures 1.6 summarize Sidney's employment trends by occupation. The data presented in these tables represent the estimates gathered through the 2010 US Census and 2020 American Communities Survey.

- Sidney's job market has a broad range of occupations. The largest occupational sectors are:
 - » Management, business, and financial occupations (13.5%)
 - » Office and administrative support occupations (13.2%)
 - » Education, legal, community service, arts, and media occupations (12.1%)
 - » Sales and related occupations (7.7%)
- The median annual wage in Sidney is approximately \$32,836

- Between 2000 and 2010, 1,408 jobs were lost. The greatest decline occurred in management and sales related jobs largely due to the departure of Cabela's.
- While the employment market shrank in Sidney between 2010 and 2020, the job market became more balanced across multiple sectors.
 - » Investments in Sidney's educational and healthcare services resulted in strong job growth over the past decade.

Sidney has a high potential for job growth. The city's location along I-80, easy access to Colorado markets, and high quality of life make the potential to fill the former Cabela's office buildings strong. However, with changing work patterns, the occupancy of the buildings and diversity of that workforce may not look like it did in 2010.

INCOME TRENDS

Table 1.7 describes the income distribution for Sidney compared to similar communities and Cheyenne County.

- Sidney has a large number of individuals employed in retail trade, education, and health services. Many of these individuals are in administrative and management roles, which tend to be higher paying jobs.
- Compared to markets like Ogallala, Sidney is less dependent on service jobs and has slightly higher income levels.
- During listening sessions it was noted that retirees appear to be moving to Sidney. These households tend to have lower annual incomes but higher net worth.
- Sidney and Cheyenne County households earn below the state's median income of \$63,015.
- While the median job pays \$32,837 (Figure 1.6) the city's median household income is \$51,880 (Figure 1.7), illustrating the demands of two income households.

Figure 1.7: Income Distribution for Households by Percentage

	Under \$15,000	\$15,000 - 24,999	\$25,000 - 34,999	\$35,000 - \$49,999	\$50,000 - \$74,999	Over \$75,000	2020 Median Income
Sidney	13.2%	10.9%	9.0%	13.9%	24.1%	28.9%	\$51,880
Kimball	14.1%	20.2%	10.1%	14.8%	22.2%	18.7%	\$39,167
Ogallala	23.3%	7.7%	11.3%	10.0%	25.6%	22.2%	\$45,508
Sterling	13.8%	12.8%	14.8%	16.9%	21.4%	20.3%	\$58,472
Cheyenne County	12.0%	10.2%	11.1%	13.0%	22.4%	14.0%	\$52,270

Source: US Census Bureau, 2020

RETAIL TRENDS

Downtown Sidney is the heart of commerce for the community. Despite the retail and restaurants at the I-80 interchange, many residents still visit downtown on a regular basis for their needs. Recently, local entrepreneurs have invested further in downtown by opening up businesses in vacant storefronts. This activity and support of downtown businesses has left few storefronts vacant. The opportunity exists to create a stronger retail district and better promote activities of the businesses as a unit to draw in more shoppers.

This section builds upon the business and employment character of Sidney and the secondary/tertiary market areas initially based upon 2019 data in the Sidney Downtown Plan. Figures 1.8 and 1.9 illustrate the surrounding market areas primary source of employment is retail trade and services for Sidney.

- Sidney has a total of 526 employers creating 4,538 jobs
- The greatest retail trade employer is sports goods, hobby, book, & music stores (261 employees) followed by general merchandise and food stores with 142 employees respectively.
- The primary service provider industry is still educational institutions and libraries (677) followed by other services (581) and health services (492). Educational and libraries have increased and health services has dropped to the third highest service provide job since the previous report.
- The future demand for retail will be based on population projections and striving to maintain residents current level of commercial services.

RETAIL SPENDING PATTERNS

The 2020 Downtown Study included a detailed analysis of retail spending. Notable findings included:

Notable findings include:

- Recreational Vehicles and Fees: Spending well above the national average in both the Primary and Secondary Markets
- Pets: Spending above the national average in both the primary and secondary markets
- Lawn and Garden: Spending above the national average in both the Primary and Secondary Markets
- Food: Many respondents expressed interest in more restaurant variety in downtown Sidney. In concert with the previous

section, this retail spending index provides insight into the purchases of food at home (grocery), food away from home (restaurants), and food and drink on trips (travel and tourism).

- » Food at home: Spending near but below the national average in both the Primary and Secondary Markets
- » Food away from home: Spending below the national average in both the Primary and Secondary Markets

HOUSING TRENDS

The patterns of how and where housing gets built are deeply connected to the health of both our human and natural communities and is one of the city’s most defining characteristics. As part of a comprehensive planning process, it is important to consider whether the existing housing stock is adequately meeting the needs of the community. Additionally, tracking data on housing tenure, median value/rent, and price relative to income can help reveal important information about a community’s current economic trajectory.

OCCUPANCY

Building upon the data and research established in the 2021 Sidney Housing study we still see a demand to rent over owning households. This is not surprising because the city has been successful at attracting young workers, who tend to rent before they buy. This was also a national trend coming out of the recession as renting offers a bit more flexibility.

- Renter occupancy rose in many communities following the Great Recession
- Renter occupancy may remain a consistent trend for the years come as older demographic downsize to smaller and easier housing options.

- The Sidney Housing study 2019 data estimated vacancy rates at 8.6%, updated data depicts vacancy rate is slightly less at 7.2%.
- 2019 estimates indicated 34 homes for sale. With landlords also indicating very few vacancies in market rate rentals.

A good number of the small units in the Sioux Villa apartments run by the Sidney Housing Authority are vacant, due to the income restrictions and size of units these don’t meet the workforce rental needs. It is worth noting that most of the units identified as vacant fall in the Census category of “other vacant.” These units are being used for storage, in poor condition, or held by families for elderly residents and not immediately or ever available for occupancy. (Figure 1.8).

Figure 1.8: Occupancy Status

	2000 Number	% of Occu- pied Units	2010 Number	% of Occu- pied Units	2020 Number	% of Occupied Units	Change 2000-2020
Total Units	2,890		3,184		3,300		410
Occupied	2,621		2,893		3,062		441
Owner-Occupied	1,832	69.9%	1,907	65.9%	1,827	59.7%	-5
Renter-Occupied	789	30.1%	986	34.1%	1,235	40.3%	446
Total Vacant	269		291		238		-31
Vacancy rate	9.3%		9.1%		7.2%		

Source: ACS 2015-20 Estimates

Figure 1.9: Household Income and Costs

	Value to Income	Median Household Income	Median Home Value	Median Contract Rent	% Cost Burdened
Sidney	1.96	\$51,880	\$101,800	\$618	Owner Costs: 38% Gross Rent: 37%
Ogallala	2.38	\$45,508	\$108,100	\$447	Owner Costs: 36% Gross Rent: 49%
Kimball	1.89	\$39,167	\$73,900	\$549	Owner Costs: 42% Gross Rent: 38%
Gering	2.22	\$62,764	\$139,600	\$569	Owner Costs: 45% Gross Rent: 43%
Alliance	2.15	\$57,898	\$124,500	\$504	Owner Costs: 30% Gross Rent: 39%
Sterling	3.45	\$40,956	\$141,100	\$690	Owner Costs: 36% Gross Rent: 45%
North Platte	2.40	\$52,653	\$126,400	\$644	Owner Costs: 29% Gross Rent: 66%

Source: 2015-2020 American Community Survey; RDG Planning & Design

AFFORDABILITY

A way to measure affordability is to compare median household incomes to median home values. In an affordable, self-sustaining housing market, with adequate value and revenues to support market-rate new construction, typically exhibits a value to income ratio between 2.5 to 3.0. Ratios above 3.0 present significant affordability issues while ratios below 2.0 are significantly undervalued relative to income and can create lower valued properties that discourage investment in adjoining properties or construction of new housing (Figure 1.9).

- Sidney’s low value to income ratio of 2.01 in 2019 has fallen to 1.96. With the 2020 estimate it should be noted that these numbers do not reflect the rebound in market within the last few years.
- Home values did likely decline due to the loss of Cabelas

Housing is affordable when a household spends no more than a third of their household income on housing. Traditionally, affordable housing is lower for owner-occupied units due to lending requirements that should limit this scenario. The percentage of owner-occupied households struggling in Sidney is similar to other cities in the region. On the rental side, the number of households that are struggling still remains on the lower end when compared to other communities. Sidney has a good number of newer

rental units, which tend to demand higher rents, than the other communities. This could lead to the assumption that more rental households would be burdened, however, a few items should be noted:

- Rental rates on these newer units dropped after 2017 and are starting to return.
- Incomes are slightly higher, supporting the higher rental rates.
- Construction of new units potentially created positive market reactions. For Sidney these new units provide a quality alternative for higher income renters. While a lack of new construction in some of the other communities creates greater competition and older units can demand higher rents leaving lower income households paying more for housing.

Figure 1.10: Affordability Analysis

Income Range	# HHs in Each Range	Affordable Range for Owner Units	# of Owner Units	Affordable Range for Renter Units	# of Renter Units	Total Affordable Units	Balance
\$0-25,000	736	>\$60,000	301	\$0-499	350	651	-85
\$25,000-49,999	701	\$60,000-124,999	849	\$500-999	786	1,635	934
\$50,000-74,999	739	\$125,000-199,999	422	\$1,000-1,499	91	513	-226
\$75,000-99,999	424	\$200,000-249,999	86	\$1,500-1,999	8	94	-330
\$100,000-150,000	298	\$250,000-399,999	150	\$2,000-2,999	0	150	-148
\$150,000+	164	\$400,000+	19	\$3000+	0	19	-145

Source: RDG Planning & Design

This analysis evaluates the availability of affordable housing and compares the quantity of housing that is affordable to each income group. A positive balance indicates a surplus of housing within the affordability range of each respective income group, while a negative balance indicates a shortage. This analysis is meant to illustrate larger trends and not exact demand in certain price ranges.

- There still remains a fairly large supply of owner occupied units valued below \$200,000 that are filled by households making more than \$75,000 annually.
 - » These units are filled by existing households that are remaining in their homes due to lack of other options or preferences related to location or budgetary philosophies.
 - » These units are also the hardest to produce for developers because they are either below cost of construction or have very small profit margins and would need assistance to produce.
- The market potential for homes priced between \$200,000 and \$250,000 appears to be strong.
 - » This is a price point that is more appealing, and frankly more feasible, for the private market.
 - » This can also begin to point to larger housing options as families and their needs grow.
- Sidney appears to have a very large supply of market rate rental units. These units are often found in the newer construction or traditional single-family homes that are owned by investors.

While it would appear that the market just needs to build more higher end housing, that is not the complete answer to the region's housing needs. Construction of higher value units will create some filtering, but many households are happy where they are or may be more interested in moving laterally to something that is lower

maintenance or in a location they prefer.

It should be noted that the above analysis does not take into consideration housing quality or mortgage status.

FUTURE SIDNEY TRENDS

Sidney is well positioned to continue to grow. However, that growth will likely look different from the high of the Cabela's expansion. .

Urban growth should be viewed through three interrelated lenses: population growth (market pressure); land growth (response to pressure); and accommodation (configuration of development).

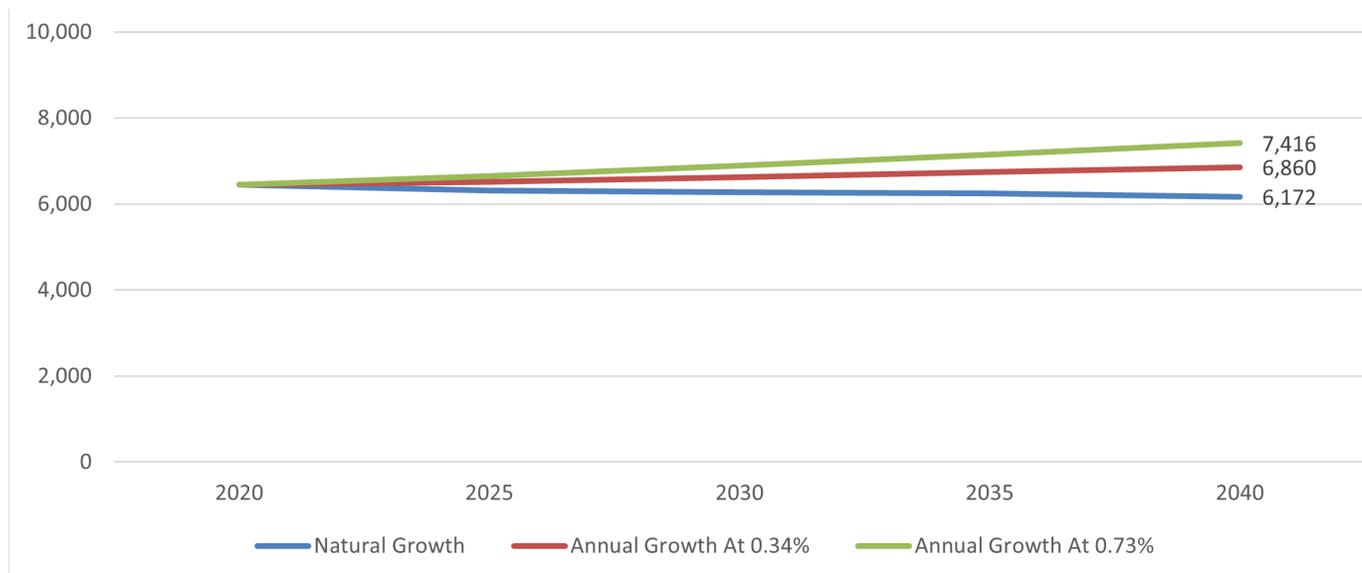
POPULATION GROWTH

Sidney has grown steadily for decades, and that growth is projected to continue into the future. Analysis of the existing population and recent patterns forms the basis for the projections of Sidney's future population through 2040. This projection then drives the projection of land consumption and contributes to the city's future land use map contained later in this plan. The plan considered several models:

- Option 1: Natural Population Change. Considering only births and deaths of the current population, this scenario results in a decline in population.
- Option 2: Forecast on Growth (0.34% annual). Predicting growth will continue at a steady rate, Sidney would grow by 409 residents by 2040. While this reflects the ebb and flow of development in Sidney, this rate aligns with the average annual growth rate between 1960 and 2020.
- Option 3: Ambitious Growth (0.73% annual). Assuming an increase in residential and employment growth, the ambition model predicts that Sidney will grow by 965 residents by 2040. While this scenario may be accurate for short increments

during the next 20 years, the rate may not be sustainable without the increase in housing and economic growth that would bring new residents to Sidney.

Figure 1.11: Population Projection Models





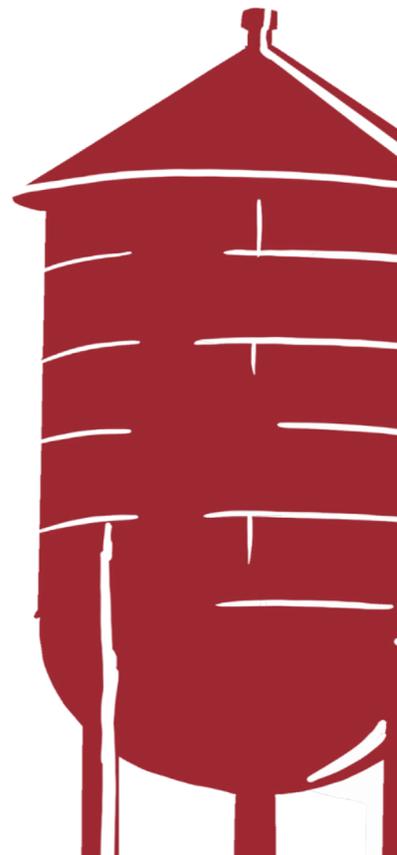


2



SIDNEY ENVIRONMENT

This sections focuses on the physical character of the city, which reviews components such as the natural setting, existing land use, transportation, sustainability, conditions of public facilities and infrastructure.



≡ SIDNEY'S ENVIRONMENT

THE PHYSICAL AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Every community has their own unique characteristics and qualities that make them who they are and those features are the basic building blocks to making them stronger. A comprehensive plan aims to maximize on this by reviewing the underlying structure and order of the community as well as its basic systems, such as land use and infrastructure. In addition to satisfying population forecasts and land needs, the Sidney land use plan is also designed to respond to the city and surrounding area's physical character.

Hills, valleys, and canyon landscape with ponds can describe some of Sidney's physical environment. This land form creates a series of rolling shaped plains with exposed stone. A large portion within and outside of the city's jurisdiction are defined by agriculture that is used for grazing, wheat, corn, and hay.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF SIDNEY

Sidney was named after Sidney Dillon who was a railroad attorney for Union Pacific in 1867. The city grew up around the Sidney Barracks, a military outpost assigned to protect the Union Pacific Railroad track layers against the threat of hostile Native Americans. The initial outpost was a single building located high on a bluff surrounded by soldier tents. In 1869 the post was relocated to the present site and the following year it was renamed Fort Sidney.

Fort Sidney later became a major supply depot along a 267 mile trail to Fort Robinson. Five years later the fort began to expand to accommodate quarters for three companies, five officer quarters, stables, hospital, guardhouse, bakery, laundry, and other structures. During this the city began to focus on cattle, farming, and ranching. In 1949 the first oil well in Western Nebraska was drilled in the Sidney area, making oil a part of the local economy.

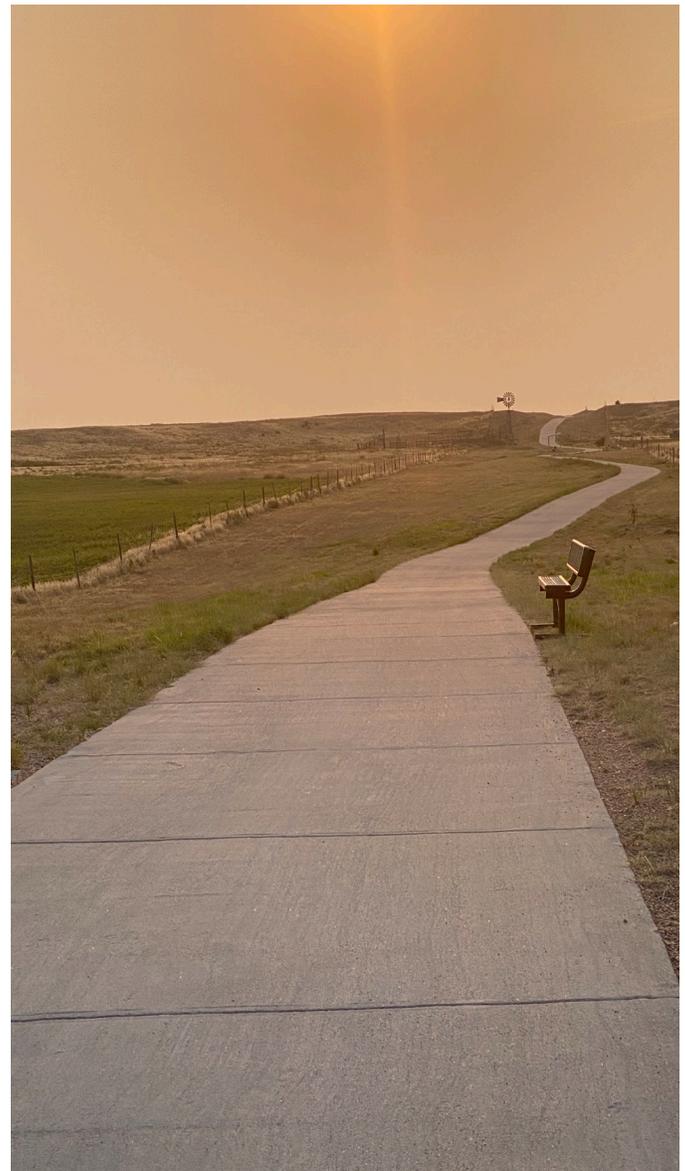
SIDNEY'S LAND USE PATTERN

The term land use describes the type of usage in a given amount of geographic area. It represents the economic and cultural activities such as agricultural, residential, industrial, mining, and commercial uses) that are practiced at a given place.

Land use decisions or changes to the plan will occur through a

transparent and open process, with an opportunity for input from all citizens and affected entities, such as the county or school district. Creation and implementation of land use decisions should be shared responsibilities that promote quality living environments and efficient use of fiscal resources.

The existing land use pattern in Sidney includes a fairly diverse mixture of residential, civic, and commercial uses with vacant land that is centrally located for growth. The location along Interstate 80 plays a significant role in Sidney's land use mix as well. Civic uses dominate the northern portion of Sidney, with commercial use immediately adjacent to each main arterial road into the city and residential sprinkled in between.



LAND USE CHARACTERISTICS

Figure 2.1 and 2.2 depict how existing land is used within Sidney, Figure 2.3 represents the current land use map.

RESIDENTIAL USES

Residential usage accounts for one of the largest uses within Sidney, which is typical of many rural communities. Sidney's housing supply is made predominately of low density or single family (94%) and is located mainly to the western side of Sidney. The remaining is made up of high density such as The Lodge Pole Apartments, nursing homes, and mobile homes out on the eastern side of Sidney.

COMMERCIAL USES

Commercial usage includes the buying, selling, or trading of merchandise or services such as, grocery stores, automobile service station, and storage units. The location of commercial land use focus along major arterial roads like I-80 and Old Post Road (Figure 2.4). The remaining usage accounts for day care facilities.

PARK USES

Legion park makes up a majority of park space in Sidney, which provides a multitude of activities centrally located and surrounded by residential neighborhoods for better access to those amenities.

INDUSTRIAL USES

Within the study area industry makes up a very small portion with Simon's aggregate being the largest industrial company within the city's jurisdiction.

CIVIC USES

Sidney features a number of large areas for civic use including city owned land like Sidney's reservoirs, landfill, and Boothill Cemetery. Sidney Regional Medical Center makes up a small portion but is still a vital element to the quality of life enjoyed by residents of Sidney.

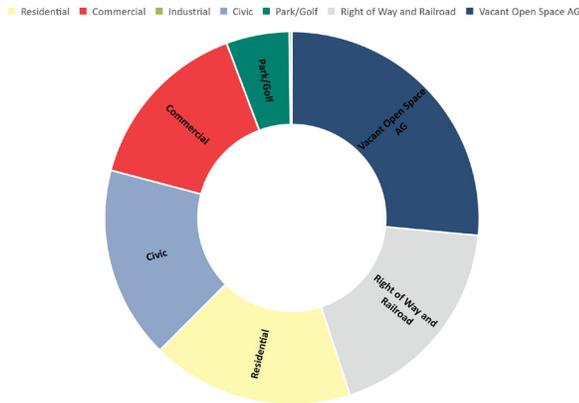
Figure 2.1: Current Land Use

Land Use	Acreage	Percent of Total	Acres per 100 People
Residential	838.4	17.5%	13.00
High Density	28.7	0.6%	0.45
Medium Density	9.3	0.2%	0.14
Low Density	796.3	16.6%	12.34
Mobile Homes	0.4	0.0%	0.01
Assisted/Nursing Home	3.6	0.1%	0.06
Commercial	730.9	15.2%	11.33
Commercial	728.7	15.2%	11.30
Office	0.2	0.0%	0.00
Day Care	2.0	0.0%	0.03
Mixed Use	0.0	0.0%	0.00
Industrial	11.2	0.2%	0.17
Civic	799.7	16.7%	12.40
Institutional - City Owned and Facilities	655.1	13.6%	10.15
Institutional - School/Church	63.0	1.3%	0.98
Cemetery	42.8	0.9%	0.66
Medical	38.8	0.8%	0.60
Park	260.4	5.4%	4.04
Park	63.8	1.3%	0.99
Golf Course	185.0	3.9%	2.87
Wetland	11.7	0.2%	0.06
Right of Way and Railroad	886.29	18.5%	4.33
Vacant/Open Space/Ag	1,274.3	26.5%	
Total	4,801	100.00%	

Source: RDG Planning & Design, 2022

Figure 2.2: Split of Development Land

Figure 2.2: Split of Developed Land



- The projections of Sidney's future through 2040 shows the Adjusted Trend Scenario with population at 7,416 and the need of 357 additional housing units.
- Each scenario assumes relatively 5 acres of industrial land to be allocated for future growth that could easily be consumed by a single entity. Not that existing industrial or underutilized land use couldn't be allocated for potential growth.

RESIDENTIAL LAND USE SCENARIOS

Adjusted Trend Scenario

- Low Density (3 du/ac) 80%
- Medium Density (7 du/ac) 5%
- High Density (14 du/ac) 15%

Efficiency Scenario

- Low Density (3 du/ac) 40%
- Medium Density (8 du/ac) 40%
- High Density (14 du/ac) 20%

Figure 2.3: Land Use Trend Analysis

Land Use	Adjusted Trend Scenario (Acres)	Efficiency Scenario (Acres)
Residential	~324	~211
Commercial	164-212	138-164
Industrial	5-6	4-5

Source: RDG Planning & Design

LAND USE GROWTH

Population growth must be supported by new places for people to live, work, and play. Therefore, population growth has a direct correlation to the demand for new development or redevelopment at higher densities.

Many factors affect how and where Sidney will grow, including environmental factors, market preferences, and access to city services. In order to facilitate the potential options, a scenario planning process was undertaken with the Steering Committee so that they could visualize the consequences of choices made today.

Two growth scenarios were presented to the Steering Committee to solicit input on growth options including how (density) and where (location) Sidney should grow.

- **Adjusted Trend Scenario.** This scenario assumes that the city will grow at a similar density and patterns that it has in the past, the scenario assumes a larger number of single-family detached homes.
- **Efficiency Scenario.** This scenario assumes that development will happen in a slightly more compact manner, including a greater variety of housing options on smaller lots and reflect the national trend in smaller scale retail.

Scenario Findings:

- The Adjusted Trend Scenario will require approximately 40% more land and infrastructure than the Efficiency Scenario
- If the Adjusted Trend Scenario were to continue, Sidney would expand requiring 324 acres to meet the expected growth.

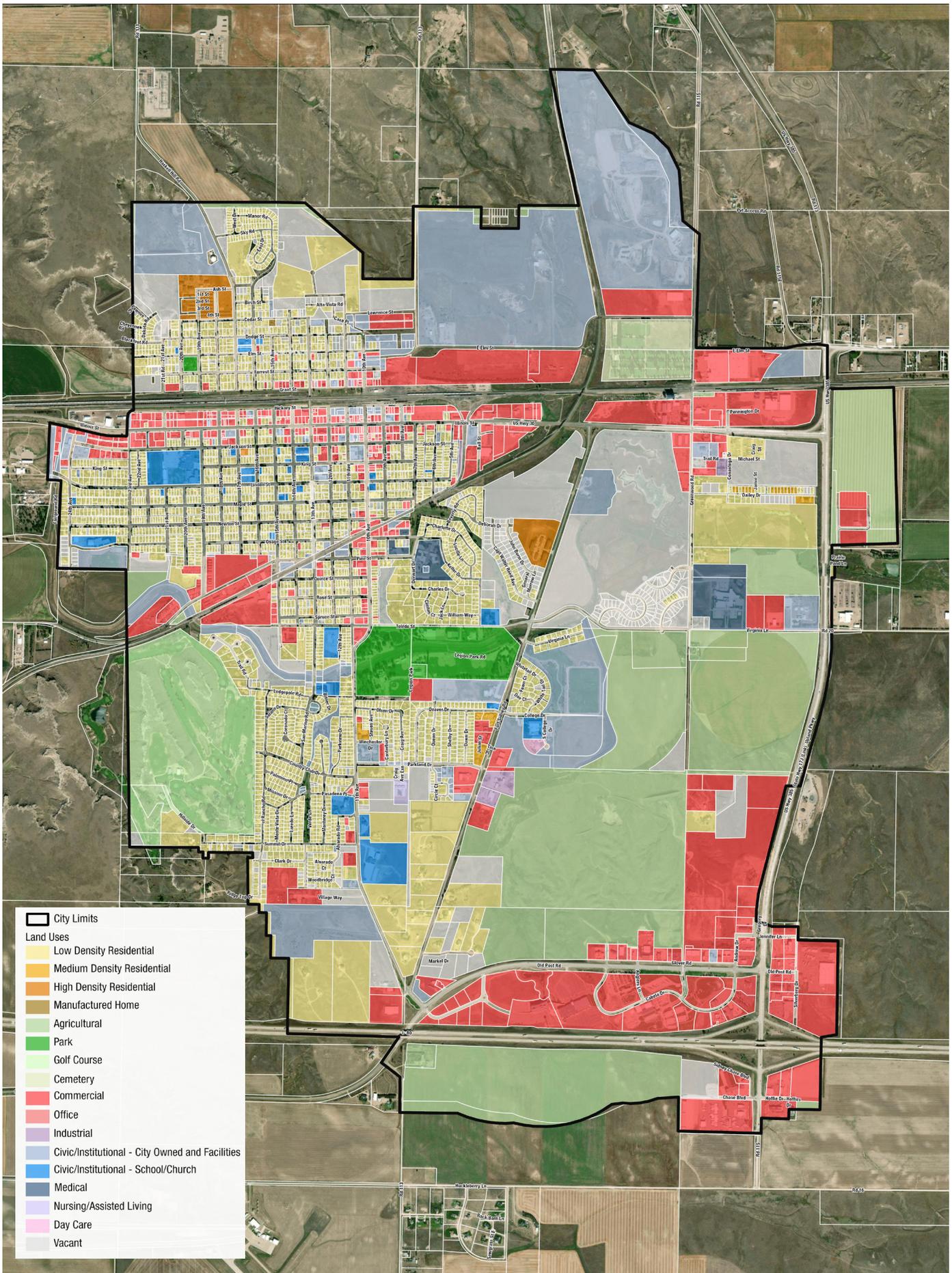


Figure 2.4: Existing Land Use Map

≡ SIDNEY'S PUBLIC FACILITIES

The health of the residents of your city impacts the entire community. Spending time in natural outdoor environments and other public facilities helps people relax and enjoy a greater sense of mental well-being. These features are reviewed below, each with a brief description of their current amenities and maintenance needs.



≡ PARKS AND RECREATION

LEGION PARK

Legion Park is the largest park and is centrally located in Sidney. It encompasses a multitude of activities that make it an ideal setting for a fun outdoor experience. Some of which include modern playground equipment, a pond stocked with fish, Sidney/Deadwood Trail, aquatic center, softball and Tee-Ball complexes, baseball diamonds, tennis courts, and shelters.

With these amenities in play there also comes the maintenance and long term visions that would further enhance the overall experience. Some of future goals include updating the aging light poles and dugouts at the baseball and tee-ball complexes, a face lift of both the interior and exterior restrooms, and rainwater mitigation around buildings and fields to help with run off. Along with a fresh coat of paint the basketball court is in need of a cover shelter and further sidewalks and ramps to the tennis courts to help with accessibility.



NORTHSIDE PARK

Northside park was established between the 1940's and 50's and has seen ongoing improvement to its equipment. Some of this includes a lawn irrigation system, sunshade shelter, and pet blessing box that is community funded with excess food, toys, and items that pets may need. One downside of this part is the lack of fresh water and modern restroom. Currently the site holds a few porta-potty but could use restroom facility within the immediate future.



SIDNEY AQUATIC CENTER

A part of Legion park is Sidney's outdoor aquatic center, which was recently built in 2017 to replace the old Toledo Street pool that was adjacent to the new basketball courts. It is open from late May to early August and provides amenities such as water basketball, spill bucket, slide, lazy river, and splash toys. Some future modifications would be to further establish better public access by replacing the existing rock parking with concrete and trails to the pool. Additional trees and landscape to better shade and improve natural irrigation around the facility.



CHEYENNE COUNTY COMMUNITY CENTER

Opened in 1992 with additions to the front lobby in 2007 the two story steel building holds enough space for open recreation, fitness, daycare, computer lab, and community event center. There has been a growing need for additional space, separate fitness areas for cardio and strength, daycare rooms with separate winter time play areas to name a few. Currently the foundation board is performing a strategic plan analysis for the future of what they may bring to Sidney. We'll discuss later in the plan the communities desire to see a new sports complex, which may address some of the growing concerns.



GREENWOOD CEMETERY

City authorized after Old Fort Sidney closed. The catholic portion grew west while the City portion grew east until they combined. Greenwood is 39 acres and over 120 years old. The maintenance shop was built in three phases with the latest being 1990's that also brought an automated irrigation system, security system, and future land for growth. Currently this land is in need of survey for future burial.

BOOTHILL CEMETERY

Boot Hill, or the original Sidney Cemetery, had its first burial in 1868 to bury soldiers of Fort Sidney and later used to bury victims of Sidney's Wild West days that continued through 1894 and is home to upwards of 400 people. A few amenities on site include 5 storyboard panels noting Old Fort Sidney's history, flagpole, benches, trees, and native stone & wrought iron fence encloses 3 sides. Volunteers aid in the up kept of stone heads of former burials and provide tours throughout the year.

HILLSIDE GOLF COURSE

The west side of Sidney holds the Hillside Golf Course club house at their 261,360 sqft field (6 acres), which includes a full course, parking, and bar & grill. The facility has recently received a refurbished roof and restroom. Currently the parking lot is comprised of gravel and a desire for a paved parking and new interior paint is requested.

The maintenance that is located on the grounds is dated and in need of a new building long term. The current facility leaks, with rainfall pooling on interior floor. It has become more of a concern for safety than a luxury need.



☰ PUBLIC FACILITIES

SIDNEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Sidney public schools are broken up by a few grades to their own building, those are Central Elementary for pre-kindergarten and kindergarten, southward elementary for first and second grades, Northward Elementary for grades third and fourth, West Elementary for fifth and sixth grade, Sidney Middle school, and Sidney High school. The long term goal would be to build a new school to retire a few aging schools such as Northward their oldest building (built in 1929) that would house a few more grades together. A few short term goals to address Northward would be to build out additional space at West Elementary to accommodate North until the new school is built.

CITY HALL

The City Hall building is over 60 years old and was originally built to house City Hall and the Police Department. The Police Department has since moved to its own building. The building now houses City Hall, council chambers, city manager's office, utility billing, HR, finance, city clerk's office, city inspector's office, payroll, fire department, and economic development.

The facility could use more modern IT upgrades for City Council and other meetings such as interactive large screen for zoom, sound, reproduction capabilities and other collaborative remote meetings. The wallpaper in the Council chamber room is outdated and needs a renovation. The front office needs better security structures such as a buzzer to get in and glass to protect the front office staff from possible harm.



ELK BUILDING

The Elks Lodge building has been a staple of Sidney Nebraska since it was commissioned in 1929 with construction being completed in 1931. In 1978, the building was acquired by the local Elks Lodge #1894. The building was originally designed to be the city auditorium, city offices, and event center. It has an old movie theatre booth, a large stage with balcony seating. It has an old mayor's office and jail cells and at one point had an indoor basketball court. The Elks building has two stories and a basement. It is on the historic registry. Entertainers such as Duke Ellington, Lawrence Welk, and Ted Williams Band featuring Perry Como have all performed there. As the Elk's lodge the facility has hosted countless community, charitable, and private events.

Over the years the building has fallen under disrepair. The first floor is still functional and is used frequently for several community, charitable, and private events. The basement is only feasible storage purposes, the windows on second floor are boarded up and a false ceiling has been installed cutting off the second floor. The building has received a historical grant to do a major renovation project that focuses on handicap accessibility, HVAC, sprinkler system, elevator to the basement level, electrical upgrades, windows, and removal of the false ceiling to open the balcony back up and restore the building to its former glory. While the grant covers major ease of life amenities a few items that are not included are some of the smaller needs such as a new bar and flooring in the main ballroom as well as some kitchen appliances that are in need of replacement. The Elk's Lodge are currently doing a major fundraiser for those items.



EMERGENCY SERVICE

SIDNEY FIRE DEPARTMENT

Located within the same building as City Hall, the building received an addition around mid 1990's for additional vehicle storage and equipment. The department has 12 in service members and 2 retired volunteer members. With an older building the interior meeting room is dated, which fashions 70's wood paneling. Currently the facility has 1 restroom so an additional handicap restroom and separate gender restroom. Additionally a few apparatus doors will need to be increased to accommodate larger vehicles along with repair to a few concrete pads that have begun to crack over time.

SIDNEY POLICE DEPARTMENT

Located within Sidney's downtown in the old restaurant the police department is housed in a 2,200 sqft building with a parking lot at 2,100 sqft since 1986. The department currently has 14 officers with 2 civilians for administrative duties. Currently the building has outgrown it's use and the future goal would be to expand into the parking lot or provide a new building for their need, which includes room for growth, office space, and equipment storage. There was a feasibility study conducted in 2014 for this future growth but moves to proceed have yet to be determined. Additionally, it is typically to replace patrol vehicles once they've hit 100,000 miles with some of their newest vehicles hovering around 75,000 miles. The replacement of these vehicles would also require updated radar units, mobile data terminal, and in car cameras.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is a vital line of connection both within and outside any given jurisdiction. Transportation is used to move people and goods all over in the most effective way possible. Sidney has various transportation systems throughout the town. Those networks are made up of trails, roads and regional highways.

ROADS

The roads ways that run through Sidney are made up of four primary types:

LOCAL ROADS

These make up a majority of internal pathways for Sidney with the purpose to move traffic within small areas of the city and provide



specific site access. A few types of local roads include residential streets, avenues, and alleys. They have the lowest speed limits and capacities in the hierarchy, but have the highest access to property.

COLLECTORS

These are roads which move traffic between adjacent districts of the city. This type of road collects traffic from local roads, and then distribute it to arterials. Typically traffic using a collector is going to or coming from somewhere close by. Examples of these include:

- » 10th Ave
- » 13th Ave
- » 15th Ave.
- » 23rd Ave
- » Fort Sidney Rd.
- » Sidney Draw Rd.
- » Haskell Hill Rd.
- » Old Post Rd.
- » Toledo St.

ARTERIAL

These roads typically handle large volumes of traffic and are primary circulation paths. Arterials are often defined by their large divided roads with few to no driveways that cannot be called freeways because of traffic lights or intersections. Illinois Street that bisects through downtown is one example of an arterial street.

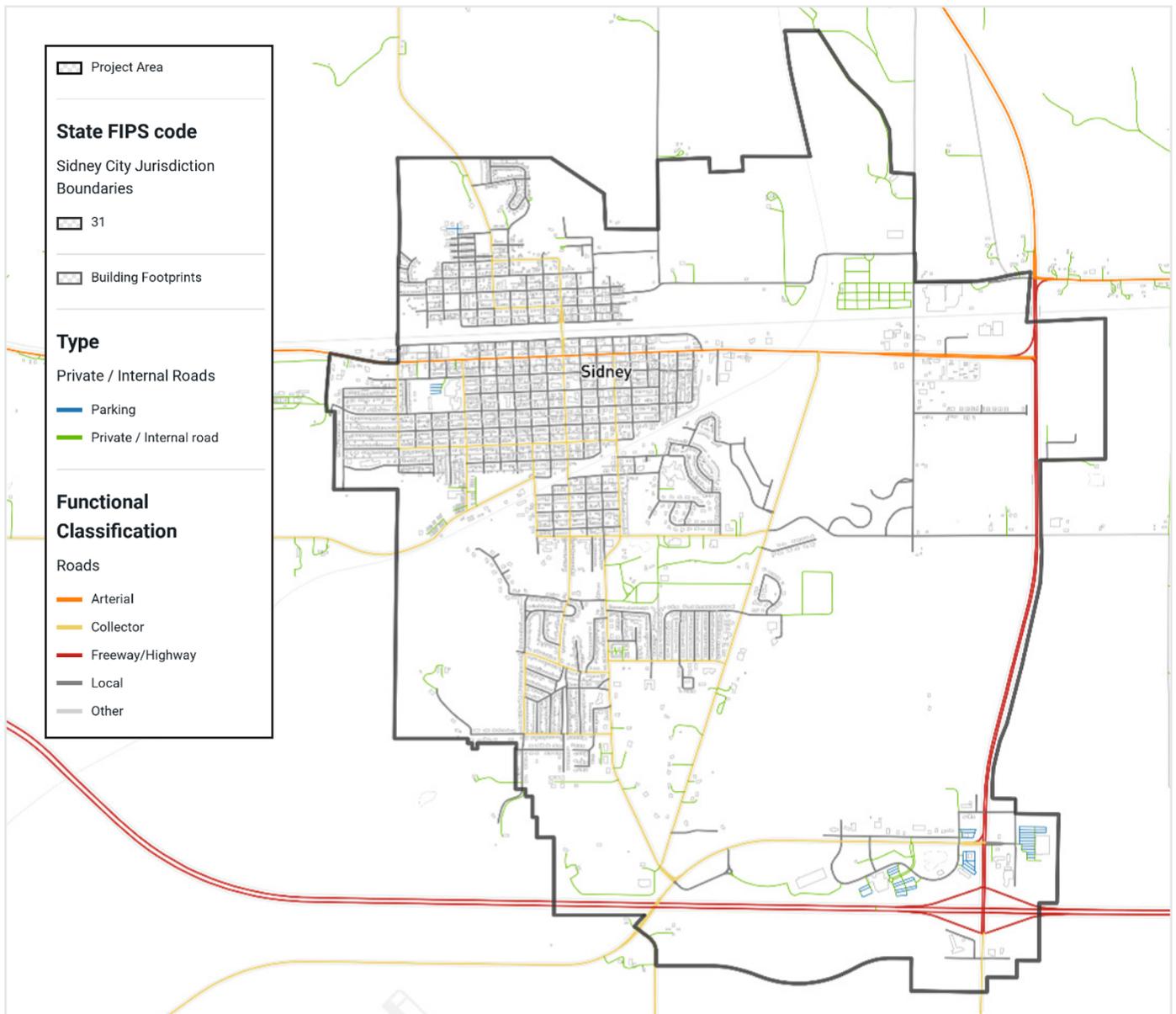


Figure 2.5: Traffic Map

HIGHWAY/FREEWAY

These roads are designed to allow optimal travel through higher speed and flow due to the reduced amount of interruptions. Those would be I-80 and 17J

While initial forethought and continued maintenance in no small measure that focuses around automobiles, each of these types of roads serve additional users including bicyclists and pedestrians, and these users should be considered with equal standing to cars in future street designs and upgrades. The city has begun taking steps at enhancing these with examples like the 2021 Old Post Road Corridor Improvement that looks to extend pedestrian and bike friendly connections further but. This should be carefully considered in a future development and improvement of transportation of Sidney.

CITY OF SIDNEY TRANSPORTATION

Located at 1433 Illinois Street in an old repurposed gas stations. It is a flat roof masonry building with a single garage door with three interior bays for vehicle maintenance. Currently there are four bus with accessible lift and a single van for requests. The building is in fair condition with visible cracks that could benefit from tuck-pointing to prevent future leaks and rain infiltration along with non operational heating to be replaced. One major concern is parking area for bus fleet. While future modifications could benefit from the addition of another garage bay door, that could be designated for washing



L&L SIDNEY MUNICIPAL AIRPORT.

The airport is located just 3 miles south of Sidney and is open to the public 24 hours a day on approximately 732 acres. The airport also supports a few of Western Nebraska Community College's (WNCC) aviation programs, like Aviation Maintenance, Aviation Airframe Maintenance, and Aviation Power Plant Maintenance.

The airfield has two runways 13/31 & 03/21 both of which are in good to fair conditions. Runway 13/31 is a concrete surface with visible markings and high intensity lighting that are in good conditions. Runway 03/21 is a natural turf surface with no lighting that is in good condition, visual marking however are in fair condition but nothing that would impede its usage.

UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Utility infrastructure are components that make keep our places of work and residence on and functional. Without one it begins to weigh on the convenience Sidney uses daily. The following is a summary of recommendations provided by facility managers of each utility.

ELECTRICAL

Built in the early 90's this metal building houses the maintenance equipment and parts for the city's electrical department. The building could benefit from new overhead doors and interior slab repair where it has spalled due to time. In terms of equipment there is a need to replace some of the aging bucket trucks for operators to be able to reach utility poles.

Overall infrastructure has seen the conversion to underground at around 75% with the remaining in dire need of replacement. Substations have been replaced along with monitoring system to gauge any given load and capacity to an area.

WASTE WATER TREATMENT

The original plant was put into operation in 1987. Treatment consisted of a 2 stage trickle filter operation with 5 clarifiers. In

2010 a 2 basin sequential batch reactor plant went into operation and the trickle filter plant was abandoned in place. This current facility has the capacity to run 1.16 million gallons per day (mgd) with the average daily flow at 0.550 mgd but has seen maximums at 0.650 mgd. A new bar screen, influent pumps, grit washer, and heater are all items that could be invested in to help maintain adequate operations.

STORM SEWER DRAINAGE

Sidney major drainage systems include 19th Ave. from Jackson St. to Flood Plain Ditch, Jackson St. from 14th Ave. to 13th Ave. to Illinois St., and Parkview Dr. drainage ditch from Country Club Drive to Lodgepole Rd. Typical maintenance includes visual inspection of inlets for blockage every spring and tops are cleaned and checked after rain events. Some downsides are 19th Ave. pipe is undersized for the amount of water going to it. Jackson St. has large amount of water flow to 13th Ave. and produces large ice hazard at the Catholic Church for both pedestrian and vehicle traffic. Riff raff buried in the Parkview Ditch it a difficult solution to the problem.

Future improvements would be the evaluation study for solution to Parkview Drainage Ditch problem and pipe size increase for 19th Ave. from Jackson St. to Flood Plain Ditch.

SOLID WASTE

Located to the north east edge of Sidney the facility has a large 5 door garage bay to house a majority of their equipment. They've currently resided here for 33 years with the building in overall good shape. Immediate needs for the facility would be the investment in new equipment specifically a bailer that is used to compact cardboard, two wheel loaders, and additional land cell for MSW municipal solid waste landfill, which is a discrete area of land or excavation that would receive household waste in the next 4 to 5 years.

IN CONCLUSION

For a relatively ageing facility the quality for a majority is within fair to good condition. Some common themes would be the request for additional space as growth occurs in the next few years for said facility along with outdated aesthetics needing refurbished. Beyond those recommendations provided by the report, regular inspection, repair, and maintenance will be essential to ensuring the future robust function of all utility and infrastructure systems. The city should regularly budget for replacement and improvement of aging systems within a six year capital improvement budget to address future .



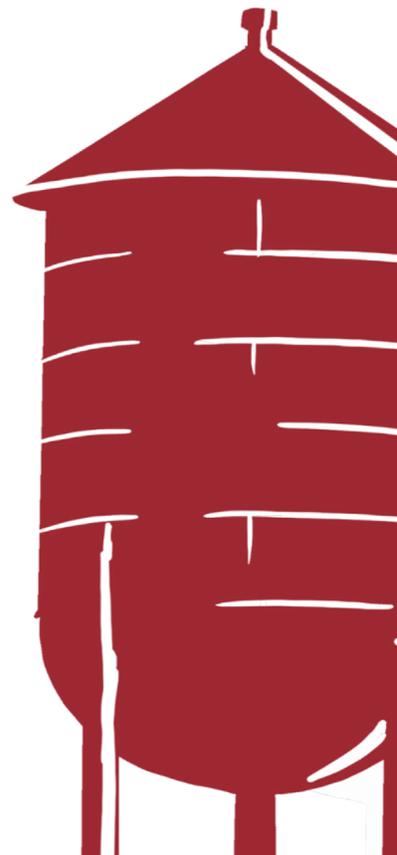


3



FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

To improve the health and quality of life for Sidney, we must equitably plan for the built and natural environments in which they interact. This chapter reviews the Future Land Use Map as a guide for land use decisions. These decisions, both large and small, impact the character of the city and the quality that residents and business owners experience in their community.



≡ LAND USE PRINCIPLES

Traditionally, community comprehensive plans identify growth areas and policies for addressing greenfield development. For Sidney, some of these policies are pertinent but more important is to identify strategies that will sustain a strong and vibrant community rather than reacting to growing demands.

Whether a city is sustaining and improving its core or developing new areas, land use policies should be established that best serve the city today and in the future. New development and redevelopment should use land efficiently, be environmentally and economically sustainable, and reinforce the quality and character of Sidney. “Smart” land use principles, applied to overall city development policy, can take advantage of opportunities and create the public benefits of environmental sensitivity, economic efficiency, and enhanced community and civic life. These land use principles, adapted to Sidney, establish patterns that should guide the city’s overall development. Sidney will grow smart if it:

Encourages Community Design that Uses Land Effectively.

Like all cities, Sidney has a limited amount of financial resources, and those resources should be used most effectively. The city has experienced a declining population for the past twenty years, however, to remain a vital community new development and redevelopment must continue to happen. To avoid stretching city services over wide areas, which increases both the cost of government and the distance that people must travel to their destinations, new growth should generally be adjacent to existing development, or take maximum advantage of underutilized “infill” areas to produce unified, economically efficient, and attractive city.

Encourages Project and Building Design that Balance Compactness and Efficiency

Contemporary urban development, framed by automobile transportation, frequently spreads out over the land and lacks the human scale and detail often found in the traditional city. While these new developments provide valuable services, the large building scale, the dominance of parking lots, the distance between buildings, and the lack of pedestrian access create a far less satisfactory environment. Compact and efficient project and building design use land and resources effectively, preserve more open space, and can provide memorable settings and experiences. Well-planned larger uses have an important place in a community’s economy and can have a level of detail and scale that take on some

of the virtues of traditional town environments.

Mixes Land Uses

Traditionally smaller communities have mixed uses and placed jobs and industries close to residential and recreation areas. More contemporary growth tends to “zone” different land uses away from one another. The concept of single-use zoning grew out of a need to separate living places from major industries to protect the health of residents, and this is still a good policy in some cases. However, mixing compatible but different uses in a modern setting creates more interesting and efficient communities and reflects the character of a smaller community. Providing uses that are closer and linked to one another can also reduce the number of trips that people must travel by car to conduct their daily lives.

Creates Housing Opportunities and Choices

Most of Sidney’s residential development is in the form of single-family detached units. Yet more diverse housing types will be needed to meet changing housing needs and preferences. The rising cost of land, materials, and labor along with demographic change have created a demand for multi-family units; smaller lot single-family development in innovative design settings, and attached housing. Residential development should be incorporated into mixed-use projects to reduce the separation between living places and activity centers. Sidney should provide opportunities for people at all stages of life to find their place in the city.

Promotes Walkability and Community Health through Routine Physical Activity

Nebraska’s small communities tended to have tighter development patterns clustered around the traditional downtown. This “small town feel” naturally creates a pedestrian-friendly environment. Sidney is an easy city for walking and biking. New developments should build on this pattern and avoid discontinuous streets, lack of sidewalks, and spreading developments that make walking or cycling difficult. Land use patterns and new investments that promote “active transportation” will create a better city. Local commercial services, schools, and major activity centers should have safe and comfortable routes to most neighborhoods. This expands transportation options and increases opportunities for social interaction. Equally important, incorporating physical activity into the daily routine of citizens creates a healthier and more physically fit community.

Encourages Identifiable Development and Redevelopment Areas with a Sense of Place

Newer residential areas often occur in defined and sometimes isolated pods, a result of incremental development. However, development and especially redevelopment should build on the desirable small town pattern and have a strong sense of belonging to Sidney. The design of redevelopment areas is especially important. These areas should fit within the context of the surrounding neighborhoods that are walkable and provide opportunities for community interaction.

Preserves Open Space and Important Environmental Areas

Sidney's surrounding open space is defined by the agricultural history of the state and the drainage ways that provided life to the region's earliest inhabitants. By preserving open spaces, the city balances the built and natural environment and provides a habitat for native plants and animals, recreational opportunities, and places of natural beauty. Open spaces also add real property value to adjacent development. While passive in use, these environments should not be absent of use. Drainage ways connect neighborhoods and the city's park system and this pattern should continue into developing areas.

Diversifies Transportation Modes

Over the past decade, Sidney has done an excellent job of expanding the trail system and connecting development to the south with the rest of the city. Residents of all ages note that Sidney is a community in which walking and biking are easy. Expanding trails, improving sidewalks, and identifying safe routes for bicyclists add to the quality of the city and the health of its residents. Other techniques that increase the ability of all residents to move freely around the city include better coordination between land use and transportation, ensuring connectivity within the street network, and developing multi-modal (or "complete") streets that accommodate all forms of transportation from bicycles to personal mobility devices and even golf carts.

Achieves Community and Stakeholder Collaboration in Development Decisions

Sidney should be a great place to live, work and play. City government should stay close to its constituents through techniques that measure the priorities of residents. The implementation of smart growth principles cannot occur without the collaboration of citizens. Partnerships between neighborhoods, adjoining communities, developers, nonprofit organizations, and the city will support and accelerate the implementation of the Sidney Plan.



LAND USE PHILOSOPHY: A FLEXIBLE APPROACH

Contemporary growth in American cities has tended to separate different land uses through zoning. The concept of single-use zoning grew out of a need to separate people's homes from major industries and factories to protect their health. Still today, some uses can produce so much traffic, noise, smell, or other negative effects that separation remains the most appropriate policy. However, increasingly, mixing compatible, and different uses is shown to create interesting and attractive communities. The Sidney Plan recommends a flexible land use approach that allows the mixing of uses.

A development pattern that encourages a mix of land uses and activities has a variety of benefits:

- » Creates activity at various times of day, among various types of uses, increasing security, vitality, and the number of people using public spaces.
- » Reduces the number of miles that people must travel daily by car when homes are in close to jobs and services.
- » Opens opportunities to build a variety of housing types, a recommendation of the Housing Study.
- » Creates more attractive neighborhoods for residents when uses are mixed (this is a national trend).
- » Provides greater flexibility for developers, and avoids unnecessary regulation when plans and land development policies allow appropriately mixed uses.

Sidney can achieve all these benefits by using a flexible land-use framework that allows for the appropriate mixing of compatible uses. The land use framework recognizes existing land use patterns while establishing an intensity-based approach for some developing areas. While this approach may allow for land uses with similar intensity to be integrated, each land use category has unique requirements for the following attributes:

- » Types of Allowable Uses
- » Intensity or density
- » Compatibility (transitions between uses)
- » Form, or design

In this section of the plan, each land use category is described in terms of its purpose, form, uses, intensity, and compatibility requirements.

Use: Integration and mixing of uses

One advantage of an intensity-based framework is its ability to integrate different land uses. Users may be integrated in two ways: horizontally and/or vertically. Horizontal integration keeps individual building uses separate but relates buildings harmoniously to each other. Vertical integration puts more than one use in the same building. In Sidney, most of the downtown and older commercial nodes are in multiple-use categories, but newer areas, such as Old Post Road, and more remote residential areas are still kept as single-use areas.

Intensity

The Sidney land use framework designates how much development occurs in an area and how that development affects its neighbors. This is measured by the intensity and/or density of development. In residential areas, intensity is measured by dwelling units per acre. For other uses, factors such as the amount of traffic that a project generates or how it affects its neighbors determine intensity.

Compatibility

One of the most important concerns in land use planning is the relationship between different uses and their relative compatibility with each other. In areas where densities are low, compatibility is usually achieved using spacing between buildings and by congregating similar uses together. This simple method is easy to administer and understand; however, it can lead to some undesirable conditions such as increased commute times, un-walkable neighborhoods, and higher utilities and public service costs.

The land use categories described in this plan exist on a continuum of intensity and therefore have a continuum of compatibility methods. As land uses become more intense and uses become more integrated, compatibility methods focus less on spacing and congregating of similar uses, and more on performance-based methods that directly address issues such as noise, traffic, privacy, and aesthetics.

It is important to remember that while the intensity-based concept proposes mixing uses, it does not mean that every land use is appropriate everywhere. Location standards and compatibility requirements for higher impact uses are an important part of the land use system proposed in this plan.

Form

Form relates to how the developments in the land use categories are laid out, including the street pattern, the type of infrastructure required, the separation between buildings, and the relation of buildings to the street. Form also includes the scale of the buildings - the length, width, and number of stories. The degree to which the buildings in an area are similar to each other in terms of these "form" characteristics impacts the perceptions of compatibility and therefore market value.

CAVEATS TO THE FUTURE LAND USE MAP

The development concepts and future land use map are based on population projections, economic trends, environmental analysis, and public input. The amount of land that is planned for is greater than the projected need, to provide market flexibility, avoid creating a false land shortage, and provide long-term planning. This means that many areas shown in the maps are unlikely to develop in the 20-year time frame. Three important points about the Future Land Use Map:

Property Owners Decide

The Future Land Use map depicts new land uses for privately owned properties. The transition of these properties from their current use to the depicted use is expected to occur slowly over time, in response to market demands, as property owners voluntarily sell, develop, or change the use of their land.

Generalized Map

The Future Land Use map should be interpreted generally and is not intended to provide the specificity or the rigidity of a zoning map or engineering document. The map should guide the zoning map and is meant to show:

- Generalized land use locations and transitions: The boundaries between land uses on the map are "fuzzy" lines and are meant to show approximate areas for transition, rather than rigid boundaries. The exception to this is those areas that preserve floodplains and wetlands.
- Collector and arterial street connections: Critical arterial and collector street connections are specified on this map, though the exact routes will depend on detailed engineering studies. Local streets will be determined as development occurs.

Basis for Land Use Decisions

The Future Land Use map should provide the basis for decisions of the Planning Commission, the City Commission, and private developers. The map is a critical part of the approval process for development proposals and zoning decisions.

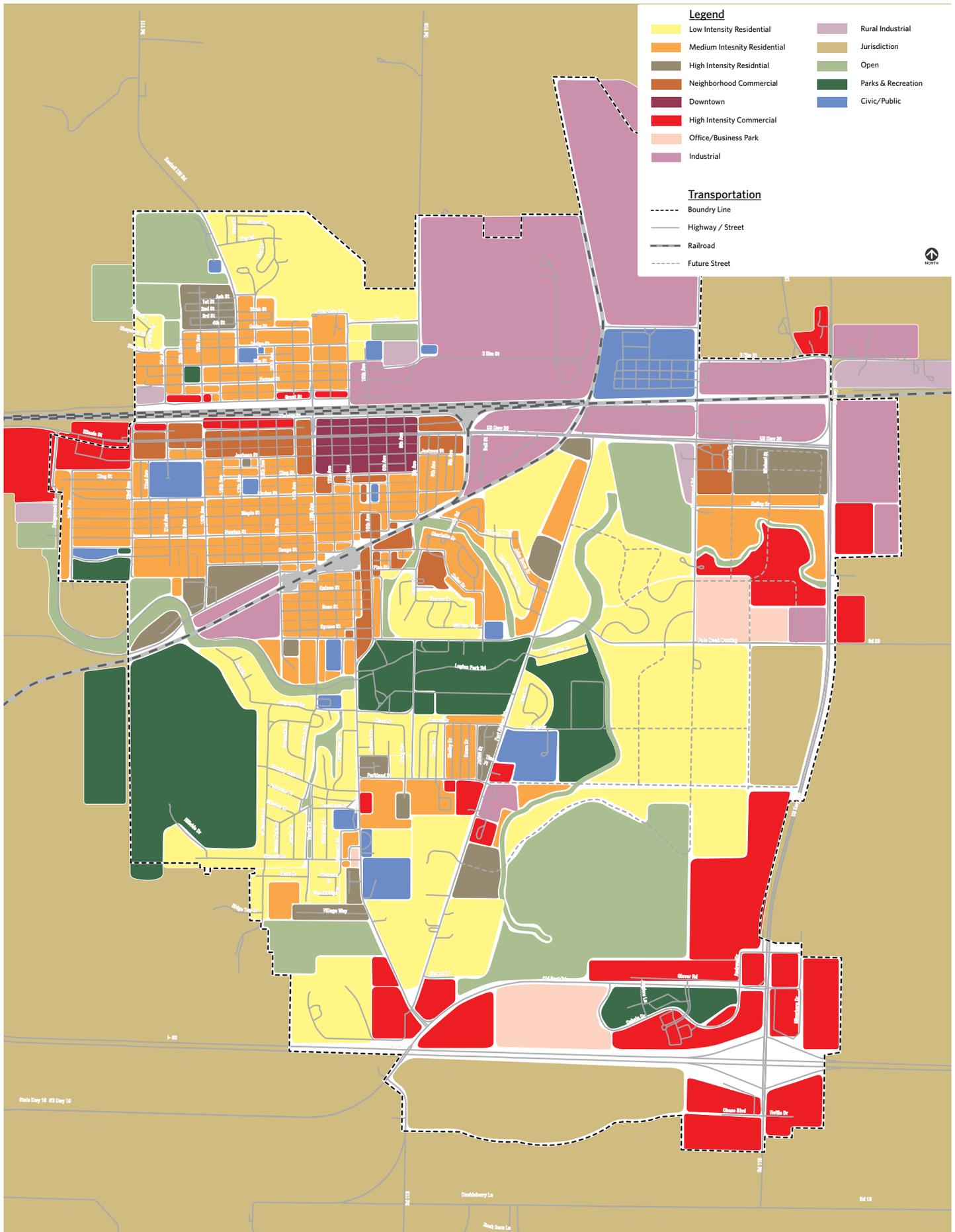


Figure 3.1: Future Land Use Map

☰ LAND USE: LOW INTENSITY RESIDENTIAL



DESCRIPTION:

Neighborhoods emphasizing single-family detached homes, although other single-family attached and small lot single-family homes may be permitted based on location.

POTENTIAL ZONING:

- R-1a (only in areas that will never receive city water/sewer service); R-1

INTENSITY (DU/A):

- 1-3 units per acre

USES:

Restrictive land use, emphasizing single-family detached development, although innovative single-family forms may be permitted with special review. Civic uses are generally allowed, with special permission for higher intensity uses. Developments will be provided with full city services.

FORM:

Developments should provide connectivity within and between developments both for cars and pedestrians. A framework of streets and open space should create a sense of neighborhood. Densities should be higher at transition points with other more intense uses or districts.

COMPATIBILITY:

Compatible with most single-family detached housing, attached single-family, and some townhome developments. Traffic and higher intensity uses should be directed away from these areas and along major thoroughfares. Building elements and scale should be consistent with surrounding development.

≡ LAND USE: MEDIUM INTENSITY RESIDENTIAL



DESCRIPTION:

Neighborhoods incorporate a mix of housing types, including single-family detached, single-family attached, townhouse, and small lot single-family. Civic uses would also generally be allowed. For reference, the density of this district is similar to the traditional neighborhoods surrounding downtown.

POTENTIAL ZONING:

- R-1; R-2

INTENSITY (DU/A):

- 3-7 units per acre

USES:

Restrictive land use, emphasizing a mix of housing styles including single-family detached, single-family attached, and townhouses. Limited multi-family development may be allowed with special review and criteria. Civic uses are generally allowed, with special permission for higher-intensity uses.

FORM:

High level of connectivity between and within developments.

Connections to neighborhood commercial services and civic destinations should provide a sense of neighborhood. Developments should have an articulated scale and maintain the identity of individual units. Densities should be higher at transition points with other more intensive districts.

COMPATIBILITY:

This applies to older established neighborhoods of the city which have diverse housing types, and to developing areas that incorporate a mix of development types. Projects may be incorporated in a limited way into Neighborhood Commercial areas.

Retain and improve the energy efficiency of public facilities

- Upgrade the city fleet with energy-efficient vehicles as part of the regular fleet replacement schedule
- Replace existing streetlights with LED fixtures
- Complete energy audits for municipal buildings
- Evaluate the use of hybrid vehicles and the possible use of bio-diesel in municipal equipment

≡ LAND USE: HIGH INTENSITY RESIDENTIAL



DESCRIPTION:

Neighborhoods that incorporate a mix of housing types, including multi-family housing. These areas may also allow small-scale office and commercial uses, but the primary use is residential. HIR areas should be designed and integrated into adjacent neighborhoods to avoid the creation of enclaves.

POTENTIAL ZONING:

- R-2, R-3, R-4

INTENSITY (DU/A):

- 12+ units per acre

USES:

Allows multi-family and compatible civic uses. Some limited offices and convenience commercials within primarily residential areas may be appropriate.

FORM:

Located at sites with access to major thoroughfares and activity centers. Should be integrated into the fabric of nearby residential areas, while avoiding adverse traffic and visual impacts on low-density uses. Traffic should have direct access to collector or arterial streets to avoid overloading local streets. High level of pedestrian access and connectivity, avoiding the creation of compounds.

COMPATIBILITY:

Conflicts with low-density residential developments should be resolved or minimized through project design. Traffic and other external effects should be directed away from lower-intensity uses. Landscaping, buffering, and screening should be employed to minimize negative effects. May be incorporated into mixed-use projects or planned areas.

≡ LAND USE: NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL



DESCRIPTION:

Areas with easily accessed commercial services from neighborhoods that surround them. A mix of smaller scale commercial uses with medium to higher density residential uses and civic uses can be integrated.

POTENTIAL ZONING

- C-2; R-3

INTENSITY:

- 7-12 DU/A

USES:

A mix of complementary smaller scale commercial uses with some higher density residential uses and civic uses. Amenities such as parks and quality streetscapes should act as neighborhood centers.

FORM:

High connectivity in transportation to allow multiple access points. Sidewalks should provide access between businesses and adjacent residential areas for greater walkability.

COMPATIBILITY:

- Land uses and intensities should be integrated at a finer grain than within the HIC designation. Compatibility should be achieved through increased attention to traffic circulation and parking, site and building design, and on-site operations.
- Smaller commercial uses are appropriate on any street provided that a smooth transition in intensity of uses is maintained.

☰ LAND USE: DOWNTOWN



DESCRIPTION:

Downtown Sidney is the civic and commercial heart of the city. It should offer small to moderate-scale commercial development along with housing. The district should remain connected to and surrounded by a mix of housing types, including townhomes and small lot single family

POTENTIAL ZONING:

- C-1

INTENSITY (DU/A):

- 12+ units per acre

USES:

A broad range of retail services, excluding large-scale stores and services, auto-related services, and large offices. Multi-family uses can be mixed in with commercial, but commercial should be the dominant use.

FORM:

Low to moderate building and impervious coverage, located along major streets in areas close to residential growth centers or at nodes created by significant intersections of streets. Developments should emphasize pedestrian scale and relationships among businesses and accommodate automobile access without being dominated by an automotive scale. Good pedestrian circulation should connect businesses and surrounding residential uses.

COMPATIBILITY:

- The emphasis for the downtown should be on creating a unique neighborhood center. Compatibility should be achieved through increased attention to traffic circulation and parking, site and building design, and on-site operations
- Land uses may be mixed vertically in smaller scale two to three-story buildings.
- Horizontal mixed-use must create smooth internal transitions from lower to higher intensity uses.

≡ LAND USE: HIGH INTENSITY COMMERCIAL



DESCRIPTION:

The Commercial category includes a variety of commercial uses including auto-oriented developments, major retailers, multi-use centers, restaurants, and other services. Small-scale or more neighborhood-oriented commercial uses may be integrated into a Highway Commercial area with additional consideration to the design and orientation of the site for additional compatibility.

POTENTIAL ZONING:

- PBC

INTENSITY (DU/A):

- Not applicable

USES:

- A broad range of retail services, including large-scale stores and services, auto-related services, and large offices.
- Multi-family uses can be mixed in with commercial, but commercial would be the dominant use.

FORM:

Should be located along arterial streets and accommodate the automobile, while providing good pedestrian and bike access to adjacent streets and trails. Horizontal and vertical mixing of uses should be encouraged. Regionally appropriate landscaping should be used along all frontage roads and within parking lots. Internal pedestrian systems should allow customers to park once and conveniently access several destinations within a retail center.

COMPATIBILITY:

Compatibility should be achieved through increased attention to traffic circulation and parking, site and building design, and on-site operations.

Potential negative effects on surrounding residential areas should be limited by locations and buffering.

Heavy landscaping should be used along boundaries with lower-intensity uses.

≡ LAND USE: OFFICE/BUSINESS PARK



DESCRIPTION:

Areas preserved for larger business development essential to Sidney's economic stability and future growth. These areas protect larger acreages to maximize clustering for specialization, synergy, transportation efficiency, and knowledge exchange.

POTENTIAL ZONING:

- O-P

INTENSITY (DU/A):

Not applicable

USES:

Centers with major office and business uses, such as technology and research centers, corporate headquarters, and lower-intensity industries with larger-scale visitor services are located at the major intersections. Multi-family may be appropriate when integrated as part of a holistic development that incorporates retail and office uses.

FORM:

Areas should have a strong emphasis on quality design and landscaping standards as these considerations impact the marketability of the business park to prospective businesses. Transportation improvements should enhance connectivity, efficiency, and capacity.

COMPATIBILITY:

Adjacent and internal development should not compromise the viability of employment lands. Incompatible uses such as lower-density residential should not be located within BP areas.

Development abutting a BP boundary, whether inside or outside the boundary, should be held to higher design standards to ensure compatibility between uses and possible adjacent residential uses.

In cases where transportation infrastructure has been installed to provide capacity to BP areas, any proposed rezone or subdivision outside of the BP area must not reduce the transportation capacity of the BP area below the level intended.

≡ LAND USE: INDUSTRIAL



DESCRIPTION:

Areas intended to accommodate industrial uses that are difficult to integrate with less intensive uses due to negative impacts from heavy traffic, noise, or odors.

POTENTIAL ZONING:

» C-3; M-1; M-1(s); M-2

INTENSITY (DU/A):

- Not applicable

USES:

All types of industrial: manufacturing, warehousing, distribution, and office/industrial flex space. Uses in this area can be smaller in size than in the Business Park areas and aesthetic standards are less stringent.

FORM:

Designation of any new Industrial areas should be done with consideration of the following factors:

- Highway and rail access;
- Availability and capacity of water and sewer service;
- Proximity to existing employment centers;
- Compatibility of neighboring land uses;
- Brownfield status;
- Impact of added employee/truck traffic to the level of service

of roadways in the surrounding area and impact on the non-industrial uses along those roadways.

COMPATIBILITY:

Development within Industrial areas will be similar in nature, so compatibility is less difficult to manage. However, in areas where industrial abuts other land use categories, the following should be considered.

- Design standards: including land buffers, architectural and site design standards, and other appropriate standards implemented through PUDs or new codes or guidelines.
- Operational standards that consider traffic, noise, lighting, and air quality.
- Areas adjacent or visible from I-80 and Highways 30 and 385 should have a higher level of landscaping and avoid outdoor storage visible from these corridors.

≡ LAND USE: RURAL INDUSTRIAL



DESCRIPTION:

Large lot residential that incorporates businesses associated with primary residents. Allows rural residential to incorporate home businesses and hobbies that take additional space.

POTENTIAL ZONING:

- R-1A; AR

INTENSITY (DU/A):

- < 1 unit per acre

USES:

Primary use is single-family residential. Businesses and uses may include storage and small-scale fabrication. Heavy manufacturing or uses that generated a significant amount of traffic would not be compatible.

FORM:

Lot size would generally be a minimum of one acre. Uses that generate significant deliveries should have access to an arterial. There should be a strong emphasis on residential uses and storage should be screened from adjoining residential uses and streets/highways. Uses along highway corridors should not be strip or linear in nature limiting access to the corridor and undeveloped land.

COMPATIBILITY:

Conflicts with residential developments should be resolved or minimized through landscaping and screening Traffic and other external effects should be directed away from lower-intensity uses and have direct access to arterial or collector streets.

≡ LAND USE: URBAN RESERVE/JURISDICTION



DESCRIPTION:

Long-term growth areas. This comprehensive plan outlines the land needed to accommodate growth over the next 10 - 20 years. The urban reserve designation is generally assigned to areas outside city limits and much longer range growth potential.

Development proposals in this area, including high-intensity agricultural operations, should be reviewed for their compatibility with future urban uses.

POTENTIAL ZONING:

- A

INTENSITY (DU/A):

- Not applicable

USES:

Restrictive land use with an emphasis on land preservation such as crop cultivation.

FORM:

Adjacent developments should be designed for future expansion of roads, sewers, and other infrastructure facilities into the urban reserve areas without cul-de-sacs and other configurations that will require future growth to leap-frog development areas.

COMPATIBILITY:

Urban reserve areas should remain reasonably compatible with typical urban land uses including residential, commercial, and industrial operations.

The compatibility should be determined based on the future land use identified on the future land use map; for example an urban reserve area adjacent to an area identified on the future land use map as industrial should be compatible with the industrial land use classification contained in this chapter.

≡ LAND USE: OPEN



DESCRIPTION:

Areas intended to remain undeveloped and natural or recreational in character. These areas act to preserve natural features such as drainage ways or native prairies and create buffers.

POTENTIAL ZONING:

- A; F

INTENSITY (DU/A):

- Not applicable

USES:

Limited, primarily natural. Any development is recreational and low impact in nature (such as park shelters or ball fields), while complementary to the purpose of the wider area as open natural space.

FORM:

Traditional parks and recreation areas include both passive and active recreation. Sidney's dry dams, floodplains, and any other sensitive areas should be preserved and incorporated into the city's stormwater management system.

COMPATIBILITY:

These areas are valuable for the natural character and use within them should have minimal impact. This requires minimal visual, auditory, and other pollutants that would reduce the pristine character of areas. Aids for compatibility may include:

Heavy landscaping screening, very large buffers; height limitations, zero odor emissions, and strict ambient noise requirements.

More intense recreation uses, like sports complexes, should be treated like comparable commercial uses for the traffic and compatibility issues that they can generate.

≡ LAND USE: PARKS & RECREATION



DESCRIPTION:

Areas intended to remain undeveloped and natural or recreational in character.

POTENTIAL ZONING:

- Various

INTENSITY (DU/A):

- Not applicable

USES:

Recreational and low impact in nature (such as park shelters or ball fields), while complementary to the purpose of the wider area as open natural space. More intense recreational uses would be permitted in these areas compared to Open Spaces that are preserving natural resources.

FORM:

Traditional parks and recreation areas are dominated by more intensive or active recreation areas but may incorporate more passive recreation uses.

COMPATIBILITY:

These areas are more intense than open spaces, potentially generating more traffic, lighting, and noise than open or passive recreation uses. Compatibility issues are most likely to arise when adjacent to low-intensity residential uses. Operational standards that consider traffic, noise, and lighting should mitigate these issues.

≡ LAND USE: CIVIC/PUBLIC



DESCRIPTION:

These two classifications provide space for educational, institutional, assembly, and other public uses, including hospitals, major campuses, cemeteries, airports, landfills, water plants, and major utilities.

- Civic (Civic and education facilities such as Southwest Community College): Fewer compatibility considerations are required.
- Public Facilities (such as water treatment facilities): Greater compatibility considerations are required due to more industrial character.

POTENTIAL ZONING:

- Various

INTENSITY (DU/A):

- Not applicable

USES:

Educational: Public, private, and parochial institutions at K-12 and

post-secondary level, or trade/business schools and their accessory uses.

Institutional and Assembly: Community or cultural facilities, religious institutions, public health care, or human services facilities and their accessory uses.

Other: Government or non-profit organizations and accessory uses.

FORM:

Government facilities should be held to the same standard for site design and connectivity as any private enterprise of similar intensity

COMPATIBILITY:

Civic uses may be permitted in several different areas, including residential areas. Maintenance, operating facilities, and public works yards should generally be located in industrial areas.

Individual review of proposals requires an assessment of operating characteristics, project design, and traffic management. Industrial operating characteristics should be controlled according to the same standards as industrial uses.



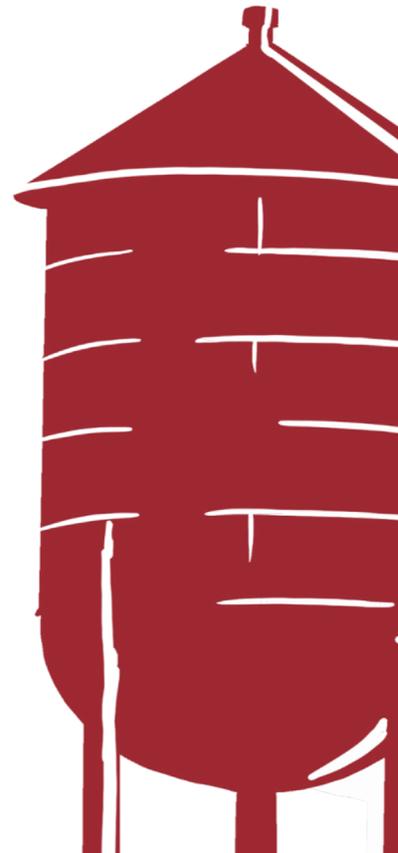


4



PLAN ELEMENTS

A city's character, economy, and social environment of its many residents make up the interconnected elements that form its identity and community. This chapter considers the information contained in the previous chapters to identify strategic opportunities for Sidney and generate guiding principles and policies for future land use decisions as it pertains to Placemaking and Image, Parks and Recreation, Mobility, Economic Development, Living, Energy Use, and Sustainability.



≡ PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

A COMMUNITY BUILDING PROCESS

Sidney and its residents are its greatest assets with the plan being a conversation about the future, the statement of a common vision, and the creation of a practical implementation strategy to generate meaningful outcomes and momentum for future action. Hence, the participation of the community is an integral part of the planning process. This program of public participation and involvement allowed citizens the opportunity to frame the goals and objectives of the plan, and in doing so, chart the future of Sidney.

STEERING COMMITTEE

A Steering Committee, represents a broad spectrum of community interests that offer primary guidance for the plan. Committee members met regularly to assist in identifying emerging issues, refining vision statements, and prioritizing the community's goals. They also served to review the plan as it matured through the development process.

CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP

At the beginning of the process, a workshop was held with the City Council to explore the purpose of a comprehensive plan, the many ways it can be used, and to understand their perspective on what a successful project would look like to them and their constituents.

COMMUNITY SURVEY AND ONLINE ENGAGEMENT

It is critical to engage the community in various ways to understand their goals and visions. During Oktoberfest 2022, 195 individuals participated in an online survey that explored their perspective on important projects to achieve over the next ten years and ideals that would attract more workers to Sidney.



≡ A STRATEGIC APPROACH TO ACCOMPLISHING GOALS

The strategic plan elements come from a well-defined land use plan. A land use plan not only meets the statutory requirements of a comprehensive plan but also assists city staff and leaders in making land use decisions. From this core land use framework, strategic plan elements are more action-focused and reinforce the land use framework.

For a city to continue to grow successfully, they must be proactive to ensure that each of these plan assets (elements) continue contributing to the character of the city in a positive way. Simply maintaining the status quo does not ensure that Sidney will retain the character that its residents love. In pursuit of the best future possible, the community must make bold and long-term decisions to seek excellence in each element.

CREATING SIDNEY TOMORROW

ELEMENTS OF THE CITY



Placemaking
and Image



Parks and
Recreation



Mobility



Economic
Development



Living



Energy Use
and
Sustainability

EXISTING CONDITIONS: PLACE MAKING AND APPEAL

STRONG COMMUNITY IMAGE.

Sidney is the county seat of Cheyenne County and home to several historic attractions such as Fort Sidney complex, Living Memorial Garden, and Sidney Boot Hill Cemetery and seasonal events like Gold Rush Days and Oktoberfest that all serve to bring guests from far and wide. Sidney also serves the larger Panhandle area in healthcare and education through Sidney Regional Medical Center and Western Nebraska Community College.



CITY ENTRYWAYS

Three main entrances into Sidney that lack a distinct gateway. Legible signage in the community does not entice visitors to explore and discover what makes Sidney unique. An important component of this plan will be to introduce Sidney to visitors coming through and bridge the disconnect at those entryways.

DOWNTOWN CHARACTER

Sidney downtown has many unique and historic features that create a sense of place and add value to the community. A few of these historic structures date back to the early years of development for Sidney, which are predominately one to two-story buildings composed of brick and stone. Many of these historic structures have undergone significant storefront modifications that have incorporated smaller storefront presence and awnings. Those that had undergone the process of being modified could use incentives to bring it back to its former glory.

SAFETY AND FAMILY-FRIENDLY APPEAL

Based upon various listening sessions and surveys indicated that crime was not a high topic. Most felt safe and comfortable within Sidney at any given moment in time. The sense of safety and family-friendliness is one of Sidney's greatest assets that should be preserved and encouraged.

≡ PLACE MAKING AND IMAGE ≡ DOWNTOWN GOALS

Sidney should create and enhance the elements that make it a great and memorable place to live and visit. Community image is formed by the details that influence how people feel about a place.

≡ CITY GOALS & ACTIONS

GOAL 1: ENHANCE RESIDENTIAL SETTINGS FOR MULTIPLE GENERATIONS.

Recommended Actions

- Create a homeowner rehabilitation program that can bridge the financing gap for lower-income or older homeowners by providing financial assistance for certain major aesthetic improvements and repairs. Common qualifying repairs include roof replacements, siding or paint repairs, deteriorated decks and porches, window replacements, and foundation repairs.
- Allow two and four-unit structures to infill on vacant lots. Allowing variety and low maintenance options within neighborhoods creates options for every stage of life.
- Connect neighborhoods and destinations with sidewalks and sidepaths.

GOAL 2: SUPPORT THE BEAUTIFICATION OF ENTRYWAYS TO THE CITY TO CREATE A POSITIVE FIRST IMPRESSION FOR VISITORS AND RESIDENTS.

Recommended Actions

- Focus on visibility and beautification of existing signage.
- Incorporate signage and natural vegetation into medians (Figures 4.1 - 4.4)
 - » Work with the Nebraska Department of Transportation to find out what is allowed on Highway 30/Illinois Street within their guidelines.
- Create a wayfinding standard to direct visitors to various amenities within Sidney

GOAL 3: CONTINUE TO PROMOTE SIDNEY'S CLEAN AND SAFE LIVING ENVIRONMENT

Recommended Actions

- Establish neighborhood watch and promote training that residents can participate in to better help in identifying potential concerns and how to respond.
- Identify parking lots with low lighting and prioritize to ensure they are properly lit for safety.
- Work with churches and non-profits to develop neighborhood events where residents spend time together.

GOAL 1: FURTHER ENHANCE EXISTING DOWNTOWN GATHERING SPACES THAT CAN SUPPORT YEAR-ROUND ACTIVITIES

Recommended Actions

- Continue the momentum of Hickory Square by creating active year-round gathering spaces that everyone can enjoy and that do not take away from other amenities in Sidney. The space should be flexible and strengthen local businesses within the area.

GOAL 2: ENHANCE EXISTING POLICIES AND PROGRAMS TO RESTORE AND MAINTAIN HISTORIC CHARACTER

Recommended Actions

- Continue efforts to improve and revitalize downtown by updating the 2007 Historic Downtown Sidney Main Street & Historic Business District Guidelines for downtown including refreshed strategies for building facade, streetscape, and signage improvements.
- Further utilize the Main Street Program and Community Development Block Grant for downtown revitalization such as historic street light maintenance, additional street planters, and bench seating.

GOAL 3: INCREASE STREET APPEAL AND ACCESS THROUGH A COHESIVE STREETScape PLAN.

Recommended Actions

- Identify underutilized parking areas or buildings that could have regular programming and further enhance.
- Develop a streetscape plan which identifies areas for improvements, materials to be used, and a maintenance plan to ensure spaces remain appealing and last longer.
- Provide updated and wider sidewalks for pedestrian and wheelchair traffic within the Creative District



Figure 4.1: Existing East Entry on Highway 30



Figure 4.2: Beautification Concept East Entry on Highway 30



Figure 4.3: Existing I-80 Interchange looking north



Figure 4.4: Beautification Concept I-80 Interchange

EXISTING CONDITIONS: PARKS AND RECREATION

SUPPLY OF PARKS AND NATURAL AREAS

Sidney may only have a few parks but they make up for it in terms of size and amenities offered. Legion Park, for instance, is a large centrally located park that contains over 76 acres of activities like fishing, recreational fields, and playgrounds. It is interconnected with trails that explore some of the most naturally scenic areas in town.



GOOD ACCESS TO PARKS AND RECREATION

The other component of parks is the walkability of their amenities and distance to surrounding neighborhoods. Figure 4.5 depicts this metric by creating 1/8, 1/4, and 1/2 mile buffers around each park facility. This indicates which residents may need better access to these amenities. This should be considered and applied to new development areas to ensure that new residents have access to public amenities and space for both social and physical interaction. Public schools could also serve as another layer to parks and recreation when considering that type of access for Sidney's residents.

AREAS TO IMPROVE PARK AMENITIES AND TRAIL ACCESS

The city of Sidney has begun a portion of this process with the 2021 Old Post Road Corridor Improvement, which looks to further connect pedestrian and bike trails with existing trails like Deadwood Trail to Old Post Road, and 11th Avenue trail (Figure 4.6 - 4.7). With this in play further expansion north along Illinois Street and 13th to the north side of town to better connect that neighborhood through a safe trail should be considered.

Additionally, the new aquatic center opened in Legion Park, which offers various amenities like water basketball, spill bucket, slide, lazy river, and splash toys. This amenity replaced the old Toledo Street pool that was adjacent to the new basketball courts. There has been discussion of locating a dog park adjacent to the pool. It should be noted that the public has shown an interest in a new sports complex that could house an indoor swimming facility. This idea should be evaluated for feasibility.

COMMON TOPIC: SPORTS COMPLEX

Throughout the process of this plan, the community was engaged in various surveys and conversations on what projects they'd like to see achieved over the next ten years. The highest ranking of these was a sports complex and an indoor pool. Currently, the community center serves as the main indoor recreation facility for Sidney which houses free weights, courts, and daycare amenities. It was also mentioned that the community has outgrown the facility creating the need for additional space.

COMMON TOPIC: THINGS TO DO

Residents experienced a desire for more activities or entertainment options. Aside from additional restaurants and places for shopping, residents are looking for amenities that appeal to different demographics. Specifically, spaces that would appeal to young adults and senior citizens are more than just a bar. Sidney has a growing number of retirees and young professionals looking for active living environments that connect them to the community.

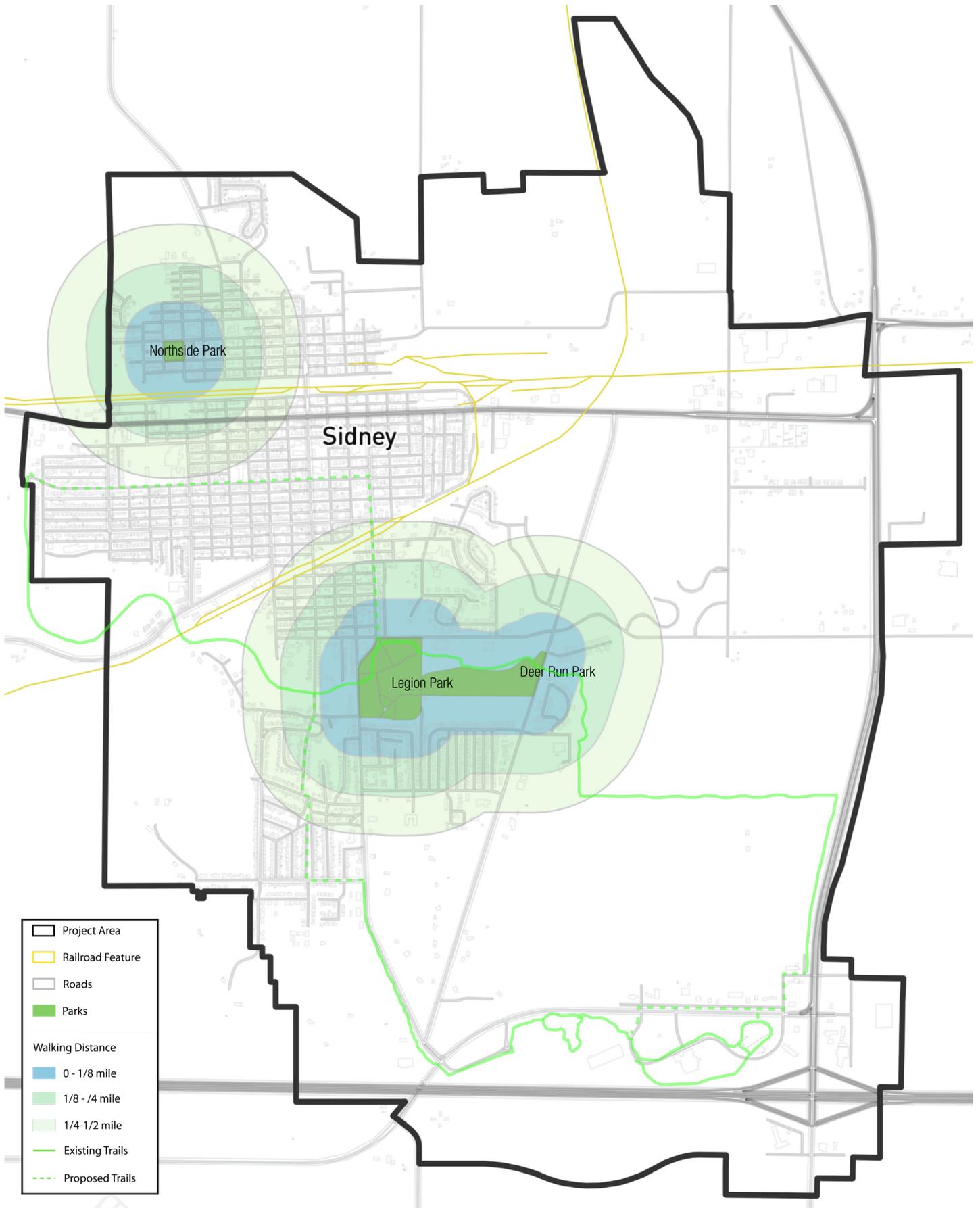


Figure 4.5: Existing Parks, Service Areas, and Trails

≡ PARKS AND RECREATION

Entertainment, parks, green spaces, and trails are a high priority for anyone looking to move to a community. For Sidney, there is room to expand in all these areas

GOAL 1: PROVIDE AMPLE PARK FACILITIES AND RECREATION SERVICES ACCESSIBLE ALL RESIDENTS

Recommended Actions

- Investigate the feasibility of a covered outdoor area within the Sidney's Creative District.
- Address building space and maintenance needs of the existing Community Center.
- Assess the opportunity for a new sports complex and potential relationship with an improved community center. The indoor recreational facility should be sited at a location in the community where it can anchor a neighborhood (new or existing) and where it can be easily accessed on-foot or by bicycle.
 - » Create feasibility study to determine scope of project and means to construct.

GOAL 2: ESTABLISH A ROBUST COMMUNITY AMENITIES PLAN

Recommended Actions

- Develop a community amenity plan that identifies public space improvements such as facility upgrades, significant maintenance, new amenity projects, or infill sites.
- Plan for adding neighborhood parks in growth areas, especially on the east and north sides of the city

GOAL 3: IDENTIFY AND ESTABLISH AN INTERCONNECTED NETWORK OF NATURAL AREAS THAT PROVIDE RECREATION OPTIONS AND PROTECT NATURAL RESOURCES.

Recommended Actions

Integrate natural landscapes and water mitigation strategies into park spaces and open spaces in developments.

- Add regulation encouraging developers to integrate natural landscapes and water mitigation strategies as a site amenity or open space
- Identify infill sites for neighborhoods that lack easy access to parks and plan for amenities and natural vegetation.

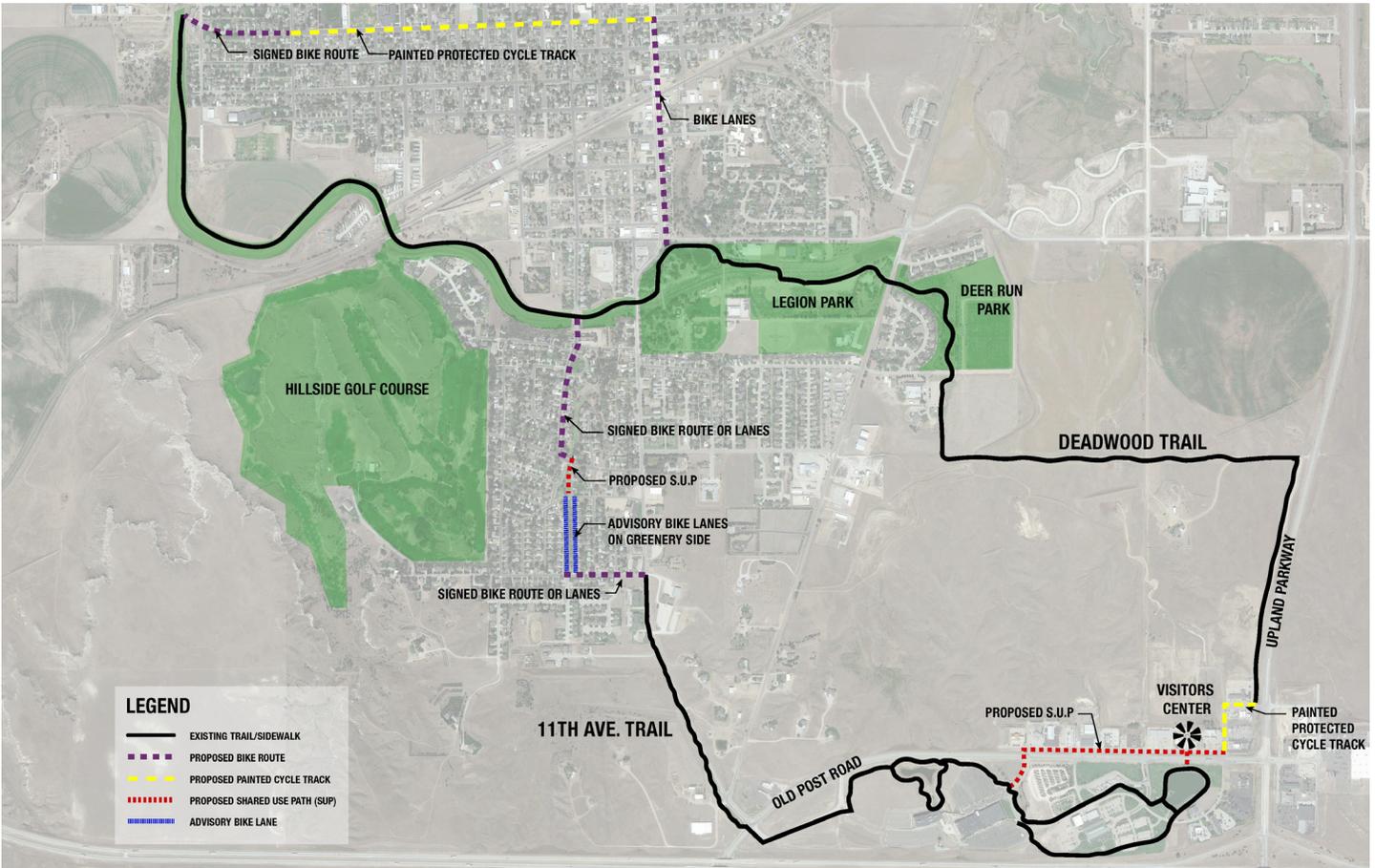


Figure 4.6: Old Post Road Corridor Improvements

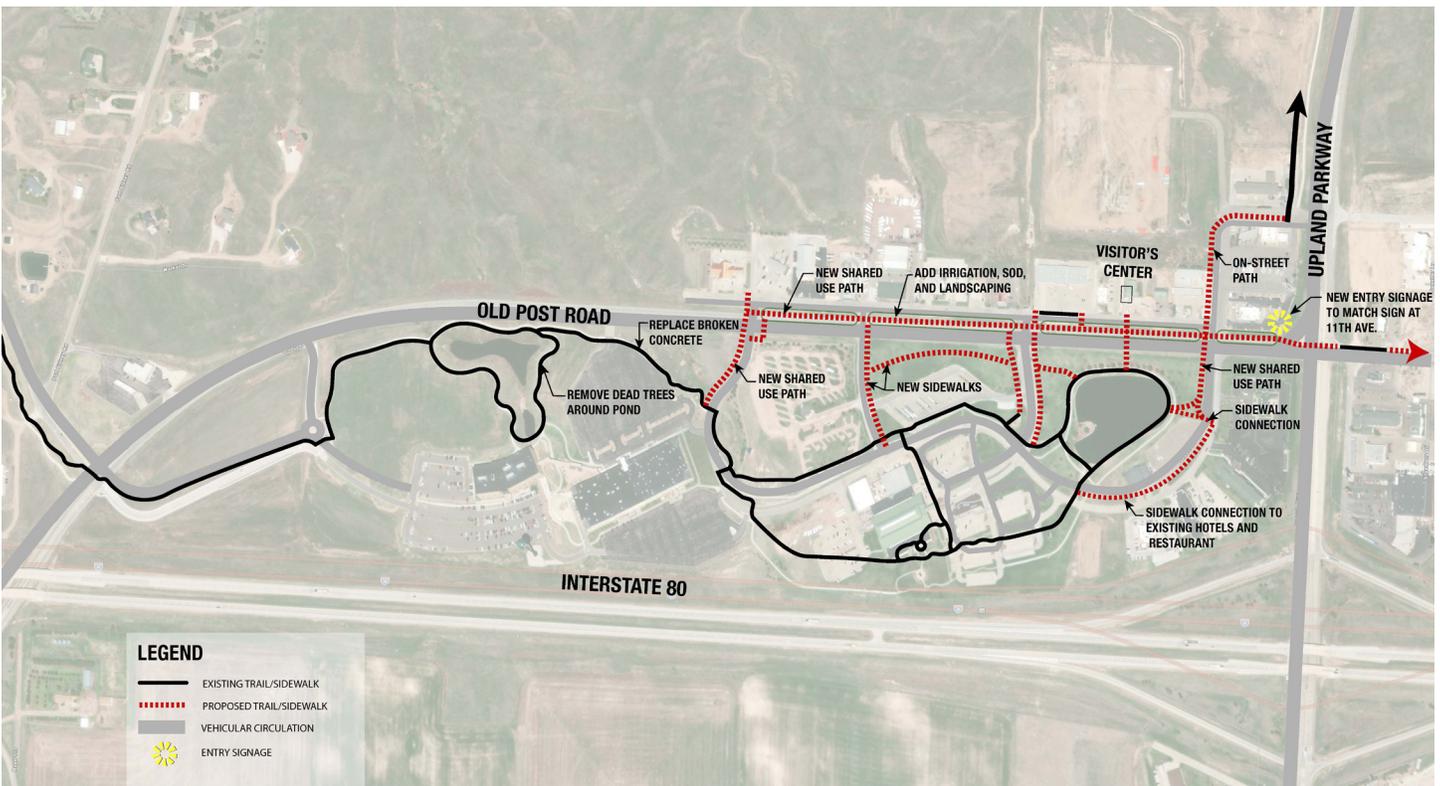


Figure 4.7: Existing and Proposed Trail Systems

≡ EXISTING CONDITIONS: MOBILITY

STRONG REGIONAL MOBILITY CONNECTIONS

Sidney has four highways and three railroads that aid in the transportation and mobility of its commerce. Those major highways and interstates are I-80 to the south of Sidney, Highway 30 originally the Lincoln highway, which runs through downtown, Highway 385 that links in with I-80, then Highway 19 which connects Sidney to Interstate 76 and Denver. Additionally, Sidney has rail lines that run parallel with Highway 30 and through Sidney. Those lines offer access to Union Pacific, Burlington North-Santa Fe, and Sidney Lowe Railroad.



A MATURE ARTERIAL AND COLLECTOR NETWORK

The city's arterial and collector network provides adequate capacity and is performing at a good level of service. Some analysis may need to be done on intersections, specifically traffic signals.

EMERGING BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN NETWORK

Sidney is home to the Deadwood Trail, which is considered one of the best trails in western Nebraska. It is roughly a nine-mile route that links service areas near I-80 interchange to a variety of community amenities. Opportunities exist to provide a bike share system and complete the last mile connection into downtown, allowing visitors a pleasant way to get to and from downtown and the services around the interstate interchange.

≡ MOBILITY

A city's transportation system serves as the lifeline for people, buildings, and public spaces to connect. How they interact determines the success of creating a comfortable and attractive community. Moving around by car, bicycle, or foot should connect destinations throughout the community safely and conveniently. Routes should also provide multiple access to high-traffic areas like employment centers and schools.

GOAL 1: PROVIDE A FUTURE TRANSPORTATION NETWORK THAT IS SAFE, CONVENIENT, AND OFFERS A VARIETY OF INTERCONNECTED MODES FOR ALL.

Recommended Actions

- Enhance bike circulation and parking within Sidney by adopting site plan regulations that require bike paths/trails that align with Sidney's vision. Include regulations to install bike parking for specific commercial uses frequented by bicyclists, such as restaurants and community facilities.
- Identify reliable funding sources for street and trail repair. Continue to prioritize projects and establish an annual funding schedule for street and trail repair and maintenance through grant programs such as Safe Streets 4 All.
- Further provide safe pedestrian crossings and entry points along Illinois and major pedestrian traffic streets through curb extensions, wider crosswalks, and pedestrian warning signs (Figure 4.8 - 4.9).
- Promote walkability by connecting jobs with housing using sidewalks and trails to reduce the need for employees to travel by car to their place of work. This will reduce vehicle miles traveled and support the livelihood of low-income households by reducing transportation costs.

GOAL 2: CONFIRM THAT SIDNEY'S EXISTING TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM IS ADEQUATE AND MEETS THE DEMAND PLACED UPON IT.

Recommended Actions

Improve the functionality and safety of the existing transportation system by periodically surveying residents of Sidney on their perception of the local transportation system including its strengths, areas of concern, and opportunities for improvement.

GOAL 3: ADDRESS BARRIERS PROACTIVELY WHERE CONNECTIONS ARE MOST NEEDED.

Recommended Actions

Barriers can include the railroad and high-traffic streets and crossings.

- Expand and connect existing trails by implementing ideas explored in 2021 Old Post Corridor Improvements.
- Explore opportunities to expand or enhance connections to the northern Sidney
 - » Further enhance 13th Avenue underpass through improved lighting, paving surface, and railing.
- Investigate the feasibility of pedestrian bridge access to Hickory Street Square from the north side of the railroad tracks.

Figure 4.8: 50' Width Street Concept

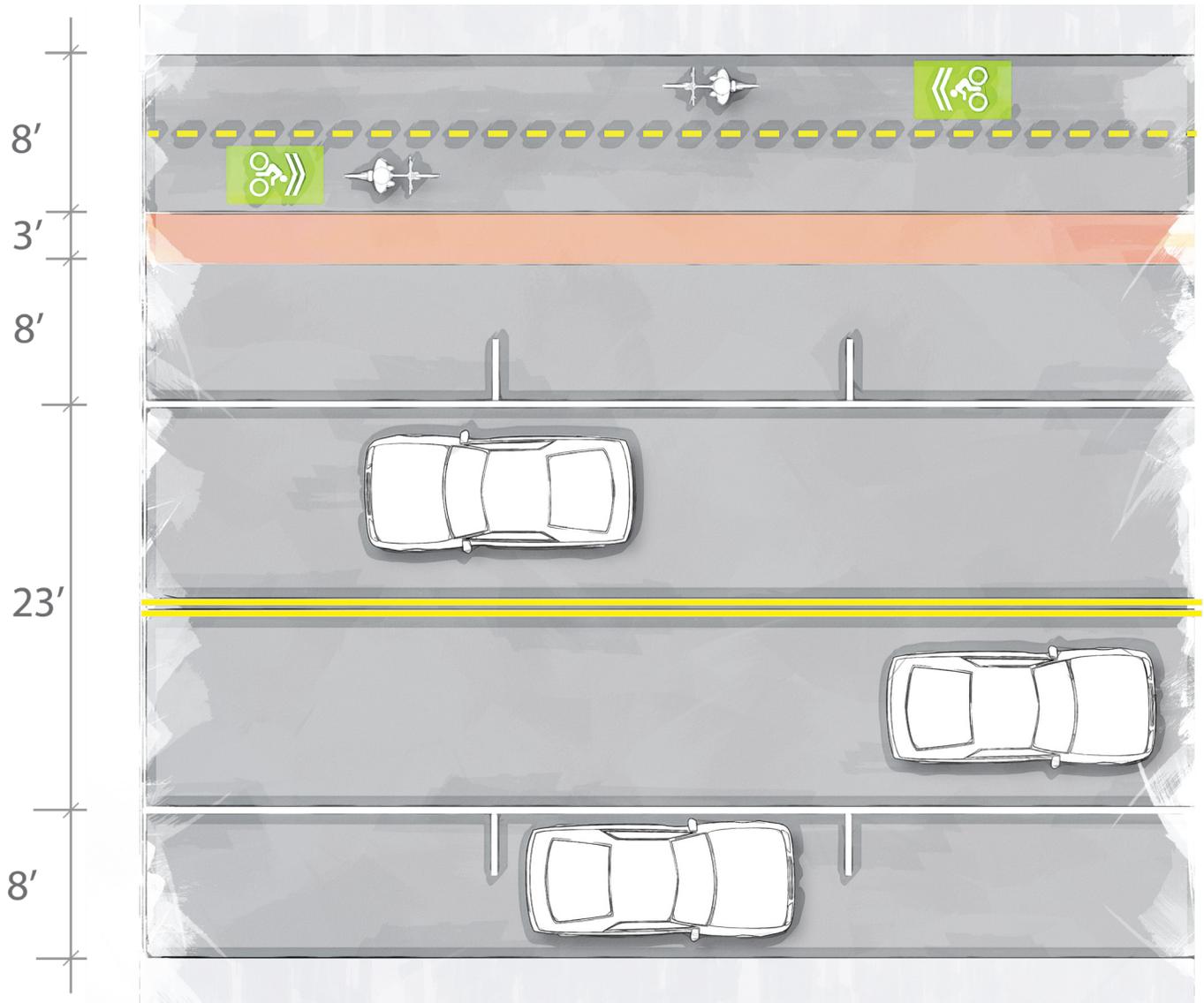
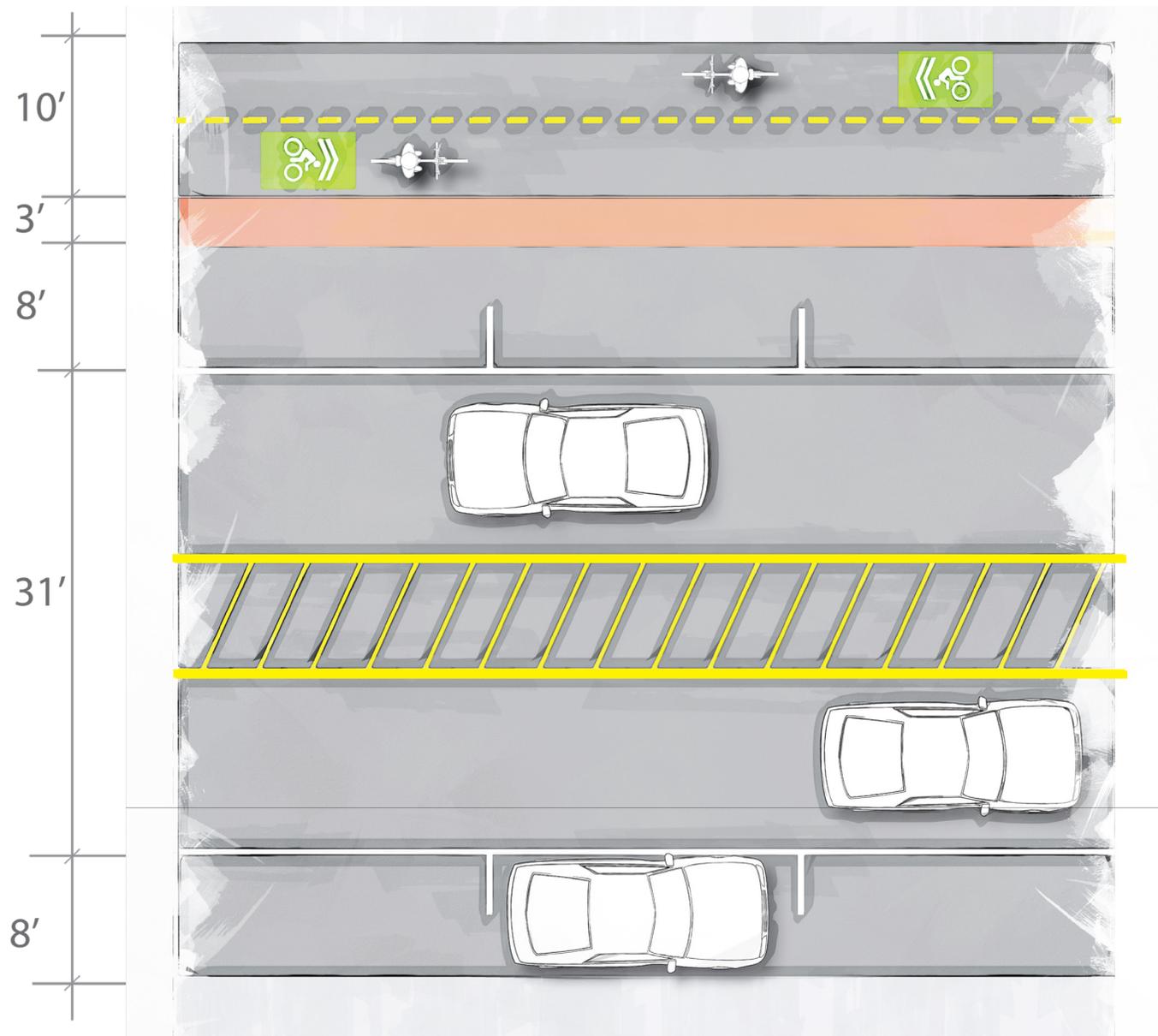


Figure 4.9: 60' Width Street Concept



EXISTING CONDITIONS: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

LOCATION AS AN ADVANTAGE AND CHALLENGE

Sidney's location at the intersection of Highway 385 and I-80 has encouraged the growth of the city as a regional hub between North Platte and Cheyenne, Wyoming. The challenge and benefit of the interchange are relatively new commercial uses that provide commuters a quick in and out but do not lead them further into downtown.



LONG-STANDING EMPLOYERS

In 2016 the sale of Cabela's to Bass Pro Shops resulted in the loss of nearly 2,000 jobs. Despite this loss, Sidney still retained large local and regional employers such as Adams & Son Trucking, Adams Industries, Anderson Forest Products, Commercial Resins, Crossroads Cooperative, Egging Company, Glover Industries, Innovative Masonry Products, Master Trading, Nienhueser Construction and Excavation, Progress Rail, Pennington Seed, Sidney Regional Medical Center, Scoular Grain, Sioux Meadows Industrial Park, TE Connectivity, U.S. Aprons and 21st Century Equipment that have continued to invest and create new jobs.

PRIME LAND FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The sale of Cabela's left a large corporate office space that is currently underutilized and primed for potential tenants. Subdividing this space to have multiple tenants may be an option in the pursuit to occupy the building fully. Despite the loss of jobs, Sidney has a very low unemployment rate and a limited number of vacant housing units. Attracting new business(s) to the space will require new workers to move to the area, supporting housing construction and reinvestment.

INTERCONNECTEDNESS OF BUSINESSES AND LIMITING FACTORS

Many factors make up the interconnectedness of businesses but one of the most vital is supply and demand; while these principles are examined and applied at the micro-level within individual businesses, they should be viewed broadly in the context of community development, such as whether there is sufficient capacity to support a business venture in a community. Proximity also plays a role in terms of economic development especially in Sidney's case as it is uniquely located hours from the Colorado Front Range keeping it relatively far from large metropolitan areas, which can limit economic prospects, but also close enough in the new remote working world.

≡ ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The business community is a group that thrives as nexus of creativity, trade, commerce, and a center of connectivity. Business centers represent a powerful and positive idea. One where small businesses can open their doors and thrive or a place where individuals can connect and be open to all residents of a city.

GOAL 1: INVEST IN DOWNTOWN SIDNEY AS A DESTINATION, AN ECONOMIC ENGINE, AND THE HEART OF THE COMMUNITY

Recommended Actions

Downtown buildings should be viewed as infrastructure; when fully occupied, these resources serve the community to the maximum benefit through unique housing, destination businesses, and reinforcing the overall quality of the district.

- Promote full occupancy of downtown buildings through incentives, demonstration projects, and promotional events.
- Research ownership of buildings and contact building owners about cleaning up their properties, renting vacant spaces, or selling to new owners.
- Work with Cheyenne County Tourism and Cheyenne County Chamber of Commerce to create a unified marketing plan for the community

GOAL 2: QUALITY BUSINESSES SHOULD BE RECRUITED, INCENTIVIZED, AND RETAINED TO PROVIDE DIVERSE JOBS AND ECONOMIC WEALTH

Recommended Actions

- Encourage the creation of complementary business clusters to reduce operational costs and promote business growth.
- Focus business recruitment on sectors that will complement the character of the city and fill economic gaps
- Engage existing businesses in regular, action-oriented, discussions to understand their state of affairs and identify potential solutions to overcome barriers to retention and expansion.

GOAL 3: ATTRACT AND RETAIN A YOUNG AND TALENTED WORKFORCE THROUGH THE PROMOTION OF AMENITIES

Recommended Actions

- Promote the creation of high-quality neighborhoods that feature a variety of housing styles, occupancy types (renter and owner-occupied), and price-points configured in an environment attractive to young professionals
- Encourage the creation of housing units in proximity to employment centers and other community and cultural features to provide residents with convenient housing opportunities.

EXISTING CONDITIONS: LIVING

WELL MAINTAINED HOUSING STOCK

One of Sidney's greatest strengths is the quality of the existing housing stock. Over the past decade, the residents have invested in many older properties and the city itself has invested in code enforcement. Some pockets of disinvestment exist and are most notable in older housing built to meet short-term needs. The city's older housing stock is the best source of affordable housing and maintaining these units will be essential to providing affordable rental and first-time homebuyers options into the future.



STRONG HISTORY OF HOUSING CONSTRUCTION

Sidney has experienced a boom in building activity within the last decade, unlike many comparable communities. Several single-family and multi-family units were constructed ahead of Cabela's move. In the last two to three years, low rental vacancy rates and a limited supply of for-sale homes indicate demand has returned.

OWNER / RENTER BALANCE

Currently, 60% of Sidney's households own rather than rent, a decline over previous decades. Since 2000 renter occupied households have risen from 30.1% to 40.3%, which may remain consistent as older homeowners begin to downsize to lower maintenance options.

A SHORTAGE OF HOUSING AND LIMITED HOUSING DIVERSITY

Nationally the housing market has experienced an unstable market with a recession from 2009 to 2010 then 2021's record low interest rates and extreme shortages of housing. Similar conditions were experienced in Sidney with a record number of homes on the market in 2018 following Cabela's move to less than 20 in 2021. In 2020 and 2021, buyers were often making cash offers and beating out individuals trying to fill jobs in Sidney.

NEIGHBORHOOD ANCHORS

Neighborhood anchors are typically community features that serve as a public point of interest in any given residential area. Anchors traditionally included schools, libraries, commercial areas, and parks. This plan aims to implement the same philosophy to creating new neighborhoods but it is also important to reinforce existing neighborhoods. While Sidney's neighborhoods still have their local anchor, the area north of downtown and Illinois Street should be evaluated and targeted for reinvestment. Especially with North Ward Elementary beginning to reach the end of its life cycle and Northside Park not having fresh water and a modern restroom

≡ LIVING

Sidney is a unique community in Nebraska with one of the newest and strongest housing stocks in Western Nebraska. For Sidney to continue to grow they must create housing and continue community development strategies to meet that demand.

GOAL 1: NEW DEVELOPMENT SHOULD INCLUDE SMALL-SCALE MULTI-FAMILY AND MAINTENANCE-FREE OPTIONS

Recommended Actions

Expand housing diversity by type and cost options that appeal to the needs and desires of buyers and renters. The community should promote projects that integrate additional choices for prospective buyers and renters, both for newcomers to Sidney and residents wanting something different. The City should explore the financial, policy, or organizational support that can be offered to innovative neighborhood development projects.

GOAL 2: MAINTAIN AFFORDABLE HOUSING STOCK

Recommended Actions

The city's older housing stock and those designed for efficiency such as townhomes and duplexes tend to serve as the most affordable housing stock. Older housing has the highest risk of disrepair and focus should be given to the maintenance and reinvestment of these affordable units.

- Rental Rehabilitation Programs. Sidney should also consider a rehabilitation program focused on rental properties that provide leveraged loans combined with code enforcement. In a tight rental market, there is often no incentive for rental property owners to make improvements beyond the minimum required to meet building codes.

GOAL 3: PROMOTE INFILL DEVELOPMENT THAT BUILDS ON THE CHARACTER AND QUALITY OF NEIGHBORHOODS

Recommended Actions

A key component of stabilizing and revitalizing older neighborhoods is infill development. This can also be one of the most challenging projects for the private market. The challenges come from site development issues, such as older infrastructure, compatibility with existing neighborhood structures, or removal of an existing structure. Additionally, lower assessed values for surrounding properties can increase development risk. Often these types of projects need some assistance from the city, but the return on the investment can be significant for both the neighborhood and the city's overall tax base. Sidney should identify areas for infill and development policy that best fits the occasion. Infill development policy may include any of the following components:

- Establish incentives for vacant lot development. Infill housing refers to housing that is built on vacant or underused lots in existing neighborhoods. Vacant lots can be a good resource for new affordable housing. However, these lots may have site issues that need to be addressed, such as dilapidated structures that need to be removed. Site issues along with the scattered nature of vacant lots can make infill development challenging.
 - » TIF. Small-scale TIF may be a more effective tool for Sidney than a land bank because of the limited opportunities that a land bank would have in Sidney. These projects usually require adding some density to a neighborhood, such as replacing a single-family home with a duplex or townhome. These units should fit with the character of the neighborhood, often referred to as house scaled, and address parking needs.
 - » Gap financing. Often certain products are not produced because a gap exists between construction costs and appraisals/rental rates. To fill this gap, financing tools identified in the Housing Study may be necessary.
- Assist with land assembly. One of the biggest hurdles to transforming infill development in struggling neighborhoods is the assembly of land or lots. Most developers do not have the capital, time, or other resources to assemble lots from multiple property owners. This can be true for both deteriorated older residential areas or even older commercial and industrial sites. In areas with a concentration of infill sites or just one larger infill development, the preparation of a redevelopment plan by the city should guide developers and builders.

- Standards for infill development. Infill development must respect the character of the existing neighborhood and contribute to the city's vision for the future of a neighborhood, such as medium-density housing at the fringe of downtown. Principles that should be considered with any infill development include:
 - » Transitions. Provide transitions between higher-intensity uses and lower-intensity uses to address compatibility issues.
 - » Scale. The size and height of the buildings are in keeping with surrounding buildings or the context of the corridor.
 - » Context. The design fits the housing styles around even if the types of units are different. Other context variables on a site may include views that enhance the site or stormwater facilities that may add open-space amenities.
 - » New Housing Options. Can the site provide an alternative that might allow a young adult to live in the neighborhood where they grew up or enable a senior to downsize without needing to leave their neighborhood behind?

EXISTING CONDITIONS: ENERGY USE AND SUSTAINABILITY



ENERGY TRENDS

With inflation and demand for resources increasing it is expected that energy prices will increase in tandem. The general trend is that energy prices would increase faster than inflation. Sidney should explore solutions that can be implemented to alleviate higher costs and use resources more efficiently.

ENERGY USE, SOURCE, AND SUPPLY

The City of Sidney Electric Department serves 4,005 residential, 648 Commercial, and 69 Industrial customers, and 83 municipal accounts with a peak load of 19,223 kW. In terms of usage, industrial consumes account for 43%, with residential following at 36%, commercial at 14%, and municipal usage at 7% (Figure 4.10).

The City purchases a majority of its power from the Western Area Power Administration (WAPA) and the Municipal Energy Agency of Nebraska (MEAN). The City also uses sustainable sources, including:

- » 5% from a soon-to-be-completed community solar project
- » 6.6% from hydro generation
- » 1.7% from wind generation.

The City also offers a residential energy efficiency rebate program and wholesale power provider energy efficiency programs for commercial and residential customers to aid in overall utility costs.

Figure 4.10: Nebraska Energy Consumption 2020

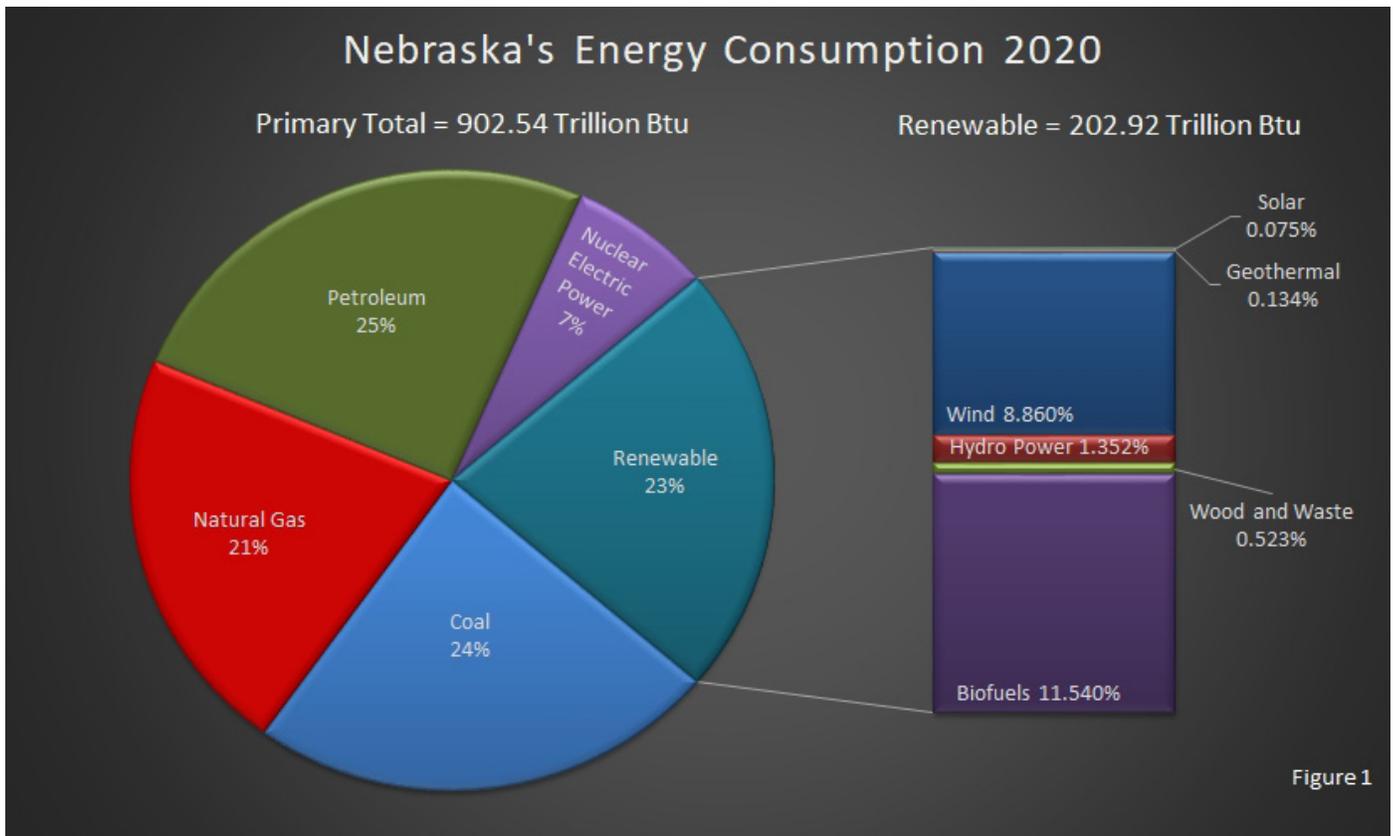


Figure 1

ENERGY USE AND SUSTAINABILITY

As public facilities and fleet vehicles approach the end of their useful life, careful planning and decisions should favor resource-efficient operations. The city can support action in the private market in addition to improving public facilities through regulation and incentive programs that encourage efficient operations.

GOAL 1: PROLONG THE USEFUL LIFE OF EXISTING BUILDINGS THROUGH RESOURCE-EFFICIENT OPERATIONS.

Recommended Actions

- Retain and improve the energy efficiency of public facilities
- Upgrade the city fleet with energy-efficient vehicles as part of the regular fleet replacement schedule
- Replace existing streetlights with LED fixtures
- Complete energy audits for municipal buildings
- Evaluate the use of hybrid vehicles and the possible use of bio-diesel in municipal equipment

GOAL 2: PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES FOR RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL USERS

Recommended Actions

- Incentivize energy-efficient building methods
- Further, encourage the use of all available energy rebate programs and promote energy-saving tips
- Incentivize energy improvements in older homes
- Use incentives to encourage investment in existing commercial locations
- Encourage the use of the online EPA energy yardsticks for their residential or commercial uses in the city

GOAL 3: REDUCE INDUSTRIAL ENERGY CONSUMPTION

Recommended Actions

- Encourage complementary businesses to locate in clusters to reduce unnecessary travel and to promote operational synergy. This can be encouraged through economic development initiatives and the implementation of the future land use plan
- Promote alternate modes of transportation to alleviate dependence on finite resources and increase a cleaner and healthier lifestyle through connected trails, safe intersections, and designated lanes.

GOAL 4: IMPROVE UPON LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION

Recommended Actions

- Further plan for and fund alternative transportation to connect jobs, shopping, and housing using sidewalks and trails
- Strongly support and market complementary business clusters as part of an integrated economic development strategy
- Expand and connect the city's bike and pedestrian trail systems to encourage the use of alternative modes of transportation

GOAL 5: FURTHER BUILD AND EXPLORE ALTERNATIVE RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES

Recommended Actions

- Support the goals of energy providers for renewable energy production and use
- Explore ways that renewable energy can be used in economic development
- Investigate additional ways to include solar energy into the city's energy portfolio, similar to what is being done with Sandhills Energy



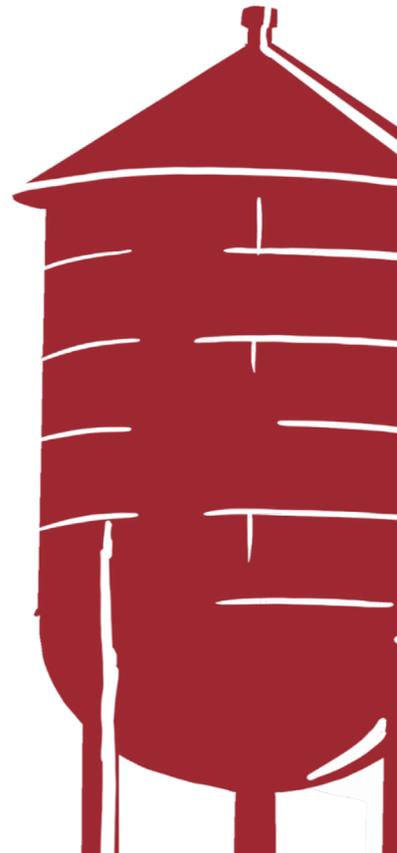


5



PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

A Plan is only as good as those who see it through. A good plan is a road map that aids you to get from one point to another, such as what landmarks are along the way and potential pitfalls ahead. Its implementation requires participation from multiple partners with a focus on capital projects, initiatives, and policies. This chapter synthesizes the recommendations from the preceding sections with additional guidance on how to make these individual actions come to reality as part of a larger strategy.



≡ INTRODUCTION

This comprehensive plan articulates many recommendations through policies, initiatives, and investments – to help the community achieve the vision expressed by residents throughout the engagement process. This section addresses the scheduling of the plan implementation by both public agencies and private decision-makers:

MECHANISMS & POLICIES

Annexation is one tool for accommodating growth over time. This section outlines policies for evaluating areas for annexation.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The implementation of this plan must be a partnership of many stakeholders throughout the community. This section outlines the key players and their potential roles in achieving the goals of this plan.

IMPLEMENTATION TABLE

This section summarizes the many recommendations of the plan and presents a projected time frame, responsible parties, and potential funding mechanisms.

PLAN MAINTENANCE AND CHANGES

A comprehensive plan is a living document that must be maintained, updated, and revisited to ensure it remains a helpful and relevant guide for the community. This section outlines the process for maintaining the plan and evaluating progress toward the plan goals.

≡ MECHANISMS & POLICIES

The regulatory tools of the city, including zoning and subdivision regulations, are essential to the implementation of the plan.

ANNEXATION POLICIES

One of the important regulatory tools that the city can use when addressing growth and development is annexation. Nebraska Law prescribes the process by which communities can annex land. This section provides the legal framework for annexation, but each community should also establish a policy framework for the implementation of annexation codes. These policies should take into consideration the following:

- **Areas with Significant Pre-Existing Development.** Areas outside the city with substantial commercial, office, or industrial development are logical candidates for annexation. In addition, existing residential areas developed to urban densities (generally higher than 3 units per acre) should be considered for potential annexation. However, these areas should be closely considered under a cost-benefit analysis.
- **Protection of Future Growth Areas.** To allow the city to guide its growth and development more effectively, future growth areas will need to be managed through annexation. Annexation will allow the city to extend its zoning and subdivision jurisdiction, thus guiding development in a direction that will provide safe and healthy environments.
- **Public Services.** Public service issues can provide compelling reasons for annexation. Areas for consideration should include:
 - » **Parcels that are surrounded by the city but remain outside of its corporate limits.** In these situations, city services may provide enhanced public safety with improved emergency response times. These situations should be resolved and avoided in the future.
 - » **Areas that are served by municipal infrastructure.** Sidney's sewer and water system should not be extended without an annexation agreement.
- **A Positive Cost Benefit Analysis.** The economic benefits of annexation, including projected tax revenues, should compensate for the additional cost of extending services to newly-annexed areas. The review policy for annexation should include the following:
 - » **Estimated cost impact and timetable for providing municipal services.**
 - » **The method by which the city plans to finance the extension and maintenance of municipal services.**
 - » **Identification of tax revenues from existing and probable future development in areas considered for annexation.**
 - » **Calculation of the added annual operating costs for urban services, including public safety, recreation, and utility services, offered within newly-annexed areas.**

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The public, decision-makers, and staff must be concerned with the short and long-range consequences of present actions. Each of these groups plays a role in ensuring that decisions are made in the interest of good quality design and protecting the integrity of what makes Sidney an exceptional community.

RESPONSIBILITIES: ELECTED/APPOINTED OFFICIALS

Decision-makers, along with staff, must be conscious of the rights of others. Decisions should expand choices and opportunities for all persons, including the disadvantaged, and promote economic integration. Officials include the City Council, City Boards, and Commissions.

RESPONSIBILITIES: CITY STAFF

City staff should continue to seek meaningful input from the public on the development of plans and programs. The Sidney Comprehensive Plan is rooted in a public engagement process, and thereby the goals and initiatives represent the aspirations of the community as a whole. Recommendations from staff to decision-makers should provide accurate information on planning issues to all affected persons and to governmental decision-makers.

IMPLEMENTATION TABLE

The tables at the end of this chapter present a summary of the recommendations of the Sidney Comprehensive Plan.

Recommendations are listed in order of their place in the plan. Each recommendation is characterized according to its plan element categories:

The implementation of a comprehensive plan must be flexible, and multi-faceted, and also respect the finite resources of all stakeholder organizations. The timing of the implementation table was explored by the city and the Steering Committee which assigned each action to a time frame.

Although the implementation timing can help with the question of “where to start,” it should not dictate the order of implementation.

The city should be open to implementing any of these

recommendations if/when the opportunity arises or the conditions are right.

RESPONSIBILITY & LEADERSHIP

The primary audience of this plan is the City Council, City Staff, and the Planning Commission. However, it is important for the City to partner with various entities that have an interest in implementing the recommendations of the plan. The partnerships columns recommend which group should take the lead in carrying out the recommendation and who the potential partners are (Figures 5.1-5.6).

This designation of “partnership” is not meant to be exhaustive, or to exclude any group that would like to take the lead on a project or policy. Any group or resident is invited to work with the city to support the implementation of this plan. However, this list can serve as a starting point and provide guidance on the expectations of the groups listed here.

The entities named in the table are listed below, followed by the abbreviated name used in the table.

- » City Council (Council)
- » Planning Commission (PC)
- » Park and Recreation Board (Park Board)
- » City Staff
- » Sidney Steering Committee
- » Community Leaders
- » Cheyenne County Chamber of Commerce (CCCC)
- » Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT)
- » Residents or Resident Groups (Residents)
- » Private Land Developers (Developers)
- » Private Property Owners (Owners)

Figure 5.1: Schedule for Implementation - Placemaking and Image

RECOMMENDATION	ON-GO-ING	<3 YEARS	3-5 YEARS	BE-YOND 5 YEARS	PARTNERSHIPS	FUNDING MECHANISMS
Enhance residential settings for multiple generations.	X				City Staff Council Developers	General Funds State Grants & Programs
Create a homeowner rehabilitation program.		X			City Staff Council	General Funds State Housing Programs
Support the beautification of entryways.		X			Council NDOT	General Funds NDOT beautification funds
Incorporate signage and natural vegetation into medians.		X			Council NDOT	General Funds NDOT beautification funds
Create wayfinding standard.		X			City Staff Council	
Continue to promote Sidney's clean and safe living environment.	X				City Staff Community Leaders	
Establish neighborhood watch and promote training.		X			Community non-profits	
Locate poorly lit parking and prioritize properly lighting for safety.		X			City Staff Owners	General funds Energy Grants
Further enhance existing downtown gathering spaces that can support year-round activities.			X		City Staff Council	General funds Foundation Grants
Enhance existing policies and programs to restore and maintain historic character.		X			City Staff	Facade Enhancement Grant
Update and revise historic downtown Sidney main street & historic business district guidelines for downtown.		X			City Staff	
Further promote Main Street Program and Community Development Block Grant.		X			Sidney/Cheyenne County Economic Development CCCC	
Increase street appeal and access through a cohesive streetscape plan.		X			City Staff Council	General Funds NDOT beautification funds
Identify underutilized parking areas or buildings that could have regular programming and further enhancement.		X			City Staff Council	General Funds NDOT beautification funds Facade Enhancement Grant
Provide updated and wider sidewalks for pedestrian and wheel chair traffic within the Creative District.			X		City Staff Council	General Funds NDOT beautification funds Foundation Grants

Figure 5.2: Schedule for Implementation - Parks and Recreation

RECOMMENDATION	ON-GO- ING	<3 YEARS	3-5 YEARS	BEYOND 5 YEARS	PARTNERSHIPS	FUNDING MECHA- NISMS
Provide ample park facilities and recreation services accessible all residents.	X				Council Park Board	General Funds Foundation Grants
Investigate the feasibility of a covered outdoor area within the Sidney’s Creative District.		X			Council City Staff	
Address building space and maintenance needs of the existing Community Center.		X			Council Staff	
Assess the opportunity for a new sports complex and potential relationship with an improved Community Center.		X			Council Park Board	
Develop a community amenity plan that identifies public space improvements.		X			Council Park Board	
Plan for adding neighborhood parks in growth areas, especially on the east and north sides of the city				X	Council Park Board	General Funds Foundtaiton Grants Development Fees
Add regulation encouraging developers to integrate natural landscapes and water mitigation strategies		X			Council	
Identify infill sites for neighborhoods that lack easy access to parks and plan for amenities and natural vegetation			X		Council Park Board	

Figure 5.3: Schedule for Implementation - Mobility

RECOMMENDATION	ON-GO- ING	<3 YEARS	3-5 YEARS	BEYOND 5 YEARS	PARTNERSHIPS	FUNDING MECHA- NISMS
Provide a future transportation network that is safe, convenient, and offers a variety of interconnected modes for all.	X				City Staff Council	
Enhance bike circulation and parking within Sidney by adopting site plan regulations that require bike paths/trails that align with Sidney’s vision.		X			City Staff Council	
Continue to prioritize projects and establish an annual funding schedule for street and trail repair and maintenance.	X				City Staff Council	
Further provide safe pedestrian crossings and entry points along Illinois and major pedestrian traffic streets.		X			City Staff Council NDOT	
Promote walkability by connecting jobs with housing using sidewalks and trails to reduce the need for employees to travel by car to their place of work.	X				City Staff Council Developers	
Improve the functionality and safety of existing transportation system by periodically surveying residents of Sidney on their perception of the local transportation system.			X		City Staff Council	
Expand and connect existing trails by implementing ideas explored in 2021 Old Post Corridor Improvements.		X	X		Council	General Fund Foundation Grants Nebraska Game & Parks NDOT
Further enhance 13th Avenue underpass through improved lighting, paving surface, and railing.			X		City Staff Council	General Fund NDOT
Investigate feasibility of pedestrian bridge access to Hickory Street Square from the north side of the railroad tracks.				X	City Staff Council Railroad	General funds NDOT Railroad

Figure 5.4: Schedule for Implementation - Economic Development

RECOMMENDATION	ON-GO-ING	<3 YEARS	3-5 YEARS	BEYOND 5 YEARS	PARTNERSHIPS	FUNDING MECHANISMS
Invest in downtown Sidney as a destination, an economic engine, and the heart of the community.	X				Council Economic Development CCCC	
Promote full occupancy of downtown buildings through incentives, demonstration projects, and promotional events.	X				Council Economic Development CCCC	LB840 Economic Development Fund
Research ownership of buildings and contact building owners about cleaning up their properties, renting vacant spaces, or selling to new owners.		X			Council Economic Development CCCC	
Work with Cheyenne County Tourism and Cheyenne County Chamber of Commerce to create a unified marketing plan for the community.		X			City Staff Cheyenne County Tourism CCCC	
Encourage the creation of complementary business cluster to reduce operational costs and promote business growth.	X				Council Economic Development CCCC	Rental Assistance Program
Focus business recruitment on sectors that will complement the character of the city and fill economic gaps.	X				Council Economic Development CCCC	Nebraska Advantage Microenterprise Tax Credit
Engage existing businesses in regular, action-oriented, discussions to understand their state of affairs and identify potential solutions to overcome barriers.	X				Council Economic Development CCCC	
Attract and retain a young and talented workforce through the promotion of amenities.	X				Council Economic Development CCCC	LB840 Economic Development Fund
Promote the creation of high-quality neighborhoods that feature a variety of housing styles, occupancy types and price-points.	X				City Staff PC Council	
Encourage the creation of housing units in proximity to employment centers.	X				City Staff PC Council	

Figure 5.5: Schedule for Implementation - Living

RECOMMENDATION	ON-GO- ING	<3 YEARS	3-5 YEARS	BEYOND 5 YEARS	PARTNERSHIPS	FUNDING MECHA- NISMS
New development should include small scale multi-family and maintenance free options.	X				City Staff PC Council	
Maintain affordable housing stock.	X				Council Economic Develop- ment Non-Profits	
Consider a rehabilitation program focused on rental properties.		X			City Staff Council	
Promote infill development that builds on the character and quality of neighborhoods	X				City Staff PC Council	
Promote incentives for vacant lot development.	X				City Staff PC Council	
Assist with land assembly for new development.	X				City Staff PC Council Economic Develop- ment	
Establish standards for infill development.		X			City Staff PC Council	

Figure 5.6: Schedule for Implementation - Energy Use and Sustainability

RECOMMENDATION	ON-GO-ING	<3 YEARS	3-5 YEARS	BEYOND 5 YEARS	PARTNERSHIPS	FUNDING MECHANISMS
Prolong the useful life of existing buildings through resource efficient operations.	X				City Staff	
Retain and improve the energy efficiency of public facilities		X			City Staff	
Upgrade city fleet with energy efficient vehicles as part of the regular fleet replacement schedule			X		Council City Staff	
Replace existing streetlights with LED fixtures.		X			City Staff Council Energy Providers	Energy Grants General Funds Utility fees
Complete energy audits for municipal buildings.			X		City Staff	
Incentivize energy efficient building methods.	X				Council City Staff	Energy Grants General Funds Utility fees
Further encourage the use of all available energy rebate programs and promote energy saving tips	X				City Staff Economic Development CCCC	
Encourage the use of the on-line EPA energy yardsticks for their residential or commercial uses in the city.	X				City Staff Economic Development CCCC	
Encourage complementary businesses to locate in clusters to reduce unnecessary travel and to promote operational synergy.	X				City Staff PC Council	
Promote alternate modes of transportation to alleviate dependence on finite resources.	X				City Staff PC Council	
Strongly support and market complementary business clusters as part of an integrated economic development strategy	X				City Staff Economic Development CCCC	
Expand and connect the city's bike and pedestrian trail systems to encourage the use of alternative modes of transportation		X	X		Council NDOT	General Fund Foundation Grants Nebraska Game & Parks NDOT
Support the goals of energy providers for renewable energy production and use.	X				City Staff Council PC	
Investigate additional ways to include solar energy into the city's energy portfolio, similar to what is being done with Sandhills		X			City Staff Council PC	

≡ CHANGES TO THE PLAN

This plan is a living document as it is open to constant change through the vision of its community and the guidance of its leaders. It is not meant to be rigid or static, but it should be flexible in response to changing conditions, resources, and opportunities. This plan, land use maps, and other recommendations are meant to be general guides of policy, rather than carrying the specificity and rigidity of a zoning map. As such, the Planning Commission, City Staff, and the City Council can exercise some discretion as to whether a proposal matches the intentions of the plan. This plan was created through a public process, and therefore, any official changes to the plan should be made through a public process.

≡ PLAN MAINTENANCE

The initiatives and action items of the Sidney Comprehensive Plan are ambitious and long-range, and its recommendations will require funding and other continuous support. The city should implement an ongoing process that uses the plan to develop annual improvement programs, as outlined below.

ANNUAL ACTION AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

The Planning Commission and City Council should define an annual action and capital improvement program that implements the recommendations in this plan. This program should be coordinated with Sidney's existing capital improvement planning and budgeting process, even though many of the plan's recommendations are not capital items. This annual process should be completed before the beginning of each budget year and should include:

- A work program for the upcoming year that is specific and related to the city's financial resources. The work program will establish which plan recommendations the city will accomplish during that year.
- A three-year strategic program. This component provides for a multi-year perspective, aiding the preparation of the annual work program. It provides a middle-term implementation plan for the city.
- A six-year capital improvement program. This is merged into Sidney's current capital improvement program.

ANNUAL EVALUATION

The Planning Commission should conduct an annual evaluation of the comprehensive plan at the end of each fiscal year. This evaluation should include a written report that:

- Summarizes key land use developments and decisions during the past year and relates them to the comprehensive plan.
- Reviews actions taken by the city during the past year to implement plan recommendations.
- Defines any changes that should be made in the comprehensive plan.

The plan should be viewed as a dynamic changing document that is actively used by the city as a source of information and guidance on policy and public investment.



