

THE CENTER POINT PLAN

This plan is intended to be a guide for the City of Center Point to coordinate growth and development over the course of the next twenty years. The plan is focused on the area within the current city limits and in the surrounding future growth boundary outside the city.

The plan includes an in-depth look at the city's population, housing, economic base, transportation, public and recreational facilities, physical infrastructure and current and future land uses. In addition, broad citywide goals are outlined and policy guidelines are recommended to achieve those goals. The plan, however, is not meant to be a strict blueprint, but rather a guide for officials in their decision-making.

This document looks twenty years into the future, and offers a framework for growth and development during that period. This plan is not a regulatory document, but a policy document. By considering the impact of future development well into the 21st century, a community direction can be established to guide the development of regulatory tools such as zoning ordinances, subdivision regulations, housing and building codes and annexation procedures.

The plan has two fundamental purposes. First, it presents a unified vision for Center Point articulated from the hard work and participation of the citizens who devoted their time and effort toward creating this plan. Secondly, it provides the legal basis for land use regulation such as zoning and subdivision ordinances.

THE PLANNING PROCESS

The Center Point Plan is the culmination of a planning process that involved citizens in and around the community in creating a vision for the future of Center Point. The process was managed by the East Central Iowa Council of Governments through monthly public work-sessions.

The first part of the process involved assessing the City's current position. This includes the analysis of census data, population trends and housing and economic development issues. From there, work sessions were held to establish a common vision and reachable goals for the next twenty years. Finally, action steps and an implementation schedule were created to achieve the stated vision.

Provisions should be made for amending this document as policies and data become outdated. This authority should be used with discretion, however, since much of the value of the plan can easily be lost through frequent or capricious changes. Amendments may be proposed by the Planning and Zoning Commission, the City Council, or by concerned citizens. Any proposal must always be referred to the zoning commission for consideration and recommendation to the Council.

It is also recommended that the entire plan be carefully reviewed annually to insure that the data and land use maps are updated. Policies may have to be updated as well. The review may be simple if the City has not grown in the years prior to the review or it may be more elaborate following a period of rapid growth or change. The results of the review and revision may very well mean changes in the zoning ordinance or other developmental tools.

The planning process should be an ongoing endeavor. The success of this plan will require the support of citizens as well as the City Council. Cooperation from the public and private sectors will provide long-term benefits to the entire planning area and ultimately the City of Center Point.

Successful communities do not just happen. They must be continually shaped and guided. New issues and opportunities will inevitably arise. While no plan could possibly foresee every issue, the goals and strategies developed in the Center Point comprehensive plan will provide flexibility for city officials and area residents in successfully planning for the future.

SURVEY RESULTS

The crucial element in any plan is ensuring that the wishes and hopes that residents hold for their community is represented in the content of the plan. If the plan does not accurately reflect the needs and desires of area residents, it will have little value. For this reason, a survey was distributed to the residents of Center Point to accurately gauge the issues and concerns facing the community. Public participation is crucial for creating an effective and appropriate plan. By having residents fill out the survey, every resident had an opportunity to direct a future vision for Center Point.

In May 2010, surveys were mailed and hand delivered to every household in the Center Point community. A total of 913 surveys were distributed, with 293 surveys fully and partially filled-out. From the excellent responses received, the following list of priorities and non-priorities were tabulated. The entire results of the survey can be found in the appendix of this plan.

Table 2.1 – Priority and Non-Priority Issues For Center Point

PRIORITY	NON-PRIORITY
<p>Of a list of 14 issues, the following were the top 3:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Local Street Maintenance/Improvements 2) Economic Development (attracting new business/industry) 3) Correcting Storm Drainage Problems <p>Local Street Maintenance was by far the most common response and was ranked first more than all other options combined.</p> <p>Street Maintenance, Storm Water Flooding, and a Lack of Sidewalks were voted significant issues in the community.</p> <p>86% of respondents held Center Point’s small town atmosphere as at least somewhat important.</p> <p>Most respondents believe the City should continue the composting facility, upgrade Lewis Access Road from the interstate to North Center Point Road, needs more commercial development, and improve Main Street.</p> <p>The most wanted type of new housing is moderately priced single-family homes.</p> <p>The most wanted commercial businesses are a community center, restaurant, and a hardware store.</p> <p>Ambulance service, the library, fire protection, and the composting facility are the top rated City services/facilities.</p>	<p>Of a list of 14 issues, the following were the bottom 3:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Developing Multi-Purpose Bike and Pedestrian Trails 2) Increasing Housing Opportunities 3) Extending Water and Sewer to Outlying Areas <p>All three were about equal in being the least important ranked issue.</p> <p>Lack of a Connecting Trail System, Cost of Housing, Housing Availability, and the Location of New Development were voted non-significant issues in the community.</p> <p>Most respondents believe the City does not need more diverse housing opportunities and should not take over maintenance of Wakema Park from the County.</p> <p>The least wanted types of new housing are high value single-family homes and duplexes.</p> <p>The least wanted commercial businesses are a large shopping center and an office park.</p> <p>Street maintenance and the sidewalk system are the lowest rated City services/facilities.</p>

Based upon the results and comments made on the survey, street maintenance seems to be the most agreed upon issue facing the City. It is also the survey’s lowest rated City service. The most agreed upon non-issue for the City is housing, specifically the cost of housing, housing availability, and the location of new development.

STRENGTHS

Center Point’s location twenty minutes north of the Cedar Rapids metro area defines how residents see their community. Many residents live in Center Point to take advantage of the amenities of a large population center without having to pay the costs associated with traffic, taxes, and development. As Center Point has matured from a bedroom community to a full-service, distinct city, these benefits are being challenged by increased development and population growth. As a result of these forces, many Center Point residents want to manage the growing population while others feel additional growth and development is necessary. This provides the context for the challenges Center Point will face over the next 20 years.

CHALLENGES & NEEDS

The challenges facing Center Point are the challenges most small communities face when confronted with the prospect of new development. How can growth continue without compromising the small town atmosphere residents have come to expect and appreciate? How can the City increase services to meet the expanding population? This is the crucial question the plan will address.

THE QUALITY OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Future development in Center Point must be defined by quality rather than quantity. Assuring quality of life for current and future Center Point residents starts with good design of residential and commercial developments. Beyond good schools and public services, quality of life means nice, pedestrian neighborhoods, parks and open space, trails for biking and walking, and appropriately designed commercial areas.

Good design means that future development adapts to the topography of the Center Point landscape. Mature trees are incorporated into new neighborhoods, while woodlands and wetlands are preserved for recreation and wildlife.

DEVELOPMENT CONCEPTS

The most effective way to insure the quality of the built environment is to require that future developments maintain the small town quality of Center Point. This is best accomplished using an *Incremental Design Framework*. This approach maintains the small town character of the area by utilizing compact, contiguous growth to existing development.

When new development occurs, it should, wherever possible occur incrementally, or contiguous to existing development. Growth of this nature will reduce capital outlay and maintenance costs to the City by allowing short, economical extensions of municipal infrastructure (sewer, water, street, sidewalk, etc.) which serve the new neighborhoods. Incremental growth will also save open land and areas better suited for agricultural or other use.

In addition, the City should focus on preserving significant natural features of the landscape as permanent, common open space. The City's subdivision standards should include requirements for conserving natural drainageways, woodlands, and wetlands.

Current patterns typically develop over the natural environment by subdividing all property into private lots. If current patterns continue in Center Point, the small town character so valued by residents will be lost. Therefore, the City should take a unique approach to development to insure that open space is preserved and that future development is consistent with the small town feel of Center Point.

The previous chapter provided preferred development concepts for Center Point. Without specific criteria for preferred development types and character, land use controls will not serve the best interest of the community. Therefore, it is crucially important to identify a preferred vision for the future of Center Point. This begins with an overriding policy statement:

Growth and development should continue in Center Point but neither at the expense or integrity of the existing community nor at the expense of the small town character.

How can this seemingly contradictory statement be realized? Continued growth and development implies Center Point should become physically larger. “Small town character” implies Center Point should remain small. This incongruous theme can only be accomplished through the clear identification of community values. The establishment of values provides the opportunity to pursue growth and development where appropriate and limit or restrict growth where appropriate.

SMALL TOWN CHARACTER

When the community survey was done, a majority of participants identified “small-town character” as an important element in their quality of life. In 1990, the population of Center Point was 1,693; in 2000, the population was 2,007. In 2008, the latest Census estimate showed a population of 2,342. For communities experiencing nearly a twenty percent growth in less than a decade, maintaining a small town atmosphere becomes a difficult proposition

The difference between small and large towns can often be described as a design issue. Land values are at a premium in larger towns. Density and building sizes increase to capitalize on this value. Small towns however experience less density. Building design is less concerned with maximizing small lot sizes and areas.

Center Point, like many faster-growing communities, is experiencing a transition between the small town it has been and a larger town that increased, sustained growth causes. Many residents see this transition as a double-edged sword. Growth means more housing opportunities and the ability of the city to provide additional services; it also means additional traffic, increased density and the City having to provide additional services.

A significant element of this plan is a consideration of how this growth can occur without compromising the traditional character of Center Point.

POLICY STATEMENTS

The purpose of the comprehensive plan in regard to the quality of the built environment is to provide guiding policies for development in Center Point. It is the zoning and subdivision ordinance that implements the vision of the comprehensive plan. As such, specific guidelines are provided here in an effort to provide a clear and logical basis for zoning and subdivision controls.

LAND USE

- Where appropriate, incremental, contiguous development should be used to maintain the small town character of the area. This development approach utilizes compact, contiguous, growth to maintain the small town feel.

Tools: Zoning ordinance, Subdivision Ordinance

Key Players: City Council, Planning and Zoning Commission

- Where appropriate, utilize subdivision standards to conserve natural drainageways, provide community recreational and open space, and promote watershed protection.

Tools: Subdivision Ordinance

Key Players: City Council, Planning and Zoning Commission

- Neighborhood commercial activity should be allowed through properly planned mixed-use development. Neighborhood commercial use should occur where collector streets intersect. They should be at a neighborhood scale to fit with surrounding uses. By providing shopping opportunities within walking distance to local neighborhoods, small-scale commercial activity helps reduce traffic congestion, encourages pedestrian activity, and provides needed services to newly developing areas. Neighborhood commercial is limited in size and operation to insure compatibility with adjacent neighborhoods.

Tools: Zoning ordinance

Key Players: City Council, Planning and Zoning Commission, Economic Development Group or Chamber of Commerce

TRANSPORTATION

- Adequate opportunity for pedestrian and bicycle travel, as well as automotive travel, should be provided.

Tools: Subdivision Ordinance

Key Players: City Council, Planning and Zoning Commission

- The transportation system should connect neighborhoods to one another. Isolated subdivisions should be avoided by encouraging the use of alternatives to cul-de-sacs. Without cul-de-sacs, local streets should be curvilinear in design to insure that safety is not sacrificed.

Tools: Subdivision Ordinance

Key Players: City Council, Planning and Zoning Commission, Public Works Director

- Street continuity should be maintained for proper cross-community mobility. Convenient access to new developments and main activity centers should be provided.

Tools: Subdivision Ordinance

Key Players: City Council, Planning and Zoning Commission

DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER

- Wherever possible, existing mature trees should be preserved and incorporated into new developments. Open space and/or park dedication should be incorporated into every new subdivision.

Tools: Subdivision Ordinance, Zoning Ordinance

Key Players: City Council, Planning and Zoning Commission

- Future residential areas in Center Point should develop with architecturally interesting and coherent streetscapes designed with a diversity of styles and building materials.

Tools: Building Code, Design Standards

Key Players: City Council, Zoning Administrator, City Administrator

- To encourage good single-family design and avoid “cookie-cutter” housing developments, Center Point should pursue the creation of design standards to insure high-quality neighborhoods, and compatibility between new and existing neighborhoods.

Tools: Design Standards

Key Players: City Council, Zoning Administrator

- Where appropriate, mixed-use development should occur. This would include single- and multi-family uses as well as residential and neighborhood commercial uses. Mixed-use development should be properly planned to insure compatibility between uses.

Tools: Zoning Ordinance

Key Players: City Council, Planning and Zoning Commission, Economic Development Group

DRAINAGE

- Streams should be preserved or restored with appropriately landscaped native vegetation. By creating a variable width, naturally vegetated buffer system along all waterways, an interconnected network of open space will provide habitat for wildlife, buffers for clean water, trails for recreation, and added flood control. Stormwater detention may be incorporated within the buffer areas as retention ponds or be located upland discharging into the buffer system.

Tools: Subdivision Ordinance

Key Players: City Council, Planning and Zoning Commission, Public Works Director

- Where possible, streets should cross-buffered areas at a perpendicular orientation. This minimizes the amount of buffer area disturbed.

Tools: Subdivision Ordinance

Key Players: City Council, Planning and Zoning Commission, Public Works Director

LAND USE DESIGN AND PLANNING GUIDELINES

To preserve open space and maintain the small town character of Center Point, an incremental design framework for development of the area is preferred. Many times a community will allow development to occur in a “leap-frog” manner; sprawling across the countryside.

Incremental development, or growth contiguous to existing development, helps preserve land better suited for agricultural use longer than conventional development. This design technique will allow land to develop when it is clearly in the best interest of the City and property owner.

In addition, the City can utilize subdivision standards to preserve drainageways, slopes, woodlands, wetlands, and other natural features as permanent open space. When the property is ready to be developed, uses such as residential, commercial, or mixed-use can easily conform to the land to help maintain the small town character.

DESIGN

- 1) Drainageways and buffered areas should be delineated during the platting process.
- 2) Riparian greenways should be landscaped with trees and natural vegetation and include pedestrian/bicycle trails for pedestrians.
- 3) Where possible, lots and streets should be designed around important natural features.

Tools: Subdivision Ordinance

Key Players: City Council, Planning and Zoning Commission, Public Works Director

PLANNING

- 1) Overall density should comply with the zoning district.
- 2) Individual lot size dimensions, including lot width, may be reduced from requirements of the zoning district. Any reduction on lot size shall be devoted to common open space or other community facilities.
- 3) Future development should be next to existing development.
- 4) Developers are responsible for open space dedication. Planning, landscaping and maintenance for open space should be shared by the resulting development and the City of Center Point.
- 5) Where appropriate, mixed-use development should be allowed.

Tools: Subdivision Ordinance, Zoning Ordinance

Key Players: City Council, Planning and Zoning Commission, Economic Development Group

TRANSPORTATION DESIGN AND PLANNING GUIDELINES

Center Point must provide a roadway system consisting of a hierarchy of streets designed to facilitate the movement of traffic to, from, and through Center Point. The following functional uses of streets are urban standards to be applied as development occurs:

Arterial streets provide a continuous route for the movement of large volumes of all types of through-traffic across and beyond the city and between high traffic generation points. The following streets are, or are planned to be, arterials:

- Lewis Access Road
- Franklin Street
- North Center Point Road

Planning & Design standards:

- 1) Local street access should not be allowed.
- 2) Direct access from abutting properties may be permitted at higher traffic generation points.
- 3) 80' ROW

Collector streets provide movement of traffic between arterial routes as well as providing limited access to abutting property. The following streets are, or are planned to be, collector streets:

- Palo Road
- Iowa Street
- Main Street
- Ford Lane
- Green Street

Planning & Design standards:

- 1) Local street access should be limited.
- 2) Allowable speeds should not exceed 35 mph.
- 3) 70' ROW
- 4) Conceptual streets shown on future streets map.

Local Streets serve as a means of access to abutting property. They are low speed and designed for short trip routes, with less than 500 vehicles per day. All streets serving only neighborhoods are local streets. Planning and design standards are found on the following page.

PLANNING & DESIGN STANDARDS:

- 1) Local streets should be proposed during the platting process.
- 2) Included with local streets should be residential sub-collectors to move vehicular and pedestrian traffic between neighborhoods at slow speeds. This would lessen congestion on high-volume arterial and collector streets.
- 3) 60' ROW.
- 4) Cul-de-sacs should be encouraged only when used to preserve natural features of the landscape. Local through streets are encouraged to preserve a coherent traffic circulation system.

Tools: Subdivision Ordinance

Key Players: City Council, Planning and Zoning Commission, Public Works Director

DEVELOPMENT DESIGN AND PLANNING GUIDELINES

These guidelines are designed to insure that new development is of the highest quality possible. They are to be used as a guide for developers and for the City of Center Point when reviewing proposals.

DESIGN RESIDENTIAL

- 1) A minimum 6' sidewalk should be provided on one side of all collector/arterial streets, except where adjacent trails are provided. The standard 4' sidewalk should be located on the other side.
- 2) Proper buffering should occur between single-family residential developments and commercial development and arterial and collector streets.

Tools: Subdivision Ordinance, Zoning Ordinance

Key Players: City Council, Planning and Zoning Commission

COMMERCIAL

- 1) A minimum 6' sidewalk on one side of all collector/arterial streets. The standard 4' sidewalk should be located on the other side.
- 2) Where possible, parking lots in commercial areas should be sited to the rear of the main building to minimize the impact of parking lots on neighboring uses.
- 3) Neighborhood commercial activity should occur only on collector or arterial streets.
- 4) Signage should be monument-style.

Tools: Subdivision Ordinance, Zoning Ordinance

Key Players: City Council, Planning and Zoning Commission, Economic Development Group

PLANNING RESIDENTIAL

- 1) Single family developments should provide architecturally interesting and diverse designs.
- 2) Multi-family developments should provide diversity in building design, building materials, and landscaping.
- 3) Pedestrian access should be provided through easements between adjacent residential and commercial developments.

Tools: Building Code, Design Standards

Key Players: City Council, Zoning Administrator

COMMERCIAL

- 1) Hours should be limited to minimize conflicts with neighborhood vehicular and pedestrian traffic.
- 2) Architecture should be of a residential scale with pitched roofs compatible to surrounding construction.

Tools: Design Standards

Key Players: City Council, Zoning Administrator, Economic Development Group

POPULATION TRENDS AND PROJECTIONS

A planning program for the physical development of a community must be based upon the requirements, both present and future, of the citizens living in the area. In order to establish what these requirements will be, it is necessary to know as accurately as possible how many people will be living in the area in the foreseeable future.

Precise predictions of future populations, of course, are not possible. However, a reasonable, reliable forecast can be made on the basis of past studies, population trends over the years, and current, observable patterns. This is essential in arriving at reasonable goals and objectives with respect to services and overall development.

The following section of the Plan will review the City of Center Point's growing population.

Table 4.1 - Center Point Population Quick View

1990	2000	% Change 1990-2000	2008 Census Estimate	% Change 2000-2008
1,693	2,007	18.5%	2,342	16.7%

Source: U.S. Census

POPULATION TRENDS

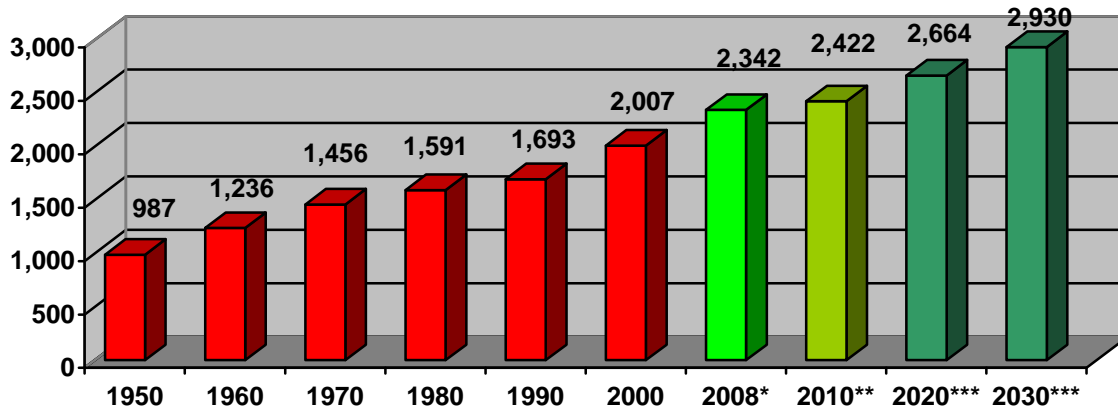
The City of Center Point has seen fairly steady population growth since the early 1900's. In fact, the City has seen no drop in population during any census taken since 1910. For a graphic illustration, please refer to the Chart below.

More recently, according to the U.S. Census, Center Point realized a 16.7% increase in population from 2000 to 2008, bringing the City's population to an estimated 2,342 people. The 2008 population is a census estimate. The City is likely to continue growing at a pace near 10 to 15% as discussed later in this Chapter.

Even during the 1980s, the City's population increased. This is inconsistent with most communities in Iowa. That period was generally known as the Farm Crisis in the Midwest and most Iowa agricultural-based communities lost population during that time. However, Center Point's population continued to grow.

The projected populations for 2020 and 2030 are shown on the Chart and discussed later in the Chapter. The population is expected to be near 2,700 residents by 2020 and over 2,900 by 2030.

Figure 4.1 - Center Point Population Trends (1950 - 2000)



Source: U.S. Census

* 2008 is a US Census Estimate

** 2010 is an ECICOG estimate based on annual Census estimates since 2001

*** Years 2020 and 2030 are projected numbers from ECICOG based on a 10 percent growth rate

The steady population growth of Center Point during the last twenty years may be due in part to residents who work in the Cedar Rapids metropolitan area but want to live in a small-town setting. Interstate 380 makes access to the metro area very easy. If energy prices retreat and the national economy recovers, growth from the metro area should continue to expand outward to cities like Center Point, Anamosa, Walford, Springville and Central City.

However, as energy and gas prices continue to increase dramatically, commuters may be less likely to move great distances from where they work. This factor alone may slow Center Point's future growth potential.

POPULATION GROWTH OF SIMILAR SIZED CITIES

There are several communities within the region that had similar populations and situations as Center Point. Each community is located within a short drive of the Cedar Rapids or Iowa City metro area. Since 1990, all six cities have experienced varying degrees of growth. See the Table on the following page.

The cities located directly adjacent to Cedar Rapids, such as Robins, have experienced substantial growth during the 1990s and early 2000s. Population trends of this nature may come with substantial negative costs to a city, such as lack of housing space, loss of farm land, increased need for infrastructure and other services, and the extreme cost of those services, as well as the loss of the small-town character. Many other cities near the Cedar Rapids metro area have experienced growth rates in the upper teens and even more as well.

Growth rates between 5 and 10% are generally more manageable for communities. Many cities find it easier to plan and budget for infrastructure costs when the growth rate is in the 10% range.

The one constant between most cities in the region experiencing substantial growth is the link to the Cedar Rapids or Iowa City metro areas. Center Point's link to Cedar Rapids along Interstate 380 should position the community nicely for future growth.

Table 4.2 - Population Trends of Similar Size Cities

City	1990	2000	% Change	2008*	% Change	County
Central City	1,063	1,157	8.8%	1,183	2.2%	Linn
Kalona	1,942	2,293	18.1%	2,516	9.7%	Johnson
Lisbon	1,452	1,892	30.3%	2,029	7.2%	Linn
Robins	875	1,806	106.4%	2,869	58.9%	Linn
Williamsburg	2,174	2,622	20.6	2,812	7.2%	Iowa
Center Point	1,693	2,007	18.5%	2,342	16.7%	Linn

Source: U.S. Census

* U.S. Census Estimates

POPULATION PROJECTIONS

As stated before, population projections can be used to plan for the appropriate level of services for future development. When used cautiously, population projections provide an estimate of future growth barring any unforeseen significant change in the economic or social composition of the community. With a sound population projection, a city can plan for infrastructure capacities, housing needs, and future land use requirements.

Table 4.3 – Center Point Population Projections

Center Point Population Projections					
	2000	2008 estimate	2010*	2020	2030
5% Growth rate	2,007	2,342	2,422	2,543	2,670
10% Growth rate	2,007	2,342	2,422	2,664	2,930
15% Growth rate	2,007	2,342	2,422	2,785	3,203
20% Growth rate	2,007	2,342	2,422	2,906	3,487
30% Growth rate	2,007	2,342	2,422	3,149	4,094

Source: ECICOG

* 2010 is an ECICOG estimate based on annual Census estimates since 2001

The above table shows several population projections for Center Point. Five different projections are shown for comparison. In each projection, Center Point realizes steady population growth. The percentage growth rate shown in the above table is between each census period (for example: 2010 to 2020).

Based on trends of the last 20 years (high residential growth surrounding the Cedar Rapids metro area, and growth of cities of similar size to Center Point in the ECICOG Planning Region), and the location of a major transportation system running near the City (Interstate 380) connecting it to the Cedar Rapids metro area, the population would be expected to continue to increase at rates between 10 and 15 percent.

It is unlikely that the City will be able to maintain large percentage growth rates (as shown by the 20% and 30% projections above). As the population increases, large percentage changes are much more difficult. In addition, the economy, rising fuel and heating costs, the amount of developable land and available community services

(sewer, water, police, roads, etc.) will ultimately dictate how fast the City grows. As mentioned before, very large percentage growth rates can be a substantial burden on community services. The 20 and 30% projections are shown in the unlikely event that dramatic growth rates will happen over the long-term. It is very likely rising energy and fuel prices will slow housing construction in outlying areas and reduce the likelihood that commuters would be willing to drive long distances to work.

However, barring any unforeseen significant change in the economic or social composition of the region, the population should maintain a 10% growth rate through 2030. A population near 2,930 could be expected by that time. For planning purposes, the 10 percent projection will be used throughout the document when discussing future infrastructure capacities, housing and land use needs.

The Land Use portion of the plan will look at the amount of undeveloped land remaining within the City limits and examine possible appropriate future growth areas outside of the existing City boundaries to locate this future growth.

As stated before, population projections should be used cautiously. Changes in local, state and national economies can have a profound affect on population counts. The rising cost of oil and natural gas could very well continue to negatively impact the economy, making even the smaller percentage growth rates unattainable. However, with the proximity to major employment and retail centers, transportation routes and available land and services, the City's population may be able to withstand small changes in the national economy and reach the plan's projected total of 2,930 by the year 2030.

For comparison purposes, the City's 2001 population projections are included below. It is noted that the projections in 2001 were made before the decennial census data was released. They are proving to be fairly accurate.

Table 4.4 - 2001 Center Point Comprehensive Plan Population Projections

	2000	2010	2020
Population ¹	2,008	2,264	2,536
Population ²	2,036	2,498	3,016

Source: City of Center Point 2001 Comprehensive Plan

¹ Conservative growth projections

² Higher percentage growth rates

Population Findings

- ❖ Steady population increases since 1900
- ❖ 335 new residents from 2000 to 2008
- ❖ The population increase since 1990 is much higher than the average in the ECICOG region (8%)
- ❖ The population is expected to be near 2,425 residents by when the next census (2010) data is released.
- ❖ Center Point should prepare for a population of near 3,000 residents by the year 2030 or the equivalent of approximately 500 new residents between 2008 and 2030. Housing, infrastructure and land use needs throughout the plan will be based on this projection.

H O U S I N G C H A R A C T E R I S T I C S A N D N E E D S

HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS AND NEEDS

In addition to examining population trends, a look into the City's current and future housing needs must be taken in order to establish growth management strategies for the planning area. Housing development is crucial to a growing community. With implications in land use and infrastructure decisions, housing trends should be studied to establish adequate growth areas in and around the community.

HOUSING ANALYSIS

In development terms, the projected population increase (at the 10% growth rate per census) is equivalent to approximately 327 new housing units by the year 2030. This represents an average annual construction rate of approximately 16 new units per year. At the current allowable density of 3 units per acre, the new units would require approximately 109 acres of land (this does not account for the rights-of-way for streets and other utilities. As a general rule, 10 percent of developed land is consumed by rights-of-way. This makes an additional 11 acres of land to be used for streets and other utilities to serve the projected residential needs. All told, it is projected that 120 acres of land will be needed to account for new residential development in Center Point over the next twenty years (See the Land Use chapter of this plan for further explanation of this total as well as land use needs for park, commercial and industrial land uses).

In 1990, there were 650 housing units in Center Point. By 2000, the Census showed 789 housing units, an increase of over 21 percent. This is fairly consistent with the population growth during that time. The 2008 Census estimate shows a population of 2,342 meaning as of 2008, there are now approximately 920 housing units in Center Point, or a 16.6% increase from 2000. Again, that is consistent with the population growth during that time.

According to the 2000 Census, there were 24 vacant housing units (3%). Around five percent vacancy is considered healthy for a community. This allows market flexibility for area homeowners as well as an ability for the City to handle sudden population increases.

In 1990, the people per housing unit was 2.71. That number decreased for the year 2000 to 2.62. Generally, this number has been decreasing throughout the region as families are trending smaller. The people per housing unit is expected to continue to drop across the region. By the year 2030, Center Point is expected to have approximately 2.35 people per housing unit. Based on this figure and the population projection, Center Point should plan on needing approximately 327 new housing units by 2030 to bring the overall total to approximately 1,247 units.

EXISTING HOUSING STOCK

It is important that current neighborhoods remain vital parts of the City. Center Point should ensure that the existing housing stock meets minimum codes for safety. As new development occurs, existing housing must be kept up in order to ensure safe, affordable housing options. The City should make every effort to apply for housing programs intended to rehabilitate the current housing stock.

In 1999, the *Linn County Housing Needs Assessment and Action Plan* was adopted containing vital information on every city in Linn County. A comprehensive housing analysis and action plan was prepared for Center Point at this time. Linn County is currently considering updating the assessment. The City should utilize the data contained in the Needs Assessment and follow the recommendations when maintaining the existing housing stock.

NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

When new housing development occurs, it should, wherever possible occur incrementally, or contiguous to existing development. Growth of this nature will reduce capital outlay and maintenance costs to the City by allowing short, economical extensions of municipal infrastructure (sewer, water, street, sidewalk, etc. which serve the new neighborhoods. Incremental housing growth will also save open land and areas better suited for agricultural or other use.

As residential development occurs, the City should insure that each new growth area can reasonably flow into the existing community. Main connections to the City's trail and sidewalk system and to the downtown area as well as to city access points should be required at the edges of each new development.

In addition, the City should ensure that appropriate recreational opportunities grow as new housing is developed. The number and location of neighborhood parks should keep pace with new construction. As new housing developments are planned, the city should ensure that common "green space" is included in each new neighborhood. Because recreation opportunities are a major influence on a family's decision on where to live, expanded recreation opportunities should be a priority for Center Point. In addition, trails and recreational opportunities were a high priority of the residents filling out the survey.

Recreation goals and the objectives to meet those goals will be discussed in another Chapter (Environment and Natural Resources). The infrastructure and land use

implications of this population target and housing needs assessment will be discussed in Chapters on Infrastructure and Land Use.

HOUSING FINDINGS

- ❖ People per household in 2000 was 2.62. That number is expected to decrease to 2.35 by 2030.
- ❖ A 10% growth rate is equivalent to approximately 327 new homes between 2008 and 2030 or approximately 16 new units per year.
- ❖ The number of new homes by 2030 would require 120 acres of land.
- ❖ There were approximately 920 housing units in Center Point in 2008.
- ❖ The City will require approximately 1,247 housing units by 2030.

This chapter of the Center Point Plan is focused on the built environment and physical features in and around the city. It first examines the environment and natural resources, the very soil on which Center Point is built. Secondly, the Chapter focuses on the City's infrastructure: water and sewer systems, storm sewer, and transportation. Finally, the Chapter ends with describing financial tools designed for developing cities.

ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

TOPOGRAPHY AND SOILS

The majority of developed land in the City of Center Point is located on generally level to moderately sloping land. The most predominant soil in the area is the Loamy Alluvial-Sparta-Spillville soil. This soil type occurs largely in the eastern two-thirds of the community. The other major soil type in the area is the Kenyon-Clyde-Floyd soil. This data is included in the plan for general information and should not be used for planning purposes.

For detailed information concerning the soils of the immediate region, please consult the United States Department of Agriculture Soil Survey of Linn County. This is important for several reasons. The difference between soils and their varying capabilities supply useful information for planning and development.

Even more important, the Soil Survey provides a guide to the general suitability of an individual soil type. Because different soils can handle a variety of different uses, such as crop production, highway construction, and residential, commercial and industrial development, it is important to know what is the best use for that particular soil type. Future development activities should be accompanied by a soil conservation plan from the Soil Conservation Service. These plans provide valuable information in determining land use and abating potential problems including storm water management and erosion control.

The City can address stormwater drainage problems through the subdivision ordinance. By incorporating appropriate landscaping, open space and tree planting in new developments, water drainage can be controlled.

FLOODPLAIN

There is a large floodplain to the north and west of the community. This floodplain will inhibit future development of the City towards those directions (see the Floodplain Map on file at City Hall). Future growth areas should be directed away from low-lying areas in the floodplain.

The City currently has a floodplain ordinance which helps control development within the flood district. Development within the floodplain should continue to be restricted.

ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS

The City should create conservation districts within the zoning ordinance. These districts should be used in conjunction with the City's subdivision authority to preserve prime park and recreational land, as well as protect drainage areas, wetlands, creek beds, floodplains and other highly erodible lands. For example, a large floodplain in the community should be zoned as a conservation district to protect development from flooding hazards.

Center Point should not allow certain types of development in conservation districts as designated in the City's zoning ordinance. Appropriate development would include storm water drainage basins, parks, and wetland areas.

AGRICULTURE LAND PROTECTION

As per the community survey, agricultural land was identified as an important resource that should be protected. The best way to protect Agricultural land is to continue to utilize compact and contiguous development within the future growth areas. This would help minimize impacts on adjacent Agriculture use and promote efficiency within the community. Because there are future growth corridors identified in the future Land Use map, other areas around the city not identified in the growth corridors should be protected.

HAZARD MITIGATION

Center Point has identified the natural hazards that threaten the community. This consists mainly of the flooding possibility that exists within the floodplain. Because of this threat, the community created a hazard mitigation plan in conjunction with Linn County. This plan helps form a long-term strategy to reduce disaster losses and damages. By coordinating with Linn County, Center Point has been able to create a well-rounded document that meets the community's needs.

The City should update its Hazard Mitigation Plan as the information becomes dated. In addition, this plan should be reviewed and used in any future land use decisions.

ENTRANCES INTO THE COMMUNITY

The entrances to the City of Center Point are generally free from clutter and unsightly structures. The growth of Center Point towards Interstate 380 may create a need for certain industrial uses near that intersection. Care must be taken to guide the new development and preserve the attractive nature of the land surrounding the community. Buildings, signs and poles should be carefully planned to discourage cluttered appearances. The City's zoning and subdivision ordinances should be carefully reviewed to ensure proper requirements.

Also, at certain entrances into the community, City leaders could place appropriate welcome signs promoting the City's numerous assets. Currently, there is a community sign off of the 380 exit on Lewis Access Road. However, the City has identified a need for community signs on the entrance streets of Green Street and Franklin Street. New signs should be coordinated around the community and could give directions to major attractions, such as the school, the proposed trail system or the City's parks. These

informational welcome signs should be coordinated with a theme to present a unified community.

GREEN SPACE AND PARK SYSTEM PLAN

Parks and public green space are vitally important to cities and their overall quality of life. They help contribute to a city's character with friendly, open environments. In addition, they also provide important active and passive recreational resources. The following section examines the City's park and recreational system, including all city-owned and operated facilities. In addition, this section will provide a vision for Center Point's open space and park system.

The maintenance of these public spaces and their extension into new sections of the community should be part of Center Point's future. As the City grows and takes advantage of new development opportunities, its park system will become important to unite the new residents with the established community.

Currently there are two main parks in the City in which residents can take advantage, Fross and Wakema Park. Fross Park is in the northern portion of the community. This park is approximately 33 acres. Wakema Park is near the center of town and is operated by Linn County. This park is about four acres. This park includes a picnic area, basketball courts and playground equipment. Based on the current population of Center Point, there is a surplus of public recreational space. The current surplus of park space in Center Point is around nine acres.

Families in the community will look to the City to provide safe and accessible services for both children and adults. The City should expand the park area available to residents. This can be accomplished through provisions in the City's subdivision ordinance requiring park or open space in each new subdivision. The development of recreational facilities should include large park and open space areas with active recreational opportunities.

For future recreation and park needs, the Center Point Comprehensive Plan projects the City's future population close to 3,000 residents in 2030. This represents about 327 additional housing units during the planning period. Based on a park dedication standard of 0.05 acres per unit, future growth will require the dedication of seven additional acres of park and recreational space in the next twenty years. This includes the current surplus of 9 acres. The City should strive for approximately 62 acres of open/park space by the year 2030.

PARK SYSTEM VISION

A goal for Center Point's park system should be a network of open spaces which impact all parts of the community, connecting old and new neighborhoods with one another and with major activity centers. This vision would bridge barriers that otherwise might separate parts of the City from one another.

To accomplish this, the City should create a networked system of open spaces. This system would link parks and activity centers by a continuous system of trails and environmental corridors. Currently, the Cedar Valley Nature Trail services the Center

Point area. However, this trail does not connect the different recreational facilities within the community. As Center Point grows, new neighborhoods should be linked to this trail system. The trail network could include on-street bikeways, trails through parks and school grounds, designated City sidewalks, and abandoned railroad right-of-way.

During the platting process, potential trails should be provided through easements between neighboring subdivisions. These easements should be created in such a way as to either connect or have the potential to connect with the Cedar Valley Nature Trail.

Because recreational trails are heavily used and involve only moderate costs to develop and maintain, they are one of the most cost efficient recreational investments a community can make. The City of Center Point, Linn County, the state Departments of Natural Resources, Transportation and Economic Development, along with private sponsors could each play a role in creating a community-wide network of trails.

In addition to linking Center Point's parks and activity centers with trails, the City should also integrate new parks and open space into each new neighborhood. By using the City's planning and subdivision authority, open space should be included in all new neighborhoods.

Then, the new neighborhood green spaces should be linked to the existing City's trail system. The concept of a linked pedestrian system, connecting neighborhoods, natural areas and parks, schools, and the Center Point Square would establish a unified community.

PARK SYSTEM SUMMARY

Currently, the City's park system is sufficient to meeting the population's demand for recreation areas. As Center Point's population grows, new parks and recreational activities must keep pace with development. Parks and open space should be included with every new subdivision. Then, the new parks should be linked to the traditional sections of town by trails and/or sidewalks.

To assure adequate youth recreational opportunities, the City should designate a portion of each new park for active recreation. This includes neighborhood ball fields and practice fields for youth sports leagues.

Recreation opportunities will continue to influence a family's decision on where to live. Unfortunately, many communities have paid limited attention to the recreational needs of its residents. Imaginative recreational opportunities can be both low cost and limited maintenance to the community. In turn, this investment should retain current residents and promote future growth. Expanded recreation opportunities should be a priority for Center Point.

The following policy statements are intended to provide the City of Center Point with guidance on environmental issues:

ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES RECOMMENDATIONS

• Protect drainage areas, wetlands, creek beds, and other highly erodible lands

- ❖ Enforce the City's zoning ordinance to protect conservation districts.
- ❖ Require soil conservation plans for all future developments.
- ❖ Incorporate appropriate landscaping, open space and tree planting in new developments to control water drainage.
- ❖ Focus new growth away from conservation districts as shown on the Future Land Use Map.

• Protect agricultural land by encouraging compact and contiguous growth

- ❖ Focus new development into designated future growth corridors
- ❖ Promote infill development within the City limits

• Integrate a network of trails connecting parks and activity centers

- ❖ Include on-street bikeways, trails through parks and school grounds, designated City sidewalks, and abandoned railroad right-of-way
- ❖ Connect old and new neighborhoods, parks, schools, and other activity centers.
- ❖ Utilize State, Federal and private resources to fund trail system, including the Department of Natural Resources REAP program and the Department of Transportation TEA-21 Enhancement program

• Ensure the number and location of neighborhood parks keep pace with new development

- ❖ Include common "open spaces" within each new subdivision
- ❖ Link each open space to the City's park system by trails or sidewalks
- ❖ Designate a portion of each new park for active recreation (ball fields, practice fields, etc.)
- ❖ Update the subdivision ordinance to include provisions for "open space" development

• Protect the entrances into the community

- ❖ Ensure careful planning for developments leading into the community
- ❖ Enforce nuisance ordinance and develop a non-compliance plan
- ❖ Establish appropriate welcome signs promoting the City's assets
- ❖ Utilize attractive landscaping to compliment the welcome signs
- ❖ Coordinate signs around the community to give directions to major attractions

INFRASTRUCTURE AND PUBLIC FACILITIES

This section of the Plan presents an inventory and evaluation of the City's infrastructure facilities. The primary infrastructure for Center Point includes the systems for water distribution, sanitary sewer, storm sewer collection, and transportation. This Plan should not be construed to replace the day-to-day maintenance and operation of the City's infrastructure. It is intended to provide a framework for the future growth of the overall system.

The City should encourage the preservation of viable existing infrastructure and promote the economical extension of new infrastructure and services. It is wise to conserve limited public funds by promoting efficient growth patterns. A community benefits from compact growth. When development occurs incrementally, contiguous to the edge of existing development, the town grows in a unified way.

A compact urban form helps accomplish this goal by using existing public facilities and infrastructure. For example, new developments should utilize existing water and sewer lines with short incremental extensions of public utilities. This reduces development costs and long-term maintenance and capital expenses.

To implement specific goals in this section of the plan, the City should not only rely on municipal funds, but also utilize the development tools listed in the plan to fund infrastructure, re-development and economic development projects. After describing each type of infrastructure, there is a list of recommended policies/projects for inclusion in a capital improvements plan.

STREET AND TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

A well-planned road system must provide for the efficient movement of pedestrian and emergency traffic. The improvements to existing streets and the structure of proposed streets should be determined by addressing such issues as parking needs, sub-base soil types, traffic volumes and types, required speeds to reduce congestion and land use of adjacent properties.

For Center Point to grow successfully, new development, including new transportation routes, must be directed to achieve land use goals and improve cross-community mobility. The City must maintain street continuity and convenient access to new neighborhoods, as well. To do so, the City should discourage the use of cul-de-sacs within new subdivisions.

Because cul-de-sacs interrupt the pattern of connecting streets, they decrease accessibility between adjacent neighborhoods (for residents, emergency vehicles, snow plows, garbage trucks, school buses, etc.). To stem the further erosion of inter-neighborhood accessibility, the City should require all future residential streets to connect with other streets either existing or planned.

Exceptions to discouraging cul-de-sacs could be made if such through connections were possible only by destroying environmentally sensitive land, or if such a connection would create a shortcut attracting a significant volume of through traffic for the

subdivision. The City should update their subdivision ordinance to reflect the need for interconnected neighborhoods.

In addition, because new development may occur farther from the traditional center of the community, the City must also seek ways to link this growth to the existing community. Main connections to activity centers (parks, schools, Main Avenue, etc.) and to city access points should be required at the edge of each new development.

Based upon the response from the citywide survey, general street maintenance was listed as a top priority. Nearly all respondents found this single issue important. Franklin Street, Lewis Access Road, and Iowa Street are all streets that were specifically mentioned as needing improvements. Every effort should be made by the City to ensure that it has an adequately funded repair program.

Having a reliable transportation network is crucial for any city growth to occur. Center Point must make fixing these arterial and collector roads a top priority. Access to the commercial corridors of the City provides needed services and jobs to residents. If streets such as the aforementioned become worse, physical damage could occur to motorists.

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING GUIDELINES

Center Point should provide a roadway system consisting of a hierarchy of streets designed to facilitate the movement of traffic to, from, and through the City. The following functional uses of streets are standards to be applied as development occurs:

Arterial streets provide a continuous route for the movement of large volumes of all types of through-traffic across and beyond the city and between high traffic generation points. Collector streets provide movement of traffic between arterial routes as well as providing limited access to abutting property. The following streets are, or are planned to be, collectors. Local Streets serve as a means of access to abutting property. They are low speed and designed for short trip routes, with less than 500 vehicles per day. All streets serving only neighborhoods are local streets.

• Street system recommendations

- ❖ Establish a Capital Improvements Plan for a detailed schedule of street system projects and maintenance.
- ❖ Undertake a systematic curb and gutter program throughout the community
- ❖ Create an east/west collector connecting Palo Road and Fay Road
- ❖ Improve Lewis Access Road with turn lane and new paving
- ❖ Extend Ford Lane north to Iowa Street and east to North Center Point Road
- ❖ Extend Main Street south to Ford Lane
- ❖ Extend Iowa Street north to Green Street
- ❖ Extend Grain Lane north to Fay Road
- ❖ Pave Palo Road
- ❖ Incorporate sidewalks into new road projects

- **Maintain street continuity and convenient access to new neighborhoods**

- ❖ Link new growth and development to the existing community and downtown
- ❖ Limit local access off collector and arterial roads including Palo Road
- ❖ Continue requirement of curb and gutter in all new developments
- ❖ Discourage the use of cul-de-sacs within new subdivisions
- ❖ Update subdivision ordinance to further restrict cul-de-sacs

WATER SYSTEM

During the life of this plan, updating the overall water system should be a priority for the City. In 2008, average daily consumption of water has ranged from 175,650 GPD to a peak demand of 269,330 GPD. Average daily use per capita is approximately 75 to 115 gallons per day.

Storage

The water system has a capacity of 275,000 gallons per day (GPD). This includes the elevated storage capacity for the one municipal water tower (75,000 gallons) and ground storage (200,000 gallons).

Based on population projections during the planning period, with an average per capita water usage of 100 GPD, the projected average day water demand would be approximately 293,000 GPD by the year 2030. Peak demand may reach 336,950 GPD. With the general recommendation that storage be equivalent to two day's usage, a shortfall in storage capacity is indicated for existing and projected demands during the life of this plan.

The City is currently in the process of alleviating this problem by planning a 500,000 gallon water tower along North Center Point Road. Construction on the new tower is planned to start during the fall of 2010.

Distribution

The City should continue to undertake a citywide program to replace all undersized and deteriorated water mains and loop the dead ends in the system to increase the flow rate and overall pressure. This program should be a high priority and made part of the City's capital improvements program.

As stated in the introduction, expansion of the system should occur, however, only within the perimeter of planned development.

- **Water system recommendations**

- ❖ Construct a new 500,000 gallon water tower
- ❖ Continue city-wide main replacement program
- ❖ Continue city-wide program to loop dead ends on the water system

- **Encourage the preservation of viable existing infrastructure**

- ❖ Utilize the Capital Improvements Plan for a detailed schedule of water system repairs and maintenance
- ❖ Utilize State and Federal grant and loan assistance for improvements

- **Promote the economical extension of the water system**

- ❖ Expand water system only within the perimeter of planned development
- ❖ Promote compact and incremental growth and development
- ❖ Ensure adequate water capacities for long-term potential growth
- ❖ Utilize a Capital Improvements Plan for financing possibilities of new infrastructure projects

SANITARY SEWER SYSTEM

The City has two wastewater treatment plants (the north plant and the south plant). The south plant is newly constructed to assist with projected growth demands. This plant has a capacity to handle 195,000 gallons of wastewater per day. The current average daily load for the south plant is 47,000 GPD with a peak demand of 100,000 GPD.

The north plant has a larger capacity at 225,000 GPD, however, is much older and needs improvements to the lift station and liner to function at maximum capacity. In order to meet projected demands, the north plant may need a new lagoon and lift station.

Current citywide daily loads for wastewater is approximately 136,529 GPD with a peak demand around 233,383 GPD. Projected growth would estimate the average daily load around 175,500 GPD with peak demands at 300,000 GPD.

The City should continue its program of televising sewer mains and maintain and replace as funding allows as per the City's Capital Improvements Plan. As stated in the introduction, expansion of the system should occur, however, only within the perimeter of planned development.

- **Sanitary sewer recommendations**

- ❖ Construct a new lagoon and lift station for the north plant
- ❖ Continue city-wide program of televised sewer lines
- ❖ Undertake sewer line replacement program

- **Encourage the preservation of viable existing infrastructure**

- ❖ Utilize the Capital Improvements Plan for a detailed schedule of sewer system repairs and maintenance
- ❖ Utilize State and Federal grant and loan assistance for improvements

- **Promote the economical extension of the sewer system**

- ❖ Expand sewer system only within the perimeter of planned development
- ❖ Promote compact and incremental growth and development
- ❖ Ensure adequate sewer capacities for long-term potential growth
- ❖ Utilize a Capital Improvements Plan for financing possibilities of new infrastructure projects

STORM SEWER SYSTEM

The City's storm sewer system is generally adequate to handle storm loads. All areas of the City are presently served with either storm sewers or drainage ditches.

Expansion of the system will be necessary as new subdivisions are developed. As increases in run-off occurs due to development, many existing pipe diameters may need to be increased to handle increased peak flows.

Over the course of the planning period, Center Point should monitor storm water drainage problems within the community and correct the problems as funding allows. In addition, where appropriate, all new developments should be required to install a storm sewer system.

- **Storm sewer recommendations**

- ❖ Where appropriate, require storm sewer in all new development
- ❖ Monitor storm water drainage problems within the community and correct as necessary
- ❖ Create a storm water plan for the systematic installation throughout the community
- ❖ Undertake the storm sewer installation program in conjunction with IDNR requirements

SIDEWALKS

According to the community survey, sidewalk coverage is an important issue in the community. Currently, Center Point does not have a complete sidewalk network throughout the city. A sidewalk system contributes to the ease of walking and daily interaction among neighbors. Sidewalks are also necessary to provide safe passage for pedestrians throughout town. Center Point should strive to complete a sidewalk system which encompasses the entire community.

The sidewalk program should start with all new neighborhoods being required to have a system which can be extended with any future development. Requirements should be placed in the City's code of ordinances which mandate sidewalks in new subdivisions. Over time, the City should work with property owners and extend the system throughout any area of town currently unserved by sidewalks. The program should focus first on streets that connect residents to schools. The City should utilize Safe Routes to School funding to assist with this priority. Then, focus the program on connecting activity centers and existing trails to complete a community-wide sidewalk system.

In addition, portions of existing sidewalks which are in disrepair should be brought up to code. Again, the City should work with property owners to repair dilapidated sidewalks. Besides being a nuisance, unkempt sidewalks are a health and safety issue.

- **Sidewalk recommendations**

- ❖ Create a sidewalk plan for the systematic installation throughout the community
- ❖ Undertake the sidewalk installation program throughout the community
- ❖ Priority should be given to the installation of sidewalks along Vine Street, Iowa Street and Meadow Breeze Lane (sidewalk connections to schools and parks)
- ❖ Secondly, focus new sidewalks in areas to connect activity centers and existing trails
- ❖ Continue requirement of sidewalks in all new developments
- ❖ Incorporate sidewalks into new road projects

INFRASTRUCTURE ANALYSIS

There are a variety of funding sources to assist and finance the development and improvement of the City's infrastructure system. For sewer and water projects, there are several grant and loan programs from the Iowa Departments of Economic Development and Natural Resources, including the CDBG, PFSA and SRF. For the transportation system, these sources would include: Road Use Tax fund, SAFETEA-LU funding for eligible routes (formally TEA-21), RISE grant and loan funds for economic development projects, and other categorical grant programs. The City should explore alternate grant programs to meet local needs. These funding tools are described in the Fiscal Context Section of the plan.

In addition, to systematically evaluate potential infrastructure projects, the City should continue the utilization of their five-year Capital Improvements Plan (CIP). The CIP is described in the Fiscal Context section of this plan. The CIP helps coordinate capital costs and financing while working towards the long-term goals of the community.

The following page contains policy statements that are intended to provide the City of Center Point with guidance on infrastructure and public facilities issues:

Other Infrastructure and Government Facilities Needs

Center Point is adequately served by city services and the community survey indicated that most citizens are satisfied. However, one of the most sought after new additions to the city is a community center. If the City decides to build a community center, the building should be built in a location easily accessible by road and utility infrastructure. It should also be connected to a trail network, which is detailed in the Park System Vision section.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND PUBLIC FACILITIES RECOMMENDATIONS

• Encourage the preservation of viable existing infrastructure

- ❖ Utilize the Capital Improvements Plan for a detailed schedule of infrastructure repairs and maintenance
- ❖ Utilize State and Federal grant and loan assistance for infrastructure improvements
- ❖ Undertake city-wide main replacement program
- ❖ Undertake city-wide program to loop dead ends on the water system
- ❖ Continue city-wide program of televised sewer lines
- ❖ Undertake sewer line replacement program

• Promote the economical extension of new infrastructure and services

- ❖ Ensure adequate infrastructure capacities for long-term potential growth
- ❖ Expand infrastructure systems only within the perimeter of planned development
- ❖ Promote compact and incremental growth and development
- ❖ Utilize a Capital Improvements Plan for financing possibilities of new infrastructure projects
- ❖ Create a storm water plan for the systematic installation throughout the community
- ❖ Where appropriate, require storm sewer in all new development
- ❖ Undertake a storm sewer installation program in conjunction with IDNR requirements
- ❖ Monitor storm water drainage problems within the community and correct as necessary
- ❖ Undertake a systematic curb and gutter program throughout the community
- ❖ Create a sidewalk plan for the systematic installation throughout the community
- ❖ Undertake the sidewalk installation program throughout the community
- ❖ Incorporate sidewalks into new road projects

• Maintain street continuity and convenient access to new neighborhoods

- ❖ Link new growth and development to the existing community and downtown
- ❖ Limit local access off collector and arterial roads including Palo Road
- ❖ Discourage the use of cul-de-sacs within new subdivisions
- ❖ Update subdivision ordinance to further restrict cul-de-sacs
- ❖ Continue requirement of sidewalks in all new developments

• **Prioritized infrastructure improvements for the life of this plan**

- ❖ Create an east/west collector connecting Palo Road and Fay Road
- ❖ Improve Lewis Access Road with turn lane and new paving
- ❖ Extend Ford Lane north to Iowa Street and east to North Center Point Road
- ❖ Extend Main Street south to Ford Lane
- ❖ Extend Iowa Street north to Green Street
- ❖ Extend Grain Lane north to Fay Road
- ❖ Pave Palo Road
- ❖ Construct a new 500,000 gallon water tower
- ❖ Construct a new lagoon and lift station for the north plant
- ❖ Install sidewalks along Vine Street, Iowa Street and Meadow Breeze Lane

FISCAL CONTEXT

The City should implement the goals and objectives presented by the plan through a realistic program that is in step with the resources of the community. The City must place development goals listed in the Comprehensive Plan within the context of financial constraints.

Therefore, to implement specific goals in the plan, the City should not only rely on municipal funds, but utilize the following development tools to fund infrastructure, redevelopment and economic development projects.

TAX INCREMENT FINANCING

The City of Center Point currently utilizes tax increment financing (TIF) powers. Tax increment financing freezes the property tax valuations in the TIF district at the level of January 1 of the preceding year. When the value of property within the district increases, the difference between the new and frozen valuations is the increment. Taxes on this amount are diverted from other taxing entities, such as counties and school districts, and enter a special fund for financing any debt incurred by the city for improvements in the district. This continues until all debts are paid. If no debt has been incurred by the city in this area, tax revenue is distributed per usual percentages. TIF has no effect on actual tax rates being applied to property.

GRANT AND LOAN PROGRAMS

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Economic Development Set-Aside (EDSA), and Public Facilities Set-Aside (PFSA) programs are offered through the Iowa Department of Economic Development. These programs are to primarily assist communities with public facilities improvements (including but not limited to sewer and water) to benefit low to moderate income individuals. In addition, the EDSA and PFSA are for economic development purposes to be utilized by new or expanding businesses or industries.

The Iowa Department of Economic Development also offers CDBG funding for housing programs, as well. These programs include but are not limited to housing needs assessments, housing rehabilitation grants, and new construction programs.

Other popular grant programs offered by the State include the Revitalize Iowa's Sound Economy (RISE) grant. This program, offered through the Iowa Department of Transportation, is used for extending streets for economic development purposes for new and expanding businesses or industries. As with the EDSA and PFSA grants, the RISE grant is contingent on job creation.

In addition, there are several other categorical grant programs, such as the Iowa Community Cultural Grant program (ICCG), the Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) program, Historical Resource and Development Program (HRDP), among others. The City should contact the various regional, state and federal agencies assisting with grantwriting for more detailed analysis of specific programs which meet a specific Community goal.

PRIVATE FINANCING

There are thousands of private foundations and corporations throughout the Country, which fund community development projects. Many support specific interests such as rural development, neighborhood programs or economic development. Others may only grant funds to a specific region or location.

Many times a local business or industry is willing to contribute to a worthwhile community development project. Because the project would likely enhance the livability of the community, a local business or industry may fund a portion of the project to retain or attract new residents.

The City should study each foundation or corporation to determine the nature of the grantmaker's interest before requesting funding of this sort.

GENERAL REVENUES AND USER FEES

Money from general revenues could be used for any number of infrastructure improvements, as well as parkland development projects.

User fees are used to operate and maintain City infrastructure systems such as sewer and water systems.

BONDING CAPACITY

The general obligation debt limit for a city in Iowa is five percent of the actual value of taxable property within the corporate limits. As a general rule, communities should not exceed 75 percent of its bonding capacity. The remaining 25 percent would then be saved for emergency purposes.

The City should continue to use its bonding capacity for large capital improvement type projects. The amount available to bond for should go up each year as the City pays off current debt and assessed values rise.

ANNEXATION AND PAYING FOR INFRASTRUCTURE COST

In the event that land is annexed into the City, Center Point should require the applicant(s) to finance the infrastructure costs. In addition, if the development is outside the future growth boundary and/or the city is not targeting that area for expansion, then

the City should require the applicants to pay for its own infrastructure and “hook up” fees to city services. By accepting this practice, the City can discourage development outside the city growth areas and encourage more compact and contiguous growth.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLANNING

A capital improvements plan (CIP) is a legal document for the planning, scheduling and financing of large construction projects and the purchasing of major pieces of equipment by the City. The CIP describes in detail the projects that are to be accomplished; then provides the blueprint that is needed to select those projects and lists the funds that will be authorized in the City’s annual budget.

There are several differences between a comprehensive plan and a CIP. A comprehensive plan looks twenty years into the future and lists possible improvement projects for the community. A comprehensive plan contains very broad policy statements on the direction the City wishes to take.

A CIP, on the other hand, is shorter in range (4-6 years) and is very focused in nature. It will list each project the city wishes to accomplish during the time-period and list the funding that will be authorized to implement that project.

The City of Center Point should continue utilizing the City’s Capital Improvements Plan for the following reasons:

- ❖ Systematic evaluation of potential projects
- ❖ Stabilize the volume of expenditures
- ❖ Coordinate capital costs and financing
- ❖ Improve economic development efforts
- ❖ Encourage more efficient government
- ❖ Work towards long term goals and vision of the community

IMPLICATIONS OF GROWTH ON THE COMMUNITY

Growth and development will come with a cost to Center Point. With each new neighborhood, the City must provide a higher level of service. Sewer, water, street maintenance, garbage pick-up, parks and recreation, and police and fire protection are all services residents will require with any new development. The city’s capacity to provide these services in an efficient manner will ultimately effect the location, dimension and timing of future developments.

During the life of this plan, Center Point should expect to hire additional personnel to assist with the provision of services the growing population expects. Additional park space will require maintenance; the new water treatment plant will require oversight; the street system will require continued upgrades, all possibly requiring new personnel.

ANALYSIS

Ultimately, Center Point, while in good financial condition, will face a number of major capital facility demands that will stretch or exceed its financing capabilities without outside assistance. For this reason, the City should utilize their Capital Improvements Plan and use the above financial tools to assist in the development of the City.

In addition, Center Point should contact the various regional, state and federal agencies assisting economic growth in and around the City for more detailed analysis of specific programs.

CEDAR VALLEY NATURE TRAIL



CENTER POINT FIRE STATION



This chapter of the Center Point Plan is focused on land use, both existing and future, within and around the City of Center Point. The intent is to provide a framework to guide and direct new development in the planning area. This should insure that future growth happens in a way consistent with the goals of the plan and paced in such a way as to not outstrip the City's ability to provide proper services.

The Land Use Plan is divided into three sections. The first describes useful tools for managing land use; the second examines current land use patterns; the final section describes future policy directions in land use including the official Center Point Future Land Use Map.

LAND USE TOOLS

Zoning and subdivision ordinances are two common regulatory land use tools for cities and counties to enforce community standards. Ordinances of this nature enable the implementation and enforcement of the policies and provisions contained in a comprehensive plan. The Land Use Chapter of the Center Point Plan will serve as a guide for future revisions of the City's development tools.

ZONING

Zoning is the most important tool to implement a comprehensive plan. This method of management works by regulating various aspects of how land may be used. Zoning's name is derived from dividing areas of a city into zones, or districts. Certain uses of land are permitted in each zone according to specific standards set by the planning and zoning commission and adopted by the City Council.

The City of Center Point has a zoning ordinance currently in place. After the plan is adopted, the ordinance should be thoroughly reviewed and updated annually to ensure the standards are working in conjunction with the goals and objectives contained in this comprehensive plan.

LAND SUBDIVISION

A subdivision ordinance is a tool the City uses to enforce standards so that land subdivision occurs in a beneficial manner. The platting requirements in the City of Center Point subdivision ordinance specify the criteria for subdividing land throughout the community.

Simply put, subdivision is a process in which land is legally described and is converted into building lots. It involves the division of a tract of land into smaller parcels and usually involves the creation of streets and other infrastructure improvements such as water and sewer systems, sidewalks, and street lighting. The subdivision ordinance is a very effective tool for enforcing subdivision growth policies.

The subdivision ordinance is also the tool cities use to require open space and park dedications in new developments. By including the requirement to devote open space in

the ordinance, developers must include open space in any plans for new development. The open space could then be maintained by the neighborhood or homeowner association or the City.

Occasionally, open space may not be practical in a development. In these cases, the subdivision ordinance should require the developer to donate an equivalent amount of money to the City. Then the City could use those funds to develop and maintain a larger more appropriate park site.

In any growing region, development pressures are usually the strongest at the edge of an already developed area. When allowed to go unregulated, this development pressure often causes undesirable results. The City, however, can utilize this plan to logically identify where appropriate growth areas should be planned for and use zoning and subdivision controls to guarantee the sound development of the City.

Center Point should update its subdivision ordinance to be consistent with the goals and objectives contained in this comprehensive plan. Specific issues the City should include in the ordinance are:

- ❖ Open space and park dedication
- ❖ Compact, contiguous subdivision design
- ❖ Requirements for pedestrian or bike trails and sidewalk connectivity
- ❖ Increase sidewalk width requirements
- ❖ Review design standards in the comprehensive plan to ensure they are consistent with the subdivision ordinance

FRINGE AREA AGREEMENTS

With an adopted subdivision ordinance, a municipality has the right to review plats within two miles of its boundaries. The standards and conditions used by a city for review and approval of a subdivision within the city limits are used to review subdivisions within two miles beyond the city's boundary. However, a fringe area agreement would be necessary if the city wanted to coordinate its standards in the fringe area with the county. This would lead to cooperative planning for the sound development of the entire region.

The City's zoning and subdivision ordinance must state that the city will enter into this agreement with the County. It is recommended that a fringe area agreement be entered into with Linn County to protect the City's development interests.

The 28E agreement would include, but is not limited to, which provisions in Center Point zoning and subdivision ordinance will be required and which provisions will be waived when reviewing subdivisions outside of the city limits. The agreement should also include any additional conditions that may be imposed, including but not limited to annexation or compliance with growth management policies. The agreement should also discuss future land use in the designated fringe area. The City of Center Point

Planning and Zoning Commission may also designate any areas where the City (1) waives its right to review the subdivision; (2) reserves the right to review; and (3) will always review the subdivision.

Center Point's attention on growth should be focused within its current City limits and within the Future Growth Boundary as shown on the Future Land Use Map. The City should state in a fringe area agreement with the county that they will always review subdivision plats within the Future Growth Boundary, thereby protecting its interests. Outside of the boundary, the City may elect to reserve the right to review plats.

JOINT-PLANNING EFFORT

In an effort to better coordinate planning activities across multiple levels of government, the city of Center Point should work with the local school district on the future placement of schools and school related facilities. Coordinating the construction of these facilities allows the City to express its views on the potential physical and social impact as well as providing an additional level of input for the decision making process. Future land use decisions made by the city are often influenced by these activities.

In addition, the City should work with Linn County Planning Department in establishing a fringe-area agreement as discussed above. This agreement would assist in the coordination of development within the City's two-mile area and specifically within its future growth areas as discussed below.

FUTURE GROWTH BOUNDARY

The future growth boundary for the City of Center Point is designated on the Future Land Use Map. This corridor includes the likely growth area of the City after the life of this plan. It also defines the geographical limit of government-supplied public facilities and services. It can be generally described as where future development around the City should be directed.

The projected land use needs of Center Point for the next twenty years should be met if the City generally stays within the current City limits. However, it is likely that additional land will be needed to accommodate future growth. Therefore, all land to be annexed for future growth should be located within this corridor. If, during the life of this plan, trends or priorities change, the City should update its future growth boundary to include new annexation possibilities. By staying within the specified growth areas, the City will protect valuable environmentally sensitive ground and prime farmland from unwanted development, while meeting projected land use needs.

ANNEXATION

Cities generally annex land to provide areas for growth, or for a particular public benefit such as managing land development around the city. For example, the city may desire to annex land at major entrances into the community to manage and/or influence the type of land uses that may develop there. Annexation may also occur if a municipality desires to prepare the area for development. The annexation process generally occurs when it is in the public interest to maintain local management over a parcel or tract of land. Annexation may be achieved voluntarily or involuntarily (with or without the explicit consent or request of the land owner).

Annexation for the City of Center Point may be needed during the life of this plan. When annexation becomes necessary, a comprehensive study should be completed. The City must be able to pay for the services required by the residents in the new territory. Because residential land does not “pay for itself,” meaning the money received through property taxes does not necessarily pay for the services required, the fiscal context of annexation should be carefully examined. Services may include sewer, water, snow removal, road maintenance, police, and fire protection, garbage removal, and other costs generally associated with City services.

The benefits of properly planned annexation include coherence and efficiency in the development of a community. Through orderly planned annexation, growth would then be encouraged in areas where services could be most readily extended, therefore minimizing costs.

Proper public input from citizens of the City and the areas to be annexed must be sought. The City should work with neighboring property owners to ensure that the property owner’s plans for the property are being met and that voluntary annexation will occur.

The following are the general policies of the City of Center Point with respect to annexation.

- ❖ To gather proper public input and seek only the use of voluntary annexations.
- ❖ To annex areas where it is clearly desirable to square out boundaries for the purpose of greater efficiency or economy in providing municipal services.
- ❖ To annex areas where annexation is determined to be in the best interest of the City and the owners of the annexed property.
- ❖ To consider topography, water and drainage conditions, current land use, cost to City, and other features such as prime agricultural land when annexation is proposed.
- ❖ To not annex land which would create “islands” within the City limits.
- ❖ To annex targeted areas of land only within the Future Growth Boundary on the Future Land Use Map.

CURRENT LAND USE PATTERNS

Land use refers to the type of activity for which any given parcel of land is being used. Because present land use conditions and activities exert a strong influence on future growth and development, it is necessary that a detailed and accurate existing land use survey be completed.

As seen in the Current Land Use Map, the largest single land use is residential, accounting for nearly 49 percent of the City's developed land area. Commercial and industrial land uses account for nearly 17 percent, while public/park and infrastructure space account for the remaining 34 percent.

In addition, there is a large amount of undeveloped land within the existing boundaries of Center Point. There are approximately 876 acres of land that is currently undeveloped.

CURRENT LAND USE ANALYSIS

The current land use map should be used by the Planning and Zoning Commission to easily identify the locations of the existing land uses throughout the City. The various categories of land use characteristics and ownership are identified as follows:

RESIDENTIAL

This category includes all land on which the major structure serves as one or more dwelling units, as well as any tracts of land with housing subdivisions, including land which has been split from a farmstead. Public structures, stores, service stations and other similar structures are not included in this category. However, home businesses are included.

As mentioned before, residential use is the primary land use in the City. New residential development is generally occurring towards the south and southwest portion of the community.

COMMERCIAL AND BUSINESS

This category includes all land and buildings where products, goods or services are sold and exchanged. Included are retail stores, business offices, service stations, amusement, food and other service establishments. Home businesses are not included in this category.

Most of the commercial uses in the community are located along the southern entrance into the City. There are a few remaining commercial businesses located Main Street.

INDUSTRIAL

This category includes land where the main use involves the application of labor to materials to produce a product that is not normally sold to the ultimate consumer on the premises. Utilities are included in this category.

AGRICULTURAL

The current land use survey included in this category all land completely undeveloped without any structures, land which is idle and any land currently in farm production.

Agricultural land generally surrounds the entire community.

PUBLIC AND CONSERVATION

This category includes all land and buildings owned by governmental agencies (city, county, state, federal, board of education). For the purpose of the land use survey,

“public” also includes parkland which is land maintained, generally, in its natural state, landscaped or otherwise, for recreational use. Also, “public” includes any church property such as buildings and cemeteries.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS IN LAND USE

This section of the Comprehensive Plan will focus on the land use characteristics needed to support the projected population increase through the year 2030. In addition, it will project the community's probable housing demand and land requirements during the planning period.

For Center Point to accommodate growth successfully, it must determine the character of that growth and assure that it enhances rather than alters the sense of the community. In addition, the City must have adequate land available for the projected growth. Land use projections should anticipate future growth needs and permit a reasonable amount of flexibility to accommodate possible changes in trends.

As mentioned before, a community benefits from compact growth. When development occurs incrementally, contiguous to the edge of existing development, a town grows in a unified way. This method of incremental growth reduces costs associated with public infrastructure extensions (sewer, water, transportation), and allows for the efficient movement of pedestrians and emergency vehicles.

LAND USE PROJECTIONS

Past trends in land development rates provide guidance in determining how much land will be needed to accommodate future growth in Center Point (see Table 6.1).

Projecting population, housing, and development trends of the last twenty years to the next twenty would suggest 120 acres of additional residential land would be needed.

This additional land would accommodate the community's anticipated housing needs up to the year 2030, including space for the public utilities and infrastructure needed to serve each new development.

Commercial and industrial land needs are more difficult to project. If the City aggressively pursues commercial or industrial development, possible projections could be skewed. Commercial and industrial development supplies cities with the resources necessary to provide services to the city's residents. It is important to provide a proper amount of land for business uses to serve the expected population. Therefore, the City should plan for an additional 250 to 275 acres of land for both commercial and industrial use.

Industrial uses should be limited to the industrial park area which would take approximately 180 acres.

For future recreation and open space needs, the Center Point Comprehensive Plan projects the City's future population close to 3,000 residents in 2030. This represents about 327 additional housing units during the planning period. Based on a park dedication standard of 0.05 acres per unit, future growth will require the dedication of seven additional acres of park and recreational space in the next twenty years. In addition, the plan calls for the development of a citywide network of trails and open space. This network may be able to utilize existing right-of-way; however, an additional 10 to 20 acres of land may be necessary to begin a comprehensive open space and

trail system. Also, the City currently has a surplus of 9 acres of open space or recreational areas.

Table 6.1 - Projected Twenty-Year Land Use Needs, City of Center Point

Land Use	Projected Additional Needs (Acres)
Residential	120
Commercial	100
Industrial	180
Park/Natural Areas and Open Space	7
Total Land Needs	407 acres

Source: East Central Iowa Council of Governments

Table 6.1 displays the projected land use needs for the City of Center Point for the next twenty years. The total suggests 407 acres of additional land will be needed to support the projected population increase. As mentioned before, there are currently approximately 876 undeveloped acres within the existing boundaries of the City. All 407 acres needed for future growth during the life of this plan could theoretically be accommodated within the current City limits.

However, during the planning period, the City may need additional land for unforeseen growth and development. Therefore, future development outside the current City limits should be directed into the Future Growth Areas. This approach will help to ensure cost-effective, efficient development that benefits the entire region.

FUTURE LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are listed in no particular order, and are presented as a guide for City officials in making decisions about future land use in Center Point. These recommendations correspond to the Future Land Use Map.

- 1) Single-family residential use will continue to be the dominant type of residential use in Center Point. Because the area between the school and the Interstate has nearly reached build-out, future residential growth should be focused in the growth corridor to the north and northeast (Phase 1 and 2 on the Future Growth Map). These areas have been designated as lower density single-family residential with certain types of low-impact commercial along major routes to serve the new development.
- 2) Multi-family residential should be focused around the Ford Lane area, as well as in the east and southeast areas of the community as shown on the Future Land Use Map. For future areas outside of the City limits, multi-family development should be used as a buffer between commercial and single-family uses. Proper landscaping and buffering should occur to insure compatibility with adjacent uses.
- 3) Commercial development should occur in three general areas of Center Point. 1) Along Main Street in the Central Business District. 2) Neighborhood scale business should be promoted within the context of mixed-use development throughout the

community and in the Phase 1 and 2 growth areas to serve new residential development. This development should be limited in size and operation to insure compatibility with adjacent neighborhoods. 3) In the Phase 3 growth area as well as along Lewis Access Road and Ford Lane. This development should be larger, service oriented commercial use. Phase 3 is identified as the areas south and southeast of the I-380 intersection. Currently, this area would be difficult for the City to serve with sewer and water. If infrastructure could be provided in the future, this would be an excellent spot for highway commercial business.

- 4) Industrial development should be limited to the area designated on the Future Land Use Map. For future expansion, the Phase 3 area of the Future Growth Area map south of the Highway intersection should serve as the new location for industrial development. In all instances, new industrial development should be designed to have no impact on neighboring uses.
- 5) Every attempt should be made to establish future development within the current City limits. However, potential development outside of the City limits should occur within the Future Growth Corridors shown on the Future Growth Area Map.
- 6) Future development should utilize incremental design (compact and contiguous growth) to protect natural features and preserve open space.
- 7) The development of new activity centers such as parks and recreation areas should be encouraged. Trails or sidewalks should link each activity center for pedestrian use.
- 8) Future neighborhoods should connect to existing neighborhoods to improve cross-community mobility. Cul-de-sacs should be discouraged whenever possible.
- 9) The City should utilize the Comprehensive Plan's policy statements on pages 7 through 13 when reviewing proposed developments.

CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT PLAN (MAIN STREET REDEVELOPMENT)

The City's Main Street was once the focal point for City business and activities. It is currently in a state of disrepair as major commercial activities are locating along Lewis Access Road. A revitalized main street can provide a sense of pride for a community, as well as providing a strong sense of place.

The community survey identified Main Street as an important issue within the community. The general appearance of Main Street and the surrounding businesses was also an issue for citizens. Improving Main Street and making it a focal point for the City should be a priority.

Future commercial development should be encouraged in this district. To create a sense of community, Center Point should promote the renewal of their "main street". Storefronts should be revitalized through the use of paint or if needed, structurally enhanced. A theme could be created for lighting and benches along the street. Small trees could be planted to create a friendly environment for pedestrians. A local

economic development group could enlist residents to help establish what improvements are needed to the downtown area.

Once the current business district begins to be revitalized, it will be easier to attract and keep local businesses. Residents will be more likely to take pride in the downtown area and frequent it more often.

Also, it will be important for the City to link any new development on the outer edge of the community to the downtown district. This can be accomplished through transportation routes with easy access (through streets, proper signage). In addition, informational signs can be placed in strategic locations directing people to the downtown area and places of interest such as the school, the park system and any new industrial park. These signs should coordinate with the theme of the business district for a sense of continuity throughout the City.

Main Street should be user friendly and walkable with areas of green space provided for residents enjoying their time downtown. Tax abatements can be used for commercial activity to offer an incentive for store owners to locate in the downtown area or improve their store fronts.

In addition, to fixing storefronts, store backs should not be overlooked. Many times store backs are left to deteriorate with junk or wild vegetation growth. Revitalized store backs are convenient for parking or even public park space. While storefronts are what everyone sees, store backs can play an important role in the development of a community and should be cleaned and fixed as well. Also, to ensure people remain in the downtown area, the City should promote second floor apartments above main street businesses.

It is important to point out that the revitalization of a downtown main street will not occur overnight. It will be contingent on public support, and will need the backing of area banks, businesses and developers. A revitalized main street will help the City grow with a sense of community and pride.

INDUSTRIAL PARK PLAN

Center Point should pursue industrial development through a new industrial park and provide incentives to spur this type of growth. The park should be strategically located to take advantage of the intersection of Interstate 380 just outside of the City (see the Future Land Use Map for general location of the new industrial park). Incentives the City could provide include tax abatements, TIFs and other assistance including the use of state grant and loan programs.

Industrial development, if done correctly, enhances a community's tax base and provides a substantial number of jobs. Proper industrial park development includes sufficient transportation routes to and from the park, up-to-date ordinances which guide the type of industries, sufficient buffering to protect neighboring uses, and the capability to promote the park to attract diverse industries. Also, it is important to maintain quality environmental standards to protect the area's environmental resources from industrial type development.

There are a several items the City will have to contend with for the proper development of the industrial park. Housing is one issue the City must address. For industries to locate in a community, adequate housing must be available for the employees. Additional, affordable housing opportunities should be a priority for the community if an industrial park is to succeed. In addition, proper promotion of the park, coupled with incentives and the continued maintenance, upgrades, and construction of the City's infrastructure will further assist industrial development.

The City should take care to monitor the housing situation and ensure that there are adequate housing opportunities for potential new employees.

As mentioned there are several incentives the City could provide to start an industrial park. However, the City should not provide so many incentives that the addition of an industrial park becomes a burden on the City's budget. The industrial park should not cost more to support than the City receives in tax revenue.

In addition to offering tax abatements, TIF's, and other direct assistance, the City can offer vocational training assistance, on the job training compensation, and other educational assistance in order to teach workers the necessary skills for any potential employers. An educated populace is usually a determining factor when a company or firm is looking for locations. Center Point can work with the area community college and metro chamber of commerce to provide these services. This incentive structure would make Center Point a great destination for skilled labor jobs.

OVERALL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic development is vital for a city's fiscal and social health. Commercial and industrial businesses not only provide jobs, but they are also the main financial vehicle for cities to gain revenue. A city's revenue is usually spent on services for its citizens. Since taxes on residential homes do not typically cover the cost of providing city services, the remaining money must come from taxes on commercial and industrial businesses.

The recent community survey indicated that economic development is a very important issue for many residents. Currently, there are two main commercial areas in Center Point, Main Street and Lewis Access Rd/Ford Lane that connects Center Point and I-380. Any future economic development should be directed into these areas.

A central question that must be asked is how does Center Point attract new businesses? Center Point is close to the Cedar Rapids metropolitan area and has access to the amenities and job markets that comes from that proximity. What needs to be done is to make Center Point a more attractive place for businesses. Job-training and other educational programs geared towards employment would give Center Point that an edge over other unprepared communities.

In addition, Center Point should still provide and maintain a good transportation and infrastructure network and other physical amenities. These are necessity for attracting new business. However, education is often an underutilized tool that many cities do not

recognize as a way to bring in new businesses. Companies want a smart, educated workforce and providing similar programs like the ones mentioned above would ensure potential employees get the needed education and training required for the job.

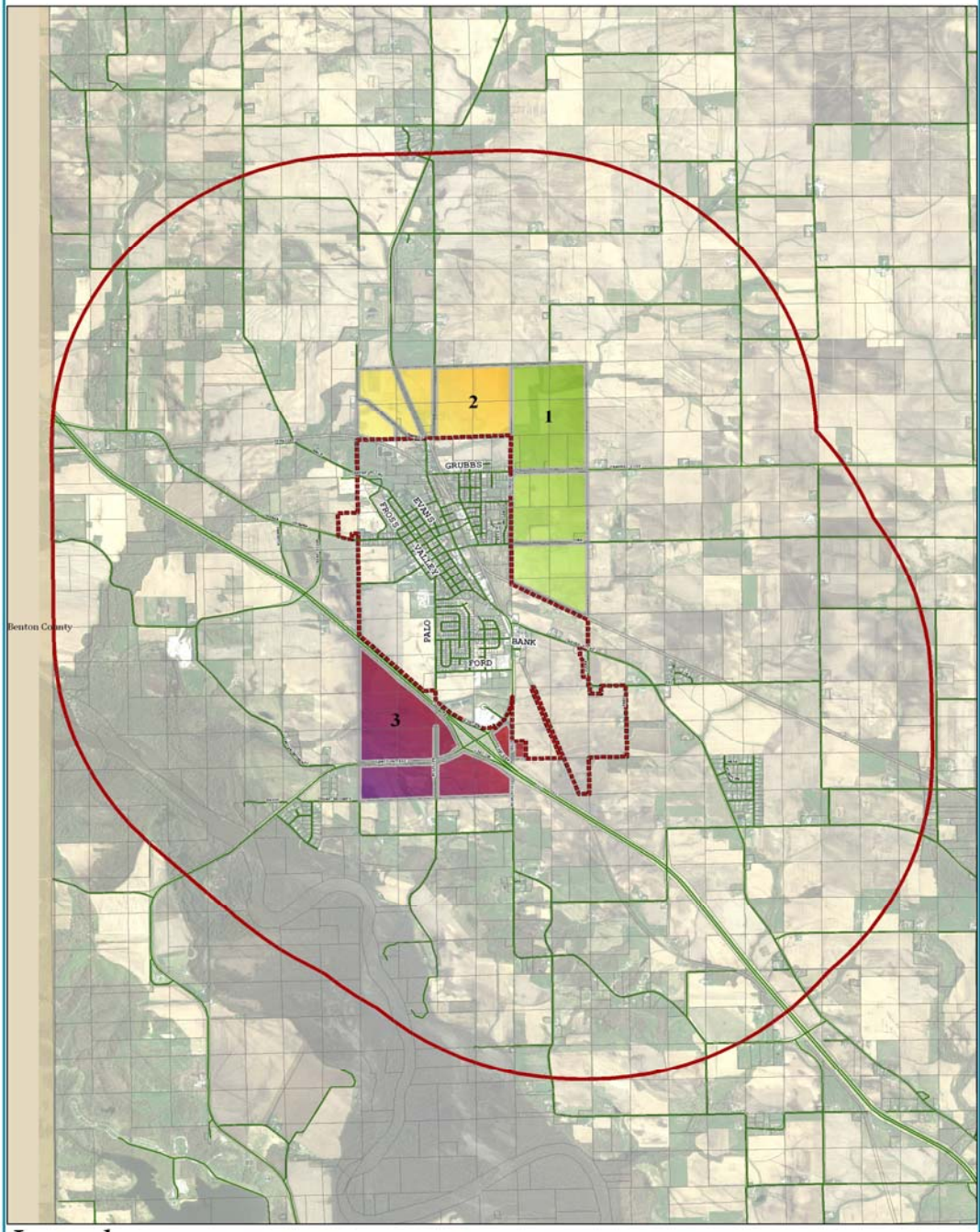
LAND USE PLAN ANALYSIS

Based on the information gathered in the Comprehensive Plan, the planning and zoning commission established the Future Land Use Map for the City of Center Point. The future land use map is generalized, but indicates the relative size, location and densities of land required to accommodate future growth.

This map should be consulted prior to any decision regarding a request for a change in zoning. Doing so adds validity to the Planning and Zoning Commission's and City Council's decisions when considering rezoning requests. This review, along with adopted procedural requirements of the Commission and Council, and those in the Code of Iowa, may assist the City when faced with a legal confrontation about zoning and land use decisions.

FUTURE GROWTH AREAS

CENTER POINT DRAFT FUTURE GROWTH AREAS



Legend

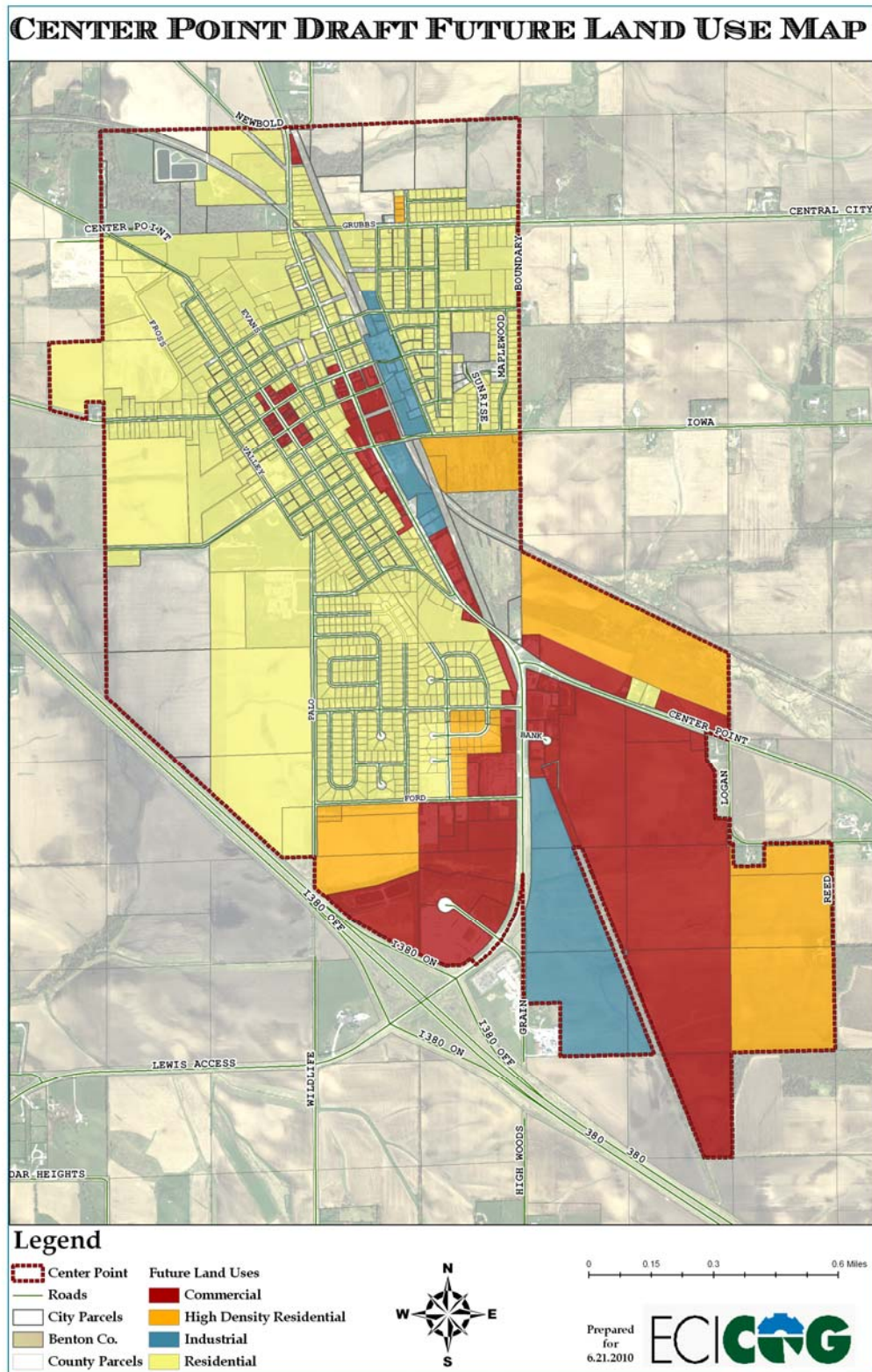
- | | | | |
|--|----------------|--|---------------------|
| | Center Point | | Future Growth Areas |
| | 2 Mile Area | | Phase |
| | Roads | | |
| | Benton Co. | | |
| | County Parcels | | |



0 0.15 0.3 0.6 Miles

Prepared for
6.21.2010

FUTURE LAND USE MAP



PLAN IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

The City should be reminded that this plan does not establish any new ordinance or legislative mandate. The goals and policies contained in the plan are to be used as a guide for local officials in decision making and implementing specific developmental tools, such as the zoning and subdivision ordinances. While adoption of these policies does not commit the City to any specific recommendations, it should commit the City to actions that are consistent with the policy guidelines and the plan itself.

This section of the plan presents an implementation schedule for the recommendations, summarizing the actions proposed by the plan. Each action is listed generally in the order presented in the plan. The action is then given a specific time frame for implementation. Each dot is representative of a completion date. However, the schedule does not list ongoing policies or actions the City should continuously undertake.

In this way, the schedule can be used to monitor the progress of the plan. This is a very important role of the plan update process that will be necessary to keep this document dynamic and up-to-date.

Table 7.1 - Implementation Schedule

Action	Within 2 Years	Within 5 Years	Within 10 years	Within 15 Years	Within 20 Years
Plan for a population near 3,000					•
Review and update City’s zoning and subdivision ordinances to conform with the Comprehensive Plan	•				
Establish coordinated welcome/informational signs throughout the community			•		
Create a capital improvements plan for a detailed schedule of infrastructure projects	•				
Integrate a network of sidewalks, trails and open spaces throughout the City					•
Construct a new 500,000 gallon water tower	•				
Complete curb and gutter program throughout the City					•
Create an east/west collector road connecting Palo Road and Fay Road				•	

Action	Within 2 Years	Within 5 Years	Within 10 years	Within 15 Years	Within 20 Years
Extend Main Street south to Ford Lane			•		
Improve Lewis Access Road with turn land and new paving	•				
Extend Ford Lane north to Iowa Street and east to North Center Point Road			•		
Extend Iowa Street north to Green Street				•	
Extend Grain Lane north to Fay Road				•	
Pave Palo Road			•		
Construct a new lagoon and lift station at north wastewater plant			•		
Install sidewalks along Vine Street, Iowa Street and Meadow Breeze Lane		•			
Create a Central Business District Renewal Plan		•			
Create a Industrial Park Plan		•			
Create a storm sewer installation plan		•			
Create a sidewalk installation plan		•			
Connect unserved neighborhoods to the City's sidewalk system			•		
Establish a fringe area development agreement with Linn County			•		
Review and update this plan at least every five years		•	•	•	•

IMPLEMENTATION ANALYSIS

This Comprehensive Plan for Center Point is intended to guide the City well into the 21st century. Its broad goals and objectives reflect the consensus of the Planning and Zoning Commission, City Council, and the citizens of Center Point. The policy directions are to serve as a general guideline for more specific action undertaken by the residents and government of the City. These goals and strategies look twenty years into the future with the expectation that periodic updates will need to be done to reflect changes in the City and the region.

The planning process should be an ongoing endeavor. The success of this plan will require the support of City residents as well as the City Council. Cooperation from the public and private sectors will allow implementation of the goals and objectives that will provide long-term benefits to the entire City.

A WORD OF CAUTION...

Once the plan has been adopted, the City should make every attempt to put the plan to work. However, no plan could possibly foresee every issue that will arise during the planning period. Therefore, the plan should be used as purely a guide for growth and development. Deviation from the Future Land Use Map could be expected, as some developments will inevitably differ from the vision of the plan. However, if properly used, the policies and goals contained in the plan should provide the City with the flexibility to ensure each development fits with the overall vision of the community.

G L O S S A R Y O F T E R M S

Affordable Housing: Housing is considered affordable when a household pays less than 30 percent of its gross monthly income for housing cost, including utilities.

Annexation: To incorporate a land area currently outside of the existing city limits into a municipality, with a resulting expansion in the boundaries of the municipality.

Arterial Street: See *Street System Hierarchy*

Buffer Strips: The Center Point Plan calls for buffering between different land uses to minimize negative impacts. Buffering can include open space, landscaped areas, fences, walls, berms or any combination thereof to physically separate or screen one use or property from another. In designing buffers, the City's zoning ordinance should allow flexibility for the type and size of the buffer.

Collector Street: See *Street System Hierarchy*

Density: The number of housing units or structures allowed per unit of land. In Center Point, current allowable density is approximately 3 housing units per acre.

Development: The physical construction of the buildings and/or the preparation of land. Development activities include: subdivision of land; construction or alternation of structures, roads, utilities and other facilities; installation of septic systems; grading; and clearing of natural vegetative cover (with the exception of agricultural activities).

Environmentally Sensitive Land: An area with one or more of the following characteristics: (1) steep slopes, (2) flood plain, (3) soils with high water tables including wetlands and wetlands transition areas, (4) soils that are highly erodible or subject to erosion, (5) land incapable of meeting percolation requirements, (6) stream or river corridor, (7) mature stands of native vegetation, and (8) habitats of endangered species.

Floodplain: The land area on either side of the banks of a waterway subject to flooding. The City of Center Point's floodplain map is on file at City Hall.

Fringe-area agreements: See *Intergovernmental Agreement*

Future Growth Boundary: The corridors to the southwest and north and northeast of the City of Center Point that defines the potential growth area for the City. The corridors, as shown on the Future Land Use Map, can be generally described as where development after the planning period of this plan should be directed.

Goal: Description of a desired state of affairs for the community in the future. Goals are the broad public purposes toward which policies and programs are directed. Generally, more than one set of actions (objectives) may be required to achieve each goal.

Green Space: See *Open Space*

Growth Management: A wide-range of techniques used in combination to manage or influence the amount, type, location, density, timing and/or rate of growth. Growth management objectives often form the backbone of a comprehensive plan. Techniques used to execute growth management policies may include: zoning and subdivision ordinances, capital improvements, and designation of future growth or urban service boundaries.

IDED: The Iowa Department Of Economic Development

IDNR: The Iowa Department Of Natural Resources

IDOT: The Iowa Department of Transportation

Incremental Design: Method of development to maintain small town atmosphere and reducing sprawl by utilizing compact, contiguous growth to existing development.

Infrastructure: Public services and facilities needed to sustain residential, commercial, industrial and all other types of development activities. Infrastructure includes, but is not limited to sewage disposal systems, water supply systems, drainage systems, roads, parks, sidewalks, trails, schools, libraries, fire, police, emergency, medical facilities and public works facilities.

Intergovernmental Agreement: (28E Agreement) A legal document binding two or more governmental units or agencies to act in certain cooperative ways. The term is most often used in a planning context to refer to shared or delegated responsibility to review development proposals and/or to recognize adopted plans and policies of the governmental units or agencies. For example, the City of Center Point and Linn County may adopt a 28E agreement which requires each entity to provide materials on development proposals within certain geographic areas for the other entity to review and comment upon. Also called fringe-area agreements.

Issues: Points of debate, discussion or dispute in the community that are identified in the plan and are dealt with by the plan's goals, policies and objectives.

Land Use: A description of how land is occupied or utilized. Land use types typically include: various types of residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, and public uses.

Local Street: See *Street System Hierarchy*

Mixed Use District: The development of a tract of land with a variety of complementary and integrated uses in a compact urban form. Mixed use within Center Point could include a combination of properly planned single- and multi-family residential and light, neighborhood commercial uses to insure compatibility between each use.

Neighborhood Commercial: Small scale business activity which is limited in size and operation to insure compatibility with adjacent neighborhoods and uses. It is generally within walking distance to local residential neighborhoods.

Objective: Individual accomplishments which, taken together, will enable the city to achieve stated goals.

Open Space: Any parcel or area of land or water that is essentially unimproved and devoted to an open space use for the purposes of (1) the preservation of natural resources, (2) outdoor recreation (active or passive), or (3) public health or safety. Land used for the managed production of resources (farming, etc.) is not considered open space for the purpose of this plan.

Plan: The formulation and graphic representation of the means to reach a desired end, as well as the act of preparing a plan (community input, research and analysis). The Center Point Comprehensive Plan is a written and graphic analysis of a desirable and feasible pattern of growth with goals and objectives to best serve the residents of the community. This plan is based on the input of the community and upon data and extensive research.

Planning Area: The area specifically shown on the Future Land Use Map contained in this plan. It can be generally described as all the land within the corporate boundaries of Center Point, as well as all the land within two miles surrounding the community. This is the area that directly influences the character, services and facilities of the City of Center Point. This area may be amended from time to time as the city physically grows.

Planning Period: The period for which the projections and the goals and objectives of this plan were made (from the year 2010 to 2030).

Policy: Statements of government intent for which individual actions and decisions are evaluated.

Region: The region designated by the Iowa Legislature as State Planning Area 10. This region consists of six contiguous counties in eastern Iowa, including: Benton, Iowa, Johnson, Jones, Linn, and Washington, which are served by the planning agency East Central Iowa Council of Governments (ECICOG).

Setback: The distance between the permitted structure and the lot line. In Center Point, the setback is regulated for the front, rear and side yards of principal and accessory uses.

Strategy: Tasks which may be taken to achieve stated goals and policies.

Street System Hierarchy: The Center Point street system consists of three functional uses of streets: Arterial, Collector and Local streets. Arterial Streets provide a continuous route for the movement of large volumes of through-traffic across and beyond the City and between high traffic generation points. Collector Streets provide

movement of traffic between arterial streets as well as providing limited access to abutting property. Local streets serve as a means of access to abutting property.

Urban Sprawl: Uncontrolled growth, usually low-density in nature, in previously rural areas and some distance from existing development and infrastructure.

Use: The purpose for which a lot or structure is or may be leased, occupied, maintained, arranged, designed, intended, constructed, moved, altered, and/or enlarged in accordance with the zoning ordinance and the Comprehensive Plan's Future Land Use categories.

Zoning: The delineation of districts and the establishment of regulations governing the use, placement, spacing and size of land and buildings.

SURVEY RESULTS

The following are the results of the community-wide survey that was administered in May 2010. The comments made on the surveys are not included, but are included in the official results. To view the official results, please navigate to Center Point’s official city website. Otherwise, contact the City of Center Point for an official copy.

Question #1: Rank the following items in the order of importance you would place upon them being accomplished by the city. Use a “1” to indicate the most important, a “2” for the second most important, and so on. Do not rank items if you believe it unimportant.

Table App. 1 – Ranked Items of Importance

Item	Total Points	1	2	13	14	# of Respondents
Local street maintenance/improvements	3070	128	50	0	0	242
Economic development (attracting new business/industry)	2065	22	36	3	1	198
Correcting storm drainage problems	2039	20	39	3	2	196
Updating city infrastructure (water, sewer)	1809	12	27	1	1	183
Improving appearance of community	1564	8	7	5	0	176
Improving Main Street	1516	8	15	7	4	173
Recreational opportunities (activities complex, swimming pool, etc.)	1481	9	21	10	5	173
Establishing a city police department	1466	26	22	10	22	166
Planning for future growth in appropriate areas	1357	3	9	5	4	164
Maintaining small town atmosphere	1205	7	10	5	12	156
Constructing a new fire station	1070	8	4	12	9	152
Extending water and sewer to outlying areas	832	0	4	8	9	133
Developing multi-purpose bike and pedestrian trails	718	2	1	17	14	124
Increasing housing opportunities	695	1	3	13	13	122

Each item in Table 1 were ranked by importance. Each vote for #1 received 14 points, #2 received 13 points, etc. In the Table, total points were used to rank each item. The numbers of respondents that ranked each item first, second, etc. are also shown in Table 1.

Local street maintenance/improvements is by far the most important issue. It was ranked number 1 more times than all of the other items combined. Correcting storm drainage problems and economic development each received about the same response and are the next highest issues. The least important items are increasing housing opportunities and developing multi-purpose bike/pedestrian trails. Both issues received more last place votes than first place votes.

The most controversial issue is establishing a city police department. It received the second most first place votes and the most last place votes. Also, by the comments received, this is a very contentious issue within the community.

When viewing these results, it should be noted that the number of responses per item varies a great amount. Some respondents may have felt a few of the questions were unimportant and therefore did not rank that item. This means that even though items were ranked important based upon points and number of times ranked first, a person may have only ranked ten items.

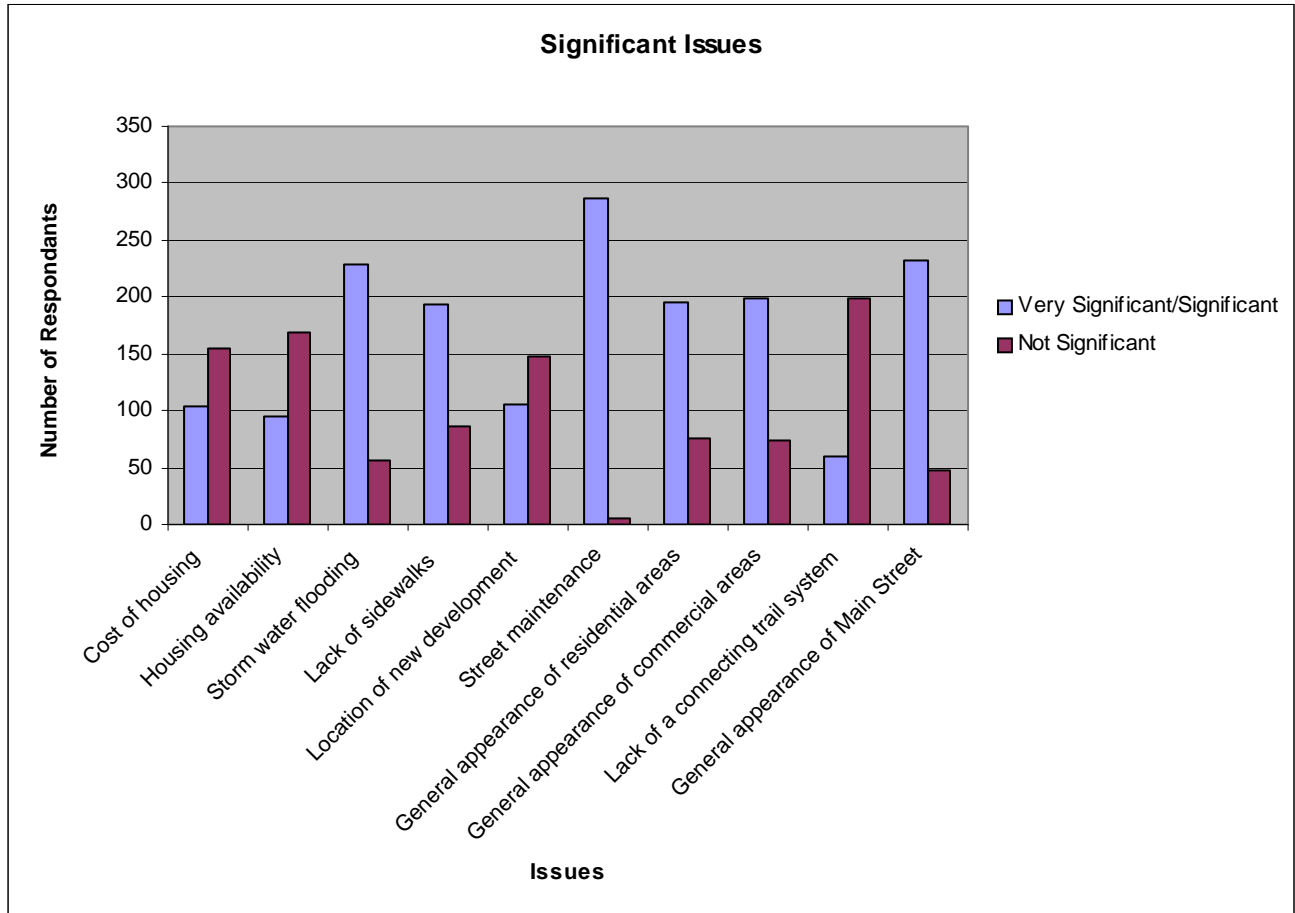
Question #2: How significant a problem is each of the following?

Table App. 2 – Significant Issues

Problem	Very Significant	Significant	Not significant	# of Respondents
Cost of housing	26	77	151	254
Housing availability	18	77	163	259
Storm water flooding	94	130	55	279
Lack of sidewalks	86	105	85	276
Location of new development	20	85	142	247
Street maintenance	221	61	5	287
General appearance of residential areas	55	137	74	266
General appearance of commercial areas	62	132	71	265
Lack of a connecting trail system	10	49	194	253
General appearance of Main Street	86	141	47	274

This question asked respondents to either mark an issue as very significant, significant, or not significant. Table 2 presents the actual information while Figure 1 shows this information graphically. From Figure 1, the most important issue is street maintenance. Then there are several issues that more or less generally received the same response of significance. The least important item is the lack of a connecting trail system. The number of respondents is generally consistent for each problem.

Figure App. 1 – Significant and Non Significant Issues



Question #3: In general, how restrictive or permissive do you believe the city's approach is toward controlling growth and development?

Table 3 – Center Point's Level of Permitting Growth and Development

City's Approach	Ranking
Don't know / No Opinion	118
Balanced	67
Restrictive	42
Very Restrictive	32
Permissive	13
Very Permissive	11

Many respondents either did not have an opinion or did not know how permissive or restrictive the city's approach is toward controlling growth and development. Of the people that did have an opinion, many people believed that the city has a balanced approach to growth. Also, from the people who responded that the city was either restrictive or permissive, they generally viewed the city as restrictive when it comes to growth.

Question #4: How important is the protection of Center Point's small town atmosphere?

Table App. 4 – Ranked View of Center Point's Small Town Atmosphere

Small Town Atmosphere	Ranking
Very Important	124
Somewhat Important	120
Not Important	33
Don't know / No Opinion	6

A vast majority of respondents feel that Center Point's small town atmosphere is at least somewhat important to them. Of those people that felt the small town atmosphere was important, respondents were split almost evenly between somewhat important and very important.

Question #5: Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Table App. 5 – Respondents Views on Statements

Statement	Agree	Disagree	Not Sure	# of Respondents
Center Point should continue composting facility	237	8	32	282
Center Point should upgrade Lewis Access Road from the Interstate to North Center Point Road	222	18	36	280
Center Point needs more commercial development	206	25	34	269
Center Point should improve Main Street	197	38	43	282
Center Point should extend and pay for Iowa Street improvements to new High School	152	59	62	278
Center Point population growth should continue	150	40	79	273
Center Point should promote the creation of an industrial park / industrial development	145	54	66	269
Center Point should promote the preservation of prime agricultural land	143	49	76	272
Center Point should create a city police department	139	82	56	282
Center Point should promote increased residential growth	128	61	76	269
Center Point needs more diverse housing opportunities	87	104	78	275
Center Point should take over maintenance of Wakema Park from the County	87	85	99	273

With question #5, respondents marked whether they agreed or disagreed with a statement or responded that they were not sure about their view. From Table 5, the two

most agreed upon statements are that Center Point should continue the composting facility and that Center Point should upgrade Lewis Access Road from the Interstate to North Center Point Road. Generally, almost all of the statements were agreed upon more than they were disagreed with. The only two statements that were either disagreed with or people were not sure of were that Center Point needs more diverse housing opportunities and that Center Point should take over maintenance of Wakema Park from the County.

Question #6: Check any of the following housing types the city should encourage to develop in the future.

Table App. 6 – Ranking Future Housing Types

Housing Type	Ranking
Moderately priced single-family homes	182
Senior citizen housing / assisted living	154
Starter single-family homes	101
Town homes / condominiums	101
Apartments	80
High value single-family homes	48
Duplex	45

The above question asked respondents to determine which types of housing the city should encourage. Table 6 shows the single most desired housing type for Center Point is moderately priced single-family homes. The next most sought after type is senior citizen housing/assisted living. The two types of housing that are the least wanted are duplexes and high value single-family homes.

Question #7: Check any of the following business / commercial types the city should encourage to develop in the future.

Table App. 7 – Desirable Future Commercial Development

Business Type	Ranking
Community center (wedding receptions, etc.)	177
Restaurants	172
Hardware store	167
Fitness center	112
Coffee shop	97
Hotel	95
Movie theater	79
Bowling alley	76
Office park	59
Large shopping center	56

From Table 7, the types of commercial development respondents believe the city should encourage are a community center, restaurants, and a hardware store. The least desirable businesses are a large shopping center and an office park.

Question #8: Rate each of the following City services or facilities.

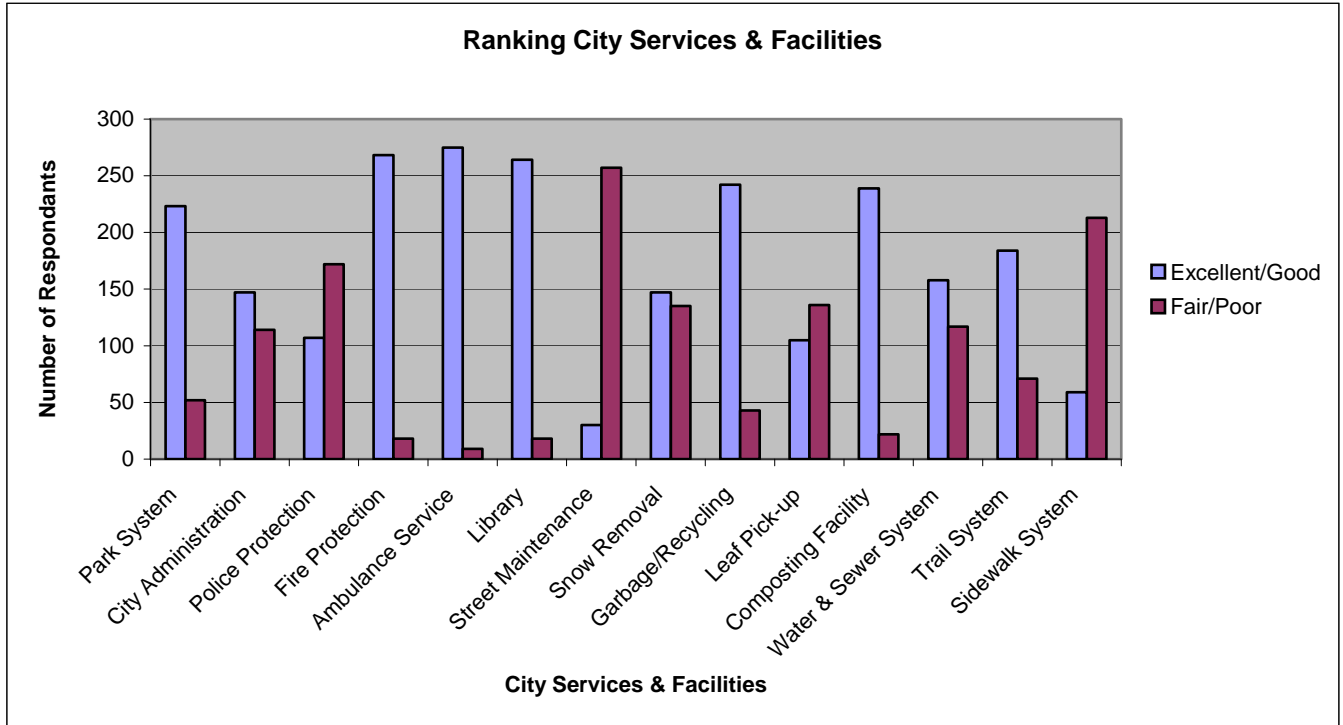
Table 8 – Critique of Center Point City Services

City Service	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	# of Respondents
Ambulance Service	157	113	9	0	279
Library	133	126	16	2	277
Fire Protection	124	139	16	2	281
Composting Facility	107	127	22	0	256
Park System	82	137	45	6	270
Garbage/Recycling	66	171	37	6	280
Trail System	33	147	60	10	250
Water & Sewer System	20	134	88	29	271
Snow Removal	18	126	77	56	277
City Administration	16	128	93	19	256
Police Protection	10	97	80	87	274
Leaf Pick-up	9	95	53	79	236
Sidewalk System	4	54	83	127	268
Street Maintenance	3	26	83	170	282

Each of the city services and facilities listed in Table 8 were rated. The respondent's top rated city services/facilities were the ambulance service, the library, the fire service, and the composting facility. The worst rated services and facilities were street maintenance and the sidewalk system. Figure 2, below, displays the information found in Table 8.

Figure 2 groups the excellent/good and the fair/poor categories together so that it is easier to determine which services and facilities were not rated well. Police protection is a service that did not rate very well, however the county provides police coverage and this topic is a controversial one.

Figure App. 2 – Ranking City Services & Facilities



N O T E S

SMART GROWTH PLANNING LEGISLATION**Location of Planning Principles Within the Plan**

Principle	Plan Page(s)
Public Participation	3-6, 27, 30, 31, 57-63
Local Characteristics	4-6, 14-23, 28-30
Land Use	7, 10, 38-50
Housing	13, 18-20, 43, 44
Infrastructure	26-33
Transportation	7, 8, 10-12, 26-28
Economic Development	45-48
Agricultural and Natural Resources	21-25, 41, 42
Government Facilities	31-32
Quality of Life	4-6
Natural Hazards	22
Joint Planning Efforts	40
Implementation	51-52

T A B L E S , C H A R T S A N D M A P S O F T H E P L A N

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