

An Update to the 2007 Comprehensive Plan



2013

Comprehensive

Land Use Plan



SNYDER & ASSOCIATES
Engineers and Planners

A Comprehensive Land Use Plan For Monona County, Iowa

Prepared with the Citizens of Monona County

By: Snyder & Associates, Inc.

April 23, 2013

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Board of Supervisors

Tim Jessen, Chairman

James W. Jensen

Brady Hanson

Zoning Commission

Patty McCall, Chairman

Lonnie Campbell, Vice Chairman

James Alexander

Ruth Jordan

Wilbur Koch

Ray Seversen

Monona County Staff

Sandy Bubke, Administrator of Zoning & Environmental Health

Dave Carney, County Engineer

Brooke Kuhlmann, County Auditor

Michael Jensen, County Attorney

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Chapter 1: Introduction</i>	<i>1-1</i>
<i>Chapter 2: Existing Conditions.....</i>	<i>2-1</i>
<i>Existing Land Use Plan.....</i>	<i>2-3</i>
<i>Zoning Map.....</i>	<i>2-4</i>
<i>Chapter 3: Future Land Use Plan.....</i>	<i>3-1</i>
<i>Future Land Use Plan.....</i>	<i>3-4</i>
<i>Chapter 4: Transportation.....</i>	<i>4-1</i>
<i>Major Streets Plan.....</i>	<i>4-3</i>
<i>Appendix</i>	
<i>Future Land Use Plan, including township maps</i>	

Chapter 1
Introduction
& Planning Process

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

This Comprehensive Land Use Plan is intended to update and supplement the 2007 Comprehensive Plan for Monona County. As such, this plan is a long-range policy guide to decisions about the physical development of the community but does not provide a detailed design for development of any specific site; instead it set out broad policy directions for growth, development and redevelopment.

This Comprehensive Land Use Plan was developed through a Steering Committee consisting of members of the Zoning Commission, Board of Supervisors, and staff as well as the opportunity for input from citizens during public hearings. This plan analyzes and incorporates a wide variety of components, including existing land use, current zoning, and the existing street network. As a result, this Comprehensive Plan provides a vision of Monona County's future, helping to guide future development within the county.

This plan also provides a framework for land use regulations, recognizing that the people of a community live cooperatively and therefore have certain responsibilities to one another. These regulations determine how land is developed within unincorporated areas of the county as well as the extra-territorial jurisdiction areas of cities within the county. Under Iowa law, land use regulations such as zoning ordinances must be established and enforced in accordance with an approved Comprehensive Plan.

Comprehensive planning does not end with adoption of the plan so an important aspect of any plan is its implementation. This Comprehensive Plan presents an integrated action program that will help county officials and staff to implement the goals of the community.

FUTURE AMENDMENTS TO THE PLAN

The time frame of this Comprehensive Plan is an approximately thirty-year period. However, the Plan does not represent a picture of how Monona County will look at any specific year, since plan implementation will occur incrementally throughout the planning period. Nor does the Plan guarantee that areas designated for non-agricultural use will actually develop within that timeframe. However, the Plan indicates the most appropriate areas for residential, commercial and industrial uses to be located should that type of development occur.

Furthermore, amendments to this Comprehensive Plan are likely to occur periodically during this time frame, as external forces and conditions change. An important task for the Zoning Commission and staff is to continually assess growth and development trends, identify priority issues and, when necessary, propose amendments or supplement to this Comprehensive Plan. Such amendments should be carefully prepared and evaluated, with ample opportunity for public input, as was the case with this Comprehensive Plan.

Chapter 2
Existing Conditions

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Monona County lies along the east side of the Missouri River and is home to rich archeological and historic resources as well as a prairie ecosystem. These resources have significant impact on future land use within the county, specifically including the following physical characteristics:

- ***Loess Hills.*** The Loess Hills are a distinctive topographic region extending through the western portion of Monona County, as well neighboring counties, that encompasses dry wind-blown silt originally deposited by glaciers. Certain areas within the Loess Hills have been protected within state or local preserves, while the vast majority of this area is in private ownership.
 - It is recommended that only very low-density development occur within the Loess Hills, including agricultural uses such as grazing and farmsteads or rural residential uses having very low density.
 - Limit site grading operations and require storm water management plans prepared by a registered professional engineer to limit erosion.
- ***Flood Hazard Areas.*** Flood hazard areas associated with the Missouri River and smaller rivers within the county are designated on the Official Zoning Map as floodway, floodway fringe, general floodplain, and low-to-moderate flood district. The floodway and flood fringe areas are generally not suitable for development purposes and are therefore also reflected on the Future Land Use Map in this plan. Some limited development in these areas may be acceptable if appropriately located and properly mitigated. For example, in flood fringe areas, recreational facilities may be permitted. Development should not increase the extent of the flood plain or cause damage or erosion to improvements along the creeks.
 - Any development within the floodplain must follow Monona County's flood plain ordinance as well as all applicable FEMA regulations.
- ***Soil Suitability.*** Though not specifically shown in this Comprehensive Land Use Plan, Soils Maps are available from the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Given the unique soils conditions and topography of Monona County, the potential for unsuitable soils exists. In certain areas, particularly near the Loess Hills, areas having steep slopes or in the flood plain, exploration and analysis by a geotechnical engineer is recommended prior to development.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

EXISTING LAND USE

Development of this Comprehensive Land Use Plan included an evaluation of the current land uses found in Monona County. Existing land uses were reviewed and, through careful consideration during the planning process, a determination was made regarding the suitability of the existing land use in meeting the county's long range vision for the future.

Existing land use was determined and mapped based on land use classifications established by the Monona County Assessor's office, designated in the county's geographic information system. Specific land uses were identified based on field review as well as local knowledge provided by the Zoning Commission and Zoning Administrator. Not surprisingly, agriculture continues to be the dominant land use in Monona County. The existing land use plan is found on page 2-3.

CURRENT ZONING

As this Comprehensive Land Use Plan was developed, future land use was developed in consideration of current zoning of parcels of land. The current Zoning Map is included on page 2-4. While the Future Land Use designation for all parcels does not necessarily match the current zoning for those parcels, current zoning was given consideration as the Steering Committee's vision was developed. As an example, a specific parcel of land may have been rezoned to M-2 Heavy Industrial District in anticipation of a development project that did not come to fruition, so the land has remained in agricultural use. During the planning process, such parcels were evaluated and a future land use was then designated, based on the Committee's opinion of its highest and best use in the future.

Chapter 3

Future Land Use

FUTURE LAND USE

The Future Land Use Plan reflects Monona County's vision for the future growth and development of their community. Developed with consideration given to environmental constraints, existing land use, transportation corridors, and the desires of the community based on input received, the Future Land Use Plan covers the entire unincorporated area of Monona County, with the exception of the Omaha Indian Reservation.

LAND USE GOALS

In considering land use needs and development patterns, Monona County should:

- ***Be consistent with the new Zoning Regulations recently adopted by Monona County.*** Future land use classifications should strongly correlate to designated Zoning Districts, with the exception of agribusinesses which are dispersed throughout the agricultural district.
- ***Utilize the principals of "Smart Growth".*** Smart growth principals should help guide the development of Monona County, specifically:
 - **Preserve open space and critical environmental areas.** Monona County is set in the Loess hills and other areas dominated by highly rolling terrain and numerous rivers and streams. These areas provide habit for plants and animals and offer natural beauty. The accompanying severe slopes and wetlands have influenced the existing development patterns will continue to play an important role in shaping growth in the future. Preservation of these sensitive areas in the form of open space will help prevent adverse environmental impacts. The incorporation of parks, severe slopes and wetlands into the city's land use plan will add quality to the community and provide a balance between the built and natural environment.
 - **Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities.** The future land use plan developed through this planning process provides the opportunity for growth adjacent to the existing cities within the county and concentrates the more intensive uses to those areas. The remainder of the county is, by and large, designated for agricultural use.
 - **Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost effective.** Monona County has worked hard, both with the preparation of this Comprehensive Land Use Plan as well as with updates to the Zoning Regulations and Division of Land & Subdivision Regulations, in making county requirements reasonable, cohesive and easier to administer. This means their application will be fair, with minimal bureaucratic "red tape".
 - **Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions.** Stakeholders, including the Zoning Commission and Board of Supervisors, were heavily involved with both the Comprehensive Land Use Planning

FUTURE LAND USE

project and the Zoning Regulations/Division of Land & Subdivision Regulations project. In addition to the regular public meetings of both groups, numerous public hearings were advertized and held that provided the opportunity for input from citizens of Monona County.

- ***Include transitional land uses.*** Monona County's existing land use pattern includes some adjacent, incompatible land uses, primarily in the form of industrial uses abutting residential uses. The land use plan should reflect transitional land such that there is a gradual progression of land use intensity.
- ***Provide a basis for decision-making.*** In order to successfully achieve the vision set forth by the Comprehensive Plan, and the Future Land Use Plan in particular, the plan must include concise and specific guidelines so decisions are made in a manner that is logical with respect to the dictates of the plan.

THE FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

The City's plan for Future land use is incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan Update as Future Land Use Plan. This Future Land Use Plan identifies more land for development purposes than has been forecasted for the planning period. Identification of more land for each use than is necessary provides flexibility, allowing for multiple development opportunities. A variety of choice avoids giving an unfair advantage to a limited number of property owners in the real estate market. Further, it provides more opportunity to developers if property owners are unwilling to sell their land, particularly farm land, for development purposes.

This Future Land Use Plan is intended to provide general guidelines for future land use. Land uses boundaries are conceptual in nature, with the emphasis being on the relationship between adjoining land uses and physical features. The Future Land Use Plan should not be considered too literally since land use boundaries do not necessarily follow property lines as do zoning district boundary lines on a zoning map.

Agribusiness land use has not been specifically identified on the Future Land Use Plan since it may be interspersed throughout agricultural land uses, provided certain design criteria are met, such as the need for a paved street or other criteria identified in the zoning ordinance.

Chapter 4
Transportation Plan

TRANSPORTATION PLAN

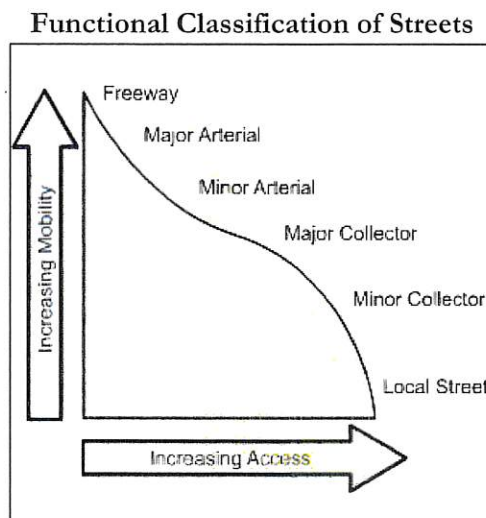
The air, rail, river, and highway transportation system were detailed in the 2007 Comprehensive Plan for Monona County. However, understanding the major street system is an important component of Monona County's Comprehensive Land Use Plan update.

The street network in the county provides the primary transportation system for City residents, as well as through traffic from the surrounding region. These streets provide for truck traffic and personal vehicle use. As such, the street network is intimately related to the Land Use Plan as it forms the means of connection between residences, employment locations, shopping trips and recreation opportunities. Existing streets will form the primary network off of which future development can build. Therefore, it is important to recognize the function current streets provide in the county that provide access, continuity, ease of movement to future development.

TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

The Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) develops a Federal Functional Classification (FFC) map for each county with the input of local government, traffic volumes and statewide network planning. The Major Streets Plan was developed based upon Iowa DOT FFC map and attached at the end of this chapter.

Figure 4-1



As its name indicates, this plan focuses on the major routes that provide countywide connectivity and will provide access to future development. These include Interstates/Principal arterials, minor arterials, major collectors, and minor collectors. The county development process must ensure that future residential developments provide local streets that result in continuity with existing street system and avoid 'dead-end' streets, as to ensure commercial and industrial developments provide internal site circulation, support cross-site access and comply with access restrictions on the major streets.

INTERSTATES/ PRINCIPAL ARTERIALS

Major Arterials are high capacity roadways that primarily provide for the movement of through traffic and limit access to adjacent land. When the road is part of the State or County road system, they serve to move regional through traffic. Principal arterials typically provide four to five lanes for traffic and turn lanes, are often spaced 1 mile to 2 miles apart, have a higher speed limit from 35 mph to 55 mph, and limited access spacing with lower capacity roads and site entrances, generally between 1/2 mile to 1/4 mile