



Home of The Comets

2018

Charles City, Iowa Comprehensive Plan



Prepared By
North Iowa Area Council Of
Governments (NIACOG)

And the
City of Charles City

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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RESERVED FOR ADOPTION RESOLUTION

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1. Iowa Code On The Planning Process

The Code of Iowa provides the basis for city planning in Chapter 414. This chapter is referred to as enabling legislation by the State of Iowa because it empowers cities to plan and regulate their physical development. Although the code subsection pertaining to comprehensive development plans is brief, it specifically states that zoning regulations must be made in accordance with a local comprehensive plan. This Chapter of the Iowa Code also states that the comprehensive plan ‘shall be made with consideration of the smart planning principles’. Also, the code requires the platting and subdivision of land and urban renewal activities to be consistent with a comprehensive development plan.

Planning is the process of determining the future goals of the city and how to achieve those visions. In the City of Charles City, this process will protect prime development land, provide for compatible land use and responsible growth, enhance residential areas while protecting the environment, agricultural, and natural resources, provide recreational opportunities, and expand economic development that will ensure a high quality of life in the community for the future. The comprehensive development process is continuous, because future attitudes and data can change over time, and a regular review and revision process is necessary to meet changing attitudes and information.

The plan’s development was guided by Iowa’s ten (10) Smart Growth and Sustainable Principles found in Iowa Code 18B.1 and the development guidelines found in Iowa Code 18B.2.2. The ten (10) principles prescribed to be addressed include the following:

1. Collaboration – Governmental, community, and individual stakeholders, including those outside the jurisdiction of the entity, are encouraged to be involved and provide comment during deliberation of planning, zoning, development, and resource management decisions and during implementation of such decisions. The state agency, local government, or other public entity is encouraged to develop and implement a strategy to facilitate such participation.
2. Efficiency, Transparency, and Consistency – Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should be undertaken to provide efficient, transparent, and consistent outcomes. Individuals, communities, regions, and governmental entities should share in the responsibility to promote the equitable distribution of development benefits and costs.
3. Clean, Renewable, and Efficient Energy – Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should be undertaken to promote clean and renewable energy use and increased energy efficiency.
4. Occupational Diversity – Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should promote increased diversity of employment and businesses opportunities, promote access to education and training, expand entrepreneurial opportunities, and promote the establishment of businesses in locations near existing housing, infrastructure, and transportation.
5. Revitalization – Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should facilitate the revitalization of established town centers and neighborhoods by promoting development that conserves land, protects historic resources, promotes pedestrian

accessibility, and integrates different uses of property. Remediation and reuse of existing sites, structures, and infrastructure is preferred over new construction in undeveloped areas.

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

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

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

9. Sustainable Design – Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should promote developments, buildings, and infrastructure that utilize sustainable design and construction standards and conserve

natural resources by reducing waste and pollution through efficient use of land, energy, water, air, and materials.

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

Iowa Code (18B.2.2) states that a city “shall consider the smart planning principles” and “may include” the elements listed below, if applicable, when developing or amending a comprehensive plan. The thirteen smart planning elements are:

- a. Public Participation
- b. Community Overview
- c. Current & Future Land Use
- d. Housing
- e. Public Infrastructure
- f. Transportation
- g. Economic Development
- h. Agricultural Land and Natural Resources
- i. Community Facilities
- j. Community Character
- k. Hazards
- l. Collaboration
- m. Implementation Plan



Focus Group A: Infrastructure, Transportation, Hazards

2. Public Participation & Plan Adoption

Focus Groups

Focus groups were established to obtain input from individuals with expertise in the subject areas covered by this comprehensive plan as follows:

Focus Group A: Public Infrastructure, Transportation, Hazards; Focus Group B: Community Facilities, Agriculture, Natural Resources; Focus Group C: Economic Development, Land Use; Focus Group D: Housing, Community Character.

Data Collection and Analysis

A survey tool was developed by the focus group and it was successful in obtaining input from citizens throughout the community. Survey Monkey (an on-line survey tool) was used to input data. Hard copies were also made available to the general public. The survey was promoted through a variety of means including: posting on the city's website (October/November 2017), public service announcements, Channel 4 (Public Access Channel), civic organization presentations, focus group member distribution, word of mouth, and paper copies at the library, city hall, chamber of commerce, county courthouse, etc.

Setting Goals and Strategies

Using the analyzed data, the Focus Groups developed goals that reflect the interests of the Charles City community. The focus groups then developed strategies to reach the goals. The goals and objectives were presented to the public for input at an open house. Their comments were integrated into the goals and objectives. The goals set in the Charles City Comprehensive Plan are visions to achieve over the next 10 to 15 years.

Plan Preparation

Once the goals and objectives were identified, they were added to the Charles City Comprehensive Development Plan. A draft plan was then developed

for final review and comments were requested from the Planning and Zoning Commission and the general public. Alterations to the draft were made accordingly after the end of the comment period.

Plan Adoption

As required by the Iowa Code (Section 414.3.4.a.), this plan was recommended by the City's Planning & Zoning Commission and then adopted by the City Council following a published notice of 4 to 20 days prior to the adoption. All members of the City Council are familiar with the Plan's overall content. The adoption resolution is included on page ii at the front of this document.

Plan Implementation

The implementation of the Charles City Comprehensive Plan is a combined effort between all government, private, and related entities, community groups and organizations to complete the objectives and meet the goals of the plan. This Plan's Goals and Strategies guide the Planning and Zoning Commission and the City Council as to the policy that will be implemented. Future implementation and enforcement of these policies require the implementation of a city-wide zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations.

Plan Evaluation and Revision

Land use and development is constantly changing, so periodically the Charles City Comprehensive Development Plan will be reviewed and updated. This will assure its effectiveness as a long range planning document. During the review, changes will be identified since the last adoption, and all data sections will be updated. Finally, the goals and strategies will be revised to reflect the identified changes and needs of the City of Charles City. The Charles City Planning and Zoning Commission will review the Plan once every 5 years.

3. Community Overview

a. History of Charles City

Planning & Zoning

The most recent comprehensive plan for Charles City was written as an update in 2002 by Veenstra & Kimm, Inc. The City established zoning regulations with the latest zoning ordinance adopted on January 3, 2005. The City has also established a subdivision ordinance.

Settlement of Charles City

Located on the site of a Winnebago Indian village, Charles City was originally named “Charlestown” for the son of the first-known white settler to the area, Joseph Kelly. Upon his 1851 arrival to the area, Kelly envisioned the site, with its ample supply of water from the Cedar River and adjacent timberlands, as an ideal location for a town. By 1852, 25 other settler families had joined Kelly in that vision and a community was born. Joseph Kelley built a grist mill at the location of Main Street and the Cedar River Bridge. The town name changed, first to “St. Charles” and eventually to “Charles City,” to avoid duplication of other Iowa town names.

Charles City became the county seat after Floyd County was established in 1851 and officially organized in 1854. Floyd County itself was most likely named for Sergeant Charles Floyd of the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

Tornado in 1968

Many people around the region remember Charles City as the site of a devastating tornado that ripped through town on May 15, 1968, leaving 13 dead, hundreds injured, and massive destruction in its wake. One of the largest twisters ever recorded in the state, the storm destroyed much of the downtown - 256 businesses and 1,250 homes. Damage estimates of more than \$20 million only told part of the story; the cost in human suffering was much greater than that. However, with an outpouring of support from the region, a determined community rebuilt, and has not only survived, but thrived.



This picture was taken by the Floyd County Sheriff (L. L. Lane) at his spotter position on Highway 14. It shows the tornado when it was 2 miles southwest of Charles City.

Tractor History

The Oliver Company can be traced back to Charles Hart and Charles Parr, who started the Hart Parr company in Madison, Wisconsin, in 1897 to manufacture small gasoline engines. With financial backing from Charles Ellis, Hart Parr moved to Charles City, Iowa, in 1901, and built a new factory. By this time, they were mounting their gasoline engines on frames with wheels. They called their contraptions gasoline traction



engines. Their marketing department found that this was too hard to describe, so they coined the term 'tractor'. The growing business eventually became the Oliver Farm Equipment Company and finally the White Farm-New Idea Equipment Co. At its peak in the mid-1970s, the sprawling plant complex encompassed 23 acres and employed nearly 3,000 workers. The 1980s farm crisis and other economic pressures led to the closing of the plant in 1993. Today, the vacant site stands ready for re-use. The Floyd County Historical Museum preserves the plant's history and memories in an extensive collection of documents and artifacts.



Carrie Lane Chapman Catt

National women's rights leader Carrie Lane Chapman Catt spent her girlhood years on a farm south of Charles City. Catt is well known for her efforts in helping to pass the 19th Amendment, granting women the right to vote. Her home and an interpretive center are open to the public.

Suspension Bridge

Charles City's historic Suspension Bridge was built 1906 and provided pedestrian access across the Cedar River for over a century. It spanned over 270 feet and was built to allow the townsfolk access to the Chautauqua events in Lion's Field Park. This bridge was listed on the National Historic Register of Historic Places. A beloved icon and landmark of the community, the bridge



was lost during record floods in June of 2008. A new cable-stay pedestrian bridge was constructed at the same location in 2010.

Floods of 2008



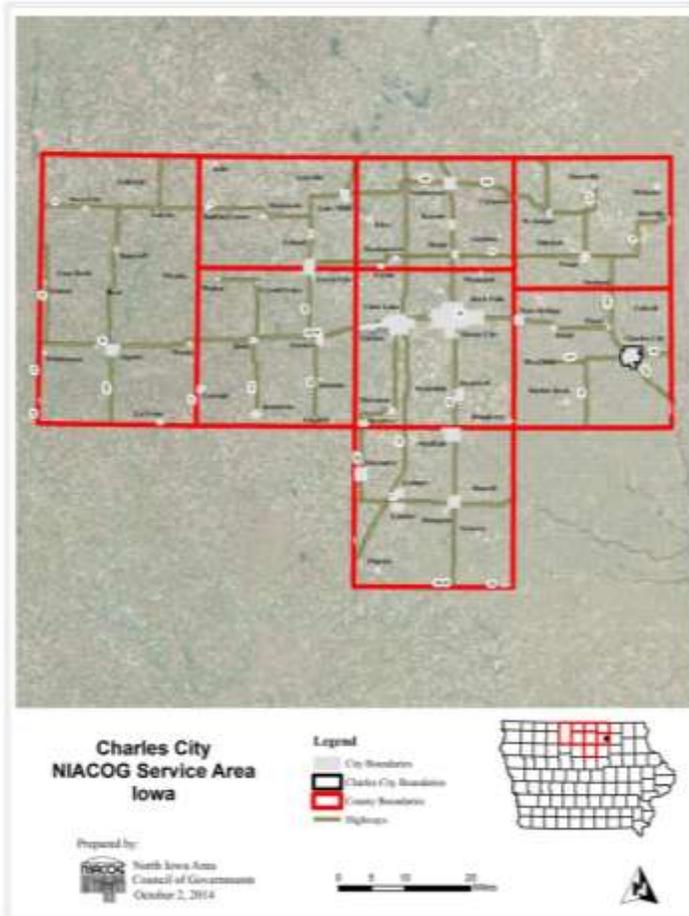
Severe flooding in 2008 resulted in the demolition of 28 homes in Charles City and extensive clean-up for many others. In addition, several commercial buildings were also impacted. To prepare for future high water, Charles City: removed 17 homes from the floodplain with assistance from FEMA, purchased HESCO Container units (easier to deploy than sandbags), and constructed a retaining wall around the main lift station.

b. Geography: Location, Climate, Geology, Topography

Location & Regional Context

The City of Charles City includes 6.3 square miles of land area and is located in Floyd County in North Central Iowa. Charles City serves as the county seat and is located in the east-central part of the county.

Commuter distances from Charles City to cities of frequent commute include (downtown to downtown measurements): Mason City - 33 miles (36 minutes), Waterloo/Cedar Falls - 45 miles (45 minutes), Des Moines 136 miles (2.25 hours - state capital), and Minneapolis, Minnesota 170 miles (2.5 hours).



Charles City is a member of the North Iowa Area Council of Governments (NIACOG), which is a voluntary association of local governments established for the purpose of promoting intergovernmental cooperation and strengthening local units of government.

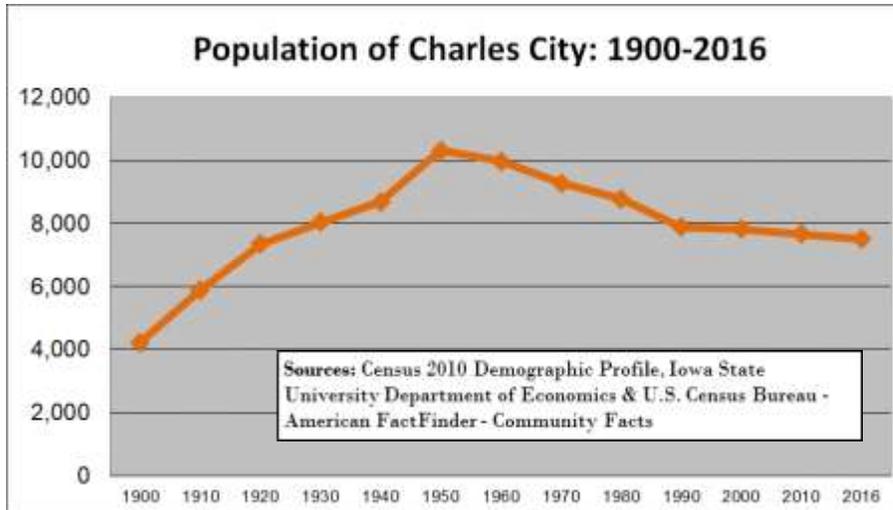
NIACOG is Region 2 of the Iowa Association of Regional Councils, and consists of eight counties and 67 cities in north central Iowa. The service area of NIACOG is shown in the map at left.

Charles City is outlined in the furthest southeast county of the region.

c. Population Data

Total Population

The population of Charles City peaked in 1950, but then a sharp decline followed for 40 years. The sharp decline ended in 1990, but was followed by a consistent 23-year gradual decline thru the most recent population estimates in 2016. The chart below illustrates the trends including the sharp increase, then sharp decline, then gradual decline over several years.



Year	Population
1900	4,227
1910	5,892
1920	7,350
1930	8,039
1940	8,681
1950	10,309
1960	9,964
1970	9,268
1980	8,778
1990	7,878
2000	7,812
2010	7,652
2016	7,496

Between the most recent decennials Census counts, the U.S. and State populations increased by 10% and 4%, respectively, while the population for Floyd County and Charles City decreased by 4% and 2%, respectively.

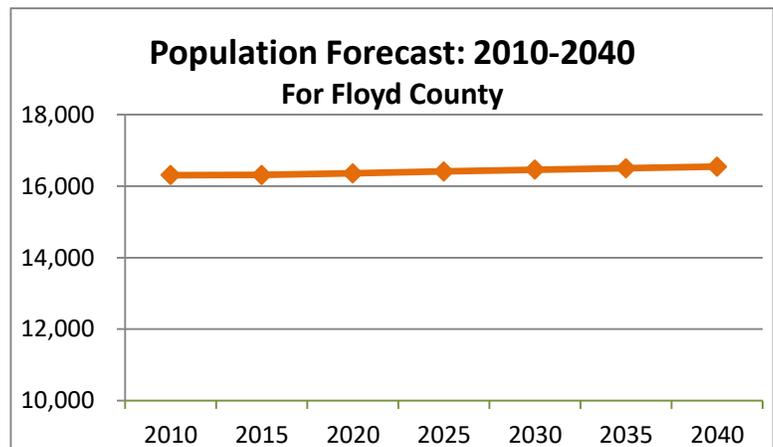
Population	2000	2010	Change	% Inc.
Charles City	7,812	7,652	(160)	-2%
Floyd Co.	16,900	16,303	(597)	-4%
Iowa	2,926,324	3,046,355	120,031	4%
U.S	281,421,906	308,745,538	7,323,632	10%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder, Table DP-1

Population Forecast

After 50+ years of decline as described in the previous section, Woods & Poole Economics has forecasted a stable if not slightly increasing population for Floyd County. The trend is illustrated in the chart at right. Woods & Poole is arguably the world’s most respected forecasting firm, and they make their estimates by extrapolating key indicators to calculate future population estimates.

Unfortunately, the firm solely assembles forecasts for counties and larger cities. So, in the absence of a forecast for Charles City, Floyd County’s



figures were used. In light of the close connection of Charles City’s population and that of Floyd County, the trend for Charles City is expected to be very similar.

As indicated in the table above, the population for Floyd County is forecasted to increase over the next 30 or so years from 16,310 to 16,546, which is only an increase of 1.4% (236 people). However, a slightly increasing or stable population is much preferred to the 50 previous years of decline. These are estimates, however, not foregone conclusions, so population stability continues to be a concern, especially in light of the aging population especially as it relates to workforce needs. These workforce needs are described in the Population By Age (next) section.

If we apply Floyd County’s 1.4% estimated population increase to Charles City’s 2010 population, we estimate an increase of 107 people by 2040.

Population By Age Data

The population of Charles City has been gradually declining for the past 50 years and this section will help us to identify areas of growth and decline. For example, as detailed in the table to the right, Charles City is experiencing a 16% increase in children under 5 years of age, which is, of course, very significant. If this trend continues, it will certainly have a significant impact on stabilizing and possibly growing the City’s population.

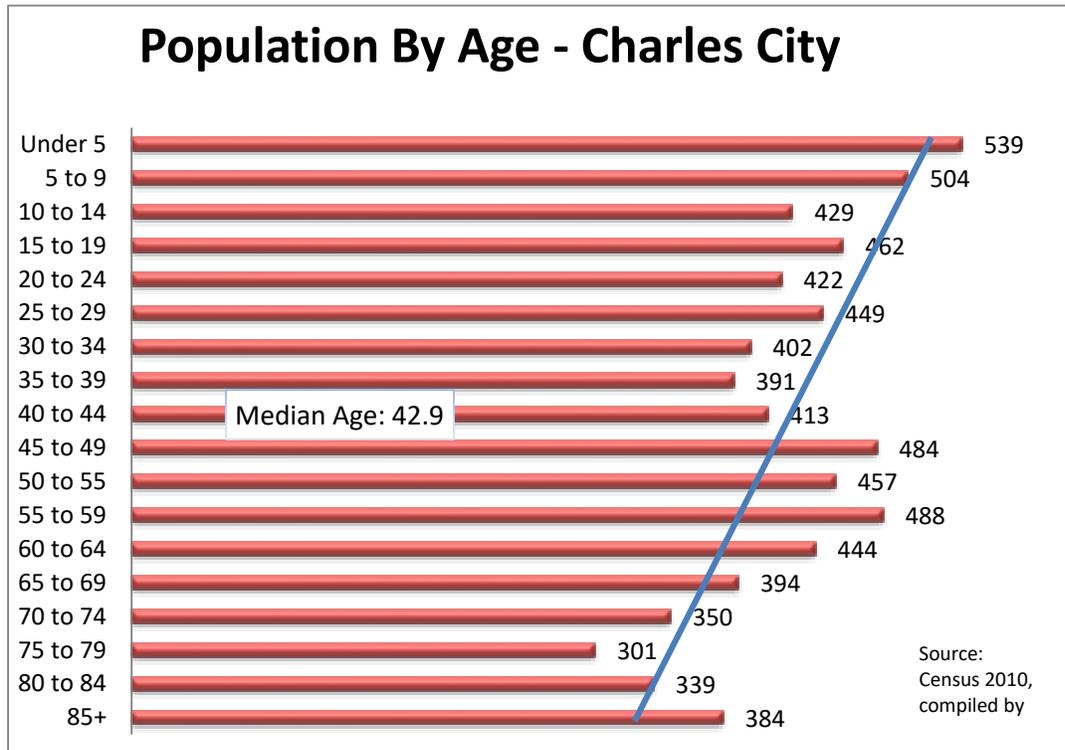
The chart below illustrates the number of people by age group in 5 year increments. The blue line in the table shows the trend of population by age group for a growing population; it assumes that, due to mortality with each advancing age group, there will be fewer people as a result of mortality. You’ll see variations that point to age groups that have more (and less) than typical age trend numbers:

- **Above age trends:** The bar for these age groups extend beyond the blue line and have more people than an even age distribution would anticipate
 - children under 5
 - older middle aged adults a.k.a. baby boomers
- **Less than age trends:** The bar for these age groups do not make it to the blue line and have less people than an even age distribution would anticipate
 - teens, young and middle aged adults
 - elderly

Population By Age			
	2000	2010	Diff (%)
Under 5	464	539	16%
5 to 9	504	504	0%
10 to 14	500	429	-14%
15 to 19	518	462	-11%
20 to 24	394	422	7%
25 to 29	410	449	10%
30 to 34	457	402	-12%
35 to 39	494	391	-21%
40 to 44	477	413	-13%
45 to 49	508	484	-5%
50 to 55	452	457	1%
55 to 59	385	488	27%
60 to 64	369	444	20%
65 to 69	342	394	15%
70 to 74	401	350	-13%
75 to 79	380	301	-21%
80 to 84	388	339	-13%
85+	369	384	4%

Source: Census 2010, compiled by Iowa State university, Department of Economics, "Census 2010 Demographic Profile"

The median age for Charles City is 43 (2010 Census), which is an increase of more than a full year since the previous decennial census (2000). This compares to the median age of 37 for the U.S. and 38 for the State of Iowa. Therefore, the population in Charles City is on average more advanced in age by 5 to 6 years as compared to the U.S. and State, respectively. On a related note, a May 2014 Laborshed Study by Iowa Workforce Development indicates that the average age in the Charles City’s workforce is 50.



In looking to future growth, two other groups are also important for discussion: 'Brain Drainers' (teens & young adults) and 'Baby Boomers' (older middle age/retirement).

The 'brain drain' of young teens and young adults is a recurring prevalent theme in rural America. In Charles City fourteen percent (14%) of the youth (10-19 year olds) in 2000 are no longer in the population counts in 2010 (20 to 29 year olds). However, if we compare the number of young adults in 2000 to 2010 a significant increase has occurred resulting in 7% to 10% more young adults. Also, combating the brain drain is the significant growth of children under 5 (16% growth).

Over the past several years, the baby boomer generation has graduated from being the young workforce (20 to 44) to being the older workforce and is starting into retirement. This trend is evident in the 12% to 21% decline in population sectors from age 30 to 49, as well as in the 15% to 27% growth of ages 55 to 69 years. In the future, as these baby boomers continue on to retirement, they will leave a huge void in the workforce, which will be tough to overcome. On a positive note, however, the loss of older workers may help to reduce the brain drain by providing more openings for young workers who might otherwise travel to larger urban centers to find employment in their field. Besides the implications related to workforce, a growing elderly population will certainly also have impacts on growing needs for healthcare, assisted housing, leisure recreation, and transit.

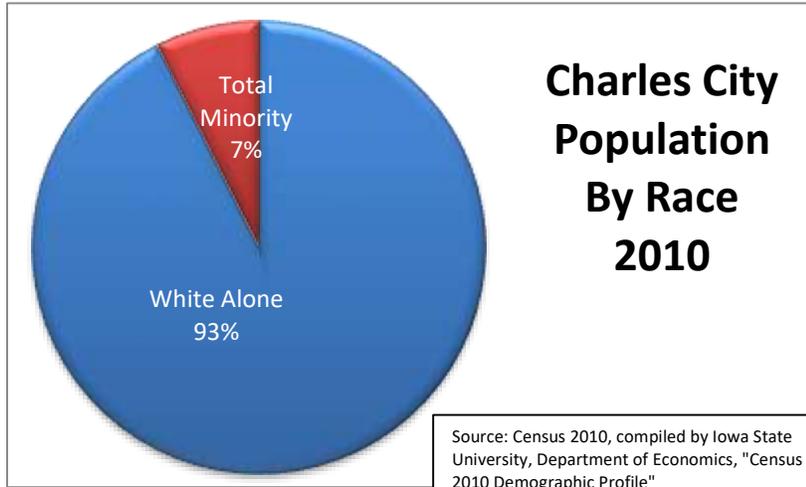
Population By Workforce Age Group				
Age	Group	2000	2010	Diff (%)
Under 20	Future Workforce	2,490	2,438	-2%
20 to 44	Younger Working Age	2,232	2,077	-7%
45 to 64	Older Working Age	1,714	1,873	9%
65+	Retirement Age	2,260	2,069	-8%

Source: Census 2010, compiled by Iowa State University, Department of Economics, "Census 2010 Demographic Profile"

Population By Race

Although the minority population still makes up only 7.4% of Charles City’s population, the percentage of minority residents more than doubled between 2000 and 2010. The white population (not including mixed race persons) went the opposite direction of minority declining by 6% (477). So, much of Charles City’s ability to minimize population loss has been from the growing minority race sectors. The majority of the increase in minority races came from persons of black race alone (.4% in 2000 to 2.5% in 2010) and Asian race alone (.7% in 2000 to 2.5% in 2010). The percentage of Hispanic or Latino residents increased slightly from 2.1% to 2.6% between 2000 and 2010.

Population By Race - 2010	
Race	% of Pop
White Alone	92.7%
Total Minority	7.4%
<i>Black Alone</i>	2.5%
<i>Asian Alone</i>	2.5%
<i>2+ Races</i>	1.1%
<i>Other</i>	1.3%



Source: Census 2010, compiled by Iowa State University, Department of Economics, "Census 2010 Demographic Profile"



Migration Data

Migration data is used to analyze the number of people who moved into or out of the City of Charles City. Migration of rural residents into larger cities is a national trend, but it does not appear to be prevalent in Floyd County. In fact, Charles City has remained a very stable 45% to 47% of the County for the past 50 years.

County	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2013
Charles City (CC)	9,964	9,268	8,778	7,878	7,812	7,652	7,527
Floyd	21,102	19,860	19,597	17,058	16,900	16,303	16,092
% of County In CC	47%	47%	45%	46%	46%	47%	47%

Source: American Community Survey, 2007-2011, U.S. Census Bureau

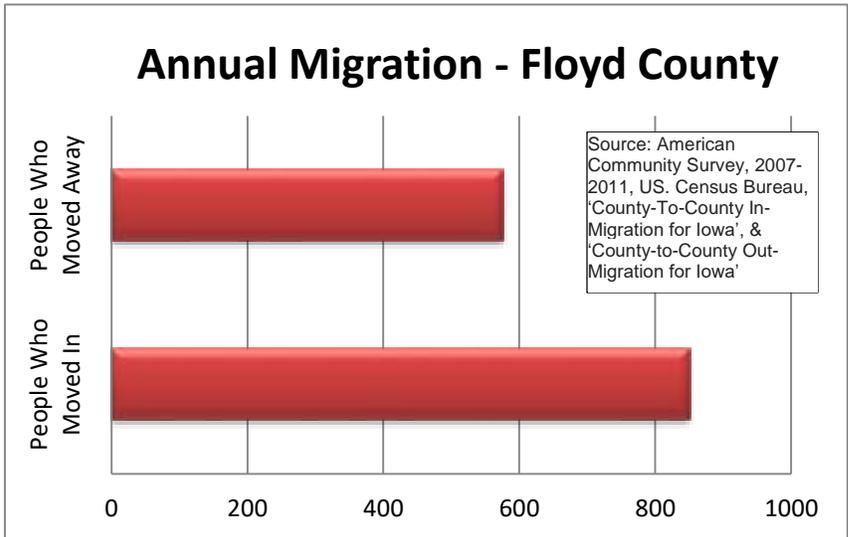
Migration data is not specifically available for Charles City from the Census Bureau, so Floyd County’s data is used as a close approximation. Please note that the U.S. Census Bureau data is collected through an annual survey but averages data over 5 years, in this case from 2008 thru 2012.

Floyd County Annual Migration	
People Who Moved In	852
People Who Moved Away	577
Net Migration	275

As detailed in the table at left and illustrated in the table below, 275 more people moved into Floyd County than moved out as an annual average.

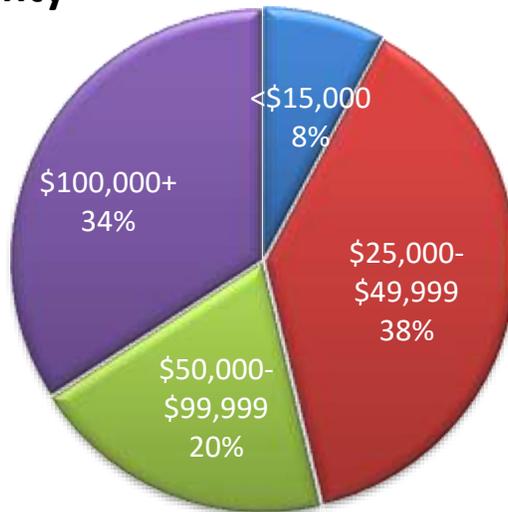
In-Migration: Further research from the same source showed that 55% of the people who moved in to Floyd County had relocated from other areas in Iowa (20% of them from Cerro Gordo County, the closest urban center). Also notable, 17% of the people moving into Floyd County relocated from Cook County, Illinois.

Out-Migration: Over half of the people moving away from Floyd County moved to adjacent counties. The highest percentage (34%) moved to Cerro Gordo County. The net effect of households moving between Floyd County and Cerro Gordo County was a loss for Floyd County of about 30 residents per year. Floyd County actually experiences a higher loss in population to Blackhawk County; on average 54 households per year move from Floyd County to Blackhawk with no reciprocal movement from Blackhawk County to Floyd County.



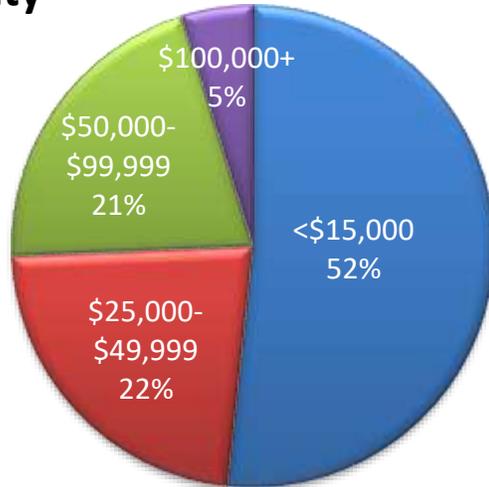
Income After Moving Out of Floyd County

Source: American Community Survey, 2007-2011, U.S. Census Bureau, 'County-to-County Out-Migration by Household income for Iowa'



Socioeconomic Impact of Migration: The people moving into the community tend to be less educated and have lower incomes than those who moved away. In fact about half of the households who moved into Floyd County make less than \$15,000 annually. And, on the flip side 34% of the households moving out make over \$100,000; whereas, only 8% of households moving in make over \$100,000.

Income After Moving Into Floyd County



Source: American Community Survey, 2007-2011, US. Census Bureau, 'County-to-County In-Migration by Household income for Iowa'

Cost of Living – Does the difference in cost of living overcome the difference in wages? Although specific cost of living figures are not available for Charles City from a reliable source, research tool for comparing cost of living in different counties was released in 2014 by MITⁱ. Using this tool, Floyd County’s cost of living is estimated to be 3% less than Cerro Gordo County’s and Blackhawk County’s (the two noted destination counties for outmigration).

d. Educational Data

The percentage of residents (over age 25) without a diploma in Charles city is dropping according to the U.S. Census Bureau. The 2000 Decennial Census (DP-2) reported that 16% of the population did not have a diploma and their more recent estimates are that only 11% do not have a diploma (American Community Survey 5-year estimate 2008-2012). Because 63% of the population has diplomas, but no advanced degree, they make up by the far largest percentage of the population in terms of educational attainment.

Educational Attainment	#
No Diploma	548
Diploma	3,264
Associates Degree	560
Bachelor's Degree	511
Graduate Degree	310

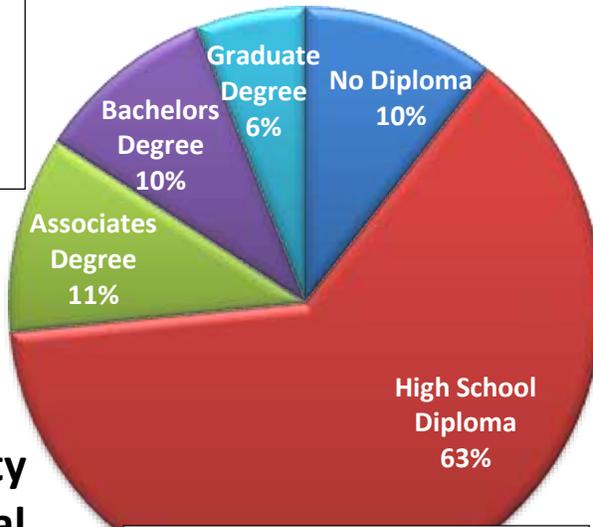
In fact, the U.S. Census Bureau reports that nearly 89% of the population in Charles City (over age 25)

has a high school diploma or higher degree. This compares favorably to the U.S. average of 86%.

Not surprisingly, Charles City, and neighboring Floyd County residents (over 3 years of age), continue to exceed the statewide and national averages for school enrollment as shown in the table below.

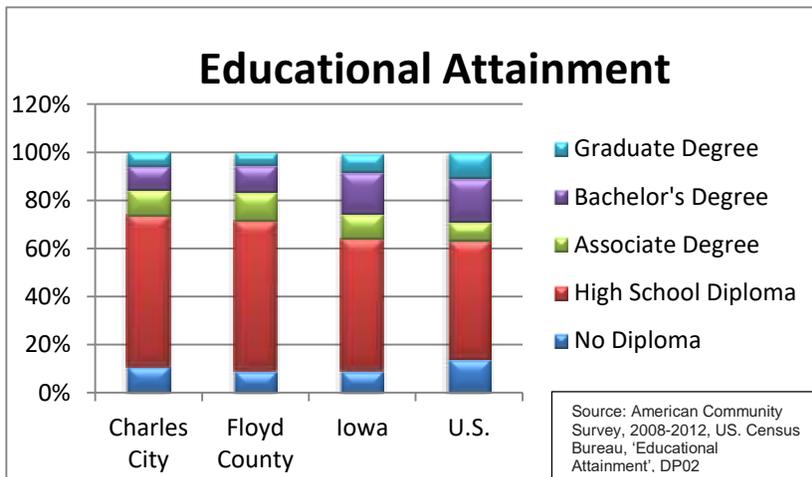
Geographic Level	Enrolled in School (3 yrs+)
Charles City	24%
Floyd County	25%
Iowa	21%
U.S.	21%

For **unemployed** only:
 *Associates Degree 20%
 *Bachelors Degree 7%
 *Graduate Degree 13%
 Source: Laborshed Analysis, Iowa Workforce Development, May 2014



Charles City Educational Attainment

Source For All Tables & Graphs In This Section: American Community Survey, 2008-2012, US. Census Bureau, 'Educational Attainment', DP02



Although basic education has exceeded national levels, advanced degrees are quite a different story. The Census Bureau reports that 29% of U.S. residents (over age 25) have a bachelor's or a higher degree, while only 16% of Charles City residents have a bachelor's degree or higher. As illustrated in the chart at left, the statewide

and national average for bachelor's degrees (purple in chart below) and graduate degrees (teal) is about twice the average for Charles City residents (over age 25). This is further evidence of the brain drain occurring as Charles City youth are educated well and then find employment in larger cities where positions requiring degrees are more numerous and may offer higher salaries.

Please refer to the Population Section of this document (Population By Age & Migration sub-sections), for more details about the brain drain for Charles City. Although Charles City's high school graduation rate exceeds U.S. levels, nearly 1 in every 10 kids (90.44%ⁱⁱ) is not graduating, which leaves considerable room for improvement.

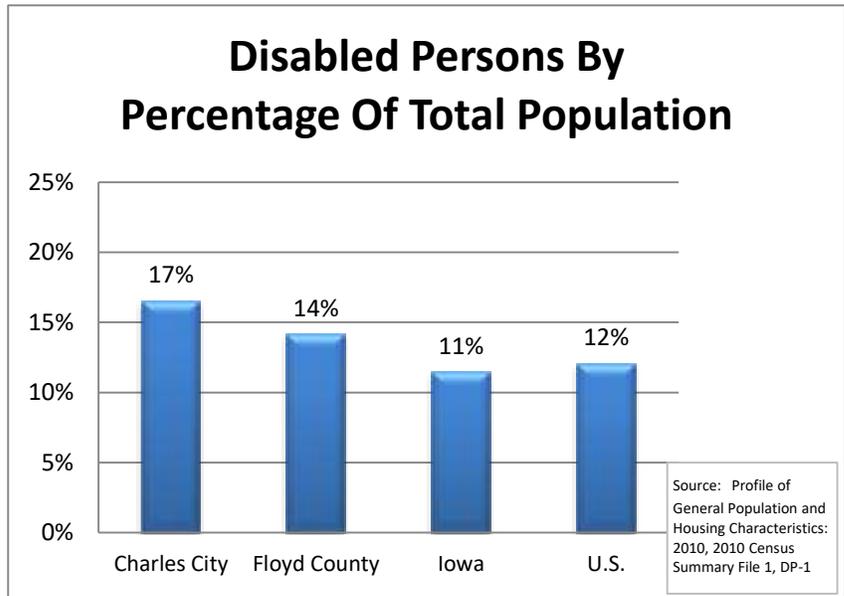
The enrollment rate for the Floyd County School Districts declined 14% from 1,792 (2000/01) to 1,545 (2010/11) and continued to decline, but at a lower rate of 2% during the more recent 8 years (between 2010/11 and 2017/18).

Math and Reading scores, reported by the Iowa Department of Education, indicate that the Charles City School District had scores above the nationwide average at 69% for math and 68% for reading, but they fell somewhat short of Iowa's statewide averages of 78% and 74%, respectively.

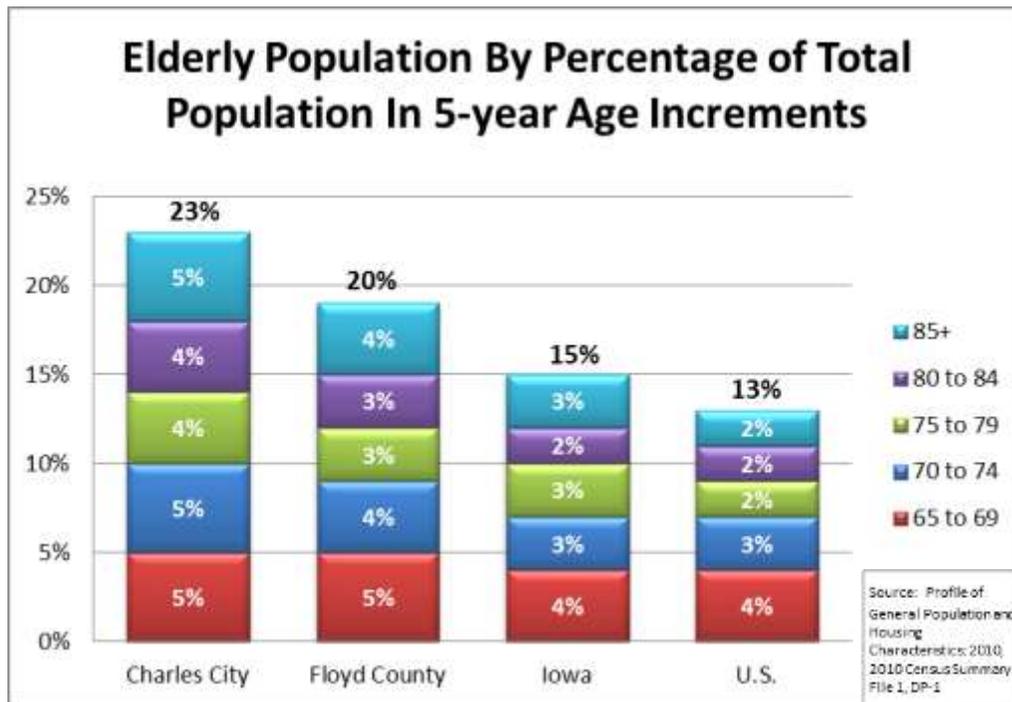
e. Health Data

Disability

Charles City has a significantly higher percentage of disabled people than Floyd County, Iowa, and the U.S. as illustrated in the table at right. Much of the reason stems from the higher percentage of elderly living in Charles City as compared to the percentage of elderly living in the county, state, and nation. For Charles City, the percentage of persons with disabilities is 5% for children, 13% for working age (18 to 64), and 39% for those of retirement age. This growing percentage of disability with advancing age is common to all geographies mentioned.



However, as illustrated in the chart below, the disparity between Charles City’s percentage of elderly and the state/ county/nation’s percentage grows with each 5-year increment over age 65. In fact, Charles City’s percentage of residents over age 85 is 2 ½ times the national rate, which leads to higher disability levels.



Common Causes of Death

The top 5 causes of death in Floyd County included (in order): heart, cancer, lung, stroke, and accidents. The table (at right) details the percentages for the most common causes of death in Floyd County.

For all of these causes of death, except one, the rate of occurrence per capita in Floyd County was either lower than the national average or in the same general range as the national average. The only exception to this was the rate of Parkinson’s disease, which was significantly higher than average in Floyd County, but was only ranked #10 for the county.

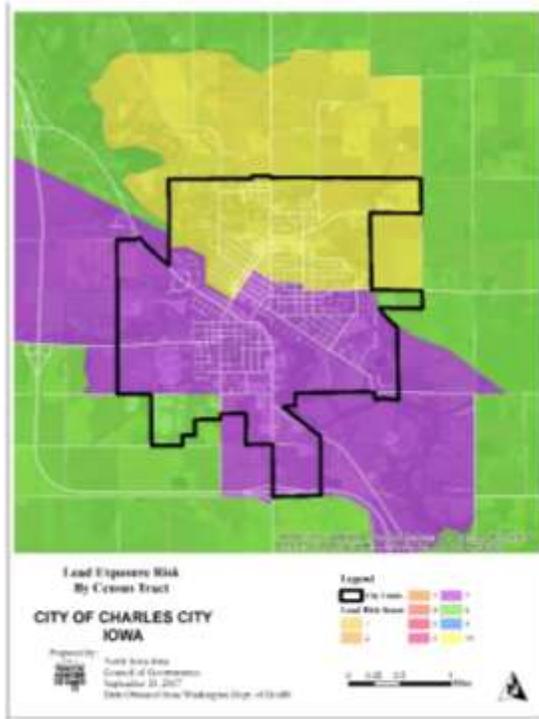
The causes of death that were in a lower range in Floyd County than the national average included: stroke, accidents, diabetes, influenza, kidney, blood poisoning, hypertension, and liver disease.

The causes of death that were within the national average range included: heart, cancer, lung, Alzheimer’s, suicide, and homicide.

Top 15 Causes Of Death Floyd County		
Rank	Cause	% of Most Common
1	Heart	35.0%
2	Cancer	28.7%
3	Lung	7.9%
4	Stroke	7.6%
5	Accidents	5.2%
6	Alzheimer's	4.2%
7	Influenza	2.7%
8	Suicide	2.1%
9	Diabetes	1.9%
10	Parkinson's	1.6%
11	Kidney	1.2%
12	Blood Poisoning	0.7%
13	Liver Disease	0.6%
14	Hypertension	0.3%
15	Homicide	0.3%

Source: World Life Expectancy, web address: www.worldlifeexpectancy.com/usa/top-15-causes-of-death

Lead Exposure Risk



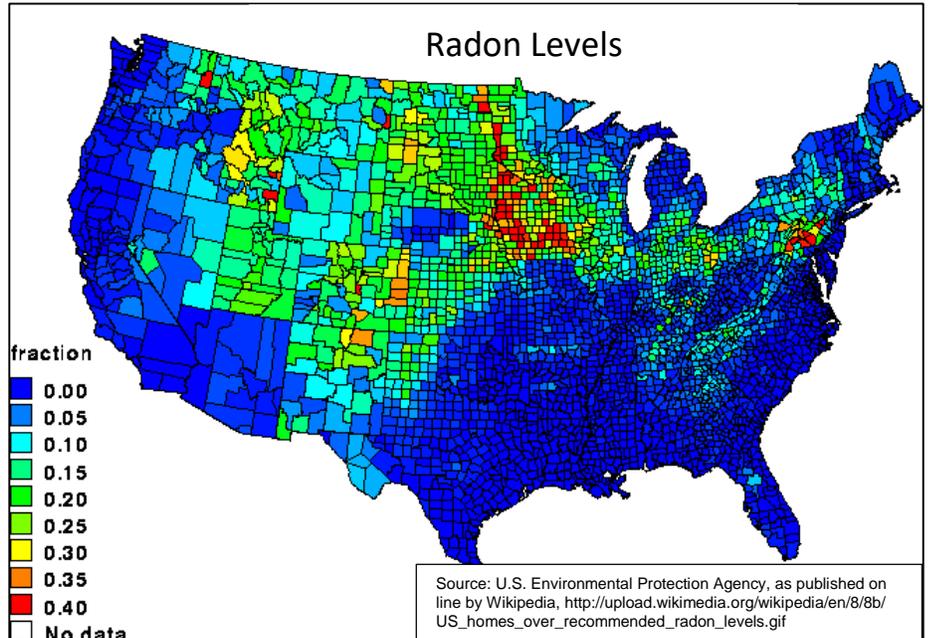
‘Lead Exposure Risk’ is a term that is used to define neighborhoods where kids face the highest risk of lead poisoning. As illustrated by the map at left, the lead exposure risk is quite high in Charles City. On a scale of 1 to 10, lead exposure risk ranked a 10 for the northern portion (Census Tract 4804) of the community and a 7 for the southern portion (Census Tract 4805).

The exposure to lead poisoning typically exists in the form of lead paint that is chipping or peeling, so it is typically found in older housing that is not very well maintained. Children under the age of 6, including those yet in the womb, are particularly susceptible to lead poisoning.

The Lead Exposure Risk ratings were determined through a partnership of VOX and the Washington Department of Health. The ratings consider two factors: the age of housing and the poverty levels. Ratings were assigned by Census Tract.

Radon

Like most Upper Midwest and Plains states, radon is a common problem in Iowa, especially in areas with clay-rich soils. Radon is gaseous and easily inhaled. Although it can dissipate quickly in open air, radon gas from natural sources can accumulate to far higher than normal concentrations in buildings, especially in low areas such as basements and crawl spaces due to its heavy nature. Studies have shown a clear link between breathing high concentrations of radon and the incidence of lung cancer. Thus, radon is considered a significant contaminant that affects indoor air quality worldwide. According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, radon is the second



most frequent cause of lung cancer, after cigarette smoking, causing 21,000 lung cancer deaths per year in the United States. About 2,900 of these deaths occur among people who have never smoked. While radon is the second most frequent cause of lung cancer, it is the number one cause among non-smokers, according to EPA estimates.

Children's Health

The number of infant deaths per thousand remained at 0 (rounded) from 2000 to 2012, and the number of teen births (mothers 15 to 19 years of age) declined by 30% over the same period.ⁱⁱⁱ

The number of confirmed child abuse cases is about 28 per thousand children, which ranks 14th in severity out of Iowa's 99 Counties.^{iv}

CHAPTER 2: SMART PLANNING ELEMENTS

The planning elements of Iowa Code Chapter 18.B.1. covered in this Chapter include the following:

1. Land Use
2. Housing
3. Public Infrastructure
4. Transportation
5. Economic Development
6. Agricultural Land & Natural Resources
7. Community Facilities
8. Community Character
9. Hazards
10. Collaboration

1. Current & Future Land Use

a. Land Use - Background

Before setting new goals and strategies for future land use in Charles City, it is important to inventory the existing land uses within the city. A Current Land Use Map for Charles City is provided on the next page. The following is a description of growth trends and current land uses in the city. The existing land uses were identified by using aerial photography and input from city staff.

The vast majority of development is occurring within the incorporated areas of the City where adequate infrastructure is available. The exceptions are residential development on Maple Heights Drive (west of the city) and industrial development of the Valero ethanol plant (formerly VeraSun), which began production in April 2007 and sits on 225 acres of land situated about 2 1/2 miles northwest of the city.

The majority of residential development is occurring in the Allied subdivision in the southeast quarter of the city and is now on its seventh addition.

b. Land Use - Vision

Vision: Encourage policies and decisions that will protect prime agricultural land outside the corporate limits, provide for compatible land use and responsible growth within city limits, enhance residential development in non-productive agricultural areas while protecting the environment and natural resources, provide recreational opportunities, and expand economic development that will ensure a high quality of life in Charles City for the future.

c. Future Land Use - Goals & Strategies

The primary theme of this plan is to identify and promote the most productive use of land throughout the City of Charles City, while assuring a high compatibility with adjacent land uses.

Various types of land uses must be permitted for productive use of the land, but specific uses may need to be reasonably regulated and controlled in order to properly safeguard the rights of adjacent property owners and the overall benefit of the general public.

Current & Future Land Use - Smart Planning Guidance:

Objectives, policies, and programs that identify current land uses within the municipality and that guide the future development and redevelopment of property, consistent with the municipality's characteristics. The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may include information on the amount, type, intensity, and density of existing land use, trends in the market price of land used for specific purposes, and plans for future land use throughout the municipality.

Smart Planning Guidance:

18.B.1 Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should be undertaken to provide efficient, transparent, and consistent outcomes. Individuals, communities, regions, and governmental entities should share in the responsibility to promote the equitable distribution of development benefits and costs.

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

The Goals and Objectives identified in this Plan should give guidance to all major decisions made by city officials in the future. These major considerations may include road improvements, recreational areas, and new residential, commercial and industrial developments. Future land use decisions throughout the City must conform to the Goals and Strategies established in the 2018 Charles City Comprehensive Development Plan to derive the maximum benefit of the Plan.



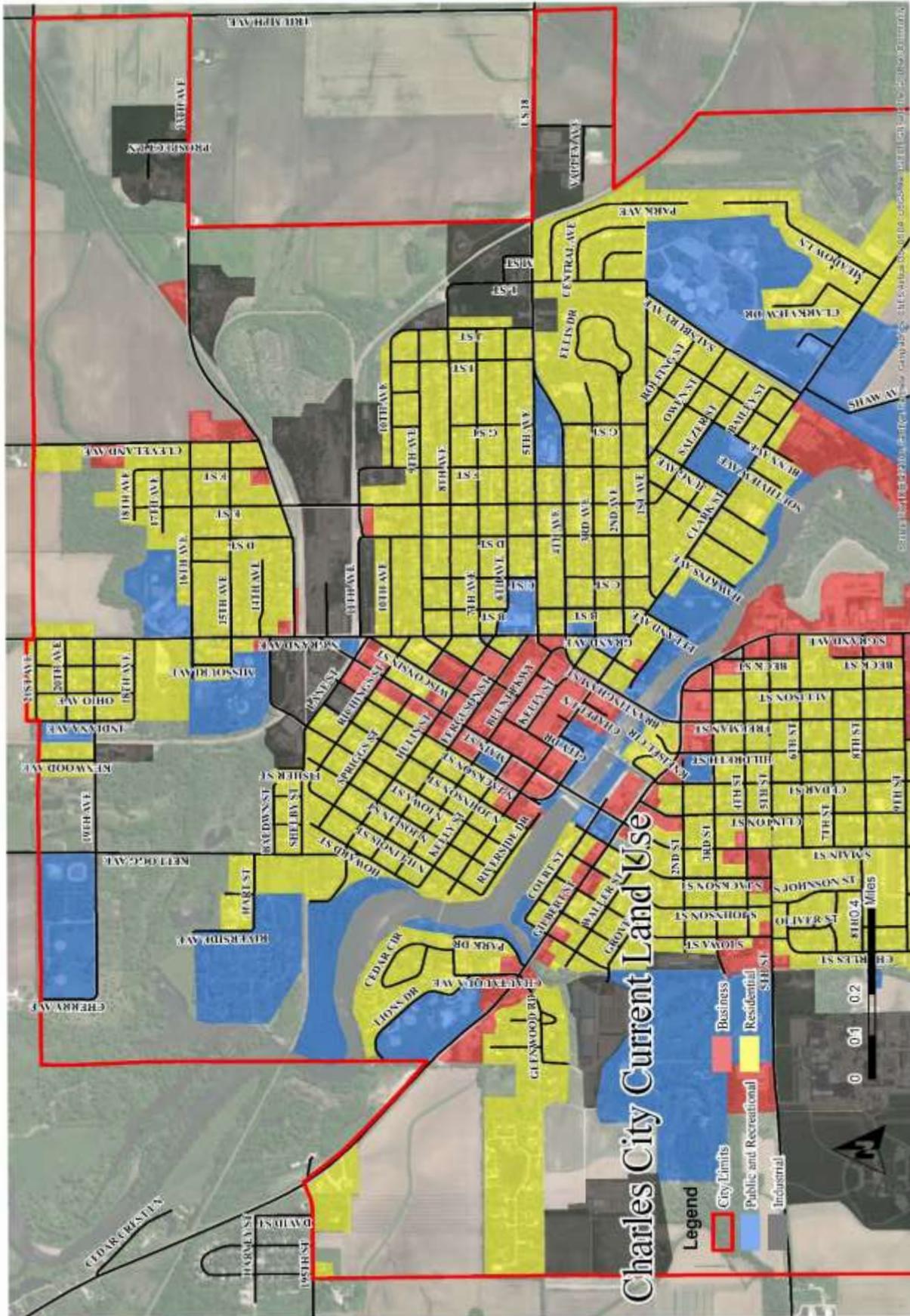
In addition, the Charles City Future Land Use Map should be considered. The land uses in this map have been determined by the City of Charles City to be most appropriate for the City in the future. The determination is based on anticipated development, demographics, topography and terrain, and market conditions. Based on unforeseen circumstances during the life of this Plan, the Charles City City Council can change the Future Land Use Map through an amendment. The City of Charles City's Zoning Ordinance will be used to implement the Future Land Use Map.

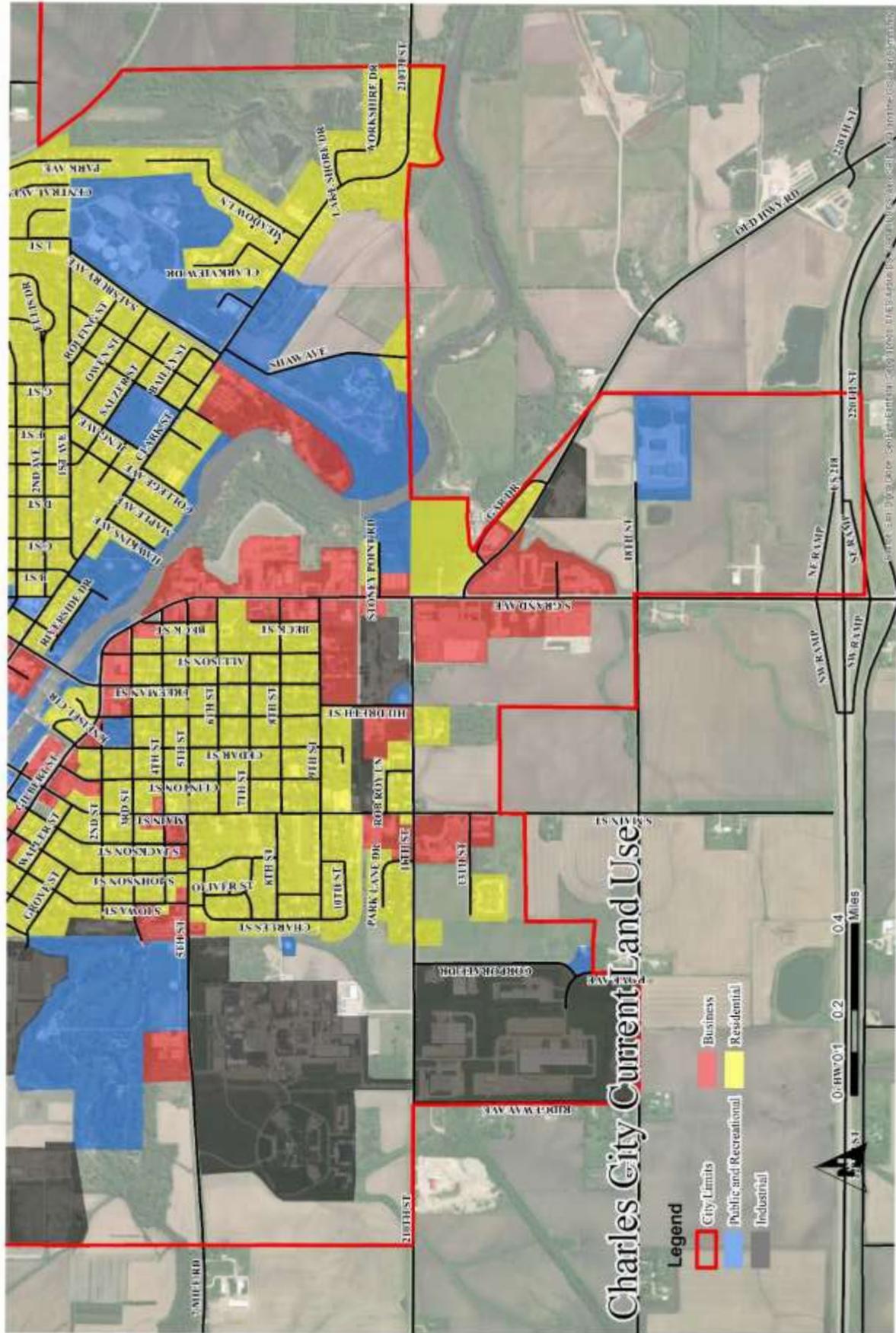
Specific goals and strategies to implement the above principles for the Comprehensive Development Plan and Land Use Planning include the following:

1. **GOAL: Comprehensive Plan Adopted** - Adopt the Comprehensive Development Plan goals and objectives by City Council resolution
 - a. **STRATEGY:** Adopt City zoning, subdivision, floodplain, and health regulations as needed to fully implement the Goals and Objectives of the adopted Charles City Comprehensive Development Plan
2. **GOAL: Plan Used to Guide Development** - Establish an organized pattern of future development in Charles City using the approved Comprehensive Development Plan
 - a. **STRATEGY:** Utilize the Plan when making decisions which affect development, environment, health, safety, and the general welfare of the City and its citizens
 - b. **STRATEGY:** Gain citizen input to the maximum extent reasonable in all pertinent land use decisions, or other decisions which follow this Comprehensive Development Plan and the Goals and Objectives set forth in this document
 - c. **STRATEGY:** Review, evaluate and amend the Comprehensive Development Plan as needed to maintain and improve its relevancy and effectiveness as the City's planning guide for the present and the future
3. **GOAL: Balanced Land Uses** - Guide the basic land use patterns and the incremental land use decisions made for the city
 - a. **STRATEGY:** Encourage a balance of land uses from land preservation and environmental protection, to residential, commercial, and industrial, which generate revenue for essential services and natural resource protection
4. **GOAL: Protect Property Rights** - Protect individual property rights that don't abridge other property owner rights, are detrimental to the City as a whole, or conflict with the City's policies

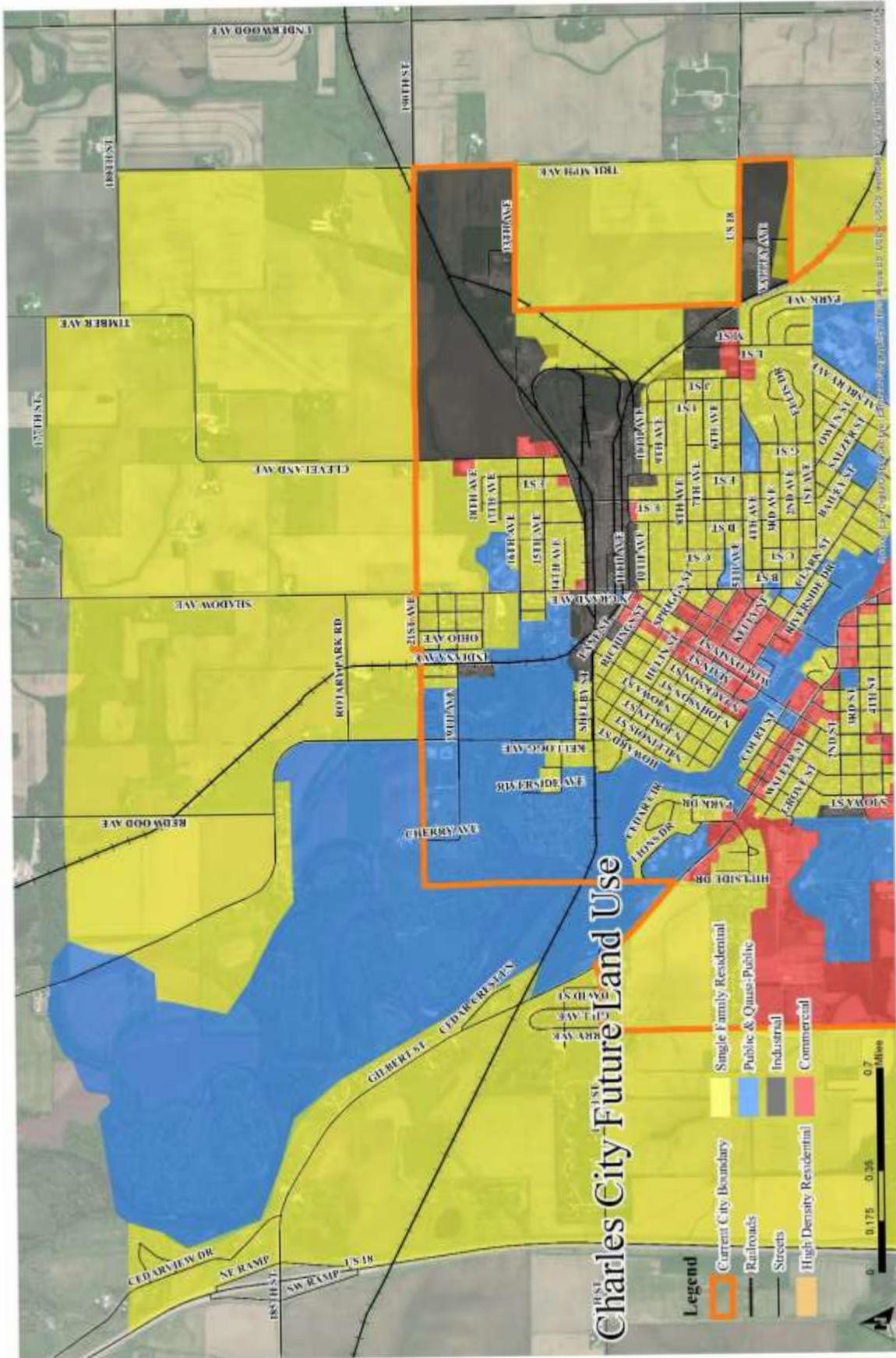
- a. **STRATEGY:** Encourage citizens to develop and utilize appropriate implementation strategies
- 5. **GOAL: Land Put to Highest & Best Use** - Protect, promote, and enhance the use of land in the highest and best manner and preserve its continued use for future generations.
 - a. **STRATEGY:** Encourage local officials to establish mutual agreements to plan, facilitate, coordinate, and resolve possible conflicts of proposed development within the municipal fringe areas
- 6. **GOAL: Consider Fiscal Impact On City** - Provide that all land use considerations shall be made with the consideration of the fiscal impacts on local government
 - a. **STRATEGY:** Encourage city officials to include only those lands within the corporate boundary, which they are capable of serving with municipal utilities and necessary for the orderly growth of the community
- 7. **GOAL: Existing Extraterritorial Growth** - Systematically consider the impact of extraterritorial growth and any needed action to enhance its impact on the city
 - a. **STRATEGY:** Conduct a cost-benefit analysis for annexation of: southeast developments by golf course, Maple Heights, and east side of town
 - b. **STRATEGY:** Consider whether the fees paid for city utilities outside of the city (such as in Maple Heights) are adequate to cover current and future supply and maintenance costs including all costs associated with supplying and maintaining lines for the specific development and a fair share of overall utility system costs
 - c. **STRATEGY:** Focus visually appealing industrial growth and amenities near the Avenue of the Saints to encourage the appeal of the City for industrial recruitment
- 8. **GOAL: Future Land Use Map** – Use the Future Land Use Map on the next page as a guide.
 - a. **STRATEGY:** Use the Future Land Use Map to assist with making decisions about zoning changes
 - b. **STRATEGY:** Use the Future Land Use Map to assist with making decisions about potential growth areas

Charles City Comprehensive Plan - 2018





Charles City Comprehensive Plan - 2018



2. Housing

a. Housing - Background

Housing Units

The 2010 Census reported that the City of Charles City had 3,761 housing units, which was an increase of about 5% (164) over the 2000 Census. The Census Bureau estimates an increase in the number of housing units for this same period of 8% for the State and 14% for the nation.

Housing Units	2000	2010
Vacant	258	321
Owner-Occupied	2,238	2,200
Renter-Occupied	1,101	1,240
Total Housing Units	3,597	3,761

According to city records, between 2010 and 2015, 29 houses were built and 36 demolished for

a net decrease of 7 homes. After the 2008 flood event, 28 homes were demolished including 17 demolitions funded by the City and FEMA in 2011; the other 11 were funded privately with demolition generally completed from 2008 to 2009.

The chart at the right documents the number of permits taken out annually for new home construction and for demolition for the past five (5) years. During that time, new home construction has exceeded demolition for a net gain of 13 homes; however, the overall impact for the decade is a net loss of 6 homes partially due to the large number of demolitions that followed the flooding. See more details in the table below.

Smart Planning Guidance:
 18B.2. Housing - Objectives, policies, and programs to further the vitality and character of established residential neighborhoods and new residential neighborhoods and plan to ensure an adequate housing supply that meets both the existing and forecasted housing demand. The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may include an inventory and analysis of the local housing stock and may include specific information such as age, condition, type, market value, occupancy, and historical characteristics of all the housing within the municipality. The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may identify specific policies and programs that promote the development of new housing and maintenance or rehabilitation of existing housing and that provide a range of housing choices that meet the needs of the residents of the municipality.

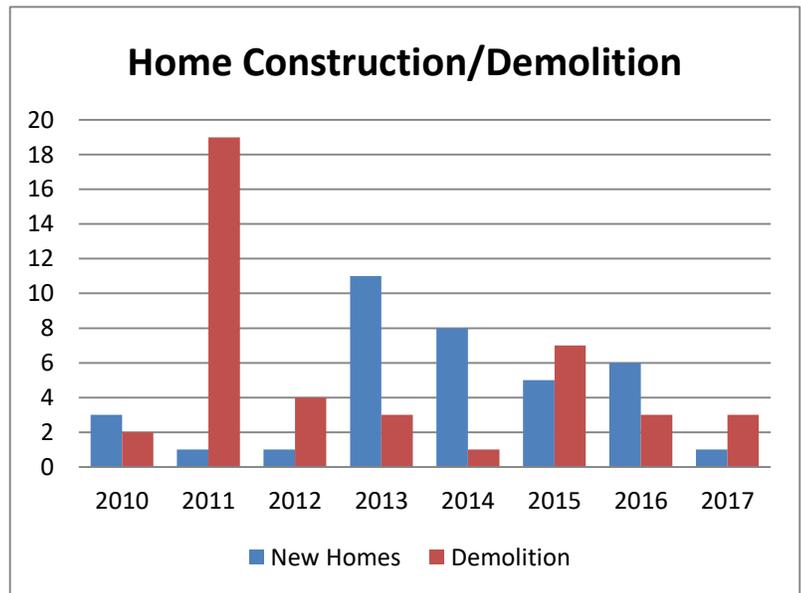


Table and Chart Figures Courtesy of Charles City Code Enforcement

Permits	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2010-2017
New Homes	3	1	1	11	8	5	6	1	36
Demolition	2	19	4	3	1	7	3	3	42
Remodel/Repair	270	171	174	177	199	236	234	225	1,686

A substantial percentage of new construction has occurred in the Allied Subdivision which is located southeast of the Charles City High School. The City of Charles City, the CCADC, Floyd County, Iowa Finance Authority and local Charles City lenders combined efforts to assist Allied Land



Development, a local, private developer, with a phased 76-lot, single family, residential development district. Since then, many homes have been constructed with a substantial number being purchased by households with moderate incomes.

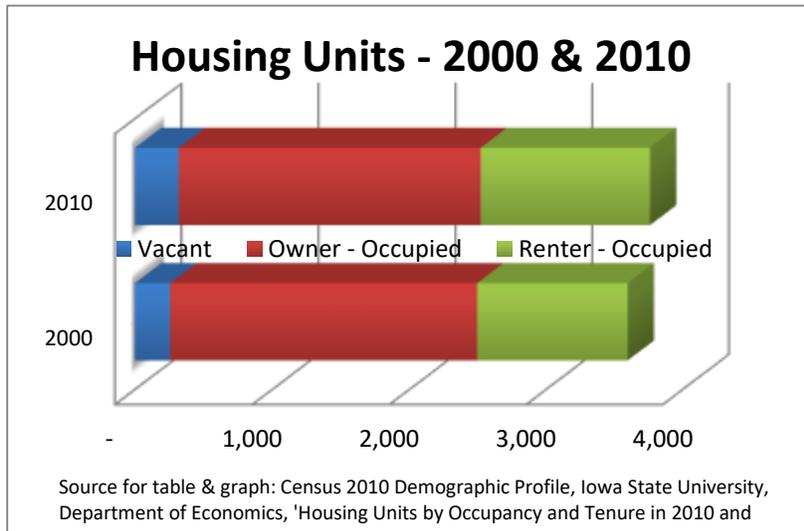
In 2015 the Parkside Subdivision infrastructure was completed and homes under construction in the subdivision. The development of this subdivision was assisted by federal CDBG funding and has several 'green' features described in more detail in the Community Character/Sustainability/Livability section of this plan (Planning Element #8).



Vacancies

As depicted graphically below, the percentage of vacancies and renter-occupied units increased slightly between 2000 and 2010. After adjustments are made for seasonal/recreational/occasional use, 2010 vacancy rates are very similar between Charles City, Floyd County, Iowa, and the U.S. rate.

Vacancy By Percentage	2000	2010
Total Housing Vacancy	9%	7%
Homeowner vacancy	3%	3%
Rental Vacancy Rate	7%	9%



In 2010, vacancy rates by type of use (owner-occupied or rental) were also very similar for the city, county, state, and nation at around 9% for rental occupied housing units and 2% to 2.7% for owner-occupied housing.

Occupancy Split

As an overall split, 64% of the housing in Charles City is owner-occupied and 36% of the housing in Charles City is renter-occupied

according to the 2010 Census. This is typical of the U.S. as a whole and of trade center communities like Charles City that are a county seat serving adjacent counties. Both the county and state average higher percentages of owner-occupied housing at 74% and 72%, respectively.

Age/Condition of Housing

Owner-Occupied Housing –

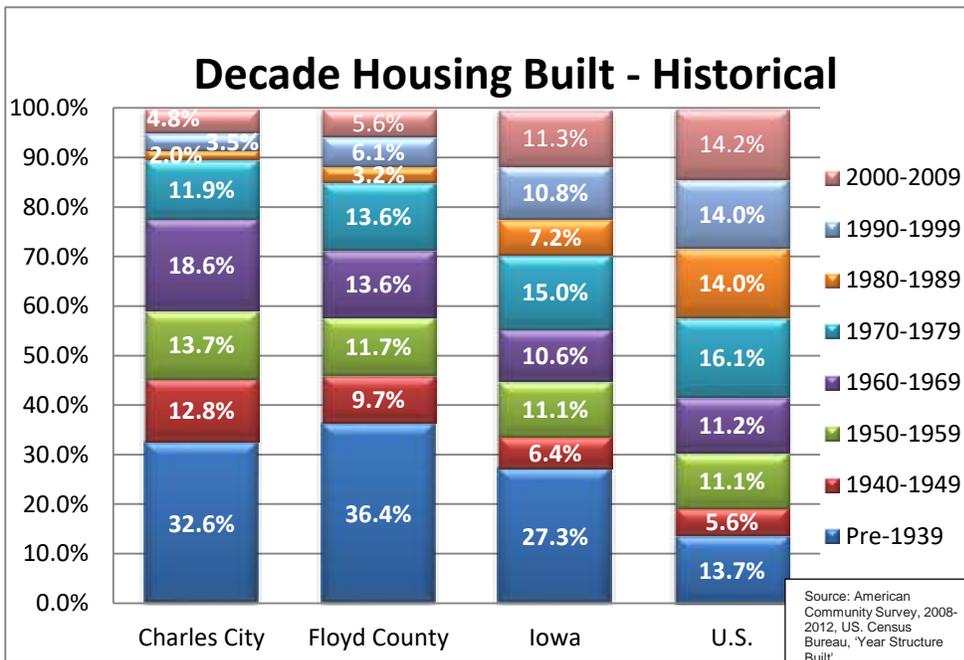
After the steadily high level of housing construction up through the 1970’s, housing development slowed substantially after that and has never regained its former level of momentum. The table at the right details the number of housing units built by decade in Charles City.

These figures indicate that about one-third of the City’s housing stock was built prior to 1939 and nearly 60% was built in the following 4 decades (1940 and 1979), leaving only about 11% to be built in the last 34 years.

Since the population of Charles City peaked in 1950, it is not surprising that construction dropped off after that. The chart below compares the percentage of housing built per decade for Charles City, Floyd County, Iowa, and the

Decade	Housing Units	%
2010-2014	21	0.6%
2000-2009	181	4.8%
1990-1999	130	3.5%
1980-1989	75	2.0%
1970-1979	445	11.8%
1960-1969	694	18.5%
1950-1959	514	13.7%
1940-1949	480	12.8%
Pre-1939	1220	32.4%

Source: American Community Survey, 2008-2012, U.S. Census Bureau, 'Year Structure Built'; Charles City Building Permit Data

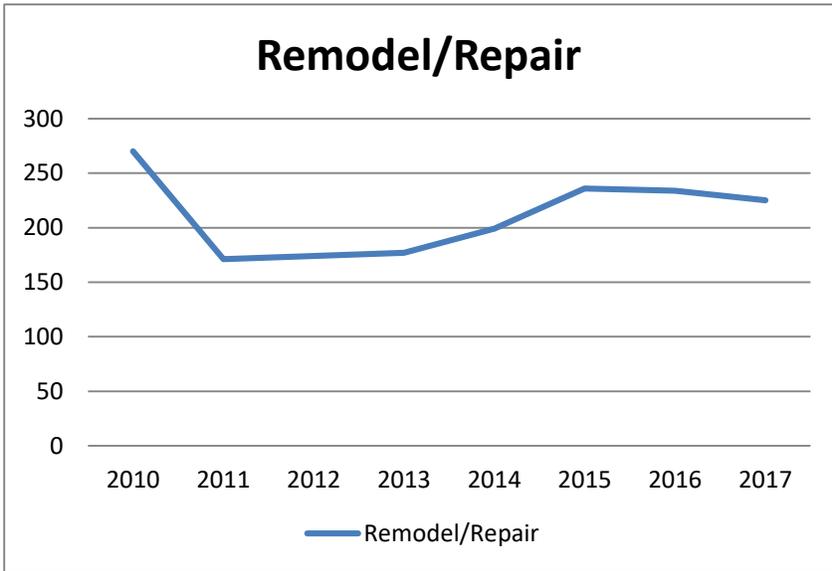


U.S. As you can see, the housing built in the last few decades represent a very minimal percentage of the housing stock for both Charles City and the County, but Iowa and the U.S. have a much more even distribution of housing construction over the decades. This can lead to questions about the condition of housing.

The most recent Housing Needs

Assessment (2012) reported that, “An estimated 40% of the housing units in Charles City are still in need of at least some rehabilitation.” This reaffirms the continuing need for housing rehabilitation programs in the community.” It also reported that, despite increases over the previous 15 years, the median sales price of homes sold in Charles City over a 12-month period (October 1, 2010 through September 30,

2011) was only \$66,000. This relatively low value for homes may serve as a deterrent to renovation work which will yield little increase in equity.



According to city records, between 2010 and 2017, 1,686 home remodel/repair permits were issued with at least 171 issued each year. This is equivalent to 44% of the housing units in the community. The number of permits was high in 2010 (270 permits) as flood repair projects continued, then returned to a more normal pace in 2011 (171 permits) and has been at a general increase since that time, averaging about 230 for the most recent 3 years.

In 2005 the Floyd County Housing Trust Fund was formed. This Trust Fund targets its efforts on furnace replacement for low to moderate income households. However, the Trust Fund has recently undertaken a merger with the NIACOG Housing Trust Fund that increased its State Housing Trust Fund allocation.

Charles City Housing regularly submits applications for federal funding (CDBG) to rehabilitate owner-occupied homes. The program typically rehabilitates 3 or more homes per year for low to moderate income homeowners in a targeted neighborhood.

Rental Housing Condition -

Workforce - A real estate broker survey showed a definite need for rentals. This need arises from two factors. Employers in Charles City show the need for more suitable rental units for entry level positions or younger employees. Many of Charles City’s commuting employees fall into this category and, with no particular ties to the community, are willing to seek housing elsewhere, unless given the incentive of rental opportunities available in Charles City that are better suited to their needs. During the open house for this plan, industrial management and senior staff also noted the need for higher quality housing as one of the key reasons that many of their co-workers live in Waverly.

Seniors - The other need for rentals pertains to senior households in Charles City. Although



rental vacancy is normal as shown in the occupancy section above, the real issue is the poor quality of the available rental units.

McQuilllen Place is under construction on North Main Street in Downtown Charles City as a mixed use development with storefront commercial spaces on the first floor and apartments on the second and third floors. This development was designed to provide 33 residential rental units.

Homeownership Affordability

The most recent Housing Needs Assessment and Action Plan reports that the homes selling up to the median sales price for housing were affordable to about half of Charles City residents and about 25% of the current listings fall into that range.

It also reports that the selling price most commonly requested by households looking for homes in Charles City is in the range of \$50,000 to \$100,000, a 3+ bedroom home, with a 2-stall garage.



These characteristics are reasonably consistent with the upper end of the \$50,000 to \$100,000 range, which means that they are out of reach to many median income householders in Charles City.

In a survey, residential mortgage lenders in Charles City reported that high debt, poor credit history, and lack of down payment are the most common reasons for mortgage loan denials.

To better understand area housing needs and lay groundwork for future development, the City and County are preparing a housing needs assessment through the Charles City Area Development Corporation. Completion of the study is expected in January 2019.

b. Housing - Goals & Strategies

1. **GOAL: Housing Rehabilitated (HIGH PRIORITY SELECTED BY FOCUS GROUP)** - Continue to seek strategies that would aid in the rehabilitation of existing housing.

- a. **STRATEGY:** Select and prioritize areas of the community for rehabilitation and apply to ongoing sources that fund the rehabilitation of owner-occupied units such as the Iowa Economic Development Authority's Community Development Block Grant Program
- b. **STRATEGY:** Pursue other funding sources such as the Federal Home Loan Bank Affordable Housing Program for housing rehabilitation work
- c. **STRATEGY:** Seek opportunities that would fund both multi-family and scattered site rental rehabilitation programs
- d. **STRATEGY:** Promote the Floyd County Housing Trust Fund's furnace replacement program

Smart Planning Guidance:

18B.1. Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should encourage diversity in the types of available housing, support the rehabilitation of existing housing, and promote the location of housing near public transportation and employment centers.

2. **GOAL: New Single-Family Housing Constructed (HIGH PRIORITY SELECTED BY FOCUS GROUP)** - Continue to seek strategies that would aid in the construction of new single-family housing.

- a. **STRATEGY:** Continuation of public/private partnerships in the City of Charles City, which would create incentives for single family residential developments, and result in the availability of moderately priced lots (the Allied development on the east side of the community being a successful example)
- b. **STRATEGY:** Consider the use of the Iowa Finance Authority Project Based State Housing Trust Fund
- c. **STRATEGY:** Consider the use of USDA Rural Development 502 New Construction Program
- d. **STRATEGY:** Consider the use of the Iowa Economic Development Authority Housing Enterprise Program
- e. **STRATEGY:** Consider the use of Green Initiative Programs offered by the Iowa Economic Development Authority such as Green Sustainable Housing

3. **GOAL: Construction of New Rental Housing Units (HIGH PRIORITY SELECTED BY FOCUS GROUP)** – Actively promote the creation of new rental housing units with emphasis on lower density projects

- a. **STRATEGY:** Consider the use of the Iowa Finance Authority Multi-Family Housing Loan Program
- b. **STRATEGY:** Consider applying for assistance under the Iowa Finance Authority HOME Partnership Rental New Construction Program
- c. **STRATEGY:** Consider applying for assistance under the Iowa Finance Authority Project Based State Housing Trust Fund
- d. **STRATEGY:** Promote the use of the Federal Home Loan Bank



McQuillen Place Under Construction in October, 2015

- Affordable Housing Program to prospective developers/builders
 - e. **STRATEGY:** Given the strong ties that the local lending community has with the USDA Rural Development, promote the use of the USDA Multi-Family Housing Programs
 - f. **STRATEGY:** Redevelop vacant downtown upper stories and/or vacant building into rental housing or condominium housing
- 4. **GOAL: Promote Homebuyer Assistance Programs** – Continue to pursue strategies to promote home ownership
 - a. **STRATEGY:** Promote participation in purchasing units with federal down payment assistance provided in the Parkside Villas Subdivision through NIACOG
 - b. **STRATEGY:** Promote the USDA Rural Development 502 Direct Loan or 502 Guaranteed Loan Single Family Housing Purchase Programs, especially since many local mortgage lending institutions partner with the USDA community on these Programs
 - c. **STRATEGY:** Assemble a homebuyer education program to educate prospective homebuyers on the steps for home buying (build credit, talk to a banker about loan and payment limits, connect with a Realtor to search for a home, and closing and maintenance needs)
 - d. **STRATEGY:** Promote the use of Section 8 (HUD) vouchers for home ownership
 - e. **STRATEGY:** Consider the use of the Iowa Finance Authority First Home and First Home Plus Programs
 - f. **STRATEGY:** Consider applying for grant opportunities under Iowa Finance Authority HOME Partnership Homebuyer Assistance Program
 - g. **STRATEGY:** Consider use of the Federal Home Loan Bank Affordable Housing Program.
 - h. **STRATEGY:** Refer prospective purchasers to the NIACOG Homebuyer Assistance Program
 - i. **STRATEGY:** Continue to apply to incentive Programs offered in the State of Iowa from time to time such as the Rural Home Building Initiative grant program that was utilized by the City several years ago
- 5. **GOAL: Enhanced Availability Of Senior Housing** – Continue to promote the construction and offering of senior housing alternatives
 - a. **STRATEGY:** Proactively seek senior citizens in need of rent assistance to participate in the Section 8 housing voucher program:
 - i. Send a mass mailing to senior citizen complexes
 - ii. Visit every senior housing complex with an informational meeting and offer private consultation to assist with completing applications
 - iii. Educate assisted housing managers on the use of Section 8 housing vouchers and empower them to provide information to prospective tenants on the voucher program and assist with connecting them with the Housing Authority
 - iv. Annually meet with staff of Elderbridge Agency on Aging
 - v. Make an annual presentation at the Senior Citizen Center
 - b. **STRATEGY:** Continue to use public/private partnerships (with the use of TIF financing as needed) that, to date have resulted in well over 100 new senior housing units over the past 15 years in the community (Port Charles, Cedar Crest, Riverside Senior Living)
 - c. **STRATEGY:** Consider the use of the Iowa Finance Authority Multi-Family Housing Loan Program
 - d. **STRATEGY:** Consider applying for assistance under the Iowa Finance Authority HOME Partnership Rental New Construction Program

- e. **STRATEGY:** Consider the use of the Iowa Finance Authority Affordable Assisted Living Program
- f. **STRATEGY:** Promote the Iowa Finance Authority Home and Community Based Services Programs
- g. **STRATEGY:** Consider applying for assistance under the Iowa Finance Authority Project Based State Housing Trust Fund
- h. **STRATEGY:** Promote benefits available under the Iowa Department on Aging Programs
- i. **STRATEGY:** Promote benefits available under the Elderbridge Agency Services
- j. **STRATEGY:** Consider the use of the Federal Home Loan Bank Affordable Housing Program
- k. **STRATEGY:** Consider the use of the USDA Rural Development Multi-Family Housing Programs

6. GOAL: Encourage Land Uses That Promote Compact, Orderly Growth Near Existing Infrastructure

- a. **STRATEGY:** Encourage residential living that is in conformance with Charles City's housing strategies.
 - i. Discourage non-residential development within residential areas, except on a scale and format not disruptive to the neighborhood
 - ii. Encourage live-work spaces, home based businesses, and new urbanist growth that is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood
- b. **STRATEGY:** Develop reasonable and planned growth strategies for the neighborhoods in Charles City
 - i. Encourage annexation where sufficient provisions are made for community infrastructure utilities (sewer and water) and such development is adjacent to an existing developed residential area
- c. **STRATEGY:** Create living areas that are compact and identifiable, near employers, offering overall security and affording freedom of choice for types of residential dwellings, social opportunities, and creative individual living
 - i. Allow single family residential uses where it is shown safe and proper provisions are made for public utilities
 - ii. Provide a balance and diversity of housing types within new neighborhoods
 - iii. Recruit and financially assist housing developers



3. Public Infrastructure

a. Public Infrastructure - Background

Water System

The Charles City water system is owned and operated by the City and includes 65 miles of water mains, 800 valves, 470 hydrants, 3 wells, 2 water towers, and a water treatment facility. The water is drawn from the Cedar Valley Aquifer.

Water Treatment Facility – The Water Treatment Facility is located at 1709 Indiana Avenue. The capacity of the water treatment plant is 5 million gallons per day. With peak demand for water usage of only 3,118,000 gallons (June 26, 2010) since 2010, the plant offers excess capacity of approximately 40% (2 million gallons) for future demand growth.

Smart Planning Guidance:

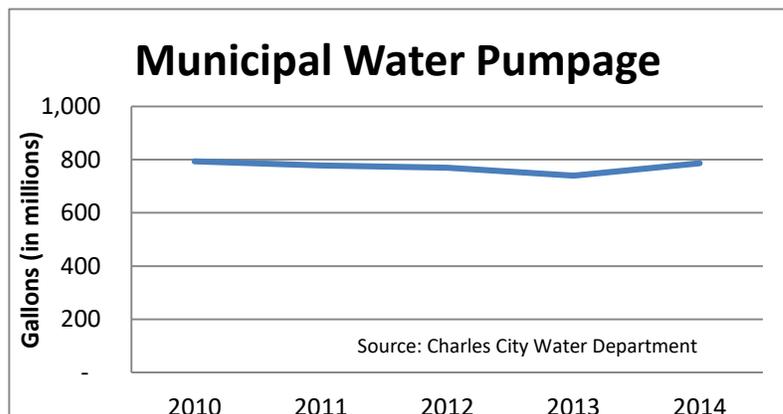
18B.1. Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should be undertaken to promote clean and renewable energy use and increased energy efficiency.

18.B.2. Public Infrastructure and Utilities - Objectives, policies, and programs to guide future development of sanitary sewer service, storm water management, water supply, solid waste disposal, wastewater treatment technologies, recycling facilities, and telecommunications facilities. The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may include estimates regarding future demand for such utility services.



The capacity was increased in Spring 2010 when a new \$8.7 million addition to the water treatment facility was completed. The project was funded by water revenues and financed through the State Revolving Loan Fund. A preventive maintenance program is followed at the plant.

Pumpage & Wells - Annual pumpage has been fairly steady declining



slightly, between 2010 and 2013, but then increasing in 2014 nearing the 2010 level.

The water is pumped to the plant from the three (3) city-owned wells. Information about the municipal wells is detailed in the table below.

Existing Municipal Wells			
Well Number	Year Established	Location Of Well	Depth (feet)
#5	1950	In water plant	185'
#7	1963	Just north of water plant	244'
#8	2009	West of VFW (just north of Hyers Creek in line with Missouri Avenue; west of N Main)	230'

After treatment, water is stored in two (2) water towers as detailed below. Total capacity for water storage is 2 million gallons which is approximately equal to the average daily pumpage (based upon annual pumpage figures). In addition a reservoir stores 500,000 gallons of water.

Municipal Water Towers			
Tower Number	Year Established	Location Of Tower	Capacity (Gallons)
#1	1972	West of Trail / Houses on Charles St. between 8 th /9 th St.	1 Million
#2	2004	Just north of water plant	1 Million

Water Distribution – As previously mentioned, the City currently maintains approximately 65 miles of water mains. They range in size from 4” to 18” in size. Most of the older system is comprised of cast iron pipe, and since 1982 mostly of polyvinyl chloride (pvc) pipe. The distribution system includes a complete feeder main loop, generally along the periphery of the City. The water system also has a booster station that increases pressure in the industrial area along with higher elevation in the south and east parts of the City.

Water loss from the mains averaged 14% in 2015, and the City has been investing in leak detection to identify major leakage area and minimize water loss through replacement of water mains. Lines and hydrants are flushed annually to maintain the system. Two significant new lines were added to the water distribution since 2000, including the following:

- ❖ Valero - Charles City was involved with construction of an 18" water main three miles west of the corporate limits, which serves the Valero ethanol plant. This project, though funded by the ethanol plant, had 45% of the construction costs reimbursed by an industrial Tax Increment Financing district. Project cost for installation of the main, engineering and increase in pumps and backup generation amounted to \$2,750,000.
- ❖ Southwest Industrial Park - The City completed final street and utility work in the 110-acre park in 2000. Both the acquisition of land and extension of local improvements were made possible by a

Joint City/County Southwest TIF District organized in 1990.

Wastewater Management

The Charles City wastewater management system is owned and operated by the City and includes 72 miles of sanitary sewer collection lines and the wastewater treatment facility. The existing sanitary sewer system is municipally owned and operated. The system is made up of lateral, trunk, and outfall sewers and five pump stations; it conveys wastewater to the wastewater treatment facility.

Wastewater Treatment Facility – The Wastewater Treatment Facility (aka Water Pollution Control Plant) is located at 1 Shaw Avenue. The capacity of the Charles City wastewater treatment facility is 4.66 million gallons per day (mg/d), which is only slightly below the 5 million gallon capacity of the water treatment facility to treat water for drinking, watering lawns, and other uses. In terms of BOD (Biological Oxygen Demand) the maximum treatment capacity is 4,300 pounds per day. Currently, the plant treats approximately 1,030 pounds of B.O.D. per day, which equates to 25% of the plant’s capacity. However, the more limiting factor is the amount of BOD allowed under the current Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) permit; the permit limits effluent to only 1,555 pounds of BOD (averaged over 7 days) based upon the amount of E. coli bacteria, etc. in the effluent that is released. Although this means that average level of effluent is within the IDNR limit, the City still needs to be able to accommodate peak demands and growth from new development. Therefore, the City added an ultraviolet disinfection system to the wastewater treatment plant in 2015. In 2016 the City completed a plan for reducing nutrients (nitrogen and phosphorous) remaining in the treated wastewater (effluent). Expansion of the waste water treatment plant is scheduled to commence by 2019 and will include a water resource recovery facility. The equalization basin component of the expansion project will handle excess flows of up to 6.1 million gallons. The reed bed feature will digest the wastewater’s bacteria, fungi, and algae, which will reduce operating expenses. These efforts will improve the quality of the effluent being discharged into the Cedar River, and as a result, IDNR will be able to increase the amount of effluent allowed by their permit; this should greatly improve the City’s ability to meet peak demand levels and accommodate future growth without adversely affecting the environment.



Sanitary Sewer Collection System – The 72 miles of sanitary sewer that make up the collection system primarily serve the residents of the city, and also the Maple Heights neighborhood located northwest of the city limits. The City annually slip lines targeted mains at a typical cost of about \$150,000. Additionally, the City cleans and maintains the system as a whole.

The collection system includes 5 lift stations located at:

- Gilbert Street & Park Drive – Wastewater is forced under Shermans Creek to the Court Street sanitary sewer.
- Kellogg and Hart Street– Sewage is lifted to the Kellogg sanitary sewer, which then takes wastewater to the plant by gravity flow.
- Maple Heights Addition – The Homeowners’ Association has its own sanitary sewer district

contracting with the City for maintenance of the system and treatment of wastewater.

- 11th Street – This lift station solely serves the industrial park.
- Old Highway Road (near South Grand Avenue) – This lift station serves the area south of Old Highway 218.

Stormwater Management

Storm Sewers – A storm sewer system removes rainwater runoff to prevent ponding or flooding of streets and adjacent areas. A considerable majority of Charles City stormwater management involves the traditional method of collecting rainwater runoff through storm sewer intakes. After which, the rainwater is piped to the Cedar River and its tributaries. The pipes vary in size from 12 inches to 60 inches. The storm sewer intakes and pipes are generally placed at the time that streets are constructed. The storm water management system is aging and needs maintenance, that is to say, periodic replacement of sections as budgets allow. The City is currently working to resolve areas with storm water ponding issues.



Permeable Paving –

Although, storm sewers have historically been the only option for removing rainwater from city streets, Charles City has taken a more environmentally friendly approach. In 2010, the City began its permeable paving campaign. In an effort to address problems that a westside neighborhood had been experiencing with substandard storm water sewers, the City installed a permeable paving system in

a 16-block section of the neighborhood. The permeable paving was designed to improve water quality and reduce flooding. The design involves brick pavers which are NOT grouted together. The voids

between the pavers allow rainwater to soak into a rock base, reducing the need for storm water structures. The subsurface, made up of clean gravel and rock chips, provides the water a place to store until it recharges into the earth. The pilot project cost \$3.7 million and was funded through I-Jobs and ARRA, together with about \$3 million in local funding. It has been said that the project was the largest of its kind in the nation at the time. This environmentally friendly solution also improves water quality by filtering rainwater as it passes through the system.



The system lasts longer and requires less maintenance than a typical storm sewer system. The first permeable paving project in Charles City was completed in 2010.

In 2012 the city completed its second permeable paving project, which consisted of 8.5 city blocks. The project cost about \$2 million. The work was funded through the State Revolving Loan Fund. Thirty percent of the eligible expense, which does not include water and sanitary sewer work, will be forgiven by the State Revolving Loan Fund. Sources for the city's share of the funding included the water fund, the storm water fund, and the local option sales tax. The project was located on Clark Street (between Jackson Street and the pedestrian bridge), Joslin, Iowa, and Illinois Streets (between Spriggs Street and Richings Street), and Spriggs Street (between Johnson and Jackson Streets).

These projects have reduced the need to replace downstream storm sewers and have helped to reduce flooding of the adjacent yards.

Permeable paving was also included in the Parkside Villas Subdivision built in 2014/15 with the assistance of the Jumpstart Housing Assistance Program, which offered CDBG funding to replace housing lost in the floods of 2008.

The city now has 29 blocks of permeable paving. Maintenance staff have found the pavers to be easier when making repairs in two ways. First, there is no random cracking and, if a brick is significantly damaged, that brick can be fairly easily replaced at little cost. Second, when replacing utilities under one of these streets, instead of removing and replacing the street paving, the bricks can simply be removed, set aside, and replaced after the utility work is completed. This creates a cleaner look for the street and saves cost in materials.

Maintenance of the permeable pavers includes weed control through gaps between the pavers, and snow plows must keep their blades slightly elevated to avoid catching the sides of the bricks.

Although these projects have been cost effective, the City looks at the projects on a case by case basis to determine whether storm sewers or permeable paving are a better alternative for the City.

Gas/Electric

MidAmerican Energy supplies the gas and electric needs for Charles City. The company has invested approximately \$13 million in distribution, substation, and transmission upgrades and new facilities in the Charles City and surrounding area since 2010. Projects have included the construction of an additional distribution circuit tie, circuit breaker replacements, relaying upgrades, extensive distribution and transmission reconstruction (aka 'rebuilt'), individual distribution and transmission structure replacements, and a substation transformer addition. MidAmerican Energy is based in Des Moines, Iowa and offers rebates for some types of energy efficient construction/appliances, as well as, assistance in some cases for new industrial development.

Communication Systems: Telephone, Internet/Broadband

Telephone service is provided by Century Link and Mediacom. Cell tower coverage is very good. Internet service is available to all homes and businesses.

Broadband service is made available by Wisconsin Independent Network ('W.I.N.'), a communications and IT services subsidiary of UnityPoint Health; however, its coverage is limited. The broadband cable is generally located with the right of way for the Charley Western Recreational Trail that loops around the City. For competitiveness in recruiting business broadband communication is important for both entrepreneurs and big business in determining the kind of link they can have with the global economy,

and the connection can significantly impact the attractiveness of the City for progressive new businesses. The City is working toward creation of its own telecommunications utility to improve quality high speed internet access.

Solid Waste / Recycling

Collection – Residential solid waste (trash) and recyclables are collected weekly by Jendro Sanitation. Commercial entities contract directly with Jendro for collection. Fees for waste collection are based upon volume including: \$12 for 35 gallons, \$15 for 65 gallons, and \$18 for 95 gallons. Recyclables are collected bi-weekly at no additional charge. The City does all of the billing for the solid waste and recycling collection services and passes the funds through to Jendro Sanitation. Residents rake yard waste (leaves and twigs) into the street, and city workers use heavy equipment to scoop it up and haul it away. Alternatively, residents can transport their own yard waste to the landfill site for composting with no tipping fee.



Landfill - Collected waste is transported to the Floyd Mitchell Chickasaw Landfill, also known as the FMC Landfill. With a remaining life of 40 years, the landfill has substantial remaining capacity. The site is located at 3354 330th St., Elma, Iowa, which lies approximately 20 miles northeast of Charles City in Mitchell County. In addition to solid waste and recyclables, the landfill also accepts household hazardous waste. The landfill maintains a website at <http://www.fmclandfill.org> that includes details about their operations.

TIPPING FEES	
Commercial Garbage \$41.00/ton	TVs & Computer Monitors \$7/\$15/\$20
Residential Garbage \$41.00/ton	Electronics \$0
Construction/Demolition \$41.00/ton	Tires \$3.00/each
Contaminated Soil \$75.00/ton	Semi Tires \$15.00/each
Special Waste \$45.00/ton	Tires with Rims \$4.00/each
Appliances \$10.00/each	Super Singles \$5.00/each

b. Public Infrastructure - Goals & Strategies

1. **GOAL: Expand the availability of broadband - SELECTED AS HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGY BY FOCUS GROUP** - To stay competitive for economic development with other cities, reliable high speed Internet access is essential. This economic development initiative ranked highest for youth in the Charles City Community Survey.
 - a. **STRATEGY:** Obtain preliminary design and cost estimates to install fiber optic cable to homes and businesses in Charles City that will provide internet, video and telephone services.
 - b. **STRATEGY:** Consider approaches and lay groundwork for partnership, installation, ownership, operation, and billing
 - c. **STRATEGY:** Install fiber optic cable
 - d. **STRATEGY:** Include broadband in community marketing materials

2. **GOAL – Maintain City infrastructure**
 - a. **STRATEGY:** Continue operation and preventative and routine maintenance of municipal utilities including water mains, water treatment facility, wastewater treatment, sanitary sewer mains and storm sewer mains as funding allows from sanitary sewer fees (about \$1.3 million) and storm sewer fees (about \$160,000)
 - b. **STRATEGY:** Continue to replace streets and storm sewers with permeable paving on a case by case basis where it is the best alternative for the City
 - c. **STRATEGY:** Dredge Lime Lagoon

3. **GOAL – Ensure sound financing of utilities**
 - a. **STRATEGY:** Consider a sewer rate increase to speed up the sewer lining progress
 - b. **STRATEGY:** Protect the City’s water quality by pursuing watershed planning and grants
 - c. **STRATEGY:** Review rates paid by Maple Heights residents (outside of city limits) for city utilities to ensure that the rates are appropriate for non-residents

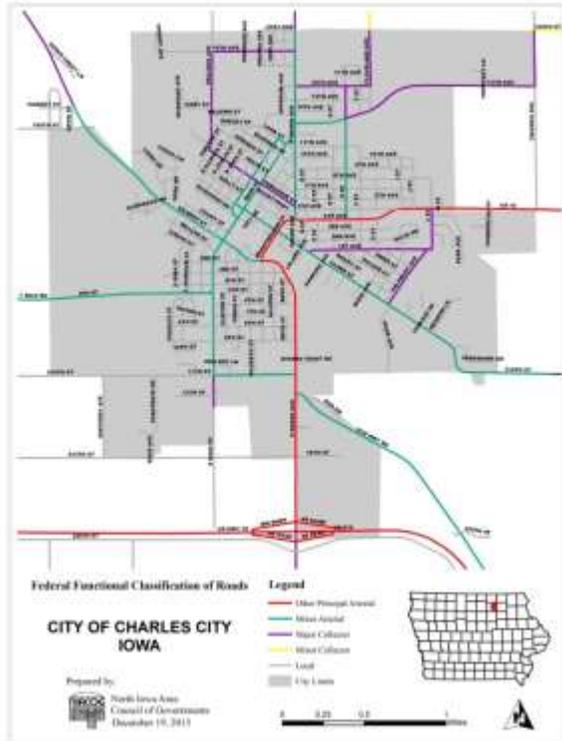
4. **General Policies**
 - a. **STRATEGY:** Do not extend city utilities outside of the city limits, unless it is for a land use not suitable for close proximity to others and it offers substantial benefit to the community, such as job creation or a rate structure that is higher than in-town residents
 - b. **STRATEGY:** Utilize energy efficient technologies to minimize future costs
 - c. **STRATEGY:** Promote clean and renewable energy resources when making choices
 - d. **STRATEGY:** Consider long term maintenance and replacement cost when making construction design / materials decisions related to utilities
 - e. **STRATEGY:** Allow permeable paving as an alternative to traditional storm sewer mains for new privately constructed subdivisions
 - f. **STRATEGY:** Generally, have new developments pay the full costs of public improvements required to serve them according to the benefit derived

4. Transportation

a. Transportation - Background

Streets

The City owns approximately 65 miles of streets. The web of Charles



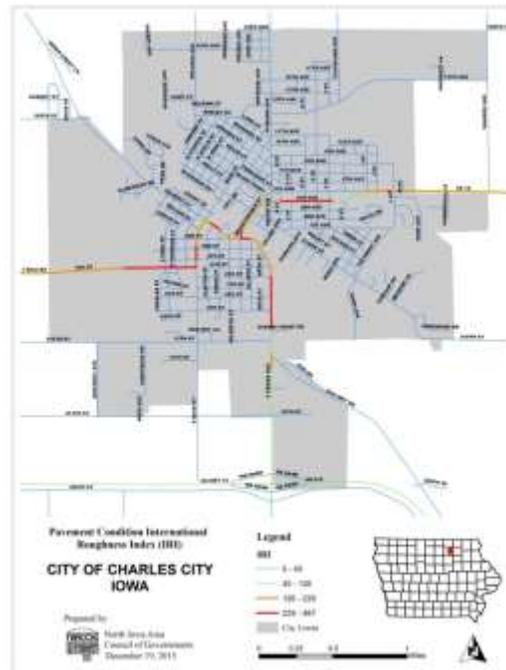
City's streets is depicted in the map titled, 'Federal Functional Classification of Roads'. The map illustrates the collector streets and arterials that serve as the backbone for the flow of traffic through the community. A larger version of the map is included at the back of this section (4.c.).

Smart Planning Guidance:
 18.B.1. Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should promote expanded transportation options for residents of the community. Consideration should be given to transportation options that maximize mobility, reduce congestion, conserve fuel, and improve air quality.
 18.B.2. Transportation - Objectives, policies, and programs to guide the future development of a safe, convenient, efficient, and economical transportation system. Plans for such a transportation system may be coordinated with state and regional transportation plans and take into consideration the need for diverse modes of transportation, accessibility, improved air quality, and interconnectivity of the various modes of transportation services.

Street Condition: The state-owned arterials in the city have been rated by the IDOT based upon the Pavement Condition International Roughness Index. The map below illustrates the ratings indicating a need for maintenance on both Highway 18 and 14 especially in the central part of the city. As regular maintenance, the city annually reconstructs or resurfaces streets at a cost of approximately

\$600,000; the funding is obtained from Local Option Sales Tax revenues. Approximately 98% of the streets in the City are currently hard surfaced. Permeable paving has been installed on 29 blocks of city streets. A larger version of the map is included at the back of this section (4.c.).

The Avenue of The Saints: Since its completion in 2001, the Avenue of the Saints has provided 4-lane divided highway access to Charles City. 'The Avenue' is depicted (in red) by the map below and is actually a combination of designated Highways including Highway 18, 27, and 218. With an average annual daily traffic of 7700-9400, this transportation resource is well traveled because it provides a vital link to adjacent trade centers (Mason City, Waverly, and



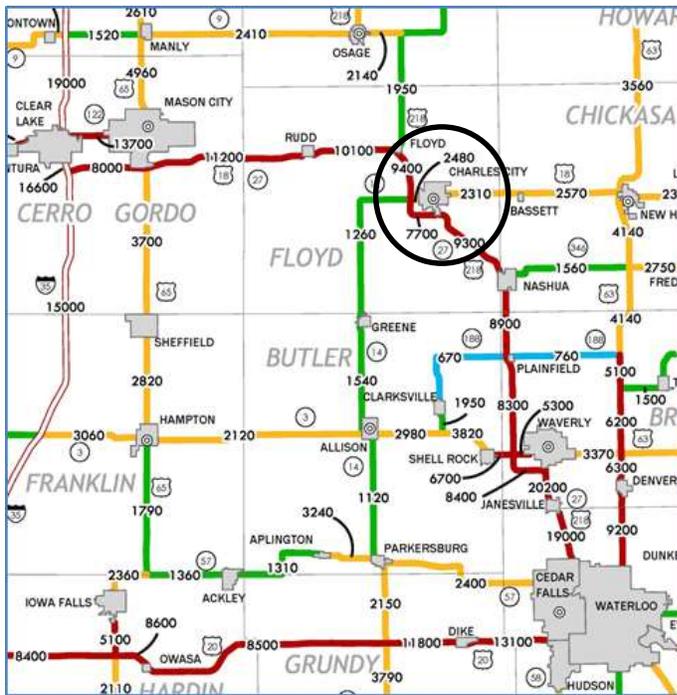


Figure 1: Iowa Vehicular Traffic, Office of Systems Planning, IDOT, 2014, <http://www.iowadot.gov/maps/msp/pdf/VehicularTrafficMap.pdf>

Cedar Falls) and it links Interstate Highways (Interstate 35 near Mason City and Interstate 380 in Waterloo). Beyond that, the Avenue connects St. Louis, Missouri to St. Paul, Minnesota. The Avenue is an important transportation tool that the community offers for business and industrial recruitment. And, the high traffic volume is also an economic resource for tourism, retail, etc.

The final street was extended into the Southwest Industrial Park (110-acre park) in 2000. Both the acquisition of land and extension of local improvements were made possible by a Joint City/County Southwest TIF District organized in 1990.

Bridges: Charles City currently has 10 bridges. The bridges have been rated using a sufficiency rating formula. The sufficiency rating doesn't necessarily indicate a bridge's ability to carry traffic

loads, but it does help to determine which bridges may need repair or replacement.

None of the Charles City bridges have been closed and none were found to be in the Structurally Deficient category (0-36%) where mitigating weight limitations, etc. can be applied. In fact, of the ten bridges 8 were found to be in good to excellent condition; unfortunately, the two bridges in fair condition are the largest and most critical bridges that span the Cedar River and provide access over the Cedar River, which divides the northeast half of the City from southwest half. As a fair rating the bridges are within the realm of safe conditions, action is not required at this point.

The sufficiency rating calculations are based on a 0 to 100 scale and compare existing bridges to a new bridge designed to current engineering standards. The formula places 55 percent value on the structural condition of the bridge, 30 percent on its serviceability and obsolescence, and 15 percent on its essentiality to public use.

No major bridge improvements are planned at this time.

Air

Charles City has a small public airport located east of town on US 18 (old 18). The airport is operated by the North Cedar Airport Authority, which has a board with two members appointed by the city of Charles City and another member appointed by Floyd County.

The last runway expansion project was completed in the 1980's. If expanded from its current 4,000 feet to an



expanded 5,500 feet in length and widening it from 75 feet to 100 feet, the runway of the Northeast Iowa Regional Airport will be able to serve larger aircraft. The runway expansion project is necessary for the airport to be in compliance with new Federal Aviation Administration rules on acceleration/stopping distances for larger aircraft and would also potentially attract more businesses and more jobs to the area.

Though some jet access is available currently, corporate clients have stated that they want to be able to bring larger aircraft into Charles City.

Expanding the runway is the first phase of a three-phase airport improvement project. The second phase is building a parallel taxiway and the third phase is a crosswind paved runway.



Rail

Charles City is served by the Canadian Pacific Railroad - CP (jointly with the Dakota, Minnesota and Eastern Railroad Co. - DME) and the Canadian National Railroad Co. – CN (jointly with the Cedar River Railroad Co. - CEDR). Both the Canadian Pacific and Canadian National Railways are Class I railroads; 2 of the 7 Class I railways in the country. Class I railroads are the industry leaders and are always at the forefront of the latest technologies and newest locomotives on the market. Over the years the number of major railroads has shrunk due to mergers, and what remains today are seven very large mega systems.



Transit

Charles City Transit, through a contractual agreement with the North Iowa Area Council of Governments, makes curbside transit bus service available to all Charles City residents. For disabled, elderly, and student passenger fares range from \$1 to \$3 within the region, and for the general public fees range from \$3 to \$5. The City recently restructured this system to bring it more 'in house'. Currently, regional service is not offered, but may be added back in eventually..

Multi-Purpose Trails

As depicted on the map entitled “Existing and Proposed Multi-Purpose Trails”, the City currently has three existing recreational trails. One extends along the Cedar River and was developed as part of the overall riverfront improvement initiative in recent years. A second trail wraps around the outer edge of much of the southwest quadrant of the city, then turns northeast dissecting the southeast quadrant of the city, and then wraps around the northeast quadrant of the city; this trail does not travel through the northwest quadrant to complete the loop; however, plans are in development to complete the loop. The third trail extends from the existing partial loop trail southeast past the school.

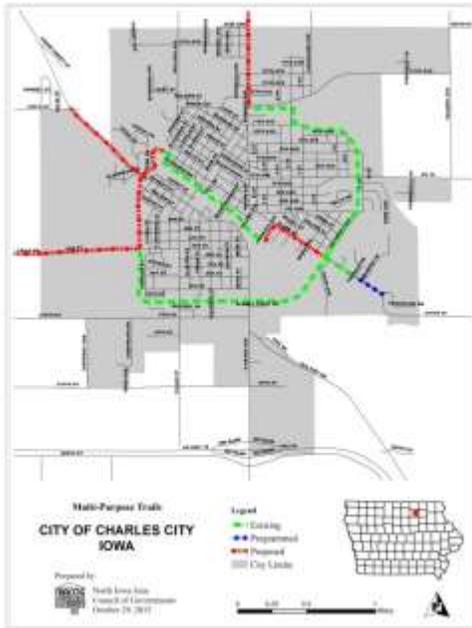


Figure 2: Existing and Proposed Multi-Purpose Trails

The map also includes proposed trails as proposed in the drafted Regional Planning Affiliation (RPA) 2 Regional Trail Plan. A larger version of the map is provided with the other maps at the end of this Chapter.



The trail shown in blue was the only trail that was actually programmed for funding in Charles City through the regionally allocated Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP); the TAP funds are federal funds administered by the IDOT (Iowa Department Of Transportation). The newly funded trail section is located along Clark Street and connects the trails that pass the Charles City High School to the new growth neighborhoods to the southeast of it, such as the Allied Subdivision.

b. Transportation – Goals & Strategies

1. GOAL: Maintain and expand transportation infrastructure

- a. **STRATEGY:** Continue to expand the trail network, especially add closing the trail loop in the northwest quadrant of the city and reaching the areas not currently served by trails. HIGH PRIORITY SELECTED BY THE FOCUS GROUPS; CITY ADMINISTRATION IS SPEARHEADING THIS EFFORT)
- b. **STRATEGY:** Continue annual street reconstruction and resurfacing as able with revenues from Local Option Sales Tax (about \$600,000 per year).
- c. **STRATEGY:** Add more lighting on bridge, in parks and along trails. Use LED lighting where feasible
- d. **STRATEGY:** Expand the runway to allow for larger aircraft
- e. **STRATEGY:** Utilize permeable paving where feasible to minimize the need expansion and replacement of storm sewer mains.
- f. **STRATEGY:** Modify sidewalks and curbs for ADA compliance
- g. **STRATEGY:** Adopt a complete streets policy – The policy would state that when there is a new project, such as a new subdivision or street reconstructions, the entire roadway and scope of users is considered in designing the right-of-way for multiple users. For example, curb ramps for wheelchairs, street widths that accommodate bike lanes, sidewalks on both sides of the streets for people who walk, and adequate space for transit buses to drop off people at the curb. Instructions for adopting a policy and a workbook are available from the National Complete Streets Coalition



2. General Policies

- a. **STRATEGY:** Provide transportation systems that are safe, efficient, and meet the needs of the residential population, businesses, industries, and community
- b. **STRATEGY:** Support and promote the proper maintenance of all transportation routes
 - Support those modes of transportation which represent the most efficient and cost effective means of transportation
 - Require sidewalks on both sides of all streets and fill in gaps within sidewalk network in commercial and residential areas
 - Encourage off-street parking, but allow street parking when sufficient street widths permit
- c. **STRATEGY:** Provide and maintain transportation and trail systems which are planned, located, and designed to enhance the efficiency of movement both for people and goods in a cost effective way
 - Plan, develop, and maintain a safe and efficient transportation system to meet the present and future mobility needs of the city
 - Provide a network of trails, connecting existing and future development areas, recreation facilities, and other major community features to serve both transportation and recreational services
 - Design trails as loops that provide maximum accessibility and flexibility in trip length
- d. **STRATEGY:** Consider aesthetics when upgrading streets
 - Consider the urban context of arterial streets when upgrading functionality and consider aesthetic treatments, such as landscaped medians and street trees

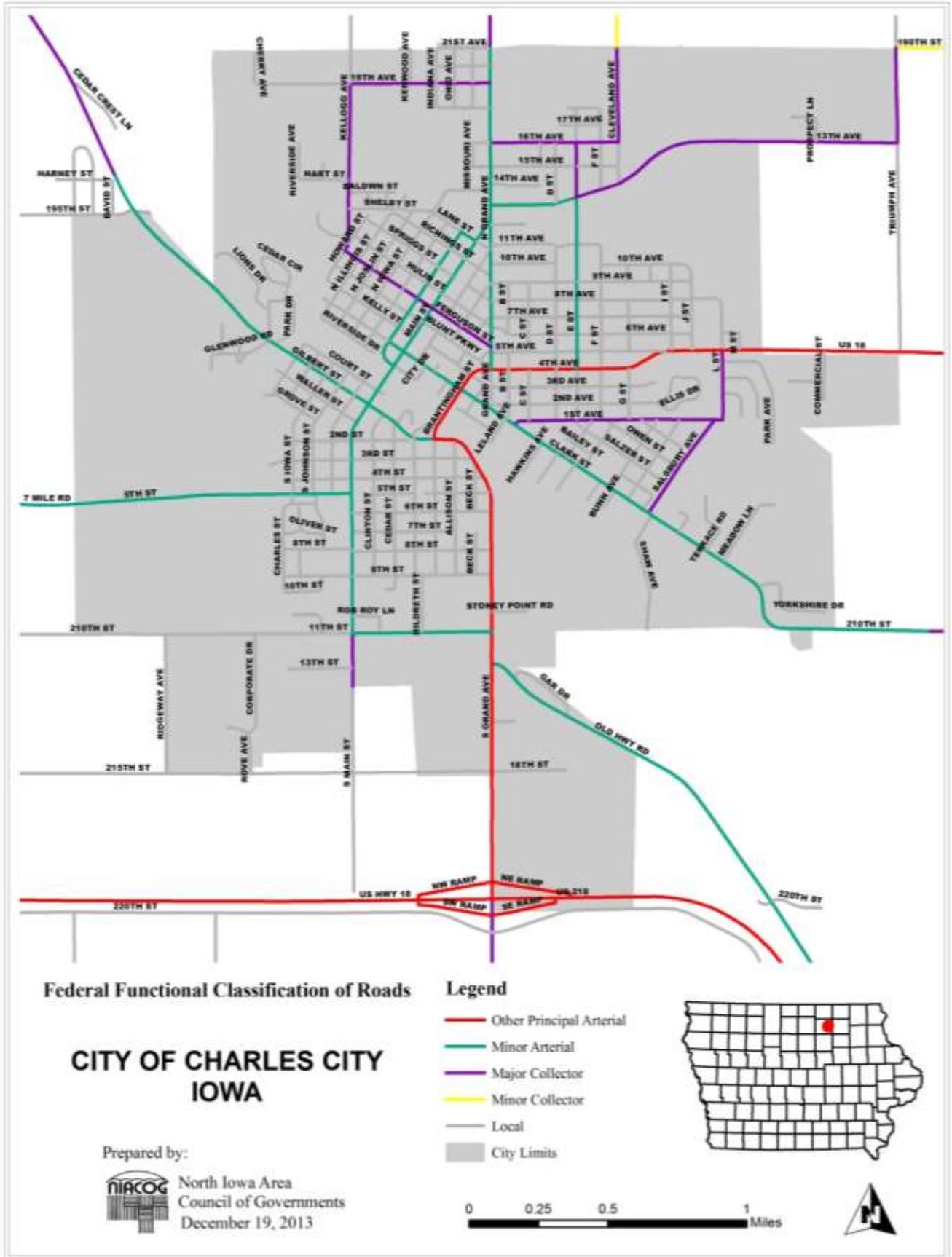
- Integrate wayfinding signage, visual design improvements, and enhancements into arterial street or highway projects

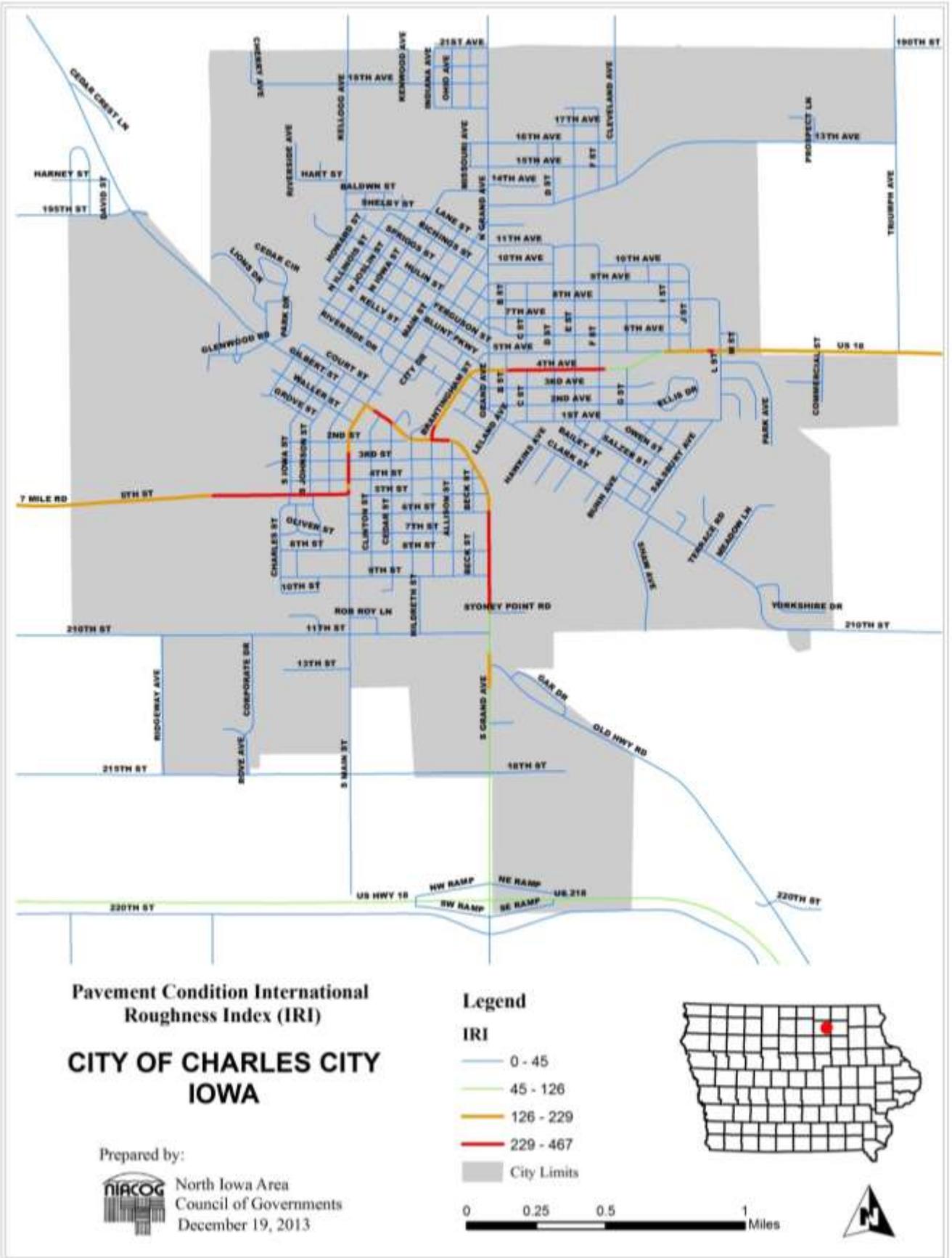
c. Transportation – Maps

Maps for this Transportation section are provided on the following pages including the following.

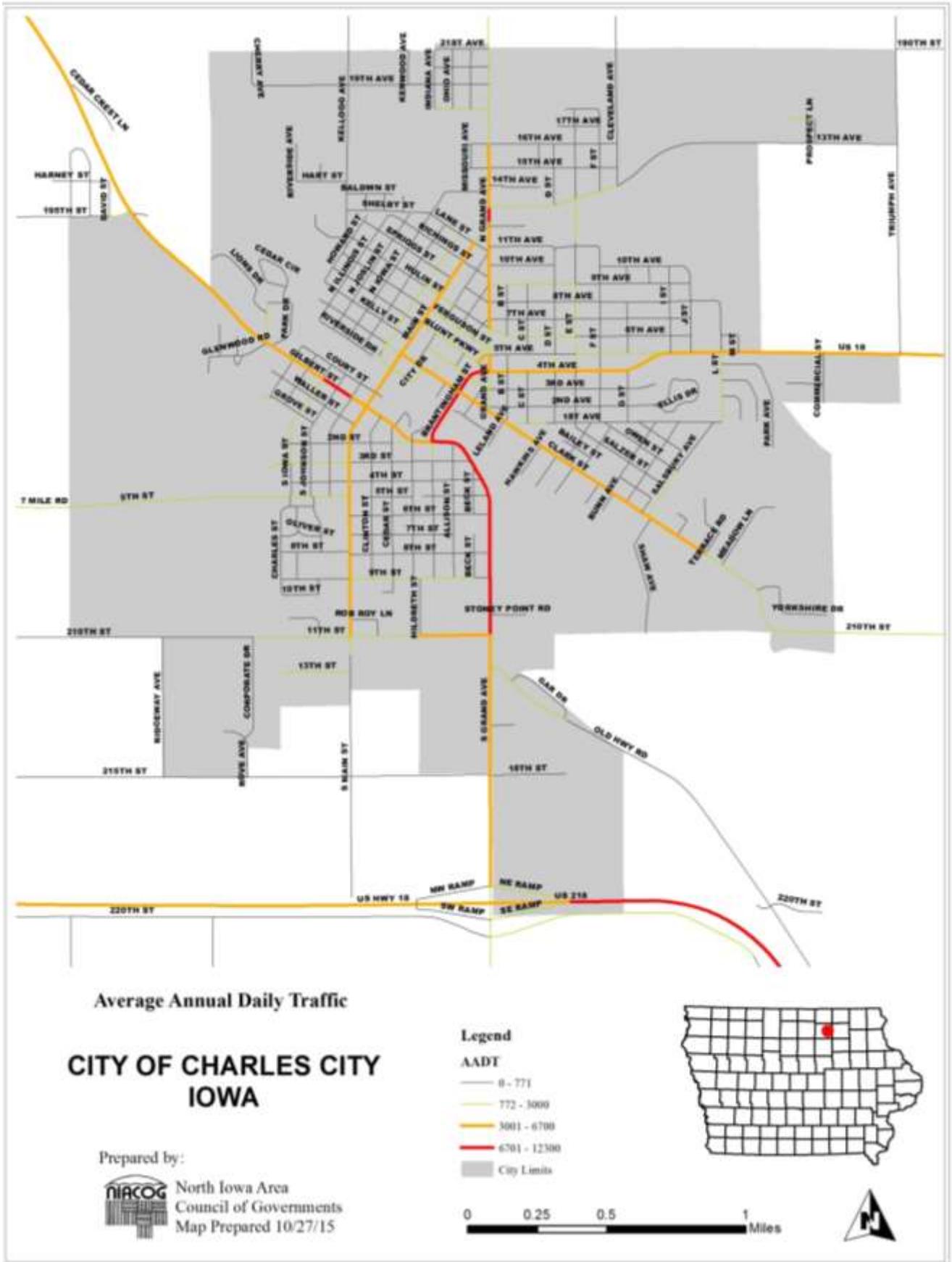
1. Federal Functional Classification of Roads
2. Pavement Condition International Roughness Condition
3. Average Annual Daily Traffic
4. Bridge Sufficiency Rating
5. Multi-Purpose Trails

Charles City Comprehensive Plan - 2018

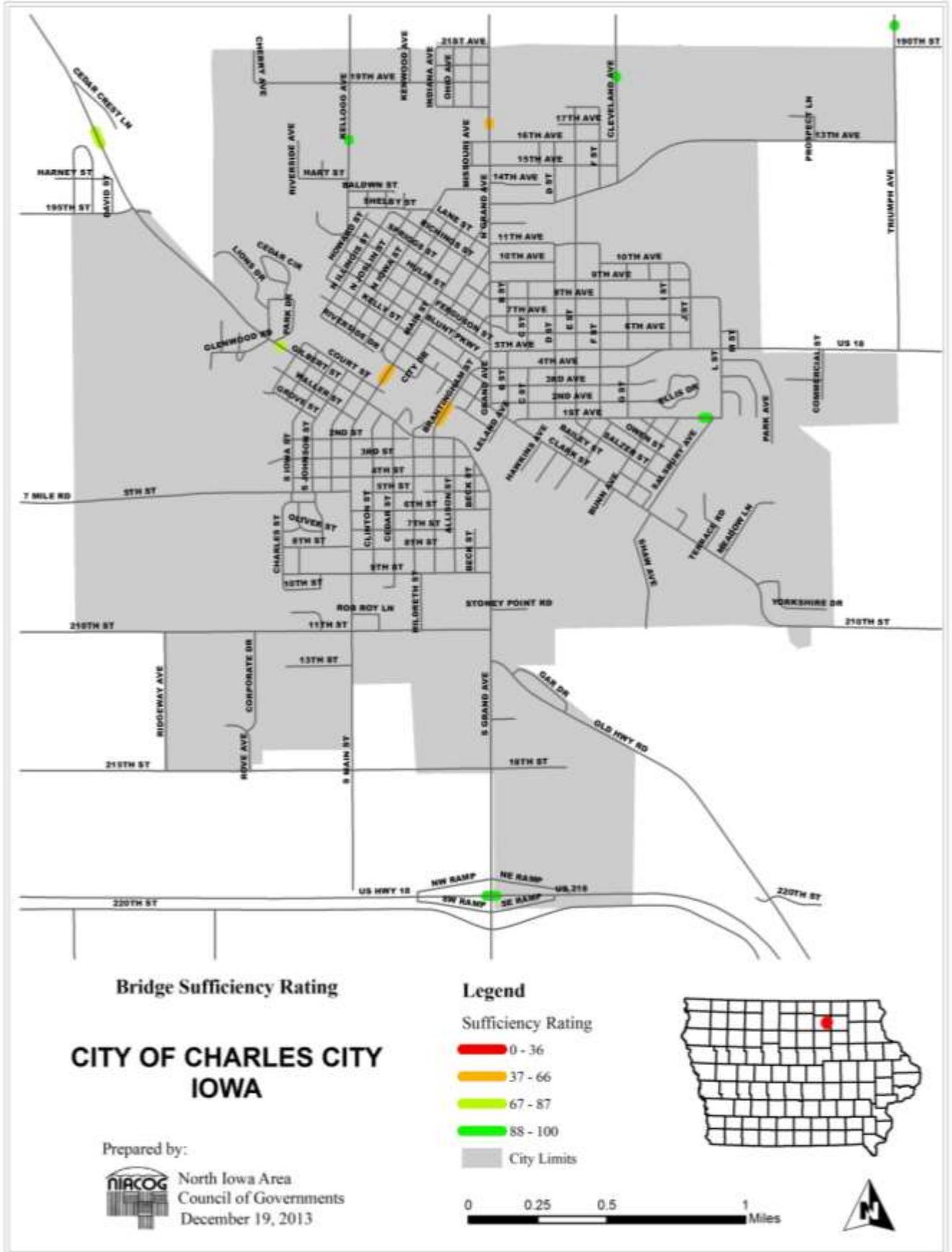


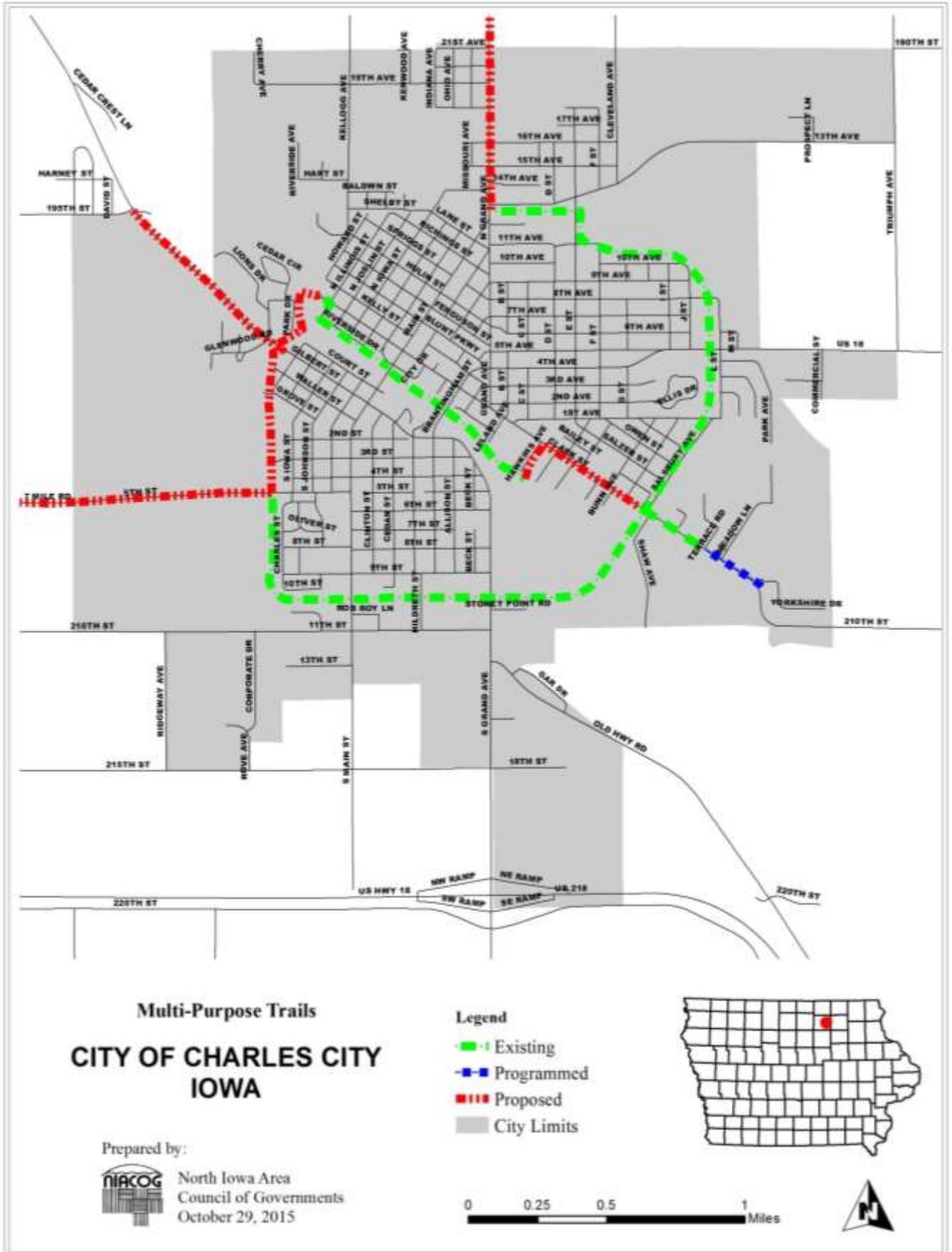


Charles City Comprehensive Plan - 2018



Charles City Comprehensive Plan - 2018





5. Economic Development

a. Economic Development - Background

Economic Development can include a wide range of subjects, but for the sake of this section we will focus on four areas: income, employment, retail, and industry.

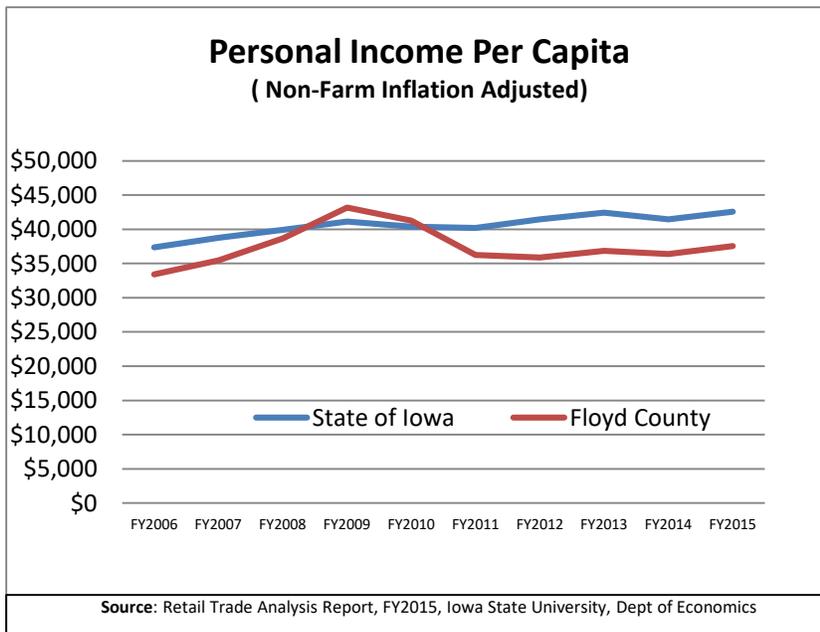
Income: Personal Income, Poverty, and Median Income, Business Establishments/Payroll

As illustrated in the chart below, personal income in Floyd County increased substantially by over \$4,000 per person between Fiscal Year 2006 and 2015. These figures are inflation adjusted, so the increase in wage is a true increase in purchasing power. These income averages do not include farm income, but do include: wages, self-employment, investment, and government payment income.

Smart Planning Guidance:

18.B.1. Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should promote increased diversity of employment and businesses opportunities, promote access to education and training, expand entrepreneurial opportunities, and promote the establishment of businesses in locations near existing housing, infrastructure, and transportation.

18.B.2. Economic Development - Objectives, policies, and programs to promote the stabilization, retention, or expansion of economic development and employment opportunities. The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may include an analysis of current industries and economic activity and identify economic growth goals for the municipality. The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may also identify locations for future brownfield or grayfield development.

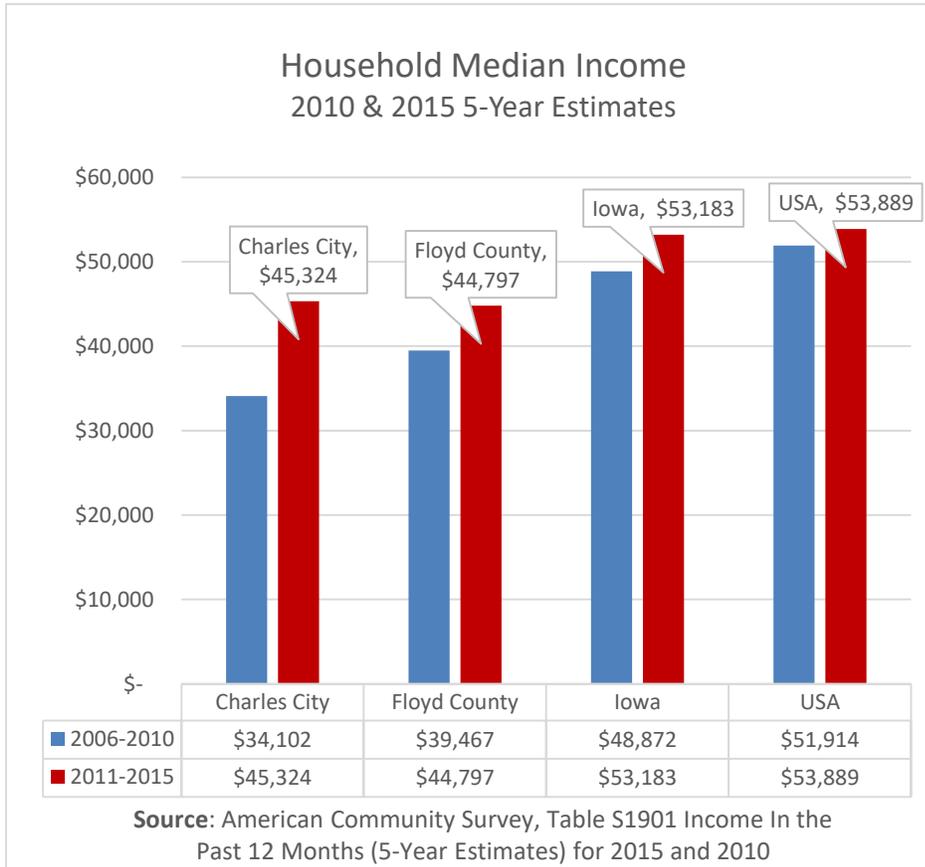


The State’s Personal Income average has consistently stayed 10%-15% above the Floyd County level with the exception of Fiscal Year 2009/2010 when flood recovery efforts increased construction sector wages significantly. Having a lower average wage can be helpful for recruiting employers, but creates difficulties with encouraging people to stay in the area or move to the area for employment, which can contribute substantially to population loss.

On a related note, the number of people living below the poverty level is 12.7% (2010 people) in Charles City, which is about the same as the statewide percentage (12.3%). In Charles City about 1 of every 3 families with children under the age of 5 live in poverty, and approximately 1 of every 5 children under the age of 18 live in poverty.

Where the above table looked at the *average* income *per person*, the following chart considers the *median* income per *household*, so it is affected less by high income households, but more affected by

the number of wage earners per household, such that the more wage earners there are per household, the higher household income will be.

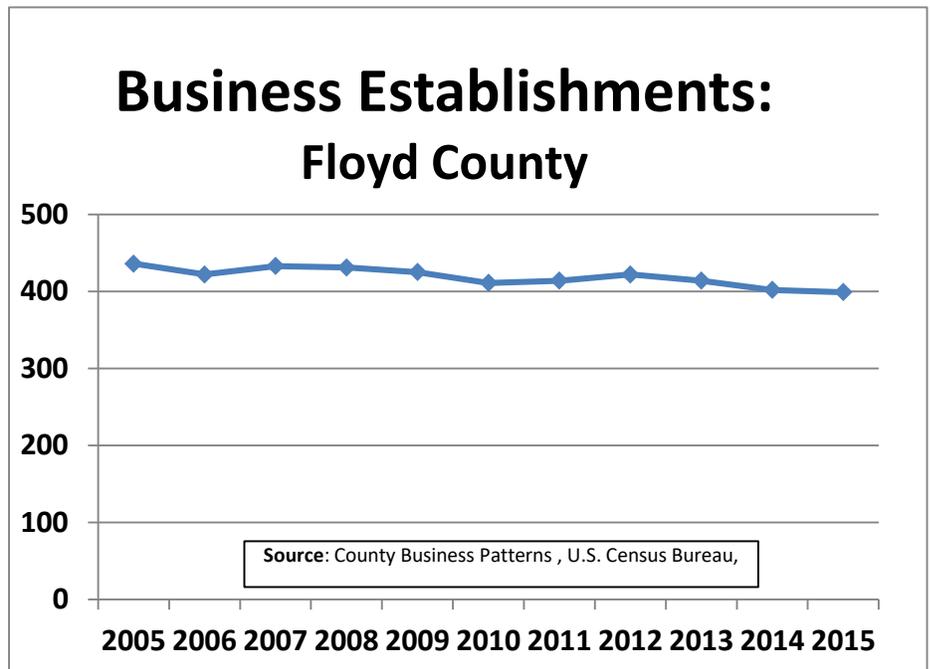


The chart at left illustrates that Charles City has made impressive gains in household median income (inflation adjusted). The City's household median income increased by 33% between the five year estimates in 2010 and 2015, which allowed the City to surpass the county's median in 2015 even though the County also experienced a substantial gain of 14%.

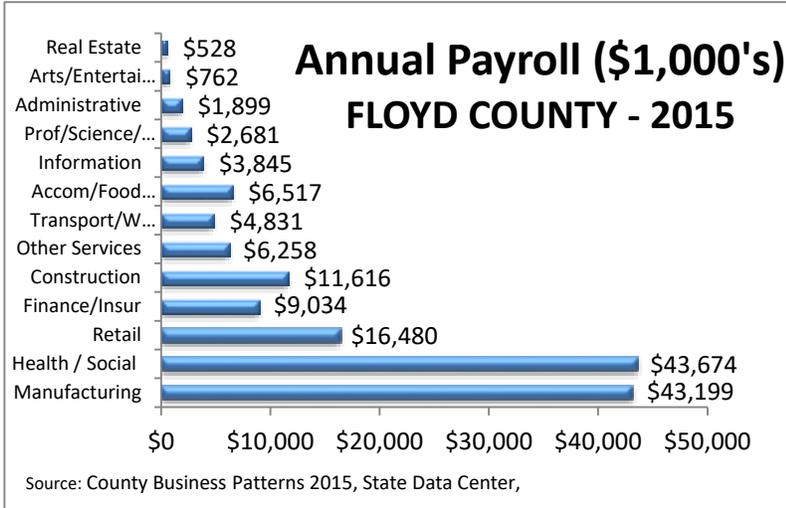
Although household median income is below the State and national averages by about 18%, the city made substantial gains because the household

median income for the State and US increased much more moderately (9% and 4%, respectively). The trend is certainly a positive one for the purchasing power of Charles City households and may help in the struggle to slow the outmigration of young adults (young workforce).

For Floyd County the number of business establishments *with employees* declined by 8% between 2005 and 2015 as illustrated in the 'Business Establishments' chart at the right. Even though the number of establishments with



employees declined, the number of employees increased by 3%, increasing from 4,351 (2008) to 4,500 (2015). This illustrates that the number of employees per employer is increasing. The Annual Payroll for Floyd County increased from \$108 million in 2005 to \$171 million in 2015. After inflation adjustment, the average wage per employee grew by 30% from \$24,999 to \$38,089 less 22% inflation. The chart at left shows the source by business sector for Annual Payroll in Floyd County for companies with employees only.



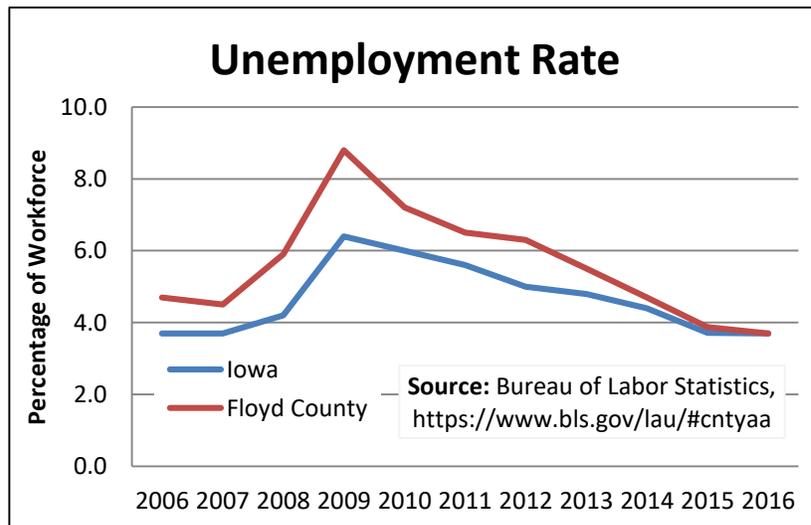
The largest two sectors of annual payroll are Manufacturing and Health/Social, each making up 25% of the annual payroll for the County. Retail had the next highest payroll with 10% of the overall amount. Please note, however, that these figures do not include self-employment. If we add the self-employment manufacturing income to the employee manufacturing income, the manufacturing income figure rises to \$81 million.^v

Employment - Unemployment, Employment, & Workforce

The unemployment rate for Floyd County exceeded the state average for 9 consecutive years between 2006 and 2015; however, in 2016 it reached a 10-year low and was identical to the state level (3.7%).

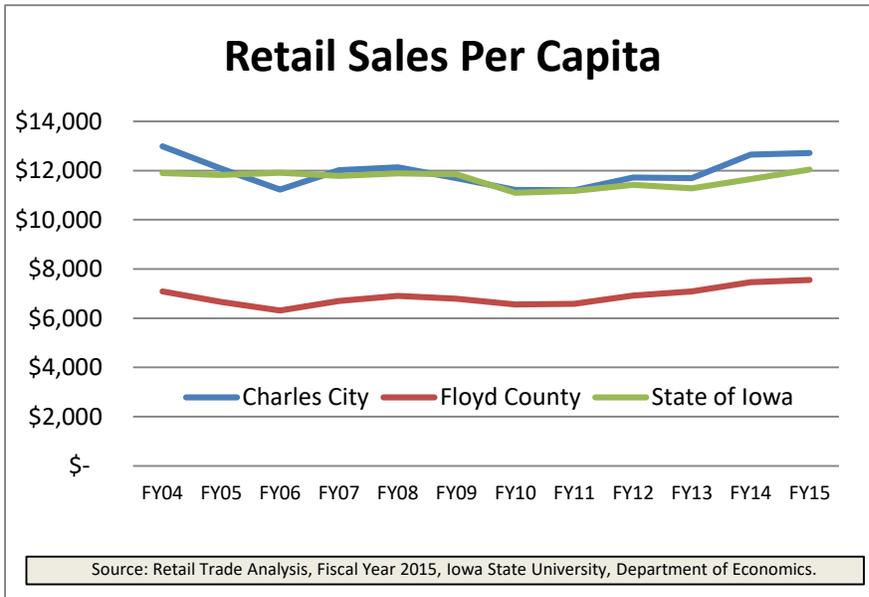
When the recession hit nationally in 2007/8, unemployment climbed quickly for Floyd County, followed by a 7-year decline. In 2015 Floyd County's unemployment rate dipped below its prerecession level of ten (10) years prior.

Unemployment rates reflect the percentage of people who are unemployed but actively looking for work as compared to the number of people in the workforce (whether they currently have a job or not). Floyd County has a labor force of 8,690 people of which 270 are currently unemployed. The number of people in the labor force has been fairly stable over the past 10 years oscillating in a range between about 8,500 and 9,000. A general decline would be expected in recent years because of the 15% growth in people age 65 to 69 in Charles City (the first wave of baby boomer retirement); however, the labor force has not shown signs of declining numbers as yet.



RETAIL

Charles City functions as a retail center for the County and neighboring communities. This is evident in the per capita sales figures illustrated in the chart below. Charles City’s per capita sales of goods (blue line) closely mirror the statewide averages (green line). However, for Floyd County, the average per capita sales is significantly lower than either average, which emphasizes that most of the County’s retail is located in Charles City. It also indicates a likelihood that as much as \$4,000 per capita for Floyd County residents is spent in cities outside the county, most likely in larger regional center cities such as Mason City, Waterloo/Cedar Falls, etc.

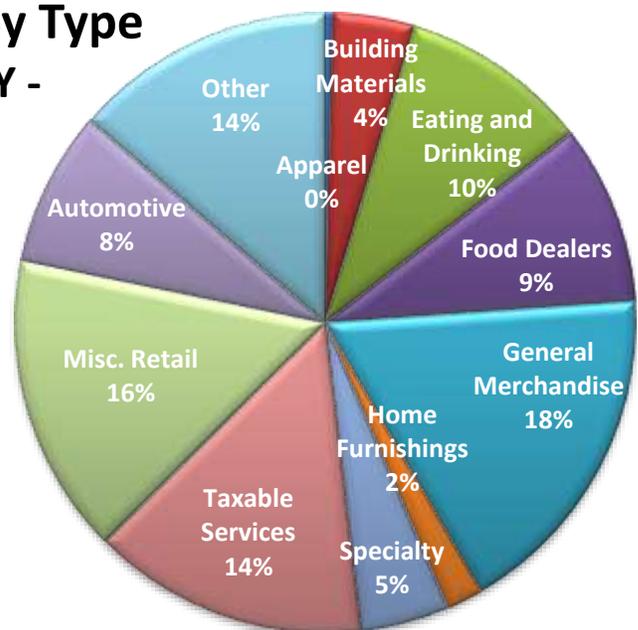


Average Real Sales Per Capita By Fiscal Year										
	FY06	FY07	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15
Charles City	\$11,219	\$12,013	\$12,131	\$11,696	\$11,216	\$11,199	\$11,711	\$11,684	\$12,646	\$12,716
Floyd County	\$6,311	\$6,702	\$6,906	\$6,795	\$6,554	\$6,582	\$6,926	\$7,092	\$7,462	\$7,556
Iowa	\$11,912	\$11,779	\$11,883	\$11,840	\$11,093	\$11,175	\$11,413	\$11,274	\$11,653	\$12,040

This leads to the question of what types of retail sales are leaking out of the county. The following two pie charts (next page) attempt to get some indication of this by comparing the percentage of each type of retail sales for Floyd County and for the State as a whole.

Several of the types of retail sales have similar shares when comparing the Floyd County sales to the statewide sales. However, three types of

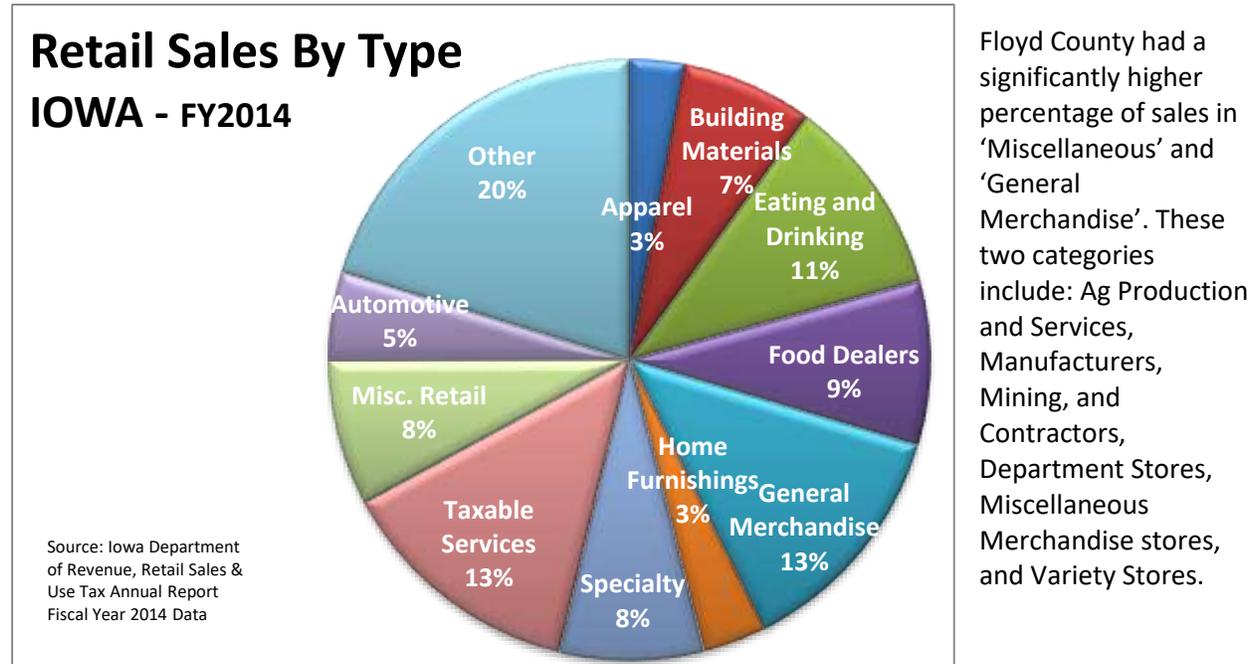
Retail Sales By Type
FLOYD COUNTY -
FY2014



Source: Iowa Department of Revenue, Retail Sales & Use Tax Annual Report Fiscal Year 2014 Data Tables, <https://tax.iowa.gov/report/>

retail sales differ more significantly including 'Miscellaneous', 'General Merchandise', and 'Other'.

The State had a significantly higher percentage of sales in the 'Other' category. This category includes Utilities (Communications, Electric/Gas, and Water/Sanitation), Transportation/ Warehousing, and Wholesale goods (Apparel Piece Goods, Construction Materials, Farm/Garden Equipment, Furniture/ Homes Furnishings, Groceries/ Farm Products, Miscellaneous, and Motor Vehicle Parts/ Supplies).



E-Commerce Trends

In May 2016, the U.S. Census Bureau reported figures for the growing trend of Internet sales^{vi}. The report showed that over the past 10 years (2006 to 2016), Internet sales have increased from about 3% of total sales to about 8% of total sales. This trend is increasing steadily. Between 2007 and 2016, total retail sales increased by about 20%, but e-commerce increased by about 300% (tripled). This change presents a challenge and an opportunity for the Charles City community to assist entrepreneurs and retailers with tools for increasing web sales to make use of this growing market. Potential tools include Broadband development, good shipping options, and training in web-based marketing. This trend also presents options for industrial growth though entrepreneurs who want to manufacturing products on small or large scale that can be marketed to the world or through use of Internet clearinghouse vendors like Amazon, E-Bay, or Zulily.

Commercial Development Initiatives

Commercial development is encouraged by Charles City Community Revitalization and through incentives.

- ❖ Charles City Community Revitalization (CCCR) administers the Mainstreet Program in Charles City and actively participates in the Iowa Mainstreet Program. The City has twice been named a semi-finalist for the *national* Great American Mainstreet Award with the most recent being in 2015. CCCR has begun a number of community events to celebrate and revitalize the downtown and works jointly with the City to encourage building facade and other renovation projects. CCCR is partnered

with the Charles City Chamber of Commerce.

- ❖ Commercial incentives are utilized in the form of TIF financing and making redevelopment property available in the Downtown District. Some of the more recent projects include Pizza Ranch (2000), Casey’s General Store (2002), BDH, LLC (Fastenal) (2011), and McQuillen Place (2016).

Industry

Largest Industrial Companies

The largest industrial employers in the Charles City area currently include the following (company name, industry type, estimated employees):

- Zoetis, animal vaccines and pharmaceuticals, 410
- Cambrex Charles City, Inc., human pharmaceutical products, 368
- Simply Essentials, LLC, poultry harvesting, 275
- Winnebago Industries, Inc., recreational vehicle hardwoods and assembly facilities, 208
- Mitas Tires North America, Inc., radial agricultural tires, 177
- Machine Tool Engineering, Inc., custom machining and prototypes, 65
- Valero Renewable Fuels – Charles City, biorefinery, 65
- Diversified Fastening Systems, Inc., industrial fasteners and concret anchors, 55
- CDI, LLC, recreational vehicle painting, 50
- Skyline Materials, aggregate and limestone, 47
- Hawkeye Preferred Tooling Group, aluminum and plastics blow molds, 23
- Custom Wood Products, Inc., wooden and vinyl doors, CNC job shop, 20
- L & J Industries, Inc., free-flow grain bin floor supports, 17
- Thor Manufacturing LLC, the Frostbuster soil heater, 15

Industrial Parks

The City has three (3) main industrial parks including the Southwest industrial park, East industrial park and Southgate industrial park. The following paragraphs provide some details on the industrial park sites.

Southwest Industrial Park - The City completed final street and utility work in the 110-acre park in 2000. Both the acquisition of land and extension of local improvements were made possible by a Joint City/County Southwest TIF District organized in 1990. This City/County partnership has been instrumental in



Southwest Industrial Park
Photo courtesy of Mapquest

development of the park. The industrial park itself was located to take advantage of the Avenue of the Saints access. To date the Park is or has been home to five major occupants: F & H Aluminum; Winnebago Industries, Inc. Hardwood Facility; Winnebago Industries, Inc. Assembly Facility; Custom Wood Products, Inc.; and Mitas Tires.

❖ **East Industrial Park** – The east industrial park is nearly built out, but has adjacent undeveloped land to the east. The site is located on Highway 18 east of Charles City and is the closest park to the Northeast Iowa Regional Airport.

❖ **Southgate Swartzrock Development Park** - The Southgate Swartzrock Industrial Park is the newest industrial park in the community and is located just 700 feet from the Avenue of the Saints, a 4-lane, divided highway. It is home to a multi-jurisdictional facility jointly owned by the State of Iowa, Floyd County, and the City of Charles City. The park contains 62 acres. The City and County are purchasing some of this land to create a new development park. (See next bullet.)



❖ **Avenue of the Saints Development Park** - The City and County currently working to purchase a substantial portion of the land around the US 218 / Shadow Avenue interchange, as well as additional land, to create a state certified development site.

Industrial Development Incentives Provided In The Past

Incentives have been offered to attractive investment in the community and to create jobs. The following is an abbreviated summary of incentives provided.

❖ **Valero Water Main** - Charles City was involved with construction of an 18" water main three miles west of corporate limits, which serves an ethanol plant. This project, though funded by the ethanol plant, will have 45% of the construction costs reimbursed by an industrial Tax Increment Financing district. Project cost for installation of the main, engineering and increase in pumps and backup generation amounted to \$2,750,000.00.

❖ **Southwest Industrial Park** - The City completed final street and utility work in the 110-acre park in 2000. Both the acquisition of land and extension of local improvements were made possible by a Joint City/County Southwest TIF District organized in 1990. This City/County partnership has been instrumental in development of the park. The industrial park itself was located to take advantage of the Avenue of the Saints access. To date the Park is or has been home to five major occupants: F & H Aluminum; Winnebago Industries, Inc. Hardwood Facility; Winnebago Industries, Inc. Assembly Facility; Custom Wood Products, Inc.; and Mitas Tires.

❖ **Other Industrial Development** - The City and Charles City Area Development Corporation have partnered with local industry through the use of TIF Financing to encourage industrial growth. Recent examples include:

Charles City Comprehensive Plan - 2018

<u>Year</u>	<u>Company</u>	<u>Capital Investment</u>	<u>New Jobs</u>
2008	Fort Dodge Animal Health (now Zoetis)	\$ 5,200,000	20
2011	Hawkeye Preferred Tooling	\$ 507,500	14
2011	Mitas North America	\$53,100,000	192
2011	Cedar River Poultry, LLC	\$ 3,985,000	130
2011	Machine Tool Engineering	\$ 5,285,115	17
2013	Cambrex	\$19,300,000	46
2015	Cambrex	\$66,700,000	32
2016	Simply Essentials	\$31,250,000	250
2018	Cambrez	\$27,000,000	29
2018	Zoetis	\$55,000,000	6

Financial Incentives Available Through The Charles City Area Development Corporation

- ❖ **Revolving Loan Fund** - In cooperation with the City of Charles City, the Charles City Area Development Corporation administers these funds to stimulate industrial development and expansion within the city limits of Charles City. Intended as an incentive to assist development and expansion, the Revolving Loan Fund has been established to provide gap financing for development projects.

- ❖ **Private Job Creation Fund (or Capital Fund)** - The Job Potential Review committee of the Charles City Area Development Corporation is responsible for overseeing all applications to the Capital Fund. The Capital Fund money was raised from the private sector of the community: businesses, private individuals, and financial institutions. This funding is tied to job creation and the economic value of those jobs to the community.

- ❖ **Charles City Regional Revolving Loan Fund** - In an effort to promote and encourage economic development within the communities of the greater Floyd County region, the Charles City Area Development Corporation has established a revolving loan fund to provide financial assistance to new and expanding businesses. The Regional Revolving Loan Fund is designed to provide supplemental financing in support of new and expanding businesses located within, and adjacent to Floyd County. The revolving loan fund will be used by the CCADC to make loans and loan guarantees for the following purposes:
 1. To increase employment opportunities, particularly for low and moderated income residents, by increasing the number and type of businesses within member communities and rural Floyd County.
 2. To offer financial assistance that will promote the retention and expansion of existing businesses.
 3. To increase the property tax base.
 4. To diversify the region's economic composition by encouraging unique or essential business concerns.

Financial Incentives Available Through Charles City & Floyd County Governments

The following financial incentives are offered for development on a case by case basis with emphasis on high paying job creation, investment, and increased valuation.

- ❖ **S.W. Bypass Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District** –
 1. City/County will consider funding public infrastructure improvements necessary for industrial growth
 2. Loans are available as incentives to assist in industrial growth within the district. The amount of the loan is based upon increased taxable valuation, number of jobs, wage rate and capital investment.

Loans are project specific, with Development and Assessment Agreements required.

❖ **Riverside TIF District (includes Central Business District) -**

1. Loans are available for both new and expanding commercial and industrial activities. Loan amount is based upon the increased taxable valuation created by the improvements and is specific to the benefits created for the community.
2. A low interest Business Development Loan program is available for business retention and business creation. Amounts are based upon needs of each project and overall benefits created for the community.

❖ **South Grand TIF District -** City will consider funding public infrastructure improvements necessary to service new commercial and industrial construction, as well as tax rebates for economic development.

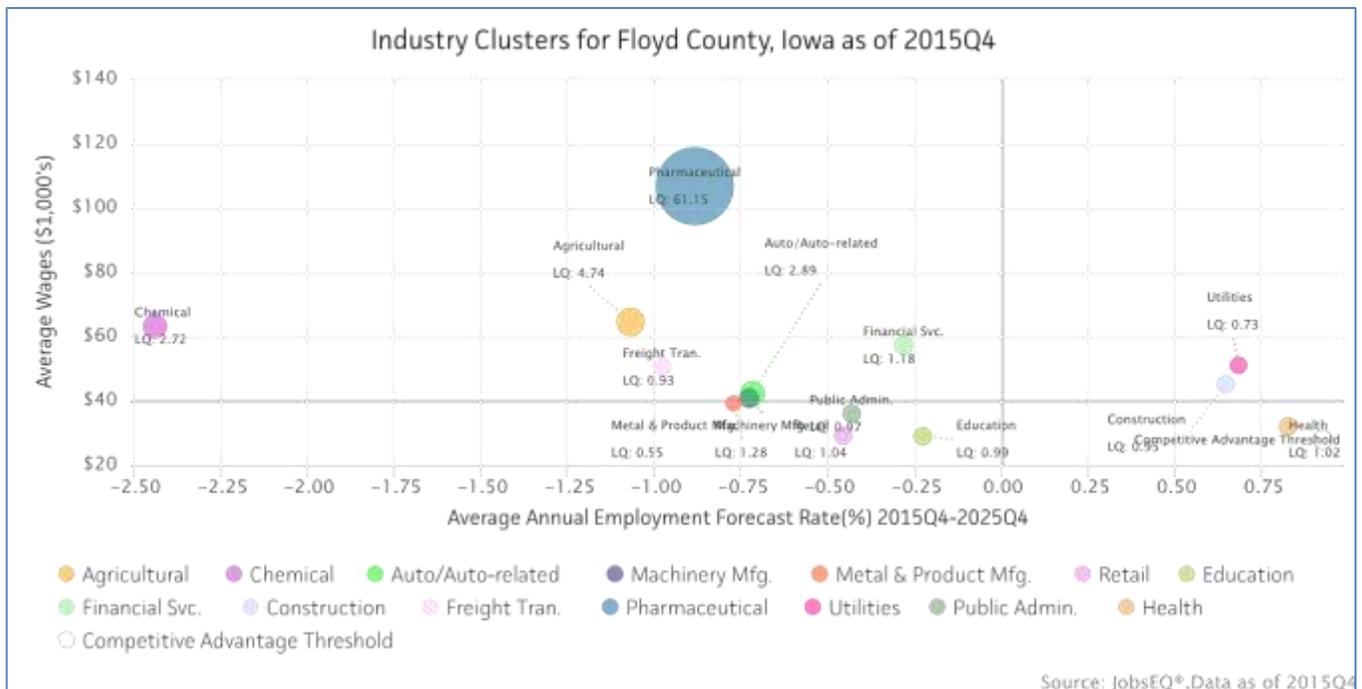
Financial Incentives Available Through The North Iowa Area Council Of Governments (NIACOG)

- ❖ **NIACOG Revolving Loan Fund -** The North Iowa Area Council of Governments (NIACOG) offers a revolving fund to provide gap financing primarily for industrial development projects that create job growth. Funding is provided for development costs including fixed assets, equipment, etc.

Industrial Clusters

The chart below illustrates Floyd County’s industry clusters. For any industry with a LQ (Location Quotient) above 1, Floyd County has a potential competitive advantage in securing that type of industry. The chart also includes the average wage of the respective industry.

With a very high average wage and Location Quotient of 61.15 the Pharmaceutical industry is extremely attractive for focusing development efforts. Other attractive industries include: agriculture, automotive, and financial services. Although these industries are contracting in the number of workers (left of the vertical line), new trends in robotics (automation requiring fewer workers) could also be encouraging companies to build new more highly automated plants with a higher percentage of white collar workers.



b. Economic Development – Goals & Strategies

1. **GOAL: Grow the business and employment sector to provide a stable economy, good paying jobs, quality industrial based, and stable tax base**
 - a. **STRATEGY:** Create a middle skills training program that focuses on training workforce (especially students) in the trades like plumbing, electrical and other jobs that do not require a 4-year degree (HIGH PRIORITY SELECTED BY THE FOCUS GROUPS)
 - b. **STRATEGY:** Expand the availability of broadband in Charles City (HIGH PRIORITY SELECTED BY THE FOCUS GROUPS)
 - c. **STRATEGY:** Complete construction of a speculative metal shell building in the Southwest Development Park that is currently home to Mitas Tires North America, Inc. and Winnebago Industries, Inc. (11th Street and 215th Street). This is intended to attract a new manufacturer to the area or accommodate an expansion of an existing manufacturer
 - d. **STRATEGY:** Redevelop White Brownfield Site
 - e. **STRATEGY:** Focus recruitment on new and expanding businesses and industry that have high paying (white collar) jobs and value added industry that grow the local economy. Do not give incentives for industry with low paying jobs (use median, not average that includes highly paid executives). Adopt a threshold for new industry incentives that the median wage must be at least \$1 above currently average median wage for Charles City
 - f. **STRATEGY:** Promote entrepreneurial business in the schools
 - g. **STRATEGY:** Encourage on-line businesses development through education and awareness
 - h. Participate in the Industrial Site Certification program

2. **GOAL: Grow the commercial sector to provide a wide variety of restaurants, shops, and activities**
 - a. **STRATEGY:** Recruit restaurants as an important part of recruiting and maintaining workforce (HIGH PRIORITY SELECTED BY THE FOCUS GROUPS)
 - b. **STRATEGY:** Promote the development of riverfront related businesses
 - c. **STRATEGY:** Promote mobile vendors on the riverfront (food, water sport supplies, drinks)
 - d. **STRATEGY:** Promote repurposing the Sherman Nursery into a winery or other attractive venue
 - e. **STRATEGY:** Make the downtown design standards enforceable
 - f. **STRATEGY:** Renovate upper stories of downtown buildings
 - g. **STRATEGY:** Fill vacant Downtown Storefronts
 - h. **STRATEGY:** Conduct a market analysis to determine the need for different types of retail and housing
 - i. **STRATEGY:** Develop strategies for shopping locally

3. **General Policies for Commercial Development**
 - a. **STRATEGY:** Provide commercial development that is necessary to support the economy
 - Encourage commercial development where infrastructure and city services can be provided
 - Continue to identify, develop, and maintain buildings and sites for commercial growth
 - Encourage utilizing existing abandoned sites and brownfields rather than prime agricultural land
 - b. **STRATEGY:** Allow commercial development to sites adequately served by road systems or on existing railways

- Allow commercial development at intersections of highways and railroad right-of-ways as long as they satisfy the following requirements:
 - Protect the character of the area
 - Assured visual compatibility of development with the surrounding area
 - Reduce the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low-density development
 - Protect critical areas of surface water and groundwater resources
 - Protect against conflicts with the use of agricultural lands

c. **STRATEGY:** Support Downtown Charles City

- Make the downtown design guidelines enforceable for the architectural design of new buildings and to define and conserve the town center
- Develop a master plan for the physical and organizational development of downtown
- Promote Charles City’s architectural character to outside audiences as an economic and cultural resource
- Use underused sites in the downtown for redevelopment projects
- Install streetscape improvements along the primary streets
- Evaluate the need to increase historic preservation activities and attractions

4. **General Policies for Industrial Development**

a. **STRATEGY:** Identify railroad corridors as a likely area for industrial development

- Ensure that proposed industrial development is appropriate for and will be compatible with its surroundings, and will have access to appropriate transportation by targeting railroad corridors and high traffic roadways

b. **STRATEGY:** Utilize existing abandoned sites and brown fields rather than prime agricultural land.

- Support the efforts of development corporations developing industrial parks by guiding new industry to these locations
- Encourage and support the development and expansion of industry that does not create nuisance issues and does not interfere with the existing quality of life for surrounding neighbors and property owners, but for which municipal utilities can be made in a safe and proper manner
- Provide for industrial uses that serve the needs of residents and are consistent with maintaining Charles City’s character

6. Agricultural Land & Natural Resources

a. Agricultural & Natural Resources – Background

Agricultural Land

The amount of agricultural land in the city is quite limited for a city of its size in North Iowa; however, nearly all land just beyond the city limits is agricultural. This shows a pattern of compact development and annexation that has been limited to the land actually needed for development.

One of the agricultural properties in the city was the former site of the Sherman Nursery, located at 1300 Grove Street. The nursery was founded in 1884 and operated for 128 years until it closed in 2012^{vii}, and was later added to the National Register Of Historic Place on November 12, 2014 (#14000905). The nursery raised plants and supplied them as a wholesaler to retail companies. With a stone office building built in 1884, decorative stone bridges, and mature trees, the site is both historic and picturesque with the notable exception of the dilapidated greenhouses (behind the office building) and the large processing buildings (north of the office building), which appear to be in good condition, but are large and utilitarian. Given the minimal amount of unimproved land within Charles City’s borders, the nursery site may be attractive for redevelopment. The site offers a very large amount of land that would be suitable for an agricultural tourism venue (such as a winery or bed and breakfast), housing, light manufacturing, or a combination of these. Because the lot is so large, it would likely also be suitable for subdividing, however, additional street access points would likely be needed in light of the long (east to west) shape of the parcel.

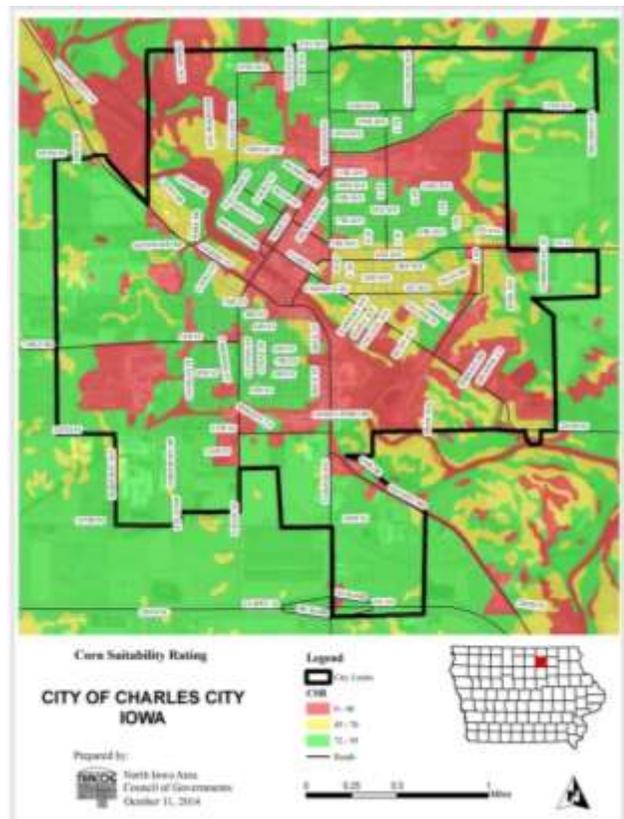


Sherman Nursery Office Building,
Picture Courtesy Of TripAdvisor

CSR: The Corn Suitability Rating (CSR) provides a rating that indicates suitability for row-crop production. In the map at the right (see full-sized version at the end of this section), the CSR is provided in increments with the most suitable and valuable soils in the green

Smart Planning Guidance:

18.B.1 - Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should facilitate the revitalization of established town centers and neighborhoods by promoting development that conserves land, protects historic resources, promotes pedestrian accessibility, and integrates different uses of property. Remediation and reuse of existing sites, structures, and infrastructure is preferred over new construction in undeveloped areas.

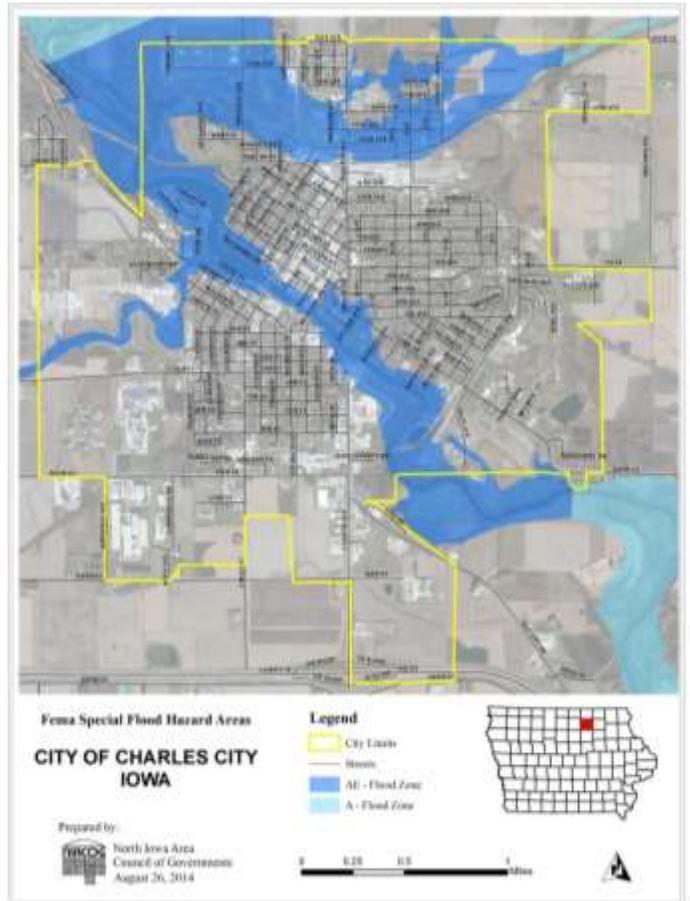


category, is less suitable, and red is the least suitable. The least suitable soil areas are generally found in the central developed portion of the city, and the best soils are generally located on the fringe of the city with a very high percentage of undeveloped land being both very suitable row crop and used for that purpose with the exception of some floodplain areas that are not available for development. Therefore, if the business community has need for very large tracts of land, CSR should be considered. Due to a lack of undeveloped land, such as in the location near the Avenue of the Saints corridor, industrial development may still be the highest and best use for the area in spite of the high CSR's.

Much of the unimproved land in the city lies within the flood plain (see map at right). The floodplain generally follows of the northwest city limits and also bisects the city from northwest to southeast around the Cedar River. A new flood insurance rate map became effective in January 2015. The changes primarily affect undeveloped areas. The Cedar River corridor has been improved for fish habitat and recreational use.



Picture Courtesy Of TripAdvisor

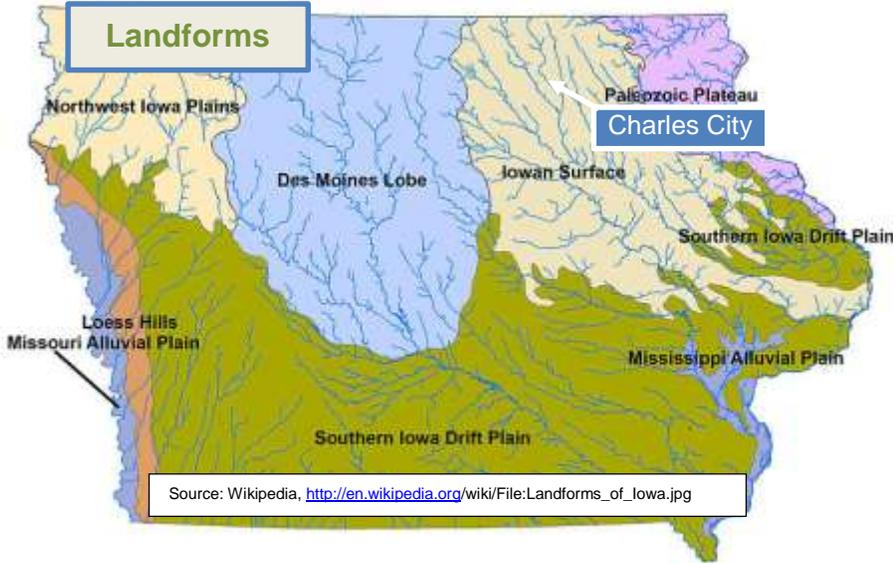


Urban Agriculture

With new trends for healthier living, locally grown foods have become a very popular commodity. From 1997 to 2007 direct-to-consumer food marketing grew by 105% while total agricultural sales increased by only 47.6%^{viii}. Charles City has become involved in this trend as well by creating community gardens. Municipalities are increasingly making accommodations in land use policies and zoning ordinances to allow urban agriculture. Nationally, the more common forms of agriculture for residents include raising: plants, bees, chickens, fish, and miniature goats. The trends also include different means of selling their agricultural products other than through traditional retail establishments. For example, a farmer's market is available in Charles City in the warmer months of the year.

Geology: Soils, CSR, & Bedrock

Soils: Charles City is part of the Iowan Surface Lobe. This lobe is characterized by being covered with eroded Illinoian till with moderate loess formation, frequently in the form of paha ridges with muted relief except for steep rolling hills near river valleys and deeper valleys.

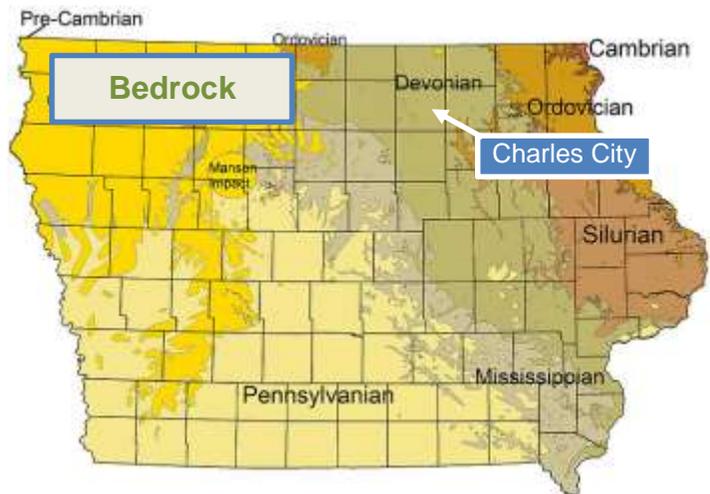


The Floyd County soils are composed of glacial till, sediment from glacial till, alluvium, and deposits of organic material over limestone bedrock.^{ix}

The principal soil associations in the Charles City area are: 1.) Clyde-Kenyon-Floyd association in the uplands, 2.) Saude Coland-Lawler association in the bottomlands, and 3.) Lourdes-Protovin-Clyde association, (similar to the bottomland soil association).

The *Clyde-Kenyon-Floyd* soils are nearly level to moderately sloping and poorly to moderately drained. Granite boulders were common the surface until removed for cultivation. This soil association is used intensively for corn and soybeans. Management concerns include drainage improvements, maintaining fertility, and controlling wind and water erosion. The *Saude-Coland-Lawler* soil association contains many soil types which may be similar or entirely different from one another. This land is gently sloping and contains narrow floodplains. Old stream beds are common and often gather water during rain. Saude soils are well drained, Coland soils are poorly drained and occur in low lying areas, and the Lawler soils are somewhat poorly drained and near terraces. Management concerns are drainage needs and protection from flooding.

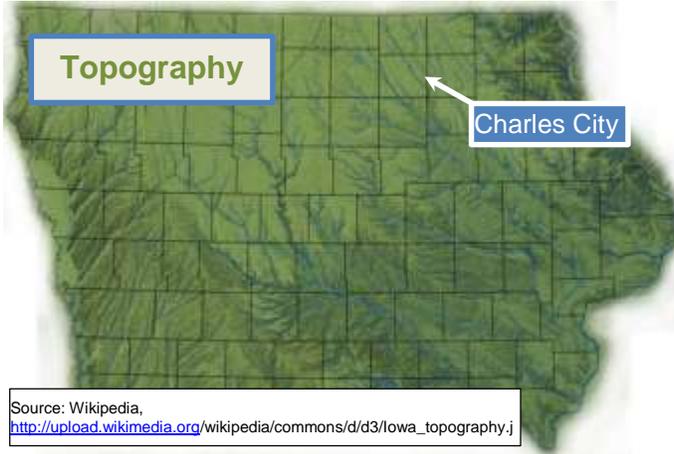
The Lourdes-Protovin-Clyde association is found on nearly level to moderately sloping land and is poorly to moderately drained. The subsurface soil is more dense and less permeable than the top material. Thus, the subsurface water moves laterally downslope. Conservation tillage helps erosion and excessive wetness. Maintenance concerns are water erosion, fertility, and drainage improvements. It also has large granite boulders. The soil is ideal for row crops such as corn, beans, grasses and legumes.



Bedrock: The bedrock in Charles City and the surrounding county is almost exclusively Devonian as illustrated by the map above.

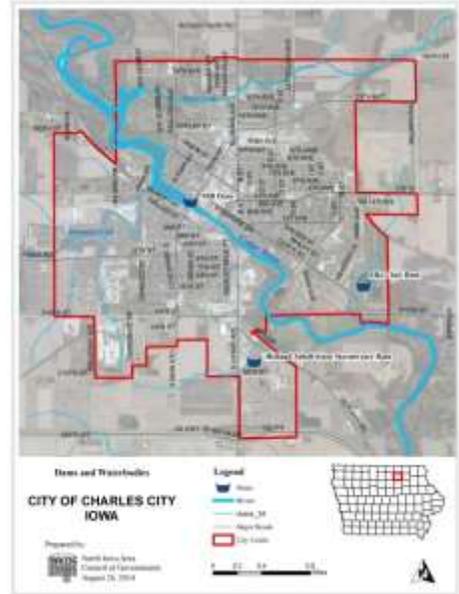
Topography and Drainage

The topography of the area varies from relatively level bottomlands, along the Cedar River, that are subject to flooding to undulating uplands. The topography of the area varies from an approximate elevation of 1100 feet above sea level to 1120 along the upland ridges, to 990 along the bottomlands of along the Cedar River.^x



Source: Wikipedia, http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/d3/Iowa_topography.j

The City of Charles City is situated within the Cedar River basin. The Cedar River cuts from the northwest corner of the city to the southeast corner of the city, meandering in a southeasterly direction. Its two principal tributaries include Shermans Creek and Hyers Creek. Both feed into the Cedar

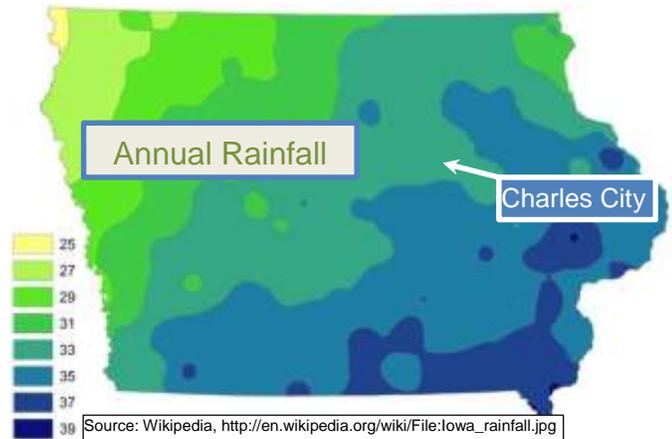


in the northwest portion of the city, but Shermans Creek flows into the city from the west central city limits and Hyers Creek from the northeast corner. See the map of water bodies and dams at the right; a full scale map is included at the end of this section.

Charles City has actively pursued the Cedar River’s recreation potential making improvement in and around the city especially in the city’s core. The River flooded extensively during the flood event in June 2008 resulting in the removal of several homes. The city participates in the National Flood Insurance program. See the History (C.1.) and Hazards (D.9.) sections of this document for more details.

Climate

Charles City has a continental climate with four seasons that are marked by different conditions of moisture and temperature. The summers are consistently warm with well distributed rainfall. Winters are cold with snow covering the ground most of the season. About seventy percent of the annual precipitation falls during the warmer half of the year between April and September. Also during the warm months, most of the annual thunderstorms, damaging high speed winds, hail, and heavy rainfalls are recorded. Annual rainfall averages 34.88 inches. Temperature fluctuates by season from the highest temperatures in July (averaging 83° high / 62° low) to the lowest temperatures in January (averaging 25° high / 9° low)^{xi}.



Source: Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Iowa_rainfall.jpg

b. Agricultural & Natural Resources - Goals & Activities

1. Protect the environment

- a. **STRATEGY:** Continue to work with the Upper Cedar Watershed Management Improvement Authority to protect the Cedar River and address water quality issues
- b. **STRATEGY:** Work with farming agencies to reduce pollution in water runoff
- c. **STRATEGY:** Encourage wellhead protection to help protect drinking water
- d. **STRATEGY:** Expand opportunities for residents to interact with the natural environment



2. Encourage urban agriculture

- a. **STRATEGY:** Promote urban agriculture that improves the healthy food options for residents, such as community gardens and the farmers' markets
- b. **STRATEGY:** Develop an agricultural endowment program

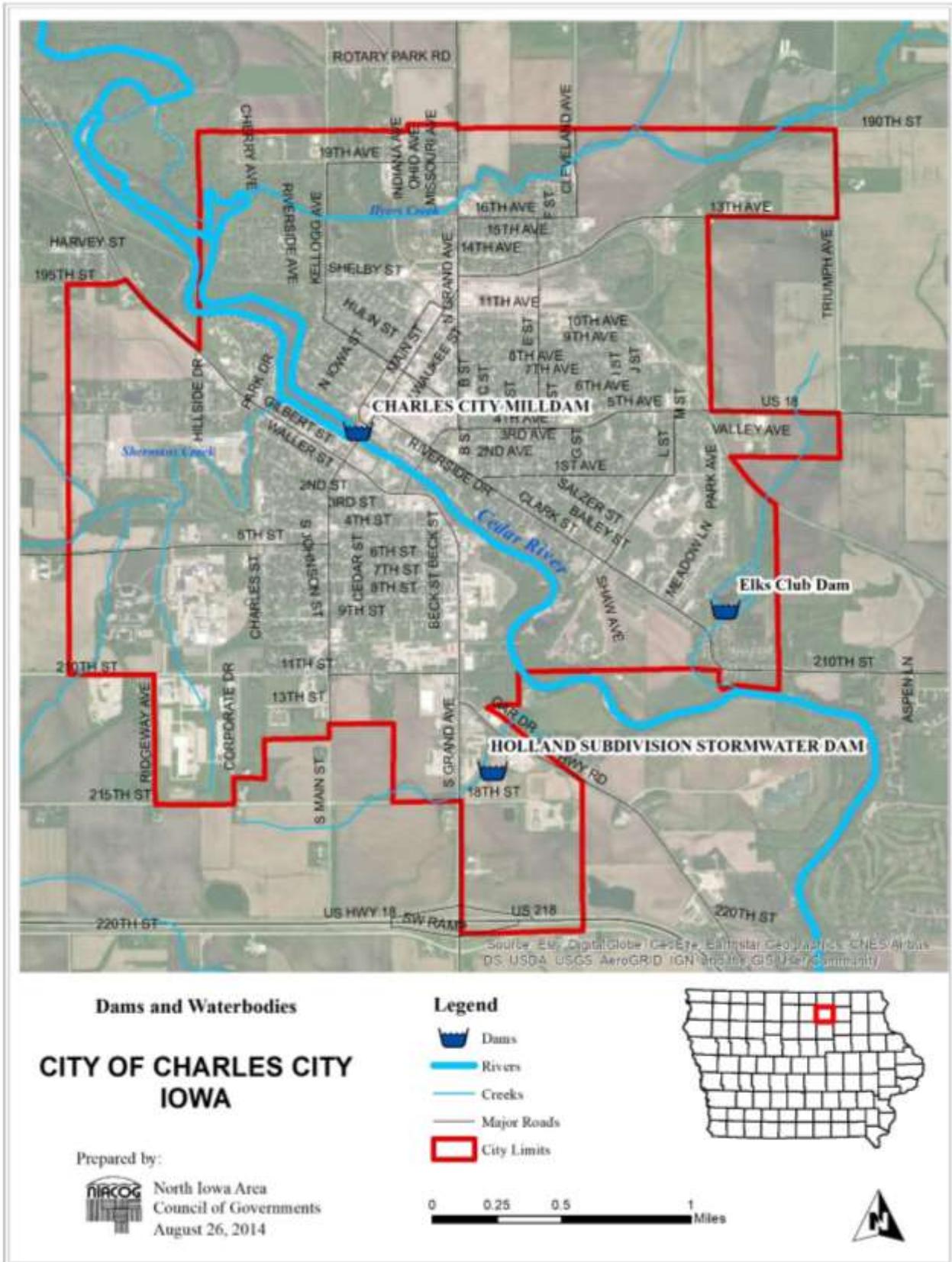


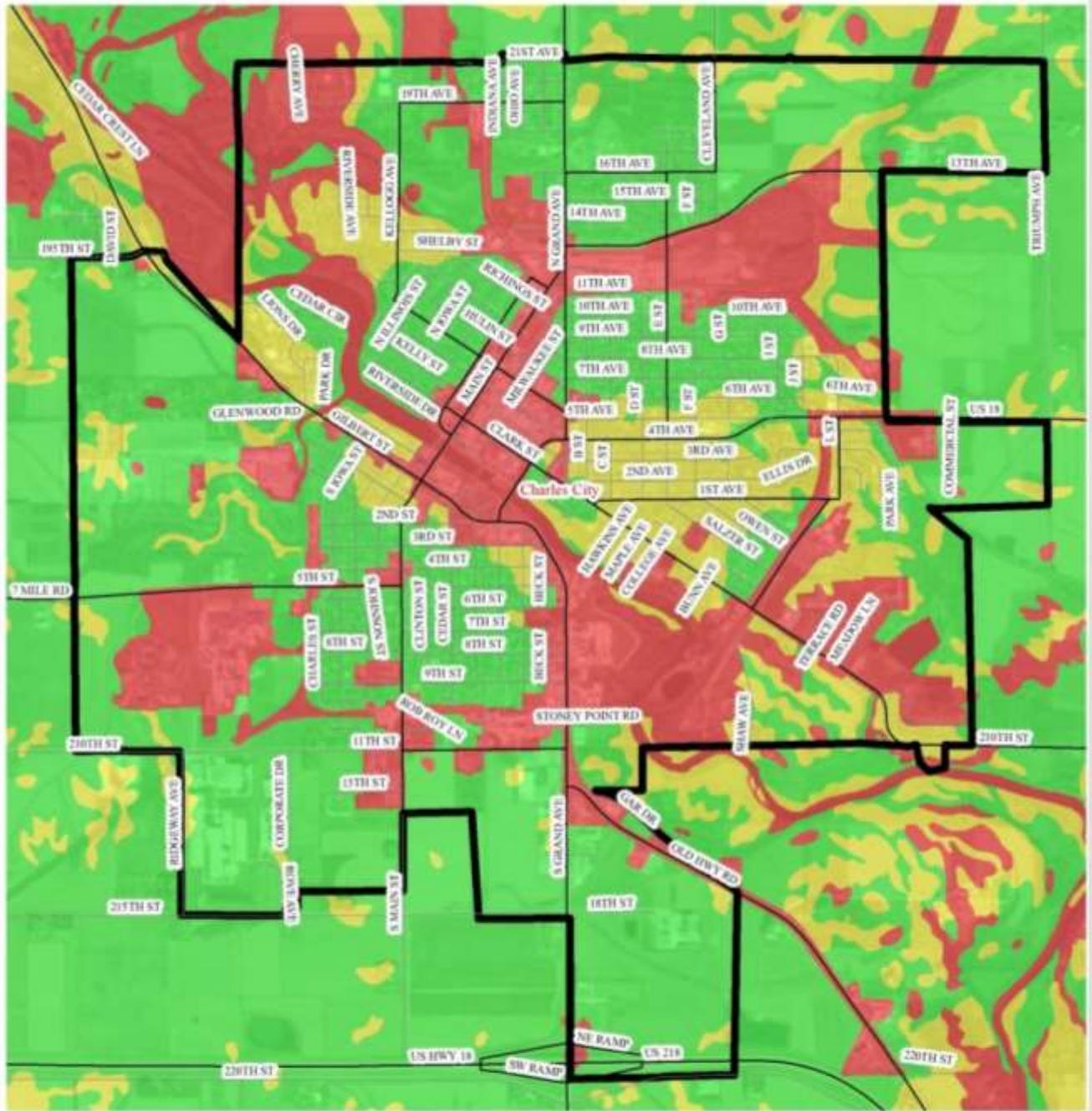
3. General Policies

- a. **STRATEGY:** Provide planning and land use management which recognizes the advantages and limitations of natural systems. Encourage protection of the land and wise use of its resources
 - Preserve the character of Charles City and its surrounding community by protecting individual components including the topography, waterways, scenic views, natural vegetation, and tree cover
 - Encourage the preservation of wooded areas in and around Charles City
- b. **STRATEGY:** Allow urban agricultural undertakings balanced with minimizing health, safety, and nuisance concerns of neighboring land uses
- c. **STRATEGY:** Promote the use and enjoyment of natural areas for educational and recreational purposes



c. Agricultural & Natural Resources - Maps





Corn Suitability Rating

**CITY OF CHARLES CITY
IOWA**

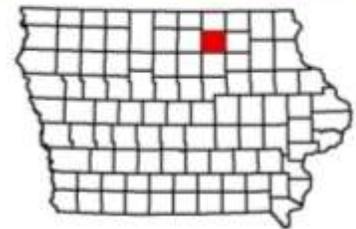
Prepared by:



North Iowa Area
Council of Governments
October 11, 2014

Legend

- City Limits
- CSR**
- 0 - 40
- 45 - 70
- 72 - 95
- Roads



7. Community Facilities & Services

a. Community Facilities & Services – Background

Community facilities include the publicly owned land and buildings that serve the community including parks, schools and public buildings (City Hall, Police Department, Fire Department, and Library; please note that utilities are covered in the Section ‘3. Public Infrastructure’). The availability of these facilities and the services they offer are important to the recreation, health, and safety of Charles City residents and businesses, as well as, the future growth of the community.

Smart Planning Guidance:

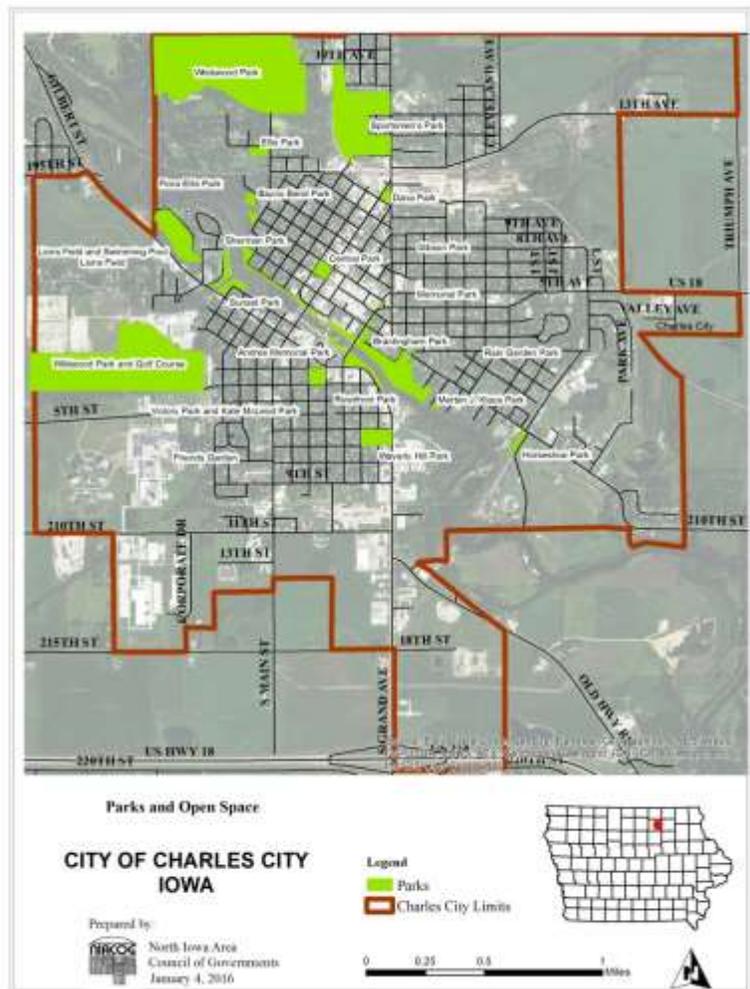
18.B.2. Community Character - Objectives, policies, and programs to assist future development of educational facilities, cemeteries, health care facilities, child care facilities, law enforcement and fire protection facilities, libraries, and other governmental facilities that are necessary or desirable to meet the projected needs of the municipality.

Parks

The City of Charles City benefits from 27 public parks within its borders that total 308 Acres. The parks are owned and/or maintained by three entities:

1. Charles City (277 Acres)
2. City Improvement Association (a non-profit women’s organization) – 19 Acres
3. Floyd County – 12 Acres

The map at the right provides a quick snapshot of the location of the parks; a full scale version of this map is provided at the end of this chapter for easier reading. The school system also provides parks in the northeast, east, and southeast sectors of the city which would otherwise be in need of parkland. Therefore, the community offers a good coverage of parks and recreation space through the community. In addition to these parks, a few local private entities own ball diamonds, golf courses, and open spaces that are available to the public although some require a fee. Further details about the parks are provided in the table on the next page.



Charles City Comprehensive Plan - 2018

Parks & Recreation Facilities In Charles City		
Charles City Owned	Amenities	Acres
Lion's Field & Swimming Pool	Ball Diamonds (2), Tennis Courts (4), Swimming pool, Skateboard Park, Picnic Areas	17.3
Riverfront Park (Mill Race, Lions, etc.)	River access, Trail, Open areas, 9-Hole Disc Golf, Amphitheater, storm water play area, picnic shelters	7.49
Sportsmen's Park	Ball diamonds (3), Basketball Court, Tennis Courts (4), Picnic Areas, pickleball court, 18-Hole Disc Golf	27.5
Waverly Hill Park	Playground Equipment, Picnic Area, Dog Park	4
Wildwood Park	9-Hole Golf Course, Playground, Picnic, Fishing	72
Westwood Park	Softball Fields (2), Playground, Wooded Lands	139.6
Central Park	Open Space, Benches	1.6
Sherman Park	Open Space, Benches	2.3
Victory Park	Victory Sculptures & Amenities	0.75
Brantingham Park (St. Mary's)	Trailhead, Open Space, Bench	2.2
Garden Corridor On Clark	Edible Bush and Tree Community Garden	0.8
Horseshoe Park	Horseshoe Pits (10)	1.2
Friends Garden Park	Public Art & Landscaping	0.1
Rain Garden Park	Rain Garden	0.1
Total City-Owned		276.67
City Improvement Association Owned	Amenities	Acres
Memorial Park	Water Fountain, Benches	0.7
Merten J. Klaus Park	Open Space, Gazebo, Picnic Area	1.6
Dana Park	Open Space	1.3
Flora Ellis Park	Open Space, Benches	5.7
Sunset Park	Benches Along Cedar River	1.1
Kate McLeod / Victory Park	Benches Along Cedar River	0.7
Riverside Park	Benches Along Cedar River	1.8
Grace Larson Park	Open Space	0.68
Bayou Bend Park	Open Space	2.72
City Improvement Association Park	Landscaped Open Space	0.22
Andres Memorial Park	Old School Site, Gazebo, Memorial Bell	2.5
Mill Race Park	Open Space, Planters, Benches	(Maintenance Only)
Total Owned By City Improvement Assoc.		19.02
Floyd County Owned	Amenities	Acres
Flora Ellis Preserve	Woodland	12.0
Total Acres of Publicly Used Parklands		307.69

Park Improvements

The following is a description of the major park improvements in Charles City.

Charles City Skate Park - The roller blade park was completed in the northwest part of the city through funding provided by the Lion's Club (\$5,000), Rotary Club (\$5,000), the City Parks and Recreation Department (\$5,000), the Ronald McDonald House (\$2,250), the Hansen Foundation (\$2,000), Citizens Bank Foundation (\$2,000), and by various other fund raising activities. The park has become a popular attraction for the area children, who test their skills using skates, skateboards, and bicycles. The facility was recently repainted by a local awareness group, and efforts are ongoing for needed rehabilitation.

Charley Western Bike Trail - The City converted an old railroad right-of-way corridor into a scenic hiking/biking trail that wraps around most of the City. The total cost of this project was \$190,000 of which \$26,600 was provided by local donations. The trail continues to be used by the residents and serves to improve their overall health and quality of life. The trail provides opportunities for biking, running, walking, skating, and cross-country skiing. A section of the trail also provides a safe route for students walking to school. Replacement of this trail's bridge is planned for 2020.

Charles City Boat Club - The City rebuilt a boat launch area and docks. A handicap accessible dock area was prepared. Funds for this project were provided by membership fees, service clubs, and the City Park and Recreation Department (\$3,500) and in-kind contributions assisted in the completion.

Cable-Stayed Bridge – After losing the historic suspension bridge during the 2008 floods, the City replaced the structure with a new Cable-Stayed Bridge. Construction on the bridge was completed during the fall of 2010. The total construction cost was approximately \$2.3 million and was funded primarily by Federal and State funds with about five percent local funding. The Community commissioned an artist to create a sculpture using what was salvaged from the old bridge. The piece is located in the park at the entrance to the new bridge, now known as Victory Park.

Riverfront Development – In 2011 Charles City developed its riverfront area adjacent to the downtown area to create a whitewater play area and park. The park complex is made up of the whitewater play area, a boat launch which is accessible to those with mobility impairments, an amphitheater, ravine play area which is a natural play area for kids, a labyrinth, a storm water fountain to aid in storm water run-off, and a Frisbee golf course. The 1.6 million dollar project utilized multiple funding sources with about 40% of the funding coming from local dollars. The whitewater feature involved changing the structure of the river and has also resulted in an improved environment for fishing. The whitewater feature officially opened in July of 2011 and has been enjoyed by people of all ages and provided hours of family entertainment.

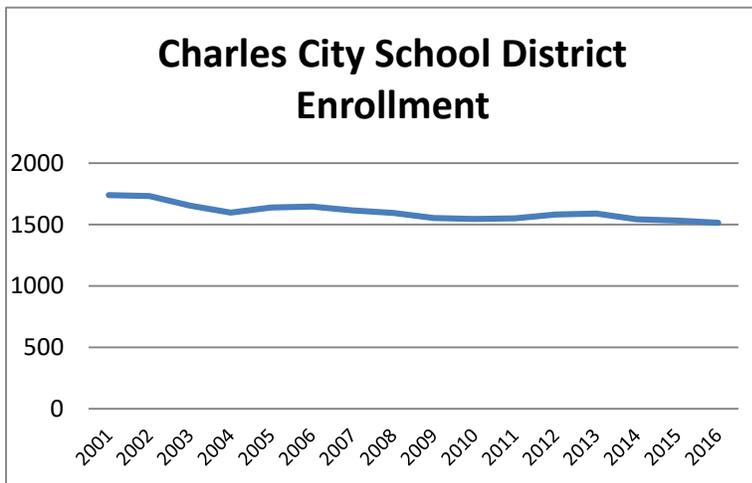
Schools

Charles City is served by the Charles City Community School District. The District operates a senior high school, middle school, and two elementary schools. All the schools are located in Charles City. In addition to Charles City, the district serves the cities of Floyd, Colwell, and Ionia (partial), as well as the surrounding areas. School buildings include:

- Lincoln Elementary School
- Washington Elementary School
- Charles City Middle School (built as an Addition to the High School during the 2015-2016 school year)
- 500 North Grand (former Middle School)
- Charles City Community High School
- Carrie Lane High School (Alternative)



Charles City Community High School,
Photo courtesy of Charles City Schools



Certified enrollment experienced an overall decline from 2001 to 2016 that has been tapering off in more recent years.

The Iowa School Report Card is a new system to show how each public school is performing on certain educational measures. The ratings are based on each school's performance over a two-year period on up to eight educational measures. Charles City High School received a 'commendable' rating with an overall score of 68. The other schools (elementary (2) /middle)

had close overall scores of 61, 62, and 63. Although the other schools in the district didn't rate as high as the high school, they were recognized for a high rate of 'College and Career Ready Growth'. This achievement recognizes the percentage of students making a year of academic growth in a year's time on reading and mathematics assessments.

In addition to the public schools, two parochial schools operate within the Charles City school district boundaries including:

- Immaculate Conception Grade School (Kindergarten through 6th Grade) – 186 students^{xii}
- Lighthouse Academy in Floyd (Kindergarten through 12th Grade) – 56 students

The North Iowa Area Community College (NIACC) operates a branch campus in Charles City. NIACC's central campus is located in Mason City.

City Buildings (City Hall, Police, Fire, Library)

City-owned buildings provide the backbone for the functionality of the services the City provides. In addition to those described in '3. Public Infrastructure' (water treatment facility, etc.), other City buildings house staff that tend to the general administration, safety, and library needs of the City. These City-owned buildings have been a topic of recent study; the community is considering the creation of joint use space(s) not only for multiple departments within City government, but also other public and

private entities such as the community college, schools, YMCA, County, senior citizens center, etc. This section will discuss the facilities owned by the city. For more information about the joint use facilities study turn to section '10. Collaboration'.



City Hall - The City Hall houses the administrative offices of the City, the City Council Chambers, and the Police Department. The City Hall building is located at 105 Milwaukee Mall in Downtown Charles City.

The City Hall building has some problematic issues including the following:

1. For wheelchair accessibility to the City Council Chambers, a side exterior door must be used instead of the main entrance.
2. The public entries to the building face away from the parking areas and their location not obvious for visitors.
3. The parking area in the front is small and the parking in the rear is not visible from the front and the route to get to it from Clark Street (the front) is circuitous.
4. The building is in need of substantial repair and updating.
5. The building has very few windows to the exterior, which prevents natural light from entering.

Police Department - The City Hall building is shared by the Police Department and lacks the following needs that are specifically a concern in relation to Police Department use of the building:

1. Garage space is not secured.
2. Evidence storage is too small.
3. Other spaces are also needed.



Charles City Fire Station
Flooded In June 2008

The Police Department has 14 full time officers and 2 reserve officers. The Department provides countywide 911 dispatch service for all of Floyd County.

Fire Department: The Fire Station was built in 1969 and is located at 704 South Grand Avenue. The fire station houses the Fire Chief's office, an apparatus floor, quarters and cooking facilities for firefighters, and bays for housing firefighting equipment. The facility also provides both equipment and/or office space

for a private ambulance provider, St. Charles Township Fire Department, and the MERV (multi-purpose emergency response vehicle). Charles City Fire Department's service beyond community boundaries is based both on joint service and mutual aid agreements. Although the fire station is in good condition, its location within the 100-year flood plain is of concern especially since the building flooded in 2008 (see photo above).

Charles City Library - The City supports a library located at 106 Milwaukee Mall (adjacent to City Hall). The modern 15,371 square foot library offers a collection of over 50,000 books, movies, and games in addition to newspapers, magazines, public computers, Wi-Fi and access to 25 databases (genealogy, music downloads, and e-books, etc.). The library offers ongoing programs for children of all ages and adults. Books are delivered to homebound adults and daycare centers. School visits for elementary schools are regularly scheduled during the school year. The library also allows for public use of its Zastrow River Room. Public Library – Efforts continue to maintain and improve upon services offered to local residents.

On permanent display at the Charles City Public Library, the Arthur Mooney

Collection features the works of famous artists like: Picasso, Rembrandt, Gauguin, Manet, Whistler, and Grant Wood. The original prints include impressive engravings, etchings, lithography, woodcuts, and drypoint from these masters. Mr. Mooney donated these works of art to the library in 1941.



b. Community Facilities & Services – Goals & Strategies

1. **GOAL: Develop/Redevelop facilities as needed to address community needs**
 - a. **STRATEGY:** Develop a new fire station outside of the floodplain (HIGH PRIORITY BY THE FOCUS GROUP)
 - b. **STRATEGY:** Create an events/community center to provide for events with over 500 people and create a place for ‘things to do’ (HIGH PRIORITY BY THE FOCUS GROUP)
 - c. **STRATEGY:** Repair, expand, or move the outdoor swimming pool
 - d. **STRATEGY:** Repurpose the middle school building
 - e. **STRATEGY:** Develop/adopt a Capital Improvements Plan

2. **GOAL: Consider partnership, shared use, and energy-saving strategies that create cost efficiencies**
 - a. **STRATEGY:** Consider leasing or allowing fee for permit use of public land, facilities, or vendor opportunities to generate funds and offer amenities in public spaces such as the library (coffee/gift shop), parks (food/souvenirs), riverfront (food/beverage/floating equipment/sun tan lotion), etc.
 - b. **STRATEGY:** Participate in the Iowa Public Buildings Benchmarking program to identify buildings (city/school) that are above average for energy consumption and target them for energy saving modifications. The Iowa Energy Center is the coordinating agency for this program. Floyd County was an early participant in this program

3. **General Policies**
 - a. **STRATEGY:** Provide public facilities and services to develop a desirable quality of life for current and future residents and taxpayers.
 - Restrict placement of energy fuel storage facilities provided sufficient precautions are taken to protect the environment and nearby residents
 - Encourage environmentally safe disposal of all wastes
 - Encourage the development and use of clean and renewable energy use and increased energy efficiency
 - Evaluate the solid waste, sewer, water service needs of the city as development occurs
 - When constructing new public facilities or structures, choose a design that adds to the character of the city

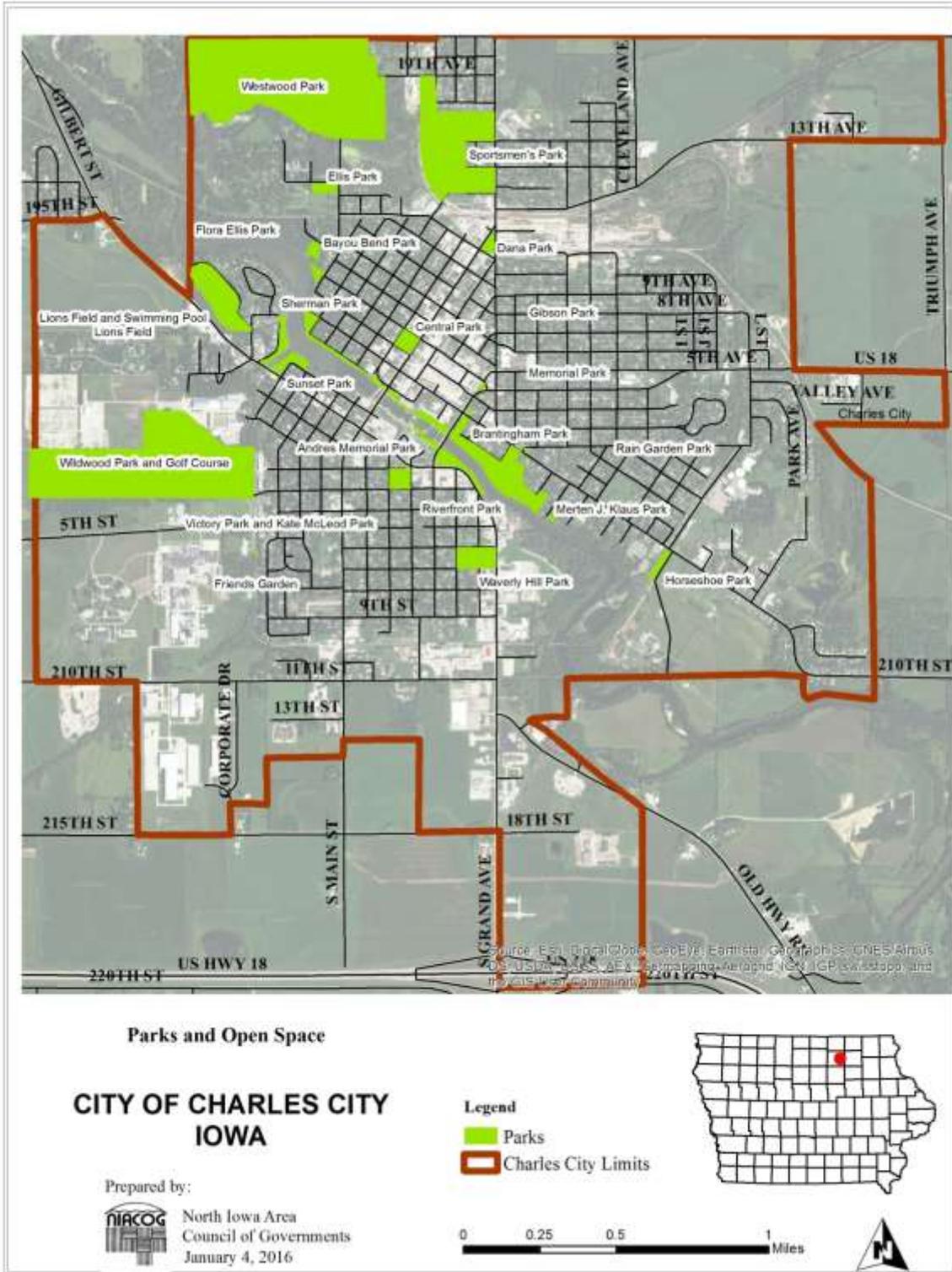
 - b. **STRATEGY:** Make available facilities and services which are necessary for the public well-being. Develop and expand current facilities and services that are of sustainable design.
 - Prohibit the disposal of hazardous wastes, unless taken to an approved disposal location
 - Encourage recycling efforts and allow facilities to locate and operate whose business is recycling, provided adequate precautions are taken to insure the operation will not be detrimental or injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the immediate area

 - c. **STRATEGY:** Provide the citizens with choices for the types and amount of recreational activities. Coordinate with County, State, and Federal programs to utilize both public and private funds.
 - Support the development of recreational opportunities in the city through a system of open space areas and parks

- Provide parkland and recreational facilities which meet the needs of all citizens and ensure that future demands are met through development of new facilities and services along with the upgrading and reconstruction of existing facilities
 - Designate low volume and wide roads as bikeways to enhance recreational opportunities within the City
- d. **STRATEGY:** Increase park land as the City of Charles City grows.
- As new neighborhoods are established, they should include the appropriate amount of park space to serve the new neighborhood
 - Site selection criteria for neighborhood parks should include ease of access, neighborhood location, and connection to greenways
 - Encourage neighborhood parks over mini-parks within residential areas

c. Community Facilities & Services – Maps

A full sized copy of the Park and Open Space map is included on the next page.



8. Community Character

a. Community Character – Background

Community Character

Community character has been covered to some extent in previous sections of this plan in section on History (I.3.), Housing (II.3.), Natural Resources (II.6.), and Public Facilities & Services (II.7.). This section will focus on the areas not previously covered including: signage, historic sites, downtown, public art, activities, crime, education, health care, amenities, foster grandparents, and sustainability. The city enjoys a state Culture and Entertainment district and is celebrated by an Iowa Great Place designation as well as being listed as a site in the Silos and Smokestacks National Heritage Area.



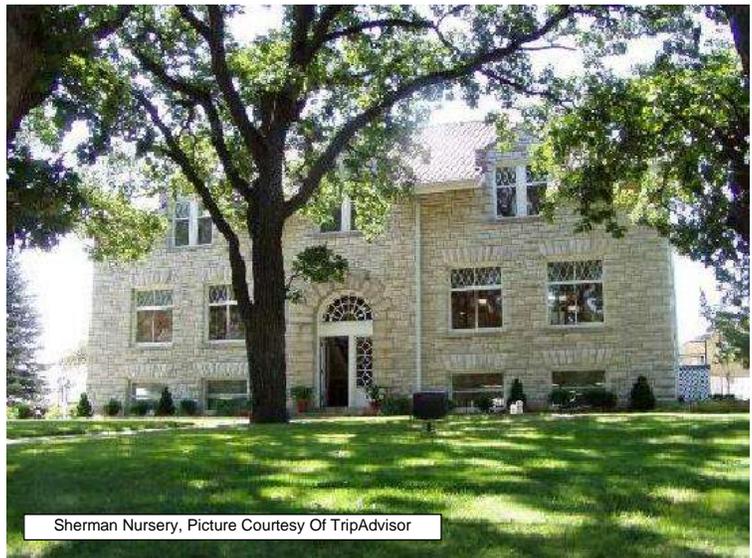
Entryway Signage -

The City has placed signage at entryways into the community to welcome visitors. The signs feature the city's motto 'America's Hometown' and the city's iconic suspension bridge that was rebuilt after its destruction by massive flooding in 2008.

Historic Sites -

Historic Districts - The City has 43 buildings/structures listed on the National Register of Historic Places, but the vast majority of them are located within one of the three (3) historic districts in Charles City; they include the Sherman Nursery Company Historic District, the Wildwood Park Historic District, and the Central Park-North Main Street Historic District.

Historic District - Sherman Nursery Company: The Sherman Nursery Company is the most recently created historic district in Charles City. Located at 1300 Grove Street, the nursery was founded in 1884 and had operated for 128 years until it closed in 2012^{xiii}. The District was added to the National Register of Historic Place on November 12, 2014 (#14000905). The nursery raised plants and supplied them as a wholesaler to retail



Sherman Nursery, Picture Courtesy Of TripAdvisor

Smart Planning Guidance:

18.B.1. Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should promote activities and development that are consistent with the character and architectural style of the community and should respond to local values regarding the physical character of the community.

Smart Planning Guidance:

18.B.2. Community Character - Objectives, policies, and programs to assist future development of educational facilities, cemeteries, health care facilities, child care facilities, law enforcement and fire protection facilities, libraries, and other governmental facilities that are necessary or desirable to meet the projected needs of the municipality.

companies. With an 1884 limestone office building, stone bridges leading up to it, and mature trees framing it, the site is both historic and picturesque. The exception is the dilapidated greenhouses (behind the office building) and the large processing buildings (north of the office building), which appear to be in good condition, but are large and industrial looking. Given the minimal amount of unimproved land within Charles City's borders, the nursery site may be ideal for repurposing in ways that benefit from its unique, historic character.

Historic District - Wildwood Park: Located south of the Sherman Nursery at 1 Wildwood Road, Wildwood Park Historic District was listed on the National Register in 1998 (#98001205). Several features of the park were found to contribute to the historic district including: some rest houses, playground apparatus, vehicular drives, golf links, some bridges, retaining wall, fireplace grill, some fords, and the entrance gate. The park was design includes bungalow/craftsman, Tudor revival, and other styles. This location has served as a clubhouse, military facility, park, and sports facility.



Historic District - Central Park-North Main Street (Downtown): The Central Park—North Main Street includes most of the downtown and was originally listed in 1976. Prominent in the District are Central Park and adjacent commercial blocks that retain a high level of integrity. The original National Register listing for the district included 16 buildings and the park. The integrity of the district as a whole remains good despite the loss of three contributing buildings since the original nomination. Seven buildings in the district listing dated to before 1872. Of the remainder, eight were brick built between 1874 and 1914. There is one frame house in the district. Thirteen buildings were designed for commercial use. Of the other three, one building was the library, and two were substantial and significant houses facing the park. The common height is two stories for all but the one-story library and two larger commercial blocks that reach up to 3 stories tall. Integrity is highest along the 300 block of North Jackson Street, the Central Park, and along the 200 block of North Main Street. The 200 block of North Main Street has limestone buildings from the 1860's and 1870's. It is the sole downtown block left substantially intact from the 1968 twister that destroyed 60 commercial buildings, three schools, six churches and 500 residences. The tornado only caused damage to the tops of these buildings. The limestone for those buildings was quarried in Charles City.

Notable Historic Buildings - The following paragraphs feature a few notable historic buildings.

Charles Theatre: The Charles Theatre is one of the very few art deco theaters left in Iowa. The theater,



completed in 1935, is now used as both a movie theater and a place for stage productions. The facade design is a series of rectangular shapes in bright, metallic colors. Inside there's a curving, metal staircase. The non-profit status of the group of volunteers who manage the facility allow rates to be very inexpensive. The facility has also benefitted from restorative façade work in 2015; the city assisted with funding for the project.

The Floyd County Courthouse and the Charles City Middle School are also in the art deco style. The courthouse, designed by Hansen & Waggoner, now Waggoner & Wineinger Architects, of Mason City, was built in 1940-41. This three-story structure of tan brick, Bedford stone and polished red granite is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2003.



Photo courtesy of Parson Real Estate



Photo courtesy of Parson Real Estate

The Middle School Building was completed in 1932. The original oak woodwork and doors are still intact. The middle school is one of the few remaining 1930's buildings that preserves the architectural heritage of the city from that time. Construction on a new middle school building was completed in 2016, and a reuse is being sought for this iconic structure. A recent study about potential multiple uses was completed and is described in Chapter 10 Collaboration section of this plan.

Frank Lloyd Wright Designed Home: The Alvin Miller House in Charles City was designed by Frank Lloyd Wright and was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1978. This one-story, L-shaped house, located at 1107 Court St., was built in 1950 for Alvin Miller, a Charles City dentist. The house, situated near the Cedar River, had three feet of water inside it during the flood of 2008, and has since been restored. Wright had a book published in 1954 titled "The Natural House," which includes information about the Alvin Miller House and photos of it. Another Prairie School house at 310 Third Avenue was designed by the Minneapolis architectural firm Purcell, Feick and Elmslie.



Alvin Miller House.
Photo taken by J.R. Manning in November 2012

Ferguson/Blunt Neighborhood Historic Architecture: Mortimer Cleveland, an early 20th century architect from Waterloo, designed a number of homes of notable historic design on Ferguson and Blunt streets. For example, Howard Burr, designed the Blunt House. This Prairie School house from 1919 is a two-story structure with a horizontal design and a beautiful green tile roof.

Downtown

Grand Avenue Streetscape - The City facilitated and completed a visioning process that led to a conceptual Mainstreet Streetscape design in 1998-99. The City completed the first phase of the project (\$750,000) with new pavement decorative sidewalks, period streetlights, and traffic signals in 2001.

Façade Renovations – Community Revitalization of Charles City coordinates an ongoing façade renovation program for Downtown Charles City. The program is funded through tax increment financing (TIF) revenues provided by the City. In 2013 to 2015 State and Federal funding sources were temporarily added to the program to complete façade renovations on a larger scale. The pictures at right show a key building in the renovation before facade renovation and when the renovation was nearly completed.

Central Park Renovations - Central Park has undergone extensive renovations since 2007. Electrical improvements were made which totaled approximately \$30,000 with funds provided through Riverside TIF. An \$8,900 irrigation system was installed during 2008. Deteriorated brick corners and center area were replaced with new pavers. The corner pavers were financed through the Riverside TIF and the center area was funded privately through Community Revitalization. The other improvements include installation of a timeline of Charles City’s history, art pieces on each of the four corners, and new signage, which were also privately funded through Community Revitalization. The final project was the purchase of a new portable band shell and truck for transportation and extra storage. These improvements provide a showcase for the City. The park has been utilized by many organizations and events and continues to be an asset to the community.



located along the Cedar River. The most recent dedicated public art piece entitled “We All Fall Down” by Katy Magee was installed August of 2006.

Public Art – In early 2003 a grassroots effort to bring more attention to public art in Charles City generated five finalists in a search for unique ideas and designs for a one-of-a-kind, site-specific, outdoor public seating areas. This innovative collection of “sit-able art” was a brainchild of Charles City’s local Main Street Iowa program, Community Revitalization of Charles City. There are now 14 pieces

Other unique public art sculptures are located in parks (including Central Park in the downtown area) or by various buildings in town. Near the Charles City Arts Center is a sculpture entitled *Streamside* by Bounnak Thammavong. Located next to the Floyd County Museum in the Butterfly Garden are sculptures known as *Children at Play*. They represent the site of the old McKinley school. *Reid and Paige Booker* by Dale Merrill is located near the Charles City Public Library. Located on the corner of Brantingham and Clark Street, is the site of a Chris Bennett sculpture commissioned by the Charles City Improvement Association (CIA). The sculpture, "Haulin' Gear," depicts a boy and his dog.



Public Art: Wishing Circle By Stephanie Sailer, 2003, Picture Courtesy Of TripAdvisor

Events - Charles City Community Revitalization holds fun and creative events that celebrate the community and bring people into the downtown area. The events are well-attended by people from within Charles City and from surrounding communities.



Picture Courtesy Of Charles City Community Revitalization

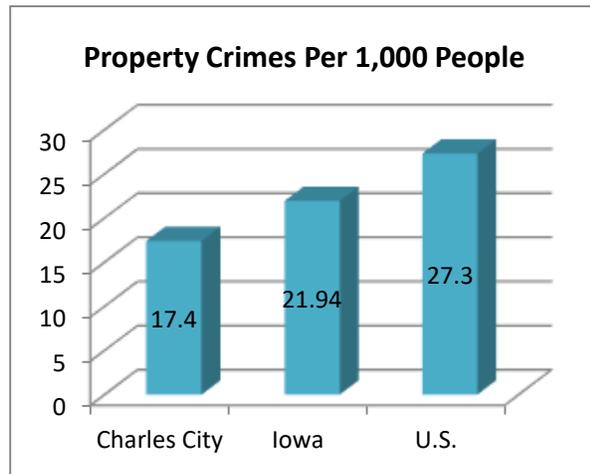


Lighted Holiday Parade
Picture Courtesy Of TripAdvisor

Varied/Affordable Housing – Housing in Charles City is consistent with state and national trends in terms of the blend of rental and owner-occupied offerings (after adjustment for seasonal housing). The housing in Charles City is on average older than state and national average, which has advantages and disadvantages. As an advantage, the area north of downtown is a showplace for a variety of pristinely kept turn of the century architectural styles such as Gothic, Italianate, and Victorian to name a few. The disadvantage to older homes is, of course, that more maintenance is required on older homes. Vacant lots are available for new home construction and some newer homes are available in newly developing areas. In addition, a new mixed-use 3-story development is being built that will offer new rental housing units to the community. The Charles City Housing Authority has been awarded both the Public Housing High Performer designation (2012) and the Section 8 High Performer designation (2017).

Crime Rate – The crime rate is low in Charles City as compared to both the State and the nation. The two subject areas predominantly used to evaluate the level of crime in communities are violent crimes and property crimes. Violent Crimes are defined by law enforcement to include murder, rape, and robbery. The rate of **violent** crime in Charles City is about 7% less than the state and 34% less than the nation.^{xiv} Property crimes as defined by law enforcement include burglary, theft, and vehicle theft. The rate of

property crimes in Charles City is about 21% less than the state average and 36% less than the national average. See the charts below for more detail.^{xv}



Educational Opportunities (K-12, college, lifelong learning) – Charles City offers a Kindergarten – 12th grade public school system, a North Iowa Community College (NIACC) satellite location, and lifelong learning opportunities through NIACC. The University of Northern Iowa is within 45 minutes driving time on the Avenue Of The Saints. The high school received national recognition by the U.S. News & World Report’s Best High Schools program; the recognition was in light of mathematics proficiency, reading proficiency, and low student-teacher ratio.

Accessible, Quality Health Care – The Floyd County Medical Center is a 25-bed Critical Access Hospital located at 800 11th Street in Charles City. The hospital was built in 1965, with a major addition in 1990, and a remodeling of the entire 2nd floor in 2008. The hospital is licensed and accredited by the Iowa Department of Inspection and Appeals and a member of the Iowa Hospital Association. The facility is operated through a management contract with Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, and is governed by a five-member appointed Board of Commissioners. With a staff of over 200 FCMC is one of the largest employers in the City.

Floyd County Medical Center provides health care to area residents in Charles City. The hospital is staffed by general/family practitioners (8), physician assistants, nurse practitioners, surgeons (1 general and 1 orthopedic), specialists, nurses, and others. The hospital offers a wide range of services including: Audiology, Birth Center, Cardiac Rehab, Diabetic Education, Emergency Department, Enterostomal Therapy, Nutritional Services, Occupational Therapy, Outpatient Specialty Clinics, Physical Therapy, Radiology, Senior Health Insurance Information Program, Sleep Studies, Speech Therapy and Surgery.



Amenities

Charles City Arts Center: Housed in the City’s historic 1904 Carnegie Library, the Charles City Arts Center is located at 301 North Jackson. The facility is operated by the Arts Council which is a local non-profit organization. Admission is free to the public. Galleries feature monthly exhibits and a gift shop of local artists’ work. Educational opportunities are provided through classes and workshops for all ages.



Charles City Art Center
Pictures Courtesy Of TripAdvisor

Floyd County Historical Museum - The Floyd County Historical Museum is owned and operated by the Floyd County Historical Society, a local nonprofit group. The museum celebrates the history of Floyd County and their grass roots forming of the tractor industry including the Oliver & Hart Parr manufacturing and coining the word ‘tractor’. The displays include exhibits, a wide range of memorabilia, and, of course, several tractors. An average 2,600 visitors attend the museum annually. To find more about the City’s tractor history see ‘Chapter 1:3.a. History of Charles City’.



Floyd County Museum
Picture Courtesy Of TripAdvisor



Charles City Art Center
Pictures Courtesy Of TripAdvisor



White Water Course
Picture Courtesy Of TripAdvisor

Whitewater Course - Charles City developed Iowa’s first whitewater course on the Cedar River. The course is rated at Class II and Class III levels with three distinct features for paddlers of all abilities. The Riverfront Park area is enjoyed by kayakers, stand-up paddle boarders, tubers, canoeists, and fishermen. This course area is ripe for development as a tourism venue. Equipment rental is recently being made available.

Foster Grand Parents – The Foster Grandparents office is located at 624 N Main Street. The Senior Citizens Center is located at 900 Hulin Street.

Sustainability

Sustainability Awards

The sustainable practices adopted by the City of Charles City have led to awards from several organizations as follows.



STAR Communities Award - Charles City joined the STAR network as a Leadership Community in January 2014. As a member of the Leadership Program, the City worked towards certification with a cohort of other communities from across the country. On February 17, 2016, Charles City received recognition as a 3-STAR Community. 'STAR' is an acronym that stands for 'Sustainability Tools For Assessing & Rating Communities'. The status was achieved by scoring a high level of points in the following areas:

1. Built Environment
2. Climate & Energy
3. Economy & Jobs
4. Education, Arts, & Community
5. Equity & Empowerment
6. Health & Safety
7. Natural Systems

Many of the best practices of the STAR Communities program were integrated into this plan to further enhance the community's sustainability now and into the future.



EPA Smart Growth Achievement - Charles City was one of seven communities to receive the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's 2014 National Award for Smart Growth Achievement. The communities were honored for their "creative, sustainable initiatives that better protect the health and the environment while strengthening local economies," according to a press release from the EPA. Charles City, which won in the category of Plazas, Parks and Public Places, is being recognized for the Charles City Riverfront Park. "After years of fighting against the often-

flooded Cedar River, Charles City used land acquired through Federal Emergency Management Agency flood buyouts to create an inviting riverfront park with a whitewater course," the press release stated. "Capitalizing on the river's natural features to help prevent future flooding, Charles City turned the river from an obstacle into an ecological and social benefit. Members of the community were involved in the park's design and construction. "Riverfront Park is a model of how to strategically use flooded properties to create a sustainable and economically valuable amenity." The winners were chosen based on their effectiveness in creating sustainable communities; fostering equitable development among public, private and nonprofit stakeholders; and serving as national models for environmentally and economically sustainable development.^{xvi}



River Town of the Year By Iowa Rivers Revival - In 2012 Charles City was awarded the state River Town of Year by Iowa Rivers Revival. Iowa Rivers Revival is a statewide river advocacy group that works on public policy to restore and protect rivers and streams. The River Town of the Year award celebrates vibrant river communities across Iowa

that are reclaiming river fronts as anchors for recreation, economic development, ecological practices, and good water quality. Charles City received the award for:

- 1) Transforming a low-head dam into Iowa's first whitewater kayak course
- 2) Developing new riverside parks with many amenities
- 3) Redesigning and replacing a century-old suspension bridge that was swept away by the 2008 flood
- 4) Completing Iowa's largest "permeable paving system" that dramatically reduces storm water runoff and pollutants discharging into the Cedar River.^{xvii}

Iowa Shines Community - On August 26, 2004 Lt. Gov. Sally Pederson proclaimed Charles City an "Iowa Shines" community for its quality of life improvement. Also, she recognized the community for the efforts to provide more affordable housing for its residents. Also, in 2009 the City installed a permeable paving system in a 17-block section of a residential neighborhood in the northwest section of town. This project could certainly be used as a model for future street improvements in other residential neighborhoods in the community.



Iowa Great Places – In October 2007, Charles City was named one of Iowa's Great Places. Iowa Great Places is a program that calls on state agencies to partner with Iowans to make Iowa's communities, neighborhoods, districts, and regions great places where people want to live, work, and raise a family. Charles City's vision statement and ideology for the Great Places program is: America's Hometown. The community's proposal showcases Charles City as a great place to live, work and play. Key features that made the award possible include Carrie Chapman Catt's Girlhood Home, riverfront development of a whitewater course, ravine play area, park entrance enhancement, boat launch, storm water fountain, labyrinth, amphitheater, and Charley Western trail augmentation.

Other Awards - The community also received the: All-Star Community (2010), Governor's Environmental Excellence Award (2010), and Storm Water Excellence award.

Sustainability Pilot Programs -



Although, storm sewers have historically been the only option for removing rainwater from city streets, Charles City has taken a more environmentally friendly approach. In 2010, the City began its permeable paving campaign. In an effort to address problems that a westside neighborhood had been experiencing with substandard storm water sewers, the City installed a permeable paving system in a 16-block section of the

neighborhood. The permeable paving was designed to improve water quality and reduce flooding. The design involves brick pavers which are NOT grouted together. The voids between the pavers allow

rainwater to soak into the ground, reducing the need for storm water structures. The subsurface, made up of materials such as gravel and sand, gives the water a place to hold until it leeches into the earth. The pilot project cost \$3.7 million and was funded through I-Jobs and ARRA, together with about \$3 million in local funding. It has been said that the project was the largest of its kind in the nation at the time. This environmentally friendly solution also improves water quality by filtering rainwater as it passes through the system. The system lasts longer and requires less maintenance than a typical storm sewer system. The first permeable paving project in Charles City was completed in 2010.

In 2012 the city completed its second permeable paving project, which consisted of 8.5 city blocks. The project cost about \$2 million. The work is being funded through the State Revolving Loan Fund. Thirty percent of the eligible expense, which does not include water and sanitary sewer work, will be forgiven by the State Revolving Loan Fund. Sources for the city's share of the funding include the water fund, the storm water fund, and the local option sales tax. The project was located on Clark Street (between Jackson Street and the pedestrian bridge), Joslin, Iowa, and Illinois Streets (between Spriggs Street and Richings Street), and Spriggs Street (between Johnson and Jackson Streets).

These projects have reduced the need to replace downstream sewers and have also reduced flooding of the adjacent yards.

Permeable paving was also included in the Parkside Villas Subdivision built in 2014/15 with the assistance of the Jumpstart Housing Assistance Program, which offered CDBG funding to replace housing lost in the floods of 2008.

The city now has 27 blocks of permeable paving. Maintenance staff have found the pavers to be easier when making repairs in two ways. First, there is no random cracking and, if a brick is significantly damaged, that brick can be fairly easily replaced at little cost. And, second, when replacing utilities under one of these streets, instead of boring into concrete surface and patching in new concrete, the bricks can simply be removed and set aside, then put back in place after the utility work is completed; this creates a cleaner look for the street and saves cost in materials.



The less appealing side of the permeable pavers has been that weeds can grow through gaps between the pavers in the street and snow plows must keep their blades slightly elevated to avoid catching the sides of the bricks.

Although these projects have been cost effective, the City looks at the projects on a case by case basis to determine whether storm sewers or permeable paving are a better alternative for the City.

b. Community Character – Goals & Strategies

1. **GOAL: Create/Enhance features and venues that add to the character of the community**
 - a. **STRATEGY:** The Sherman Nursery site offers a very large amount of land that would be suitable for an agricultural tourism venue (such as a winery), bed and breakfast, housing, craft manufacturing, or a combination of these. Because the lot is so large, it would likely also be suitable for subdividing, however, additional street access points would likely be needed in light of the long (east to west) shape of the parcel.
 - b. **STRATEGY:** Design and install an integrated signage system to draw people into the community, direct people to amenities (such as river access points, library, trails, etc.), and enhances the sense of place
 - c. **STRATEGY:** Further enhance Cedar River as an amenity
 - Add wayfinding signage for river access points
 - Improve accessibility to the riverfront through improved parking and entry development
 - Enhance restrooms and changing facilities and amenities in or near the riverfront for public use
 - Recruit traveling vendors
 - Continue to expand the recreational trail along the Cedar River
 - d. **STRATEGY:** Repurpose the train depot
 - e. **STRATEGY:** Add bike rental and expand the bike trails network
 - f. **STRATEGY:** Conduct a major remodel of the YMCA
 - g. **STRATEGY:** Utilize brick pavers when feasible in street development/reconstruction

2. **GOAL: Provide programs and services that add to the character of the community**
 - a. **STRATEGY:** Expand After School/Youth Engagement programs
 - b. **STRATEGY:** Prevent crime through community policing initiatives that involve citizen partnerships, crime preventative design in public spaces, etc.
 - c. **STRATEGY:** Actively address neighborhood nuisance issues: junk vehicles, dilapidated structures, broken sidewalks, vicious or barking dogs, tall weeds/grass
 - d. **STRATEGY:** Conduct a Community Care Coordination (Health Care) program
 - e. **STRATEGY:** Publicize the Community Foundation for bequests
 - f. **STRATEGY:** Create a volunteer program for clean streets, projects, events, etc.; use names provided during community survey process
 - g. **STRATEGY:** Develop a Walkability Program
 - h. **STRATEGY:** Develop a Nature Conservancy Project/Plan
 - i. **STRATEGY:** Evaluate the possibility of participating in the Healthy Communities initiative
 - j. **STRATEGY:** Continue to implement the LED Lighting replacement initiative
 - k. **STRATEGY:** Expand available, affordable childcare
 - l. **STRATEGY:** Continue to participate in the FMC Empowerment Area with the following goals:
 - Make quality early learning and preschool opportunities available for age eligible children in the FMC ECI Area.
 - Encourage and offer early reading and vocabulary-building opportunities for all children birth to 5 in the FMC ECI Area.
 - Educate parents and caregivers by providing them with credentialed home visitation and group setting direct support services to enhance their parenting abilities and continue to address reducing FMC ECI Area child abuse rates.

- Increase the number of available child care slots in the FMC ECI Area.
- Increase the quality of early childhood environments in the FMC ECI Area.

3. GOAL: Track trends to identify issues and allow for ongoing solutions

- a. **STRATEGY:** Regularly track, involve, and survey youth to identify and better understand the reasons behind the 'brain drain'
- b. **STRATEGY:** Map and research locations and causes of crime to track patterns and then develop strategies to address causes
- c. **STRATEGY:** Track and provide efficient public services to all residents in ways that appeal to the public: on-Line Bill paying, credit card, regular updates on website, citizen newsletter

9. Hazards

a. Hazards – Background

Charles City has had more than its share of natural disasters, especially with tornado and flood activity, and, therefore, appreciates the need to prepare for disasters.

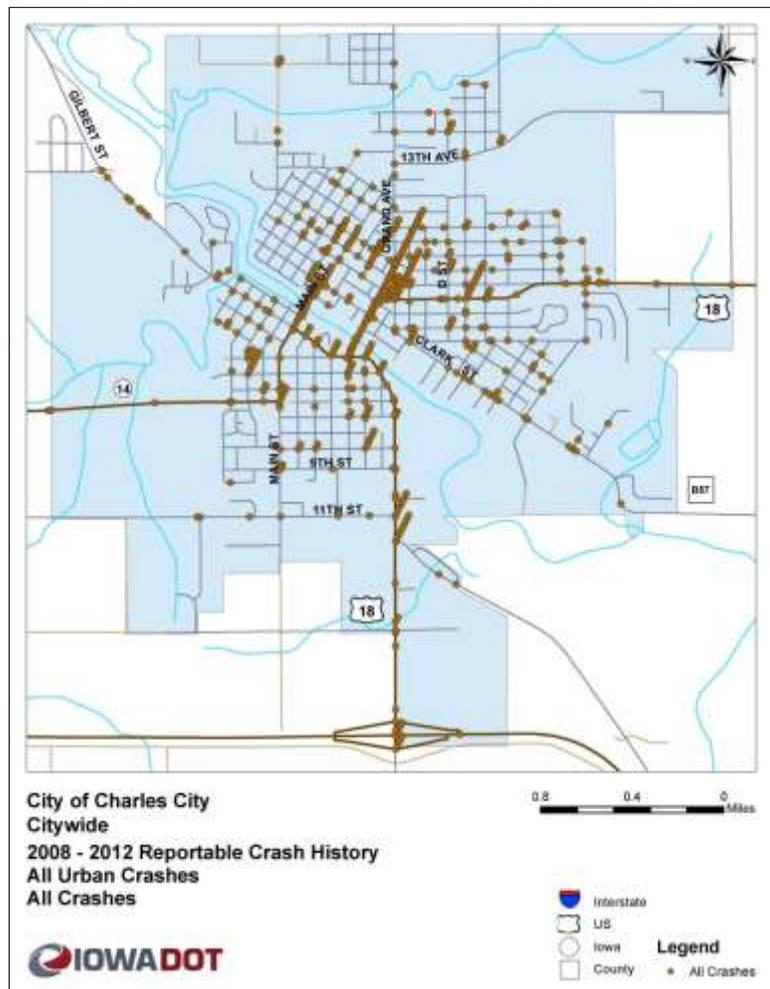
The Floyd County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan was adopted, and then later updated in 2015 to identify, prevent, and prepare for hazards with the understanding that hazards can be natural hazards or manmade hazards. Formulation of the plan included all of Floyd County with representation and involvement of Charles City representatives and meetings. The plan is intended to promote sound public policy designed to protect citizens, critical facilities, infrastructure, private property and the natural environment. The plan lays out a prioritization of which hazards are present, which hazards are more significant and what should be done to address them. The following paragraphs detail the background of the highest priority hazards. Following them, is a table of all of the hazards that were analyzed as part of the study and their prioritization. Section b. then outlines the goals and strategies adopted to address the hazards.

Transportation Incidents

Between 2008 and 2012 in Charles City, there were 485 vehicle crashes. Of these crashes, none were fatal, 5 were major, 42 were minor, and the extent of 80 was not recorded. 358 crashes caused property damage. The crashes resulted in 167 injuries.^{xviii} Although traffic engineering, inspection of traffic facilities, land use management of adjacent areas to roads and highways, and the readiness of local response agencies has increased, highway incidents continue to occur. The combination of large numbers of people on the road, unpredictable weather conditions, potential mechanical problems, and human error create the potential for a transportation accident.

Smart Planning Guidance:

18.B.2 Hazards - Objectives, policies, and programs that identify the natural and other hazards that have the greatest likelihood of impacting the municipality or that pose a risk of catastrophic damage as such hazards relate to land use and development decisions, as well as the steps necessary to mitigate risk after considering the local hazard mitigation plan approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

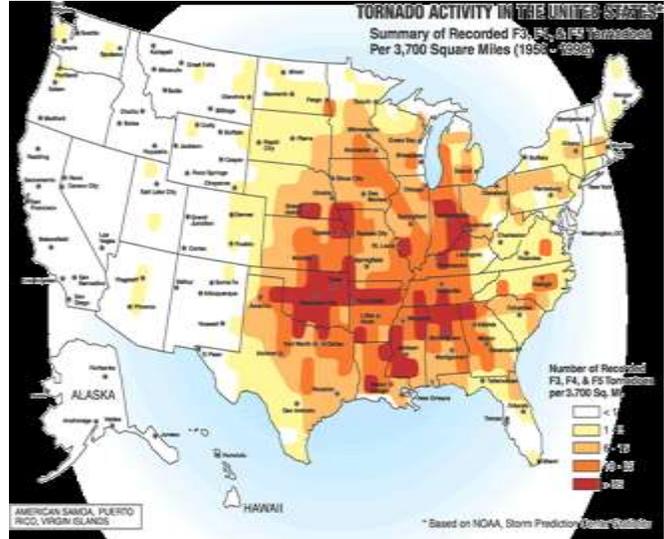


Drought

Drought is a normal part of climate fluctuations. Climatic variability can bring dry conditions to a region for years at a time. Research and observations of the El Nino/La Nina climatic events are resulting in more predictable climatic forecasts. A drought would likely affect most of Floyd County, if not the whole State of Iowa, and the Upper Midwest as a whole. Based on its dependence on precipitation, the agricultural community would be the most adversely affected. However, the entire state or region would feel an indirect impact due to the heavy reliance on agricultural production for such a large sector of the local economy.

Tornado

In the US, Iowa is ranked third in the number of tornadoes per 10,000 square miles. Between 1959 and 2013, there have been 15 recorded tornado events in Floyd County. These events have caused 13 deaths and 452 injuries, \$26,275,000 in property damage, and \$65,000 in crop damage.^{xix}



One of the largest twisters ever recorded in Iowa, occurred in Charles City on May 15, 1968. The twister left in its wake 13 dead, hundreds injured, and massive destruction. The storm destroyed much of the downtown, including 256 businesses and 1,250 homes with damage estimates exceeding \$20 million. Many upper story levels in downtown buildings remain vacant to this day.



This picture was taken by the Floyd County sheriff (L. L. Lane) at his spotter position on Highway 14. It shows the tornado when it was 2 miles southwest of Charles City.

Flash Flood

Floods are the most common and widespread of all-natural disasters except fire. Between 2000 and 2013, Charles City experienced flash flooding on 6 dates.^{xx} A flash flood is an event that occurs with little or no warning where water levels rise at an extremely fast rate. Flash flooding results from intense rainfall over a brief period, sometimes combined with rapid snowmelt, ice jam release, frozen ground, saturated soil, or impermeable surfaces.

Most flash flooding is caused by slow-moving thunderstorms or thunderstorms repeatedly moving over the same area. Flash flooding is an extremely dangerous form of flooding which can reach full peak in only a few minutes and allows little or no time for protective measures to be taken by those in its path. Flash flood waters move at very fast speeds and can move boulders, tear out trees, scour channels, destroy buildings, and obliterate bridges. Flash flooding often results in higher loss of life, both human and animal, than slower developing river and stream flooding.

Hazardous Materials

During the period of 2000-2015, 80 hazardous material incidents (a.k.a. spills) have been cited in Charles City according to the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR)^{xxi}. The number of spills average 5 per year. The type of material varied, but included items such as engine oil, petroleum, propane, gas, and ammonia. Despite increasing safeguards, more and more potentially hazardous materials are being used in commercial, agricultural, and domestic activities. This situation is made worse by the density of people and hazardous materials in Iowa. However, none of the incidents in Charles City are considered to be significant and high impact. A high impact occurrence is one defined as an environmental emergency by the EPA. An environmental emergency is a sudden threat to the public health or the well-being of the environment, arising from the release or potential release of hazardous materials.

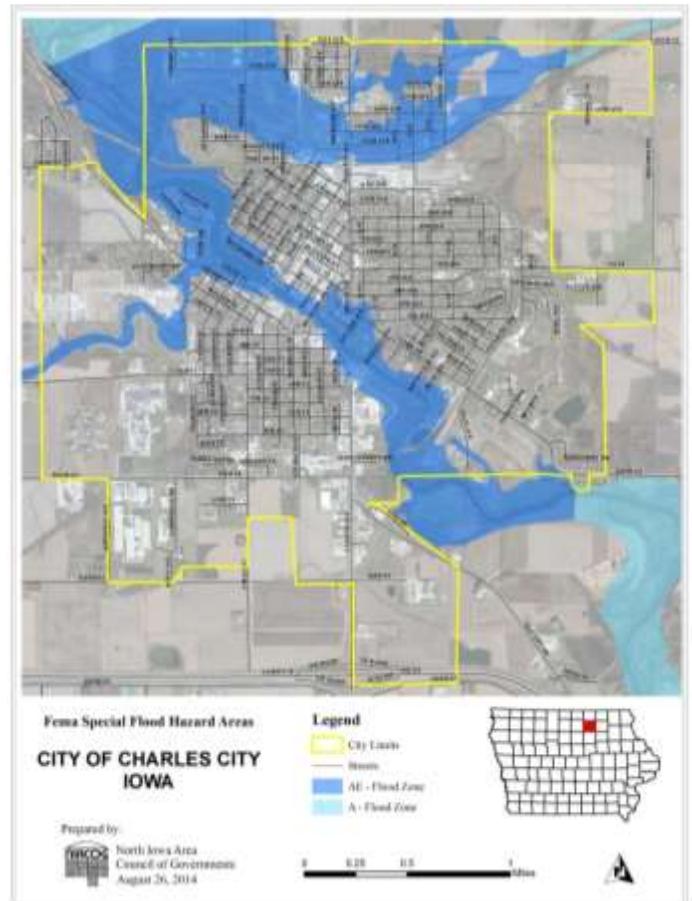
River Flooding

In Charles City, areas subject to flooding include the Cedar River, Hyers Creek, and Shermans Creek. The City of Charles City participates in the National Flood Insurance Program administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

River flooding is a rising or overflowing of a tributary or body of water that covers adjacent land, not usually covered by water, when the volume of water in a stream exceeds the channels capacity. Floods are the most common and widespread of all natural disasters, except fire. Most communities experience some degree of flooding after spring rains, heavy thunderstorms, winter snow thaws, waterway obstructions, or levee or dam failures.

Floodwaters can be extremely dangerous; the force of six inches of swiftly moving water can knock people off their feet and two feet of water can float a car. Floods generally develop over a period of days.

Significant flooding along the Cedar River has occurred 5 times with the most recent incident in 2008 being the most severe. Severe flooding in that year resulted in the demolition of 28 homes in Charles City and extensive clean-up for many others. In addition, several commercial buildings were also impacted.



Crest History of Cedar River at Charles City (Flood Stage: 12 Feet)

Date	3/27/1961	3/2/1965	8/16/1993	7/21/1999	6/9/2008
Stage	21.60'	21.64'	21.44'	22.81'	25.33'

Source: NOAA/National Weather Service La Crosse, WI, 2013



Pedestrian Bridge Remains After 2008 Flood
Source: FEMA, 'Bridging The Future and the Past', <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nEgmcQM8Zxs>

A pedestrian bridge had connected the east and west sides of the community and its trail system. It was lost in the floods of 2008, and became the center of much concern for residents who felt a deep loss when the iconic bridge was left in ruins. Former City Administrator, Tom Brownlow noted, "Bridges are what tie the community together. It

was something that only Charles City had and now it was gone."

Financial participation of the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA), the State of Iowa, and Musco Lighting made the bridge replacement financially feasible. Though many miss the old bridge, they are very grateful for the new bridge that keeps them connected.

In addition to the loss of the bridge, many homes and buildings were also damaged in the flood event. With the assistance of FEMA, the State of Iowa, and the Small Business Administration, financial assistance was made available to repair, demolish, and/or relocate areas residents and businesses.



Main Street Bridge During 2008 Flood
Source: FEMA, 'Bridging The Future and the Past', <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nEgmcQM8Zxs>

To prepare for future flooding, Charles City: removed homes from the floodplain with assistance from FEMA, purchased HESCO Concertainer units (easier to deploy than sandbags), built a new wastewater treatment facility, constructed a retaining wall around the main lift station and added more river gauges for early detection in Charles City and upstream in Osage. Additionally, Charles City is actively involved in the efforts of the Upper Cedar Watershed Management Improvement Authority to address flood risk and water quality issues.

Prioritization of Hazards

The following chart details a prioritization of potential hazard areas assembled by the Charles City Committee. The hazards listed in the top section (Priority '1') are the ones selected as the most urgent to address. The hazards in the middle (Priority '2') are of medium urgency. And, those listed in the bottom section (Priority 3) are the least urgent, which not intended to mean that they are unimportant, but that they are less important than those ranked in the upper sections. The other numbers in the

Charles City Comprehensive Plan - 2018

table weigh the degree of danger posed by the respective hazard; the higher the number the greater the danger or risk the hazard poses.

**Charles City/Charles City Community School District
Hazard Scores and Priorities**

Hazard	Probability	Magnitude/ Severity	Warning Time	Duration	Total Score	Weighted Score	Priority
Transportation Incident	4	3	4	3	14	3.6	1
Drought	4	4	1	4	13	3.6	
Tornado	3	4	4	4	15	3.6	
Flash Flood	4	3	4	2	13	3.5	
Hazardous Materials	4	2	4	4	14	3.4	
River Flooding	4	3	2	3	12	3.3	
Windstorm	4	3	3	1	11	3.3	2
Infrastructure Failure	4	2	4	2	12	3.2	
Hailstorm	4	2	4	1	11	3.1	
Human Disease	4	2	1	4	11	3.0	
Severe Winter Storm	4	2	1	3	10	2.9	
Grass or Wildland Fire	4	1	4	1	10	2.8	
A/P/C Disease	4	1	1	4	10	2.7	3
Terrorism	1	4	4	4	13	2.7	
Thunderstorms and Lightning	4	2	1	1	8	2.7	
Extreme Heat	4	1	1	3	9	2.6	
Sinkholes	3	1	4	3	11	2.6	

Source: Floyd County Hazard Mitigation Plan, 2015

b. Hazards – Goals & Activities

1. **GOAL: Continue to monitor opportunities and prepare for flooding**
 - a. **STRATEGY:** Continue to monitor opportunities and prepare for flooding
 - b. **STRATEGY:** Monitor funding available to continue to minimize future funding
 - c. **STRATEGY:** Use the Flood Resilience Checklist to assess exposure to flood risk and prepare for future events
 - d. **STRATEGY:** Proactively advance Storm Water Management through permeable paving and other means when financially feasible

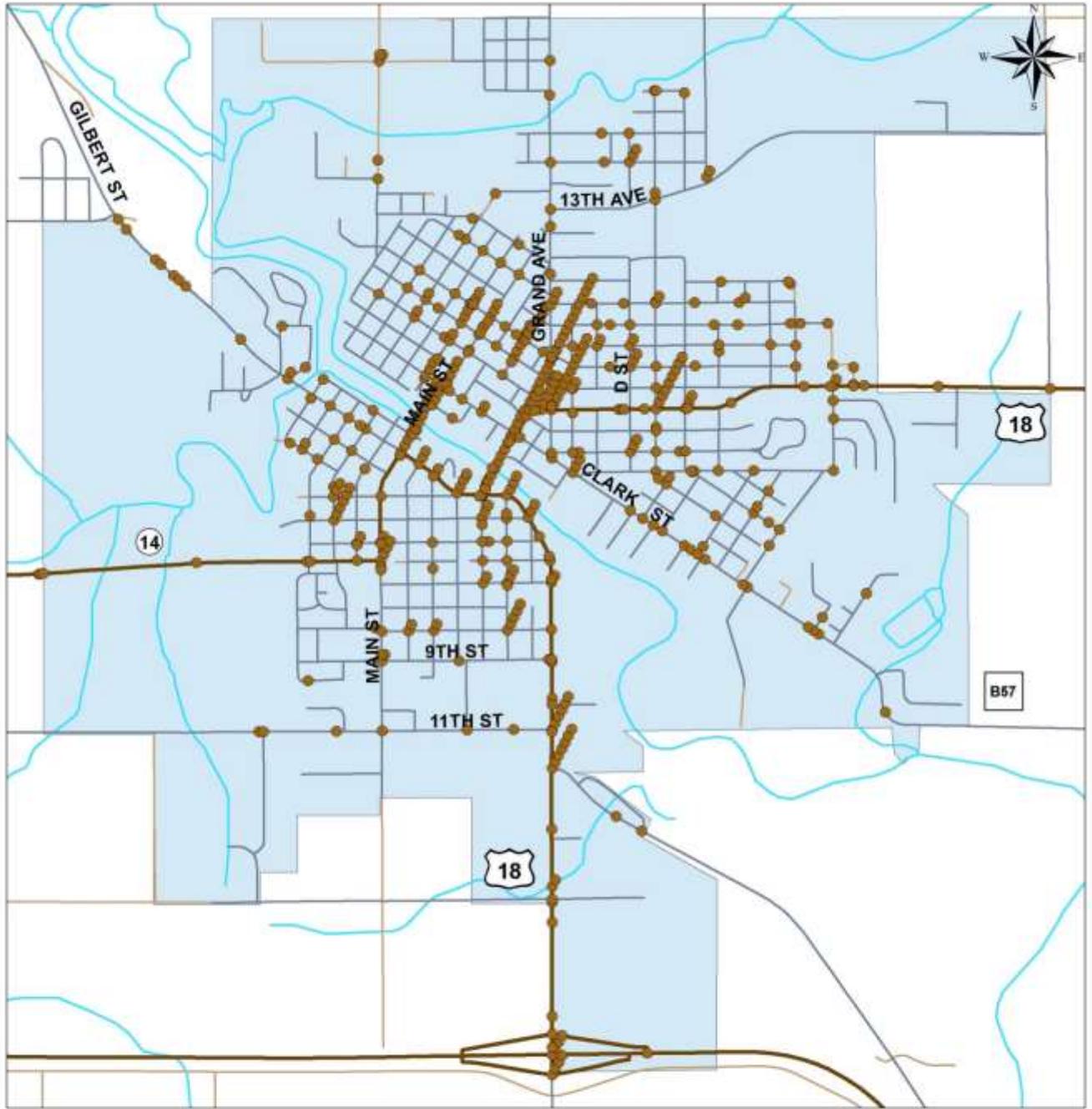
2. **GOAL: Continue to participate with the Cedar River Watershed Coalition (see Section 10. Collaboration) in pursuing the following goals:**
 - a. **STRATEGY:** Assess the flood risks in the watershed.
 - b. **STRATEGY:** Assess the water quality in the watershed.
 - c. **STRATEGY:** Assess options for reducing flood risk and improving water quality in the watershed.
 - d. **STRATEGY:** Monitor federal flood risk planning and activities.
 - e. **STRATEGY:** Educate residents of the watershed area regarding water quality and flood risks.
 - f. **STRATEGY:** Allocate moneys made available to the authority for purposes of water quality and flood mitigation.
 - g. **STRATEGY:** Make and enter into contracts and agreements and execute all instruments necessary or incidental to the performance of the duties of the authority. A watershed management authority shall not acquire property by eminent domain.

c. Hazards – Maps

Maps for this Transportation section are provided on the following pages including the following.

1. 2008-2012 Reportable Crash History
2. Tornado Activity In The United States
3. FEMA Special Flood Hazard Areas

Charles City Comprehensive Plan - 2018



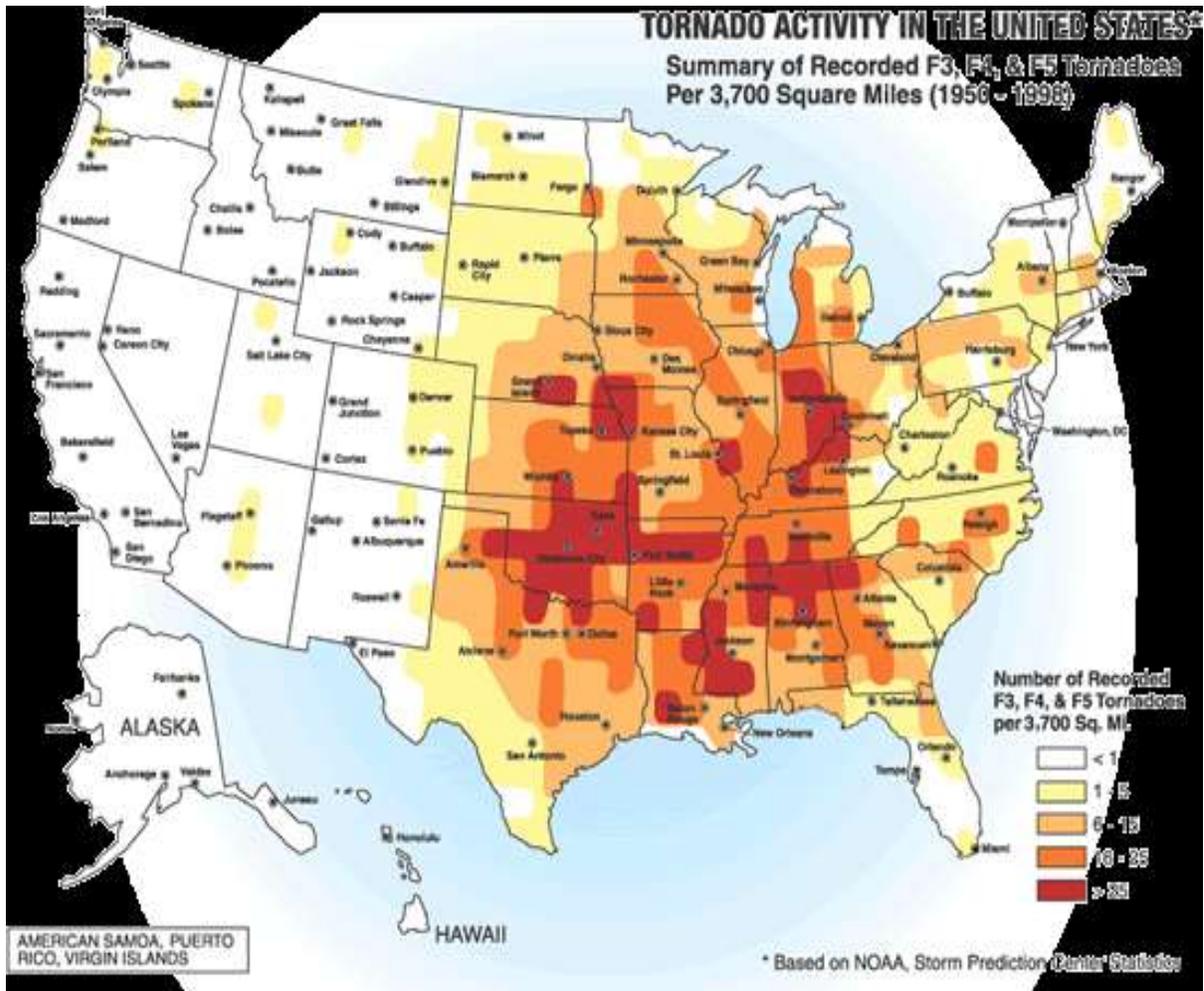
City of Charles City
Citywide
2008 - 2012 Reportable Crash History
All Urban Crashes
All Crashes

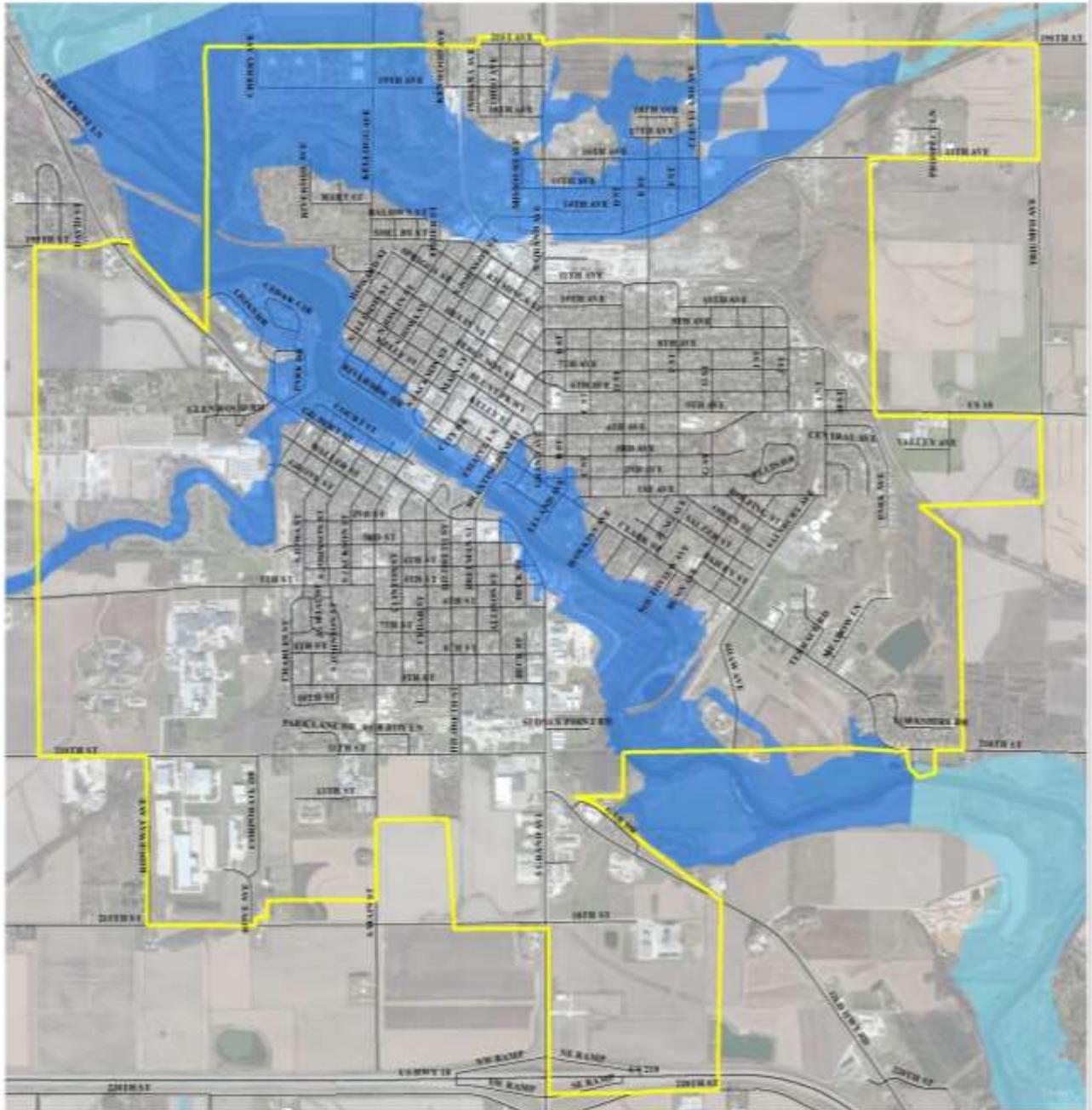


- Interstate
 - US
 - Iowa
 - County
 - All Crashes
- Legend**



Source: http://www.iowadot.gov/crashanalysis/data/city/general/_counts/counts20082012/images/pegs/allcrashes_charlescity20082012.jpg



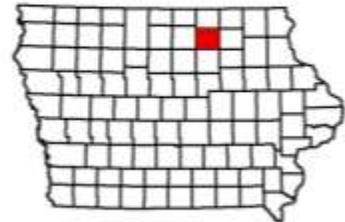


Fema Special Flood Hazard Areas

**CITY OF CHARLES CITY
IOWA**

Legend

- City Limits
- Streets
- AE - Flood Zone
- A - Flood Zone



Prepared by:



North Iowa Area
Council of Governments
August 26, 2014



10. Collaboration

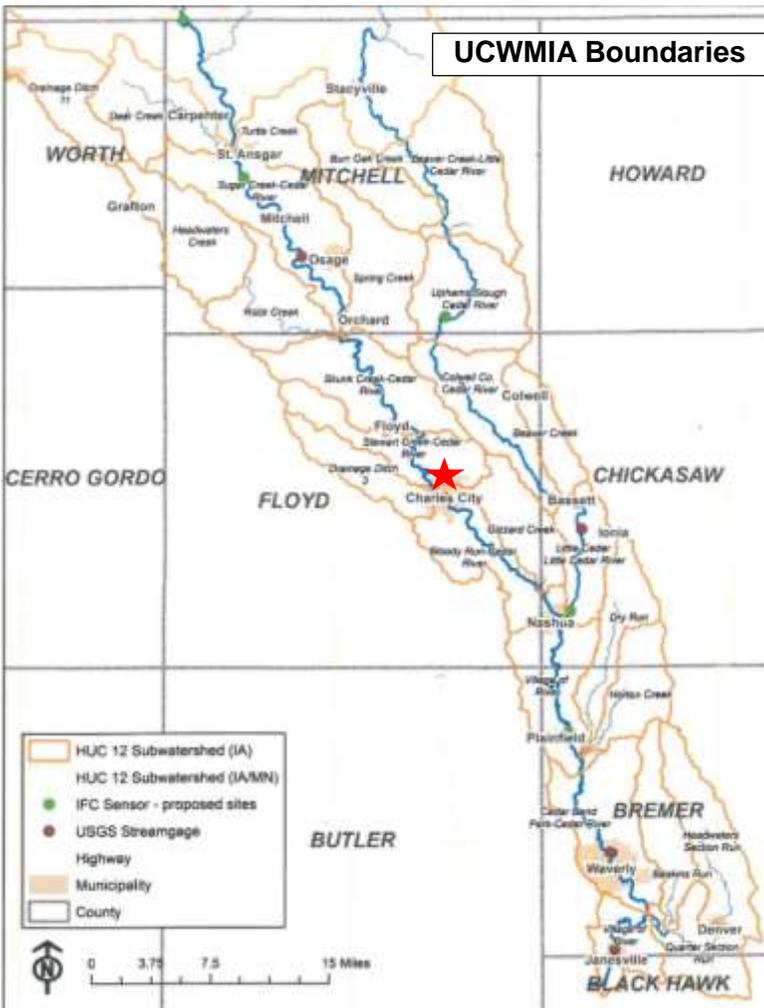
a. Collaboration – Background

Collaboration has served as a backbone for accomplishing goals for the City of Charles City. This section will discuss partnerships that extend outside of Charles City government including:

1. Upper Cedar Watershed Management Improvement Authority
2. Cedar Valley Transportation Facility
3. Joint Use Facility
4. Early Childhood Development

Smart Planning Guidance:
 Iowa Code 18.B.1 Guidance: Governmental, community, and individual stakeholders, including those outside the jurisdiction of the entity, are encouraged to be involved and provide comment during deliberation of planning, zoning, development, and resource management decisions and during implementation of such decisions. The state agency, local government, or other public entity is encouraged to develop and implement a strategy to facilitate such participation.

Upper Cedar Watershed Management Improvement Authority (UCWMIA)



Charles City is centrally located in the Upper Cedar Watershed Management Improvement Authority (UCWMIA) and is actively involved in its efforts to address flood risk and water quality issues. The UCWMIA was created pursuant to Iowa Code Chapter 28E by and between the Iowa counties of Black Hawk, Bremer, Butler, Chickasaw, Floyd, Mitchell and Worth, the Iowa cities of Charles City, Colwell, Denver, Floyd, Nashua, Northwood, Osage, Plainfield, St. Ansgar, Stacyville, and Waverly, and the Iowa Soil and Water Conservation Districts of Black Hawk, Bremer, Butler, Chickasaw, Floyd, Mitchell and Worth Counties. The authority may perform the following duties:

- Assess the flood risks in the watershed.
- Assess the water quality in the watershed.
- Assess options for reducing flood risk and improving water quality in the watershed.
- Monitor Federal flood risk planning and activities.
- Educate residents of the watershed area regarding water quality and flood risks.

- Allocate moneys made available to the authority for purposes of water quality and flood mitigation.
- Make and enter into contracts and agreements and execute all instruments necessary or incidental to the performance of the duties of the authority. A watershed management authority shall not acquire property by eminent domain.

The Upper Cedar Watershed is part of the larger Cedar Watershed and encompasses 1,685 square miles - an exceptionally large geographic area. In March 2015, MSA Professional Services completed the UCWMIA Watershed Management Plan. The plan should be viewed as a 'plan for a plan'. It identifies the broad goals, policies, action plans, and an implementation schedule for the entire watershed. It presents a course evaluation of the water resources within the watershed and presents an action plan which places priorities on establishment of stakeholder groups, funding opportunities, and additional detailed assessments of sub-watersheds within the Iowa portion of the Upper Cedar Watershed.

Cedar Valley Transportation Facility

Charles City partnered with the Iowa Department of Transportation (IDOT) and Floyd County to build a joint maintenance facility in the South Grand Development area. Used to make repairs to the vehicles owned by the three entities, the facility is located near the Avenue of the Saints, which affords easy access for the City, IDOT, and Floyd County. The total investment in the facility was approximately \$4 million. This project was the first of its kind in Iowa and has proved a great success.

Joint Use Facility

In 2015, FEH Design of Dubuque was hired to develop concepts for a joint use facility. The joint use facility would potentially include any or all of the following: City Hall administrative offices, Police Department, YMCA, Fire Department, Community Center, Alternative School, Senior Center, and School District Office. The study was designed to provide a comparison of alternatives using both a capital cost comparison and an operating cost comparison (not including staffing costs).

After several public meetings and a public design charrette, the following recommendations were made by FEH Design and are listed in order of their importance as expressed by the Advisory Task Force and public participants.

1. The existing historic middle school building should be adapted for reuse as an iconic and state of the art, community event center. Compatible uses should be considered to be co-located in the facility such as small retail, welcome center, convention and visitor's bureau, recreational uses and local history exhibit. Other uses such as municipal, school district and county space should also be considered depending upon compatibility.
2. A new YMCA facility should be considered to be constructed on the High School campus in partnership with the school district and possibly the city park & recreation department. This facility should have an indoor walking path, swimming pools and possibly a fieldhouse with 200 meter indoor track. A plan for the reuse of the existing YMCA building should be developed.

3. If it is determined that county jail prisoners should be kept in Floyd County then a joint City Police/County Jail and Sheriff's Office should be planned in a building adjacent to, but separate from, the Floyd County Courthouse.
4. All or a portion of the block of housing between Grand and Harwood street should be acquired and converted to parking and connected to the city parking near the Senior Center to support the parking need for a community event center in the historic middle school building but only if item 1. above is pursued.
5. The school district, business community and NIACC leadership should continue to develop synergies that will provide necessary education and training giving local and area people and business the tools to succeed.
6. An outdoor sports complex should be developed in the community outside of the flood plain providing ball diamonds, soccer fields, basketball courts, tennis courts, playground, restrooms, adequate parking and a connection to the hike/bike trail.
7. The current City Hall/Police Station site should be marketed as a recreation, retail or commercial facility that further supports the riverfront location. Long term expansion for the Public library should also be considered on this site if the library is to remain in its current location long term. If so, the library building should be planned to better leverage the riverfront location environment.
8. A Fire Station annex should be provided on the north side of the river in an appropriate location to support safety for residents and service to local commercial development.
9. The TLC community child care facility should remain in its current location and be allowed to expand into the area currently housing the AEA office if and when space is needed.
10. Cultural and environmental community assets should be recognized, enhanced and leveraged to promote the pride of place, Charles City culture and improve the quality of life for area residents.
11. The existing Senior Center is an under used community asset. The facility and organization needs to promote themselves and their programs to attract new and younger participants. A name change would be a great first step in that endeavor.
12. The permeable brick paved streets program should continue to be implemented in areas where it is allowed, such as non-truck routes that will be attractions to visitors to the community such as the suggested Community Event Center.

As the top recommendation, reuse of the middle school building was the subject of a concept plan. The uses featured in the plan include a community event center, auditorium, city hall, and fire annex building as well as an education building made up of the technical education (a.k.a. 'tech ed') academy, district office, and the alternative high school. Estimated cost for the project totaled \$14.4 million. Since the plan was developed, ongoing review has continued for potential reuse of the 500 North Grand building. Also, in 2018 the County passed a \$13 million jail bond referendum that includes a new jail with Sherriff's office and courthouse improvements.

Early Childhood Development

The FMC (Floyd-Mitchell-Chickasaw) Early Childhood Iowa Area, which was designated an official Iowa Community Empowerment Area in September, 1999, created a Community Plan that was adopted by their Board on November 17, 2014. The Plan identified 5 priority areas listed below. The Plan also lists

the specific indicators used to track success and the agency(ies) responsible for each of the priority areas.

- Make quality early learning and preschool opportunities available for age eligible children in the FMC ECI Area
- Encourage and offer early reading and vocabulary-building opportunities for all children birth to 5 in the FMC ECI Area
- Educate parents and caregivers by providing them with credentialed home visitation and group setting direct support services to enhance their parenting abilities and continue to address reducing FMC ECI Area child abuse rates
- Increase the number of available child care slots in the FMC ECI Area
- Increase the quality of early childhood environments in the FMC ECI Area

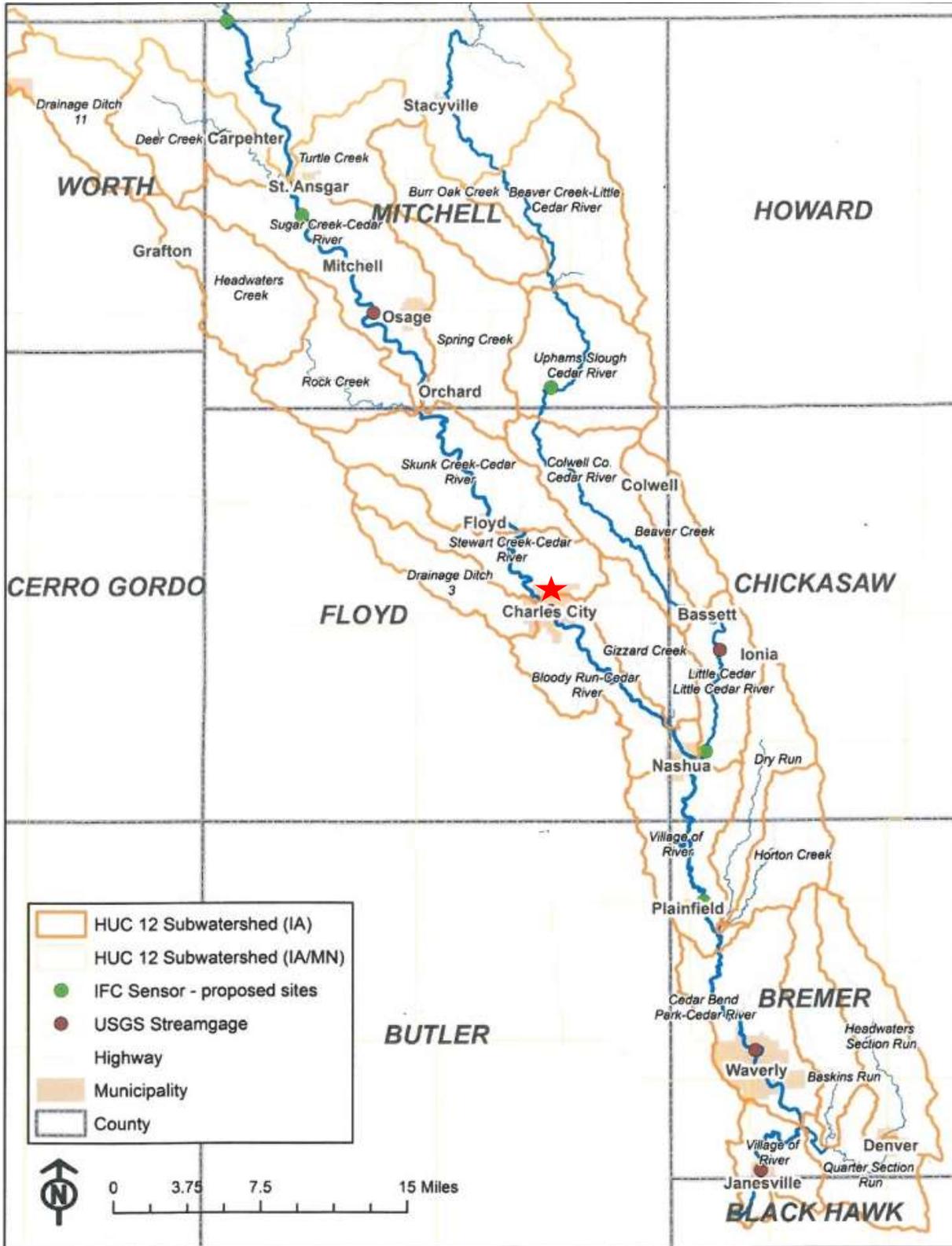
b. Collaboration - Goals/Strategies:

1. **GOAL: Work in collaboration with other agencies and partners to create efficient use of time and financial resources and/or develop a better end product**
 - a. **STRATEGY:** Continue to participate in the Cedar River Watershed Coalition including: shared landfill, shared use facilities, early childhood development, and other existing partnerships
 - **STRATEGY:** Develop a program to promote ongoing communication and collaboration between city, other local governments, non-profits, etc. on issues of key importance
 - **STRATEGY:** Partner with area churches to create a program to help low-income families with exterior improvements to their homes
 - **STRATEGY:** Consider a partnership that would involve sharing dispatch and community response resources
 - **STRATEGY:** Develop a regional foundation to fund a variety of projects and initiatives
 - **STRATEGY:** Consider development of a Regional Economic Development Alliance / Avenue of the Saints Website

c. Collaboration – Maps

Maps for this Collaboration section are provided on the following pages including the following.

1. Upper Cedar Water Management Improvement Authority Boundaries



Upper Cedar Watershed Management Improvement Authority Boundaries
 Source: UCWMIAB, <http://www.floydcoia.org/395/Upper-Cedar-Watershed-Management>

CHAPTER 3: SMART PLANNING PRINCIPLES

The following matrix is designed to document that all of the guidelines for developing a comprehensive plan in Iowa Code 18B.1. have been followed.

Guideline	Sections
a. Public Participation & Participants & Their Input Results	Intro.2 -Public Input Process C - results
b. History, Demographics, Community Resources, & Hazards	B. C.8 C.9
c. Current Land Use & Future Land Use and Development	C.5 C.9
d. Housing Inventory & Goals	C.6
e. Utilities, Waste Management, & Telecommunications	C.3 C.5
f. Transportation	C.10
g. Economic Development	C.4 C.5
h. Preservation of agricultural and natural resources	C.8
i. Public facilities – education, cemeteries, health care, child care, law enforcement, fire protection, libraries,, etc.	C.3 C.7 C.9
j. Community Character	C.7.
k. Natural and other hazards	C.8. C.9
l. Collaboration	C.1.
m. Implementation Plan	C. E.

CHAPTER 4: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

1. Priority Strategies

The focus groups selected the following priorities which are described in more detail following the summary listing:

- A. Restaurant Recruitment
- B. Trails Development
- C. Middle Skills Job Training
- D. Events/Community Center
- E. Better Housing (esp. rental)
- F. Faster Internet/Broadband
- G. Develop new Fire Station

A. **Restaurant Recruitment Strategy** – All of the 4 focus groups felt that adding new restaurants needs to be a priority for the community, which was further confirmed in the survey results. A particularly high need for higher end restaurants, such as ‘sit down’ or steakhouse was specifically noted. Restaurants are seen as important tool for recruiting and retaining new businesses and workforce. This strategy includes the following components.

1. Coordinate local professionals to donate/invest in restaurant effort
2. Coordinate local professionals to provide expertise in the areas of: general management (financial planning, accounting, marketing, marketing, etc.) and restaurant operation
3. Locate young entrepreneur and help them set up for success
4. Partner to recruit Comet Café potential entrepreneur
5. Develop strategy for making restaurant startups as easy as possible
6. Partner with Main Street Iowa for holding promotional event similar to ‘Iowa’s Best Bite’
7. Utilize survey results, as needed, to demonstrate demand for more restaurants, and/or a particular type of restaurant

LEADERSHIP: Charles City Revitalization - Business Improvement Committee (lead), area professionals with management/restaurant expertise, City

B. **Bike Trails Development Strategy** – Also, a common goal of multiple committees, the trail development strategy involves trails both within the City and connecting Charles City with other communities. This strategy includes the following components.

1. Assemble a team from Charles City/Clarksville, Floyd/Butler County
2. Request to use existing right-of-way/infrastructure for regional trails connections when feasible from County/IDOT
3. Review/Prioritize trails on the existing NIACOG regional Master Plan
4. Incorporate trails as part of new street construction projects (a.k.a. complete streets concept)
5. Identify and pursue the first regional connection of choice
6. Replace the Charley Western Trail Bridge

7. Identify and secure funding sources for trail development (TAP, REAP, federal, state, etc.)

LEADERSHIP: Charles City (lead), Floyd County, Charles City Bike Trail Committee, other counties /cities involved in regional system

- C. **Technical Skills Training Strategy** – Due to the high degree of unmet need for technical skills positions in the Charles City area and the need to provide jobs with a good wage level for local workforce to slow the ‘brain drain’, a technical skills program is a way to address both issues with one program. The concept was well-supported by community survey participants and by focus group members. This strategy involves the following components.
1. Identify companies who work in the trades (plumbing, electrical, welding, etc.)
 2. Recruit companies for participation with apprenticeship/internship
 3. Market internships to students, adults, and people who are new to the community
 4. Provide school credits for internships for students if they maintain the internship for at least 1 year
 5. Provide technical skills training in the classroom through the high school and/or NIACC

LEADERSHIP: Charles City Area Development Corp. (lead), Charles City School District, NIACC, businesses that employ skilled trades

- D. **Events/Community Center Strategy** – The community survey participants and focus group members often described a need for ‘things to do’ in the community and specifically cited the need for a venue that would serve 500 or more people at an event. This strategy is by far the most financially difficult to achieve and requires a significant amount of further study to determine feasibility in the areas of: sites available, potential partnerships, costs (construction and operation), and funding resources. This strategy involves the following elements.
1. Identify team of partners to tackle the issue
 2. Establish needs/gaps to be addressed by the event/community center (500+ venue, kitchen, etc.)
 3. Identify potential existing/new locations
 4. Expand the youth enrichment center (added space and commercial kitchen)
 5. Evaluate enhancement of Elks and Knights of Columbus facilities regarding electrical heavy load needs
 6. Evaluate Central Park as a possible location
 7. Identify cost (construction/ongoing operation) and major funding sources
 8. Deal with the reality of the high cost of this project (especially with other projects also underway) and other bonded projects
 9. Locate funding sources and pursue development if feasible

LEADERSHIP: Charles City (lead), Charles City Revitalization, Charles City School District, YMCA, private investors, current event venues

- E. **Housing Improvement** - Seen as a key factor in recruiting and retaining business and workforce, enhancing the quality is a key factor. Having quality housing is also essential in having the local workforce reside in the community rather than in the larger commercial hubs of Waverly and Mason city. The 3-point approach to this housing strategy includes three elements as follows.

1. **Housing Rehabilitation** - Continue to seek strategies that would aid in the rehabilitation of existing housing.
 - a. Select and prioritize areas of the community for rehabilitation and apply to ongoing sources that fund the rehabilitation of owner-occupied units such as the Iowa Economic Development Authority's Community Development Block Grant Program.
 - b. Pursue other funding sources such as the Federal Home Loan Bank Affordable Housing Program for housing rehabilitation work.
 - c. Seek opportunities that would fund rental rehabilitation programs.
 - d. Promote the Floyd County Housing Trust Fund's furnace replacement program.
 - e. Promote the use of the USDA Rural Development 504 program by homeowners to assist with making improvements to their homes, especially for elderly homeowners who are able to grants, instead of loans, for home improvements.

2. **Construct Single-Family Housing** - Continue to seek strategies that would aid in the construction of new single-family housing.
 - a. Continue public/private partnerships in the City of Charles City, which would create incentives for single family residential developments, and result in the availability of moderately priced lots (the Allied development on the east side of the community being a successful example)
 - b. Consider the use of the Iowa Finance Authority Project Based State Housing Trust Fund, USDA Rural Development 502 New Construction Program, and Green Initiative Programs offered by the Iowa Economic Development Authority such as Green Sustainable Housing

3. **Construct Rental Housing Units** - Actively promote the creation of new rental housing units with emphasis on lower density projects.
 - a. Consider the use of the Iowa Finance Authority's: Multi-Family Housing Loan Program and the HOME Partnership Rental New Construction Program. Promote the use of the Federal Home Loan Bank Affordable Housing Program to prospective developers/builders.
 - b. Given the strong ties that the local lending community has with the USDA Rural Development, promote the use of the USDA Multi-Family Housing Programs.
 - c. Redevelop vacant downtown upper stories and/or vacant building into rental housing or condominium housing

LEADERSHIP: Charles City (lead), Charles City Area Development Corporation

- F. **Broadband Strategy** – To stay competitive for economic development with other cities, reliable high speed Internet access is essential. This economic development initiative ranked highest for youth in the Charles City Community Survey.
 1. Obtain preliminary design and cost estimates to install fiber optic cable to homes and businesses in Charles City that will provide internet, video and telephone services.
 2. Consider approaches and lay groundwork for partnership, installation, ownership, operation, and billing
 3. Install fiber optic cable
 4. Include broadband in community marketing materials

LEADERSHIP: Charles City (lead), partnering agencies

G. **Fire Station Strategy** – The current fire station is located in the flood plain and took on water during the floods of 2008. Relocation of the fire station outside of the flood plain is an important part of preparing for future flood hazards in being able to more adequately provide for the safety of citizens.

1. Identify available sites
2. Evaluate based upon service needs
3. Complete a preliminary design
4. Pursue funding sources
5. Construction

LEADERSHIP: Charles City (lead)

2. Review & Amendment of the Plan

Future Evaluation & Modification of Plan

This document is a dynamic tool to manage growth over the next ten to fifteen years to protect the high quality of life found in Charles City and to foster a healthy economy for the community. Although this plan is intended to be a long term plan, through the course of activities in completing goals and changes in the dynamic strata that is a city, revisiting of the comprehensive plan is needed to:

1. **Annually**
 - a. Assess success in accomplishing the Priority Strategies established in the previous section of this Plan (Chapter 4, Part 1. Priority Strategies)
 - b. Re-evaluate the Priority Strategies in terms of their efficacy in light of the current conditions and resources
 - c. Modify the Priority Strategies as needed to better address the best interest of the community.
2. **As the need arises**, evaluate and consider modifications of sections of this plan to address public and private sector undertakings or policies that in sound judgment would significantly benefit the community.
3. **Periodically**, update the maps, tables, illustrations, and/or narrative in the plan to keep it current and relevant.

Amendment Process

In order to consider an amendment or update to this plan, the Planning and Zoning Commission shall consider the proposed amendment and conduct a public hearing, notice of which shall be published once, not less than seven (7), nor more than twenty (20) days before the date of the hearing, in a newspaper with local circulation. The Commission shall make a recommendation on the proposed amendment or update, after the public hearing. Said recommendation of the Commission shall be carried by an affirmative vote of a simple majority of its members. The Commission shall send its recommendation, either for approval or denial of the proposed amendment or update, to the City Council for consideration.

After receiving the recommendation, the City Council shall also hold a public hearing on the proposed amendment. The public notice of which shall be published once, not less than seven (7), nor more than twenty (20) days before the date of the hearing, in a newspaper with local circulation. The City Council is authorized to make the final decision, including alterations to the amendment or update prior to adoption. Adoption shall require an affirmative vote of a simple majority of the membership of the Council.

- ⁱ 2014 Dr. Amy K. Glasmeier and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, <http://livingwage.mit.edu/states/19/locations>
- ⁱⁱ www.educaiaowa.gov/documents/graduates/2014
- ⁱⁱⁱ Iowa Department of Public Health / 2012 Iowa Kids Count
- ^{iv} PCA Iowa, www.pcaiowa.org
- ^v Iowa Workforce Development, <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/quarterly-census-employment-and-wages>, calculated as average of quarterly wages multiplied by average quarterly employment multiplied by 52 weeks per year
- ^{vi} 'Quarterly Retail E-Commerce Sales', U.S. Census Bureau News, U.S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D.C., 20233.
- ^{vii} Cedar Valley Business Monthly On-Line, September 28, 2011, 4:50 p.m.
- ^{viii} Diamond, A. and Soto, R. (2009). Facts on Direct-to-Consumer Food Marketing: Incorporating Data from the 2007 Census of Agriculture. USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service. <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/getfile?dDocName=STELPRDC5076729>
- ^{ix} National Cooperative Soil Survey, 1995
- ^x Comprehensive Plan Update, adopted May 20, 2002, page '2-1'
- ^{xi} U.S. Climate Data, <http://www.usclimatedata.com/climate/charles-city/iowa/united-states/usia0145>
- ^{xii} 2015-2016 Non-Public Schools Certified Enrollment, Iowa Department of Education, <https://www.educateiowa.gov/documents/nonpublic-schools-certified-enrollment/2015/12/2015-2016-non-public-schools-certified-0>

- ^{xiii} Cedar Valley Business Monthly On-Line, September 28, 2011, 4:50 p.m.
- ^{xiv} Neighborhood Scout, www.neighborhoodscout.com, Sherriff's Departments
- ^{xv} Neighborhood Scout, www.neighborhoodscout.com, Sherriff's Departments
- ^{xvi} Globe Gazette, February 4, 2014
- ^{xvii} Globe Gazette, January 30, 2012

- ^{xviii} Iowa Department of Transportation, Office of Traffic and Safety, 2008-2012 Reportable Crash History, <http://www.iowadot.gov/crashanalysis/data/city/charlescity.htm>
- ^{xix} National Climate Data Center, 2014
- ^{xx} National Climate Data Center, 2014
- ^{xxi} Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Hazardous Substance Incident Tracking Database, <https://programs.iowadnr.gov/hazardousspills/Introductory.aspx#&&BasicPageIndex=4>