2014 City of Carson Comprehensive Plan

Prepared by the Metropolitan Area Planning Agency

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Introduction

The 2014 Comprehensive Plan for the City of Carson is designed to act as a guide for growth and community development and to be the basis for establishing land use policies and regulations. The Plan will analyze existing conditions within the City of Carson relating to population and demographics, land use, housing, and public facilities and infrastructure including transportation and parks and open space. Through interpretation of the data collected during the analysis phase and through community involvement and public participation, the Plan will also establish goals and objectives, which will enable elected officials and citizens to make informed and educated decisions about the future of the community. Finally, the Plan makes recommendations regarding policies that will allow Carson to implement the goals and objectives contained herein.

This plan was prepared with guidance provided by the Carson Planning Commission and the Carson City Council. The planning time period for this plan including achieving goals and objectives is 20 years.

This section of the Comprehensive Plan for Carson will discuss basic introductory information regarding the purpose of comprehensive plans and the process for developing them.

Planning Process

Carson's planning is a continual process that involves multiple stake holders and groups in order to reach as many residents as possible to improve upon and encourage public participation.

Carson involves the public in multiple planning projects through the years to encourage focus on one project at a time. This is done through community surveys and planning processes through the years in order to track progress and public opinion.

Through the combination of data and public participation mention in the *Iowa Smart Planning Elements* section (pg.54) the City has provided a plan the combined the elements of citizen participation, collaboration, and data collection to put together a plan that is both achievable and practical.

Authority to Plan

The 2014 Comprehensive Plan for Carson was prepared under the authority of Section 414 of the Code of Iowa, 2005, as amended.

Land use regulations such as zoning ordinances recognize that people in a community live cooperatively and have certain responsibilities to one another. These regulations establish rules that govern how land is developed within a municipality and its extra-territorial jurisdiction.

Iowa as in most other states and cities may not adopt land use ordinances without first adopting a comprehensive development plan. This requirement derives from the premise that land use decisions should not be arbitrary, but should follow an accepted and reasonable concept of how the city should grow. The 2014 Carson Comprehensive Plan provides the ongoing legal basis for the city's authority to regulate land use and development.

EXTRA-TERRITORIAL JURISDICTION

The planning jurisdiction for the City of Carson includes the area within the city limits of the City of Carson as well as the two-mile extra-territorial jurisdiction of the City. Both the City of Carson and Pottawattamie County accept and agree to the outlined development policies and implementation measures regarding annexation, zoning, and subdivision review of areas located within the two-mile extra-territorial jurisdiction of the City.

PART I: COMMUNITY PROFILE

HISTORY

In 1853, a mill was erected by Joseph Losh on the west side of the West Nishnabotna River, west of Carson's present location. Several families built homes on the hill near the mill. Gradually, people began building on the east side of the river. In 1880, the Burlington and Rock Island Railroad began to provide transportation access to settlers.

The railroads brought a plan for a new town called Carson, named after a railroad officer. The town was then incorporated in 1881 with a population of 240 residents. The first newspaper, The Carson Fairdealer, lasted about a year. The Carson Criterion, later called the Carson Critic, was started in 1881. The first bank, "The Trader's Bank," was established in 1882 and a year later the Bank of Carson was opened. In 1884 the population was 600 and the real estate assessed value was $43,140.

The business places on Broadway burned on July 6, 1889 and in November 1894 the south side was destroyed by fire. Ten acres of ground was donated to the town by Alva Burton, in the late 1800's for the Carson cemetery. The first theatre, Cozy Theatre, was started by Frank Smith in 1921 and was later renamed the Dreamland Theatre. The first telephone system was installed by W.J. Way and the dial system was installed in 1947. City Hall was built in 1962 and Mill Stone Park was established in 1974.

ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES

Climate

The climate of the area is continental with relatively warm summers and cold, dry winters. The area is situated between two (2) distinctive climatic zones, the humid east and dry west; therefore it experiences climactic fluctuations. The fluctuations between the two zones produce weather conditions for periods that are characteristic of either zone, or a combination of both. Low-pressure systems commonly affect the weather of the area by causing periodic and rapid changes, especially during the winter months.

Most rain falls during the evening as sharp showers or thunderstorms, which occur mostly during the growing season of April to September. About 75 percent of the total precipitation falls during that period. Although winters are relatively cold, precipitation is light, with only 10 percent of the total annual precipitation. Sunshine is plentiful, from around 50 percent of the possible in the winter to 75 percent in the summer.

Watersheds and Floodplains

The Nishnabotna River traverses south, near the western end of Carson. The 100 year flood plain encompassing the Nishabotna River lies west of North Rodeo Drive and east of new developments along Christy Street

Soils and Topography

The following are the various soil types found within Carson. Figure 1.1 shows the location of the soil types within Carson. Each number on the map corresponds with the type of soil described in the section. The letter “W” on the map indicates the location of water. Soil and Topography information was obtained through the 1989 Soil Survey of Pottawattamie County. All information derived from Soil Survey of Pottawattamie County, Iowa was issued by the United States Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service in September 1989.

8B-Judson silt loam, 2 to 5 percent slopes.

This gently sloping, well drained soil is on foot slopes and alluvial fans in upland drainageways. Areas range from 5 to 75 acres in size and are irregularly shaped.

Typically, the surface layer is black silt loam about 7 inches thick. The subsurface layer is silty clay loam about 23 inches thick. The upper part is black, the next part is very dark brown, and the lower part is very dark grayish brown. The subsoil is dark brown and brown, mottled, friable silty clay loam about 25 inches thick. The substratum to a depth of about 60 inches is brown, mottled silty clay loam.

Included with this soil in mapping are some small areas of the nearly level, poorly drained Colo soils adjacent to the drainage way channels. These soils dry out more slowly after rains than the Judson soil. They make up less than 10 percent of the unit.

Permeability is moderate in the Judson soil, and runoff is slow. Available water capacity is high. The subsoil generally has a low supply of available phosphorus and potassium.

Most areas are cultivated. This soil is well suited to corn, soybeans, and small grain. In some areas runoff from the soils upslope results in siltation and gullying on this soil. Measures that control the runoff on the soils upslope are needed. Grassed waterways help to remove excess water and prevent gullying. Good tilth generally can be easily maintained. Returning crop residue to the soil or regularly adding other organic material helps to maintain tilth, improves fertility, helps to prevent surface crusting, and increases the rate of water infiltration.

This soil is well suited to grasses and legumes for hay and pasture. Overgrazing or grazing during wet period however, causes surface compaction and poor tilth and reduces forage production.

The land capability classification is lIe.

9B-Marshall silty clay loam, 2 to 5 percent slopes.

This gently sloping, well drained soil is on broad ridgetops in the uplands. Areas range from 5 to more than 100 acres in size and are long and irregularly shaped.

Typically, the surface layer is very dark brown silty clay loam about 7 inches thick. The subsurface layer is very dark brown and very dark grayish brown silty clay loam about 17 inches thick. The subsoil to a depth of about 60 inches is friable silty clay loam. The upper part is brown, and the lower part is dark yellowish brown and yellowish brown and is mottled.

Permeability is moderate, and runoff is slow. Available water capacity is high. The subsoil generally has a low supply of available phosphorus and potassium. Most areas are cultivated. This soil is well suited to corn, soybeans, and small grain and to grasses and legumes for hay and pasture. If cultivated crops are grown, erosion is a hazard. It can be controlled, however, by contour farming, terraces, a system of conservation tillage that leaves crop residue on the surface, and crop rotations that include meadow crops. Good tilth generally can be easily maintained. Returning crop residue to the soil or regularly adding other organic material and deferring tillage when the soil is wet help to maintain tilth, improve fertility, help to prevent surface crusting, and increase the rate of water infiltration.

A cover of pasture plants or hay is effective in controlling erosion. Overgrazing, however, causes surface compaction and poor tilth, increases the runoff rate, and reduces forage production. Proper stocking rates, pasture rotation, and timely deferment of grazing help to keep the pasture in good condition.

The land capability classification is IIe.

9C2-Marshall silty clay loam, 5 to 9 percent slopes, moderately eroded.

This moderately sloping, well drained soil is on side slopes in the uplands. Areas range from 5 to 50 acres in size and are long and irregularly shaped.

Typically, the surface layer is very dark brown silty clay loam about 7 inches thick. Plowing has mixed some streaks and pockets of dark yellowish brown subsoil material into the surface layer. The subsoil is friable silty clay loam about 31 inches thick. The upper part is brown, and the lower part is mottled dark yellowish brown and yellowish brown. The substratum to a depth of about 60 inches is mottled yellowish brown and grayish brown silty clay loam. In some places gray mottles are within a depth of 24 inches. In other places the surface layer is less than 7 inches thick.

Permeability is moderate, and runoff is medium. Available water capacity is high. The subsoil generally has a low supply of available phosphorus and potassium.

Most areas are cultivated. This soil is moderately suited to corn, soybeans, and small grain and to grasses and legumes for hay and pasture. If cultivated crops are grown, further erosion is a hazard. It can be controlled, however, by contour farming, terraces, a system of conservation tillage that leaves crop residue on the surface, and crop rotations that include meadow crops. Good tilth generally can be easily maintained. Returning crop residue to the soil or regularly adding other organic material and deferring tillage when the soil is wet help to maintain tilth, improve fertility, help to prevent surface crusting, and increase the rate of water infiltration.

A cover of pasture plants or hay is effective in controlling erosion. Overgrazing, however, causes surface compaction and poor tilth, increases the runoff rate, and reduces forage production. Proper stocking rates, pasture rotation, and timely deferment of grazing help to keep the pasture in good condition.

The land capability classification is IIIe.

9D2-Marshall silty clay loam, 9 to 14 percent slopes, moderately eroded.

This strongly sloping, well drained soil is on side slopes in the uplands. Areas range from 5 to 100 acres in size and are long and irregularly shaped.

Typically, the surface layer is very dark brown silty clay loam about 7 inches thick. Plowing has mixed some streaks and pockets of dark yellowish brown subsoil material into the surface layer. The subsoil is friable silty clay loam about 31 inches thick. The upper part is brown, and the lower part is mottled dark yellowish brown and yellowish brown. The substratum to a depth of about 60 inches is mottled yellowish brown and grayish brown silty clay loam. In some places gray mottles are within a depth of 24 inches. In other places the surface layer is less than 7 inches thick.

Permeability is moderate, and runoff is medium. Available water capacity is high. The subsoil generally has a low supply of available phosphorus and potassium. Most areas are cultivated. This soil is moderately suited to corn, soybeans, and small grain and to grasses and legumes for hay and pasture. If cultivated crops are grown, further erosion is a hazard. It can be controlled, however, by contour farming, terraces, a system of conservation tillage that leaves crop residue on the surface, and crop rotations that include meadow crops. Good tilth generally can be easily maintained. Returning crop residue to the soil or regularly adding other organic material and deferring tillage when the soil is wet help to maintain tilth, improve fertility, help to prevent surface crusting, and increase the rate of water infiltration.

A cover of pasture plants or hay is effective in controlling erosion. Overgrazing, however, causes surface compaction and poor tilth, increases the runoff rate, and

reduces forage production. Proper stocking rates, pasture rotation, and timely deferment of grazing help to keep the pasture in good condition.

The land capability classification is IIIe.

11B-Ackmore-Colo-Judson complex, 0 to 5 percent slopes.

These nearly level and gently sloping soils are along upland drainageways. The somewhat poorly drained Ackmore and poorly drained Colo soils are on the lower parts of the landscape and are subject to flooding unless they are protected. The well drained Judson soil is on the higher parts of the landscape. Areas range from 5 to 75 acres in size. They are about 40 percent Ackmore soil, 30 percent Colo soil, and 30 percent Judson soil. The three soils occur as areas so intricately mixed or so small that separating them in mapping is not practical.

Typically, the surface layer of the Ackmore soil is very dark grayish brown silt loam about 6 inches thick. The substratum is very dark grayish brown, very dark gray, and dark grayish brown, mottled, stratified silt loam about 22 inches thick. Below this to a depth of about 60 inches is a buried layer of black silty clay loam or silty clay. In places the soil is silt loam to a depth of 40 inches.

Typically, the surface layer of the Colo soil is very dark gray silty clay loam about 7 inches thick. The subsurface layer is black silty clay loam about 16 inches thick. Below this is a transitional layer of very dark gray, firm silty clay loam about 11 inches thick. The subsoil is very dark gray silty clay loam about 14 inches thick. The substratum to a depth of about 60 inches is dark gray silty clay loam. In some places it is silty clay or is calcareous. In other places the upper 12 inches is recently deposited silt loam.

Typically, the surface layer of the Judson soil is black silt loam about 7 inches thick. The subsurface layer is silty clay loam about 23 inches thick. The upper part is black, the next part is very dark brown, and the lower part is very dark grayish brown. The subsoil is dark brown and brown, mottled, friable silty clay loam about 25 inches thick. The substratum to a depth of about 60 inches is brown, mottled silty clay loam.

Permeability is moderate in all three soils, and runoff is slow. Available water capacity is high. The Ackmore and Colo soils have a seasonal high water table. The supply of available phosphorus and potassium is low in the Judson soil. The supply of available phosphorus is medium in the Colo soil and low in the Ackmore soil. The supply of available potassium is very low in the Colo and Ackmore soils.

Most areas are used for row crops. These soils are well suited to corn, soybeans, and small grain. In some areas a drainage system is needed to reduce the wetness and provide good aeration and a deep root zone for plants. Tile drains work well in the Colo soil if they are properly installed and if an adequate outlet is available. Tilth typically is good in the surface layer of the Ackmore and Judson soils and fair in the surface layer of the Colo soil. Returning crop residue to the soil or regularly adding other organic material and deferring tillage when the soils are wet help to maintain tilth, improve fertility, help to prevent surface crusting, and increase the rate of water

infiltration.

These soils are well suited to grasses and legumes for hay and pasture. Overgrazing or grazing during wet periods, however, causes surface compaction and poor tilth and reduces forage production.

The capability classification is llw.

9C-Marshall silty clay loam, 5 to 9 percent slopes.

This moderately sloping, well drained soil is on side slopes in the uplands. Areas range from 5 to 50 acres in size and are long and irregularly shaped.

Typically, the surface layer is very dark brown silty clay loam about 7 inches thick. The subsurface layer is very dark brown and very dark grayish brown silty clay loam about 17 inches thick. The subsoil is friable silty clay loam about 31 inches thick. The upper part is brown, and the lower part is mottled dark yellowish brown and yellowish brown. The substratum to a depth of about 60 inches is mottled yellowish brown and grayish brown silty clay loam. In places gray mottles are within a depth of 24 inches.

Permeability is moderate, and runoff is medium. Available water capacity is high. The subsoil generally has a low supply of available phosphorus and potassium.

Most areas are cultivated. This soil is moderately suited to corn, soybeans, and small grain and to grasses and legumes for hay and pasture. If cultivated crops are grown, erosion is a hazard. It can be controlled, however, by contour farming, terraces, a system of conservation tillage that leaves crop residue on the surface, and crop rotations that include meadow crops. Good tilth generally can be easily maintained. Returning crop residue to the soil or regularly adding other organic material and deferring tillage when the soil is wet help to maintain tilth, improve fertility, help to prevent surface crusting, and increase the rate of water infiltration.

A cover of pasture plants or hay is effective in controlling erosion. Overgrazing, however, causes surface compaction and poor tilth, increases the runoff rate, and reduces forage production. Proper stocking rates, pasture rotation, and timely deferment of grazing help to keep the pasture in good condition.

The land capability classification is IIIe.

99D2-Exira silty clay loam, 9 to 14 percent slopes, moderately eroded.

This strongly sloping, well drained soil is on side slopes in the uplands. Areas range from 5 to more than 100 acres in size and are long and irregularly shaped.

Typically, the surface layer is very dark brown silty clay loam about 7 inches thick. Plowing has mixed some streaks and pockets of brown subsoil material into the surface

layer. The subsoil is about 39 inches thick. The upper part is brown, mottled, friable silty clay loam, and the lower part is mottled light brownish gray, yellowish brown, and brown silt loam. The substratum to a depth

of about 60 inches is mottled light brownish gray and brown silt loam. In places the soil does not have grayish mottles within a depth of 24 inches.

Permeability is moderate, and runoff is medium. Available water capacity is high. The subsoil generally has a very low supply of available phosphorus and a low supply of available potassium.

Most areas are cultivated. This soil is moderately suited to corn, soybeans, and small grain and to grasses and legumes for hay and pasture. If cultivated crops are grown, further erosion is a hazard. It can be controlled, however, by contour farming, terraces, a system of conservation tillage that leaves crop residue on the surface, and crop rotations that include meadow crops. Good tilth generally can be easily maintained. Returning crop residue to the soil or regularly adding other organic material and deferring tillage when the soil is wet help to maintain tilth, improve fertility, help to prevent surface crusting, and increase the rate of water infiltration.

A cover of pasture plants or hay is effective in controlling erosion. Overgrazing, however, causes surface compaction and poor tilth, increases the runoff rate, and reduces forage production. Proper stocking rates, pasture rotation, and timely deferment of grazing help to keep the pasture in good condition.

The land capability classification is IIIe.

99E2-Exira silty clay loam, 14 to 20 percent slopes, moderately eroded.

This moderately steep, well drained soil is on side slopes in the uplands. Areas range from 5 to 50 acres in size and are long and irregularly shaped.

Typically, the surface layer is very dark brown silty clay loam about 7 inches thick. Plowing has mixed some streaks and pockets of brown subsoil material into the surface layer. The subsoil is about 39 inches thick. The upper part is brown, mottled, friable silty clay loam, and the lower part is mottled light brownish gray, yellowish brown, and brown silt loam. The substratum to a depth of about 60 inches is mottled light brownish gray and brown silt loam. In places the soil does not have grayish mottles within a depth of 24 inches.

Permeability is moderate, and runoff is rapid. Available water capacity is high. The subsoil generally has a very low supply of available phosphorus and a low supply of available potassium.

Most areas are cultivated. This soil is poorly suited to corn, soybeans, and small grain and to grasses and legumes for hay and pasture. If cultivated crops are grown, further erosion is a hazard. It can be controlled, however, by contour farming, terraces, a system of conservation tillage that leaves crop residue on the surface, and crop rotations that include meadow crops. Good tilth generally can be easily maintained. Returning crop residue to the soil or regularly adding other organic material and deferring tillage when the soil is wet help to maintain tilth, improve fertility, help to prevent surface crusting, and increase the rate of water infiltration.

A cover of pasture plants or hay is effective in controlling erosion. Overgrazing, however, causes surface compaction and poor tilth, increases the runoff rate, and reduces *forage* production. Proper stocking rates, pasture rotation, and timely deferment of grazing help to keep the pasture in good condition.

The land capability classification is IVe.

212-Kennebec silt loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes.

This nearly level, moderately well drained soil is on bottom land. It is occasionally flooded for very brief periods. Areas range from 5 to 100 acres in size and are irregularly shaped.

Typically, the surface layer is black silt loam about 8 inches thick. The subsurface layer also is black silt loam. It is about 24 inches thick. The next layer is very dark gray, friable silt loam about 12 inches thick. The substratum to a depth of about 60 inches is very dark gray, friable silt loam. In places the upper 12 inches is recently deposited silt loam.

Included with this soil in mapping are some small areas of the poorly drained Colo soils. These soils are slightly lower on the landscape than the Kennebec soil and dry out more slowly after rains. They make up less than 10 percent of the unit.

Permeability is moderate in the Kennebec soil, and runoff is slow. Available water capacity is high. The soil has a seasonal high water table. The substratum generally has a low supply of available phosphorus and a medium supply of available potassium.

Most areas are cultivated. This soil is well suited to corn, soybeans, and small grain. Good tilth generally can be easily maintained. Returning crop residue to the soil or regularly adding other organic material helps to maintain tilth, improves fertility, helps to prevent surface crusting, and increases the rate of water infiltration.

This soil is well suited to grasses and legumes for hay and pasture. Overgrazing, however, causes surface compaction and poor tilth and reduces forage production.

The land capability classification is I.

220-Nodaway silt loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes.

This nearly level, moderately well drained soil is in areas of recent deposition on bottom land. It is occasionally flooded for brief periods unless it is protected. Areas generally range from 5 to more than 100 acres in size and are irregularly shaped.

Typically, the surface layer is very dark grayish brown silt loam about 9 inches thick. The substratum to a depth of about 60 inches is very dark grayish brown, dark brown, and brown, stratified silt loam. In places dark silty clay loam is within a depth of 36 inches.

Included with this soil in mapping are some small areas of Kennebec soils and the moderately well drained, calcareous McPaul soils. Both of these soils are at elevations similar to those of the Nodaway soil. Kennebec soils contain more organic matter in the surface layer than the Nodaway soil. Included soils make up less than 10 percent of the unit.

Permeability is moderate in the Nodaway soil, and runoff is slow. Available water capacity is high. The soil has a seasonal high water table. The substratum generally has a medium supply of available phosphorus and a very low supply of available potassium.

Most areas are cultivated. This soil is well suited to corn, soybeans, and small grain. The flooding and the seasonal high water table are management concerns. Measures that reduce the wetness improve the timeliness of fieldwork. Good tilth generally can be easily maintained. Returning crop residue to the soil or regularly adding other organic material helps to maintain tilth, improves fertility, helps to prevent surface crusting, and increases the rate of water infiltration.

This soil is well suited to grasses and legumes for hay and pasture. Overgrazing, however, reduces forage production.

The land capability classification is llw

5030-Pits, quarries.

These are excavations from which limestone, sand, and gravel have been removed. The excavations generally have very steep sides. Some of the inactive pits are filled with water. Areas range from 5 to 75 acres in size.

This map unit is not suitable for cultivation or grazing unless vegetation is reestablished. Some of the overburden and spoil banks can be leveled and planted to grasses or trees. Because soil properties and physical conditions vary, onsite investigation is needed before any decisions can be made about farm or nonfarm uses of specific areas.

No land capability classification is assigned.

Soil Class and Capability

Capability classes, the broadest groups, are designated by Roman numerals I through VIII. Carson does not have a class group higher than IV. The numerals indicate progressively greater limitations and narrower choices for practical use. The classes for Carson are defined as follows:

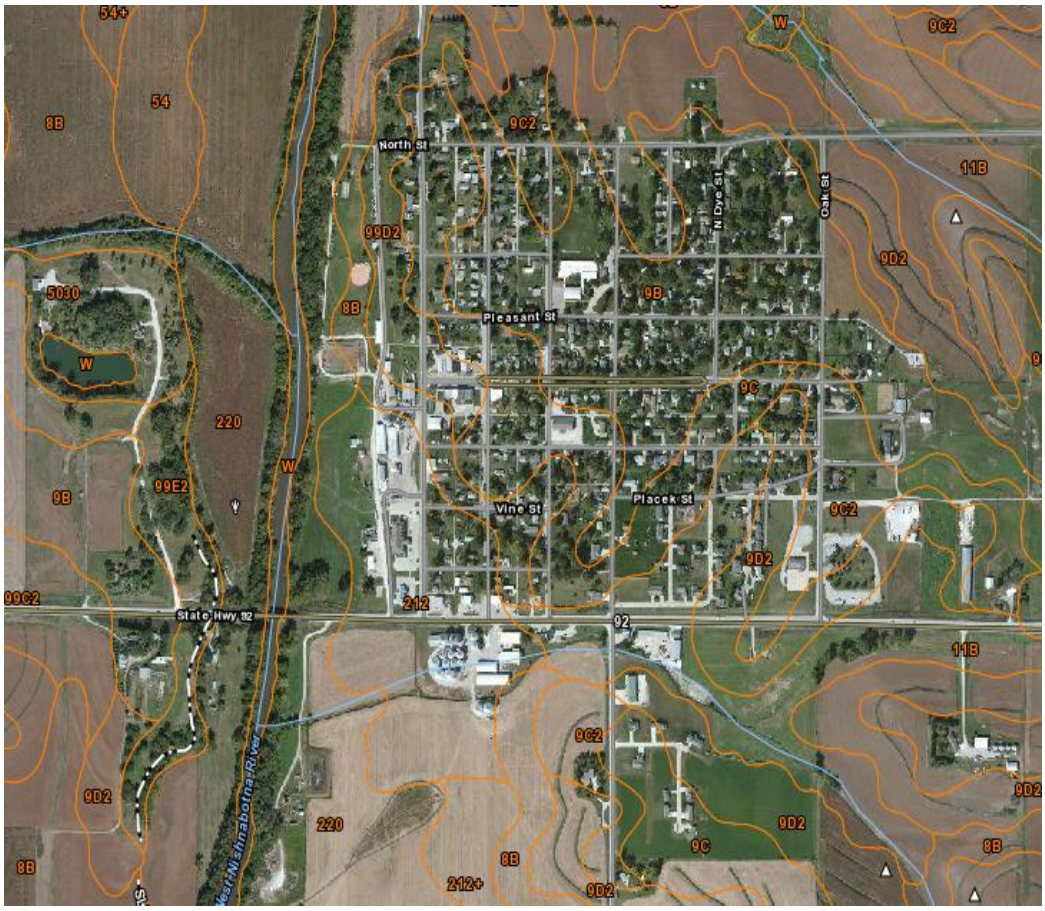
- **Class I** soils have few limitations that restrict their use.
- **Class II** soils have moderate limitations that reduce the choice of plants or that require moderate conservation practices.
- **Class III** soils have severe limitations that reduce the choice of plants or that require special conservation practices, or both.
- **Class IV** soils have very severe limitations that reduce the choice of plants or that require very careful management, or both

Capability subclasses are soil groups within one class. They are designated by adding a small letter, *e, w, s,* or *c,* to the class numeral, for example, IIe. The letter *e* shows that the main limitation is risk of erosion unless close-growing plant cover is maintained; *w* shows that water in or on the soil interferes with plant growth or cultivation (in some soils the wetness can be partly corrected by artificial drainage); *s* shows that the soil is limited mainly because it is shallow, droughty, or stony; and *c,* used in only some parts of the United States, shows that the chief limitation is climate that is very cold or very dry.

In class I there are no subclasses because the soils of this class have few limitations. Class V contains only the subclasses indicated by *w, s,* or *c* because the soils in class V are subject to little or no erosion. They have other limitations that restrict their use to pasture, rangeland, woodland, wildlife habitat, or recreation.

The soil capability subclass groups in Carson only include *e* and *w* as limitations Table 1.1 shows the labels the soil types grouped into its limitations.

Figure1.1 Soil Classification Map



*Source: USDA NRCS

http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/WebSoilSurvey.aspx

Table 1.1 Soil Type and Class			
Capability Subclasses			
	No Subclass	e	w
Class I	212		
Class II		9B, 8B	11B, 220
Class III		99D2, 9C,9D2,9C2	
Class IV		99E2	

**Source: USDA NRCS, Soil Survey of Pottawattamie County, Iowa, Issued by the United States Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service in September 1989*

Location

The City of Carson is located approximately seventeen (17) miles east of Council Bluffs in rural Pottawattamie County, Iowa. Carson lies at the intersection of State Highway 92 and U. S. Highway 59. The southern corporate limits of the community border on State Highway 92 and the western limit is the Nishnabotna River. U.S. Highway 59 is located immediately east of the city and runs north south.

Government Structure

Carson is a Mayor Council form of government, with the mayor and five council members elected at-large by a popular vote. The Mayor, is the chief executive officer of the city. The mayor is elected for a four-year term and acts as presiding officer at all regular and special City Council meetings. The mayor is not a member of the council and cannot vote as a member of the council.

POPULATION

This chapter of the Comprehensive Plan discusses historical demographic patterns, analyses current population trends and identifies needs that may arise as a result of demographic change.

Population History

In 1890 Carson had 391 residents. By 1960, the population had grown to 583 and has continued to grow to its peak at 812 in 2010. From the 1930's to the 1960's saw a decline in population to 583 in 1960. The 1970's saw a bolstering of the population. Since that time Carson's population and built environment have continued to grow at a steady pace. There has been a gradual decline in population from the 1980's to 2000's.

Table 1.2 Census Data for Pottawattamie County Cities – 1880-2010

Area	2010	2000	1990	1980	1970	1960	1950	1940	1930	1920	1910	1900	1890	1880
Avoca	1,506	1,610	1,497	1,650	1,535	1,540	1,595	1,598	1,673	1,482	1,520	1,627	---	1,600
Carson	**812**	**668**	**705**	**716**	**756**	**583**	**596**	**613**	**617**	**692**	**640**	**632**	**391**	**---**
Crescent	617	537	469	547	284	296	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Hancock	196	207	201	254	228	252	264	256	312	276	250	276	167	---
Macedonia	246	325	262	279	330	290	298	329	314	352	357	295	---	---
McClelland	151	129	139	177	146	150	159	165	161	142	134	---	---	---
Minden	599	564	539	483	433	355	328	310	377	381	423	328	287	---
Neola	842	845	909	839	968	870	839	841	944	896	926	921	917	286
Oakland	1,527	1,487	1,496	1,552	1,603	1,340	1,296	1,317	1,181	1,188	1,105	913	686	---
Treynor	919	950	897	981	472	368	247	219	232	204	122	---	---	---
Underwood	917	688	515	448	424	337	278	251	261	260	271	---	---	---
Walnut	785	877	857	897	870	777	888	902	935	1,072	950	878	811	733
Council Bluffs	62,230	58,268	54,315	56,449	60,348	55,641	45,429	41,439	42,048	36,162	29,292	25,802	21,474	18,063

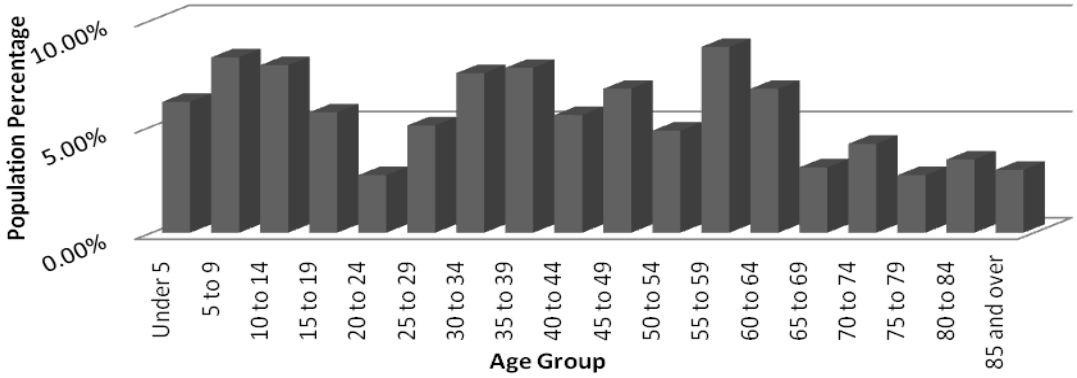
Population Characteristics

General Demographics

According to the 2010 U.S. Census, Carson had a population of 812, an increase of 144 people from the 2000 Census. There were 325 households with an average of 2.55 persons per household. The median age of the population was 39.3 years in 2010, a decrease from the median age of 40.4 recorded in the 2000 Census. The Iowa median age was 38.1 and the national median was 37.2 years according to the 2010 U.S. Census.

Over 12.5% of the population is aged 25-34 years. Ages 25-54 make up 40% of Carson's population, a significant figure since many small rural communities in Iowa have much greater percentages of residents over 65 years of age. However, the large percentage of residents in the 55-64 age groups indicates a need for more retirement housing in Carson in the future as well as other programs to assist an aging population. The large percentage of the population under 19 years of age (27.9%) also indicates a need for housing choices as that accommodate growing families and young adults just starting out . Carson's demographic breakdown shows that of a growing bedroom community with growing needs.

Chart 1.1: Carson 2010 Demographics by Age



Source: 2010 Census

Income

The median household income is higher when compared to state and national figures (in 2010 according to the U.S. Census). The median household income in Carson was $57,500 compared to $48,872 for the State of Iowa and $51,914 for the nation as a whole. However, the per capita income of $23,011 falls below the state figure of $25,335 and the national figure of $27,334. This can be indicative of a number of population dynamics, but most likely indicates the presence of dual-income households. Although per household income is higher than the state and national average, the per capita figures are down, suggesting that wage levels are not commensurate with national averages. This appears to indicate a need for higher paying jobs in the region. Only 3.6% of the families in Carson are considered to be living under the poverty level, compared to 7.4% for the state and 10.1% for the nation.

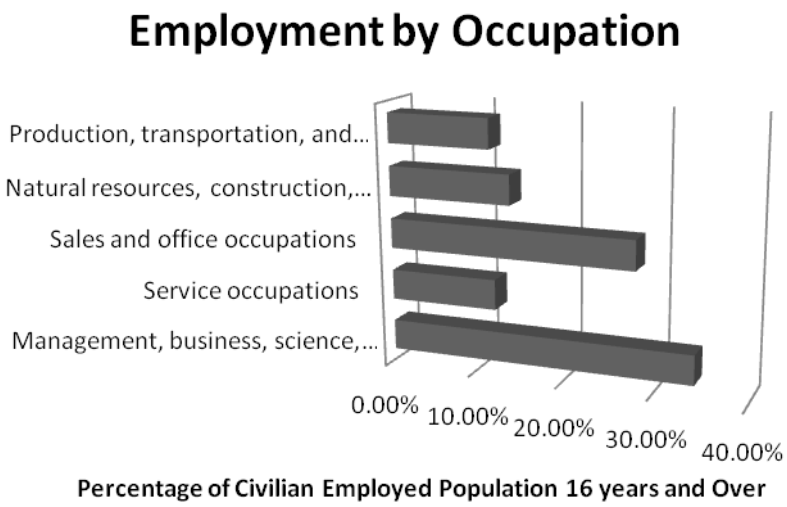
Education

Carson is a fairly educated community with 92.9% of the population having obtained a high school diploma, 11.0% have an associate's degree and 12.1% a bachelor's degree or higher. This is fairly close to the State of Iowa figures of 89.9%, 9.1%, and 24.5% respectively. Carson is a part of the Riverside School district serving portions of south-east Pottawattamie County, including the towns of Macedonia and Oakland. The higher than average numbers for diploma attainment are attributable to a quality school district. Carson is also fortunate to have a premier community college in Iowa Western, featuring excellent specialized trade programs within a few minutes' drive. This may explain slightly higher numbers for associate's degree attainment. At any rate, having such a quality community college within such short distance bodes well for economic development, as employers look for pools of well-trained, educated individuals.

Employment by Occupation

As mentioned previously, individuals in Carson earn less on average than the State of Iowa and national averages, despite household income being higher. The largest employer in Carson is Riverside Middle School with estimated 40-45 employees. Of residents aged 16 and over 73.7% were engaged in the labor force, above the national average of 64.8% and the state average of 68.8%. In families with children under 6 years of age, 90.5% had both parents engaged in the labor force. Of those residents aged 16 and over engaged in the labor force, 95.7% commute to work out side of Carson with an average travel time of 31.1 minutes.

Chart 1.2: Occupation Percentages

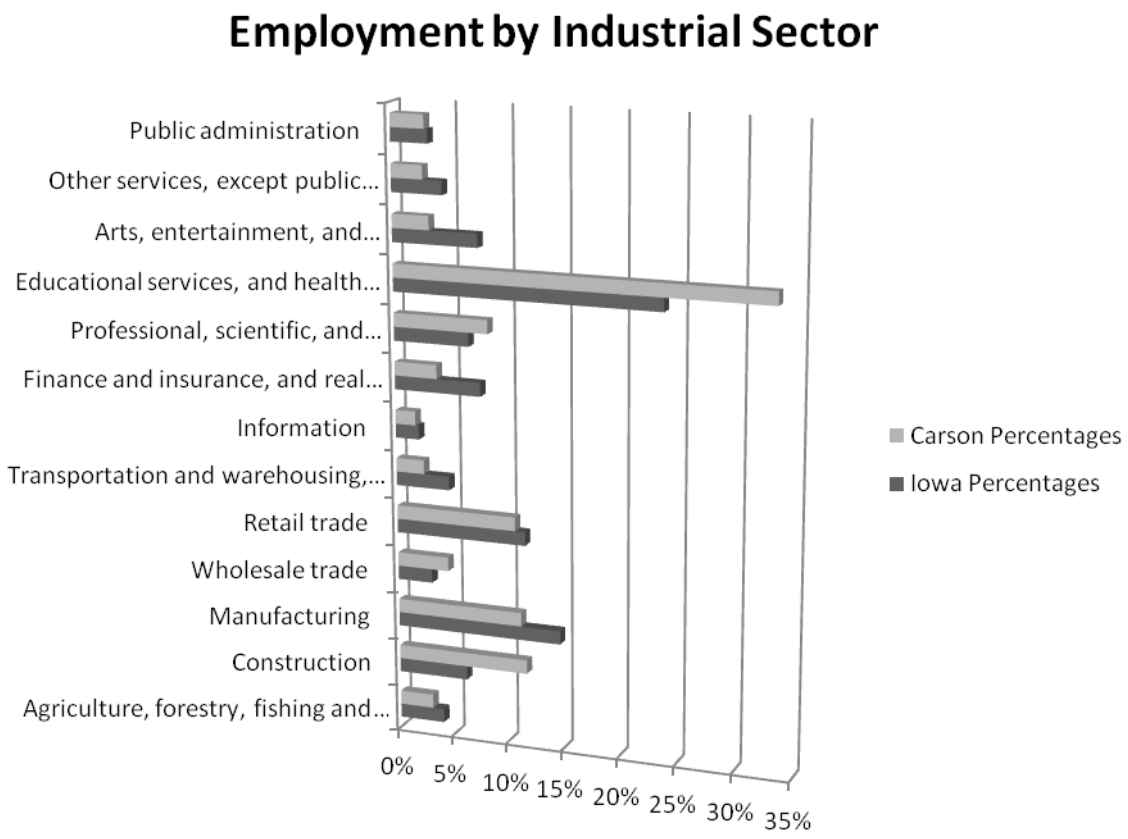


Source: 2010 American Community Survey

Employment by Industrial Sector

The breakdown of occupation types suggests a bedroom community demographic trend; the largest employment sector is management, professional and related occupations at 34.3%, with sales and office occupations accounting for the next greatest percentage at 27.9%. Natural resource, construction, and maintenance occupations account for 14.0% of the labor force. Service occupations make up 12.2% of the labor force and production, transportation and material moving employ 11.7% of the work force. It was reported that 3.0% of the labor force is employed in the agricultural sector. These figures, more than any other, elucidate the role that Carson plays in the region. The vast majority of the work force is employed in jobs that are not found within Carson, and few are employed in traditional industries like farming. New job creation in Carson will likely be focused on a variety of industries.

Chart 1.3: Carson and Iowa Employment by Industrial Sector Comparison



Source:2010 American Community Survey

Place of Employment

Table 1.3 shows that there is a decrease from 2000 to 2010 of an estimated 4.3% of Carson residents working inside the State of Iowa and another decrease of an estimated 8.4% of residents working inside Pottawattamie County. This, combined with the estimated increase in travel time to work (see Table1.4) could indicate a need for both the State of Iowa and Pottawattamie County to provide better employment opportunities for Carson residents.

Table1.3 Place of Employment		
Place of Employment	**2010**	**2000**
Worked in state of residence:	68.5%	72.8%
Worked in county of residence	61.2%	69.6%
Worked outside county of residence	7.4%	3.2%
Worked outside state of residence	31.5%	27.2%

Source: 2000 Census; 2010 American Community Survey

Carson Commuting Trends

- Travel Time to Work

Table 1.4 shows that from 2000 to 2010 there was an estimated increase of 13.4% of individuals traveling longer than 35 minutes to work and an increase of 4.6% of those who travel 60 min or more to work.

Table 1.4 Travel Time to Work		
Est. Travel Time	**2010**	**2000**
> 10 min.	16.80%	14.80%
10-14 min.	11.10%	18.80%
15-19 min.	3.40%	8.20%
20-24 min.	1.60%	6.00%
25-29 min.	2.80%	3.30%
30-34 min.	16.60%	19.40%
35-44 min.	22.50%	14.80%
45-59 min.	16.60%	16.10%
60 or more min.	8.50%	3.90%

Source: 2000 Census, 2010 American Community Survey

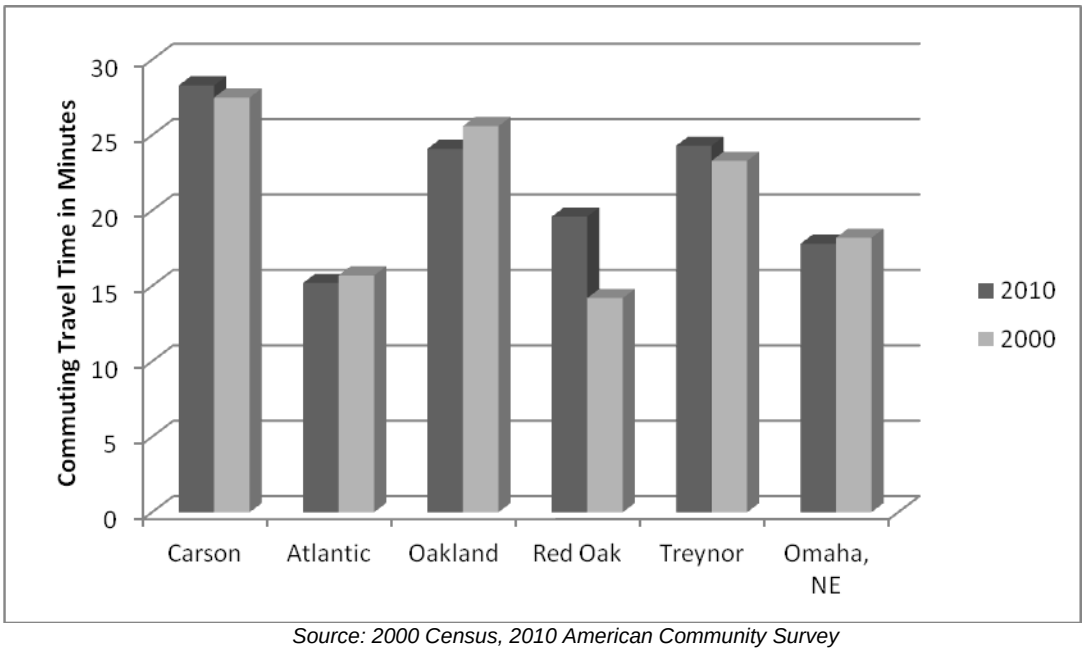
Regional Commuting Trends

Table 1.5 shows the average commute time of cities in the region. From 2000 to 2010 the estimated commute time of those living in Carson increased. People in Carson are willing to travel farther for employment yet, regional trends show average commute times and distances decreasing. According to the 2010 American Community Survey, commuters in Carson spend an average of about 28.3 minutes traveling to work, higher than the state average of 18.5 minutes and the national average of 25.2 minutes. An estimated ten percent of workers in Carson carpool, which is a positive trend that should be encouraged. Average commute time for the Omaha-Council Bluffs Metropolitan Statistical Area decreased from 18.2 minutes in 2000 to 17.8 minutes in 2010. Decreases in commute time have been greater on the Nebraska side of the Missouri River than on the Iowa side. Part of this decrease could be due to more employment opportunities throughout Omaha.

Year	Table 1.5 Average Regional Commute Time (minutes)					
	Carson	Atlantic	Oakland	Red Oak	Treynor	Omaha
2010	28.3	15.2	24.1	19.6	24.3	17.8
2000	27.5	15.7	25.6	14.2	23.3	18.2

Source: 2000 Census, 2010 American Community Survey

Chart 1.4 Average Regional Commute Time (Minutes)



Source: 2000 Census, 2010 American Community Survey

Taxable Retail Sales

About 27.9% of Carson's workforce is employed in retail trade. However, Carson's pull factor, a figure used to determine the relative strength of retail trade within a city is .26. A pull factor of greater than 1 shows that a city draws consumers from other areas, a pull factor of less than 1 shows that people are traveling outside of a city to shop. A great deal of retail sales is lost to Council Bluffs and Omaha. Council Bluffs and Avoca both had pull factors of greater than 1, both have successful retail located on interstate exits. The average number of per capita sales in Carson was $2,787 in 2012, compared with a state average of $11,236. Likewise sales per firm was about 1/10 of the state average. Caution is urged in the interpretation of pull factors, especially for smaller communities. A low pull factor does not necessarily suggest untapped sales potential in the local retail sector. Most small cities should expect to lose at least a fraction of their residents' spending to larger trade centers.

Table 1.6: Taxable Retail Sales for Pottawattamie County Municipalities

City	2010 Population	Retail Sales ($mil)	Retail Firms	Sales Per Firm	Per Capita Sales	Pull Factor
Council Bluffs	62,230	$1,006.8	1,345	$748,424	$16,009	1.49
Avoca	1,506	$26.8	78	$342,959	$17,822	1.59
Oakland	1,527	$9.2	58	$158,435	$6,004	.56
Carter Lake	3,785	$16.2	59	$277,415	$4,208	.38
Underwood	917	$4.8	49	$97,776	$5,090	.47
Walnut	785	$8.4	54	$154,438	$10,786	1.00
Neola	842	$6.3	40	$158,642	$7,492	.67
Crescent	617	$5.4	45	$120,959	$8,667	.78
Treynor	919	$5.8	39	$149,811	$6,351	.55
Carson	**812**	**$2.39**	**34**	**$67,846**	**$2,878**	**.26**
Minden	599	$2.1	22	$96,696	$3,510	.31
Hancock	196	$1.9	14	---	---	---

Source: Iowa State University Extension/Office of Social and Economic Trend Analysis
**Note: Population figure is for 2010; US Census Bureau 2012 estimates are used elsewhere in this document; Hancock did not report Sales per Firm, Per Capita Sales, or Pull Factor*

LAND USE

The arrangement and location of future land uses should be determined before the basic services for Carson, such as utilities, community facilities and streets can be planned. Land use classifies land according to the way an area is utilized – residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural or public. Establishing suitable areas of town in which certain types of land use are acceptable is one of the foundation principles of planning and also is primary to the development of efficient, safe and economically sound cities. This section of the Plan analyzes current land use patterns and existing regional development trends. From this information and information obtained from members of the community, city officials and staff, this section also presents a Community Growth Plan, which is intended to guide land use decisions and become the basis for land use regulation in Carson.

Existing Land Use

Planning for future uses can be completed only after the existing land use patterns have been determined. The predominant land use in Carson is residential with commercial, industrial and agriculture uses accounting for the remainder of non-civic land uses in the city. Carson is surrounded by a predominantly agricultural landscape. Carson is located within the West Nishnabotna Watershed (USGS Cataloging Unit 10240002). The primary river within the watershed is the West Nishnabotna River, which runs west of the city.

● Residential Land Use

The main land use in Carson is residential and it is found in all parts of the town, with many single-family dwellings located in between North and South Commercial Streets, and North and South Oak Streets. Addition residential land use is located east of the Nishnabotna River and South of Highway 92, west of 400th Street. A total of 350 existing single family dwelling units exist in the City of Carson, according to the 2011 American Community Survey. Twenty-nine of these structures were built from the year 2000 or later.

●Commercial and Industrial Land Use

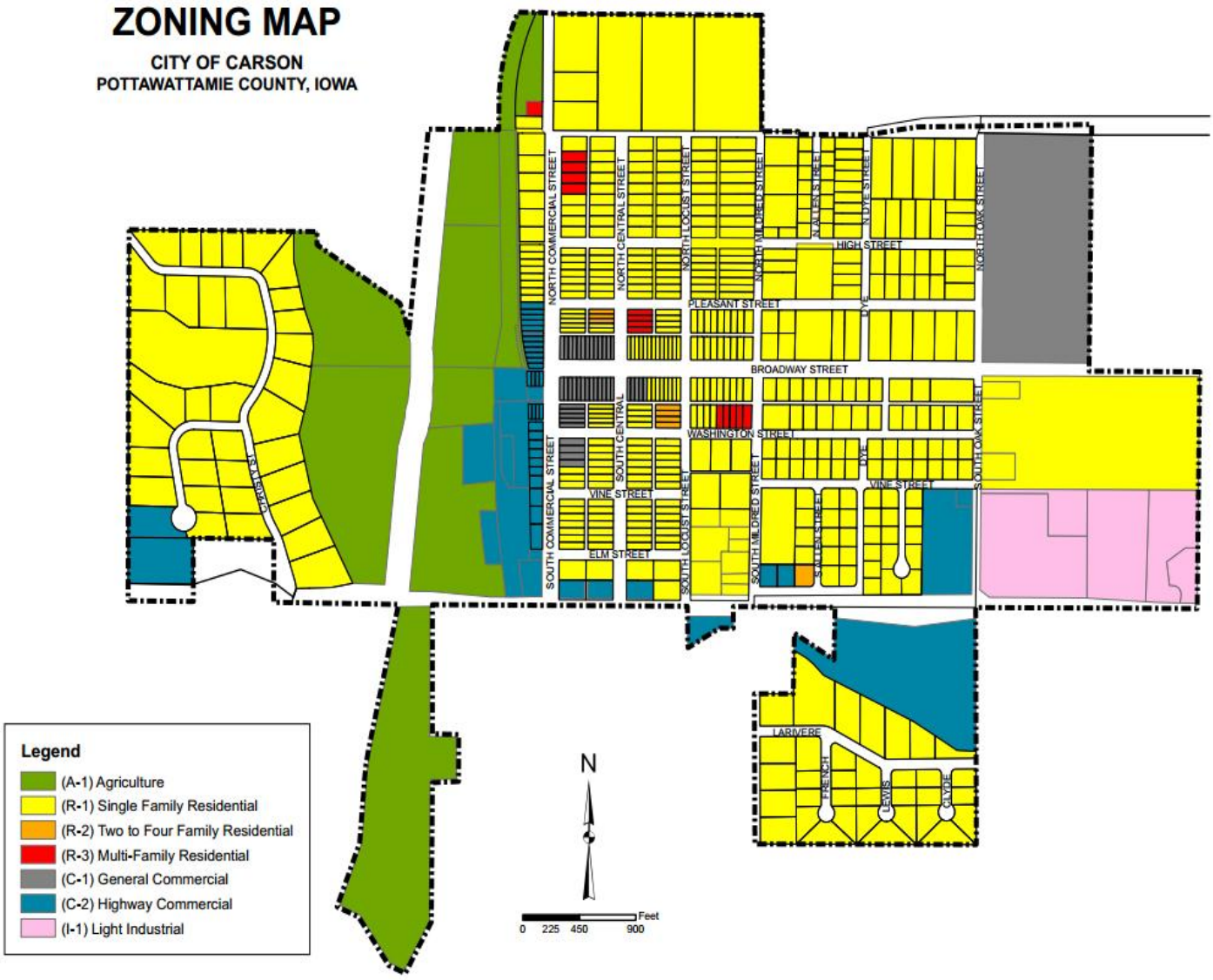
The City's commercial uses are located along Highway 92 on the North and South sides, on the East side of South Commercial Street, and on the East and West end of Broadway Boulevard. Industrial land uses are located along Highway 92, on the South east end of Carson.

●Agricultural and Recreational Land Use

Land located along the East and West side of the Nishnabotna River is Agricultural and Recreational land uses.

Figure 1.2 Carson Existing Land Use Map

Figure 1.3 Carson 2014 Zoning Map



Existing Extra Territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ)

The planning jurisdiction for the City of Carson includes the area within the city limits of the City of Carson as well as the two-mile extra-territorial jurisdiction of the City. Pottawattamie County is currently regulating land use in the Carson ETJ. Zoning districts in the ETJ are in accordance with the Pottawattamie County Zoning Ordinance. The zoning districts that are within the Carson ETJ are R-2 (Urban Transitional) and C-2 (General Commercial). The definitions located in the Pottawattamie County Zoning Ordinance are as followed:

- **Class R-2 District** is intended to provide for single-family residential areas at suburban densities. It is intended that this district shall provide residential areas which combines certain of the advantages of both urban and rural locations by limiting the concentration of development and by permitting limited number of animals to be kept on the premises. (Ordinance #2007-01/03-09-07)

- **Class C-2 District** is intended primarily to provide for those business and commercial establishments serving the general retail shopping needs of those persons living in the unincorporated areas of the County. (Ordinance #2007-01/03-09-07)

Figure1.4 shows the following zoning districts within Carson's half-mile ETJ. The districts are in accordance with the Pottawattamie County Zoning Ordinance. Iowa Code 414.23 states that, "The powers granted by this chapter (Chapter 414 of the Iowa Code) may be extended by ordinance by any city to the unincorporated area up to two miles beyond the limits of such city, except for those areas within a county where a county zoning ordinance exists." Pottawattamie County does have a zoning ordinance, which, as stated earlier does regulate land use. 9.01.040 of the Pottawattamie County Subdivision Ordinance states the following:

PLATS IN UNINCORPORATED AREAS WITHIN TWO (2) MILES OF THE CORPORATE LIMITS OF CITIES*: The purpose of this Section is to facilitate the orderly processing of subdivisions in unincorporated areas of the County within two (2) miles of the corporate limits of cities and to avoid conflicting regulations while at the same time assuring that provisions are made for proper and orderly future growth of the County and its cities. (Ordinance #96-3/February 9, 1996)*

In the event a subdivision is located within two (2) miles of the corporate limits of a city which exercises such subdivision jurisdiction, as provided in Section 354.9, Code of Iowa, as amended, the procedures for review and approval of preliminary and final plats shall be the same as established by this Ordinance, except that the preliminary and final subdivision plats shall first be reviewed and approved by the City Council of that city. The developer shall submit the preliminary and final plats and other required materials as required by this Ordinance. The County Board shall have the right to waive such requirements, as are contained in this Ordinance, for such subdivisions whenever the County Board, upon recommendation by the Commission are satisfied that equally

suitable regulations have been placed on these subdivisions by the City Council of that city. (Ordinance #96-3/February 9, 1996)

Such a plat shall be considered to have been approved and authorized for filing with the County Auditor and County Recorder only after it has been approved by the County Board, as prescribed by this Ordinance and by the City Council of that city. (Ordinance #96-3/February 9, 1996).

Land Use Projections/Current Trends

Residential uses will continue to dominate the City of Carson. The trend of residential commuters migrating to Carson will continue, keeping Carson a predominantly residential town. There is some potential for commercial and industrial expansion, particularly near the Highway 92. The future land use map in Figure1.5 shows that Carson should continue to push commercial use along Highway 92. The current ETJ map in Figure 1.4 shows that Pottawattamie County has already designate commercial use for those lots south of Highway 92, adjacent to 400th street on both the east and west side. It is recommended that if those lots are to be annexed into the city limits, that Carson incorporates these lots into the C-2, Highway Commercial Zone. It is also recommended that the City of Carson evaluate any potential annexation every three to five years and provide and annexation map to depict any annexation scenario and timeline for annexation.

The 2010 Carson Community Visioning Final Report and Feasibility Study conducted by JBC Landscape Architects & Planners indicated that members of the steering committee identified the recreational area adjacent to the Nishnabotna River as an area of importance. This large area has huge amounts of green space and recreational activities. Providing a more developed and defined link between the recreational area and the rest of the community was discussed by this steering committee. A well defined commercial area along the west end of Broadway Blvd. could provide that link by encouraging more foot traffic along the commercial area on Broadway Blvd., which is adjacent to the recreational areas next to the Nishnabotna River.

Goals

- *Expend Job Opportunities and the Tax Base*

  The encouragement of commercial/industrial facilities along Highway 92 is a goal of this plan. Most growth in the past 10 years has come from residential development, and the community is actively seeking ways to expand the local sales tax base as well, providing additional retail and commercial opportunities for the residents of Carson and all of southeastern Pottawattamie County. In recent years, City officials have made efforts to facilitate new commercial activity in the community, and will continue to do so in the next few years. While there are some local service

employers in the community, the potential exists for additional job opportunities in the area, as the community currently has sites available for industrial or manufacturing uses, and is in the process of upgrading essential services to provide adequate capacity for these activities, in addition to anticipated residential growth. WIDA would be a resource for job creation.

- Encourage More Retail: *A goal of this plan is to revitalize the downtown commercial district, giving the community that Main St. feel. Currently, there is and has been a need for the town to regain an area with this designation. The need for more commercial services has been identified as a goal. A general store and other services that would be utilized could locate in the downtown commercial district, which would contribute significantly to the quality of life in Carson. However, a small population makes supporting basic commercial services a challenge. These services may need to fit a niche or a community survey may need to be completed to gauge community support.*

  Another goal of this plan is to create a commercial district along Highway 92. This would help to diversify and grow the city's commercial uses and help pull traffic off of the highway.

- *Preserve Floodplain for Agricultural Land and Open Space*

The Nishnabotna River floodplain is a significant barrier to development on the west side of Carson. Aside from being a challenge to land use planning, this barrier can be an asset to Carson by presenting an opportunity for open space reservation and creating capacity for additional recreational uses.

- Preserve Agricultural Land and Open Space*: Leaving much of the floodplain as agriculture will reserve a great deal of open space, giving peace of mind to residents and adding to quality of life. Building out of a floodplain can alter and affect the floodplain around other properties. Preserving the floodplain will not protect those properties. The floodplain has also been identified as being suitable for recreational purposes, particularly for ball fields.*

- Natural Features*: Identifying and preserving land with challenging natural topography or bordering drainage ways is key to efficient development and to integrating green space throughout the community. By buffering drainage ways, the natural flow of water will be protected while allowing for excessive flow levels. Challenging topographies often have questionable development value or capability to become a functional lot. If left as open space, the preserved landscape would benefit the entire community.*

- *Residential Expansion*

  The expansion of residential uses will be a continued trend and a goal of this plan. The area has seen a huge influx of commuting households and housing development. A goal of this plan is to encourage the development of residential subdivisions and allow the city to realize its potential in a controlled manner.

  - Conventional Single-Family Subdivisions: *This is the biggest residential need in the community. Although the majority of new homes built in Carson will likely continue to be moderate-high value, single-family residential, reflecting the regional housing market trends, it is important for Carson to identify affordable housing development. This growth will occur on in fill lots within the city limits. The moderate-high value, single-family residential, reflecting the regional housing market trends will likely occur on the perimeters of town to the south and east.*

Community Growth Plan

By establishing proactive community development policies and adhering to a vision of how the community should grow, Carson has the potential to successfully attract residential and commercial development, sustain a stable tax base and continue to provide quality public services to all. The sum of all community development policies and the strength of community development principles will determine, to a great extent, future land use in the city. The Community Growth Plan consists of two parts:

- *Community Growth Principles*, setting forth the basic premises and community values used to guide all development actions.

And

- *Community Development Policies*, establishing areas of specific development focus and providing avenues to accomplish the goals contained in the plan.

●<u>General Principles</u>

When considering development plans, ask: “Does the project/plan conform to the guiding principles?”

- *Concentric Growth*: Carson’s growth should occur in a logical procession from city limits outward. Residential growth should occur primarily north and west of the city and south of Highway 92, and highway commercial and industrial expansion should be reserved for land adjacent to the Highway 92. General Commercial should continue along South Central Street’s west end.

- *Managed Growth*: Areas identified for growth should be related to regional demand in the housing market and land demand for commerce and industry. Development policy should emphasize the need for to provide multiple housing choices or location

opportunities for potential residents and businesses. However, development policy should balance the need for choice with the need for orderly development and infrastructure extensions.

- *Responsible Growth*: A basic, continuous network of streets and open spaces should be pre-planned to maintain linkages between traditional city and newly developing areas. As Carson grows, the City should maintain to some extent the grid street network that characterizes the established part of town. New subdivisions and streets should not be considered as "standing alone" but should provide increased mobility and accessibility for all residents.

●Land Use Policies

- *Create Capacity for Growth*: Carson has already taken a proactive approach in providing space for residential expansion. Continuing the planned residential growth areas to the west and south is recommended.

- *Phased Annexation*: A program of phased voluntary annexation is recommended. Annexation of developable land will provide capacity for the future expansion of Carson. This is known as an "urban reserve." The use of TIF and other financial incentives can draw residential and commercial development into a community – but land must be incorporated into the City in order for those incentives to be offered. The first step in phased annexation is to gauge landowners' willingness to annex and their future plans for their property. Landowners immediately adjacent to city limits should be the first tier of annexation and those parcels should logically be the first to develop. Fringe, or leapfrog development should be discouraged as it places greater burdens on utility infrastructure and creates fractious land use patterns. Discussing future land use plans with landowners is the most critical step to creating capacity for development. Obtaining voluntary petitions for annexation most often does not occur until a subdivision plat is ready for approval, however, many landowners may find it beneficial to have land annexed prior to a development beginning. Once land is annexed, the City can prepare for utility extensions to the territory.

- *Zoning and Subdivision Regulations*: Zoning and subdivision regulations are the "teeth" behind a comprehensive plan. This plan will establish the desired land use patterns and orderly development for the City of Carson, however, zoning and subdivision regulations reinforce those ideas with actual regulatory power. A zoning map (see Figure 1.3), indicating what areas of town are suitable for certain types of development, will essentially mirror the current land use map (see Figure 1.2) included herein. Subdivision regulations will ensure that any new development is constructed to be efficient, safe and compatible with the rest of the community. Zoning and subdivision regulations are being drafted in conjunction with this plan.

- *Building Permits and Impact Fees*: Requiring all new construction to obtain a building permit will ensure conformance will established land use regulations and will be essential to enforcing zoning and subdivision regulations upon adoption. Fees charged

for building permits can pay for the cost of inspections to ensure proper construction methods and quality. Private firms or individuals, or even larger cities, can provide inspections and permit administration on a contract basis. Impact fees should also be charged for connection to city utilities. An engineering firm can calculate the impact that an average new home or business will have on a wastewater or water treatment plant and translate that impact into a monetary value on a per home, or per acre basis. Assessing these impact fees to new development will ensure that future upgrades or expansions needed as a result of new development can be sustained.

Figure 1.4 City of Carson's Current Extra Territorial Jurisdiction, ETJ (Half-Mile)

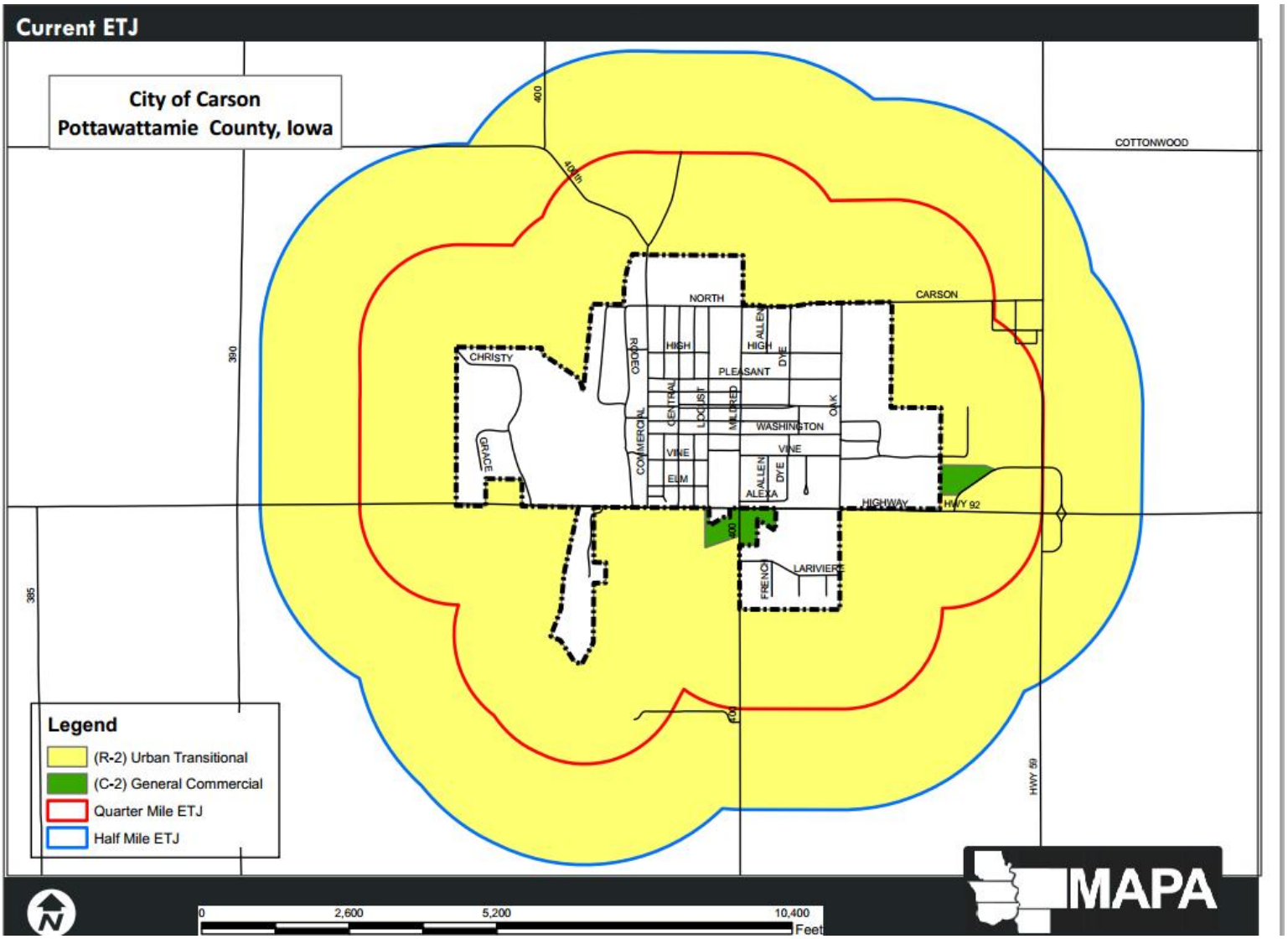


Figure 1.5 Carson Future Land Use Map

PART II: INFRASTRUCTURE

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation can be seen as the fabric that ties together all components of an urban area. In addition, public streets often represent the greatest percentage of publicly owned territory within a city and consequently are the most utilized and important civic spaces. The appearance and condition of public streets have a great affect on the health and value of property within the City. Quality public streets which safely and efficiently accommodate vehicular traffic, sidewalks which allow easy and universal accessibility to all, and landscaped rights-of-way which add to the quality of life are all essential functions of a transportation network. This section of the Carson Comprehensive Plan provides an analysis of the existing transportation network in Carson, highlights existing or emerging circulation problems and provides suggestions on how to enhance accessibility options and create a transportation network that does much more than provide a paved surface to drive upon.

Existing Conditions

- **Streets/Roads**

  Most of the Carson's streets are hard-surfaced, including U.S. Highway 92, which runs from east to west on the south end of the community. Generally the street system is in fair condition, with improved storm water drainage on older streets a concern for the community. Several streets need to be improved (ground and re-asphalted) which is a priority of the community.

  According to the City of Carson City Wide Resident Survey Final Report (2008) conducted by the Southwest Iowa Planning Council, 57.7% of the 104 respondents were not satisfied with the current condition of the streets in town. Since the conclusion of the 2008 report, the following streets having been gone through improvements:

  - South Mildred Street
  - North Dye Street
  - Highway 92 Intersections at Christy Street
  - South Commercial
  - South Mildred
  - South Oak Street
  - Fire Station Alley

  It is suggested that continual maintenance and street repair continue at an as needed basis.

- **Trails and Sidewalks**

    - Most of the community is adequately served with sidewalk facilities, and individual property owners are responsible for improvements to their sidewalks.

Goals

- *Provide a transportation system throughout Carson for the safe and efficient movement of people, goods and services.*

- *Create and maintain design standards and policies for various classes of streets, roads, highways and bridges to enhance the function and safety of the roadway and street system in Carson.*

- *Install/Repair Sidewalks as needed*

- *Install/Repair Streets as needed*

Transportation Policies

• Develop Five and Ten-year Transportation Plans

Developing five and ten-year transportation plans will ensure that the city's current commitment to upgrading roadways is continued into the future. Road Use Tax can continued to be used for maintenance and improvements to streets and right-of-way properties in the community. A five-year plan should be developed to deal with street maintenance and repair. A ten-year plan should also be drafted to prepare for long-term roadway improvements. This will allow the city to plan and prepare for minor and major improvements and help to utilize tax revenues in the most efficient manner.

HOUSING

Carson's housing stock can be viewed as critical infrastructure and the maintenance, enhancement and continual development of it are essential to sustaining and improving upon the level of service and quality of life that residents currently enjoy. The housing supply represents the city's largest capital investment and the value of the housing stock largely determines the fiscal health of the City. This section of the Plan analyzes current housing conditions, examines regional trends in the housing development market, sets goals based on identified community needs and provides policy solutions to ensure that quality housing is available for all residents.

Existing Conditions

Carson has a relatively old housing stock with a median age of 1954. While the age of the housing stock is usually a large concern in a small community, Carson does not have such consequences. However, it is still important to identify what older homes are in the community, 47% of the housing was built before 1950. Many of these homes have been kept up well and a few are the process or have just completed major renovations. There are very few houses that can be considered dilapidated. Housing policies should continue to encourage rehabilitation and renovation of older homes. Such as the current City rehabilitation program (LMI qualified) that is intended to help maintain or improve the condition of these homes. Falling valuations could cause serious revenue problems and create difficulties upgrading and maintaining infrastructure in these neighborhoods.

Newer construction is found throughout the town on vacant lots or on the edge of the community. The oldest areas of town are those found generally in the center of the community. New housing has occurred mostly to the southern (south of Highway 92) and eastern (east of West Nishnabotna River) portions of Carson. The Mosquito Creek floodplain has deterred housing development to the east.

Regional Trends

Many communities surrounding the Omaha metro have experienced small housing booms corresponding with fluctuations in the national housing market. When interest rates are low and development costs comparatively low, people often look to “move up” to higher value homes in bedroom communities. This trend is expected to continue, however, a newer trend that is occurring nationwide is towards condominiums and attached two-family living arrangements. This is more flexible for replacement housing on reclaimed or vacant lots. As jobs and housing become more dispersed, people will look to communities such as Carson as places to live. In the past that has been reserved almost exclusively for higher income commuters, however, now residents of all income levels are able to commute into the Omaha metro.

Housing Characteristics

According to Table 1.2 there were 353 total housing units in Carson in 2010. This is an increase of 44 housing units from 2000. The number of occupied housing units also increased in that same ten (10) year period from 284 units to 325 units. Of the 325 occupied units in 2010, 17.8% were rentals and the remaining 82.2% are owner-occupied. With an increase in the number of housing units, an increase in the percentage of owner occupied units, and a decrease in the percentage of rental occupied units may indicate a shift from renters looking to be homeowners.

The median housing value in Carson is estimated at $105,000. This is an increase of about $23,000 from the median housing value in 2000. This could be due newer homes on the South and East ends of Carson being constructed within the past ten years. This

new construct could show a preference for newer housing units with larger lot sizes. These statistics could make it difficult for young adults and LMI families to become home owners within the community.

Although some of the housing in Carson could be considered affordable under HUD guidelines, obstacles to homeownership such as down payments and closing costs make it difficult for first time homebuyers. Nearly 67.5% of households in Carson had a mortgage in 2010, and the median mortgage payments of those were $1,072 per month. The median rent per month was $425 in 2010, an increase of $33 from 2000. This slight increase in rent per month and the increase in homeownership may be showing a shift to renters looking to be homeowners.

A vacancy rate can be defined as the number (or percentage) of year-round units within the existing housing supply which do not have an occupant at the time of enumeration. A standard vacancy rate of 5 percent allows for a community to typically offer an adequate supply of safe, decent, and affordable housing. Housing vacancy deficiency is defined as the number of vacant units lacking in a community, whereby the total percentage of vacant units is less than 5 percent. A vacancy rate of 5 percent is the minimum rate recommended to allow a community to have sufficient housing available for both new and existing residents. Carson has a current housing vacancy rate of more than 5 percent, thus indicating no housing vacancy deficiency.

Table 2.1 Carson Housing Characteristics

Year	2010	2000
Number of Housing Units	353	309
Number of Occupied Housing Units	325	284
Owner Occupied Housing Units (percentage)	82.2%	80.4%
Renter Occupied Housing Units	17.8%	19.6%
*Median Housing Value (in dollars)	$105,000	$82,000
*Percentage of Homeowner With a Mortgage	67.5%	51.2%
*Median Mortgage per Month (in dollars)	$1,072.00	$725.00
*Medan Gross Rent per Month (in dollars)	$425.00	$392.00
Vacant Housing Units (percentage)	17.3%	7.8%

Source: 2000 Census, 2010 Census, 2010 American Community Survey

***NOTE**: Lines with an asterisk (*) indicate 2010 results using 2010 American Community Survey Data*

According to the City of Carson City Wide Survey (2008) it was reported that 30.4% of residents stated that if they were to purchase a residence within a year, the price range they would look at, considering their household income would be in the $100,000-$125,000 price range. It is important to note that the median housing value for 2010 (indicated in Table 2.1) is within the $100,000-$125,000 price range.

Household Characteristics

Table 2.2 provides an analysis of **household characteristics** in The City of Carson from 2000 to 2010. During the 10-year period from 2000 to 2010 the number of households in Carson increased from 284 to 325. The number of persons in household also increases in that same ten year person, from 668 in 2000 to 797 in 2010, with an average increase of .2 persons per household. This could be due to an increase in new families in households in Carson from 2000 to 2010

Table 2.2 : Carson Household Characteristics				
Year	**Population**	**Persons in Household**	**Households**	**Persons Per Household**
2010	812	797	325	2.5
2000	668	668	284	2.3

Source: 2000 Census, 2010 American Community Survey

Goals

• *Continue to create new housing developments*

- Carson has excellent access to Omaha and has capitalized on its location to jobs and services found there. Carson will continue to grow, and creating a sound vision for what form that growth should take, as well as creating incentives and clear guidelines for developers, are major goals of this plan.

- *Provide all residents with access to a variety of safe, decent, sanitary housing types.*

  - Affordable housing has never been relegated to a certain area of town, and the result has been a harmonious blend of income levels and household types. The community has expressed a desire to retain this tradition of mixed housing stock with the next wave of development, which it hopes will bring greater variety and affordability to town.

- *Promote development of residential options for Carson's residents of all income levels*

  - Offering incentives such as TIF could help create momentum to develop single-family affordable housing. The availability of all types and values of housing is a major factor in diverse growth of population.

- *Encourage future residential development which is compatible and complements existing neighborhoods.*

  - Careful regulation of the design and disposition of dwelling units will benefit the character of existing neighborhoods.

- *Actively access affordable housing programs available from local, state and federal agencies/departments.*

Housing Tools

To continue the construction of new housing and improve both existing renter and owner occupied housing in Carson, the community, in corporation with the private entities, must continue to access affordable housing programs to reduce the cost of development and/or long-term operations. The following information recognizes funding sources and programs available to support financing the housing demand in Carson. The combination of two or more sources can assist in reducing development and/or operational costs of proposed affordable housing projects.

- **Iowa Finance Authority**

  The Iowa Finance Authority partners with housing organizations throughout the state to offer a variety of programs to assist in affordable rental, homeownership and homelessness initiatives.

  - **State Housing Trust Fund (SHTF):** Provides grants to advance and preserve affordable single-family and multifamily housing all over the state through two important programs. In accordance with **Iowa Code section 16.181**, a housing trust fund is held within the IFA. The moneys in the Fund are to be used for the development and preservation of affordable housing for low-income households (Eligible Recipients) in the state. The two programs operated under the Fund are the Local Housing Trust Fund Program and the Project-Based Housing Program.

    - **Local Housing Trust Fund Program:** This program receives at least 60 percent of the annual SHTF allocation to provide grants for organizations certified by IFA as a Local Housing Trust Fund (LHTF).

      A local housing trust fund has been established through the Southwest Iowa Planning Council (SWIPCO) called the “Southwest Iowa Housing Trust Fund”. SWIPCO identified services provided, which fall into the following areas:

      - **Housing Repairs** to address health, safety, and energy efficient deficiencies in owner-occupied homes. We currently maintain a lengthy waiting list. Most common work items are roofs, furnaces, and windows.

      - **Homeownership Assistance** to help lower income households purchase their own home. The assistance is in the form of 5-year forgivable loans and low interest loans.

- **Purchase, Rehab, Resell** acquires vacant foreclosed properties, rehabilitates the property, and resells it to low to moderate income homebuyers.

- **Demolition of blighted properties** removes dilapidated homes from the housing stock. The home must be city owned. The program will pay for 50% of asbestos inspection and removal and demolition costs.

- **Project-Based Housing Program**: The remaining funding goes to the Project-Based Housing Program, which aids in the development of affordable single-family and multifamily housing.

- **Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)**

  The Housing CDBG is an annual competitive program that funds owner-occupied rehabilitation for single family homes being used as the principal residence. The Iowa Economic Development Agency (IEDA) outlines the following as the eligible use of funds:

  - Projects must primarily benefit low- and moderate-income persons (per HUD's definition)

  - Projects must incorporate and support Iowan's state sustainable principles

  - All houses must be rehabilitated in accordance with any locally adopted building and housing codes, standards and ordinances. If locally adopted and enforced building and housing codes do not exist, the Iowa Minimum Housing

  - Rehabilitation standards will be followed. Rehabilitation projects have a maximum per unit subsidy of $37,500, including but not limited to the hard costs of rehabilitation, technical services costs (including lead hazard reduction carrying costs), lead hazard reduction costs, and temporary relocation.

  - Rehabilitation hard costs are limited to $24,999 of the total maximum subsidy of $37,500.

  - Applicable technical services costs (including any lead hazard reduction carrying costs) are limited to $4,500 per unit of the total maximum subsidy of $37,500.

- **Federal Home Loan Bank Des Moines (FHLB)**

    - **Strong Communities Fund:** The formation of a three-tiered approach to giving, the Strong Communities Fund (SCF), recognizes the goal to build strong communities through the creation of safe housing, sustainable economies and good jobs.

        - **Competitive Affordable Housing Program:** One of the largest sources of private sector grants for housing and community development in the nation. This competitive grant program encourages member financial institutions to partner with local government, non-profits and tribes to secure funds for the purchase, construction or rehabilitation of owner-occupied or rental housing units. Projects often serve people with a wide range of housing needs, including seniors, persons with disabilities, homeless families and individuals with limited resources.

        - **The Homeownership Fund:** A grant program that provides down payment and closing cost assistance to low- to moderate-income owner-occupant homebuyers. Assisted households must be at or below 80 percent of the area median income. The fund may be used to assist households in rural or urban locations. The Fund *is not* restricted to first-time homebuyers.

Housing Policies

The following policy suggestions are intended to address the goals listed in the previous section

Zoning Adequate Space for Expansion

Adopting new zoning and subdivision regulations will ensure that new housing is located so as to provide the best benefit for the City as well as potential new residents. Zoning adequate space for residential expansion is vital to ensuring that there are enough housing units in Carson. By sustaining and expanding high density or multi-family zoning districts, the city effectively encourages the development of alternative housing choices. Currently, multifamily zones are located near the established city center. Possible expansion of this zone could be suggested along Highway 92, as to have immediate access to the Highway. Single-family zoning districts can be located further from major transportation links and the established city core. Carson has added approximately 44 units from 2000–2010, an average of just over 4.4 units per year. If this trend is to continue the City will need to zone space adequate to fill at least another 88 lots during the next planning 20 years. Given the increased demand for residential property in and around Carson, the majority of the new units added in the next 20 years will be on previously undeveloped land either on the east side of the city or south of Highway 92. There is also potential to redevelop infill lots with affordable housing options.

FACILITIES AND UTILITIES

Water Supply/Storage/Distribution

The city's water supply is provided by a system of four shallow wells. Of the four wells, two are 30 feet in depth, one is 21 feet and the fourth is 25 feet. The wells usually provide adequate water supply, but a drought situation could cause problems with availability and quality of water for the community. The treatment plant was initially built about 60 years ago, but the city has made regular improvements to the system over the years in addition to its regular maintenance. The City has identified the need to make additional improvements to the water treatment plant or construct a new facility and to install automated controls. The City also sees a need to have a permanent power generator installed at the treatment plant. Presently, water is treated using a system of green sand filter, potassium, HTH, fluoride and permanganate. Approximately 75,000 gallons per day are pumped through the system.

The supply line is connected to the city's water tower, which is located on the northeast part of the city. The city received a CDBG award in 1996 to assist in the construction of the new water tower. The water tower is 150,000 gallons and was built in 1997. The City has 354 water customers that pay an average bill of $26.85 per month.

Wastewater Collection and Treatment

Carson's wastewater treatment system is an automated trickling filter system and was upgraded in 2006. The plant is designed for 65,000 gallons per day with an average wet weather flow of 161,000 gallons per day and a maximum wet weather flow (treated) of 300,000 gallons per day. The design standard for the system is 830 people and is rated for 141 BOD lbs. per day. The facility is located south of town near the West Nishnabotna River. Both the collection and treatment system have been fully upgraded to meet Iowa DNR standards and to provide the additional capacity needed to accommodate anticipated growth. The City has 354 sewer customers that pay an average bill of $41.12 per month.

Storm Water Collection System

Portions of the community's business district have storm water infrastructure in place, but street improvements have rendered most of the system obsolete. Installation of new inlets and a study of the existing infrastructure could restore the usefulness of that

system, but replacement of the existing storm sewers will most likely provide the best long-term solution for the area.

Much of the rest of the community utilizes a ditch system that seems to adequately drain excess water from residential areas. New storm water infrastructure, including curb and gutter, is being installed as new streets are added to the community. However, installation of storm sewers in older parts of the community could prove to be very costly and would require adjustments to several right-of-way properties.

Utilities

Electric	MidAmerican Energy
Natural Gas	MidAmerican Energy
Telephone	Frontier Communications of Iowa
Cable TV	Dish Network or Direct TV
Solid Waste	Collected by Matt-Mills Trash Service and delivered to the Mills County Landfill near Malvern, Iowa. A recycling program is in place.

Public Buildings

	Facility	Location	Condition	Issues
1	Carson Community Center	316 S Commercial	Excellent	Complete ground heat loop system and add emergency generator
2	Fire Station	127 Broadway	Good	Too small for needs
3	Maintenance Building #1	121 Rodeo Drive	Good	
4	Maintenance Building #2	121 Rodeo Drive	Good	
5	Library	Oakland	Good	

The City has identified the need to drill an additional 15 wells for the community center ground heat loop system, to add sufficient capacity to the facility's heating and cooling system. The City also sees a need to have a permanent power generator for the community center facility, as the facility serves as an emergency shelter. The City has identified the need to either make an additional to the current facility for truck capacity or construct an entirely new fire station facility.

There is currently no library in the community, but the City cost-shares with the Oakland Public Library, allowing its residents full access to that facility.

Goals

- *Increase the Water Supply*

  Increasing the water supply through surveying and drilling for new wells or connecting with Oakland's water could reduce the occurrences of water restrictions during a drought and provide an extra incentive for economic development.

- *Construct new water treatment facility with automated controls*

  Automated control will have some costs and benefits to evaluate that are outlined in the 2008 American Water Works Association study entitled, "*Cost and Benefits of Complete Water Treatment Plant Automation*". The cost and benefits are outlined in two main categories, tangible and intangible. These are outlined as followed:

  - **Tangible Costs** include costs that can be assigned an economic value and that are readily quantified. For automation projects, some of the primary costs include planning, design, engineering, procurement, and implementation. Post implementation costs will include computer software and hardware maintenance and upgrading, staff training, and instrument calibration.

  - **Intangible Costs** include technology and operational risks; changes in operational procedures; employee concerns; and change management costs as an organization adapts to new technologies and practices. Often such costs are difficult to quantify, but that do represent a potential impact to the city.

  - **Tangible Benefits** can include reduction in labor costs as result of the facilities being operated automatically or unattended, reduction in time travel to remote facilities, reduction in chemical cost as the result of better control; operational improvements resulting from automation; ability to install additional processes or support facility expansion using savings from avoided costs; labor reduced energy costs through automated load shedding or shifting strategies such as off peak production and pumping schedules. Other tangible benefits include reduction in labor for data collection and report development , and better data to support equipment maintenance.

  - **Intangible Benefits** are tougher to assign an economic value and are difficult to determine. These benefits can include more consistent quality of treatment effluent; streamline regulatory reporting; better data collection for engineering, planning, and document performance; enhanced

monitoring and security; rapid response to process upsets or alarm conditions; reduced technological risk and improved operator moral.

- *Replace overhead electrical line to underground electrical lines.*

  MidAmerican Energy has provided the City with cost estimates for this project. In 2008 they estimated the project could cost the city $68,092 to convert power to underground in the northeast section of the City. Because the power is owned by a private entity the City would not be eligible for any State Hazard Mitigation Funding for this project.

  In 2008, the City held several public meetings regarding this issue. Many of the effected residents were present at these meetings and stated they would support the project and were willing to pay for electrician hookups at their homes to the new underground service.

- *Construct new fire station*

  The fire station is currently in good condition; however it is too small to meet the City's current needs.

- *Drill additional 15 wells for Community Center Ground Heat Loop System*

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

Mill Stone Park is located on the northwest side of town next to the West Nishnabotna River. The park is equipped with a ball field, soccer field, basketball court, playground equipment, open shelter, restrooms and concession stand. The playground equipment includes swings, merry-go-round, tire swing, seesaws, and climbing jungle gym. The shelter has picnic tables, grills and water. Also included in the area is a hiking trail along the West Nishnabotna River.

In 2008, the City acquired the parcel at 418 S Rodeo Drive, an area that is potent ground for additional athletic fields, park system, and multi-use trails. It is adjacent (just south) of Mill Stone Park and creates a large park that keeps the east side of the Nishnabotna River as greenspace. The City completed some demolition work on this

site which cleaned up the west entrance to the city. This site will also include a welcome center offering information on the City of Carson.

In 2001, the City acquired Prairie Preserve Park, an area that demonstrates and promotes a native prairie environment. This park is located west of the West Nishna Botna River, to the Carson City Park. REAP funding was awarded for the acquisition of property. The City then seeded the park using its own general funds. A path will be added to this park, which will be used for both a walking trail and for interpretation of the native prairie. The city plans to connect this to the east side of the river via a bridge and trail. A trail would be constructed to boarder the preserve and offer interpretive signage and way finding experience.

The most notable annual recreational event in Carson is Rodeo Days, which occurs in early August. This event is held at the rodeo grounds near the south of Mill Stone Park and it is estimated to attract nearly 10,000 people annually. The 2nd Annual Mud Run was also held this year and had significant growth since the 2012 event. Community volunteers, in partnership with the Carson Methodist Church and Iowa Department of Public Health, started a community garden which has been quite successful**.**

Existing Conditions

Annual Maintenance is done on the Mill Stone Park, the Ball Fields are conditioned annually through our annual maintenance budget and park board sponsor. Additional modern restrooms would be useful to accommodate the needs of visitors, especially near the camp ground and canoe ramp area of the park. Carson continues to maintain the prairie preserve grasses and flowers through a brush burning schedule at Prairie Preserve Park**.**

Regional Trends

Omaha Council Bluffs metro area. Several major urban trails have been constructed and planned extensions are gradually being completed. Investment in trails shows no signs of slowing down as much federal and state grant money goes to trail construction. Council Bluffs has committed to building a trail network along many of the major floodways, taking advantage of the abundant open space in floodplains and providing a useful purpose to land that otherwise cannot be utilized. A trail runs nearly the entire length of Mosquito Creek within Council Bluffs city limits. Omaha's Keystone Trail is one

of the nation's most extensive urban trails and is very heavily utilized. Trails have shown to be great economic development tools, even within this region. Towns like Malvern, Silver City, and Mineola have all benefited tremendously from the Wabash Trace Nature Trail. Aside from the health and well being benefits of recreation, a trail can provide alternative transportation options, which have numerous economic and social benefits.

A second trend in regional recreation habits is towards regional weekend excursions. Due to rising prices of gasoline and other economic difficulties, many people have begun to abandon the long summer vacation routine in favor of smaller weekend trips close to home. The rising popularity of places like Arrowhead Park is evidence of this trend. County Conservation Boards and cities are making tremendous efforts to include campgrounds in recreation areas to accommodate weekend travelers. Funding for new campgrounds, playgrounds and other basic park improvements is on the rise, second only to the funding available for trails.

Goals

- *Trail Development*

  The proposed park trail should be an extension and connection to the proposed Nishnabotna Loop System. Figure 2.2 depicts the proposed trail project.

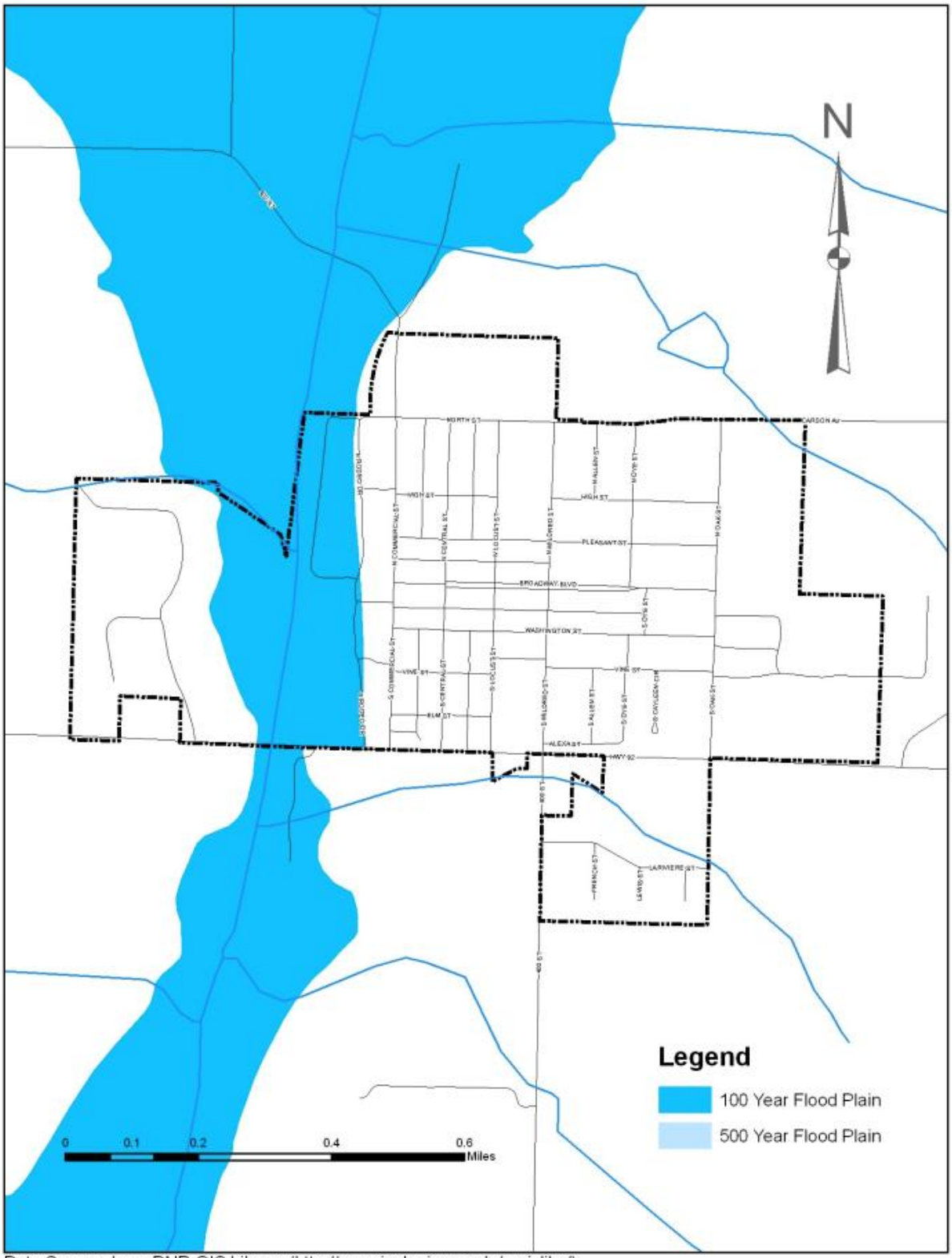
- *Realize opportunities for recreational space as community grows*

  Integrating open/recreational space into the City as it grows is a goal. It is important that each residential area of the community is able to reasonably access a park or open space, as this greatly contributes to quality of life. By doing this, the city can plan for and combine open space and conservation issues.

- *Utilize floodplain space for recreational uses*

  Utilizing floodplain for uses such as recreation is an efficient and safe way to incorporate floodplains into the community. Such a use is an efficient and effective was to decrease the likelihood of destructive flooding while not requiring infill to build the facilities out of the floodplain. The Nishnabotna River floodplain runs along the entire west and south side of the city, severely limiting development there. The area would be well suited to additional ball fields and trails, which will be needed as the city continues to grow. Figure 2.1 depicts the 100 year and 500 year flood plain within and surrounding the Carson City limits.

Figure 2.1Carson Flood Plain



Date Source: Iowa DNR GIS Library (http://www.igsb.uiowa.edu/nrgislibx/)

Parks and Open Space Policies

The following are policy recommendations that will allow Carson to achieve the goals listed in the previous section and may open up new opportunities for enhancement of recreational opportunities for residents.

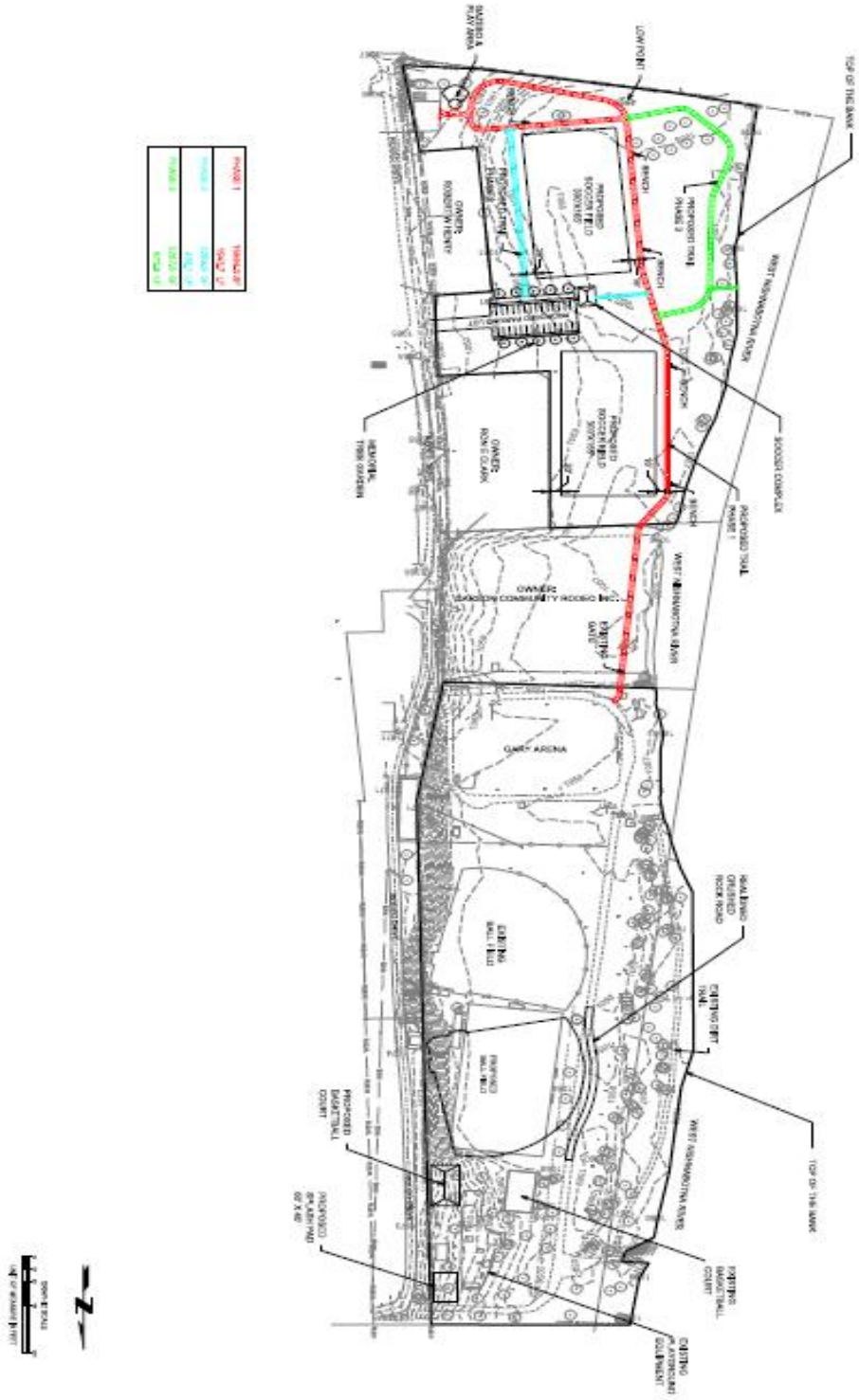
- **Linkages**

  A policy that provides open space linkages that form a connected system of sidewalks and trails through the city, as well as linkages to regional trail systems. A continued effort to follow the *2014 Carson Trail Project, Preliminary Cite Plan* depicted in Figure 2.2 provides a guide for a proposed policy.

- ***Waterfront***

  A policy of the city to protect suitably of the shorelines Nishnabotna River for public access, public use and scenic enjoyment would offer potential for public access, waterfront recreation or scenic vistas and offer unique recreational opportunities.

Figure 2.2 Proposed Trail Project



Source: JEO Consulting Group, 2014 Carson Trail Project, Preliminary Cite Plan

PART III: IMPELEMENTING THE PLAN

PLAN MAINTENANCE

The scope of the 2014 Carson Comprehensive Plan is long term and contains many ambitious goals. When taken as a whole, the Plan presents many long and short-term goals that will place significant burdens on the City. However, developing an implementation schedule will guide city officials in the decision making process and will allow the City to gradually cross off goals contained in this Plan. Every year, the City should take a look at this Plan and determine which goals can feasibly be completed. In addition, the City should review the Comprehensive Plan annually. This review should be in the form of report that:

• *Summarizes key land use developments in the past year and relates them to the goals contained in the comprehensive plan.*

• *Reviews action taken by the City during the past year to implement plan recommendations.*

• *Define any changes that should be made to the comprehensive plan.*

In this way, the Plan is a dynamic, changing document that is used actively by the City.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM

Using data gathered by the City in the development of its Infrastructure Needs Study and Strategic Plan, a strategy for completing capital improvements in a systematic fashion has been developed, with considerations made for availability of financial resources and priority of needed improvements as they relate to the City's overall development goals.

In 2012, the City of Carson conducted a series of meetings with City staff to discuss the infrastructure and capital improvements needs in the community. In these meetings the committee identified the City's infrastructure needs and other projects that the City deemed necessary to improve living conditions and services throughout the community. These meetings were part of a strategic planning process that documented needed capital improvements, detailed estimated costs for the improvements, and provided information on how the projects could be financed. This can be considered the basis for the city's Capital Improvements Program and thus, is an essential part of this plan. As projects are completed, the Capital Improvements Program should be reevaluated to determine if there are new needs. This program is a vital instrument to the City's budgeting process and any improvement undertaken should first be reviewed for compliance with both the Capital Improvements Program and the Comprehensive Plan.

IOWA SMART PLANNING ELEMENTS

- **Collaboration**

  Carson's planning is a continual process that involves multiple stake holders and groups in order to reach as many residents as possible to improve upon and encourage public partic ipation.

  Carson involves the public in multiple planning projects through the years to encourage focus on one project at a time. This is done through community surveys and planning processes through the years in order to track progress and public opinion.

  In 2008 a city wide resident survey was sent out to track citizen opinions on the city services, infrastructure, housing, and economic development. A total of 361 surveys were mailed out with 115 completed (31.9% response rate) and mailed back to city hall. The results of this survey were presented in a final report by the Southwest Iowa Planning Council.

  In 2010 Carson was one of 12 communities selected to participate in the 2010 Iowa's Living Roadways Community Vision Program. Visioning sessions included a steering committee of local residents and stakeholders who took part in a series of meetings that were facilitated by field coordinators from Trees Forever. Iowa State organized design interns and ISU faculty and staff, and the program was sponsored by the Iowa Department of Transportation. The final report was completed by Jeffrey L. Bruce and Company L.L.C. and provided an inventory analysis of Carson as well as a conceptual plan that included entry and wayfinding signage, multiple street designs, and trail development.

  Carson is currently working on a conceptual plan for the community park and has completed a trail plan with JEO Consulting. All of which included the opportunity for citizen input through planning commission meetings.

  The 2014 Carson Comprehensive Plan involved three planning commission meetings which were open to the public for any comments and suggestions. This comprehensive plan also relied on information from past planning and surveys performed in Carson.

- **Efficiency, Transparency, and Consistency**

  Access to planning documentation and studies is available upon request from the city clerk. The City of Carson Website currently provides citizens access to meeting minutes from city council meeting. The city has also updated its website with the new domain name of carsongov.com. This updated website allows for citizen input on issues and provides a community calendar for events in the city.

Throughout the planning processes citizens have had the opportunity to provide input. This information is outlined in the previous pullet point under "Collaboration."

- **Clean, Renewable, and Efficient Energy**

  MidAmerican Energy provides helpful tips to conserve energy on their website. It is encouraged that residents follow these tips.

- **Occupational Diversity**

  - *Expend Job Opportunities and the Tax Base*

    The encouragement of commercial/industrial facilities along Highway 92 is a goal of this plan. Most growth in the past 10 years has come from residential development, and the community is actively seeking ways to expand the local sales tax base as well, providing additional retail and commercial opportunities for the residents of Carson and all of southeastern Pottawattamie County. In recent years, City officials have made efforts to facilitate new commercial activity in the community, and will continue to do so in the next few years. While there are some local service employers in the community, the potential exists for additional job opportunities in the area, as the community currently has sites available for industrial or manufacturing uses, and is in the process of upgrading essential services to provide adequate capacity for these activities, in addition to anticipated residential growth. WIDA would be a resource for job creation.

- **Revitalization**

  - Encourage More Retail

    A goal of this plan is to revitalize the downtown commercial district, giving the community that Main St. feel. Currently, there is and has been a need for the town to regain an area with this designation. The need for more commercial services has been identified as a goal. A general store and other services that would be utilized could locate in the downtown commercial district, which would contribute significantly to the quality of life in Carson. However, a small population makes supporting basic commercial services a challenge. These services may need to fit a niche or a community survey may need to be completed to gauge community support.

    Another goal of this plan is to create a commercial district along Highway 92. This would help to diversify and grow the city's commercial uses and help pull traffic off of the highway.

- **Housing Diversity**

  Housing diversity is a goal of the plan, outlined on page 39. Below are the goals that correspond with Iowa Smart Planning Principles as it relates to housing diversity.

  - *Continue to create new housing developments*

    Carson has excellent access to Omaha and has capitalized on its location to jobs and services found there. Carson will continue to grow, and creating a sound vision for what form that growth should take, as well as creating incentives and clear guidelines for developers, are major goals of this plan.

  - *Provide all residents with access to a variety of safe, decent, sanitary housing types.*

    Affordable housing has never been relegated to a certain area of town, and the result has been a harmonious blend of income levels and household types. The community has expressed a desire to retain this tradition of mixed housing stock with the next wave of development, which it hopes will bring greater variety and affordability to town.

  - *Promote development of residential options for Carson's residents of all income levels*

    Offering incentives such as TIF could help create momentum to develop single-family affordable housing. The availability of all types and values of housing is a major factor in diverse growth of population.

  - *Actively access affordable housing programs available from local, state and federal agencies/departments.*

- **Community Character**

  A community concept plan for Carson has been created through the 2010 Carson Community Visioning Final Report and Feasibility Study. Using the results of the inventory analysis of community resources, the Carson visioning committee set goals and determined the visions that it has for Carson. Specific projects identified include:

  - Entry and way-finding signs
  - Highway 92, Commercial Street and North Street Enhancements
  - Downtown Enhancements
  - Broadway Boulevard Improvements
  - Tail Development

- **Natural Resource and Agricultural Protection**

  In 2001, the City acquired Prairie Preserve Park, an area that demonstrates and promotes a native prairie environment. This park is located west of the West Nishna Botna River, to the Carson City Park. REAP funding was awarded for the acquisition of property. The City then seeded the park using its own general funds. A path will be added to this park, which will be used for both a walking trail and for interpretation of the native prairie. The city plans to connect this to the east side of the river via a bridge and trail. A trail would be constructed to boarder the preserve and offer interpretive signage and way finding experience. Carson continues to maintain the prairie preserve grasses and flowers through a brush burning schedule**.**

- **Sustainable Development**

  2010 Carson Community Visioning Final Report and Feasibility Study encourage pedestrian oriented design through Broadway Boulevard and Commercial areas in Carson. The Carson Community Park Plan and subsequent Tail will provide a seamless pedestrian transition from Commercial Street to the parks, prairie preserve and rodeo arena.

- **Transportation Diversity**

  The proposed park trail should be an extension and connection to the Nishnabotna Loop System, and the Pottawattamie County “WattaWay” Water Trail System. It was also a goal of the plan to repair and expand city sidewalks and repair roadways as needed (see pg. 36).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Current Economic Development Activity

Carson is currently a member of Western Iowa Development Association (WIDA). WIDA was created in June of 1987 out of necessity to promote the area. WIDA was developed with the help of Nishnabotna Valley REC, Oakland Industrial Foundation, and Avoca Promotions. The mission of WIDA is to enhance employment opportunities through marketing, promotion, and development of people, products and resources. WIDA has enlarged its scope to assist individuals and municipalities with projects and to help businesses to locate and develop business opportunities in the region.

Goals

- Actively Market the Community

  While WIDA is there to assist Carson in marketing the city to potential businesses, the City of Carson can undertake some activities to supplement the current marketing initiatives. Websites such as Location One Information System (LOIS – www.locationone.com) provide an online clearinghouse for information about building sites and infrastructure available in a community. When sites become available, the pad sites can be advertised on LOIS at no charge to the community. Updating the community profile found on LOIS will also aid in marketing efforts – as new amenities are added it should be noted here. Keeping the site information as accurate as possible is extremely important when marketing.

- Participate in Creating “Shovel Ready” Sites

  Carson already has great potential for economic development, but can enhance the attractiveness of the community to business interests through infrastructure extension. While speculative development of commercial or industrial sites and buildings by the City is not recommended, the City can assist private entrepreneurs and landowners by providing incentives to extend infrastructure and participating and, in some instances, leading the push for outside funding for infrastructure development. Locally, policies such as TIF and tax abatement can help to offset the costs of infrastructure development and effectively level the playing field for Carson. Outside funding sources, such as RISE grants, revolving loan funds and other economic development oriented grant and loan programs can be used to assist private sector interests in developing infrastructure, buying equipment or training employees. The City of Carson must participate, and take the lead in some cases, in order for businesses to vie for these outside funding sources.

PART IV: FINAL REPORT

Public participation throughout the planning process was facilitated through meetings with the Carson Planning Commission, City Staff and citizens. Without the guidance and oversight of the Planning Commission, and the authorization of the City Council, this plan would not have been possible. The recommendations contained herein are based on identified community needs and represent the first step in planning for and maintaining the services, infrastructure and public amenities that make life in Carson pleasurable, safe and healthy. Dedication to implementing the projects in this plan and diligence in maintaining and updating all planning documents is necessary to ensure that the quality of life in Carson is maintained and enhanced throughout the years.