Acknowledgements

Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee
Kerry Bailey
Richard Pyle
Jason Carnahan
Karen Eisenbarth
Betty Reading
Sandy Roes
Matt Reeves
Randy Bauer

Chadron City Council
Paris Fisher, Mayor
Mark Werner, Vice Mayor
John Coates
Miles Bannan
John Gamby

Chadron Planning Commission
Chuck Miller, Chairperson
Russ Bohnenkamp, Vice Chairperson
Darrell Lang
Loren Young
Justin Coupens
John Woodson
Jeff Beye
Justin Murdock
Kourt Cooksley
Buff Tewahade, Alternate

Planning Team
The Lakota Group
Urban Development Services
Baker and Associates
Contents

Section 1: Introduction ........................................ 5
Section 2: The Chadron Community .................... 13
Section 3: Land Use and Existing Conditions ........ 37
Section 4: Comprehensive Plan ....................... 73
Section 5: Plan Implementation ......................... 113

Key Acronyms

ADA - Americans with Disability Act
ADT – Average Daily Traffic
CCCFF - Civic and Community Center Financing Fund
CDBG - Community Development Block Grant
CDE - Community Development Entity
CDR - Chadron Municipal Airport
CIP - Capital Improvements Plan
CLG – Certified Local Government
CRA - Community Redevelopment Area
CROWN - Credits to Own Program
GIS – Geographic Information System
HOME - Home Investments Partnerships Program
HUD – U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
MGD - Million Gallons Per Day
NAHTF - Nebraska Affordable Housing Trust Fund
NDOR - Nebraska Department of Roads
HPCDC - High Plains Community Development Corporation
NMTC - New Markets Tax Credit Program
NNR - Nebraska Northwest Railroad
NTAP - Nebraska Transportation Alternatives Program
PDA - Priority Development Areas
PUD - Planned Unit Development
SBA - Small Business Administration
TIF – Tax Increment Financing
USDA - U.S. Department of Agriculture
Section 1
Introduction

What is a Comprehensive Plan?

In the years ahead, as the Chadron community seeks to explore new growth and development opportunities along with the revitalization of its traditional neighborhoods and commercial areas, a well-defined vision and planning framework is needed to help guide local decision-making, especially in regards to land use, community and economic development, transportation, open space, neighborhoods, commercial corridors and districts, and infrastructure and capital improvements.

A Comprehensive Plan, therefore, serves as a “guidebook” for elected officials and municipal staff, residents, business owners, and local industries and potential investors, allowing them to make well-informed decisions based on community needs, existing assets and conditions, and on future economic and social trends.

Most importantly, decisions will be based on the community’s future vision for what it would like to become over the next 10 to 20 years.
The time horizon for implementing a Comprehensive Plan and working toward its community vision is 10 to 20 years, although the Plan should be reviewed and updated every five years to address local needs, issues and opportunities, and changing trends. The Plan should be used on a daily basis to assist the community in making any land use or development decision.

In summary, the Comprehensive Plan serves several purposes:

- **Existing Conditions.** City officials and community members can use the Comprehensive Plan to review where Chadron is today in terms of its existing population, transportation and infrastructure needs, and other conditions related to its commercial, residential and industrial areas.

- **Land Use Framework.** The Plan provides a land use framework and strategy that recommends a set of land uses and land use patterns that promote the highest and best uses of land while reducing land use conflicts and increasing the benefits the land can provide in terms of employment, transportation, food, clean water and recreation. Benefits must also be enduring and sustainable so that current and succeeding generations of Chadron residents can enjoy an enhanced quality of life. In addition, the Plan sets forth broad development and revitalization strategies that can be used to review and refine current and on-going community improvement and development projects, as well as adjust zoning and development regulations to ensure that such projects are in conformance with the goals, objectives, and policies set forth in this Comprehensive Plan.

- **Public Investment Guide.** The Chadron City Council should use the Comprehensive Plan to guide decision-making regarding investments in infrastructure, community facilities, and other capital improvements. The Plan can also be used in seeking grants at the regional, state and Federal levels.

- **Private Investment Guide.** Developers, industries, entrepreneurs and others interested in investing in Chadron can use the Comprehensive Plan to gain insight into the City’s development policies. Such investors also view sound comprehensive planning as critical to ensuring the viability and long-term success of their investments in the community.

- **Community Engagement Tool.** The process in creating this Comprehensive Plan provided an opportunity for local leaders, stakeholders and residents to understand and evaluate community strengths and weaknesses, and to craft strategies and recommendations for addressing critical planning issues. Future planning efforts for Chadron’s residential, commercial, and industrial areas, as recommended in this Comprehensive Plan, will also provide additional opportunities to engage Chadron’s stakeholders on important development and revitalization issues.

- **Future Vision.** This Comprehensive Plan will serve as an important document in informing current and future community stakeholders about Chadron’s long term vision. Above all, preparing a Comprehensive Plan represents a collaborative process between the City and its citizens in determining Chadron’s future.
Comprehensive Plan Organization

A Comprehensive Plan is typically composed of a several interrelated elements and chapters defined within the Nebraska Revised Statutes Section 19-903. The key elements included in the Chadron Comprehensive Plan are based upon those outlined in the State Statute, “which shall consist of both graphic and textual material and shall be designed to accommodate long range future growth.”

In addition, the Comprehensive Plan shall address key issues and elements such as providing adequate transportation, schools, parks, water and sanitary systems; protecting property against blight and deterioration; and, promoting a community’s general health and welfare. A comprehensive land use plan must also reflect the local conditions, concerns, and goals of a community. Most importantly, the plan must have a land use element, “which designates the proposed general distributions, general location and extent of the uses of land for agriculture, housing, commerce, industry, recreation, education, public buildings and lands, and other categories of public and private use of land.” It should be noted that a municipality’s zoning powers can only be exercised after the adoption of the community’s comprehensive plan.

In July 2010, the Nebraska Legislature amended Nebraska State Statute 23-114.02 to require all community comprehensive plans to incorporate an energy efficiency element. This element should document a community’s energy infrastructure and use by land use, including residential, commercial and industrial, and provide recommendations for encouraging energy conservation and the use of alternative and renewable energy sources.

Elements and chapters included in this Comprehensive Plan are:

- Section 1 - Introduction
- Section 2 - The Chadron Community
- Section 3 - Land Use and Existing Conditions
- Section 4 - Comprehensive Plan
- Section 5 - Plan Implementation

The Comprehensive Plan is essentially divided into two parts. Section 2 describes and analyzes the City’s current land use, transportation, infrastructure, environmental, and economic setting. Section 4 describes and summarizes the overall vision and comprehensive plan for the City of Chadron, along with the future land use framework and planning and revitalization strategies. Section 5 summarizes key implementation action steps.
Planning Mission and Process

In August 2014, the City of Chadron, along with community stakeholder groups and residents, initiated a five-month planning process to create a Comprehensive Plan. The key purpose of the Plan was to update the 1997 Comprehensive Plan and to create a long-term vision and planning framework for enhancing the community’s overall land use, economic vitality, and physical appearance and image, along with a set of practical implementation action strategies.

To facilitate the creation of a Comprehensive Plan, the City of Chadron engaged a multi-disciplinary planning team that included the following firms:

- The Lakota Group (Planning, Urban Design, Historic Preservation, Landscape Architecture, Community Relations)
- Urban Development Services (Economic Analysis and Public Policy)
- Baker and Associates (Transportation and Civil Engineering)

A Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, representing a broad-based segment of community stakeholders, including local property owners and residents, industries, merchants, civic institutions, governmental agencies and City leaders and officials, was formed in August 2014 to help guide the Plan’s development.

Beyond understanding Chadron’s long-term future, the Comprehensive Plan also seeks to assess current conditions and propose strategies and recommendations for the following Comprehensive Plan elements:

- **Land Use.** Evaluate existing community land uses and identify specific issues, constraints and opportunities to encouraging appropriate land use patterns and development within and near Chadron corporate boundaries and its extraterritorial jurisdiction.

- **Regulatory Tools.** Research and recommend new zoning and regulatory tools that manage and direct community growth and revitalization in ways that promotes economic diversity and vibrancy, and attractive places and neighborhoods.

- **Transportation Systems.** Document and analyze Chadron’s current roadway network and physical conditions as a method for exploring opportunities for achieving network efficiencies, roadway changes and pedestrian enhancements.

- **Infrastructure and Capital Improvements.** Conduct an overview assessment of the City’s sanitary, public utilities and stormwater management systems, and consider strategies for long-term system maintenance and capital improvements.
• **Neighborhoods and Housing.** Assess and analyze the condition of residential neighborhoods and the existing housing stock in order to determine appropriate planning strategies that address local housing needs through new construction, housing rehabilitation and infill development.

• **Commercial Areas and Corridors.** Examine planning and revitalization issues along the Highway 20 and 385 commercial corridors, including building and storefront improvements, business and real estate development, and urban design enhancements. This Comprehensive Plan does not assess Downtown planning issues in depth given the March 2014 adoption of the Downtown Master Plan. The Downtown Chadron Master Plan will be considered the Downtown Sub Area Plan as Part of this Comprehensive Plan.

• **Economic/Market Assessment.** Analyze and understand market trends for commercial, residential and industrial development within Chadron as a basis for establishing recommendations regarding future land use and economic development scenarios. Several market analysis components including the Downtown Chadron Master Plan were consulted and incorporated in this Comprehensive Plan’s Market and Economic Conditions section.

• **Parks and Open Space.** Identify, protect and enhance Chadron’s “green infrastructure” of existing parks and natural systems, as well as consider sustainable design initiatives that reduces stormwater run-off and promotes cleaner air and water.

• **Agencies, Organizations and Institutions.** Understand the current capacity of governmental agencies and other organizations and entities, including non-profit groups and religious and educational institutions to help implement a various aspects of the Comprehensive Plan.

• **Implementation Strategy.** Create a detailed implementation strategy that prioritizes specific planning actions, outlines roles and responsibilities between the City of Chadron and other agencies, organizations and entities, and identifies other stakeholders and groups that could participate in implementation efforts now and into the future.

• **Community Engagement.** Undertake an effective planning process that involves a broad and diverse section of community stakeholders in order to generate consensus for the Comprehensive Plan’s long-term development and revitalization vision, and short-term action strategies and planning recommendations.

The planning process for creating the Comprehensive Plan involved two distinct phases: a “State of the City” phase where an assessment of existing conditions was conducted by the planning team and a preliminary set of planning goals and strategies were prepared; and, a final plan-making phase in which planning goals, strategies and implementation action steps were developed by the planning team in collaboration with the community and are accepted and adopted by the City.
Phase 1: State of the City

The first phase, initiated in August 2014, comprised a comprehensive assessment of Chadron’s existing conditions in the following areas: land use, transportation, infrastructure, parks and open space, community facilities and neighborhood, commercial and industrial areas. The planning team also reviewed relevant planning documents and policies, assessed the community’s existing demographics and economic development activities and, defined challenges and opportunities on achieving short and long-term planning and revitalization goals.

Phase 1 also included various focus group and stakeholder interview sessions to gain public input and insight regarding critical planning issues. Field work activities were also conducted. Field work, document analyses, and review of interview and focus group session proceedings were incorporated in a “State of the City” chapter. Phase 1 included several different activities and tasks that are summarized in the following section:

Project Start Meeting, Community Tour and Stakeholder Interviews (August 18 - 21, 2014)

A meeting with City staff and officials was conducted to initiate the planning process and to discuss specific items related to the project schedule, the planning process and community planning issues. The planning team, along with City staff, also conducted a reconnaissance tour of Chadron to observe and document existing conditions. During the course of Visit #1, several interview and focus group sessions were conducted with various community stakeholders, including local residents, industries and business owners; non-profit groups and institutions; local schools; Chadron State College; the U.S. Forest Service; and, the Nebraska Northwest Development Corporation and other local planning, housing and economic development groups. Proceedings of the stakeholder interviews and focus group sessions were recorded. The Planning Team also conducted in-the-field observations and documentation of existing conditions during the visit.

Community Workshop #1 (September 24, 2014)

A two-hour evening community input workshop was conducted at the Country Kitchen restaurant to solicit feedback on important planning issues and concerns from Chadron residents and stakeholders. Feedback was solicited through several interactive mapping exercises. Approximately 52 people attended.

State of the City Report

Following the completion of Phase 1 assessment and analysis, the Planning Team prepared the State of the City Report, which summarizes Chadron’s key strengths, challenges, and opportunities and preliminary planning goals and strategies.
Phase 2: Final Comprehensive Plan

The second phase of the planning process will involve the creation and development of specific and more detailed planning concepts and revitalization strategies that enhances Chadron’s physical appearance, transportation and infrastructure options and overall economic environment. As part of Phase 2, planning concepts were presented during a community workshop on September 24, 2014. Afterward, planning concepts were refined into a Comprehensive Plan prepared in November 2014. Additional refinements were undertaken after public input was received by the planning team.

Community Workshop #1 (December 3, 2014)

A second community meeting was held to present a draft of the Comprehensive Plan and to receive additional feedback and comments. Approximately 42 people attended.

Chadron Planning Commission Meeting (January 12, 2015)

The Comprehensive Plan was presented to the Chadron Planning Commission for discussion and comment. Subsequent to the meeting, a new draft of the Comprehensive Plan was prepared.

Chadron City Council Meeting (January 19, 2015)

The revised draft of the Comprehensive Plan was presented at the January 19, 2015 regular meeting of the Chadron City Council for discussion and comment. Subsequent to the meeting, a new draft of the Comprehensive Plan was prepared.
Section 2
The Chadron Community

Regional Context

The City of Chadron is located in the far northwestern corner of Nebraska’s Panhandle region, within Dawes County, and at the juncture of U.S. Highway 20, known locally as the Crazy Horse Memorial Highway, and U.S. Highway 385, also known as Ash Street within Chadron’s municipal boundary. Chadron currently borders no other town, city or place, with the exception of the Nebraska National Forest at its southeastern edge, and is one of only three incorporated municipalities within the County, including the Village of Whitney and the City of Crawford.

Other places and unincorporated areas within the County include Marsland, Belmont and Dakota Junction. Dawes County is bordered by Sioux County to the west, Box Butte County to the south, Sheridan County to the east and the State of the South Dakota to the north. The County has 42 townships and encompasses an area of 1,404 miles. Chadron is the seat of government for Dawes County.
Chadron is currently not located within a Metropolitan or Micropolitan Statistical Area – a Metropolitan Statistical Area being defined as a metro area containing an urban core of 50,000 or more in population, and a Micropolitan area consisting of an urban core of at least 10,000 but less than 50,000 in population. Within the larger region, Chadron is situated near several metropolitan areas, including the Denver-Aurora-Lakewood metropolitan area in Colorado (302 miles), Cheyenne and Casper, Wyoming (101 miles and 185 miles, respectively), and the Rapid City, South Dakota metropolitan area (102 miles). Chadron is also located 433 miles from Omaha and 422 miles from Lincoln, the two metropolitan areas within the State of Nebraska. Apart from the metropolitan areas, Chadron is located to the northeast of the Scottsbluff (98 miles) Micropolitan Area that comprises Banner, Scottsbluff and Sioux counties. Other nearby cities and towns include Hot Springs, South Dakota (55 miles); Sturgis, South Dakota (130 miles); Alliance, Nebraska (55 miles); and, Valentine, Nebraska (137 miles).
Chadron is an established community formally organized in 1885 with a population of 5,787 (estimate, U.S. Census, 2013). The overall population of Dawes County is 9,088 (estimate, U.S. Census, 2013). First platted in the early 1880s, Chadron today encompasses approximately 3.85 square miles of land and water and is situated within three distinct topographical regions: the Dawes Table lands and plateau towards the southern half of the Dawes County; the Pine Ridge escarpments, slopes and pine forests that traverse through the County’s center, and the Pierre Hills grasslands that are found to the northwest of Chadron.\(^1\) With these topographic and geologic features, Chadron enjoys a unique proximity to several significant natural resource and recreational areas, including the adjacent Nebraska National Forest, the Oglala National Grasslands (30 miles from Chadron) and the Toadstool Geological Park located within the Oglala National Grasslands. Chadron State Park, a Nebraska State Park situated within the Nebraska National Forest is located nine miles south of Chadron.

In addition to these nearby natural resource amenities, Fort Robinson State Park, which contains the extant buildings of Fort Robinson and its grounds, is located 28 miles west of Chadron along U.S. Highway 20. Fort Robinson, a former U.S. Army Fort, is also listed in the National Register of Historic Places, this nation’s official list of buildings, sites and structures worthy of preservation, and a National Historic Landmark. Like many Nebraska Panhandle communities, Chadron had experienced similar patterns of population growth corresponding to the coming of railroad in the 1880s, and subsequent droughts in the 1890s and early 1900s. Chadron’s population stabilized and rebounded in 1910s and 20s due largely to the establishment of Chadron State College, which today boasts 70 undergraduate and 13 graduate programs and a combined full and part-time enrollment of approximately 3,000 students.

Beyond Chadron State College, Chadron today remains a significant center in the Panhandle for employment and small industries, retail and professional services, recreation, education, and ranching and agricultural-related businesses. Its Downtown business district retains an intact collection of Victorian and post Victorian-era commercial architecture unlike other small communities and rural towns across the country where the Downtown building fabric have been lost to prior urban renewal efforts. The recently adopted Downtown Chadron Master Plan has inspired and mobilized community efforts to encourage façade and building improvements, upper-story residential conversions, and new streetscape and urban design enhancements.

\(^1\) *Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey: Dawes County.* Nebraska State Historical Society, August 2005; page 1.
Historic Context

Fur Trading and the Native American Legacy

The history of the Chadron and Panhandle region is inseparably bound to the early fur-trading enterprises established by the Spanish, British and French during the eighteenth century and the various indigenous Native American tribes that both lived, roamed and hunted the area from the Black Hills in South Dakota, to the Upper White and Niobara Rivers near Chadron and further south to the Platte River Valley. The Lakota Sioux or Grand Teton Sioux, a confederation of tribes that include the Oglala and Brule, became the dominant Native American bands near the Chadron and Black Hills region after their settlement in the Great Plains after moving from the South and North Dakota border with Minnesota during the mid-1700s. The Lakota made the Black Hills their home after defeating the Cheyenne tribe for control of the land in 1776.

The success of the western fur trade, which centered on hides from beaver, buffalo, and various other animals, along with the California gold discovery in 1840s, spurred an increased influx of travelers and settlers through the region and on trails and land that the Lakota Sioux and other tribes relied on for hunting, trade and travel. By the middle 1800s, much of northwest Nebraska was populated by trappers, ranchers and other entrepreneurs seeking to make their fortune in the region’s ongoing settlement and emerging commercial activity.2

Much of the fur trading during the first half of the eighteenth century prospered along the North Platte River and the Upper White River near Chadron, most significantly with the establishment of fur trading posts by the American Fur Trading Company and others.3 During the 1840s, two competing fur trade posts were established near Chadron, one, eight miles south of present day Chadron and the other, approximately three and one-half miles east of Chadron along Bordeaux Creek.4 Furs were often transported from these posts along the creeks and tributaries to the Upper White River, and along the trail routes that connected the Chadron region to important locations, such as Fort Laramie in Wyoming and Fort Pierre in South Dakota.

Over this period, however, driven by the discovery of gold in the Black Hills, increased encroachment on Sioux lands by both traders and settlers led to a succession of conflicts and wars with the Lakota Sioux and other tribes, leading ultimately to the establishment of the Red Cloud Agency first in Wyoming and then later near Crawford, Nebraska. Camp Robinson (later Fort Robinson) was established in 1873 to provide security to the Sioux Indians on the Agency and to the important supply lines to the Agency both east and west. The Fort was later moved to its present location in 1874. The Sioux resistance in the region would end in 1890 during the Ghost Dance War, which led to the death of Sitting Bull at the Standing Rock Agency

3 Nebraska Historic Building Survey, page 4.

Main Street, Downtown Chadron, circa 1930s; postcard courtesy of Urban Development Services
and the massacre at Wounded Knee Creek at the hands of the U.S. 7th Calvary Regiment.

**Chadron’s Settlement and Growth**

Formal settlement of the Chadron area took place during most of the latter half of the nineteenth century with the coming of the railroads — the Fremont, Elkhorn and Missouri Valley Railroad was first constructed through Chadron in 1884 with the Chicago and Northwestern Railway following in 1885. During this time, Chadron was initially located six miles northwest of its present location at the confluence of the White River and Chadron Creek and originally called O’Linn after its founder Fannie O’Linn. When O’Linn residents discovered that the Elkhorn and Missouri Valley Railroad was to locate and plat a new town on land owned by Fannie O’Linn, which was to be called Bordeaux in honor of a well-known early explorer and landowner, an uproar ensued resulting in the townspeople moving the entire town O’Linn to the new location.5

The new town was named Chadron after the Louis Chartran, a French-Indian fur-trapper who lived in the region during the 1880s. In succeeding years after Chadron’s first platting by the Fremont railroad, Chadron would grow significantly with an influx of new settlers and immigrants — Germans, Irish, Swedes, English, Danes, Czechs and Scots — all seeking the promise of a new life and fortune in the ever expanding frontier. By the end of 1885, there would be 2,500 living in the new town of Chadron.6 The town would also become the county seat when Dawes County was created from the division of Sioux County into four smaller counties in 1885.7

Throughout much of the late 1890s until the Panic of 1893, Chadron would prosper as a center of commerce, industry and trade as new stores, factories, freight depots, hotels, churches and opera houses located in and around the Downtown commercial district and adjacent residential neighborhoods. The railroads in particular would provide the impetus for Chadron’s growth as they brought new settlers and visitors and transported goods and commodities from the surrounding region and beyond. Chadron also served the growing needs of the cattle and ranching industry that began to take root in the surrounding lands.

By 1893, Chadron’s population was 5,500 although the Panic and subsequent droughts would reduce the population to only 1,700 by the turn of the century.8 It was during much of the late 1880s and early 1890s that many of Downtown Chadron’s distinctive commercial vernacular buildings, including those located along the 200 block of Main Street and the 100 and 200 blocks of 2nd Street, were first built to house new stores, banks, bakers, grocers, hardware businesses, restaurants, dry good establishments and saloons. A new Dawes County Courthouse was also constructed along with a citywide water system estimated to have cost $100,000 at the time.9 With the passage of the Kinkaid Act of 1904 by the U.S. Congress, the population of both Dawes County and Chadron rebounded as new settlers to the region arrived to claim the free 640 acres of land if they would remain on the land for at least five years.10

In the following decades, Chadron continued to grow steadily in population as it became the economic and social center of the far northwest Nebraska Panhandle. It also became an

---

5 *Nebraska Historic Building Survey: Dawes County*, page 8.
8 *Chadron Commercial District National Register Nomination*, Section page 1.
important destination for higher education with the establishment of the Northwest Nebraska Normal School in 1911, later known as Chadron State College, as one of the Nebraska’s four state teacher schools at the time. The School was built at Chadron’s southern edge on the site of a former Congregational Academy and on axis with the Downtown commercial district along Main Street. The School’s first buildings would include a women’s dormitory and hall, a gymnasium, a library and Crites Hall, a building constructed as a men’s dormitory by the Works Progress Administration in the 1930s. Further development of the campus would not resume until after World War II. Other important institutions created in the period before and during the Great Depression include the Chadron Public Library, constructed from 1910 to 1912 and partially financed by philanthropist Andrew Carnegie, and Chadron’s first permanent hospital, located on 800 block of Morehead Street, constructed in 1928. A new Dawes County Courthouse was also constructed between 1935 and 1937, designed in the Art Deco style and sited along the Main Street axis between 4th and 5th Streets. Outside of Chadron, two of the region’s most important natural resource and recreational amenities would be established, including the Nebraska National Forest in 1908 and the 974-acre Chadron State Park by the State of Nebraska in 1921. Municipal parks would be later established with the addition of Wilson Park and War Memorial Park, both located along the east and west ends of the Chadron along 10th Street just north of the Chadron State College campus.

As with most communities during the Great Depression, Chadron suffered its share of retail store and bank closures and the loss of area farms and ranches due to dust storms and crop failures. However, Chadron would grow again after World War II and into the 1950s as railroading, ranching and agriculture, and Chadron State College’s continued campus expansion would help to strengthen the community’s economic base well into the 1960s. While Downtown would largely retain its original land area and footprint, new residential areas of Ranch homes and Cape Cod cottages would develop in newer neighborhoods, including the newly established Kenwood addition north of the railroad corridor. The addition would retain the mostly gridded street network of the Downtown and the adjacent older traditional neighborhoods extending south from Downtown to Chadron State College.

Increasing use of the automobile during this period also led to changing land use patterns as new strip commercial developments began appearing on Third Street, which became U.S. Highway 20 during the 1920s. Commercial activity also gravitated to the intersection of U.S. Highways 20 and 385, approximately 1 mile west of the Downtown district. Increasingly, Downtown Chadron, like many downtown business districts in rural areas during the 1960s and 70s, would experience decline as shoppers traveled to larger urban centers for goods and services. Chadron would also experience significant job losses from the closure of the division headquarters of the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad during the mid-1980s.

Chadron Today

Chadron continues to be a center for commerce and economic activity in Nebraska’s northwest Panhandle, supported by a vibrant regional ranching and agriculture industry and an expanding campus and educational mission for Chadron State College. In recent years, the College has added new dormitory and academic facilities – the most notable facilities for new agriculture and rangeland management programs. Chadron Community
Hospital relocated from its long-time Morehead Street building to a newly constructed hospital facility located on West 8th Street and Centennial Drive. Downtown revitalization efforts have been initiated with the adoption of a new master plan in 2014; façade improvements, upper-story residential conversion and various urban design enhancements comprise the key master plan goals and elements. Infrastructure and storm sewer replacement projects are also underway in the Downtown. These projects and initiatives demonstrate a continued commitment on the part of the community to maintain Chadron as a vibrant place and destination in the upcoming decades of the 21st century.

City Governance Structure

According to Nebraska Revised Statute 16-101, the City of Chadron is currently classified as a “first class city” — one that is between 5,000 and 100,000 in population, including people residing in a city’s territorial boundaries.15 Chadron is currently governed by City Council-City Manager form of municipal government with a City council consisting of five members elected at large. All Council members serve staggered four-year terms with the Mayor and Vice-Mayor chosen from the City Council. Apart from the City Manager, the City administration also consists of several key administrative staff posts and departments that carry out specific functions of the City, including the City Clerk, the City Attorney and City Finance Officer along with the Public Works Department, Fire and Police, Community Development, Streets, the Parks Department, Municipal Airport and the Chadron Public Library. There are also several boards and commissions staffed by City Council members and volunteers from the Chadron community, including the Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Adjustment; the Housing Authority and the Community Development Advisory Committee; the Library, Airport, Zoning, Civil Service and Health Boards; and, the downtown Business Improvement District.

City economic development efforts are managed through the non-profit Nebraska Northwest Development Corporation based in Chadron. The Chadron Chamber of Commerce also serves to promote and market its business members as well as Chadron area special events and festivals.

Previous Plans and Studies

The following is a summary of previous plans, reports, and documents that were reviewed as part of the Comprehensive Plan process. The City’s last Comprehensive Plan — “The Chadron Plan” as it was titled — was adopted in 1997.

1997 Comprehensive Plan — The Chadron Plan

In 1997, the planning firm of RDG Croese Gardner and Shukert was engaged by the City of Chadron to prepare a comprehensive development plan. The City had previously adopted a comprehensive plan in 1969. The Chadron Plan provided a thorough analysis of land use, building and market conditions; infrastructure and public facilities; housing and neighborhoods; and, transportation and mobility. The central planning goals and land use policies

---

15 Nebraska Revised Statute 16-101.
presented in The Chadron Plan emphasize the need for an adequate supply of land for future growth, encouraging compact development that is contiguous with existing infrastructure, and concentrating new development on infill sites Downtown and strategically along 1st and 2nd Streets east of Downtown and in open greenfield areas around the edges of Chadron.

Another key plan element is the formal creation of a greenway network through the City and knit together by the development of a citywide trails network connecting the neighborhoods, Downtown and Chadron State College together through landscaped boulevards, walking paths and parks. An additional element of the network would include the creation of a new neighborhood park in the City’s southwest quadrant and a nature preserve between Niobara Street and the railroad corridor just north of 1st Street. The Plan also proposed the development of “Chadron Square” where vacant and underutilized parcels along 1st and 2nd Streets at Main Street would be infilled with new mixed use developments and combined with various public space enhancements.

2014 Chadron, Nebraska Downtown Master Plan
In 2013, Urban Development Services of San Antonio, Texas was engaged by the City to create a Downtown Master Plan, which was funded in part by a Phase 1 Downtown Revitalization Community Development Block Grant Program from the State of Nebraska. The Plan’s major emphasis is to capitalize on Downtown’s history and historic architecture and catalyze Downtown reinvestment by encouraging appropriate building façade and storefront rehabilitations and the conversion of vacant upper floors into apartments and living spaces.

Urban design and public space enhancements are also proposed through various streetscaping and landscaping improvements along Main Street and 1st, 2nd and 3rd Streets. Other Master Plan recommendations include the need for a downtown management entity — such a Main Street revitalization program or a Community Redevelopment Authority (CRA) — to help in the implementation of the Master Plan, funding strategies for façade, building and public space enhancements, and suggested zoning changes to discourage light industrial uses from creeping in the Downtown commercial core along 2nd Street. The Downtown Master Plan was adopted by the City Council in March of 2014.

The following is a summary of other plans and documents that have planning implications for the City of Chadron.

2012 Heartland Expressway Corridor Development and Management Plan
In 1998, the Federal Transportation Equity Act (TEA-21) designated a proposed transportation corridor stretching from Limon, Colorado to Rapid City, South Dakota and Torrington, Wyoming as a “high priority” corridor to be developed as part of the U.S. Highway System. This corridor route, the Heartland Expressway, would form a “modern trade corridor” that would extend from Mexico through Colorado, Nebraska, and North and South Dakota to Canada. In 2012, the Nebraska Department of Roads prepared a Corridor Development and Management Plan to explore different scenarios for how the Expressway would impact the areas of northwest Nebraska the Expressway would travel through, including Chadron by way of U.S. Highway 385. The study suggested an overall vision of a divided four-lane expressway, except in areas where they already exist, or an interim solution of two 12-foot lanes and ten-foot shoulders with passing lanes. Cost estimates for the four-lane expressway would be approximately $3 million a mile; the two 12-foot lanes scenario would be $1 million per mile. A 20-year time frame is expected for project implementation and construction.
The Nebraska State Historical Society engaged the Louis Berger Group, Inc., to conduct a county-wide architectural and historical survey that included Chadron, along with the communities of Crawford, Marsland, Whitney, and Belmont; Fort Robinson State Park; the agricultural areas of the Whitney Irrigation District and the Mirage Flats; and, other unincorporated rural parts of the County. The purpose of the survey was to determine the number of buildings, sites, structures and objects that may be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Approximately 645 buildings and sites in Chadron were surveyed with a number of commercial and residential properties identified as potentially eligible, including the Chadron U.S. Post Office, the Automobile Showroom at 202 West 2nd Street and a number of high-style and vernacular residences. These properties are in addition to the Chadron Downtown Commercial District, the Hotel Chadron, the Dawes County Courthouse and buildings of the Chadron State College Campus that are already listed in the National Register.

Vision 2011 represented a multi-year effort by Chadron State College to update its earlier planning document, Vision 2001, and to prioritize key strategic programs and initiatives in maintaining and advancing the role of the College as the premier education institution in the western High Plains states. Key goals and objectives of the Vision Plan include creating and supporting a culture for academic innovation; the recruitment and retention of underrepresented populations to the student body, Native Americans in particular; forging positive relationships and productive partnerships between the College and local and regional communities; and, assuming leadership roles in regional issues related to educational, cultural and economic development. The Plan also outlines objectives related to facilities and their maintenance and improvement to ensure they meet academic needs and student expectations. As a broad vision plan, Vision 2011 does not provide specific recommendations on current and future facility needs.

In collaboration with the City and different stakeholder groups, a trails and sidewalk master plan was created to extend and complete a connected trails network to promote walking and cycling activities within the community. The Plan outlines potential connections with the Chadron State College Trail on both 10th and Maple Streets and Ridgeview Road to the east with a northward extension that would cross the railroad right-of-way at Spruce Street. Another extension would place the trail north past the Chadron Intermediate School, south to Highway 20 and then west around Walmart and looping back again to 10th Street. In addition to this trail network, the Plan also proposes routes and alignments for the Cowboy Trail along 1st Street and the railroad right-of-way.
Population History and Demographic Context

The following is an overview of key information regarding Chadron’s population and demographic characteristics, employment base, and commercial and industrial activity. In particular, population characteristics and trends were examined in order to understand how household composition impacts future growth and economic development plans, as well as municipal services.

Population Trends

Table 1 (A) summarizes population change in Chadron since 1960 and includes Chadron and nearby and comparable communities of Crawford, Alliance, Gordon, Scottsbluff and Hot Springs, South Dakota. As Table 1 demonstrates, only three of the five comparison communities, Chadron, Alliance and Scottsbluff, added population over the last 50 years; Hot Springs and Crawford lost population. Although Chadron’s population decreased less than a percentage point over the last three years, its population has remained relatively stable over the last 50 years — due largely to its position as the county seat, the home of Chadron State College, and the center of ranching and agriculture in the region. In fact, Chadron’s population has modestly rebounded since the 1980s when the Chadron regional office of Chicago and Northwestern Railroad’s regional office closed. However, overall, of the five comparison communities, only Alliance experienced a very modest population increase during the last three years. It should be noted that all population and demographic information is based on U.S. Census information.

Table 1 (B) summarizes the relative general population characteristics of Chadron and Dawes County. Although the County’s population has declined 4.7 percent over the past 50 years, Chadron’s population grew 13.9 percent over the same period, providing an indication that

| TABLE 1A: POPULATION CHANGE IN CHADRON AND NEARBY COMMUNITIES, 1960 - 2013 |
|----------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|----------|
| Chadron                          | 5,079  | 5,921  | 5,933  | 5,588  | 5,634  | 5,851  | 5,787   | -1.09%    |
| Crawford                         | 1,588  | 1,291  | 1,315  | 1,492  | 997    | 1,107  | 985     | -11.0%    |
| Alliance                         | 7,845  | 6,862  | 9,920  | 9,765  | 8,959  | 8,491  | 8,498   | 0.08%     |
| Gordon                           | 2,223  | 2,106  | 2,167  | 1,803  | 1,107  | 1,612  | 1,544   | -4.22%    |
| Scottsbluff                      | 13,377 | 14,507 | 14,156 | 13,711 | 14,732 | 15,039 | 15,023  | -0.10%    |
| Hot Springs, SD                 | 4,943  | 4,434  | 4,742  | 4,325  | 4,129  | 3,711  | 3,514   | -5.30%    |

Source: U.S. Census

| TABLE 1B: POPULATION CHANGE IN CHADRON AND DAWES COUNTY, 1960 - 2013 |
|----------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|----------|
| Chadron                          | 5,079  | 5,921  | 5,933  | 5,588  | 5,634  | 5,851  | 5,787   | -1.09%    |
| Dawes County                     | 9,536  | 9,761  | 9,609  | 9,021  | 9,060  | 9,182  | 9,088   | -1.02%    |

Source: U.S. Census
Chadron remains an important regional center despite the population and economic consolidation that has occurred in outlying County areas. This consolidation may be due to the out-migration of younger adults to larger cities in Nebraska and elsewhere or to in-migration of adults over 65 to Chadron itself. In addition, some losses in agriculture industry over the past decade account for some of the County population decline.

To better understand Chadron’s population dynamics and its potential growth and development implications, it is important to examine several variables, including the composition and median age of the City’s population, and the growth and decline of certain age cohorts. Table 2 (A) below documents Chadron’s 2012 population make-up and its comparison to the State of Nebraska. Chadron’s population is generally similar to that of Nebraska’s in that its composition is primarily white (90.08 percent) while the number of Native Americans (3.80 percent) and Asians (1.90 percent) is slightly larger. Chadron median age is 27 (Table 2 (B)) — considerably younger than Nebraska’s median age of 36, which indicates a significant portion of Chadron’s cohorts are weighted to younger age cohorts or groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 2A: CHADRON RACE AND ETHNICITY, 2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Race + Ethnicity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian Alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian Alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some Other Race Alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or More Races</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic Origins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source: U.S. Census</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 2B: CHADRON MEDIAN AGE, 2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Median Age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source: U.S. Census</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Population Projections

Table 2(C) below examines Chadron’s population in 2000 and 2010, divided into 5 year age increments or Cohorts; Table 2(D) following then compares the actual 2010 population with a projected population for 2010, which is determined by applying average birth and death rates to population data from 2000. The difference between actual and predicted population indicate which cohorts experienced growth (or decline) beyond natural population change. This variance or difference from expectation is attributed to residents moving into or out of a community, commonly known as migration. It should be noted that Table 2(C) includes the Chadron State College student population.

As demonstrated in Table 2(C), Chadron’s population has remained stable between 2000 and 2010 with significant positive growth rates in two age groups: 25 to 34 year-olds and the 55 to 59 year olds (2.60 percent and 4.54 percent respectively). In general, the 55 to 74 age cohort experienced the strongest population increases over the decade, suggesting that a portion of the growth may be due to retirement age adults relocating to Chadron to downsize their households or to be closer to health care services. However, as Table 2(D) shown on the following page demonstrates, the growth in the age group was not as strong as predicted, which could signify that some retirement age adults and couples could be opting elsewhere in Nebraska or outside the state to retire.

### TABLE 2C: POPULATION CHANGE IN CHADRON AND NEARBY COMMUNITIES, 1960 - 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cohort</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>Change 2000-2010</th>
<th>% of Total in 2000</th>
<th>% of Total in 2010</th>
<th>Percent Change</th>
<th>2000-2010 Growth Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 5</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>364</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>5.27%</td>
<td>6.22%</td>
<td>22.56%</td>
<td>2.09%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to 9</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>4.85%</td>
<td>5.37%</td>
<td>15.02%</td>
<td>1.04%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 to 14</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>4.81%</td>
<td>4.60%</td>
<td>-0.74%</td>
<td>-0.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 to 19</td>
<td>778</td>
<td>720</td>
<td>-58</td>
<td>13.81%</td>
<td>12.31%</td>
<td>-7.46%</td>
<td>-0.72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 to 24</td>
<td>1,213</td>
<td>1,082</td>
<td>-131</td>
<td>21.53%</td>
<td>18.49%</td>
<td>-10.80%</td>
<td>-1.16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 34</td>
<td>572</td>
<td>740</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>10.15%</td>
<td>12.65%</td>
<td>29.37%</td>
<td>2.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 to 44</td>
<td>549</td>
<td>523</td>
<td>-26</td>
<td>9.74%</td>
<td>8.94%</td>
<td>-4.74%</td>
<td>-0.51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 to 54</td>
<td>579</td>
<td>557</td>
<td>-22</td>
<td>10.28%</td>
<td>9.52%</td>
<td>-3.80%</td>
<td>-0.41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55 to 59</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>3.28%</td>
<td>4.94%</td>
<td>56.22%</td>
<td>4.54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 to 64</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>3.35%</td>
<td>3.90%</td>
<td>20.63%</td>
<td>1.92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 to 74</td>
<td>312</td>
<td>362</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>5.54%</td>
<td>6.19%</td>
<td>16.03%</td>
<td>1.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75 to 84</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>-30</td>
<td>5.18%</td>
<td>4.48%</td>
<td>-10.27%</td>
<td>-1.05%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85+</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2.20%</td>
<td>2.41%</td>
<td>13.71%</td>
<td>1.31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>5,634</td>
<td>5,851</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>3.85%</td>
<td>0.40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census
The growth in 25 to 34 year olds also suggests that young adults and families may also be relocating to the community for the local schools and other amenities, although there may be a percentage of this cohort (Table 2(D)) that still prefer to live elsewhere to establish their careers and raise their families until mid-life. The relative decline of age groups between 10 and 24 may be an indication that some younger adults may be leaving for college or work outside the community.

Projecting Chadron’s population into the future, given existing growth and economic trends, serves to understand the community’s future land use development scenarios, and infrastructure and community facility objectives and policies. Population projections can be made based on past growth numbers and reasonable assumptions on future economic activities at the local and regional levels. Table 3 below summarizes projections on the last measurable growth rate of 0.40 percent and rates of 1.00 and 2.00 percent. Constraints of providing and extending infrastructure in Chadron may assume that only modest population increases could be accommodated over time.

### TABLE 2(D): MIGRATION – PREDICTED VERSUS ACTUAL POPULATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>2010 Predicted</th>
<th>2010 Actual</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 5</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>364</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to 9</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 to 14</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 to 19</td>
<td>867</td>
<td>720</td>
<td>-147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 to 24</td>
<td>1,008</td>
<td>1,082</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 34</td>
<td>804</td>
<td>740</td>
<td>-64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 to 44</td>
<td>366</td>
<td>523</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 to 54</td>
<td>526</td>
<td>557</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55 to 59</td>
<td>494</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>-205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 to 64</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 to 74</td>
<td>423</td>
<td>362</td>
<td>-61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75 to 84</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85+</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5,846</td>
<td>5,851</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census

### TABLE 3: PROJECTED POPULATION 2010-2030

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Growth Rate</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2025</th>
<th>2030</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.40% Growth Rate</td>
<td>5,851</td>
<td>5,968</td>
<td>6,089</td>
<td>6,212</td>
<td>6,337</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.00% Growth Rate</td>
<td>5,851</td>
<td>6,149</td>
<td>6,463</td>
<td>6,793</td>
<td>7,139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.00% Growth Rate</td>
<td>5,851</td>
<td>6,460</td>
<td>7,132</td>
<td>7,874</td>
<td>8,694</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The Lakota Group
Employment and Industry

Chadron is home to several significant employers and industries ranging from educational institutions, such as Chadron State College, to health care, governmental agencies, retail and professional services. Chadron’s economic base is significantly diverse; and, over the ten year period between 2000 and 2010, overall job numbers have increased by 10 percent, an indication that Chadron remains a strong employment center in the Nebraska Panhandle. For the purpose of this Comprehensive Plan, industry and employment in Chadron is measured using information provided by the U.S. Census and the State of Nebraska and defined both by occupation — as defined by the U.S. Census — and by industry.

### TABLE 5(A): EMPLOYMENT BY OCCUPATION, 2000-2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>2000 Jobs</th>
<th>2010 Jobs</th>
<th>% of Jobs</th>
<th>Change</th>
<th>% Change</th>
<th>2010 Median Earnings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Management, Business + Financial Operations</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
<td>-30</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
<td>$39,375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer, Engineering, + Science Occupations</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>-5</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
<td>$40,924</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education, Legal, Community Service, Arts +</td>
<td>338</td>
<td>444</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>31.4%</td>
<td>$44,519</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media Occupations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare Practitioner + Technical Occupations</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
<td>$63,583</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare Support Occupations</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>-101</td>
<td>-69.7%</td>
<td>$9,457</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protective Service Occupations</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>71.9%</td>
<td>$26,657</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Preparation + Serving Related Occupations</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>31.8%</td>
<td>$6,613</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building + Grounds Cleaning + Maintenance</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>-3</td>
<td>-2.5%</td>
<td>$15,703</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Care + Service Occupations</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>48.0%</td>
<td>$5,160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales + Related Occupations</td>
<td>451</td>
<td>373</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>-78</td>
<td>-17.3%</td>
<td>$6,844</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office + Administrative Support Occupations</td>
<td>466</td>
<td>577</td>
<td>17.7%</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>23.8%</td>
<td>$9,767</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farming, Fishing + Forestry Occupations</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>$8,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction + Extraction Occupations</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>70.0%</td>
<td>$23,173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Installation, Maintenance + Repair Occupations</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>-87</td>
<td>-60.8%</td>
<td>$12,279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production Occupations</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>-67</td>
<td>-78.8%</td>
<td>$47,955</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation Occupations</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>170.7%</td>
<td>$2,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Material Moving Occupations</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>140.0%</td>
<td>$16,579</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2,972</td>
<td>3,269</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
<td></td>
<td>$22,345</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census
Employment by occupation is usually described by the kind of work an individual accomplishes on the job, as opposed to the type of industry or business an individual works in. For example, a person might be an attorney (occupation) for a professional services firm (the industry). Tables 5(a) on the previous page, and Table 5(B) below, document Chadron’s employment trends, which are estimates gathered from the 2000 and 2010 U.S. Census. Chadron’s largest employment sectors include the following:

- Office and administrative support occupations (17.65 percent)

- Education, legal, community service, arts + media occupations (13.60 percent)
- Sales and related occupations (11.41 percent)
- Management, business and financial operations (9.02 percent)
- Food preparation and serving related occupations (9.00 percent)

Chadron’s largest employment sectors – legal, office, sales and education – as can be expected relate to the presence of Chadron State College, local schools, and the law firms and other associated businesses that cluster near and service the Dawes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>2000 Jobs</th>
<th>2010 Jobs</th>
<th>Change</th>
<th>% Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>-14</td>
<td>-0.47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1.01%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale trade</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>-12</td>
<td>-0.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail trade</td>
<td>570</td>
<td>560</td>
<td>-10</td>
<td>-0.34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation, warehousing and utilities</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>1.18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>-59</td>
<td>-1.99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>0.98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional, scientific, management, administrative and waste management services</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>3.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational services, health care and social assistance</td>
<td>1,006</td>
<td>1,188</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>6.12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts, entertainment, recreation, and accommodation and food services</td>
<td>367</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>-77</td>
<td>-2.59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other services, except public administration</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>-50</td>
<td>-1.68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public administration</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>0.77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,972</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,269</strong></td>
<td><strong>297</strong></td>
<td><strong>9.99%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census
Country complex in Chadron. Other professional businesses, banks, local restaurants and the retail businesses located Downtown and along U.S. Highway 20, also comprise the other major occupational categories in Chadron. Interestingly, as both tables indicate, between 2000 and 2010, retail and wholesale trades, as well as the arts, entertainment, and food services industries experienced some loss in employment numbers despite maintaining significant percentages of the employment base in Chadron. In that same ten year period, the educational and health care services sectors experienced the largest employment increases.

Other sectors that had employment increases include professional, scientific and waste management services, and construction. Therefore, industry sectors that gained the most jobs include:

- Educational services and health care (182 jobs)
- Professional, scientific, management, and waste management services (95 jobs)
- Transportation, warehousing and utilities (35 jobs)

Industry sectors that lost the most jobs include:

- Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (lost 14 jobs)
- Information services (59 jobs)
- Arts, entertainment, recreation, and accommodation and food services (77 jobs)

The median annual income in Chadron is approximately $22,343. The highest paying occupations are related to the practice of healthcare and other technical professions at $63,583 a year. Occupations related to transportation, food preparation and serving, sales, and personal care are the lowest paying occupations. The median household income is $30,573.

As stated previously, Chadron experienced a nearly 10 percent increase in employment over the period from 2000 to 2010, indicating that Chadron is growing and expanding as a center for education, sales, and professional services. The increase in 297 jobs compares well to the positive change in population in Chadron’s population during the same period demonstrating that most of those jobs are being filled by people moving to Chadron. It may also indicate that many of these jobs are part-time or seasonal or Chadron residents are holding more than one job.
Income and Retail Sales

The tables below document income distribution provided by the U.S. Census and retail sales collected by the State of Nebraska for Chadron in 2013; these tables provide a snapshot into the Chadron economy, its level of growth and how the community compares with others in the region.

Table 6(A) describes the income distribution in Chadron and similar communities; Chadron contains a significant proportion of households in the middle to lower tiers of household income as compared to other communities in the region. Chadron’s tier of household incomes over $75,000 is only larger than Hot Springs, South Dakota. Chadron also has the second lowest median household income of the comparison communities.

Table 6(B) compares retail sales in 2013 with those in 2012, for Chadron and several comparison cities. Retail sales in Chadron grew at a similar but slower and stable pace to those in other communities between 2012 and 2013. Slowly improving economic conditions are allowing more people to shop for larger ticket items, which could spur more sales in the future.

### Table 6(A): Income Distribution for Household by Comparison Community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Under $15,000</th>
<th>$15,000 to $24,999</th>
<th>$25,000 to $34,999</th>
<th>$35,000 to $49,999</th>
<th>$50,000 to $74,999</th>
<th>Over $75,000</th>
<th>2010 Median Household Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chadron</td>
<td>581</td>
<td>379</td>
<td>685</td>
<td>341</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>457</td>
<td>$30,573</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crawford</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>$31,705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliance</td>
<td>709</td>
<td>525</td>
<td>383</td>
<td>515</td>
<td>751</td>
<td>840</td>
<td>$43,118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gordon</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>$36,184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scottsbluff</td>
<td>1,210</td>
<td>1,047</td>
<td>898</td>
<td>908</td>
<td>1,074</td>
<td>1,193</td>
<td>$35,116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot Springs, SD</td>
<td>394</td>
<td>299</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>$28,284</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census

### Table 6(B): Retail Sales 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Retail Sales 2012</th>
<th>Retail Sales 2013</th>
<th>% Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chadron</td>
<td>$79,634,507</td>
<td>$80,667,983</td>
<td>1.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliance</td>
<td>$85,547,483</td>
<td>$89,222,909</td>
<td>4.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valentine</td>
<td>$56,465,212</td>
<td>$62,631,113</td>
<td>11.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scottsbluff</td>
<td>$387,989,471</td>
<td>$376,312,734</td>
<td>-3.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: State of Nebraska
Table 6(C), taken from the recently adopted Downtown Chadron Master Plan, documents the demand for the types of goods, merchandise and services that exist within Chadron’s primary trade area of 30 miles and its secondary trade areas. As the table demonstrates, additional retail sales could be captured by new restaurants, health and personal care stores, and clothing and apparel retailers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Retail Store Classification</th>
<th>0 – 30 Miles</th>
<th>30 – 60 Miles</th>
<th>60 – 90 Miles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clothing Stores</td>
<td>$ 5,385,894</td>
<td>$ 9,953,284</td>
<td>$ 24,591,577</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewelry, Luggage, Leather Goods Stores</td>
<td>$ 3,270,696</td>
<td>$ 6,590,562</td>
<td>$ -15,872,716</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News Dealers and Newsstands</td>
<td>$ 87,244</td>
<td>$ 122,391</td>
<td>$ 726,223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prerecorded Tapes, CDs, Record Stores</td>
<td>$ 101,065</td>
<td>$ 156,526</td>
<td>$ 1,044,075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food service and Drinking Places</td>
<td>$ 14,738,864</td>
<td>$ 20,434,826</td>
<td>$ 23,312,946</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camera and Photographic Equipment Stores</td>
<td>$ 141,966</td>
<td>$ 237,016</td>
<td>$ 1,580,252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialty Food Stores</td>
<td>$ 2,532,087</td>
<td>$ 4,186,813</td>
<td>$ -61,569,296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and Personal Care Stores</td>
<td>$ 6,061,291</td>
<td>$ 22,316,018</td>
<td>$ -38,790,412</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Merchandise Stores</td>
<td>$ 25,915,819</td>
<td>$ 20,420,289</td>
<td>$ -62,032,762</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous Store Retailers</td>
<td>$ 5,348,244</td>
<td>$ -1,480,624</td>
<td>$ -97,997,406</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2014 Downtown Master Plan

Table 6(C) Note: Figures in red represent retail sales surplus within the trade area; figures in black represent sales leakage to another trade area.
Housing

Next to its Downtown commercial district, a community’s neighborhoods and housing stock help to define a city’s overall character and economic vitality. Therefore, it is important to consider whether the existing housing stock is adequately meeting the needs of the community; additionally, tracking data on housing tenure, median value/rent, and price relative to income can help reveal important information about a community’s current economic path. Table 7(A) considers the total number of housing units in Chadron as well as relevant information about residential vacancy, whether occupants are renting or owning their house, and the median expense or value. The table compares estimated values from 2000 and 2010 to assess change over time in these indicators. In the period from 2000 to 2010, the total number of housing units increased by 4.83 percent while vacant units had actually decreased by a negligible amount. The housing vacancy rate suggests that very few homes are beyond the replacement margins due to their exterior conditions. Both Tables 7(A) and 7(B) also document the decline in owner-occupied units over the same period, suggesting that new renter-occupied units had been created or an increase in rental single-family housing due to the foreclosure crisis and the economic recession of 2008 and 2009. Median housing costs have also increased indicating that upward pressure on rents but not at a level greater than inflation. Chadron’s rate of home ownership in comparison to other communities also reflects the number of units that may have been converted for rental or student housing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 7(A): CHANGES IN HOUSING OCCUPANCY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Housing Units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner-Occupied Units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Owner-Occupied Units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renter Occupied Units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Renter-Occupied Units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacant Units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacancy Rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Housing Cost</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 7(B) COMPARATIVE HOUSING TRENDS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% Owner-Occupied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chadron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valentine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gordon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scottsbluff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nebraska</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census
Table 7(C) compares these same communities on the basis of the home value to income ratio, a commonly used measure of the affordability of a place’s housing market. A value-to-income ratio between 2.5 and 3 suggests a self-sustaining housing market with adequate values and revenue to support new market rate construction. Owner-occupied housing that costs between 2 and 2.5 times a household’s yearly income is considered affordable. Homes priced above this range can mean that housing costs are greater than what many in the market can afford.

Chadron has a value-to-income ratio of 2.87, suggesting that the housing stock is quite affordable and the supply adequate, although the ratio is at the upper-reaches indicating some housing units may not be affordable to all in the community. Chadron’s ratio is also significantly higher than several of the comparison communities; its 2010 median home value is also second lowest but on par with the community of Valentine.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 7(C) INCOME TO HOME VALUE RATIO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010 Median Household Income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chadron $30,573</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliance $43,118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valentine $47,639</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gordon $36,184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scottsbluff $35,116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nebraska $49,432</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 7(D) AFFORDABLE HOUSING SUPPLY BY INCOME RANGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income Range</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$0-$24,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$25,000-$49,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000-$74,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$75,000-$99,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100,000-$149,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$150,000 + over</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census and the Lakota Group
Table 7(D) on the previous page evaluates the availability of affordable housing in Chadron in comparison to the quantity of housing units that is in the income range of households in the community. A positive balance indicates a surplus of housing exists within the affordability range of each income group in Chadron. A negative balance indicates a shortage of units. This analysis indicates that there is a significant shortage of housing for those households making at or below Chadron’s median household income of $30,573 and a small shortage of units at the $150,000 to $200,000 price point range.

A shortage of housing in the lower-income range reflects a strong need to provide more affordable housing both for owner-occupied and renter units. This could be accomplished with a combination of housing rehabilitation and the construction of new multi-family apartments. Some housing will be needed to capture some higher-income households who may desire a well-maintained existing home or new construction on larger lots. Most new construction for housing in Chadron has occurred outside its traditional neighborhoods at the community’s edges or in the extraterritorial jurisdiction.

Table 7(E) below documents future housing demand based on a projection of a 0.40% growth rate in population from 2010 to 2030 with very limited growth in the group quarters population — the population consisting of dormitoried college students, nursing homes and senior living facilities — and no change in the average household size over the period of time between 2015 and 2030. The estimate below also assumes that there will be a vacancy rate of 7.00 percent; past vacancy rates have been at 9.00 percent but they are variable over time. Even with a small projection in population points to a need in new housing units, whether through new housing construction and the rehabilitation and replacement of existing housing units. The forecasts in Table 7 (E) can be compared to current development activity and available land for future development to set priorities for the types and locations of proposed housing development.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 7(E) CHADRON FUTURE HOUSING DEMAND</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population at End of Period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population in Group Quarters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Population in Group Quarters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population to be Housed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Person per Household</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Households</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Households per Housing Unit in Nebraska</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preliminary Housing Demand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demand with Vacancy Rate (7.00%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existing Housing Units (2010)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shortage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census and the Lakota Group
Travel Patterns

Table 8 illustrates average travel times to work in minutes for Chadron and for other communities in the immediate region and beyond. Chadron has an average travel time of 12.4 minutes, which ranks it third among the comparison communities and suggest that most people who work in Chadron also live in the community or in the immediate vicinity. Travel times are often an under appreciated element of a community’s quality of life factors since increased commuting time to work equals lost time that adds up over the course of a year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Average Travel Time To Work (min)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chadron</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliance</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valentine</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gordon</td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scottsbluff</td>
<td>13.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: State of Nebraska

City Development Programs and Incentives

The following is an overview of existing programs and incentives in use by the City of Chadron and other entities to facilitate community and economic development.

Community Redevelopment Tax Increment Financing

The City of Chadron has established a Community Redevelopment Area and the use of Tax-Increment Financing to help stimulate redevelopment and revitalization initiatives within the City’s corporate boundaries. Such initiatives, include, but are not limited to:

- Cost of studies, surveys, development of plans and specifications, including architectural and engineering
- Property acquisition and assembly
- Rehabilitation, reconstruction, or repair or remodeling of existing public or private buildings
- Costs of construction of public works or improvements
- Elimination or removal of contaminants and other impediments to site improvements
- Job training and retraining projects
- Relocation costs

Chadron’s existing Community Redevelopment Area includes Downtown Chadron and all neighborhood and commercial areas north of 4th Street including the Kenwood Addition. A second redevelopment area incorporates a pending subdivision development at 10th Street just west of Chadron State College and east of the Pony Park trailer park.
CHADRON TIF DISTRICT MAP
The most recent use of tax increment revenues for a community redevelopment project was the public improvement financing for the 1997 Microtel Inn Hotel development located at West 8th Street and Highway 385, now Motel 6. According to the most recent State of Nebraska Tax Increment Financing Report, approximately $359,697 has been generated in excess tax increment from the development. Tax increment financing revenues are used mostly by Nebraska communities for bond payments underwriting various infrastructure improvements within the community redevelopment area, payments through intergovernmental agreements to other local taxing bodies, and other professional fees and legal expenses.

Nebraska Northwest Development Corporation Reuse Loan Fund

The Nebraska Northwest Development Corporation currently administers a revolving loan fund, capitalized by two separate grants from the U.S. Departments of Agriculture (USDA) and Housing and Urban Development Community Development Block Grant program (HUD-CDBG), to help provide gap financing for businesses that generate new employment and diversifies Chadron’s overall economic base. Loans are awarded on a 50-50 matching basis not to exceed $10,000 for the USDA portion of the program and $20,000 for the HUD-sponsored loan pool. One full time equivalent job per $20,000 (CDBG) or $10,000 (USDA/IRP) provided must be achieved for each business assisted. Two permanent part time jobs can be combined to count as one full time equivalent job in the same project. Loan terms are 10 years for fixed assets and seven years for working capital; the loan rate is tied to the New York Prime Rate published in the Wall Street Journal. Proceeds from the Loan Fund were recently used for the construction of a 5,000 square-foot Maurices store on Highway 20 at Frontage Road.

Local Option Municipal Economic Development Tax (LB 840)

The Local Option Municipal Economic Development Act (LB 840) of the State of Nebraska authorizes incorporated cities and villages to appropriate and spend local sales and property tax revenues for certain economic development purposes, including retail development and downtown revitalization, manufacturing, warehousing, affordable housing rehabilitation, tourism and the conduct of research and development. Tax proceeds are usually disbursed in the form of low-interest loan pool and can only be spent on project types determined through the creation and adoption of an economic development plan or strategy. A half-cent LB 840 sales tax was first instituted by the City of Chadron in 2004 and was recently renewed in 2013 to help underwrite costs associated with stormwater and other infrastructure improvement projects. A portion also goes toward economic development initiatives. It is estimated the tax will generate approximately $375,000 in revenues annually over the course of its 15-year term. Over the years, the LB 840 tax revenues have been used to finance 75 percent of the new Chadron Community Hospital construction costs, softball field construction and various other economic development and community betterment projects.
Section 3
Land Use and Existing Conditions

This section describes the existing land use conditions within the City of Chadron and its immediate environs. The description provides a specific focus on the types of uses that exist in particular areas, its relevant zoning and the overall quality of the built environment and surroundings. The information and data provided in this section has been obtained through field work and visual assessment, and the analysis of existing land use maps and other data.

Land use is typically the central element of a comprehensive plan since it establishes the overall urban form and physical configuration of a city, including where specific land uses are located (see Existing Land Use Map on the following page) and how transportation and infrastructure systems are designed and instituted to support those land uses. Chadron’s land use pattern and the physical conditions in which those uses are found serve as the basis point for determining a future land use map and land use policies that will guide both public and private users of the land.
Residential

Chadron’s residential areas comprise approximately 1,583 acres of land, which represents 34 percent of Chadron’s total land area.

Single Family Residential

Chadron’s single-family housing stock represents the City’s largest land use in terms of acreage next to commercial. Historically, the single-family residential stock developed mostly in and around the Downtown commercial core south of railroad right-of-way toward 10th Street and the Chadron State College campus, and then east and west to Spruce and Maple Streets respectively. In this “traditional neighborhood core”, homes were mostly constructed between the late 1880s and the 1920s as evidenced by the Queen Anne, late Victorian and Craftsman bungalow design styles that were typically employed by home builders across the country during this period. These styles were used in both larger “higher-styled” homes that are often found along the Main Street corridor between Downtown and the College, and in the smaller one to two-story worker cottages found on other neighborhood blocks throughout Chadron. Although several homes were built north of the railroad right-of-way during this period, Chadron’s other important residential neighborhood, Kenwood, was not formally platted with 300 developable lots until the turn of the century. Additional residential developments would not occur until after World War II where land to the east and south of Highway 20 and Ridgeview Road, and to the west of Maple Street north of the Highway were developed – mainly with construction of infill Ranch homes and other latter-day construction styles. Post World War II Ranch homes and cottages can also be found in the Kenwood Addition.

The conditions of the single-family residential areas range in condition from excellent to poor depending on location. Housing located along or near the Main Street corridor from Downtown to the Chadron State College campus and in neighborhood blocks to the southeast between Main Street and Ridgeview were observed to be in generally excellent to good condition, where many larger historic homes...
appears to be well-maintained or have been recently rehabilitated. These blocks also have street curbs, parkway landscaping, sidewalks and paved alleyways, although the condition of public infrastructure can vary from block to block. Overhead power lines also remain in most locations. Housing within neighborhood blocks located both east and west of Downtown north of Fourth Street, and in pockets south of Fourth Street and west of Mears Street and in the Kenwood Addition were generally of the smaller worker-cottage type and observed in varying conditions from good to fair, with homes located nearer Downtown and Highway 20 showing signs of some disrepair and a lack of exterior maintenance. Garages and secondary structures of these homes were often observed in poorer condition than the house structure itself. Housing conditions within these blocks may indicate a higher percentage of rental housing, although the streetscape and parkway conditions, which vary considerably from block to block — some with appropriate landscaping treatments while others lack plantings, trees and sidewalks — also contribute to the housing stock’s poorer visual appearance in these areas. However, despite these observations, there are few homes that are in extremely poor condition; most vacant properties largely appeared to be good to fair condition with some exceptions. A comprehensive housing inventory should be undertaken to understand the nature and extent of overall housing conditions in Chadron.

Post World War II and newer single-family housing has occurred mostly within Chadron’s southeastern quadrant along Ridgeview Road and adjacent streets including Parry Drive and 18th and 19th Streets. These blocks accommodate larger-lot developments consisting of Cape Cod and Ranch homes dating from the 1950s to the 2000s. These streets also break the grid street pattern that largely defines the majority of single-family residential areas in Chadron. The homes along these blocks are of more recent construction and are in good to excellent condition; however, the streetscape and parkway conditions again vary with some blocks lacking sidewalks and consistent landscaping. In some locations, new housing construction occurs on single lots between residential collector streets, especially between Ridgeview Road and Pine Crest Drive and Pine Crest and Cedar Butte Drives. With the absence of alleys, the single lots place the rear yards and their privacy fences along one of the collector streets, which detracts from the overall streetscape appearance from the housing lots across the street where front entrances face the street.

Larger lot residential developments are also located along Maple Street south of 10th Street and north of West Niobara Street in the Kenwood Addition where Ranch homes are the predominate housing form. Streetscape conditions vary in Kenwood with many blocks missing sidewalks and carriage walks while the lack of rear garages for many homes has encouraged over time the use of parkway space for parking pads. In contrast to other residential Chadron neighborhoods, there is also a lack of consistency in lot sizes and setbacks, which indicates that the Addition was developed over different time periods, that some lots were never developed from the original platting and that zoning rules were applied at a later date in Kenwood than in other areas of Chadron. The lack of some zoning enforcement was evidenced by the small number of mobile homes that are interspersed within the Addition. The overall condition of homes in Kenwood range from good to fair with a number of the oldest, pre-1900 homes in the poorest condition.
Apart from the established neighborhoods of post-World War II housing, rural residential subdivisions have been zoned or approved by the City in recent years, including one located south of Chadron State College just north of the Nebraska National Forest and one just east of the College at the southeast corner of 10th Street and Ridgeview Road. The subdivision along Hidden Valley Road has been largely built out and accommodates housing on lots that are one acre or larger. The rural residential areas are meant to promote developments that merge “urban living with rural life.”

Mobile homes are also another predominate form of single family housing in Chadron and are located in various pockets in Chadron’s single family neighborhoods – along North Pine Street in the Kenwood Addition and in the Pony’s Park subdivision at the southeast corner of West 10th and Maple Streets. Additional mobile homes are located in Chadron’s far southwest quadrant at Highway 385 and 16th Street. The mobile homes can be characterized generally in good to fair condition, although the streetscape and parkways in these areas often lack sidewalks and other streetscaping and landscaping treatments. A dirt frontage road, which is not platted as a street, services the mobile homes located along North Pine Street.

Upon visual analysis, the single family residential areas appear to be mostly in good and stable condition. Housing rehabilitation has been mostly encouraged by private-sector housing development groups with opportunities extant for more consistent, applied approaches for maintaining housing and maintaining them in single-family ownership. In addition, consistent investment in neighborhood parkways and infrastructure can also help to promote the property values of the traditional, single-family residential neighborhoods.

---

1 Chadron Zoning Ordinance, page 3

**Multi-Family Residential**

Chadron is home to a few multi-family constructed apartments, townhomes or condominium buildings, and there are no defined multi-family development district in the community, with the exception of the recently constructed senior living facilities near Chadron Community Hospital. The more significant multi-family apartments in Chadron include the Heritage at 740 Pine Street, the Pine Court and West Hills Villa Apartments at 610 Pine Street, and the Royal Court complex at 740 Pine Street, which are all owned and operated by the Chadron Housing Authority. Prairie Pines Lodge, financed and developed by Chadron Community Hospital and located just north of Hospital complex, also offers one and two-bedroom residential units for retired adults and independent seniors. Other private sector-managed multi-family units include the Hillside Apartments at 700 West 8th Street. Apart from the Heritage Apartments, most multi-family development is single-story.
Commercial

Chadron’s commercial areas comprise approximately 460 acres of land, which represents 9.85 percent of Chadron’s total land area. Of that 460 acres of commercial land area, approximately 17 percent of it is located in the Downtown business district.

Downtown

The Downtown Chadron commercial core can largely be defined as the area between 1st Street and U.S. Highway 20 and Morehead Street to the west and Bordeaux Street to the east, although Downtown’s traditional building fabric does extend somewhat in areas south along Main Street to 4th Street, east to King Street and west to Mears Street. Downtown’s building fabric can be described as mostly one to three story commercial buildings constructed to the sidewalk, built over a period of time from the 1880s to the 1950s, and housing a variety of commercial businesses in the first floors. Historically, upper-story spaces were often occupied by office uses, living units and meeting halls although, over time, many upper-stories have been used for storage or are currently vacant. Downtown’s more architecturally significant buildings are located along the 200 block of Main Street where facades of elaborately cut stone and brick and detailed cornices and cresting have been well maintained, serving to define Downtown’s overall image and appearance as a historic commercial district. In other Downtown blocks, more modest one-to two story vernacular commercial buildings continue to house a variety of businesses from retail businesses and restaurants, to lawyer offices and tire and auto repair shops.

Like many traditional downtown commercial districts in other communities, building appearances have been altered and some building fabric has been lost to demolition and parking lots. The Downtown Chadron Master Plan recommends a consistent program of façade and streetscape improvements, as well as the conversion of upper floors to residential units, as primary strategies for revitalizing the commercial core, which has seen some decline in building occupancy and use over the decades. The Downtown Master Plan also provides recommendations for changing certain zoning classifications in areas in and around the Downtown in order to encourage some light industrial uses that were once oriented to the railroad right-of-way to transition to more appropriate lower-scale commercial uses more compatible with the adjacent traditional neighborhood areas. It is also suggested within the Master Plan that auto repair service uses should be transitioned out of the Downtown commercial core to more appropriate light industrial districts in Chadron. Ideally, auto-sales businesses should be
located along Highways 20 or 385 where land may be more available for such larger-lot commercial uses.

**U.S. Highway 20 Corridor**

As mentioned previously, U.S. Highway 20 became one of Chadron’s most important transportation arteries during the 1920s and gradually developed as a key commercial corridor, largely supplanting 2nd Street as a location for commercial activities. Today, U.S. Highway 20 can largely be characterized as a corridor with a mix of uses from auto-oriented developments, to single family residential, schools, parking lots, and vacant land. There are key nodes along Highway 20 – the gateway entrance at Ridgeview Road, Downtown at Main Street and the land area between U.S. Highway 385 and Elm Street, nodes where opportunities exist for gateway and landscape enhancements, and better building and site design. At the Ridgeview Road node, all four sides of the intersection are defined by auto-oriented commercial developments, including the New Leaf Flower Shop, Tommy’s Car Lot and the Bunk House Motel, with parking lots sited at the corners or to the side of the buildings.

Where Highway 20 meets the Downtown district at Main Street, the development character changes somewhat as buildings are constructed closer to the sidewalk indicating that one is entering the Downtown, although gas stations, drive-through banks and other developments set back from the street disrupt the building and development continuity. Some of the auto-oriented development and their associated parking lots are appropriately landscaped while others are not. Towards Elm Street and Highway 385, the land use character is entirely low-scale auto-oriented development that includes larger-format retail, hotels, offices and gas stations, as opposed to further east where spots of single-family residential provide some green space and visual interest. As elsewhere, Highway 20’s visual appearance at this node is defined by parking lots and a lack of landscaping in the right-of-way. There are few, if any, gateway elements or signage that define these nodes with the exception of the intersection of Highway 20 and 4th Street.

The overall condition and appearance of the commercial, residential and institutional uses along U.S. Highway 20 vary from excellent to fair and the Highway has experienced recent investments in new businesses at all key nodes. Most buildings, however, need some upgrade and enhancements to their exterior facades and parking areas if they are to continue to be desirable locations for new retail stores and commercial services. The absence of any consistent parkway and site and parking lot landscape treatments contribute to the Highway’s lack of a unified, attractive appearance. However, it should be noted, that portions of Highway 20 through Downtown will be repaved with some lighting enhancements as part of the ongoing storm sewer upgrade project. A number of vacant and under-utilized lots and parking pads along the corridor represent potential sites for commercial or residential development, or opportunities to provide temporary park or landscape improvements until development interest for those sites is generated.

![Looking east on Highway 20 — existing sidewalk conditions and curb cuts](image)
U.S. Highway 385 Corridor

Chadron’s larger format commercial enterprises, including Walmart, Hibbert Sports, Maurices and the Best Western and Hotel 6 complexes are located along U.S. Highway 385 both north and south of Highway 20. Walmart occupies a significant site at the southwest corner of Highways 20 and 385 while auto dealerships and smaller auto-oriented retailers and fast food establishments occupy the area to the north of Highway 385. Best Western and Motel 6 are located further south along Highway 385 at West 8th Street in close proximity to Chadron Community Hospital. Other smaller commercial buildings also occupy lots on the west side of Highway 385. Additional commercial land is zoned along Highway 385 at the southeast corners of 10th and 16th Street, the latter of which is located in the City’s extraterritorial zoning boundary; however, upon observation, the land at 10th Street is currently being used for agriculture. The overall development and visual character of the Highway 385 corridor is characterized with deep setbacks from the street and frontage road or off-street access to most of the commercial uses. The frontage road does allow for a minimum of curb cuts and landscaping in most places between the roadway and the parking lots serving the commercial uses. More formal gateway treatments could be installed at key entry points along both Highways 20 and 385.

Industrial

Chadron’s industrial areas comprise approximately 292 acres of land, which represents 6.25 percent of Chadron’s total land area. Chadron’s industrial uses are largely located in the community’s original industrial belt – the narrow railroad right-of-way strip just north of 1st Street and south of the Kenwood Addition, currently the location for several transportation and agricultural-related businesses. The Nebraska Northwest Railroad currently owns and operates the original Chicago and Northwestern Railway roundhouse as a maintenance facility for its train engines and uses the adjacent rail yard for the assembly of short-haul trains between Chadron and Dakota Junction. The Railroad is a growing industry and was able to secure a Federal TIGER (Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery) grant to upgrade its rail lines and bridge ties between Chadron and Crawford.

Apart from the railroad industrial belt, existing industrial land uses include the Dawes County Fairgrounds and portions of a former cattle operation along East Norfolk Street, and an auto and metal recycling facility along East Niobara Street, both located in Chadron’s far northeast quadrant. A concrete contractor also surrounds one of the municipal ball field complexes in this location. Although open space with environmental issues mostly surround the industrial uses in this quadrant, the majority of the land is currently zoned for future industrial development.

Additional small-scaled industrial land uses are located in Chadron’s northwestern quadrant at Stockade Road and 1st Street. The Downtown Master Plan recommends the development of new depot on the site of the former one for an interpretive center. The roundhouse currently operated by the Nebraska Northwest Railroad could be rehabilitated and interpreted as a tourism site when not in active use, perhaps after certain business hours or on the weekends.
The Master Plan also suggests that a trail head for the Cowboy Trail be developed near the vicinity of Bordeaux and 1st Streets as a means towards promoting Chadron for cycling enthusiasts and as a heritage tourism destination. These recommendations also serve to alleviate the railroad right-of-way as a physical barrier between Downtown and the neighborhoods to the south from the Kenwood Addition to the north.

Agricultural and Natural Resources
Chadron’s agricultural areas comprise approximately 1,262 acres of land, which represents 27 percent of Chadron’s total land area. Land devoted to agricultural and ranching uses largely surrounds Chadron in its extraterritorial jurisdiction with the exception of the community’s southern quadrant where the municipal boundary abuts the Nebraska National Forest. Some agricultural land, however, is located within the municipal boundaries, including areas south of the Chadron Community Hospital, southeast of Walmart and in the northeastern quadrant adjacent to the Dawes County Fairgrounds. Within the wider region, Chadron is also located near the natural resource amenities of Chadron State Park, the Oglala National Grasslands, and the Nebraska National Forest.

Geology, Watershed and Wetlands
Chadron is located within the top side of White River watershed, which drains water to the northern side of Dawes County. Due to its location within the watershed, water within Chadron generally flows from the southeast to the northwest, which signifies that land area within the City should not flood despite the terrain being flat. Land is considered mostly suitable for development given favorable soil conditions although small areas within Chadron may not drain properly given the rolling terrain surrounding the City. Soils within the City of Chadron are mostly classified as Thirtynine Silt Loam, which is considered a moderately permeable soil found on slopes and derived from a mix of siltstone and fine grained sandstone. Other areas of Chadron toward the southwest also contain permeable well-draining soils characteristic of slopes and rolling landscapes. In only select areas adjacent to Chadron State College and north of Niobara Street where water is retained more readily in swale-like soils or bedrock. According to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, pockets of freshwater
ponds and freshwater emergent wetlands exist to the northwest of the City between 1st Street to the north, Stockdale Road to the west and Highway 20 to the south.

Parks and Open Space

Chadron’s parks and open space areas comprise approximately 334 acres of land, which represents 7.15 percent of Chadron’s total land area. The City of Chadron maintains a Parks Department that oversees and manages various parks throughout the City, including its main community parks, including Wilson, War Memorial and Finnegan, and a number of other ball fields and smaller neighborhood park facilities. These parks, however, do not include the open space and recreational facilities that are a part of the Chadron public school district, which also include a number of ball fields and playground areas, and the outlying parks and open spaces that are part of Chadron State Park, Chadron State College, the Nebraska National Forest and the Oglala National Grasslands. Greenwood Cemetery, located along U.S. Highway 20 at Linden Street, Calvary Cemetery at 10th and Maple Streets, and the Ridgeview Country Club, a publicly-operated golf club and driving range located along U.S. Highway 385 south of West 16th Street, are also defined as park and open space land uses for the purposes of this Comprehensive Plan. It should be noted that parks and open space are not

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Park Facility</th>
<th>Acreage</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Facilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boog Horse Park</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>Morehead Street/Belle Fourche Avenue</td>
<td>Small neighborhood park with playground area, grills and baseball backstop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finnegan Park</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>East 5th and Cedar Streets</td>
<td>Larger community park with playground areas, picnic tables and grills, and public restrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War Memorial Park</td>
<td>5.38</td>
<td>Shelton and 10th Streets</td>
<td>Large community park with municipal swimming pool, tennis and basketball courts, playground areas and a sand volleyball court</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilson Park</td>
<td>13.82</td>
<td>Maple and 10th Streets</td>
<td>Signature community park with picnic shelters and playground areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Dams</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>City Dam Road</td>
<td>Fishing piers and kayak/boat launch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Hills Park</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>Pine and Sixth Streets</td>
<td>Small community gardens</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The Chadron Plan, 1997
classified under the City’s current zoning code. Park facilities are summarized previously in Tables 8 (A) and 8 (B). The table shown below summarizes the organized ball field facilities within Chadron.

The 1997 Chadron Comprehensive conducted a full inventory and assessment of all park facilities, including those located on the public school campuses, and concluded that the Chadron park and open space system was 20 acres short of meeting the recommended park acreage standards by population as suggested by the National Park and Recreational Association (NPRA). In addition, although the Chadron park system meets or exceeds national standards related to playground space and ball fields, it would fall short on baseball and tennis facilities if the community were to grow in any substantial way. In general, the 1997 Plan recommended incremental improvements to Chadron’s parks while considering the need for additional park space in the Kenwood Addition, adding linkages to a growing trail network and developing of new multi-use spaces around Chadron to serve residential areas. Chadron stakeholders have also commented that more gym space or a competition gym would be helpful to alleviate the overuse and overcrowding of other facilities, in particular in the local school system. The gym space could be used for basketball, gymnastics and indoor track.

The 1997 Comprehensive Plan also recommended upgrading the municipal pool at Memorial War Park, perhaps with the development of a new indoor pool facility. After much planning in recent years on part of Chadron stakeholder groups in partnership with Chadron State College, the Community Hospital and others, a referendum to underwrite the cost of the new pool facility through a special sales tax increase passed during the recent November 2014 general election. With an estimated construction cost of $6 million, the new pool complex will include, in addition to the enclosed pool, a walking track, a rehabilitation pool, water slides, a zero-entry walk-in, and a multi-purpose room. The pool is scheduled to be completed in late 2016. Although Chadron State College cannot participate in the capital construction and financing, it will assist in its management and programming.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Park Facility</th>
<th>Approximate Acreage</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Facilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Roger Eaton Soccer Field</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>300 N. Main Street</td>
<td>Soccer field with goals and nearby basketball court, horseshoe field and public restrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legion Baseball/Maurice Horse Field</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>400 N. Main Street</td>
<td>Adult/American Legion regulation baseball diamond, concession stands and public restrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little League/Fitzgibbon Field</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>300 N. Main Street</td>
<td>Little League baseball diamond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schumway Park</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>900 East Niobara Street</td>
<td>Three softball fields, concession stands and public restrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hampton Field</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>300 N. Main Street</td>
<td>Women’s softball diamond, public restrooms</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Softball and baseball tournaments have become successful mainstay events in Chadron that attract teams and visitors from throughout Nebraska. There is a strong desire within the Chadron community to help grow these events, especially as a means to promote increased tourism and visitor spending. Currently, although the ball fields are generally in good shape, there is a need to upgrade and improve the functionality and operations of all the ball fields in use. Most of the baseball and softball fields do not drain well and smaller fields are needed for the growing number of Little League teams. Ball field lighting has remained an issue as the newer lights are more than 27 years old and may be too expensive to replace. Better concession stands would also be helpful in making the tournaments more enjoyable for players and families. Soccer fields are often underutilized despite efforts of local groups, including the non-profit Chadron Community Recreation organization, to promote soccer leagues in the community.

Beyond the needs to maintain, upgrade and add new park and recreation facilities, local Chadron stakeholders have commented on the desire to establish a “wellness network” that would complement the new indoor pool facility by encouraging walking, running and cycling in the community. The network would be composed of new sidewalks, on-street bike lanes, and connected paths and trails to and from Chadron. Sidewalks in areas where they are missing would be helpful since many seniors walk on the street; it has been reported by local residents that during winter time, seniors often slip and fall on icy streets. Local stakeholders believe that establishing and maintaining such a network could encourage more Chadron residents to participate in local sporting, running and cycling activities, which would promote more healthy living.
Community Facilities and Institutions

Chadron’s community facilities and institutions comprise approximately 330 acres of land, which represents 7.06 percent of Chadron’s total land area. Municipal and other community facility needs were inventoried and evaluated as part of this Comprehensive Plan Update and is based on interviews with staff and elected leaders for the City of Chadron and other taxing districts. It should be noted that community facilities and institutions are not classified under the City’s current zoning code.

City Hall

City Hall, which contains offices for the City Manager, the Council chambers and various municipal departments, is located at 234 Main Street, in the heart of the Downtown district, and occupying a vernacular commercial buildings built in 1917. The City administration currently has no space or facility needs although the building’s second floor is unoccupied and used for storage.

To make the second story more accessible for the public, depending on its location, an elevator shared by the adjacent property owners could be installed. The original storefront has been modified with more modern building materials. The building is in excellent condition and is a contributing building in the Chadron Commercial National Register Historic District.

Fire Department

Chadron has one fire station located along the north side of U.S. Highway 20 between Morehead and Mears Streets at the southwestern edge of the Downtown District. The Department also has a training facility at Sixth Avenue and Arrow Drive. The Chadron Fire Department is an all-volunteer fire department and currently has no space or facility needs.

Police Department and Training Center

Chadron’s Police Department is located in a building constructed in 1988 at 125 Main Street on the northern end of the Downtown district just south of 1st Street. The Police Department, which has 15 personnel and six dispatchers that are full or part-time employees. The Department currently serves a 9,000-person service area, and receives about 10,000 service calls a year. The Department does not currently have any facility needs but a new police department building might be warranted if Chadron’s experiences any substantial and consistent development and growth long-term. The building is in excellent condition and is a non-contributing building in the Chadron Commercial National Register Historic District.

Municipal Airport

Although not located within Chadron’s municipal boundaries, the Chadron Municipal Airport is located five miles west of Chadron on Highway 20. Chadron Municipal Airport offers free parking to airport patrons.
Commercial flights are provided by Great Lakes Airlines with service to Denver International Airport. According to local stakeholders, the Airport is in need of runway rehabilitation and the addition of new taxi-ways.

Public Library
The Chadron Public Library building, a Carnegie-funded library designed in the Classical Revival style and constructed in 1912, is located at 507 Bordeaux Street not far from the Dawes County Courthouse complex on Main Street. The Library comprises part of the City operating budget and is open 50 hours a week serving approximately 1,200 users weekly. There are three full-time and three part-time staff people; staff retention is challenging given the limited and constrained hours for the part-time employees. The Library offers a rich and diverse number of activities for Chadron residents in addition to its 40,000 item collection and online databases. More than 240 people take part in the Library’s summer reading program and other book clubs retain strong reader interest and support from the larger Chadron area. The Library also organizes a yearly “ghost hunting” event and ongoing craft, knitting and yoga clubs; it also participates in a soup kitchen, and book and learning services for those in assisted living facilities. A Native American movie festival has been hosted by the Library in recent years and has great promise to expand its offerings; the Festival has attracted many outside actors and film directors to Chadron.

The Chadron Public Library has been exploring options for additional space since 2004; the Library needs an additional 5,500 to 6,000 square feet in order to provide existing services adequately and to add new ones where needed. The Library’s current location is within walking distance of Downtown and schools; however, it is acknowledged that senior citizens need some form of public transport to get to the Library. Parking may also be a constraint in any addition since the current facility lacks a parking lot.

Chadron Public Schools
The Chadron School District consists of four schools – the primary school (Chadron Primary School) that serves kindergarten through 2nd grade, the intermediate school (Chadron Intermediate School) which serves third to fourth grades, the middle school (Chadron Middle School) serving grades 5 through 8 and the high school (Chadron High School), which are grades nine through 12. The school district is countywide serving a 10 mile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 9(A): CHADRON SCHOOL ENROLLMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Department of Education
radius and does comprise a number of consolidated rural school districts. Enrollment by school is summarized in the table below.

Compared to the State of Nebraska average of 13.60 students per teacher, only the Primary School and High School are above this number. In general, school enrollment has remained fairly stable over recent years; it was only during the 1980s that Chadron Schools experienced a significant decrease in local school enrollment. Although most students come from Chadron and Dawes County, some Native Americans from the Pine Ridge Reservation are enrolled in Chadron schools. The Chadron Public Schools are highly regarded within Nebraska – the High School has a 90 percent graduation rate and has been ranked second among Nebraska high schools by *U.S. News and World Report* in recent years. The Public Schools do not have any significant issues recruiting teachers to the area. However, the Chadron School District is ranked 19th from the bottom in all Nebraska School Districts in its overall funding. Like most school districts, it receives a combination of property tax revenues and state aid; its property tax funding base is relatively small given the significant amount of non-taxable land in the Chadron region.

In terms of facility needs, building maintenance and rehabilitation projects, including new HVAC systems, window repairs and other accessibility improvements for the schools, are of high priority. In 2011, an $11 million bond issue for maintenance and repair needs was rejected by Chadron area voters. Energy efficiency is also a significant issue for Chadron Schools and energy efficiency measures are needed to contain utility costs, which are taking up ever more substantial portions of building maintenance budgets every year. Special building funds are also beginning to be impacted. Beyond facility maintenance needs, new building needs include a new performance arts venue and a centralized multi-purpose arena or gym. The Chadron community does not have extensive performing arts facilities although the High School auditorium is used for a number of school and community activities and performances. A centralized multi-purpose arena would also be helpful for the School District in alleviating gym space overuse in the neighborhood schools. To that end, the School District has prepared preliminary concept plans to expand its High School campus at Cedar and 10th Streets with a new gym and auditorium facility adjacent to War Memorial Park. A new play area is also being considered for the Middle School campus. There are also public transit needs to be addressed since the School District does not provide bus transportation.

The Chadron Schools also maintains a number of important partnerships with other educational institutions, including Chadron State College, in order to provide work study and mentorship programs, and facilities for academic and athletic programs. These partnerships are valuable programs and initiatives that leverage existing resources. In addition, the High School has just re-started an agricultural education program after not having one for many years. The program is meant to provide some basic vocational training for those who want to pursue a career in agriculture or some related field.

Vocational training has been identified by several stakeholder groups as a significant need in general in Chadron; for instance, there is a lack of information technology professionals to service the computer and information technology needs of the Public Schools and Chadron State College. Western Nebraska Community College, the region’s community college with campuses in Alliance, Scottsbluff and Sidney, is considered by some Chadron stakeholders too academically-oriented to provide much in terms of vocational training. Perhaps there may be a need for some alternative high school education initiatives that can train students for different trade and technical occupations.
Chadron State College

Established in 1911, Chadron State College and its 25 academic buildings and seven residence halls occupy more than 281 acres of land along Chadron’s southern boundary near the Nebraska National Forest. The western edge of the campus is on axis with Main Street toward the Downtown commercial district; five of the academic buildings are listed as a district in the National Register of Historic Places. The College is Chadron’s most significant institutional land use.

As of January 2014, approximately $30 million in new construction initiatives was begun on the College campus, including the Rangeland Complex, which will expand the College’s agricultural and range land programs, the Vern Chicoine Events Center and Eagle Ridge housing units for upper classmen. Future facility needs include a new stadium and track; preliminary plans for the stadium have been made, although the issue of the directional orientation needs to be resolved. In recent years, the College has moved forward on several fronts to drive down energy costs and to be more sustainable. For instance, the College is capturing water on-site through bio-swales and other systems, and has installed a wood chip burning heating and cooling technology system. In addition, the College’s campus is within a quarter of a mile of linking up with the regional trail system – securing private property to complete that link is what remains to be undertaken. The U.S. Forest Service is currently leading that effort.

Chadron State College offers a variety of academic programs in several schools, including the School of Liberal Arts, Education, Business and Entrepreneurship and Graduate Studies. Current enrollment is approximately 2,300 students of which 60 percent are full-time. Approximately; 55 percent of the student body comes from Nebraska while 16 percent come from Wyoming and about 6 percent from Colorado. The rest come from South Dakota and other parts of the country. Approximately 50 percent are first generation college students. It is the College’s goal to reach 3,000 in student enrollment and to offer new programs in hospitality management and gerontology, which it sees as emerging fields of occupations in the Chadron region.
**Dawes County Courthouse**

Dawes County currently occupies its historic courthouse building and grounds at the northeast corner of Main Street and 4th Street. The Courthouse building currently housing numerous County functions, including the County Clerk, Treasurer’s and Assessors offices; the County Sheriff; and the departments of Motor Vehicles, Zoning, and Veteran Affairs. The County Roads department occupies lease space in Downtown Chadron. There is currently no recognized facility needs although local stakeholders have stated anecdotally that some improvements to the Courthouse facility is needed.

**Chadron Community Hospital**

The current Chadron Community Hospital was constructed in 2010 and has 25 beds and currently employs approximately 208 physicians, nurses, administrators and other personnel. Of the professional staff, there is one surgeon, six family doctors in residence, as well as 30 registered and 10 prenatal nurses. The former hospital site at West 8th and Morehead Streets is currently undergoing asbestos removal and will be converted to an Alzheimer’s patient treatment center in 2015. In terms of future space and facility needs, the Hospital may need a pharmacy dispensary.

In recent years, the Hospital has also been active in developing the Prairie Pines senior housing complex near the Hospital for both low-income and independent living; the Hospital also owns other land, which could be developed for housing or medical offices in adjacent land parcels. There is no public transportation that currently serves the hospital. The Hospital has recently been exploring the feasibility of installing a bio-mass energy system to help reduce its energy and utility costs.

**Religious Institutions**

Several religious institutions are located within Chadron and fulfill important spiritual and social functions within the community. Several religious institutions have been in the Chadron community since its earliest years, while others are relatively new and show a desire to become an integral part of the community.

All land uses are summarized in the following table. It should be noted that land uses by acreage includes associated public streets and rights-of-way.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 10: LAND USES BY ACRES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Land Uses</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural + Natural Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parks + Open Space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Facilities + Institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacant Land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Streets + ROW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Historic Resources

Currently, there are two National Register Historic Districts in Chadron and several buildings that are individually listed. In 2006, portions of Downtown Chadron bounded by the 100 and 200 blocks of Main Street and the 100, 200 and 300 blocks of 2nd Street were designated as a district in the National Register of Historic Places, this nation’s official list of buildings, sites, structures and objects worthy of preservation. The Downtown district’s architectural and historic significance lies in its importance as a center for commerce and trade in Nebraska from the late 1880s to the 1950s, and for its intact collection of late Victorian and early 20th century commercial architecture. Listing in the National Register does not impose restrictions on the use of private property but does provide tax credits for the rehabilitation of income-producing buildings and other incentives.

Of the 61 buildings that comprise the Historic District, 41 are considered contributing and 21 non-contributing – buildings that have been altered to an extent that they no longer possess their architectural integrity. The second district comprises several of the original buildings of the Chadron State College campus, including Crites, Miller, Sparks, and Edna Work Halls, and the former Library Building at 10th and Main Streets.

Other buildings individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places include:

- Bordeaux Trading Post (Museum of the Fur Trade site) (1845)
- Chadron Public Library (1912)
- Dawes County Courthouse, Chadron (1935)
- Hotel Chadron/Olde Main Street Inn (1890)

As mentioned previously, a countywide architectural and historical survey that included Chadron was conducted in 2005 in order to determine the number of buildings, sites, structures and objects that may be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Approximately 645 buildings and sites in Chadron were surveyed with a number of commercial and residential properties identified as potentially eligible, including the Chadron U.S. Post Office, the Automobile Showroom at 202 West 2nd Street and a number of high-style and vernacular residences. Although already included as part of the Downtown National Register District, the Blaine Hotel may also be eligible for individual listing.
Transportation and Infrastructure

This section provides a summary of the existing conditions associated with Chadron’s transportation and infrastructure systems. In the regional context, Chadron is located in the middle of the high plains that stretch from Colorado to North Dakota. Chadron is just 20 miles south of the South Dakota border and 60 miles east of the Wyoming border in northwestern Nebraska. Chadron is located at the intersection of U.S. Highways 385 and 20 and is one hour and 40 minutes from Rapid City and about three hours from Cheyenne and Casper, Wyoming.

Chadron is located along the old Chicago & Northwestern Railroad. The line has been abandoned to the east of the City and the section west is owned by a smaller railroad firm.

Roadways

U.S. Highways 385 and 20 intersect on the west side of town. Highway 385 is located along the western edge of Chadron and turns west at the intersection on route to South Dakota. The City of Alliance is 55 miles south on 385 Highway. Highway 20 runs east-west though the heart of Chadron. Municipalities east along the highway include Hay Springs, Rushville, Gordon and Valentine. Cities west include Harrison, Lusk and Douglas Wyoming. The Highways are controlled and maintained by the Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR).

Planning has been undertaken for the potential development of the Heartland Expressway through Chadron with an alignment that largely follows Highway 385. Funding the Expressway’s construction is still being considered and sought at the state and Federal levels.

Within the City, main routes include Main Street (north-south), 10th Street and 1st Street (east-west). The City is partially divided by the railroad as there is only two crossing at Main Street and at Pine Street. Other streets used as collectors include Norfolk, North Maple, and Niobrara (access to Chadron Intermediate School) and 6th Street from Walmart east to Henken Street, and Maple from Highway 20 south to beyond 16th Street.

Gateways

The two gateways into Chadron are along the Highways. The main gateway is at the intersection of Highways 385 and 20, and the second is located on the east side of town along Highway 20 at Ridgeview Road. At the intersection of the highways 385 and 20 is Chadron’s highway-oriented commercial district that includes Walmart and Country Kitchen/Hotel to the south, automotive sales along the west side, service stations on the northeast and southeast corners, and restaurants on the northwest corner and east along Highway 20. The east entry leads to a small commercial node that includes automotive sales, retail stores and hotels. There are a couple of residential lots on the north side at the eastern edge.

Average Daily Traffic

Average daily traffic counts were analyzed from the Nebraska Department of Roads. The highest traffic was counted between the intersection of the Highways and Main Street on Highway 20. These
counts range from 8,285 to almost 9,000 vehicle per day. Traffic counts indicated an average of 3,700 traveling in and out south of the City on 385; 6,110 on Highway 20 west side; and 3,665 vehicles per day leaving/entering on Highway 20 on the east edge of town. Main Street is traveled heavily from 2nd Street south to the College at 10th Street. Traffic on 10th Street east of Highway 385 also includes an entry point into the south side of town.

### Downtown Streets and Parking

Chadron has a charming, historic Downtown district with traditional roadway grid network. Chadron’s Downtown’s central thoroughfare is Main Street, traveling north-south and intersecting 3rd Street (U.S. Highway 20) at the community’s center. Main Street is a wide, two-lane street with angle parking from 1st Street to 5th Street and wide sidewalks connecting three blocks of storefronts. The City’s original plat provided adequate room in the right of way for sidewalks, parking, and travel lanes for automobiles.
The Downtown area incorporates frontage along Highway 20 blocks both east and west a block and north to 1st Street in a similar manner. The area includes Main Street and one long block south of 3rd Street to the Dawes County Courthouse. There are City-owned parking lots on the backside of Main Street on both sides of the 200 block. The Downtown Master Plan included a parking study element and concluded that Downtown parking is adequate for normal activities. However, in the long term when the upper stories of Downtown buildings are rehabilitated and adapted to residential uses, overnight parking will have to be addressed.

Road Conditions
The main thoroughfares are in good condition as well as most side streets. Maintenance has kept the average street in good repair.

There are a few platted streets that have never been paved. Parts of Elm Street directly north of Highway 20 and a block of 3rd Street that is attached to Elm. Street sections north of Gordon Avenue in the north end of the City as well as a couple of blocks south of Niobrara Avenue are not paved. There are other scattered sections of unpaved streets including Ridgeview Road on the east side of town, north of Highway 20.

Alleys
A good portion of the original town has paved alleys that are in good condition. Paved alleys are also found in most locations from Highway 20 south to 10th Street. The Kenwood area has a little less than 50 percent paved alley. The unpaved alleys are well maintained with road gravel.

Sidewalks
The availability of sidewalks varies greatly within the City. Condition of the walkways also varies from excellent to hardly visible. ADA accessible ramps are prevalent along the Highways and the Downtown area. In the older residential areas, the ramps are not likely to be present. New residential and re-paving projects have consistently added accessible routes.

A good example is the first block of Mears Street, starting at 6th Street, moving south, with sidewalk on both sides. There are no ADA accessible ramps at the intersections and sections out to the street are in poor condition. The sidewalks are located at the property line and most of the rest of the block is in good condition. The last lot on the east side does not have a sidewalk, just a trail where pedestrians cross. The next block of Mears south does not have sidewalks on the west side except for the first house to the front door.

Most areas in the community have sidewalks, with an estimate of about 10-15 percent without. It appears that some lots and developments never planned to have a walk and for others lots, the sidewalks were never installed even though there are sidewalks adjacent. The City applied for a Nebraska Safe Route Grant to provide additional walkways on routes to schools. They are planning to re-apply next year as they did not receive any funds from the program.

Airport
The Chadron Municipal Airport (CDR) is located five miles west of Chadron on Highway 20. Chadron Municipal Airport offers free parking to airport patrons. Commercial flights are provided by Great Lakes Airlines with service to Denver International Airport. Great Lakes Airlines operates code share air flights between United Airlines and Frontier Airlines. Passenger numbers have declined in recent years due to a number of factors from the lack of flights to regular flight cancellations due to a shortage of airline pilots. The U.S. Department of Transportation, which underwrites the cost of air service to many small airports in Nebraska, has opened a request for proposal process for new air
service to serve the Chadron Municipal Airport. Last year, a request for proposals was issued by the City for repairs to the runways and taxi-ways, which will be funded mostly by a grant through the Federal Aviation Administration.

Bicycle and Trails
There are several trails located south of the college campus. There are two paved sections that begin at the southwest corner of the campus, one runs southwest by the water plant and connects to Maple street south of 15th Street. The other paved route loops south around the campus and connects to the parking lot south of the football field. From these paved sections are several other gravel pathways that continue around the south end of the campus and includes a loop to the Maple Street connection.

The abandoned railroad route to the east of the town has been proposed to be a part of the Cowboy Trail. When completed, the Cowboy Trail will be the world’s longest rails-to-trails bike trail (321 miles). Currently about two-thirds of the route has been surfaced between Norfolk and Valentine (195 miles). Approximately, 137 miles between Chadron and Valentine remain to be constructed and surfaced for bicycle uses. The in-town portion of this trail could be completed in Chadron out to the Fur Traders Museum to encourage visitors to bike, hike or equestrian use of the trail.

Railroads
The Nebraska Northwestern Railroad (NNW) currently conducts freight railroad operations in the former Chicago and Northwestern rail yard north of Downtown Chadron. The NNW railroad is a Class III railroad that began operations in 2010 after it had purchased 7.22 miles of the former Cowboy Line track between Dakota Junction and the Chadron rail yard. A Class III railroad typically has less than $20 million in revenues and operating as a short line trunk railroad servicing a small number of towns and industries. The railroad also leases track between Dakota Junction and Crawford where the line is owned by the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad. There is currently no passenger rail service provided to and from Chadron.

Water
The public water supply for the City of Chadron comes from three sources; surface water (Chadron Creek), infiltration gallery at Chadron Creek, and 5 wells located 18 miles south of town. The stream flows about 9 miles south of the city and is fed from springs and surface runoff.

Two earthen reservoirs, having a total capacity of about 100 million gallons storage during the fall and winter months when water consumption is low in town. These reservoirs are filled by diverting water from Chadron Creek. A reinforced concrete diversion dam has been constructed to divert water and control the depth of water in the reservoirs. A concrete pipe 15 inches in diameter and approximately 1 mile long conveys the water from the reservoirs toward the city. The pipe is laid with open joints and acts as an infiltration gallery, collecting water from several springs and also collecting the seepage from the dam. It is estimated
that approximately 30 percent of the total water used is collected in this pipe. An iron pipe 14 inches in diameter and approximately four miles long conveys water from the concrete pipe to the city. The latter pipe discharges into the treatment plant. A valve is placed on the pipe line to regulate the flow to the plant.

The water travels through the conventionally designed treatment plant. This plant has a capacity of 4.5 million gallons a day. Upon entering the plant, the water is then discharged into a rapid-mix basin, mechanically agitated, and combined with chlorine gas and polymer. This is followed by sedimentation in four rectangular tanks, operated in series, each being equipped with properly designed inlet and overflow weirs to provide proper settling. These tanks have a combined capacity of 750,000 gallons. Filtration is accomplished by means of two Anthracite Filters, each 350 square feet in area. These filters are equipped with filter block under-drains, 24 inches of Anthracite and 6 inches of filter sand.

Water from the 5 wells 18 miles south of town does not need to be sent through the treatment plant because the quality of the water is very good. The City can select to by-pass the treatment plant or allow the water to directly enter the clear well. The wells pump into the well field storage tank which is 100,000 gallons. Water is pumped to the Hilltop storage tank via one of two booster pumps (2,000 gallons per minute and a 4,000 gallons per minute pumps) that are utilized at different times to transfer the water. Another, smaller capacity well by-passes the field storage tank and pumps directly to the hilltop tank. The 250,000 gallon Hilltop tank holds the water until a control valve senses that the clear well at the treatment plant is low enough and opens to let the water gravity flow to town. The well water then enters the clear well after being treated or by-passed.

The clear well is connected to three storage reservoirs. Adjacent to the treatment plant is a ground level concrete reservoir of 1,000,000 gallon capacity. From the reservoir, water is supplied to the main distribution system. A 1,000,000 gallon steel reservoir located southeast of the college is filled by pumping water from the clear well at the plant through a 12” water line. This reservoir is connected to the City’s upper zone water system. There is a 14,000 gallon storage tank that stores the water for Hidden Valley which is also pumped out of the clear well and serves the high zone.

The water system is near capacity based on supply and treatment. A Water System Master Plan was prepared in 1987 and recommended improvements to the system to provide water for the following 20 years. This Plan is beyond its time frame and should be updated, addressing current issues with supply, control, and treatment. The City also has no water conservation program in place.

**Wastewater**

The City of Chadron’s Wastewater Treatment Plant was built in 2009 and is an Aero-Mod plant. The plant is a SEQUOX system that offers the benefits of sequencing aeration with the reliability of continuous clarification. To achieve better solids settling, the plant incorporates a selector tank to provide a preconditioning of raw wastewater that inhibits filamentous growth. The process is energy efficient, has a small footprint and operation is easy to control.

The City does have some infiltration (groundwater) and inflow (stormwater) into the collection system and staff have a committed schedule on locating and fixing the problem areas. Since the construction of the new plant, the City has been able to reduce infiltration significantly in the collection system. Capacity of the plant is 0.635 Million Gallons per Day (MGD) and is currently running at an average of 0.42 MGD.
Storm Sewer and Stormwater Management

The City had a Stormwater Management Plan prepared in 2008 by Leo A. Daly Company. The plan divides the City into three (3) basins and recommends improvements to the collection system. Following is a summary of the existing conditions.

The three basins described in the Plan are: the 1st Street System (area north of 1st Street); Main Street System (area including Downtown and east of Main Street); and the Southwest System (area including college and line to the northwest). The 1st Street collection system extends from Norfolk Street southwest to an outlet at Pine and 1st Street. From the outlet, stormwater flows to the northwest, generally parallel to the railroad. The system includes storm sewer in 1st Street from Main street west to the outlet. The pipes in 1st Street where partially replaced in 1979 and are now under construction, increasing pipe size and capacity.

The Main Street System extends from 10th Street south to three to five different connections with the 1st Street pipe at Main Street. The main line runs north down Main Street from 10th to 1st Street. The section from 3rd Street (Highway 20) north to 1st Street is scheduled for construction, also increasing capacity by installation of box culverts under the streets. The natural grade for the area is to the northwest, and there are large areas southeast of Main Street that have surface (curb and gutter) drainage without piping. The surface run-off is collected into the pipe system starting at Cedar Street.

The Southwest System collection begins at 10th Street and Chapin Street and extends west on 10th Street to the City Park. A drainage area south of the park also connects at the same location. The system outlets into a channel at Maple and 5th Street. The channel continues southwest, then west and turns north and undercrosses Highway 20 in a box culvert. The large 90° curves in the channel were paved in 1979 and channel grade...
and shape was improved at the same time. An area north of 6th and Pine Street was also graded to increase stormwater detention volume. The channel continues north of the Highway for about 450-feet, then flows northwest in a natural channel.

The channel continues to the northwest until it reaches the railroad near Stockade Road, where it is joined with stormwater flowing in a natural channel from the west end of 1st Street. The area bounded by the railroad on the north, Stockade Road on the west, the north side of the development along the north side of Highway 20, and Elm Street and the east, is an area of high groundwater and includes wetland areas. Stormwater will eventually flow into the White River northwest of the City. There are a series of small and large dams that collect stormwater, some used for irrigating crops.

The Management Plan provides for replacement of most of the existing pipes, increasing size and capacity, and replacing the grated inlets with larger capacities open-throat inlets. As development continues, extension of the collection system will be required. Areas of possible development, including south and east of 10th and Ridgeview, areas south of the college, and areas south of 10th Street along the Highway and Maple, will stretch the existing system to over existing capacity. Currently, Chadron has sufficient water supply to accommodate existing development areas into the near future.
Zoning

Chadron’s current Zoning Ordinance represents the community’s existing development pattern for the most part (see Chadron Existing Zoning Map on the following page). There are no zoning classifications for public and institutional uses. The existing zoning classifications include:

- AG: Agricultural District
- RR: Rural Residential District
- R-1: Low-Density Residential District
- R-2: Urban Family Residential District
- R-3: Multiple-Family Residential District
- MH: Mobile Home Residential District
- LC: Limited Commercial/Office District
- CC: Community Commercial District
- DC: Downtown Commercial District
- GC: General Commercial District
- LI: Limited Industrial District
- GI: General Industrial District

Chadron’s zoning districts provide basic land use requirements for what is permitted or not permitted in certain land use zones. The zoning districts are also regulated for lot size, building placement and bulk. Some modifications to the existing zoning and the introduction of new zoning mechanisms will likely be required to implement aspects of this Comprehensive Plan. Potential changes could include consolidating zoning districts, or creating additional districts to allow a range of uses in appropriate locations. Redrawing districts or changing designations in some areas also could help reduce land-use conflicts. Adding design requirements and flexibility regarding building design and massing, landscape and streetscape, and signage will also be important considerations. An analysis of each zone follows.

Residential Zoning Districts

AG: Agricultural District

Chadron’s Agricultural Districts are mainly located in the City’s far northeast quadrant near the Dawes County Fairground complex and municipal ball fields, and to the west of Walmart along U.S. Highway 20. Land in the extraterritorial boundary is zoned predominately Agricultural. The purpose of the AG Agricultural District is to preserve agricultural uses, a rural development pattern and low-density residential development. The minimum lot area in the Agricultural District is 2.5 acres.

RR Rural Residential

Rural Residential districts are mainly located in Chadron’s southern quadrant north and south of 16th Street and east and west of Highway 385 at 16th Street. Other pockets of Rural Residential zoning exist at the southeast corner of Ridgeview Road and 10th Street, and at North Pine Street north of Niobara west of the Kenwood Addition. Additional Rural Residential land is zoned north of Beaver Valley Road in the extraterritorial jurisdiction. The Rural Residential districts are meant to promote low density residential developments that are consistent with the levels of existing infrastructure and sensitive to local environmental conditions. The minimum lot area in the Rural Residential district is one acre.

R-1 Low-Density Residential

The R-1 Low Density Residential districts are generally located in Chadron’s southeast quadrant east of Main Street, south of 5th Street and west of Ridgeview Road, and in a small pockets around Wilson Park and adjacent to Chadron Memorial Hospital. Low Density Residential districts are intended to encourage single family
residential on larger lots consistent with the carrying capacity of underlying infrastructure. The minimum lot area in the Low Density Residential district is 8,000 square feet.

**R-2 Urban Family Residential**
The R-2 Urban Family Residential districts mainly consist of the traditional historic residential core of Chadron adjacent and south of the Downtown and the Kenwood Addition to the north. The R2 districts are intended to maintain single-family residential on small to moderate-sized lots typically found in the traditional core. Duplexes and townhomes are also permitted within this zoning classification. This zoning district is also meant to be a transition zone between single-family and multi-family neighborhoods. The minimum lot areas in the Urban Family Residential district is 6,000 square feet for single family, 4,000 square feet for duplexes, and 3,000 square feet for townhomes of multi-family units of four units or more.

**R-3 Multiple-Family Residential**
The R-3 Multi-Family Residential district is generally located west of Maple Street adjacent to the Highway 20/385 commercial areas. Multi-family apartments, townhomes, condominium complexes and single-family residential are encouraged in these zones consistent with available infrastructure. Hospital-related businesses are also permitted with a number of commercial and institutional uses allowed by special permit only. The minimum lot areas in the Multi-Family district is 6,000 square feet for single family, 3,000 square feet for duplexes, and 2,000 square feet for townhomes of multi-family units of four units or more.

**MH: Mobile Home Residential**
The MH Mobile Home Residential zoning district permits mobile home developments in planned parks or subdivisions along with the necessary supportive services and utilities. This zoning district is mostly located at Highway 385 and Redwood Court, at Maple Street south of 10th Street and at 4th Street and Westview Estates.

**Commercial Zoning Districts**
**LC Limited Commercial/Office**
The LC: Limited Commercial/Office zoning district mainly encompasses the campuses of Chadron State College the Chadron High School, and the Chadron Middle and East Ward Elementary Schools. The purpose of the district is promote low-scale, low impact commercial uses from restaurants and personal services to general retail, office and
lodging facilities; single family, duplex and multi-family residential developments are also permitted uses. Since many commercial and residential uses may not be appropriate or even considered on the school campuses, it may be appropriate to consider a new zoning classification for the campuses to only encourage the type of commercial and residential uses that are compatible with the campuses and the surrounding neighborhoods. The minimum lot area for Limited Commercial districts is 8,000 square feet.

CC: Community Commercial
The CC Community Commercial district is mostly found along the U.S. Highway 20 corridor from Ridgeview Road west to Maple Street and is intended to provide a range of commercial services to adjacent neighborhoods and the outlying region. Community Commercial developments are intended to be low-scale and compatible with nearby residential neighborhoods. Permitted commercial uses include general retail and restaurants, lodging and liquor sales, day care businesses, and churches and educational facilities. Most single and two family homes are also classified as permitted uses. Such commercial districts are also deemed appropriate for major intersections and at the junction of several neighborhoods. The minimum lot area for Community Commercial districts is 8,000 square feet.

DC: Downtown Commercial District
The DC Downtown Commercial District mainly incorporates the blocks that comprise the traditional Downtown commercial core along Second Street and Morehead Road, Chadron and Bordeaux Streets. The zoning classification is intended to encourage mixed uses in the Downtown and to strengthen the Downtown’s role as the commercial, social and civic center of the community. Most commercial uses ranging from general retail to restaurants and offices are permitted. The Downtown Master Plan recommends that a portion of the traditional Downtown along 1st Street should be rezoned from Limited Industrial to Community Commercial, or Downtown Commercial, reflecting the changes in land uses over time in these blocks. No minimum lot area is required in the Downtown Commercial district.

GC: General Commercial
The GC General Commercial zoning districts are generally located in the areas surrounding the U.S. Highway 20 and 385 intersection and east of the Highway 20 and Ridgeview Road intersection. Other pockets of General Commercial exist in blocks just northeast of Downtown along 2nd Street and Chadron Avenue and Bordeaux Streets. The purpose of the General Commercial zoning is to group commercial uses of significant traffic impact...
and auto-oriented nature along major arterial streets and to reduce conflicts between such commercial uses and areas of lower land use intensity. This zoning classification appears to be appropriate to the U.S. Highway 20/385 intersection although it may encourage unnecessary larger-sized auto-oriented developments to enter the Downtown district. Single family residential is permitted by special permit in this zoning classification. Other land zoned General Commercial is located west along U.S. Highway 20 at Stockdale Road in Chadron’s extraterritorial jurisdiction. The minimum lot area for the General Commercial districts is 8,000 square feet.

Industrial Uses

LI: Limited Industrial
The LI Limited Industrial zones in Chadron are located in pockets along 1st Street adjacent to railroad right-of-way and on land just west of Walmart along the east side of Stockdale Road. Limited Industrial zoning is intended to reserve sites for smaller-scaled industrial warehousing and light manufacturing uses that are wholly-contained within a building, although agricultural-related industrial uses are allowed by special permit. This zoning classification seems appropriate for the light industrial uses that are oriented to the railroad right-of-way. Again, the Downtown Master Plan recommends that several Downtown blocks be rezoned from Limited Industrial to Community Commercial, or Downtown Commercial. The minimum lot area for the Limited Industrial districts is 8,000 square feet.

GI: General Industrial
General Industrial zoning is mainly located in Chadron’s northeast quadrant including the land adjacent to the railroad right-of-way and north and south of Niobara Street. This zoning classification is intended to manage heavier industrial and manufacturing land uses with significant external effects, including outside storage needs, in particular locations away from land uses of a lower intensity. Accordingly, buffering treatments are suggested to reduce land use incompatibilities. It is unclear whether new industrial land uses can be located in the Niobara Street area given some drainage and environmental constraints. The minimum lot area for the general Industrial districts is 8,000 square feet.

Floating Zones

The City of Chadron provides two floating zones in its municipal code to encourage mixed use and good development design in certain locations. The MU: Mixed Use Overlay District is intended to promote a mix of compatible land uses, including commercial, residential park and open space, through a special permitting process. The minimum land area required for the Mixed Use Overlay is three acres. The PUD: Planned Unit Development overlay provides some flexibility.
in zoning requirements in order to achieve certain design objectives, including the inclusion of open space and other amenities. There is no minimum area or lot size requirement for Planned United Developments. The Downtown Master Plan recommends a Mixed Use Overlay District be adopted for portions of the Downtown Commercial District.

Energy Use and Water Conservation
This section evaluates Chadron’s metrics relating to energy consumption and existing community initiatives to help conserve energy and reduce the impacts of carbon-based energy use on the environment and the general health and well-being of the community. The people of Nebraska are fortunate to have relatively low-cost access to a range of both conventional and renewable energy sources, mainly through the public utility districts that operate in the public interest. In turn, Chadron is well-powered with five different substations that can handle any potential growth in the community. Electric power is provided through a combination of sources including wind, coal, nuclear and hydro-electric. In addition, the natural gas supply and capacity will be increased over the next two years in Chadron, although more capacity will be needed for any new industrial users. However, despite this low-cost access, there are opportunities in Chadron to lower utility costs so that Chadron businesses, institutions and residents can realize real energy savings – savings that can help spur additional investment in the community’s businesses and industries, homes and neighborhoods.

Chadron’s current energy use profile was determined through an analysis of a number of data sources from the State of Nebraska and through interviews with Chadron’s utility companies. Chadron’s energy use profile includes the following breakdown of energy sources compiled from 2013 usage data by the Nebraska Public Power District, the electric supplier for the City of Chadron:

- Coal (56.00 percent of total generation sources)
- Wind and other renewables (4.6 percent)
- Hydroelectric (2.5 percent)
- Natural Gas and Oil (0.8 percent)

This profile demonstrates that carbon-based energy sources still dominate as the main energy generation source while renewable energy represents approximately 7.1 percent of all sources. In comparison, the State of Nebraska, using 2012 data, consumed 861 trillion British Thermal Units (BTUs) of energy, which ranks it 33 of 50 states in energy uses across generation sources. The general number of energy sources for the state includes:

- Coal (64.00 percent)
- Wind and other renewables (5.2 percent)
- Hydroelectric (3.2 percent)
- Natural Gas and Oil (1.7 percent)
In general, Chadron’s energy sources falls mostly in line with how the rest of the state is securing its energy needs, although the use of renewable energy sources will become a growing percentage of the energy source mix for all Nebraskans. In fact, the Nebraska Public Power District in its most recent annual report, claims that the District produced 42 percent more power from renewable sources than the previous year, which is 20 percent more generated than neighboring states. Examples of renewable energy resources include: biomass, hydroelectric, geothermal, solar, wind, and wood. Renewable energy resources are naturally replenishable, but they are limited in their distribution as compared to oil, coal and gas, which can be shipped over long distances. Therefore, the use of some renewable energy sources can be undertaken at a local level where distribution channels are readily available and costs are relatively competitive to other non-renewable sources.

**Chadron State College Bio-Mass Energy System**

Chadron State College provides a compelling example of how a locally-managed alternative energy system has resulted in significant energy savings, especially for an educational institution comprised of academic buildings and dormitory space. The College has been using a wood-burning bio-mass system since 1991 to heat and cool approximately 1.1 million square feet of building space, saving approximately $150,000 and more a year in utility costs. In the late 2000s, the College installed an absorption chiller that condenses steam produced by the wood fired boilers to provide chilled water for campus air conditioning. On average 8,000 tons of wood chips are burned per year, which are delivered to the College by a contractor from locally-sourced wood supply, mostly from the Pine Ridge area. In terms of lifecycle costs, it was originally estimated that the bio-mass system would take 10 years to pay off; it only took seven years.

A bio-mass system, as well as other alternative forms of energy, could be employed by other public bodies and agencies in Chadron to reduce their energy costs. For instance, this technology could be used by the Hospital, the schools and the municipality; since the U.S. Forest Service retains a significant amount of leftover lumber from year to year that does not get sold or used, the lumber could be employed in bio-mass systems. Lumber will always be in supply locally since fire is a fact of life in a 100,000 acre national forest and some of the wood is also culled for selling to the private sector. The Hospital has recently completed a wood chip technology feasibility study.

**Geothermal and Geo-Exchange**

In addition to bio-mass technologies, geo-exchange systems (sometimes referred to as geothermal systems) take advantage of the naturally constant temperature of the earth, providing heat in the winter and cooling in the summer by use of a Ground-Source Heat Pump. Geo-exchange systems should not be confused with true geothermal systems that take advantage of much higher temperatures in geologically active areas such as Iceland. Geothermal systems can be a feasible alternative to carbon-based energy sources for local agencies seeking to reduce their energy costs.

Such systems are also being considered for use in much larger settings that for an individual building or structure. For instance, the community of West Union, Iowa (population 2,500) is installing a geo-thermal system for the entire Downtown commercial district so that individual property and business owners can take advantage of lower heating and cooling bills. Downtown property owners are not required to join the system but more than a dozen have hooked up since the system began operating in 2014. Costs of system design and construction were paid through a grant from the U.S. Department of Energy; therefore, no local tax was enacted to underwrite the project. It is
expected that energy costs for Downtown business
and property owners will go down over time as
more owners participate in the system over time.²

Solar Thermal
Solar thermal systems use the sun’s energy to
make hot water. Solar thermal is a more mature
technology with lower cost per kilowatt and an
efficiency that can exceed 70 percent. Solar thermal
panels also present several challenges to Downtown
revitalization projects in particular since they
can be visible on low-rise buildings facing south.
Depending on the use of the building, there may
also be a problem finding a use for large quantities
of hot water, especially during the summer months.
Restaurants can take advantage of large quantities
of hot water produced by the panels, while standard
commercial office space may not have the need for
hot water beyond a coffee station sink.

Wind
Wind power is another form of renewable power
that has recently gained favor but there are challenges
to installing wind turbines. Most wind turbines
cannot be mounted onto existing structures as most
buildings are not designed to resist the lateral loads
that wind turbines can place on a structure. Wind
turbines are also not a traditional visual element of a
historic Downtown district. However, smaller-scaled
wind turbines away from the front of the structure
on a secondary elevation, or an accessory buildings
such as a garage can be installed. Most importantly,
one should confirm that there are sufficient prevailing
winds to power a turbine.

² “Iowa town puts unusual geothermal twist on district heat-
ing.” Midwest Energy News, October 9, 2014

Nebraska Energy Code
Under Sections 81-1608 to 81-1616, the State of
Nebraska has adopted the International Energy
Conservation code as the Nebraska Energy Code.
Any city in Nebraska may adopt and enforce the
Nebraska Energy Code or an equivalent energy
code. If, as is the case in Chadron, a city does not
adopt an energy code, the Nebraska Energy Office
will enforce the Nebraska Energy Code in the
jurisdiction. The Code applies to all new buildings,
or renovations of or additions to existing buildings.
Only those renovations that will cost more than 50
percent of the replacement cost of the building must
comply with the Code.

Water Conservation
In recent years, many communities have begun
enacting local water conservation programs often
focused on encouraging private property owners
and developers to install plumbing fixtures and
appliances that reduces the amount of water being
used from toilets, showers and home faucets. Such
programs also extend to public and commercial
buildings and have proven to have a significant
impact in lowering water consumption in
households and businesses.

Community Engagement
An essential component of any comprehensive
planning process is community engagement –
couraging local stakeholders to participate in
the process and to voice their concerns, ideas and
opinions on Chadron’s future. A multi-layered
community engagement process was employed
to help identify and establish planning issues and
priorities. It is important that this process achieve
both a range of community involvement through
different means and methods in order to garner a
deep understanding of the questions and concerns
of Chadron residents. Direct participation in the
planning process – when community stakeholders
are able to be seen and heard – fosters trust between neighbors and elected officials responsible for enacting policy. Additionally, harnessing the energy and excitement generated through public participation efforts is particularly essential during the early phases of a long-term planning effort since tangible results will occur over time.

To achieve these goals, the public process for updating the Comprehensive Plan utilized the following community engagement elements:

- **Stakeholder Interviews.** One-on-one and small group meetings provide an opportunity for the Planning Team to obtain the unique insights of City department heads and other important stakeholders, including the local School District, Chadron State College, business and land owners, ranchers and agricultural industries, economic development and housing groups, churches and civic institutions, the U.S. Forest Service and other public agency representatives, and local residents.

- **Community Tours.** On the ground tours conducted by the planning team with other stakeholders to observe existing conditions in Downtown, the neighborhoods, and the commercial corridors and industrial areas.

- **Public Meeting.** An open house for community members to meet the Planning Team, share their thoughts, and listen to others was conducted on September 24, 2014. Approximately 50 residents and community stakeholders attended the workshop.

- **Online Survey.** An online survey was developed to help reach a broader audience, yet provide privacy for honest feedback in determining the key community planning issues.

The results of these community engagement tools allow for a thorough analysis of planning issues and common themes and ideas. In addition to outreach efforts by the City of Chadron and various independent organizations, the Planning Team prepared both a formal project website and a Facebook page to directly engage and inform Chadron residents about the planning effort, as well as meetings and events. The project website was planchadron.mindmixer.com while the Facebook page was titled **Plan Chadron.**

**Online Survey**

Following the first open house, an online survey was developed to help gain additional information and insight on the planning issues facing Chadron. In all, 20 community members participated online. Key results of the survey are measured by average scores of differing scales from one to five and one to ten with one representing “poor” or “dissatisfied” and five or ten signifying “excellent or “very satisfied.” Average scores are listed.

- Condition of streets and sidewalks – 3.16 score (5 scale)
- Quality of local parks – 7.37 (10 scale)
- Quality of recreational programs – 5.89 (10 scale)
- Quality of infrastructure – 6.49 (10 scale)
- Quality of local schools – 6.74 (10 scale)
- Quality of housing – 2.30 (5 scale)
Planning Themes
Several planning issues and themes emerged during a planning process that included stakeholder and focus group interviews, a community meeting, online interaction through MindMixer and an online survey. These issues include:

Downtown
The historic Downtown district has a number of opportunities for retail development and upper-floor housing. It also has the potential to position itself as a tourism destination within the region. Implementing the Downtown Chadron Master Plan should be a key focus for the community going forward.

Infrastructure
The City has begun a substantial infrastructure improvement project with its storm sewer project Downtown. Other infrastructure issues remain in improving streets and sidewalks in the neighborhoods. Infrastructure constraints in the City’s water supply and stormwater management systems may also preclude the City from growing and expanding its current footprint.

Housing
Stakeholders noted a desire for both higher quality and affordable housing in the community; local demographic trends indicate that affordable housing is much needed in the community. A majority of the housing stock is older and many units have been converted into student apartments. There is also a limited amount of developable land for new housing along with attendant infrastructure constraints.

Economy
Overall, the Chadron economy is remarkably diverse with a highly educated workforce; however, there is a recognized need for people with technical and trade skills that meet the needs of the local health care, education and agriculture sectors. There is also a strong need for new businesses in the Downtown, businesses that can provide a variety of goods and services to the local population. Industrial development will be significantly constrained due to infrastructure issues. Tourism is still an unrealized potential for the community.

Quality of Life
Chadron residents desire more features and services that enhance their overall quality of life: better parks and baseball fields, access to bike trails, new cultural and entertainment venues, and enhanced library and school facilities. The community has recently worked together to approve a new indoor pool complex; future referendums and other initiatives may be needed to achieve community quality of life goals and improvements to various community facilities.
Community Appearances

Chadron residents expressed interest in “cleaning up” the community and improving the overall appearance of properties and public spaces. Gateway enhancements, corridor streetscapes and public improvements within the Downtown can help to beautify and “brand” the community as a visually-appealing, scenic and charming Panhandle community.

Partnerships

The recent passing of a referendum to help fund a new indoor facility is testament to the Chadron’s partnership ethic and the recognition that collaboration between many stakeholder groups and institutions is an effective means toward accomplishing community development goals. Strong and effective partnerships and organizational arrangements between the City, community institutions and citizen stakeholders will be needed to advance other community desires in revitalizing the Downtown, maintaining Chadron’s traditional neighborhood areas, promoting tourism, enhancing parks and open space, and in building a competitive and well-skilled workforce.

Chadron’s trees and parkways contribute positively to Chadron’s visual qualities and appearance.
Section 4
Comprehensive Plan

The Chadron Comprehensive Plan is the result of a collaborative process between the City of Chadron, the Planning Commission, the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, other local government bodies, Chadron citizens and stakeholders to create a planning vision and framework for the community’s long-term future. This process included data and information analysis, on-site field work, community meetings, and stakeholder and focus group interview sessions. The vision for Chadron is based on a realistic land use strategy for the community’s proper growth and development and a series of recommendations for revitalizing Chadron’s traditional commercial areas and neighborhoods, enhancing the community’s overall visual appearance and aesthetics, diversifying its economic base, improving the efficiency of its transportation and infrastructure systems, and creating a superior quality of life for its residents over the next 10 years.

This Comprehensive Plan also seeks to build on Chadron’s many significant assets, including its historic Downtown district and Chadron State College; access to nearby highways and transportation routes; proximity to Chadron and Fort Robinson State Parks, the Nebraska National Forest, and the Oglala National Grasslands; its state-of-the art community hospital and strong community school system; its vibrant Public Library; long-time industries; area religious institutions; parks and open space; and, its engaged civic organizations and citizens and stakeholders. Just as important, it is also the seat of government for Dawes County.
Community Vision
The community’s collective ideas for Chadron’s long-term revitalization and growth have been drafted in written form as a comprehensive Vision Statement, drawn from the results of various discussions and meetings with stakeholders and the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee. The Vision Statement summarizes Chadron’s key strengths and assets while capturing stakeholder consensus and citizen aspirations for diversifying land use and economic activity, and creating a more vibrant, resilient community now and into the future. The Vision Statement should inspire and motivate Chadron residents to work together in implementing various elements of this Comprehensive Plan.

Chadron Vision Statement
Ten years from today, Chadron will be the economic, social, cultural and recreational center of Nebraska’s upper Panhandle region with a revitalized historic Downtown district and traditional neighborhoods; a diversified base of employment and industries; prosperous commercial corridors; well-maintained parks, ball fields, and open space; enhanced community facilities and schools; new recreational opportunities and venues for heritage tourism; improved and expanded infrastructure; and quality, sustainable growth and development that is visually appealing, provides and meets the needs of local residents, and is compatible with adjacent land uses and the surrounding physical environment.

Above all, the Chadron community continues to work and collaborate together to achieve important community development goals and initiatives.
The Vision is outlined as follows:

**Revitalized Downtown Chadron**

Downtown is the heart of Chadron known for its historic architecture, its diversity of stores and restaurants and its special events, and cultural and entertainment activities. As the heart of the community, Downtown Chadron will have:

- Buildings facades and storefronts have been sensitively rehabilitated and reused with upper stories converted to new residential units and office space. Buildings are also fully-occupied with a mix of retail stores and service businesses that meet the needs of local residents and visitors.

- New streetscape, gateway and urban design improvements that enhance Downtown’s sidewalks, streets, public spaces and infrastructure systems.

- Farmer’s market, festivals, promotion events and sporting activities that attract local residents and visitors from around the Panhandle region and beyond.

- New infill development on vacant and underutilized lots in order to promote mixed uses and enhanced overall urban design appearance that reweaves Downtown’s “retail fabric”.

- A new trailhead for the Cowboy Trail along 1st and Bordeaux Streets in the railroad right-of-way serving as an important hub for recreational cyclists and hikers. A new heritage interpretive center has been created near the Downtown as a significant tourism destination.

- Implemented the various elements and recommendations of the 2014 Downtown Chadron Master Plan.

- A mix of retail stores and professional services as well as tourism, arts and entertainment-related businesses and establishments.
Vibrant Neighborhoods

Chadron is the home of vibrant neighborhoods with many assets and strengths, including its schools, community organizations, churches, existing businesses and industries, and active and engaged neighborhood stakeholders and residents. By capitalizing on these assets, Chadron will have:

- A well-maintained housing stock that meets the diverse housing needs of Chadron residents – a housing stock that includes a mix of rehabilitated single-family residential homes, new construction, multi-family units, and housing that serves the senior and moderate to low income populations.

- Improved infrastructure and transportation choices, including new and improved sidewalks and bike lanes that enhance the mobility of local residents to walk or ride to their destinations, as well as facilitate the creation of a “wellness” network within the community.

- A culturally-diverse residential population that is actively engaged in neighborhood civic life, churches and schools, and various activities such as clean and green efforts and block gatherings that build the image of Chadron neighborhoods as a friendly, safe and inviting place to live.

- New residential neighborhoods that add new and innovative housing products that are well-connected to the existing neighborhood residential fabric, offer new amenities such as parks and bike paths, and incorporate sustainable design elements that reduce energy consumption and stormwater run-off.

- Energy efficient residential units through a combination of efforts that promote alternative energy systems and energy saving practices in new and existing homes.

- Strong and effective collaborations with local housing groups and non-profit organizations that serve to rehabilitate and supply affordable housing units in the Chadron community.

Diversified Economy

Chadron will be the home for a diverse collection of businesses and industries operated by entrepreneurs and investors needing suitable spaces to create, develop, market and sell new products, goods and services. With Chadron State College, the nearby Pine Ridge Job Corps and numerous smaller communities in the area, Chadron provides the opportunity for a large and skilled work force that should accommodate almost any business that would wish to locate and grow in the community. Chadron is also a shopping hub for the Nebraska Panhandle with a customer base that extends 50 miles in all directions, thereby greatly enhancing the opportunities for retail growth. Businesses will also relocate to Chadron due to its opportunities for world class hunting, hiking and outdoor activities; history, and access to the Nebraska National Forest and
Oglala Grasslands. As a vital regional business and economic center, Chadron will have:

- A strong and growing commercial and industrial base that includes large to small-scale format retailing and manufacturing. Commercial activities will locate Downtown, along commercial corridors and in strategic locations that do not impact residential neighborhoods. New industrial will locate in designated areas supported by adequate infrastructure and transportation networks.

- Ongoing technical, organizational and financial support that encourages and facilitates entrepreneurship, small business development and investments in new industries.

- A well-educated and trained workforce that meets the skill-level needs of local employers and industries and, diversifies the career and occupational opportunities for current and prospective Chadron residents. Partnerships between the local schools, Chadron State College and other agencies and institutions serve to provide the educational venues and settings for Chadron residents to enhance and develop their work skills and experiences.

- Growing, vibrant heritage and recreational tourism sectors that capitalizes on Chadron’s existing assets, including the historic Downtown, nearby open spaces, ball fields and park spaces.

- Energy efficient businesses and industries that use their energy cost savings to reinvest in their businesses, add new employment and enhance and improve Chadron’s air, water and other environmental qualities.

**Special Sense of Place**

Chadron will have a unique physical appearance and design character that sets it apart from other Nebraska Panhandle communities and serves to attract shoppers, visitors, investors and new residents to the community. As a special sense of place, Chadron will have:

- Improved community gateways, streetscapes and pedestrian spaces along key corridors and neighborhood areas that enhance Chadron’s overall visual appearance.

- Preserved architecturally and historically significant buildings and sites along with new development that maintains Chadron’s small town character and is compatible with the scale and design of adjacent historic buildings and neighborhoods.

- Enhanced parks and park facilities that “green up” Chadron and provide desired services and amenities to local residents and visitors.

- A complete trail and bike path network that includes new connections to the Nebraska National Forest and points east and west.
Land Use Planning Strategy

The long-term vision for Chadron will be accomplished through the implementation of a rational and compelling land use strategy that seeks to enhance the quality of life for all Chadron citizens through a balanced and well-considered approach to the community’s land development. A balance of land uses is needed to ensure there is ongoing investment in older areas of the City and adequate land and infrastructure for new commercial, residential and industrial development; furthermore, the infrastructure network should not be overly burdened and new development must be compatible with adjacent land uses and the visual, environmental and aesthetics qualities of the surrounding landscape. Diversity in land uses should also promote economic diversity and long-term community resiliency to changes in local and regional economic conditions.

Specific land use objectives and recommendations are described in later sections of this Comprehensive Plan with a specific focus on housing and neighborhoods. The Future Land Use Map (shown on the following page) represents a recommended pattern of land uses in the City of Chadron and the types and intensities of different land uses occurring in a particular area. The Chadron land use strategy is further defined and described in the following section. While the land use map should guide future land use and zoning decisions, it is also meant to be adjusted when circumstances warrant a change in planning direction in a given area of the City. However, any changes to the land use map should also be consistent with the larger community vision presented in this Comprehensive Plan. It should also be noted that the land use strategy does not eliminate existing uses on existing properties where a change in land use direction is recommended in this Comprehensive Plan. Last, the land use strategy builds on and updates the one proposed in the 1997 Comprehensive Plan.

Traditional Downtown Core

Bounded generally by Morehead Street to the west, King Street on the east, and the commercial block facing Main Street at 4th Street the Traditional Downtown Core is intended to encourage a mix of commercial and residential uses in both existing buildings and new construction, and to maintain the Downtown as the community’s primary shopping district. Allowing a mix of uses in the Downtown can help facilitate increased utilization of buildings and spaces, as well as build increased value in Downtown real estate and businesses. Downtown should become the premier historic commercial district in the Nebraska Panhandle.

The primary planning goals in the Traditional Downtown Core include rehabilitating buildings and storefronts; adapting the upper floors to new uses, such as apartments, offices, bed and breakfast operations and lodging establishments, and improving the overall physical environment through streetscape and urban design enhancements. Infill development on available land should be encouraged and designed in a way to reinforce the Downtown pedestrian orientation and zero-setback development pattern.

A primary focus for the Chadron community going forward is to implement the Downtown Chadron Master Plan, which provides detailed recommendations on land use, building and urban design improvements. A particular focus of the Master Plan is to reposition the Downtown to not only offer more goods and services but also to become a compelling destination for tourists and visitors through the creation of an interpretive center in the historic railroad roundhouse and a trailhead for the Cowboy Trail. The Master Plan also recommends the eventual transition of auto-related land uses to other more suitable areas in Chadron as Downtown grows and revitalizes and the demand for space for more suitable retail and commercial uses increases over time.
Traditional Neighborhoods

Residential neighborhoods adjacent to the Downtown and south towards 10th Street, east toward Beech, west toward Maple Street and the majority of the Kenwood Addition mainly consists of older and historic homes, mostly single family and single-family converted to multi-family use. This Land Use Strategy seeks to preserve and maintain the low-scale single-family character of these neighborhoods by encouraging housing rehabilitation and compatible new infill development that compliments the scale and design of the existing housing stock. Residential infill should be encouraged on the smaller lots that may exist in these neighborhoods; townhomes and duplexes should only be encouraged on available lots near the Traditional Downtown core. All new residential developments in Traditional Neighborhoods should be of high quality and compatible with the surrounding building forms and styles. Traditional neighborhoods should also receive a high priority for capital improvements – improved streets, alleys and new sidewalks where needed as well as enhanced parks and park amenities, gateway and other branding elements.

Neighborhood Residential

In contrast to the Traditional Neighborhoods where the majority of the housing dates prior to World War II, Neighborhood Residential housing represents areas where the housing was largely constructed in the 1950s and afterwards. The essential character of these areas will remain single family on larger lots with select opportunities for multi-family development in appropriate locations. These areas should be mostly consistent and compatible with block size and street grid patterns of the Traditional Neighborhoods; capital improvements should receive a lower priority than in the Traditional neighborhoods, although alleys and other public right-of-way improvements should occur where needed and warranted.

Multi-Family Residential

Multi-family residential should be encouraged in areas that are supported by existing transportation networks, infrastructure and nearby commercial areas. The types of multi-family housing to be encouraged include apartments, townhomes, and condominium complexes. Single-family should be discouraged in such areas in order to reserve available land for needed multi-family units.
Rural Residential
To maintain the mostly rural and semi-rural character of lands within Chadron and adjacent to the community in the extraterritorial jurisdiction, rural residential would permit larger lot single-family residential consistent with available infrastructure, including needed collector roads and sanitary and stormwater management systems. Rural residential development should also be conducive to conservation subdivision design along with traditional subdivision regulations. Conservation subdivisions permit large-lot single family developments while preserving open spaces, creeks, vistas and natural areas within such developments. Single family lots in such subdivisions are often clustered together to fit more naturally within the existing landscape and preserve existing open spaces, ranch steads and cultural resources.

Urban Reserve
Land located in these areas should largely remain undeveloped or slated for open space and continued agricultural use. Infrastructure and environmental constraints will often prevent the land from being developed in the near term.

Institutional-Civic
Significant public sector civic and institutional uses, including the local schools, Chadron State College, City Hall, the County complex and other governmental facilities, religious institutions and municipal parks will be identified as institutional-civic land uses. Currently, there is no zoning classification for such uses in the Chadron zoning code. The planning goals for institutional-civic use areas should include maintaining parks and government facilities as key elements of vibrant commercial areas and residential neighborhoods and promoting the campus-environments of Chadron State College, the High School along 10th Street and other places as warranted. Some commercial uses should be limited in the campus zones in order to ensure the commercial vitality of the Downtown district and to promote it as a primary shopping area for Chadron State College students.

It is recognized that Chadron State College is a growing educational institution with new academic buildings related to agriculture, a new sports complex, student housing and a commitment to serve the higher educational needs of the Chadron region for generations to come. The College will continue to anchor the southern edge for the community where opportunities for growth and expansion will continue to occur. The community will also seek new partnerships with the College in regards to expanding educational services, facility sharing where feasible and appropriate, and potential economic development-related endeavors that help to attract new employment, businesses and industries.

Institutional-Medical
Available land in and around the Chadron Community Hospital represent an opportunity to create a small district of collaborative and mutually-supportive medical, residential and commercial land uses ranging from doctor offices, and senior and affordable housing complexes, to related retail stores.
and other services. The district could also incorporate a higher level of urban design improvements and linked to area bike paths and trails, which would position the Hospital complex as the “wellness center” for Chadron. Such a district could help grow an already strong healthcare sector in Chadron and position the community to attract additional medical professionals and residents to the community.

**Highway 20 – 3rd Street Corridor**

U.S. Highway 20 from Ridgeview Road to Oak Street has a mix of smaller-scaled, mostly auto-oriented commercial uses along with single-family homes and institutional uses, especially along its eastern segment past the Downtown district. Commercial uses should continue to be promoted with an emphasis on developing vacant and underutilized lots, improving the appearance of existing building, redeveloping existing commercial with higher quality buildings, site landscaping and other design improvements, and maintaining a clear separation of commercial from the single-family residential in the adjacent neighborhoods. The overall goal for the 3rd Street corridor, therefore, is to improve its overall visual appearance, image and urban design as a commercial thoroughfare; a high quality urban design environment enhances opportunities for economic development, ensures resident retention and helps to attract new residents, businesses and visitors.

To that end, new lot and development standards should be considered to encourage more appropriate site design and building placement, especially in regards to placing new developments closer to the sidewalk and screening parking areas from the sidewalk and right-of-way and to the adjacent residential neighborhoods. Incentives could also be created to encourage existing property and building owners to undertake building and site improvements. Right-of-way enhancements should also include new landscaping treatments and crosswalks, wayfinding signage and new lighting where appropriate. Entry signage and other landscaping treatments should be focused at gateways into the corridor at or near the intersections of Ridgeview Road and at 4th Street or Elm Streets.

Residential development should be discouraged along the corridor’s western segment and maintained where it exists in the eastern portion past Downtown toward Ridgeview Road. In the long term, residential uses fronting Third Street along the corridor’s eastern segment could be transitioned to commercial or institutional. Some lots could also transition to park or open space. Only small-scaled, light manufacturing uses where all operations are wholly enclosed in a building and adequately screened from adjacent residential areas should be allowed along the corridor. Higher density housing, such as townhomes, condominiums and apartments should occur in the Downtown district along Third Street.

**General Commercial**

General Commercial areas occur along key highway intersection nodes such as at U.S. Highway 20 and 385 and supporting single-story, larger-scale auto-oriented commercial uses serving both local residents, travelers and the regional market. Chadron has available commercial land in these areas that are already served with upgraded sewer and water connections. Light industrial and manufacturing uses of a larger scale and not producing noise or emitting odors would also be encouraged in the general commercial areas. Parking areas for both commercial and light industrial developments should be adequately landscaped and screened from the sidewalk or right-of-way.

The potential construction of the Heartland Expressway through the Highway 20 and 385 intersection could catalyze additional commercial uses within this quadrant, perhaps on land west of the Chadron Cemetery and north and south of Highway 20. Such commercial uses could include restaurants, convenience stores and hotels. This area should be the subject of a sub area plan if the
Heartland Expressway is funded for the portion extending from South Dakota to Alliance.

**Light Industrial**

Light industrial zones are intended to provide for light production and assembly, warehousing, office and research, and other similar uses in completely contained buildings and structures that do not involve the release of polluting sounds, odors and materials. Light industrial uses that necessitate the need for outdoor storage facilities should only be permitted by condition in these areas. The Downtown Chadron Master Plan recommends that light industrial uses located along the 1st Street between Chadron Avenue and Mears Street be transitioned over time to Downtown-oriented commercial uses given the changing nature of the businesses currently located in this portion of the Downtown. Other Light Industrial areas in Chadron should remain, although opportunities exist to add more light industrial uses along Niobara Street depending on environmental conditions and further west past the Highway 20 and 385 intersection.

With some exceptions, most retail and general commercial uses will generally not be permitted in light industrial areas although landscaping and buffering requirements to adjacent land uses of a lower intensity is recommended. Some forms of light assemble uses could be located in the Downtown district if they are wholly enclosed in a building.

**General Industrial**

Higher intensity industrial facilities – ones that require the outside storage of materials and equipment or have the potential to emit polluting odors and materials, degrade infrastructure and cause potential land use conflicts – should be considered general industrial. This area is largely confined to the railroad right-of-way and limited locations east of East Main Street on East Niobara Street. Any new general industrial areas in Chadron will be mostly restricted by infrastructure constraints, new industrial developments must be served by adequate infrastructure, including roadways and utilities and have significant setbacks and buffering from adjacent land uses of a lower intensity.

**Land Use Objectives**

The purpose of creating this land use framework is to allow the City to achieve the following important land use and community development goals and objectives:

- Revitalize the Traditional Downtown Core as a pedestrian-friendly, mixed use center for retail, office and residential uses. Commercial uses, especially, are concentrated in the Downtown core to promote and maintain its long-term economic viability and vitality. New residential development in the upper floors of Downtown buildings can increase the amount of occupied space, raise property values and generate new sources of income for building owners.

- Preserve and enhance the character of established neighborhoods while providing housing opportunities at a range of price points and rental rates and in new locations in areas supported by adequate infrastructure.

- Plan and locate industrial uses in appropriate locations supported by adequate infrastructure and that avoid potential conflicts with residential areas and other land uses.

- Consider areas where tourism-related commercial uses could be located.

- Maintain the scenic and environmental qualities of Chadron and its surrounding land.

- Plan for the orderly growth of the commercial areas at Highway 385 and Highway 20 in order to encourage high quality development design and enhanced community gateways.
• Build on assets that already exist in Chadron – including its educational institutions, historic Downtown core, traditional neighborhoods, and nearby parks and natural resource amenities – as a way to attract new businesses and residents and build a tourism base.

The Land Use Matrix below helps to summarize the Land Use Strategy and categories presented above and how they can be applied given current conditions. Flexibility in implementing the land use strategy is the primary goal while being consistent in achieving the overall planning goals presented in this Comprehensive Plan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRADITIONAL DOWNTOWN CORE</th>
<th>TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOODS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use Characteristics</strong></td>
<td><strong>Features</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Includes a mix of commercial uses with upper story office and residential units</td>
<td>- Pedestrian-oriented development with zero building setback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Focus of civic uses and social gathering spaces</td>
<td>- High level of streetscape and urban design treatments in the public ROW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- New mixed-use developments on infill development sites</td>
<td>- Formal gathering spaces and center of cultural activities and events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Features</strong></td>
<td><strong>Features</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Pedestrian-oriented development with zero building setback</td>
<td>- Historic preservation is of high importance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- High level of streetscape and urban design treatments in the public ROW</td>
<td>- New development respects existing development character</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Formal gathering spaces and center of cultural activities and events</td>
<td>- Strong connections to adjacent neighborhoods and proposed tourism attractions in railroad ROW.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Historic preservation is of high importance</td>
<td>- District may expand on underutilized or vacant lots and spaces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- New development respects existing development character</td>
<td>- Existing densities are generally maintained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Strong connections to adjacent neighborhoods and proposed tourism attractions in railroad ROW.</td>
<td>- Housing rehabilitation and infill development emphasized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- District may expand on underutilized or vacant lots and spaces.</td>
<td>- Priority parkway, alley and infrastructure improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Existing densities are generally maintained</td>
<td>- Should be buffered from land uses of high intensities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Housing rehabilitation and infill development emphasized</td>
<td>- Priority parkway, alley and infrastructure improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Priority parkway, alley and infrastructure improvement</td>
<td>- Should be buffered from land uses of high intensities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 11: LAND USE MATRIX

#### NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTIAL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use Characteristics</th>
<th>Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Detached single family residential, duplexes and townhomes permitted generally on larger lots than Traditional Neighborhoods</td>
<td>• May apply to existing neighborhoods but general in development opportunity areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Larger multi-family developments and group housing may be permitted on condition and special review</td>
<td>• Density should be 6 to 15 units per acre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Civic and institutional uses permitted by condition and general review</td>
<td>• Existing infrastructure is maintained while new streets, alleys, parks and trail connections may be required. Street connectivity with the existing development fabric is strongly recommended.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Planned Unit Developments and Conservation Subdivisions could be used for alternative designs</td>
<td>• Clustering should be encouraged in environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands, streams and view sheds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Mixed use development with first floor commercial is limited to areas near Downtown and commercial corridors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• New Neighborhood Residential areas could be used for temporary housing by condition</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use Characteristics</th>
<th>Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Permits townhomes and multi-family housing and restricts detached single family residential</td>
<td>• Located by major intersections and destinations, including the Community Hospital and retail centers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Civic and institutional uses are generally permitted by condition and special review</td>
<td>• Emphasis on providing affordable housing near amenities and services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Typical density is higher than 15 units per acre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Well-connected to the street network and adjacent development fabric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Maintained and new infrastructure with high quality urban design and streetscape treatments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Incorporates parks and open space and trail connections where feasible and part of Planned Unit Developments and Conservation Subdivisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Mixed use development with first floor commercial is limited to areas near Downtown. The Community Hospital and commercial corridors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## TABLE 11: LAND USE MATRIX

### RURAL RESIDENTIAL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use Characteristics</th>
<th>Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▪ Restricted to detached single family residential, although Planned Unit Developments and Conservation Subdivisions are encouraged.</td>
<td>▪ Residential is the primary use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Developments provided with full municipal and infrastructure services</td>
<td>▪ Densities may range from 1 to 6 units per acre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Civic and institutional uses permitted by condition and special review</td>
<td>▪ Clustering and the protection of environment assets and view sheds are recommended.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Should generally not be located near industrial areas</td>
<td>▪ Should generally not be located near industrial areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Connectivity with adjacent residential and commercial areas</td>
<td>▪ Connectivity with adjacent residential and commercial areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Dedicated open space is recommended</td>
<td>▪ Dedicated open space is recommended</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### URBAN RESERVE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use Characteristics</th>
<th>Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▪ Agriculture and open space uses</td>
<td>▪ Land will remain in agriculture or open space use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Land will generally not be developed due to market and infrastructure constraints</td>
<td>▪ Environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands and poorly drained areas will be protected from development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### INSTITUTIONAL-CIVIC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use Characteristics</th>
<th>Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▪ Use permitted includes schools, Chadron State College, parks and recreation facilities, churches, libraries, government buildings and other places that act as centers of community and public service facilities.</td>
<td>▪ Permitted by condition in most land uses areas except industrial. Conditions may focus on traffic, parking, design, and operating characteristics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Parks and open space are maintained as both active and passive recreation space</td>
<td>▪ Commercial uses associated civic facilities should also be reviewed by condition to ensure viability of Chadron’s commercial districts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Environmentally sensitive areas including drainage areas protected and maintained as open space</td>
<td>▪ Sidewalks, bike paths and trails should be encouraged to connect such uses to other Chadron neighborhoods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Greenways and trails established where feasible and as part of new residential developments</td>
<td>▪ Parks and open spaces added in locations where there is a shortage of such space but parking and traffic adequately accommodated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Ball fields are enhanced to improve drainage and visitor and user amenities</td>
<td>▪ Ball fields are enhanced to improve drainage and visitor and user amenities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Permitted by condition in most land uses areas except industrial. Conditions may focus on traffic, parking, design, and operating characteristics.</td>
<td>▪ Commercial uses associated civic facilities should also be reviewed by condition to ensure viability of Chadron’s commercial districts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Sidewalks, bike paths and trails should be encouraged to connect such uses to other Chadron neighborhoods</td>
<td>▪ Sidewalks, bike paths and trails should be encouraged to connect such uses to other Chadron neighborhoods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Parks and open spaces added in locations where there is a shortage of such space but parking and traffic adequately accommodated</td>
<td>▪ Parks and open spaces added in locations where there is a shortage of such space but parking and traffic adequately accommodated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Ball fields are enhanced to improve drainage and visitor and user amenities</td>
<td>▪ Ball fields are enhanced to improve drainage and visitor and user amenities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 11: LAND USE MATRIX

#### INSTITUTIONAL - MEDICAL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use Characteristics</th>
<th>Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▪ Commercial and residential uses except single-family permitted near the Memorial Hospital complex</td>
<td>▪ Senior group housing and affordable multi-family should be focus of residential development on available land.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Commercial uses could focus on services, health care and convenience retail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Infrastructure and urban design could be enhanced with banners and gateway elements to brand the area as Chadron’s medical or “wellness district”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Sidewalks, bike paths and trails should be encouraged to connect the medical district to other Chadron neighborhoods.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### HIGHWAY 20 – THIRD STREET CORRIDOR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use Characteristics</th>
<th>Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▪ A variety of low-scaled commercial uses permitted including pedestrian and auto-oriented retail uses.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Townhome and multi-family residential encouraged in certain blocks and locations</td>
<td>▪ Commercial uses generally located along Highway 20 between Ridgeview Road and Pine Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Higher quality building and site design and landscaping encouraged or required through new standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Enhanced streetscape, urban design and infrastructure conditions with an emphasis in improving the pedestrian environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Visual and business operational impacts minimized from the adjacent neighborhoods through buffering and landscape treatments</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### GENERAL COMMERCIAL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use Characteristics</th>
<th>Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▪ Medium and larger-scaled auto-oriented commercial uses, such as hotels, retail centers, and restaurants located on or near the Highway 385/20 intersection</td>
<td>▪ Landscaping and urban design treatments between front parking lots and the sidewalk, street and right-of-way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Buffering and landscaping treatments along adjacent land uses of lower intensity including residential and industrial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Pedestrian connections to adjacent or nearby residential areas should be encouraged.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Commercial signage should be high quality and scaled appropriately to the street and surrounding development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Development restricted from environmentally sensitive areas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 11: LAND USE MATRIX

#### LIGHT INDUSTRIAL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use Characteristics</th>
<th>Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Generally low to medium-scaled industrial uses that are wholly contained in a building, do not emit materials or odors and do not generate noticeable external effects</td>
<td>• Light industrial sites ideally should have adequate access to arterials and other transportation routes without having to pass through residential and commercial areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Warehousing, light assembly and low impact maintenance uses can be considered light industrial</td>
<td>• Light industrial uses should be adequately screened from land uses of lower intensity such as residential and commercial districts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Light assembly uses could be considered conditionally in the Downtown District</td>
<td>• Light industrial uses should be wholly contained in a building if located in the Downtown</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### HEAVY INDUSTRIAL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use Characteristics</th>
<th>Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Generally medium to larger-scaled industrial uses that have noticeable external impacts including large outside storage areas and emission of materials and odors.</td>
<td>• Heavy industrial sites ideally should have adequate access to arterials and other transportation routes without having to pass through residential and commercial areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The railroad right-of-way should be the focus of a sub area plan that outlines additional land for industrial uses while maintaining a clear separation and distinction from adjacent land uses of a lower intensity.</td>
<td>• Heavy industrial uses should be adequately screened from land uses of lower intensity such as residential and commercial districts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Commercial is generally restricted in Heavy Industrial areas</td>
<td>• Adequate infrastructure is in place for new heavy industrial uses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Signage and landscaping treatments should be recommended to improve the overall appearance of heavy industrial areas.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Downtown Revitalization Policies

The City of Chadron and its stakeholder partners will continue to work towards creating a vibrant and resilient Downtown commercial district that supports a wide range of uses and activities and attracts shoppers, visitors and investors from the region and beyond.

To accomplish this, the City and its partner stakeholder groups and entities will:

- Maintain on-going business and real estate development efforts that support entrepreneurial endeavors, attract needed retail and commercial services, and facilitate the innovative adaptive use of vacant and under-utilized space for residential and other commercial uses.

- New construction within the Downtown should share the same setback, height and scale characteristics of the existing historic commercial buildings.

- Undertake streetscape, urban design and infrastructure improvements and create new public spaces as recommended in the Downtown Chadron Master Plan to unify Downtown’s visual appearance, provide for a comfortable and safe pedestrian environment, and connects the Downtown to the traditional neighborhoods to the south, east and west, and the Kenwood Addition to the north.

- Design and install gateway and wayfinding signage as one enters the Downtown core at key entry points along 1st, 2nd, 3rd and Main Streets.

- Remove barriers and obstacles to Downtown investment and facilitate the use of available incentive programs to rehabilitate and preserve historic commercial buildings and storefronts and convert upper floors for location-neutral businesses, office and residential uses. New incentives should be created where needed to stimulate business start-ups and building improvements.

- Continue needed infrastructure upgrades that can help facilitate Downtown investment as well as improve the functioning and operation of the City’s water, sanitary and stormwater management systems.

- Encourage additional modes of transportation to and from the Downtown, including the installation of bike lanes where feasible and appropriate.

- Make Downtown a center for tourism, arts and crafts and entertainment-related uses by attracting additional restaurants, galleries, performance venues and makerspaces, and increasing upper-story lodging and bed and breakfasts operations.

- Establish a formal management program or entity that works in partnership with the City, business and property owners, and other investors and stakeholders on spearheading and facilitating Downtown revitalization and redevelopment initiatives.

- Implement the Downtown Chadron Master Plan and prepare an update every five years going forward.
Recommendations

The following are recommendations to implement Downtown revitalization policies and recommendations. These recommendations are in addition to the ones suggested in the Downtown Chadron Master Plan.

Tourism Development

The Downtown district with its historic stock of commercial buildings would be the logical starting point and hub to promote tourism in Chadron, especially for heritage tourists interested in learning Chadron’s story and that of the surrounding region. Many of the recommendations presented in the Downtown Chadron Master Plan, in regards to façade improvements, business development and linkages to the Cowboy Trail and a potential railroad roundhouse interpretive center, are geared toward setting the stage for increasing tourism activities. However, a more formal tourism development plan should be created to help coordinate the efforts between the City, the Tourism Board, a Downtown management entity, Downtown property owners and other partners to increase tourism in the Downtown district. The Plan could incorporate the following design and economic development activities and initiatives:

- **Focusing on the local story.** Retailers could mount historic photos of their building and business on their walls as a way to tell the Chadron story and encourage browsing.

- **Enhance unattractive and vacant storefronts.** Enlist the support of local artists to help make unattractive windows more visually appealing. Vacant windows could also be rented to local artists to display their works.

- **Develop a restaurant niche.** A number of restaurants already exist in the Downtown but more variety in higher quality settings could promote Downtown Chadron as a destination place for dining. New restaurants could focus on local cuisine and locally grown products or a “farm to market” table program that leads visitors from a local farm or ranch to a Downtown restaurant. Additional outdoor dining venues should also be encouraged.

- **Upper story lodging.** Self-serve lodging facilities in the upper-stories should be pursued as a way to attract visitors interested in staying in a historic Downtown. These lodging spaces are also typically apartment or loft-style overnight or short-term rentals, and including a small kitchen stocked with breakfast items. Rooms are cleaned and re-stocked between guest stays, but typically not on a nightly basis.

- **Create a Downtown “museum store.”** Work with the Museum of the Fur Trade to create a storefront “museum store” in a vacant, highly visible first-floor location Downtown. A storefront presence could help boost the Museum’s visibility to tourists who may be only traveling through Chadron.

- **Wayfinding and directional signage.** A wayfinding and directional signage system should be created to direct visitors to key Chadron attractions, such as the Dawes County Courthouse, parks, Chadron State College and current and future tourism destinations.

- **Low-cost hospitality program.** Ensure that informational flyers on all Chadron events, activities, and attractions are regularly distributed to personnel at Downtown stores and other frequent entry points. In
addition, create an awards program that recognizes exemplary visitor service in the local hotels.

- **Cultural Walk.** A cultural walk that connects different parts of Downtown with the Library, the County Courthouse, other sites of historic and architectural importance, and future tourism attractions should be developed and implemented in partnership with different stakeholder groups and entities. Special sidewalk paving, landscaping treatments, interpretive and wayfinding signage and public art could be specific elements included in the cultural walk’s overall design. Interpretive signage and public art could incorporate themes from Chadron’s history and that of the region, including the Native-American narrative.

- **Cowboy Trail.** This Comprehensive Plan affirms the recommendations made within the Downtown Chadron and Chadron Trails Master Plans to implement a suggested route for the Cowboy Recreation and Nature Trail, which largely follows the former route of the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad through Nebraska from Norfolk to Chadron. The route from Valentine, Nebraska to Chadron is the only remaining unfinished portion of the Cowboy Trail. The City has designated a route on the north side of the railroad right-of-way for the Trail although the Downtown Master Plan proposes an on-street trail along 1st Street west of Ridgeview Road. A new trailhead-visitors facility could be constructed in the Downtown at Bordeaux and 1st Streets that could serve as a point of arrival and departure for trail users. Adequate landscaping and screening elements between the Trail and railroad land and other points along 1st Street is strongly suggested to buffer trail users from rail cars and roadways.

- **Roundhouse Interpretive Center.** Many Chadron stakeholders consider railroad enthusiasts as an untapped tourism market for Chadron given the number of informal and organized tourism trips to view railroads in other areas of the county and region. The Downtown Master Plan provides a recommendation to consider some type of interpretive center for the historic roundhouse, owned and managed by the Nebraska Northwest Railroad. The interpretive center could be incorporated as part of a trail head facility for the Cowboy Trail or located more closely to the roundhouse in the former depot site, nearby commercially zoned land along Main Street, or some other type of facility. A combined interpretive center/trailhead facility would serve to reduce the need for two separate venues.
• **Campground.** Although not near the Downtown district, a campground could be considered on land north of the Dawes County Fairgrounds to accommodate short-term campers visiting the area for the annual County Fair, baseball and softball tournaments and to access a future Cowboy Trail segment and railroad interpretative center. The campground would be adequately screened from uses to the south and the Kenwood Addition to the west. The site could also be converted to temporary worker housing in case of a fracking oil boom in the region. This area along with the ball field complexes, the industrial land north and south of Niobara Street and the railroad right-of-way should be planned more thoroughly through a sub area planning process as described below.

• **Sub Area Plan.** A sub area plan for the railroad right-of-way and adjacent industrial land both north and south of Niobara Street should be created to determine how the right-of-way can best accommodate the Cowboy Trail, a combined trailhead-interpretive facility and functioning commercial and industrial uses. The plan would focus on a properly and orderly arrangement of land uses and needed screening and buffering treatments to separate the commercial, open space and industrial uses within this area and from the adjacent residential areas in the Kenwood Addition. The plan may also consider planning for the recreational, industrial and commercial land uses north of Niobara Street where tourism-related activities will also take place.

Energy Efficiency Improvements

Achieving energy efficiency goals for the Downtown commercial core can be accomplished in two ways: providing incentives for private property improvements and educating property and business owners on energy efficiency and way in which energy bills can be lowered. Energy efficiency programs can be created, implemented and coordinated by the City and other entities and can include the following:

• **Incentive Loan or Grant Program.** A formal incentive grant or loan program should be established to encourage energy-efficiency improvements in Downtown commercial buildings, including insulation and storm window installation, the replacement of energy generating systems with more efficient ones, and other enhancements and improvements to a building’s envelope. A local program could be funded through corporate funds or outside grants. It should be noted that there are a number of grant loan programs that are already offered at the Federal and State levels, especially from the Nebraska Energy Office. The Nebraska Public Power District also offers a number of incentive programs. Regardless of the funding source, all incentive programs should be actively marketed and promoted by the City, the Nebraska Northwest Development Corporation, the Chamber, and potentially, a future Main Street revitalization program.

• **Energy Audits.** Ongoing efforts and initiatives in promoting and providing energy audits for Downtown property and business owners should be undertaken. The City, the Nebraska Northwest Development Corporation, the Chamber, and a future Main Street revitalization program could work together with the Nebraska Public Power District and other
utilities and agencies to offer energy audits. After energy audits are completed, follow-up services could be provided in terms of matching the energy efficiency needs of building and business owners with available incentive programs.

- **Educational Workshops.** Formal and regular public educational workshops on energy efficiency improvements for Downtown commercial buildings could be organized and conducted by the City and in partnership with the Development Corporation, Chadron State College, the Nebraska Public Power District, and other entities. Workshop topics could focus on simple and straightforward building envelope improvements, building installation, green roofs and alternative energy generating equipment.

- **Upper-Story Conversions and Downtown Public Facilities.** Upper-story residential units funded through incentives should also be required to install appliances with Energy Star certifications. City Hall should also be retrofitted with energy efficiency improvements, including the installation of an alternative energy generating systems in order to save on utility costs.

**Light Industrial Uses**

Given the City is somewhat constrained by infrastructure in adding new industrial areas, Downtown Chadron could house some forms of light assembly and research-oriented manufacturing in the upper-stories or in commercial buildings located away from the Main and Second Street intersection. Light assembly uses could be associated with retail operations and office and research operations on the first floor. Some fabrication activities related to art work production as well as research could also be permitted; however, such light assembly uses must be wholly contained in a building with no external storage allowed in yards facing the sidewalk.

**Venture Fund**

In order to spur the creation of new business and industries in the Downtown, especially location neutral businesses and tourism related enterprises, such as restaurants and upper story lodging facilities, a venture fund should be established, capitalized and managed locally by a non-profit organization or foundation. A dedicated venture fund can then make strategic debt or equity investments in new enterprises, businesses that may not receive the entirety of its start-up capital from area banks and financial institutions. The venture fund can be established with hotel/motel tax revenues, or it may also be funded by local investors and/or philanthropists.

**Retail Overlay**

The Downtown Chadron Master Plan suggest the adoption of a retail overlay district for portions of the Downtown district to help in managing the design of new infill construction more effectively than the base zoning requirements. This Comprehensive Plan affirms the need for such an overlay to ensure that new development is compatible with the Downtown historic architecture and building form.
Housing and Neighborhood Policies

The City of Chadron and its stakeholder partners will continue to work towards maintaining and preserving the vibrancy and viability of its housing stock and existing neighborhoods as well as promote new housing developments where needed and supported by infrastructure systems. To accomplish this, the City and its partner stakeholder groups and entities will:

• Maintain the City’s older and traditional single-family housing stock through proactive rehabilitation efforts and programs. In addition, existing multi-family units and developments that are in need of maintenance and improvements should also be rehabilitated.

• Identify and implement comprehensive strategies and partnerships that would help mitigate the impact of vacancies and foreclosed properties on overall neighborhood appearance and stability.

• Create a neighborhood capital improvements program and undertake improvements to neighborhood infrastructure, including parkways, streets, alleys and lighting. Additional streetscape and urban design improvements, such as gateway features, signage, special lighting standards and public art, could be incorporated as part of the neighborhood capital improvement program to help enhance the visual character and image of Chadron’s existing neighborhoods.

• Encourage infill housing in existing neighborhoods on lots where housing should be replaced, once existed or is currently vacant. Housing replacement should focus on areas where the existing housing is in a significantly deteriorated condition or where new housing products and types are needed and desired.

• Guide the development of new housing in locations serviced by adequate infrastructure and where innovative housing subdivisions, such as conservation subdivisions, could be used to encourage additional housing density while maintaining and protecting view sheds to the outlying topography and other environmental and cultural resources.

• Ensure new housing developments have adequate land devoted to park and open space and incorporate sidewalks, greenways and trails.

• Promote connectivity in new housing developments to the existing developed areas and neighborhoods

• Establish neighborhood associations and organizations that can work as liaisons between the City and homeowners, renters and landlords in identifying and addressing neighborhood revitalization and housing development issues.

• Forge and maintain effective partnerships and working relationships with community and neighborhood housing organizations to promote housing rehabilitation and new housing construction.

• Consider residential historic districts as a way to build and promote citizen pride and recognition of Chadron’s important historically and architecturally significant homes and residences.
Recommendations

The following are recommendations to implement housing development and neighborhood revitalization policies and recommendations. These recommendations build on those suggested within the 1997 Chadron Comprehensive Plan. Residential neighborhoods comprise the most significant land use areas in any given community and greatly contributes to a community’s overall urban form, appearance and image. Chadron’s neighborhoods also represent the largest single investment on part of private landowners in the housing stock and by the City in its infrastructure and capital improvements. Most residents measure their satisfaction of the communities they live in by the how their neighborhood block looks, the services provided to the neighborhood by the municipality, and the overall quality of life afforded by nearby parks, schools and other amenities.

Chadron’s neighborhoods have many immeasurable qualities, including well-connected access to the Downtown district and single-family residential building forms that are well-scaled to the surroundings and landscape and constructed in styles that reflect Chadron’s historical development. Through the planning process, however, Chadron residents viewed maintaining the vibrancy of their neighborhoods and the need for providing quality, affordable housing as high priorities. There is an opportunity to address these issues through a combination of housing rehabilitation, neighborhood capital improvements and new construction where feasible and supported by available infrastructure. With this strategy in mind, Chadron can achieve a good balance of housing that brings economic diversity to the neighborhoods. Thriving neighborhoods also contribute to making Chadron a compelling and attractive place to live and do business.

Neighborhood Revitalization

Specific initiatives to rehabilitate and maintain the single-family housing stock in Chadron’s Traditional Neighborhoods should be pursued by the City and other partner organizations and entities. The design, charm and pedestrian scale of several neighborhood areas in and around the Downtown District are significant community assets and efforts to organize and mobilize homeowners to participate in various revitalization activities can help to maintain neighborhood stability and increase property values.

Even though the majority of homes in Chadron are single-family with rental and student housing conversions, Chadron should strive to encourage a diversity of housing stock that includes for-sale single-family as well as rental opportunities for individuals and families that may not be in a position to buy homes. In other words, as some single-family homes have been converted to apartments over the years, there is benefit to keeping converted homes as apartments to meet affordable housing needs in the community.

Markets for rental housing may include children coming home from college, seniors looking to downsize and age in place, and families saving to purchase for a starter or bigger home elsewhere in Chadron. Furthermore, rehabilitating the existing housing stock also serves to maintain the overall design character and urban form of existing neighborhoods as well as preserve historically and architecturally significant homes that are important to promoting Chadron as special place in the Nebraska Panhandle.

Therefore, the key elements of the housing and neighborhood revitalization strategy include the creation of specific incentives and programs to encourage housing rehabilitation and infill construction, initiatives to maintain the appearance
and quality of single-family rental housing, neighborhood building and marketing efforts, and enhancing the organizational capacity of the City and housing groups to implement a comprehensive neighborhood revitalization program.

A housing rehabilitation incentive program could be established that offers grants or below-market financing for current residents for making property improvements and new residents seeking to rehabilitate older homes up to neighborhood standards. Incentives could be targeted to certain blocks in order to facilitate enhancements to housing exteriors and build momentum for additional private investments along adjacent blocks. Targeted blocks need not be ones with the most needs, such as the number of vacant properties, but rather where there may be a strong likelihood of positive and visible neighborhood change. The program could come in several forms:

- **Low-Interest Rehabilitation Loan Program.** New homebuyers in Chadron would be eligible for low-interest loans to make improvements in conjunction with property purchase within a targeted block. The loan would typically carry a fixed interest rate that may be one percent below the 60-day Fannie Mae rate with the home buyer contributing three to five percent of the purchase price from their own funds. The buyer may then borrow the balance of the funds needed to buy and renovate the home, possibly as much as 110 percent of the after-rehabilitation appraisal of the property. There should be no homeowner income restrictions on the use of this loan program and all applicants must have the ability to pay the loan back and meet standard underwriting requirements. Loan proceeds can be used for energy-efficiency improvements such as insulation projects, storm window installation and the replacement of energy generating systems with more efficient ones.

- **Rehabilitation Grant Program.** Existing homeowners located within targeted blocks would be eligible for $5,000 or $10,000 matching grants to undertake various exterior property improvements, including painting, siding removal and installation, landscaping, lighting and other site improvements. There should be no homeowner income restrictions to use the grant program; the grant program could be structured as a forgivable loan whereby the property owner must undertake the improvements and live in the residence for five years. If the property owner fails to meet such requirements, the owner is subject to loan recapture. Grant proceeds can be used for energy-efficiency improvements such as insulation projects, storm window installation and the replacement of energy generating systems with more efficient ones.

- **Design Assistance.** Basic design and architectural assistance could be provided to grant or loan applicants to ensure that proper home rehabilitation methods and procedures are followed and a desired neighborhood appearance is achieved with grant or loan proceeds.
• **Homebuyer Counseling.** Counseling can be provided to prospective homeowners on topics related to house maintenance and repair, and maintaining a good mortgage payment history.

• **Design Manual.** In addition to design assistance, a design manual can be prepared by the City and partner organizations to provide guidelines and best practices to exterior housing rehabilitation. The manual could cover topics such as siding repair and removal, painting, porch repair and replacement, new additions, landscaping, garages, and driveways. Photos, images and graphics could help illustrate and describe rehabilitation methods and standards.

The High Plaines Community Development Corporation (HPCDC) is the community housing development organization (CHDO) for the Chadron area and has received a number of recent grants to rehabilitate homes in Chadron. It also provides rental counseling and assists homeowners with rehabilitation needs. The City could work with HPCDC to secure additional funding to expand its work in Chadron neighborhoods, including the establishment or capitalization of larger grant and loan programs, programs that would also be offered to other homeowners without certain income limitations. The HPCDC could also expand its work in infill construction by partnering with other entities. Underwriting the incentive program could also come from several different sources, including Community Development Block Funds, HOME funds from the Department of Housing and Urban Development, municipal general revenues, grants and loan programs from the State of Nebraska, the Nebraska Investment Finance Authority, regional and local foundations, and private lenders in the area.

**Housing Conditions Survey**

In order to better understand where to focus housing rehabilitation efforts in Chadron’s traditional neighborhoods, a comprehensive assessment of housing conditions should be undertaken. The assessment should note which dwelling units are in standard and good condition, substandard with minor or major issues or dilapidated. The assessment can be based both on a formal survey process and on information gathered through building inspections. All information should be incorporated in an online database or in a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) format that can be easily updated by City staff and accessed by local housing development organizations. Areas with a higher concentration of building maintenance and condition issues should be targeted with rehabilitation and redevelopment initiatives. The 1997 Comprehensive Plan also noted the blocks in and around the Downtown has priority areas for housing rehabilitation and redevelopment.

**Code Enforcement**

Since many single-family homes in Chadron serve as rental housing units for many families, maintaining the quality, appearance and durability of these units for future residents should be a high priority. From anecdotal evidence and observation, many of these units tend to be older housing units in poorer condition. A more thorough housing survey can confirm this. An effective housing rehabilitation program must have an active inspection and code enforcement program to ensure that housing is maintained to minimum building standards. A rental inspection program could also be instituted that would require all rental units to be inspected, registered and certified that the unit is meeting minimum building standards. Such a program may require additional City staff to implement and manage. It can also be implemented on a voluntary basis. The Nebraska communities of La Vista, Herndon, and
Fairbury have recently instituted rental inspection or certification programs.

Neighborhood Marketing
Chadron’s traditional neighborhoods have many assets and positive qualities that should be more actively marketed and promoted to realtors, lenders and prospective homeowners. Marketing activities can help change local attitudes and mindsets about Chadron’s neighborhoods and help shape a more consistent, positive image regarding neighborhood housing opportunities and quality of life. Marketing efforts should not just be seen as supplemental to housing development initiatives proposed above but as integral to building momentum for housing and neighborhood improvements, attracting future homebuyers and in engaging current residents in neighborhood revitalization efforts.

A traditional neighborhoods marketing program could encompass two different set of activities: neighborhood-based events, such as block parties and house walks organized by local residents and neighborhood associations with participation from the City and other groups, and print and internet-based tools that promote financial incentive programs, recently rehabilitated homes for sale, before-and-after pictures of home improvements, neighborhood amenities, and local lending sources. Internet-based tools could also include a neighborhood blog that allows local residents to post stories about their home rehabbing experiences. Internet-based activities could be conducted by the City, by the High Plains Community Development Corporation or some other entity.

Infill Housing Development
There may be opportunities for infill housing on lots where housing may need to be replaced, where single family housing once existed or where empty lots and land offer the prospect of adding new housing. Ideally, facilitating infill development should be undertaken with HPCDC or other private non-profit neighborhood development corporation that can obtain lots by purchase, gift, exchange, foreclosure, or transfer from the County or tax claim bureaus. Properties could then be held by the HPCDC or other entity until the lot is ready to be redeveloped.

A program to help finance and develop new homes on vacant lots should be created. Similar to the housing rehabilitation, a pool of new construction contractors and housing development organizations should be used as partners to execute infill development contracts, with a revolving loan fund created to finance new construction projects. A loan pool using private lender sources, foundation and philanthropic sources, CDBG and HOME funds, state grants and resources, and Low-Income and New Market Tax Credits can be accumulated to capitalize the loan pool. New housing should also be designed and constructed according to prepared design guidelines, perhaps as part of the neighborhood design manual mentioned in the previous recommendations.

Neighborhood Associations
Implementing housing development and revitalization initiatives and in building citizen pride and involvement in Chadron’s traditional neighborhoods will require the City, neighborhood stakeholders and other partners to create and adopt a formal or
ad-hoc organizational structure, perhaps through citizen-led neighborhood associations. Neighborhood associations comprise of local residents and other interested citizens that devote their time and energy to improve a well-defined neighborhood area that they and others live in. Most neighborhood associations are concerned with quality of life issues and are proactive in preparing neighborhood plans, starting community gardens, upgrading park equipment, organizing block parties and festivals or installing traffic calming measures on a residential street. Neighborhood associations can be established as charitable non-profit groups and can be effective partners in a variety of neighborhood marketing and revitalization efforts.

**Neighborhood Historic Districts**

Certain neighborhoods in Chadron may be eligible for listing as a district in the National Register of Historic Places. The Historic Resources Survey of Dawes County identified a number of homes and residences as potentially eligible for individual listing in the National Register. In turn, blocks and neighborhoods could also be eligible as districts.

The City should consult with the Nebraska Historical Society regarding the necessary procedures for determining whether there are potential National Register districts; most likely, an additional survey may need to be conducted to assess the integrity of properties already inventoried as part of the earlier survey and the number of homes and building that could contribute to a district. Neighborhood National Register Districts are honorary and do not restrict the property owner from use of the property. National Register Districts have also proven that they can stabilize neighborhoods and raise property values, and promote a sense of prestige and pride in a neighborhood’s history and architecture.

**Neighborhood Energy Efficiency**

Similar to the recommendations suggested in the Downtown Revitalization Policies, energy efficiency efforts could focus on encouraging private and public energy efficiency improvements to homes, schools, religious buildings and public facilities. Therefore, for homes, improvements should focus on weatherization and upgrading furnaces and energy generating systems with more efficient ones. In addition to promoting available incentive programs, educational workshops in partnership with local utilities and other agencies and organizations could also be conducted with homeowners on low-cost and more complex energy efficiency improvements.

**Neighborhood Capital Improvements**

An annual Capital Improvement Program that prioritizes important infrastructure projects within the traditional neighborhoods should be developed and adopted by the City in collaboration with local residents and neighborhood groups. Potential projects should include the repair and rebuilding of alleys, curbs, streets and sidewalks where needed and new parkway landscaping and streetscaping where necessary and desired.

Neighborhood “greening” initiatives and other public space enhancements can also be included as part of an overall urban design and capital improvement program for traditional neighborhoods, which could be funded through a combination of City revenues, grants, fundraising and special assessments. Such initiatives can include neighborhood vegetable gardens, “green” alleys and streets, rain gardens and public art installations should also be considered. Green alleys and streets are surfaced with a permeable pavement system to aid in reducing stormwater run-off; rain gardens, which can be installed in parkways and on private property, also helps to reduce stormwater run-off as well as filter pollutants reaching nearby creeks and streams.

The 1997 Comprehensive Plan recommended special landscape and streetscape treatments to add visual interest and design unity to Main Street as an artery connecting Chadron State College to the Downtown District. This Plan reaffirms that
recommendation. Such treatments can include gateway and wayfinding signage, banners, trees, and specially paved crosswalks and parkway landscaping.

New Residential Neighborhoods
In addition to housing rehabilitation and infill development in Chadron’s traditional neighborhoods, new housing development could take place in areas that are adequately served by municipal infrastructure, including land located to the south, southwest and west of the City principally along the Highway 385 corridor. Land in these locations offer opportunities to provide a diversity of housing choices that meet different housing needs in Chadron. Other land is available near and adjacent to the Community Hospital. These opportunity sites can provide flexibility in lot sizes that can help introduce a mix of housing types from single family residential to townhomes and apartments.

- **Highway 385 and 10th Street Opportunity Site.** This site bounded by Highway 385, West 10th Street and West 16th Street provides a distinct opportunity to add a combination of single-family and townhome residential developments on both small to medium-sized lots. Townhomes, apartments or affordable senior group housing could be developed along 10th Street in proximity to the Community Hospital complex. Alternatively, the site could be developed for single-family neighborhood residential similar to that of the Post World War II Ranch housing found along Maple Street and Ridgeview Drive to the east but with alleys. Any new housing in this location should incorporate high quality park and open space that should be connected with sidewalks and bike trails. One to two collector roads would have to be installed servicing the development and connecting the new housing developments to the Regency Court mobile home park.

- **10th Street near Chadron State College.** Land located between the Pony Park mobile home park and Chadron Avenue would be an ideal location for moderately priced townhomes or duplex housing that could incorporate open space and environmental features within the development given that the site contains wetlands and problematic drainage. The site should be planned and developed through a Planned Unit Development to ensure the maintenance of these features, gain added park and open space and perhaps provide trail spur from the Chadron State College Trail through the development. The site could also be developed as a conservation subdivision where additional housing units could be permitted if they are clustered in a certain configuration to protect the site’s environmental assets and views to the adjacent landscapes to the south. Conservation subdivisions are described more fully below.
• **Hospital District.** Land around Chadron Community Hospital would be the most logical location for additional multi-family and group housing given the existence of other affordable and senior housing complexes. Such housing would take advantage of the Hospital’s location and other nearby commercial and institutional services. Townhomes, duplexes and multi-story developments would be the most appropriate building forms in this location.

**Temporary Housing**

It is unclear if and when the oil fracking boom will arrive in Dawes County although local Chadron stakeholders are concerned that a significant housing shortage may loom if fracking and oil drilling becomes more active in the region. Anecdotal, high hotel occupancy rates in Chadron indicate that oil-related workers may already be staying in the area given housing shortages in nearby Wyoming. To plan for this possibility, land that has been previously identified as opportunities for permanent housing development could be reserved for temporary “man camp” housing that are developed and managed by private contractors. Alternatively, such housing could be located at Chadron’s far northeast quadrant along Beaver Valley Road where they could be adequately screened from adjacent land uses.

The City of Chadron will need to adopt zoning provisions to ensure that such camps go through a conditional use permitting process to ensure that temporary worker housing meet local and state requirements for operating any infrastructure systems that may impact Chadron’s street, sanitary and stormwater systems. Such provisions should also require that temporary worker sites be returned to the original conditions before such housing was approved.

**Conservation Subdivisions**

An alternative to the standard subdivision design are conservation subdivisions that conserve natural and open space and cultural resources while new development is designed and clustered in a way that do not impact those resources. Conservation subdivisions would be more suitable in areas south, west and north of Chadron where topography and vista views, creeks and poorly drained areas should be protected from development. Undeveloped green space within such developments could be linked together to form greenways and parks, which would help add to Chadron’s open space inventory. Generally 40 to 60 percent of a development site is set aside in primary or secondary conservation areas; therefore, homes are built on smaller lots than in a conventional subdivision and are situated to provide the greatest view of the preserved open space. Conservation subdivisions can also be designed to make the best possible use of existing infrastructure.

Illustration of a Neo-Traditional Neighborhood (top) versus a Conventional Neighborhood (bottom)
Image credit: Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company
Placing residential development within a natural resource context means that land-use planning decisions will be made in accordance with a cohesive plan for the whole regional landscape rather than considered individually, project by project. In addition, new developments are designed to reduce construction in aquifer recharging areas. Like planned unit developments, conservation subdivisions could be instituted as a “floating” zone that may be selected as an alternative design approach by a developer or builder.

Preparing Sites for Development
Local Chadron stakeholders have expressed concern that housing developments in areas where development should occur has yet to happen. This may be due to the continued sluggishness in the housing market nationally and regionally or the lack of any interested private-sector developers in the Chadron region. In fact, Chadron most recent housing developments have not been undertaken by the private sector but with the Chadron Housing Authority and the Community Hospital, which developed the Prairie Pines senior group housing near its complex. New upper-story housing units are proposed for the Downtown commercial district although that is expected to be led by private property owners with participation from City CDBG funds.

In the near-term, the community’s non-profit sector could take the lead in developing new housing units, which will be especially beneficial since there is significant demand for affordable housing. The Hospital could spearhead new senior townhome, apartment and group home facilities while the High Plains Community Development Corporation could partner with other entities to acquire sites and finance affordable single or multi-family housing developments; this would require the HPCDC to expand its operational and financing capacity to undertake such initiatives. Apart from these approaches, the City could consider implementing the following tools:

- **Tax Increment Financing.** Tax Increment financing can be used in redevelopment areas for land acquisition, development financing and infrastructure installation. Since the tax increment can only be captured over a period of 15 years, the development must be completed in short and discrete time phases and according to strong market demand. Therefore, TIF should only be used when a capable developer is at hand and strong housing sales can be anticipated. In other words, the housing development must meet a market demand for a specific housing product. However, TIF could be used to spur adaptive use and upper story housing development in the Downtown where proceeds could be used as gap financing.

- **Infrastructure Bank.** Infrastructure banks are starting to gain some momentum as an infrastructure financing tool by communities given the increasingly limited municipal budgets for extending infrastructure. With an infrastructure bank, a municipality finances the infrastructure as a deferred loan, which is paid back when a house is sold. An infrastructure bank will have to be capitalized by a number of sources that could include third party grants, corporate contributions, tax-increment financing, CDBG and other state and Federal sources.

- **Special Assessment District.** Although rarely used in Nebraska communities, a special assessment district could be used to finance infrastructure for new developments. A developer would establish a special assessment district in coordination with the municipality while bonds are issued to underwrite the infrastructure
improvements. New owners purchasing the homes would then assume a portion of the bond payments over the course of the assessment district’s term of operation. Like TIF, there must be strong housing demand and a tightly-timed and phased development program to ensure the bonds are paid on time; otherwise, the developer risks default on the bonds. Given the added assessment to a property owner’s tax bill, such an approach may limit the number of units that could be sold to low to moderate income households.

- **CROWN Rent to Own Program.** The Credit to Own Program (CROWN), managed by the Nebraska Investment Finance Authority, is a lease-to-own housing program developed to bring home ownership within reach of low-income households. Low income housing tax credits and other sources of money are used to reduce the amount needed to construct new homes. A homeowner tenant then leases the home for a period of 15 years at a below market rate while equity is built in escrow to be used for the home’s purchase at the end of the lease period. The CROWN program could be used in selected areas for infill development of contiguous lots or in a scattered site scenario.

- Ensure the City and its Parks Department will have adequate financial resources and staff to maintain and program new and existing park facilities as well as plan and implement future park enhancements and capital improvements.

- Create non-motorized connections in the form of bike lanes, bike trails, pedestrian sidewalks, and pedestrian trails that connect Chadron residents to local and regional attractions and amenities including the Cowboy Trail and trail systems as part of the Nebraska National Forest/Pine Ridge System.

- Plan for park and recreational amenity improvements to existing parks and the ball field complexes so that they remain high quality amenities that attract users locally, regionally and statewide.

- Protect the natural environment by incorporating best management practices aimed at reducing stormwater runoff, flooding, and environmental impacts of new development within the community.

- Encourage the creation of additional open spaces, parks and greenways in locations where park space is needed and through the adoption of flexible subdivision design standards.

### Parks, Open Space and Natural Environment Policies

The City of Chadron will strive to maintain and improve its system of parks and open spaces as well as enhance access to regional recreational amenities though pedestrian and bicycle connections for residents and visitors alike. To accomplish this, the City will:

- Ensure the City and its Parks Department will have adequate financial resources and staff to maintain and program new and existing park facilities as well as plan and implement future park enhancements and capital improvements.

- Create non-motorized connections in the form of bike lanes, bike trails, pedestrian sidewalks, and pedestrian trails that connect Chadron residents to local and regional attractions and amenities including the Cowboy Trail and trail systems as part of the Nebraska National Forest/Pine Ridge System.

- Plan for park and recreational amenity improvements to existing parks and the ball field complexes so that they remain high quality amenities that attract users locally, regionally and statewide.

- Protect the natural environment by incorporating best management practices aimed at reducing stormwater runoff, flooding, and environmental impacts of new development within the community.

- Encourage the creation of additional open spaces, parks and greenways in locations where park space is needed and through the adoption of flexible subdivision design standards.

![Finnegan Park](image)
• Maintain and forge new partnerships with non-profit groups, community institutions and other entities in the creation, maintenance and enhancement of parks and open space in Chadron.

Recommendations

The following are recommendations to implement policies and recommendations related to parks, open space and natural environment. These recommendations build on those suggested within the 1997 Chadron Comprehensive Plan.

Parks and Open Space Master Plan

The City should develop a more comprehensive master plan for its park system in order to evaluate all existing facilities and natural resources, assess public needs via surveys and workshops, and develop funding strategies for future park improvements. The Plan should build upon recommendations made within this and prior comprehensive plans regarding park facility needs but also address current stakeholder concerns regarding the condition of the ball fields and where new park space could be secured. In addition, a parks and open space master plan could identify potential greenways that could be developed over time as new residential areas grow and develop over time, especially to the south and southwest of Chadron. The plan should also incorporate elements of the Trails and Sidewalk Plan created in 2011. A parks and open space master plan will also allow the City to be more competitive in applying for additional revenue and grant sources at the local, state and Federal levels.

Ball Field Sub Area Plan

A sub area plan as part of the parks and open space master plan should be prepared for the ball field complex adjacent to the Kenwood Addition that addresses the drainage, lighting and amenity issues that are impacting their use and utility for local leagues and for tournaments. Drainage issues could prevent the Chadron community from hosting minor and major baseball and softball tournaments. A sub area plan could identify potential solutions to the above issues by recommending a re-orientation and siting of the ball field complexes, designs for shared concession area between ball fields and funding sources and energy saving techniques for lighting and other electrical needs. An enhanced ball field complex should also incorporate bike and trail connections as suggested in the Trails and Sidewalk Plan and screening, urban design and landscaping treatments from the adjacent residential and industrial areas.

Open Space Requirements and Planned Developments

The existing Planned Unit Development (PUD) regulations within the zoning ordinance may apply to any new development that contains a grouping of multiple land uses, including open space. The City may want to modify the PUD code to require that a certain percentage or a greater amount of open space be set aside to protect environmentally sensitive areas or to connect greenways in adjacent developments – greenways that may have been identified in a park and open space master plan. An exact dedication requirement may also include recreation amenities and community facilities, either dedicated to the City or retained under private ownership. Alternatively, securing green and open space in new residential development could also be achieved through an adoption of a conservation subdivision code “floating zone.”

Community Gardens Program

A community garden already exists at 6th and Pine Streets, where the City pays for the water community residents pay a nominal fee for garden maintenance. A community garden program could be expanded to other locations in the City and managed in co-partnership with other groups and entities to enhance neighborhood character, increase access to green space and locally grown food, and decrease City costs.
associated with the maintenance of any City-owned empty lots.

There are different ways to organize community gardening programs as some offer garden space at no cost to residents in return for maintenance and upkeep. Another method is to establish a lease program whereby a not-for-profit organization or neighborhood association creates gardens for a low fee. Chadron should pursue grant opportunities as they arise, preferably as a joint effort between the responsible parties and the City. In addition, the City should permit community gardens in most residential zoning areas. Standards should be developed on how community gardens should be designed and managed.

Cowboy Trail and Interpretive Center

The Chadron community should continue to advocate and pursue the extension of the Cowboy Trail from Valentine to Chadron. The Trails and Sidewalk Plan identified a preferred scenario for how the Trail should be installed and constructed through Chadron, principally along the 1st Street Corridor. As mentioned previously, a sub area plan for the railroad right-of-way should be prepared to determine how the trail will be developed along the backdrop of nearby industrial uses. Opportunities exist to create a more modern industrial park setting in this area even with existing railroad operations and the potential to create a trailhead and interpretive center for the roundhouse in this location.

Parkways

Neighborhood parkways should be considered integral parts of Chadron’s greenway and open space systems. Installing trees and other landscaping treatments that beautify and enhance parkway appearances should be considered as part of the capital improvement program for Chadron neighborhoods.

Infrastructure, Capital Improvements and Community Facility Policies

The City of Chadron will maintain and operate efficient infrastructure systems for water supply, wastewater treatment, and stormwater management, and plan and finance improvements and enhancements to various community facilities. The City of Chadron and its partners will:

- Create and adopt on an annual basis a capital improvements plan that outlines priority expenditures for enhancements to the City’s infrastructure, including its streets and sidewalks, water supply and stormwater management and flood prevention systems. Separate capital improvement programs should be considered for the Downtown districts and the neighborhood and industrial areas.
- Continue planning and funding efforts to separate storm and wastewater sewer systems in older parts of Chadron while implementing measures to effectively manage the rate of stormwater discharge from new development in other parts of the City.
- Water and sanitary systems should only be expanded to potential growth areas when such systems have been upgraded to meet new demand.
- Encourage the construction of new public work facilities where and when needed in order to maintain public works equipment in good condition.
- Encourage energy efficiency improvements in all community facilities from City Hall to the Public Library and local schools. Sustainable design techniques, such as rain gardens and bio-swales should be installed in local parks and other rights-of-way to
reduce the load on the City’s stormwater management system and localized flooding.

- Collaborate with partner agencies and governmental entities to fund and build needed community facilities that provide new services and amenities and that enhance the overall quality of life for Chadron residents.

Infrastructure Planning

The maintenance of aging infrastructure and water and stormwater systems will be Chadron’s most important challenge going forward. This Comprehensive Plan emphasizes that growth and expansion of the City should only take place with concurrent investments in its infrastructure and other needed capital improvements. New development areas proposed in this Plan will stretch the capacities of the sanitary and stormwater sewer systems. In the near-term, a new water system master plan should be prepared to determine the costs and means in which the City’s water system capacity can be boosted; likewise, efforts to implement the 2008 Stormwater Management Plan should also be pursued, especially if new development is pursued in the southern and southwest quadrants of the City. Alternative, sustainable stormwater management initiatives, such as in the introduction of rain gardens, permeable pavement and bio-swales should also be considered as methods to reduce the load on the current system.

Public Library

The Chadron Public Library is one of the community’s most significant institutions as it provides a wide array of programs and cultural offerings beyond just its reading collection. Expanding its facility will provide much needed space to expand its programs and services. The Library should remain at its current location and expand on available lots when they become available; however, the design of a new addition should be sensitive to its surroundings and not be incompatible in scale, massing and architectural style with the surrounding neighborhood architecture.

An addition larger than the original building will considerably disrupt the neighborhood’s setting and rhythm of height, setback and scale of adjacent homes. Consideration should be given to partially reducing the parking requirements associated with the new addition so that parking does not dominate portions of the site and necessitate the removal of adjacent homes more than needed. Parking may also be alleviated by perhaps expanding the parking lot for the County Courthouse and allowing evening hour use of the lot for Library patrons. Homes that will be acquired as part of the Library expansion should be moved to an available and appropriate lot near or adjacent to the Library block.

Neighborhood Capital Improvements

An annual Capital Improvement Program that prioritizes important infrastructure projects within Chadron’s Traditional Neighborhoods should be developed and adopted by the City in collaboration with local residents and neighborhood groups. Potential projects should include the repair and
rebuilding of alleys, curbs, streets and sidewalks where needed and new parkway landscaping and streetscaping where necessary and desired.

Energy Efficiency Measures for Community Facilities
The City, the Public Library and the Chadron Public Schools should pursue efforts to reduce their overall energy usage, which in turn will save monies for other facility improvements and investments. Energy profiles that track energy usage for respective community facilities should be developed and used to evaluate potential solutions in achieving energy savings; this can also help to develop a baseline of energy usage and benchmark energy performance compared to similar buildings and facilities. Such solutions could range in scale from purchasing Energy Star appliances to using LED lights for the ball field complexes to installing alternative energy generating systems, perhaps similar to the bio-mass system used by Chadron State College. According to the U.S. Forest Service, excess wood cut from their forest management efforts is often unsold, which could be used for local bio-mass energy generating systems. In addition, energy recovery ventilators have also proven to dramatically reduce energy costs in buildings. All new community facilities should be constructed to meet the provisions and requirements of the Nebraska Energy Code or a suitable building rating system such as the LEED certification from the U.S. Green Building Council.

Transportation Policies
The City of Chadron will provide and maintain an efficient transportation system of streets, bridges and pedestrian and bicycle paths that will enable residents, businesses and visitors safe and viable options to navigate the community and connect to other regional transportation systems. The City and its partners will:

- Conduct on-going capital improvements to City-owned streets, sidewalks and trails to ensure the transportation system is well-maintained and connected, and designed with sufficient capacity to support adjacent land uses. Transportation improvements should also seek to enhance Chadron’s physical environment and visual and environmental qualities.

- Promote local and regional bike trail connections that connect Chadron neighborhoods and the Downtown and other areas with each other and with amenities and attractions outside the community’s boundaries.

- Ensure street connectivity between established areas of the City and areas that are planned for new development.

- Improve the operations and capacity of the Municipal Airport.

Road Connectivity
Several new streets and roads are suggested in this Comprehensive Plan to improve and enhance Chadron’s street network connectivity. Connectivity refers to the number of connections in the path or road network and the directness of links to certain locations and destinations. As connectivity increases, travel distances decrease and route options increase, leading to less traffic congestion and automobile emissions. Better connectivity can also make certain lots and land areas more attractive to development since they become more accessible. Several areas in Chadron have been identified for connectivity improvements; such improvements would be subject to further study and cost-benefit analysis to determine their feasibility and potential need. These areas include:

- **Medical District Vicinity.** Collector street north of the Community Hospital connecting West 16th Street to Highway 20 at 4th Street. Pine Street could
potentially be extended south and west towards Centennial Drive to open up lots for development to the east.

- **North Pine and Maple Streets.** Street extensions should be considered for Gordon, Norfolk and Belle Fourche Streets from Maple to Pine Street, which would help end the isolation of the residential uses along Pine Street from the rest of the Kenwood Addition. Construction of these extensions would be a long-term priority and would necessitate the redevelopment of several properties.

- **Cedar Butte Drive/Pine Crest Drive Sector.** A residential street connection could be considered that would connect Cedar Butte Drive south toward 10th Street, which would open up lots for single family residential development. In turn, Cedar Butte Drive could be extended north to Royal Court.

Additional collector streets could be considered in Chadron’s northeast quadrant that would connect Niobara Street to Beaver Valley Road. Such a connection would be helpful in separating the recreational land uses to the west from agricultural land to the east; and, possibly, any temporary housing that may locate in this sector. New streets should incorporate adequate sidewalk space and landscape parkways consistent with existing landscape treatments in adjacent blocks.

**Street and Sidewalk Improvements**

The City of Chadron should continue its ongoing program of upgrading streets and sidewalks in the Downtown and surrounding neighborhoods. A key focus of street and sidewalk improvements going forward is to implement such improvements along 1st Street to prepare this corridor for the future placement and construction of the Cowboy Trail, if the Trail is to align on the street rather than in the industrial strip to the north, and to make 1st Street more accessible to pedestrians especially if a trailhead and interpretive center is to be located somewhere along this corridor near or in the Downtown. If tourism attraction is to be a key element of revitalizing the Downtown and adjacent areas, adequate sidewalks will be vital to encourage visitors to walk from tourism attractions to the Downtown and vice-versa. Long-term, street improvements will be needed to accommodate the Cowboy Trail if it is to be on-street. Such improvements could include painted lanes, a turn pocket at Main Street, parking lane striping and perhaps a bike turn signal if needed.

**Trail System**

A key element of the local regional trail system that should be a top community priority is to complete the connection of the Chadron State College Trail to the Pine Ridge regional trail system in the Nebraska National Forest. The U.S. Forest Service is currently leading the effort to secure the quarter-mile of land that remains to link the two trails. A trail link-up could also help promote more equestrian activities along with hiking and cycling in the area, especially towards Fort Robinson State Park where stables are located.

**Boulevards**

The 1997 Comprehensive Plan proposed the establishment of a neighborhood boulevard system – mainly along Main Street as the axis between Downtown and Chadron State College – streets that would have a higher level landscape and urban design treatments, including special street light standards, banners, identity signage, crosswalk paving and parkway improvements. Such treatments can only enhance one of Chadron’s best street environments and reinforce a connection between the College and the Downtown. An additional street that could be transformed into a minor boulevard is 10th Street since it links the
CHADRON TRAILS NETWORK MAP

Legend:
- City Boundary
- City Trail
- Cowboy Trail
- College Trail
- Main St. Corridor
- Safe Routes to School
- Suggested Bordeaux Bike Trail
- Sidewalk Improvements

0'/1/4 mile/1/2 mile
College to the neighborhoods to the west and Highway 385. The street could be renamed “Eagle Way” in recognition of the College’s mascot.

**Chadron Municipal Airport**

The Chadron Municipal Airport is a key transportation asset for Chadron and for Dawes County. The City should continue to pursue what upgrades may be necessary to rehabilitate Chadron Municipal Airport’s terminal facilities and runways and taxiways. With a new carrier to be selected and upgrades to the runways and taxiways to take place in 2015, future redevelopment efforts should focus on improving terminal facilities. An Airport Master Plan should be prepared to determine specific terminal modernization needs and costs. Funding for improvements could be sought through the Federal Aviation Administration and the Nebraska Department of Aeronautics with its varied airport facility grant and loan programs.

**Community Image and Identity Policies**

The City of Chadron will highlight unique assets of the City and promote the community’s historic sense of place within the Nebraska Panhandle. To accomplish this, the City and its partners will:

- Design and install gateway and wayfinding signage at key entrance ways that identify and direct visitors to key community destinations.
- Facilitate the preservation of architecturally and historically significant properties, sites and structures within the community.
- Support festivals, local artists and artisans, and special events and marketing programs that promote Chadron’s unique heritage, Downtown destinations, and distinctive businesses and neighborhoods.
- Implement initiatives that enhance the visitor experience to Chadron and while participating in regional tourism development efforts that leverages marketing and promotion dollars to enhance Chadron’s visibility within the Nebraska Panhandle.

*Chadron’s unique logo could be used more extensively in community gateway and branding elements*  
*Examples of gateway signage*
Gateway and Wayfinding Program

Chadron’s only gateway signage feature is located along Highway 20 at West 4th Street. Previous plans have suggested gateway improvements near the Ridgeview Road and Route 20 intersection and at 10th Street and Highway 385. Other potential locations could include Main Street and Beaver Valley Road and further west along Highway 20 at Stockdale Road. Gateway signage and other wayfinding elements help to define and promote Chadron’s “brand image” as well as to provide a means for visitors and motorists to navigate to important destinations within Chadron. New identity and gateway signage should be considered at locations; directional signage directing motorists to specific destinations such as Chadron State College, the Dawes County Courthouse, Downtown, the Public Library and local parks should also be created and installed as part of a family of wayfinding and identity signage that incorporates the City’s corporate logo or a specially designed brand logo or image.

Public Art and Interpretive Signage

Locations along the Downtown streetscape, neighborhood gateways, and parks and open spaces should be considered for public art. Wall signage and murals can also be considered as long as they are of high design quality and installed in areas where their presence can contribute positively to the streetscape environment. Interpretive signage and markers highlighting Chadron’s history, including that of the Native Americans can be placed on buildings and in certain places Downtown.

National Register Designations

As suggested previously, a National Register Historic District designation should be explored for the traditional neighborhoods surrounding the Downtown, especially along the Main Street.
corridor from Downtown to the Chadron State College campus. Designations of individual properties that may be individually eligible should also be pursued to help enhance Chadron’s image as a historic community and as a tourism destination in the Panhandle region. The 2005 Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey of Dawes County had recommended that several buildings, sites and structures could be individually eligible for listing. Listed buildings that are income-producing would also be eligible for the Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credit, an incentive that could facilitate historic building rehabilitation and adaptive use, especially for potential tourism-related facilities.

Small-Scaled Promotion Events

Work with Downtown merchants and property owners to introduce and produce small-scale entertainment events to enhance the Downtown area’s “entertainment factor.” Event strategies, particularly in the short-term, should place emphasis on small-scale activities, local performances and events that help to “tell a story;” focus on family, friends, kids, local history and culture; and promote a strong sense of pride in Chadron. Smaller-scale promotional activities and events staged in the Downtown or other parts of the community can also attract attention and create a heightened sense of Chadron as a place for fun and entertainment. Examples of small-scale promotion events include:

- Organizing a Chadron State College student-alumni “street ball” basketball game or “local celebrity” free-throw competition staged in the Downtown area, possibly in connection with the local schools and/or another civic organization.

- Creating a “walking history showcase” using interpretive displays and/or historic photos of Downtown buildings displayed in the storefronts of both vacant and occupied buildings as part of a walking history tour or living history skit staged during the National Historic Preservation Awareness Month campaign in May of each year.

- Hosting a periodic “block party” or town social, or a special “Lunch Bucket Lounge” lunchtime entertainment series during the summer, which might be coordinated with local churches, civic organizations and area employers.

- Expand venues for creating and displaying locally-produced art, products and merchandise from Chadron-area artists and artisans, including the Chadron Quilt Festival and the Summer Block Party.

- Inviting community groups to decorate Christmas trees located in storefront windows as part of a walking “Enchanted Forest” holiday display and promotion, “unveiled” as part of an annual tree lighting ceremony.
Section 5
Plan Implementation

The following are notes regarding code changes and other implementation matters that advance the implementation of the planning strategies presented in this Comprehensive Plan.

Code Changes

The majority of planning strategies presented in this Comprehensive Plan were created to meet current zoning in terms of permitted land uses and basic density and bulk requirements. However, some changes and additions to the zoning code and other land use regulations may be needed in order to advance specific planning recommendations or if significant changes in land use direction in particular were noted in this Comprehensive Plan. Two additions to Chadron’s land use regulations that should be considered include the adoption of a conservation subdivision code and zoning for temporary housing.

Additional study will be needed to more specifically determine any other zoning code revisions that may be needed to carry out the land use goals and objectives proposed in this Comprehensive Plan. It is recommended that the City retain a professional planning and zoning consultant to prepare needed changes to the zoning ordinance.
Design Standards and Manual

Beyond zoning changes, the Comprehensive Plan recommends the need to develop design manuals and standards to provide information to property and business owners and developers on best practices and procedures for home improvements, façade rehabilitations, signage, and site and landscape enhancements. A design manual is meant to be paired with current and future incentives programs that encourage building and site improvements in neighborhoods, and commercial and industrial areas. A variety of information and guidance can be provided in a design manual, including topics such as energy efficiency and sustainable design for existing and new buildings. Design standards are usually viewed as an added layer of requirements in the zoning code that can guide how development is placed, sited and designed on a particular lot in a certain land use district.

Design standards should be explored for the Highway 20 corridor given the potential to create a more dynamic and vital commercial corridor that is also pedestrian friendly, visually appealing and compatible with adjacent land uses. A more unified and attractive corridor can help to attract new businesses and residents to Chadron as well as tourists seeking a unique experience in the Nebraska Panhandle.

Such design standards are usually incorporated as part of zoning code’s landscape and site design provisions.

Conservation Subdivision Code

A conservation subdivision code can help guide the development of more unique residential developments that respect the Chadron area’s distinctive environmental and landscape qualities, more so than standard planned unit development code. Conservation subdivisions can also add new green space and provide for housing products that may be attractive to new homebuyers. The application of the conservation subdivision code may be limited at first given the limited amount of land available for development but could prove useful in the long-term if infrastructure capacities are improved and extended to areas where topography and wetlands and other environmental features need to be considered and maintained in future development activity.

Temporary Housing

Although the oil boom has yet to reach Chadron and Dawes County, the community should be prepared to determine which locations temporary housing should be located, what infrastructure systems need to be in place, and how they should be regulated. Chadron’s zoning and building codes should be updated to include temporary housing provisions.

Historic Preservation

The City should consider adopting a local historic preservation ordinance in order to be eligible for Certified Local Government grants (described in State Funding Sources in the following section).
Capital Improvement Plan

Capital improvement planning and funding has been suggested in several sections of this Plan as the principal means for implementing various planning policies, including:

- Upgrading infrastructure such as the water, sanitary and stormwater management systems
- Street, alley and parkway enhancements
- Gateway and wayfinding programs
- Trail and tourism site development

Recognizing that public budgets are tight and limited in the current economy, the City should investigate shared improvements and funding opportunities with other agencies and entities, including public/private partnerships wherever feasible.

Annexation Policy

This Comprehensive Plan does not recommend any specific areas to be annexed within the next five years since realistic growth areas for the City already exist within its municipal boundaries. In addition, there are no areas around Chadron currently that have significant concentrations of development where an extension of City services is warranted. The only area that could be annexed is land southwest of West 10th Street and Highway 385 – land that was previously identified as a development area in the 1997 Comprehensive Plan – where the City could exert its zoning authority and guide its development in the long term.

Annexation can only be contemplated if the City has undertaken additional studies to determine the cost of infrastructure outlays, a timetable for those improvements, estimated potential tax revenues that could be generating from future development and the costs of providing other municipal services such as police and fire protection.

Plan Implementation

Since implementing the Comprehensive Plan will take time, setting clear priorities at the beginning will be critically important to achieving short term goals and building momentum for long-range planning goals and projects. An implementation sequence that outlines specific priority initiatives and a general timeline framework for their start and completion is presented in the following tables.

Economic and political conditions at the local, regional, state and Federal levels, along with the availability of outside project funding sources and financing, will also influence the implementation timeline. Therefore, one significant challenge for Chadron is to begin implementation of the planning initiatives that will have greatest short-term impacts in shaping the community’s physical appearance and in generating reinvestment in the Downtown, neighborhoods and industrial areas.

Additionally, a well-coordinated effort at implementation between the public and private sectors will also be needed with respective roles and responsibilities between different entities clearly defined. The City of Chadron will need to take important roles in the initial funding of certain implementation projects in order to facilitate private sector participation and involvement. These funding needs may include the start-up of a small business venture fund, infrastructure improvements, and the design and engineering costs for urban design projects. The initial implementation step should be continuing the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee as an entity to facilitate short-term implementation projects, and to encourage stakeholder participation in other planning projects and activities.
Local Funding Sources
The following are several major sources of funding that may have potential for implementing the revitalization strategies presented in this Master Plan:

- **General Revenue Bonds.** The City may investigate the ability of long-term bonds for specific portions of the Comprehensive Plan in order to facilitate redevelopment activities. Bonding for public infrastructure, open space or streetscape improvements, or site acquisition, are some of the key catalytic Comprehensive Plan elements that should be considered.

- **Community Redevelopment Tax Increment Financing (TIF).** Tax Increment Financing is a State authorized program administered by a municipality that allocates future increases in property taxes from a designated area for improvements dedicated to that area. Under TIF, the property taxes due to an increased value from new development, increases in new assessment due to rehabilitation or improvement or tax rate changes, are allocated to the municipality in a Tax Increment Allocation Fund to be used for various redevelopment activities within the designated area. Other taxing districts continue to receive property taxes at the same level as before the TIF district was instituted.

- **Capital Improvement Plan.** Most communities incorporate some aspects of public improvement initiatives within the municipal capital improvements plan, which should be evaluated on an annual basis. Capital improvement funding could be used to support various projects outlined in this Comprehensive Plan. Recognizing that public budgets are tight and somewhat limited in the current economy, the City should investigate shared improvements and funding opportunities with public/private partnerships.

- **Business Improvement District (BID).** A Business Improvement District is a State authorized financing program that can be administered by the City or by a designated service provider agency, to deliver a wide range of additional services and physical improvements in a defined geographic area such as a central business district or commercial corridor. A BID is funded by a special tax assessment paid by the property owners in the designated BID and can finance a variety of district management activities including marketing and special events, trash and snow removal, and sidewalk/public space maintenance. A BID can also underwrite infrastructure and building improvements. Eligible implementation costs include:

  - Building improvement program
  - Wayfinding signage design and installation
  - Streetscape design and construction
  - Business retention/attraction program
  - Salaries related to implementation activities
  - Branding, marketing and promotion activities
  - Special events
  - Streetscape maintenance services
  - Staff salaries related to implementation activities

Although a municipal government is required to pass an ordinance to adopt the BID, a separate service provider, such as a Main Street program, chamber of commerce, or separate downtown management organization, to serve as the BID’s operating and governing entity. The process for establishing a BID requires obtaining support from property owners and taxpayers within
the proposed BID district. An overall strategy for organizing stakeholder support is important, along with determining the BID’s governing structure, level of services to be provided, and annual budget and boundaries. The municipality and service provider agency are required to hold a hearing to discuss the benefits of a BID with local stakeholders.

Other Local Funding Sources

Grants, contributions and technical assistance from foundations, corporations, institutions, other government agencies, and other businesses and individuals can also be developed and secured to help fund a variety of local planning initiatives.

- **Equity Fund/Community Supported Financing.** The possibility of forming an equity fund for business capitalization, expansion and stabilization for Boulevard businesses should be explored. This might take the form of small group of investors pooling funds to create one or more needed businesses or a downtown small business venture fund seeded and capitalized by private individuals, local and regional foundations and government grants. Community financed businesses can also be structured as cooperatives or as local stock corporations, which could a realistic solution for reviving the Momence Theater as a functioning theater. Additionally, customer-owned cooperatives and community-owned stores structured as local stock corporations have become increasingly common in starting new grocery stores in underserved markets.

- **Business Plan Competitions.** Annual business plan competitions can be a useful and effective tool for helping existing business owners develop skills and increase sales and/or efficiency. It has been found to be particularly effective when each year’s competition focuses on a specific challenge, such as adding a new product line, developing an online storefront or adding a new distribution channel. The competition could offer a cash prize, coupled with technical assistance to help all interested businesses compete. A Downtown Main Street program could be the primary organizer of the business plan competitions and fund it through grants or contributions.

- **Nebraska Public Power District Incentive Programs.** Chadron’s local utility Company offers a number of incentives programs to encourage energy efficiency improvements for commercial, residential and institutional buildings. Eligible improvements are focused on replacing heating, ventilating and air conditioning systems with more efficient ones and old lighting systems with LED light fixtures. Several of the incentive programs require a building energy audit be conducted first before the incentive is provided. Private property owners, the City, the School District and other public institutions and entities are eligible to apply.

State Funding Sources

The following funding sources available through the State of Nebraska and its agencies and departments.

- **Nebraska Transportation Alternatives Program (NTAP).** Administered by the Nebraska Department of Roads and funded through the Federal Highway Administration (FHA), this program provides funding for programs and projects defined as transportation alternatives, including on and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation and enhanced mobility, community improvement activities, and
environmental mitigation; recreational trail program projects; safe routes to school projects; and projects for the planning, design or construction of boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former Interstate System routes or other divided highways.

- **Certified Local Government Grants (CLG).** Certified Local Government grants are Federally-sourced matching grants administered by the Nebraska State Historical Society. Grant amounts range from $3,000 to $30,000 and require a local 30 percent match. Eligible project expenses include historic district design guidelines, National Register nominations and preservation education initiatives. Chadron must first become a Certified Local Government to be eligible for CLG grants.

- **Nebraska Affordable Housing Trust Fund.** The Nebraska Affordable Housing Trust Fund NAHTF was created in 1996 by the State of Nebraska to increase the supply and improve the quality of affordable housing in Nebraska. The NAHTF was also created to provide a flexible housing resource to enhance economic development and to provide matching funds for federal resources. The NAHTF generates funds for its initiatives through a small documentary stamp tax on all real estate transactions. The NAHTF uses its funds for housing rehabilitation activities, homebuyer assistance, and new rental housing construction, and organizational capacity-building efforts.

- **HOME Program.** The HOME Program was created by the U.S. Congress as part of the National Affordable Housing Act of 1990 (NAHA), with the intent to provide decent affordable housing to lower-income households and to expand the capacity of non-profit housing providers. Like the NAHTF, the HOME Program provides monies for housing rehabilitation activities, homebuyer assistance, and new rental housing construction.

- **Civic and Community Center Financing Fund (CCCFF).** The Nebraska Department of Economic Development offers grants to support the development of civic centers and community centers under the Civic and Community Center Financing Fund — projects that support the development of civic, community, and recreation centers in Nebraska communities.

- **Enterprise Zone.** An enterprise zone could be established to encourage job creation and capital investment in areas of economic distress and to promote neighborhood revitalization in target areas. Portions of Chadron are located within a TIF district; therefore it could not take advantage of the property tax abatements, but would be able to take advantage of the State tax credits and sales tax refunds.

- **Dollar and Energy Savings Loan Program.** The Nebraska Energy Office participates with Nebraska lenders and financial institutions on providing low-interest loans for a variety of building energy efficiency improvements. Loan amounts range from $100,000 to $750,000 based on the type of property being improved and building ownerships. As such, private property owners as well as government entities and institutions can apply for loan proceeds.
Federal Funding Sources

The following funding sources available through the Federal Government and its agencies and departments.

- **Community Development Block Grants (CDBG).** The CDBG program is a formula-based annual grant program administered by HUD and the Nebraska Department of Economic Development intended to support and fund a variety of community enhancement efforts, including infrastructure improvements, housing development and property acquisition, and the provision of public services.

- **New Market Tax Credits.** The New Markets Tax Credit Program (NMTC), established in 2000 and administered by the U.S. Treasury, with the goal of spurring the revitalization of low-income communities and neighborhoods. The NMTC Program provides tax credit incentives to investors for equity investments in certified Community Development Entities (CDEs), which must have a primary mission of investing in low-income communities and persons. Commercial and mixed-use real estate projects are among the eligible categories, as are community facilities and operating businesses. The NMTC will provide only a portion, perhaps 15 percent to 20 percent of the capital needed for a project, so other layers of financing will be needed.

- **U.S. Small Business Association (SBA).** With local banks, the SBA provides a number of guaranteed loan programs for existing and start-up businesses. Its 7(a) Loan Program in particular provides guaranteed financing for working capital, equipment, fixtures/furnishings, land/building improvements and debt refinancing. Short-term smaller loans of up to $35,000 for working capital, inventory purchase and building improvements are available through the Micro-Loan Program.

- **Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program.** Since 1976, the National Park Service, in partnership with the Internal Revenue Service and the Nebraska State Historical Society has administered the Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program to encourage rehabilitation and reinvestment in historic buildings. A 20 percent tax credit is provided to owners and developers of income-producing historic buildings who undertake a substantial rehabilitation project in which rehabilitation costs must be equal to or greater than the property’s adjusted basis, which is the property’s purchase price existing minus the cost of the land, plus improvements already made, minus depreciation already taken. In addition, the project must also be a certified rehabilitation as determined through a three-part application process with the Historical Society. All contributing buildings within Downtown Chadron National Register Historic District are eligible for the tax credit.

- **Brownfield Assessment Grants.** Administered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Brownfield Assessment Grants provide funding for the inventory and assessment of local brownfield site contaminated by hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants, including petroleum. Grant awards vary from $100,000 to $350,000.

Other implementation steps are presented in three “tiers” on the following pages. Long-term tasks are listed as “Tier 3” planning initiatives while shorter ones are considered “Tier 1.” Action type refers to whether the particular planning initiative
should be an adopted policy initiative or a specific action that should be undertaken. In most cases, most planning initiatives involve both policy and action commitments. Impact on resources refers to whether a significant amount of the community’s financial and human resources will be required to manage or complete the initiative.

The implementation process begins with City funded and/or organized infrastructure improvements and incentives that are intended to encourage private sector investment and business development. As implementation of the Comprehensive Plan progresses, the following ongoing tasks will be necessary:

- Continue to secure financing sources to fund infrastructure improvements, revitalization efforts, and marketing and business development initiatives.
- Update the Comprehensive Plan every five years to account for changing conditions and opportunities.
- Monitor private investment to determine the catalytic effects of the initial public infrastructure investments and define the City’s role in later-tier planning and revitalization initiatives.
## IMPLEMENTATION SEQUENCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Type</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Impact on Resources</th>
<th>Tier 1</th>
<th>Tier 2</th>
<th>Tier 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TRADITIONAL DOWNTOWN CORE</td>
<td>Policy</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement Downtown Master Plan</td>
<td>Policy</td>
<td>Major</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undertake streetscape and urban design improvements</td>
<td>Action/Policy</td>
<td>Major</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ongoing business and real estate development efforts</td>
<td>Action/Policy</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design and install Downtown gateway and wayfinding system</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop incentives and remove barriers to Downtown reinvestment</td>
<td>Policy</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue Downtown infrastructure upgrades</td>
<td>Policy/Action</td>
<td>Major</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage additional modes of transportation</td>
<td>Policy/Action</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attract additional restaurants, upper-story lodging and bed and breakfast operations</td>
<td>Policy/Action</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish a Downtown Management Program</td>
<td>Policy/Action</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undertake low-cost hospitality initiatives</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create a cultural walk</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocate/construct Cowboy Trail</td>
<td>Policy/Action</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhance appearance of Downtown storefronts</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop Makerspaces</td>
<td>Policy/Action</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create Venture Fund</td>
<td>Policy/Action</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement Retail Overlay</td>
<td>Policy/Action</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage appropriate light industrial uses</td>
<td>Policy</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Implementation Sequence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Type</th>
<th>Impact on Resources</th>
<th>Tier 1</th>
<th>Tier 2</th>
<th>Tier 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Housing and Neighborhoods</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain the City’s traditional housing stock through rehabilitation efforts</td>
<td>Policy/Action</td>
<td>High</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create and implement Neighborhood Capital Improvement Programs</td>
<td>Policy/Action</td>
<td>High</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage infill housing in existing neighborhoods</td>
<td>Policy/Action</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure adequate infrastructure in development areas</td>
<td>Policy</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Require parks and open space in new developments</td>
<td>Policy</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote street connectivity between development areas and established neighborhoods</td>
<td>Policy</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forge and maintain partnerships with housing development groups</td>
<td>Policy/Action</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consider residential historic districts</td>
<td>Policy/Action</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish new low-interest loan and grant programs for housing rehabilitation</td>
<td>Policy/Action</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide design assistance and homebuyer counseling</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create neighborhood design manual</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct housing conditions survey</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undertake regular code enforcement efforts</td>
<td>Policy/Action</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement neighborhood marketing activities</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organize neighborhood associations</td>
<td>Policy/Action</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan and prepare sites for new residential developments</td>
<td>Policy/Action</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adopt temporary housing code</td>
<td>Policy</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adopt conservation subdivision code</td>
<td>Policy</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### PARKS, OPEN SPACE AND THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Impact on Resources</th>
<th>Tier 1</th>
<th>Tier 2</th>
<th>Tier 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ensure the Parks Department has adequate resources to maintain and enhance the park system</td>
<td>Policy</td>
<td>High</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create non-motorized connections to all parks and park facilities</td>
<td>Policy/Action</td>
<td>High</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan and implement improvements to the ball field complexes</td>
<td>Policy/Action</td>
<td>High</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protect natural environment through best stormwater management practices</td>
<td>Policy/Action</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage creation of additional parks and open spaces through new subdivision codes</td>
<td>Policy</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forge and maintain partnerships with other entities to maintain and improve parks</td>
<td>Policy</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create parks and open space master plan</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adopt community gardens program</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construct Cowboy Trail and Interpretive Center</td>
<td>Policy/Action</td>
<td>High</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve neighborhood parkways</td>
<td>Policy/Action</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## IMPLEMENTATION SEQUENCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Type</th>
<th>Impact on Resources</th>
<th>Tier 1</th>
<th>Tier 2</th>
<th>Tier 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INFRASTRUCTURE, CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adopt an annual capital improvements program</td>
<td>Policy</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue planning and funding efforts to separate storm and wastewater systems</td>
<td>Policy/Action</td>
<td>High</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extend infrastructure where and when infrastructure systems have been upgraded</td>
<td>Policy/Action</td>
<td>High</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan for construction of new public works facilities</td>
<td>Policy</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage energy efficiency improvements in community facilities</td>
<td>Policy</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborate with partner agencies to fund and build needed community facilities</td>
<td>Policy</td>
<td>High</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upgrade Municipal Airport</td>
<td>Policy/Action</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expand Public Library facility</td>
<td>Policy/Action</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan for new Community Center</td>
<td>Policy/Action</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Update Water Systems Master Plan</td>
<td>Policy/Action</td>
<td>High</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## IMPLEMENTATION SEQUENCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Type</th>
<th>Impact on Resources</th>
<th>Tier 1</th>
<th>Tier 2</th>
<th>Tier 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>TRANSPORTATION</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct on-going capital improvements to City Streets</td>
<td>Policy/Action</td>
<td>High</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote local and regional bike and pedestrian trails</td>
<td>Policy/Action</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure street connectivity in existing areas and new growth areas</td>
<td>Policy/Action</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rehabilitate and upgrade Municipal Airport</td>
<td>Policy/Action</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan and undertake on-going sidewalk improvements</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connect Chadron State College trail system to the Pine Ridge/Nebraska National Forest trail system</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design and construct Main Street green boulevard</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design and construct “Eagle Way” boulevard</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upgrade Municipal Airport</td>
<td>Policy/Action</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>COMMUNITY IMAGE AND IDENTITY</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design and install community gateway and wayfinding signage system</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List significant properties in the National Register of Historic Places</td>
<td>Policy/Action</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support festivals and marketing programs</td>
<td>Policy/Action</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Install public art and other placemaking initiatives</td>
<td>Policy/Action</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>