



CITY OF ESTHERVILLE

Comprehensive Planning is a transparent, public process in which communities establish a future vision and locally designated standards in order to promote public health, safety and prosperity. Successful planning attracts economic development, protects and preserves the community's resources, and encourages a strong community identity. (Iowa Smart Planning, 2010)

The Elements of a Good Life!



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NorthWest Iowa Planning & Development Commission
Spencer, Iowa

2015 Comprehensive Land Use Plan

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



CITY OF ESTHERVILLE

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2015 ESTHERVILLE COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The comprehensive land use plan is an essential planning document for those communities in Iowa intending to enforce zoning regulations, annexations, urban renewal tax benefits and other land use controls. This document is created to be Estherville's primary guide for future land use policy decision making. The comprehensive plan is general in nature and broad in scope, assessing past and current conditions and making projections for population, housing, economic conditions, and land use issues. The core of the plan is comprised of two primary sections to be supported by the remainder of the data and statistical analysis in this plan.



- 1) Goals, Objectives & Policy Recommendations** for the next 10 to 15 years in Estherville
- 2) Future Land Use Map** creating a visual depiction of proposed land use development.

Included within this executive summary are the general comprehensive plan goals, plan implementation strategies, and the future land use map. Supporting data is available within the main body of the plan, as well as specific policy recommendations addressing each land use classification in Estherville.

SUMMARY OF OVERALL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The comprehensive planning process provides tools for directing change in cities. The vision created for Estherville will only happen if local leaders continue to consider new or non-traditional planning methods and techniques, and address problems that may arise. All participants must realize there is commitment and effort required to make the planning process and this plan successful. The commitment of the Planning and Zoning Commission to work with city leaders to guide the implementation of this plan and other development issues of the community is essential. Excluding segments of the community may result in the loss of productive and interesting ideas. This plan is not a "quick fix" to the future economic and community development of Estherville. However, this plan can serve as a guide to future development decisions. A comprehensive land use plan needs to be modified and updated over time in order to maintain current plan goals and control ordinances. The extent of growth experienced by the city will play a major role in determining how often and what types of adjustments will be required.

The overall goal of the Estherville Comprehensive Land Use Plan is to provide long term guidance, which together with land use controls will minimize the number of conflicting land

uses while preserving the character of developed areas, maintain a diversity among its parts, preserve the irreplaceable natural resources of the community, allocate land to be reserved for designated future land uses, maximize the opportunity for a wide range of choices, reflect local traditions, facilitate the provision of needed services and facilities, and is adoptable and acceptable to the people of Estherville.

General development goals and objectives guide the comprehensive planning process and are summarized as follows:

1. Land Use Development & Planning

- Maintain available and functional city planning organizations and programs which will direct the planned development of the community according to well established procedures, and provide the city with a development plan of legal force which facilitates the orderly growth and development of the city.
- Update the plan, related policies, and programs according to local changes and demands.
- Assure active participation and involvement of all residents in all elements of the program.
- Develop a community environment that encourages the preservation of prime agricultural land, preserves environmentally sensitive areas, and preserves historical areas.
- Promote the best land use possible for areas to be developed, including considerations for flood prone areas as indicated by FEMA.

2. Annexation

- Encourage and utilize annexation as a tool to supply needed land for growth as existing subdivisions become developed.
- Encourage development of land within the city limits prior to actively annexing additional land. Insure new development will be compatible to existing neighborhoods or businesses.
- Utilize annexation as a tool to control uncontrolled rural growth and promote orderly development.
- Provide municipal services and utilities to those developed rural areas currently located adjacent to but outside of the city limits, if so desired by and paid for by the developer or property owners.

3. Community Facilities and Services

- Make all facilities and services available to all residents of the city, both existing and proposed.
- Continue to promote and develop community facilities which foster a high standard of living, public welfare, safety, and overall development.
- Provide opportunities for potential students within the community to receive a quality education to the level of their choice.

4. Residential Development

- Provide convenient access to all desired locations, compatible surrounding land uses, opportunity for neighborhood cohesion and identification, a variety of dwelling sites and types, and an array of aesthetics that include clean air, pleasing appearance, maintenance and upkeep of structures and property, etc.
- Provide housing opportunities to all individuals regardless of age, sex, income, race, ethnicity, creed or religion.

5. Commercial Activities

- Develop a diversified local commercial base that will provide the city with a wide range of goods and services.
- Make areas of development available to accommodate the commercial activities and services demanded by the citizens of Estherville and the larger retail trade area.
- Encourage future development to locate within the Central Business District or along the Highway 9 business corridor. This will better utilize existing infrastructure and result in efficient land use patterns.

6. Industrial Activities

- Continue efforts toward acquisition of future industrial growth, as well as emphasizing the promotion of industrial development through support of local organizations and personnel available in the area.
- Provide space, facilities, incentives and support for industries wishing to locate in the city. Integrate these industries and their employees into the community in such a manner that the city will gain economic growth.
- Encourage industrial development in planned industrial parks or existing industrial sites, where utility demands can be met without costly upgrades. Restricted light industrial uses should be allowed to locate in commercial zoned areas in the community after careful examination and recommendation from the Planning and Zoning Commission.

7. Recreation/Open Space

- Provide citizens with choices for the types and amounts of recreational activities desired.
- Preserve resources which have historical, scientific, scenic, or recreational value.
- Coordinate all possible funding sources to provide recreational facilities for the citizens of the community.
- Reserve land in areas of proposed subdivisions or future developments for use by existing and future residents and visitors.

8. Civic/Public

- Promote and encourage development of new public, cultural or civic oriented land uses within Estherville. Public and civic uses complement recreational and natural resource uses by promoting and increasing the quality of life in Estherville.

9. Transportation

- Develop and maintain a transportation system that is planned, located and designed to enhance the efficiency of movement of people and goods, and supports and promotes all areas of the city.
- Upgrade and expand upon existing and needed transportation facilities as necessary to meet local demands and within local budget constraints.

10. Utilities

- Provide all residents and business of the city the best quality services at the lowest possible rates.
- Enhance the living environment and economic potential of the community with necessary services such as fire, water, sewer, electric, communications, streets and gas.
- Encourage new land use developments to locate where adequate infrastructure is present, prior to developing where costly infrastructure needs to be expanded.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS PLAN

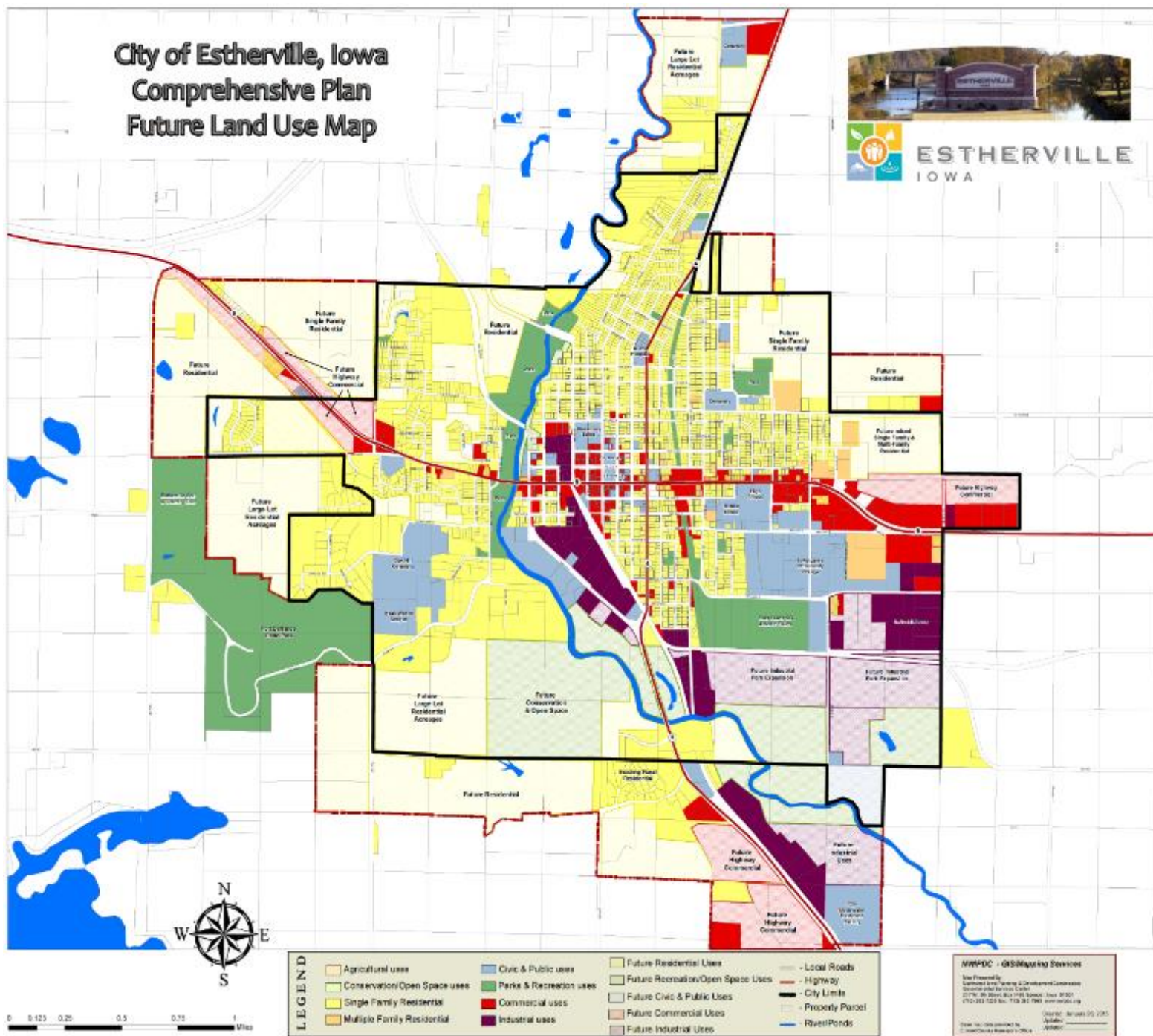
The Estherville Comprehensive Land Use Plan is to be used as a guide by both public and private sectors in land use decision-making processes. The private sector, including developers, investors, industry and businesses will use this document to become informed of the general positions of the city regarding land use objectives and policies. The land use plan will provide the general public with an outline and guide to make individual land investments, purchases or development decisions. The public will become more informed as to the city's policies in regards to those land uses that are permitted, encouraged, prohibited or protected. With this knowledge in advance, the public will be able to make informed and knowledgeable decisions complimentary to the comprehensive plan.

Community leaders and city officials in Estherville are charged with the task of identifying, leading, and being the first to accept and embrace the future that this community has ahead. Suggested implementation measures the city may wish to review, address or incorporate include:

1. Establish a benchmark for Estherville from which future community growth will be measured. Create a three to five year action or strategy plan addressing specific growth, economic development and annexation policies.
2. Encourage city officials, planning and zoning commission members, board of adjustment members, and key community leaders to attend training in an effort to gain new perspective on current or innovative trends in planning and/or regulatory ordinances.
3. Establish an annual comprehensive plan review process in which public input is encouraged regarding the progress and development of the community. Furthermore, the planning and zoning commission will review the city's future land use plan and land use policies and make a report to the city council to determine if changes need to be made to reflect current development projects.
4. Create a plan to attract and/or retain young professionals and the younger population residing in Estherville. Far too many communities see their younger populations leave the community upon graduation from school for larger metropolitan areas. Monitor results through affordable housing options, younger demographic trends, and recreational or entertainment activities intended for this demographic.
5. Continue to promote and exhibit a welcoming and accommodating feeling to new residents, businesses and visitors to the community. This may be accomplished through creating and sustaining a "welcoming committee" and packet of information for new residents and businesses to the community.
6. When creating and enforcing new or existing land use policies, remember to protect the rights and interests of property owners in Estherville. This strategy should also be utilized when looking to update the city's control ordinances such as zoning and subdivision regulations.
7. When implementing new land use policies, city leaders and elected officials must remember that consistency and fairness is a must for all residents and businesses in Estherville.

ESTHERVILLE FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

The exact amount of land to be devoted to each land use in the year 2030 is not exactly known and cannot be accurately estimated. A realistic estimate of land areas will be made relative to the following methodology. First, the population and demographic changes from 2010 to 2030 will be examined and analyzed to determine the impact on existing and future planned land uses. Secondly, expansion or growth areas will be indicated on the future land use map. This is done to assure the city's planning and zoning commission has future direction for making land use decisions. It must be kept in mind the future land use plan is a valuable tool upon which development decisions and zoning controls are based. The future land use plan is a tool to help direct future growth and development of the community.



CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION & PLANNING ELEMENTS

A comprehensive plan is a collection of material and information designed to guide the future growth and development of the community. It is general in nature and provides a framework and policy context within which to make land use decisions relating to future development. The comprehensive plan is long range, looking forward 10 to 15 years, and does not plan a highly specific course. Rather, the plan points toward land use goals and general policies that the city should consider when making development decisions. While short term planning is important, such as capital improvement planning, strategic action plans, economic development strategies, or municipal budgeting, it is not within the scope of this plan. Short term plans may be incorporated into the comprehensive plan by reference. The comprehensive city plan or master plan must, therefore, be a balanced and attractive general design best suited to present and future needs. Second, the plan must be in scale with the population and economic prospects of the community, and third the plan must be in scale with its financial resources.



DEFINITION OF A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Comprehensive Planning is a transparent, public process in which communities establish a future vision and locally designated standards in order to promote public health, safety and prosperity. Successful planning attracts economic development, protects and preserves the city's resources, and encourages a strong community identity.

Defined by the Rebuild Iowa Office "Iowa Smart Planning" 2010

The comprehensive planning process consists of utilizing past and present planning efforts and integrating this information into a vision for the future. What exactly is a "vision?" A vision is an image or foresight into where the community wishes to see the city grow and develop in the future. A common vision is critical for the development of a comprehensive plan. Once a vision statement has been established it serves as a focal point for all other long range plan goals and specific policy statements.

The Estherville Comprehensive Plan is an intense study and analysis into specific components that makes the city work, including the physical growth and development of the community. Changes in land use patterns, infrastructure, transportation, municipal facilities and services, population, housing, and other features are very important in determining the current condition of the city. This information is useful in determining objectives and policies relating to the natural environment, the built environment, land uses, and other such activities that directly affect the physical aspects of

Estherville. The plan's overall goals, policies and future land use designations are intended to be updated and amended as needed. As the community grows or changes from year to year, so will its needs. Therefore, the comprehensive plan should reflect new changes and possibly new objectives or policies toward specific actions. Ideally, the comprehensive plan would be updated on an annual basis. Actions recommended by the planning and zoning commission and approved by the City Council can amend this plan to reflect current trends or simply a change in philosophy regarding one or more of the policy statements.



According to Chapter 414 of the Iowa Code, if a city is to create zoning districts then ***“the regulations shall be made in accordance with a comprehensive plan”***. All cities involved in zoning and land use regulations need to have an updated plan to guide future development activities. In general this comprehensive plan should and will contain sections regarding population and housing trends, socioeconomic data, transportation & infrastructure, hazard mitigation actions, parks & recreation, city services & community facilities, economic development, smart growth and future land uses. Once the working definition of planning has been internalized by those involved, the steps of the actual process should commence.

According to the Iowa Land Use Planning Notebook published by Iowa State University Extension, a comprehensive plan serves the following functions for a community.

- **The plan provides continuity.** A comprehensive plan allows continuity within the city and provides successive public bodies a framework for addressing common land use issues.
- **Balancing competing private interests.** A thorough comprehensive plan can provide a balance between competing demands on land by establishing a plan for identifying future development patterns in an orderly and rational manner. A plan should be created to support the greatest benefit for individuals and the community as a whole.
- **Protecting public interests.** A comprehensive plan is also a means by which the city avoids costly infrastructure expenses on low priority or non-beneficial projects. It is much less expensive for a city to provide public services to a well-planned, ordered and phased development versus haphazard or scattered low density development that may only provide benefit to a few properties.
- **Protects the city's valued resources.** Planning can identify environmental features and other natural resources and suggest strategies or policies to protect and preserve those resources from destruction or degradation by development.

- **Shapes the appearance of the community.** A comprehensive plan can establish policies that create and promote a distinct sense of place.
- **Promotes economic development.** A comprehensive plan contains valuable information that can aid firms and the city's economic development organizations in determining where to locate new businesses and industries.
- **Provides justification for decisions.** A comprehensive plan provides factual and objective basis for support of zoning and subdivision decisions, which can be used to defend a city's decision if challenged in court.
- **Expresses a collective citizen vision for the future.** The comprehensive planning process allows residents of the community to participate in a discussion, debate and visioning process to plan for the future of their community. A plan developed with a proactive public participation process will enjoy strong community support. Decisions that are consistent with the comprehensive plan's policies are less likely to be subject to public controversy.

Planning is a key element in the development of any comprehensive plan. The "planning" steps of the comprehensive plan process should include:

1. The primary stage of a planning program is **research and data collection**. It is from this supply of data that all decisions will be based, indicating that the more extensive and specific the data is the more accurate and functional the decisions. The following are the broad, general areas of data needed for the information base/inventory: Population, Housing, Economic Development, Physical Features, Land Use, Transportation, Public Works, Community Facilities, Parks and Recreation, and the Environment.
2. **Analysis of the data collected** is an ongoing activity conducted at the same time the research and data collection is being pursued. Analysis involves the collection and presentation of data in written and/or graphic form to establish a complete base of existing conditions. Once this base has been established, the analysis proceeds into projection of future trends and growth. Dynamic forces are identified as well as their relative effect on the future.
3. All of this input in turn will facilitate the evolvement of certain **broad general goals** for the planning area that aims towards which effort is to be directed. Objectives involve bringing the goals closer to reality and specifically establishing those accomplishments that are desirable and closer to realizing established goals.
4. The **objectives and policy recommendations** are the framework for plan preparation. The technical personnel involved in the planning effort prepare the actual comprehensive plan document. Before submission of the plan to the legal bodies concerned, it should have been studied and commented upon by all the involved sectors and altered accordingly.
5. Legalization of the plan involves the **plan adoption** by the local legislative body. Public hearings and wide distribution of the plan should take place before formal adoption proceedings. The plan must meet with the approval of those in the planning area to function properly.
6. **Implementation of the plan** is not carried out by any one department or agency, but is a combined effort of all government, private and related entities. It cannot be emphasized enough that cooperation and coordination are the keys to an effective plan implementation.

CHAPTER 2. COMMUNITY HISTORY

Estherville is located in the west central part of Emmet County in a valley created by the West Fork of the Des Moines River. Emmet County was first settled in 1856 and the City of Estherville was incorporated in 1881. The City is named after Esther Ridley, the wife of Robert Ridley the city's founder. The early population of Estherville was comprised of immigrants from primarily Scandinavian countries as well as Germany and Ireland. Estherville is the county seat of Emmet County, which is named after the Irish patriot, Robert Emmet.

The following is a brief overview of Estherville's early community history as described on the Estherville Chamber of Commerce website. Emmet County was originally created by an act of the Iowa Legislature in January 1851. In 1853 a provision was made for Emmet County's political organization, although it would not become effective until six years later. Early pioneers arrived around 1856, but it was not until the summer of 1857 that settlers arrived on the site of what is defined as Estherville today. In 1859, Estherville was formally chosen as the county seat of Emmet County.

Figure 1 - Early photo of Rock Island Railroad Depot in Estherville, 1905

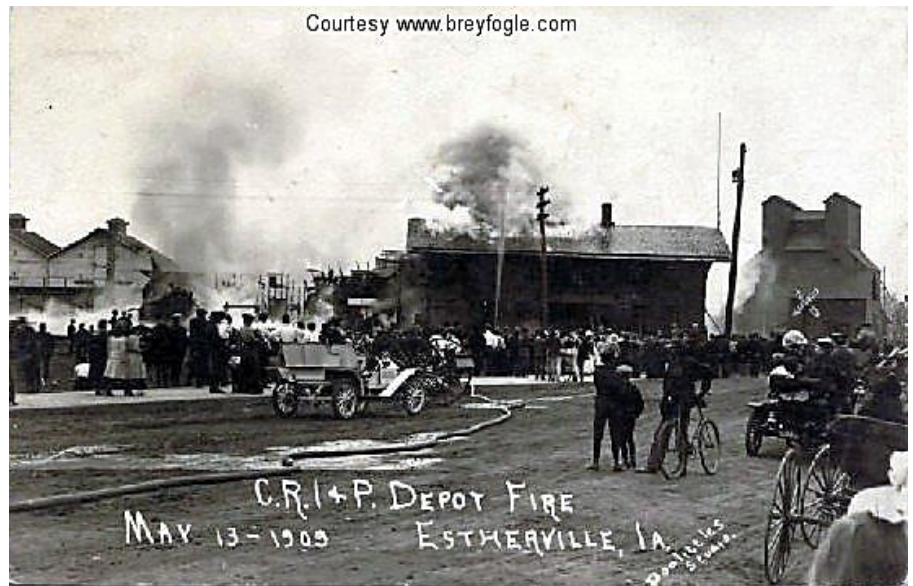


Figure 2 - Photo of early downtown and railroads in Estherville



Free lots were given to anyone who would erect a dwelling on them. In 1860, the population of Emmet County was only 105 persons, with most of these residents dwelling in the City of Estherville. In 1861, Emmet County participated in its first Presidential election and everyone in the county voted for Abraham Lincoln. By 1870, the establishment of the newspaper in Estherville was perhaps the most far reaching event of the time. Reportedly, the term "blizzard" was first printed in the press in Estherville, Iowa in 1870. An old Anglo-Saxon term used to define a heavy snow storm accompanied by a

violent wind and extreme cold, the use of the word “blizzard” is often credited to O.C. Bates, the editor of the Vindicator, Estherville’s first newspaper. Another version of the origin of this word is that Bates adopted the word from “Lightning” Ellis, one of the town’s characters who congregated in the newspaper office. Whatever the source, the term “blizzard” first appeared in print on April 23, 1870 in the Estherville newspaper. Around 1870, there was a heavy migration of residents coming from Scandinavian countries, Germany and Ireland.



Another historical event in Estherville’s history occurred on May 10, 1879 when a meteor weighing 437 pounds and measuring 27” x 22¾” x 15” impacted earth just north of Estherville. The surface of the meteor was broken with a metallic glitter. Specimens of this meteor are still on display in the Estherville Public Library and Estherville Meteorite Center. In 1881, Estherville officially incorporated as a city in the State of Iowa and had a population of 800 residents. By 1884, the first courthouse of brick was built in Estherville at a cost of slightly under \$12,000 on the north half of the Public Square which was deeded to the county by the city. By 1892, Estherville’s population had grown to 2,185 residents, just one year after the city became incorporated. The City of Estherville created a municipal water works and electrification of the city in 1895, which inaugurated the community into the modern era. In 1903, a Carnegie Library was constructed on the south block of the City Park.

Figure 3 - The first brick courthouse in Estherville

HISTORICAL SITES IN THE CITY OF ESTHERVILLE

Although not listed on the National Register of Historic Places, there are many places of historical interest that are of local, county and regional importance. Many buildings within the downtown district are more than 100 years old. While in Estherville, you can view and learn more about the community’s history through these important sites:

Carnegie Library – Located at 613 Central Avenue, this historic building is more than 100 years old and located in the heart of downtown Estherville. The public can enjoy the beauty of the architecture, monuments, and green space in the surrounding town square environment.

Emmet County Historical Museum – The complex houses a rich collection of the history of Emmet County with photographs and artifacts. The historical museum complex includes an actual country school building, log cabin and machine shed. The Emmet County Historical Museum is located at 1720 3rd Avenue South in Estherville.

World War One Monument – A project of the War Mothers, now known as the Service Star Legion Organization, this monument was constructed in 1938 and restored to its original glory in 2005. The monument sits in the Library Square and commemorates soldiers from the Emmet County area who fought in World War 1.

Estherville Rock Garden – Built in 1933, the Rock Garden was constructed to be a beautiful area in which to relax by the river. Stones from various towns were brought in to build the masterpiece. The garden was restored in 1996 after flooding damaged much of the area in 1993. The Rock Garden is located in Mickelson Park along the West Fork Des Moines River.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE IN EMMET COUNTY - NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Currently, there are no sites within the City of Estherville listed on the National Register of Historic Places. However, there are three (3) structures or sites in Emmet County carrying the distinction of being placed on the national register. These sites are important to the history of Emmet County as a whole.

Brugjeld-Peterson Family Farmstead District – Located at 2349 450th Avenue (County Road N40). This family farmstead was placed on the National Register in April 2000. This historic farmstead includes a restored farmhouse, barn, and various outbuildings.

Ellsworth Ranch Bridge – Placed on the National Register in 1998, this bridge is located on 130th Street over the East Fork Des Moines River near the City of Armstrong.

Thomsen Round Barn – Added to the National Register in 1986, this historically significant round barn is located off Highway 15 close to the City of Armstrong.

CHAPTER 3. PLANNING BACKGROUND & PUBLIC INPUT

BACKGROUND OF COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

The Northwest Iowa Planning and Development Commission (NWIPDC), formed in 1973, is responsible for coordinating activities in the region and assisting member governments with technical assistance and planning projects. The formation of NWIPDC marked the first real effort of a genuine “regional” planning commission in northwest Iowa. The principal purpose of the regional planning commission was to undertake planning studies on a regional basis and facilitate cooperation among the various governmental bodies within the region. The City of Estherville, similar to most other cities and counties across northwest Iowa initiated its first planning efforts in during the 1970s by participating in a 701 Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Urban Planning Assistance Program. The original planning effort in Estherville consisted of working with the Northwest Iowa Area 3 Regional Council of Governments (former name of NWIPDC) to complete the city’s first comprehensive plan in 1978.

Over the course of the next two and a half decades, the planning and zoning commission, board of adjustment and city council utilized the city’s comprehensive plan in making land use decisions to guide zoning issues and support growth within the community. However, by the end of the 1990s the city’s demographics, population, housing and economic conditions of the community changed from when the original plan had been adopted. It became evident the city needed to update its land use policy document. By 1999-2000, the city once again worked with NWIPDC to complete an update of the Estherville Comprehensive Plan in conjunction with a countywide comprehensive planning project for Emmet County. The Estherville comprehensive plan was completed in 2002.

During the spring of 2014, city officials once again indicated a need to update the city’s planning documents and zoning regulations, especially in regards to community growth, annexations and land use policies affecting future growth trends. Estherville city staff sought the assistance of the regional Council of Governments (NWIPDC), of which the city is a participating member. The Northwest Iowa Planning and Development Commission staff planners initiated the third revision and update to the Estherville comprehensive plan in August 2014. Once the city’s comprehensive plan update is completed, the Planning and Zoning Commission and city staff may also look to update the city’s zoning ordinance and subdivision ordinance regulations, to be consistent with the goals and policies outlined in this new land use planning document.

PUBLIC INPUT & DATA GATHERING

Estherville city officials and staff have initiated several actions to ensure public input is an integral part of the comprehensive planning process. In an effort to better understand the current state of planning services within Estherville, the Northwest Iowa Planning & Development Commission provided the city with an informational questionnaire intended to develop an overview of current planning activities in Estherville and services offered by the community. The Estherville Planning and Zoning Commission contributed as an important role in working with NWIPDC staff to provide the necessary information and support to update the city’s comprehensive plan.

In addition to working with city staff, local officials, and the Estherville Planning and Zoning Commission, direct public input is also an important part in developing a comprehensive plan representative of the residents of the community. Estherville's public solicitation involved the distribution a land use policy questionnaire and community visioning survey to members of the city council, planning and zoning commission, board of adjustment, city staff, school district representatives, and other key community leaders to complete.

CONCLUSIONS AND ANALYSIS FROM ESTHERVILLE LAND USE QUESTIONNAIRE

In conclusion, a brief analysis of the results from the Planning Commission, city staff and community leaders land use survey showed many interesting opinions, thoughts and beliefs of those persons overseeing development decisions and reviews for both existing and future developments in Estherville. Following is a brief summary and generalized conclusions drawn from the previously listed comments extracted from the completed surveys.



Agricultural Land Uses

Regarding the impact and effects of agricultural land uses in and near Estherville, 19% of survey respondents believe there are no conflicts. Conversely, a majority of survey respondents (56%) believe there are conflicts with agricultural uses that need to be addressed. The highest percentage of responses regarding impacts from agricultural uses is overwhelmingly tied to odor issues and the impact upon neighboring developing properties along with noise, fertilizer application, impact upon water and natural resources and continued growth in the agricultural sector. Additionally, 25% of survey respondents believe there was minimal or negligible impact or had no response to the question. In general, opinions varied regarding agricultural land uses, but most of the survey responses were indicative of strong opinions on one side or the other, not many people seemed to be in the middle regarding their opinions. For example, whereas some people stated, "conflicts with odors from ag based manufacturers..." and "impacts from ag includes odor, noise, waste production and pest control..." Others commented, "We are an ag community so issues will come up" and "Ag industries are very important..." Ultimately, one of the more insightful comments regarding the future of agricultural land uses and their impact upon the future development of Estherville was "There could be future conflicts if we do not pay attention."

Residential Land Uses

Regarding the analysis of Residential land use comments and thoughts in Estherville, there were 62 comments regarding current development trends of residential uses. The most common response for the type of housing needed in Estherville was identified as senior independent living at 28%, followed next by the need for new single family residential at 24%. Multiple family dwellings or apartments was the third most needed type of housing in Estherville at 19%.

Where should residential housing be located?

West Estherville	36%
Northeast Estherville	29%

Type of new housing needed?

Senior Housing	28%
Single Family	24%

Northwest Estherville	14%	Multiple Family	19%
In existing areas	14%	Assisted Living	10%
North Estherville	7%	Low Income Housing	10%
		Affordable Housing	10%

With respect to where new housing should be built in Estherville, the survey responses are noted in the above table. The greatest response was for new housing to be built in the western parts of Estherville. This was followed by northeastern Estherville and in third place was development in northwest Estherville. All survey responses to the question of whether residential uses utilizing city services should be brought into the city limits responded with the answer of “yes”. Regarding social or economic factors influencing residential development, along with responses to what impact the price or value has upon new development in Estherville generated many varying responses. For instance, several responses were directed toward the costs of developing new housing that may be needed in Estherville. Some of these comments include, “new housing is so expensive – prohibits building new rentals” and “we can’t build affordable housing at a profitable level to attract large builders into our community”. Although only 10% of survey respondents indicated a direct need for affordable housing in Estherville, several of the specific comments indicate otherwise with several comments indicating affordable housing is an issue within the community. There appears to be very little to no concern from the survey respondents in regards to urban sprawl or uncontrolled residential growth patterns in the community.

Commercial Land Uses

Survey respondents offered 41 specific comments regarding the development trends of commercial land uses in Estherville. Regarding the best location for future commercial development, 35% of survey responses indicated the Highway 9 corridor is the best location, followed by 26% who believe downtown Estherville needs additional commercial development. Following is a table indicating where the survey respondents believe commercial development will expand in Estherville, along with the beliefs of how the city should regard and regulate home occupations.

<u>Where should commercial uses develop?</u>		<u>How should the city review home businesses?</u>	
Highway 9 corridor	35%	Scrutinize/regulate	55%
Downtown	26%	Allow all businesses	18%
Along the fringe of the city	17%	Depends on the business	9%
South Hwy. 4 corridor	13%	Evaluate each business	9%
East side of Estherville	9%	Comply with existing rules	9%

Regarding home businesses or home occupations, the opinions varied, but more than 50% of the survey responses indicated the city should review the impact of home based businesses on neighboring residential uses with greater scrutiny and regulations. Only 18% of the survey responses indicated the concept of liberally allowing the use of residences for home based businesses. Other comments regarding home based businesses included evaluating each business on their own merit, along with simply complying with and enforcing the existing rules in the city’s ordinance. Nearly all of those responding to this survey were in concurrence that commercial uses may be permitted near residential uses, but it is not appropriate to allow them within residential developments. Overall, there were several comments generated from the commercial land use questions pertaining to the survey respondents’ concerns over the number of vacant commercial

buildings and a need for the community to look to fill empty buildings before being concerned with new commercial developments.

Industrial Land Uses

There were 42 comments directed toward industrial land uses in Estherville. Regarding the best place for new industrial development to expand, the following responses were tallied. 33% of survey respondents indicated in south Estherville (near existing rural industrial development), followed by the southeast part of Estherville with 27% of survey responses. The following table shows where the respondents felt new industries should locate. The other table shows the responses to the questions asked of the survey respondents about whether the city should target specific industries or welcome all industrial types to building in Estherville.

Where should industrial uses expand?		Should the city encourage all industries or specific ones?	
South Hwy. 4	33%	Target specific industries	44%
Southeast Estherville	27%	Take what we can get	22%
In the city limits	20%	Light industrial uses	11%
In the industrial park	20%	Manufacturing businesses	11%
		Large industry	11%

With regards to recruiting and attracting new industry to Estherville, other industrial uses sought after by survey respondents include custom manufacturing businesses, alternative energy industries, value-added industries, smaller industrial operations, and encouraging growth of the existing industrial businesses in Estherville. In response to the basic question of will the industrial sector grow in Estherville, 25% of the survey responses indicated “no”, while 75% of the responses stated “yes”. Comments regarding the potential or perceived conflicts between industrial uses and other uses included responses indicating conflicts over odor issues, a greater need for buffers between industrial uses and other use types, the need to follow existing regulations identified in the city’s ordinances, and identifying potential conflicts of heavy and light industrial uses.

Community Facility and Public Land Uses

Regarding comments on Community Facility or Public land uses in Estherville, there are 26 specific comments for this land use classification. All of the survey responses indicated limited to no potential future community facility or public land use growth in future years. When looking at more specific comments regarding future community facility uses in Estherville, some of the comments pertained to the need for a new community center, the need for a new aquatic center, limited growth for schools since the Estherville Lincoln School District has centralized the school campus. There was at least one comment made in regards to possible growth and expansion of the hospital facilities. In response to the questions asked about any concerns, conflicts or issues with community facility or public uses in the community, an overwhelming majority of the survey responses indicated “no conflicts” with neighboring uses. One survey response indicated the city should review community facility development for its impact on neighboring properties. Another comment asked the city to consider potential issues such as traffic considerations, noise, congestion, and property upkeep when reviewing and considering additional community facility or public land uses.

Natural Resources/Environmental Land Uses

There are 32 comments received in regards to Natural Resource/Environmental land uses. From these 32 comments, 80% the survey responses agree there should be protective measures such as buffers to protect natural resource areas. Similarly, 90% of survey responses indicate the city should encourage the expansion of natural resource areas in and near the community. There was only one survey respondent that indicated the city should not encourage the expansion of natural resource areas. Other comments received pertaining to natural resource areas include avoiding additional development near Fort Defiance State Park, protect the natural resources of the Des Moines river corridor, promote additional buffers between conflicting land uses, addressing water runoff and water quality issues, promote the city's river, trails and parks, and identifying how the city's sanitary sewer system affects the areas natural resources. The one comment stood out of all the survey responses pertaining to natural resource and environmental land uses is, "The river is a foundation of the city by using it for trails, parks, etc."

Parks & Recreation Land Uses

In response to Parks and Recreation land uses in Estherville, survey respondents offered 54 comments pertaining to the future development of park and recreational land uses. Regarding the types of park and recreational land uses needed in Estherville, the following table shows a summary of the survey responses in relation to the types of park and recreation uses desired.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
New trails	100%	0%
New parks	75%	25%
New rec programs	78%	22%

All of the survey responses indicate the city should seek developments that incorporate some type of park or recreation element. Similarly, another 100% response from the survey respondents supports the City of Estherville itself initiating new park and recreational developments. Again, the survey respondents were unanimous in support of the city creating policies to support and protect park and recreation uses from encroachment of other land uses. Several comments were submitted about the desire to see future growth of parks and recreation uses in Estherville, including the following suggestions:

- Swimming pool
- Campground & RV dump
- Create citywide trail network
- Hiking and biking trails
- Complete the trail system
- Expand soccer
- Fine arts theatre
- Prioritize existing rec areas



ESTHERVILLE COMMUNITY VISIONING SURVEY RESULTS

A second survey was distributed to members of the city, Planning Commission, city boards, and other key community leaders. This shorter “Community Visioning Survey” is intended to provide a quick snapshot of the beliefs of residents of Estherville in regards to what are perceived as the “Community Accomplishments”, “Strengths”, “Issues/Concerns” and “Future visions” for the City of Estherville. This additional public input process generated several responses, ideas, concepts and suggestions pertaining to the future growth, development and land use composition of the community. Immediately following is a sample copy of the survey distributed to residents of Estherville, followed by a compilation and summarization of the comments received from the Estherville Community Visioning Survey.

COMMUNITY ACCOMPLISHMENTS - recent accomplishments or successes of the city

#1 Community Accomplishment

- Last 20 years – good deal of cleanup
- Walking path, skate board park, the Pavilion
- Improvements to several parks and the new Lincoln Park
- Purchase and planned restoration of Penny’s Building
- Upgraded playground equipment and shelter houses in several parks

2nd Highest Priority for Estherville’s accomplishments

- Colleges wind energy program – big plus
- Entrance signs into Estherville
- Continued delivery of city services efficiently
- New business, tire mounting at industrial park
- Assisted living facility

3rd Highest Priority for Estherville’s accomplishments

- Wellness Center – big plus
- Assisted living – good
- Expensive logo & new middle school
- Parks improvements
- Acquired and demolished dilapidated residential property and applied for housing grant to help repair owner occupied homes

VALUES OR STRENGTHS OF OUR COMMUNITY - what makes Estherville a great place to live?

#1 Community Strength

- 14 miles from the Iowa Great Lakes – close to our own lakes
- Working together with residents and farmers
- Close to the lakes area
- Schools, ILCC and their affiliations
- Street maintenance is excellent

2nd Highest Priority for Estherville’s strengths

- Ingham, High, Swan, Tuttle and Iowa Lake – also the river is a big plus
- Strong school system

- Conservative values
- Parks and recreation facilities including RWC
- Community supports fundraisers to help entities achieve goals

3rd Highest Priority for Estherville's strengths

- On the crossroads of two highways – Hwy 4 & 9
- Lack of problems that come with larger communities
- Civic groups and churches; small town atmosphere
- Library – ours is probably the best in the area, progressive and tech savvy

ISSUES AND/OR CONCERNS - what issues, concerns or challenges will need to be addressed

#1 Community Issue/Concern

- How do we make sure other races/ethnicities feel a part of our community?
- Make business district stronger – more appealing to the public
- Aging population
- Population trends away from small town – brain drain
- Keeping retail stores and fill empty downtown stores and at the mall

2nd Highest Priority for Estherville's concerns

- Need for a community center – maybe Armory?
- Declining population and taxable valuation
- Funding through taxation as needs change and population changes
- Upgrade outdoor pool?

3rd Highest Priority for Estherville's concerns

- Need to expand city limits
- Lack of affordable housing

MOVING FORWARD – LEADING INTO THE FUTURE - What should Estherville plan for in 10-15 years

#1 Future initiative, program or activity

- One day a year – have a community celebration for ethnic diversity
- More activities in downtown so people come to that area – games, concerts, etc.
- Develop a citywide trail system
- Development of family oriented programs
- Campground with electric, water and sewer – and dump station

2nd Highest Priority for Estherville's future

- More people to shop Estherville
- Affordable housing programs (single family, multi-family and condos)
- Recycling – take advantage of state-of-the-art recycling methods
- Upgrade/replace aging infrastructure

3rd Highest Priority for Estherville's future

- Need for different kinds of businesses and bigger industry to bring in people and housing
- Listen, listen, listen

CHAPTER 4. PHYSICAL FEATURES & NATURAL RESOURCES

Physical features and the natural resources are an important element in land use planning. These natural elements have largely been ignored in the past when determining future land use trends. An emphasis on environmentally sensitive areas and the availability of advanced information on geological structure and soils make it possible to place more emphasis on physical features and the natural environment related to land use planning decisions. Climate, location, geologic structure, topography, drainage, surface waters, watersheds, and soils each uniquely affect the types of land uses best suited for a particular tract or parcel of land. Some of these factors such as topography, drainage or soil types weigh heavily when determining acceptable land uses for an area. The purpose of this section is to determine those limiting factors as they relate to Estherville, so adequate consideration may be given when determining future land uses in a specific area of the community.

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

Estherville, located in the west central portion of Emmet County in northwestern Iowa, is found in the northernmost tier of counties in Iowa adjacent to the Minnesota state border. The City of Estherville is 5.20 square miles in size or 3,328 acres. The City of Estherville, within Emmet County, is bordered by Martin County, MN to the north and northeast, Jackson County, MN to the northwest, Dickinson County to the west, Clay County to the southwest, Palo Alto County to the south, and Kossuth County to the east and southeast.

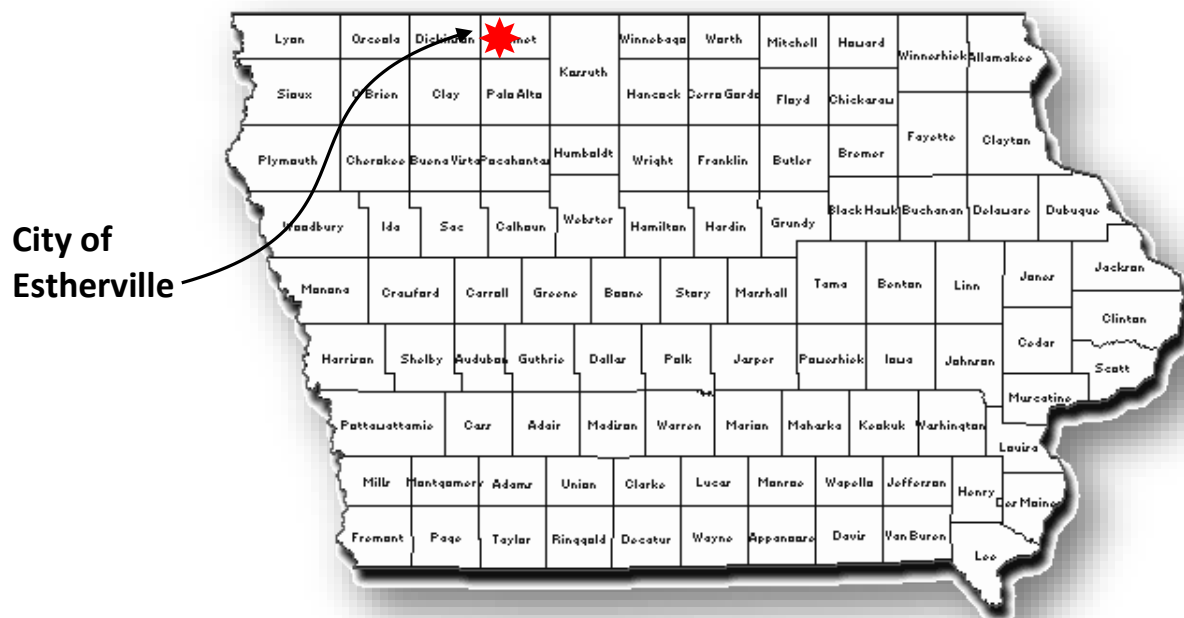
The nearest city of 10,000 + population is Spencer, IA (pop. 11,233) – 34 miles SW

The nearest city of 50,000 + population is Mankato/North Mankato, MN (pop. 54,035) – 82 miles NE

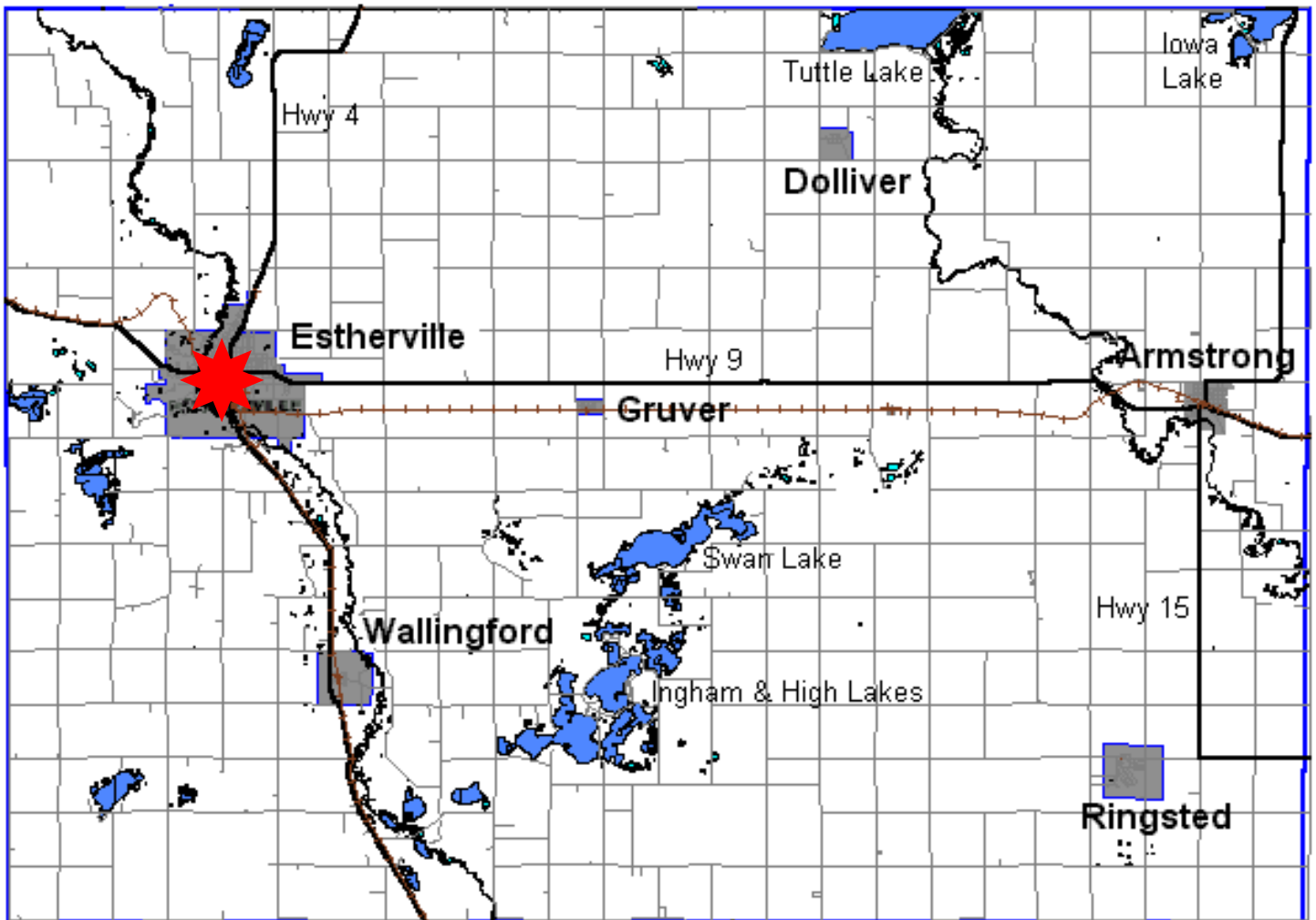
The nearest city of 200,000 + population is Minneapolis, MN (382,578) – 164 miles NE

The nearest city of 1,000,000 + population is Chicago, IL (2,718,782) – 491 miles SE

Figure 4 - City of Estherville Location Map



Emmet County

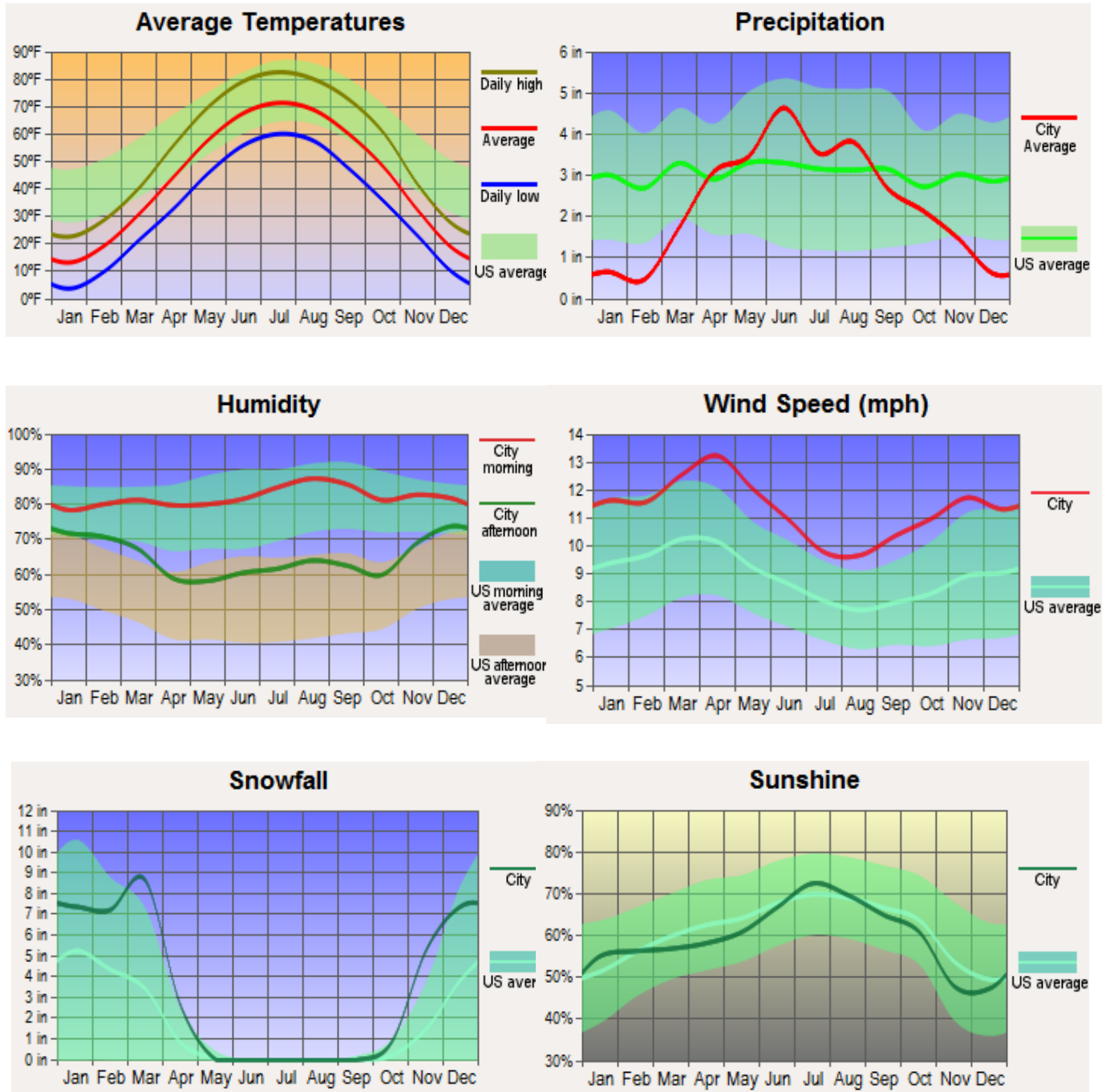


CLIMATE

Climate patterns become a factor in land use planning when it relates to crop production and construction seasons for roads and buildings. The climate of Estherville in Emmet County limits both activities to a certain part of the year. Most development, along with cultivation, planting, and harvest will occur from April to October. Estherville has a typical mid latitude climate with cold, snowy winters and hot, humid summers. The average high temperature in Estherville in July is 83° F with an average daily low of 60° F. The average coldest month in Estherville is January with the average low of 4° F and an average daily high of 23° F. In terms of growing periods, the last freeze occurs around May, with the first freeze taking place in late September, giving the Estherville area an average growing season of 120-150 days. Average precipitation as rainfall amounts to 27.93 inches annually, with June being the wettest month with 4.65 inches of precipitation and February typically being the driest month with no average recorded precipitation.

Below are climate charts showing the average climate in Estherville, Iowa based on data reported by over 4,000 weather stations. Information is obtained from www.city-data.com.

Figure 5 – Average Climate Patterns for Estherville



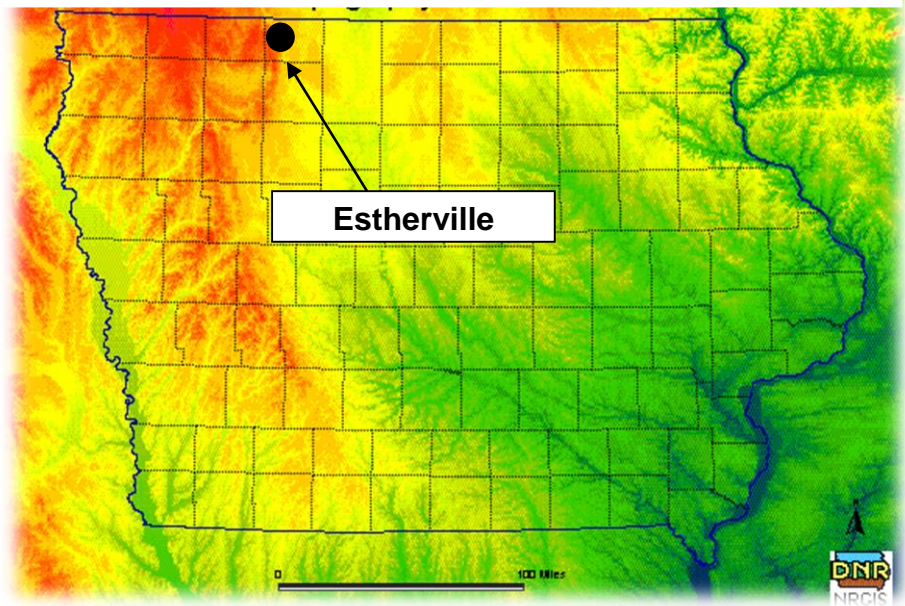
TOPOGRAPHY AND LANDFORMS

The topography of Estherville and Emmet County can best be summed up by a citation from “Northwestern Iowa – It’s History and Traditions 1804-1926” in which the author, Francis Allen, describes northwest Iowa as, “...not a land of lofty peaks and tremendous gashes in the ground, but a gently swelling country...It is not a land of which children are in awe, but which they love, and its expanses of mellow soil, sometimes varied along its water courses by rounded banks and hills, are a constant assurance of thrift, contentment and prosperity.”

The City of Estherville in Emmet County is situated upon land where the last of the glacial activity exited the state many centuries ago. Where two glaciers came together it formed a larger ridge called a “median moraine”. In the western part of Emmet County (where the City of Estherville is situated) geologists have found abundant evidence that a glacial river left a median moraine here when it came into contact with another glacier that covered Dickinson County. The average elevation of Estherville is 1,298 feet above sea level. The nationwide average elevation is 1,062 feet above sea level. In comparison, the highest elevation in the State of Iowa is at Hawkeye Point in Osceola County (west of Estherville) at 1,670 feet above sea level and the lowest elevation in the State is at 480 feet above sea level in southeast Iowa.

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources defines, a “Landscape” as a collection of shapes or landforms. Individual landform shapes reflect the diverse effects of deposits left by glaciers, wind, rivers, and seas in the geologic past. Examples include the loess hills, moraines, kettles, kames, sinkholes, springs, alluvial slopes, and entrenched valleys. Both the City of Estherville and Emmet County have many marshes or sloughs across the landscape along with a well-defined drainage system consisting of streams and minor feeders not large enough to be placed on a typical map. These streams and minor feeder creeks drain to the West Fork Des Moines River and East Fork Des Moines River. Emmet County is mostly flat by appearance and topography, except through portions of the West Fork Des Moines River valley. The City of Estherville is located in some of the hilliest terrain in the county, where the topography changes in the floodplain and river basin. Estherville lies within the “Des Moines Lobe” landform region in the State of Iowa. As summarized by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources from information obtained from Landforms of Iowa by Jean C. Prior, the Des Moines Lobe landform is characterized as gently rolling with abundant moraines, shallow wetland basins or potholes, and a few relatively deep natural lakes. This landform still retains the imprints of glacial occupation. The most prominent landform patterns left by the

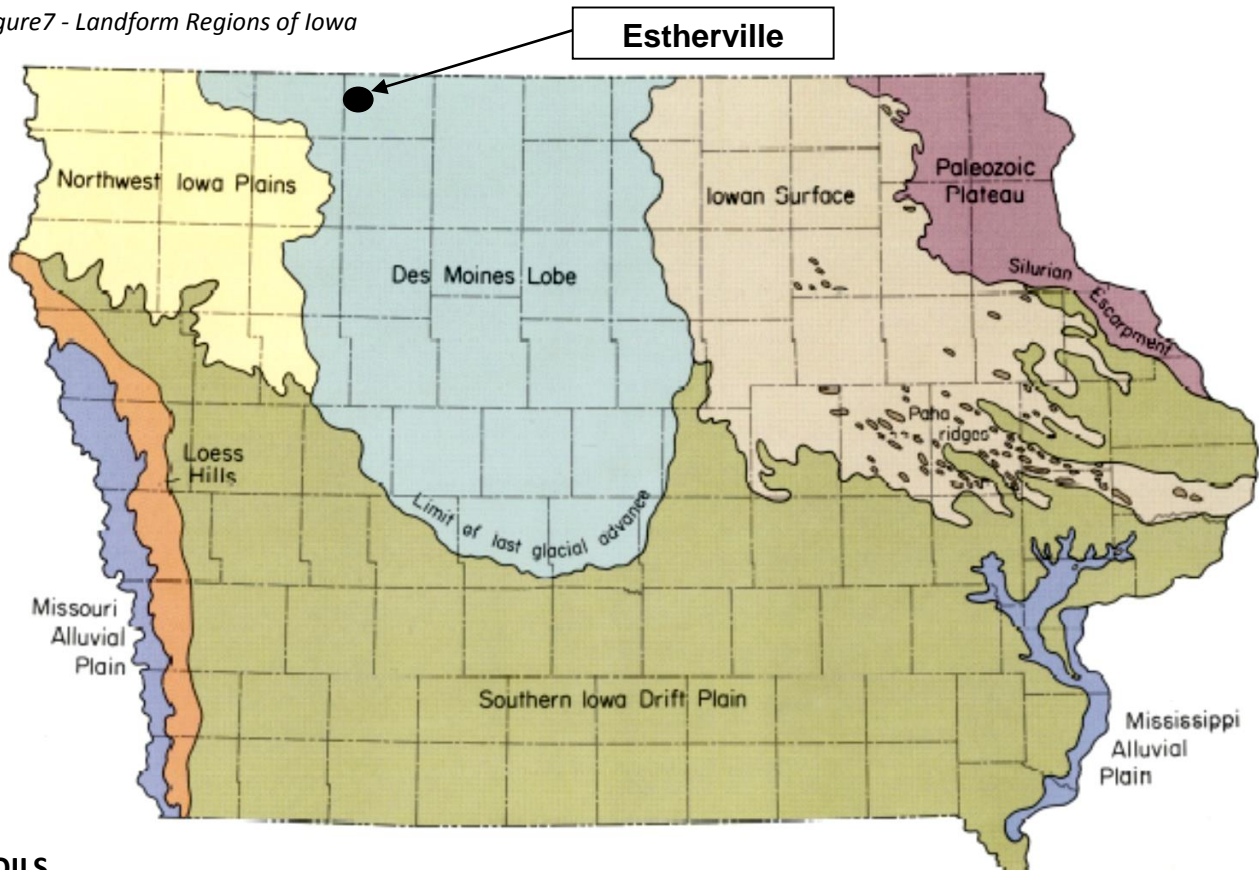
Figure 6 - Topography Map of Iowa



Topography map of Iowa with green/blue indicating the lower elevations in the state and red showing the highest elevations in Iowa.

Wisconsin glacier on the Des Moines Lobe are the end moraines. The Des Moines Lobe is also part of the prairie pothole region that extends to the north and west.

Figure 7 - Landform Regions of Iowa



SOILS

Soil conditions determine several important land use decisions when planning for future growth and development. Where community and economic growth occurs on a balanced and fragile ecosystem, the types of soils and their suitability or lack thereof to development becomes of great importance. Factors such as building suitability, percolation rate, productivity, and slope are all important in determining future growth patterns. These factors all have various effects on placement of utilities, recreation areas, transportation networks, sewer treatment facilities, residential development, industrial development, commercial development, and agricultural usage.

The material in this section is primarily accessed from the Soil Survey of Emmet County, Iowa. This survey was made cooperatively by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Soils in cooperation with the Iowa Agricultural Experiment Station. The Soil Survey of Emmet County, Iowa was created and last updated in 1923. Although this document is several decades old, the soils information remains accurate since the soil types do not change significantly over time. The most striking characteristic of the surface soils in Emmet County, and one common to soils under grass vegetation, with proper conditions of moisture, is a dark color. This color comes from the decay of grass roots and mixed with the mineral constituents of the soil. On flat areas and around sloughs, this black organic matter can be as deep as 14" to 24", while on the better drained ridges this matter may only be 8" to 14" deep. Areas of Peat and Muck in Emmet County represent areas of extreme accumulation of vegetative matter due to poor drainage. Seventeen (17) total types of soils, including Peat and Muck, are mapped in Emmet County. However, more than 97% of the land

in Emmet County falls into one of eight (8) major soil types. These soil types include Clarion Loam (69.8%), Webster Silt Loam (9.6%), Webster Loam (6.8%), Muck (3.6%), Lamoure Silty Clay Loam (2.4%), Webster Silty Clay Loam (2.3%), Peat (1.3%) and Sioux Loam (1.2%). As with topography, the county's soil associations are a product of the intrusion of glacial ice. A listing of specific soil types with detailed information may be obtained in the Soil Survey of Emmet County through USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service.

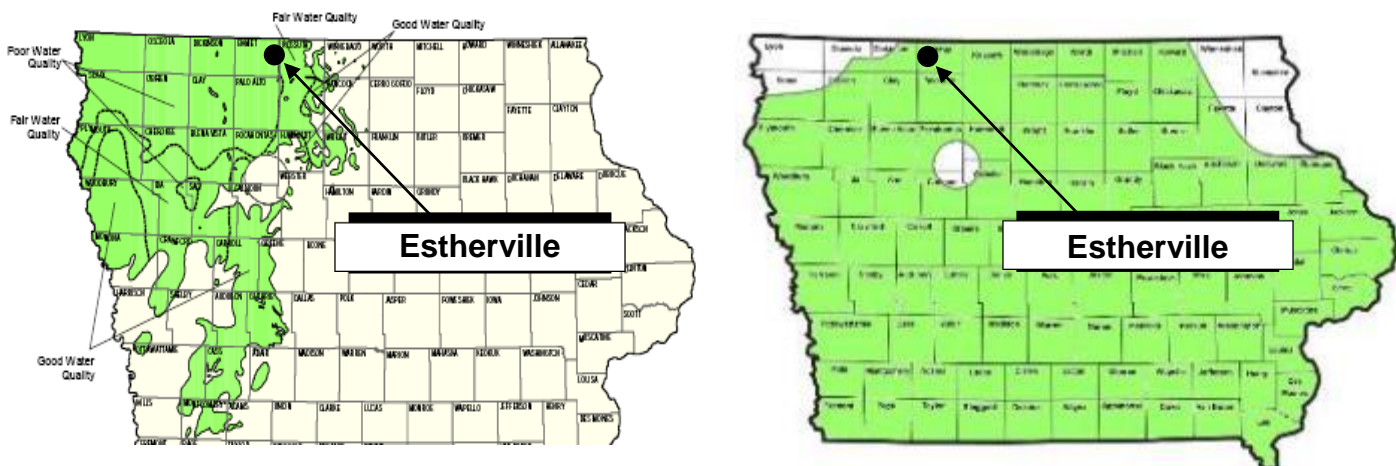
How Soil Surveys assist Planners, Planning Commissioners, or Zoning Administrators

Soil surveys assist planners to make and substantiate decisions that local government officials translate into zoning ordinances, building permits, sewer projects, and other regulations. Information about soil limitations for given uses helps prevent major mistakes in land use and unnecessary costs to individuals and the county. Soil surveys help in determining flood prone areas, and identify hazards that affect such areas. In many states soil surveys are used to guide decision-makers in restricting the use of flood plains for housing, septic tank fields, and other intensive development. Zoning areas for housing, recreation, commercial, and other kinds of development should take account of the suitability and limitations of soils for such uses. Soil surveys describe soil properties in detail and can help planners establish general patterns of soil suitability and limitations for various land uses.

AQUIFERS AND GROUNDWATER

In the Iowa Department of Natural Resources' book [Iowa's Groundwater Basics - A Geological Guide to the occurrence, use & vulnerability of Iowa's aquifers](#), the City of Estherville is located within the Northwest Iowa Hydrogeologic Region. Groundwater sources in northwest Iowa can generally be characterized as "fair" in terms of availability and quality. There are fewer options in northwest Iowa in comparison to those located in central or northeast Iowa. Groundwater resources in Estherville are typically found through two major sources; surficial aquifers (shallow aquifers) including alluvial aquifers and the Dakota and Jordan Aquifer (deep aquifer). The well sources in Emmet County are primarily dependent upon the Dakota sandstone aquifer. The wells in the region average 700+ feet in depth and have the lowest levels of nitrates of any of the other hydrogeologic regions in the state. In general, this region proved to have the overall lowest level of contamination when considering all forms of water contaminants.

Figure 8 - Map of Dakota Aquifer in Iowa (left) and the Jordan Aquifer in Iowa (right)

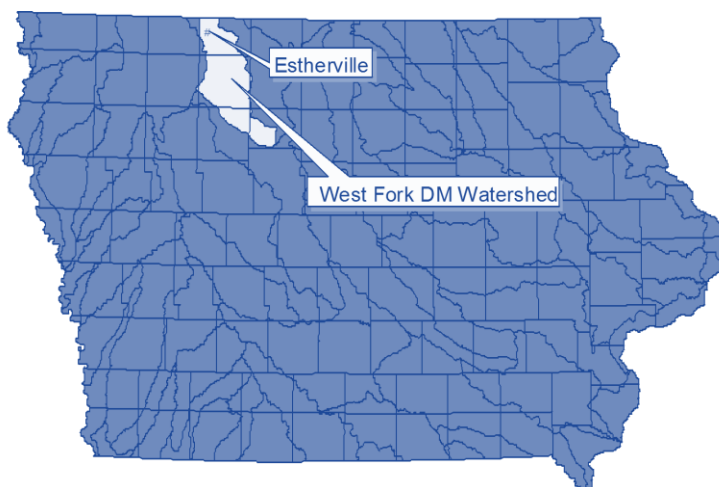


WATERSHED AND NATURAL DRAINAGE

Watersheds are areas in which all water, sediments, and dissolved materials flow or drain into a common river, lake or other body of water. Watersheds may vary in size from the largest river basins to just a few acres, but within their boundaries, all living things are linked by their common watercourse. EPA provides a number of different financial and technical resources to support local watershed protection efforts undertaken by state and tribal governments, public interest groups, industry, academic institutions, private landowners and concerned citizens. Through the EPA's Office of Water, along with many local groups and other federal agencies integrate solutions and measure the success of these efforts through monitoring and other data gathering.

Estherville lies in the Upper Des Moines River Basin and claims the West Fork Des Moines River as the major watershed (Iowa Department of Environmental Quality Water Quality Management Division). The West Fork Des Moines River, through Estherville covers a greater than 1,700 square mile area, into which the intermittent streams drain. The West Fork Des Moines River eventually empties into the Mississippi River, after merging with the East Fork Des Moines River near Humboldt, Iowa. The figure below provides information on the West Fork Des Moines River watershed and its effects on Estherville.

Figure 9 - Upper Des Moines watershed map



Watersheds affect every part of life as we know it. Watersheds are one of nature's primary sources of recharging groundwater sources and aquifers referred to in the previous section. This action is necessary for people to continue to extract water from the ground to provide this basic essential human need.

What can residents do to improve water quality?

As stated in the online resource, Iowa Learning Farms—Building a Culture of Conservation, through the Iowa State University Extension website; there are many ways individual residents living in a city or small town can do to improve water quality within their watershed. Some of these ideas include methods to reduce excess water runoff from property as well as improving soil quality such as rain gardens, soil quality restoration, bioretention cells, native landscaping, Bioswales or permeable pavement. The State of Iowa offers a number of public and private programs and services designed

to protect water quality and our state's natural resources. Additional resources may be obtained from the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS), Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), USDA Natural Resource Conservation Services (NRCS) or IOWATER.

STORM WATER MANAGEMENT

The EPA describes storm water runoff as “rain or snow melt that flows off the land, from streets, roof tops, and lawns. The runoff carries sediment and contaminants with it to a surface water body or infiltrates through the soil to groundwater.” During storms and heavy periods of rainfall, storm water travels across impervious surfaces collecting contaminants and ground sediment, eventually transporting them to water bodies (i.e. streams, rivers, ponds, lakes, etc.). Storm water is also intentionally directed into bodies of water through storm water drainage systems. Storm sewers are used to divert water away from streets, parking areas, rooftops, and other impervious services channeled through a series of piping eventually leading to a storm water collection basin or directly injected into a water body. The EPA wants the public to know that nonpoint source pollution, including storm water runoff is one of the most important sources of contamination of the nation's waters. According to a nationwide survey, 77 of 127 priority pollutants were detected in urban runoff. These pollutants can range from heavy metals to toxic chemicals, pesticides and herbicides, sediments, organic compounds, and other substances. The EPA has identified several storm water management practices that help to alleviate direct storm water discharge into water bodies and allow a more natural dissolution of storm water runoff. Suggested management practices include:

- *Erosion and Sedimentation Control Measures* – After construction, the planting of fast growing vegetation such as grasses and wild flowers can prevent the runoff and erosion of construction sites.
- *Land Use Controls* – Zoning and subdivision regulations can be utilized to keep encroaching developments from impeding upon nearby drinking water sources, wetlands, marshes, streams or creeks.
- *Minimizing Directly Connected Impervious Areas* – The reaction of water moving from one impervious surface to the next causes increased retention of sediment and contaminants into water bodies. For instance, water runoff from rooftops should be directed over grass instead of concrete.
- *Structural Designs* – Are designed to create manmade areas that retain or hold storm water runoff and allow for proper ground infiltration. Examples of structural designs are: 1) Grassy swales, 2) Buffer strips, 3) Filter strips or 4) Storm water retention ponds (wet ponds)
- *Constructed Wetlands* – Similar to wet storm water ponds, however, they contain much more aquatic vegetation and natural plantings around the wetland. Constructed wetlands are intended to treat and retain storm water and generally have less natural biodiversity than natural wetlands.
- *Infiltration Basins and Trenches* – Long narrow stone-filled trenches, 3 to 12 feet deep where storm water runoff is stored and slowly infiltrates into the soil below, where filtering between the rocks and soil also helps to remove pollutants.

QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN CONSIDERING DEVELOPMENT & SURFACE WATER

- Are there visual or other indications of water quality problems on or near the site?
- Will the project involve discharge of effluent into surface water bodies? If so, will it meet state, federal, and other applicable standards?
- Will the project involve substantial impervious surface waters? If so, have runoff control measures been included in the design to insure protection of surface water?
- Is the proposed project located in a watershed management plan area?

QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN CONSIDERING DEVELOPMENT & STORM WATER

- Will the proposed project disturb 1 acre or more of land? If yes, then an NPDES permit may be required. Contact an engineer to determine the need.
- Will existing or proposed storm water disposal systems adequately serve the proposed project?
- If no storm water system exists, will the project promote storm water run-off? If yes, then a project engineer should be consulted to determine ways to minimize impact.

CHAPTER 5. NATURAL HAZARDS & MITIGATION ACTIONS

As cited in the 2014 Emmet County Hazard Mitigation Plan; floods, tornados, windstorms, and severe winter storms are all examples of natural hazards that affect Iowans each year. These events threaten thousands, even millions of dollars of property damage annually and can sometimes be fatal to persons and animals in harm's way. To protect lives and property from natural or man-made hazards, it is vital for local leaders to identify potential losses and take measures to prevent such losses; this process is known as hazard mitigation planning.



This section of the Estherville comprehensive plan addresses the identification of natural hazards affecting the community, in addition to the goals, policies and mitigation actions to address the future risk of natural hazards specific to Estherville. Natural hazards can have a devastating impact on a community, county or region. Estherville is not immune to the power of mother nature and the devastating effects that natural disasters can have upon the local economy, housing, businesses, public utilities and many other development or land use related issues. The purpose of mitigation planning is to:

- 1) Mitigate against injuries, the loss of life, and property
- 2) Reduce disaster losses, break the cycle of disaster damage, reconstruction, and repeat damage
- 3) Allow the city to be eligible for non-emergency disaster assistance



A Hazard Mitigation Plan is intended to accomplish several things. First, through the planning process, hazards that pose a risk to the community are identified. Next, an assessment of those hazards is made. Once the

assessment is completed, a list of current and historic mitigation efforts is evaluated. Once the hazards have been assessed and mitigation actions have been identified, the plan outlines implementation strategies. Some proposed projects are small in scope and thus relatively low cost. Other projects are broad in nature and would require more funding than the local community can reasonably provide. The plan highlights potential funding sources and identifies city departments responsible for implementation. Lastly, the plan outlines how to keep the public involved, and steps taken to ensure hazard mitigation remains a priority.

Hazard mitigation is defined as any sustained action taken to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk to human life and property from hazards. Mitigation encourages long term reduction of vulnerability to natural and man-made hazards. The goal of mitigation is to save lives and reduce property damage. However, it has been demonstrated that hazard mitigation is most effective when based on an inclusive, comprehensive, long-term plan that is developed before a disaster. (FEMA Local Multi-Hazard Mitigation Planning Guidance, July 1, 2008)

HAZARD MITIGATION ENABLING LAWS AND REGULATIONS

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) provides assistance to local governments for disaster response and recovery through the Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Stafford Act). The basis for authority to create a natural hazard mitigation plan lies in Section 322 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Stafford Act), 42 U.S.C. 5165. This act was enacted under Section 104 of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000), P.L. 106-390. Section 104 is the legal basis for FEMA's Interim Final Rule for 44 CFR Parts 201 and 206, published in the Federal Register on February 26, 2002.

The Stafford Act aims at assisting communities that are affected by disasters. The Act was amended in 2000 to include The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000. **This amendment requires local governments to have adopted an approved Hazard Mitigation Plan in order to qualify for mitigation project funding.** The purpose of this change is to encourage cities and counties to identify prevalent hazards and to determine appropriate mitigation strategies to protect property and save lives.

IDENTIFICATION OF NATURAL HAZARDS

This section is intended to provide a brief identification of those hazards that the Emmet County Planning Team, consisting of representatives from Estherville, believe have either already affected or potentially will affect the city in the future. The descriptions of hazards presented on the following pages are derived and referenced from the Statewide Hazard Mitigation Plan for Iowa. Of the 16 identified natural hazards occurring in the State of Iowa, the local planning committee has concluded that 13 of these hazards have either already affected to could affect Estherville.

- *Drought* - Droughts are defined as periods of prolonged lack of precipitation for weeks at a time producing severe dry conditions. The highest occurrence of drought conditions in Iowa are associated with agricultural and meteorological drought as a result of low soil moisture or a decline in recorded precipitation.

- *Extreme Heat* - Conditions for extreme heat are defined by summertime weather when temperatures (including heat index) are in excess of 100° Fahrenheit or at least three (3) successive days of higher than 90° F or warmer.
- *Flash Flood* - A flash flood is an event that occurs with little or no warning where water levels rise at an extremely fast rate. Flash flooding results from intense rainfall over a brief period, rapid snowmelt, ice jam release, saturated soil, or impermeable surfaces.
- *River Flood* - River flooding is a rising or overwhelming of a tributary or body of water that covers adjacent lands, not usually covered by water; and when the volume of water exceeds the channel's capacity. Floods are the most common and widespread of all natural disasters, except fire.
- *Hail Storm* - Hail storms are an outgrowth of a severe thunderstorm in which pellets or irregularly shaped lumps of ice greater than 1 inch in diameter fall with rain.
- *Landslide* – Landslides occur when susceptible rock, earth or debris moves down a slope under the force of gravity and water. Landslides may be very small or very large and can move slow or at very high speeds.
- *Severe Winter Storm* - Severe winter weather conditions affecting day-to-day activities can include blizzards, heavy snow, blowing snow, freezing rain, heavy sleet, and extreme cold. Winter storms are common during the months of October through April.
- *Thunderstorms and Lightning* - Thunderstorms are common in Iowa and can occur singularly, in clusters, or in lines resulting in heavy rains, winds reaching or exceeding 58 mph, producing a tornado, or dropping surface hail at least 1 inch in diameter. Lightning is an electrical discharge that results from the buildup of positive and negative charges within a thunderstorm.
- *Tornado* – Tornado is a violent wind characteristically accompanied by a funnel shaped cloud extending down from a cumulonimbus cloud that progress in a narrow, erratic path. Rotating winds can exceed 300 mph. Iowa is located in “Tornado Alley”.
- *Wind Storm* - Wind storms are created when extreme winds, typically associated with severe thunderstorms, downbursts or very steep pressure gradients generate excessive and damaging wind speeds and can be responsible for structural and property damage.
- *Dam Failure* – Dam failure is the uncontrolled release of impounding water resulting in downstream flooding, which can affect life and property. Flooding, earthquakes, blockages, landslides, lack of maintenance, improper operation, poor construction, vandalism or terrorism can all cause dam failures.
- *Levee Failure* – The failure of a levee can be attributed to the structural integrity of a wall, dike, berms, or elevated soil by erosion, piping, and saturation or under seepage resulting in water to inundate normally dry areas.
- *Grass and Wildland Fires* - A grass or wildland fire is an uncontrolled fire that threatens life and property in either a rural or wooded area. Grass and wildland fires can occur when conditions are favorable, such as periods of drought, or they can occur from other natural occurrences such as lightning strikes.

HAZARD MITIGATION RISK ASSESSMENT RESULTS

The Emmet County Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee determined the countywide hazard rankings. The city was also provided with information and statistics relevant to hazards affecting Estherville, including records of past events and damages. The city was asked to review the information from the countywide rankings and determine the highest risk hazards for the county applied to Estherville, and if not, how Estherville's situation differs from the county. Based upon this discussion, prevalent hazards were determined for Estherville. Along with information and statistics provided, the people present were asked to draw upon their knowledge and experiences of hazards affecting Estherville. After the discussion among the Planning Team, it was decided the City of Estherville would re-prioritize the hazards of the countywide rankings for their jurisdictional portion of the Plan. It is recognized that Estherville may be susceptible to other hazards, such as the hazards in the State of Iowa Hazard Mitigation Plan, but those hazards are not considered to be a high risk and are not examined at this time. However, if it is later determined that a hazard affecting Estherville does pose a higher risk than originally determined, it will be examined at that time or when the plan is updated.

Table 1 - HAZARD RISK ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Hazard	Ranking
Severe Winter Storm	1
Wind Storm	2
Grass/Wildland Fire	3
River Flood	4
Hail Storm	5
Extreme Heat	6
Thunderstorm/Lightning	7
Flash Flood	8
Tornado	9
Drought	10
Levee Failure	11
Landslide	12
Dam Failure	13

Implementation of measures to reduce the risk of these hazards will be based on social acceptability, technical feasibility, administrative capacity, political willingness, legal authority, economic benefits, and environmental compatibility. While these factors will be addressed more specifically in the response, mitigation, and recovery plans, it is important to consider them here when making the decision regarding the priority group in which the hazard belongs

HAZARD MITIGATION ACTIONS

When the Emmet County Mitigation Planning team decided on the hazards that threaten the county, it was decided that specific mitigation actions needed to be discussed and compiled for the plan. The following are the mitigation actions that were identified by the local planning committee:

- Enforce Tree Trimming
- Backup Power Generators (buy)
- Bury Utility Lines
- NOAA Weather Radios (buy /distribute)
- Designating Community Shelter
- Purchase Snow Plow/Truck
- Monitor Levees and dams
- Good Neighbor Program

- Outdoor Warning Sirens (build or update)
- Watershed study & Implement
- Promote Landscaping Practices
- Build Safe Room – Thoresen Park
- Building/Zoning Codes
- Continue HAZMAT Training (Mason City)
- Continue Fire Dept. Training
- Snow Removal Policy
- List of Storm Shelters
- Public Education/Awareness
- Maintain Outdoor Warning Sirens
- Update/Create Local Emergency Plan
- Replace Sewer Lines
- Purchase Portable Pumps
- Fire Gear PPE
- List of those of elderly, disabled or medically distressed
- Shelter rations (cots, blankets, water, etc.)
- Backup of City/County Records
- Enforce Burn Bans
- Affirm Rural Water Connection
- Sandbags
- Determine areas most prone to flood
- Remain Compliant with NFIP
- Reaffirm Mutual AID
- Maintain sand bagging plan
- Enforce Floodplain ordinance
- Test warning sirens monthly
- Review/update Local operations Plan

HAZARD MITIGATION MEASURES

The identified mitigation measures can be grouped into six categories. The Emmet County Mitigation Actions Table identifies which group a specific measure falls within.

Prevention

Government administrative or regulatory measures or processes that influence the way land and buildings are developed and built. These measures also include public activities to reduce hazard losses. Examples include:

- Planning and zoning
- Hazard mapping
- Building codes
- Subdivision regulations
- Studies/data collection and analysis to support prevention measures
- Floodplain regulations
- Storm water management regulations
- Multi-jurisdictional agreements that reduce hazard risks
- Other regulatory measures or processes that reduce hazard risks

Property Protection

Measures that involve modifying existing buildings or structures to protect them from a hazard, or removing buildings or structures from the hazard area or providing insurance to cover potential losses. Examples include:

- Acquisition, elevation, or relocation of hazard-prone property
- Safe room/storm shelter retrofits
- Security retrofits
- Critical facility protection
- Risk reduction retrofits (modifications) to hazard prone properties
- Studies/data collection and analysis to develop property protection measures
- National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) participation

Public Education and Awareness

Measures to inform and educate citizens, elected officials, and property owners about the hazards and potential ways to mitigate them.

Examples include:

- Programs to improve awareness of hazard risk
- Programs to improve awareness of hazard risk prevention and reduction
- Education programs directed toward specialized audience, i.e. buildings, developers, and hazard prone neighborhoods

Natural Resource Protection

Measures that, in addition to minimizing hazard losses; preserve or restore the functions of natural systems.

Examples include:

- Sediment and erosion control
- Stream corridor restoration, watershed management
- Forest and vegetation management
- Wetland restoration and preservation

Emergency Services

Measures taken before, during and after a hazard event to protect people, and property; although these measures are not typically considered "mitigation, they significantly minimize the events impact and preserve the community's health and safety.

Examples include:

- Emergency/response facilities and personnel
- Hazard warning systems and equipment
- Health/safety/environmental risk prevention/reduction
- Emergency/response infrastructure
- Emergency/response planning
- Emergency/response training
- Emergency/response vehicles, equipment and protective gear
- Emergency/response services studies and data collection
- Emergency/response communication systems

Structural Projects

Measures that involve the construction and maintenance of structures and infrastructure that will reduce the impact of a hazard or redirect the impact away from people and property.

Examples include:

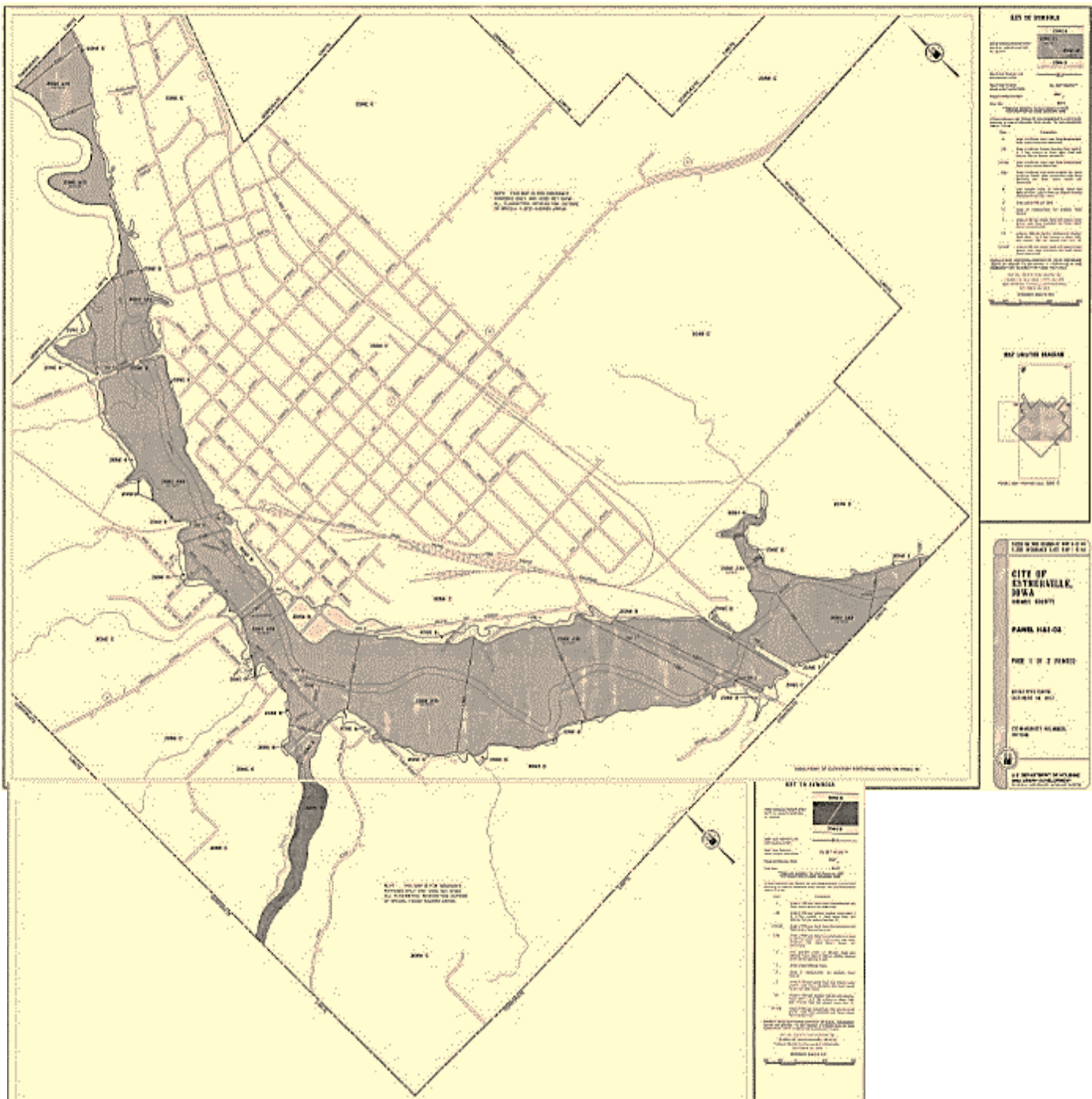
- Channel modification/maintenance
- Dam and reservoir construction/maintenance
- Levee and floodwall construction and maintenance
- Safe room construction
- Infrastructure construction and maintenance — roads and bridges
- Infrastructure construction and maintenance — utility systems
- Infrastructure construction and maintenance — urban and rural drainage systems
- Studies and data collection to develop structural projects

FLOODPLAIN MAPPING

The Estherville floodplain map referenced below has an effective date of September 30, 1978. This is why the street, neighborhoods and city limits are not consistent with today's map of Estherville. The accuracy of the floodplain map is not correct as some properties in Estherville have inevitably elevated their land to raise their dwellings or move structures out of the floodplain. Also, both state

bridges have been replaced, which in turn removed the flood way restrictions. With that stated, FEMA still recognizes the following map as the official floodplain map for the city, unless there are documented amendments to such map. The city does not have a process in place for the administration or compliance of floodplain permits. Persons living in Estherville with questions pertaining to the administration of floodplain regulations should contact the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. The city is listed as one of the Iowa communities participating in the NFIP. According to the FEMA Community Status Book Report for Iowa, Estherville received its initial Flood Hazard Boundary Map (FHBM) on March 29, 1974. The city's Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) was identified on October 14, 1977, of which is also the current map effective date.

Figure 10 - FEMA Floodplain Map for Estherville, 1978



EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SERVICES

Emergency management services for the City of Estherville are offered through the Emmet County Emergency Management Director. The county's emergency management officer is headquartered in Estherville (Emmet County Seat) at 114 N. 6th Street, Suite #3. The city has an outdoor warning siren system in place, which is connected to the Emmet County Law Enforcement Center. Another component of early warning awareness is storm spotter training. There are trained storm spotters in Estherville that coordinate with county and state officials during time of hazardous storms or other natural events. Storm spotter training classes are held annually at the National Weather Service in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.



CHAPTER 6. COMMUNITY TRENDS (Population & Housing)

While the City of Estherville, located in Emmet County, is in many respects similar to other small Iowa and Midwestern communities, there are trends in Estherville that make the community unique. Emmet County is one of many counties in Iowa facing population decline. Over the past several years, Estherville has experienced many challenges, successes, issues and opportunities that affect population, housing and growth as explored in this next chapter. Growth, declines or shifts in a city's population and housing play a critical role in the planning process. Examining community trends is fundamental in considering what infrastructure is required for future development opportunities. Population and housing information is necessary when assessing future needs of community facilities and development of industrial, commercial, and residential uses.



HISTORIC POPULATION TRENDS

Since the turn of the century, much of the Midwest's and Iowa's rural population has been declining, largely as a result of technological advances in the agricultural industry allowing fewer people to farm the land with greater efficiency combined with cultural shifts of younger population bases to larger cities and metropolitan areas. For the most part, rural communities across northwest Iowa, including the City of Estherville, are not immune to these lasting trends as shifts in population from rural to urban areas continue to take their toll on Iowa's rural population base.

Reviewing Estherville's population trends from incorporation to present shows a picture of the historic growth and periods of declining population in the community. According to the table below, Estherville grew at an astounding pace in its early years as a community. Between 1880 and 1900, Estherville grew from 138 to 3,237 residents in just two decades. Likewise, the city's population more than doubled from 3,237 to 6,719 residents over the next 50 years. Growth continued until 1970 when Estherville reached its peak population of 8,108 residents. By the following decade Estherville experienced the beginning of a 30 year period of declining population. During the 1980s the city was hit hard with a 10.6% population decline equaling a loss of 798 residents. Estherville was not the only town in Iowa to experience population declines during the 1980s economic farm crisis. Estherville also lost a major employer during this period. Between 1990 and 2000 Estherville's population only slightly declined by 0.9% or 64 residents.

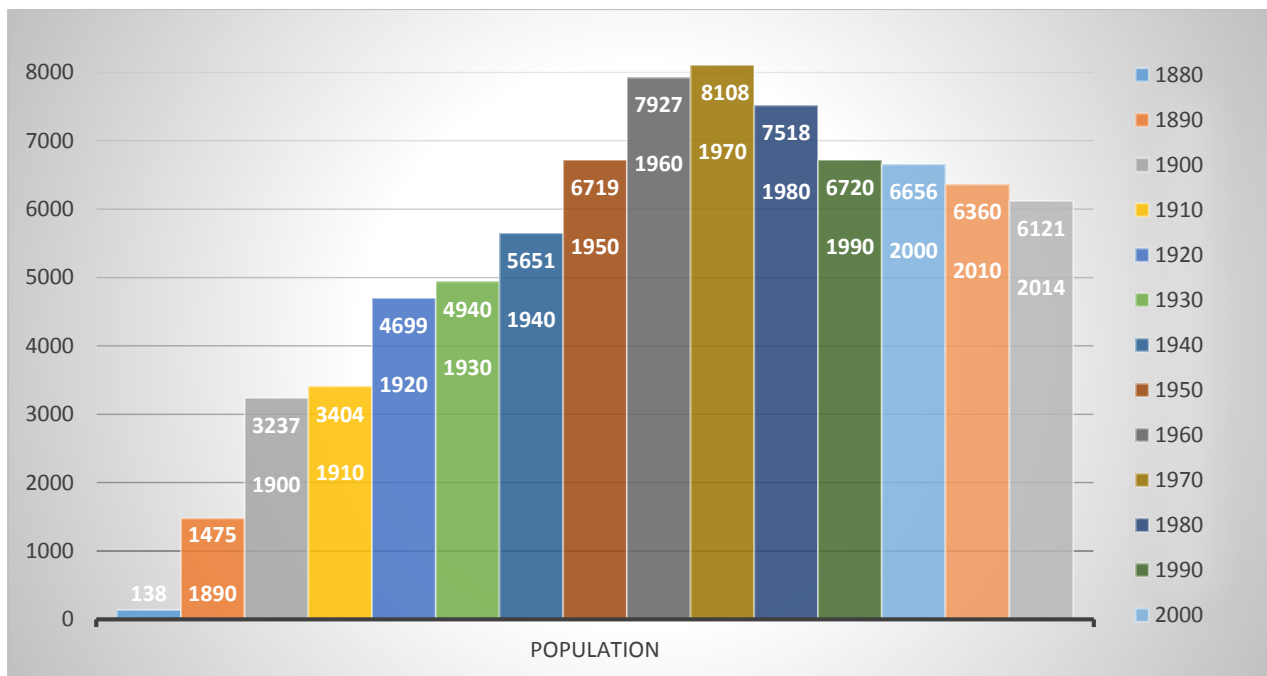
Table 2 - Historic Population Trends, City of Estherville

YEAR	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950
POPULATION	138	1,475	3,237	3,404	4,699	4,940	5,651	6,719

YEAR	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2014 est.	
POPULATION	7,927	8,108	7,518	6,720	6,656	6,360	6,121	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder, and Population (1850-1990) for Incorporated Places in Iowa— ISU Census Services

Figure 11 - Historic Population Trends. 1880-2010



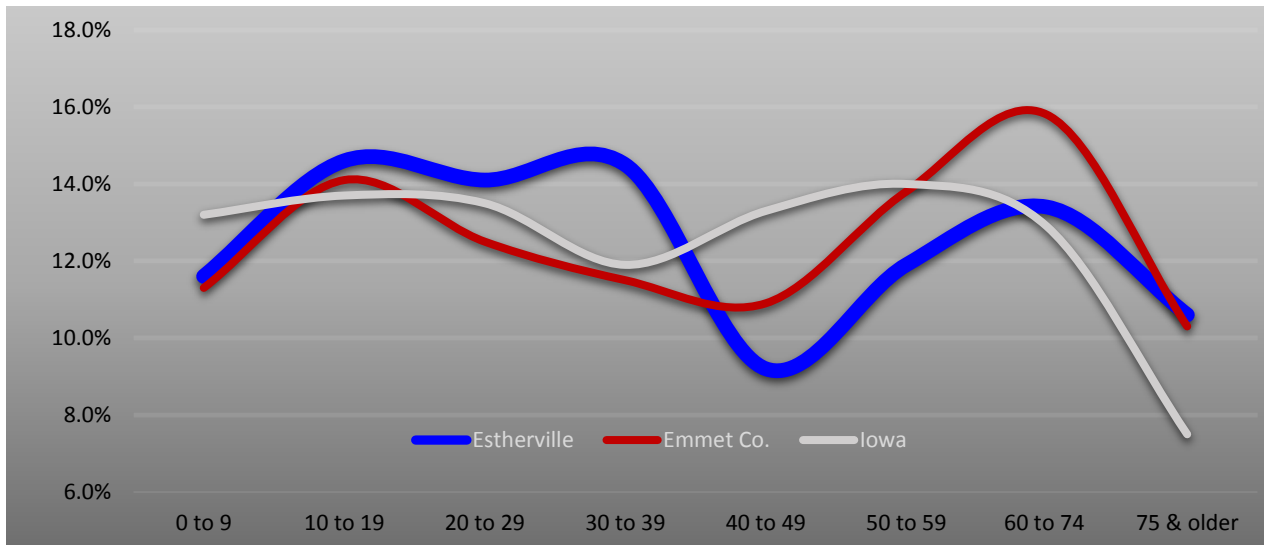
The city's percentage (or share) of Emmet County's total population increased in recent decades from 58.0% of the county's population in 1970 to 60.4% in 2000 and most recently the community has grown to represent 61.7% of the county's overall population in 2010. This is important when projecting future growth or decline of population since local growth is often based on projections previously developed for the county. In many cases, it can be assumed the city will continue to make up the same percentage of the county's population.

CURRENT POPULATION STRUCTURE

As of the 2010 decennial census, Estherville's population is 6,360 persons. The median age of 37.3 is 0.8 years younger than Iowa's median age of 38.1 years. These numbers clearly indicate Estherville shows evidence of a younger population residing in the community. This is likely attributed to the population of students attending Iowa Lakes Community College and residing in the community. Regarding the age of residents in Estherville, 17.7% of the city's residents are classified as "seniors" or those persons over the age of 65. This is higher than the state's average of nearly 15% for this same category. The number of young adults in the age class of 18-44 represents 52.4% of the

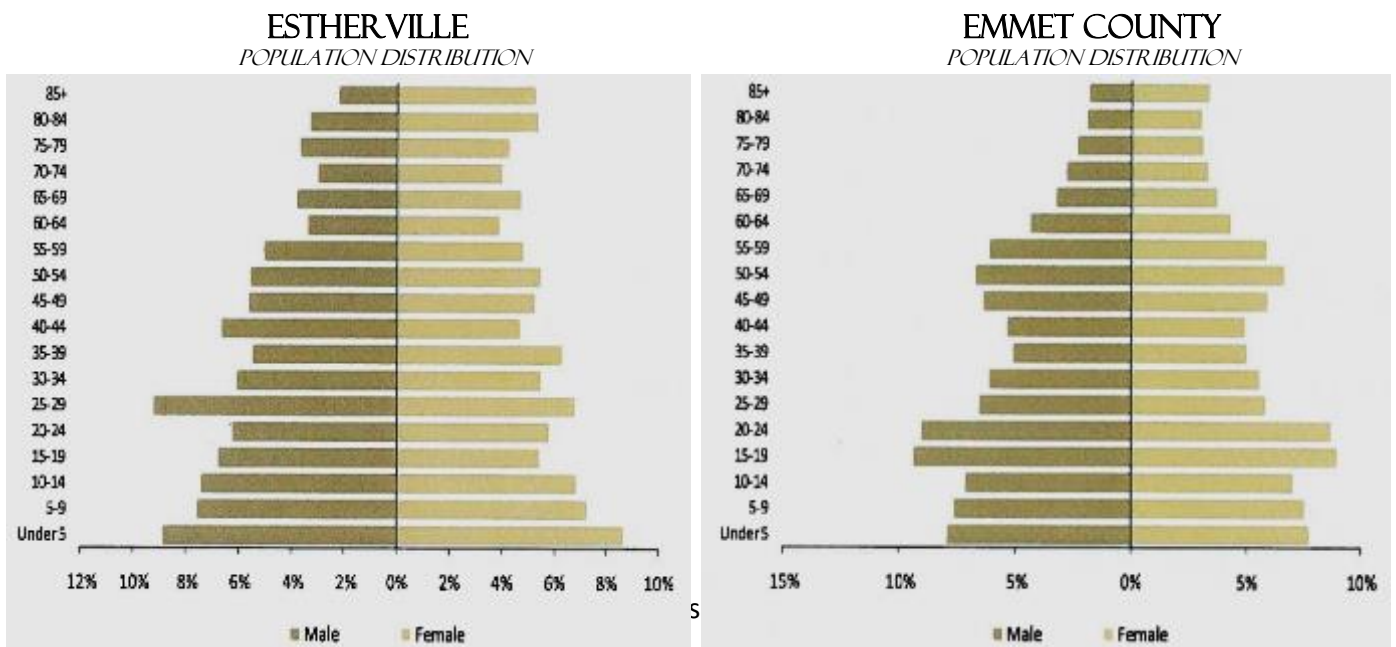
community's population; of which is significantly higher than the statewide average of 34.6% of persons considered young adults (ages 18-44). Lastly, the percentage of children in Estherville (those classified as ages younger than 18) is 16.2% of the total population. This is lower than both the state (23.9%) and national statistics (24.0%). Whether it is statistics for the elderly or statistics for the youth in a community, each of these numbers represent population trends in Estherville and will need consideration when it comes to providing a variety of services in the future.

Figure 12 - Age Distribution Comparison of 2010 population for Estherville, Emmet County & Iowa



Below are population pyramids which provide a detailed look into the age distribution of male and female age groups in five year increments. The term “population pyramid” was given to this chart, since the ideal age distribution suggests a larger percentage of young residents (i.e. children, teenagers), with an average percentage of middle aged residents (i.e. working aged persons), and the senior or retired population comprising the smallest percentage of population.

Figure 13 - Age Distribution Pyramid for Estherville and Emmet County, 2010



combinations of races other than white. By 2010, this figure had changed to reflect 7.7% of the city's residents are classified as a race or combinations of races other than white. In 2010, 92.3% of Estherville residents identified themselves as belonging to the White race. Those identifying themselves as Hispanic or Latino of any race in 2010 accounted for 702 residents or 11.0% of Estherville's population. These race and ethnicity statistics are significant when determining the services that need to be provided to all residents of the community. As these minority and ethnic segments of the population continue to grow, the city's policies and goals with respect to personnel and services provisions may need to be evaluated and adjusted.

FUTURE POPULATION PROJECTIONS

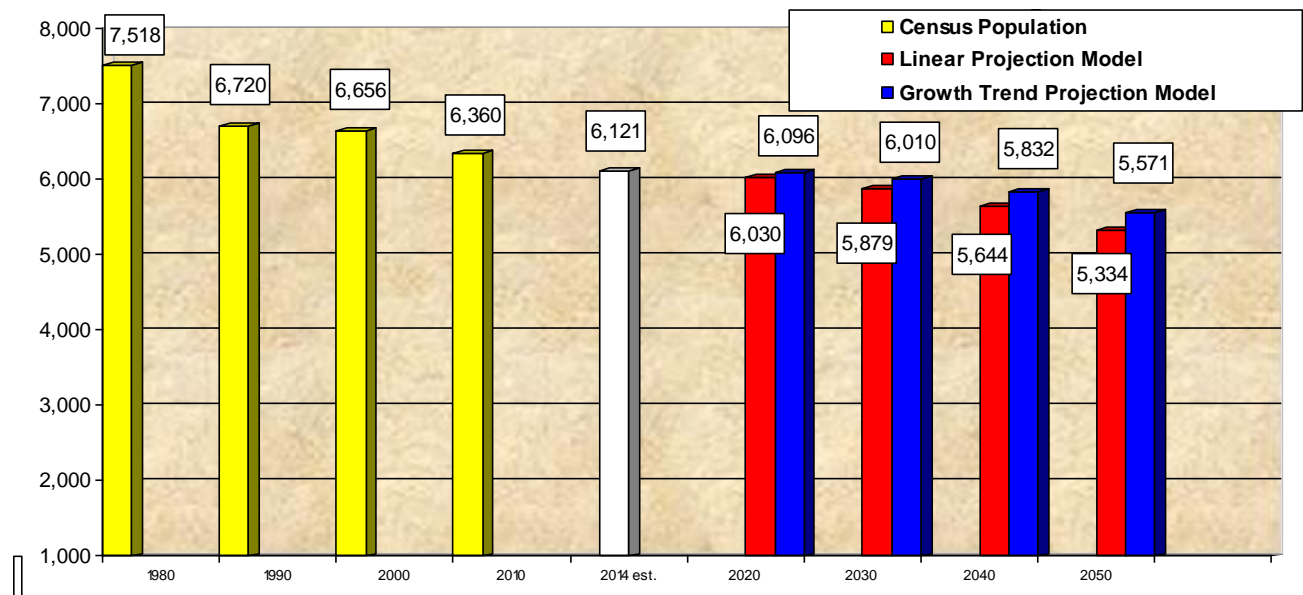
Accurate estimates of population for a city are important factors in determining future need for services, housing, and infrastructure. Analysis of population projections can provide insight into the type and quantity of future development needed and allows local officials to establish land use policies to guide development. There are multiple sources that provide population and demographic projections. Unfortunately, nearly all these sources only provide projections at the state, county or metropolitan level. No known sources generate population projections for small cities (cities not classified as a metropolitan statistical area or a population under 50,000). For purposes of identifying future population projections for Estherville the data presented by Woods & Poole Economics, Inc. will be used. Woods & Poole Economics, Inc. is an independent corporation located in Washington D.C. specializing in long term county economic and demographic populations. Woods & Poole maintains a database for every county in the United States containing projections through the year 2040 for more than 500 variables. Using Woods & Poole data is perceived to be more accurate than other sources or methods of calculating population projections. Whereas other projection models, such as the cohort-survival method is based strictly on the natural change, including births and deaths, of a given population the Woods & Poole data accounts for in-migration and out-migration in addition to other economic factors. Since projections are limited to the county level, the projected population for Estherville will be extrapolated from Emmet County data.

Table 3 - Projected Population, 2020-2050

Year	Emmet County Population	Estherville Projected Population (exponential)	% of Total County Population	Estherville Projected Population (linear)	% of Total County Population
1970	14,009	8,108	57.88%	8,108	57.88%
1980	13,336	7,518	56.37%	7,518	56.37%
1990	11,569	6,720	58.09%	6,720	58.09%
2000	11,027	6,656	60.36%	6,656	60.36%
2010	10,302	6,360	61.74%	6,360	61.74%
2014 est.	9,990	6,121	61.27%	6,121	61.27%
2020*	9,841	6,096	61.95%	6,030	61.27%
2030*	9,596	6,010	62.63%	5,879	61.27%
2040*	9,212	5,832	63.31%	5,644	61.27%
2050*	8,706	5,571	63.99%	5,334	61.27%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1970-2010 and 2014 Census estimates *2020-2050 are projections by Woods & Poole, Inc. 2015 Reprinted with permission from "2015 State Profile: Iowa", Woods & Poole Economics, Inc., Washington, D.C.; Prepared by: State Library of Iowa, State Data Center Program, <http://www.iowadatatcenter.org>.

Figure 14 - Population Projections, 2020-2050



When analyzing population projections, existing and potential socioeconomic variables are not factored into these results. These projections are based solely on statistical data that quantifiably shows populations trends, migration patterns and current tax data. The population numbers shown in the table above do not factor economic and sociological forces affecting a community's growth. Factors that may affect a city's future population include business expansions or closures, new housing developments, a rise or decrease in unemployment, or the cost of living index.

According to the population projections shown above there are two projection models used for calculating Estherville's future population growth. The first method is simply utilizing the percentage of county population that Estherville comprises from the last known census data of 61.27% and assuming Estherville will maintain this percentage of population over the next 30 years. This "linear" method of population projection maintains the same level of population ratio between city and county and follows the projected county increase or decrease in population as reflected in the Woods & Poole population projections. The other method of projecting population takes a look at the historical population percentage ratio of Estherville as compared to Emmet County. In 1980 the city only comprised 56.37% of the total county population. By 2010, this percentage increased to 61.74%. By using the average growth per decade over the last 30 years Estherville should continue to increase its percentage of population in Emmet County each decade. With Estherville comprising a larger share of the total Emmet County population in the future, the city's projected population decreases will occur at a much slower rate in comparison with the rest of the county.

HOUSING TRENDS



By the end of the 1990s and into the early 2000s the economy and the housing market, were robust across much of the Nation. New residential subdivisions were being platted and new housing units constructed.



The first half of the 2000 decade showed promising signs for a strong period of housing growth. The City of Estherville struggled through portions of the 1990s and 2000s to experience the housing boom happening in other counties throughout the State. With the onset of a downturn in the national economy the local economy (including new housing starts) followed regional and national trends during 2008-2009. Since 2010, Estherville has attempted to recruit new housing starts in the community and encourage new construction of residential properties. With the potential for a rebounding housing economy during the next ten years, Estherville needs to position itself to capitalize upon low interest rates, a favorable lending market and increasing wages to help spur new housing development in the community. City staff, community leaders, the Chamber of Commerce and the Estherville Industrial Development Corp. have worked collaboratively and proactively to promote continued development of subdivisions and housing lots. In order to promote available housing options across all incomes and to impact all population segments within the community, city officials along with economic developers will continue to provide adequate land, utilities and community services.

AGE OF HOUSING

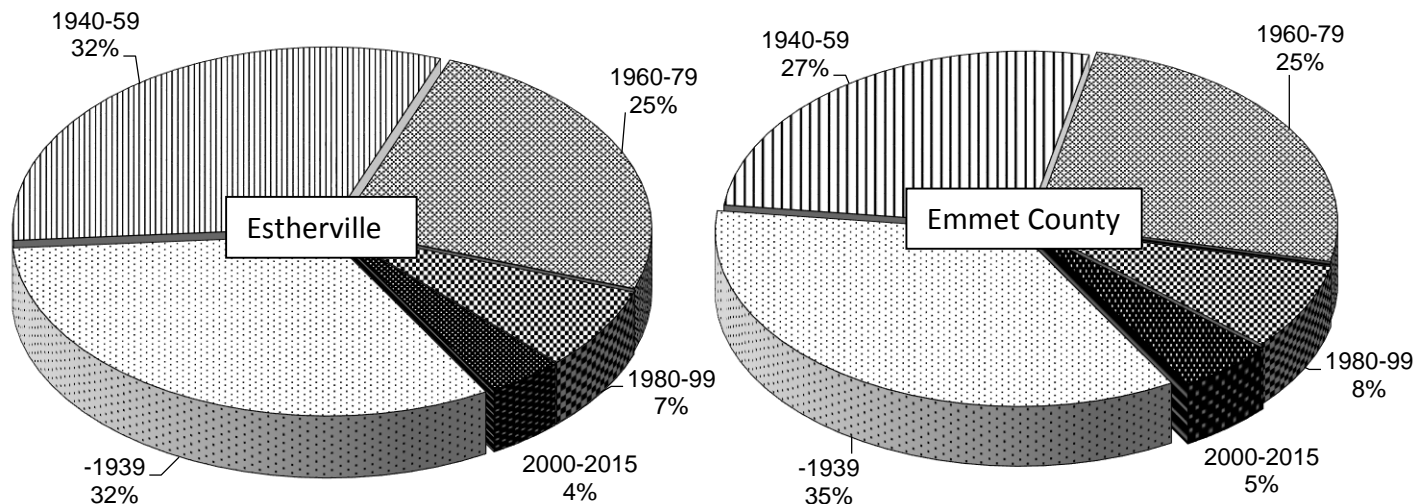
According to 2010 census data, approximately 32% of housing units in Estherville were built prior to 1939. This statistic decreased since 2000, in which 43.7% of the city's housing was built prior to 1939. This statistic shows an increase in newer housing constructed since the percentage of older housing units is decreasing. With that said, new housing construction in Estherville has not kept pace with Emmet County or statewide averages since 2000. For comparative purposes, the statistical numbers from the US Census Bureau show housing constructed since 2000 accounts for 3.9% of the total housing stock in Estherville. In comparison, Emmet County newer housing stock accounts for 5.1% of the total and the statewide average is 12.5%. Overall there are a greater number of older housing units in Estherville in comparison to Emmet County and Iowa.

Table 4 - Year housing units were built in Estherville, Emmet County and Iowa

Time period	Estherville		Emmet County	Iowa
	No. of Occupied Housing Units	% of Units	% of Units	% of Units
2000 to present	98	3.9%	5.1%	12.5%
1980 to 1999	185	7.4%	8.0%	18.4%
1960 to 1979	616	24.6%	25.2%	25.8%
1940 to 1959	799	31.9%	26.4%	17.4%
1939 or Earlier	807	32.2%	35.2%	25.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census and 2009-2013 American Community Survey

Figure 15 - Age of housing units in Estherville and Emmet County



HOUSING VALUATION

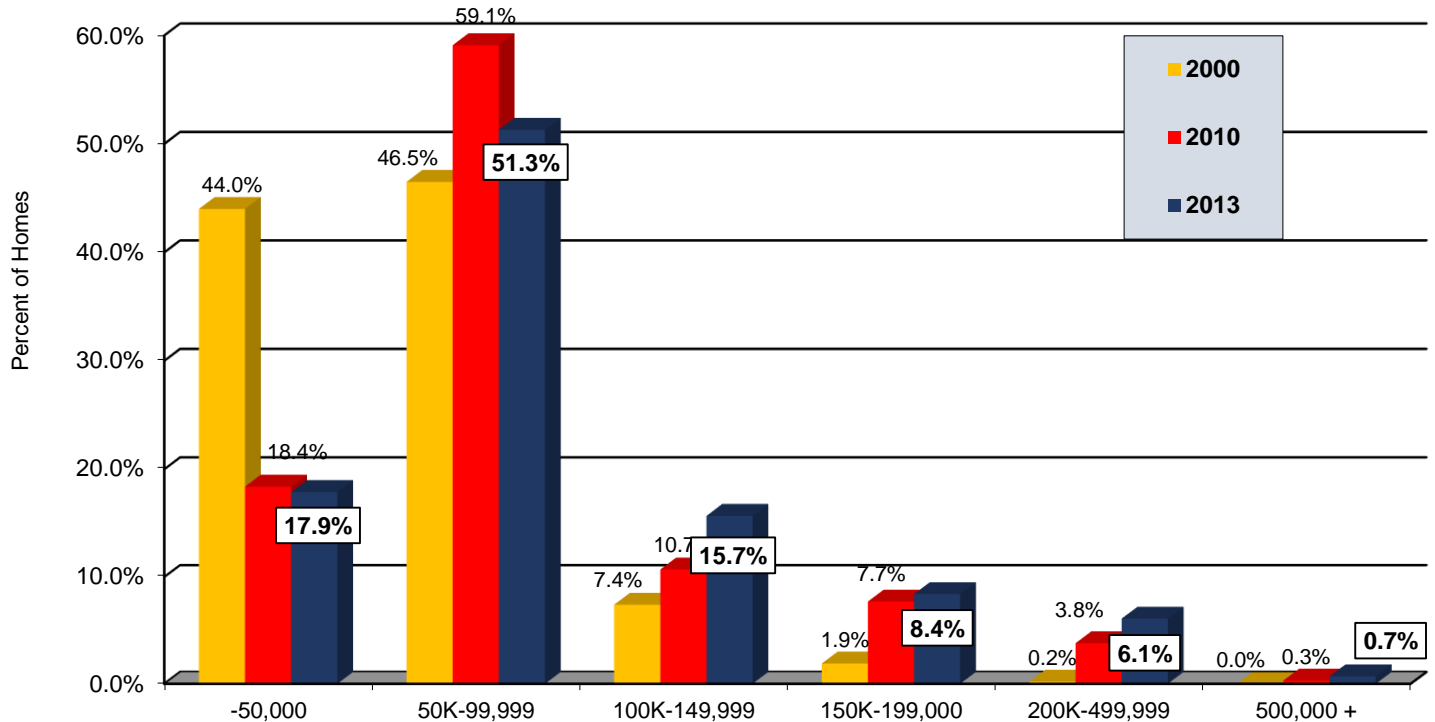
Estherville's housing stock is comprised of a variety of housing styles and values. In order to analyze the current housing stock it is useful to identify changes in the current housing market and vacancy rates. From 2013 American Community Survey data, the largest number of housing units per valuation category is in the \$50,000-\$99,999 price range with a commanding percentage of over 50%. The city's median house value in 2013 was \$79,300, an increase of 1.9% over the 2000 median value of \$77,800. Data from 2010 show the highest income category of all housing units in Estherville were 6 houses valued in the \$500,000 to \$999,999 value range. No housing units were valued at more than \$999,999 in 2010. By 2013 the city recorded an increase of higher end housing resulting in 13 housing units valued in the \$500,000+ range, an increase of 7 housing units or 116%.

Table 5 – Estherville Housing Valuations, 2000, 2010 & 2013

Valuations of Housing - 2000						Median Value - \$54,500
Value in 2000	<\$50,000	\$50,000-\$99,999	\$100,000-\$149,999	\$150,000-\$199,999	\$200,000-\$499,999	\$500,000+
# of Homes	774	818	130	34	4	0
Valuations of Housing - 2010						Median Value - \$77,800
# of Homes	341	1,096	199	143	69	6
Valuations of Housing - 2013						Median Value - \$79,300
# of Homes	340	975	298	159	116	13

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 & 2010 Census data, American Fact Finder-2009-2013 American Community Survey

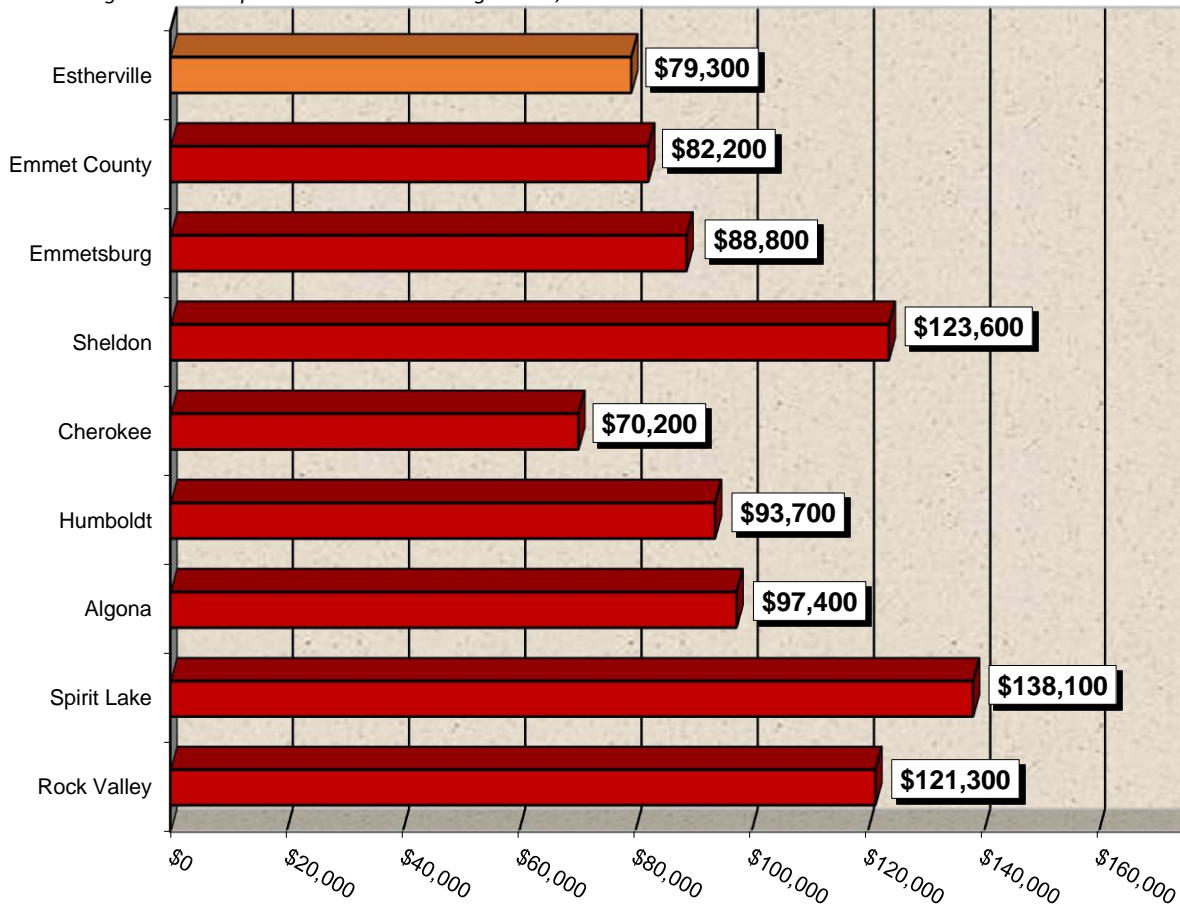
Figure - Valuation of Homes, 2000, 2010 & 2013 in Estherville



It is expected the trend of rising housing valuations will continue as the cost of new construction rises, the average sale price of housing increases, and county residential tax assessments continue to rise. The trend may eventually lead to producing higher valued housing options that may not be as easily accessible for people who are first-time homebuyers, one-income or low-income families. Estherville currently offers and participates in programs that offer financial loans and grants for new construction of housing units to homebuilders and qualified homebuyers. The Northwest Iowa Regional Housing Trust Fund program also provides housing assistance for rehabilitation and needed repairs to qualifying lower income families and households in Estherville. These housing programs provide many benefits to current and prospective homebuyers in the community.

Another means of analyzing the value of housing is to look at the median housing values of other cities in the region. The chart to the right shows a comparison of median housing values for Emmet County, Estherville and seven (7) other cities of comparative size to Estherville. During a thirteen year period, Estherville experienced a 45.5% growth in housing values, as compared to a 55.1% increase in Emmet County and a 50.6% increase for the statewide average.

Figure 17 - Comparative Median Housing Values, 2013



FUTURE HOUSING NEEDS

The average household size in Estherville in 2000 was 2.36 persons per household (pph). By 2015, the household size maintained its ratio of 2.25 pph. Estherville's trend of a slightly declining household size is a trend experienced across much of Iowa; in which most communities experience lower household sizes due to a number of factors including an aging population, higher divorce rate, more single persons waiting to marry, or married couples having none or fewer children. By 2025, Estherville's household size is projected to continue to decline to 2.22 pph. Estherville's household size trend is indicative of regional and statewide trends. Using average household size data and population projections, one can predict future housing needs. Between 2000 and 2010, Estherville's total housing units decreased slightly from 2,924 to 2,892, a decrease of 1.1%. This can primarily be attributed to the fact that in recent years and over the past decade, new housing development in Estherville has remained slow but the city has proactively removed and/or demolished several older dilapidated housing structures.

When looking at and trying to identify the projected housing need for the future of Estherville, traditional housing projects do not show the desired or indicated results the community believes is accurate for today's housing climate in Estherville. By running projections purely on the numbers of existing housing units and projected housing need based on projected population, vacancy rate, and demolitions the City of Estherville would have a projected housing surplus in excess of 100 housing units within the next 10 years. However, as previously stated, these numbers are not 100% reflective of current housing trends in Estherville. There are several assumptions being made in the basic housing projections. Another factor that needs to be qualified is the fact that within the past 30 years, the City of Estherville needed housing stock to support a population base of 7,500 to 8,000 residents. Today, that resident population has declined to around 6,300 people but much of the city's older housing stock remains. A current and thorough housing conditions survey would provide city officials and local planners with a better idea of the state of housing within the community and target those areas of the City which are most in need of rehabilitation of older housing stock or removal of dilapidated and/or nuisance housing properties. Furthermore, just because the overall housing stock numbers for the community indicate a surplus in total housing stock, this does not mean that targeted or niche segments of the housing community are in need of additional housing units. For instance, there may be a need for higher priced market rate housing to attract younger working class and professional persons and families to Estherville. Furthermore, there may be a lacking in assisted living or senior independent housing options for that segment of the population that may have reached that point in their life where they are ready to sell their property and move into a maintenance free living environment. Ultimately, there are too many variables at play in Estherville to make an accurate prediction of specific housing needs in this plan. The City of Estherville may wish to look further into a specific housing needs assessment to identify specific or targeted areas of housing needs in the community, along with a housing conditions survey to determine the city's needs to continue working with rehabilitation of properties or continue supporting a housing demolition and redevelopment program.



Before



After

Note: The photos above are stock photos of a random housing rehabilitation project to show the potential of what can be done through repair and rehabilitation programs for housing in need of assistance or dilapidated housing.

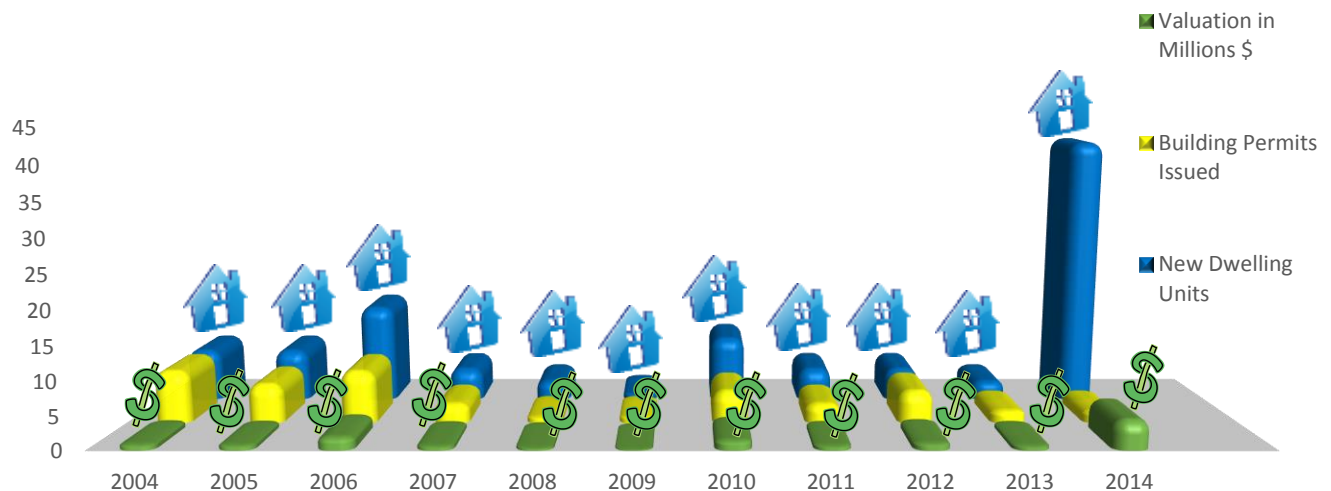
RESIDENTIAL BUILDING PERMITS

According to statistics from the U.S. Census Bureau, a combined 44 building permits issued for the construction of 104 new single family and multiple family dwelling units in Estherville over the past decade. From 2004 through 2014, the total valuation of new dwelling units constructed in Estherville is nearly \$13 million. The following statistics are for new construction of residential housing units only and does not include the building permits or valuations for the construction of new commercial or industrial and agricultural related buildings and structures.

Table 6 - 2004 to 2014 Residential Building Permits, New Dwellings Built and Valuation of Housing in Estherville

Year	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Permits	8	6	8	3	1	1	5	3	5	2	2
Dwellings	8	8	15	5	3	1	10	5	5	3	41
Value (Millions)	0.858	0.775	1.901	0.665	0.425	0.234	1.466	0.718	1.056	0.716	4.4

Figure 18 - Residential Housing Building permits in Estherville, 2004-2014



Source: United States Census Bureau 2012 Building Permits and 2014 Emmet County Assessor

OCCUPANCY CONDITIONS

As the total number of housing units has remained stable or decreased in Estherville over the past several years, the vacancy rate appears to have increased somewhat. According to 2010 U.S. Census Bureau data, the vacancy rate for Estherville is 9.9%. Although the city's vacancy rate is higher than the State of Iowa's vacancy rate (8.6%), it is lower in comparison to Emmet County's vacancy rate of 11.0%. Both Estherville and Emmet County maintain higher than average and higher than the "ideal" vacancy rate of five percent (5%), which is considered healthy for a buying and selling market. The occupancy rate of owner occupied housing is 72.3% in Estherville, with 27.7% of residents being renters. The owner and renter occupancy rates are nearly the same as the statewide average of 72% with nearly 28% claiming rental occupancy as their place of residence.

Table 7 - Single and Multiple Family Housing Vacancies, 2010

	Total Housing Units	Occupied Housing Units	Vacant Housing Units		Owner Occupancy Rate	Renter Occupancy Rate
			Number	Percent		
Estherville	2,892	2,607	285	9.9%	1,886 72.3%	721 27.7%
Emmet County	4,758	4,236	522	11.0%	3,214 75.9%	1,022 24.1%
State of Iowa	1,336,417	1,221,576	114,841	8.6%	880,635 72.1%	340,941 27.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder, 2010

An adequate supply of affordable and safe housing is often in high demand. The housing market's supply and demand for types and prices of housing will vary over time. Generally, if a market does not have a type and/or preference in choice of housing and if a household has the means to construct a new house, they will often do so. However, if a household does not have the financial means or capacity to construct and/or live in and maintain single family housing, these homeowners will often times seek out multifamily rental housing as another alternative. If there is a shortage of adequate and affordable multifamily housing then it leaves homeowners with little choice but to accept substandard housing or move to another community that offers an adequate and affordable supply of all housing types. Below is a list of advantageous benefits of multifamily housing that cities should consider when planning.

Multifamily housing is a key component of smart growth

- Well-planned, higher density housing in areas designated for growth has always been an integral component of smart growth.
- Multifamily housing developments make it possible to preserve more open space and natural features than do single family housing.
- Multifamily housing usually requires less public infrastructure, including roads, sewer and water pipes, and electricity and gas lines.
- Multifamily housing makes it financially feasible to integrate commercial/retail uses into a neighborhood.

Multifamily housing enables affordable housing options

- Single income households may not be able to afford median-priced single family housing in the community.
- Many working families spend more than half their income on housing or live in substandard housing.
- For financial reasons, some households move farther from their jobs, enduring long commutes, to find affordable housing options.
- Apartments and condominiums play an important role in housing the workforce.

Multifamily housing can be an attractive and compatible

- The design of today's apartments and condominiums is much more creative and sensitive to neighborhood context.
- Multifamily allow greater flexibility in making it possible to preserve open space and natural features.
- There is no discernible difference in price appreciation of single family housing near multifamily housing and those not located close to multifamily housing.

ESTHERVILLE AFFORDABLE HOUSING



In Estherville, there are four affordable housing properties providing rental assistance to income qualifying persons. Rental assistance is a type of housing subsidy that pays for a portion of a renters monthly housing expenses. This rental assistance can come in the form of Section 8 housing voucher, public housing, USDA rental assistance, as well as HUD Section 202 properties. The four rental properties in Estherville providing rental assistance to tenants are the 20 unit Country View Apartments; the 16 unit Garden Village Apartments; 20 unit Breezy Acres Apartments; and 25 unit Gardston Apartments. The Northwest Iowa Regional Housing Authority (NWIRHA), located in Spencer Iowa, is the regional housing authority assisting low income residents in Estherville with finding housing and rental assistance. The NWIRHA provides low-rent housing options and Section 8 voucher program for those persons in need in a multi-county region in northwest Iowa, including the residents of Emmet County and the City of Estherville. The NWIRHA does business in accordance with the Federal Fair Housing Law (Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 as amended by the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974), and does not discriminate against any person because of race, color, religion, sex or national origin, disability and familial status.

NORTHWEST IOWA REGIONAL HOUSING TRUST FUND

Estherville and Emmet County are participating members of the Northwest Iowa Regional Housing Trust Fund, Inc. (NWIRHTF), a non-profit corporation whose mission is to improve the quality of housing for low and moderate income people in northwest Iowa. The six (6) member counties of the housing trust fund include Buena Vista, Sioux, Lyon, O'Brien, Osceola, and Emmet Counties. The 13 member Board of Directors consists of two representatives from each member county; one from the private sector and one from the public or government sector. The Northwest Iowa Planning & Development Commission is the trust fund's administrative agency. Housing improvement loans and grants are approved by the trust fund's board members. Financial assistance is limited to households at or below 80% of the area median income and at least 30% of the funding will be set aside to benefit the very low income households within participating counties. Households with incomes below 30% of the area median income limits are eligible to receive a 5 year forgivable grant for up to \$7,500 and a low interest loan (2%) for up to \$15,000. Applicants with incomes between 31% and 80% of the area median income is only eligible for the grant after two-thirds of the project costs are covered by the low interest loan. Financial assistance is granted to basic structural repairs such as roofs, windows, siding, etc. Applicants applying for housing assistance through the NWIRHTF must have a credit score higher than 620 to be eligible to receive assistance. Over the past four (4) years, the NWIRHTF has awarded more than \$775,000 in loans and grants to 130 low and moderate income households.

Northwest Iowa Regional
Housing Trust Fund, Inc.



**CHANGING LIVES
CHANGING
NORTHWEST IOWA**

CHAPTER 7. CITY CHARACTER & PUBLIC SERVICES

ESTHERVILLE CITY HALL



The Estherville City Hall building is located at 2 North 7th Street in downtown Estherville at the corner of Central Avenue (Highway 9) and 7th Street. The office hours for City Hall are daily from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The city's administrative staff, housed at City Hall, is comprised of the City Administrator, City Clerk/Finance Director, Community Development Director, Deputy City Clerk, Secretary/Receptionist and Municipal Utilities Staff. The City Council chambers are also located in City Hall. The seven member City Council meets the 1st and 3rd Monday of each month at 5:00 p.m.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Estherville Police Department is located in the Emmet County Law Enforcement Center at 114 North 6th Street. The Estherville Police Department and Emmet County Sheriff conduct joint law enforcement from this location. The department employs 11 full time officers, consisting of the Chief, Captain, Detective, two Sergeants, and six Officers. The department also has a Specialty Canine certified in narcotics, evidence recovery and tracking. The Police Department and its employees take pride in their department and the community. The city's officers participate in school programs and community events. The department maintains a high level of proficiency by participating in continuing education programs and special instruction schools. Many of the city's officers are certified law enforcement instructors proficient in pursuit driving, firearms, defense tactics, field sobriety testing, stop stick devices, pursuit intervention, DARE education classes and chemical munitions. Several of the city's Police Officers are also trained in specialty fields such as hostage negotiations and accident investigation.

Police Department Mission Statement

"To build stronger partnerships with the community to provide public safety, to enhance community service, and to improve the quality of life while maintaining respect for individual rights and human dignity."

ESTHERVILLE AMBULANCE SERVICE

The Estherville Ambulance Service is a private business providing ambulance service for residents of the community and surrounding rural areas. Estherville Ambulance is located at 15 N. 1st Street. The Estherville Ambulance Service adequately serves the medical transportation needs of the community.

FIRE & RESCUE

The Estherville Fire Department, located at 27 South 5th Street, is comprised of 29 volunteers including the Fire Chief, Assistant Chief, Captain, Lieutenant and 5 Safety Officers. The Estherville Fire & Rescue department is equipped with three pumper trucks, one tanker truck, two brush trucks, a rescue boat and a rescue truck. All of the city's firefighters are trained in First-Aid and

hazardous materials ops. Most of the department's staff have obtained the Firefighter I certification, with several members obtaining the Firefighter II certification.

EMMET COUNTY COURTHOUSE

Since the county's inception, the county seat has been in Estherville. This has not always fared well with residents on the east side of the county that felt the courthouse should be more centrally located. In fact, when the first courthouse was proposed to be built in 1876, a petition was circulated calling for the courthouse to be located at Swan Lake. Although the Swan Lake site won an election in 1879 to move the courthouse, the Board of Supervisors refused to move. After a second election in 1882, Estherville won the right to be the county seat. Estherville officially became

Photo of Emmet County Courthouse in Estherville



the county seat of Emmet County on January 15, 1883. The first courthouse was built in Estherville at a cost of \$12,000. It was located on the city square in Estherville. Around 1916, county officials declared a need for a new courthouse. However, it would not be until 1954 that it was recommended to build a courthouse. The courthouse in Estherville today was started in 1957 and opened on July 28, 1958. Upon occupancy of the new courthouse, the original courthouse was demolished.

EMMET COUNTY FAIR

The Emmet County Fair and Agricultural Show are held annually on the Emmet County Fairgrounds located at



1686 – 3rd Avenue South. The Fair is typically held the last week of July each summer. The Emmet County fair is a fun summertime tradition in Estherville and enjoyed by all residents of Emmet County. There are many activities to keep one busy at the fair including commercial and 4H exhibits, inflatable rides for the kids, fair queen contest, kiddie tractor pull, Bill Riley talent show, lots of food vendors, fair coloring contest, tractor pull and many other fun and exciting things to do. When the Emmet County Fairgrounds are not being used during the fair week, the buildings are rented out for winter storage of campers, boats, recreational vehicles, automobiles or farm equipment. Several of the buildings on the fairgrounds are also available to rent from the Fair Manager for reunions, fundraisers, auctions or other events.

EMMET COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM

Located within the city limits of Estherville is the Emmet County Historical Society Museum Complex. This historical complex is located at 1720 3rd Avenue South. Included on the grounds are

the H.G. Albee Memorial Museum surrounded by the Bolstad School (a historic one room rural school), the former Palestine Lutheran Church, a rural farm windmill, a log cabin, a blacksmith shop, and the Farm Heritage building. The museum building contains many displays relating to Emmet County's early history. Examples of items included in the museum are home furnishings, educational materials, Estherville native items, military history and much more. There is no admission fee to visit the Emmet County Historical Museum complex and it is open daily from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m., June through August; or by appointment.



*Photos of Emmet County
Historical Society
Museum Complex*



SENIOR CITIZENS CENTER

The Estherville Senior Center was created and is sustained to meet the social and physical needs of the senior residents in the community. The center currently offers dinner date meals and meals on wheels provided by the Elderbridge Agency on Aging. The Estherville Senior Center is located at 6 N. 7th Street.

HEALTHCARE SERVICES

Hospitals, healthcare facilities and long term care facilities remain an important aspect of the community facilities offered within Estherville. Given the statistics presented earlier in this plan regarding the continuing aging population of Estherville's residents, the provisions of healthcare and long term care facilities will prove to be a valuable asset to the city's families and residents.

Avera Holy Family Hospital

Avera Holy Family Hospital, located at 826 North 8th Street, is a member of the Avera Health network, a regional healthcare system of more than 229 facilities in a five state region in the upper Midwest. Avera Holy Family Hospital was established in 1944 and the Estherville Medical Clinic began in 1975. In



Avera is a health ministry rooted in the Gospel. Our mission is to make a positive impact in the lives and health of persons and communities by providing quality services guided by Christian values.

- Avera Mission

1997, the Estherville Medical Clinic moved onto the Holy Family Hospital campus to provide integrated health services with the hospital. In 2002, the hospital completed a major building renovation and expansion project adding additional private inpatient rooms, special care unit, operating rooms, same day surgery facilities, emergency department and a modern energy plant to the Estherville hospital. Avera Holy Family Hospital continues to update their facilities.

Avera Holy Family Hospital offers an array of medical services to the residents of Estherville and Emmet County including but not limited to cardiac rehab, 24-hour emergency care, diabetes care, diagnostics, dietitian/nutrition services, wound care, general surgery, home care, hospice services, infection control, laboratory services, nursing services, obstetrics, occupational therapy, pharmacy, same day surgery, sleep studies, social services, speech therapy and wellness services.

According to the Avera Holy Family website at www.avera.org/holy-family-hospital, they state the following make their hospital special.

- Hospital's mission and goals which reflect the Hospital's Christian core values of compassion, hospitality and stewardship.
- A leader in patient satisfaction.
- Commitment to Estherville and surrounding towns through community benefit activities.
- A leader in healthcare technology.

In 2011, Avera Holy Family Hospital in Estherville was named one of the Top 100 Critical Access Hospitals in the nation by the National Rural Health Association. Hospitals were scored on the Hospital Strength Index, which is a means of measuring relative performance of medical facilities based on 56 different performance metrics.

Emmet County Public Health Office

Emmet County Public Health offers a community based approach to health care serving individuals, families or groups. Services are provided in the client home, in the office, schools, worksites or meeting places. The goal of Public Health Nursing is to promote maximum health and long life for residents of Emmet County. People of all ages living in Emmet County may request services by contacting the Public Health Office at 508 South 1st Street or by phone at (712)362-2490.

Photo of Avera Holy Family Hospital



Free Clinic

A Free Clinic is held the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month at the First Christian Church, 205 North 7th Street. The Clinic opens at 6:30 p.m., to serve underinsured or uninsured patients.

Good Samaritan Society - Estherville

All are welcome at the Good Samaritan Society. When loved ones and elderly residents of Estherville and surrounding towns are no longer able to live independently at home, the Good Samaritan Society is a local option for assisted living, long term residential care, and other services for the aging. Their hope is that every resident feels safe and comfortable, emotionally and socially secure, and they will experience a sense of



family in their relationships at the center. Services offered at the Good Samaritan Center include senior living housing with independent apartments as an option. Parkview Terrace and Friendship Terrace are independent housing options that provide more than maintenance free living; these places offer a chance to reside in a caring, friendly community. Home and community services include outpatient therapy and home care. Good Samaritan also offers rehabilitation services and skilled nursing care, along with memory care and hospice services. The Good Samaritan Society facility in Estherville is located at 1646 5th Avenue North.



Photo of Estherville Good Samaritan Society

Rosewood Manor

Rosewood Manor is a 60 unit care center facility located at 2001 1st Avenue North in Estherville. Rosewood Manor provides rehabilitation services in addition to long-term care. The employees of Rosewood Manor ensure the details of care needs are met and take the extra time to comfort those in need. Creative input from residents, families and service providers is used to develop new and innovative ways to make the lives of our residents as enjoyable as possible.

Windsor Manor

With a mission statement “to provide an atmosphere of respect, comfort and grace, where quality of life is of the utmost importance. Life is a journey. Make the most of it at Windsor Manor.” This new assisted living complex features 40 one



and two bedroom apartments which allow the residents to have independence when they want it, and assistance when they need it. Windsor Manor is located at 2015 - 3rd Avenue North.

PUBLIC LIBRARY

The public library is located at 613 Central Avenue. The library employs six people, comprised of the Library Director, an Assistant Director, three Library Coordinators, and a Bilingual Library Coordinator. The library can be traced back to having a presence in the community in 1871. In 1993 the city renovated the Carnegie Building and expanded the facility. According to the library's Mission Statement, the Estherville Public Library enhances the quality of life for the community by maintaining a welcoming and accessible public facility, inviting residents to gather for meetings, programs, reading and studying. The library provides residents of all ages with materials in a variety of formats to meet their interests and is a primary contributor to lifelong learning pursuits.

Photo of Estherville Public Library



DAYCARE/CHILDCARE SERVICES



A variety of childcare services is provided by both daycare centers and in-home daycare providers. Currently, there are many in-home daycare providers operating in Estherville. A Child's World, which is currently the only daycare center offering community wide childcare services is located at 214 W. 2nd Avenue North. Currently, this community daycare has 105 children registered for daycare. Other childcare services available in Estherville include HeadStart providers and preschools. The Emmet County HeadStart is available to children of low income families in order to promote a comprehensive child development program to meet educational, emotional, social, health and psychological needs. HeadStart is free to income eligible families with

some allowances for higher income families with special needs. The Emmet County HeadStart is run by the UDMO (Upper Des Moines Opportunity) organization. Additionally, there is also an Estherville Early HeadStart program available to children and families in the community. This Early HeadStart program is a licensed center in Estherville with an operating capacity of 41 children. Young children in Estherville may also be served by the Guardian Angel Preschool which also serves as a licensed daycare center with a maximum capacity of 24 children.

ESTHERVILLE LINCOLN CENTRAL SCHOOLS

The Estherville Lincoln Central Community School District (or ELC) is committed to providing the highest educational standards in an environment promoting all students to achieve the full potential as productive residents, professionals and leaders. The ELC School District is the public

primary and secondary educational institution operating in the City of Estherville. The School District has a current enrollment of 1,380 children in Preschool through 12th grade and employs nearly 225 full time staff. The ELC school district focuses on preparing students to maximize their potential. ELC School District is the largest public school district in Emmet County serving a population base of roughly 8,800 people. There are four (4) main school buildings supported by the district. Demoney Elementary serves students in PreK to 2nd grade. Roosevelt Elementary serves 3rd and 4th grade students. The ELC Middle School serves 5th– 8th grade students and the ELC High School provides education to those students in 9th–12th grades.

Photo of Estherville Lincoln Central High School



ELC School Mission Statement

“...to ensure that all students maximize their learning potential in becoming confident, independent, productive citizens with good character.”

- Estherville Lincoln Central School District

Substantial renovations and remodeling were completed at the high school and elementary school in 2008. In 2009, a new middle school building was constructed and is now connected to the high school. All buildings in the district are located on the same campus, except for Roosevelt Elementary. However, this will change in 2016 as construction started on Demoney Elementary to house the 3rd and 4th grades. This addition will complete one of the District’s goals of having all students in PreK- 12th grade on the same educational campus. According to the District’s website

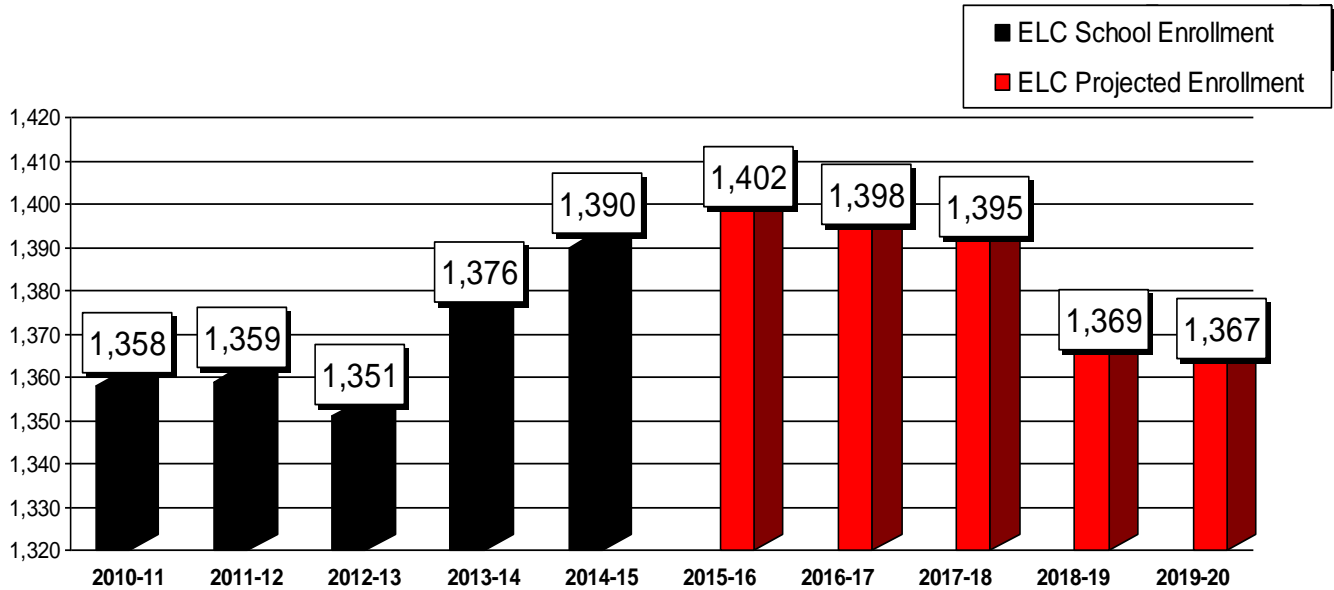
at www.estherville.k12.ia.us, the key elements to a public education are instruction and curriculum. Dedicated personnel strive to prepare students for critical thinking and problem solving in the workplace. ELC schools want their students to discover and nurture creative talents and prepare these students to meet and cope with social change in an atmosphere conducive to learning.

The Estherville Lincoln Central School District enrollment has experienced slight increases in student population over the past five years. The school district increased from 1,358 students in 2010 to 1,390 students in 2015, an increase of 2.4% in student enrollment over 5 years. This trend is unique and unexpected for the ELC Community School District, given the previous statistics regarding population changes and shifts in population aging. However, the school district enrollment numbers tend to point, at least in part, to more children enrolling in school in the ELC School District. The Iowa Department of Education predicts the ELC School District’s enrollment will top out in the 2015-16 school year at 1,402 students and then reverse the trend from the past five years of growth and experience slight declines in student enrollment through 2020. The following information comes from the Iowa Department of Education’s website at <http://www.educateiowa.gov>.

Table 8 - 2010-15 ELC School District Enrollments & 2015-2020 Projected Enrollment

<u>School Year</u>	<u>Certified Enrollment</u>	<u>School Year</u>	<u>Projected Enrollment</u>
2010-11	1,358	2015-16	1,402
2011-12	1,359	2016-17	1,398
2012-13	1,351	2017-18	1,395
2013-14	1,376	2018-19	1,369
2014-15	1,390	2019-20	1,367

Figure 20 - 2010-15 Estherville School District Enrollment & 2016-2020 Projected Enrollment

**Estherville Lincoln Central Com School District, IA (USD)**

Unified School District boundary map for Estherville Lincoln Central Com School District, Iowa (USD).

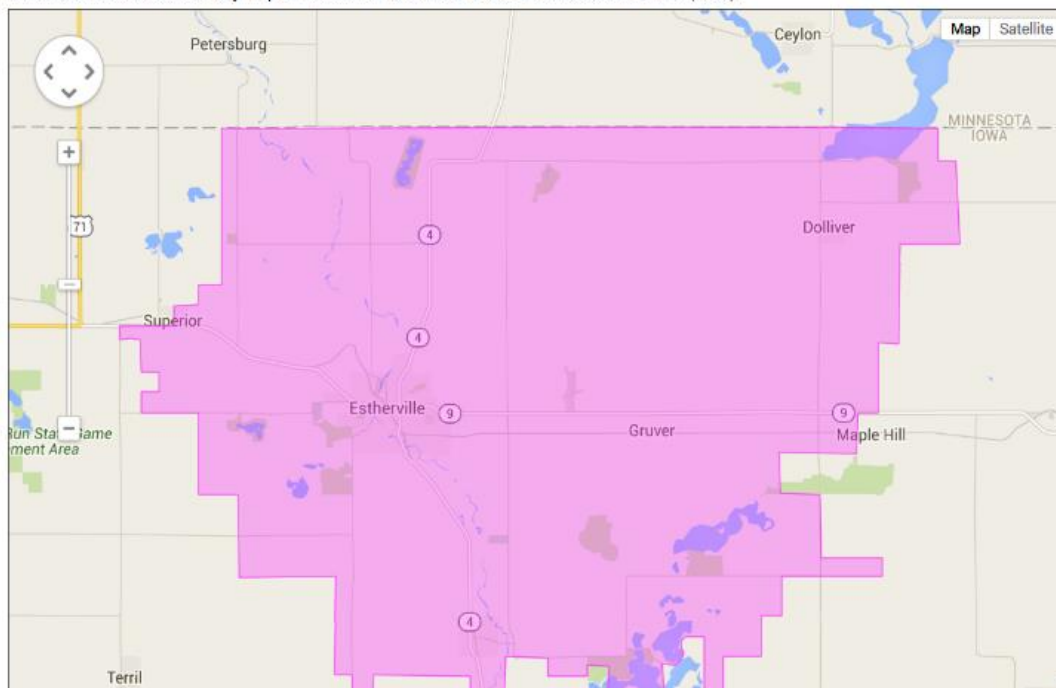


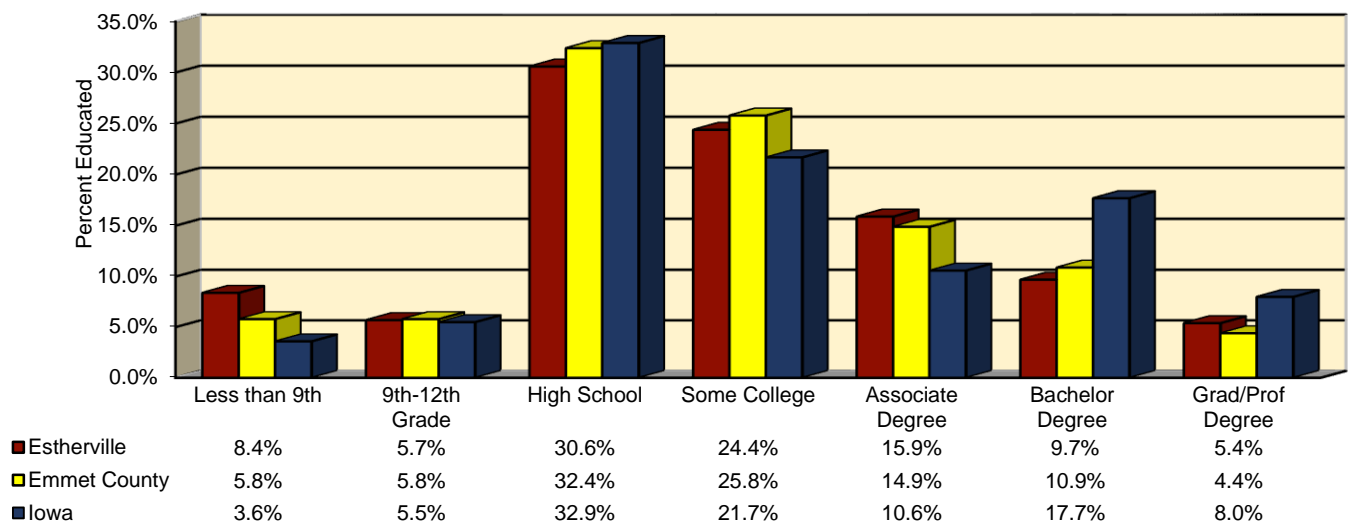
Figure 19 – Map of Estherville Lincoln Central School District

Map Source: 2008-2015 MapBoundary.com

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF ESTHERVILLE RESIDENTS

According to the 2013 American Community Survey through the U.S. Census Bureau, 742 persons in Estherville are between the ages of 18 to 24 years. Of these post-secondary education aged residents, 20.5% achieved a high school diploma or equivalency, 52.3% achieved some college or an Associate's Degree, and 7.0% achieved a Bachelor's Degree or higher. This data does not account for those persons in this age group that may still be furthering their educations. In comparison, statistics show there are 4,136 residents of Estherville over the age of 25. Of these 8.4% indicated they had less than a 9th grade education, 5.7% attended high school but did not graduate, and 30.6% achieved a high school diploma or equivalency. Furthermore, for those persons in Estherville over the age of 25, 24.4% indicated they attended some college, 15.9% obtained an Associate's Degree, 9.7% obtained a Bachelor's Degree and 5.4% of the population achieved a Graduate or professional degree.

Figure 21 - Educational Attainment of Estherville & Emmet County residents, 2013



IOWA LAKES COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Iowa Lakes Community College was established in 1967. Iowa Lakes is unique in the fact that they have two primary campuses serving the district, in Estherville and in Emmetsburg. Over the years, three more satellite campuses have been added in Algona, Spencer and Spirit Lake. Today, Iowa Lakes Community College offers classes and curriculum to students and residents in five (5) northwest Iowa communities. The Estherville campus, developed in the early 1970s, is one of the largest campuses and is home to the Iowa Lakes athletic teams and Fine Arts programs (band, choir and theatre). The Estherville campus is located at 300 South 18th Street. Students have the option of earning a transfer degree on the Estherville campus (Associates Degree), or choose to study and obtain a degree in one of the many career option



programs offered. The Estherville campus of Iowa Lakes offers on-campus housing which allows students to gain independence, responsibility and create new friendships.



In addition to the typical post-secondary education for traditional college students in areas of study such as liberal arts or voc-tec programs, Iowa Lakes Community College also offers many other community development, economic development, and life-long learning programs to non-traditional students, residents and the cities in Emmet County and northwest Iowa. The Wind Energy and Turbine Technology Program offers

a two-year Associate in Applied Science program that provides hands-on, real-life experiences. This academic program for wind turbine service technicians is one of just seven programs nationwide to receive the American Wind Energy Association Seal of Approval. The Sustainable Energy Resources and Technologies (SERT) building at ILCC houses more advanced training, from wind and solar to HVAC and geothermal. As a comprehensive community college, Iowa Lakes offers its students a variety of academic and job training programs that serves the diverse needs of the communities served by the college. Areas of focus for Iowa Lakes include science, technology, engineering, math and many others. In addition to traditional classroom courses, several programs have online options. Classes are offered during the day, nights or weekends at all five of the Iowa Lakes campuses.

REGIONAL WELLNESS CENTER



Photo of the Regional Wellness Center in Estherville

The Regional Wellness Center is a collaborative multi-use community and recreation center in Estherville that is the result of a joint effort between the city, ELC School District, and the Iowa National Guard. Located at 415 South 18th Street, this facility is a combination of the Iowa National Guard Armory and a regional wellness center. Therefore, each use was constructed and can be operated independently of each other, but also designed to be integrated as

one entire building. The wellness and recreation center side of the facility contains a large multi-use gymnasium space with a running track above it, an indoor water park type pool with a large water slide, a lap pool and multiple fitness and community rooms. This nearly 127,000 square foot facility was opened to the public in 2003 and has been utilized to its fullest extent since then.

There is the option of an annual membership or daily fees for non-members. Fitness related facilities available for use in the center include a recreation based indoor pool with a lap pool, cardiovascular & weight lifting area, an aerobics room, two full size gymnasiums, a kids club area, and an elevated walking/jogging track. Additional facilities and uses in the wellness center include a multipurpose community room and meeting rooms used in conjunction with birthday parties, church groups, business meetings, reunions, school groups, youth tournaments, boy scouts/girl scouts and Christmas parties.

Regional Wellness Center Vision

"...become a comprehensive community based organization making health, wellness, fitness and social opportunities available to our residents of all ages and guests to our community."

RELIGIOUS OPPORTUNITIES

The Estherville community and surrounding area is served by the following places of worship:

- 1) St. Patrick Catholic Church, 903 Central Avenue
- 2) Calvary Baptist Church, North 16th Street
- 3) Grandview Baptist Church, 3705 170th Street
- 4) First Christian Church, 205 North 7th Street
- 5) Estherville Lutheran Church, 208 North 8th Street
- 6) Immanuel Lutheran Church (LCMS), 409 North 6th Street
- 7) Redeemer Lutheran Church, 1215 North 15th Street
- 8) Trinity Lutheran Church
721 18th Avenue North
- 9) United Methodist Church
102 South 8th Street
- 10) First Presbyterian Church
723 1st Avenue South
- 11) Calvary Gospel Assembly
21 North 8th Street
- 12) Church of the Nazarene
508 7th Avenue North
- 13) Crossroads Community Church
2015 3rd Avenue South
- 14) Iglesia Cristo de Poder
703 2nd Avenue North
- 15) Emmanuel Church
1021 6th Avenue South



Source: <http://www.churchangel.com/iowa.htm> and Estherville Chamber of Commerce

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

In addition to the above referenced churches found within Estherville, there are many service organizations, clubs, social groups, youth organizations, fraternal clubs, athletic groups, and volunteer organizations that contribute to the quality of life in Estherville. Volunteers and service organizations have a huge impact on the community. Whether it is local businesses, civic groups, churches, or service organizations the people of Estherville come together to make things happen. The following is a listing of organizations and clubs in Estherville. This list was compiled with information from the Estherville Chamber of Commerce's website: <http://www.estherville.org/>

- Alzheimer's Support Group
- American Red Cross
- Black Knights Car Club
- Cancer Survivors Group
- Elks Lodge
- Emmet County 4-H
- Emmet County Animal Shelter
- Emmet County Cattlemen
- Emmet County Historical Society
- Emmet County Kinship
- Emmet County Relay for Life
- Estherville Chamber Ambassadors
- Estherville Builders Club
- Estherville Garden Club
- Estherville Saddle Club
- EXCEL Estherville
- Farm Bureau
- Friends of Fort Defiance
- Friends of the Estherville Public Library
- Fire Department and Auxiliary
- Girl Scouts
- Kiwanis
- Knights of Columbus
- Many Voices Choir
- Masonic Lodge
- Northstar Carvers
- Northwest Iowa Concert & Jazz Band
- Rotary
- RSVP
- Skate Estherville
- Upper Des Moines Opportunity
- VFW and Auxiliary
- WA TAN YE

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Estherville Area Chamber of Commerce provides an invaluable ally in helping your business and the community succeed. The Chamber tries to provide opportunities for members to meet, exchange information and work together. The Chamber has been instrumental in planning and organizing events that bring our community together, bring visitors into Estherville, and create the great quality of life that we enjoy in Estherville.

EXCEL! ESTHERVILLE

Excel! Estherville is a non-profit corporation and affiliated division of the Estherville Area Chamber of Commerce. Projects are funded by Local Option Sales Tax, approved by a vote of residents in 2008. Its vision is to make Estherville a destination to live, work, and play, resulting in population growth, balanced economic growth, and increased prosperity for its residents. Excel projects are guided by committees made up of active and interested citizens. To learn more about and/or participate in any of the committees listed below, please contact the Chamber of Commerce.

- Oversight Board
- Beautification Committee
- Housing Committee
- Branding Committee
- Arts and Culture

COMMUNITY CELEBRATIONS & EVENTS

Estherville Sweet Corn Days

Perhaps the most widely known community celebration in Estherville is the annual Sweet Corn Days. This annual community celebration is all about celebrating the community and embracing the agricultural heritage and culture of northwest Iowa. The annual event occurs the first weekend of August and includes



such fun events like the parade, free sweet corn, merchant market, little Miss and Mr. Sweet Corn Pageant, 5k/10k/half marathon Run for the Cob, basketball tournament, golf tournament, Des Moines River Fun Float and many more events and activities.

Downtown Market

The Estherville Downtown Market occurs Thursday nights during June through September. This local take on the traditional Farmer's Market allows the residents and visitors to Estherville to purchase locally grown produce and goods, specialty homemade food and craft products, along with a selection of local artisan products.

Estherville Farmers Market

An additional Farmers market is conducted in the parking lot south of 1226 Central Avenue. This occurs on Thursdays and Saturdays during the growing season.

Flight Breakfast

The Flight Breakfast in Estherville is held each July 4th and is a way the local residents can show their appreciation and support for the Estherville Airport.

Fright Hike

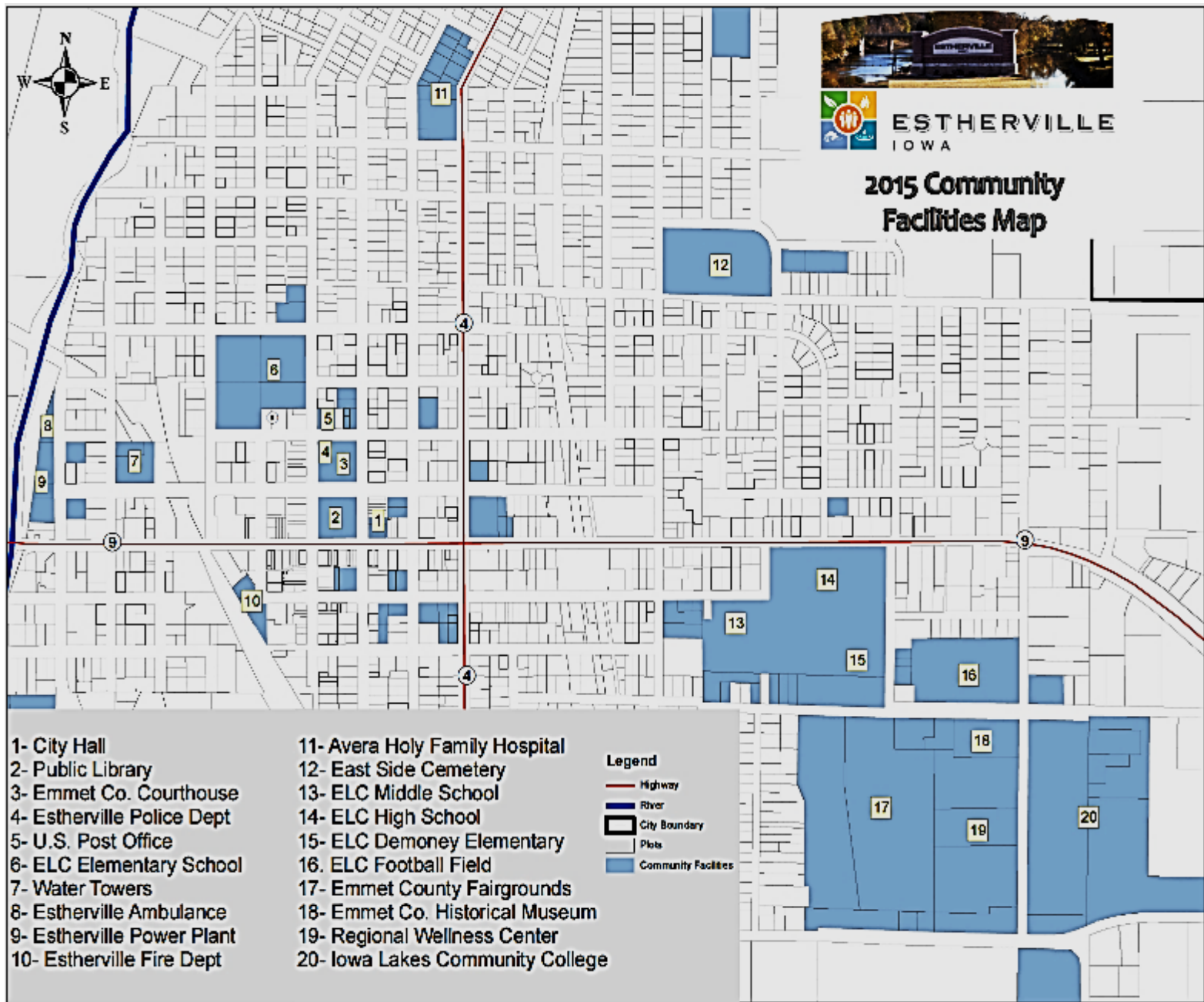
Are you brave enough to walk through the haunted Fort Defiance Forest? Join us Halloween night for spooktacular fun! This annual haunted hike takes place in the west end of Fort Defiance State Park on the White Tail Ridge Trail.

Christmas Events

At one of the busiest times of the year, Estherville promotes the holiday seasons with the Santa House, Parade of Lights, and Tuba Christmas events.

2015 ESTHERVILLE COMMUNITY FACILITIES MAP

Following is a map showing the city's current community facilities and public use areas in Estherville.



CHAPTER 8. INFRASTRUCTURE & UTILITIES

The City of Estherville employees operate under the general supervision of the City Administrator. The city provides electricity, water, sanitary sewer, storm sewer, garbage & recycling services. The city franchises with privately owned utility companies to provide natural gas, cable, and internet/telecommunications services to residents of the community. The Estherville employees operate from the City Offices located at 2 North 7th Street.

ESTHERVILLE INFRASTRUCTURE & UTILITIES

Those utility companies currently serving the residents and businesses of Estherville include:

Municipal Infrastructure and Utilities: City of Estherville provides electric, water, storm sewer, sanitary sewer, garbage and recycling services.

City employees are responsible for the installation, maintenance and repair of the city's electric, water, sanitary sewer and storm sewer infrastructure on public right-of-ways. Private residents and businesses are responsible for the maintenance and repair of infrastructure from the main.

Private and Franchised Utilities: The natural gas system in Estherville is operated and supplied by Black Hills Energy Company. Local telephone services are primarily provided through CenturyLink or Mediacom. Community residents have many options in choosing a nationwide long-distance carrier. A local provider of cellular telephone service is Verizon Wireless with a business office in Estherville. Additional regional and nationwide cellular telephone options are available from a variety of cellular service providers. Cable/satellite television service are provided by Mediacom, DirecTV and Dish Network. Lastly, a variety of internet services are offered by several local companies including CenturyLink and Mediacom. Prior to digging at any location, have utilities located. Call IOWA ONE CALL at 1-800-292-8989

WATER SERVICE. The water supply in Estherville is provided by the city and is in generally good to excellent condition. The source of the water supply comes from the Ordovician-Cambrian (Jordan) Aquifer. The average capacity is 1.1870 mgd, but the water system is rated for a capacity that is 2.2 mgd. There are a limited number of properties within the community that are not able to be served by the city's water system, including those areas considered for annexation purposes. The rural water provider, Iowa Lakes Regional Water, serves those rural areas adjacent to Estherville with a water supply. The City of Estherville will need to consider and evaluate the capacity and ability of rural water services to meet the ongoing needs of residents and businesses located outside of, but within close proximity to the City of Estherville. This will especially come into play when the city considers properties for future annexation, and the provision of utilities they are currently being served.



Name:	City of Estherville		
Location:	Estherville, Iowa (Emmet)		
Well Avg Depth:	750 ft.	Peak Demand (mgd):	1.9190
Treated:	Yes	Cost/1000 Gal:	\$4.34
Rated Capacity (mgd):	2.2	Storage Capacity (gal):	351,150
Temp Range (F):	54	Major Source:	Ordovician-Cambrian Aquifer
Avg Capacity (mgd):	1.1870	Hardness (ppm):	80.0
Connection Fee:	Yes		
Phone:	712-362-3574	Web Address:	www.cityofestherville.org/utilities.htm

WASTEWATER SERVICE (Sanitary Sewer). The wastewater treatment plant is located at 1878 Hwy 4 South. The mechanical treatment plant serves 100% of Estherville and both the wastewater collection and treatment facilities are in good condition. Average daily usage is around 1,000,000 gallons per day with the facility peaking at 8 million gallons daily. There are currently six (6) employees working at the city's wastewater treatment plant.

Name:	Estherville Municipal Utilities		
Location:	Estherville, Iowa (Emmet)		
Ownership Type:	Municipal	Average Daily Use (mgd)	1.0000
Rated Capacity (mgd):	2.0000	Peak Demand (mgd):	8.0000
Cost/1000 Gal:	\$5.65	Connection Fee:	Yes
Phone:	712-362-4162	Web Address:	www.cityofestherville.org

ELECTRICITY. Electric service to the residents and businesses of Estherville is provided by Estherville Municipal Utilities. The city's power plant is located at 21 N. 1st Street with the electrical distribution facility located across the street. The city's electrical distribution system meets the existing needs of the clientele served. Electricity to residents and businesses located outside of the Estherville Municipal Utility service area is provided by the Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative.

Name:	Estherville Municipal Utilities		
Location:	Estherville, Iowa (Emmet)		
Ownership Type:	Municipal	Regulated:	No
Peak Demand (kW):	14,568	Generation Capacity (MW):	12.1
Customers Served:	3,261	Website:	www.cityofestherville.org

NATURAL GAS. The natural gas utility serving the Estherville community is operated and supplied by Black Hills Energy. Currently, the provider is meeting the resident's needs for this utility.

Name:	Black Hills Energy		
Location:	Estherville, Iowa (Emmet)		
Customers Served (Local):	2,758	Ownership Type:	Investor-owned
Customers Served (State):	750,000	Gas Transportation Available	Yes
Pipeline Source:	Northern Natural Gas	Website:	www.blackhillsenergy.com

Source: The information shown in the above table comes from LOIS Location One Information System, an on-line economic development site selection tool for economic developers. Specific data sources is derived directly from the City of Estherville and private utility providers. Additional information about the LOIS system and online economic development data for the City of Estherville may be found at www.locationone.com.

SOLID WASTE COLLECTION & RECYCLING

The City of Estherville provides solid waste collection and collection of recyclables. The charges for commercial establishments are based according to the volume of refuse generated and the number of pick-ups required. Local waste products can also be dropped off locally at the ECCOG Solid Waste Transfer Station at 703 South 1st Street. This transfer station is a local drop off point for waste products headed for the Northern Plains Regional Landfill. The landfill, under management by the City of Spencer, IA, also supports recycling efforts through acceptance of plastics, paper, cardboard, tin cans, and aluminum foil as standard recycling materials. Estherville participates in a curbside recycling program. Local recycling businesses in Estherville include Estherville Iron & Metal Company.



ESTHERVILLE ZONING & BUILDING CODES

The City of Estherville is zoned; and it does enforce subdivision regulations for the platting of land. The community's zoning regulations, establishes by legislation, specific zoning districts within the city in which certain land uses are permitted by right or special exception. These allowed uses will be subject to site development regulations such as yard setbacks, maximum height of buildings, and minimum lot area and lot width requirements.

Zoning enforcement services are provided in Estherville by the city's Community Development Director. This position is responsible for enforcing the zoning laws and policies set forth in the city's Zoning Ordinance and administrative procedures. A building permit is needed when any structure is built or altered by way of changing the square feet and/or elevation.

ZONING PERMITS

No land shall be occupied or used, and no building hereafter erected or structurally altered shall be occupied or used in whole or in part for any purpose whatsoever, until a permit is issued by the zoning administrator.

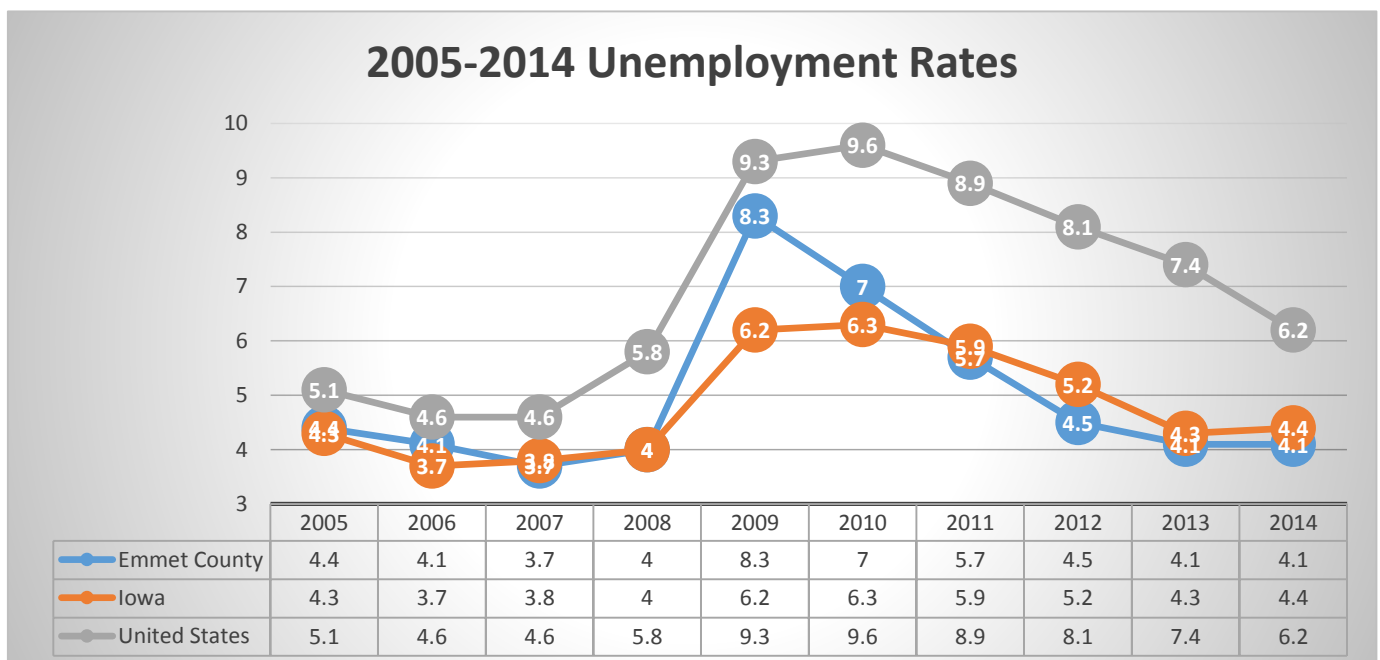
CHAPTER 9. OCCUPATIONAL & EMPLOYMENT DIVERSITY

Employment and job growth or loss has become an integral part of economic development and community development in Iowa. Shifts in employment and diversification of the workforce is considered by many as one of the most importance aspects of economic development. If the city of Estherville is to flourish, it must serve as a center for the production and distribution of goods and services. Many other factors play a role in the future of a community, however employment vitality is important to insure continued economic and community growth. Included in this section are Estherville's employment trends and occupational diversity as compared to Emmet County and Iowa. Employment and occupational analysis provides vital statistics as to the relative health of the community and potential growth in each of the city's respective land use categories.

EMPLOYMENT

Estherville's employment is characterized by several factors including unemployment rates, employment by industrial sector, major occupation trends and commuting patterns. Iowa Workforce Development generates employment and labor force data pertinent to determining the economic climate related to job creation or loss. Unfortunately, these numbers are only available at the county or metropolitan city level. Therefore, the following section will refer to Emmet County data. However, the trends experienced countywide should be reflective of trends occurring in Estherville as well. As of May 2015, the unemployment rate in Emmet County is 3.5%. The City of Estherville and Emmet County, are following the trends of surrounding counties in northwest Iowa by having some of the lowest unemployment rates in the state. Specifically, Emmet County is consistent with the statewide average for unemployment. The statewide average unemployment for May is 3.5%. In comparison, the highest percentage of unemployment in 2015 for a county in Iowa is 5.1%.

Figure 22 - Unemployment Rates for Emmet County, Iowa, and U.S.



Estherville's local employment is similar in many respects to other rural northwest Iowa communities in that the economy relies, in part, on seasonal employment opportunities especially within the agricultural and construction trades. Looking at monthly unemployment rates for Emmet County in 2014 shows fluctuations in unemployment due to the agricultural, construction and seasonal businesses and industries.

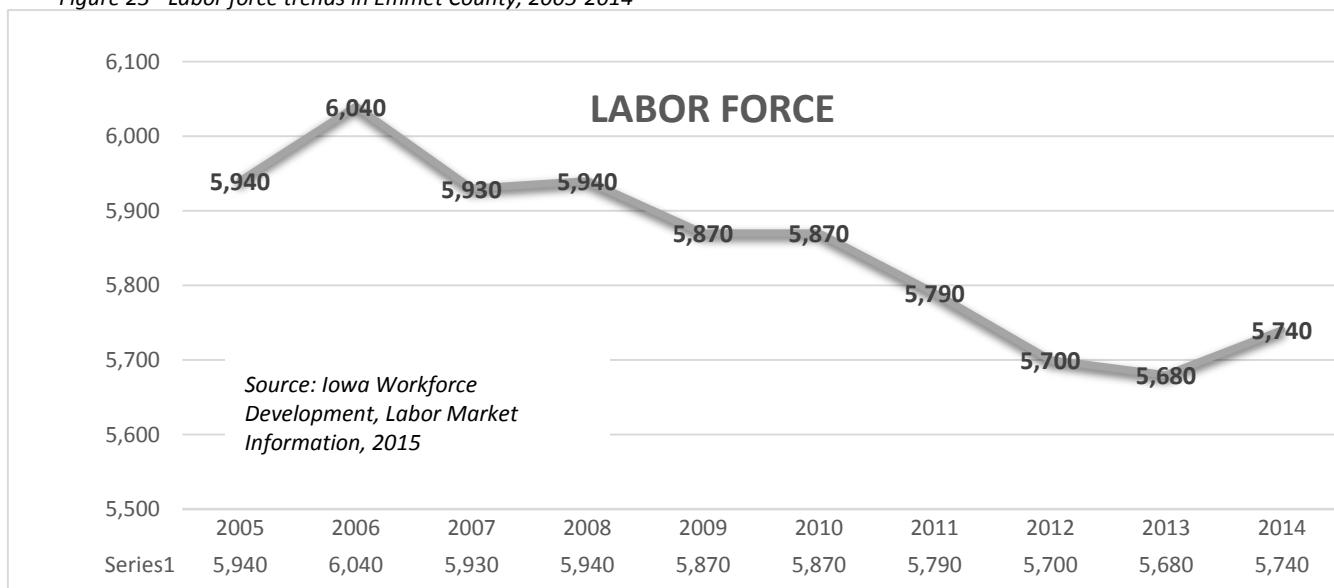
2014 Emmet Co.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Unemployment	5.1	4.4	4.1	3.8	3.3	3.5	4.6	4.3	4.1	4.6	3.6	4.3

In January 2014, unemployment was 5.1 percent. This is most likely due to a combination of winter or seasonal layoffs in construction and agricultural trades. Conversely, the lowest unemployment rates of 3.3%-3.8% occurred from April through June. These trends are indicative of hiring seasonal help during the agricultural and construction seasons.

LABOR FORCE TRENDS

Employment estimates for states and local areas are key indicators of economic conditions. The Bureau of Labor Statistics in the Department of Labor is responsible for the concepts, definitions, technical procedures, validation and publication of the estimates. According to the most recent labor force data available, there are 5,740 persons comprising the civilian labor force in Emmet County. Of this total labor force, 5,500 were employed leaving the remaining 240 persons unemployed as of December 2014. The labor force in Emmet County appears to be struggling to maintain a consistent workforce of available persons to meet the employment needs of the county. The reduction in labor force is not indicative of high unemployment since the county's unemployment rate remains relatively low. Therefore, the logical assumption can be made that the leading cause of the reduction in labor force is tied to declining population trends in Emmet County and Estherville. According to Iowa Workforce Development, the county's labor force in 2014 is 5,740 persons as compared to a high of 6,040 workers in 2006, a decrease of 5.2% in the labor force over nine years. Although the long term trend shows a declining workforce, an encouraging trend is the increase of 60 persons in the county's workforce in 2014. This labor force growth reverses an 8 year trend of declining or stable labor force.

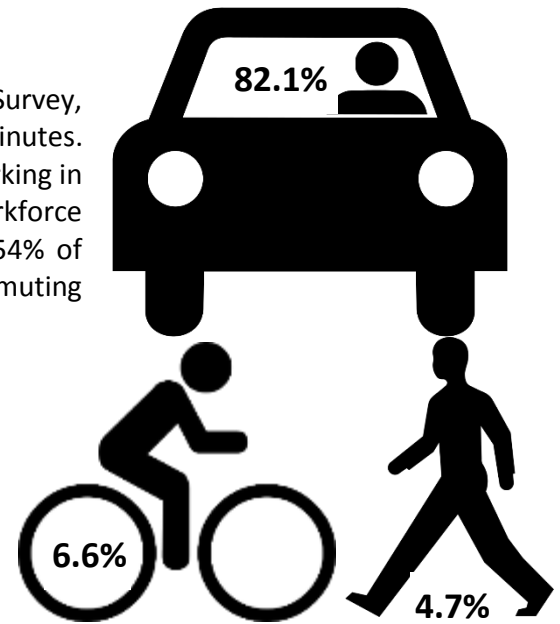
Figure 23 - Labor force trends in Emmet County, 2005-2014



COMMUTING PATTERNS

According to U.S. Census Bureau's 2013 American Community Survey, the average commute time for Estherville residents is 14.5 minutes. While the short commute time suggests most residents are working in or near Estherville, statistics show only 46.2% of the workforce commuted less than 10 minutes to work. Therefore, nearly 54% of workers in Estherville, not working in the home, are commuting longer than 10 minutes to work which likely means outside of the City of Estherville. It is reported 22.2% of the workforce in Estherville commutes 10-14 minutes to work. Similarly, another 15.8% of the workforce commutes between 25-35 minutes. While nearly 75% of Estherville residents drive to work each day, another 7.1% carpool, 5.0% work at home, 6.6% bicycle to work and 4.7% walk to work.

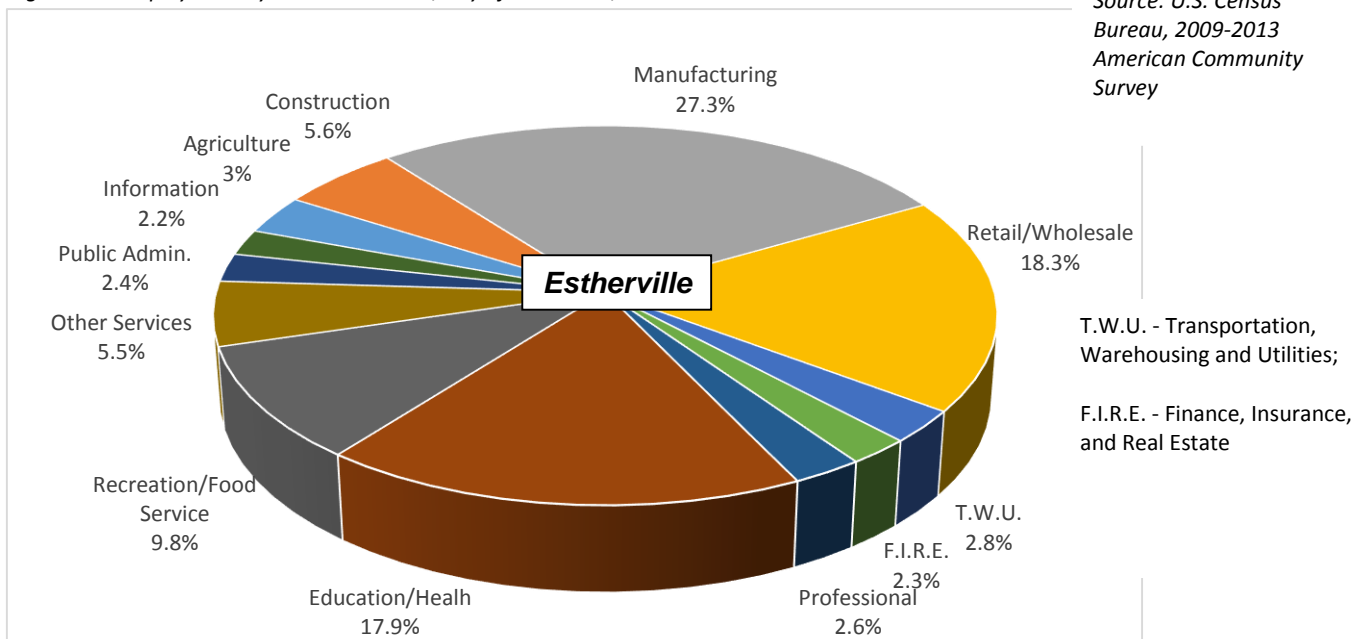
Figure 24 – Estherville
Commuting Methods



EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

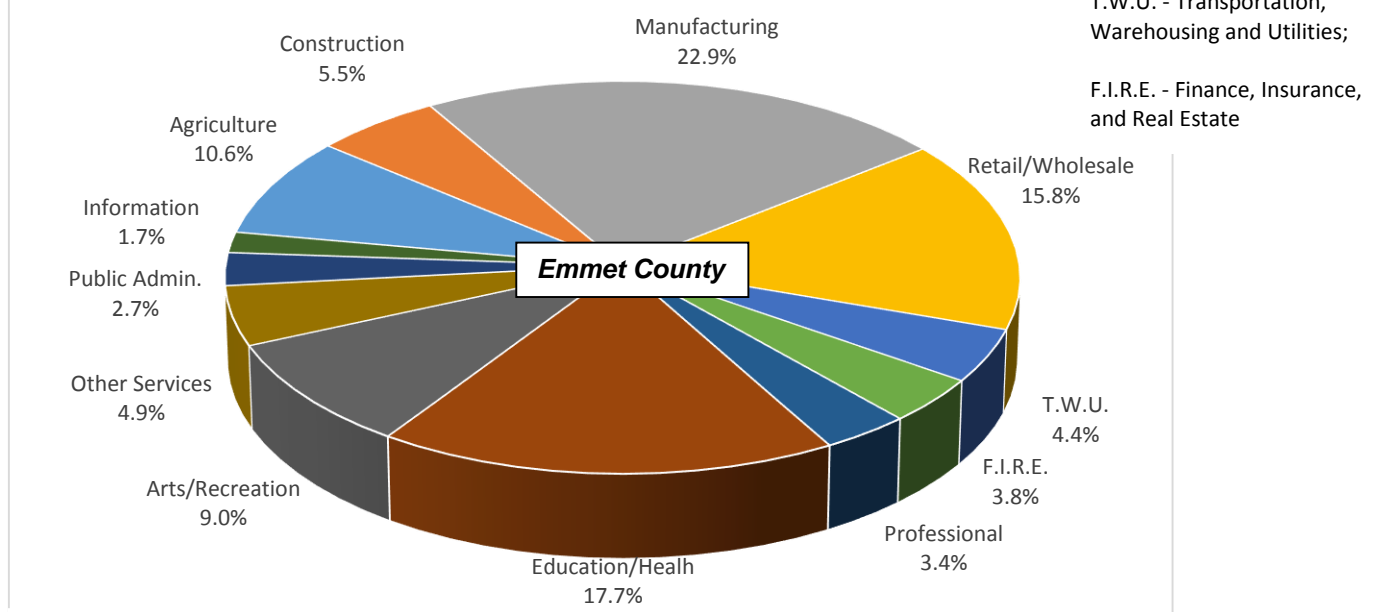
The charts below represent areas of employment by industrial sector for the City of Estherville and Emmet County. The industry sector employing the greatest majority of the workforce in Estherville is the manufacturing sector. This category employs slightly more than a quarter or 27.3% of all civilian employees over 16 years of age in Estherville. The retail and wholesale sector is the second highest employee sector in the community comprising 18.3% of the workforce. In fact, a large percentage of the city's workforce (73.3%) is comprised of only four industry classifications. The four industry sectors in which nearly 3 out of 4 people in Estherville work in are manufacturing, retail/wholesale, education/health/social services, and arts/recreation/food services.

Figure 25 - Employment by Industrial Sector, City of Estherville, 2013



Similar to Estherville, Emmet County's top employment sector is manufacturing followed secondly by the education, health and social services employment sector. As would be expected for Emmet County, the agricultural employment sector comprises a greater percentage (10.6%) of the county workforce in comparison to the City of Estherville.

Figure 26 - Employment by Industrial Sector, Emmet County, 2013



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 American Community Survey

MAJOR EMPLOYERS IN ESTHERVILLE

The largest manufacturing employers include several ag-industry and value added agricultural businesses primarily dealing with the pork and egg sectors. Although the city boasts several agricultural related industries and traditional manufacturing employers, some of the city's largest employers are in the healthcare and education sectors, including Iowa Lakes Community College, Avera Holy Family Hospital and the Estherville Lincoln Central Community School District. The diversity of these employees helps to ensure that if one sector of the economy falters the negative impact on the community is not too severe. Below are the employers in Estherville with more than 50 full time equivalence (FTE) employees.

Table 9 - Estherville's Largest Employers (more than 50+ employees), 2015

NAME	PRODUCT/SERVICE
Avera Holy Family Hospital	Healthcare/hospital
E-L-C Community School District	Education (primary/secondary)
Iowa Lakes Community College	Education (two year college)
Dakota Pack	Ag Industry (pork processing)
Estherville Foods	Ag Industry (egg products)
GKN Wheel	Wheel Manufacturing
Iowa Lakes Electric Coop	Energy Utility
Bank Plus	Banking
NorthStar Bank & Agency	Banking and Insurance
Hy Vee	Grocery
City of Estherville	City Government/Municipal Utility
Emmet County	County Government
Daybreak Foods	Ag Industry (egg products)

Source: City of Estherville, Iowa Lakes Corridor Development Corp.

OCCUPATIONAL EMPLOYMENT PROJECTIONS

Iowa Workforce Development compiles current levels of employment for workforce regions across the state and projects the level of anticipated employment in 10 years for each of the classifications. The employment projection for 2022 is only available on a regional basis. The data for Region 3 includes the counties of Lyon, Emmet, Osceola, O'Brien, Dickinson, Clay, Buena Vista, Palo Alto, Sioux and Kossuth. The eastern half of this region comprised of Emmet, Dickinson, Clay and Palo Alto counties constitutes the primary labor shed for Estherville. Therefore, the employment projections presented below provide useful data in regards to the employment trends and projected job growth in Estherville's labor shed area.

Table 10 - Iowa Workforce Development Region 3 Employment Projections, 2012-2022

Industry Description	2012 Employment	2022 Projected Employment	Total Growth	Percent Change
Management Occupations	11,155	10,870	-285	-0.3%
Business and Financial	3,285	3,580	290	0.9%
Computer/Mathematics	615	690	75	1.2%
Architecture/Engineering	1,020	1,110	90	0.9%
Physical/Social Science	745	830	85	1.1%
Community and Social	1,345	1,585	240	1.8%
Education & Library	6,005	6,520	515	0.9%
Arts & Entertainment Sports	1,270	1,395	125	1.0%
Healthcare Practitioners	3,560	4,035	475	1.3%
Healthcare Support	2,885	3,325	440	1.5%
Protective Services	775	835	60	0.8%
Food Preparation/Serving	6,285	6,870	590	0.9%
Building and Grounds	3,755	4,230	475	1.3%
Personal Care and Service	2,230	2,635	405	1.8%
Sales/Related Occupations	8,775	9,520	745	1.0%
Office and Administrative	11,890	12,565	675	0.6%
Farm, Fishing & Forestry	2,115	2,195	85	0.4%
Construction/Extraction	4,390	5,245	855	1.9%
Installation/Maintenance	4,340	4,825	480	1.1%
Production Occupations	10,890	11,225	335	0.3%
Transportation/Moving	7,405	7,985	580	0.8%

Source: Iowa Workforce Information Network (IWIN), Iowa Workforce Development, 2015

CHAPTER 10. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

An analysis of past and present economic trends is necessary to determine patterns, trends, and amount of potential economic growth expected in the future. Economic development has become synonymous with community development, as many consider economic development one of the most critical aspects of community development. An economic analysis provides important indicators as to the relative health of the city and potential growth in each of the land use categories.

WAGES AND INCOME DISTRIBUTION

Income is one of the measures of the health of an area's economy and potential economic growth when expressed in real terms. By real terms, it is meant the purchasing power of income or the quantity of goods and services that can be bought. By comparing the amount of money it takes to buy a certain quantity of goods in current dollars, with the amount needed to buy the same goods in a previous base year can determine the real income growth of the economy. In other words, the determination is made as to how much of the income increase is due to inflation and how much is actual growth of the economy. Data showing median family income in 2013 for the city, county and the state is shown below.

Table 11 - Household, Family, & Per Capita Income - Estherville, Emmet County & Iowa

	Median Household Income	Median Family Income	Per capita Income
Estherville	\$45,718	\$60,200	\$24,394
Emmet County	\$48,600	\$63,310	\$27,908
Iowa	\$51,843	\$65,802	\$27,027

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013 American Community Survey

The median family income of Estherville is approximately 5% lower than Emmet County and 9% lower than the State of Iowa. When comparing the lowest and highest income ranges, closer examination shows 8.0% of families in Estherville make less than \$15,000; compared with 6.5% for Emmet County and 5.8% for the State of Iowa. The opposite trend holds true for Estherville in regards to the highest range of family incomes. In Estherville, there are 2.8% of families with incomes larger than \$150,000 per year. The percentage of families in Emmet County earning in excess of \$150,000 during 2013 is 6.0% and 8.6% percent for the State of Iowa.

Studying income distribution of a community compared to other communities can indicate an overall wealth and subsequent purchasing power, providing insight into the economic health of Estherville. For reference in this chapter, the following terms will be defined: household, family household, and nonfamily household. These terms will be used in the following chart.

Household- A household consists of all the people who occupy a housing unit. A house, an apartment or other group of rooms, or a single room, is regarded as a housing unit when it is occupied or intended for occupancy as separate living quarters; that is, when the occupants do not live with any other persons in the structure and there is direct access from the outside or through a common hall. A household includes the related family members and all the unrelated people, if any, such as lodgers,

foster children, wards, or employees who share the housing unit. A person living alone in a housing unit, or a group of unrelated people sharing a housing unit such as partners or roomers, is also counted as a household. The count of households excludes group quarters. There are two major categories of households, "family" and "nonfamily". (See definitions of Family household and Nonfamily household).

Family Household- A family household is a household maintained by a householder who is in a family, and includes any unrelated people (unrelated subfamily members and/or secondary individuals) who may be residing there. The number of family households is equal to the number of families. The count of family household members differs from the count of family members, however, in that the family household members include all people living in the household, whereas family members include only the householder and his/her relatives.

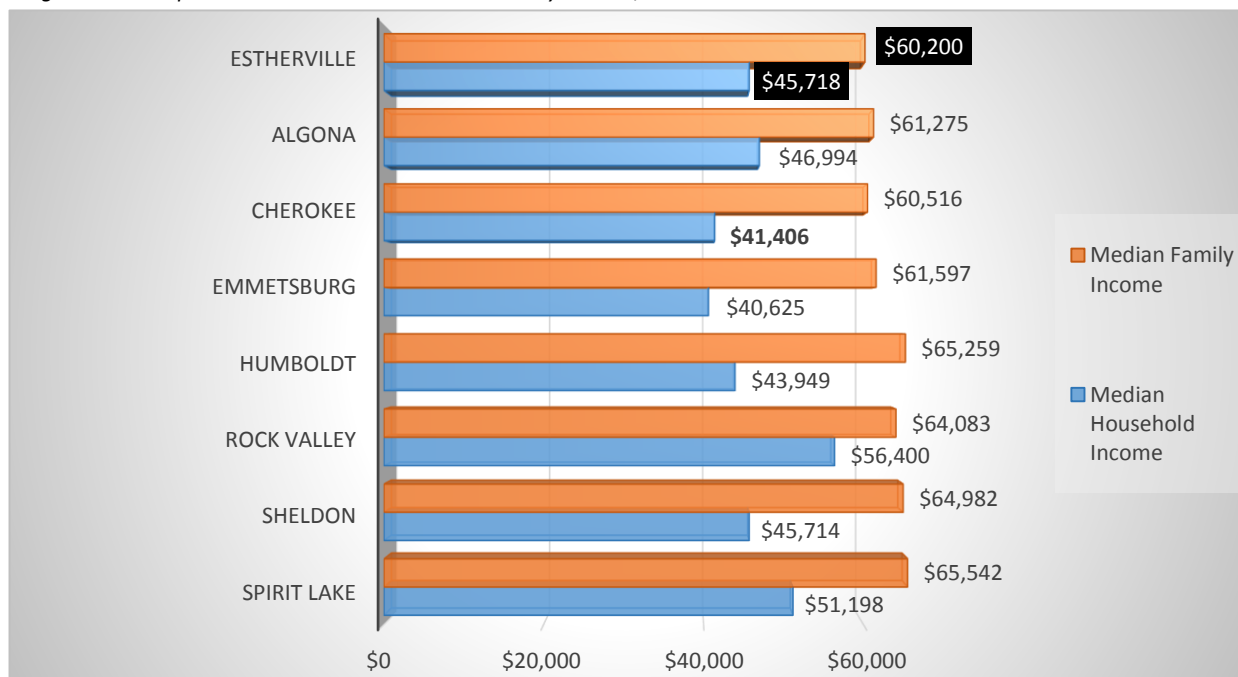
Nonfamily Household- A nonfamily household consists of a householder living alone (one-person household) or where the householder shares the home exclusively with people to whom he/she is not related.

Table 12 - Household and Family Income Comparison of Estherville and cities of similar size

	2013 Median Household Income	2013 Median Family Income	2013 Median Nonfamily Income
Estherville	\$45,718	\$60,200	\$29,708
Algona	\$46,994	\$61,275	\$29,257
Cherokee	\$41,406	\$60,516	\$22,271
Emmetsburg	\$40,625	\$61,597	\$18,897
Humboldt	\$43,949	\$65,259	\$22,821
Rock Valley	\$56,400	\$64,083	\$24,238
Sheldon	\$45,714	\$64,982	\$24,574
Spirit Lake	\$56,198	\$65,542	\$19,388

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013 American Community Survey

Figure 27 - Comparative Median Household and Family Income, 2013



The Iowa Workforce Development compiles data on current wage levels for several occupations and industries. Unfortunately, the following wage and salary data is only reported for Iowa Workforce regions across the state, and does not report at the county or city level. However, the regional workforce data provides an indication of typical wages and earnings represented in Estherville.

Table 13 - Iowa Workforce Development Wage Survey for Region 3-4 Iowa Workforce Region, 2014

Occupation Description	2014 Mean Annual Wage	Occupation Description	2014 Mean Annual Wage
Management Occupations	\$76,150	Protective & Safety Services	\$34,575
Business & Finance (Accountants)	\$53,648	Food Preparation and Serving	\$19,481
Computer Support	\$52,192	Building & Grounds Maintenance	\$24,615
Architecture & Engineering	\$57,618	Personal Care/Service Occupations	\$22,898
Life, Physical & Social Science	\$47,145	Sales and Related Occupations	\$30,634
Community and Social Services	\$35,261	Office and Administrative Support	\$29,772
Legal Occupations	\$54,226	Farming, Fishing & Forestry	\$31,308
Education, Training & Library	\$41,188	Construction and Extraction	\$34,532
Art, Entertainment & Sports	\$30,862	Installation, Maintenance & Repair	\$40,238
Healthcare Practitioners & Technical	\$56,159	Production Occupations	\$31,545
Healthcare Support	\$25,568	Transportation & Moving	\$29,537

Source: May, 2014 Iowa Wage Survey Region 3 & 4

RETAIL TRADE ANALYSIS

Informative retail trade data and trends are available from the Iowa State University Extension, Regional Capacity Analysis Program or ReCAP. This information may help explain retail employment gains or losses over the last decade. Characteristics of retail activity are often times indicative of the overall economic vitality of a community. The data presented in this retail trade analysis compares retail trade sales data for the City of Estherville, neighboring cities in Emmet County and comparative cities of similar size in Northwest Iowa. The table below shows historic retail sales data for Estherville over a 34 year period between 1980 and 2014. This is done so historical comparisons can be made between the value of the dollar today as compared to sales in the community 20 or 30 years ago. It is interesting to note that while actual retail sales increased continually over this period, the number of retail firms remained constant until a decrease over the past 5 years.

Table 14 - Number of Retail Firms v. Constant Sales per Firm, Estherville

Year	FY 1980	FY 1990	FY 2000	FY 2010	FY 2014
Total Retail Sales (\$ Millions)	\$45.51	\$53.96	\$76.12	\$69.78	\$71.23
Constant Dollars (\$ Millions)	\$117.66	\$88.47	\$100.19	\$74.68	\$71.23
Number of Firms	273	275	267	268	246
Current Dollar Sales Per Firm	\$166,711	\$196,210	\$278,832	\$260,366	\$289,547
Constant Dollar Sales Per Firm	\$431,783	\$322,008	\$375,944	\$278,400	\$289,253
Current Dollar Sales Per Capita	\$6,054	\$8,029	\$11,281	\$10,971	\$11,637
Constant Dollar Sales Per Capita	\$15,529	\$13,089	\$15,041	\$11,733	\$11,795

Source: FY 2014 Retail Sales Analysis & Report, ISU Extension ReCAP, Iowa State University Dept. of Economics

The data presented below provides an overview of recent economic activity and retail trade occurring in Estherville. Specifically, this data identifies the city's retail trade trends since 2010. The subsequent graph shows total retail sales in Estherville for a 10 year period from 2005-2014.

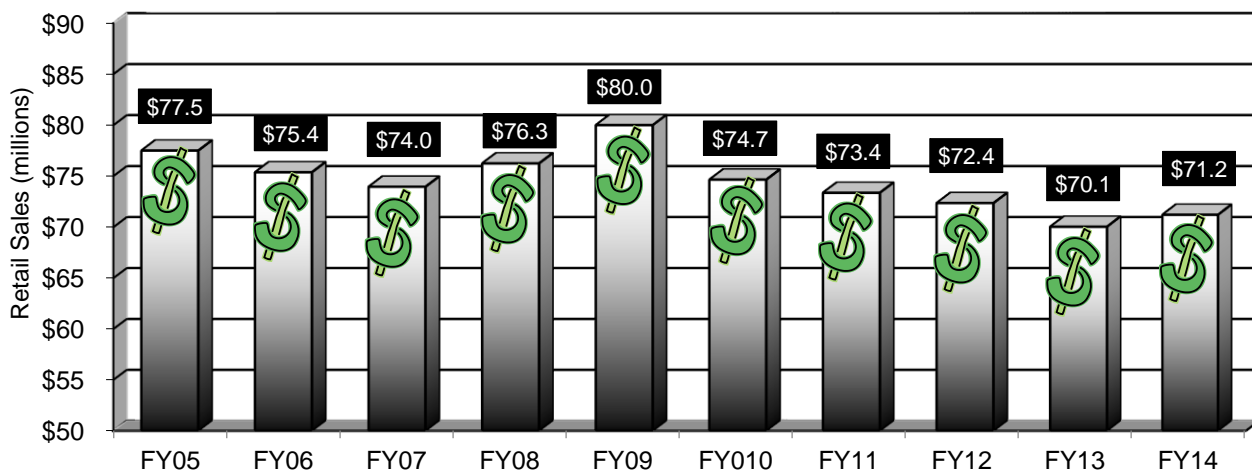
Table 15 - Retail Trade Overview for Estherville, 2010-2014

	FY 2010	FY 2014	%Change 2010-2014
Real retail sales (\$ millions)			
Estherville	\$74.68	\$71.23	-4.62%
Emmet County	\$86.23	\$83.14	-3.59%
State of Iowa	\$34,188	\$35,848	4.63%
Average Sales Per Capita (\$)			
Estherville	\$11,733	\$11,795	0.53%
Emmet County	\$8,355	\$8,431	0.91%
State of Iowa	\$11,240	\$11,565	2.81%
Average Sales Per Firm (\$)			
Estherville	\$278,400	\$289,253	3.76%
Emmet County	\$214,892	\$228,395	5.92%
State of Iowa	-	-	-

Source: FY 2014 Retail Sales Analysis & Report, ISU Extension ReCAP, Iowa State University Dept. of Economics

According to 2014 Retail Sales Analysis provided by Iowa State University Extension ReCAP, Estherville experienced retail sales of just over \$71 million in FY 2014. This represents a 1.6% increase in retail sales over the previous year. In comparison, Emmet County's retail sales have decreased approximately 8% from 2005-2014. Since 2010, the retail data indicates Estherville is a community with a relatively stable retail sector. The retail and service industries that constitute the commercial districts are just as vital to community development growth as manufacturing and industrial facilities. Commercial activities are concentrated in two areas of Estherville. They are the Central Business District (downtown) and the Highway 9 corridor.

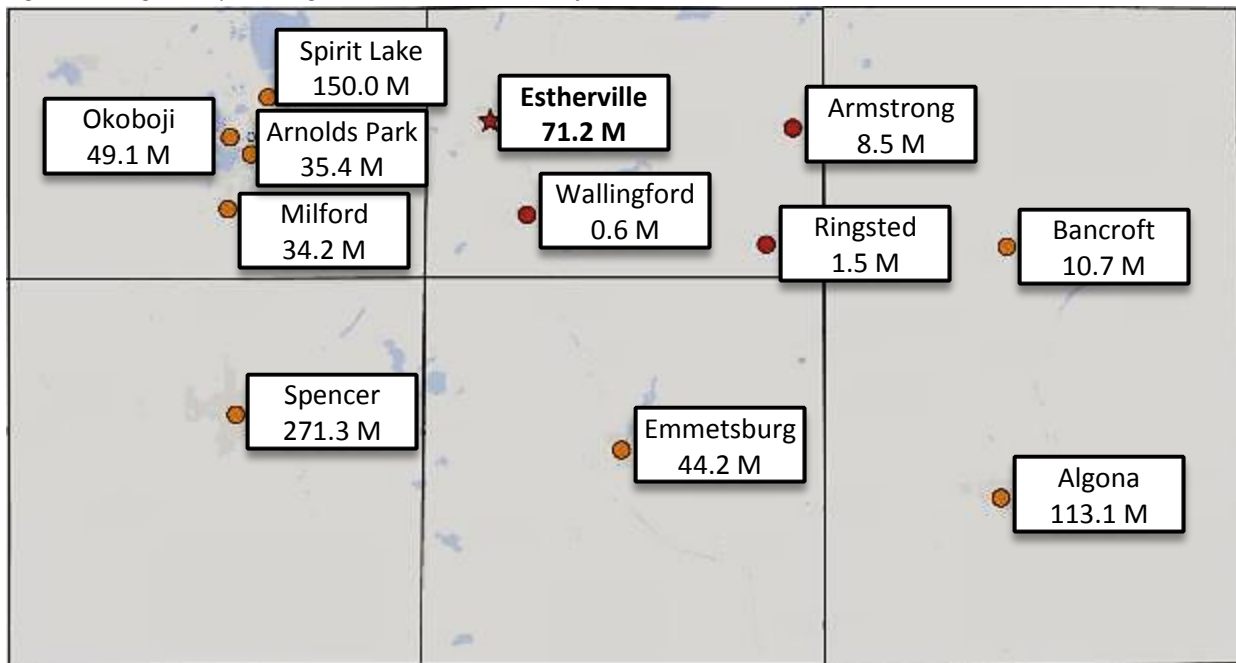
Figure 28 - Total Taxable Retail Sales in Estherville, FY05-FY14



Source: This chart provided courtesy of the FY 2014 Retail Trade Analysis Report for Estherville, Iowa
Iowa State University, Department of Economics

The following map shows the FY 2014 total retail sales for the City of Estherville in comparison to neighboring cities and regional communities of similar size.

Figure 29 - Region map showing Total Taxable Retail Sales for area cities



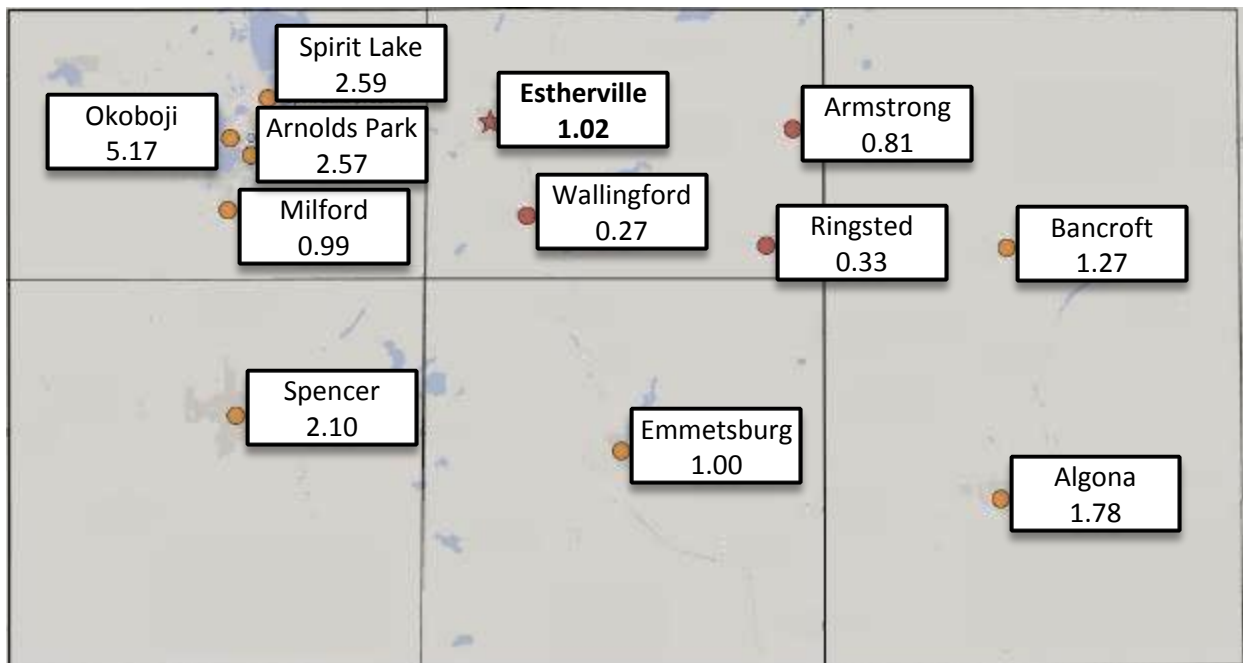
Source: Retail Trade Analysis Report, FY 2014, Iowa State University Dept. of Economics

PULL FACTOR

The pull factor was developed by Iowa State University Extension Service to provide a precise measure of sales activity in a locality. The pull factor is derived by dividing the per capita current dollar sales of a city or county by the per capita sales for the state. For example, if a town's per capita sales were \$18,000 per year and the state per capita sales were \$9,000 per year, the pull factor is 2.0 ($\$18,000/\$9,000$). The interpretation is that the town is selling to 200 percent of the town's population in full time customer equivalents. Pull factors are good measures of sales activity because they reflect changes in population, inflation, and the state's economy. A strict interpretation of the pull factor indicates a 1.0 means the city is drawing all of its customers from within its boundaries and none from the outside. Less than 1.0 means there is leakage of customer sales to outside the community and a ratio over 1.0 means the city is attracting customer sales or purchases from residents outside its trade area boundaries.

In 2000, Estherville's pull factor was 1.21. By 2010, the pull factor decreased to 1.04, indicating a shrinking share of retail dollars brought into the community. The good news for Estherville is that the city's pull factor still indicates the community is spending nearly the same amount of retail dollars in the community for city of its size. In other words, even with strong retail competition from a tourist region in Dickinson County, the city is still not losing more in retail sales than projected for the community. On the following page is a map showing the comparative pull factor for cities in Emmet County and regional communities of similar size.

Figure 30 - Region map showing the Pull Factor (retail surplus or leakage indicator) for area cities



Source: Retail Trade Analysis Report, FY 2014, Iowa State University Dept. of Economics

TRADE AREA CAPTURE

Another method for determining the amount of retail sales activity occurring in Estherville is to calculate the city's trade area capture. The purpose of the trade area capture formula is to examine how many customers or potential purchasers are spending their dollars in Estherville to shop for any type of product at any given time. The trade area capture estimates the portion of customers the city actually attracts or loses from within and outside its boundaries. The trade area capture analysis is also used by retail sectors to understand trade growth or decline.

Table 16 - Trade Area Capture analysis for Estherville

TRADE AREA CAPTURE FORMULA	
$A / [B \times (C / D)]$	
A = Total Retail Sales for Estherville	
B = Per Capita Sales for the State of Iowa	
C = Estherville Per Capita Income	
D = State of Iowa Per Capita Income	

Estherville's trade area capture for the year **2014** is as follows:

A (Estherville Total Retail Sales)	= \$71,228,448
B (State Per Capita Sales)	= \$11,565
C (Estherville Per Capita Income)	= \$25,038 *Note: 2013 Per Capita Income
D (State Per Capita Income)	= \$27,027 *Note: 2013 Per Capita Income

2014 Trade Area Capture for Estherville = 6,649 customers

2014 Estimated Population = 6,237 residents

The figures on the previous page indicate that businesses in Estherville captured the retail sales of 6,649 customers from its 2014 estimated population base of 6,237 residents. This results in the City of Estherville capturing retail sales from 107% of its expected customers. In this calculation, the city is gaining an additional 7% of its retail sales from residents outside of Estherville.

ESTHERVILLE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

As stated on the chamber's website at <http://www.estherville.org>, the mission statement for the Estherville Chamber of Commerce is *"To promote and encourage economic growth while enhancing our community and quality of life."* Membership with the Estherville Chamber of Commerce will unite your business with more than 150 businesses in support of the community. The Chamber of Commerce is a non-profit organization that provides business exposure to its members, networking opportunities, and supports many community events to enhance the quality of life in Estherville. The Chamber of Commerce is supportive of and hosts communitywide events such as Sweet Corn Days, Downtown Market, Santa House, Fright Hike, Parade of Lights, and the Flight Breakfast.



ESTHERVILLE
AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

ESTHERVILLE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CORP. (EIDC)

The city's local economic development efforts are led through the Estherville Industrial Development Corp. (EIDC). EIDC Board members represent the membership investing in the chamber/EIDC and the public. The EIDC Director is the community's primary champion working with city officials and community leaders in continuously finding opportunities for new businesses and industry to locate in Estherville. EIDC Board members are asked to proactively participate in the planning and implementation of the economic development goals for the community and county. The EIDC is working closely with the Iowa Lakes Corridor Development Corp. which is the regional economic development organization for Emmet, Dickinson, Clay and Buena Vista counties.

"To encourage industrial growth in Estherville and Emmet County, creating new good-paying jobs through the expansion of existing and recruitment of new industries."

-Estherville Industrial
Development Corp.
MISSION STATEMENT

Specifically, EIDC is marketing and promoting industrial and office commercial development within the city's existing developed 25 acre industrial park (shown below). The 30,000 sq.ft. spec building was recently sold. EIDC may be looking to work with additional economic development partners to erect another spec building to market in the community. With rail service along the south side of the industrial park and highway service less than a half mile north of the industrial park, Estherville is positioning itself to provide ready-to-build sites for new businesses in the community.

Figure 31 – Aerial Photo of Estherville Industrial Park

Source: Image supplied by EIDC website, www.eidc.org



According to the Estherville Industrial Development Corp. when you build and invest in Estherville, you get in return:

- Residents who are highly involved in their work, family and community
- Many community amenities such as the Regional Wellness Center, state-of-the-art medical facilities, up to date educational facilities and many other opportunities
- The opportunity to make a significant impact on the businesses, people and the greater Estherville community.

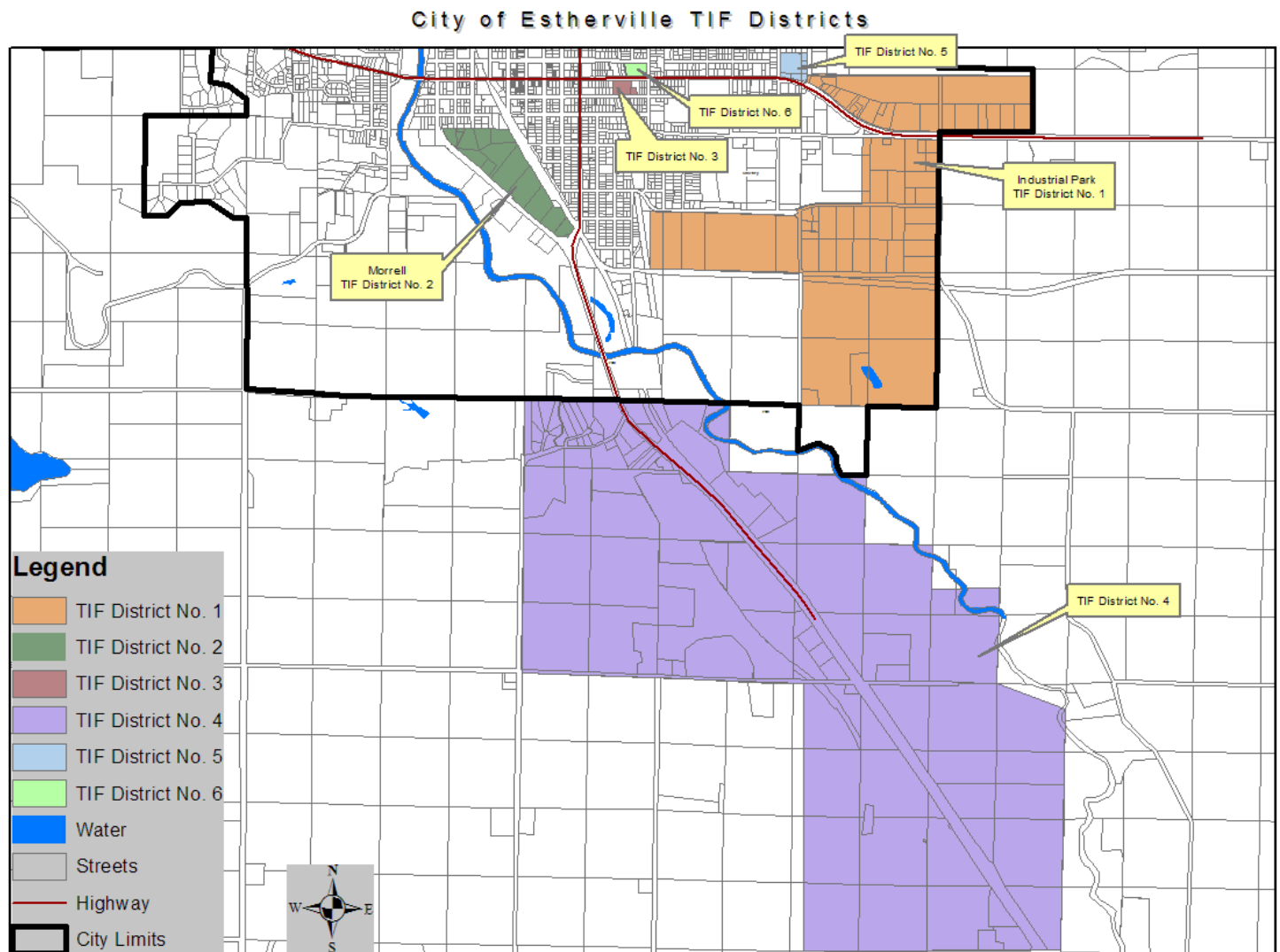
Opportunities exist for new and expanding industry, along with new jobs in Estherville. If the community wants to look to grow and prosper in the future, there are several local, regional, and state opportunities for financial incentive programs to new prospective and existing

expanding businesses. Incentives that may be available to qualifying and prospective new or expanding businesses include:

1. *High Quality Jobs Program* – The High Quality Jobs Program provides qualifying businesses tax credits and direct financial assistance to offset some of the costs incurred to locate, expand or modernize an Iowa facility.
2. *New Jobs Tax Credit* – The Iowa New Jobs Tax Credit is an Iowa corporate income tax credit and is available to companies that enter into a New Jobs Training Agreement and expand their employment base by ten percent.
3. *Job Training Assistance* - Several Federal and State programs are available to assist industries in training new employees, as well as retraining workers.
4. *Innovation Fund Tax Credit* – This program was created to stimulate venture capital investment in innovative Iowa businesses. Certified Innovation Funds make investments in promising early-stage companies that have a principal place of business in Iowa.
5. *NWIPDC Regional Loan Fund* - The Northwest Iowa Planning & Development Commission offers low interest loans at interest rates below prime for new and expanding businesses.
6. *Value-Added Agricultural Products & Process Financial Assistance* - This State program provides financial assistance to new and existing companies that utilize agricultural commodities to create new, higher-value products or produce renewable fuels and co-products.
7. *Iowa New Jobs and Income Program* - This program provides financial assistance to new and existing companies that utilize agricultural commodities to create new, higher-value products or produce renewable fuels and co-products.
8. *Tax Abatement* - A local tax abatement program for residential properties allows for an exemption from taxation on the first \$75,000 of valuation for five (5) years. All properties assessed as multiple family, commercial or industrial are eligible to receive a 100% tax abatement for a period of three (3) years for the actual value added by new construction or improvements to existing structures.
9. *TIF Financing* - EIDC offers low cost fully developed land in their industrial parks. The City of Estherville also offers incentives on new construction and/or expansions.

Map showing the six (6) identified TIF districts in Estherville.

Source: City of Estherville



IOWA LAKES CORRIDIOR

- A PERSPECTIVE ON REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Iowa Lakes Corridor Development Corporation was formed in 1992, under the name of Iowa Great Lakes Corridor of Opportunity, as a joint two county economic development commission to further the economic and business climate of Clay and Dickinson counties. The Corridor was formed as a non-profit organization able to offer joint services to participating public entities in areas of mutual advantage for the entire region. The Corridor is a separate entity for legal purposes but serves the economic development needs of each contributing local government, including Estherville.



The Corridor experienced several changes over the years to foster and promote a healthier, stronger, and expanded economic base in northwest Iowa. In November 2005, the Corridor announced the expansion of the region's boundaries to include Emmet County. Additionally, by the spring of 2006, the Corridor announced that Buena Vista County would be joining forces with this multi-county economic development corporation. Today the Iowa Lakes Corridor Development Corporation is the regional economic development agency for Buena Vista, Clay, Dickinson and Emmet Counties. The Iowa Lakes Corridor invites all residents, employers and visitors to the area to experience all the activities the region has to offer. This glacial lakes region of Iowa boasts some of the most beautiful landscapes, along with offering a blend of commerce, leisure, culture, education and hospitality that will surely encourage visitors to stay.

“To foster, encourage, promote, aid or otherwise assist in the economic growth and development of the four-county region.”

-Iowa Lakes Corridor Development Corp.
MISSION STATEMENT

The Iowa Lakes Corridor Development Corporation uses the strengths and opportunities of the four-county region to build collaborative efforts for the benefit of the whole. The Iowa Lakes Corridor Development has four main focus areas for their goals and objectives, workforce, housing & infrastructure, business development, and entrepreneurship. The overview of each of these focus areas and the way they are being measured in terms of performance for the corridor are as follows:

- 1) **Workforce** – Assure that employers have access to an adequate and well-trained workforce, with an emphasis on worker attraction/retention, worker training/skills, career education, and funding.

Goals:

- Attract and retain workers.
- Satisfy employers and demand for worker training by identifying, coordinating, and creating new training partners, programs, and resources.
- Assure access to employer-driven career information and training by working with secondary school boards, administrators, and staff.
- Create a workforce development fund and leverage resources to supplement employer efforts in raising the education and skill level of the existing workforce and new workers in the community.

- 2) **Housing/Infrastructure** - Providing an infrastructure conducive to business development, with an emphasis on housing, transportation, communications, and volunteer/leader development.

Goals:

- Develop strategic partnerships to increase needed housing stock.
- Work with the public sector on the local, state, and federal level to assure decision makers are aware of critical transportation and communications infrastructure needing public investment.

- Strengthen and develop discussion forums and networking opportunities that reach across the four county area to share best practices, strengthen business-to-business interaction and sales, and workforce, entrepreneurial, and business/job growth goals.

3) **Business Development** - Create an environment for business development and job growth by emphasizing existing and high value business, communication, issue action, and marketing.

Goals:

- Grow existing four county businesses by addressing issues impeding growth.
- Attract high-value employers and industry to the four county region.

4) **Entrepreneurship** - Enhancing entrepreneurial activity and new business starts by emphasizing youth/next generation entrepreneurs, mentoring, networking and learning, coaching, counseling, market research and data, and access to capital.

Goals:

- Continue and enhance youth/next generation entrepreneurial training and recruitment.
- Build on existing coaching and counseling services for entrepreneurs.

Figure 32 – Map of the Iowa Lakes Corridor Development Corp. service area



As an organization, Iowa Lakes Corridor Corporation values honesty, respect, integrity, trustworthiness, openness and reliability. By using the strengths and opportunities of all counties in the region, they are able to build collective and beneficial opportunities for everyone.

CHAPTER 11. TRANSPORTATION DIVERSITY

Transportation systems are created with the primary goal of transporting people and goods safely and efficiently. The components that comprise the transportation element of this plan include vehicular and pedestrian movement, traffic flow, street classifications, public transit, railroad and airport facilities. Community leaders and elected officials strive to commit the necessary resources to construct, improve and maintain the many miles of city streets and infrastructure throughout the community. Estherville should continue to emphasize a balance between maintaining, rehabilitating or replacing existing streets with new construction of planned future streets in developing areas.

TRANSPORTATION & LOGISTICS

Location and access to major markets for the shipment of goods and services is essential to survival in the business marketplace. Estherville is centrally located in the Upper Midwest with access to interstates, rail and air service, making it a strategic base for transporting goods within the region and nationwide. On a regional level, Estherville is centrally located between Des Moines, IA (187 miles) and Minneapolis, MN (187 miles). Sioux Falls, SD is located 112 miles west. Estherville is served directly with rail and air access, along with two Iowa state highways bisecting the community. Estherville is located approximately 20 miles south of Interstate 90. To learn more about Estherville's transportation and logistics, contact the City Office at 712-362-7771.

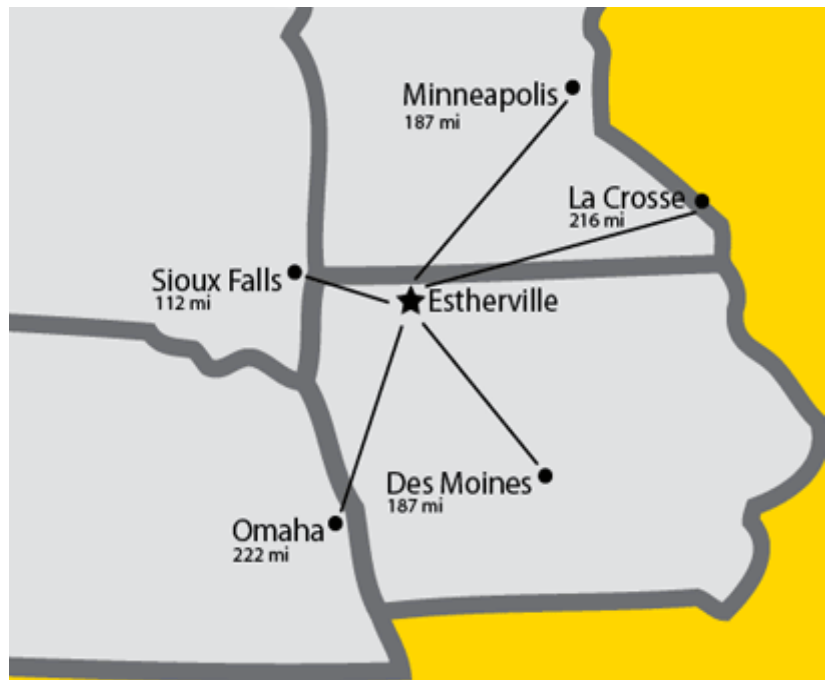


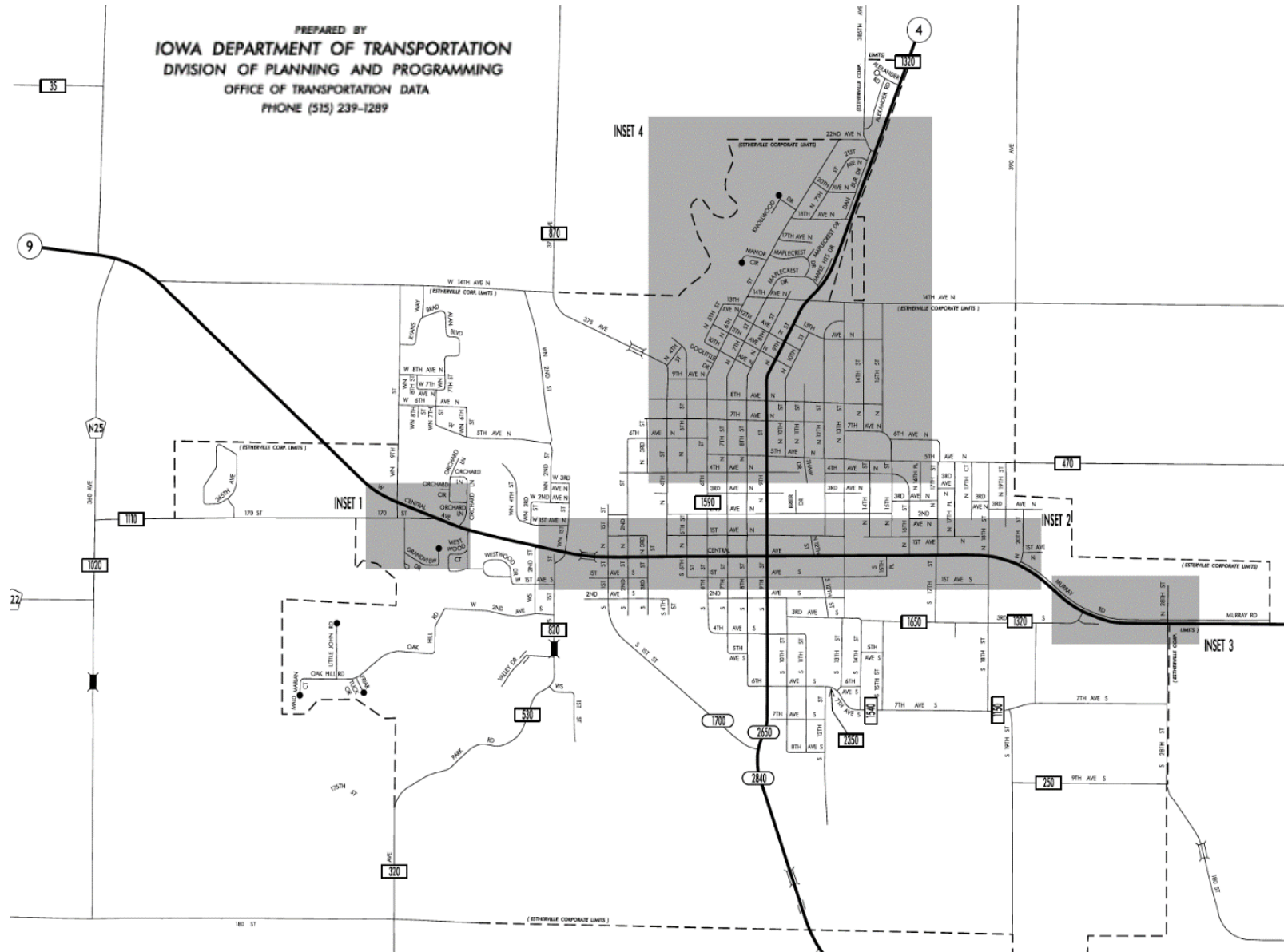
Figure 33 – Regional location map showing Estherville's presence in the

TRAFFIC FLOW

Comparing the 2003 to 2011 Iowa DOT Traffic Flow maps the overall trend appears to show a decrease in the number of overall traffic flow throughout the community. The primary transportation route in Estherville remains to be the Iowa Highway 9 and Iowa Highway 4 corridors. Much of the change in traffic flow is reflective of population trends experienced over the past 10-15 years. The numbers between 2003 and 2011 reflect the overall traffic flow decreasing on most roadways, but the highways and major collector routes have not declined as fast as the secondary roadways in Estherville. This may be attributed to a greater amount of traffic utilizing the major thoroughfares for commuting patterns or simply traveling through Estherville.

Figure 34 – IDOT Traffic Flow Map, 2011

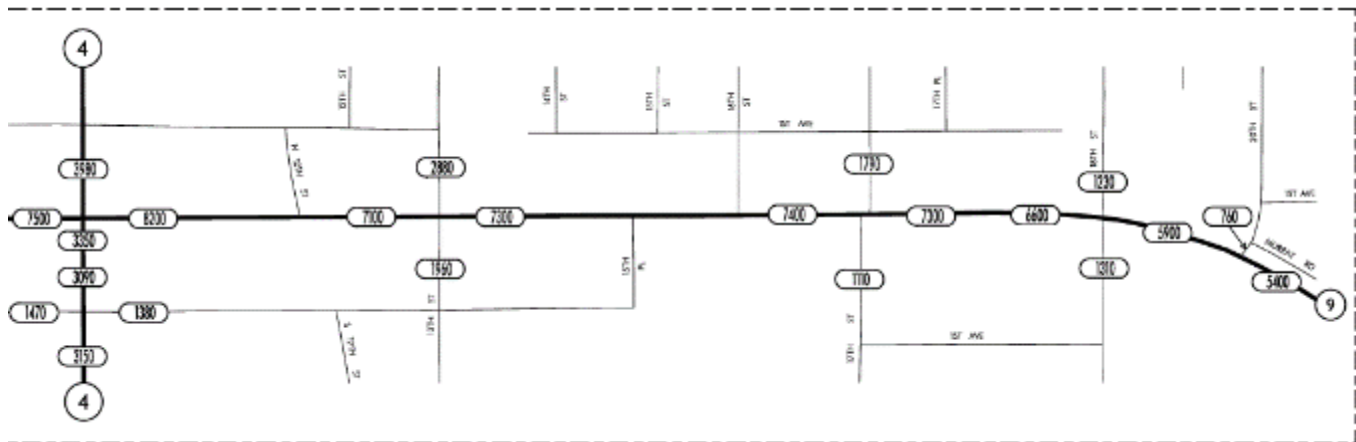
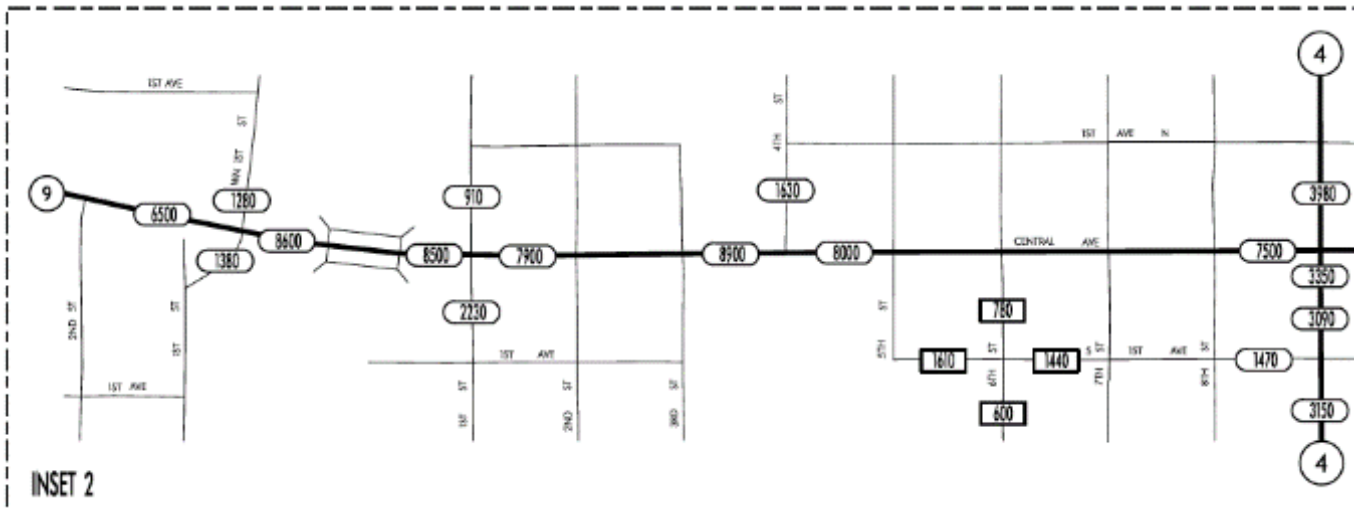
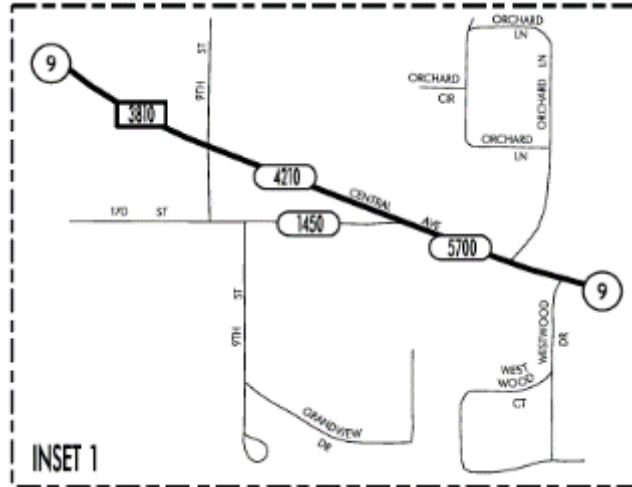
TRAFFIC FLOW MAP OF ESTHERVILLE EMMET COUNTY 2011 ANNUAL AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC

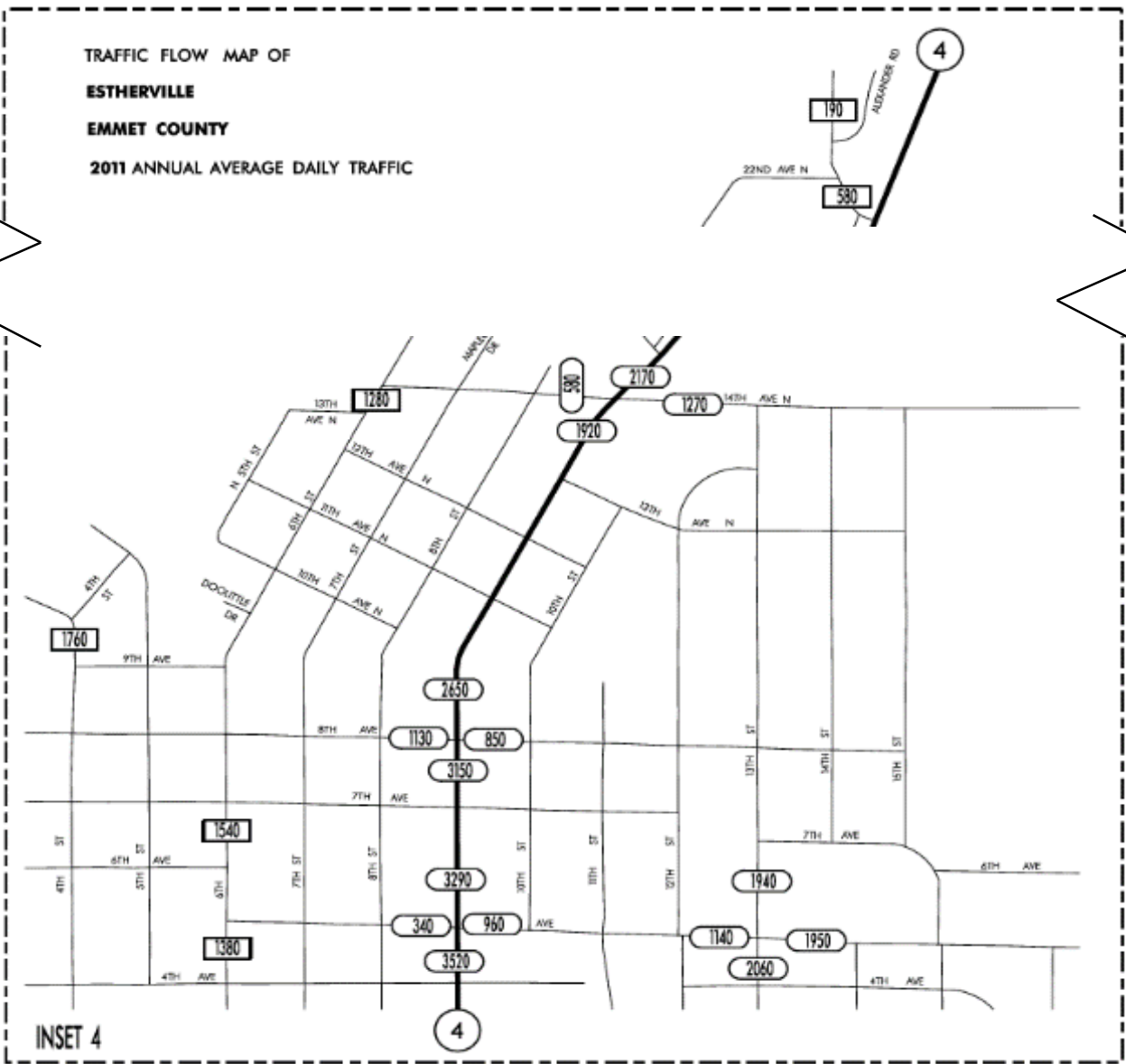
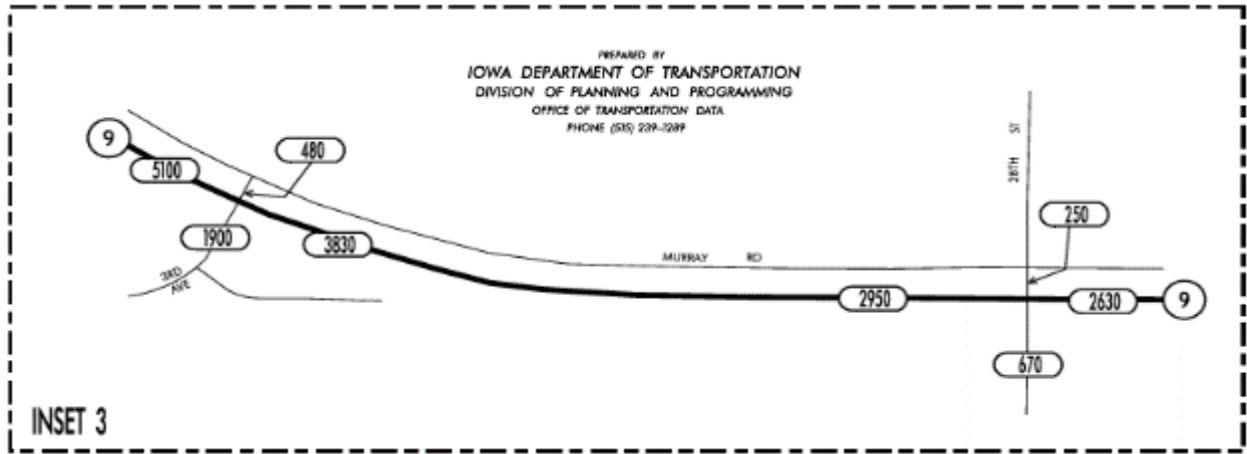


See the following pages for additional inset maps for Iowa DOT Average Daily Traffic counts.

**TRAFFIC FLOW MAP OF
ESTHERVILLE
EMMET COUNTY
2011 ANNUAL AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC**

PREPARED BY
IOWA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DIVISION OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING
OFFICE OF TRANSPORTATION DATA
PHONE (515) 281-1289





Generally, higher traffic counts occur on arterial and collector highways and streets, and near the business district. In 2011, there was an average of 4,210 vehicles entering and leaving Estherville on west side of the community along Highway 9, as compared to 5,400 vehicles in 2003. Similarly, on the east side of Estherville, along Highway 9 a recorded 5,100 vehicles traveled this route daily in 2011; in comparison to 5,900 average daily traffic in 2003. The average daily number of vehicles traveling in and out of the city at the northern city limits was reported at 2,170 in 2011 in comparison with 2,430 vehicles in 2003. The one place in Estherville that saw an increase in average daily traffic between 2003 and 2011 was along Highway 4 north near the Avera Holy Family Hospital. At this location, traffic increased from 3,070 vehicles in 2003 to 3,650 vehicles per day in 2011. This may be attributed to greater employment or greater use at the hospital and surrounding properties. Traffic counts in Estherville remain the highest at the intersection of Highway 4 and 9. On the west side of the intersection, traffic declined from 8,600 average daily traffic to 7,500. Similarly, on the east side of the intersection, traffic decreased from 9,500 average daily traffic to 8,200 in 2011. Traffic along Highway 4 south was recorded at 3,690 in 2003; of which decreased to 3,150 by 2011. Traffic remains consistent along the Highway 9 corridor through much of the community. As reported, the traffic count near the intersection of Highway 4 was 8,600 average daily vehicles in 2011. In comparison, traffic counts near downtown, were 8,900 average daily traffic. Traffic counts recorded at the Des Moines River bridge were 8,600 average daily vehicles in 2011.

STREET CLASSIFICATIONS

The streets of a community are indispensable. Few other elements so drastically affect a city's development. Therefore, this section shall devote attention to the street transportation system in Estherville. Local traffic systems have evolved from a constantly changing set of determinants. A few of these determinants governing current and future roadway design include:

Psychological Factors:

1. The population masses using the traffic system tend to follow the fastest course.
2. When a properly designed traffic system is not provided, the driving public establishes one by finding the routes, regardless of adjacent land uses and other planning considerations.
3. The driving public tends to drive according to environmental conditions of the roadway.

Economic Factors:

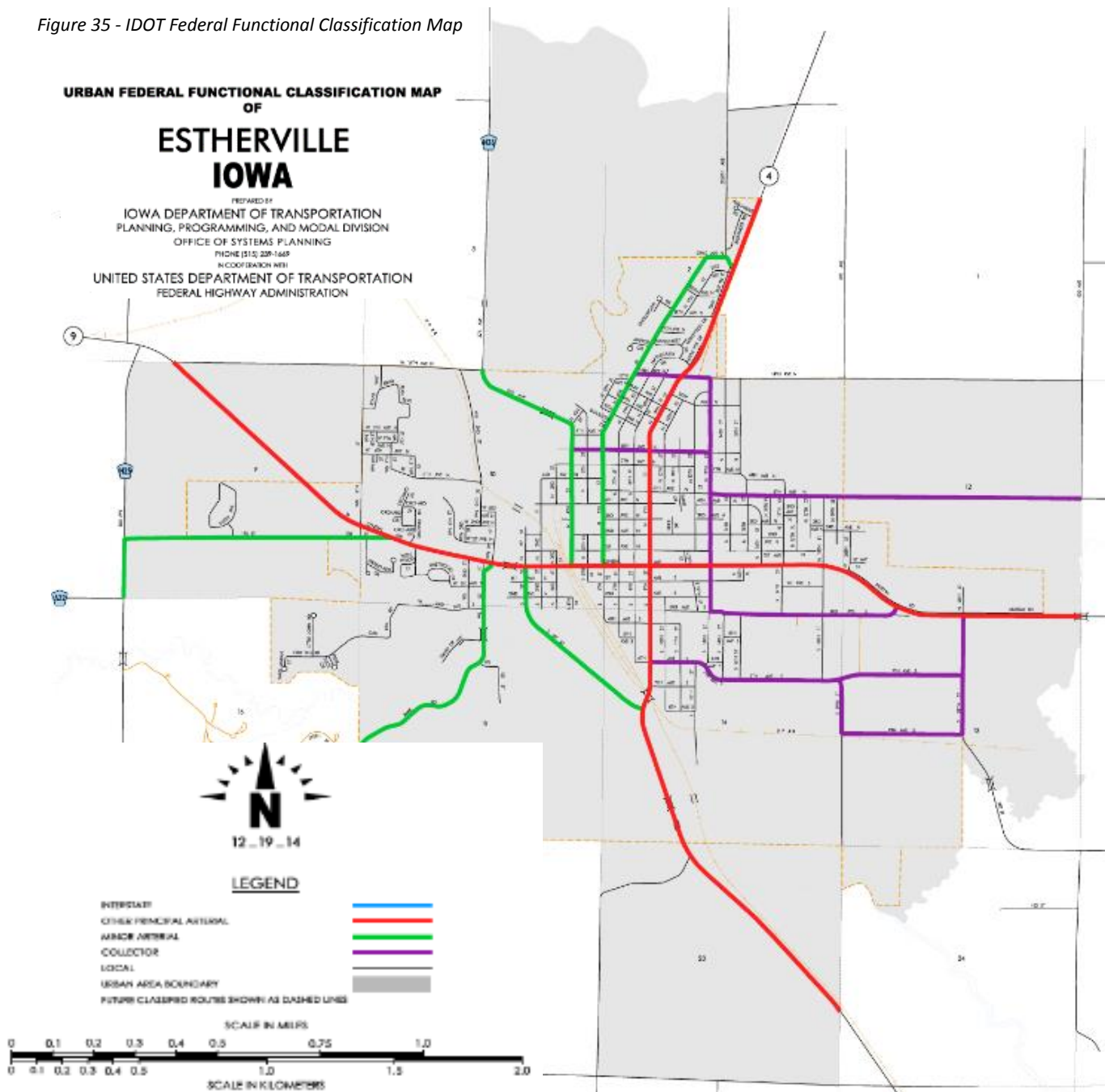
1. Streets and roadways comprise a large percentage of land acreage within the community. Consequently, a substantial capital asset of the city is tied up in land value of the roadways.
2. Capital expenditures for road improvements, maintenance costs, and construction costs of streets are a substantial portion of city, county, state, and federal expenditures.

Physical Factors:

1. Street grades and the grades of abutting properties may severely restrict driver sight distances. This is a particular serious condition at street intersections or driveway entrances to streets.
2. Street intersections can have restricted sight clearances as a result of numerous private and public signs, trees, and shrubs improperly located, vehicles parked too close to the intersection, utility poles blocking view, etc.
3. Poor street alignment, right-of-way cross-sectional grading and drainage techniques, etc. can contribute additional safety hazards.

The following map depicts those routes in Estherville classified according to the Federal Functional Classification system. The highest traffic routes in Estherville are Highways 9 and 4, which are both classified by the Iowa DOT as a principal arterial routes. The next highest classification of roads is a minor arterial route. Those roads in Estherville classified as minor arterials are County Highway A22 on the west side of the community, as well as Park Road. South 1st Street connecting Highway 9 with Highway 4 south is also classified as a minor arterial. The last two streets classified as minor arterials are N. 4th Street and N. 6th Street running from Highway 9 north to the city limits. The next level of street classification includes collector streets. N. 13th Street on the east side of the community is defined as a collector street from 3rd Avenue S. north to the city limits. Other collector streets include 9th Avenue S., 7th Avenue S. and 3rd Avenue S. on the city's east side and 5th Avenue N., 8th Avenue N., and 14th Avenue N. All other streets in Estherville are classified as local streets.

Figure 35 - IDOT Federal Functional Classification Map



An explanation of the following street definitions is necessary for the proper understanding of the IDOT's Federal Functional Classification Map. These definitions are to be considered basic design guidelines that serve as a framework for satisfactory design of new street and highway facilities. The following street classification definitions are in accordance with the Iowa Statewide Urban Design and Specifications (SUDAS). The four major functional classifications for urbanized areas are arterial streets, collector streets, local streets and private streets. These classifications are consistent with American Association of State Highway & Transportation Officials (AASHTO).

ARTERIAL STREETS

1. Major/Principal Arterial - The major/principal arterials serve major centers of activity in urbanized areas and carry a high proportion of total urban travel on a minimum of miles.
2. Minor Arterial - The non-primary arterial connects with and augments the principal arterial system. It accumulates trips of moderate length at a somewhat lower level of movement.

COLLECTOR STREETS

1. Major Collector - Provides movement of traffic between arterial routes and minor collectors and, at lower speeds, collects traffic from local streets and residential and commercial areas.
2. Minor Collector - Provides movement of traffic between major collector routes and local streets as well as providing access to abutting property at low speeds.

LOCAL STREETS

Local streets provide for movement of traffic between collector streets and residential or commercial areas.

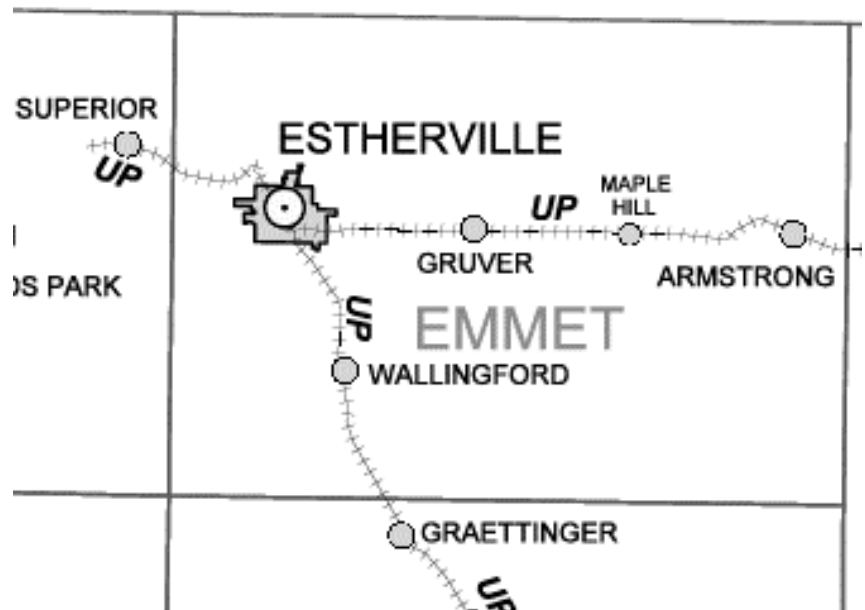
PRIVATE STREETS

Certain jurisdictions allow private streets in specific situations. Private streets are similar to the local streets but generally are located on dead-end roads, short loop streets, or frontage roads.

RAILROAD SERVICES

According to the Iowa DOT Railroad Map, the City of Estherville and Emmet County are served by the Union Pacific (UP) Rail line. There are two UP rail lines that follow the Highway 9 and Highway 4 corridors respectively and merge into one line within the city limits of Estherville. The UP line exits the community to the northwest. It heads to the Green Plains Ethanol plant where the line is terminated. The UP rail line serving the City of Estherville plays an important role in the shipment of agricultural products along with the shipment of raw and finished goods in and out of Estherville.

Figure 36 – Detail from the IDOT Iowa Railroad Map, 2014



TRANSIT SERVICES

The City of Estherville is not provided with direct connection to intercity or charter bus service. There are smaller private charter ride services available to the residents of Estherville. In terms of public transit services, the community continues to be served by the Regional Transit Authority's bus service called "RIDES," which makes daily trips to and throughout Estherville. Transit rides are offered Monday-Friday 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

ESTHERVILLE MUNICIPAL AIRPORT

A well designed airport is a vital tool for community and economic development. The City of Estherville is served by a municipal airport located at 4250 Hwy 9, approximately 2.5 miles east of the city's eastern city limits. The Estherville Municipal Airport is a general service airport. According to the Iowa DOT's Office of Aviation, a general service airport supports most twin and single engine general aviation aircraft. These airports generally support the regional and in-state air transportation needs. The Estherville airport supports the aviation needs of personal and recreational aircraft, as well as the business and corporate air needs for businesses and industries in Estherville and Emmet County. Additionally, Estherville Aviation, a small family owned fixed based operation (FBO), is located on the airport grounds and services small general aviation aircraft along with providing flight instruction and aviation rentals to the general public.

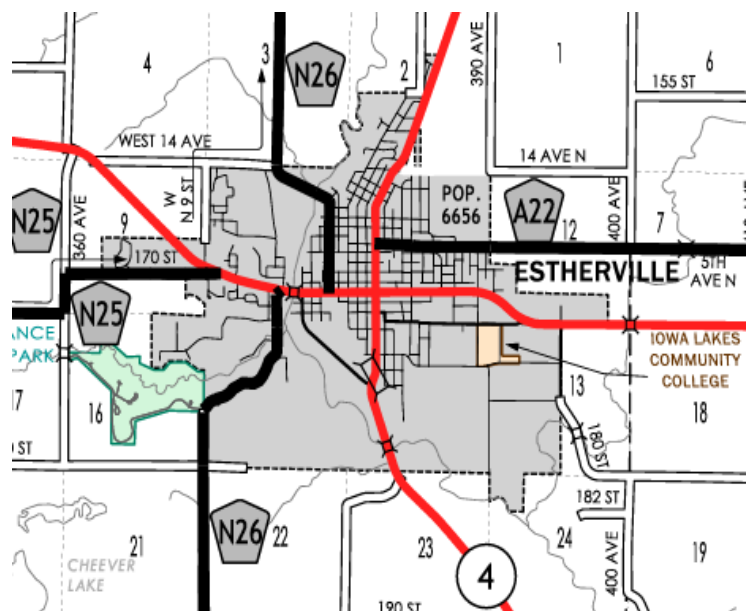
The Estherville Municipal Airport offers two runways. The airport is situated at 1,319 feet above sea level. Runway 16/34 is concrete and in good condition, and measures 4,797 x 75 feet. The second runway, 6/24 is a turf runway in fair condition with the runway measuring 2,985 x 90 feet. Services offered include hangars, fuel, maintenance and aircraft tie-downs. The aircraft operations average 26 per day with 81% for local general aviation and 19% for transient general aviation. There are 23 aircraft based on the field, including 22 single engine and 1 multi engine aircraft. The nearest airport offering commercial air service is Mankato, MN located 83 miles to the northeast. The nearest international airport is in Minneapolis, MN located 165 miles to the northeast.

FARM TO MARKET ROAD SYSTEM

Farm to market roads in Iowa connect principal traffic generating uses to primary roads or other farm to market routes. These designated county routes are maintained by each county, but paid for by a special fund. The Farm to Market Road Fund consists of federal secondary road aid and 8 percent of Iowa's road use taxes. Farm to Market roads within the City of Estherville consist of County Highways A22 and N26 and Iowa Highways 9 and 4.

Figure 37 - IDOT Farm-to-Market Road Map

Farm-to-Market Road System Map
EMMET COUNTY
IOWA



CHAPTER 12. PARKS & RECREATION

Many people choose to spend their leisure time in some form of recreation, whether it is active or passive recreation. This increased demand for recreational areas and activities can put excessive burden on existing facilities, causing them to become inadequate. A sound park system and recreational activities can be categorized as necessary components of a desirable living situation. Many psychologists and biologists have deemed recreation as a positive force. It is believed that recreation creates peace of mind and increases pride within community residents. Therefore, it is apparent that recreation is not only desirable but necessary for the well-being of the residents. A set of goals and objectives are established which act as guidelines that promote orderly development and betterment of the community. Estherville maintains a strong parks and recreational system, however these “green” amenities cannot afford to remain static. As the composition of the community changes over time, so must the recreation system change to meet new demands.

RECREATION, as defined by the Merriam-Webster online Dictionary:

“Something people do to relax or have fun; activities done for enjoyment.”

CITY PARKS

The city park spaces in Estherville fall into one of three classifications: neighborhood, special use and community or school parks. The following section summarizes the facilities, amenities and acreages for the city’s parks.

Neighborhood Parks - neighborhood parks provide residents with a place for active recreation close to home. These spaces are designed for residents in a ¼ mile radius or 10 minute walk from their home. Neighborhood parks typically vary in size from 1 to 10 acres and may contain playground equipment, picnic areas, basketball court, parking, a single ball field or open field for recreational activities or games.

Special Use Parks - these parks typically contain golf courses, arenas, gardens, pools, plazas, historic sites, skate parks, disc golf or dog parks; and are areas based on the unique, cultural, historic or community feature or recreational activity.

Community and School Parks – typically provide facilities for a whole community and school district, and are multi-field athletic complexes or contain facilities that are unique to the particular park. Examples are: picnic shelter with rental, large aquatic facility, and multiple tennis courts. When making a school and community park the city and school district work together on recreational facility planning, typically the large scaled park that can be used by the athletic teams of the school and also be used by community teams.

There are eleven (11) public parks owned and maintained by the city in addition to the municipal swimming pool. Although not located within the city limits, the Estherville Golf Course is adjacent to the city’s west side and is considered by many to be a recreational amenity in the community.

Photo of swinging bridge at Riverside Park

Riverside Park - This community park is located on the 100 block of N 1st Street. The park, situated upon 11.34 acres of land, has ample green space for walking, playing or picnicking. Riverside Park is mostly comprised of low lying floodplain areas adjacent to the river. The most widely recognized amenity in Riverside Park is the entrance to the swinging bridge that crosses the river. Riverside Park is also the location of the city's outdoor ice skating rink during the winter months.



W.B. Mickelson Park – At 11.85 acres, this park space is one of the larger community parks. Mickelson Park is located on the south side of the Highway 9 bridge in the 100 block of S 1st Street. As one of the most utilized park spaces in Estherville, this park offers beautiful scenic views of the West Fork Des Moines River, has river access, and is home to the community swimming pool and Rock Garden. Furthermore, this centrally located park contains playground equipment, picnic facilities, off street parking, restrooms, and a basketball court.

*Photos of W.B. Mickelson Park including:**Top left**- A beautiful river view and access**Top right**- The Rock Garden in the park**Right**- The Estherville community swimming pool located in the park*

Joe Hoyer Park – Aside from the athletic fields south of the Iowa Lakes Community College campus, Joy Hoyer Park is the city's largest park space at 37.44 acres. This park is located between West N. 2nd Street and the 4th Street Bridge on the west side of the West Fork Des Moines River. Similar to Riverside Park, Joe Hoyer Park consists of a lot of floodplain lands for the Des Moines River. This park also has playground equipment, picnic areas, a shelter house, ballfield, basketball court, and is



home to the city's Frisbee golf course. The park's shelter house can be rented free of charge by contacting the Estherville Park and Recreation office. Joe Hoyer Park is also one of the best places to take in scenic vistas of the Des Moines River corridor.



Photo of the shelter and playground at Joe Hoyer Park (above) along with a photo of the Des Moines River corridor from the north end of Joe Hoyer Park (left).

Ed Thoreson Memorial Park - This community park is situated on the city's northeast side at 6th Avenue North and 15th Street. Although containing many amenities, the primary focus of this 15.4 acre park is to serve as the community's central hub for athletic sporting fields. Thoreson Park is where the city's summer youth baseball and softball games are held, as well as traveling team tournaments. This park also contains volleyball courts and soccer fields. Other fun and recreational amenities offered at Thoreson Park include playground equipment, a bocce ball court, sand volleyball, park benches, picnic facilities, and three shelter areas. The park shelters consist of the Open Shelter, the Sanborn Shelter (containing public restrooms, grills, electricity and kitchen appliances), and the Pavilion which also serves as the concession stand during the summer rec programs. The open shelter is free of charge and the Sanborn Shelter and Pavilion can both be rented for a nominal fee through the city's Park and Recreation Department.



Photos of Thoreson Park sign and the ballfields at the park



Trinity Park – A good example of a small neighborhood park situated on the city's far north side. Trinity Park is comprised of 1.7 acres of land located at the corner of 20th Avenue North and Dan Bur Drive. In recent years, the city had upgraded and added to the playground equipment for the neighborhood children to enjoy. There is also off street parking available to safely access and enjoy the park.



Photo of Trinity Park



Lincoln Park –

Lincoln Park is one of the city's newest neighborhood parks. The park is located at the corner of N. 9th Street and 12th Avenue North. The park contains a large, partially fenced family friendly and accessible playground for all persons to enjoy. There are several picnic areas in the park. This location is also a bus stop for local students throughout the school year.

Spurgin Park – Spurgin Park is a community park located in the southeast part of Estherville along 7th Avenue South near S. 15th Street. This is the city's largest park at 46.3 acres of land, and is conveniently located adjacent to the Iowa Lakes Community College Baseball Complex. In addition to the baseball field, Spurgin Park hosts four (4) tennis courts, public restrooms, picnic areas, park benches, and a 1 mile limestone walking trail.



Photo of Spurgin Park

South 10th Street Park – This small neighborhood park consists of 1.3 acres of land. As the name would imply, the park is along S. 10th Street between 4th and 6th Avenues S. This neighborhood park consists of playground equipment, a kickball field and open grass space for the neighborhood children to play.



Photo of Wayne King Park

Wayne King Park –

This nice small neighborhood park is comprised of 1.2 acres of land. Wayne King Park can be found on N. 14th Street between 2nd and 4th Avenues. The park hosts a number of nice amenities including playground equipment and an open shelter house with picnic tables.

Jensen Park – This 1.1 acre neighborhood park is located in the Carrico Heights neighborhood in northwest Estherville. This relatively new park is equipped with playground equipment, an open shelter and picnic tables, along with a large open grass play area.

Photo of S. 14th St. Park



South 14th Street Park – Another small neighborhood park, this one is located at the corner of S. 14th Street and 5th Avenue South. This is a 1.2 acre park. It is equipped with playground equipment, and a large open area for the neighborhood kids to gather and play ball.

Photo of Fitzgibbons Park

Jean & Leo Fitzgibbons Park – At 1.7 acres in size, this small north-side neighborhood park is a relaxing place for people to enjoy. Fitzgibbons Park is a triangular piece of land donated by the family of the park's namesake. It is located at the corner of 14th Avenue N. and N. 9th Street (Iowa Highway 4). At this time, there is no picnic or play equipment located at the park.



Former Railroad R.O.W. Greenspace – Although not classified as a city park, the former north-south U.P. Railroad right-of-way through Estherville has been acquired by the city and converted into an open greenspace corridor that bisects the community from Highway 9 north to the northern city limits. This open greenspace corridor through a residential part of the community provides a nice area for neighborhood children to play.

ESTHERVILLE GOLF COURSE

The Estherville Golf Course is located adjacent to the city's western city limits. The golf course plays an integral role in providing additional recreational amenities to the residents and visitors of Estherville. This beautiful, fun, yet challenging 9-hole golf course is situated between the city's newest residential subdivision



to the north and abuts Fort Defiance State Park on the southern edge of the course. This Par 35 course features a course rating of 34.9 and has a slope rating of 122 from the blue tee box. According to the golf course's website at www.esthervillegolfcourse.com, the Estherville Golf course *"...proves to be more challenging than many in the area, with mature trees, rolling hills, and sand bunkers."* The Estherville Golf Course is committed to providing a quality golf experience to the general public and also offers affordable memberships for singles and families, as well as "Early Bird Specials" and "All Day Specials". In addition to the course and grounds, the Estherville Golf Course has many other amenities including cart storage and the clubhouse restaurant with a full bar. The clubhouse restaurant can be rented out for parties or events, which hosts an indoor capacity of 250 people with an additional 100 person capacity on an outdoor patio. This beautiful scenic area is the perfect place to host birthdays, anniversaries, or graduations.



Photo of Estherville golf course

ESTHERVILLE TRAILS

The city is working to increase the amount of designated walking/biking trails within the community. Realizing that many people participate in walking, running, bicycling and other active outdoor activities, the city leaders in Estherville want to ensure its residents have a safe and fun environment in order to participate in these activities. Currently, the city's only designated trail

segment is the mile long trail in Spurgin Park. The city is also in the process of planning for additional trail segments that will traverse the city's riverfront parks as well as a trail segment planned for the railroad greenspace corridor.

There are other unique trails present in and near Estherville that are not present elsewhere in the State of Iowa. For instance, for the more extreme trail user, there are several miles of extreme off-road trails traversing the rugged terrain in Fort Defiance State Park. There are 10 designated trails, ranging from interpretive trails to easy prairie loop trails to the extremely difficult ravine trails which are perfect for mountain bikers, hikers or anyone wanting to experience a challenging trail experience.



Furthermore, when one hears the word trails, it is automatically assumed one is referring to a paved trail utilized by walkers, runners, bikers, etc. However, Estherville is unique from the perspective that this community is home to the start of a river trail. River trail utilization is growing in the state of Iowa and many people, both local residents and visitors, are discovering how fun, exciting and physically demanding water trails can be. Some people hit the water trails purely for fun and enjoyment, whereas others use the water trails as a part of a physical fitness regimen. The Des Moines River Trail begins its course in Emmet County and continues south through parts of northcentral Iowa. The scenic and

beautiful West Fork Des Moines River in Emmet County provides for more than 20 miles to explore via boat, canoe, kayak or tube. There are several access points for the water trail to accommodate starting and end points for your next adventure in Emmet County.

EMMET COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION AREAS (NEAR ESTHERVILLE)

With more than 300 acres of parks, trails, natural areas and historic sites in Emmet County, there is something for everyone whether it's camping, hiking, biking, fishing, hunting, educational programs, boating, swimming, birding and more. Emmet County Conservation is directly responsible for overseeing the parks and wildlife areas in the county. This section will provide a brief overview of those county managed lands in proximity to the City of Estherville.

Emmet County Nature Center

The Emmet County Nature Center is the headquarters for the Emmet County Conservation Board. This nature center facility is located at 2303 450th Ave. The nature center houses several interactive displays, wildlife mounts, and local artistry. The nature center is open to the public Wednesday-Friday 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Wolden Recreation Area & Campground

This county run campground and natural area is located on the shores of the 467 acre High Lake in central Emmet County. The park is 65 acres along the lake shoreline and contains a 90 unit campground, 40 camp sites are equipped with 50 amp service, shower house, playground, shelter house, picnic tables, and a storm shelter. Activities at the Wolden Recreation Area include camping, hiking trails, and an arboretum.

Peterson Point Historic Farmstead

This historic point of interest includes an 1866 restored farmhouse, barn, various outbuildings and machinery. Located only 10 miles southeast of Estherville near High Lake, this historic farmstead hosts several events throughout the year for the public to enjoy such as Christmas on the Farm, Spring Rendezvous, and Pioneer Day.

Tuttle Lake Recreation Area & Campground

This county managed recreation area is situated upon the shore of the 2,294 acre Tuttle Lake on the Iowa-Minnesota border 17 miles northeast of Estherville. The campground offers 60 camp sites along with picnicking and fishing areas.

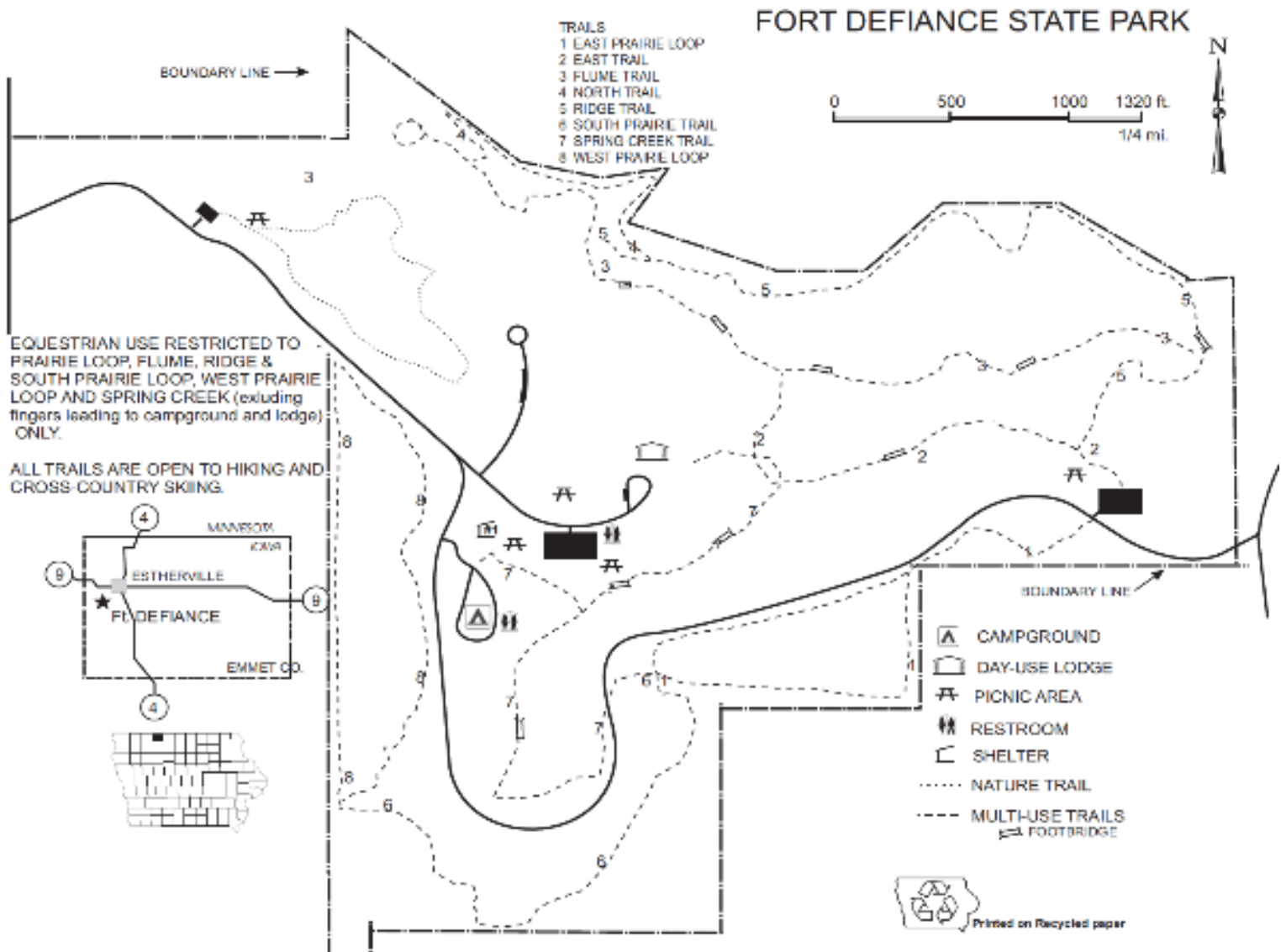
STATE PARKS (NEAR ESTHERVILLE)

The City of Estherville is fortunate to have one of Iowa's great State Parks located on the city's doorstep. Fort Defiance State Park, located adjacent to the city's southwest city limits, is a relatively small state park of 191 acres. The park includes densely wooded lands full of ravines, hilltops, and exciting places to explore. Within the park is a 16 site primitive campground sites with electricity present at 8 of the sites.

In addition to camping there are facilities for day trips, including picnic sites, an open shelter, and a beautiful lodge constructed in the style of an old army outpost. The lodge at Fort Defiance can be rented out to the public through the State's reservation system and is a great place to host receptions, weddings, parties, etc.



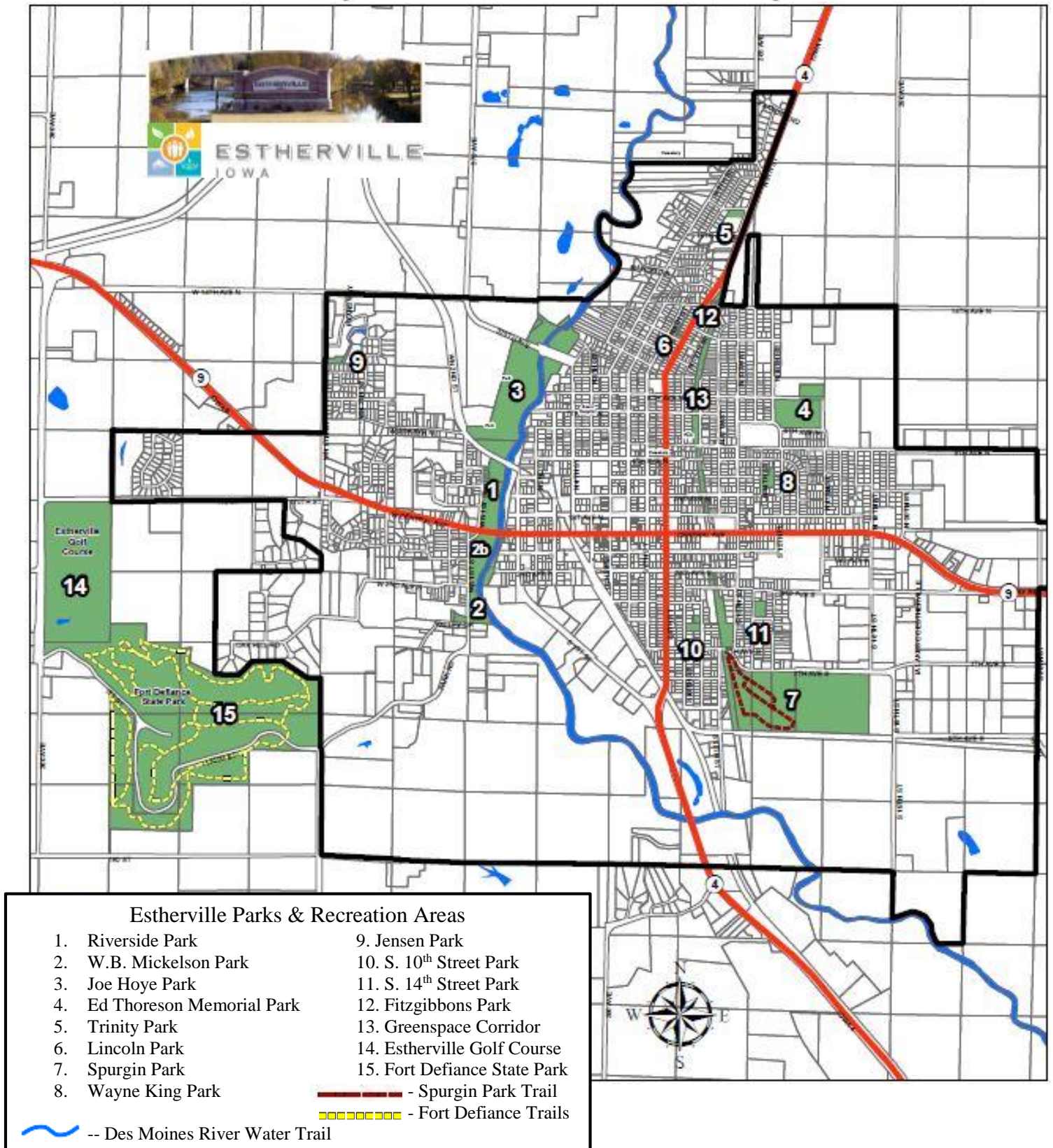
In addition to camping, the lodge and picnicking facilities at Fort Defiance, this State Park also boasts a comprehensive, challenging and adventurous trail network throughout the park. There are eight (8) individual trail loops of varying levels of difficulty and length that provide opportunities to everyone from the casual hiker to the adventurous off road biker. Below is a map of Fort Defiance State Park showing the trail loops.



2015 ESTHERVILLE PARKS & RECREATION MAP

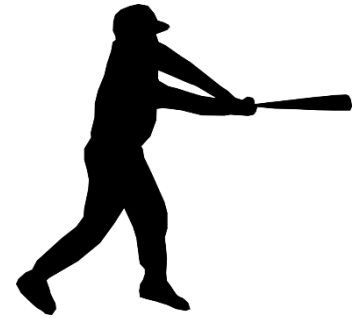
On the following page is a map showing the city's current park and recreation areas in and adjacent to Estherville. This map is intended to show an inventory of current parks and recreational land uses. This map was created with information provided by Estherville city staff.

Comprehensive Plan - Parks & Recreation Map



CITY RECREATION ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMS

The Estherville Parks and Recreation Department is run by a seven (7) member board comprised of volunteers from the community. The day-to-day operations of the Parks Department's activities and responsibilities is covered by City of Estherville staff. The Parks and Recreation Department is responsible for overseeing the operations, maintenance and future planning for the city's parks, trails, outdoor swimming pool, shelter house reservations, ballfield scheduling, and running the city's youth recreation programs.



The Estherville Parks and Recreation Department offers a variety of recreational programs throughout the year. Most notable of the city's rec programs is the summer youth baseball and softball programs. Games and tournaments are held at Thoreson Park. In addition to summer youth baseball and softball, the city also offers youth tennis lessons, Sanborn Sun Crafters program and a summer Swim Team program.

RESPONSIBILITIES FOR PROVIDING RECREATION USES

Those entities responsible for providing and maintaining recreation uses involve both the public and private sectors, and it's essential that each sector understand its responsibilities. The federal government has little power affecting recreation uses in Estherville. Funding policies of federal agencies do influence the community. The primary concern of the federal government is the provision for and protection of areas that attract national attention. Estherville's surrounding area does not contain any nationally significant landforms or attractions.

The State of Iowa is responsible for the provision of facilities that have regional or statewide influence. The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) is the state agency directly concerned with outdoor recreation uses. The Iowa Department of Transportation, Iowa Economic Development Authority, Iowa Natural Resources Council, State Archeologists and the State Historical Society are other state agencies that may also exert direct and indirect influence on state recreation programs. Those areas nearest to Estherville that attract regional or statewide attention include the West Fork Des Moines River corridor and Fort Defiance State Park.

The principal agency involved with providing outdoor recreation at the county level is the Emmet County Conservation Board. This Board is responsible for countywide recreation plans, the implementation of such plans and the general obligation to provide outdoor education and recreation areas to the residents of the county.

Within the City of Estherville, the City Council is ultimately responsible for the provision of recreational uses and activities, with oversight and administration provided by city staff. The city's park system consists of public use areas such as the swimming pool, picnic grounds, playgrounds, tennis courts and baseball/softball fields. A high proportion of future outdoor recreation uses is expected to take place on or in privately owned facilities. Generally speaking, the private sector provides recreation uses typical of high intensity uses, such as driving ranges, golf courses, roller-skating, laser tag, fitness centers, health clubs, and camping. With each of these agencies providing facilities appropriate to their particular scope a balanced program will be achieved. An organized

continuation of recreation uses is essential for meaningful service to benefit Estherville's residents. Changing priorities and demands on recreation amenities requires foresight if the city is to meet future needs, while simultaneously continuing with maintenance and upgrading of existing facilities.



STATE OF IOWA PROJECTED RECREATION TRENDS & GOALS

In 2013, the most recent statewide comprehensive outdoor recreation plan or SCORP was developed and resulted in the Outdoor Recreation in Iowa Plan. When planning future outdoor recreation uses and activities it becomes necessary to identify issues and priorities facing recreation activities. The Iowa Department of Natural Resources was granted the task of bringing together many diverse persons with a strong interest in outdoor recreation. In support of Governor Brandstad's

"Goals for Iowa", the following recreation planning statistics support the Governor's future goals. According to research by Iowa State University in 2012, spending in Iowa's state parks, county parks, lakes, rivers, streams, and multi-use trails contributes more than \$2 billion of economic activity which helps support 31,000 jobs statewide. Furthermore, as stated in the plan, outdoor recreation opportunities help local businesses recruit new employees, as well as grow and sustain businesses.

As most of us are aware, parks and recreational uses provide many benefits to the individual user, families and the entire community. Examples of benefits derived from outdoor recreation include:

1. **Environmental benefits** – People with a connection to the outdoors also support conservation and preservation of natural resources.
2. **Physical benefits** – Walking, hiking, biking and other outdoor activities keep Iowans healthy throughout their life.
3. **Emotional benefits** – Spending time outdoors reduces stress and re-energizes us to take on the tasks of everyday life.
4. **Social benefits** – Open spaces and recreation areas are natural draws for people to come together and spend time with family and friends.
5. **Economic benefits** – People who participate in outdoor recreation contribute to their communities through local spending.

One of the primary components to the outdoor recreation plan is to explore and examine recreation trends across the state and comparisons to national trends. In order to accomplish this examination of current trends in recreational usage and desires, in 2012 the Iowa Department of Natural Resources distributed 1,000 surveys to residents of Iowa. Other methods of public input involved the Iowa Park Foundation working with ETC Institute conducting focus group sessions around Iowa and surveying participants about State Parks. Additionally, Iowa State University completed an economic survey and report on outdoor recreation and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service released Iowa-specific survey data regarding outdoor recreation activities. Based on the recreation survey, the survey results from Iowa Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan show:

Overall Participation in Outdoor Recreation in Iowa

- Walking (89%)
- Picnicking, barbecuing or cooking out (83%)
- Driving for pleasure (56%)
- Family oriented activities (52%)
- Swimming (49%)
- Fishing (46%)
- Observing, feeding or photographing wildlife (44%)

**Most Interest in Outdoor Recreation Activities**

- Picnicking, barbecuing or cooking out (88%)
- Walking (82%)
- Family oriented activities (76%)
- Driving for pleasure (62%)
- Fishing (60%)
- Swimming (58%)
- Trails for physical fitness (56%)
- Lake fishing (55%)
- Camping (55%)
- Fishing from shore (53%)
- Visiting entertainment facilities (52%)
- Observing, feeder or photographing wildlife (51%)

**Average Number of User Days per Activity**

- Walking (120.9 days among all Iowans)
- Observing, feeding or photographing wildlife (59.0 days)
- Picnicking, barbecuing or cooking out (31.7 days)
- Driving for pleasure (25.1 days)
- Jogging or running (22.9 days)
- Trails for physical fitness (21.2 days)



Although the SCORP is a statewide plan, one of the more interesting statistics reports that residents in Iowa overwhelmingly utilize municipal or city parks (73%), whereas, only 60% report utilizing county parks or conservation areas. Furthermore, just less than half of the people responding to the survey reportedly use State parks (48%), and less than one third of Iowans (32%) use Federal parks.

State Outdoor Recreation Priorities

As stated in the State's SCORP Plan, outdoor recreation in Iowa needs the support of Iowans in order to increase participation and conservation of natural resources in the state. As part of the planning process, the State developed five (5) primary priorities to be addressed in order for the State to move forward in a positive direction over the next five years. The priorities are not listed in any specific order of importance.

Priority 1. Address funding challenges as they relate to growing healthy and sustainable opportunities in outdoor recreation and open spaces for Iowa.

Priority 2. Create places to go in Iowa that exemplify best practices in natural resources conservation and protection while providing a variety of opportunities for outdoor recreation.

Priority 3. Encourage collaboration and planning efforts to advance outdoor recreation.

Priority 4. Promote outdoor recreation as a means to achieve healthier lifestyles, enhancing the quality of life for all Iowans.

Priority 5. Better understand Iowans' outdoor recreation wants and needs, and develop effective tools that connect them to Iowa's natural resource opportunities based on their unique demographics and interest.

RECREATION FUNDING ALTERNATIVES

The Estherville City Council, community schools (public and private), and various service clubs in the community are responsible for providing recreational activities in Estherville. A community Park Board or advisory committee will certainly aid the City Council in making park related decisions. Generally speaking, revenues derived from taxation usually finance recreation facilities and activities. However, the city should continue to research, apply, and utilize state and federal grant funds administered through the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, such as the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LAWCON) or the Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) program. The City Council should remain flexible in all budgetary programs. There are a number of methods to finance park development or acquisition. The city should pursue all avenues of funding. Below is a partial listing of resource and revenue sources that Estherville may utilize for continued park and recreation development.

- City Council appropriations
- Tax levies
- Donations of money and land by public, private and semi-private sources
- Revenue sharing
- User fees
- Cooperative funding by various levels of governments
- County, regional, state, or federal grants

Park improvements are included in the annual city budget. Future recreational needs will be programmed in the capital improvements section of this city's budget.

CHAPTER 13. PLANNING GOALS & LAND USE POLICIES

The comprehensive planning and visioning process provides tools for directing change in Estherville. A community vision will only happen if local leaders continue to consider new or nontraditional planning methods and techniques, and address land use problems that may arise. There is a large commitment required to make the planning process and this document successful. The Planning and Zoning Commission will continue to work with city leaders to guide the implementation of this plan and other development issues of the community. This plan is not a “quick fix” to the future economic and community development of Estherville. However, this plan can serve as a guide to future development decisions. A comprehensive land use plan needs to be modified and updated over time in order to maintain current plan goals and control ordinances. The extent of growth experienced by the city will play a major role in determining how often and what types of adjustments will be required.

The following planning terms should be defined for this plan:

GOALS are broad statements of intent or priority covering a long period of time

OBJECTIVES are specific land use decisions, are a means by which the goal is reached

LAND USE POLICIES delineate specific courses of action used to meet the objectives

The previous sections of this plan contain background information upon which land use objectives and policies are based. The background elements are analyzed with regards to statistics, availability, inadequacies, preliminary recommendations, etc. Factors affecting development of such land use objectives and policies include considerations such as the public interest, social values, human behavior, economics, convenience, physical characteristics, and political climate. The unpredictability of how various interrelated determinants affect each other combined with an effort to control and plan for future development based on these factors necessitates a combination of objectivity and subjectivity. This plan is developed by considering these trends, needs, etc. from which the background supporting data indicates. By no means can the future be predicted with the accuracy that all portions of the plan can be carried out in an orderly fashion. Thus, flexibility is built into the plan in the form of goals, objectives, and recommendations to be utilized by the City Council and the Planning and Zoning Commission in making land use decisions. Goals, objectives and land use policies can aid in making future decisions by the city that are not specifically spelled out in this plan. The purpose of the overall goals is to state in general terms the end to which all objectives and land use recommendations point. Objectives, though more specific than goals, detail to some extent what the community is working toward in specific areas of focus or concern. Land use policies offer solutions to problems identified as part of the background studies.

LAND USE TERMINOLOGY

DEFINITION OF COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

Comprehensive planning is a transparent, public process in which communities establish a future vision and locally designated standards in order to promote public health, safety and prosperity. Successful planning attracts economic development, protects and preserves the community's resources, and encourages a strong community identity.

Defined by the Rebuild Iowa Office "Iowa Smart Planning", 2010.

<i>Vacant/No Land Use -</i>	Land having no impact, improvements, or any obvious current land use. This may include abandoned buildings or structures, or properties or land that is currently not utilized for any productive purpose.
<i>Agricultural Land Use -</i>	Land that is being used for crop production, the raising and/or production of livestock, and/or other agricultural-based commodities.
<i>Single Family Residential Land Use -</i>	Structures occupied for dwelling purposes by a single-family or two families living in separate dwelling units under a common roof.
<i>Multiple Family Residential Land Use -</i>	Structures occupied for dwelling purposes containing three (3) or more dwelling units.
<i>Commercial Land Use -</i>	Structures and/or land used primarily for retail trade and service such as retail, grocery, entertainment, food service, and other related businesses providing for the sale of goods, products, and services; but excluding wholesale trade and manufacturing businesses.
<i>Public/Civic Land Use -</i>	Structures and/or land available for use by the general public for non-commercial purposes such as schools, churches, cemeteries, fraternal or social clubs, and all government buildings.
<i>Industrial Land Use -</i>	Those uses of economic activity including forestry, fishing, mining, manufacturing, extracting raw materials, transportation, communications, and utilities.
<i>Parks and Recreation Land Use -</i>	Public and/or private areas devoted to active or passive recreation Activities for use by the general public. This includes city, county and state parks, playgrounds, trails, and similar uses.
<i>Annexation -</i>	The incorporation of land into an existing community with a resulting change in the boundaries of that community.
<i>Growth Management -</i>	The pacing of the rate or controlling of the location of development via law enactment to manage a community's growth.
<i>Smart Growth -</i>	An approach to land use planning and growth management that recognizes connections between development and quality of life. In developing areas, the approach is more town-centered, transit and

pedestrian oriented. Smart growth also seeks to preserve open space and other natural resource amenities.

Existing Land Use - The current use of a lot or structure at the time of the comprehensive plan study.

Future Land Use - The proposed or intended use of properties or areas of land as depicted in the city's comprehensive land use plan and maps.

Often times, similar definitions are used within the city's zoning ordinance. Zoning definitions should not be confused with the categories listed above. Land use classifications are more general in nature and probable uses of the land are derived only from the appearance of a given land use or property. These categories are meant only to aid in studying the composition of the city's current and proposed future land use patterns.

OVERALL GOAL OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The City of Estherville's planning program is based on the following overall comprehensive plan goal. This goal should be the most significant element underlying the comprehensive land use plan. Additional land use objectives or policies will guide the comprehensive planning process. These objectives and policies address growth and development issues in the areas of population and growth, economic development, community facilities and utilities, transportation, housing, parks and recreation and land use development.

The overall goal of the Estherville Comprehensive Land Use Plan is to provide long term guidance, together with land use controls to minimize the number of conflicting land uses while preserving the character of developed areas, maintain diversity among its parts, preserve the irreplaceable natural resources of the community, allocate land to be reserved for designated future land uses, reflect local traditions, facilitate the provision of needed services and facilities, and is adoptable and acceptable to the people of Estherville.

GENERAL LAND USE DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

General development goals and objectives guide the comprehensive planning process and are summarized as follows:

1. Land Use Development & Planning

- Maintain available and functional city planning organizations and programs which will direct the planned development of the community according to well established procedures, and provide the city with a development plan of legal force which facilitates the orderly growth and development of the city.
- Update the plan, related policies, and programs according to local changes and demands.
- Assure active participation and involvement of all residents in all elements of the program.

- Develop a community environment that encourages the preservation of prime agricultural land, preserves environmentally sensitive areas, and preserves historical areas.
- Promote the best land use possible for areas to be developed, including considerations for flood prone areas as indicated by FEMA.

2. Annexation

- Utilize annexation as a tool to supply needed land for growth as existing subdivisions become developed.
- Encourage development of land within the city limits prior to actively annexing additional lands, yet insure new development will be compatible to existing neighborhoods or businesses.
- Utilize annexation as a tool to regulate uncontrolled rural growth and promote orderly development.
- Provide municipal services and utilities to those developed rural areas currently located adjacent to but outside of the city limits, if so desired by and cost incurred by the developer or property owners.

3. Community Facilities and Services

- Make available to all residents of the city all facilities and services, both existing and proposed.
- Continue promotion and development of community facilities which greatly aids in facilitating a high standard of living, public welfare, safety, and overall development.
- Provide the best opportunities for potential students within the community to receive quality education to their desired level of attainment.

4. Residential Development

- Provide convenient access to all desired locations and promote compatible surrounding land uses, opportunity for neighborhood cohesion and identification, a variety of dwelling sites and types, and an array of aesthetics that include clean air, pleasing appearance, maintenance and upkeep of structures and property, etc.
- Provide housing opportunities and types of housing available to all individuals regardless of age, sex, income, race, ethnicity, creed or religion.

5. Commercial Activities

- Develop a diversified local commercial base that will provide the city with a wide range of goods and services.
- Make available areas of development to accommodate the commercial activities and services demanded by the citizens of Estherville and the larger retail trade area.
- Encourage future development to locate within the Central Business District or along the Highway 9 business corridor to better utilize existing infrastructure and result in efficient land use patterns.

6. Industrial Activities

- Provide space, facilities, incentives and support for industries wishing to locate in the city and to integrate these industries and their employees into the community in such a manner that the city will gain economic growth with a minimum of adverse effects.

- Continue efforts toward acquisition of future industrial growth, as well as emphasizing the promotion of industrial development through support of local organizations and personnel available in the area.
- Encourage Industrial development in planned industrial parks or existing industrial sites, where utility demands can be met without costly upgrades. Restricted light industrial uses should be allowed to locate in commercial zoned areas in the community after careful examination and recommendation from the Planning and Zoning Commission.

7. Recreation/Open Space

- Provide citizens with choices for the types and amounts of recreational activities desired.
- Preserve resources which have historical, scientific, scenic, or recreational value.
- Coordinate all possible funding sources to provide recreational facilities for the citizens of the community.
- Reserve land in areas of proposed subdivisions or future developments for use by existing and future residents and visitors.

8. Civic/Public

- Promote and encourage development of new public uses, cultural or civic oriented land uses within Estherville. Public and civic uses complement recreational and natural resource uses by promoting and increasing the quality of life in Estherville.

9. Transportation

- Develop and maintain a transportation system that is planned, located and designed to enhance the efficiency of movement of people and goods, and which supports and promotes all areas of the city.
- Upgrade and expand upon existing and needed transportation facilities as necessary to meet local demands and within local budget constraints.

10. Utilities

- Make quality services available to all residents and business of the city at the lowest possible rates.
- Enhance the living environment and economic potential of the community with necessary services such as fire, water, sewer, electric, communications, streets and gas.
- Encourage new land use developments to locate where adequate infrastructure is present, prior to developing where costly infrastructure needs to be expanded.

LAND USE CHARACTERISTICS & COMMUNITY GROWTH TRENDS

The largest land use category is single family residential. Residential development occurs in large tracts throughout much of the community. The next largest land use category is comprised of agricultural lands within the city limits. Those parcels or tracts of land utilized for conservation and open space, or simply undeveloped property includes nearly 365 acres of land. The fourth largest land use classification includes properties considered civic or public use in nature. These uses typically include churches, schools, hospitals, municipal buildings, library, wastewater treatment plant, water treatment plant, civic clubs or lodges, and other uses typically considered public or civic in nature. A majority of the city's land dedicated to public and civic land uses are comprised of school and college owned lands, cemeteries and the Izaak Walton League. For the most part, public and civic uses are scattered throughout the community with the largest concentration occurring in the east central part of the community where the Estherville Lincoln Central Middle and High

School campus and the Iowa Lakes Community College campus is located. Parks and Recreation lands comprise the next largest land use category in Estherville, many of which are located along the West Fork Des Moines River corridor. Those park and recreational uses scattered throughout the community are typically neighborhood or community parks and the Iowa Lakes Community College athletic fields. The recreational land use acreage calculated for Estherville is only considering those uses within the city limits and not factoring in recreational amenities adjacent to the city limits such as the Estherville Golf & Country Club and Fort Defiance State Park. These two areas significantly increase the amount of recreational land acres for Estherville residents to enjoy. Commercial land uses are concentrated within two primary areas of Estherville. Downtown Estherville is one concentration of commercial uses, and the Highway 9 corridor east of downtown is the other. Those properties utilized for industrial uses continue to be developed, but comprise the second smallest classification of land uses. Most of the city's industrial land uses are confined to two sections of the community, the Estherville Industrial Park on the city's eastern edge, and an industrial area along South 1st Street between 2nd Avenue South and Highway 4 (South 9th Street). The smallest percentage of developed land uses within the community includes multi-family residential properties. These properties are separated from single family residential uses due to their higher density and typically more intense use relative to single family residential. When combining multi-family with single family residential, this strengthens the evidence for the city providing adequate and diversified housing options in Estherville.

Historical growth of the community has developed around the central business district in a grid system street pattern. A changing pattern is now visible in the far northern and western portions of the community. Especially west of the Des Moines River corridor, the prominent street pattern is consumed with curvilinear streets and cul-de-sacs indicative of newer residential subdivisions. The general residential growth of the community over the last ten to twenty years is to the west, north and northeast portions of the community. Conversely, commercial and industrial uses are experiencing growth in the east, southeast and southern parts of the city. Estherville, similar to many other cities in Iowa, is experiencing trends of rural residential sprawl along the fringe of or in close proximity to the city's corporate limits. The urban sprawl developments around Estherville are relatively small and mostly consist of rural subdivisions, rural acreages and rural scattered commercial or industrial uses. These rural land uses should receive consideration for future land use control measures. The city may want to consider future annexations if additional rural growth continues in patterns not consistent with the city's future land use intentions.

The exact amount of land to be devoted to each future land use category in the year 2030 is not known and cannot be accurately estimated. Instead, a realistic estimate of land areas is made relative to the following methodology. First, trends in past, current, and projected populations are examined and analyzed to determine the impact on existing and future planned land uses. Secondly, additional land use areas (future growth areas) are shown on the future land use map. This is done to assure the city's Planning and Zoning Commission has future direction for making land use decisions. The future land use plan is a valuable tool upon which development decisions and zoning controls are based. The future land use plan helps direct future growth and development of the community.

The following table and corresponding chart identify the number of acres occupied by each existing land use category, as well as the percentage of total land in the community within in each respective land use category.

Table 17 - Existing Land Use Composition of Estherville, 2015

Agricultural Land Use	831.94 acres	23.8%
Natural Resource, Open Space or Undeveloped Lands	364.94 acres	10.5%
Single Family Residential Land Use	1,004.91 acres	28.8%
Multiple Family Residential Land Use	58.82 acres	1.7%
Commercial Land Use	164.33 acres	4.7%
Industrial Land Use	144.84 acres	4.1%
Civic & Public Land Use	288.23 acres	8.3%
Parks & Recreation Land Use	175.95 acres	5.0%
Lakes, Ponds & Rivers	42.98 acres	1.2%
Transportation Land Use (street ROW, railroad ROW)	415.15 acres	11.9%
TOTAL	3,492.09 acres	100%

5.45 sq. miles

Figure 38 - Land Use Composition for Estherville, 2015

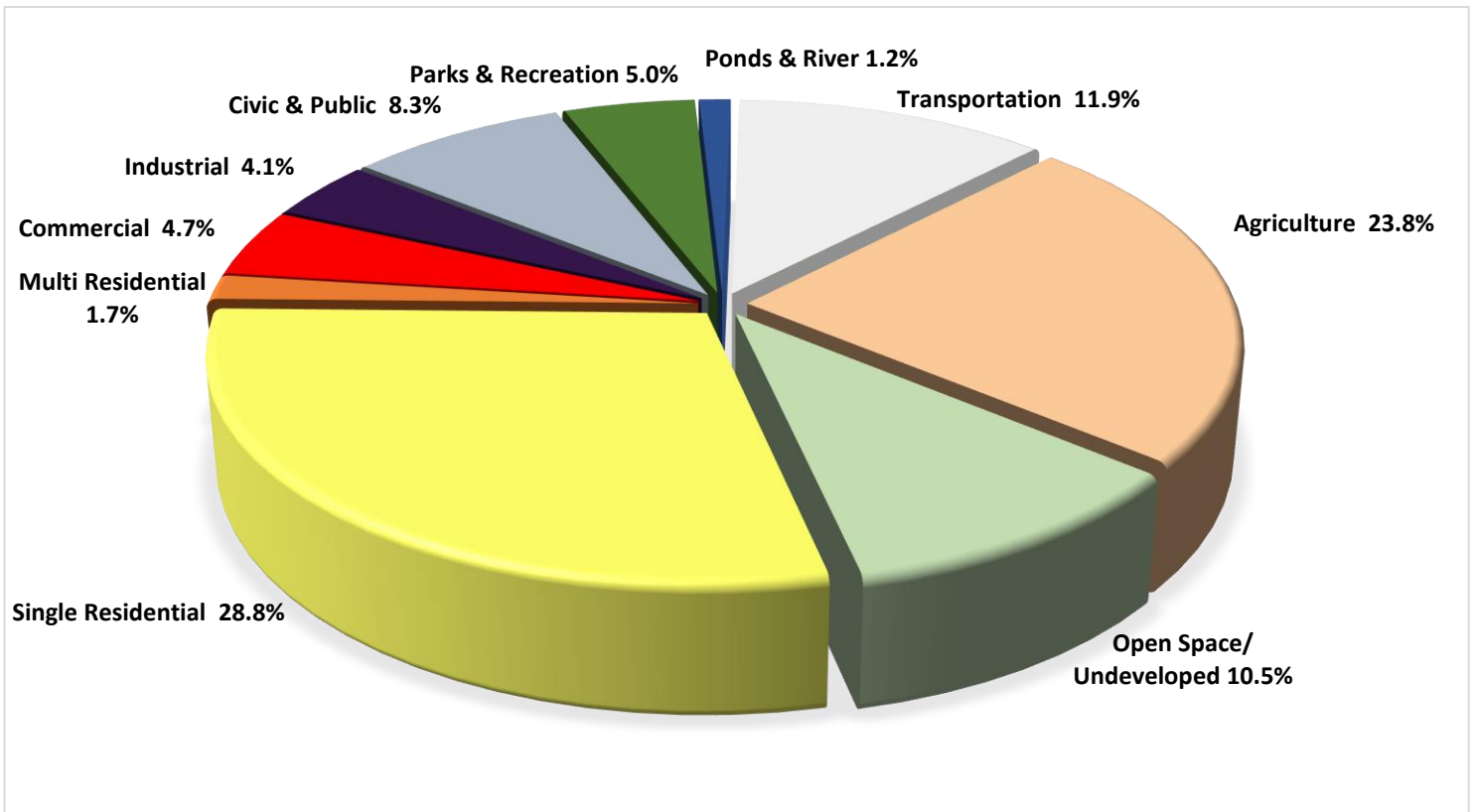
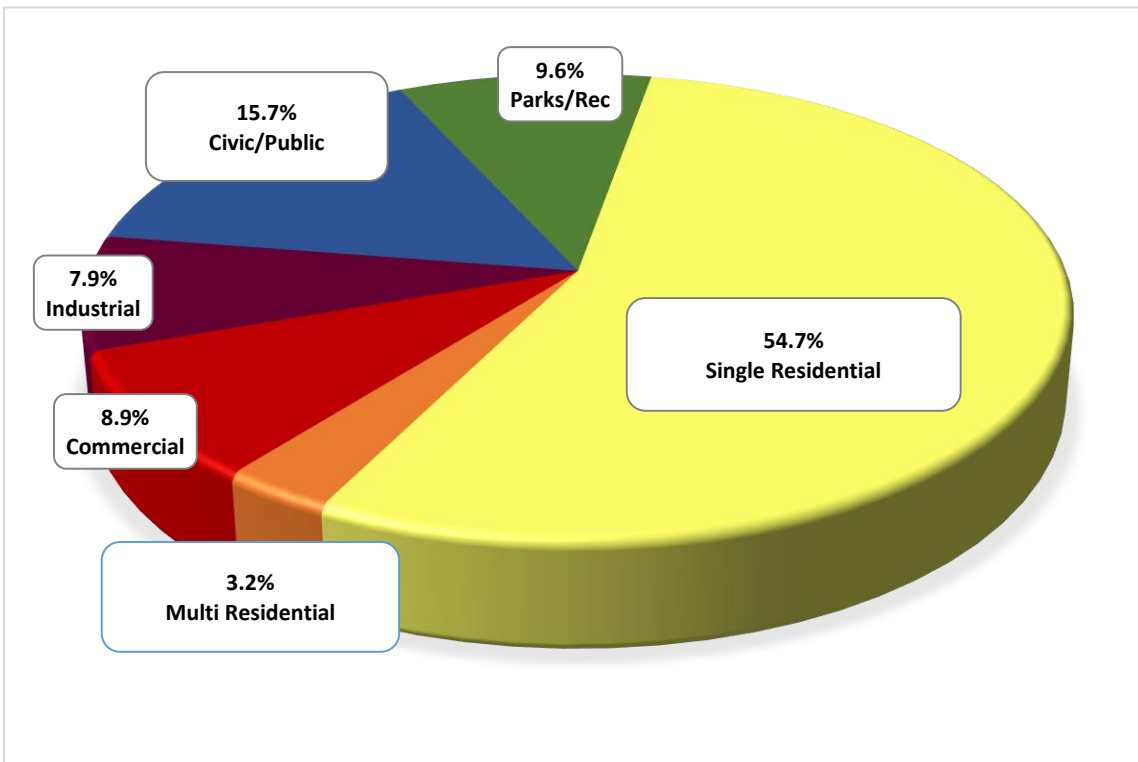


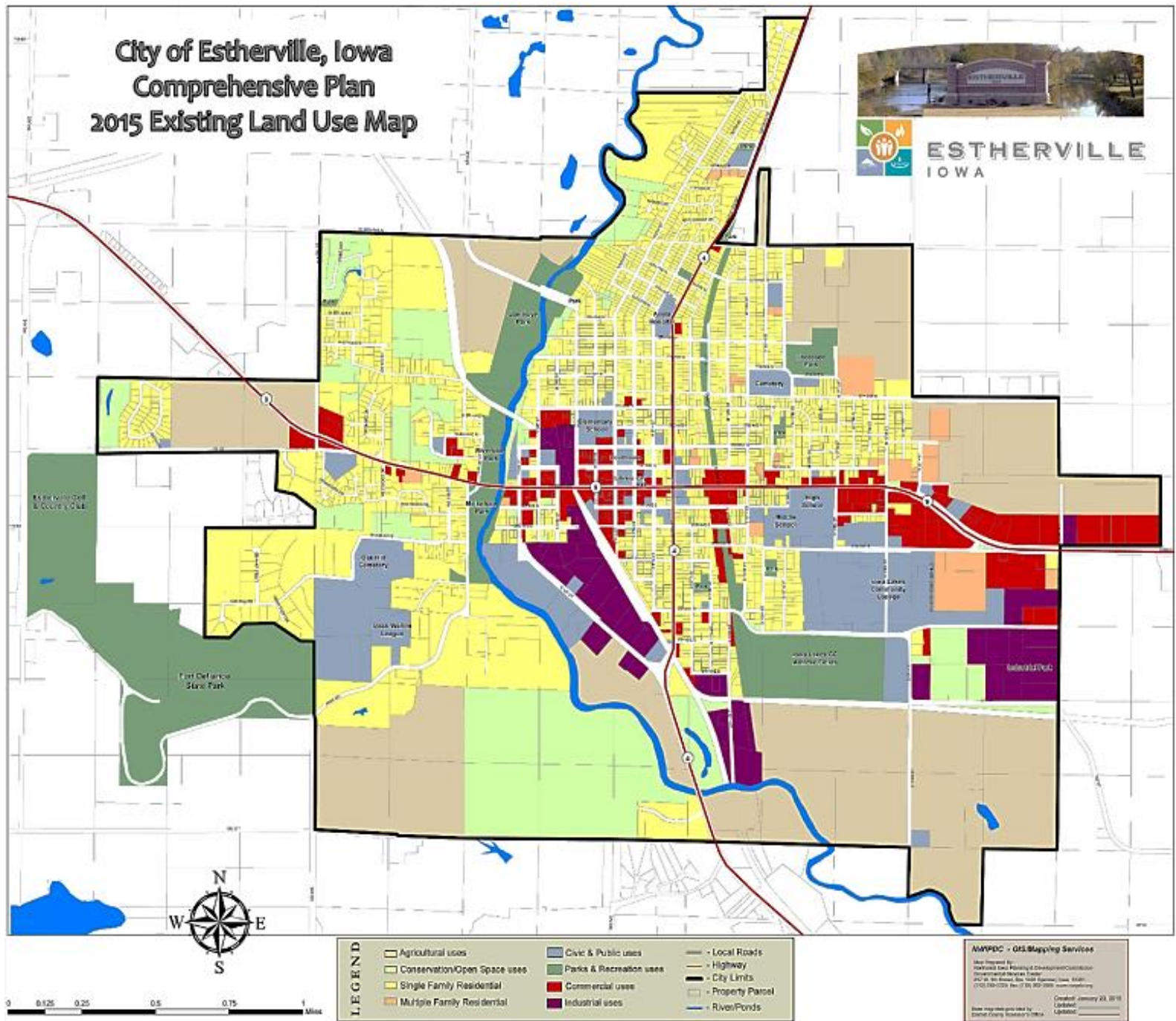
Table 18 - Land Use Composition of Developed Land in Estherville

Single Family Residential	1,004.91 acres	54.7%
Multi-Family Residential	58.82 acres	3.2%
Commercial Land Use	164.33 acres	8.9%
Industrial Land Use	144.84 acres	7.9%
Civic/Public Land Use	288.23 acres	15.7%
Parks & Recreation Land Use	175.95 acres	9.6%
TOTAL	1,837.08 acres	100.00% (2.87 square miles)

Figure 39 - Land Use Composition for Developed Property in Estherville, 2015



2015 Estherville Existing Land Use Map





Future Land Use Planning and Implementation Policies

In addressing the future land use planning process effectively, the city has generated a framework of goals and objectives for the community, upon which the specific land use policy recommendations and land use decisions should be based. One important thing to remember is that land use planning, especially future land uses, is not static. This will be an ongoing and developing process for the community. Henceforth, the city and the planning commission should plan to review, update and change the city's comprehensive plan according to variations in land use and future development patterns. The extent of growth experienced in Estherville will play a major role in determining how often and to what extent review and revision of the city's comprehensive plan will be necessary. It is important to remember the principal function of this plan in combination with the land use maps is to serve as a guide for future development and for how decision makers in Estherville address such development.

The Estherville city staff, zoning administrator, Planning and Zoning Commission and Board of Adjustment all have important responsibilities in carrying out the intent of this plan. It is also important to consider that board volunteers and city staff are conscious of the effect upon the entire community from each planning decision made, and not lean toward single issue tendencies. Determining land uses for a specific area within the community or along the fringe of the community is a product of many variables. Factors affecting the decision of where future land use planning should occur in Estherville may include social values, human behavior, the local and regional economy, convenience, physical characteristics or topography of the land, the community's best interest, and the political climate. Identifying the causes of land use planning becomes even more complex as efforts are made to project or plan where future land uses are to be located. There is no crystal ball to identify the future development patterns of the community, however this plan along with the human resources of the community can help predict, plan and guide development where it will promote the greatest benefit and create the fewest conflicts for the city.

Objective 1.

The city's future land use plan should become a guide and tool for the zoning administrator and the Planning and Zoning Commission to use in determining future zoning changes.

Policy Recommendations for future land use planning, implementation and enforcement of this plan include:

Policy 1.a. – Review periodically by the Planning and Zoning Commission and recommend any land use changes to the City Council. Periodic revisions to the zoning or subdivision ordinances are also encouraged to promote best development practices.

Policy 1.b. – Review by the City Council and support regulations integrated into the city's zoning and subdivision regulations addressing relevant community image goals.

Policy 1.c. - Enforce applicable property maintenance, nuisance and zoning regulations in an effort to maintain minimum property standards.

Policy 1.d. - Continue offering financial and human resources dedicated to zoning enforcement, code enforcement and compliance with the city's land use, zoning and subdivision regulations.

Agricultural Land Uses

Agricultural land uses are those properties within the city limits primarily used for grazing or pasture land, producing row crops, raising livestock, or other agricultural commodities. Of all land uses in Estherville, agricultural uses comprise the second largest amount of land acres in the community at nearly 832 acres or 23.8%. This compares to agricultural land uses accounting for 979 acres or 29.8% of the total land area in Estherville, according to the city's 2002 comprehensive plan. This change in the number of agricultural acres is likely due to a combination of development on some of these agricultural lands and changes in land use classifications. Certain properties may be classified differently now versus in 2002, when they were classified as agriculture. According to the existing land use map, a vast majority of the existing agricultural lands found in Estherville are located toward the fringe of the city limits in northwest, northeast, southeast, and southwest corners of the community. Since virtually all property in Estherville has the potential for development of some kind, whether it is residential, industrial, or even conservation or open space, agricultural land uses are not a designated land use classification on the future land use map. This is simply used to show the "development potential" of lands in Estherville, although many of these acres will continue to be actively used for agricultural production and purposes well into the future.

Objective 2.

To alleviate the potential for continuation of existing or promotion of future conflicts between developed land uses and agricultural operations, specifically within the city limits of Estherville. Similarly, the City needs to be conscious of and commit to protect and preserve prime agricultural lands adjoining the community.



Stock photo of agricultural farming operations similar to those near Estherville.

Policy Recommendations for agricultural lands and development related to agricultural or vacant land uses include:

Policy 2.a. – Direct, when possible, *future development of other land uses into adjacent land currently used for agriculture within the city limits. Effort should be made to avoid leapfrog development to the edges of the community, leaving large gaps of agricultural land sandwiched between old and new residential and commercial uses.*

Policy 2.b - *Encourage in-fill development of other land uses whenever possible. The preservation of prime agricultural land within the city should not take such high priority that the city is forced to look outside its boundary for land to absorb growth of residential, commercial, and industrial uses.*

Policy 2.c – *Be sensitive to the operations of nearby agricultural industries or businesses, while at the same time striving to protect the interests, property values, and quality of life of residents which may be compromised due odors, dust, noise or other detrimental effects emanating from agricultural operations or agricultural related businesses and industries.*

Policy 2.d - *Encourage development in Estherville to practice environmentally friendly conservation and “green” development practices.*

Policy 2.e - *Develop with Emmet County officials a joint extraterritorial land use agreement overseeing the allowable development of certain agricultural operations, including confined animal operations, within proximity to the city limits.*

Natural Resource, Open Space or Undeveloped Lands

This section will explore, identify and discuss a low impact land use classification consisting of land utilized for natural resources, open space or otherwise undeveloped land. This may include land being utilized as floodplain areas, wooded timber lands or pasturage. Although the development potential for most of these open spaces and natural resource areas are limited at best, these areas provide benefits to the community that are often overlooked. Natural resource and open space lands can provide benefits such as floodplain protection, recreational benefits and general beauty or aesthetics of the community. On the other hand, undeveloped land uses are those properties classified as having no current land use associated with the property, which may include a series of vacant lots in a newly platted residential subdivision not yet built upon, vacant parcels in an industrial park or vacant buildings. Natural resource, open space and undeveloped lands comprise the fourth largest land use category in Estherville at 365 acres or 10.5%. Most of the land classified as this use is in the form of large tracts of heavily wooded and forested land in the southern part of the community along the West Fork Des Moines River corridor. Other tracts of undeveloped lands

include vacant lots within the industrial park and larger tracts of properties in the northwest corner of the community designated for future residential development. Also considered a natural resource, the amount of water acres in the community consists of 43 acres or only 1.2% of the land in Estherville. This includes land covered by lakes, ponds and the West Fork Des Moines River. Natural resource, open space and undeveloped lands are typically considered low impact in nature, but there may be limited development potential and recreational opportunities.

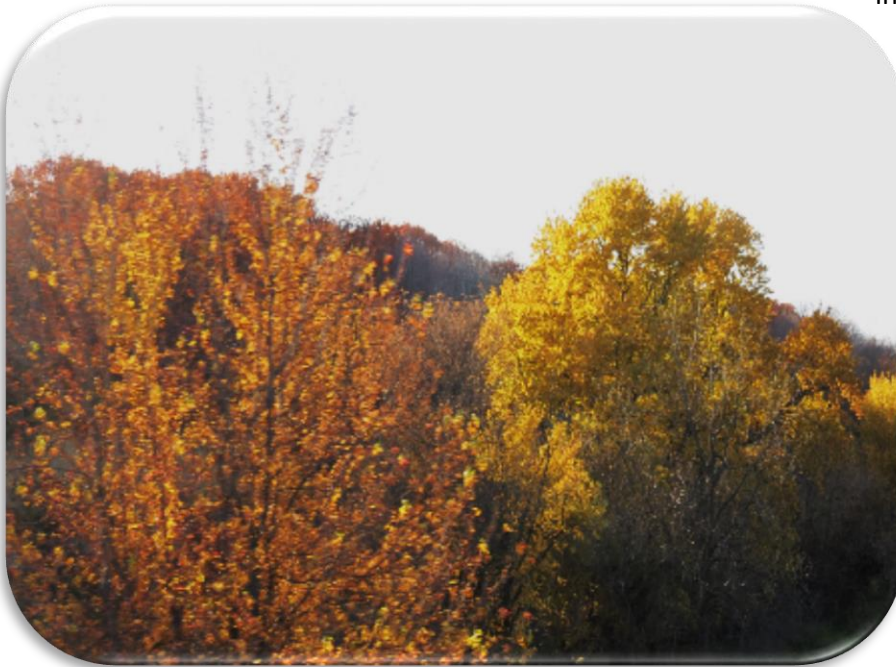


Photo of timber lands in the south/southwest part of Estherville

Objective 3.

The city should realize that many of the acres containing natural resource or open space lands should be protected and avoid development of any type. Many floodplain areas, woodlands, sensitive natural habitats and open space areas serve a useful purpose in providing natural buffers between adjoining land uses. Conversely, undeveloped lands, especially within platted subdivisions in the city, should be targeted for future development and productive use.

Policy Recommendations for natural resource, open space and undeveloped lands include:

Policy 3.a. – *Preserve and protect floodplain and other natural resource areas not suited for development, while promoting those undeveloped lots in Estherville that are suited for development purposes.*

Policy 3.b. – *Encourage low impact development and best practices for stormwater management in the community in an effort to protect the sensitive natural resource and floodplain areas.*

Policy 3.c. - *Continue to participate in the NFIP and discourage building within designated floodplains. Any development within floodplain boundaries as defined by FEMA will be built in accordance with NFIP standards.*

Population, Housing and Residential Land Uses

Residential land uses, including both single family and multiple family residential, comprise the greatest amount of land area in Estherville. Single family residential housing comprises nearly 1,005 acres of land or 28.8% of all land within the city limits. Higher density residential uses, including multiple family residential housing units such as condominiums, congregate housing, assisted living facilities, or senior housing complexes consist of 58.8 acres or 1.7% of land in Estherville. Future residential land uses are projected to occur adjacent to existing residential developments within the northwest, far west, and northeast portions of the community. In order to make efficient use of existing public utilities and facilities it is essential that future residential growth occur first within existing developed areas of the city. However, this is not always a practical solution since newly platted subdivisions on the fringe of the city can offer highly desirable spacious building lots versus the much smaller compact infill residential lots that were platted decades ago.

Within the existing city limits, several newer residential lots are available to build upon in the far northwest and western portions of the community, including the recently subdivided 49 lot Country Club Estates located immediately north of the Estherville Golf & Country Club. Recent growth trends tend to show that most of the newer single family housing is being built in these subdivisions in the city's western and northwestern side. There is also some new housing being built on the city's far north end. A majority of the city's multiple-family residential developments are situated in the eastern and northeastern portions of Estherville. Windsor Manor, a new assisted living complex, is located at 2015 3rd Avenue North. These areas of current residential development, along with vacant or undeveloped lands adjacent to newer residential subdivisions, are ideal for future residential development. This is due to the fact that municipal utilities are present or can be easily extended. The city should anticipate future residential annexation in these areas.

Existing residential neighborhoods in Estherville are expected to remain stable with older units being rehabilitated or replaced with new construction. A higher concentration of older residential properties near the central business district will provide additional issues in maintaining viable neighborhoods in the central part of the community. The City of Estherville should consider housing rehabilitation programs to revitalize these older neighborhoods. Similarly, another option for the city to consider would be an urban renewal project where some of the older neighborhoods in proximity to the downtown are cleared of the older, smaller single family dwelling units in favor of newer multiple family buildings that would increase the density of residential living in close proximity to the central business district for purposes of work, public facilities, mobility, etc. Multi-family dwellings and other medium/high density type construction will become increasingly important as construction for new single family dwellings continues to escalate. Residential neighborhoods must continue to be strengthened to assure their continued viability and growth. Encroachment from incompatible land uses must be resisted. Realization of residential development by the types and areas proposed can be achieved through the use of regulatory measures such as zoning and subdivision ordinances and land use policies.

Photos of various residential uses including older established neighborhoods, newer row housing, and cooperative housing



There are several existing rural residential dwellings, farmsteads, acreages and rural subdivisions adjacent to or within close proximity to the Estherville City limits. Many of these residential properties are currently served by rural water or private wells and septic tanks; a fact that will eventually result in sanitary problems created by concentrated septic tank disposal fields. The city should consider and explore the feasibility and/or benefit to the community by annexing developed residential areas or rural subdivisions adjacent to or near the current city limits.

Objective 4.

The City should encourage residential development activities that promote strong, safe, diverse neighborhoods in which to live.

Policy Recommendations for residential land uses, including both single family and multiple family dwellings, to be used in conjunction with this comprehensive plan and Estherville regulatory ordinances include:

Policy 4.a. - *Promote the development and redevelopment of housing opportunities on existing lots in Estherville's older neighborhoods, emphasizing and enhancing the historical value of these areas whenever possible.*

Policy 4.b - *Expand multi-family housing opportunities, especially adjacent to the central business district of the city, and bordering vibrant commercial areas. Avoid isolation of multi-family housing units in remote or less desirable parts of the city.*

Policy 4.c - *Take advantage of opportunities to develop new or rehabilitated multi-family housing around the city's central business district and along the Highway 9 corridor, buffered from the traffic by commercial uses.*

Policy 4.d - *Carefully manage subdivision development as demand for more and a greater variety of housing types warrants. Avoid unabated subdivision development during times of stable or declining numbers of households. Strictly enforce subdivision regulations to ensure quality infrastructure provisions.*

Policy 4.e - *Take steps to encourage residential development in an infill pattern first, emphasizing renovation of older homes and using existing vacant lots for construction. The city should continue to encourage the demolition of housing structures that are beyond repair to make room for new homes.*

Policy 4.f - *Compliment infill residential development with carefully managed subdivision development as demand increases for the number of households. Care should be taken to make sure developers fulfill obligations with regard to infrastructure provisions as stated in the city's subdivision regulations, in order to minimize city expense.*

Policy 4.g. - *Aid in making housing available to all individuals regardless of race, ethnicity, sex, creed, national origin or age.*

Policy 4.h. - *Follow recommendations and suggestions outlined in additional housing plans or strategic planning sessions to ensure the city continues to pursue methods to alleviate housing issues.*

Policy 4.i. - *Continue to support organizations such as the Northwest Iowa Housing Authority, the Estherville Housing Authority, Excel Estherville Housing Committee, and the Northwest Iowa Regional Housing Trust Fund, Inc. so the residents of the community can take advantage of housing assistance programs.*

Policy 4.j. – *Rehabilitate existing neighborhoods in the form of the CDBG and USDA programs.*

Policy 4.k. - *Enforce local zoning controls that encourage upkeep of existing structures.*

Policy 4.I. - *Work with developers, including non-profit and private organizations to support the construction of additional housing options for senior residents such as assisted living, senior independent living or care facilities.*

Commercial Land Uses



Commercial and retail land uses should continue to be promoted for development within the central business district and along the Highway 9 corridor east of downtown. In all respects, commercial land uses should receive the same protection from incompatible land uses as one would expect for a residential district. Commercial developments classified as highway commercial which rely upon large expanses of open space and/or highway access should be strongly encouraged to locate along the Highway 9 corridor near the eastern city limits. Whenever possible, frontage roads should be recommended in conjunction with more intensive commercial uses. Where frontage roads are not feasible, parking and access options need to be considered to help prevent highway congestion. For the most part, a vast majority of large commercial uses are appropriately located along the Highway 9 corridor east of downtown Estherville. Other smaller, less intensive commercial uses

are located sporadically throughout the community. Commercial development in the downtown business district should be limited to those uses that typically do not require large expanses of land for parking or open display lots. Central business district parking space is limited and it would be advisable to keep this available space for retail establishments. Downtown commercial businesses are heavily retail and service based, and interspersed with public, civic and governmental uses.

Photo of retail establishments in downtown Estherville.



Objective 5.

The City should develop a diversified commercial base that will provide the community with a wide range of goods and services; and to make available all types of commercial activities and services demanded by the people of Estherville as well as the commercial trade area; and to promote the location of commercial activities in areas conducive to the provision of highway commercial activities along with ensuring the stability of the central business district.

Policy Recommendations for commercial land uses that guide the city in making appropriate decisions on the location of new commercial development include:

Policy 5.a. – *Guide future commercial development to the central business district to fill vacancies and aid in maintaining a viable downtown district. Strengthen the position of the central business district as a focal point of the community through planning, promotion, land use controls and incentive based development.*

Policy 5.b. – *Unify new commercial developments to be complimentary and well-planned.*

Policy 5.c. – *Encourage growth along the fringes of the community and along the Highway 9 corridor. The City should provide for planned highway commercial use developments and maximize development opportunities that minimize traffic congestion, conflicts with other uses, and visually unappealing commercial developments.*

Policy 5.d. – *Restrict commercial land uses from development in purely residential areas of the city. Future commercial development should not be in conflict with or jeopardize recreational and natural resource areas of interest to the community.*

Policy 5.e. – *Reduce existing and prohibit future spot commercial development in residential areas, aside from approved home occupations regulated by the city's zoning ordinance.*

Policy 5.f. – *Minimize negative influences from commercial development upon adjacent non-commercial areas such as natural resource, recreation or residential uses by the use of appropriate buffers such as physical screens and open space.*

Policy 5.g. – *Encourage public assistance or tax incentive programs, where deemed appropriate by local officials, such as tax increment financing or tax abatement to encourage expansion of existing facilities and development of new opportunities.*

Policy 5.h. – *Protect zoning of existing and proposed commercial development locations from eventual residential or less intense land use encroachment limiting future expansion of these commercial uses in these locations.*

Policy 5.i. – *Promote traffic safety within highway commercial developments by requiring safe and convenient access and adequate off-street parking and loading facilities for customer or service vehicles.*

Industrial Land Uses and Economic Development

Industrial uses include the on-site extraction or production of goods by non-agricultural process, including the warehousing and distribution of goods. Industrial land uses are often times difficult to plan due to many factors governing the location of industries, including land availability, transportation access, workforce availability, available utilities and city services, etc. The success of

Estherville in recruiting and attracting new industries is affected by the aforementioned factors along with the efforts of city staff and the Estherville Industrial Development Corporation (EIDC). Industrial development is one of the most important variables related to land use planning since overall community and economic development and growth is extensively dependent upon it. Estherville must anticipate expansion of its industrial base and land needs to be made available to accommodate future growth. Industrial growth is expected to occur primarily within and adjacent to the city's existing industrial park in the southeast part of the community. There is land available to expand the city's industrial growth to the south and southwest of the existing industrial park. The Estherville EIDC group continues to work extensively with city officials and key community leaders in promoting and expanding the city's industrial base both in the existing industrial park as well as other places deemed appropriate for industrial development and indicated as such on the city's future land use map. According to the city's 2014 land use survey of existing land uses, industrial uses comprise approximately 145 acres of land or 4.1% of all land within the corporate city limits of Estherville. In comparison to the previous Estherville comprehensive plan, industrial uses comprised approximately 199 acres or 6% of the land within the city limits. The declining industrial land use numbers may have changed for several reasons. Recent annexation of property non-industrial in nature would alter the percentage of total land area in the community. Furthermore, there may be parcels used in a different capacity today that were previously identified as an industrial use in 2002. Those areas already dedicated to serving the industrial development needs of the community along with additional acres of land identified as future industrial land use both within the existing city limits and in proposed future growth areas will allow the community to continue strengthening its industrial and economic development presence in Emmet County.

Objective 6.

Estherville should continue to provide land, community facilities, incentives, and support for its existing and proposed new industrial development within the city and to integrate these industries and employees into the community in such a manner that the city will gain economic growth with a minimum of adverse effects to the community or neighboring properties. The city, with cooperation and support from the EIDC, should continue to promote industrial development through expansion of existing business along with the recruitment of new business and industries to Estherville.

Photo of businesses located within the Estherville industrial park



Policy Recommendations intended to guide future industrial growth and support the expansion of existing industries and businesses include:

Policy 6.a. – Strictly enforce land use controls and zoning regulations to differentiate between light and heavy land uses and their impact upon neighboring and adjoining properties. The city should look to utilize buffering effectively between especially heavy land uses and neighboring less intense uses such as residential properties.

Policy 6.b. – *If possible fill industrial development on existing buildable lots prior to expanding or creating new industrial parks in the community. Adherence to this policy limits the amount of infrastructure construction and maintenance required from the city.*

Policy 6.c. – *Provide community and governmental support for the continuation of the existing industrial businesses and development of a diverse future industrial base to complement the local economy.*

Policy 6.d. - *Maintain and support the efforts of those involved in promoting industrial development, such as the Estherville Industrial Development Corporation (EIDC) and others.*

Policy 6.e. - *Promote those industries in the city with aesthetically pleasing sites and buildings, low emissions and good neighbors to adjoining property owners as well as the entire community.*

Policy 6.f. - *Protect industrial areas from the encroachment of incompatible land uses that restrict development. Ample area must be reserved for future expansion.*

Public & Civic Land Uses and Community Facilities

Civic and public land uses include utility, educational, religious, cultural, medical, public safety, governmental, and other uses strongly vested with public or social importance. These uses within the city of Estherville are located on more than 288.23 acres of land that comprise 8.3% of the total land mass within the city limits. In comparison to the land use percentage from the 2002 Estherville comprehensive plan, civic and public uses comprised 173 acres accounting for 5.3% of the total land area in 2002. This increase in public and civic land use acres and percentage of land area in the community is attributed to two primary factors. One, the Iowa Lakes Community College and Estherville Lincoln School District have both acquired additional lands for educational purposes over the past 10 years. Additionally the Izaak Walton League was incorrectly identified as another land use in the 2002 comprehensive plan. Both the number of acres and percentage of land utilized for public and civic land uses is somewhat higher in Estherville than other similar sized communities throughout northwest Iowa. This is due primarily to the fact that Estherville has several civic and public uses that utilize a large amount of land. These uses in Estherville include the Iowa Lakes Community College campus, the Estherville Lincoln Central Community School District's middle and high school campus and athletic fields, the hospital and two large cemeteries.



Photos of civic & public uses in Estherville

In general, civic and public uses usually have little effect on neighboring properties and have the flexibility to be scattered throughout residential and commercial neighborhoods in the community. Increased traffic and congestion at predictable times is often associated with public uses such as schools, churches, community centers, and facilities housing civic groups. While periodic increases in traffic flow are often acceptable when adjacent to many other land uses, periods of heavy congestion and safety issues should be addressed in the development of future land use policies regarding civic and public uses. There is a concentration of these land uses near the downtown central business district. Other scattered public uses include the hospital to the north, the high school and college campuses on the east side of the community and on the west side of Estherville is the Izaak Walton League and the cemetery.

Objective 7.

Both existing and proposed community facilities and city services should be made available to all residents of the community on a fair and equitable process. The quality and quantity of all civic and public land uses should be expanded and developed to adequately meet the needs of Estherville. Development of civic and public land uses aids in facilitating a high standard of living, public welfare, safety and overall quality of life in Estherville.

Policy Recommendations to support, attract and direct growth of cultural, civic, governmental, service and public land uses include:

Policy 7.a. – *Make available opportunities for civic and public land uses in most zoning districts with the provision that more intensive utility and municipal services (e.g. water or sewer treatment facilities) be contained to commercial or industrial districts.*

Policy 7.b. – *Review the city's parking requirements for public or community land uses to assure congestion, use or traffic noise does not interrupt adjacent land uses.*

Policy 7.c. – *Be careful to avoid obvious land use conflicts such as the placement of civic or public uses surrounded by heavy industrial uses. Since civic and public land uses vary so much in intensity and use, each development needs to be examined on a case-by-case basis.*

Policy 7.d. – *Continue the high quality of education currently available for the community's youth. The city's schools for all ages should encourage the use of innovative technologies to teach and innovative educational approaches to all persons residing within the community and school districts.*

Policy 7.e. – *Maintain existing athletic and educational facilities to insure the best use by all students within the district.*

Policy 7.f. – *Plan capital improvements to include periodic maintenance and replacement programs for city equipment, buildings and facilities to avoid large unforeseen replacement costs.*

Policy 7.g. – *Make available to all citizens the basic and essential services such as police and fire protection and availability to local, county and state governmental services.*

Policy 7.h. – *Construct a community/events center in Estherville to coordinate programs, activities, events and entertainment for all ages and backgrounds.*

Policy 7.i. – Expand infrastructure into newly developing areas controlled through subdivision regulations. Provisions of basic community services and city utilities will prove to be a valuable asset and critical need in developing future lands for residential, commercial or industrial developments.

Parks and Recreational Land Uses

Parks and recreational land uses include city or county parks, trails, campgrounds, swimming pools, golf courses, tennis courts and other public recreational areas in and adjacent to the City of Estherville. For clarification, this section is identifying land uses actively used for the city's park

Photo of Lincoln Park in Estherville

system and recreational activities. This section does not include areas determined to be passive recreation areas, open space, natural resource areas or floodplains. These lands will be discussed in the following section. Actively used parks and recreation land uses in Estherville occur on more than 175 acres of land comprising 5% of the land area within the city limits. These numbers are slightly higher when compared to the land use acres and percentage of the community from the 2002 comprehensive plan. In 2002, parks and recreation land uses comprised 150 acres accounting for 4.6%

of the land area in the community. The greatest change in park and recreational land uses between 2002 and 2014 is in the development of the Iowa Lakes Community College athletic fields and ball fields on the city's southeast side. Community leaders and local decision-makers should remember that quality of life in Estherville is one of the most important factors in promoting economic and community growth. Considerations for recreation and park space play an integral part of a community's population and growth patterns, and is also reflected in the decisions of local businesses and industries to locate in Estherville. The appeal of parks and recreation opportunities, especially for youth, is far too often overlooked as an important factor in economic and community development initiatives.

Although parks and recreational uses are typically one of the smaller land use categories in terms of acreage and percentage of land within a community, in Estherville, this land use category is the fifth largest land use category overall and the third largest land use category when considering just developed lands. In Estherville, parks and recreational land uses comprise more land acres than commercial or industrial land uses. Upon consideration of the number of acres devoted to recreational and park space uses versus the city's population base, there appears to be an adequate amount of land acreage dedicated to park and recreational uses. The percentage of recreational land use acres to the number of people increases



substantially if the city takes into consideration the Estherville golf course and Fort Defiance State Park, both of which are situated adjacent to but just outside of the city's corporate limits. These two uses alone comprise another 166 acres of recreational land uses not calculated into the original 175 acres located within the city limits of Estherville.

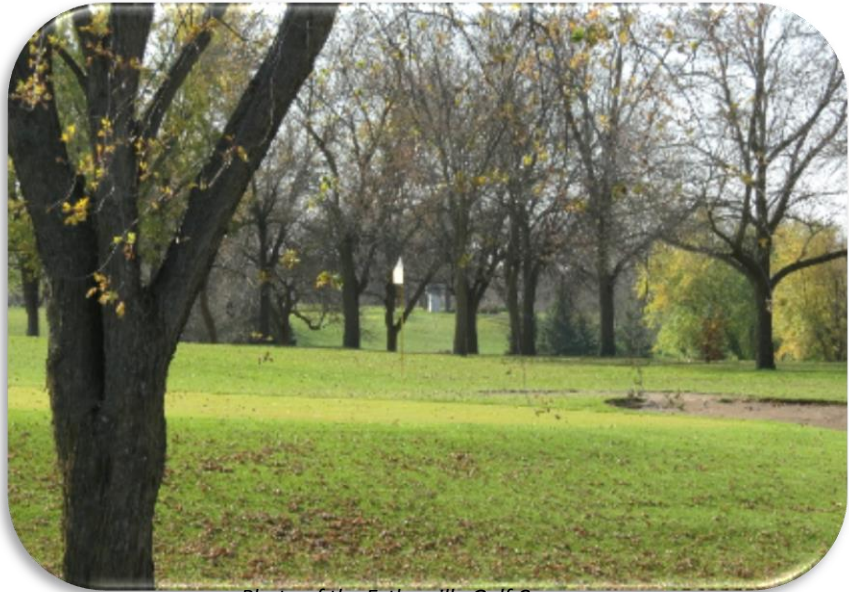


Photo of the Estherville Golf Course

Objective 8.

The City should continue to provide and improve upon parks and recreational facilities, uses and programs in order to promote lifelong activities, health and enjoyment in the community. The city should provide each citizen with choices for the types of recreational activities desired, and to coordinate with county, state and federal programs to ensure the most effect utilization of public and private funding for recreational purposes. Estherville should make recreation facilities available in all areas of the city with activities and programs designed for a wide range of age groups.

Policy Recommendations for parks and recreation to further identify the future needs of the community and visitors that regularly use the city's recreational amenities, include:

Policy 8.a. – Be consistent with and follow the recommendations for recreational land uses identified in the city's parks and recreation plan. The city should consider updating the parks and recreation plan every five years to remain consistent with current park planning needs and facilities.

Policy 8.b. – Continue following a schedule for regular park maintenance and enhancement of existing park and open spaces throughout the community.

Policy 8.c. – Provide equal access to facilities and activities to all residents, guests and visitors of Estherville and Emmet County.

Policy 8.d. – Preserve natural areas that incorporate historical, scenic and scientific significance.

Policy 8.e. – Consider completing the planned or proposed trail segments in the community, along with planning to construct a complete trail "loop" around Estherville.

Policy 8.f. – Give consideration to the city's existing swimming facilities and look at the feasibility of a new aquatic center for the community.

Policy 8.g. – Consider planning for a new city campground designated for recreation vehicles and camping, along with adequately designed infrastructure needs to handle today's modern campers and recreational vehicles.

Transportation, Infrastructure and Utility Policies



Photo of IA Highway 9 bisecting Estherville east to west

A well planned and designed transportation system is essential to the overall development of a community. It is not expected that new major arterial lines of transportation will be added, but existing modes and infrastructure must be continually updated and improved. The city is continually addressing street and infrastructure maintenance in order to improve the transportation efficiency and street conditions in Estherville. Surprising to many is the amount of land that is utilized by transportation uses. Transportation uses in Estherville (including the entire road right-of-way, not just street paving) amounts to more than 415 acres of land, representing 11.9% of the total land area. Only street right-of-ways were used in calculating the transportation land use acreage. Other city utilities and infrastructure such as lift stations, electrical substations, water plant, sewer treatment plant, etc. were calculated as part of the public & civic land use category. Estherville has an adequate to good infrastructure and transportation system in place.

Objective 9.

The City should develop and maintain a transportation system in Estherville which is well-planned, located and designed to enhance the efficient movement of both people and goods, and which supports and promotes all areas of the city. Furthermore, the city should continue to provide the residents of Estherville utilities and facilities at a high level of service and continue upgrading existing services and expand city services into newly developed areas.

Policy Recommendations in support of transportation, infrastructure and utility land uses include:

- Policy 9.a. – *Design the city's transportation system to accommodate future growth; plan to separate commercial and industrial truck traffic from residential streets; and design aesthetically pleasing landscape to beautify, identify and unify land use areas with a desirable pattern of transportation access.*
- Policy 9.b. – *A good transportation system is vital to the overall growth of a community. Continue paving deteriorated or unpaved streets in addition to regular maintenance.*
- Policy 9.c. – *Regulate streets within new subdivisions or platted rural subdivisions outside the city limits of Estherville to conform to the requirements of the city's subdivision regulations.*

Policy 9.d. – *Improve existing facilities to alleviate deficiencies and make available city utilities and services in newly developed areas of the community, whether within the city limits or within 2 miles of the community. Estherville should work with Emmet County officials on requiring infrastructure and services for rural subdivisions in close proximity to the city.*

Policy 9.e. – *Construct all new subdivisions in accordance with policies stated in the city's subdivision regulations.*

Policy 9.f. – *Consider frontage roads in newly developing commercial and industrial areas that front on a major transportation route.*

CHAPTER 14. ADDITIONAL DEVELOPMENT

ANNEXATION

Annexation is the process through which contiguous fringe territory is added to an existing municipality. Laws that regulate annexation and corporate growth vary greatly from state to state, necessitating a brief narrative of the annexation procedures as they relate to Iowa cities. Annexation usually is not a simple process, but rather one that requires considerable thought and consideration as to benefits and cost requirements prior to an official act by a city. Once a city has annexed a parcel of land, the resulting economic, physical, and cultural results will be evident for many years. Annexation may become further complicated by recommendations developed by the legislature based upon input by those opposing urban sprawl trends occurring in other parts of Iowa. Cities must be kept abreast of current legislative proposals as they relate to annexation. This information will provide a general overview of annexation procedures, and indicate general areas adjacent to Estherville's present city limits that may be suited for future annexations. Estherville may find itself in situations where annexation of adjacent lands into the city limits must be considered in order to provide adequate space for growth or to protect the city's interests when the pattern of development outside the city's boundary threatens to have a negative impact on the community in the future. In Iowa, a city may annex land by one of five (5) different methods:

1. Voluntary annexation not in an Urbanized Area
2. Voluntary annexation in an Urbanized Area
3. "80/20" voluntary annexation not in an Urbanized Area
4. "80/20" voluntary annexation in an Urbanized Area
5. Involuntary annexation.

Since Estherville is not bordered or within two (2) miles of another community, Estherville is not considered an urbanized area. Therefore, only those voluntary and "80/20" annexation procedures for non-urbanized areas will be applicable to the City of Estherville. The involuntary annexation procedure is the same for both urbanized and non-urbanized areas. The annexation process in Iowa is overseen by the City Development Board. The City Development Board is comprised of community officials and representatives from across Iowa operating under the direction of the Iowa Economic Development Authority. This board is granted authority by the State of Iowa to review and make recommendation on annexation proposals.

Voluntary Annexations

Voluntary annexation is a relatively simple process that is handled at the local level between the city and property owner(s) requesting annexation. These annexations are classified as either being in an urbanized area or not. Only those voluntary annexations in an urbanized area require state involvement in the form of a review by the City Development Board. If the voluntary annexation is not located within an urbanized area, such as the case with Estherville, the annexation may be directly filed and recorded with the Secretary of State. As the name would imply, voluntary annexations have complete support from the landowners requesting annexation into the city. Voluntary annexations, when in the best interest of the city and in keeping with the land use policies established herein, should be welcomed by the city. The resulting increase of tax base and future development potential generally translates to positive outcomes for the city.

Voluntary Annexation Procedures
City Development Board, Iowa Economic Development Authority

Voluntary annexations not in an urbanized area

- a) Submit application for voluntary annexation
- b) The city shall provide a copy of the application to the Board of Supervisors.
- c) The city publishes a notice in an official newspaper and city council approves the annexation by resolution.
- d) The city files a copy of the resolution, map and legal description of the annexed land with Secretary of State, Board of Supervisors, public utilities, and Iowa DOT
- e) Records a copy of the legal description, map, and resolution with the County Recorder.
- f) The annexation is complete upon acknowledgement by the Secretary of State.

Additionally, those voluntary annexations which adjoin or are within two miles of another city must:

- Provide notice of the application to cities whose boundaries adjoin the land or that are within two miles of the territory, each affected public utility, the Board of Supervisors, and the regional planning authority.
- Upon approving the annexation by resolution, the city forwards the proposal to the City Development Board.
- City Development Board considers the annexation proposal and approves or denies the proposal.
- If the annexation is approved and no appeal is filed within 30 days, the Board files and records documents.

80/20 Voluntary Annexations

The primary difference between a voluntary annexation and an 80/20 annexation is that a city may include up to 20 percent of the total land area to be annexed containing land owners not wanting to annex into the community, as long as the remaining 80 percent voluntarily consent to the annexation. Also, public land may be included in 80/20 annexations regardless of written consent. If a public land owner does not consent, the public land does not affect the 80/20 ratio calculation. The IEDA City Development Board may ask if city services are provided to residents in the annexed area.

80/20 Voluntary Annexation Procedures
City Development Board, Iowa Economic Development Authority

80/20 voluntary annexation including land without the owner's consent BOTH in and out of an urbanized area.

- a) A city can include up to 20% of land without consent of the owner to avoid creating islands or square up boundaries.
- b) City holds a consultation with the Supervisors and Township Trustees at least 14 business days prior to application.
- c) At least 14 business days prior to any action, the city shall by certified mail provide a copy of the application to the non-consenting property owners and each affected public utility.
- d) The city must hold a public hearing on the application before taking official action.
- e) At least 14 days prior to any action, the city shall provide notice of application and public hearing to the Supervisors, non-consenting owners, owners of property that adjoins the territory, and public utilities that serve the territory.
- f) The City Development Board considers the annexation proposal. If the application is accepted, a public hearing is set
- g) The City Development Board holds a public hearing for the county and property owners. After hearing all evidence the Board decides whether to approve or deny the annexation.
- h) If the annexation is approved, the Board notifies the parties and 30 days following the notification the Board files and records documents to complete the annexation if no appeal is file.
- i) If the annexation is denied the Board notifies the parties.

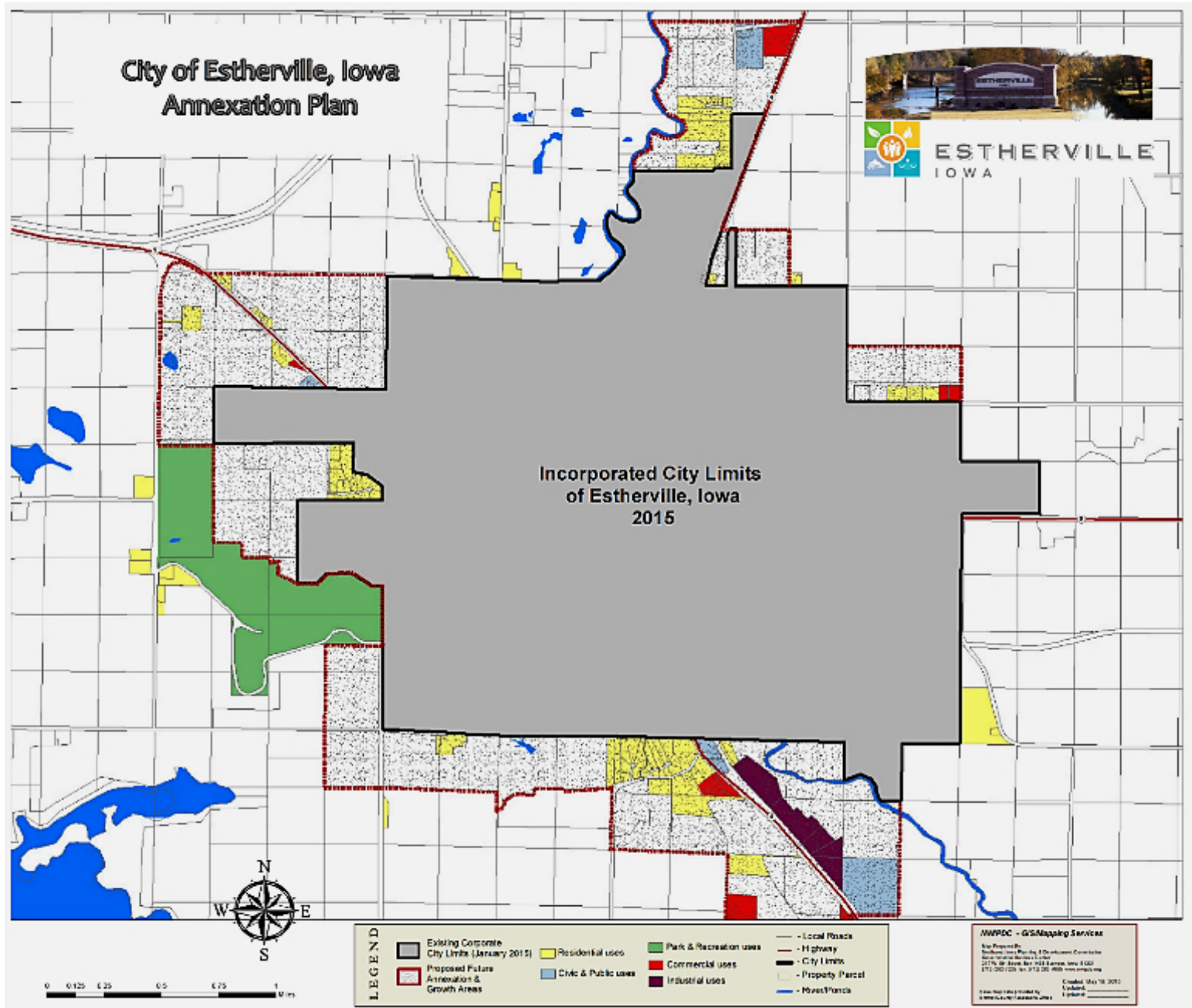
Involuntary Annexations

Involuntary Annexations are initiated by the city and are opposed by the majority of landowners in the proposed annexation areas. Before a city attempts such a process, they should review Chapter 368, Code of Iowa, as amended and the most recent City Development Board Administrative Rules appearing in the Iowa Administrative Code. Furthermore, contacting the City Development Board to review and provide necessary coordination and advice on proceeding with the annexation should also be considered. Involuntary annexations can easily become a complex legal matter; thus, care should be given to assure that all requirements of the City Development Board are met. The city must be prepared to defend its actions by indicating how and when community facilities, services, and utilities can be extended into the proposed annexation. Once approved by the board, involuntary annexations must also be approved by a simple majority of the residents of the proposed annexation area and the residents of the city in a referendum vote. A city may be able to justify involuntary annexations based on the best interest of the public when, for example, adequate land area for a particular land use is not immediately available within the current city limits potentially causing the city to miss out on the creation of jobs or provision of expanded services for residents or businesses. Petitions requesting involuntary annexations must indicate how municipal services will be provided by the city to the annexed area within three years of July 1 of the fiscal year in which the city taxes are collected against property in the annexed territory. At the end of the third year, the city must submit a report to the City Development Board describing the status of the provision of services within the annexed territory. If the city fails to provide services or fails to show progress in providing services, the City Development Board has the power to cut ties between the city and all or part of the annexed territory. If good cause is shown, the city may request an additional three years to provide municipal services.

Involuntary Annexation Procedures City Development Board, Iowa Economic Development Authority

- a) Notice of intent
- b) Prior to filing a petition, a letter of intent must be sent to each city whose urbanized area contains a portion of the land, the regional planning authority, affected public utilities, property owners listed in the petition, and the Supervisors.
- c) Prior to filing, the city must hold a public meeting on the petition, of which a notice is to be published.
- d) The city files a petition with the City Development Board
- e) Board reviews petition for completeness and proper filing. If accepted as complete, a committee is formed.
- f) A committee holds a public hearing to hear evidence for and against the petition.
- g) The Committee holds a decision meeting to approve or deny the petition for annexation.
- h) The Board works with the county to set an election date. The Board publishes the election results.
- i) If the petition is approved at election, and no appeal is filed within 30 days of the publication of the election results, the Board files and records the documents necessary to complete the election.
- j) Three years following the completion of involuntary annexation, the Board reviews the status of the provision of services provided by the city to the annexed territory and determines if further action is required.

Figure – Estherville Proposed Annexation Map

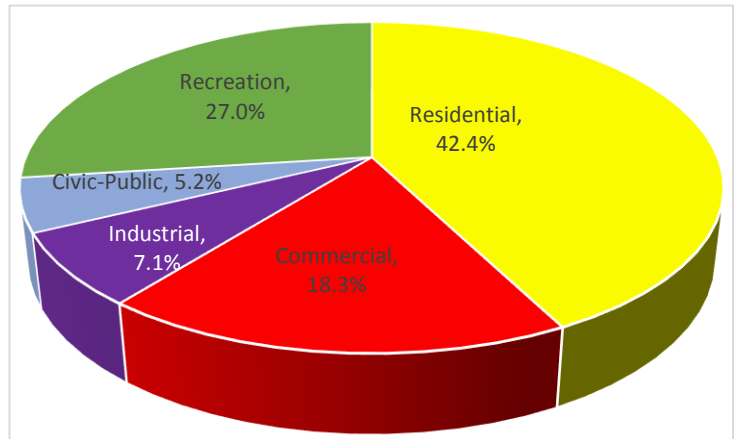


As shown above, the grey shaded area is the city's existing corporate city limits. The lighter shaded areas with the red border represent those lands with the greatest potential for annexation and interest to the City of Estherville. One of the primary reasons Estherville is progressive in identifying and targeting potential future annexation areas is relative to the amount of existing rural development in proximity to the city limits. According to a recent land use analysis, there is more than 616 acres of developed or actively utilized land adjacent to or nearby the Estherville corporate city limits, but within the unincorporated portion of Emmet County. Some of the larger tracts of developed property adjacent to Estherville's city limits, but not within the city, include the 40 acre

Estherville Golf & Country Club, 126 acres comprising Fort Defiance State Park, scattered commercial uses, several large industrial uses situated upon more than 40 acres of land south of the city along Highway 4, rural residential subdivisions adjacent to the city's southern and western city limits and several rural residential acreage developments adjacent to the city's western and northern city limits. A listing of those rural developed land uses adjacent to the existing city limits of Estherville include:

Rural Land Uses adjacent to or within close proximity to the Estherville city limits:

- Residential properties – 261.53 acres
- Commercial businesses – 112.60 acres
- Industrial businesses – 43.96 acres
- Civic/Public uses – 32.08
(Including the city's wastewater treatment plant and two rural cemeteries)
- Recreation areas – 166.49 acres
(Including the Golf & Country Club and Fort Defiance State Park)



The City of Estherville will need to prioritize the above listed rural developed areas for potential or proposed annexation into the city's corporate limits. Future growth of the community is expected to occur primarily to the west and north, with some development in the south and east. Thus, the city should anticipate annexations within these adjacent territories in the future. Neighborhoods in the western, northwest and northern portions of Estherville are expected to see continued development, and annexation in relationship to the needs for additional subdivision development. The provision of necessary infrastructure may need to be considered. The areas to the east, south and southeast of the city's corporate limits will continue to experience varying amounts of commercial and industrial land uses. Annexations in this area will likely provide the City of Estherville with considerable land use controls over the present pattern of scattered and haphazard rural growth.

Photo of industrial land use located near but outside of the city limits along Hwy. 4 south



In summary, the City of Estherville may be presented with the opportunity or foresee the need to pursue future annexations. The city should pursue voluntary annexation in most cases if proven beneficial to the community. Furthermore, the city should not deny the possibility of involuntary annexation if and when the need arises to control haphazard urban sprawl or protect the city from rural developments not in the city's best interest. In all cases, a proposed annexation will result in both benefits and disadvantages. In general terms, the benefits to the annexing body include:

1. Protection for the city against uncontrolled and inappropriate rural scattered development.
2. The ability to control and direct fringe areas in a manner that will minimize future service costs and insure appropriate levels and type of development.
3. Expansion of taxes, debt limit, and revenue base of the community.

At the same time, the community should be aware that in some situations disadvantages might offset advantages. If Estherville is to consider undertaking possible involuntary annexations, it should be aware that the burden of proof is upon the city to show the ability to offer the annexed area city services and municipal utilities in a better quality and quantity than the area is currently accustomed to. Annexation solely to increase revenue is not a justifiable process in the eyes of Iowa law. Involuntary annexations can offer the following advantages to affected properties:

1. Protection of property values through zoning and the application of municipal codes.
2. Improved availability of city services and utilities; particularly water, sewer, & waste disposal.
3. Concentrated police and fire protection services.
4. Improved infrastructure; including adequate streets and roads which incorporate the city's urban design standards.

Objective 10.

The city should be open to and plan for annexations in order to promote future growth of the community, and to protect against haphazard and scattered rural growth in close proximity to Estherville along with unwarranted or potentially harmful developments to the city.

Policy Recommendations to guide future annexations and growth of the community through the use and protection of designated land use patterns include:

Policy 10.a. - *Take measures, including involuntary annexation, to address and control future residential, commercial and industrial development expected to occur near the city's existing city limits.*

Policy 10.b. - *Continue to review rural residential development to the west, north and southwest of Estherville's current city limits for annexation by the city in an effort to properly plan and retain uniform development standards consistent within the community.*

Policy 10.c. – *Work cooperatively with Emmet County to establish a joint 28E policy agreement which will synchronize rural development and nuisance abatement outside the city limits.*

Policy 10.d. - *Consider and maintain the option of utilizing annexation as an effort to protect residents, businesses and land from unwanted or potentially harmful development, including agricultural animal confinements or agricultural industries, that may not be complementary to adjoining land uses in Estherville.*

EXTRATERRITORIAL ZONING AND LAND USE

In accordance with Section 414.23 of the Iowa Code, “The powers granted by this chapter may be extended by ordinance by any city to the unincorporated area up to two (2) miles beyond the limits of such city, except for those areas within a county where a county zoning ordinance exists...” The City of Estherville is limited in enforcing these extraterritorial zoning provisions over unincorporated lands up to two miles from the city limits because Emmet County is already zoned. Additionally, zoning controls in the rural portion of Emmet County are not without limitation. According to the Iowa Code, the farm exemption clause identified in Section 335.2, which exempts zoning controls on property used for agricultural purposes, still applies to agricultural lands in unincorporated areas near Estherville.

However, there are alternative methods of working cooperatively between the City of Estherville and Emmet County with regards to extraterritorial planning and zoning. Another form of extraterritorial zoning that is not used as frequently in northwest Iowa is for cities and counties to cooperatively establish 28E joint governmental development agreements authorizing a city to have specific levels of input into county land use matters, or vice-versa. 28E agreements are used much more frequently in situations where both the city and county choose to exercise zoning controls over their respective jurisdictions. Currently, Estherville and Emmet County do not share any specific zoning or land use related 28E development agreements. The City of Estherville should give consideration to cooperatively establishing a joint 28E policy agreement between the city and county that will spell out specific development opportunities concerning rural residential, commercial, industrial and agricultural business development within close proximity to the Estherville city limits. A potential joint development agreement between the city and county could include and address topics such as:

- Primary land use allowable near the city
- Secondary land use allowable near the city
- Utilities- water, sewer, electric – in rural subdivisions
- Infrastructure- roads, storm sewer - in rural subdivisions
- Public roads - concrete/asphalt/unimproved – in rural subdivisions
- Zoning regulations in the joint development area
- Building and design standards in the joint development area
- Subdivision review and standards in the joint development area
- Subdivision plat review in the joint development area

The City of Estherville and Emmet County have taken a first step forward in working towards discussing and/or developing joint development agreements through a 28e intergovernmental agreement. In 2012, an issue was raised concerning the location of CAFO's (Confined Animal Feeding Operations) proposed to be built in close proximity to the city limits of Estherville. Although the county has virtually no zoning authority over agricultural operations in the State of Iowa, the county also recognized the impact that such facilities may have upon future growth and development of a community if intense agricultural operations were to be allowed to be constructed in such close proximity to cities. The City of Estherville and Emmet County collaboratively worked to create a statement which was approved by motion by both the city and county officials in 2012. This statement document stipulates the following:

- 1) Emmet County will oppose any other new large-scale animal confinement facilities proposed to be located within 2 miles of the City of Estherville in the future.
- 2) If any new large-scale animal confinement facilities are located within 2 miles of any city limits in Emmet County, it will be the policy of the Emmet County Board of Supervisors that the developer shall pay 100% of the cost of any road upgrades. No county funds will be used to assist in these projects.
- 3) For future reference, these projects should be sited where the county road system can handle the traffic and they also should be sited a minimum of 2 miles from any city limits.

Estherville reviews preliminary and final plats of rural subdivisions if they fall within a two (2) mile area outside of the city limits, in accordance with Chapter 6, Article 2, Section 4 of the Estherville City Code. The rural subdivision plat is to be presented to the Estherville Planning and Zoning Commission for review and conformity to city's subdivision standards, upon which a recommendation will then be forwarded to the Emmet County Engineer and Board of Supervisors.

If the city were to consider exercising extraterritorial land use or zoning powers, it is recommended that Estherville focus on the review of potential development projects occurring within the following areas listed below. These areas are identified as potential growth areas outside of, but adjacent to, the city's current city limits.

1. Rural residential subdivisions located adjacent to the west, south and northern city limits of Estherville.
2. Highway commercial and industrial land uses located south of Estherville along Highway 4.
3. Sparse light commercial and residential acreages located along Highway 9 west of Estherville.
4. Recreational areas and scattered residential acreages located adjacent to the southwest city limits of Estherville.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY PRACTICES

According to the "Sustainability Dictionary" website, the definition listed below was developed in 1987 at the World Commission on the Environment and Development. This definition is comparable to the Native American "seventh generation" philosophy in which the tribal Chief would always consider the effects or consequences of his actions on the descendants of the next seven generations. As expressed on this source's website, there are many definitions and ways to measure sustainability. Some of the criteria used in measuring sustainability in your community may include:

- Financial Capital
- Natural Capital
- Human or Social Capital

In regards to how sustainable development or creating a sustainable community in the City of Estherville can be implemented, one of the best ways of describing sustainable development is to enhance economic

DEFINITION OF SUSTAINABILITY:

"Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

As created and defined in 1987 at the World Commission on the Environment and Development (the Brundtland Commission)

Courtesy of: The Dictionary of Sustainable Development
<http://www.sustainabilitydictionary.com/s/sustainability.php>

opportunity and community well-being while protecting and restoring the natural environment upon which people and economies depend. In review of both the city's existing and proposed future land use maps, it appears from a spatial land use perspective, the city is attentive and observant of the city's needs in terms of promoting a sustainable community in Estherville. The community has paid great attention to the wonderful natural resources adjacent to the West Fork Des Moines River corridor, reviewing floodplain development and promoting open space and recreational opportunities along the corridor. Estherville needs to be consistent in its future planning and policy making decisions on allowing or promoting development opportunities by doing its due diligence and determining the impact of such development upon the natural environment.

According to the Institute for Sustainable Communities (ISC), headquartered in Montpelier, Vermont, a sustainable community is one that is: "economically, environmentally, and socially healthy and resilient. Sustainable communities meet challenges through innovative solutions rather than fragmented approaches that may achieve one goal at the expense of another. The mission of the ISC is to help communities address environmental, economic and social challenges to build a better future to be shared by all. Similar to the sustainable criteria mentioned above from the World Commission on the Environment and Development, the ISC also believes sustainability comes from managing human, natural and financial resources to meet current needs of the community while ensuring resources are available for future generations. As identified on the ISC's website at: <http://www.iscvt.org/>, following is a list of community practices that define sustainable communities.

Healthy Environment

- Protection and enhancement of local and regional ecosystems
- Conservation of water, land, energy and nonrenewable resources
- Utilization of prevention strategies and technology to minimize pollution
- Practice the use of renewable resource no faster than their rate of renewal
- The use of infrastructure that improves access to goods and services without comprising the environment

Social Environment

- Obtaining the satisfaction of basic human needs including clean air and water
- Provisions of affordable but quality healthcare and well-living for community members
- Safe and affordable housing accessible to all
- Access for all to a quality education
- Enhancement and appreciation of community cultural differences, treasures, customs and traditions

Economic Environment

- Community members benefit from a strong and healthy community economy
- Diverse and financially viable economic base
- Reinvestment of financial and human resources into the local economy
- Maximize local ownership of businesses
- Adequate and accessible employment opportunities for all residents
- Effective and accessible job training and education programs for the workforce to adapt to future demands
- Encourage those businesses that enhance community sustainability

SMART GROWTH PRINCIPLES

Urban sprawl, by name alone, would appear to be a metropolitan issue. On the contrary, regardless of the name, urban sprawl is an issue for any community, town or rural area that has been impacted by uncontrolled or haphazard growth of large sprawling lots without regard to the impact upon the environment or surrounding uses. Many have heard of the term “smart growth”, but do we really understand what it means. According to Smart Growth America on their website, <http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/>, smart growth can be defined as:

SMART GROWTH IS A BETTER WAY TO BUILD AND MAINTAIN OUR TOWN & CITIES:

“Smart growth means building urban, suburban and rural communities with housing and transportation choices near jobs, shops and schools. This approach supports the local economies and protects the environment.”

Courtesy of: Smart Growth America <http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/>

Smart Growth America is a national organization dedicated to researching, advocating for and leading coalitions to bring smart growth practices to communities nationwide. Many cities desire to create pedestrian friendly neighborhoods with nearby schools and shopping with ease of access for its residents, however, the reality is that this is not the case with most rural communities that experienced a majority of its growth or even peaked in growth during the 1940s-1970s. Although supportive of new residential and commercial growth, many cities are beginning to question the costs of building further out from the city center. This is becoming increasingly more important especially as infrastructure, utility and transportation costs are continually escalating. Spurring the smart growth movement are shifts in demographics, a revived environmental ethic, and increased fiscal concerns over development costs. In older communities, smart growth can also play an integral role in urban renewal projects. In areas of older communities near the downtown to city center neighborhoods, where older housing stock continues to deteriorate and cities look for ways to revitalize these neighborhoods, smart growth principals can be applied to the redevelopment of these older neighborhoods. Smart growth promotes connectivity between people and employment, recreation and services,

Generally, smart growth principles are based on two concepts; 1) issues facing cities today and 2) recommended smart growth principles used to create policy and means to address the previously addressed issues. The information referenced below is summarized from the “Smart Growth Online” resource provided by the smart growth network (www.smartgrowth.org).

Quality of Life – Create and preserve a sense of place through housing, green spaces, recreation and cultural attractions, and policies or incentives to encourage mixed-use neighborhoods.

Design – Offer health, social, economic, and environmental benefits for all. Suggest incorporating green building practices, low-impact developments and walkable neighborhoods.

Economics – Encourage small business investment adding to employment opportunities.

Environment – Environmental challenges we are facing today are due in part to the way neighborhoods, communities, and cities have been built up during the past half-century.

Health – Reduces threats from air and water pollution and indoor air contaminants through resource efficient building design along with promoting public transit, bike lanes and trails.

Housing – Create housing options for diverse lifestyles and socioeconomic levels by supporting mixed-use development, affordable housing alternatives and revitalize existing neighborhoods.

Transportation – Protects public health, environmental quality, conserves energy, and improves the quality of life by promoting new or innovative transportation choices.

In summary, smart growth can also be summarized as the opposite of urban sprawl or the anti-sprawl movement. Smart growth encourages infill development, redevelopment of brownfield or greenfield sites, along with redevelopment of thriving city centers where nearby residents can once again come to gather, socialize, and shop with ease of pedestrian access and transportation to and within the city center developments. Smart growth principals support job growth, new housing, economic development and healthy communities. Simply stated, smart growth supports the traditional means of community and economic development, but just looking at development from a differing perspective; one that does not support urban sprawl with neighborhoods of cookie-cutter housing that only supports driving to and from any place the residents want to go. Smart growth principals support walkable neighborhoods and communities that encourage mixed use developments within larger residential tracts. The City of Estherville should look to smart growth principles and practices when considering potential future development, redevelopment or revitalization efforts in the central business district or surrounding older neighborhoods.

LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT AND BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

The Clean Water Act gives the Environmental Protection Agency the regulatory control over cities and governments to control stormwater that is discharged into waterways. Much of the City of Estherville provides for natural and controlled stormwater drainage and runoff into the West Fork Des Moines River or its tributaries. The concept behind low impact development and stormwater management practices is to capture the excess stormwater at the source point instead of trying to manage and control or direct the flow of water into natural drainage ways or waterways. The controlled flow of excess storm water promotes the collection of sometimes harmful waste products and materials that are intentionally directed and dumped into our natural waterways; promoting the pollution and contamination of sources of drinking water and or recreational waterways within the immediate vicinity of the community or downstream.

Low impact development is a management approach and set of best practices promoted by the EPA intended to reduce runoff and pollutant discharges. These suggested practices are intended to help a community comply with EPA stormwater management rules by managing excess stormwater runoff as close to the source as possible. Low impact development (LID) practices include a variety of suggested methods of capturing stormwater runoff including small scale stormwater collection and management approaches, the implementation of natural storm water infiltration into the ground, areas to collect and allow evaporation or transpiration, and the harvesting and use of collected rainwater. According to the USDA NRCS (Natural Resource Conservation Service), there are several examples of best practices in the management of storm water in lieu of traditional storm water sewer. Some of these low impact development examples include:

Native Landscapes – these plantings add beauty to any landscape and once established native landscapes become low maintenance areas that provide great habitat for birds and insects. Additional environmental benefits include the retention and filtration of stormwater through the root architecture of native plant species.

Pervious Paving – This low impact development practice allows stormwater to infiltrate into subsurface layers and eventually into the groundwater below. By containing the stormwater on-site, this reduces the amount of pollutants flowing into storm sewers and directly into natural rivers or lakes. The City of Estherville could explore the feasibility of implementing this practice in older neighborhoods near the downtown and near the West Fork Des Moines River. This method of low impact development serves two purposes. One, it saves on stormwater sewer costs by alleviating sewer infrastructure in lieu of natural groundwater drainage; and two, it also serves as an aesthetically pleasing look that creates the appearance of old cobblestone roads. This could be a unique development approach in older neighborhoods.

Photo of pervious paving streets in Charles City, Iowa



Photo Source: iowaagriculture.gov

Soil Quality Restoration – Native soils have been significantly altered by farming practices and grading over many years. By restoring the soils with high organic matter content and porosity, this will allow the ground to absorb rainfall and not shed runoff.

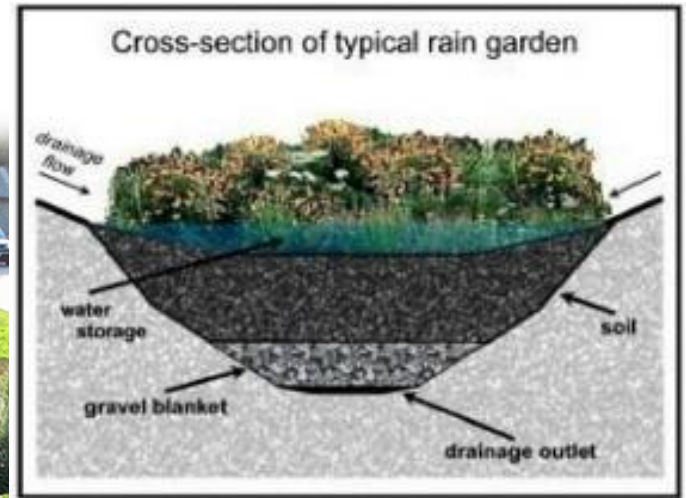
Rainwater Harvesting – The simplest form of rain harvesting is to install a rain barrel onto the downspout and collect the rain water. There are also more elaborate means to collect rooftop rainwater such as modern cisterns and bladder tanks. Harvested rainwater is intended for non-drinking water uses such as watering lawns or gardens.

Bioswales – This form of low impact development is similar to a rain garden in its objective, but instead of a strategically placed depression to collect water, Bioswales are a designed conveyance system to collect and move water in lieu of storm sewers. Bioswales improve water quality by filtering the first large push of storm water after a large rain event.

Photo of a bioswale or bioretention area constructed in a city park in Denison, Iowa



Rain Gardens – Rain gardens are depressions within the landscape that are planted with flowers and native vegetation intended to collect and absorb excess stormwater. Rain gardens are strategically located to capture rain runoff from roofs or streets. Rain gardens will fill with a few inches of rain and then slowly absorb the water back into the ground, rather than directing it to a storm sewer.



Above: Photo of a rain garden installed in the Arnolds Park Amusement park in Arnolds Park, Iowa.

Right: A typical cross-section of a rain garden. Image source: arundelonthebay.org

Other forms of low impact development best practices include water gardens, green roofs, French drains, bioretention cells, constructed wetlands, butterfly gardens, native turf, sustainable landscaping, green wall, and a dry well.

The City of Estherville should consider a demonstration site on city owned property to promote the use of low impact development practices in the community. This proposed demonstration site could also be used as an educational tool for local schools as well as educating and promoting individual property owners to consider incorporating low impact development alternatives on residential or commercial properties.

Objective 11.

Encourage new development to utilize green development practices such as low impact development (LID) or best management practices such as green roofs, solar energy, bioswales, pervious paving or a number of other green alternatives.

Policy Recommendations to guide future low impact development decisions of the community through the use of low impact development practices include:

Policy 11.a. - Investigate options for implementing low impact development or best management practices within a demonstration site on city owned property.

Policy 11.b. - Consider and review potential changes to the zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations and other building codes to encourage the utilization of green development practices.

Policy 11.c. - Work with community partners, developers and private landowners to inform the public of best management practices for containment of stormwater on-site in lieu of directing stormwater from the property directly into natural waterways.

CHAPTER 15. PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The Estherville Comprehensive Land Use Plan is to be used as a guide by both public and private sectors in land use decision-making processes. The private sector, including developers, investors, industry and businesses will use this document to become informed of the general positions of the city regarding land use objectives and policies. This land use plan and the associated existing and future land use maps will provide the general public with an outline and guide to make individual land investments, purchases or development decisions. The public will become more informed as to the city's policies in regards to those land uses that are permitted, encouraged, prohibited or protected. With this knowledge in advance, the public will be able to make informed and knowledgeable decisions complimentary to the city's comprehensive plan.

The public or government sectors, including primarily the City of Estherville, but possibly with considerations from Emmet County and/or the State of Iowa, will utilize this comprehensive plan as a guide in making future land use decisions and interpretations of proposed projects. While this working document is the result of the efforts of the Estherville Planning and Zoning Commission, it is prepared representing the interests of all community residents. Activities affecting land uses by the city, Emmet County, State of Iowa or the United States Federal Government should follow the intent and spirit established by the policies and guidelines set forth in this plan. This document is intended to be flexible and should be reviewed for policy changes from time to time. The city will need to review this plan periodically to determine if clarifications, changes or land use policies should be changed, amended or deleted.

The Estherville Comprehensive Plan may be amended as deemed necessary by the planning and zoning commission, with amendments recommended to the city council for approval. While actual or literal enforcement of the land use policy statements included in this plan may be difficult, the city should consider the policies established within this document as enforceable through the city's zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations. The intent, spirit and policies established in this comprehensive planning document are often times cited, referenced, and utilized in the city's other enforcement regulations. All governmental bodies, businesses, individuals, and corporations are strongly encouraged to comply with the spirit and intent set forth in the goals and land use policies outlined in this comprehensive plan.

The preceding chapters in this document form the core of the Estherville Comprehensive Plan with narratives, maps, charts, tables, and statistics concerning desirable future development patterns. This chapter addresses possible means of implementing those objectives and policy recommendations identified in Chapter 13. Because the scope of the Estherville Comprehensive Plan is long term in nature its policy recommendations and the idea of implementing such policies may seem daunting. It is for this reason that city officials and specifically the planning and zoning commission should utilize the plan to assist in developing annual or short term improvement programs such as a parks and trails plan, capital improvements plan, or financial budgeting. Additionally, the planning and zoning commission should evaluate the comprehensive plan on an annual basis in consideration of changing development patterns which may occur in any given year.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Community leaders and city officials in Estherville are charged with the task of identifying, leading, and being the first to accept and embrace the future that this community has ahead. Suggested implementation measures the city may wish to review, address or incorporate include:

1. Establish a benchmark for Estherville from which future community growth will be measured against. Create a three to five year action or strategy plan addressing specific growth, economic development and annexation policies.
2. Encourage city officials, planning and zoning commission members, board of adjustment members, and key community leaders to attend training in an effort to gain new perspective on current or innovative trends in planning and/or regulatory ordinances.
3. Establish an annual comprehensive plan review process in which public input is encouraged regarding the progress and development of the community. Furthermore, the planning and zoning commission will need to review the city's future land use plan and land use policies and make a report to the city council to determine if changes need to be made or updated to reflect current development projects.
4. Create a plan to attract and/or retain young professionals and the younger population residing in Estherville. Far too many communities see their younger populations leave the community upon graduation from school for larger metropolitan areas. Monitor results through affordable housing options, younger demographic trends, and recreational or entertainment activities intended for this demographic.
5. Continue to promote and exhibit a welcoming and accommodating feeling to new residents, businesses and visitors to the community. This may be accomplished through creating and sustaining a "welcoming committee" and packet of information for new residents and businesses to the community.
6. Protect the rights and interests of property owners in Estherville when creating and enforcing new or existing land use policies or when updating the City's ordinances such as zoning and subdivision regulations.
7. Be consistent and fair to all residents and businesses when implementing new land use policies.

Establishing planning or performance benchmarks is one method utilized to determine accountability for the implementation of this comprehensive plan. A benchmark system encourages the city to develop general descriptions of what it hopes to achieve by implementing the land use objectives and policy recommendations outlined in the plan. After identifying desired outcomes the city can set thresholds or goals for the achievement of the desired outcomes. Periodically, the city officials should track and review the achievement of desired outcomes from implementing this comprehensive plan. Below is a sample listing of benchmarks the City of Estherville may consider using or expand upon in determining if it has met the desired objectives and policy recommendations of this comprehensive plan.

- The sales price of vacant and buildable land.
- The rate of conversion of vacant land to improved land.
- The average sales price of single-family housing.

- The average monthly rental costs for multiple family housing.
- The number of new single family and multiple family building permits issued.
- The goal of attaining 5 percent vacancy rate in housing.
- An increase in the amount (in acres) of parks and recreational land uses per capita.
- A reduction, or at least no new acreage of residential development located in floodplains or areas not best suited for residential developments.
- The number of miles (to be determined by the city) of street repair, resurfaced, or new pavement.

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