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SPRINGFIELD, NEBRASKA

URBAN DESIGN MASTER PLAN

Tonya K. Carlson



Professional Project

For the Degree:

Master of Community and Regional Planning

Community and Regional Planning Program

College of Architecture

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

SPRINGFIELD, NEBRASKA

URBAN DESIGN MASTER PLAN

Tonya K. Carlson

March 30, 2015

Client:

City of Springfield, Nebraska

Professional Project Advisory Committee:

Professor Gordon Scholz, Committee Chair

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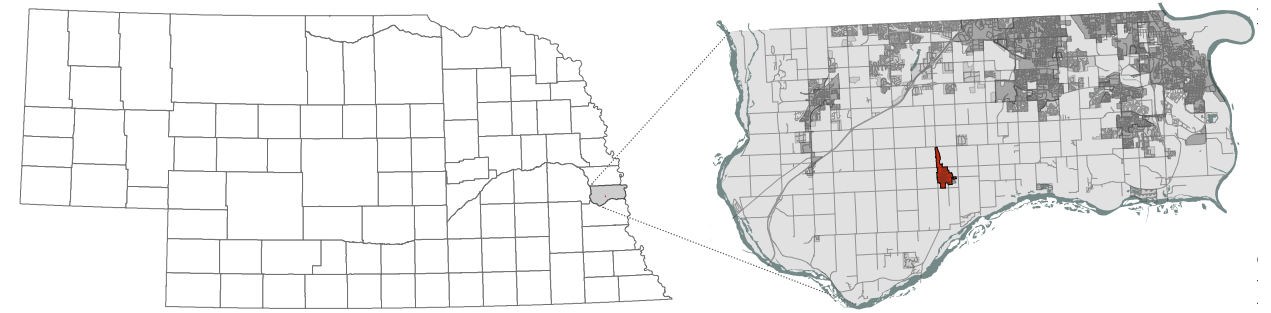
Professor Zhenghong Tang, Committee Member

Kathleen Gottsch, Committee Member and Client Representative

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PREFACE



PROJECT INTRODUCTION

The City of Springfield, Nebraska, is located in Sarpy County and has a population of 1,529. It is located approximately 15 miles southwest of downtown Omaha, and directly 5 miles south of the intersection of Nebraska Highway 50 and Interstate Highway 80. In the past several decades, other cities in Sarpy County have experienced large population increases. If this trend is a sign of what is to come for Springfield, the community wants to be ready. In addition to preparing for growth, community members take great pride and continue to invest in improvements to their hometown.

One of the first steps for any city to prepare for growth and change is to have a current and viable comprehensive plan. Springfield contracted with JEO Consulting Group, Inc., to complete an updated comprehensive plan for the community. JEO Consulting Group, Inc., then approached the College of Architecture at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln to explore the possibility of a partnership to complete an urban design portion for the Springfield Comprehensive Plan.

Because of my undergraduate degrees in landscape architecture and my career aspirations to focus on urban design, I accepted the opportunity to complete an urban design project for the City of Springfield. This professional project is in partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree of Master of Community and Regional Planning from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Kathleen Gottsch, Springfield City Administrator, served as the representative for the City of Springfield, my professional project client. The urban design component was intended to supplement the Springfield Comprehensive Plan that was being updated by JEO Consulting Group, Inc. In the process of completing this professional project, I was offered an internship at JEO Consulting Group, Inc. This position allowed me to work on the Springfield Comprehensive Plan, as well as my professional project. Although certain components of my professional project (Springfield Urban Design Master Plan) were incorporated in the Springfield Comprehensive Plan, they are two separate plans.

PREFACE



Springfield is located in south-central Sarpy County, just a few miles north of the Platte River. Because of its close proximity to Interstate 80 and Highway 50, the trips to both Lincoln and Omaha are very short.

PREFACE

PURPOSE AND NEED

Urban design is sometimes described as the art of making places for people. And although the use of the word “urban” might seem inaccurate for a town of 1,500, urban design is a vital part of the planning process in communities large and small. Urban design assesses the safety of community members, the aesthetics of the place, the movement patterns within the area, the places people inhabit and visit, and the relationship between people and their surroundings. This project proposes urban design ideas intended to improve the lives of Springfield residents and enhance the experiences of people visiting Springfield. The Springfield, Nebraska Urban Design Master Plan, along with the Springfield Comprehensive Plan, will help community members envision what their town could be and provide guidance for implementation of that vision.

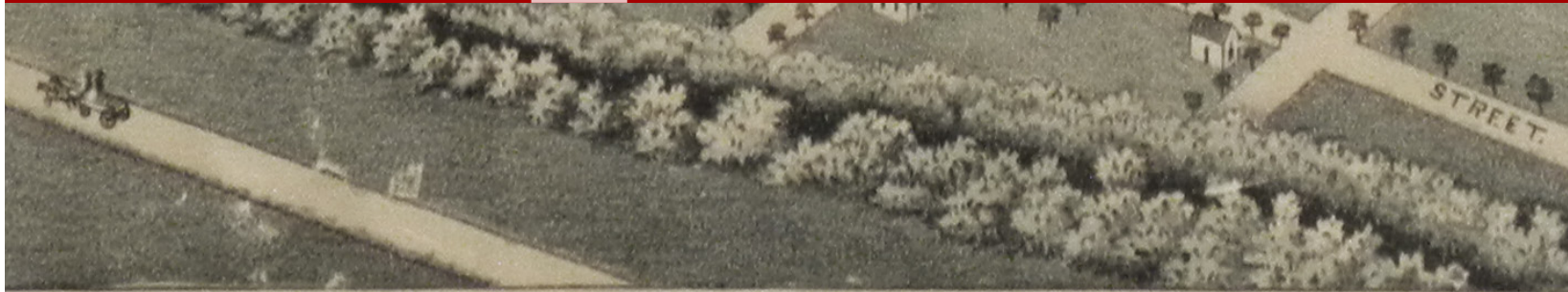


A view of Main Street in Springfield, looking east in September 2014.



HISTORY

- SPRINGFIELD'S BEGINNING 1.1
- HISTORIC CORRIDORS 1.2
- AGRICULTURAL ROOTS 1.3



BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF
SPRINGFIELD
SARPY CO., NEB. 1884.

ool.
acific Railroad Depot.

3. Smith's Flour

1.1 SPRINGFIELD'S BEGINNING

Sarpy Center

HISTORY

Springfield, Nebraska, is rich with interesting and significant history that tells the story of how the small railroad village began and how it grew into the city it is today. The trends found in Springfield's history could even help predict how development and transformation might proceed from this day forward. The study of Springfield's history is extremely important to the urban design process and helps to inform design outcomes.

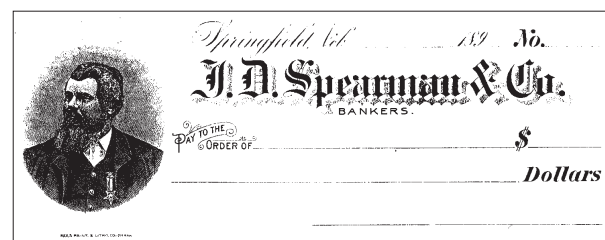
SARPY CENTER

The story of Springfield, Nebraska, must first begin with a town called Sarpy Center and its founder, Captain James Dawson Spearman. James Dawson Spearman was born in Jacksonville, Illinois, on March 9, 1833, but moved to Des Moines, Iowa, where he grew to adulthood. He became the Captain of the 25th Iowa Volunteer Infantry, Company H. During the Civil War, Captain Spearman's regiment was engaged in a battle on May 22, 1863, and he was wounded by a gunshot. The injury led to his discharge from the military in 1864, and he returned to farming and a retail grocery business in Iowa for a few years. In 1871 Captain J.D. Spearman sold the business and farm and moved to Sarpy County, Nebraska, to farm. (G.F.W.C. 1982)



J.D. Spearman, father of Springfield.
Source: Springfield, Nebraska At Its Source

J. D. Spearman purchased land in the geographical center of Sarpy County and created a company called J.D. Spearman and Company. On April 8, 1875, the town Sarpy Center was platted (Bangs 1887). Sarpy Center was located about one mile west of Richfield at the corner of Fairview

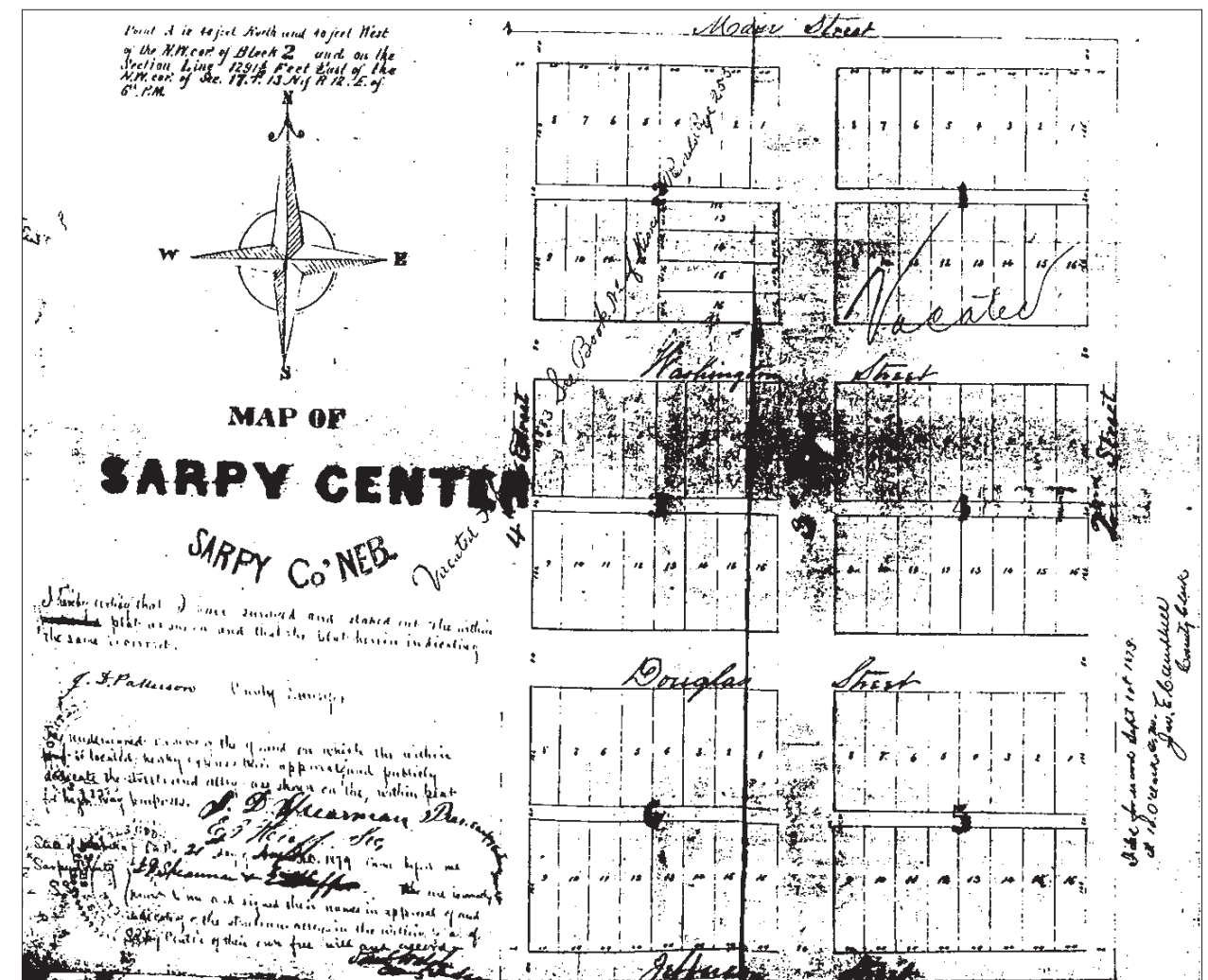


A J.D. Spearman & Co. check
Source: Sarpy County Museum

1.1 SPRINGFIELD'S BEGINNING

Sarpy Center

Road and 120th Street. Because of good roads leading to the town, it successfully supported several businesses. These businesses included a store, blacksmith, hotel, two churches, and the Sarpy County Sentinel newspaper. Sarpy Center was even in hot contention with Papillion, for a time, to become the county seat. (A Bridge from the Past 1970)



A map from 1875 of Sarpy Center, Nebraska. The word "Vacated" was later scrawled across the map.
Source: Sarpy County Museum

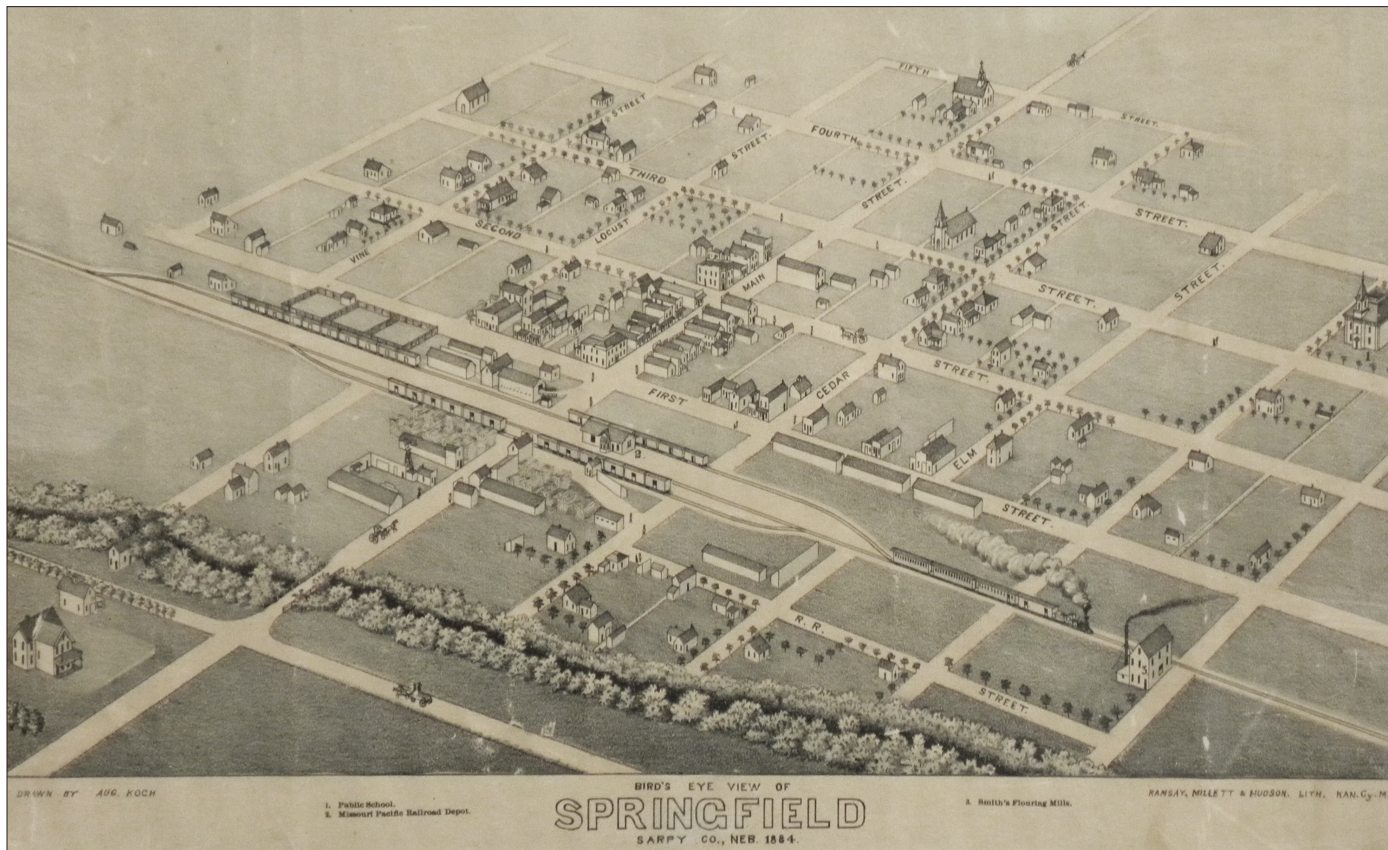
However, during that time in Nebraska, whether a city prospered and grew or not was largely dependent on its access to the railroad. In the first years of Sarpy Center's beginning, it was rumored that a railroad extension from the south was to be routed through Sarpy County to reach Omaha. Sarpy Center was said to be right in the new rail line's path, and the town was ready for a railroad station. Unfortunately, the railroad did not come to Sarpy Center. J.D. Spearman was adamant that his town would have railroad access, so in October of 1881, Sarpy Center was uprooted and moved to a new location. (G.F.W.C. 1982)

1.1 SPRINGFIELD'S BEGINNING

Springfield

SPRINGFIELD

The land on which Sarpy Center was platted was not the only land Spearman bought when he moved to Sarpy County. He also bought land further south in Sarpy County for \$822.68, from a family by the surname of Cotter. This land was in the path of the new rail line, unlike Sarpy Center, so Spearman decided this would be the new location for his town. (Smith) In October of 1881, Spearman began to move the buildings from Sarpy Center to the new location. The name did not move with the buildings, however. Spearman decided that this new town along the railroad was to be named Springfield because of the natural springs in the fields at the western edge of the town. All the buildings except for the school were uprooted from Sarpy Center and moved to Springfield. A post office was soon established in December of 1881. The village plat for Springfield was filed for record at the county seat in Papillion on February 27, 1882. (G.F.W.C. 1982)



A bird's eye view of Springfield drawn by August Koch in 1884.
Source: Photograph of drawing taken at the Springfield Public Library

Soon after the plat was filed, the Missouri Pacific Railway made its way through the new village on March 24, 1882. The railroad built a depot in Springfield on land that Spearman contributed. The building measured 24 feet by 50 feet. (G.F.W.C. 1982)

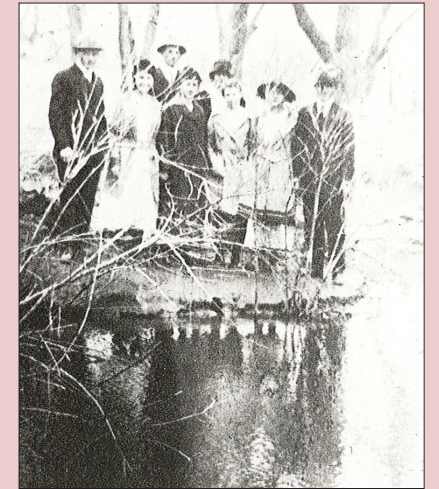
1.1 SPRINGFIELD'S BEGINNING

Springfield



A plat map from 1883 showing the original plat and Spearman's first addition.
Source: Sarpy County Surveyor Book 1883

How Springfield Was Named



Early Springfield residents standing near the natural springs.
Source: Springfield, Nebraska At Its Source

"You modernists cannot picture that spring as it existed when the village was founded and for many years thereafter. In that grotto, or bower, under the shade of those trees, with sloping banks of bluegrass, in springtime studded with violets and other wildflowers, was a pool of the clearest water, upon a sand bed 15 to 20 feet in diameter...Everyone in Springfield, in that early day, knew it as 'The Bubbling Spring.'"

*—Everett M. Swain
'The History of Springfield'*

The village of Springfield grew quickly at first because it procured much of the trade of western Sarpy County. This was because Springfield was farther west than other towns in Sarpy County and no bridges across the Platte River into the county existed at the time. The population was recorded at 300 on October 1, 1882, just one year after the first buildings were moved to Springfield from Sarpy Center. The bustling little village was home to many businesses including: four grocery stores, three dry goods stores, one meat market, three hotels, one bank, two blacksmith shops, two lumberyards, two agricultural houses, one livery stable, two harness shops, one grain elevator, one flour mill, one saloon, one shoe shop, one furniture store, one millinery, one jewelry shop, an art gallery, and two churches. (G.F.W.C. 1982)

1.1 SPRINGFIELD'S BEGINNING Railroad

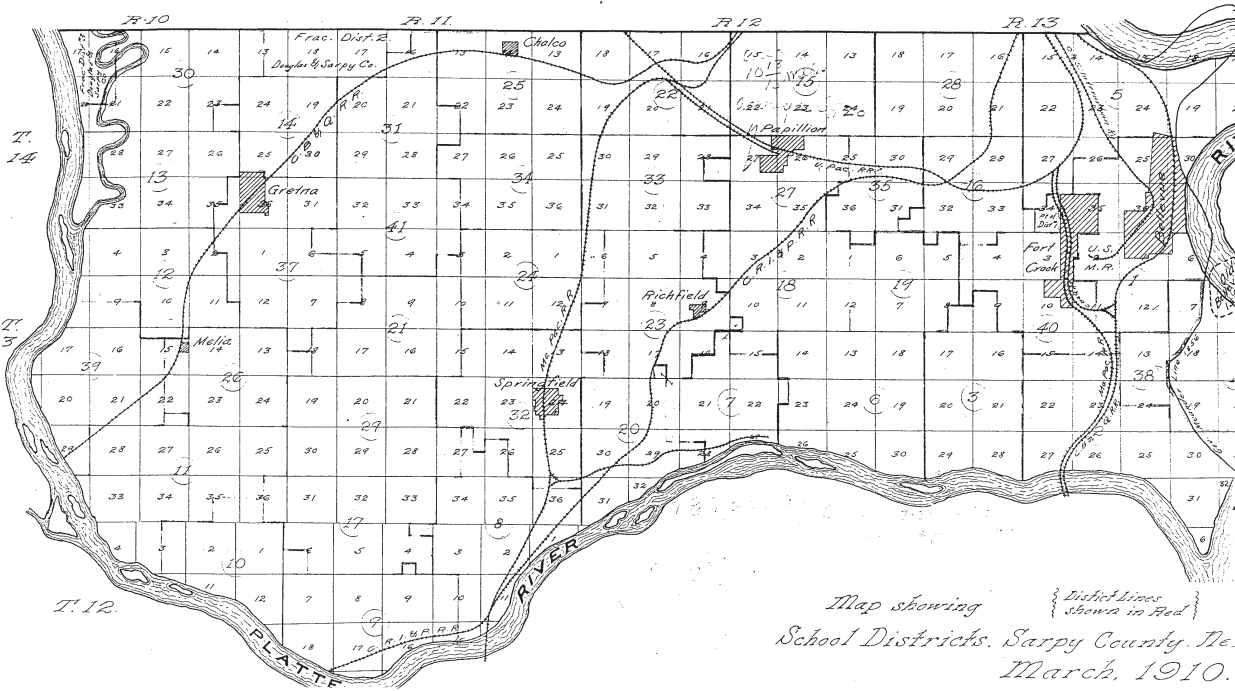
RAILROAD

The Missouri Pacific Railway was established in 1849 with the purpose of connecting St. Louis, Missouri, to the west coast during the California Gold Rush. However, the construction progress was slow and was completely halted at Kansas City when the Civil War broke out in 1861. Construction began again after the Civil War and continued westward across the Missouri River and into the territories of Kansas and Nebraska. (Missouri Pacific Historical Society)

The Missouri Pacific Railway reached Springfield on March 24, 1882. It quickly brought growth and prosperity to the new village. The rail line provided regular passenger service and supplied Springfield and other eastern Nebraska communities with resources such as coal and lumber. (G.F.W.C. 1982) For many years the Missouri Pacific Railway served as a link between the southern states and the western territories and states, distributing goods and taking people to places everywhere in between.

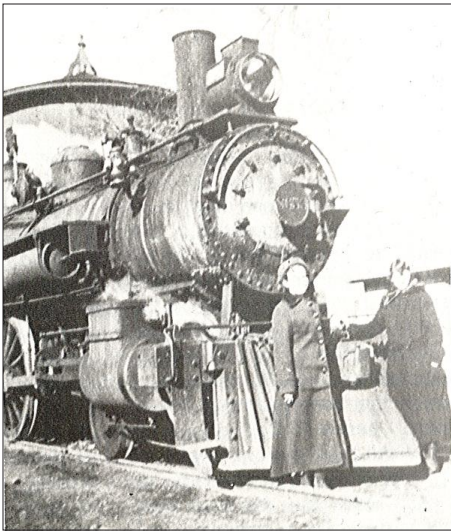


The Missouri Pacific Railway logo as can be found in the advertisements in the Springfield Monitor in the early 1900s. Source: trainweb.org



This school district map from 1910 clearly delineates the rail lines in Sarpy County at the time. Source: Sarpy County Museum

1.1 SPRINGFIELD'S BEGINNING Railroad



Two local women stand by the last Missouri Pacific passenger train to leave Springfield in the summer of 1933. Source: Springfield, Nebraska At Its Source

Although the railroad is the reason that Springfield exists, it gradually became less and less important to the community throughout its century of service. In the summer of 1933, during the Great Depression, passenger train service was discontinued on the Missouri Pacific line through Springfield. (G.F.W.C. 1982) Then the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956 changed transportation forever. As the Interstate Highway system was built, products were increasingly shipped on trucks via the Interstate system rather than by rail. This trend was seen in Springfield as well, and rail traffic began declining in the 1960s and 1970s on the Missouri Pacific Railway. In 1984, heavy rains and flooding washed out a section of the railroad near Elmwood, Nebraska, southwest of Springfield in Cass County, Nebraska. The Missouri Pacific

Railway made the decision to not repair this rail line, and it was removed from service. The rail line was officially abandoned in 1990. (Messerschmidt 2015)

Although Springfield has not seen a train pass through since 1984, the rail right-of-way now serves a purpose of a different kind. After the Missouri Pacific Railway removed the rail line from service, several entities, including the City of Lincoln, the Nebraska Trails Foundation, and the Great Plains Trails Network, bought much of the rail right-of-way from the railroad in Lancaster County and Cass County. From this land, the MoPac Trail West and the MoPac Trail East were born in the early 1990s. However, construction of the part of the MoPac Trail that currently passes through Springfield was not begun until 2004. (Lower Platte South Natural Resources District)

The MoPac North begins just south of South Bend, Nebraska, and connects to the north side of the Platte River by the Lied Pedestrian Bridge. The trail then runs along Highway 31 until it meets with Highway 50 just north of Louisville. The MoPac then extends along the old Missouri Pacific Railway north through Springfield. With the completion of a segment from Main Street to Platteview Road this spring (2015), the MoPac Trail will run all the way north to the intersection of Schram Road and Highway 50. Several entities are working toward completing the connection between Lincoln and Omaha by means of the MoPac Trail and are hoping to see this accomplished in the near future.

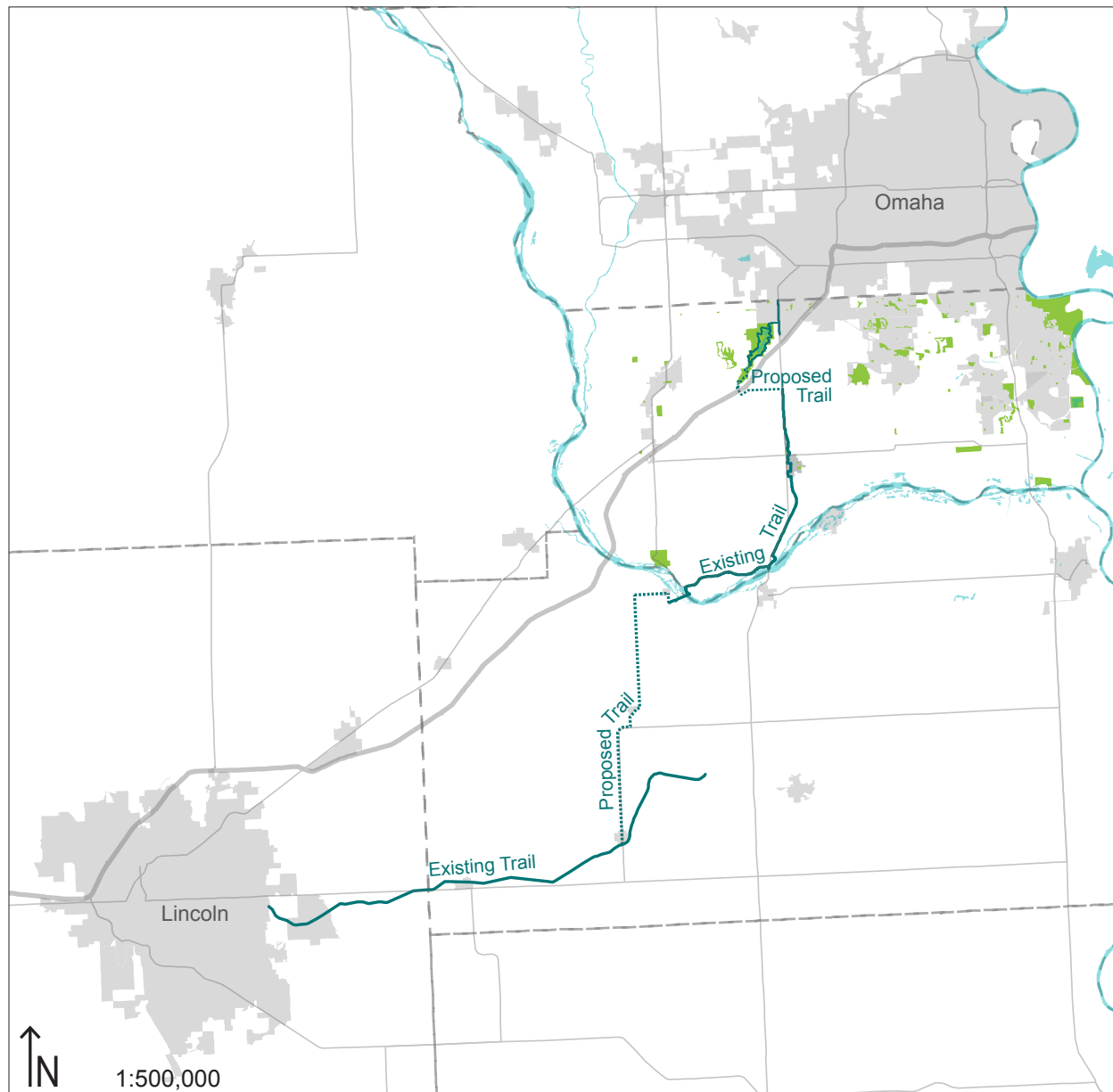
1.1 SPRINGFIELD'S BEGINNING

Railroad



The MoPac Trail as it runs between Springfield Creek and the southern section of the Sarpy County Fairgrounds.

Just as the Missouri Pacific Railway was once the lifeblood of Springfield, the MoPac Trail has the potential to become a very valuable amenity to Springfield as well. This value must be further explored, realized, and utilized.



The MoPac Trail will be completed from Lincoln to Omaha when the small portion in Cass County is completed. The Lower Platte South Natural Resources District has been negotiating with the Nebraska Department of Roads for use of highway right-of-way and a proposed route is now in place.

1.2 HISTORIC CORRIDORS

Main Street

MAIN STREET

Since the first buildings were moved from Sarpy Center to Main Street of Springfield in 1881, Main Street has remained the heart of the community. The Main Street corridor in Springfield has always been the main business district and the location of many county fairs, parades, festivities, as well as a congregation point for everyday socializing.

On March 19, 1903, Main Street faced a very traumatic disaster. Just after midnight, a fire started in the bowling alley that had once been the Wagner Hotel, which was on the south side of Main Street. It was customary in that day to ring church bells when a fire broke out to rouse citizens, so many from the town were called to the scene. The north side of Main Street was saved by throwing wet blankets over the facades of the buildings, but nothing could be done for the south side of the street. The entire south side of Main Street was destroyed except for a shoe shop at the west end of the block. The businesses destroyed during the fire included a hardware store, Kieck's grocery store, Elwell's implement store, Bates' drug store, a bowling alley, a barber shop, a meat market, a saloon, a pool hall and a few other businesses. (G.F.W.C. 1982)



Pictures taken after the 1903 fire that devastated the buildings on south side of Main Street.

Source: Springfield, Nebraska At Its Source

The fire did not dampen the spirit of Springfield business owners and residents, however. The following summer, the buildings that were once built from wood, were replaced by structures constructed with brick and stone. This work was accomplished by the Kiewit Corporation, and it was one of the (now extremely successful) company's first projects (G.F.W.C. 1982). Most of the wood buildings on the north side of the street have been replaced throughout the years, as well, but many of the brick buildings on the south side of Main Street built during the summer after the fire are still standing and in use. They reflect the architecture of the era and bring much character to the Main Street corridor today.

1.2 HISTORIC CORRIDORS

Main Street

A building recognized on the National Register of Historic Places exists along Main Street, as well. This is the Springfield Community Hall. Although it is definitely not the oldest structure in Springfield, it is historically important because it was built in 1939 as part of the W.P.A. New Deal program. A hotel and grain elevator were torn down to make room for the Community Center. It was built with sandstone that was mined west of Springfield. (G.F.W.C 1982) Today the unique structure stands in its original location on the northeast corner of the intersection of 1st Street and Main Street. It still provides a venue for numerous programs, events, meetings, and youth sports practices and events.



Laying the cornerstone for the Community Building in 1939.
Source: Springfield, Nebraska At Its Source

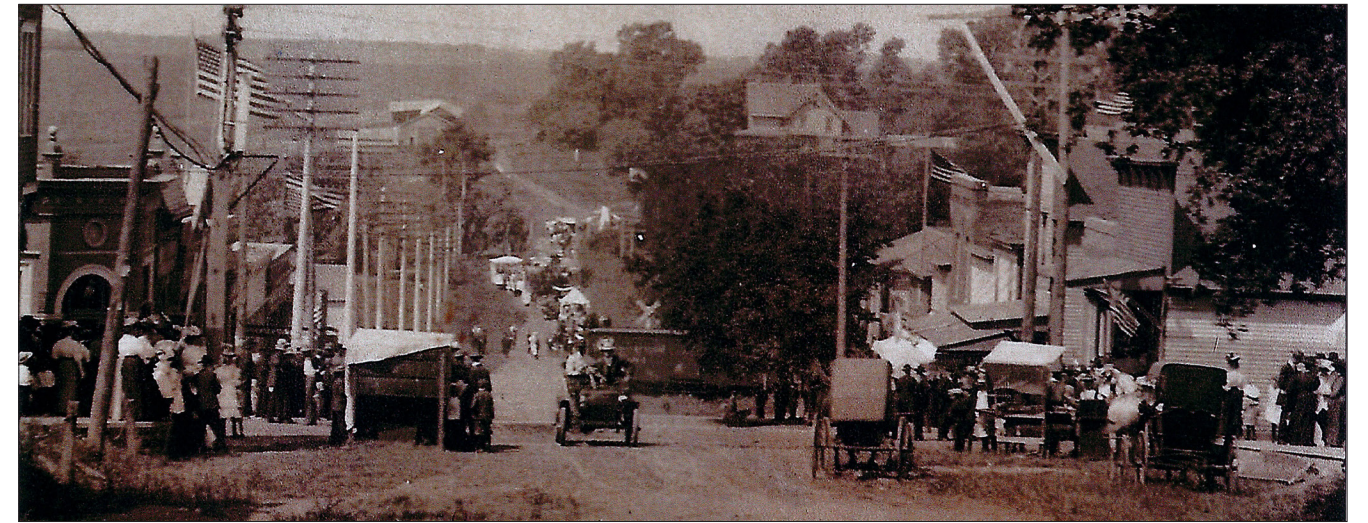


Springfield Community Hall, built with locally mined sandstone, is still used today.

Many of the businesses downtown have historically catered to the needs of farmers in the area. Although some agriculturally focused businesses still exist in the downtown area, the Main Street corridor has changed its customer base. This change is most likely due to several forces, including: revolutionizing farming practices, large farm equipment store chains moving to the area, and Sarpy County becoming much less rural and being the home to fewer farmers. Today, the businesses along Main Street corridor are much more geared toward tourism, pleasure, and everyday services, rather than agriculture. As Springfield Mayor Mike Dill comments, "Springfield has gone through a huge transition." This transition will serve Springfield well as the residents plan and prepare for inevitable future growth of the city.

1.2 HISTORIC CORRIDORS

Main Street



Looking west down Main Street. The date of this photograph is unknown, but it appears to be sometime after 1914 when electric lighting came to Springfield, but before Main Street was paved in 1923. Source: Springfield Public Library



Looking west down Main Street in the early 1960s. Source: Springfield Public Library



Looking west down Main Street on June 1, 2014.

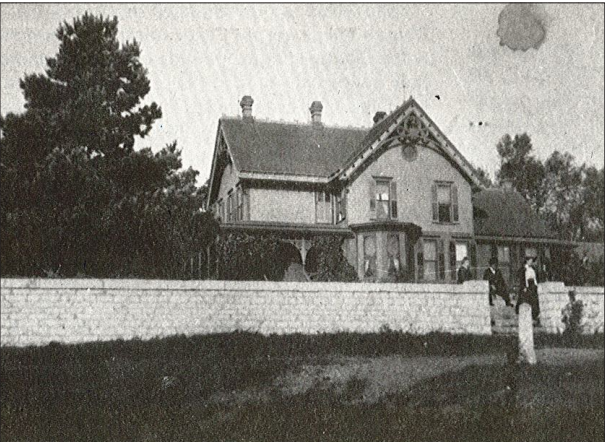
1.2 HISTORIC CORRIDORS Highway 50

1.2 HISTORIC CORRIDORS Highway 50

HIGHWAY 50

As Omaha continues to grow and development moves south and west in the metropolitan area, Highway 50 becomes increasingly important to the City of Springfield. Currently, development pressures exist along the highway, but it has not always been this way. The downtown Main Street corridor has always been the central business district and historical center of Springfield, but Highway 50 holds historical relevance to Springfield as well.

The home of J.D. Spearman, the founding father of Springfield, was built on Highway 50. It is located atop the hill on the west side of the highway at the intersection of Main Street and Highway 50. It was as if Spearman had the house built there so he could watch over his city. The house is still standing today and owned and occupied by another family. The stately old house is surrounded by a low stone wall, which adds to the overall grand effect of the hilltop property overlooking the city.



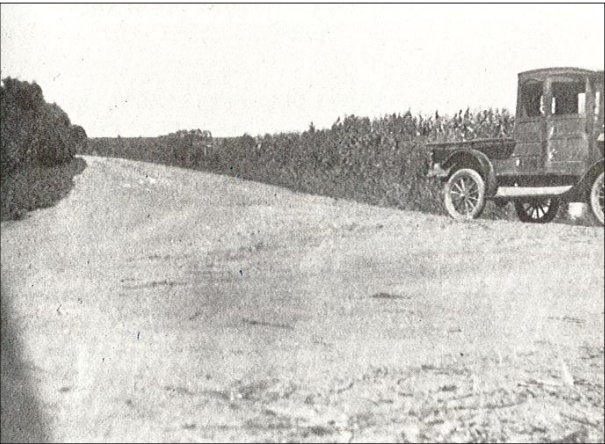
J.D. Spearman house in the early years after it was built.
Source: Springfield, Nebraska At Its Source



The Spearman house, with slight modifications, in September, 2014.

The old Highway 50 Diner also was located along Highway 50 on the northwest corner of the intersection of Highway 50 and Platteview Road. Mayor Mike Dill recalls the place as a hangout for area farmers and Springfield residents—a place to socialize with friends and neighbors. It served as a bar and grill, had homemade pies, and catered to the rural community. The Highway 50 Diner closed about 10 years ago, and a small car dealership now occupies the site. (Dill 2015)

The main entrance to Springfield—at the intersection of Highway 50 and Main Street—today is marked by two gas stations, a Casey’s General Store and a Sinclair gas station. Previously, these were two privately owned gas stations (Dill 2015). Even though gas stations are not ideal as a front door to any community, they do cause many travelers along Highway 50 to stop at the main entrance to Springfield. The gas stations also serve as places where Springfield residents often socialize.



Highway 50 before it was paved.
Source: Springfield, Nebraska At Its Source



Looking north on Highway 50, near Main Street. Photograph was taken on September 20, 2014.

Highway 50, once an unpaved rural road in the not-so-distant past, is now promising to bring a large amount of adjacent development, stimulated in large part by overall growth in the metropolitan area, to Springfield. Industries, institutions, and businesses alike are seeing the potential of the highly traveled roadway. This could mean further change and opportunity for the city of Springfield.

1.3 AGRICULTURAL ROOTS

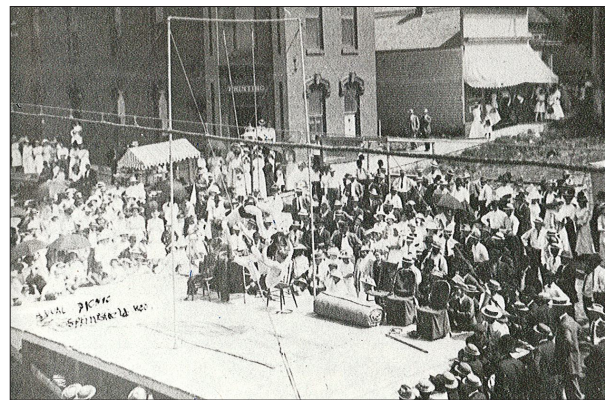
Sarpy County Fair

SARPY COUNTY FAIR

Another large part of Springfield's history is the events held in the city. Springfield began its long history of celebrations with the Independence Day Free Ox Roast in 1884. It was said that around 2,000 people were in attendance, which, at the time, was a large percentage of Sarpy County's population. In 1899, Springfield had the honor of holding the Sarpy County Fair. Springfield was home to the County Fair until it was discontinued in 1903. (Iske) That didn't stop Springfield residents from continuing the celebrations, however.



The 1884 July 4th Ox Roast celebration. J.D. Spearman is pictured on the right.
Source: Springfield, Nebraska At Its Source

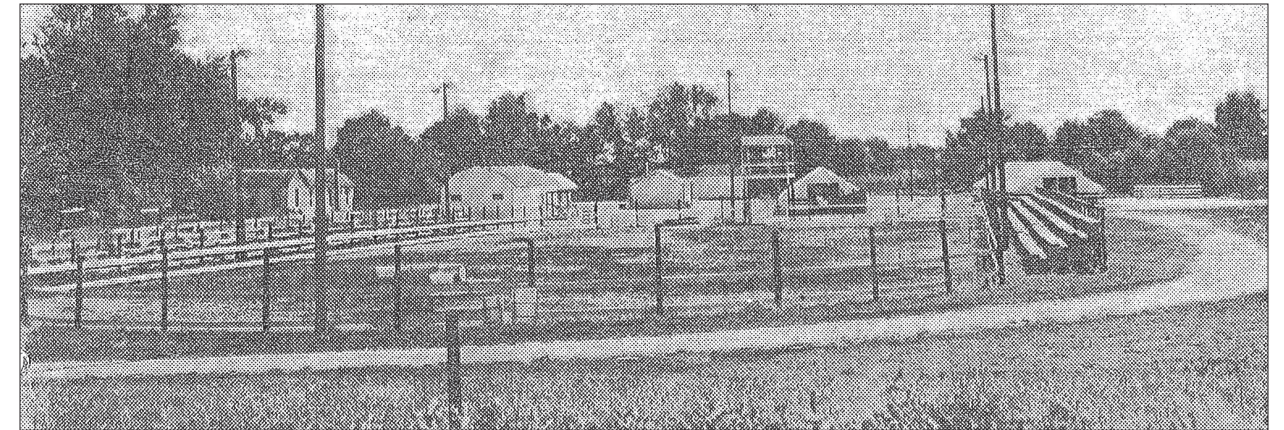


Acrobatic entertainment at the 1914 Old Settler's Picnic in the intersection of 2nd Street and Main Street.
Source: Springfield, Nebraska At Its Source

The city held celebrations almost every year, called Old Settlers' Picnics or Farmers and Merchants Picnics, which would include dancing, games, parades, vendors, and different kinds of entertainment (G.F.W.C. 1982). The Sarpy County Fair was held in Springfield again in 1937, and the city continues to this day to host the County Fair (Iske). Currently, the fair festivities occur on the Sarpy County Fairgrounds at the western edge of Springfield just east of Springfield Creek. It was not always this way, though. Before the grandstand and the fair buildings were built, the Sarpy County Fair was held on Main Street, 1st Street, and 2nd Street. Soon the Fair outgrew the streets of downtown Springfield, and a larger and more permanent site was sought. Money was contributed from various entities, and land was bought. The rodeo arena was first built because of a horse club that existed in Springfield at time, but it soon evolved into the rodeo arena for the Fairgrounds. (Dill 2015) The rodeo arena is probably one of the first things a person notices when entering Springfield from the west on Main Street, as it sits on the south side of Main Street. Other buildings were constructed near it during the summer of 1957 to house the events of the Sarpy County Fair, and in 1958 the first rodeo was held in the rodeo arena. Eventually, more parking was needed, so land was purchased just north of Main Street, across from the rodeo arena, in 1970. More land

1.3 AGRICULTURAL ROOTS

Sarpy County Fair



The Rodeo Arena in 1958.
Source: Sarpy County Museum

was also rented from the Missouri Pacific Railway in 1971 for the carnival and additional parking. (G.F.W.C. 1982) Then, in recent history, before the fair in summer of 2014, a Motor Sports Complex was built at the south end of the fairgrounds.

In recent years, the Sarpy County Fair has usually brought about 10,000 people a day to Springfield during the five days it runs. In 2014, because of the nice weather and added Motor Sports Complex, an estimated 80,000 people visited the Sarpy County Fair. (Dill 2015) The Sarpy County Fair has been a large part of Springfield's history and continues to bring recognition to the community.



The Motor Sports Complex during the final stages of its construction. Picture taken June 1, 2014.



A large welcome sign and advertisement for the Sarpy County Fair. The sign is located along Highway 50.

Although Springfield is changing with the rest of Sarpy County into a more urbanized place, less centered around agriculture, the city is still known to many as "Springfield—Home of the Sarpy County Fair." This foundation in agriculture will hopefully remain for many years to come, and will continue to bring thousands of visitors to Springfield and pride to its residents.

1.3 AGRICULTURAL ROOTS

Zimmerman Feed Yard

ZIMMERMAN FEED YARD

Frank Zimmerman opened a livestock feed yard in Springfield in 1915. The business was first named Zimmerman and Weeth Feed Company, but business partners changed and it became the Zimmerman and Gottsch Feed Company. The feed lot soon became the largest feeding operation in the area. It was located on a 42-acre parcel bounded by Pflug Road, Spruce Street, 1st Street, and 6th Street. In 1922, it was reported in the Papillion Times that Zimmerman and Gottsch Feed Co. was feeding three thousand head of cattle and four thousand head of hogs over the course of a year, and at one time would have 500 head of both cattle and hogs. The Papillion Times also claimed that it was probably the largest stock feeder company in the entire state of Nebraska at the time. (G.F.W.C. 1982)

Zimmerman and Gottsch's partnership dissolved in 1928, but Zimmerman continued the company alone. In 1935, however, the feed yard had to be closed due to World War I and hard times. After the Second World War, the Zimmerman Feed Yard was opened for business again by Frank Zimmerman, his daughter Hazel Latham, and her husband. (G.F.W.C. 1982) The business remained in the family, and Hazel owned it until her death in December of 1999. Before her death, Hazel Latham told her nephew, Howard Engberg, to close the feed yard after her passing. Howard Engberg did as he was instructed in December of 2001. Zimmerman Feed Company was one of the oldest and longest operating businesses in Springfield. According to the Springfield Monitor, Engberg was sad to sell the property, but he wanted the community to grow. "It's not going to be a small town forever...Sarpy's not just an agricultural county anymore." (Dreibus 2001)

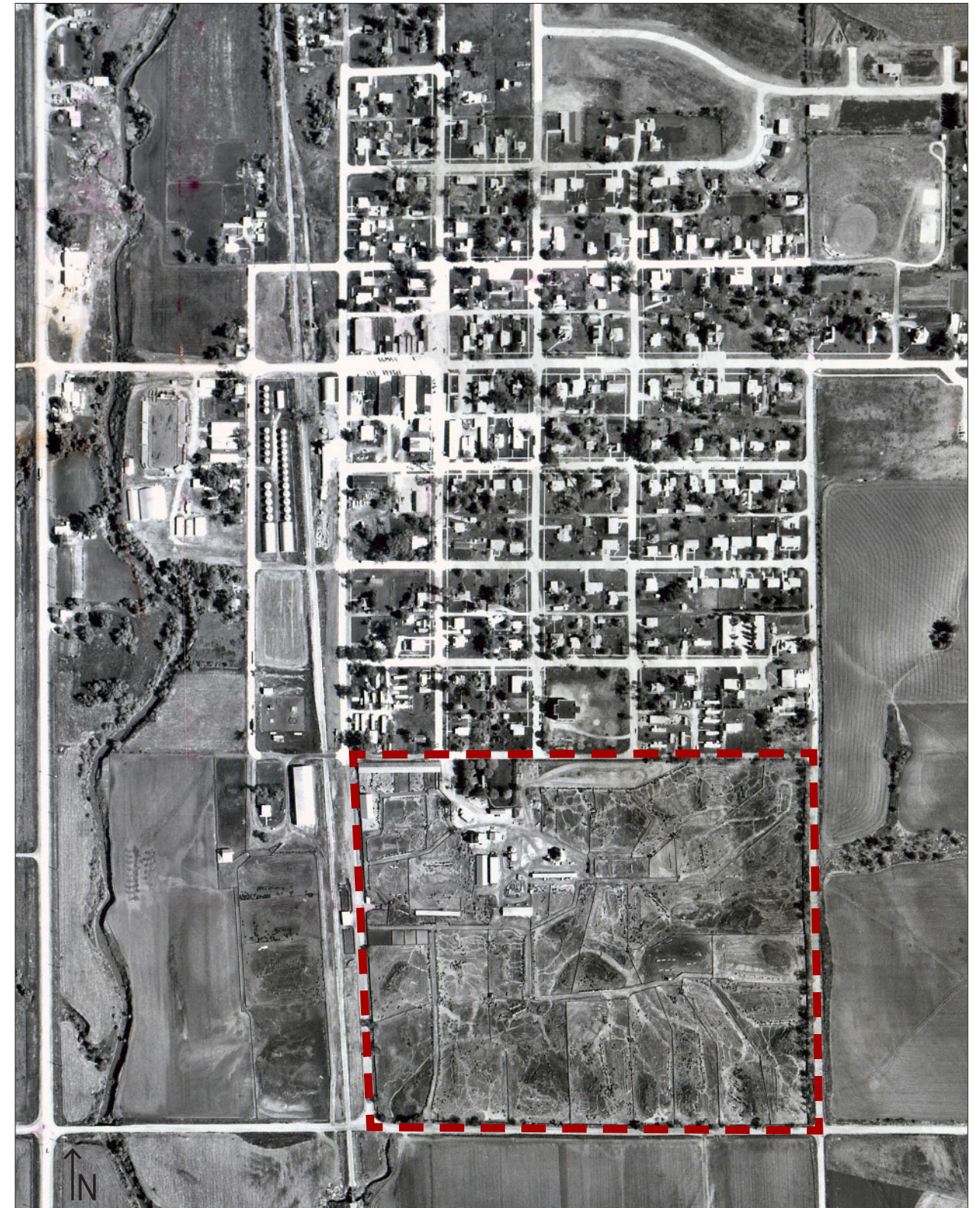


100 years ago, in 1915, Zimmerman Feed Yard was opened on this land. A rapidly developing light industrial park now occupies the western half of the old feedlot property. Picture taken September 20, 2014.

Today, the western area of the land where the feedlot stood is a rapidly developing light industrial park. The eastern half has returned to somewhat of a natural state, covered in tall grasses. This will most likely not remain for long, however. With development surrounding this land, it will become a likely place for residential development, as proposed in the future land use map for Springfield.

1.3 AGRICULTURAL ROOTS

Zimmerman Feed Yard



Aerial photograph taken in 1973. The outlined area shows the large area of land occupied by the Zimmerman Feed Yard. Source: Nebraska Department of Roads: Flight 3310

1.3 AGRICULTURAL ROOTS

Springfield Then And Now

SPRINGFIELD THEN AND NOW

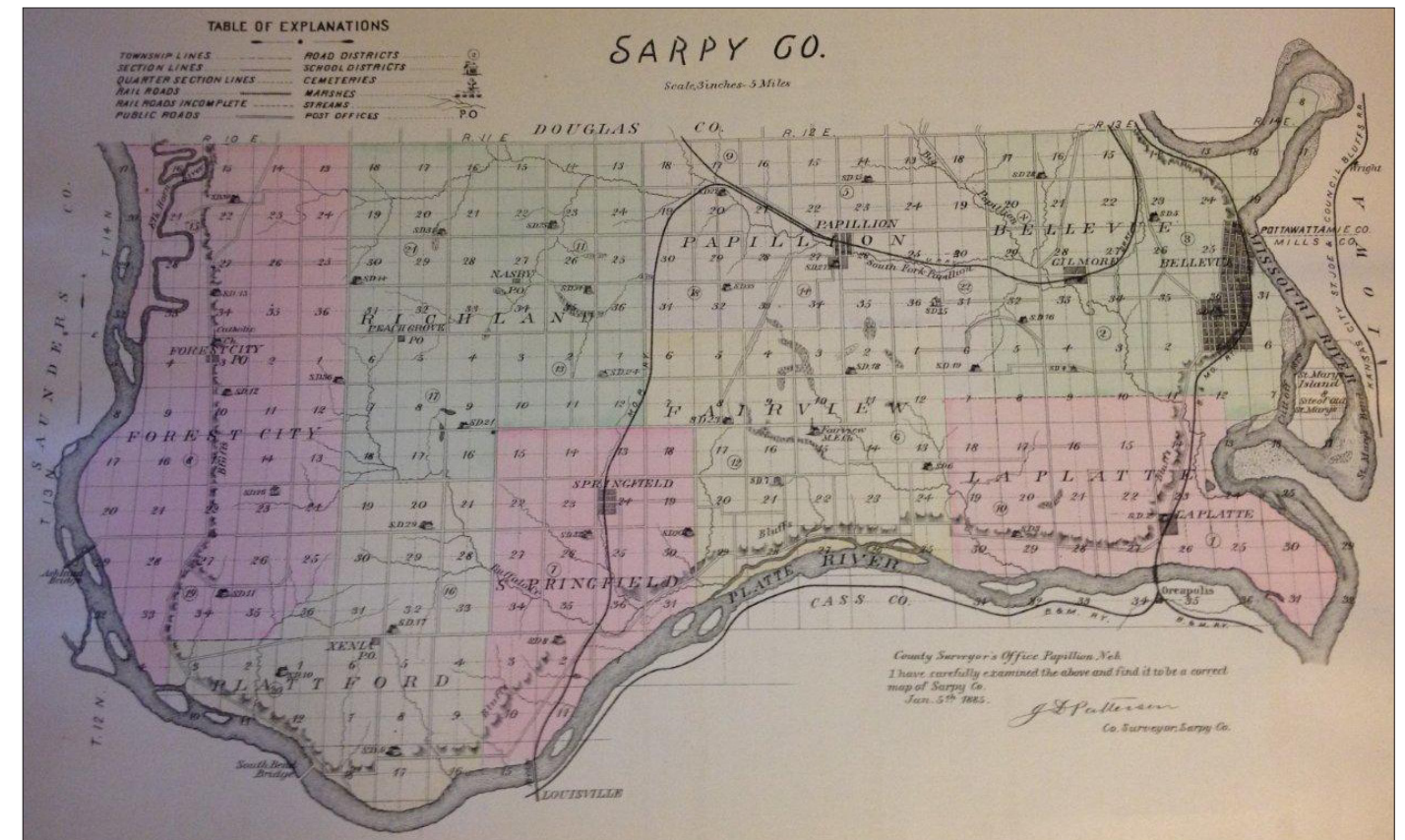
Springfield Mayor Mike Dill has lived in Springfield most of his life, so he is very helpful in painting a picture of how Springfield has changed in the last 60-plus years. Because of transportation limitations, people were not as mobile in the early years of Springfield. A trip to Omaha was considered an all-day trip, not just an hour quick trip to the store. People living in Springfield and in the surrounding country still went to downtown Springfield for all of their needs and entertainment. As Mayor Dill described it, Saturday evening was always a big night for Springfield. Families would come to downtown Springfield and the men would go to a bar or visit the barber, and the women would go shopping for groceries and other needs. (Dill 2015)

As already mentioned, the businesses in Springfield's early history catered to agriculture and the rural community. Examples of the businesses and industries which called Springfield their home over the years include: a hatchery, a lumberyard, a flour mill, livery and feed stables, feed yards, blacksmiths, elevators, a dray service, a harness shop, and many more. As cars and tractors replaced horses on the roads and on farms, and other goods and services became obsolete, some businesses closed or transformed to meet the current needs of rural Sarpy County residents. (G.F.W.C. 1982)

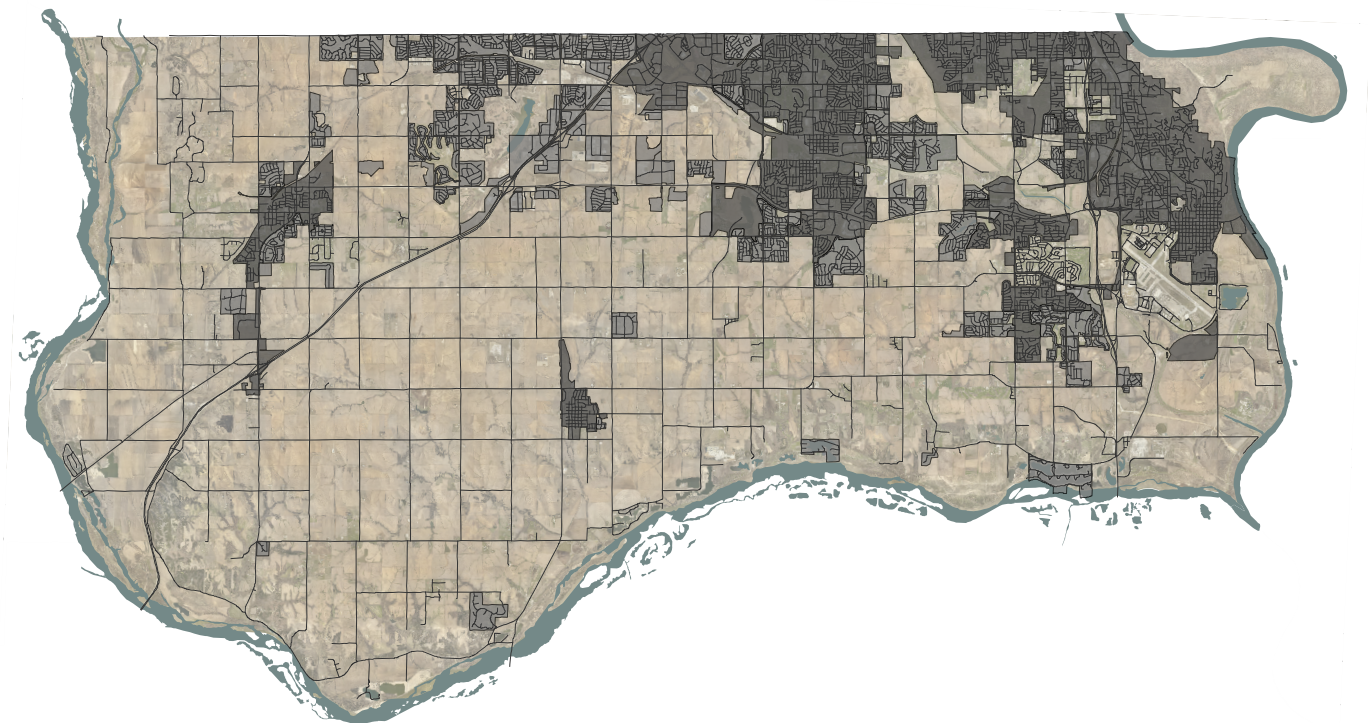
After World War II, Sarpy County began to grow rapidly. Much of Sarpy County's farmland was developed into housing, commercial, and other land uses. Vehicular transportation became more convenient, and a trip to Omaha transformed from an all-day trip to an everyday commute for many Springfield residents. Springfield was considered by many as a bedroom community, rather than a farm community, and residents no longer depended on Springfield businesses for their everyday needs. However, in recent years, the region has recognized Springfield for its unique tourist attractions, such as Soaring Wings Vineyard, Weiss Studio and Gardens, Springfield Artworks, and Springfield Drug and Soda Fountain. In the words of a community member, "Springfield went from being known as the city with the landfill and feedlot to the city with the winery." Springfield is adapting gracefully with the rapidly transforming Sarpy County. The Comprehensive Plan update and Urban Design Master Plan are two further measures taken by the city to ensure Springfield is fully ready for further growth and change.

1.3 AGRICULTURAL ROOTS

Springfield Then And Now



Sarpy County Surveyor's Map of Sarpy County in 1883.
Source: Sarpy County Surveyor Book 1883



Municipal boundaries, sanitary improvement districts, and roads in Sarpy County in 2014.



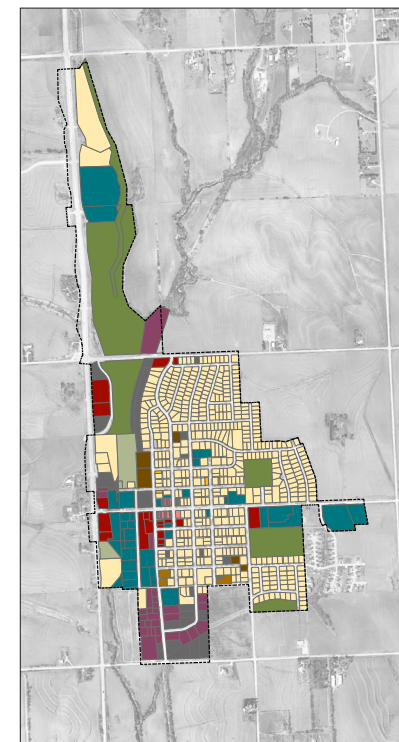
2

INVENTORY & ANALYSIS

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| COMMUNITY | 2.1 |
| BUILT ENVIRONMENT | 2.2 |
| NATURAL ENVIRONMENT | 2.3 |
| THE CITY IMAGE AND ITS ELEMENTS | 2.4 |

2.0 INTRODUCTION

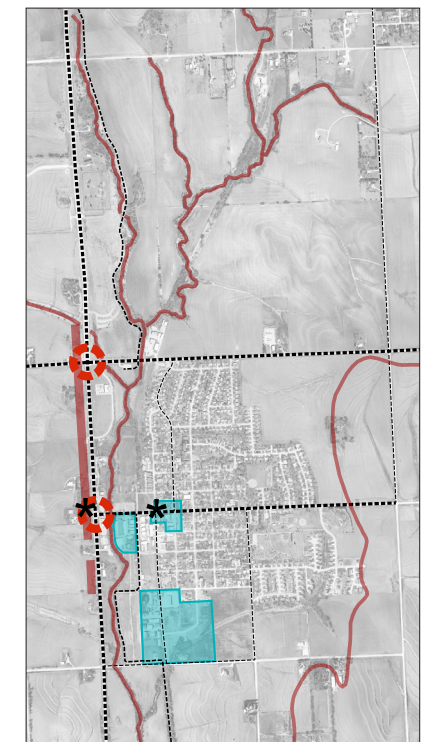
The Inventory and Analysis chapter compiles and evaluates many different elements within the City of Springfield. The Inventory and Analysis chapter is divided into four sections: Community, Built Environment, Natural Environment, and The City Image and Its Elements. First, the Community section covers population and demographics, community facilities, and tourist attractions. The Built Environment section examines land use, zoning, transportation, and prominent corridors in Springfield. The Natural Environment section includes watersheds, water bodies, floodplains, topography, and recreational systems. The City Image and Its Elements section analyzes Springfield through Kevin Lynch's five city elements: path, edge, district, node, and landmark. A comprehensive understanding of the many facets of the community was gained by analyzing the information gathered about Springfield within the Inventory and Analysis chapter. This chapter, along with the History and Community Involvement chapters, will inform and influence the final design areas and design guidelines of the Springfield, Nebraska Urban Design Master Plan.



Existing Land Use



Topography



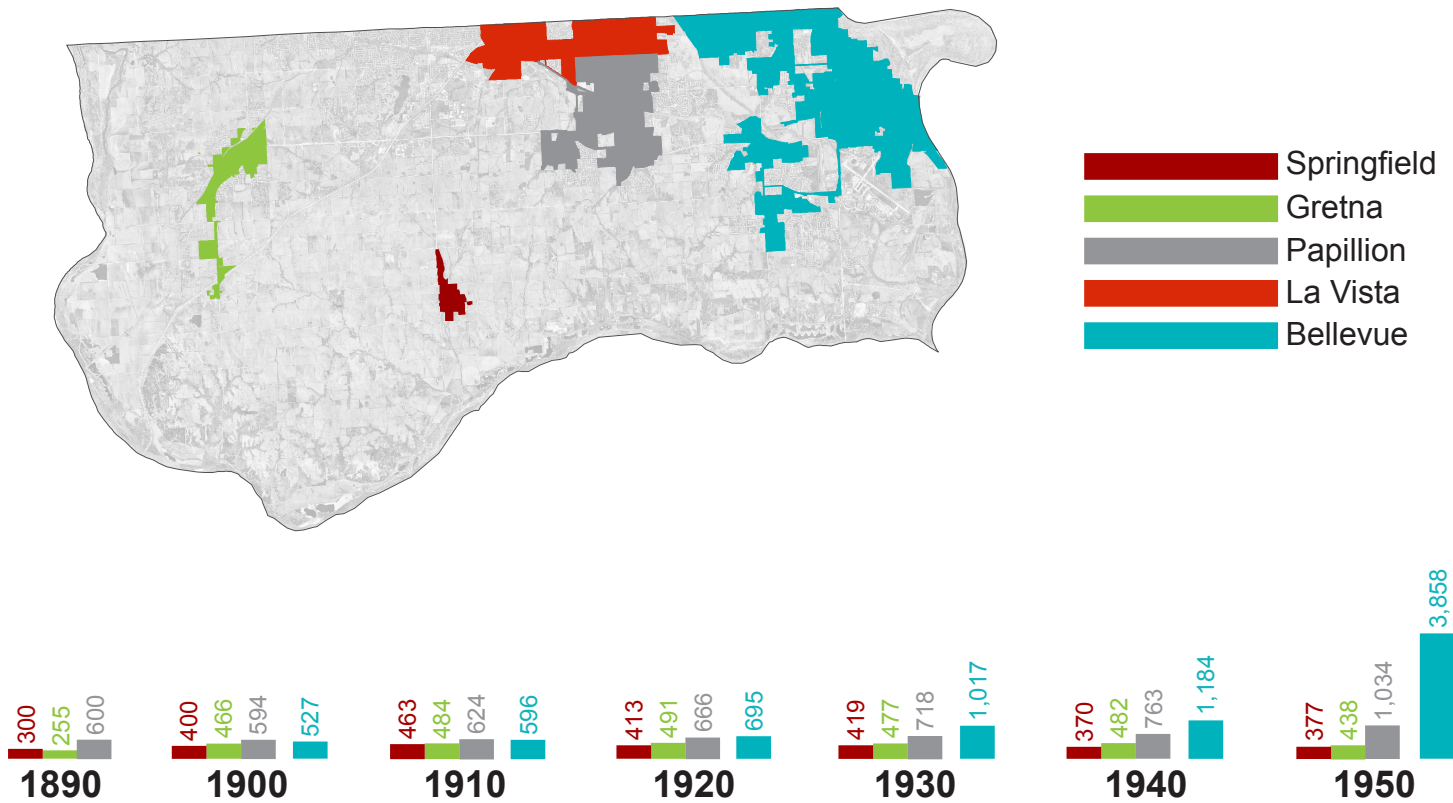
The City Image and Its Elements

2.1 COMMUNITY Population

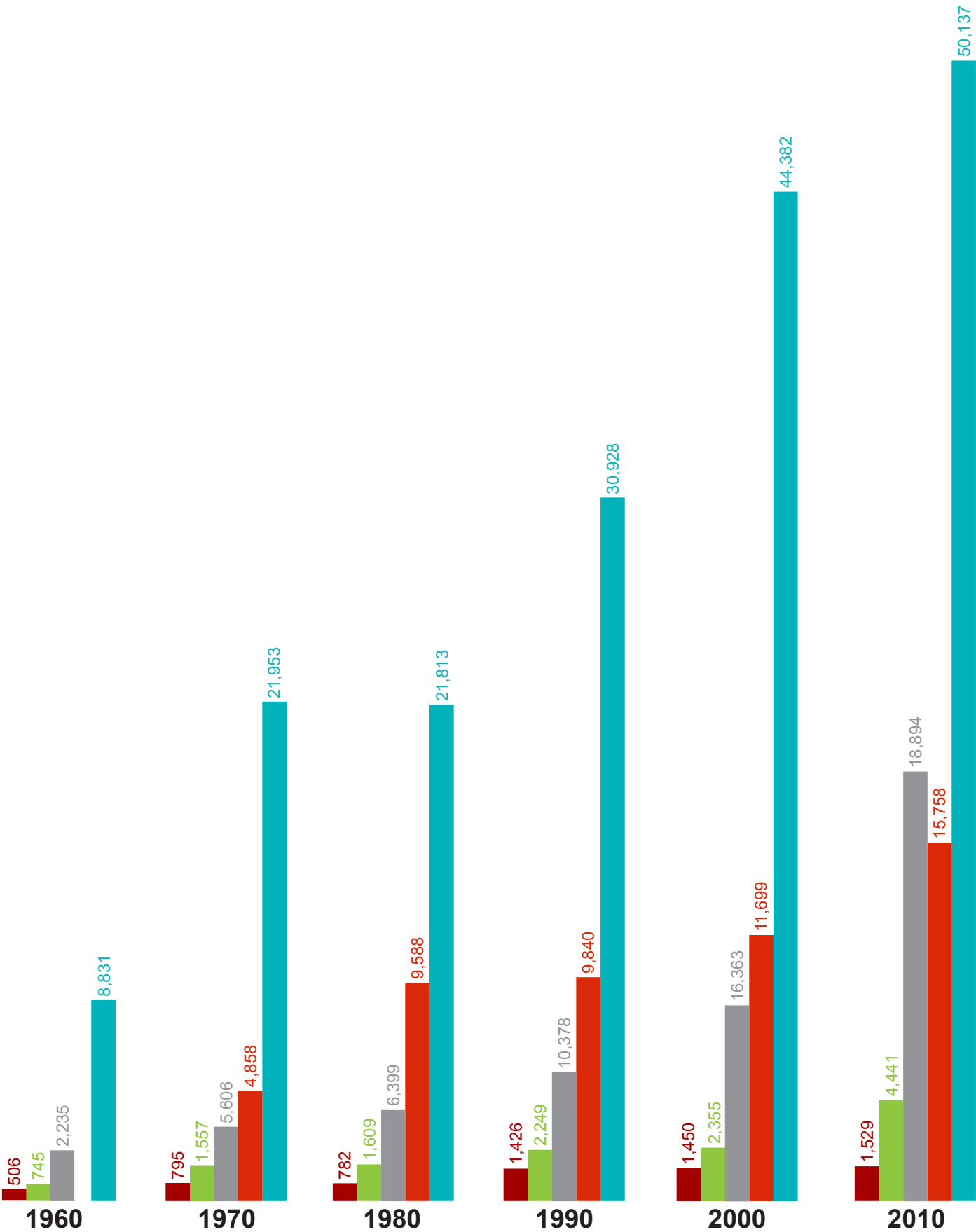
POPULATION

Five cities are located in Sarpy County: Springfield, Gretna, Papillion, LaVista, and Bellevue. The bar graph below shows the population of the cities every ten years since 1890. Although Springfield's population was once comparable to the other cities in Sarpy County, this is no longer the case. The graphic shows when each of the cities had large amounts of growth, particularly Bellevue and Papillion. It also shows the large population La Vista contributed to Sarpy County, when the city was incorporated in 1960. Even Gretna, which remained about the same size as Springfield into the 1960s, has started to grow much more rapidly in the past 50 years. Much of the growth in Sarpy County can be contributed to the expansion of Omaha. Bellevue, La Vista, Papillion, and Gretna either border or are within a few miles of Omaha's city limits. These cities have become attractive to people who work in Omaha but desire to live in a smaller city. Springfield, however, has not seen this growth because it is geographically separated from Omaha and the other cities in Sarpy County. Springfield residents are expecting growth in the very near future, though. As Papillion grows southwest, as sanitary improvement districts (SIDs) continue to develop, and as Highway 50 continues to generate industrial and commercial development, Springfield will continue to grow and expand.

SARPY COUNTY POPULATION

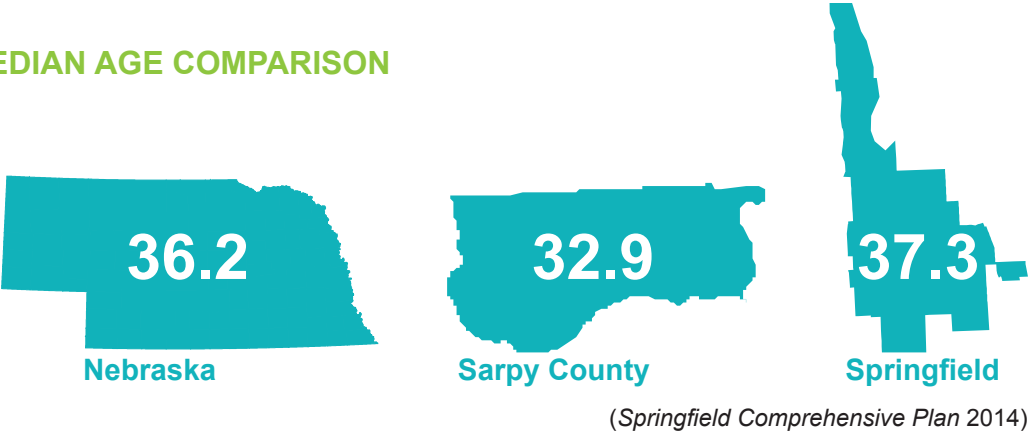


2.1 COMMUNITY Population



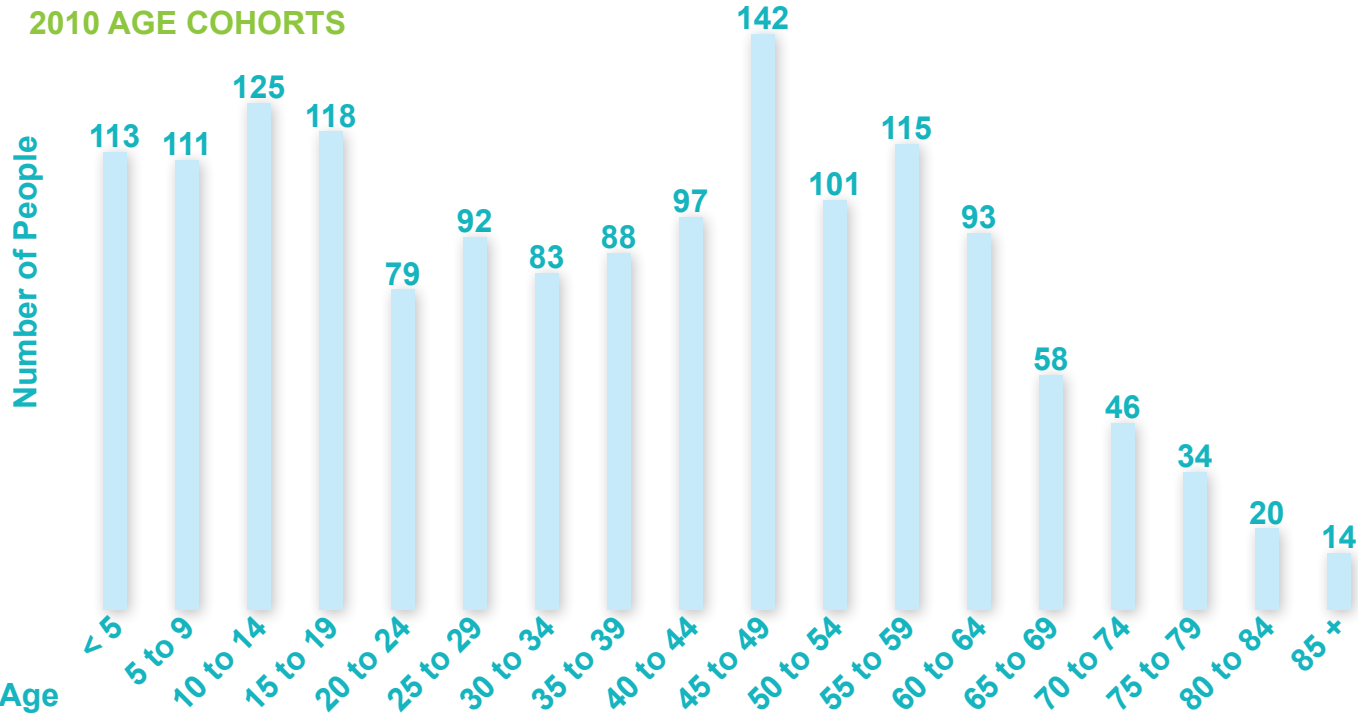
2.1 COMMUNITY Age Demographics

2010 MEDIAN AGE COMPARISON



Springfield’s median age is not much higher than the State of Nebraska’s median age, but it is significantly higher than the median age of Sarpy County. Springfield’s median age has also been increasing. In 1990 the median age in Springfield was 31.2, and in 2000 it was 35.7.

SPRINGFIELD 2010 AGE COHORTS

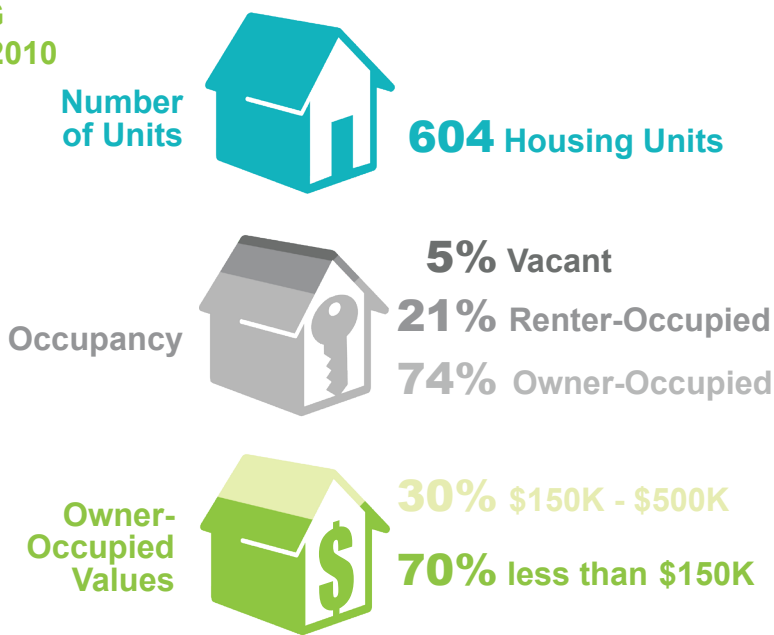


Sources 2000 US Census SAMPLE DATA, Profile of Selected Economic Characteristics (DP-3)
*2008-12 ACS 5-YEAR ESTIMATES, Selected Economic Characteristics (DP03)

Springfield’s largest age cohort consists of 142 people from ages 45 to 49. Almost 30 percent of the city’s population is between ages 45 to 64. This means a large percentage of Springfield’s population is approaching retirement. School-aged children make up over 30% of the population. Planning for the needs and services of children and the aging population should be given high priority in Springfield.

2.1 COMMUNITY Housing and Household Income

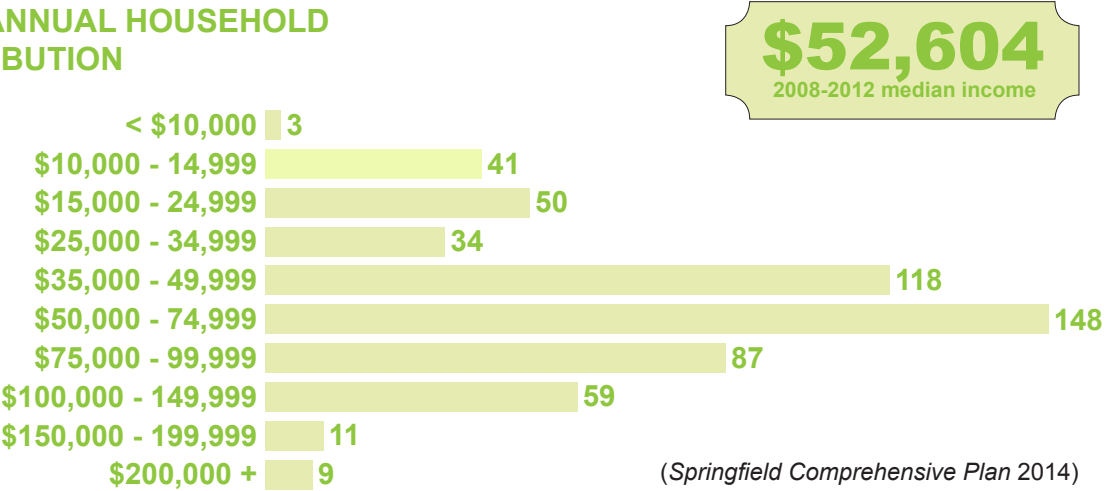
SPRINGFIELD HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS IN 2010



Sources: 2010 US Census, Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics (DP-1)
2008-12 ACS 5-YEAR ESTIMATES, Selected Housing Characteristics (DP04)

Housing is key to the future growth of communities. Increasing the quantity and diversity of the housing stock is a growing need for Springfield. Only about five percent of homes are vacant in Springfield, which causes prospective Springfield residents to look elsewhere for places to live. Currently, the housing stock has a high ownership percentage, and most of these homes are valued under \$150,000.

SPRINGFIELD ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME DISTRIBUTION

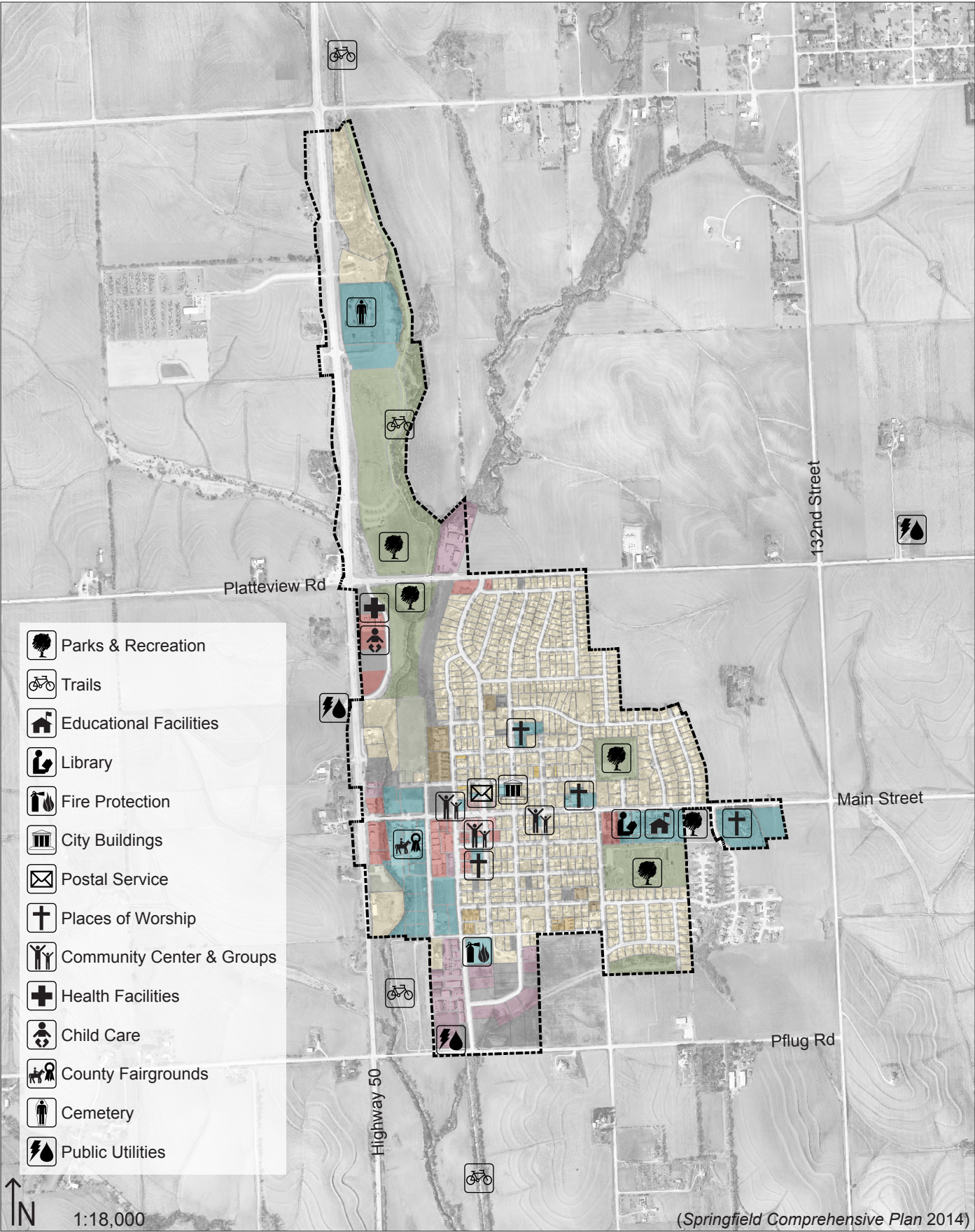


(Springfield Comprehensive Plan 2014)

Although Springfield’s median household income has increased over \$4,000 since 2000, the rate of inflation has outpaced this increase. Other neighboring communities have also struggled to keep up with inflation and were affected negatively by the recent economic downturn. However, just in the past few years, Springfield has experienced more commercial and industrial development, which will likely be reflected in a decrease in unemployment in the next community surveys.

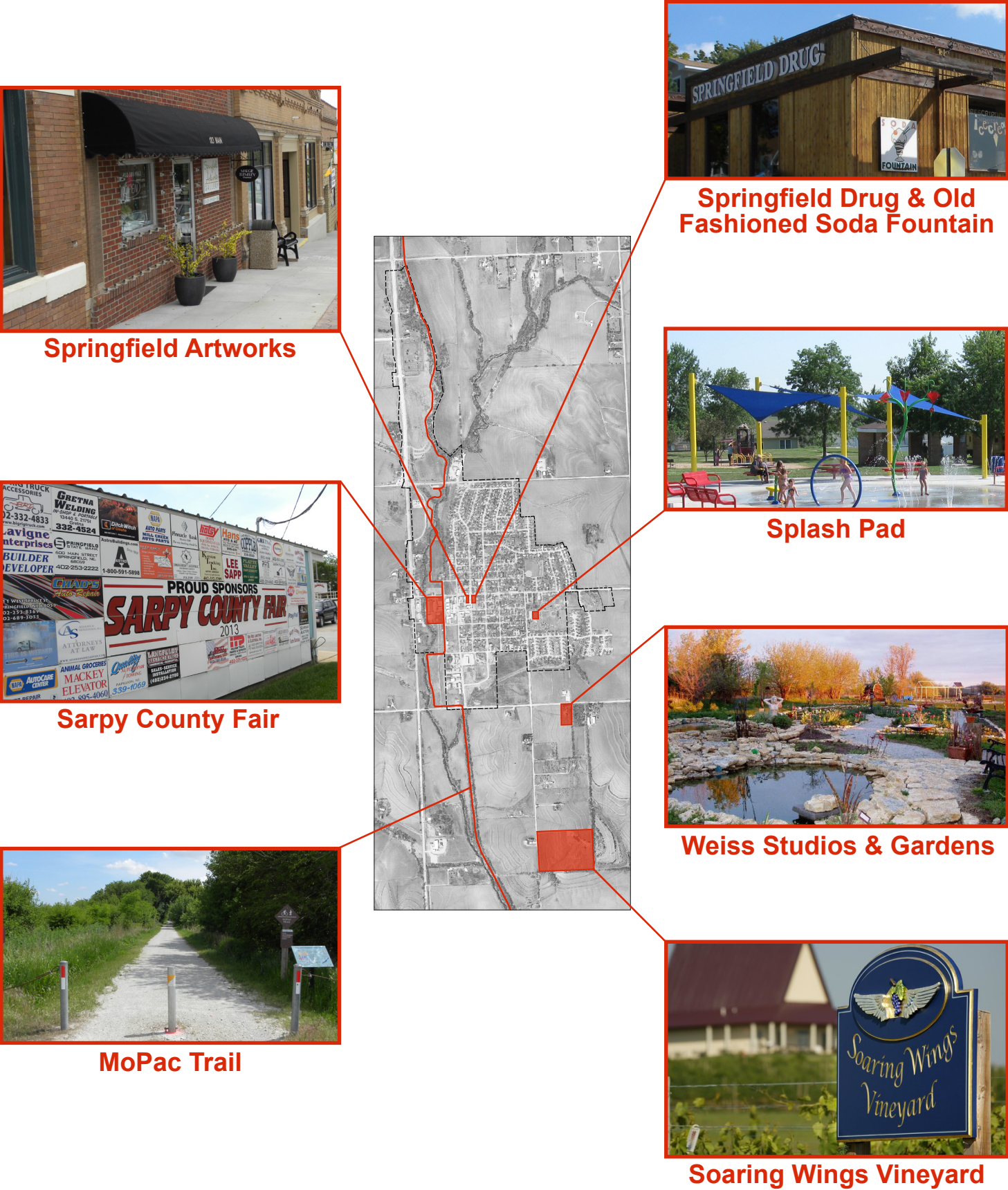
2.1 COMMUNITY

Community Facilities



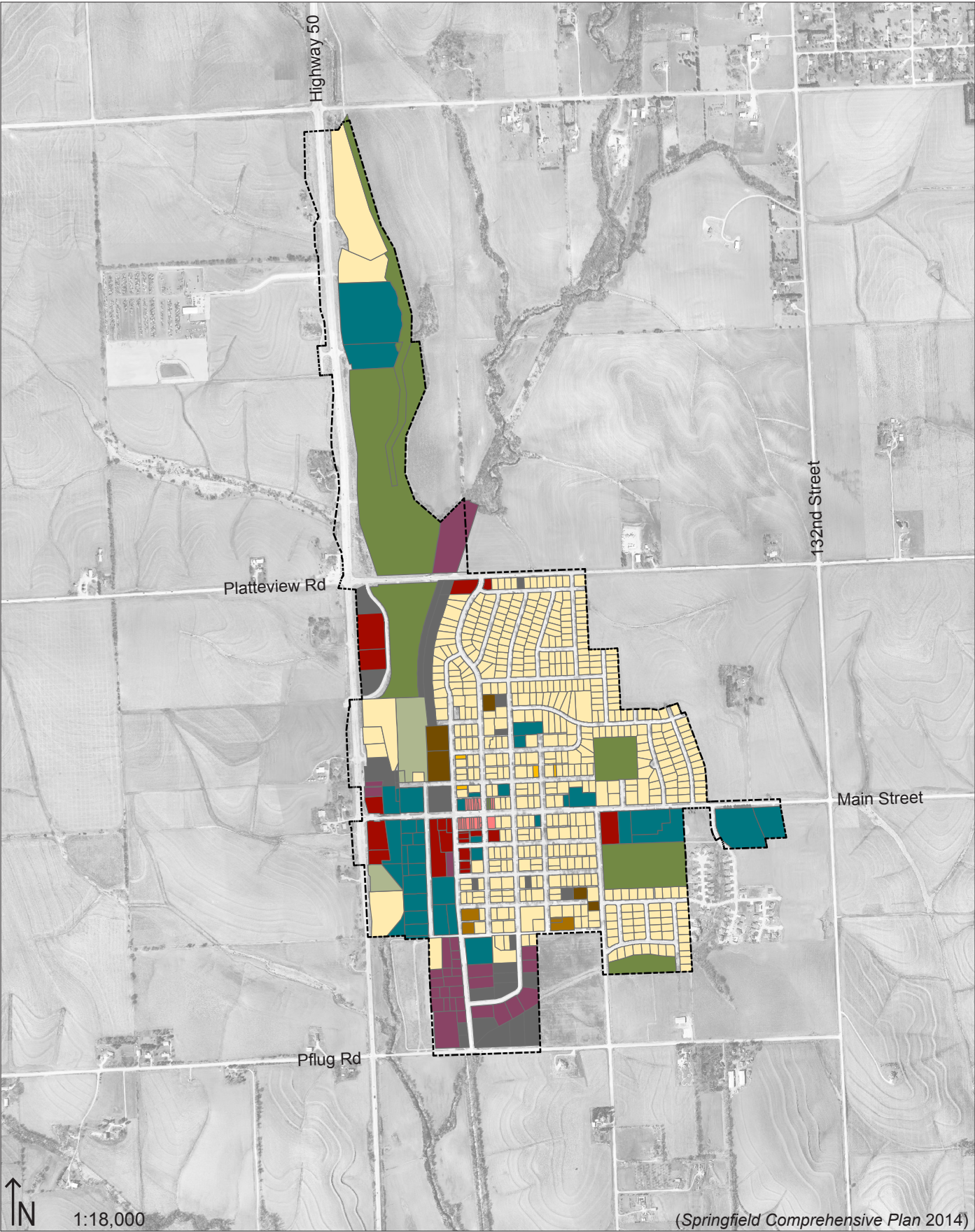
2.1 COMMUNITY

Attractions



2.2 BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Existing Land Use



2.2 BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Existing Land Use

- 46.1%

Low Density Residential (LDR)
Low Density Residential consists of a parcel of land with a residential structure occupied by one family. LDR represents the typical lot size, single-family house surrounded by yards on all sides. This land use represents 153 acres and 46 percent of Springfield.
- 0.2%

Medium Density Residential (MDR)
Medium Density Residential represents single family residential housing on smaller lots. MDR consists of four parcels on half an acre.
- 1.5%

High Density Residential (HDR)
High Density Residential contains the townhomes and apartment buildings that have multiple families on the same parcel. HDR represents five parcels on roughly five acres.
- 0.6%

Mobile Homes (MH)
This land use displays the grouping of mobile homes within defined property boundaries. Each parcel of land contains factory-built, single-family structures. Although single-family residential in nature, however MH is identified separately due to density of such housing units. There are four parcels with mobile housing units on 1.91 acres.
- 0.5%

Central Business District (CBD)
The Central Business District is located along Main Street. The parcels lie within the boundaries of the original downtown area and contain multiple public and quasi-public land uses, as well as general commercial. Residential living is permitted above the businesses which defines this district as mixed use district. The Central Business District contains 23 parcels on 1.73 acres.
- 4.9%

General Commercial (GC)
A General Commercial parcel has a commercial use which may sell goods, but mostly provides services, such as automotive repair or fast food restaurants. Springfield has 20 parcels of General Commercial on 16.41 acres.
- 4.6%

General Industrial (GI)
A General Industrial parcel contains a commercial use involved in manufacturing or packing, storage, or assembly of products, which does not have a major external effect on surrounding properties or uses. Springfield's General Industrial consists of 23 parcels on 15.30 acres.
- 20.2%

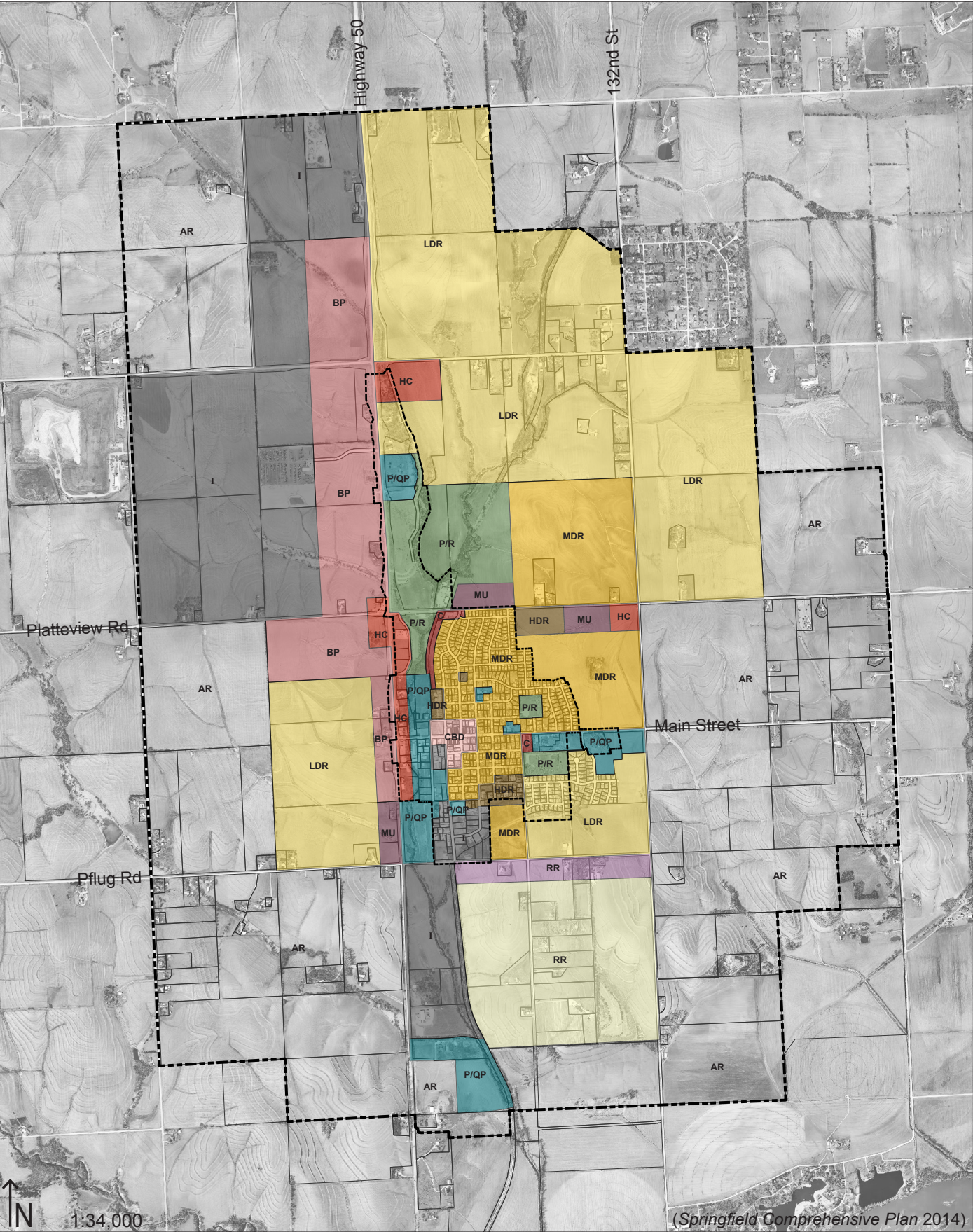
Park and Recreation (PR)
A Park and Recreation parcel of land contains public or private land available for recreational, educational, cultural, or aesthetic use. There are nine parcels of Park and Recreation with 67.18 acres.
- 14.3%

Public and Quasi-Public (P/QP)
A Public/Quasi-Public parcel of land is owned or maintained by a federal, state, or a local governmental entity and open for enjoyment by public, or a parcel of land containing a use that is generally under the control of a private, religious, or non-profit entity, that provides social benefit to the community as a whole. The public and quasi-public represent 40 parcels and 47.63 acres.
- 7.0%

Undeveloped (UND)
Springfield's undeveloped properties have different land uses associated to each parcel. It may be unbuildable, due to floodplain, and left as open space. Others might be a vacant residential lot without a house. This identification was shown on the Existing Land Use Map to provide current opportunities within the corporate limits. There are 24 parcels on 23.33 acres of undeveloped or vacant land.

(Springfield Comprehensive Plan 2014)

2.2 BUILT ENVIRONMENT Future Land Use

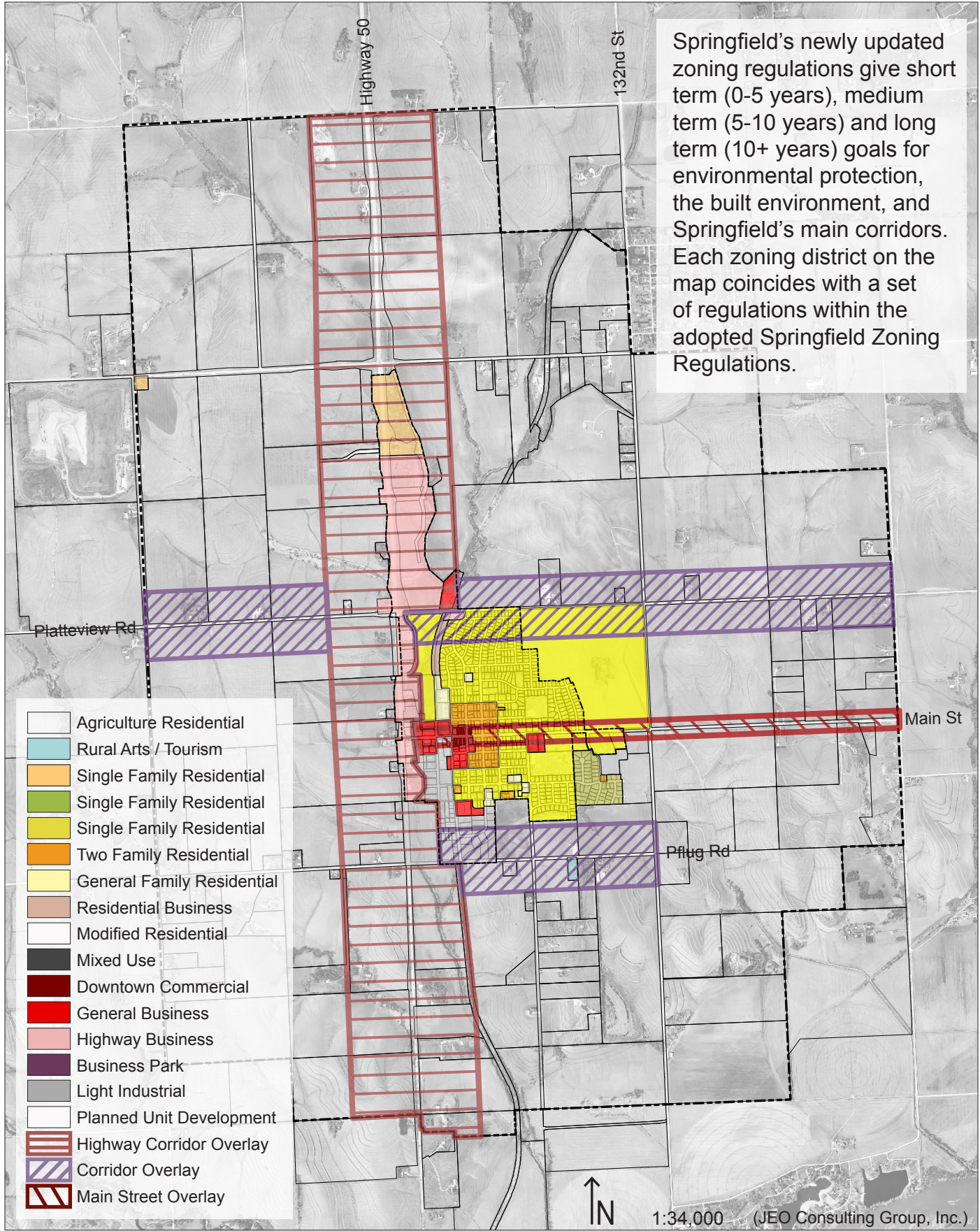


2.2 BUILT ENVIRONMENT Future Land Use

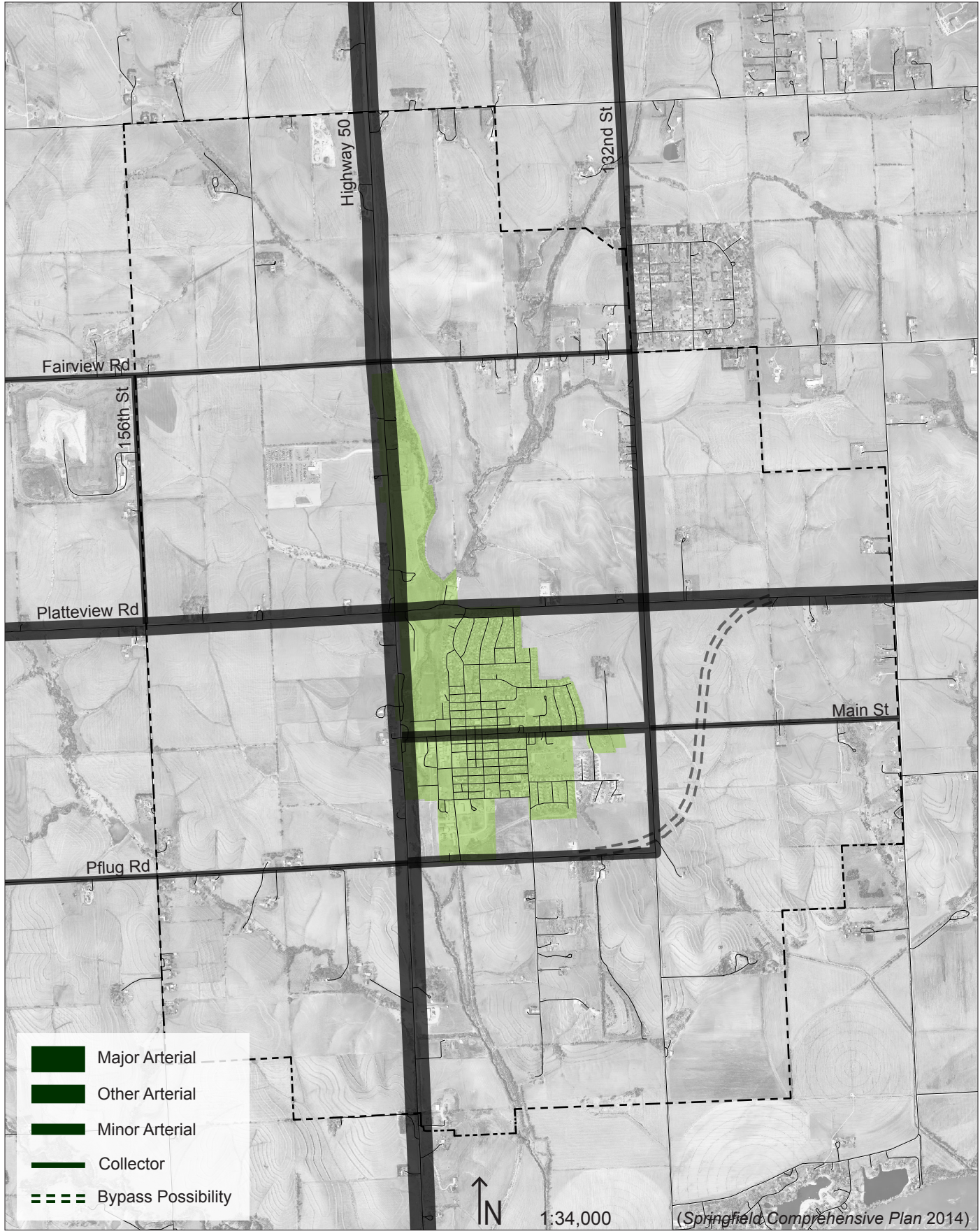
Future land use categories are slightly different from the existing land use categories. Fourteen general categories define different use types, characteristics, and densities. This Future Land Use Map, which was developed as part of the Springfield Comprehensive Plan update, will assist Springfield in determining the type, intensity, direction, and timing of future growth. Future Land Use categories include:

- Agricultural Residential (AR)
- Rural Residential (RR)
- Low Density Residential (LDR)
- Medium Density Residential (MDR)
- High Density Residential (HDR)
- Central Business District (CBD)
- General Commercial (C)
- Highway Commercial (HC)
- Business Park (BP)
- Mixed Use (MU)
- Rural Arts (RA)
- Industrial (I)
- Public/Quasi-Public (P/QP)
- Parks/Recreation (P/R)

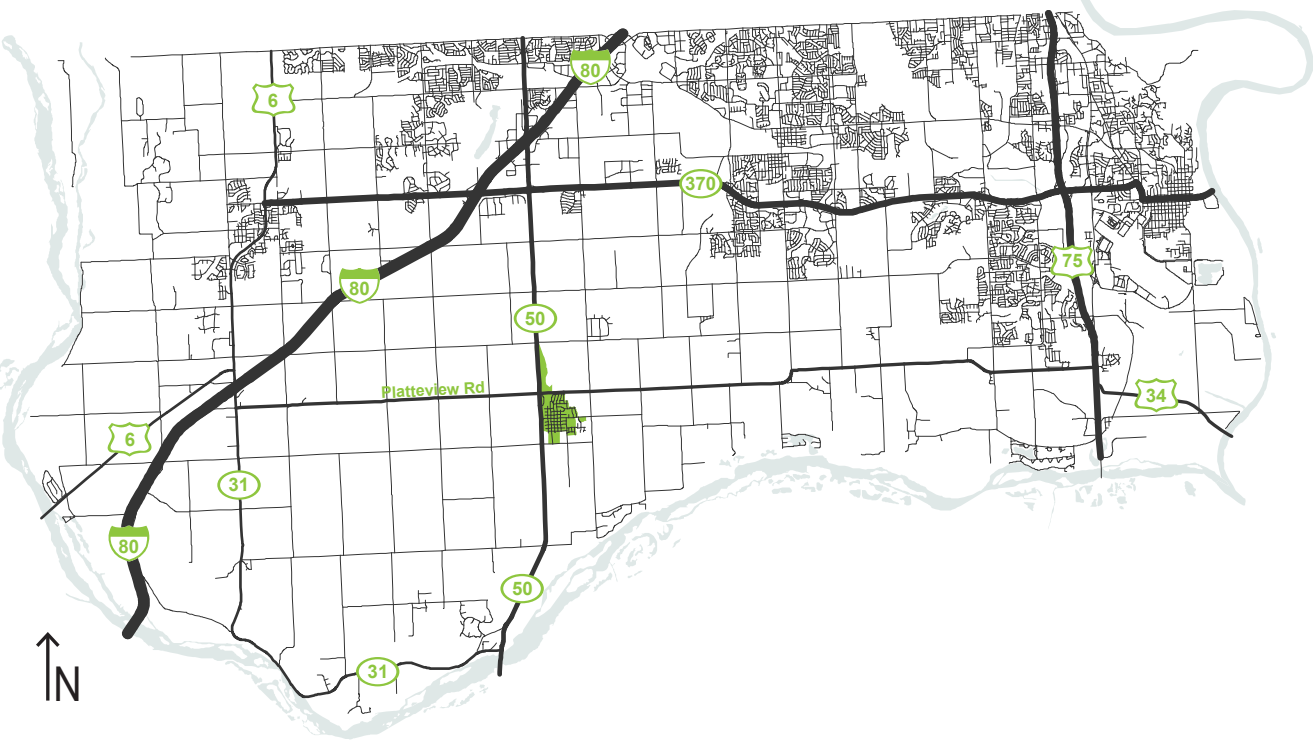
2.2 BUILT ENVIRONMENT Zoning Map



2.2 BUILT ENVIRONMENT Future Transportation



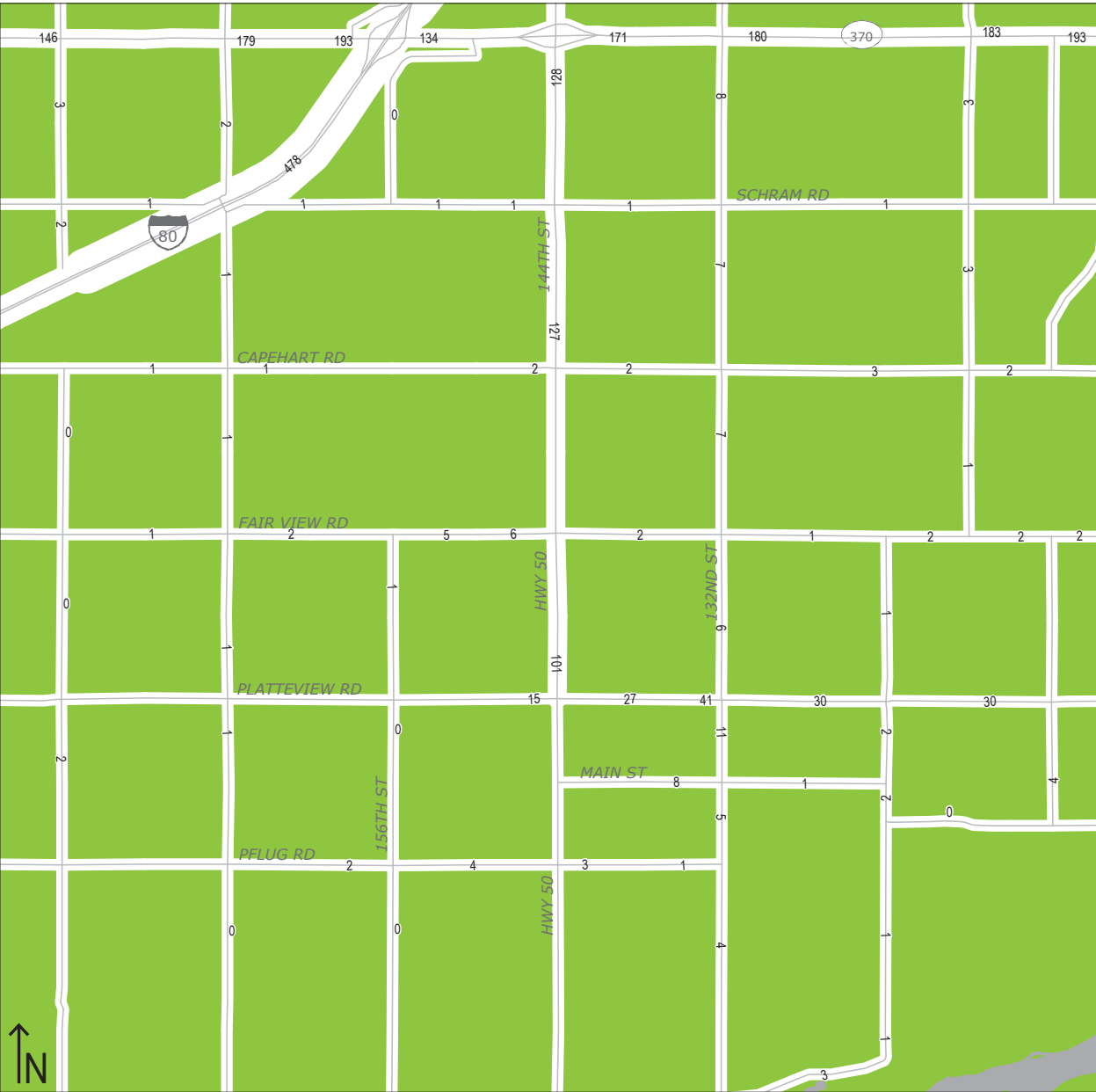
2.2 BUILT ENVIRONMENT Regional Transportation Network



Several major roadways currently cross Sarpy County. Highway 50 and Platteview Road have the greatest impact on the City of Springfield, but the city's proximity to other major roadways is also significant. Businesses and industries are often likely to locate along major roadways or intersections, which affects the way cities develop and grow. Highway 50 and Platteview Road will continue to see this type of growth in the years to come, because of the development south along Highway 50 from Omaha, and the increase in traffic on Platteview Road due to the Highway 34 bridge across the Missouri River into Iowa.

2.2 BUILT ENVIRONMENT Traffic Counts Map

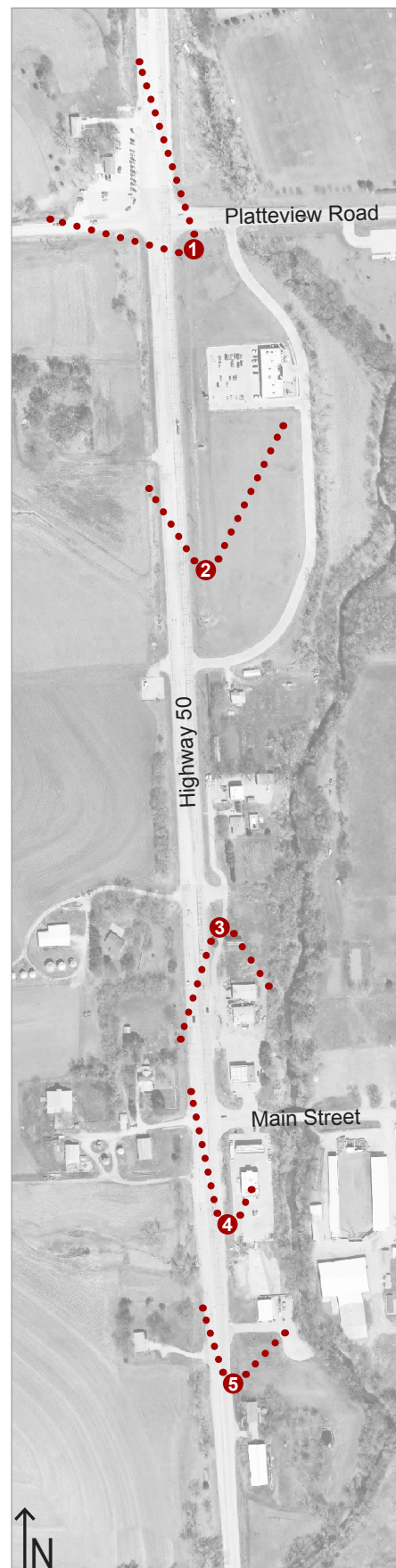
Because of lack of alternative forms of transportation, especially when considering personal travel, the greater Omaha area relies heavily on the automobile transportation network. The Metropolitan Area Planning Agency (MAPA) recognizes this importance and therefore conducts many traffic studies for the Greater Omaha and Council Bluffs metropolitan area. MAPA's study area includes the major roads near Springfield. The following map shows traffic counts from 2012.



"Travel volumes shown on this map represent estimates based on raw data provided by contributing jurisdictions. Numbers indicate average annual weekday traffic (AAWT) in hundreds of vehicles per day in both directions." (MAPA 2012)

2.2 BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Highway 50



① A car dealership currently occupies the northwest corner of the busy intersection of Highway 50 and Platteview Road. Springfield Soccer Complex is located across Highway 50, on the northeast corner of the intersection.



② Southeast of the corner of Platteview Road and Highway 50 is being developed as a commercial area. Runza, a chiropractic office, and a daycare occupy the building that was built several years ago. In the past year, a Dollar General was built in the area.



③ Large machine sheds and garages are common along Highway 50.



④ Two gas stations, Casey's General Store and a Sinclair, are located where Main Street intersects with Highway 50.



⑤ The east and west sides of Highway 50 are currently very different in land use and image. The west is still largely agricultural land interspersed with farmsteads, while the east has been developed with mostly unattractive highway commercial and industrial buildings.

2.2 BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Highway 50

One of the most frequently addressed topics during the public involvement process was the Highway 50 corridor. Because of the importance of the corridor and the concern and questions of the community, my coworkers at JEO Consulting Group and I met with Tim Weander of the Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR) to discuss Highway 50.

An asphalt overlay on Highway 50 through Springfield is scheduled to begin in the summer of 2015 and be finished in the spring of 2016. Because of funding changes, Highway 50 will not be widened to Louisville for another 10 to 20 years. (Weander 2014)

Creating design guidelines to improve the aesthetics of Highway 50 is challenging because of the regulations that apply to state highways. Below is a list of the regulations we discussed:

- A Protection Corridor exists on Highway 50, 300 feet on both sides of the center line. This exists to protect the highway right-of-way for possible future widening of the road.
- Trees are allowed 30 feet off of the white shoulder line, or in the back slope.
- Street pole banners are allowed on the existing poles.
- Human scale decorative lighting is possible if break-away poles are used.
- Colored concrete, decorative pavers, or very short drought and salt tolerant vegetation is a possibility for the medians. The maintenance would be the responsibility of the city.
- Signs along the highway, especially electronic signs, have very specific restrictions. (Weander 2014)

2.2 BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Platteview Road

Platteview Road is the southern most continuous east-west route in Sarpy County and the Omaha metropolitan area. It extends from US Highway 75 in Bellevue to Highway 31, less than half a mile south of the interchange at Interstate 80. Recently, Platteview Road has gained much attention because of the Highway 34 road extension and bridge project. This project extended Highway 34 west from its interchange with Interstate 29 in Iowa, across the Missouri River into Sarpy County to intersect with Highway 75. This new intersection of Highway 34 and Highway 75, in the southeast “corner” of Sarpy County, is only about a quarter of a mile south of where Highway 75 connects with Platteview Road. And the next phase of the project is to connect the new Highway 34 extension directly to Platteview Road (Olsson Associates 2014). Therefore, this project has created a new east-west connection between I-29 and I-80, which can be used by travelers and truckers who want bypass Omaha traffic.

Because of the anticipated increase of traffic, Platteview Road qualified for a corridor study. Olsson Associates is in the process of completing a “Platteview Road Corridor Study” for the Metropolitan Area Planning Agency (MAPA). Changes to Platteview Road will greatly affect the city of Springfield. The adopted Future Transportation map for Springfield suggests Platteview Road to be rerouted to the south of Springfield to connect with Pflug Road. This scenario, however, is not expected to take place anytime in the near future because of monetary and lack of traffic volumes to validate the need for the project. However, short term projects have been preliminarily identified for the Platteview Road Corridor Study. The map diagrams on the following page shows the identified areas for short term projects.



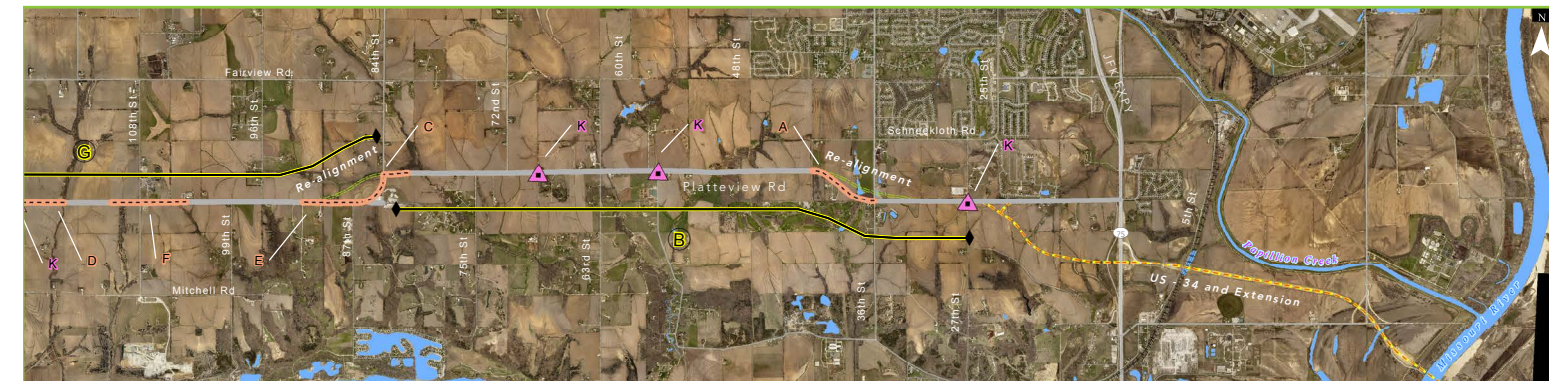
Looking west on Platteview Road near 2nd Street.

2.2 BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Platteview Road



Platteview Road, west segment



Platteview Road, east segment

Platteview Road Corridor Study

MISSOURI RIVER BRIDGE TO I-80



Proposed short term projects along the Platteview Road corridor.

Source: Platteview Road Corridor Study: Interim Report #1: Existing Conditions (Olsson Associates 2014)

The short term projects on Platteview Road near Springfield include a number of different solutions. The roadway profile on the west approach to Highway 50 does not meet vertical curve grade standards so several improvements are recommended for this area. These include: regrading for 1,200 feet, adding a left turn lane and a shared through/right turn lane, increasing lane width by two feet, and adding edge line rumble strips. Other short term projects on Platteview Road, east of Highway 50, include: adding left turn lanes at certain locations (Platteview High School and Middle School) or reconstructing the road to improve the vertical profile. (Olsson Associates 2014)

2.2 BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Main Street - South Side

Liebentritt Family Dentistry

This building is very well-maintained, and the details of the facade bring character to Main Street.

Garvey's Pub

This building was split into two interior spaces until very recently when Garvey's Pub moved from the building directly west.

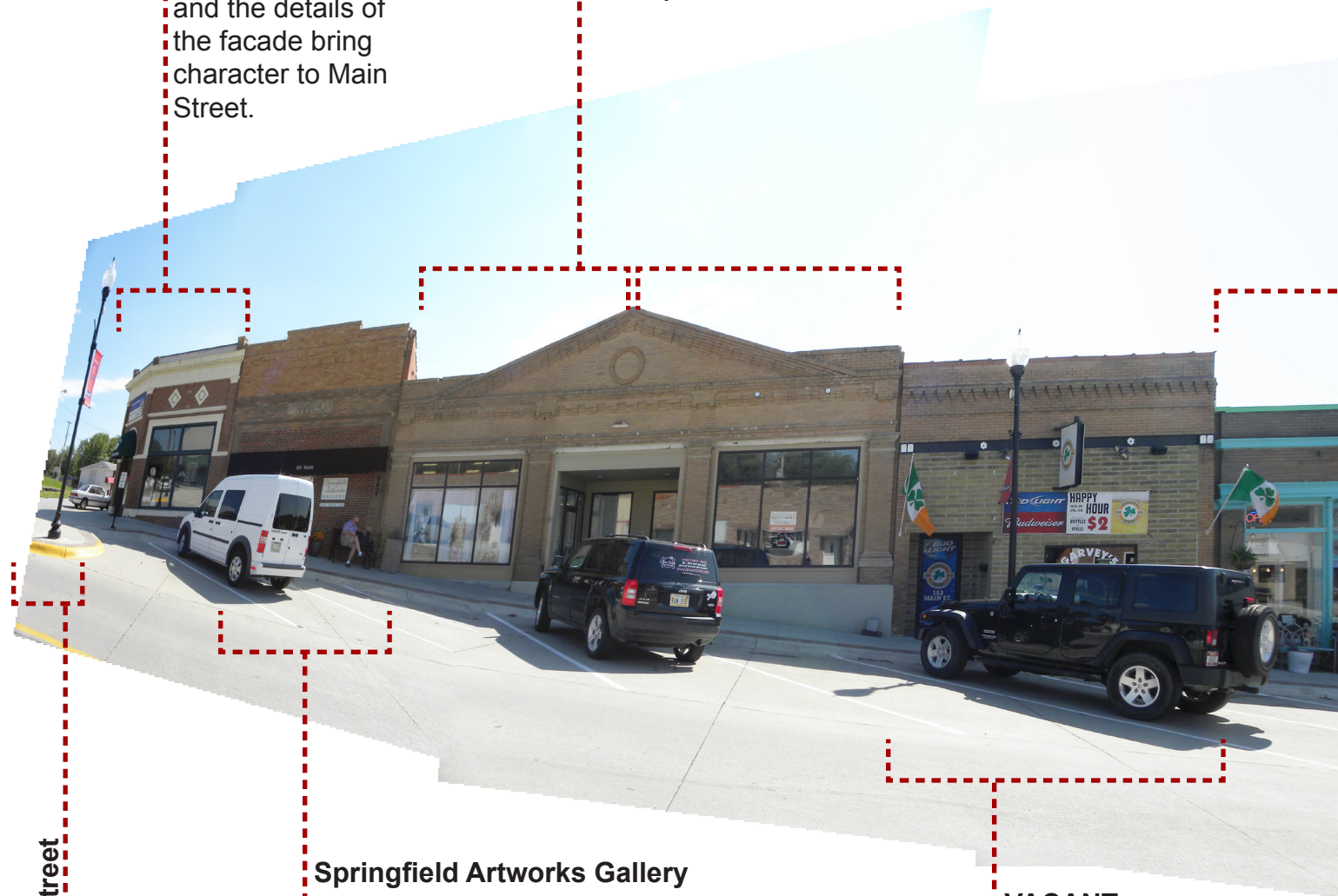
Springfield Artworks Gallery

These business owners were very involved in the public input process of the Comprehensive Plan and are interested in how to improve Springfield's downtown.

VACANT

Garvey's Pub recently moved out of this building to the one directly to the east. An outdoor beer garden was been built in the rear of the former pub, adding vitality and night life to the corridor.

2nd Street



2.2 BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Main Street - South Side

VACANT

Robin's Nest has very recently moved out of this building and into the Quonset building on the southwest corner of 1st Street and Main Street. The blue trim, large windows, and slightly recessed entrance currently make this one of the most noticeable and dynamic buildings along the corridor.

Corky's Workshop Antiques Refinishing

This business occupies a space that was once two separate buildings, one of which was once the Legion building. The face of these buildings is in need of repair and updating.

Mixed-Use Building
This building is divided into an apartment on the second level and business on the first level. Mixed-use is important to the vitality of downtown centers, so more residential use should be encouraged on the second levels of Main Street businesses.

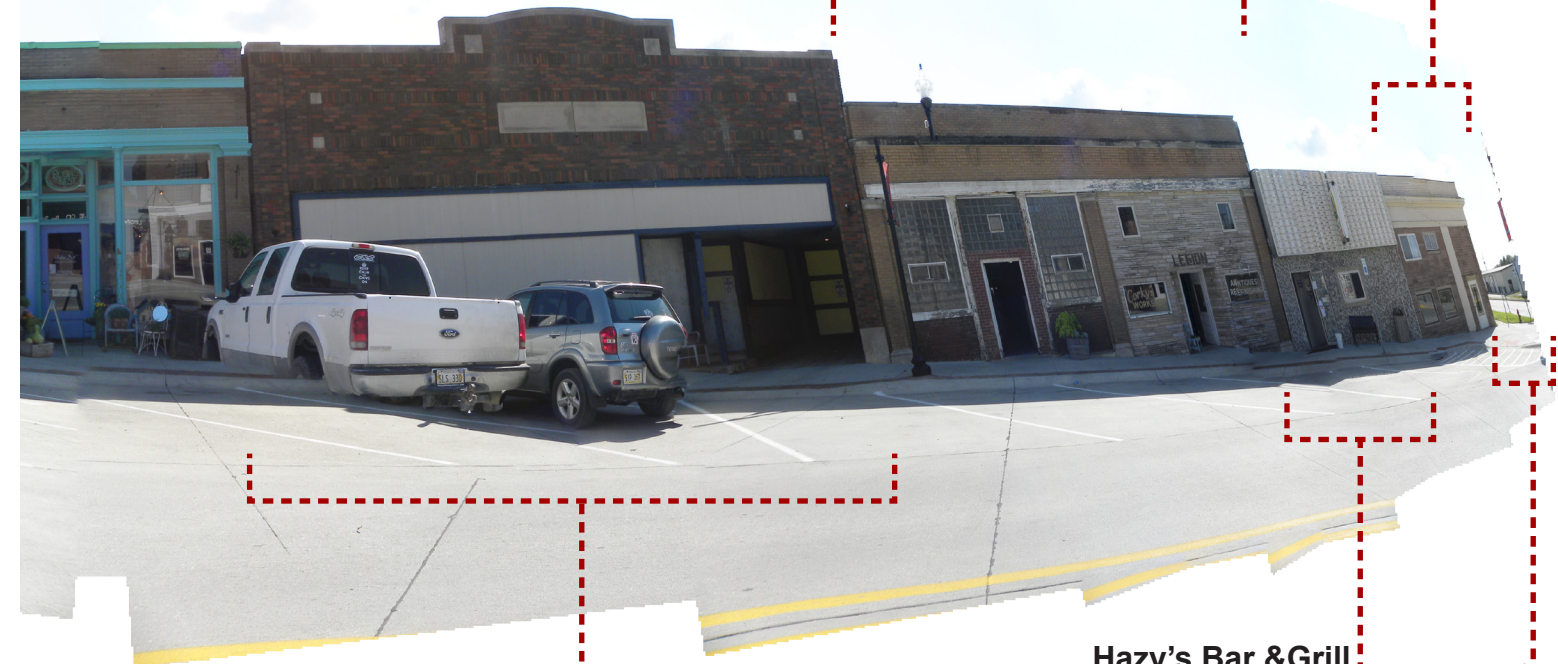
VACANT

The beige wood on this facade was once glass. Returning these windows would improve the aesthetics of the streetscape and create a more penetrable and inviting storefront for pedestrians.

Hazy's Bar & Grill

The exterior materials and business sign are in need of update to coincide with the architectural style and character of the other structures along the corridor.

1st Street



2.2 BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Main Street - North Side

Springfield Community Hall

Because this structure was built in 1939 by the WPA it was placed on the National Register of Historical Places in 1998. The building is very unique in shape and building materials, making it somewhat of an icon for Springfield.

Home Decor & Gift Shop

Until recently, this unique building was occupied by an insurance company, but a new home decor and gift shop has recently moved into the building. This type of niche shop will hopefully help draw tourists to downtown Springfield.

138 Salon

This business has a small square footage but is very well-maintained and adds character to the Main Street corridor.



2.2 BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Main Street - North Side

5678 Dance Studio

The graphics on the sign on the building and the sign in the window are not of a consistent design and should also coincide with the style of the other business signs along the corridor.

VACANT

This building has very little visual interest and would benefit from awnings, planters, or other streetscape elements that would enhance the visual quality of the corridor.

VACANT

If the Urban Park across the street continues to be developed and becomes a popular node in the city, as planned, this building across the street could gain a lot of visibility.

Leonard Cattle Co. Pro Traders, Inc.

This business is more true to the history of Springfield businesses because it caters to agriculture. The building is well maintained and the business owner has added a covered bench and awnings, which contribute to the aesthetics of the Main Street corridor.

VACANT

Because this building is split into three different businesses, the styles of signs, lighting, and awnings should be similar to one another but perhaps different colors or otherwise slightly different so they read as separate entities.

Visionaire Insurance Services

This building has character because of the brightly painted wood and the ornate brick on the upper facade.



2nd Street

2.2 BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Main Street



Two gas stations are currently located on Highway 50 at the Main Street entrance into Springfield.



A large open lot north of the fairgrounds is used for extra parking during the Sarpy County Fair but otherwise remains empty the majority time. It is in the 100-year floodplain.



Springfield Creek makes the entrance to the city very unique. The creek provides an opportunity to capitalize on the natural beauty of entrance by constructing a covered vehicular and pedestrian bridge across the creek.



The Sarpy County Fairgrounds provides a sense of pride and identity for Springfield. Unfortunately, it is not aesthetically pleasing and is often the first thing one sees when entering Springfield.

2.2 BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Main Street



This empty lot just west of the Community Building was once the location of the rail line and is currently owned by the City of Springfield. Some citizens are hoping the southeast corner of the vacant lot will be the location of the new Springfield City Hall. The Future Land Use Map and updated Zoning Map have delineated this area as an expansion of the Central Business District.



Springfield has recently made improvements to "Urban Park" and is planning to make more. The Sarpy Chamber Leadership Class completed a project with a design proposal for the park in 2014.



The business owner of Robin's Nest has very recently relocated to this Quonset building and has improved the aesthetics of the non-traditional Main Street structure.

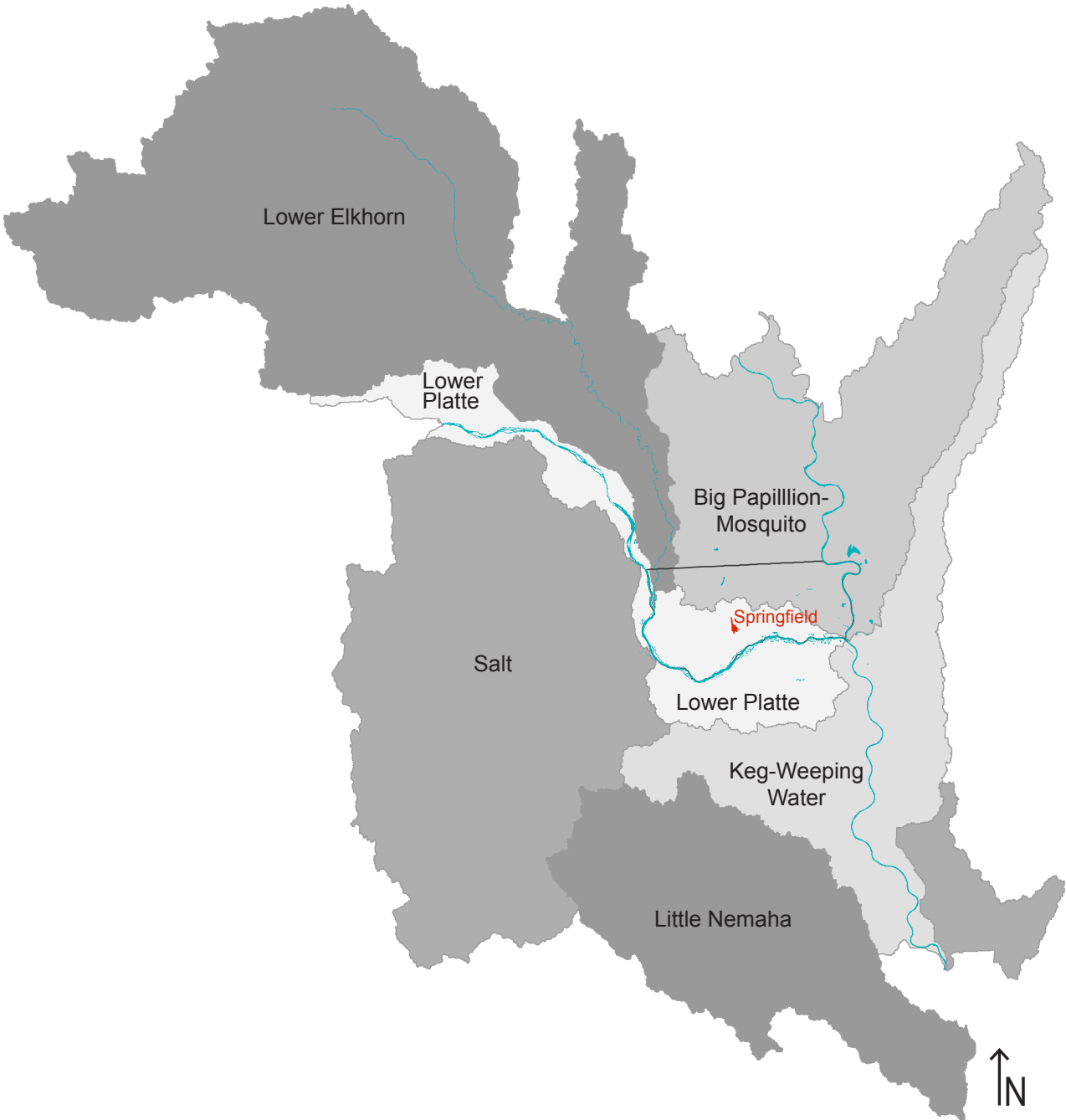


Springfield Drug and Soda Fountain is a tourist attraction and wonderful amenity for Springfield residents. The property adds interest and value to the Main Street corridor.



2.3 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

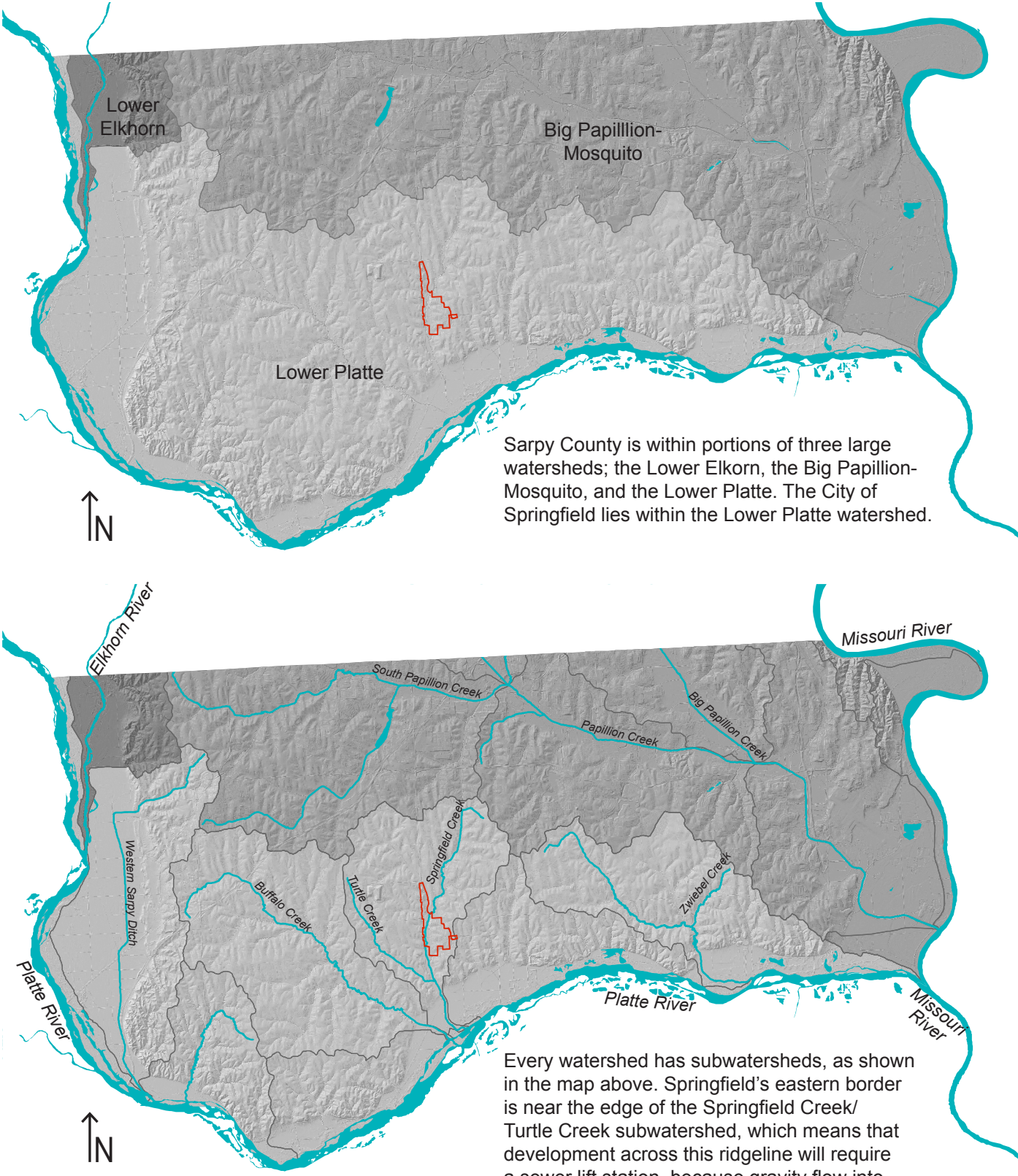
Regional Watersheds



Although Sarpy County is geographically the smallest county in the state of Nebraska, its land is very important hydrologically because it drains into three different rivers. This map depicts those three watersheds as well as three other surrounding watersheds in the eastern Nebraska and western Iowa region.

2.3 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Sarpy County Watersheds

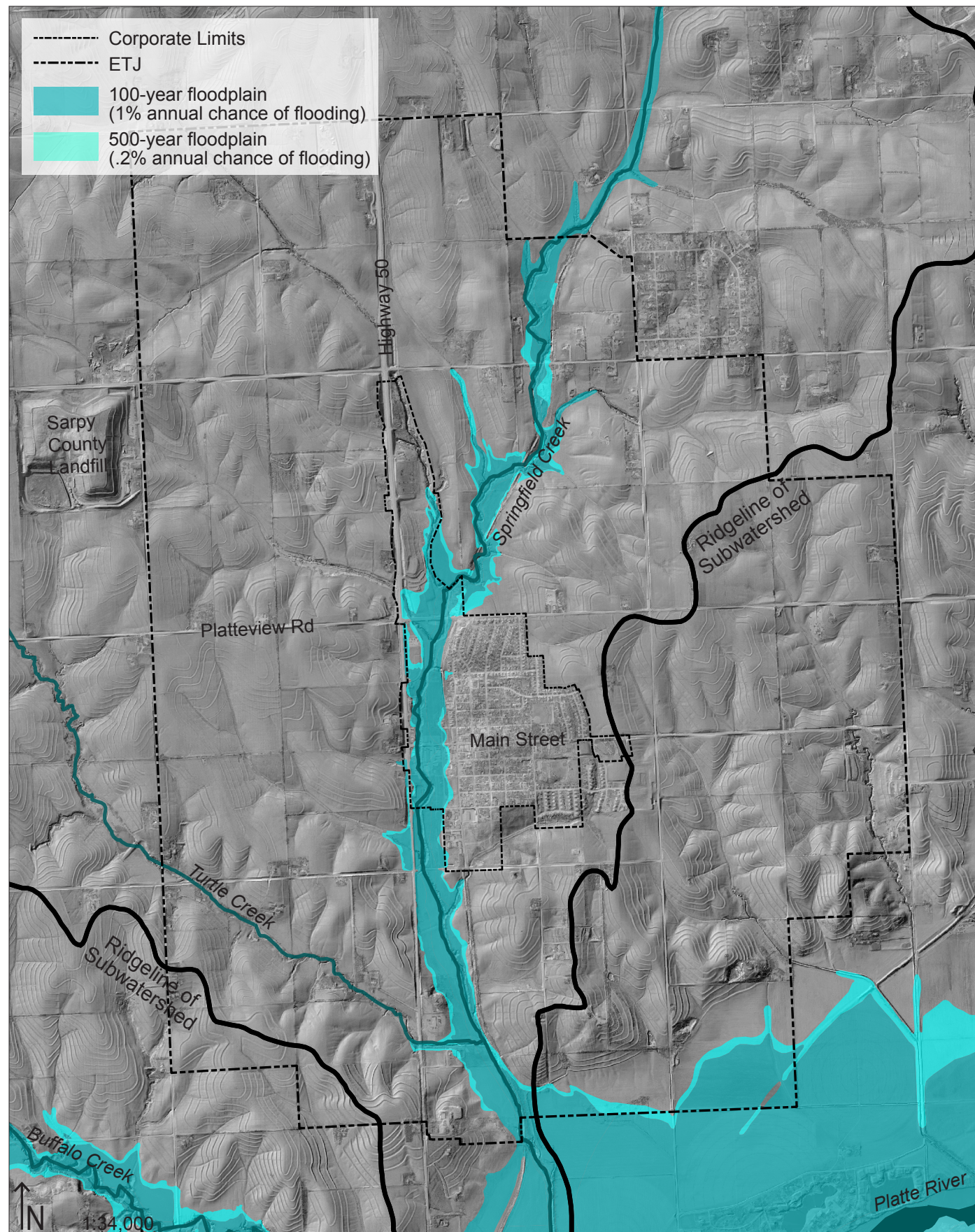


Sarpy County is within portions of three large watersheds; the Lower Elkhorn, the Big Papillion-Mosquito, and the Lower Platte. The City of Springfield lies within the Lower Platte watershed.

Every watershed has subwatersheds, as shown in the map above. Springfield's eastern border is near the edge of the Springfield Creek/ Turtle Creek subwatershed, which means that development across this ridgeline will require a sewer lift station, because gravity flow into Springfield's existing sewer system will not be possible. Springfield's subwatershed drains into Springfield Creek and Turtle Creek, both of which feed into the Platte River.

2.3 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Local Natural Systems



2.3 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Local Natural Systems

Water bodies, watersheds, and topography are environmental elements that have a large impact on future development in Springfield. The boundary lines of the extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) and the corporate limits show the extent to which these natural elements affect Springfield.

As previously mentioned, the ridgeline of the subwatershed somewhat limits the eastern growth of the city. Any development east of the ridgeline will require a sewer lift station, because gravity flow into Springfield's existing sewer system will not be possible.

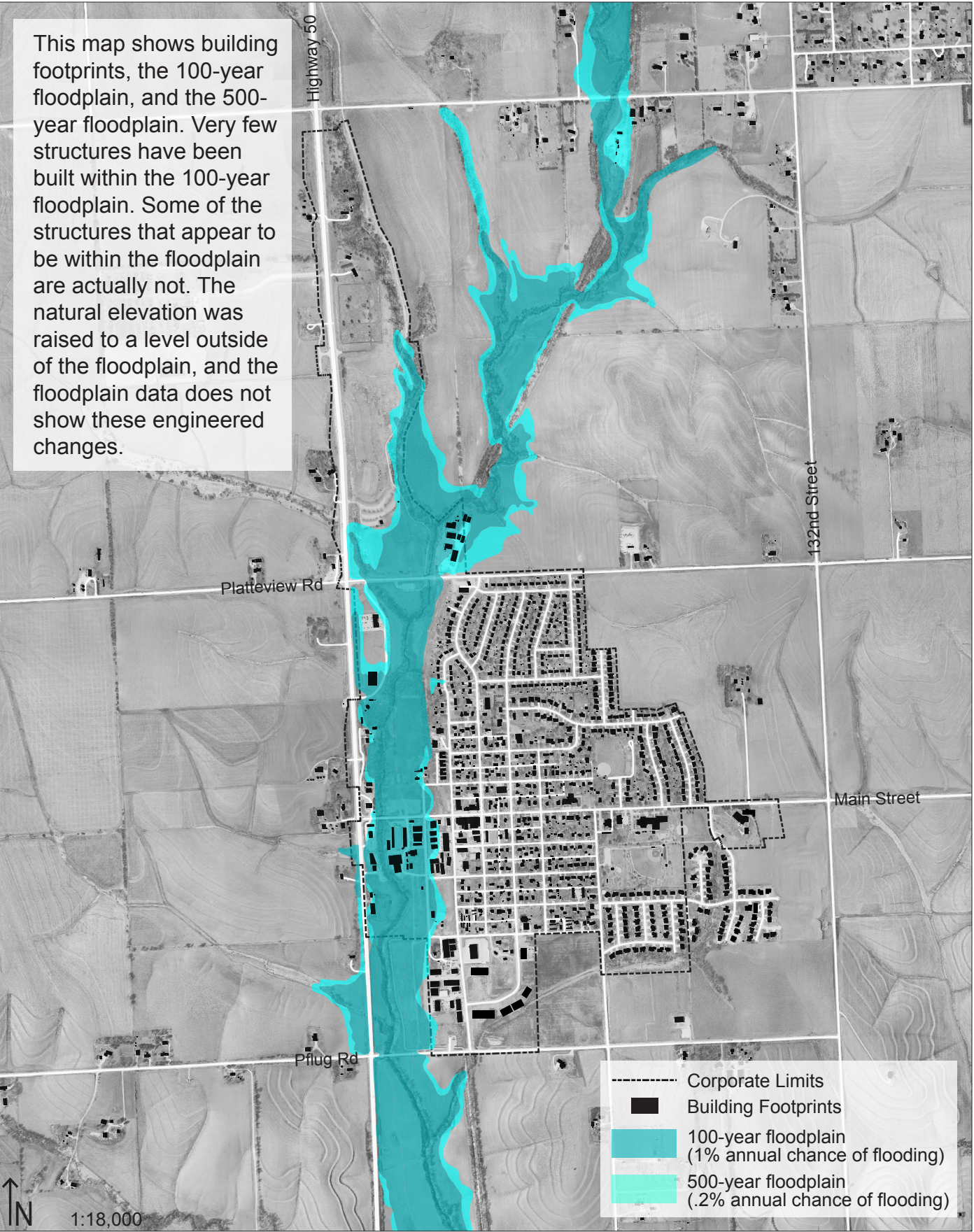
The floodplain also greatly affects further development on the current western edge of the city. Some recent development has occurred in the floodplain by altering the natural grade and "building out of the floodplain." However, this practice can have adverse affects on the environment. When the amount of impervious surface is increased and the natural grade of the land is altered, stormwater runoff causes environmental and property degradation. Erosion occurs along stream banks and an increase of sediment and pollutants flow into creeks, rivers, and storm sewers. Therefore "engineering out of the floodplain" in Springfield is not encouraged. This being said, however, certain kinds of development are appropriate to be located within the floodplain. Much of the Springfield Soccer Complex on the northeast corner of the intersection of Highway 50 and Platteview Road is located within the 100-year and 500-year floodplain. Floodplain areas are often recommended for recreational development, and Springfield is currently putting this strategy into practice by building the connection of the MoPac Trail through the floodplain area between Main Street and Platteview Road. The future land use map adopted as a part of the Springfield Comprehensive Plan proposes the floodplain north of Platteview Road and east of Springfield Soccer Complex be developed as recreational land, as well.

The map on the preceding page also shows the topography of the Springfield area. The farming practice of terracing is widely used in this region of Nebraska and becomes very evident on this map. Another area that stands out on this map is the Sarpy County Landfill located just outside the ETJ, northwest of Springfield.

Springfield Creek is an amenity in Springfield that must be protected and maintained. It is a beautiful natural element in the city. Pedestrian bridges over the creek along the MoPac or along roads would provide places for residents and non-residents alike to enjoy this unique natural area of the city.

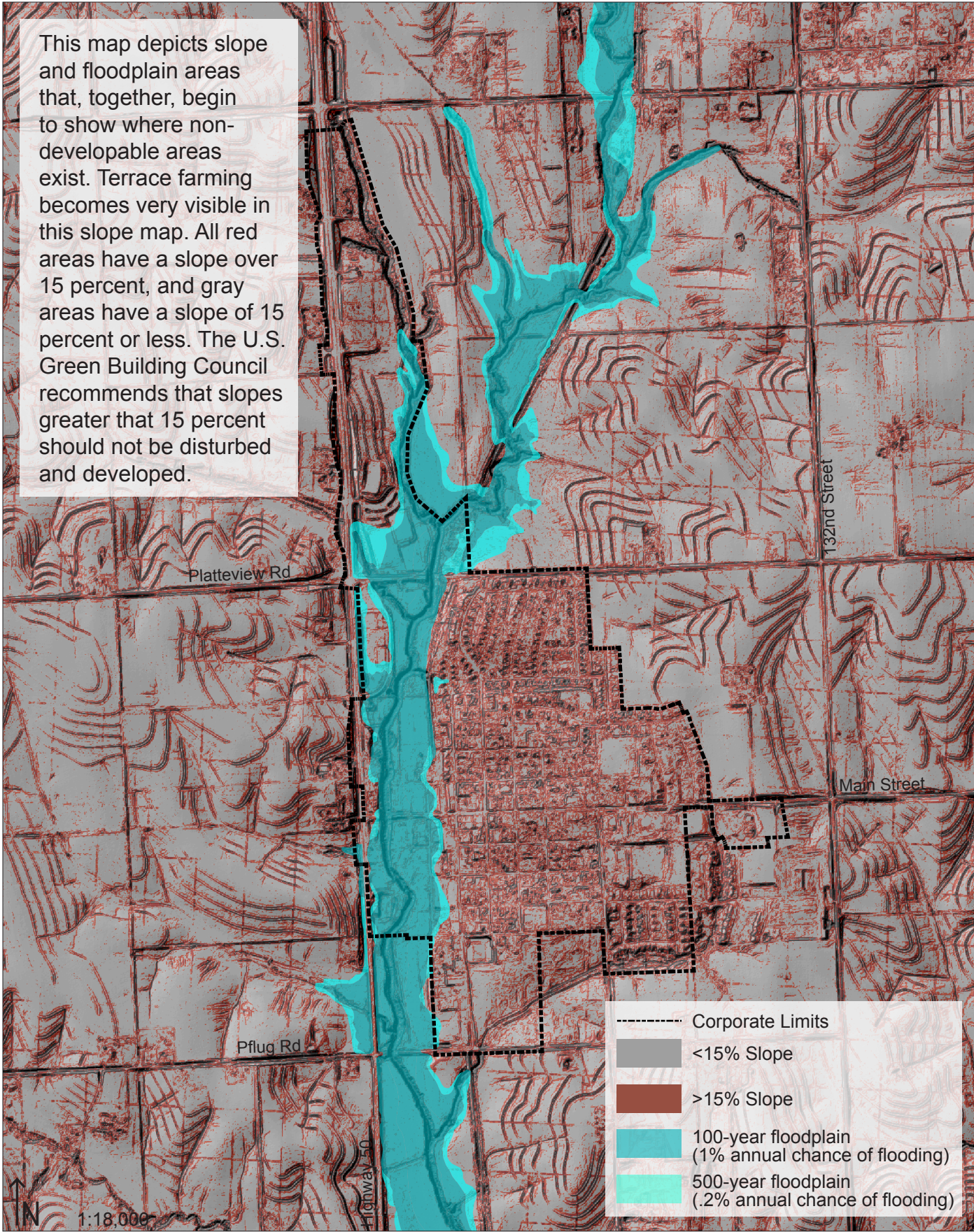
2.3 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Floodplain & Building Footprints

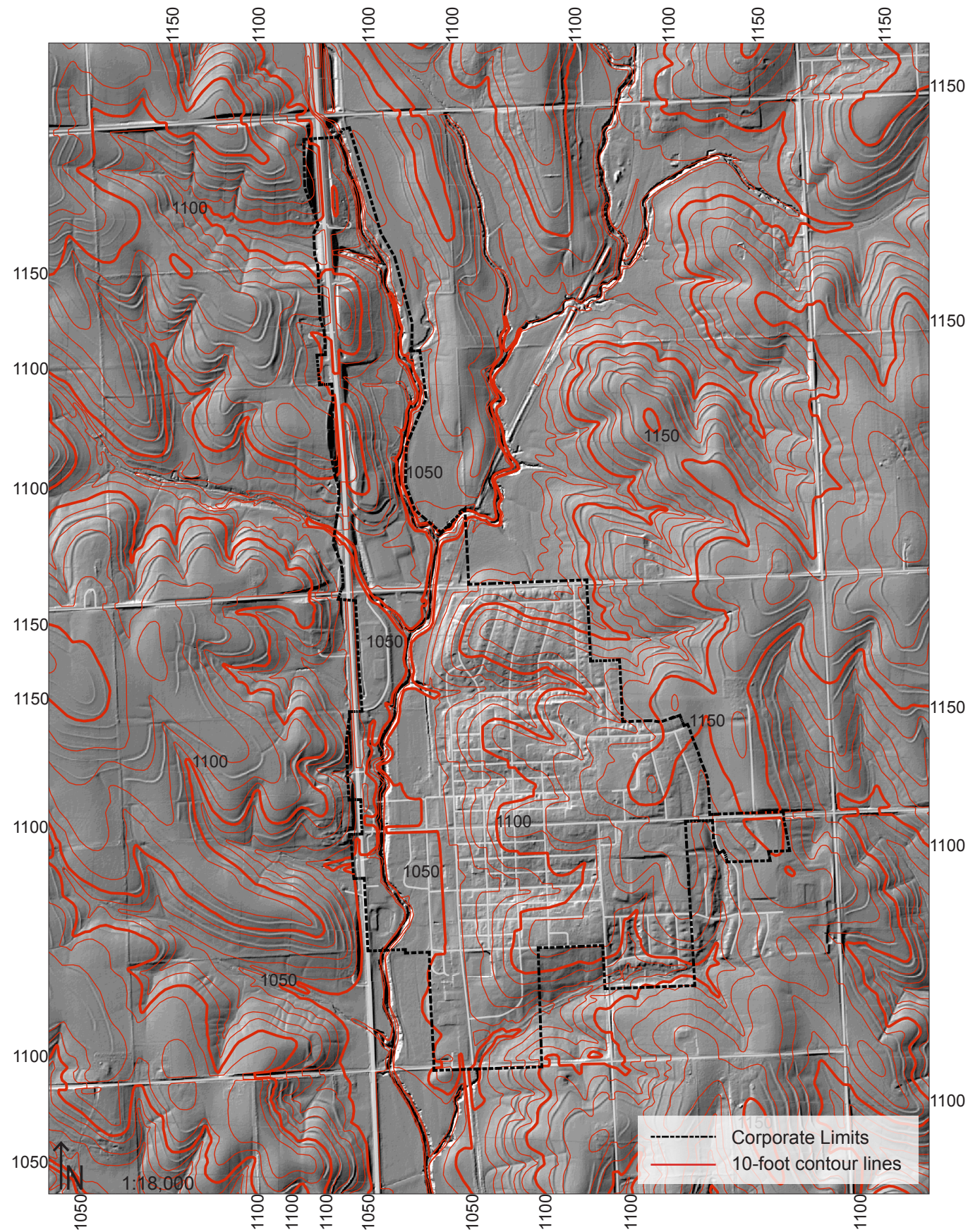


2.3 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Developable Land



2.3 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT Topography



2.3 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT Topography

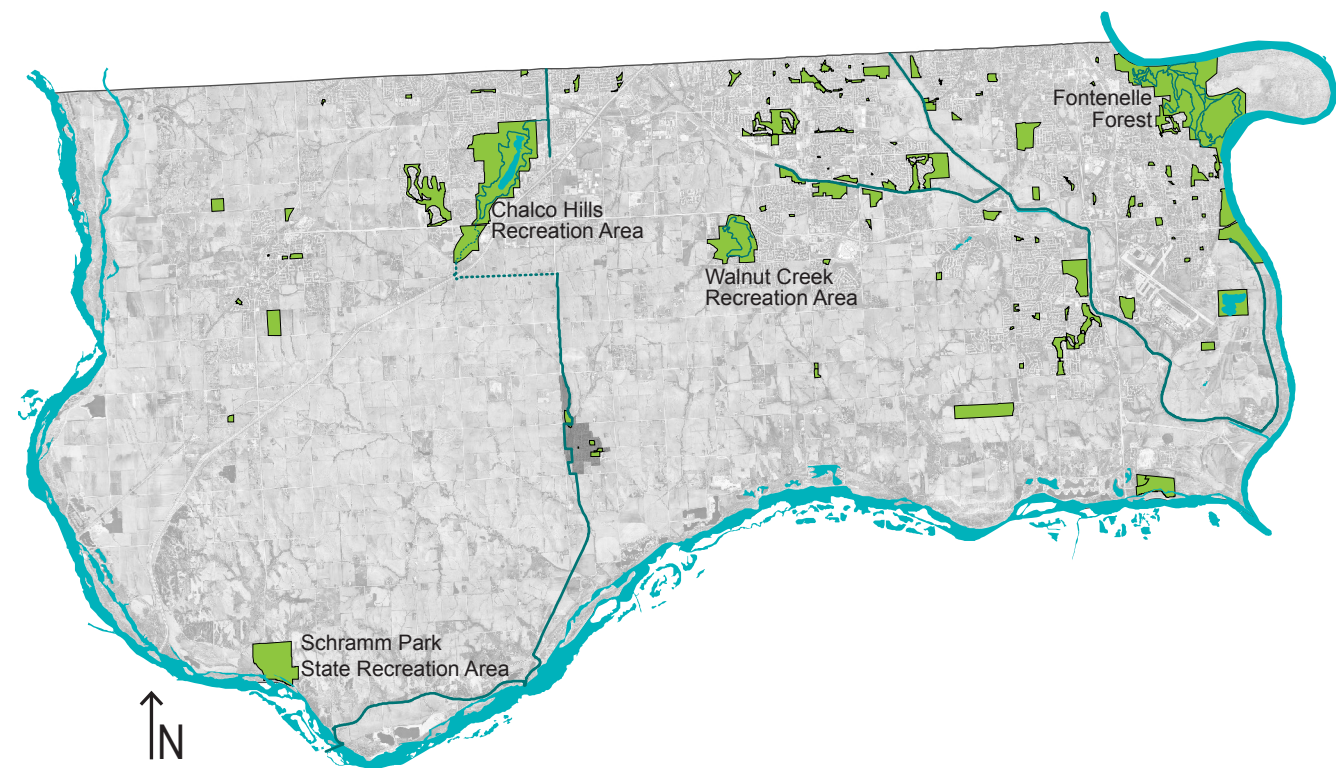


These photographs, looking west on both Pflug Road and Platteview Road at their intersection with Highway 50, show the steep grade of the hill that runs parallel to Highway 50 on the west. This natural land feature has played a role in the lack of westward development in Springfield.



A very unique feature of Springfield is that Main Street and the town center were platted and built on a hillside. This hillside location makes the views up and down Main Street dynamic and eye-catching.

2.3 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT Regional Recreation System



Springfield is located in close proximity to many natural resources and recreation areas. Because Sarpy County is bordered on three sides by rivers and has natural hills and vegetation, recreation areas are abundant. Trails in Springfield and elsewhere in the county continue to be proposed and built to create a better connected recreation system for the region.

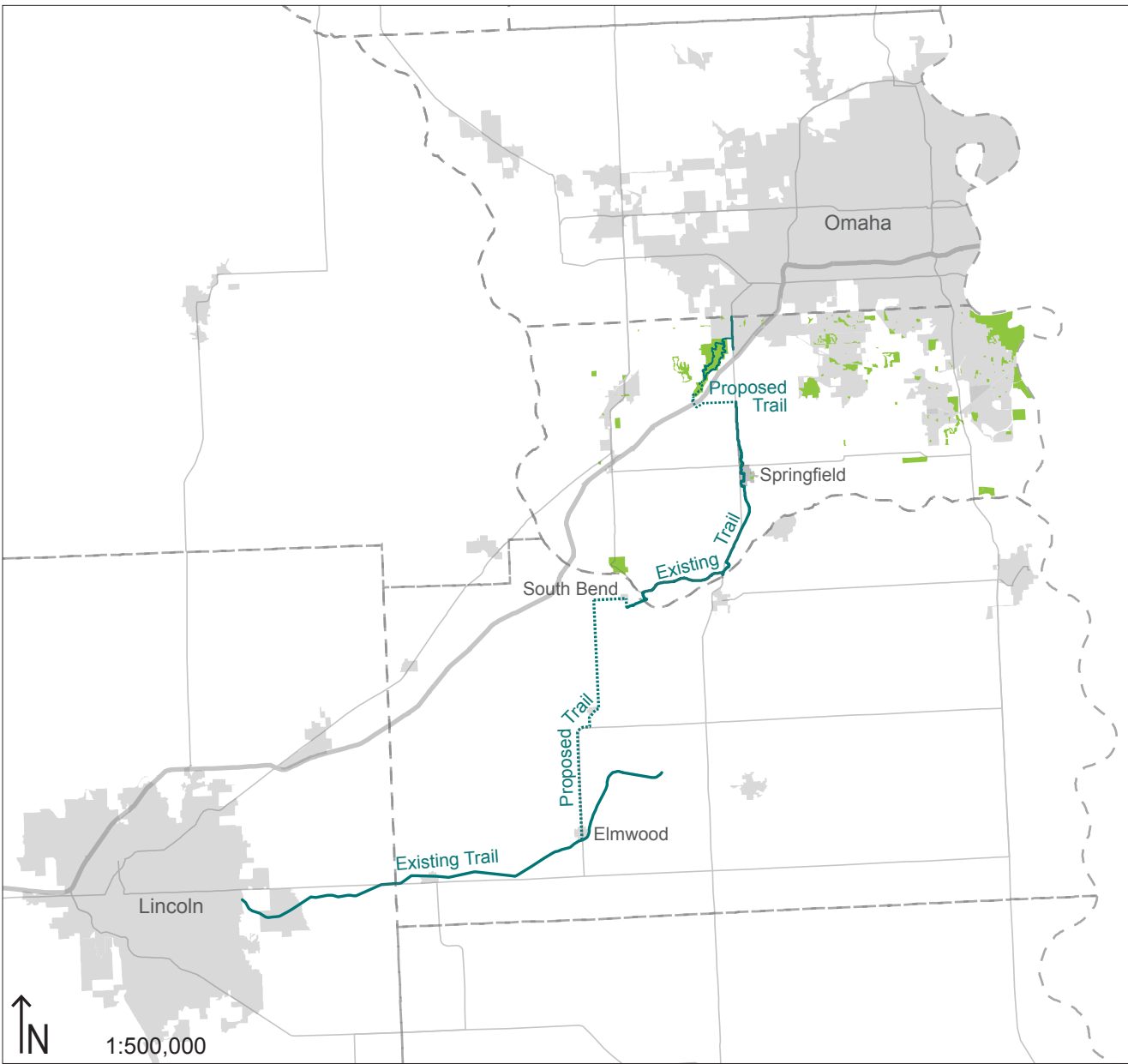


MoPac Trail looking south from Pflug Road.



Looking north on the MoPac Trail adjacent to the Springfield Soccer Complex.

2.3 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT MoPac Trail

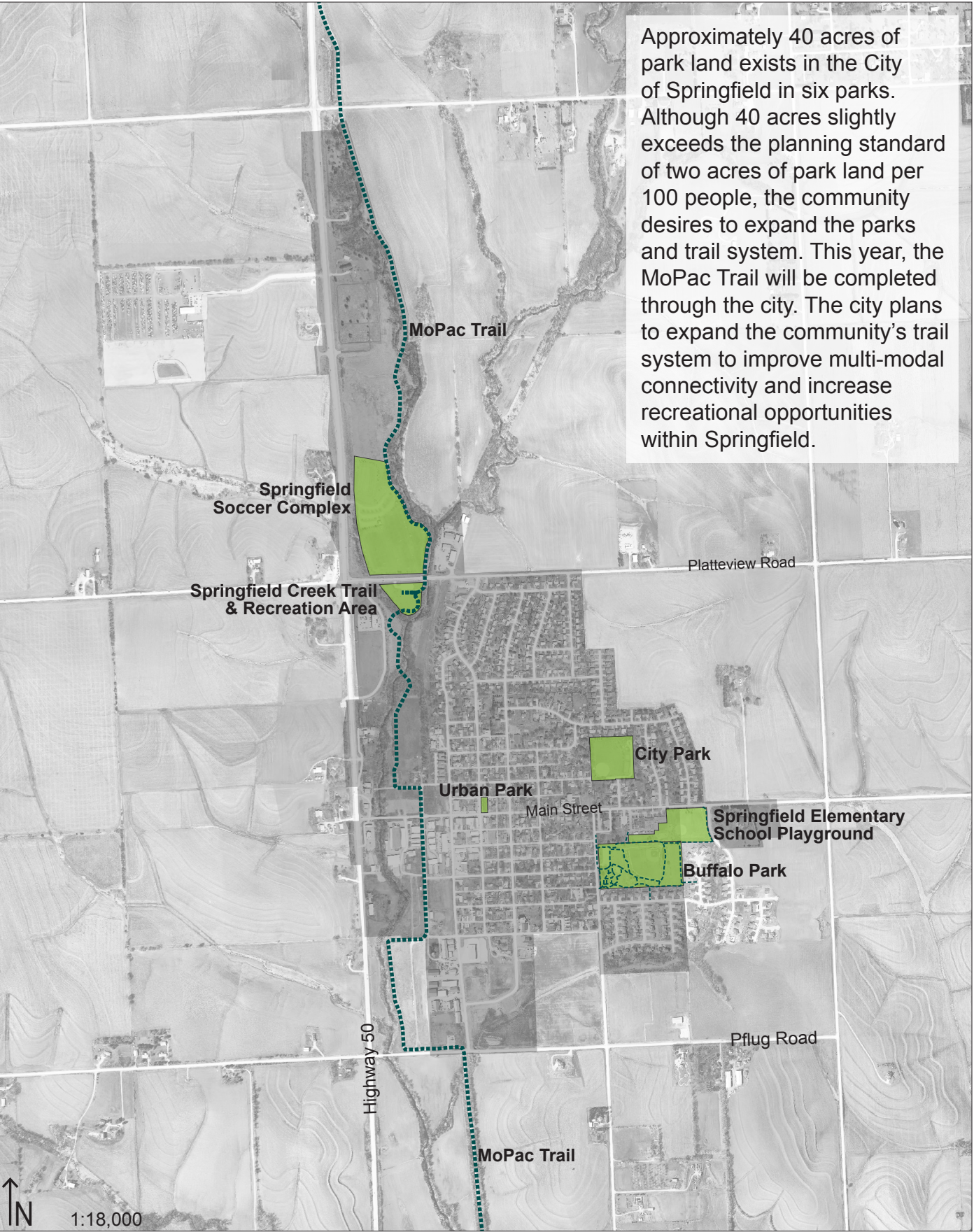


Several entities are currently working together to complete the MoPac Trail system between Nebraska’s two largest cities, Omaha and Lincoln. After the portion of the trail from Main Street to Platteview Road is completed in Springfield this year, only two “gaps” will remain: (1) in Cass County between Elmwood and the pedestrian bridge across the Platte River near South Bend and (2) in Sarpy County between Schram Road and the trails in the Chalco Hills Recreation Area. The map above depicts the existing MoPac Trail as a solid line and the proposed MoPac connections shown as dashed lines.

2.3 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Springfield Parks & Trails

Approximately 40 acres of park land exists in the City of Springfield in six parks. Although 40 acres slightly exceeds the planning standard of two acres of park land per 100 people, the community desires to expand the parks and trail system. This year, the MoPac Trail will be completed through the city. The city plans to expand the community's trail system to improve multi-modal connectivity and increase recreational opportunities within Springfield.



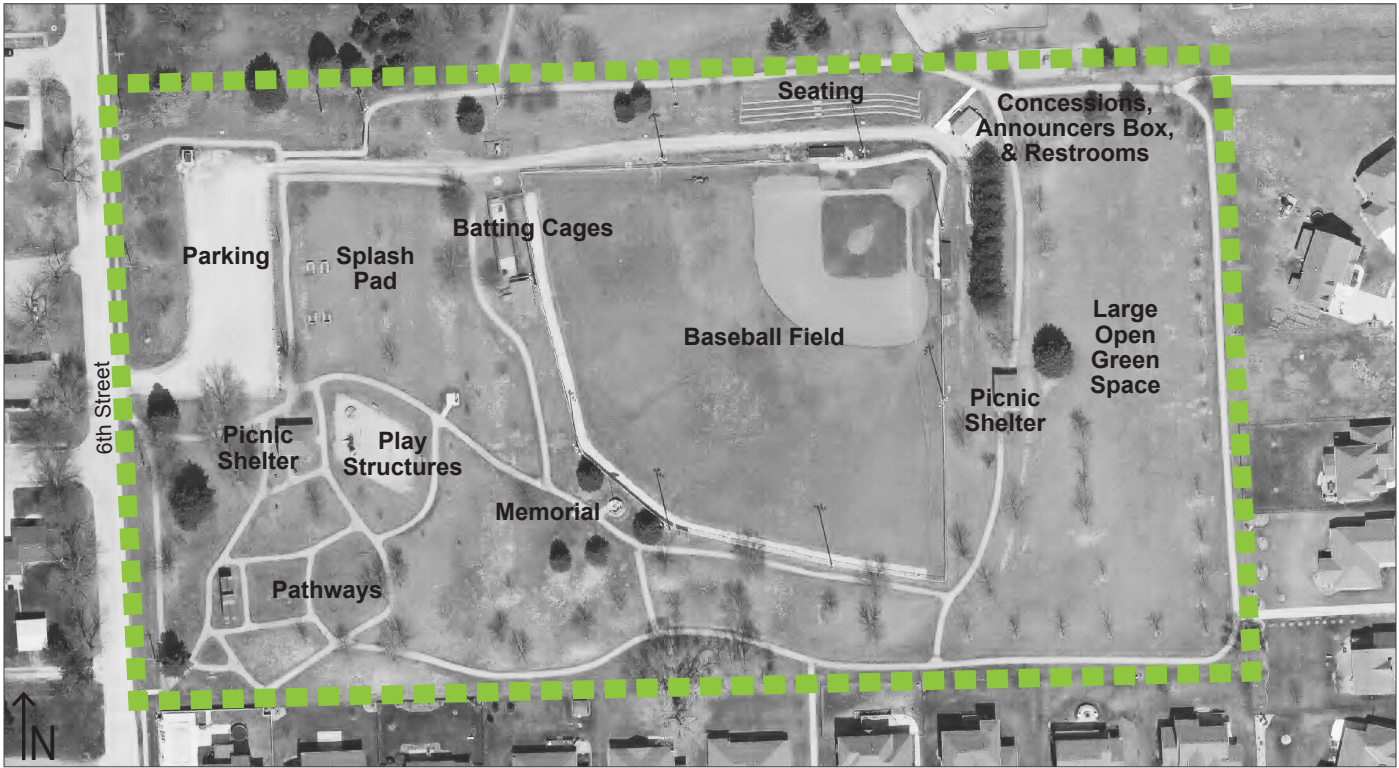
2.3 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Buffalo Park



BUFFALO PARK 10.65 acres

Buffalo Park is the only park in Springfield classified as a community park. A splash pad was completed during the summer of 2014 and drew a large number of visitors as soon as it opened. Buffalo Park is also home to the only baseball field with lights in the city. Springfield recently contracted with Olsson Associates to prepare a master park plan for Buffalo Park. This plan includes recommendations for increased parking, restrooms, tennis courts, new play structures, an additional picnic shelter and an outdoor exercise area.



2.3 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

City Park



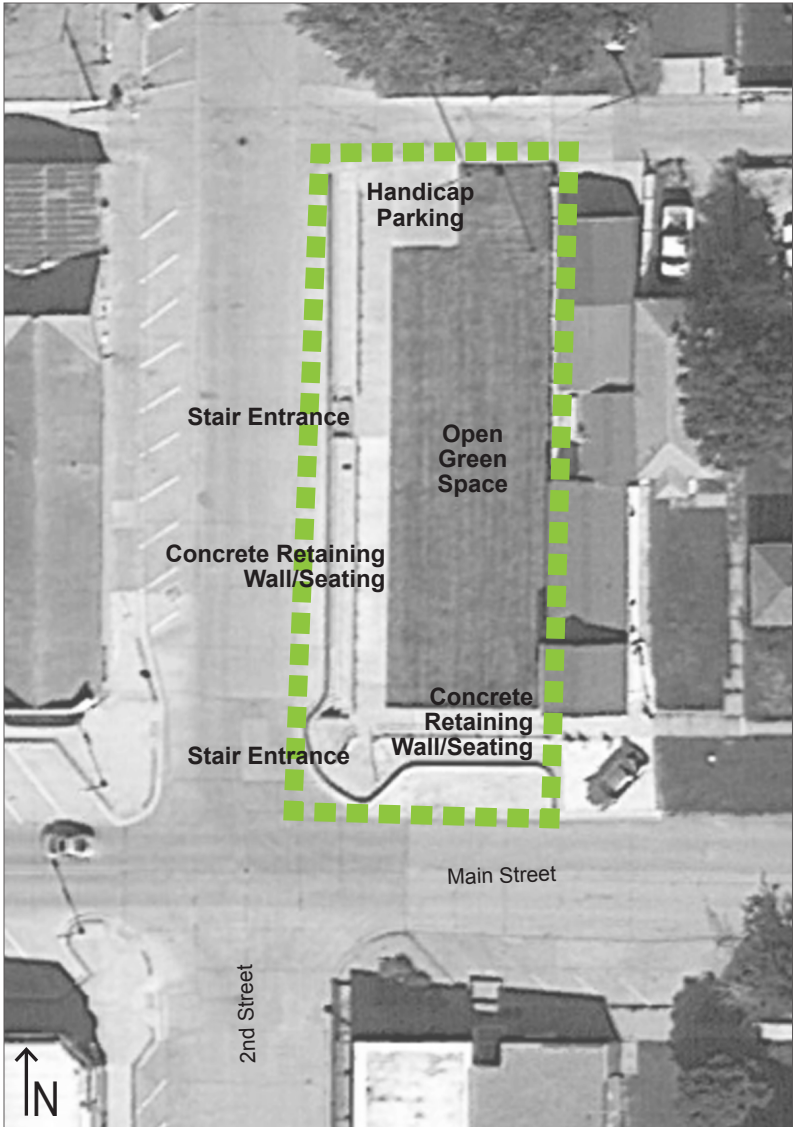
CITY PARK 5.27 acres

City Park is classified as a neighborhood park. Most softball games are played at City Park, and the field is equipped with covered dugouts, restrooms, bleacher seating, and a concessions and announcers building. The softball field is in need of lighting. The park also has a tennis court, an undersized basketball court, play structures, and a picnic shelter. Vehicle parking is very limited; during softball games, vehicles overflow to the Springfield Public Library and the Springfield Elementary School parking lots.



2.3 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Urban Park



URBAN PARK .13 acres

Urban Park, a narrow area of land located on the northeast corner of the intersection of Main Street and 2nd Street is classified as a mini-park. Construction has recently been completed on streetside edges of this park, replacing the stairs, concrete retaining wall, railings, street parking, and handicap parking. Currently the interior of the park is an open mowed turf area, but the city plans to develop the park as an engaging gathering place along the Main Street corridor.



2.3 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Springfield Creek Trail & Recreation Area


SPRINGFIELD CREEK TRAIL & RECREATION AREA 3.8 acres

Springfield Creek Trail and Recreational Area is classified as a mini-park, but it will likely be expanded to the south in the future. The Springfield Creek Trail Head in this park will become the connection to the MoPac Trail extending south through Springfield and to the Platte River. Construction on the MoPac Trail extension will be completed in 2015. The park is largely an arboretum with a variety of identified trees. A paved parking lot is located in the park adjacent to Platteview Road.

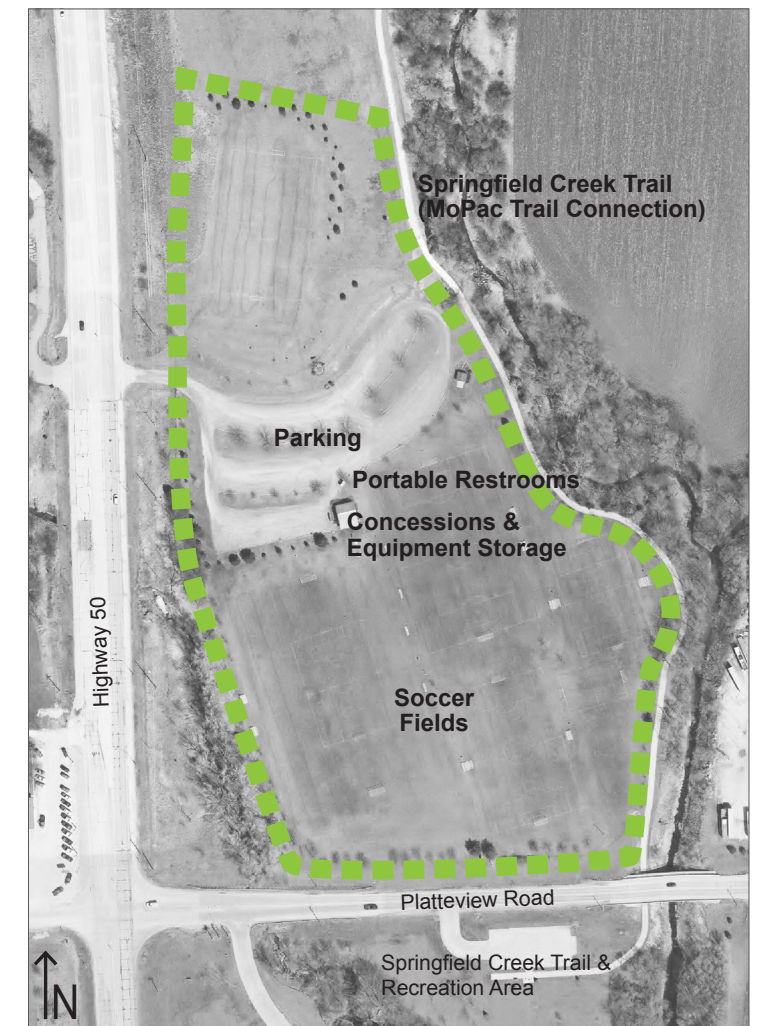


2.3 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Springfield Soccer Complex

SPRINGFIELD SOCCER COMPLEX
14.6 acres

The Springfield Soccer Complex is classified as a sports complex and is maintained by the Southern Sarpy Activities Program (SSAP), not the City of Springfield. One tournament held at this complex every year brings about 60 different teams, some from hundreds of miles away. The complex has a gravel parking area, a building for concessions and equipment, and direct access to the Springfield Creek/MoPac Trail. The SSAP owns more land to the north for future expansion of the complex.

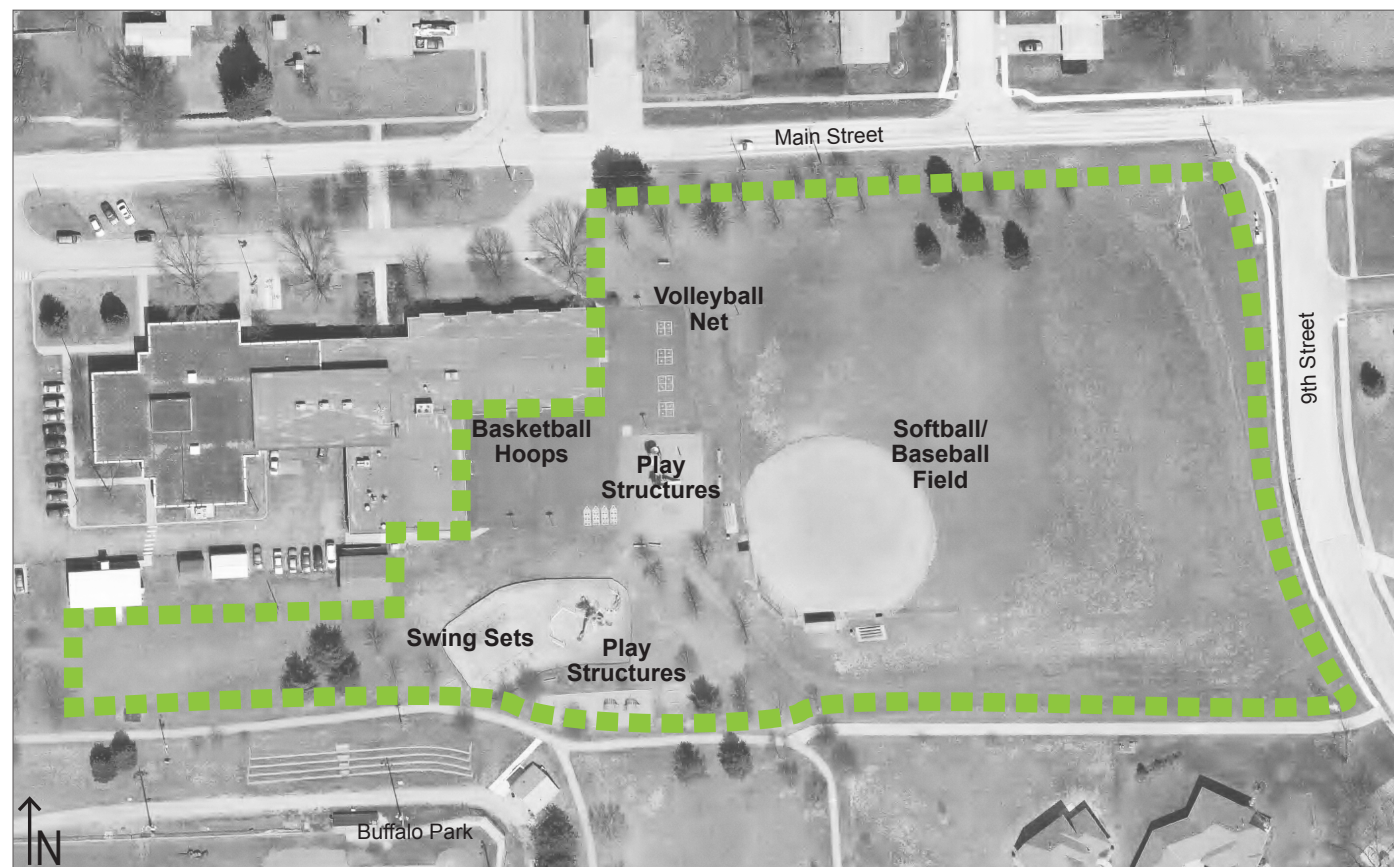


2.3 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT Springfield Elementary School Playground



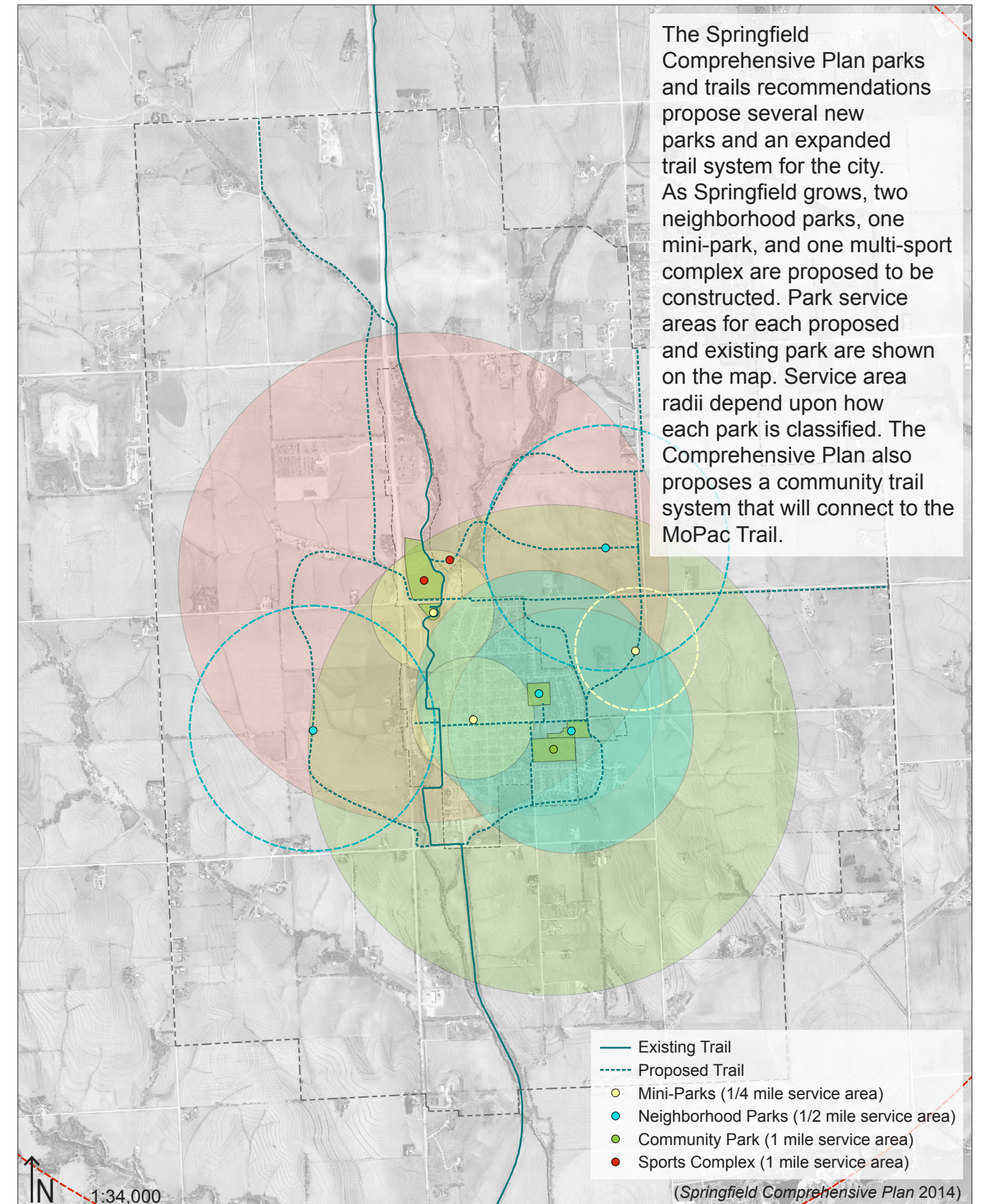
SPRINGFIELD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PLAYGROUND 5.23 acres

The Springfield Elementary School Playground is classified as a neighborhood park and is maintained by Springfield Platteview Community Schools, not the City of Springfield. This park is directly north of Buffalo Park. It has many play structures, swings, basketball hoops and other play areas for children. A softball field is located east of the playground.

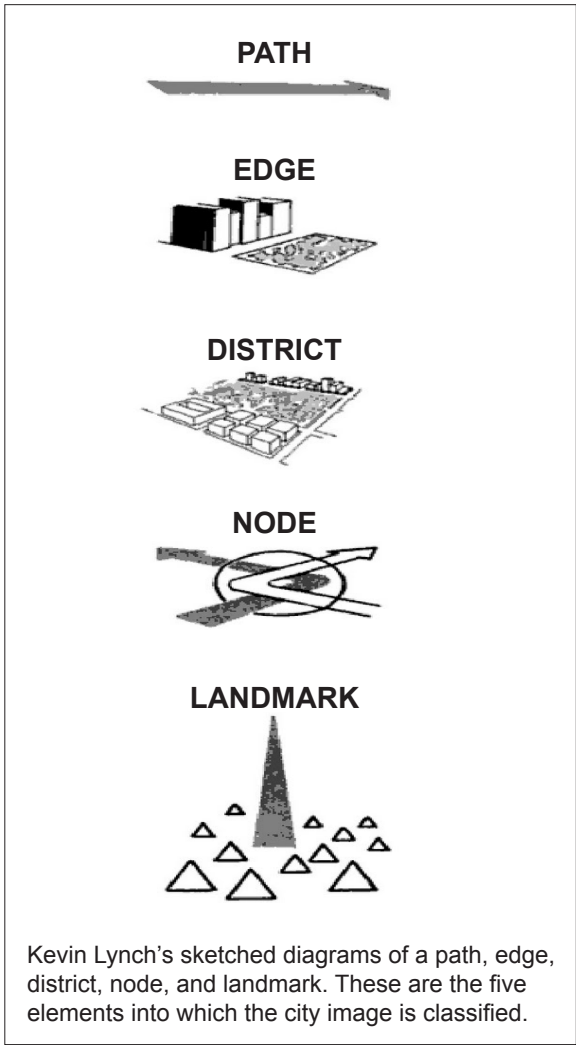
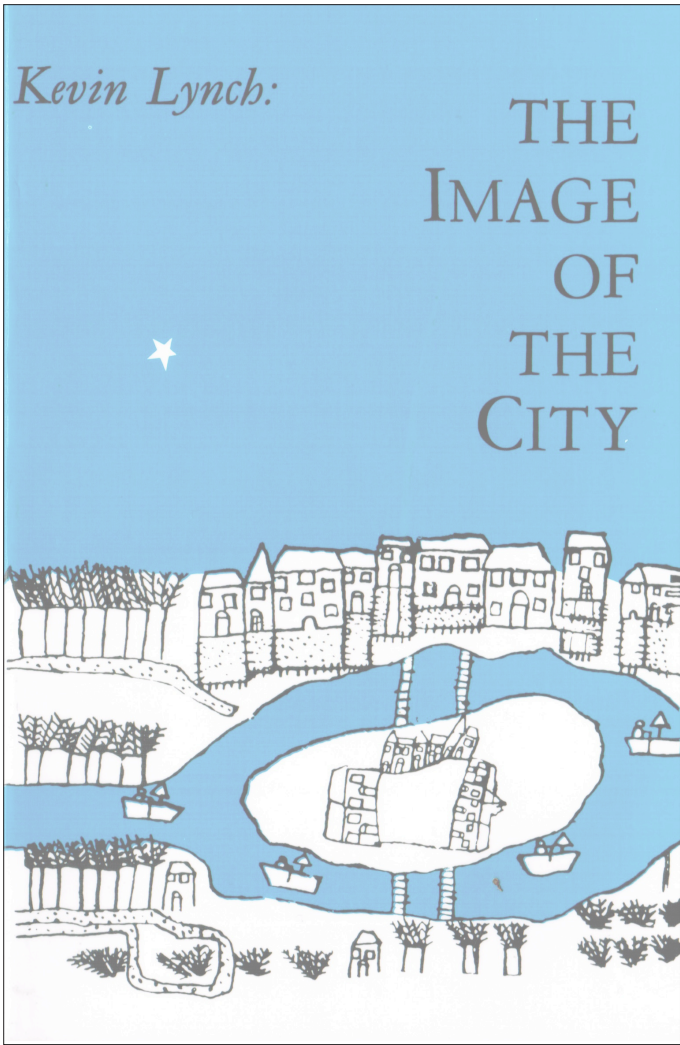


2.3 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Future Parks and Trails Map



2.4 THE CITY IMAGE AND ITS ELEMENTS



2.4 THE CITY IMAGE AND ITS ELEMENTS

Description

Kevin Lynch, who was a professor of urban studies and urban design at MIT, wrote the book *The Image of the City* in 1960. Although the book is 55 years old, the concepts within one of the chapters in the book, “The City Image and Its Elements,” are still widely acknowledged and accepted as a basis for analyzing, planning, and designing urban environments. The chapter explores and defines concepts on how people perceive their cities. This method of understanding and analyzing a city is applied to the City of Springfield. Lynch claims that the city image can be classified into five types of elements: paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks. Mapping the existing perceived elements will assist in designing a more “imageable” and successful city. The basic definitions of each of the five elements are as follows:

-

PATHS

Paths are the channels along which the observer moves. They may be streets, highways, sidewalks, trails, transit lines, etc. For many people, these are the predominant elements in their image of a city. (Lynch 1960)
- **EDGES**

Edges are also linear elements, but they are not used as paths. Edges are often barriers that separate one area from another in a city. Although usually not as dominant as paths, edges sometimes have very important organizing impacts in a city. (Lynch 1960)
- **DISTRICTS**

Districts are areas within a city that the observer mentally enters inside. A district can be recognized, because it will usually have a specific identity or common character within a certain area. (Lynch 1960)
- ⊙

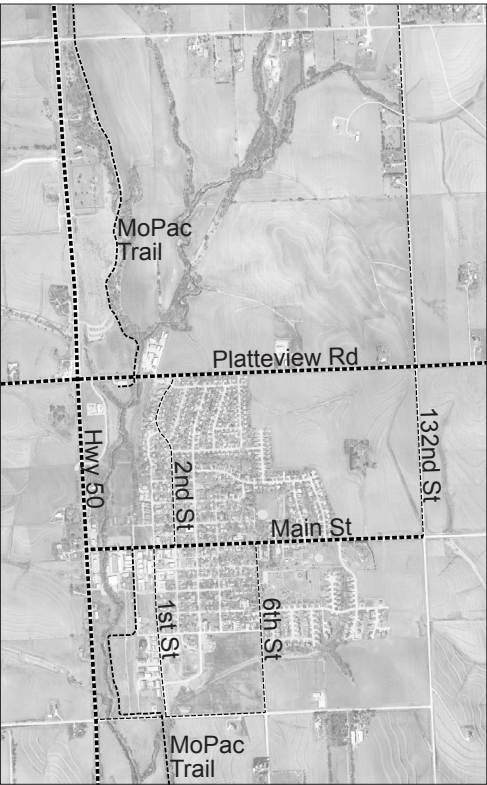
NODES

Nodes are points in a city that an observer can enter and are places for the concentration of particular uses. Nodes are primarily junctions or crossing points of paths. They can also be a town square or place where people converge. (Lynch 1960)
- ✱

LANDMARKS

Landmarks are observed and used as a point-of-reference but are not entered within by the observer. Landmarks are unique features inside or within view of a city. For example, mountains, statues, or important or unique buildings could be landmarks. (Lynch 1960)

2.4 THE CITY IMAGE AND ITS ELEMENTS Existing



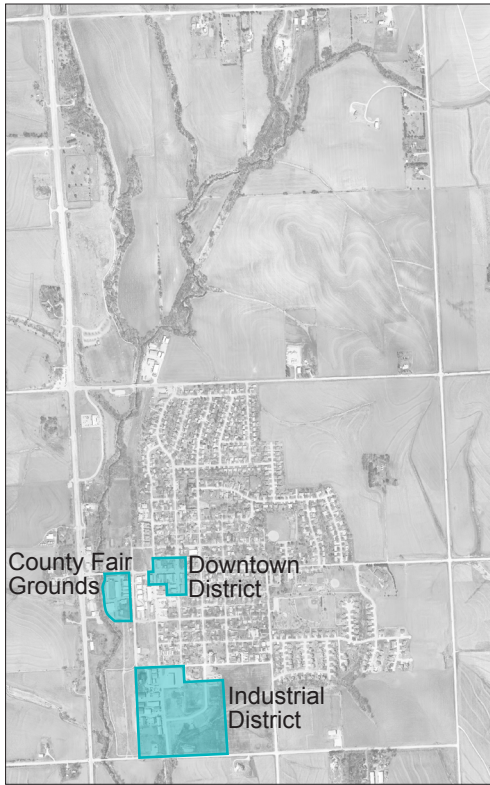
PATHS

Highway 50, Platteview Road, Main Street, and Pflug Road, were the paths most frequently spoke of during the community involvement process. They are the most frequently travelled, and their corridors hold the most significance to the growth of Springfield. They are the paths that are frequented by locals and non-locals alike. 1st Street, 2nd Street, 6th Street, and 132nd Street are also perceived as entrances and heavily used paths for locals. The MoPac Trail is also perceived as a path. As the MoPac is completed through the city, it will gain even more recognition as a major path.



EDGES

Three different types of edges exist in Springfield. The land that runs adjacent to Highway 50 rises in a steep grade. This slope is most likely one of the reasons Springfield has not expanded to the west. It is an added barrier to the busy Highway 50 and perceived as the western edge of the city. Springfield Creek has cut a deep vegetated ravine through the land that requires bridges for pedestrian and vehicular crossing. The ridgeline (or water basin edge) on the east side of Springfield is also perceived as an edge to the city because sewer lift stations would have to be installed if the city expanded beyond that ridgeline.



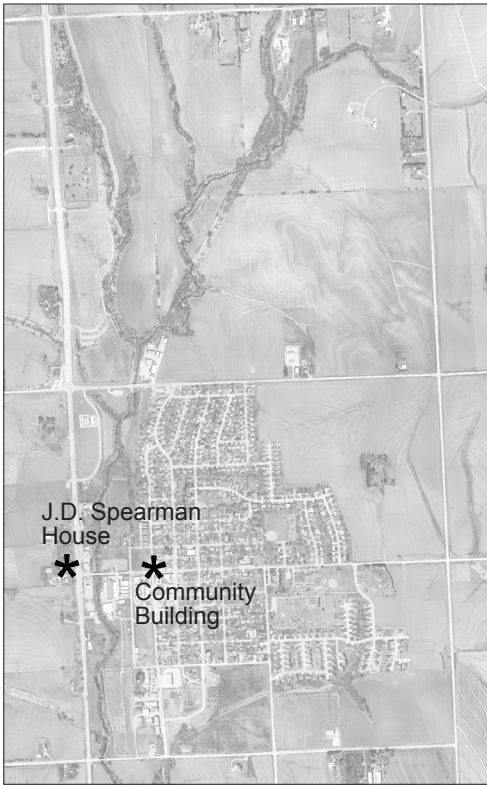
DISTRICTS

Three areas exist in Springfield that the community perceives as districts. These include the downtown, the fairgrounds, and the expanding industrial park. Each of these areas has a unique and defining character that makes it feel unified as a certain district. Each is important to Springfield in different ways and was referred to many times in the community involvement process.



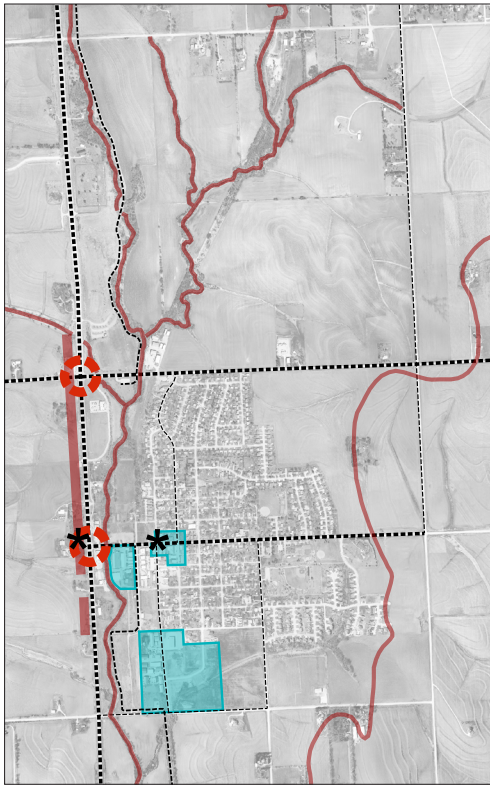
NODES

The two nodes shown on the map are where the most traveled roads in the city intersect. Community members repeatedly talked of how busy the intersection of Platteview Road and Highway 50 is. The intersection of Highway 50 and Main Street is considered the main entrance to Springfield. It is also considered a node due to the high activity at the two gas stations located at the intersection.



LANDMARKS

Springfield's two landmarks are considered so because of their historical relevance. The house that was built for Captain J.D. Spearman, the "father" of Springfield, still stands in great condition on the top of the hill near the intersection of Highway 50 and Main Street. The Springfield Community Hall is on the National Register of Historic Places because it was built by the W.P.A. in 1939 as part of the New Deal.

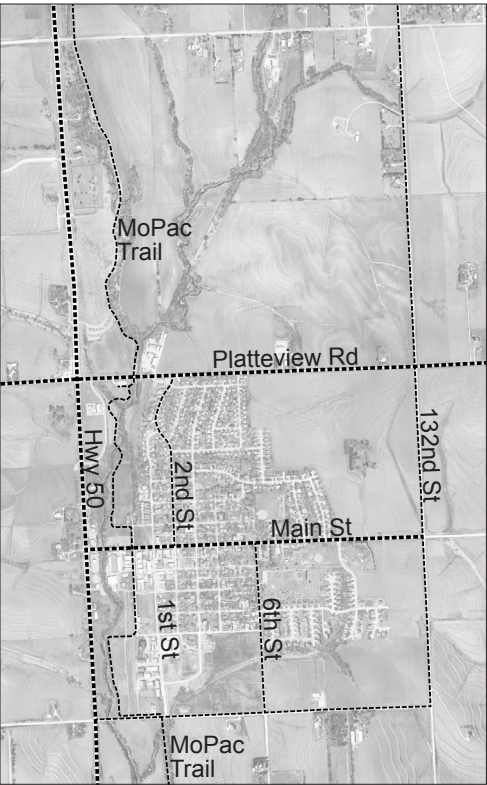


EXISTING COMPOSITE IMAGE OF SPRINGFIELD

This map is a cumulative depiction of the maps showing the separate existing elements: paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks.

2.4 THE CITY IMAGE AND ITS ELEMENTS Existing

2.4 THE CITY IMAGE AND ITS ELEMENTS Proposed



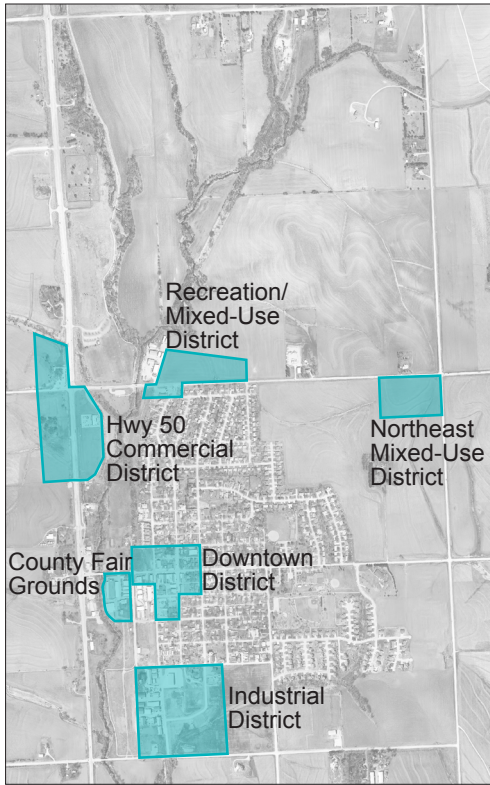
PATHS

With the completion of the MoPac Trail through the city, as well as its future completion from Omaha to Lincoln, the trail will have a much higher usership. Springfield will be an interesting stop and unique environment for many who are traveling on the MoPac. The vehicular routes which are currently viewed as paths will most likely remain so.



EDGES

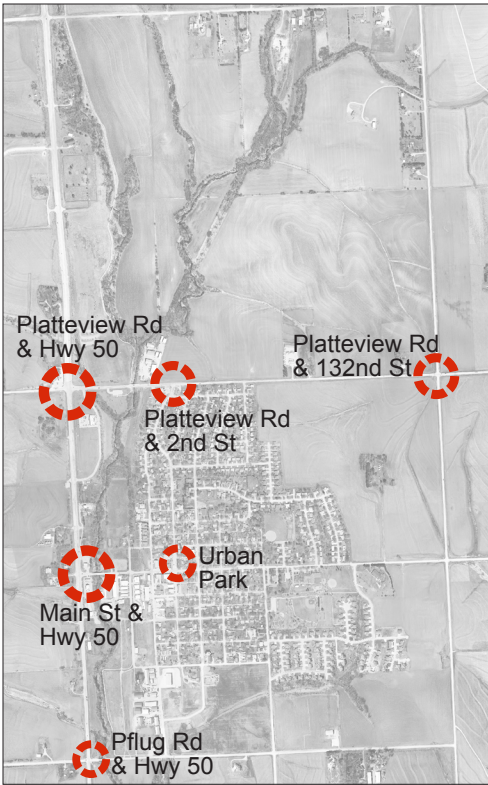
When envisioning Springfield, the edges will remain mostly unchanged because they are all natural topographical features. It is unwise and irresponsible to drastically change the natural slope of land because of adverse affects on the environment and property. However, the Springfield Creek edge could become more penetrable with added pedestrian bridges. Also, if sewer lift stations are constructed east of the ridgeline, this will cease to be perceived as an edge. This being said, the Future Land Use map does not propose heavy development east of the ridgeline, so it will likely remain a perceived edge.



DISTRICTS

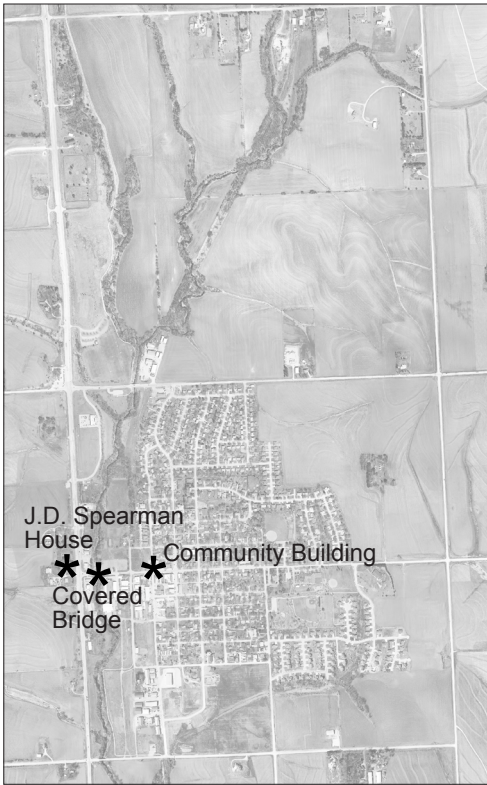
Three additional areas likely will be perceived as districts in the future. These three areas are all located along Platteview Road, because growth of the city is proposed to move primarily to the north. Traffic will likely continue to increase on Platteview Road, making it more attractive for commercial and mixed-use developments. The downtown district is likely to grow by expanding into vacant or under-developed areas.

2.4 THE CITY IMAGE AND ITS ELEMENTS Proposed



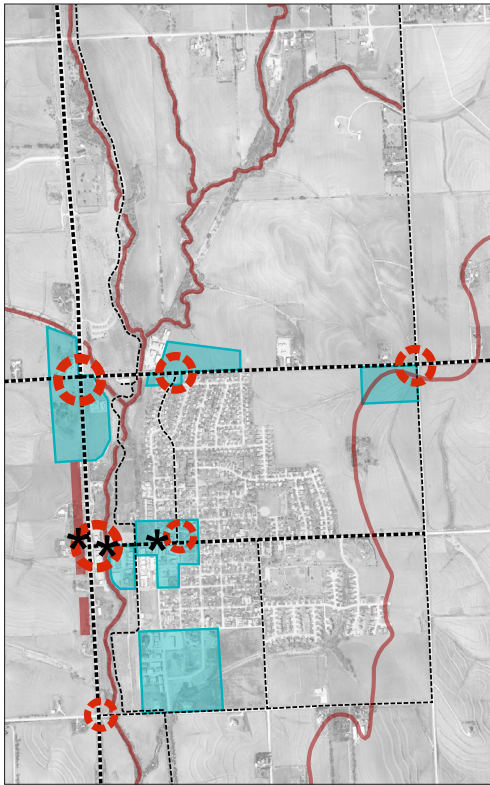
NODES

Three nodes have been added as secondary points of entrance into Springfield. As the city grows, these nodes will become more frequented entrances and/or commercial/mixed use areas. Springfield Urban Park has also been added as a future node because the city is looking to further develop it as a dynamic public space.



LANDMARKS

Springfield has a very unique Main Street entrance. Many community members would like to capitalize on the opportunity to make the entrance a more memorable one. Therefore, a covered bridge (to replace the current bridge that crosses Springfield Creek) was discussed on multiple occasions to highlight the Main Street entrance. Captain J.D. Spearman's house is not on the National Register of Historic Places, but it should continue to be protected and occupied because of its historical significance to the city. Community Hall will remain a landmark, as it is already listed in the National Register of Historical Places.



PROPOSED COMPOSITE IMAGE OF SPRINGFIELD

This map is a cumulative depiction of the maps showing the separate proposed elements: paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks.



COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

| | |
|--------------------------|-----|
| PROFILE MEETINGS | 3.1 |
| PUBLIC TOWN HALL MEETING | 3.2 |
| FOCUS GROUP MEETINGS | 3.3 |
| DESIGN CHARRETTE | 3.4 |
| PUBLIC FORUM | 3.5 |
| VISION STATEMENT | 3.6 |



3.1 PROFILE MEETINGS

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Community involvement and the input of the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee was a very large part of the Springfield Comprehensive Plan process. The Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee Members included Kathleen Gottsch, Bob Roseland, Dan Craney, David Kulm, Jerry Webster, and Jim Opitz. To fully understand the community's needs and desires, I felt it was important to attend all of the public meetings, and my presence was necessary at most of the Steering Committee meetings, as well.



PROFILE MEETINGS WITH STEERING COMMITTEE

JEO Consulting Group engages communities in a four stage-process when helping them develop their comprehensive plans. In sequence, these stages are: 1. Profile; 2. Envision; 3. Achieve; and 4. Implement. After gathering much of the demographic data, economic data, and existing land use information for the Profile stage, the JEO team met with the Steering Committee in Springfield on two different dates to present the findings. The public was not invited to these first two meetings, held on April 10 and April 24 of 2014, because we first needed to confirm the overall validity of our gathered information with the Steering Committee. At these meetings I presented the existing land use data because I compiled the inventory and prepared the maps of Springfield's existing land use. This presentation included definitions of each land use, the location of each land use, the land area percentage of Springfield's total land area that each land use occupies, and generally what the existing land use distribution means for the future development of Springfield. The Steering Committee also assisted the JEO team in determining which individuals from the community should be invited to the focus group meetings for the Envision stage.

3.1 PROFILE MEETINGS

The various limitations for growth that impact Springfield were discussed in the Profile meetings. Because of water bodies, watersheds, and wellhead protection areas, development in certain areas is limited physically, legally, and financially. Springfield Creek runs along the western edge of the Springfield, just east of Highway 50. The 100-year floodplain along Springfield Creek limits development in that area. The eastern edge of Springfield's corporate limit is very near a natural ridgeline (in other words, the edge of a subwatershed). If development occurs on the east side of the ridgeline, a sewage lift station would be needed to provide sewer service. Additionally, a wellhead protection area abuts the southeastern city corporate limit. The availability of properties and homes in Springfield was considered a hindrance to growth. All of these factors are important determinants in the development of an urban design master plan for Springfield.

After the first two profile meetings with the Steering Committee, we moved on to the Envision phase of the Springfield Comprehensive Plan process. The Envision phase is designed to gather the needs, desires, and opinions of community members in an open participation process. The Envision process also helps build partnerships among citizens, stakeholders, community leaders, and consultants while creating a sense of ownership of the Comprehensive Plan through direct community involvement. Getting to know community members and being able to interact directly with them to hear their concerns, desires, needs, and opinions was extremely valuable and enlightening. The Envision process also built community interest in the prosperity of Springfield, built trust between the community members and me, and gave them a sense of ownership in my project and the Comprehensive Plan.

PUBLIC TOWN HALL MEETING

The first community meeting in the Comprehensive Plan process was the town hall meeting held in the Community Center on May 8, 2014. After presenting the aforementioned Springfield Profile information about the community's demographics, economics, and land use, we asked that the community members split up into smaller groups. We then asked the participants to identify Springfield's positive features, needed improvements, issues facing the community, and projects needed in the community. The groups then took turns sharing and discussing their ideas as I recorded them. The lists compiled from the community input are as follows:

3.2 PUBLIC TOWN HALL MEETING

Positives

Small School District
Quality of Life
Access to Medical Services
Proximity to Metro Area
Transportation Connectivity
Fire Department
Water/Sewer Infrastructure
Low Crime Rate
Springfield History
Tourism Potential
Parks and Recreation
School and Youth Programs

Issues Facing Springfield

Ground Water Withdrawal
City Well Needed
Growth Limitations
Lack of Special Events
Drawing People Downtown
School Learning Communities
Highway Signage and Visibility
Lack of Community Identity
Marketing to Developers
Economic Development Planning
Platteview Road Development
Community Leadership
South Sewer Interceptor

Constraints and Challenges

Growth Restrictions--
Land Availability/Suitability
Sewer Infrastructure Restrictions
Lack of Retail Businesses
Lack of Large Employers
Lack of Tourism Business
Lack of Public Involvement
Outside Perception of Springfield
Highway 50 Construction
Highway Traffic
Lack of New Housing--
Construction and Development
Lack of Restaurants
School Districts – Kids opting out
Competing City Encroachment

Projects Identified

New Municipal Well
Paving Streets
Splash Pad (completed)
Completion of MoPac Trail
Inter-local Agreements for
Recreation Facilities
Motorsports Track
Infrastructure Improvements/Expansion
Sidewalks – ADA Compliance
Urban Park
New City Hall
New Maintenance Yard
New Public Works Building
Senior Center
Commuter Park (Park & Ride)

3.2 PUBLIC TOWN HALL MEETING

The community members were asked at the town hall meeting to develop several visions for Springfield that would exemplify the features identified in the previous lists. Participants wanted growth to occur by infill and redevelopment, starting from the core of the city first and then moving outward. They also recognized the importance of development along Highway 50, but were concerned about drawing the “right kind” of businesses and development adjacent to Highway 50, as well as in other parts of the community. One thing that became very evident in the town hall meeting was that Springfield residents have great community pride. This pride was apparent when they discussed the types of businesses they would like to see in Springfield. One resident stated (with agreement of others) the belief that businesses should locate in places because they (the businesses) want to be part of the community and not because the city offered them incentives to locate there. That being said, they did admit that Springfield’s unwillingness to give incentives may be a reason for the lack of large employers and housing developments in Springfield. Springfield residents at the town hall meeting desired the city to continue developing as a tourist destination and wanted to also focus on attracting a younger age group to the city. The participants voiced the need for strong development and design guidelines for Springfield as it develops to ensure that it grows in such a way that is positive, prosperous, and healthy for its inhabitants.



Community members discussing their ideas in small groups at the town hall meeting on May 8, 2014.

3.2 PUBLIC TOWN HALL MEETING

3.3 FOCUS GROUP MEETINGS

FOCUS GROUP MEETINGS

Three separate focus group meetings focusing on three topics were held: 1. Housing and Commercial Development; 2. Economic Development; and 3. Recreation and Tourism. The meetings were held in Springfield at the City Hall building on May 28th and 29th, 2014. The purpose of the focus group meetings was to gain as much knowledge as possible from local residents about the community and its needs, desires, problems, and opportunities. The local stakeholder participants in the focus group meetings were identified during the Profile meetings with the Steering Committee. Persons identified for each of the groups were notified of the meetings and asked to attend and give input.

1. Housing and Commercial Development Focus Group Meeting

The limited availability of housing and retail businesses was the most significant issue discussed by the Housing and Commercial Development Focus Group. The group recognized that many goods are not available in Springfield; therefore, residents are forced to leave town for much of their shopping. However, the group spoke of the great potential they saw in Springfield for commercial development in several different locations. The Highway 50 corridor creates many possibilities for the community that are not currently being realized. Highway 50 is used heavily by people traveling between Omaha and Louisville for work, shopping, and other purposes. One focus group participant stressed that when considering Springfield's commercial potential, Louisville also must be included in the numbers. Focus group participants viewed the large amount of truck traffic along Highway 50, suggesting the possibility for an industrial park between Highway 50 and the Sarpy County Landfill (which is just northwest of Springfield at the corner of Fair View Road and 156th Street). One participant also stressed that the importance of Platteview Road should not be underestimated, suggesting that the intersection of 132nd Street and Platteview Road could become a community entrance. Downtown Main Street was seen as having great potential, especially as an added attraction to the 50,000 people per year who are drawn to the community by Soaring Wings Vineyard, located less than a mile south of Springfield. The small town feeling of Springfield, or as one called it, "a modern-day Mayberry," is a huge draw for many people to visit or live in Springfield.

Housing was also a large focus of this meeting. The demand for housing outweighs the supply in Springfield. A wide variety and diversity of housing, from multi-family housing, to small beginner homes, to large estates, was desired by the group. They recommended that most of the residential development should occur east of Highway 50. Housing and commercial development are very dependent on one another. As it was mentioned several times in the discussion, businesses will be attracted to Springfield only when there are enough residents living in town to patronize the businesses.

3.3 FOCUS GROUP MEETINGS

2. Economic Development Focus Group Meeting

The discussion was not quite as long or in-depth during the Economic Development Focus Group meeting because fewer people were able to attend. Attracting light industry and light manufacturing were identified by this group as the best strategies for expanding economic development in Springfield. Undeveloped land northwest of Springfield along Highway 50 was viewed as a possible location for light industry. However, infrastructure improvements, specifically sewers and streets, would be required before a large industrial development investment could be made. Warehouse distribution was not seen as likely development because of the distance to Interstate-80. This group focused mainly on industrial development because, once again, they said the current limited availability of housing will not attract significant commercial growth.

3. Recreation and Tourism Focus Group Meeting

Facilitating the growth of strong youth sports programs was a priority of the Recreation and Tourism Focus Group. The idea of developing a multi-sports complex just east of the existing Springfield Soccer Complex was a very attractive idea to a majority of the meeting attendees. This large multi-sports complex would allow athletic organizations in the Springfield area to pool their resources, such as maintenance equipment and volunteer workers. Springfield is already considered a tourist destination because of Soaring Wings Vineyards, Weiss Studios and Gardens, Springfield Artworks, the Sarpy County Fair, and Springfield Drug and Soda Fountain, and the group saw a great opportunity for encouraging new tourist attractions to locate in Springfield. One focus group member even suggested that Springfield could become a regional sports destination, as well as a tourist destination. However, the group recognized that the city needs more supporting businesses and accommodations for the people who would visit for sports/tourist purposes.

The Recreation and Tourism Focus Group was interested in having more recreational events to draw positive attention and bring people into the town. Some examples mentioned were running, biking, or walking events on the MoPac Trail, winter activities or events such as sledding or a temporary ice rink, 3 V 3 tournaments, or projecting a movie for the public outdoors. They spoke of many of these events occurring in downtown Springfield along Main Street. These are important considerations to be accommodated in Springfield's urban design master plan.

3.4 DESIGN CHARRETTE

DESIGN CHARRETTE

The Springfield Design Charrette was held on the evening of June 5th, 2014, at the Springfield Fire Hall. Attendees were first given information on the Profile segment of the Comprehensive Plan, and the comprehensive planning process was explained. The meeting then proceeded in an open house format. Fifty community members attended the Design Charrette, the largest attendance for all the community meetings. The meeting attendees were asked move about the Fire Hall and share their ideas with the JEO planners and me. I stationed myself at a long table where I had printed large pictures of the community, as well as a couple of maps of Springfield. Before the Design Charrette, I had drawn on trace paper over some of the pictures to show several design ideas and to generate discussion among the participants. Two JEO planners—Dave Potter and Mike Gilligan—and I were able to speak one-on-one with most of the community members in attendance. This was very important, considering that many of these people had not been at previous community meetings.

After compiling the information gathered, it seemed that the Design Charrette participants had focused on four corridors where they saw current problems and opportunities for development. These corridors are Main Street, Highway 50, Platteview Road, and Pflug Road.

Attendees at the Design Charrette asked me what could be done to Main Street to improve its aesthetics and vibrancy, and I was able to draw some examples of improvements that could be made. They also were very interested in enhancing the entrance to the community at Highway 50 and Main Street. A covered bridge with a pedestrian walkway was suggested by Springfield Mayor Mike Dill, and other citizens seemed enthusiastic about the idea. Periodic and temporary activities were suggested for Main Street, such as farmers markets and other events to stimulate and enliven the corridor.

Attendees also expressed their concerns about Highway 50 and Pflug Road. Highway 50 is heavily traveled, and Springfield citizens recognize the visibility of the highway and the importance and opportunities it provides for the city. Charrette participants expressed the desire to maintain the unique small town character of Springfield, not only along Main Street but throughout the entire city, even along Highway 50. Pflug Road was also mentioned several times at the Design Charrette. Community members were concerned about the industrial development that is happening so quickly along Pflug Road, considering the many tourists that use Pflug Road to access Soaring Wings Vineyard and Weiss Studios and Gardens. The condition of Pflug Road, which is currently graveled, was also a concern.

3.4 DESIGN CHARRETTE



Discussing urban design solutions with community members at the Design Charrette on June 5, 2014.



The Design Charrette participants also had ideas about what kinds of business, residential, recreational, and institutional development they would like to see in Springfield. Many agreed that the city needs a grocery store and more restaurants, because all residents must leave the city for groceries, and they have an extremely limited restaurant selection. A wide variety of residential development also seemed important to those in attendance. Some community members even saw the benefit of institutional development near Springfield, giving the example of a community college. Attendees were interested in expanding Springfield's park system and saw potential for that in the area east of the Springfield Soccer Complex.

From all the information gathered in the Steering Committee meetings and community meetings, in addition to all of the research, inventory, analysis, I was able to go through a framework process to determine five areas for which I would develop detailed designs. The preliminary designs and design iterations were what I shared at the Public Forum, the conclusion of the Envision stage of the comprehensive planning process.

3.5 PUBLIC FORUM

PUBLIC FORUM


The Public Forum was the final public meeting of the Envision stage of the Springfield Comprehensive Plan process. It was held on June 19th at Springfield City Hall two weeks after the Design Charrette. First, a short presentation was given on the process of the Springfield Comprehensive Plan for those who had not attended a previous public meeting. I then presented my preliminary urban design ideas for the five different design areas in Springfield. A discussion followed, and community members in attendance provided comments and additional ideas. The boards and information presented at the public forum are shown on pages 89-93.






Public Forum presentation at Springfield City Hall on June 19, 2014.

3.5 PUBLIC FORUM

Design Area 1 Presentation Board




1 Main Street Community Entrance


Presentation Points

- Enhance the experience of visitors and residents entering Springfield
- Dramatic entryway such as a covered bridge
- Create a promenade or procession entering Springfield through signage, lighting, and landscaping
- Replace certain buildings downtown
- Take advantage of vacant lots and promote commercial and public infill development
- Rejuvenate the facades and streetscape in Downtown
- Downtown sidewalks are narrow; therefore, container plantings, new paint schemes, business signs lit externally, canopies/awnings, (use of historic photographs to resemble past architectural style)
- Space for special community events


The downtown should be an inviting environment.



A safe pedestrian route should exist to connect the Highway 50 Corridor and the Main Street Corridor.



The entrance and progression into downtown needs design enhancements, and the entire Main Street Corridor should become more aesthetically pleasing.



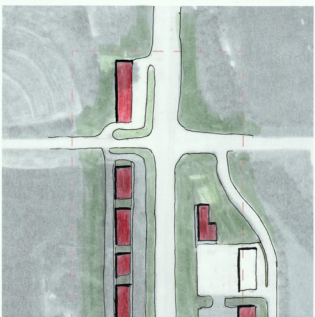


3.5 PUBLIC FORUM

Design Area 2 Presentation Board




2 Highway 50 Corridor






Highway 50 should become safe and attractive for pedestrians and cyclists.

Improvements and design guidelines are needed along Highway 50 to enhance the aesthetic quality of the corridor.


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Design strategies should be implemented so that those traveling on Highway 50 will realize they are entering Springfield.

Presentation Points

- Highway 50 is a state highway, so restrictions will apply to urban design and development along the corridor (especially within the right-of-way)
- Design strategies that would make travelers aware of Springfield could include trees, signage, lighting, median plantings, etc.
- Commercial development and redevelopment along the corridor where the floodplain allows
- Commercial nodes at Main Street and Highway 50 and at Highway 50 and Platteview Road
- Building designs should keep the same architectural style as existing and historical downtown Springfield architecture
- Highway 50 should become accessible by pedestrians and cyclists, as well, by creating "rear" access from the MoPac Trail

3.5 PUBLIC FORUM

Design Area 3 Presentation Board



3 Platteview Road




This designated area off of Platteview Road could be developed as a large sports complex, a commercial area, or even a mixed use area.

Design strategies should be implemented so that those traveling on Platteview Road will realize they are entering Springfield.




Presentation Points

- Considered the north entrance to a residential area of Springfield, North 2nd Street and Platteview Road needs to be developed further and better identified as an entrance
- Floodplain areas to the north could be developed as a multi-sports complex for the community and to draw visitors for tournaments and events
- Recreation area could be fronted with recreational-friendly commercial development to keep visitors from leaving Springfield, and a small commercial node could be created at North 2nd Street and Platteview Road

3.5 PUBLIC FORUM

Design Area 4 Presentation Board



Platteview Road & 132nd Community Entrance

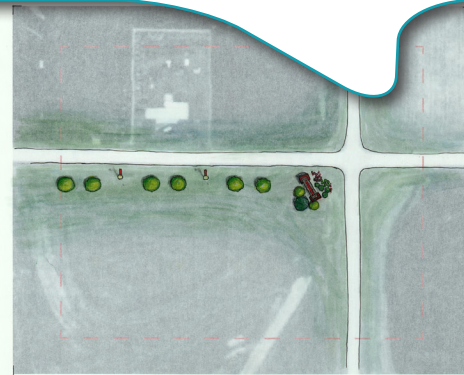
Entrance signs could be added to the corner of Platteview Road and 132nd so those traveling on the highway realize they are entering Springfield.

Further development could occur at the intersection, possibly including housing, commercial, and public space.



Presentation Points

- Considered the natural east side entrance to Springfield before cresting the hill and the city comes into view
- Ideal location to have a defining marker or establish a commercial node to signify and announce the entrance to the city
- Account for the possible widening of Platteview Road in design guidelines
- Perhaps maintain a green space and implement a landscape design strategy and signage (with branding)



3.5 PUBLIC FORUM

Design Area 5 Presentation Board



Pflug Road



Presentation Points

- The aesthetics along Pflug Road must be addressed through design guidelines
- Evergreen trees and other vegetation could soften the industrial uses and future development leading toward the tourist attractions off of Pflug Road
- Continuation of distinctive street lights and/or an entrance sign could enhance the overall image of Springfield and signify entrance into the city



Entrance signs could be added to the corner of Pflug Road and Highway 50 so those traveling on the highway realize they are entering Springfield.



Design and landscape guidelines are needed along Pflug Road as an entrance into the town and to soften industrial uses.

3.5 PUBLIC FORUM

Community Discussion

PUBLIC FORUM DISCUSSION

After presenting the preliminary design concepts for the five different design areas, the meeting was opened for discussion. Although the attendance for the Public Forum was not as high as the Design Charrette, those at the Public Forum were very knowledgeable about Springfield and involved in the community. Community members in attendance discussed several things, including Highway 50 regulations and problems, the west entrance to Main Street at Highway 50, building an identity for the city, and more trees and plantings to improve the image of the city.



The Public Forum participants were concerned with the volume and speed of the traffic on Highway 50 and Platteview Road—especially where the two roadways intersect. The group discussed the possible increase of traffic on Platteview Road and the need for a traffic signal. The group also had questions about state highway regulations that could not all be answered. (I later met with Tim Weander of the Nebraska Department of Roads on July 22, 2014, to ask questions about Highway 50 and state highway regulations.) Public Forum participants were interested in adding a “pearl of lights,” signage, or a patterned landscape strategy along Highway 50 to draw people to downtown Springfield. Public Forum participants also liked the idea of a dramatic entryway, such as a covered bridge, because they thought it would be very unique to Springfield. Community members also mentioned designing a brand or wayfinding signage to help develop an identity for Springfield. Participants spoke of the importance of trees and other plantings, and were interested in pursuing funding opportunities to add trees and other vegetation to certain corridors.

3.6 SPRINGFIELD VISION STATEMENT

SPRINGFIELD VISION STATEMENT

After listening to and working with the community throughout the Envision stage of the comprehensive planning process, JEO developed several different options for vision statements for Springfield. The Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee was then asked to help determine which vision should be adopted as Springfield’s own. After a few revisions were made and a vote was taken, the committee decided on the following vision to represent Springfield:

The City of Springfield will be a prosperous, family-oriented community with a full range of housing, business, cultural, and recreational opportunities in a safe and attractive environment. This will be accomplished through greater partnering with public and private entities and through planned growth and development.

The goal of the Urban Design Master Plan is to create a product that assists the City of Springfield in becoming the prosperous community described in the above vision statement. City staff, city leadership, and community members are dedicated to ensuring planned growth and development. This Urban Design Master Plan will provide information, design concepts, and guidelines for the community to move forward as Springfield faces growth and further development in the days to come.



4

FRAMEWORK

SPRINGFIELD FRAMEWORK PLAN 4.1

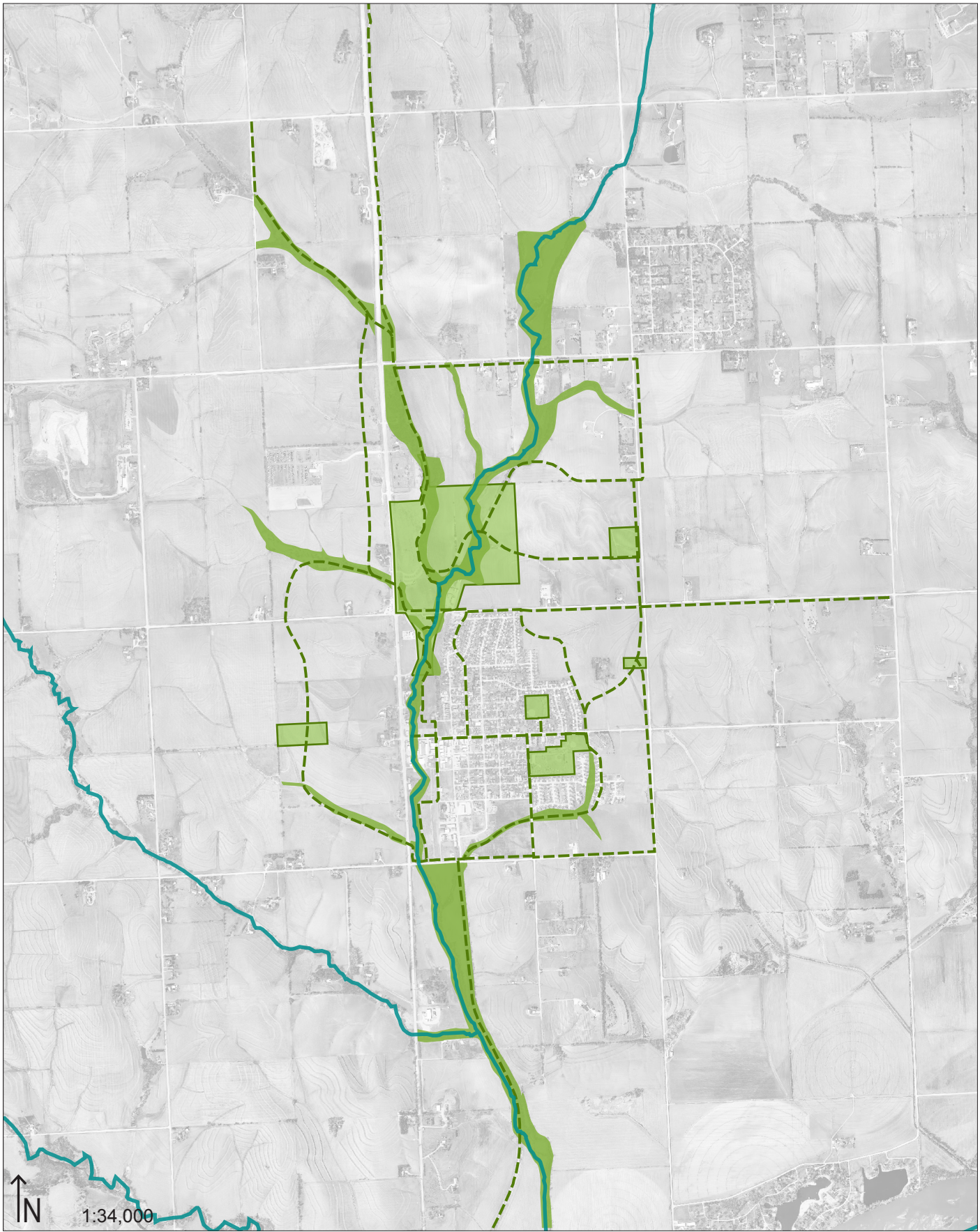
4.1 SPRINGFIELD FRAMEWORK PLAN

From the information gathered from my research, inventory, analysis, and most importantly, the community input, a framework plan was developed. With the purpose of creating a framework for further project development, the framework plan identifies areas to develop as certain types of land use. In addition, pedestrian and vehicular circulation, open space and recreational networks, and prominent nodes and districts within the community, are addressed. The framework plan will help identify detailed project design locations, as well as inform what areas and subjects should be addressed in the urban design guidelines.

The framework plan has been divided into three separate maps to show the progression of elements. The first map shows the proposed park and trail system, as well as vegetated areas and drainageways that are to be preserved. The second map shows circulation and nodes, which consist mainly of vehicular paths and places where they intersect. The third map shows proposed future land use areas as well as districts and corridors that were points of focus during the community involvement process. The final map is the composite of all the elements to complete the framework plan.

4.1 SPRINGFIELD FRAMEWORK PLAN

Recreational Network



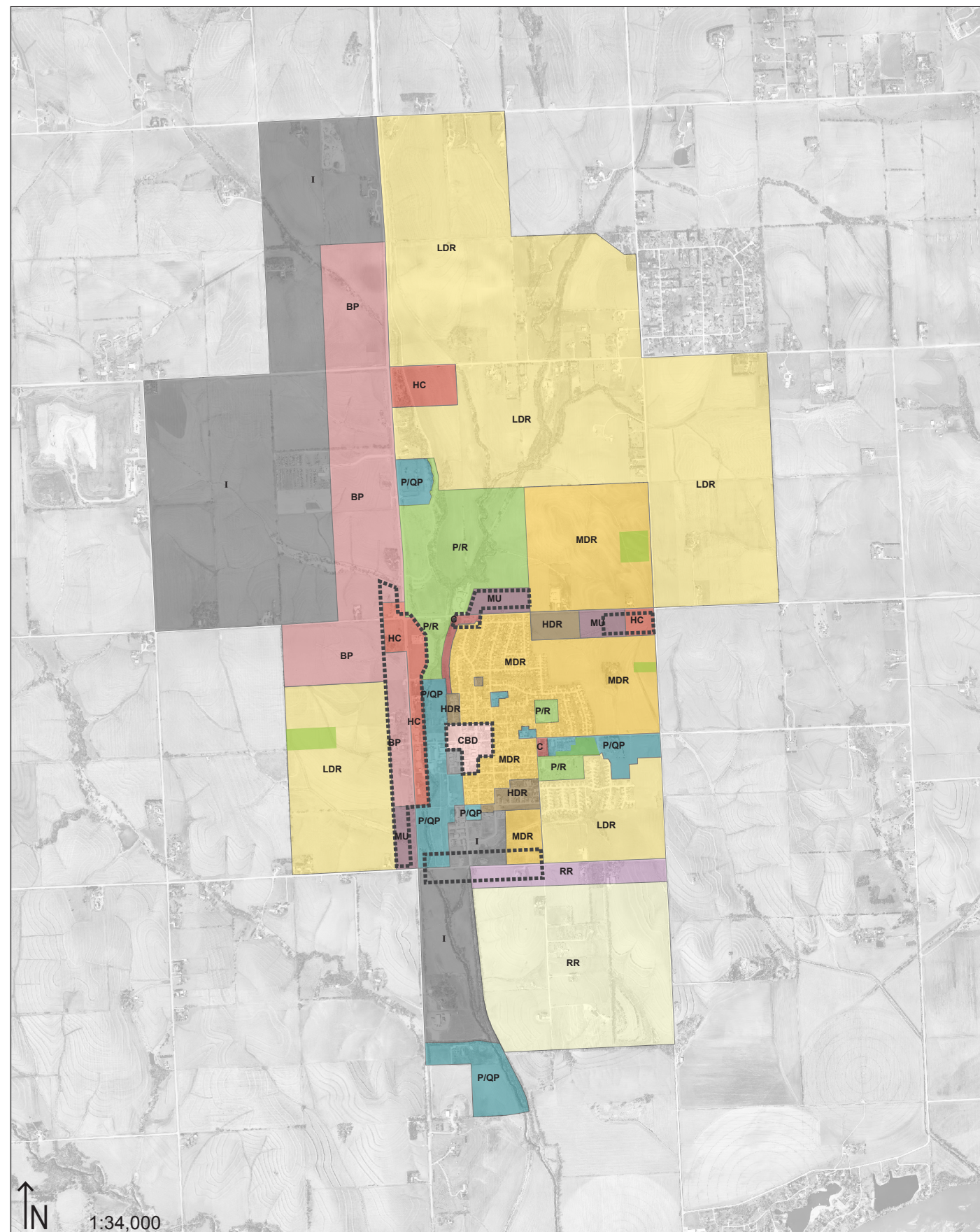
4.1 SPRINGFIELD FRAMEWORK PLAN

Circulation and Nodes



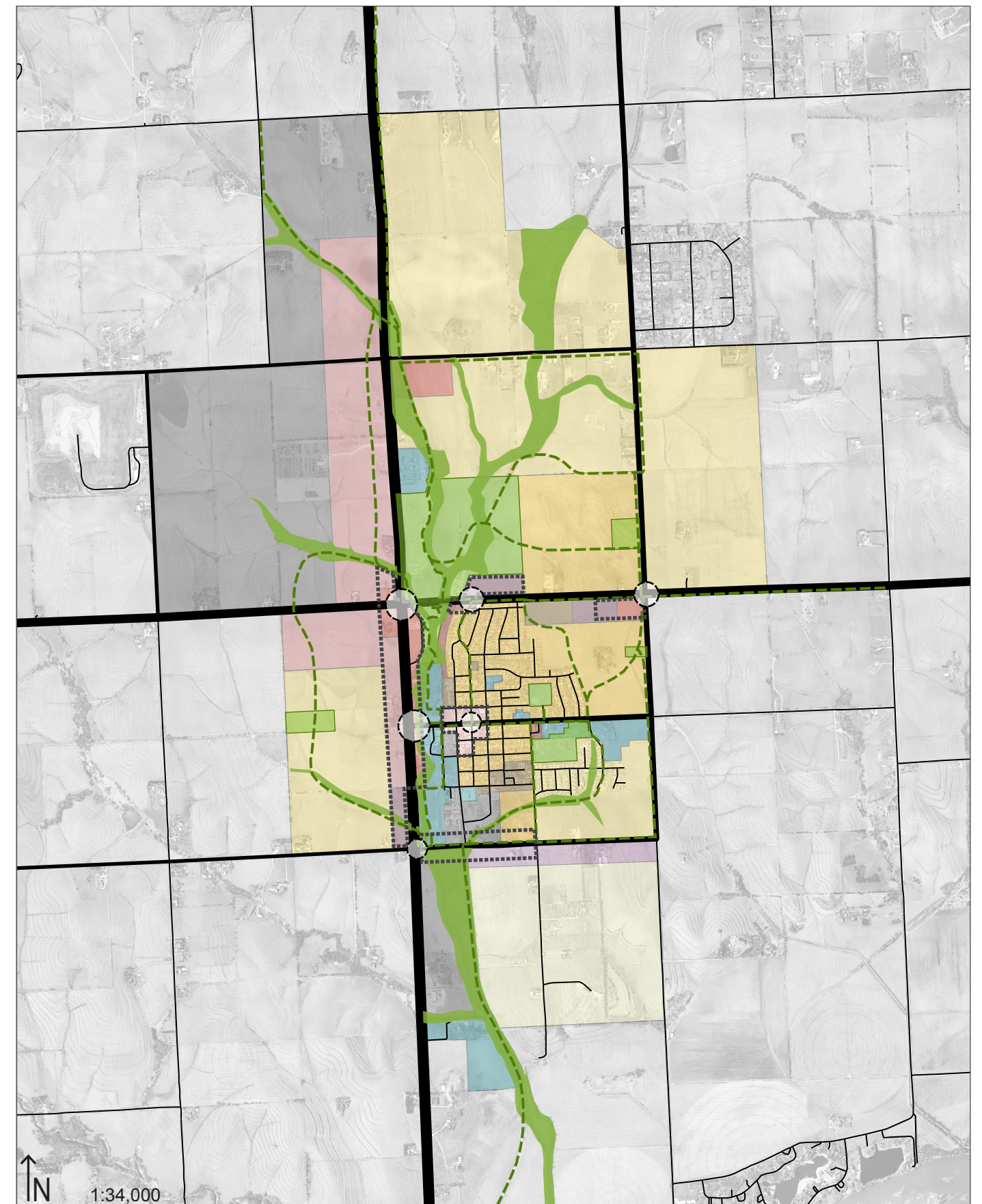
4.1 SPRINGFIELD FRAMEWORK PLAN

Land Use & Focus Areas



4.1 SPRINGFIELD FRAMEWORK PLAN

Composite Framework

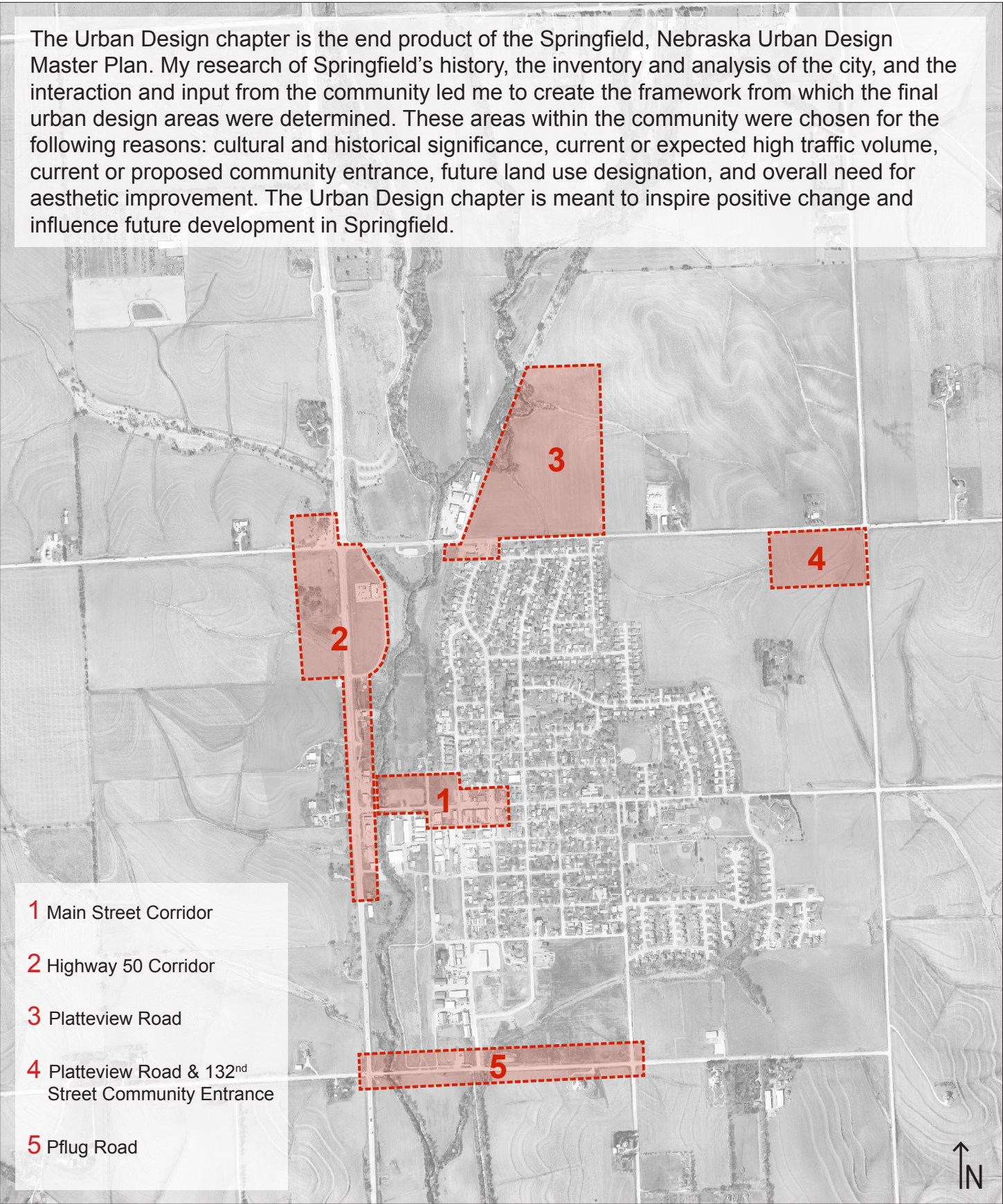


URBAN DESIGN

| | |
|---------------------|-----|
| URBAN DESIGN AREA 1 | 5.1 |
| URBAN DESIGN AREA 2 | 5.2 |
| URBAN DESIGN AREA 3 | 5.3 |
| URBAN DESIGN AREA 4 | 5.4 |
| URBAN DESIGN AREA 5 | 5.5 |
| CONCLUSION | 5.6 |

5.0

URBAN DESIGN AREAS



5.1

URBAN DESIGN AREA 1

Main Street Corridor

Main Street Corridor

AREA DEFINITION: Design Area 1 is centered around Main Street in Springfield.

INTENT: The main goals of this design area are to enhance the experience of visitors and residents entering Springfield through this main entrance, foster more business development, and create a vital community center.

COMPATIBLE USES:

- Commercial
 - Locally Owned, Niche Businesses
 - Restaurants
 - Coffee Shops/Cafes
 - Pubs
- Mixed-Uses within Single Structures
 - Commercial on Main Level
 - Office and Residential on Second Level
 - Live/Work Spaces
- Public/Civic
 - City Government
 - Recreation/Community Centers
 - Parks/Trails
 - Public Art

POLICIES AND DESIGN STANDARDS:

The Main Street entrance to the community from Highway 50 must be enhanced with a dramatic entryway, such as a covered bridge, which will establish and enhance an image and character that is unique to Springfield.

Existing structures with redevelopment potential should be preserved and restored in order to maintain the unique historic character of the Main Street corridor.

Dilapidated buildings downtown (west of 1st Street) should be replaced with needed commercial or services that will contribute to the vitality of downtown.

New development should occur on vacant land and should complement the character and style of the existing downtown area, using similar building materials, architectural styles, and streetscape elements.

The entire Main Street corridor should incorporate sidewalks and become more pedestrian-friendly. This includes incorporating a pedestrian crossing over Springfield Creek.

Awnings should be added to the street-level floors of Main Street buildings to improve the attractiveness of the buildings and create a more human scale environment by providing protection for pedestrians on the sidewalk.

5.1 URBAN DESIGN AREA 1

Main Street Corridor

Facades of the buildings should be “penetrable” to the pedestrian. The designs should incorporate windows and openings to engage the pedestrians and create a connection to the building interior.

Although limited space exists along Main Street for street trees (especially east of 1st Street), vegetation should still be part of the streetscape. Plants in hanging baskets or large planter containers should be added to enhance appeal of the Main Street corridor.

A common lighting theme and style should be incorporated along the Main Street corridor. Light pollution should be avoided as much as possible. Business signs should be externally lit, not backlit.

Existing light poles with Springfield banners should be repeated within the area and especially should be installed along Main Street to create a procession and identity as one enters the city.

A variety of paving materials (different textures, colors, and types of materials can be considered) should be used to delineate crosswalks, sidewalks, and other areas. Pervious paving materials should be used where possible to decrease urban stormwater runoff.

Outdoor seating and trash receptacles should be provided where appropriate and should follow a common style along the corridor.

Because of its many benefits, on-street parking should be allowed.

Parking lots should be located out of sight of the streetscape, either behind buildings or very well screened by vegetation. Parking lots should maximize sidewalk activity by directing pedestrians directly to sidewalks where they can then access their destinations.

The urban park at the corner of Main Street and 2nd Street should be designed and developed as an engaging anchor point for the community members, downtown workers, and visitors.

The vacant block just west of the Community Center should be developed. Where the floodplain restricts the building of structures, the area should be developed as a semi-open green multi-purpose space. It may still serve as overflow parking for the Sarpy County Fair, but perhaps serve as a space for a small community garden, farmers market, or other temporary programs or events.

5.1 URBAN DESIGN AREA 1

Main Street Corridor



The existing south side of Main Street between 1st and 2nd Streets.



This perspective shows many options and opportunities for improvement of storefronts on Main Street. Some examples shown are: awnings, exterior lighting, externally lit signs, window planters, hanging plants, narrow standing planters, returning boarded over facades to windows, and replacing, repairing, or repainting any damaged or worn materials.

5.2

URBAN DESIGN AREA 2

Highway 50 Corridor

Highway 50 Corridor

AREA DEFINITION: Design Area 2 incorporates part of the Highway 50 corridor, which includes the key intersections at Main Street and Platteview Road.

INTENT: Highway 50 is a heavily trafficked roadway, and currently not much exists along the Highway that signifies the entrance into the city. Highway 50 should be developed in a way that creates a positive and inviting image for Springfield and enhances this main community entrance.

COMPATIBLE USES:

- Commercial
 - Retail
 - Restaurants
 - Service Commercial (Salons, Dry Cleaners, etc.)
 - Office
 - Medical Services (Dentist, Chiropractic, etc.)
 - Professional Services (Attorneys, Accountants, Engineers, etc.)
 - General
- Commercial Parks
- Business Parks

POLICIES AND DESIGN STANDARDS:

Colored concrete, stamped concrete, or another textural material should be utilized to define the median along Highway 50.

Springfield banners should be added to existing light poles along Highway 50.

Columnar trees in a repeating pattern should be positioned just outside of the right-of-way to make travelers aware they are entering Springfield and to improve the image of the town.

Human scale light poles should be added along pedestrian routes.

Commercial development and redevelopment should occur along the highway where the floodplain allows.

Natural habitat, drainage, and waterways should be preserved, and measures should be taken to ensure their conservation.

The character of the structures along Highway 50 corridor should be compatible the architectural styles and character of the historical Downtown Springfield.

5.2

URBAN DESIGN AREA 2

Highway 50 Corridor

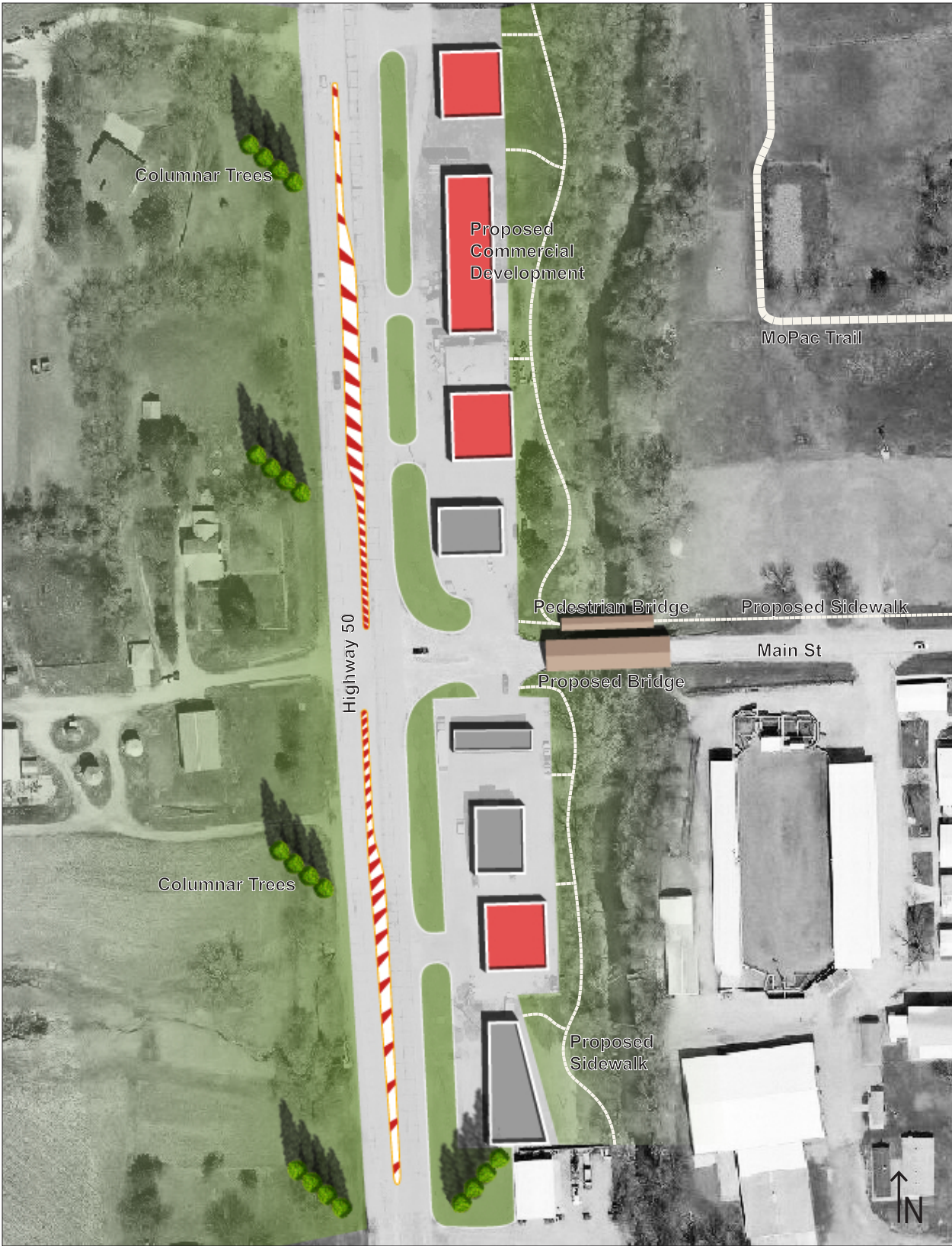
- Mixed-use and New Urbanist Developments should be used. Unattractive and unsustainable strip commercial must be avoided.
- Wayfinding signage should be incorporated to help visitors find their destinations. Wayfinding signs should reflect the character of Springfield and avoid interference with traffic safety.
- The businesses along Highway 50 should become accessible for pedestrians and cyclists, which includes creating connections to the MoPac Trail.
- Parking lots should be very well screened by vegetation, or if possible, located behind buildings, out of sight from the streetscape.
- Parking lots should be designed for human use, no less than car use, incorporating pedestrian paths, trees, and other plantings.
- Pervious paving materials for sidewalks and parking lots should be used where possible to decrease urban stormwater runoff.
- Facades of the buildings should be “penetrable” to the pedestrian. The designs should incorporate windows and openings to engage the pedestrians and create a connection to the building interior.

5.2 URBAN DESIGN AREA 2

Highway 50 Corridor

5.3 URBAN DESIGN AREA 3

Platteview Road



Platteview Road

AREA DEFINITION: Design Area 3 is the area on Platteview Road just east of Springfield Creek at the intersection of North 2nd Street and Platteview Road.

INTENT: An important goal is to enhance the community entrance at North 2nd Street. This can be done by developing the intersection further. During community meetings, participants were interested in the idea of Springfield becoming a sports and tourism hub for the region. The addition of another complex with a variety of sports fields and courts next to the existing soccer complex to create a regional sports complex is suggested. An extensive trail system is also proposed that will stem from the MoPac Trail and further connect the sports complexes to the community. These improvements will bring economic development and further growth to Springfield.

COMPATIBLE USES:

- Commercial
 - Retail
 - Restaurants
 - Service Commercial (Salons, Dry Cleaners, etc.)
- Multi-Sports Complex
 - Softball (multiple fields)
 - Youth Football field
 - Baseball field
 - Tennis courts
 - Sand Volleyball courts
- Residential
 - Loft/Apartments
 - Row Housing
- Support Services (Day Care & Play Areas)
- Mixed-Uses within Single Structures
 - Commercial on Main Level
 - Residential on Second Level

5.3

URBAN DESIGN AREA 3

Platteview Road

5.3

URBAN DESIGN AREA 3

Platteview Road

POLICIES AND DESIGN STANDARDS:

- Facades of the buildings should be “penetrable” to the pedestrian. The designs should incorporate windows and openings to engage the pedestrians and create a connection to the building interior.
- Commercial development should occur outside of the floodplain, but sports fields should be allowed in the floodplain.
- Natural habitat, drainage, and waterways should be preserved, and measures should be taken to ensure their conservation.
- Parking lots should be designed for human use, no less than car use, incorporating pedestrian paths, trees, and other plantings.
- Parking lots should be very well screened by vegetation, or if possible, located behind buildings out of sight from the streetscape.
- The character of the structures in the area should adhere to the architectural styles and character of the historical Downtown Springfield.
- Human scale light poles with the Springfield banner should be added along Platteview Road.
- Wayfinding signage should be incorporated to help visitors find their destinations. Wayfinding signs should reflect the character of Springfield and avoid interference with traffic safety.
- Community trail connections to the MoPac Trail should be implemented.
- A variety of paving materials (different textures, colors, and types of materials can be considered) should be used to delineate crosswalks, sidewalks, and other areas.
- Pervious paving materials should be used where possible to decrease urban stormwater runoff.



5.4

URBAN DESIGN AREA 4

Platteview Road & 132nd Street

Platteview Road & 132nd Street Community Entrance

AREA DEFINITION: Design Area 4 is located at the corner of Platteview Road and 132nd Street. It is currently agricultural land.

INTENT: During the community input process, many participants designated this corner as an entrance into Springfield. The purpose of designating this as Design Area 4 is to enhance this entrance into Springfield and utilize the corner for a commercial and mixed-use node. A mixed-use node will provide future residential development in the area with easy access to everyday amenities and services.

COMPATIBLE USES:

- Commercial
 - Retail
 - Restaurants and Coffee Shops
 - Service Commercial (Salons, Dry Cleaners, etc.)
- Office
 - Medical Services (Dentist, Chiropractic, etc.)
 - Professional Services (Attorneys, Accountants, Engineers, etc.)
 - General
- Support Services (Day Care & Play Areas)
- Mixed-Uses within Single Structures
 - Commercial on Main Level
 - Office and Residential on Second Level

POLICIES AND DESIGN STANDARDS:

Design Area 4 should contain a mixture of uses. These should include commercial, office, medium to high density residential, and support services. All residential uses should occupy the second level and above in mixed-use buildings. Some office uses could be located above the first level commercial spaces, as well.

The character of the buildings should be compatible with the architectural styles and character of the historical Downtown Springfield.

Facades of the buildings should be “penetrable” to the pedestrian. The designs should incorporate windows and openings to engage the pedestrians and create a connection to the building interior.

Natural habitat, drainage, and waterways should be preserved and measures should be taken to ensure their conservation.

Human scale light poles with the Springfield banner should be added along Platteview Road.

5.4

URBAN DESIGN AREA 4

Platteview Road & 132nd Street

Wayfinding signage should be incorporated to help visitors find their destinations. Wayfinding signs should reflect the character of Springfield and avoid interference with traffic safety.

Parking lots should be screened very well by vegetation, or if possible, located behind buildings out of sight from the streetscape.

Parking lots should be designed for human use, no less than car use, incorporating pedestrian paths, trees, and other plantings.

Community trail connections to the MoPac Trail should be implemented.

A variety of paving materials (different textures, colors, and types of materials can be considered) should be used to delineate crosswalks, sidewalks, and other areas.

Pervious paving materials should be used where possible to decrease urban stormwater runoff.

A water feature is recommended for the northeast corner of the development to enhance the entrance to the community, draw the attention of travelers on Platteview Road and 132nd Street, and create a more interactive and enjoyable space for pedestrians in the plaza area of the development.



5.5 URBAN DESIGN AREA 5

Pflug Road

Pflug Road

AREA DEFINITION: Design Area 5 is located along Pflug Road and the adjacent land. Pflug Road is important to the tourist attractions south of town and is adjacent to a quickly developing industrial district.

INTENT: The aesthetics along Pflug Road must be addressed through design guidelines to soften the industrial uses and future development, leading toward the tourist attractions that are accessed from Pflug Road. Pflug Road should also be considered as an entrance into Springfield and developed as such.

POLICIES AND DESIGN STANDARDS:

Earthen berms and plantings, including evergreen and deciduous trees, should be incorporated to create buffers and visual screens between the road and unsightly industrial land uses.

Community trail connections to the MoPac Trail should be implemented.

The MoPac Trail along Pflug Road should be enhanced with appropriate landscaping to make the trail more visually appealing and enjoyable for users as they enter Springfield.

Human scale light poles with the Springfield banner should be added along Pflug Road.

Wayfinding signage should be incorporated to help visitors find their destinations. Wayfinding signs should reflect the character of Springfield and avoid interference with traffic safety.

Natural habitat, drainage, and waterways should be preserved, and measures should be taken to ensure their conservation.

5.5 URBAN DESIGN AREA 5

Pflug Road



Pflug Road looking east. Picture taken September 20, 2014.



This perspective, looking east from the east side of Highway 50, shows Pflug Road as paved. The bridge has been replaced, deciduous and evergreen trees have been added to both sides of the road, and lighting and sidewalk have been added to the north side of the road.

5.6 CONCLUSION

The overarching goal of the Springfield, Nebraska Urban Design Master Plan is to help make Springfield a great community for its residents and all who visit. The designs and design guidelines of the Urban Design chapter are meant to provide the community with concepts of how to create inviting and more aesthetically pleasing entrance corridors, create a vital community center, provide residents with safe and convenient access to everyday amenities and services, and foster business, economic, and recreational growth in the City of Springfield.

Seeing the effects of rapid growth in other communities in Sarpy County, Springfield chose to be proactive in shaping the growth and aesthetics of their community. The Springfield, Nebraska Urban Design Master Plan is a measure taken by the city to ensure Springfield is fully ready for further growth. This document will help community members envision what Springfield could be and provide the city with a tool to guide and influence future development.

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DATA SOURCES AND SOFTWARE

DATA SOURCES

GIS data was provided by Sarpy County GIS, Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District, and JEO Consulting Group, Inc.

Population and demographic data was obtained from the United States Census Bureau.

Traffic data was obtained from the Metropolitan Area Planning Agency (MAPA).

SOFTWARE

- Adobe Illustrator CS5.1
- Adobe InDesign CS5.1
- Adobe Photoshop CS5.1
- ArcCatalog 10.2
- ArcGIS 10.2
- Microsoft Word 2010