



# North Liberty

*connected to tomorrow*

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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# Acknowledgements

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# PLAN FRAMEWORK

# Connected to Tomorrow

## What is “Connected to Tomorrow”?

The past comprehensive plan for North Liberty, completed in 2013, could never have predicted the changes coming in 2022. As such, the 2022 Connected to Tomorrow plan does not attempt to predict every possible scenario for the future of North Liberty. Rather, the plan provides the guidance to CONNECT the community’s vision to whatever situations present themselves TOMORROW.

Connected to Tomorrow is the foundational document to guide city decisions. The plan identifies current needs and goals for the community, presents a vision for the future, and sets priorities for new public policy and investments. The plan looks to the future and covers a wide variety of topics.

## Why a Plan for North Liberty?

Connected to Tomorrow identifies a shared vision and set of goals for the community based on a series of public discussions and community needs. Much like the 2013 plan, the 2022 comprehensive plan serves three primary roles:



**A Shared Vision for the Future.** Comprehensive planning provides an opportunity for residents to create a shared vision for their community. Residents and City Staff identified issues and opportunities for North Liberty’s land use, infrastructure, public facilities, natural resources, and more. These findings create a vision and set public priorities.



**Guidance for Decision-Makers.** The plan serves as a guide for City Staff, the Planning & Zoning Commission, City Council, and other City boards and commissions as they set policy, make public investments, and deliberate land use decisions.



**Legal Basis for Land Use Regulations.** The Code of Iowa allows cities to adopt land use regulations, such as zoning and subdivision ordinances, to promote the “health, safety, morals or general welfare of the community.” These regulations govern how to develop land within the city and its extra-territorial jurisdiction. Land use regulations recognize that people live cooperatively and have certain responsibilities to coordinate and harmonize private property uses. Connected to Tomorrow provides a legal basis for these regulations.



# Comprehensive Planning in Iowa

In 2010, the Iowa State Legislature passed the “Iowa Smart Planning Act” to guide and encourage the development of local comprehensive plans. The legislation outlines 10 smart planning principles that shall be considered and 13 comprehensive plan elements that Iowa cities may use to develop comprehensive plans. Though the sets of elements and principles may look similar, they differ in that the 10 Smart Planning Principles are meant to be the overarching values that inform each of the 13 elements:

1. Public Participation
2. Community Character
3. Land Use
4. Housing
5. Utility Services
6. Transportation
7. Economic Development
8. Natural Resources
9. Community Services
10. Quality of Life
11. Hazard Mitigation
12. Collaboration
13. Implementation

**The Connected to Tomorrow comprehensive plan was created in compliance with the Iowa Smart Planning Act guidelines.** The plan addresses all 13 elements of a comprehensive plan required by the Iowa Smart Planning Act but is organized in a format that fits North Liberty’s public engagement process and planning needs.

## 10 Iowa Smart Planning Principles



### Collaboration.

North Liberty has many stakeholders. Making sure they are involved in the process is embedded into this plan.



### Efficiency, Transparency, and Consistency.

North Liberty will provide equitable and reliable development guidelines and implementation.



### Clean, Renewable, and Efficient Energy.

North Liberty promotes land use and transportation design that mitigates environmental impact.



### Occupational Diversity.

North Liberty’s economy will be diverse in response to future economic changes.



### Revitalization.

North Liberty will reinvest in its current infrastructure.



### Housing Diversity.

North Liberty will encourage varied housing options to meet the diversity of residents’ needs.



### Community Character.

North Liberty will promote its uniqueness in architecture and culture.



### Natural Resources and Agricultural Protection.

North Liberty will balance urban and rural transitions and allow access to natural spaces.



### Sustainable Design.

North Liberty will promote sustainable design and development at all scales.



### Transportation Diversity.

North Liberty will develop systems that allow diverse transportation options that help promote health and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

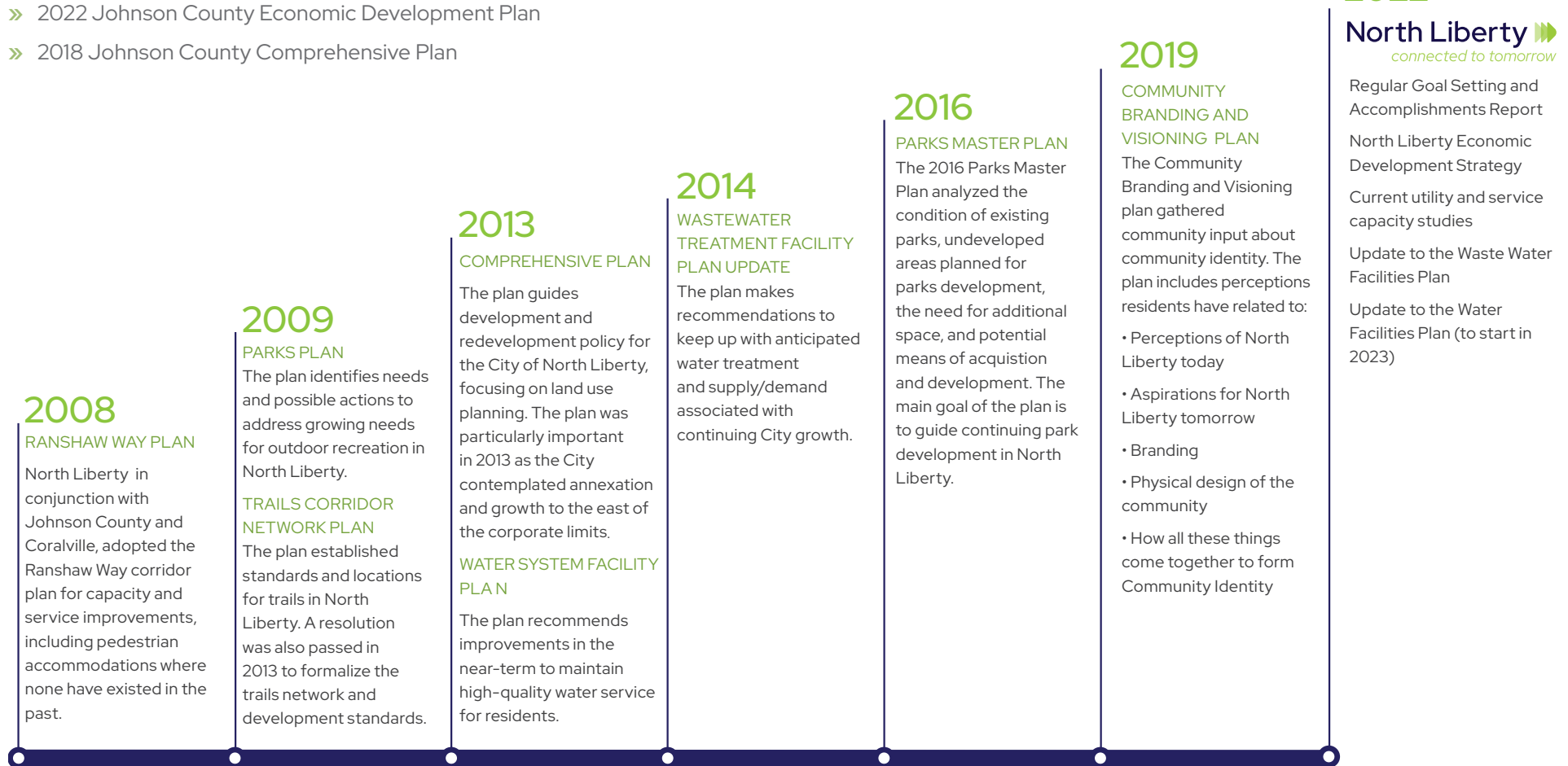
# Comprehensive Planning in North Liberty

## History of Successful Planning

Connected to Tomorrow builds on past planning efforts, several of which are ongoing in North Liberty. Many parts of the 2013 Comprehensive Plan are still relevant and reflected in Connected to Tomorrow.

Regional planning efforts that the Plan incorporates include:

- » 2022 MPO Long-Range Transportation Plan: Future Forward 2050
- » 2022 Johnson County Economic Development Plan
- » 2018 Johnson County Comprehensive Plan



## How to Use the Plan

**Connected to Tomorrow should be the overarching guiding document for planning in the City of North Liberty.** The plan is a living document to consult often, used as a tool for collaboration, and guides many user groups. Connected to Tomorrow should be the first resource to consult when developing other plans or initiatives. Other plans, studies, and reports provide additional context to the vision and goals of Connected to Tomorrow.

## A Flexible Plan

**This plan should be viewed as a dynamic document.** It is not meant to be rigid or static but should adapt to changing conditions, resources, and opportunities. As explained later in the plan, land use maps and other maps are general policy guides rather than carrying the specificity and rigidity of a map such as a zoning map. As such, the Planning and Zoning Commission, City Staff, and the City Council can exercise some discretion as to whether a proposal matches the plan's intentions.

## Who Should Use the Plan

While the chief user will be the City of North Liberty in the way it guides decisions, investments, and operations, the document offers guidance well beyond the scope of city government. Furthermore, achieving the vision articulated in the plan requires broad-ranging collaboration.

## The General Public

**Connected to Tomorrow is a representative summary of the shared aspirations of residents.** The plan was developed through hours of conversations with diverse stakeholders representing many characteristics of the community. The public should raise the vision expressed in the plan in public forums and in their actions in support of improving the community.

## Community Leaders

**Policymakers, most notably the City Council and Planning and Zoning Commission, will help set the course to realize this plan.**

These are the bodies to create and administer the policies that shape development in North Liberty. The plan should be a reliable guide to help with decisions related to large-scale policies and individual projects.

## Developers and Landowners

**While guided by city policy, much of property development occurs through private and market-driven development.** The plan should serve as a guide to developers who wish to work in North Liberty and by landowners. By understanding the City's vision for the future, these stakeholders can approach projects from collaboration to avoid unnecessary delays and negotiations.

## Partners in Implementation

**Many partners in North Liberty will be continually engaged in implementation and responsible for seeing parts of Connected to Tomorrow become a reality.** Essential partners include the school district, the Iowa City Area Development Group, Iowa City Area Business Partnership, Think Iowa City, and many more.

## CONNECTED TO TOMORROW IS NOT...

- A development plan – individual landowners still lead property development.
- A zoning map – instead it informs and guides zoning decisions.
- Static or rigid – it should change with changing conditions over time.
- A capital improvements plan – it guides priority investments but does not prescribe public investment decisions.
- Only for the City – all residents, organizations, and stakeholders with a vested interest in the future of North Liberty should want to advance the plan.



## Planning Context

The conditions of North Liberty in 2022 provide the framework for the Connected to Tomorrow Plan.

### The Region

North Liberty is situated in the center of Johnson County. The city is a 15-minute drive northwest of Iowa City and a 10-minute drive west of Coralville at the intersections of Interstates I-80 and I-380 and U.S. Route 6, making access between North Liberty and Iowa City fairly easy. The next nearest metro is Cedar Rapids, a 25-minute drive from North Liberty. These cities offer workforce and housing options that influence North Liberty.

The Iowa City-Cedar Rapids region has a rich history of planning. The result is strong jurisdictional collaboration and discussion on broader community projects. These efforts benefit North Liberty and Connected to Tomorrow is flexible to adapt to regional influences.

### Joint benefits of regional collaboration



Creates efficient mobility connections for growing areas to expand.



Coordinates investments on similar time schedules.

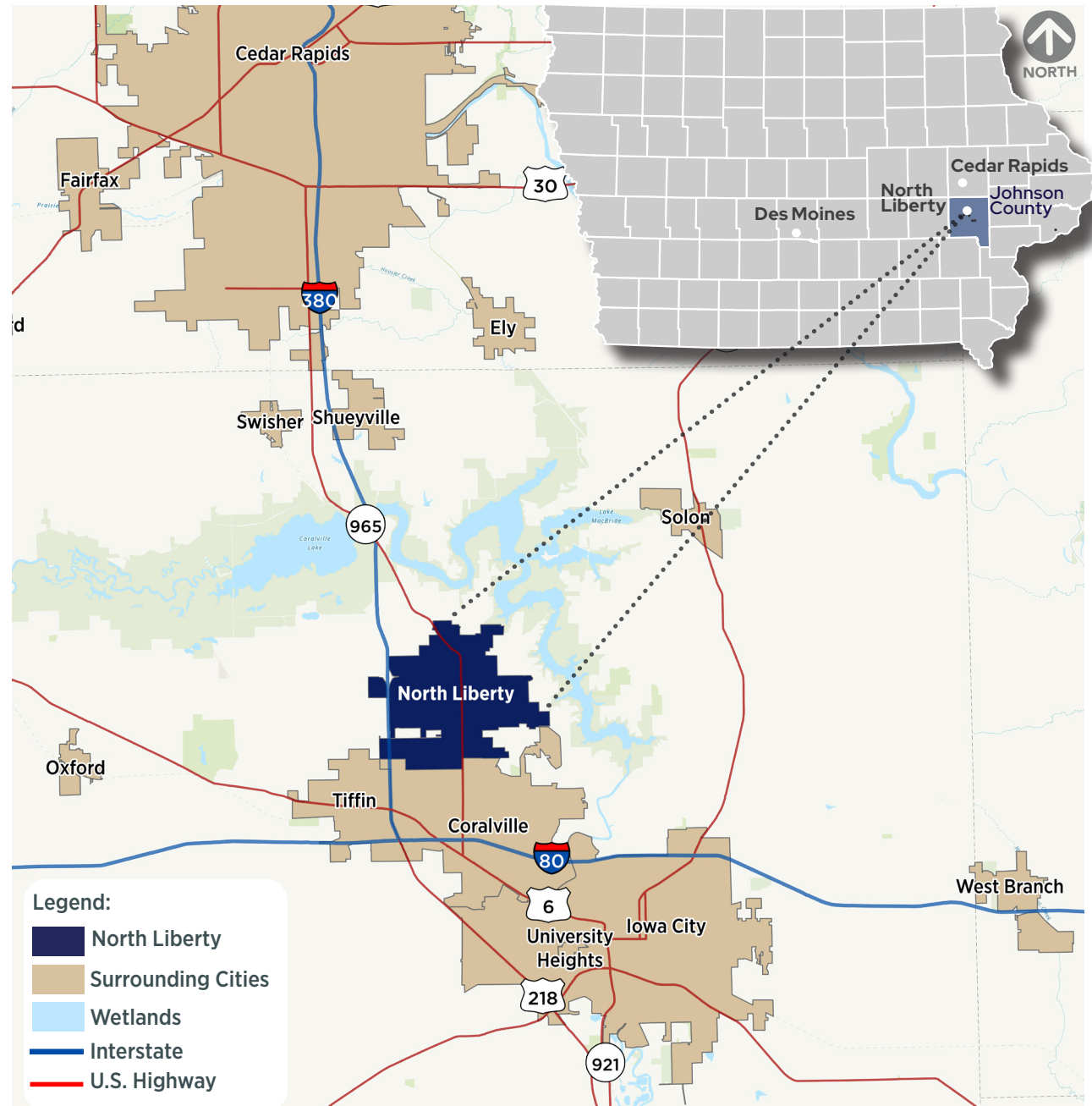


Fosters partnerships to reach common goals, such as regional transit or housing goals.



Protects systems of environmental resources that do not follow jurisdictional boundaries.

**Figure 1.1: Regional Context, 2022**



Source: RDG Planning & Design

## Surrounding Communities

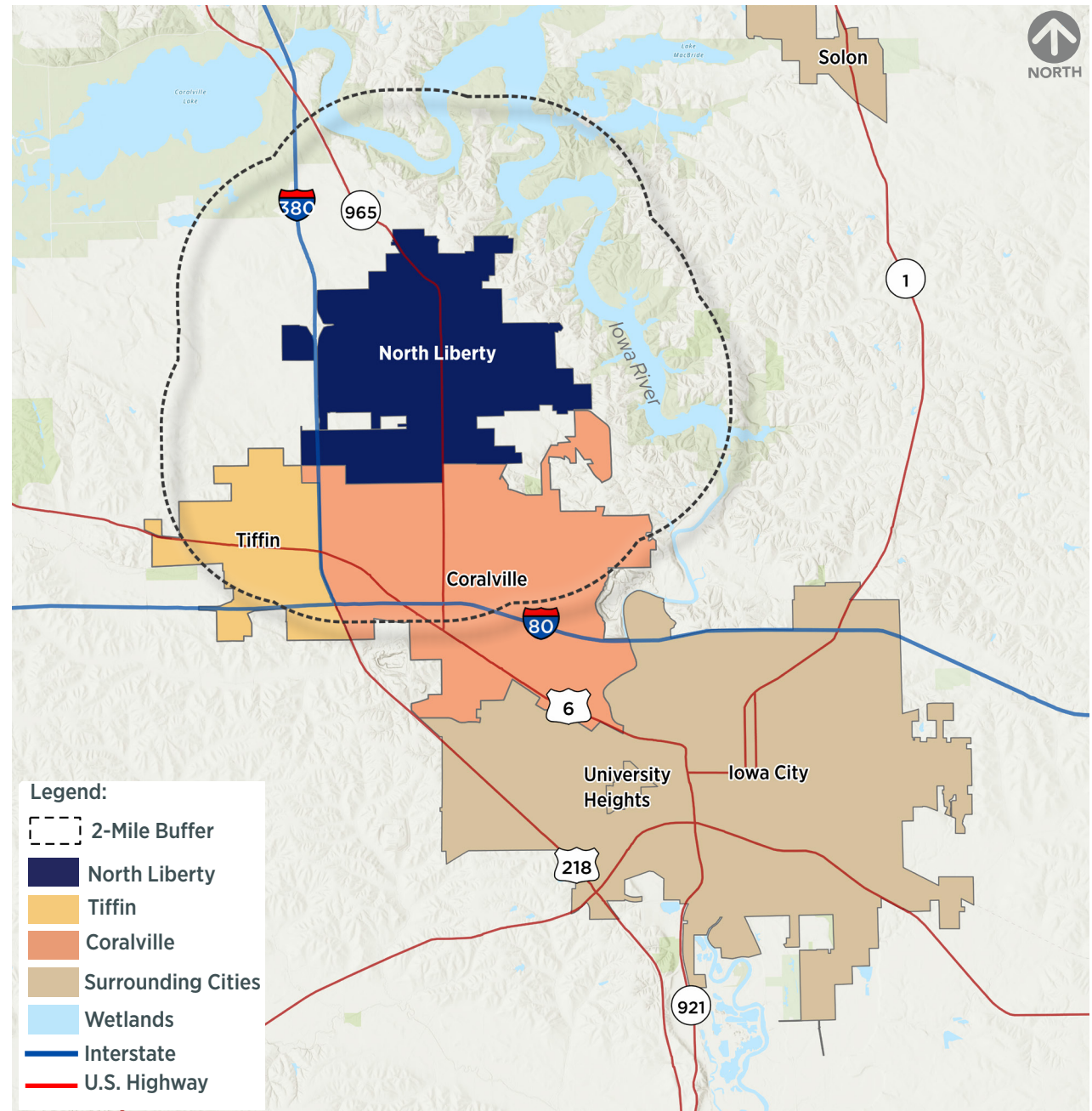
Tiffin and Coralville are two cities within North Liberty's two-mile extraterritorial jurisdiction, as seen by the dotted line in Figure 1.2. Extraterritorial zoning jurisdiction allows North Liberty to influence development outside of city limits to allow for smoother incorporation of new developments as the city expands. The cities of Tiffin and Coralville are excluded from North Liberty's extraterritorial jurisdiction zone and make their own zoning and land use decisions. Additionally, North Liberty has a Fringe Area agreement with Johnson County for growth areas.

**Tiffin.** Abuts the southwestern side of North Liberty. As North Liberty expands, communication is essential to maintain trust, avoid duplication of services, and provide a path forward for all communities.

**Coralville.** Abuts the south side of North Liberty and is east of Interstate 380. Because of infrastructure barriers, Coralville would likely be more influenced by future transportation changes over land use changes in the vicinity.

*North Liberty maintains annexation agreements with Coralville and Tiffin to set growth boundaries to the south. Iowa law also gives North Liberty a 2-mile extraterritorial jurisdiction in unincorporated areas to review zoning and subdivision proposals. Johnson County does have established zoning that North Liberty should consider.*

**Figure 1.2: Extraterritorial Zoning Jurisdiction, 2022**



Source: RDG Planning & Design



# North Liberty Today: Context for Tomorrow

The characteristics of the people living in North Liberty is the first step to begin forecasting the future. This section explores North Liberty today and where it could be in the future through several questions:

- » How has the population grown?
- » Where do people live?
- » What types of businesses are growing in North Liberty?
- » What infrastructure and transportation routes are in place?
- » How North Liberty promotes health, recreation, and additional mobility options?
- » What amenities exist today and are they sufficient?
- » What environment and natural features could affect development areas in the future?

The appendix includes a deep evaluation of conditions in North Liberty in 2022. The snapshots on the following pages provide summary context for planning elements in the rest of the plan.





## Demographic Snapshot

### Population Change and Growth

North Liberty is a fast growing community and has experienced strong population growth since 1960, shown in Figure 1.3.

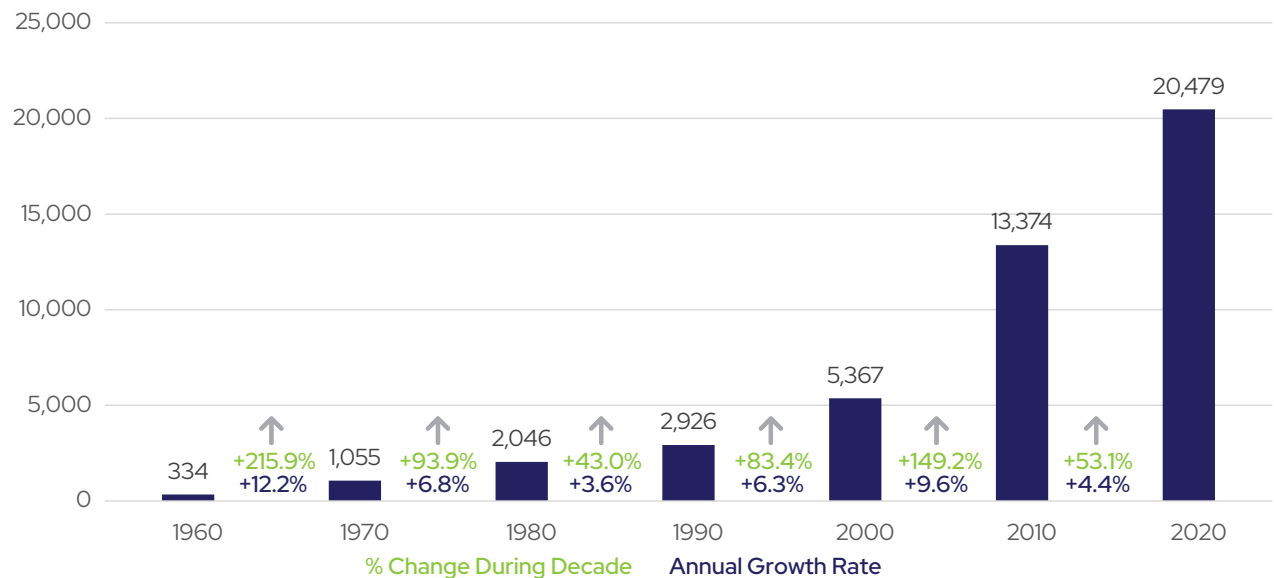
- » North Liberty's population has more than quadrupled from 2000-2020.
- » The city has added 15,112 residents with an average growth rate of 6.92% from 2000-2020.
- » From 2010-2020 the city's population has grown over 50%.

### Regional Population Change

Regional population changes since 1960 vary by comparable peer communities, shown in Figure 1.4. North Liberty experienced population growth when compared to surrounding communities.

- » From 2000-2020 North Liberty has the second highest annual growth rate (6.92%), following Waukee (8.01%).
- » **In 1960 North Liberty represented 0.6% of Johnson County's total population, and in 2020 the city represented 13.4% of the County's total population.**

**Figure 1.3: North Liberty Historical Population Change, 1960-2020**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

**Figure 1.4: Regional Population Change**

CITY	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	2000-2020 ANNUAL GROWTH RATE
North Liberty	334	1,055	2,046	2,926	5,367	13,374	20,479	6.92%
Johson County	53,663	72,127	81,717	96,119	111,006	130,882	152,854	1.61%
Iowa City	33,443	46,850	50,508	59,735	62,220	67,862	74,828	0.93%
Coralville	2,357	6,130	7,687	10,347	15,123	18,907	22,318	1.96%
Marion	10,882	18,028	19,474	20,403	26,294	34,768	41,535	2.31%
Cedar Rapids	92,035	110,642	110,243	108,772	120,758	126,326	137,710	0.66%
Waukee	687	1,577	2,227	2,512	5,126	13,790	23,940	8.01%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

## Age Composition

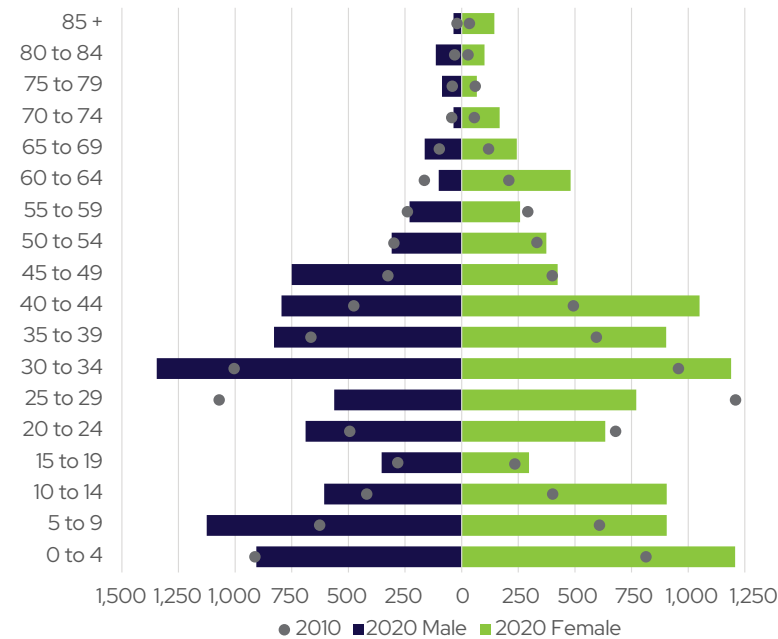
### Age Cohort Growth

Change in population among age cohorts can forecast future needs in housing, employment, and other amenities. It is also crucial to forecasting total population change by analyzing each age group and by projecting birth and death rates. Figures 1.5 and 1.6 illustrate these characteristics in North Liberty in 2020.

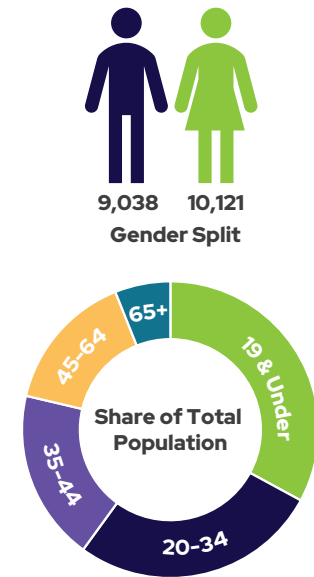
Figure 1.7 shows population changes in age cohorts between 2010 and 2020. North Liberty has been successfully attracting and retaining residents among all cohorts:

- » Children under the age of 15 showed the greatest gain among cohorts, adding 2,218 residents. An indication of family households.
- » **North Liberty has over 11 percent of its population over 55.** Many in this age group in 2020 have remained in North Liberty over the last twenty years, especially those over 65. These residents will begin to require home types and community services that the 55 age cohort does not require.
- » **Median age has increased marginally since 2010.** This indicates that North Liberty's population has retained a similar mixture of ages over time and attracting young households.

**Figure 1.5: Age Composition by Sex, 2010 and 2020**



**Figure 1.6: Gender and Age Split, 2020**



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

**Figure 1.7: Regional Population Change**

	2010		2020		CHANGE 2010-2020
	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	
0-14	3,437	25.7%	5,655	29.5%	2,218
15-19	470	3.5%	650	3.4%	180
20-24	1,060	7.9%	1,323	6.9%	263
25-34	3,855	28.8%	3,869	20.2%	14
35-44	2,026	15.2%	3,576	18.7%	1,550
45-54	1,233	9.2%	1,857	9.7%	624
55-64	822	6.2%	1,070	5.6%	248
65-74	289	2.2%	610	3.2%	321
75-84	136	1.0%	369	1.9%	233
85+	46	0.3%	180	0.9%	134
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,374</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>19,159</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>5,785</b>
<b>Median Age</b>	<b>29.1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>30.7</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

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

## Economic Snapshot

### Income and Employment

Figure 1.8 illustrates the existing characteristics of income and employment.

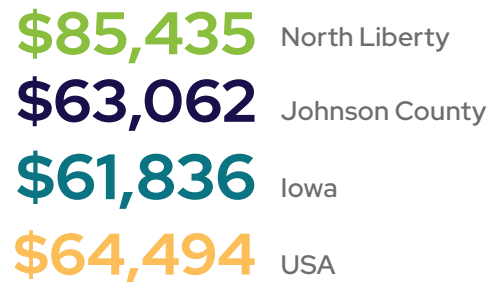
- » **North Liberty has a higher median household income (\$85,000) compared to the state** and a lower proportion of households making extremely low and high incomes.
- » North Liberty has fewer households (11.1 percentage points) making less than \$25,000 a year compared to the percentage across Iowa.
- » The top four employment sectors for employed North Liberty residents regardless of the location of their employment:
  - » Over a quarter of working residents are employed in the health care services sector.
  - » The second largest sector is educational services and social assistance. Health care and social assistance positions draw employees from outside the region.
  - » Manufacturing and retail trade have increased the number and percentage of jobs in North Liberty and in-commuters fill many new jobs.
- » Unemployment rates remain steady at less than three percent.

### Commuting

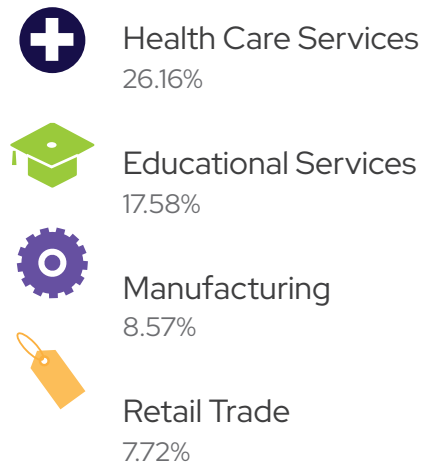
As seen in Figure 1.9, North Liberty has more workers commuting into North Liberty for work than residents commuting out of the city for work. This reflects the regional nature of North Liberty's location and opportunity to be a place of employment and living for some. However, not all. For example, those working in lower paying positions as indicated by only about 25.4% of households making less than \$50,000 a year (Figure 1.8).

**Figure 1.8: North Liberty Income and Employment Snapshot, 2020**

#### MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

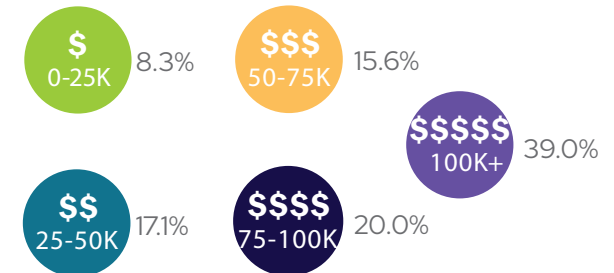


#### TOP EMPLOYMENT INDUSTRIES



Source: U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey

#### ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME RANGE



#### POPULATION 16+ IN THE CIVILIAN LABOR WORKFORCE

**81.6%**

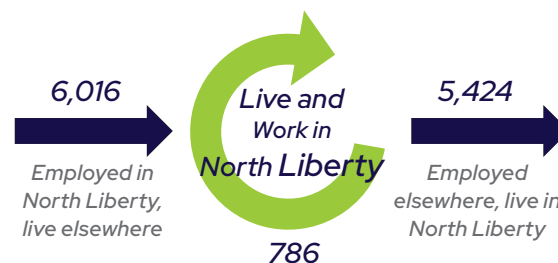
#### TOTAL WORKFORCE

**10,874**

#### EMPLOYMENT RATE



**Figure 1.9: Commuting Patterns**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap 2019

*Many employees have a difficult time finding housing in North Liberty that meets their needs and therefore commute in from surrounding communities.*



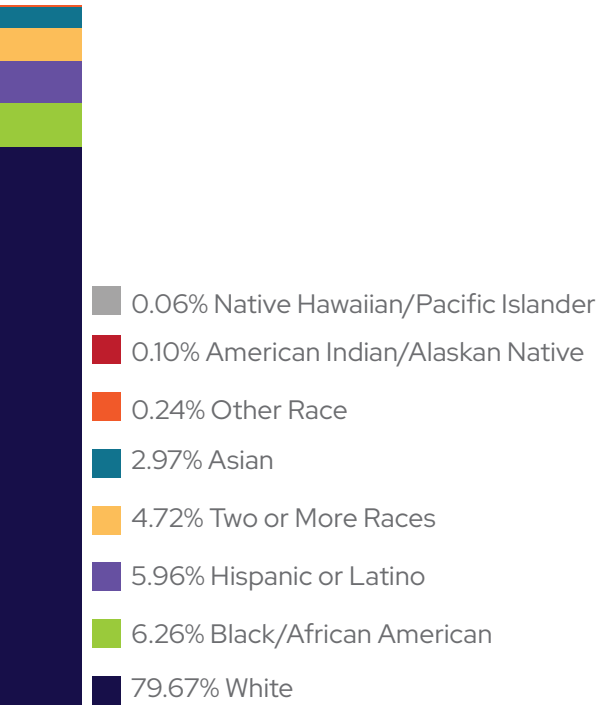
Socioeconomics

Figure 1.10 illustrates common socioeconomic indicators for a community.

- » North Liberty residents are primarily white with more education than the state of Iowa population.
- » **Fewer residents in North Liberty are living below the poverty level compared to the state of Iowa.** However, more of the senior population tends to be below the poverty level than state and national levels.
- » A higher percentage of North Liberty residents have a high school degree or higher compared to the state and national average.
- » The city has 24.7 percentage points more residents with a bachelor’s degree or higher than the State of Iowa.

Figure 1.10: Race & Ethnicity, Poverty and Education Snapshot, 2020

RACE & ETHNICITY



PEOPLE LIVING BELOW POVERTY LEVEL

4.7%

PEOPLE 65+ LIVING BELOW POVERTY LEVEL

24.9%

EDUCATION ATTAINMENT



Bachelors Degree or Higher

North Liberty 53.26%

Johnson County 52.81%

Iowa 28.57%

USA 32.15%



High School or Higher

North Liberty 97.13%

Johnson County 94.94%

Iowa 92.09%

USA 88.00%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey

## Housing Snapshot

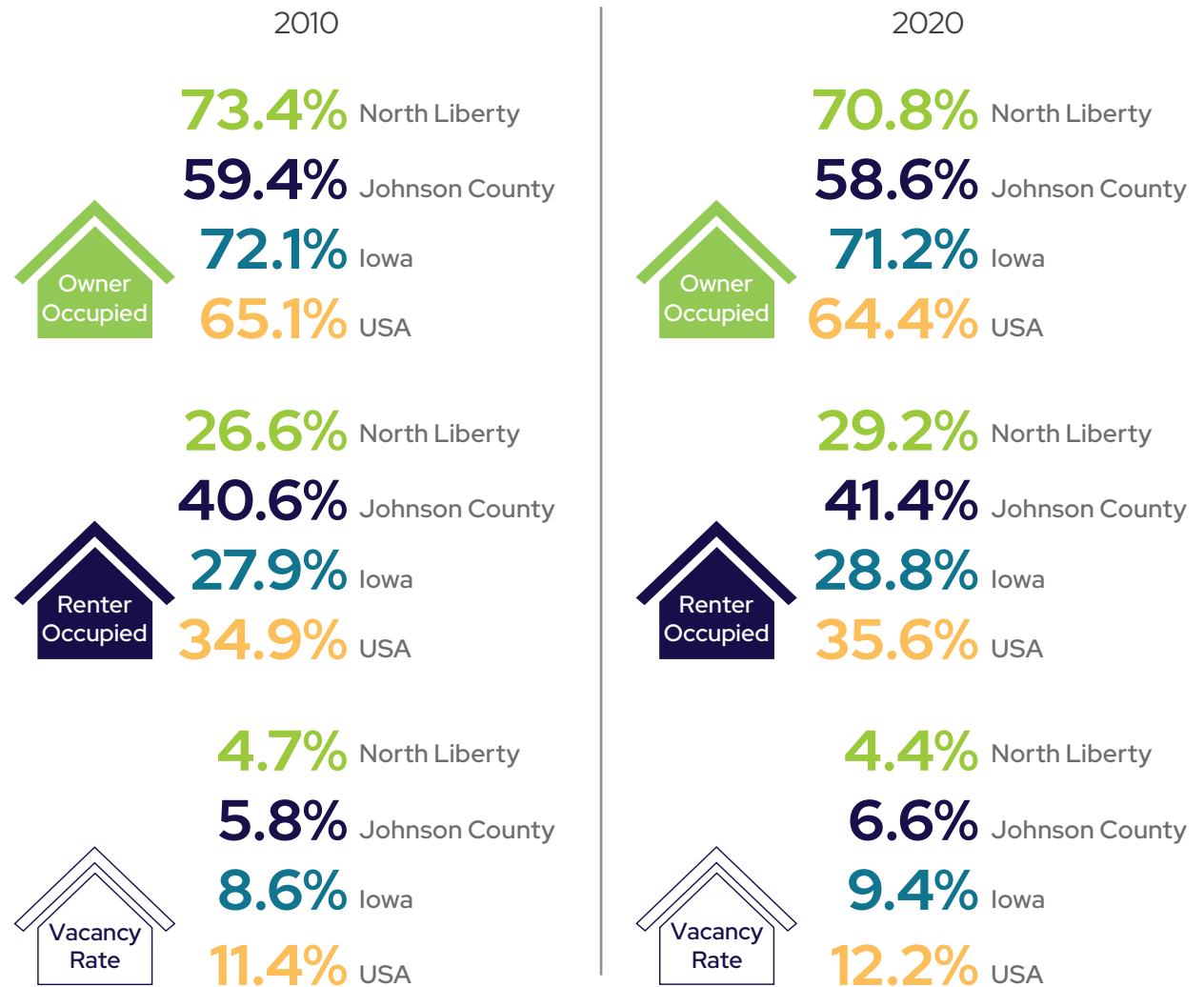
The existing housing stock and mix in North Liberty reflect the characteristics of long-standing, sustainable neighborhoods and new upcoming residential communities.

### Housing Occupancy

New residents will sometimes look to rent before buying a home, desiring to understand the community and its neighborhoods before settling. While single-family homes still dominate North Liberty's housing stock, multi-family units are rising in recent years toward more similar regional and national trends. Figure 1.11 shows the most recent occupancy data.

- » **The share of total housing units occupied by renters in North Liberty has grown since 2010.** This growth in renters was larger for the city than the state of Iowa. In this same period, the total number of housing units rose by 1,640 units, approximately 164 new units per year.
- » The growth in housing units from 2010-2020 of 29 percent compared to the population growth of 53 percent (7,105 people) computes to a household size of about 4.31 for those units (total new units / total population growth). The larger household size of recent years suggests more young families and young professionals in North Liberty. These cohorts often demand a supply of both owner and renter units.
- » The vacancy rate in 2020 was 4.4%. Cities want to have a vacancy rate high enough to allow movement in the market but not too high to start dampening the property values of surrounding homes. This healthy vacancy is typically between 5-6%.

**Figure 1.11: North Liberty Housing Occupancy and Vacancy Rates Snapshot**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey

Housing Affordability

Housing affordability is a primary concern for quality of life because the home you live in typically is the single largest regular expense. Figure 1.12 shows the median house value in North Liberty, the region, and the nation.

- » **Median home value and median rent have increased since 2010.** North Liberty has seen rent increase by 39.4 percentage points between 2010 and 2020. Home values increased by 11.2 percentage points.
- » **North Liberty has a high median income level, including for renter households shown in Figure 1.14.** These households may rent because they are new to the community or cannot find their desired housing type.
- » North Liberty has a value to income ratio of 2.72, a healthy ratio that indicates an affordable, self-sustaining market. However, this reflects the incomes of people already living in the community. **Many people in the process indicated affordability barriers for some new households to move to the community.** Figure 1.15 on the next page illustrates this comment in more detail.

Figure 1.12: Median Home Value



Figure 1.13: Median Gross Rent

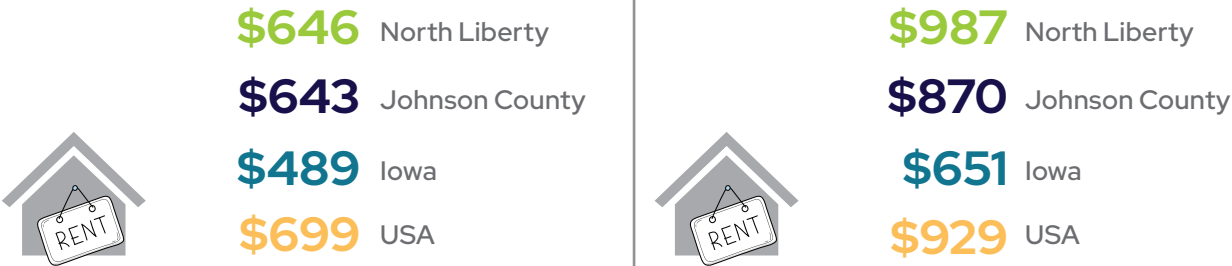
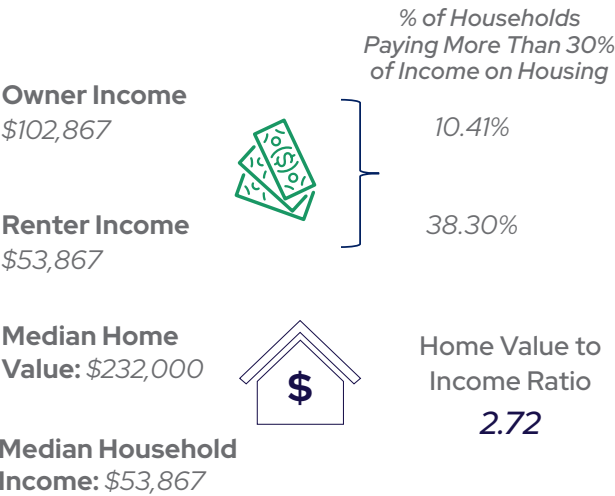


Figure 1.14: Owner and Renter Median Income, 2020



Source: U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey

Figure 1.15 evaluates the number of housing units in different income ranges and the quantity by price of homes that match those households spending 30% of their income on housing.

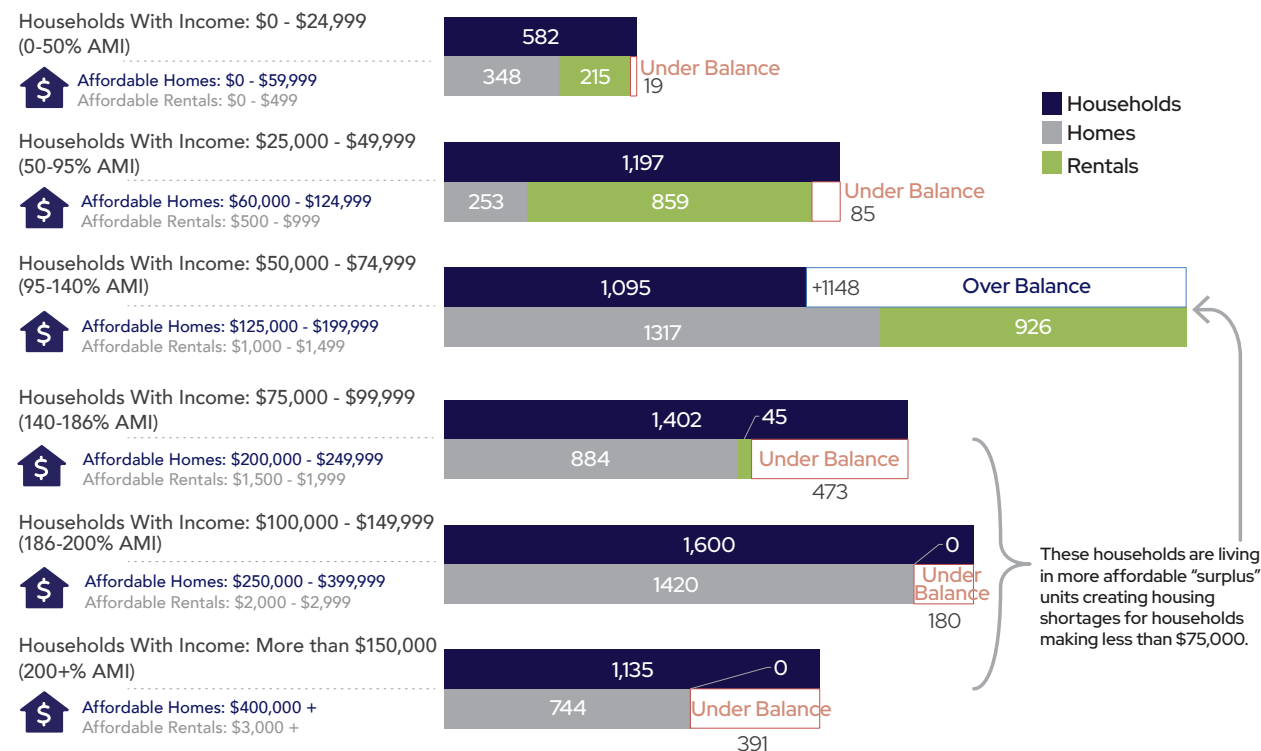
- » An over balance indicates a surplus of housing within the affordability range for the respective income group. An under balance implies a shortage.
- » Housing shortages affect the lowest income households more because of their limited choices.
- » North Liberty has more housing units matching 30% of income for households earning \$50,000 to \$74,999, and fewer for households making above \$75,000.
- » The data does not reflect inflation and higher interest rates from 2020 to plan writing, or other household costs like transportation.
- » This means many households earning above \$75,000 are living in units below what they could reasonably afford (<30% of their income spent on housing). **The result pushes households earning less into lower valued or lower quality homes, who in turn push those earning less than them into lower valued or lower quality homes (or to a different community).**

## Construction Activity

Figure 1.16 shows residential construction activity since 2010. North Liberty fared well after the 2008 recession but has seen leveling off of construction activity since around 2016. Available land to develop partially contributes to the trend.

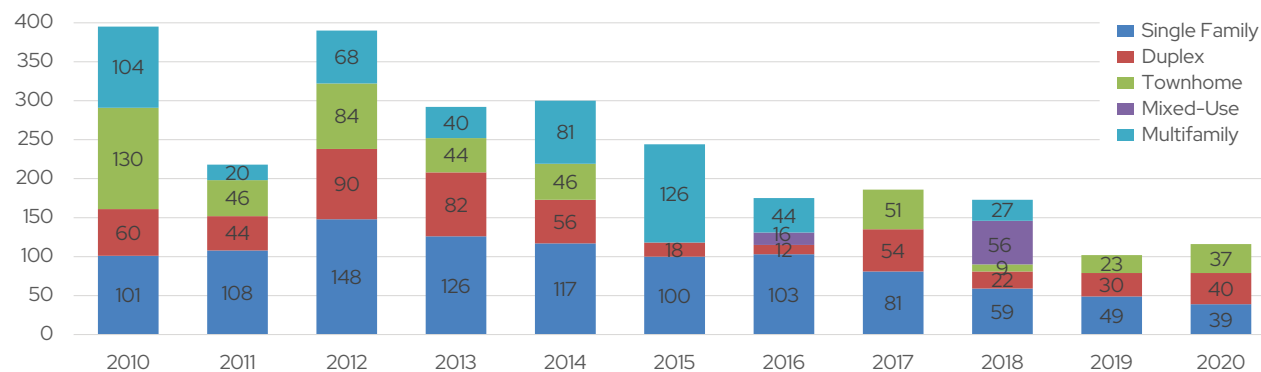
- » Between 2010 and 2020, North Liberty had 1,031 new dwelling units constructed at an average rate of nearly 94 units per year.
- » Growth in multifamily housing permits reflects the growing percentage of renters in North Liberty. 2015 saw the highest number of multifamily permits issued since 2010.

**Figure 1.15: North Liberty Affordability Analysis, 2020**



Source: American Community Survey; RDG Planning & Design

**Figure 1.16: Residential Construction Activity**



Source: City of North Liberty



# Land Snapshot

North Liberty’s existing land use and development patterns provide the foundation for developing the Connected to Tomorrow future land use plan. Topography, soils, waterways, and wildlife shape the unique physical character of North Liberty’s landscape. These forces form how development has occurred in the past and how it will continue to develop.

## Growth History

As a result of strong population growth, the City has annexed 3,101 acres from 1980 to 2020 and has doubled its size in land.

## Development Patterns

The land use pattern in North Liberty includes a strong residential core with parks and schools. Although North Liberty was founded and platted over 150 years ago, almost all of the modern-day expansion of North Liberty’s land has taken place since the mid 1950’s, shown in Figure 1.18. Population growth accelerated in the 1960’s, with nearly 90 percent of subdivided land being originated after 1980.

Figure 1.17: North Liberty Growth Over Time

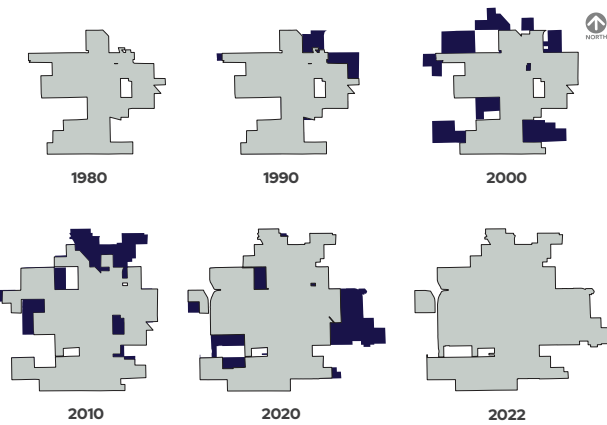
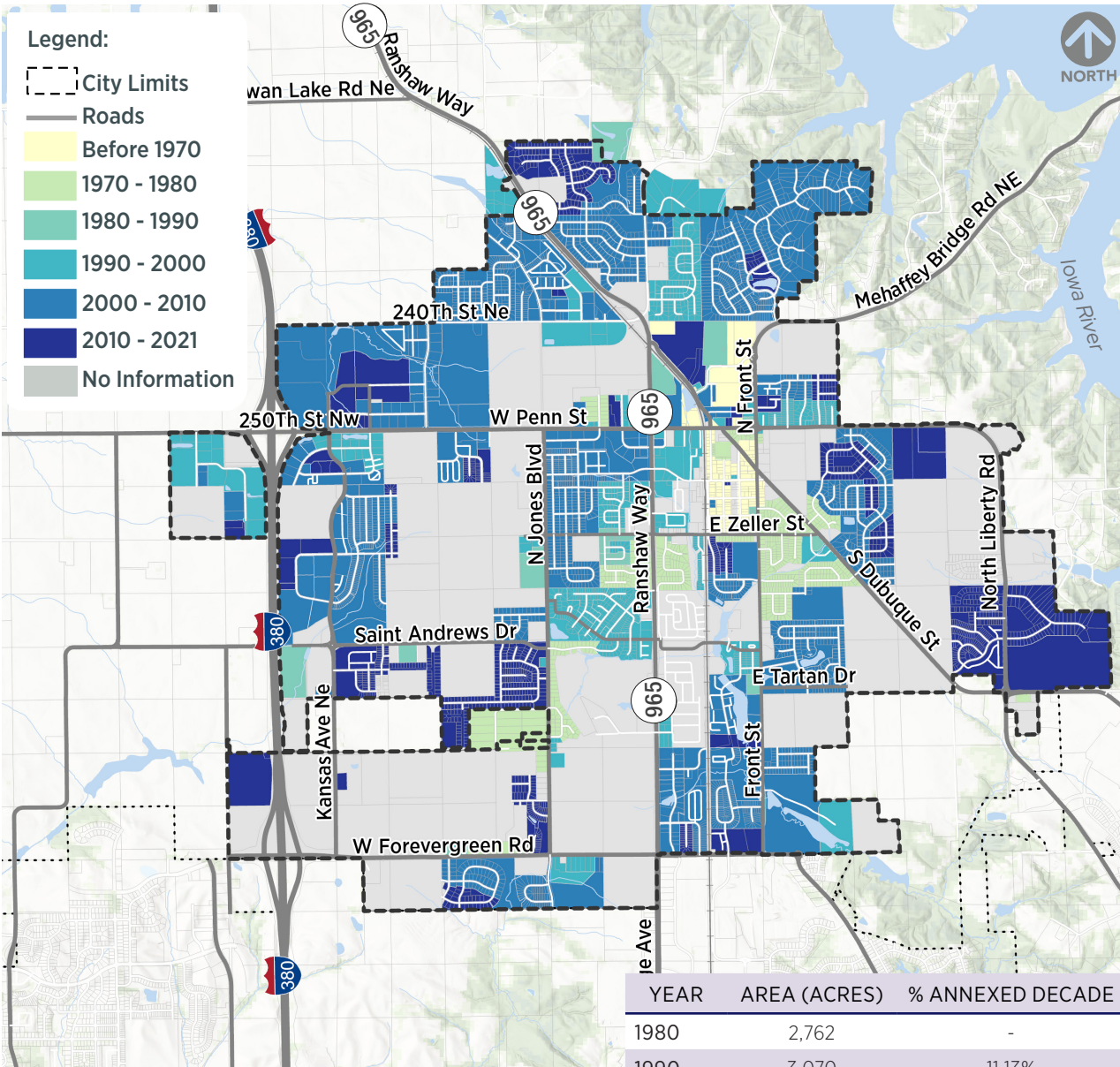


Figure 1.18: Subdivisions Origination Dates



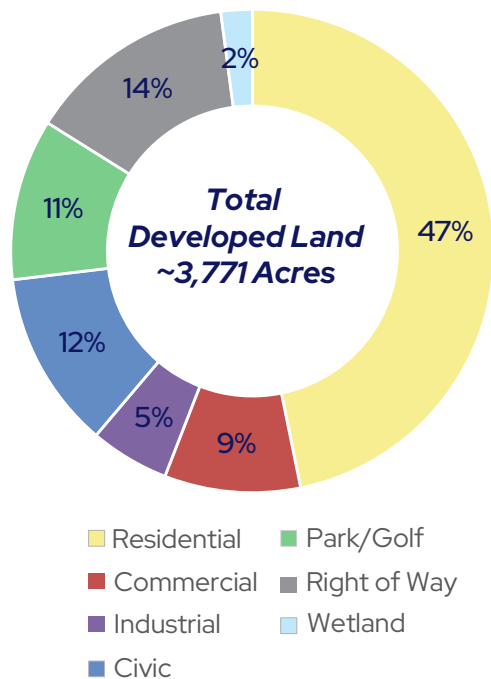
Source: RDG Planning & Design

## Current Land Uses

Development in North Liberty has mirrored the historical population and housing construction patterns discussed in the previous sections. Supporting this growth and housing demand needs to include new housing types, additional commercial space, office and job centers, and expanded recreation options. To plan for this new growth an understanding of the city's current land use mix must be intertwined with future needs.

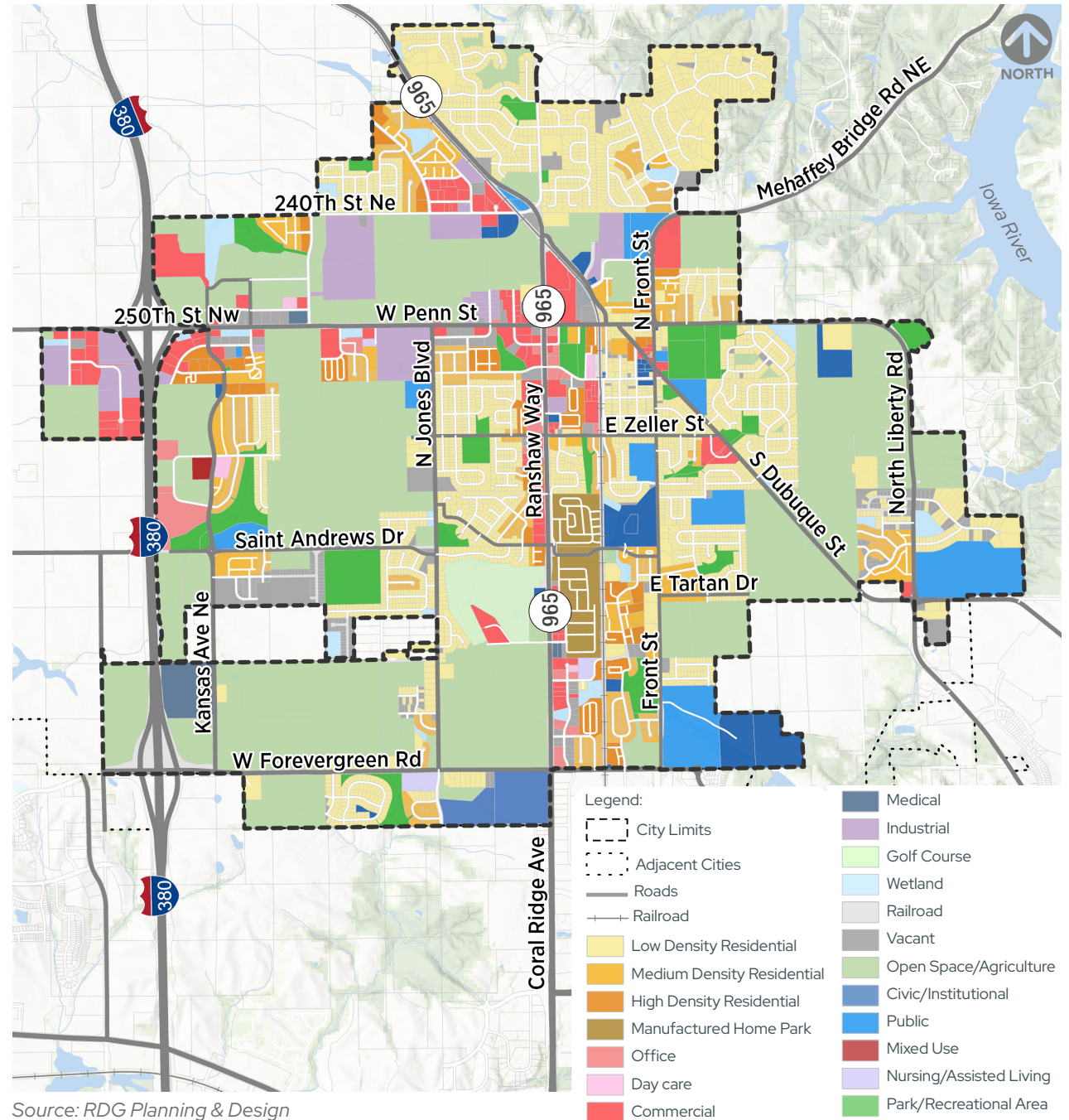
The existing land use map in Figure 1.20 classifies parcels in North Liberty by their use. Figure 1.19 shows the amount of land under each classification.

**Figure 1.19: Land Use Breakdown, 2022**



Source: RDG Planning & Design

**Figure 1.20: Current Land Uses, 2022**



Source: RDG Planning & Design



## What do current land use trends indicate?

North Liberty's largest land use category is residential. At 47%, this is close to the Midwestern average for cities like North Liberty.

North Liberty's industrial land uses vary from smaller industrial uses that are centrally located to heavier industry taking up large spaces in the northern areas of the city. The unique conglomeration of individual companies makes it hard to compare to other cities, but North Liberty has a strong economy and room to grow.








**There are 2,171 acres of vacant parcels and open spaces for future land planning purposes.**

Centrally located vacant parcels should be prioritized for infill development. Infill development utilizes existing infrastructure and can help bring more tax revenue and energy into the existing neighborhood fabric.

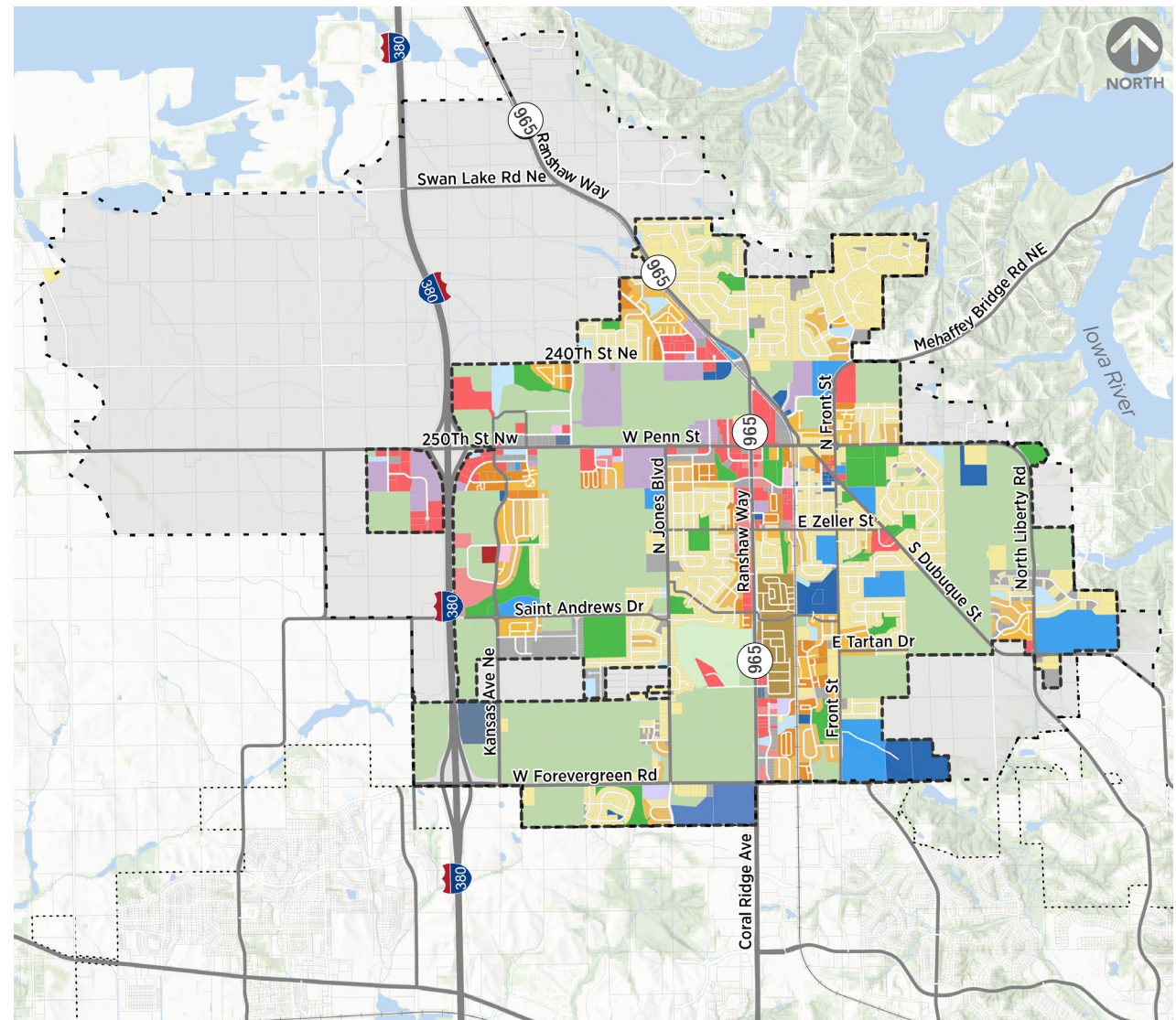
## Opportunities for Growth

Figure 1.21 displays the areas for developing the future land use map. These areas are areas that city services could serve with future infrastructure investment, **within the restraints of fringe area agreements described later in this plan.**

Legend:

 City Limits	 Medical
 Adjacent Cities	 Industrial
 Roads	 Golf Course
 Railroad	 Wetland
 Low Density Residential	 Railroad
 Medium Density Residential	 Vacant
 High Density Residential	 Open Space/Agriculture
 Manufactured Home Park	 Civic/Institutional
 Office	 Public
 Day care	 Mixed Use
 Commercial	 Nursing/Assisted Living
	 Park/Recreational Area

**Figure 1.21: Growth Boundary Areas**



Source: RDG Planning & Design

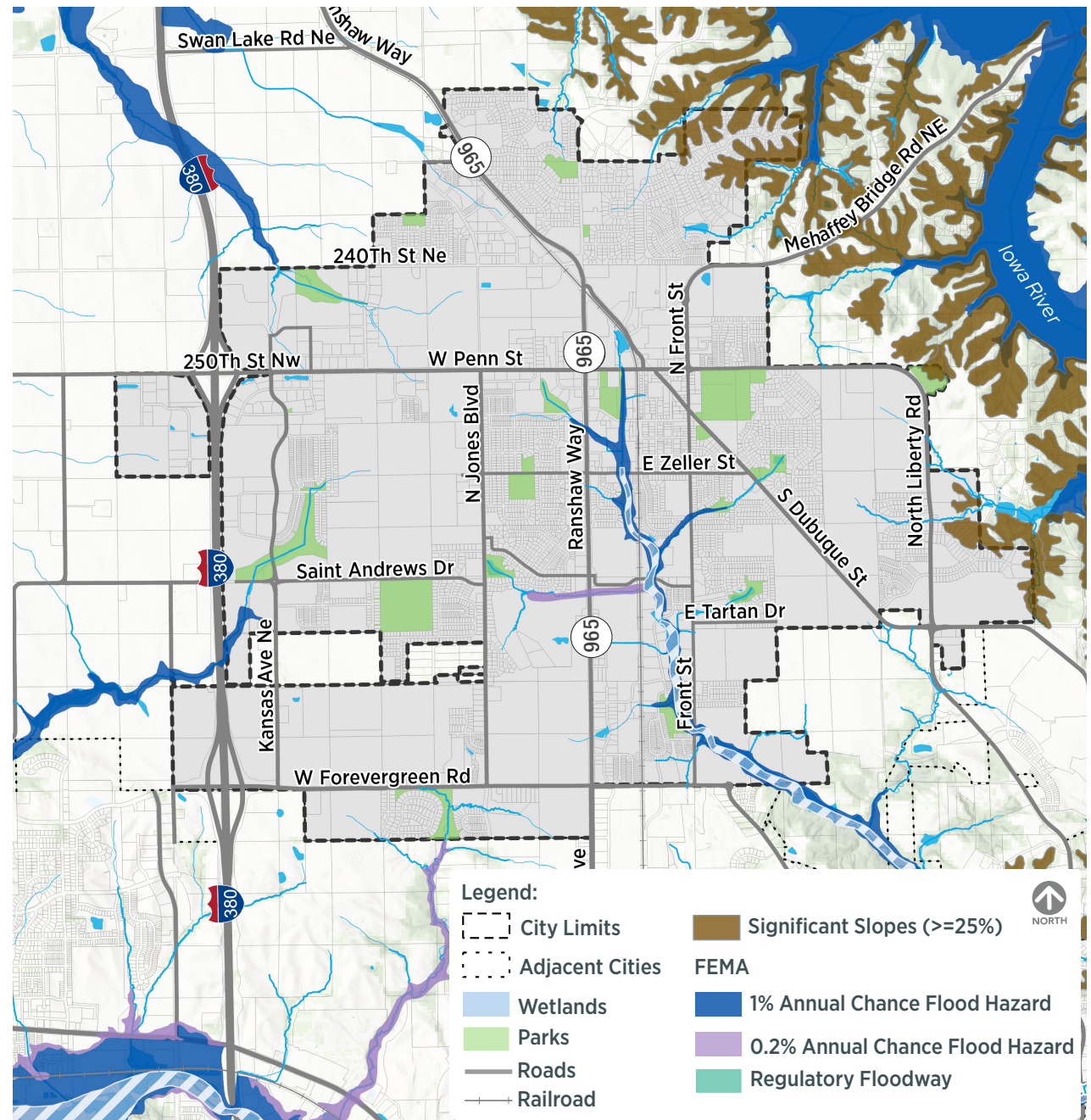
## Environmental Snapshot

### Floodplains

In the past several decades, local, state, and federal agencies have become more aware of the impact that development can have on stormwater erosion and water quality. The management of stormwater and the impact that development has on the city's drainage system requires close monitoring. Development that increases the volume and velocity of water runoff can create significant flooding and erosion issues on-site and downstream. Severe flooding also hinders transportation and emergency services, as was notably the case in 2008 in Iowa.

- » North Liberty is relatively flat. Figure 1.22 shows that floodplains and wetlands are relatively limited in North Liberty.
- » The total floodplain area in North Liberty is less than a square mile or <10 percent of the total city.
- » A portion of developed areas remains in the floodplain, including central areas of the city.
- » The likelihood of river flooding in the 100 year floodplain is minor but should not be overlooked as climate continues to evolve.

**Figure 1.22: Floodplain and Wetlands, 2022**



Source: FEMA



## Environmental Constraints

Figure 1.23 shows a development suitability map based on environmental constraints. Development suitability considers:

### Development Suitability Ratings

#### » Major Considerations (Red)

- » Should be preserved from development - includes drainage-ways, 100-year floodplains, and wetlands.

#### » Higher Considerations (Orange)

- » Should consider localized low impact development - includes areas such as the 500-year floodplain and steep slopes.

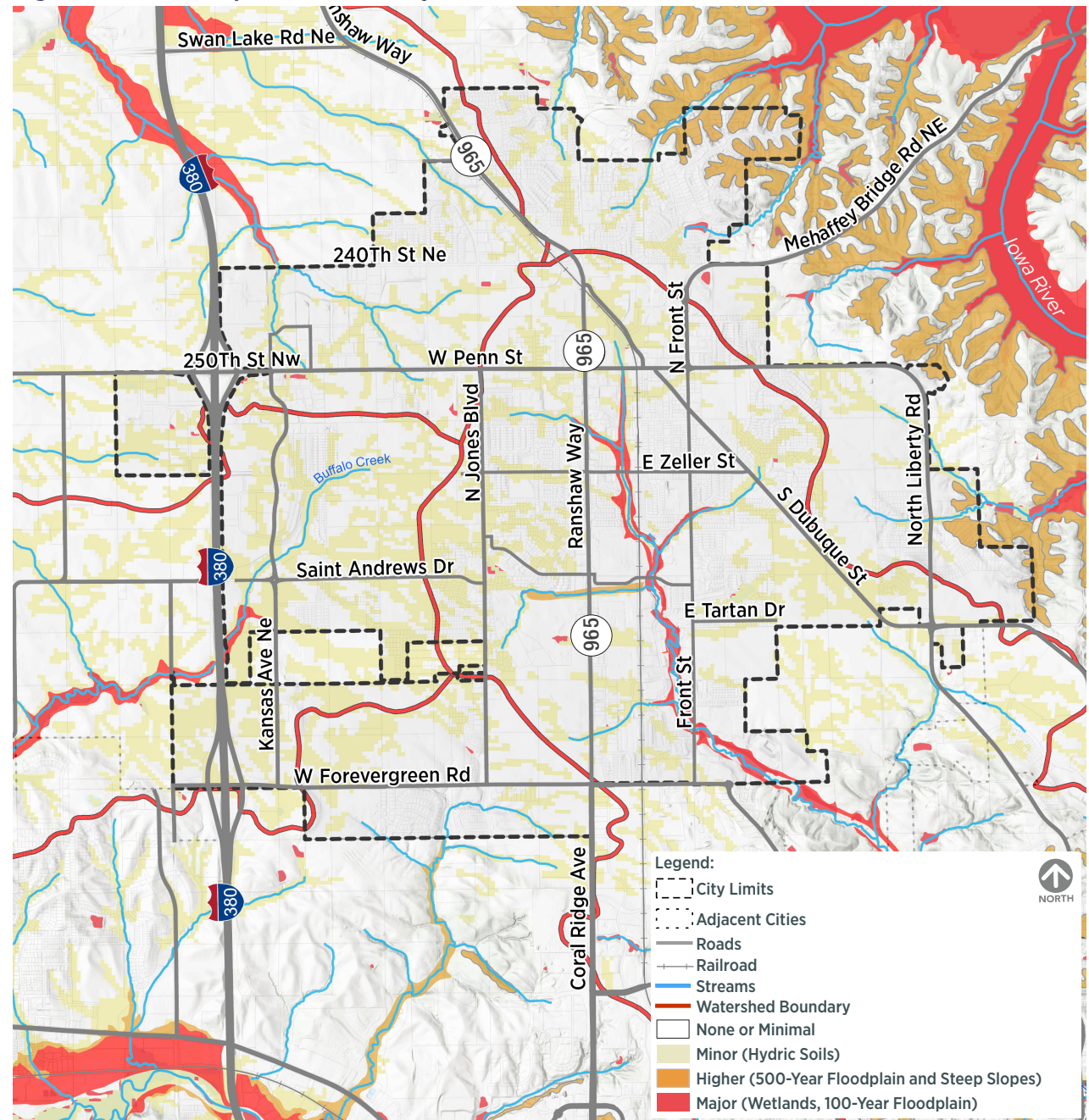
#### » Minor Considerations (Yellow)

- » Can be developed, but developers should be particularly attuned to good stormwater management - includes areas with hydric soils.

In summary:

- » **Stormwater management will be a significant issue for both North Liberty and the broader region in the coming years.** New developments will need to effectively and efficiently address stormwater to both protect the drainage corridors within developments and downstream, detailed more under the Infrastructure Snapshot.

**Figure 1.23: Development Suitability**



Source: RDG Planning & Design



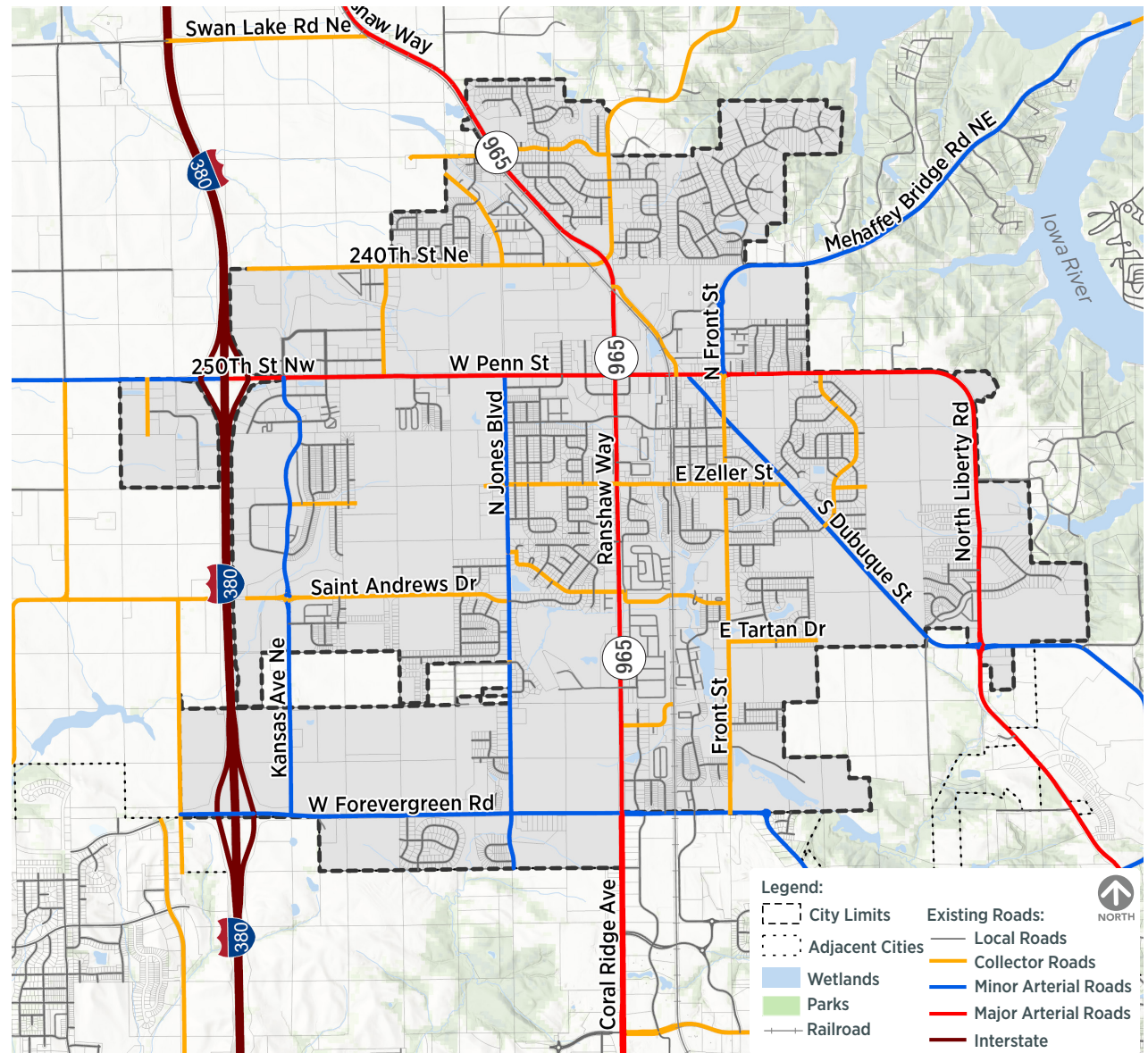
## Transportation Snapshot

North Liberty's transportation system ranges in importance from major highways to local streets. Elements of the transportation network include streets, railroads, trails, sidewalks, and transit routes.

### Streets

- **Principal Arterials.** These roads serve regional needs and connect important activity centers.
  - **Ranshaw Way.** Ranshaw Way spans north/south across the city. It is a vital gateway community corridor and a primary route for transportation and commuters.
    - Major destinations along the corridor include the North Liberty Community Center, Library, and general grocery/commercial needs. High traffic volumes make the corridor desirable for commercial uses and impact visitors' first impression of North Liberty.
  - **Penn Street and Dubuque Street.** Provides direct access to existing industrial and business park areas on the western side of North Liberty and schools on the east side, spurring additional development opportunities.
  - **Forevergreen Road.** Provides easier access to and from Interstate 80 and Interstate 380 for all travelers.
- **Collectors.** The collector system links neighborhoods together and to arterials and activity centers. Collectors are designed for relatively low speeds in urban areas.
  - **Jones Boulevard.** A primary north/south major collector used mostly by travelers as a connector to Penn Street and northern access to industrial and park areas.
  - **Kansas Avenue.** A north/south collector that provides access to parks, industrial, and commercial areas.

Figure 1.24: Transportation Network, 2022



Source: Iowa Department of Transportation

- **Local Streets.** Overall, local streets serve individual properties within all areas of the city to provide direct, low-speed access for relatively short trips.

- North Liberty's local street system is in good condition with select areas in need of repair and more repairs anticipated in coming years as infrastructure continues to age.

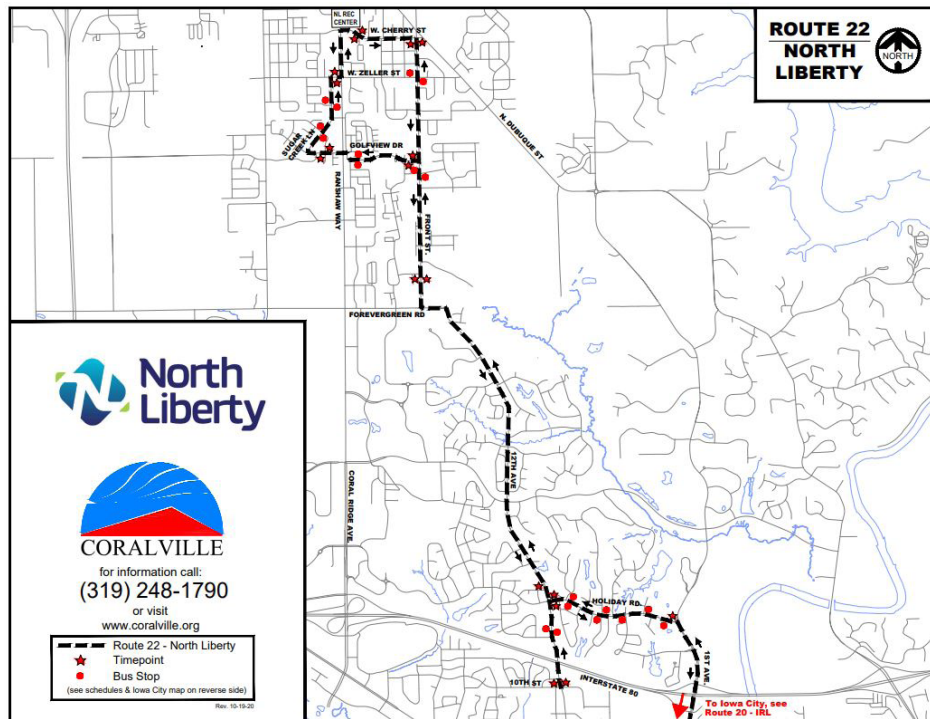
## Railroad

A rail line spans north and south in the center parts of North Liberty. In 2020, the Metropolitan Planning Organization of Johnson County (MPOJC) conducted a study that considers the potential for commuter rail service implementation between Gilbert Street in Iowa City and Penn Street in North Liberty - a 9.1-mile long active freight railroad corridor which no passenger rail services are currently offered. The Study examines the conceptual feasibility of a commuter rail service and provides a more detailed understanding of the potential benefits, costs, funding, and oversight for development, operation, and maintenance of commuter rail service. Many during the Connected to Tomorrow process indicated a desire for passenger rail in the region.

## Mass Transit

North Liberty has a fixed route bus service (Route 22) between North Liberty and Iowa City. This service is provided through a contract with Coralville Transit and limited to twice daily, Monday through Friday.

Figure 1.25: Transit Service, 2022

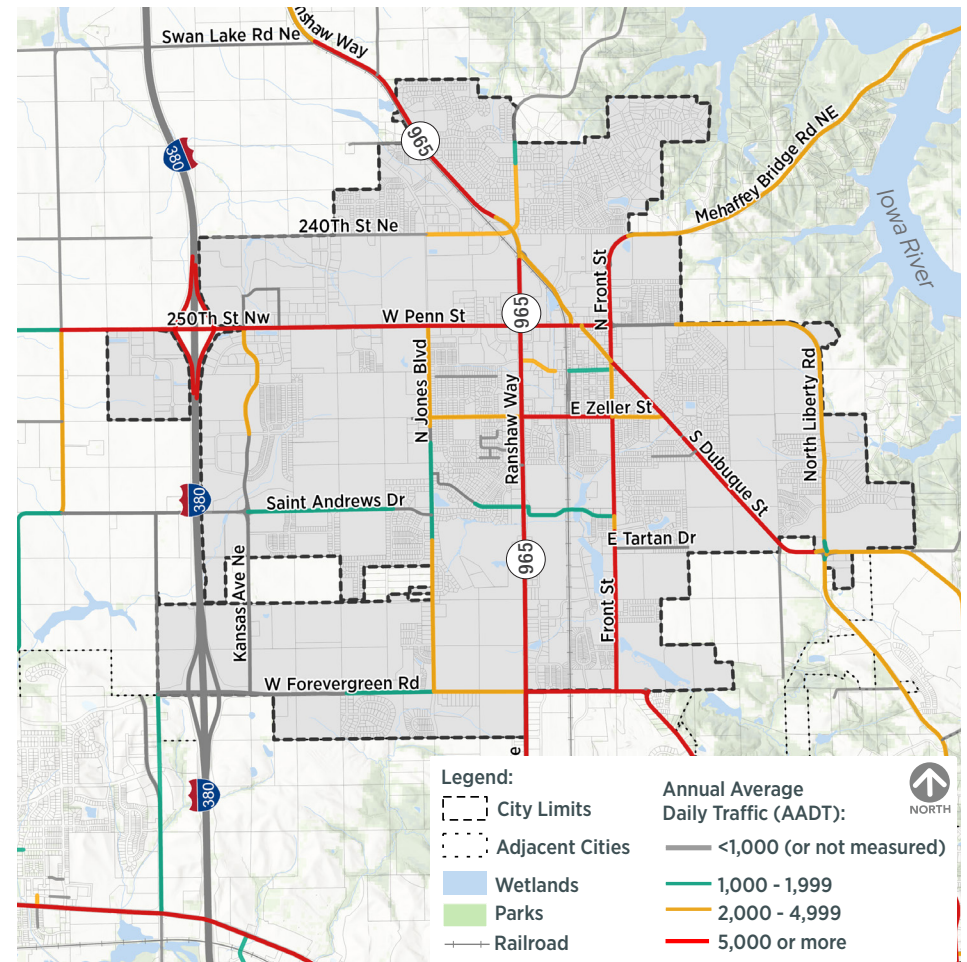


Source: City of North Liberty

## Traffic Volume

Figure 1.26 shows traffic volumes in North Liberty in 2018. Penn Street and Ranshaw Way see the highest level of traffic. Some streets do not have measurable data because of limitations. However, a more recent interchange from I-380 added at Forevergreen Road significantly increased traffic volumes on Forevergreen Road after completed in 2020.

Figure 1.26: Traffic Volume, 2018



Source: Iowa Department of Transportation



## Active Transportation

North Liberty's walk and bike path system offers a great base to connect destinations in the city and regional destinations. The majority of the city's bicycle network consists of facilities located within the street right-of-way, such as wide sidewalks (1.4 miles) and sidepaths (12 miles). North Liberty also has nearly 9 miles of off-street trails.

People widely use the system and like the comfort it provides for walking and biking. However, there are gaps in certain neighborhoods and corridors where people are faced with uncomfortable crossings and sidewalk environments. Additionally, gaps are present where areas are still developing.

Many cyclists also prefer to ride on the street because of too much pedestrian activity on sidepaths. This is a good challenge to have but indicates the need for designated on-street bike routes.

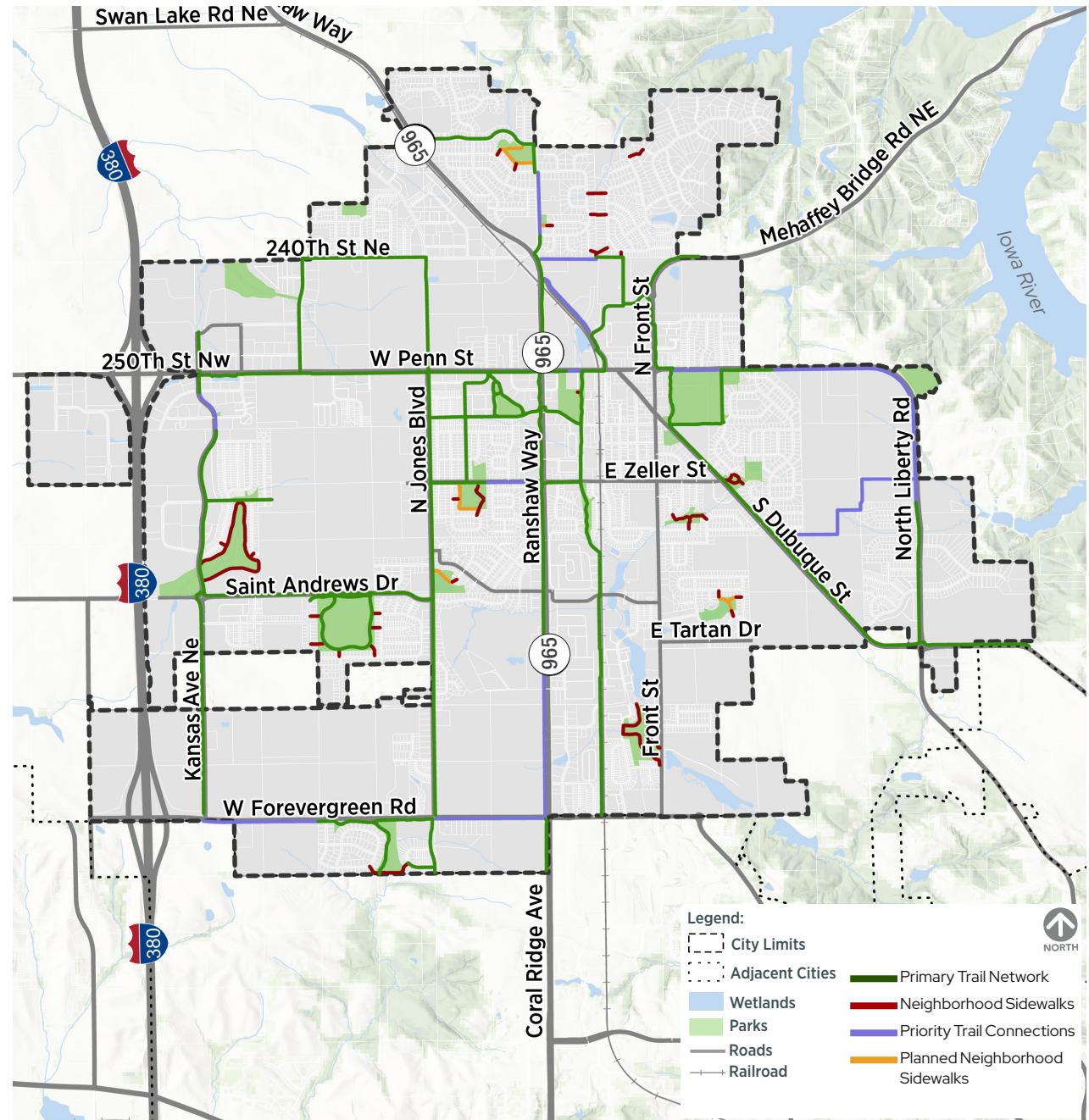
### Existing Trails

North Liberty's trail system includes local park trails and regional connections like the North Ridge Trail, which extends south to Coralville and north to connect with the North Dubuque Street sidepath (Iowa River Trail). As commercial and residential areas develop, several gaps need to be filled to create a system of continuous connections to new areas lacking bike facilities.

### Sidewalks & Sidepaths

There are nearly 13.4 miles of sidewalks and sidepaths in North Liberty. The system has gaps depending on when neighborhoods were developed. Both sidewalks and sidepaths are generally in good condition across the city with more repair and enhancement needs in the Old Town area.

**Figure 1.27: Existing Trails, 2022**



Source: City of North Liberty

## Parks and Recreation Snapshot

Access to parks is important for physical and mental health and the social well-being of a community.

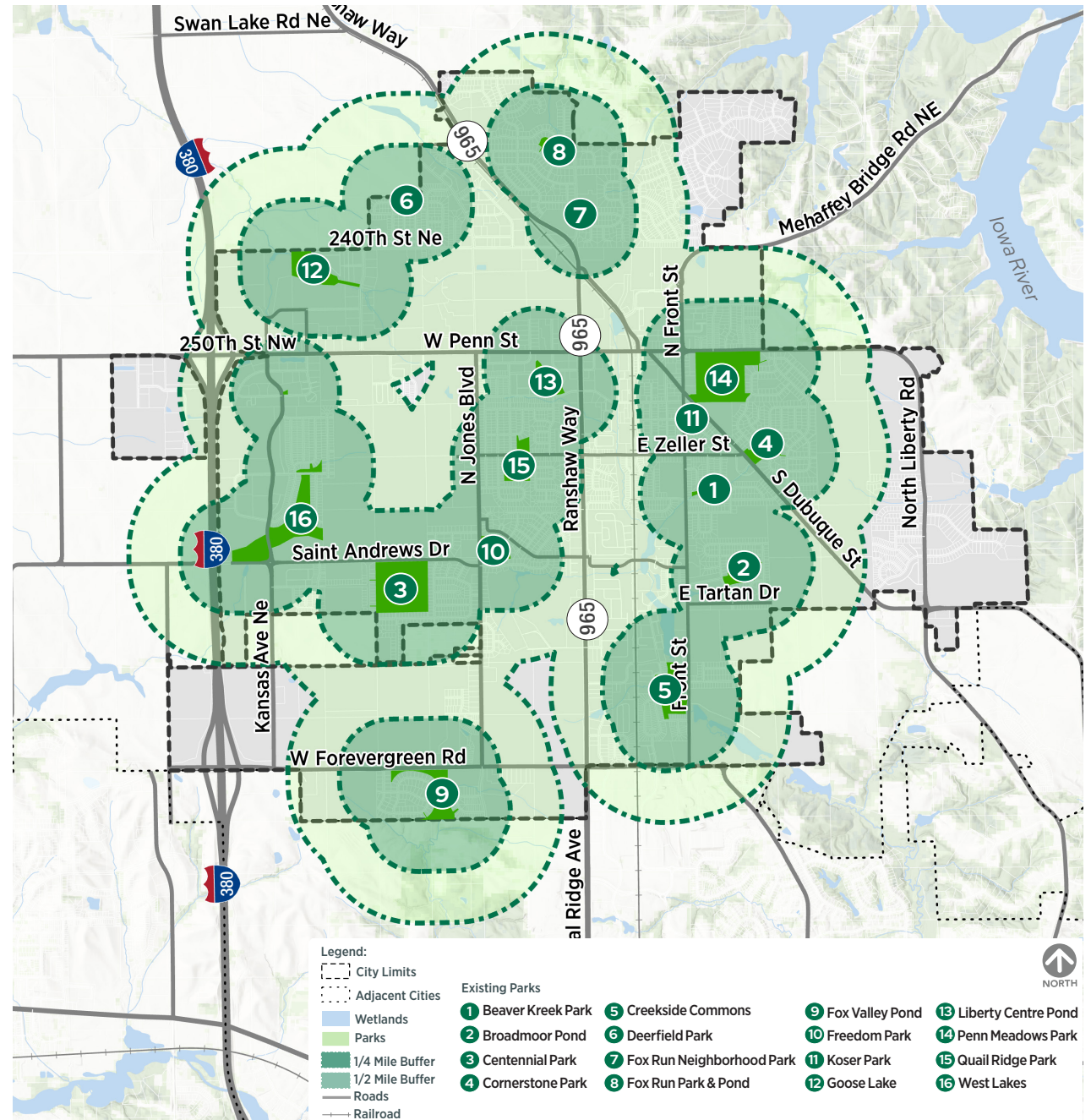
North Liberty's park and recreation system offers a high level of service and a wide range of recreational options to its residents. Figure 1.28 shows the resources available in North Liberty on its parks open to the public.

### Geographic Distribution

North Liberty supplies adequate aggregate parkland for the population. Figure 1.28 illustrates the geographic distribution of parks showing five- to twenty-minute walking distances.

- » A quarter-mile to a half-mile is considered the range in which residents are more likely to access a park via walking and bicycling.
- » **Existing residential areas are typically within a ten-minute walk of park areas.** However, the areas where residential development could occur in the future are underserved by parks, especially the north central and south central areas.
- » **Additionally, critical gaps in the transportation system increase the accessibility and time to reach a park in certain neighborhoods.**

**Figure 1.28: Existing Parks, 2022**



Source: RDG Planning & Design



## Public Facilities and Infrastructure Snapshot

North Liberty provides critical services through a variety of city-owned buildings, facilities, and utilities. The following section presents an inventory of these various assets.

### Public Facilities

Figure 1.29 shows North Liberty's existing facilities.

#### North Liberty City Hall

City Hall is currently located at Quail Creek Circle but is relocating in 2024 to a new facility. The new facility, which sits near the Police Department amid Dubuque, Cherry, and Main Streets, will house the city's administrative offices, City Council chambers, flexible community space, and a public plaza.

#### Fire Station

The North Liberty Fire Station sits at West Cherry Street. The building was built in 1945 and has limited capacity for additional storage and expansion.

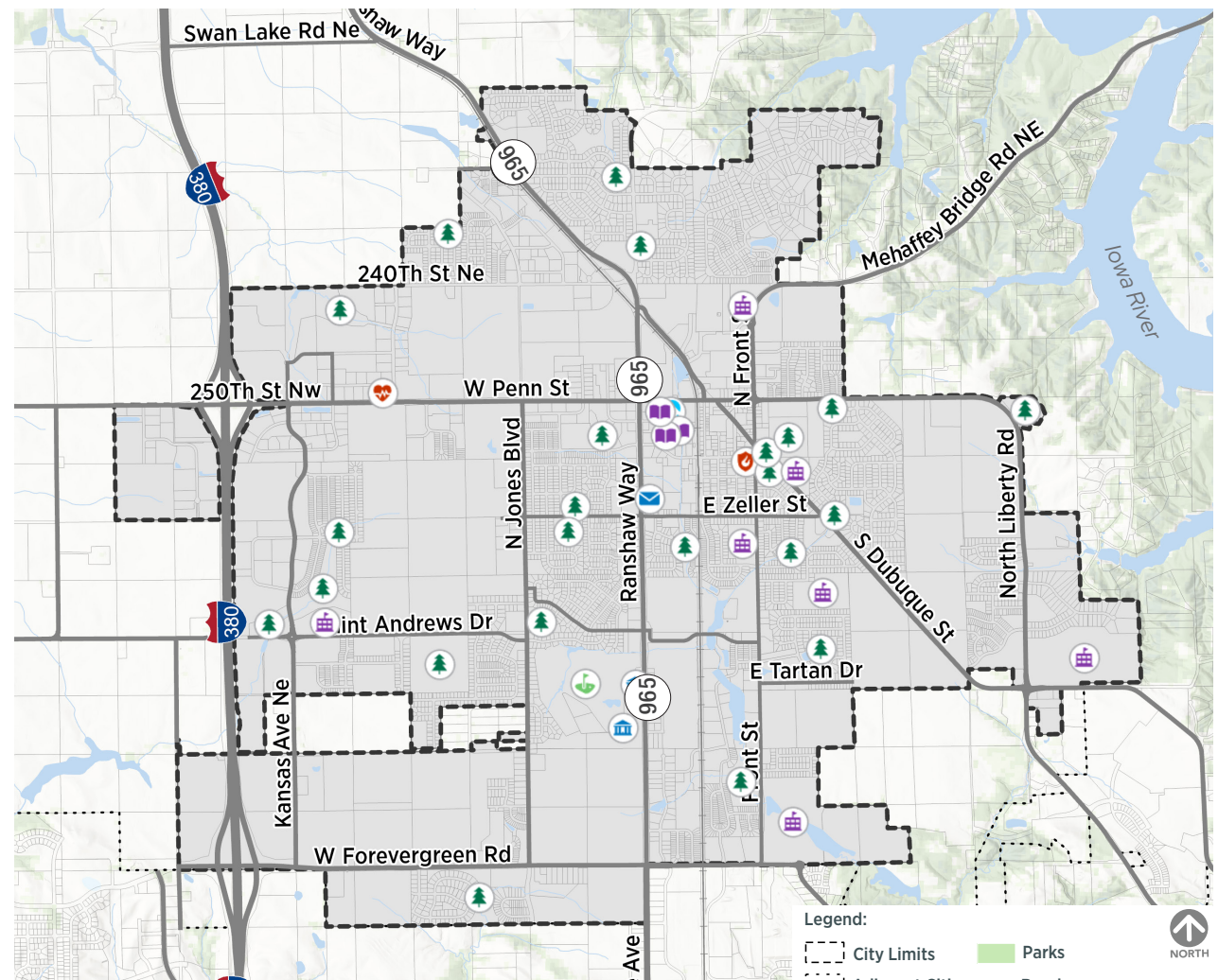
#### Police Department

A decade ago the city began acquiring land in the original part of town to build the city's civic campus. The new Police Department opened in the summer of 2020 located in the original part of the city on Cherry Street.

#### Public Library and Community Center

The Library is in a 17,900 square foot building with the Community Center, which houses the North Liberty recreation facility, and the aquatic center. The Library offers meeting rooms, computers, games, wireless access, and programmed events. The Community Center is a highlight of the community and is used for city events, and is home to several activities for kids, teenagers, and adults.

**Figure 1.29: Public Facilities, 2022**



Source: RDG Planning & Design

#### School District

A majority of North Liberty residents live within the boundaries of the Iowa City Community School District, while the area west of Jones Boulevard (and the Deerfield Subdivision) is in the Clear Creek Amana School District. School facilities within North Liberty's planning jurisdiction include a private school, five public elementary schools, one junior high school, and one high school.



# Plan Organization

The remainder of Connected to Tomorrow is a progression of visions, goals, and policies that build from existing conditions, provide direction for the Future Land Use Map, and reflect the community's aspirations for the future. Each component relies on these vision statements, guiding goals, and beginning policies.

## What is a Vision Statement

Statements that help identify where North Liberty wants to be. The vision is the overarching guiding principle for that planning element to supplement the Future Land Use map.

## What are Goal Statements and Guiding Principles

A set of statements that set the intentions for future direction. Goals help guide decision making when specific policies or actions are not listed in Connected to Tomorrow. Decisions should seek to reach the goals of each planning element.

## What are Policies and Strategies

Vision and Goal statements mean little without a strategy to implement them. The Plan states priority Policies and Strategies to get started under each Goal. The Policies and Strategies are under separate Goals in the Plan but some overlap and depend on the others to be pursued to their fullest. The Policies and Strategies are not all encompassing. Other City efforts should supplement Connected to Tomorrow as well. It is intended through regular plan evaluation that these may be amended or added to over time.

*The following sections establish the directions of Connected to Tomorrow.*

### Big Picture Vision

The overlying foundation of what North Liberty should be through the lens of the public and community leaders through a series of overarching vision statements and development principles.

### Planning for Tomorrow

Growth forecasts for population that translate into residential, commercial, industrial, and park needs through 2040.

### Land Use Tomorrow

The framework identifies where to feasibly meet forecast needs considering environmental, transportation, and utility factors. Land Use Tomorrow incorporates all the necessary components for a strong and vibrant community, including mobility, environmental preservation, parks, public spaces, housing, inclusivity, and economic development.

### Mobility Tomorrow

How North Liberty will accommodate transportation for people walking, riding bikes, on mass transit, and in cars in a efficient manner.

### Spaces and Places for Tomorrow

How North Liberty grows with new parks, public spaces, and community nodes accessible to all neighborhoods and abilities to create a unique identity.

### Our Environment Tomorrow

What role North Liberty plays to protect the environment, mitigate climate change, and ensure environmental justice.

### An Inclusive Tomorrow

How North Liberty can ensure inclusive neighborhoods while meeting its demand for housing at different price points and styles to accommodate different economic and life stages.

### Doing Business Tomorrow

A direction for supporting new business ventures, leveraging economic strengths, and ensuring quality areas to support jobs and diversify the tax base.

### Realizing Connected to Tomorrow

Draws together the policies of the plan into a program for implementation. It presents an Implementation Schedule, listing proposed projects and the time frame for their completion.



# 2

## VISION & GOALS

# Community Voice

The Vision and Goals of Connected to Tomorrow emerged from the community through a planning process that started in October 2021 and continued through December 2022. The ideas stemmed from community input, with the planning team's assistance in assembling the ideas into a plan. The process focused on building awareness for the Plan and encouraging as many people as possible to participate. The methods used to reach the vision included:

**City Staff.** City Staff met regularly to discuss ideas and concepts while responding quickly to questions.

**Plan Advisory Committee.** The Plan Advisory Committee, composed of business owners, neighborhood leaders, elected officials, organizations, and other representatives, met at regular points during the process to review the Plan's progress and offer mid-course corrections and enhancements to the Plan's concepts.

**Website.** A project website provided updates, advertised meetings, and gathered input throughout the planning process, including an interactive map for people to indicate their desires and enhancements to North Liberty.

**Community Survey.** A community survey was available online and on paper throughout the project. Several themes emerged from the over 500 participants. The full results of the survey are in the Appendix.

**Stakeholder Discussions.** Discussions included open discussions with staff, businesses, developers, the Neighborhood Ambassadors, and other stakeholders.

**Visioning Webinar.** A community webinar introduced the project and engaged people in discussions with other citizens. Discussion about the top priorities for the future began to form the vision and goals for North Liberty.

**Design Studio.** A three day design studio engaged residents, business owners, and other stakeholders directly in conceptual planning for North Liberty. The planning team used their time walking, biking, and driving around to develop concepts for mobility connections, growth areas, and community character. Participants shared their ideas, issues, and concerns informally with the design team over two open houses.

**Concepts Open House.** A review of the design concepts and plan goals with the public gave a preview before the draft plan was posted.

**Community Events.** Plan promotion and input were gathered at events throughout 2022, including Beat the Bitter and multiple Neighborhood Ambassador meetings.



**NOV. '21**  
**Project Launch**



**DEC. '21**  
**Community Survey & Map**



**JANUARY**  
**Open House**



**MARCH**  
**Committee Listening Sessions**



**APRIL**  
**Design Studio**



**MAY**  
**Plan Concepts**



**JUNE**  
**Committee Meeting**



**AUGUST**  
**Neighborhood Meeting**



**SEPTEMBER**  
**Plan Drafting**



**OCTOBER**  
**Open House**



**NOVEMBER**  
**Plan Refinement**



# Vision & Goals Summary

## Land Use Tomorrow GUIDING DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES:

- » Encourage flexible but compatible mixing of uses that avoids large areas concentrated with any one use.
- » Respect and protect the environment in all decision making.
- » Connect the city, neighborhoods, and sites with accessible mobility choices.
- » Be commerce ready to support a range of enterprises.
- » Use urban services efficiently to proactively plan for growth and market demands.
- » Promote diverse housing options for all life stages and abilities.
- » Plan for community amenities to serve all residents.
- » Use public investments to promote private development.
- » Lead transparently and collaboratively.

## Mobility for Tomorrow

**VISION:** An accessible multi-modal transportation system that supports desirable patterns of community, neighborhood, and economic development.

### GOALS AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- 1. Coordinate transportation and land use plans**, focusing on critical connections illustrated in the land use plan.
- 2. Integrate all modes of travel** to allow each mode to complement the others and provide viable and efficient alternatives.
- 3. Plan transportation improvements** ahead of development, implement with development, and design for expansion to accommodate future development.
- 4. Ensure** site development standards accommodate pedestrians and cyclists.
- 5. Establish safe multi-modal routes** across Interstate 380 and other major streets in North Liberty.
- 6. Embrace new transportation modes** for the future, such as regional transit, rail, micro-mobility modes, and other unknown technologies.
- 7. Use Complete Streets Principles** on all arterial and collector streets, including features that positively add to the image of North Liberty.





# Vision & Goals Summary

## Spaces & Places for Tomorrow

### VISION:

Evoke a special feeling of resident pride, visitor interest, and business collaboration in North Liberty.

### GOALS AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

1. **Provide and maintain** adequate neighborhood and community parks and recreational facilities to serve local and regional needs.
2. **Create experiences** at all entrances to North Liberty.
3. **Support efforts** that increase the physical and social well-being of the community by bringing people together.
4. **Foster partnerships** across the community and region to build North Liberty's identity and uniqueness.
5. **Incorporate arts and culture** into public projects and support private efforts to enhance cultural features.

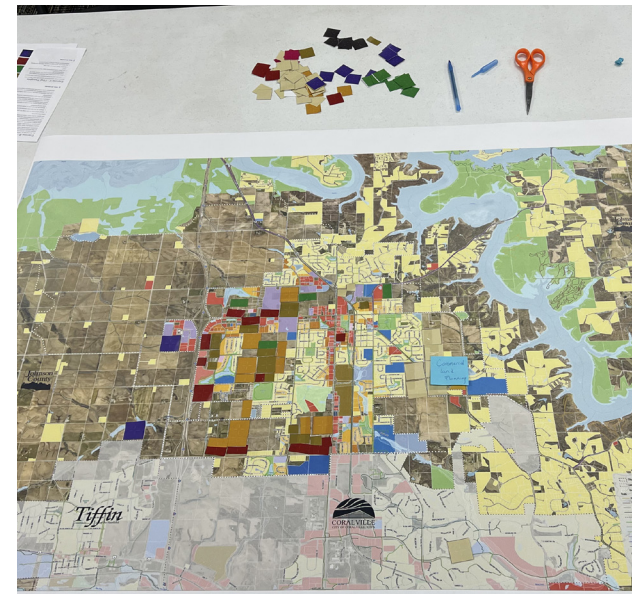
## Our Environment Tomorrow

### VISION:

Support natural environmental features while taking measures to mitigate and adapt to changing climate.

### GOALS AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

1. **Protect** all environmentally sensitive areas and unique physical features within the municipal boundaries – including habitats.
2. **Maintain** and, where feasible, improve the natural and aesthetic quality of the region's water resources.
3. **Examine the influence** on climate from site development and seek ways to mitigate negative influences.
4. **Take innovative approaches** to sustainability and being climate friendly – be proactive rather than reactive.
5. **Expand natural landscapes** through street design, commercial development, trail corridors, parks, and public spaces.
6. **Support and cooperate** with regional efforts to improve water quality.



# Vision & Goals Summary

## An Inclusive Tomorrow

### VISION:

Grow by creating neighborhood nodes of commerce or recreation that provide diversity in housing types, demographics, and income levels.

### GOALS AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- 1. Encourage a variety** of dwelling unit types, styles, sizes, and price points to satisfy the needs, desires, and income levels of all people and household sizes.
- 2. Elevate housing** as a public good to attract residents, promote economic development, and increase quality of life.
- 3. Regulate the transitions** of site intensity rather than the type of use to grow neighborhoods.
- 4. Reinforce, maintain, and upgrade** the character of individual residential neighborhoods.
- 5. Connect all neighborhoods** with mobility options, public spaces, parks, and commercial services.
- 6. Celebrate** and seek opportunities for diversity across all neighborhoods.
- 7. Proactively attract** and welcome diversity and inclusion of residents and business owners of all demographic backgrounds.

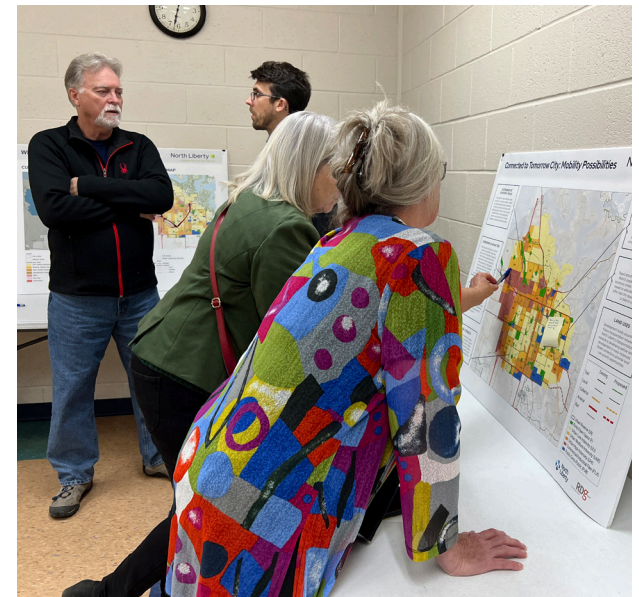
## Doing Business Tomorrow

### VISION:

Support desirable economic growth that contributes to the long-term directions of North Liberty.

### GOALS AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- 1. Market** the high quality of life in North Liberty.
- 2. Ensure** adequate public services and infrastructure to support new commercial and industrial growth areas.
- 3. Establish programming** that keeps targeted mixed-use centers “active.”
- 4. Support** entrepreneurship, local businesses, and community non-profits.
- 5. Remain attractive to** businesses in target market sectors that align with the policies of the Comprehensive Plan.
- 6. Promote** projects that assist in the redevelopment and/or restoration of substandard and deteriorating property within the city.
- 7. Support economic growth** potential by implementing other portions of the Comprehensive Plan.





# Vision & Goals Summary

## Supporting Tomorrow

### VISION:

A high quality experience for all that live, work, or visit North Liberty that does not decrease as the city grows.

### GOALS AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

1. **Plan** for public facilities and services in a **coordinated and cost-effective** manner that is consistent with the nature of development and emergency service plans.
2. **Regularly monitor and maintain** all utility systems to ensure a safe and high quality standard of service.
3. **Promote cooperation and coordination** between governmental units in the provision of public utilities and services.
4. **Coordinate** with school districts and major private entities to understand anticipated growth and expansion plans.
5. **Provide opportunities** for active and direct participation of residents, business owners, and property owners within the community.
6. **Be financially sustainable** with investment by considering costs and benefits.

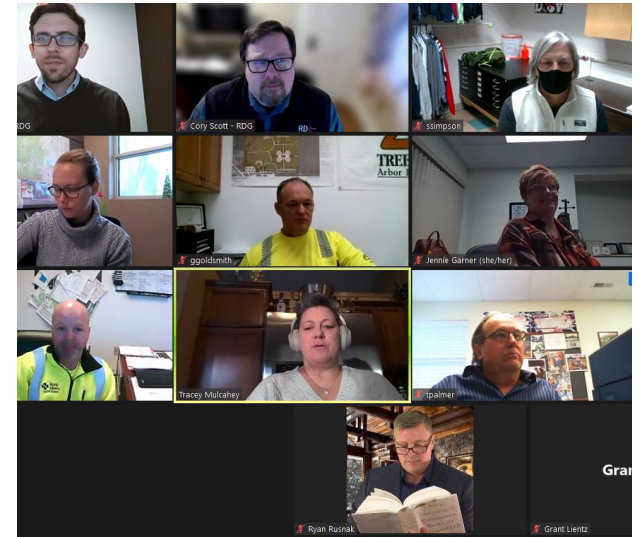
## Realizing Tomorrow

### VISION:

Ensure that all city initiatives, development, and redevelopment that occurs in North Liberty are in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan.

### GOALS AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

1. Be Transparent and Inclusive.
2. Use Consistent Decision Making Criteria.
3. Regularly Review and Update.
4. Coordinate With Partners.
5. Responsible Groups.
6. Intentional Annexation Policy.
7. Align Existing Policies and Codes.
8. Implementation Schedule.





# 3

**PLAN FOR TOMORROW**



# Planning for Tomorrow

## Planning Adaptability

Planning requires a consideration of many factors to establish likely paths for future growth and development demand. When based on market demands, a future population and land use forecast provides a baseline for the extent of land use and mobility planning. There are strong local and regional indications that growth in North Liberty will continue at a rapid pace. However, many unforeseen situations can affect North Liberty's growth trajectory.

### Land Availability

Private property owners decide whether to sell or develop their land. Typically with higher demand for land, the price rises and entices transitions away from undeveloped land. However, there are many reasons a property owner may want to avoid developing. Less land for development could limit the growth trajectory.

### Demographic Shifts

North Liberty has a young population and is an attractive community for families. Nonetheless, larger scale trends in birth rates and aging may lead to changes in the rate of population growth, housing units needed, or both.

### Climate Migration

There is evidence that a portion of people living in areas with extreme heat, drought, and flooding are moving to more "climate resilient" areas. The Midwest is one of these areas. An increase in this trend could mean additional long-term growth potential in North Liberty.

### Technological Innovation

Technological advancements are progressing at an astounding rate. Connected to Tomorrow cannot predict the number of new technologies by 2040 and their influence on city development, positively or negatively. However, in 2022 it is evident that automated vehicles, buildings, utilities, and much more are the future.

### Economic Conditions

Inflation throughout late 2021 and 2022 had many leading economists concerned about a looming recession. Combating inflationary pressures is leading to the highest mortgage rates since 2008 and a slowing of the housing market. Recessions are likely when planning over a 20-year time frame. These periods can affect forecasts depending on their severity and length.



## Growth Forecast

Figure 3.1 shows population forecast scenarios through 2040. Connected to Tomorrow uses a 3.5% annual growth rate for land use planning. This growth rate aligns with other service capacity studies and tracts increasing housing development trends. At this rate, the projected 2040 population in North Liberty is 40,749, approximately 20,270 more than the population today. During that time frame, forecast housing needs are over 8,000 housing units across various densities and arrangements.

## Future Land Development Needs

Population growth must be supported by new places for people to live, work, and play. Therefore, population growth directly correlates to the demand for new development or redevelopment at higher densities.

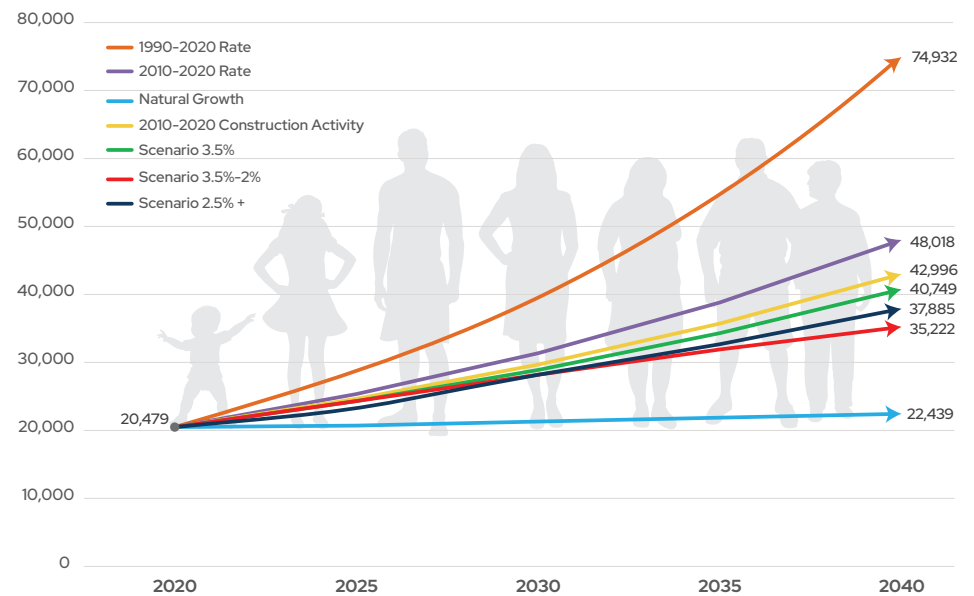
### Residential

Estimates of future residential land needs require assumptions about housing preferences. North Liberty should be planning for and accommodating various housing types for all stages of life. The projected mix of new housing units for planning purposes through 2040 includes the following:

- » 40% low density
- » 30% medium density
- » 30% high density

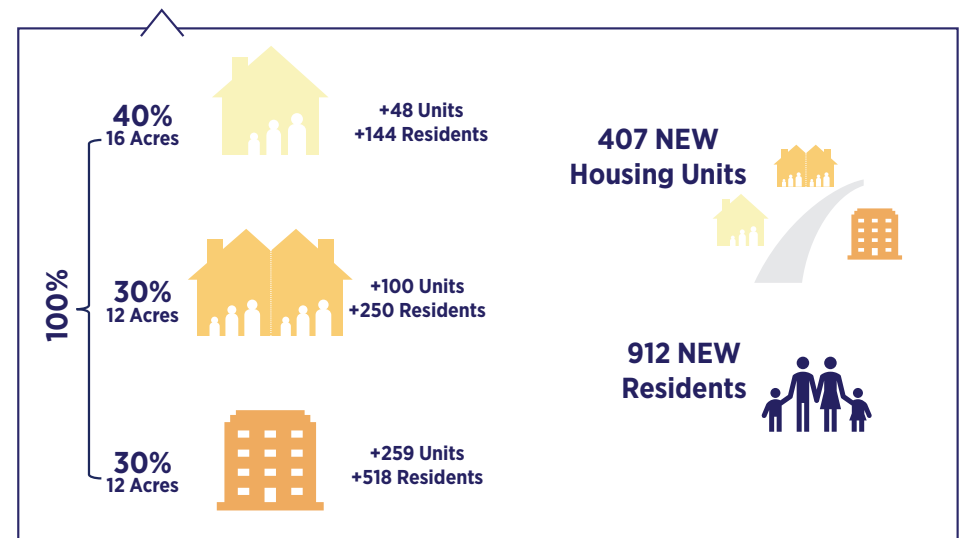
This housing mix results in a need for over 1,500 acres of new residential land. Doubling this amount for planning purposes (to provide market flexibility) means planning for 3,000 residential acres. (Refer to the An Inclusive Tomorrow section for further discussion of housing goals).

**Figure 3.1: 2040 Population Forecast Scenarios**



### Scenario Planning Example

**40 Acres Residential** 



### Commercial and Industrial Land

Commercial and industrial land needs are difficult to project accurately since one large business could change the market dramatically. Additionally, North Liberty’s position on key transportation routes is more conducive to larger distribution and flexible space demands. Therefore, the forecasts are not meant to stipulate a “destiny” or provide a ceiling on growth. Still, they should be used as a general guideline and a metric to evaluate how North Liberty grows related to expected trends.

Considering employment trends, the existing commercial land use for the population, and residential land uses, North Liberty should plan for a minimum of 300-350 acres of new commercial land through 2040. Again, increasing this by 1.5 times for planning purposes to approximately 450-525 acres.

A similar method for industrial land needs shows that North Liberty should plan for a minimum of 175-200 acres. However, industrial development requires more flexibility and space depending on the use. Therefore, the need should increase by three times for planning purposes to about 525-600 acres for 2040.

North Liberty is at a transition point that many “suburban” cities face. The residential population is reaching a point that naturally stimulates higher commercial and employment center development. This means more commercial and industrial land will likely be demanded than traditional planning forecasts for well-established cities might indicate.

*The forecasts are the basis for the developing the Future Land Use map and provide the scope of planning needs for Connected to Tomorrow.*

### Parks

With population growth, North Liberty must continue to provide adequate services. Services include public facilities like maintenance buildings, water treatment, community spaces, and parks. Parks will require the most future land need. The forecasts should be considered minimum requirements to support the population and should not prevent new parks and recreational spaces from becoming available.

Under national standards of 10 acres per 1,000 residents, North Liberty needs to add parkland to meet community needs. North Liberty should be planning to incorporate over 200 acres of new parkland through 2040. This does not include greenways and areas primarily used for flood protection unless accessible for recreational use (see the Spaces & Places for Tomorrow section for details).

Figure 3.2: 2040 Park Service Standards

PARK	EXISTING PARK LAND (ACRES)	ACRES PER 1,000 RESIDENTS	NPRA STANDARD (PER 1,000 RESIDENTS)*
Community Park	147.0	7.18	8 acres
Neighborhood Park	42.43	2.07	2 acres
Mini Park	9.40	0.46	Varies
Total	198.83	9.71	10 acres

\*National Parks and Recreation Association  
\*\* Does not include the North Liberty Community Center. With the Community Center, the total acres per 1,000 residents is over 10 acres.





# LAND USE TOMORROW



North Liberty is a place to grow and be part of a community. While many know North Liberty for its rapid growth and development visible from the Interstate, its history and character are much more. North Liberty does provide a unique living and visiting experience that goals and policies should advance through existing and new neighborhoods. These significant assets should be considered essential quality of life amenities and catalysts for investment and reinvestment.

# Development Principles

The following principles guide land use decisions. Each focuses on efficiency, reducing costs, enhancing quality of life, leveraging the power of partnerships, and creating places where people want to live, work, and play. These principles are the criteria, along with Goals, Policies, and Strategies, that frame the future.



## 1. Encourage flexible but compatible mixing of uses that avoids large areas concentrated with any one use.

High quality neighborhoods are essential to North Liberty's identity. Balanced neighborhoods and employment centers provide residents with easy access to places where they can live, shop, work, play, and engage in community life. Mixing compatible uses creates enhanced economic opportunities and promotes infrastructure efficiency. Neighborhoods should offer a variety of housing options, access to open space, and contain activity centers such as parks, schools, civic centers, or commercial areas that are well-connected to surrounding neighborhoods.



## 2. Respect and protect the environment in all decision making.

Preserving wetlands, low-lying areas, and floodplains can protect property values for adjacent and downstream developments, enhance and connect the park system, reduce flooding, and lower development costs by providing more natural areas for water to be absorbed. A network of natural areas enhances community character, offers space for active transportation connections, mitigates the impacts of extreme storm events, and avoids short-term rewards with long-term costs.



## 3. Connect the city, neighborhoods, and sites with accessible mobility choices.

A network of streets, trails, hike/bike paths, and on-street bike facilities should provide safe, efficient connectivity and accommodate a diverse set of mobility needs and preferences. Accommodating all modes of transportation on new streets is a priority. However, the techniques for each street can look different, and specific routes can be prioritized for more prominent multi-modal facilities to connect community destinations.



## 4. Be commerce ready to support a range of enterprises.

North Liberty's position along significant transportation routes creates market possibilities for continued economic development growth. Land use allocations should balance economic market demands, places to live, and service availability.



## 5. Use urban services efficiently to proactively plan for growth and market demands.

Contiguous development will help create neighborhoods as North Liberty grows. More compact arrangements reduce costly infrastructure extensions by developing on infill properties or in strategic locations adjacent to existing development. Necessary service extensions should accommodate new desirable growth that conforms with infrastructure service studies.



## 6. Promote diverse housing options for all life stages and abilities.

Connected to Tomorrow emphasizes more diverse housing options at prices that more people can afford. Neighborhoods with diverse housing options provide a mix of entry-level opportunities, move-up options for growing families, and smaller options for seniors and downsizers.



## 7. Plan for community amenities to serve all residents.

The Future Land Use map identifies many areas for parks, trails, and open spaces. These are areas of natural features but also areas that could fill park service gaps. Parks, open spaces, schools, and other public places serve as neighborhood focal points that promote community activity, personal interaction, and a sense of place. Many of these places are unknown, but all residents should have safe access to nearby amenities.



## 8. Use public investments to promote private development.

Building partnerships is key to successful community growth. Connected to Tomorrow welcomes opportunities that change the trajectory of the future land use plan if the result is more excellent projects. However, North Liberty's public investments in streets, water, sewer, parks, and civic facilities should remain at the forefront as tools to promote private development that aligns with the Future Land Use map. Any infrastructure extensions should be done to maximize private investment, thus supporting the long-term costs associated with any infrastructure or facility.



## 9. Lead transparently and collaboratively.

Decisions stemming from Connected to Tomorrow or changes to the Future Land Use map should be made transparently, with an opportunity for input from all citizens and affected entities, such as the school district. Creating and implementing land use decisions should be shared responsibilities that promote quality living environments and efficient use of fiscal resources.



## Framework for Growth

North Liberty is one of the fastest growing communities in Iowa. The pace of development requests requires the City to be flexible for unpredictable market conditions and preferences. To that end, the future land use plan for North Liberty maintains a flexible approach to decision making.

The land use plan envisions a framework for growth in North Liberty that creates compatible growth patterns rather than the typical single-use districts that have dominated since the mid-century. Measures for compatibility can still protect neighborhoods and residences from the effects of higher intensity uses.

A development pattern that encourages a mix of land uses and activities has a variety of benefits:

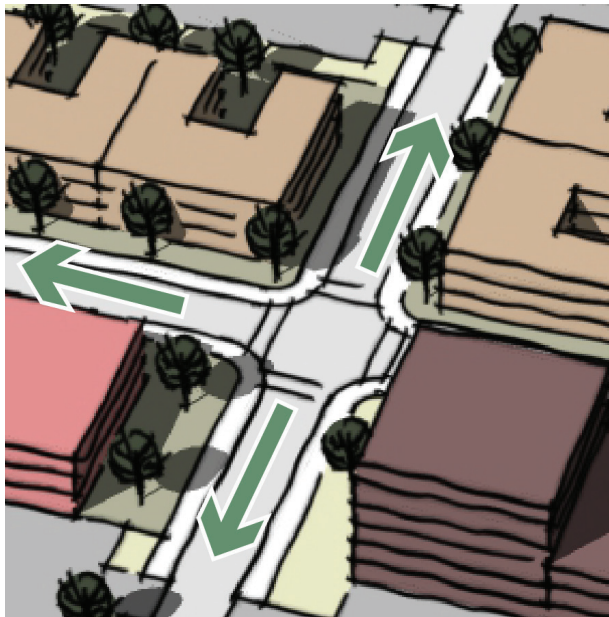
- » Promotes activity at various times of day and locations increases security, and enhances the number of people using public spaces.
- » Reduces the number of miles people must travel by car each day when homes are closer to jobs and services.
- » Allows opportunities for a variety of housing types. The development of housing above office and commercial establishments adds activity to business areas and increases the economic yield on properties.
- » It may be supported that neighborhoods are often more attractive when designed as mixed-use.
- » Plans and land development policies that provide appropriate variety of uses also provide greater flexibility for developers.

## Mixing Uses: Explained

Uses may be integrated in two ways, horizontally and/or vertically. Horizontal integration keeps individual building purposes separate but relates buildings to each other through design, public space, and mobility connections. Vertical integration includes more than one use in the same building.

Most major corridors and intersection nodes on the Future Land Use Map are in multiple-use categories. A certain level of mixing is permitted in other predominately residential areas.

*It is important to remember that while the intensity-based concept proposes mixing uses, it does not mean that every land use is appropriate everywhere. Location standards and compatibility requirements for higher impact uses are an important part of the land use plan for North Liberty.*



*North Liberty can achieve all the benefits of mixing uses by using a flexible land use framework that provides appropriate compatibility measures. While this approach may allow land uses with similar intensity to be integrated each land use category has unique requirements for the following attributes:*

## USE TYPE(S)

In general, each future land use category provides guidance on the type of uses appropriate in each district. The district descriptions are guides and not meant to cover all possible uses. Instead, intensity, compatibility, and form will guide land use decisions.

## INTENSITY

Intensity can be determined through the number of uses, zoning codes and policies, density, or other defining characteristics of development.

In residential areas, intensity is measured by dwelling units per acre. For other uses, intensity factors might include building scale and amount of traffic that a project generates.

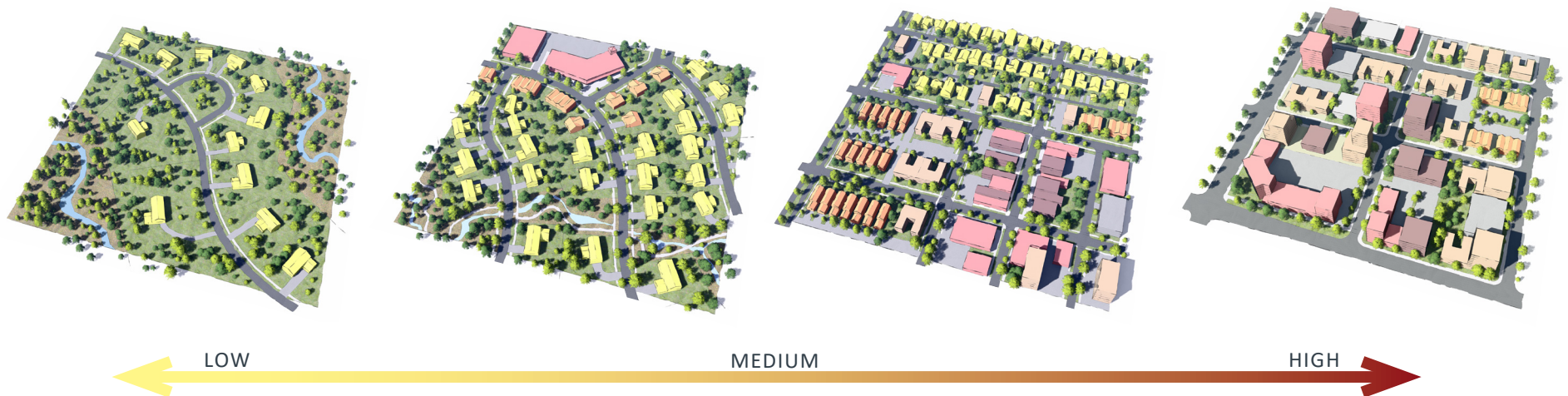
## COMPATIBILITY

Compatibility is attained by considering potential effects of various uses. As uses become more intense and more integrated, compatibility methods focus less on spacing and congregating of similar uses, and more on methods that directly address issues like noise, traffic, privacy, and aesthetics.

## FORM

Form relates to how developments are laid out, including street patterns, types of infrastructure required, how buildings relate to each other, and the relation of buildings to the street. Form also includes the scale of the buildings – the length, width, and number of stories.

### Intensity Spectrum



# Land Use Decision Making

The Future Land Use map is based on population projections, economic trends, environmental constraints, infrastructure costs/limitations, and public input. Land planned for North Liberty through 2040 is greater than the projected need to provide market flexibility, avoid creating land shortages, and to provide long-term planning opportunities. Some areas shown in the map are unlikely to develop in the 20-year planning horizon.

## Three important points about the Future Land Use Map:

### 1. Property Owners Decide

The Future Land Use map depicts new land uses for privately owned properties. The transition of these properties to new uses is expected to occur slowly over time, in response to market demands, **as property owners voluntarily sell, develop, or change the use of their land.**

### 2. Generalized Map

The Future Land Use map should be interpreted generally. It is not intended to provide the specificity or rigidity of a zoning map or engineering document. The map provides guidance for the zoning map and is meant to show:

- » Generalized land use locations and transitions: The boundaries between land uses on the map are “fuzzy” lines and are meant to show approximate areas for transition, rather than rigid boundaries. The exception to this are areas that preserve floodplains and wetlands because developing within them is not permitted.
- » Trails, collector street, and arterial street connections: Critical mobility connections are specified on the map. The exact routes will depend on detailed engineering studies. Local streets will be determined as development occurs.

### 3. Basis for Land Use Decisions

The Future Land Use map provides the basis for decisions of the Planning and Zoning Commission, the City Council, and private developers. The map is a critical part of the approval process for development proposals and zoning decisions.

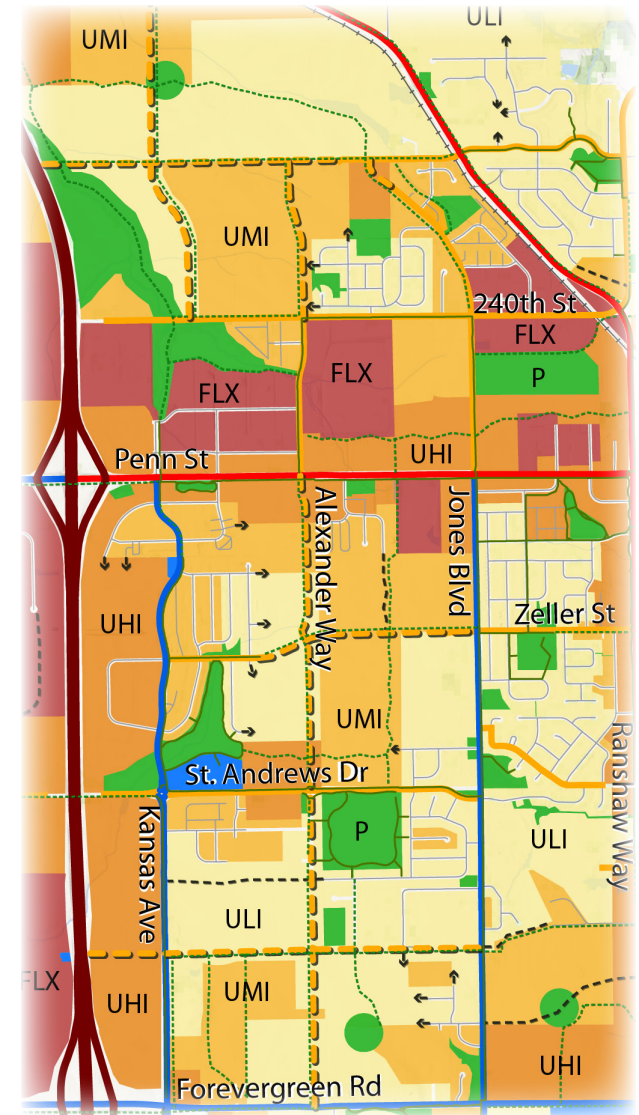




Figure 3.3: Future Land Use Map

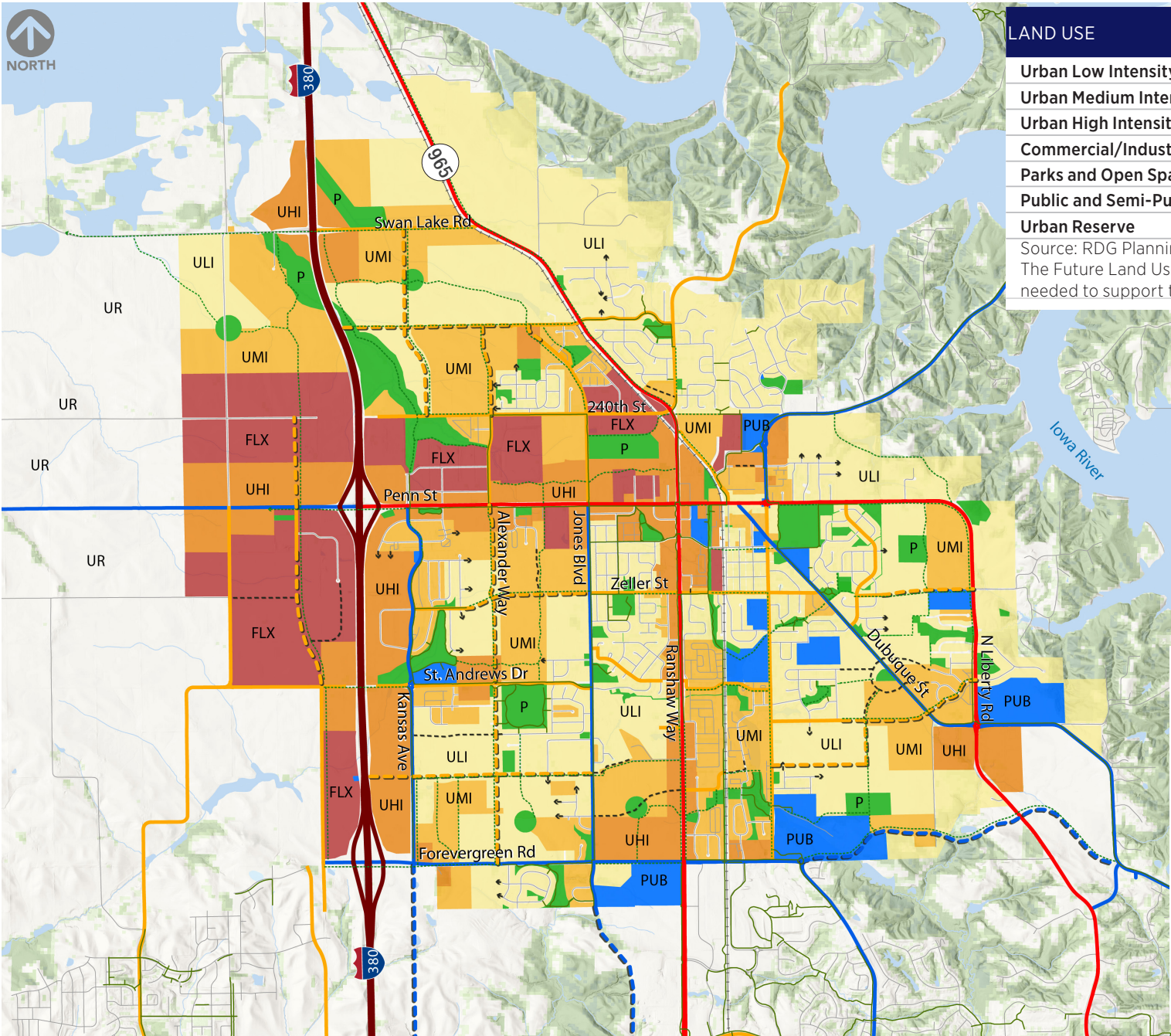


Figure 3.4: Future Land Use Designated Land

LAND USE	ACRES
Urban Low Intensity	3,700
Urban Medium Intensity	1,850
Urban High Intensity	1,570
Commercial/Industrial Flex	1,110
Parks and Open Space	665
Public and Semi-Public	388
Urban Reserve	1,500

Source: RDG Planning & Design  
The Future Land Use map shows well more land than needed to support the forecast 2040 population.



## Land Use Intensity Districts

Growing efficiently and in a way that contributes to a higher quality of life requires interconnected land uses that complement each other and allow a variety of housing and transportation choices. A proven market-based, land use planning model directs growth through land use intensity rather than single-use districts.

Land use intensity districts are the framework that classifies different areas of North Liberty and the types, forms, and intensities of development allowed in each area. District descriptions provide a sequential framework of land use designations with increasing levels of intensity. It is appropriate to compare them one to another when reading descriptions. For example, Medium-Intensity is more intense than Low-Intensity. Additionally, there are some areas that warrant more restrictive use requirements because of location, environmental protection, or pre-approved developments.

Figure 3.4 shows the types of land uses compatible with each district.

**Figure 3.4: Land Use Compatibility**

TRADITIONAL LAND USES	AGRICULTURE (AG)	URBAN RESERVE (UR)	URBAN LOW INTENSITY (ULI)	URBAN MEDIUM INTENSITY (UMI)	URBAN HIGH INTENSITY (UHI)	COMMERCIAL/ INDUSTRIAL FLEX (FLX)	PUBLIC AND SEMI PUBLIC (PUB)	PARK AND OPEN SPACE (P, OS)
Agriculture	●	●						○
Rural residential		●						
Low-density residential			●	○				
Medium-density residential			●	●	○			
High-density residential				●	●	○		
Rural commercial		●						
Neighborhood commercial			○	●	●	●		
Community commercial				○	●	●		
Regional commercial					○	●		
Low/medium intensity office			○	●	●	●		
High-intensity office				○	●	●		
Limited industrial		○				●		
Heavy industrial						○		
Parks and civic uses	●	●	●	●	●	○	●	●
Major public/civic facilities					○	○	●	○
Residential density range (du/A*)	≤40	≤40	3-8	7-14	14+	14+	NA	NA

● Permitted ○ Permitted with special review  
\*Dwelling Units per Acre

## Common Principles

All districts should follow these principles:

- **Mixed Land Uses.** All residential areas allow a mix of housing types and levels of non-residential development. However, overall intensity and density aligns with the intent of the underlying land use designation.
- **Environmental Preservation.** Sensitive natural features should always be protected. The Future Land Use map reserves major sensitive areas as parks or open spaces. The plan may not designate all sensitive areas but growth under all districts should accommodate natural features. All areas should also include stormwater best management practices, given the intensity of development.
- **Active Mobility.** The Future Land Use map identifies future road networks and proposed trail routes for efficient mobility within the city and to regional systems. Growth areas should include interconnected paths, even if not explicitly shown on the map. Connections may include complete streets, internal connections within developments, and greenway trails.



## Future Land Use: Urban Low-Intensity (ULI)

### Description

An efficient, walkable pattern of lower-density development. Compared to denser areas, ULI has more space and separation of uses, with farther distances between destinations and fewer shared amenities. Low-intensity areas can include a horizontal mix of primarily residential and limited non-residential uses at compatible lower densities and scales.

### Residential

Emphasis on single-family detached and attached residential developments. Attached housing projects may primarily be at transition areas between arterial or collector streets, small scale commercial uses, and higher intensity districts.

### Form and Features

- » General aggregate development density of 3 to 8 units per acre. Lot sizes can vary within developments to provide different housing types.
- » A framework of streets and open space should create neighborhoods and multiple access points for all types of transportation.
- » Open spaces, streets, and trail connections integrate with the larger community.

### Non-Residential

Generally secluded to neighborhood retail, office, and horizontal mixed-use but limited in frequency and scale. Low-intensity neighborhoods can include parks and civic uses like schools and places of worship.

### Form and Features

- » Buildings mostly two story or under.
- » Any neighborhood retail/office clusters are around arterial streets. Smaller retail/office and live/work arrangements may cluster along collector streets.
- » Building orientation to the street is preferred with parking in the side or rear yard.
- » Generally, commercial retail and office uses are appropriate next to attached housing developments or at district transitions to higher intensity districts.

## Low Intensity Spectrum





## Future Land Use: Urban Medium-Intensity (UMI)

### Description

More variety in housing arrangements and more allowance for activity areas that draw people from outside the immediate area for services or recreation. Increased intensity (compared to ULI) improves opportunities for economic activity and social interaction. Medium intensity areas include mostly a horizontal mix of residential and non-residential uses at compatible moderate densities and scale, although there may be opportunities for vertical mixed-use.

### Residential

Uses include a variety of housing types that may be on smaller lots. Housing mix can include single-family detached homes, duplexes, townhomes, and multi-family buildings to create integrated neighborhoods.

### Form and Features

- » General aggregate development density of 7 to 14 dwelling units per acre. Innovative designs should allow more public spaces than ULI.
- » Attached housing developments maintain the identity of the individual housing units.
- » High connectivity with multiple access points into neighborhoods. As compared to ULI, UMI encourages closer proximity between transportation, housing, and commercial services.

### Non-Residential

Neighborhood retail, office, and mixed-use options are still primarily horizontally mixed with shared parking. Parks and civic uses should be incorporated throughout.

### Form and Features

- » Buildings at four stories or lower.
- » Larger retail/office clusters should be around arterial streets and rail lines. Smaller retail/office clusters are appropriate on any street where transitions between residential uses or higher intensity districts occur.
- » Building orientation to the street is preferred with side or rear parking and pedestrian accommodations.

## Medium Intensity Spectrum



## Future Land Use: Urban High-Intensity (UHI)

### Description

These areas have increased economic activity and a higher frequency of diverse and complementary uses. High-intensity areas include more urban services with a horizontal and vertical mix of high-density residential uses and community to regional commercial uses of compatible densities and scales.

### Residential

Developments have more focus on non-residential buildings but still offer residential uses ranging from townhomes and apartments. Mixing residential with commercial uses on the same site is encouraged when feasible from a design and market capitalization standpoint.

### Form and Features

- » Aggregate development density at 14+ units per acre at sites with direct access to major arterial and collector streets. Development should avoid the creation of isolated multi-family development.
- » Edges of UHI residential developments transition to lower intensity uses or buffer from industrial/commercial uses through design, landscaping, and buffering.

### Non-Residential

More prevalent and focus in the UHI district that can include larger offices, medical buildings, commercial, and larger institutional uses such as places of worship, community centers, and indoor recreation.

### Form and Features

- » Buildings up to eight stories, mixed horizontally and vertically.
- » Good street access with multiple routes to highways and arterials, yet still including pedestrian accommodations. Trails and pathways integrated throughout developments to connect to parks, neighborhoods, and community destinations.
- » Heavy commercial uses allowed given they mitigate anticipated adverse impacts on adjacent land uses and are located on arterial streets or rail lines.

## High Intensity Spectrum



## Future Land Use: Commercial/Industrial Flex (FLX)

### Description

North Liberty's location on the Interstate and near major population centers make it a conducive location for large scale commercial and shipping related industrial development. Several areas should allow for a broad range of larger footprint commercial and industrial uses such as those with outdoor storage, regional shopping/bulk purchase centers, indoor manufacturing, warehousing facilities, technology centers, and similar scale uses.

### Residential

Developments are mostly secluded to non-residential buildings. Residential uses are typically not appropriate. Multi-family residential uses can be mixed into corporate campuses or employee provided housing arrangements.

### Non-Residential

Areas preserved for larger business development or regional commercial uses, generally over 20 acres. Uses may focus on manufacturing, warehousing, distribution, office, office/industrial flex spaces. Extraction, heavy materials production, and uses with significant outdoor operations are permitted with design regulations. Smaller commercial uses can be provided to support the primary employment generators.

### Form and Features

- » Intensity can vary but should have higher infrastructure and urban design standards along street frontages and transitions to lower intensity districts. Examples include landscaping, connections, storage screening, and buffering lower-intensity uses.
- » Special consideration is given to the image that travelers see along arterial roadways and from community destinations.
- » Industrial uses with high external effects like noise and smell are allowed given they mitigate anticipated adverse impacts on adjacent land uses and are located on arterial streets or rail lines. Operational standards should consider traffic, noise, lighting, and air quality. Strict control over signage, landscaping, and design is necessary for locations nearer to low intensity uses.

## Flex Area Spectrum





## Future Land Use: Public and Semi-Public (PUB)

### Description

To provide space for educational, institutional, assembly, and other public or semi-public uses with large footprints and attract vehicle and pedestrian traffic, including hospitals, schools, airports, libraries, and city hall.

### Form and Features

- » The land use plan identifies the largest public and semi-public uses but these uses can be incorporated into any area if at a similar intensity and form of that district.
- » Reliable pedestrian connectivity is required for high traffic uses such as parks, schools, and public spaces.

## Public/Semi-Public Spectrum



## Future Land Use: Parks and Open Spaces (P, OS)

### Description

Some areas contain valuable environmental features that should not be developed or that would make good recreational spaces. Areas intended for parks can be developed with recreational features while open space areas are more appropriate for habitat preservation with only passive recreation uses.

### Form and Features

- » Based around natural areas where wetlands, floodplains, and any other sensitive areas should be preserved. Development is limited to park areas.
- » Minimal site disturbance, green infrastructure, and stormwater management.
- » Development on the periphery should not remove trees or other natural landscaping to help retain natural filtering and protection from pollutants.
- » More intense recreation uses within parks, like sports complexes, should be treated like comparable commercial uses for the traffic and compatibility issues that they can generate.

## Park and Open Space Spectrum



## *Future Land Use: Urban Reserve (UR)*

### Description

Urban reserve areas are not planned for development in the foreseeable future. The designation means the appropriate land use should be determined closer to the development horizon to consider market forces and trends. Development proposals, including agricultural operations, should be reviewed for compatibility with future urban uses.

### Form and Features

- » Minimal infrastructure (rural arterials, no transit, water, or sewer).
- » UR land should not be permitted to develop at urban or rural residential densities until designating such land for residential development through a comprehensive plan amendment.
- » Adjacent developments should be designed for future expansion of streets, sewers, and other infrastructure facilities into the UR areas without configurations that require future growth to leap-frog development areas.

## *Future Land Use: Agricultural (AG)*

### Description

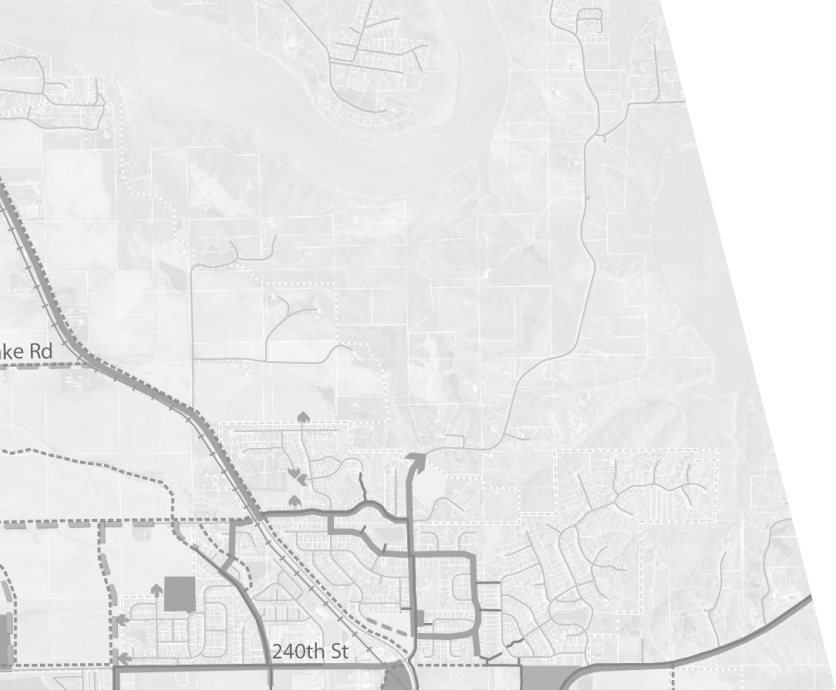
Agricultural areas are existing farms and crop cultivation that are not proposed for change in the planning horizon. Rural residences could exist in these areas.

### Form and Features

- » Restrictive land use with an emphasis on land preservation, such as crop cultivation. Rural residences with on-site utilities (septic) and not likely or able to connect to city services in the planning horizon.
- » For new rural residential outside urban reserve areas, street connections and layout should be reasonably compatible with urban land uses that may occur past the planning horizon.
- » New development of these uses should not occur in areas where city services can be provided or areas likely to have city services within the planning horizon.

## Urban Reserve Spectrum





# MOBILITY TOMORROW

Connected to Tomorrow must be built around a transportation framework that accommodates vehicles (cars and heavy transport vehicles), bicycles, pedestrians, and mass transit.





# VISION

**An accessible multi-modal transportation system that supports desirable patterns of community, neighborhood, and economic development.**

## Goals and Guiding Principles

- 1. Coordinate *transportation and land use plans*, focusing on critical connections illustrated in the land use plan.**
- 2. Integrate all modes of travel to allow each mode to complement the others and provide viable and efficient alternatives.**
- 3. Plan transportation improvements ahead of development, implement with development, and design for expansion to accommodate future development.**
- 4. Ensure site development standards accommodate pedestrians and cyclists.**
- 5. Establish safe multi-modal routes across Interstate 380 and other major streets in North Liberty.**
- 6. Embrace new transportation modes for the future, such as regional transit, rail, micro-mobility modes, and other unknown technologies.**
- 7. Use Complete Streets Principles on all arterial and collector streets, including features that positively add to the image of North Liberty.**

## THE MOBILITY PLAN IS:

1. *High Level – It does not show every needed street*
2. *Flexible – Exact paths may vary; connection points key*
3. *Service Driven – Reaching destinations via multiple routes or modes*

## Mobility Efforts in North Liberty Today

Participants in the Connected to Tomorrow planning process had many comments about transportation efficiency. There are already many projects planned in North Liberty and the region so that transportation systems can keep pace with growth. Policies and strategies in Connected to Tomorrow will build on these efforts.

- » Ranshaw Way improvements.
- » Forevergreen Rd and Dubuque St planning.
- » Interstate 380 future widening.
- » Transit studies for commuter rail.
- » North Liberty Transportation Assistance Program to fill a transit gap.

## Opportunities

**Interstate proximity and access.** North Liberty benefits greatly from access to the Interstate with direct access between Iowa City and Cedar Rapids. Its high visibility and convenient access create options for in- and out-commuting and business growth near the Interstate.

**Street hierarchy.** North Liberty's transportation network is set up for expansion with a hierarchy of streets where the majority of traffic is directed efficiently from neighborhood streets to collector streets and onto the arterial streets that ultimately lead to the final destination. Areas are reserved for continuing the system.

**Regional trails.** The Iowa City area is growing an excellent trail system through communities and natural resources. North Liberty is fortunate to have connections to this system. Continuing to fill critical regional gaps will create greater interest in North Liberty as a biking destination.

**An active population.** There is a high biker and walker presence around the city. Seeing this activity provides evidence and support for future investments in active transportation facilities for recreation and transportation.

## Policies and Strategies

1. *Continue to advance local and regional transportation plans.*
2. *Complete the "Liberty Loop" trail corridor concept.*
3. *Require all new residential development to provide multiple local street and pedestrian access points.*
4. *Advance conversations and investment into possible regional transit to North Liberty.*
5. *Prepare for new transportation modes like connected and automated vehicles.*

## 1. Continue to advance local and regional transportation plans.

The rapid growth of North Liberty comes with a near-term trade-off: congestion of previously adequate road systems. There are plans to improve several road segments in the coming years. Streets should be proactively planned for extension, expansion, and improvement to adequately serve new developments with continued future growth and local employment. To implement the future street plan, the City should follow three guidelines:

### A. Reserve Right-of-Way in Advance Based on the Future Land Use Map

Work with developers and property owners to reserve right-of-way for major streets before development. Right-of-way should accommodate multi-modal facilities, utilities, and future expansion. Developers should leave room to extend streets to future development by leaving stub streets or empty lots where extensions are planned.

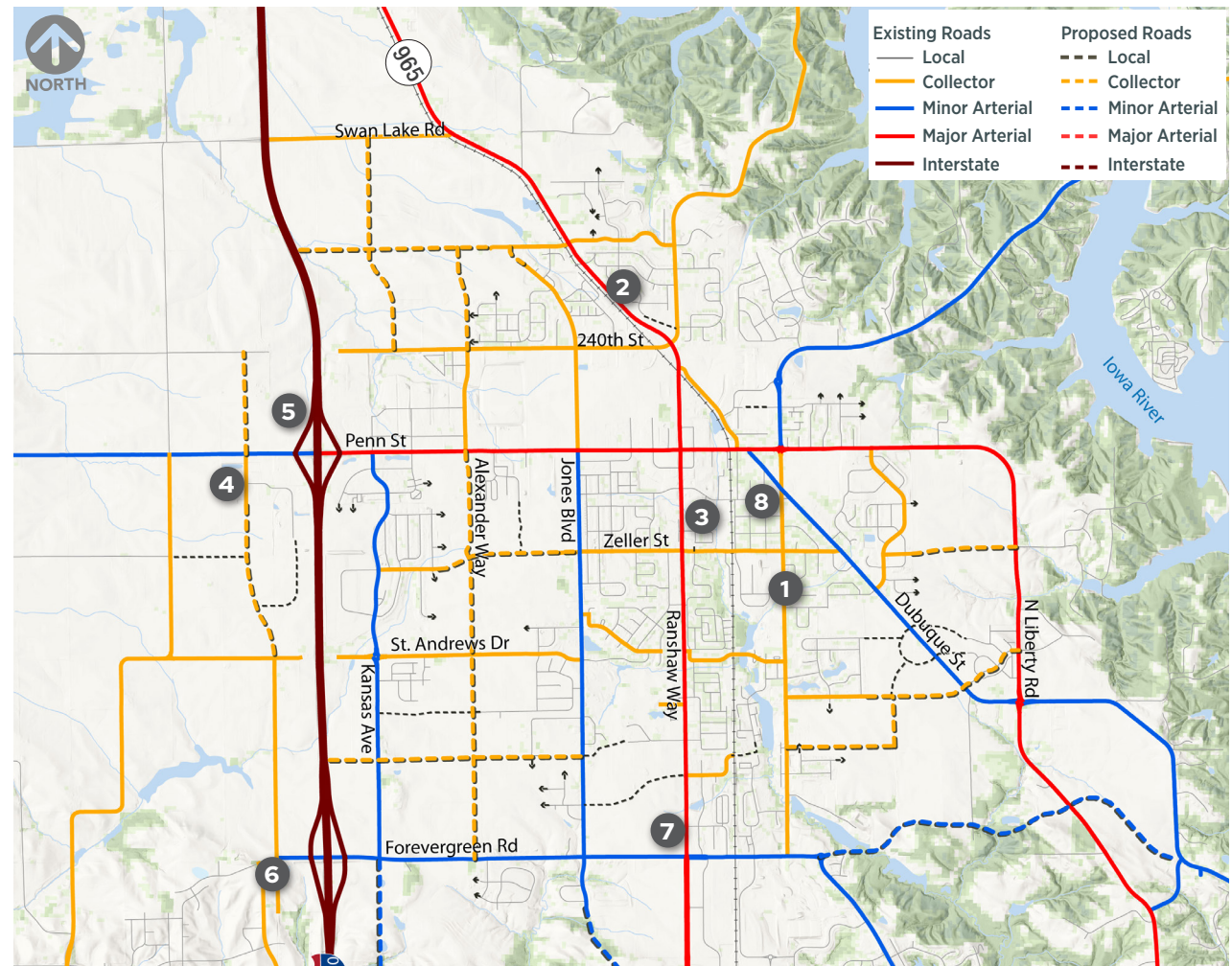
### B. Implement the Future Mobility Network Ahead of Development Whenever Possible

The City should work with developers to extend new roads or to improve existing roads as development demand arises. Street construction is one of the costliest pieces of new development. One way to control the cost is to avoid overbuilding streets. Local streets that are too wide or have more capacity than current or projected traffic volumes warrant are costly and often encourage speeding.

### C. Budget for Transportation Studies to Understand Needs Ahead of Growth

Balancing transportation investment with varying growth patterns is a challenge. Investments in significant transportation projects should be made with studies that support the need.

**Figure 3.5: Future Street Map**



### Planned Street Capital Improvement Projects Through Fiscal Year 2025

1. Dubuque St reconstruction
2. Ranshaw Way paved shoulders from 240th St to north city limits
3. Commercial Dr connection to W Zeller St
4. W Penn St reconstruction from Herky St to west city limits
5. Penn St/I-380 bridge replacement and widening
6. W Forevergreen Rd roundabout at S Jasper Ave intersection
7. Ranshaw Way full buildout from Hawkeye Dr to Forevergreen Rd
8. Various street reconstruction projects in Old Town

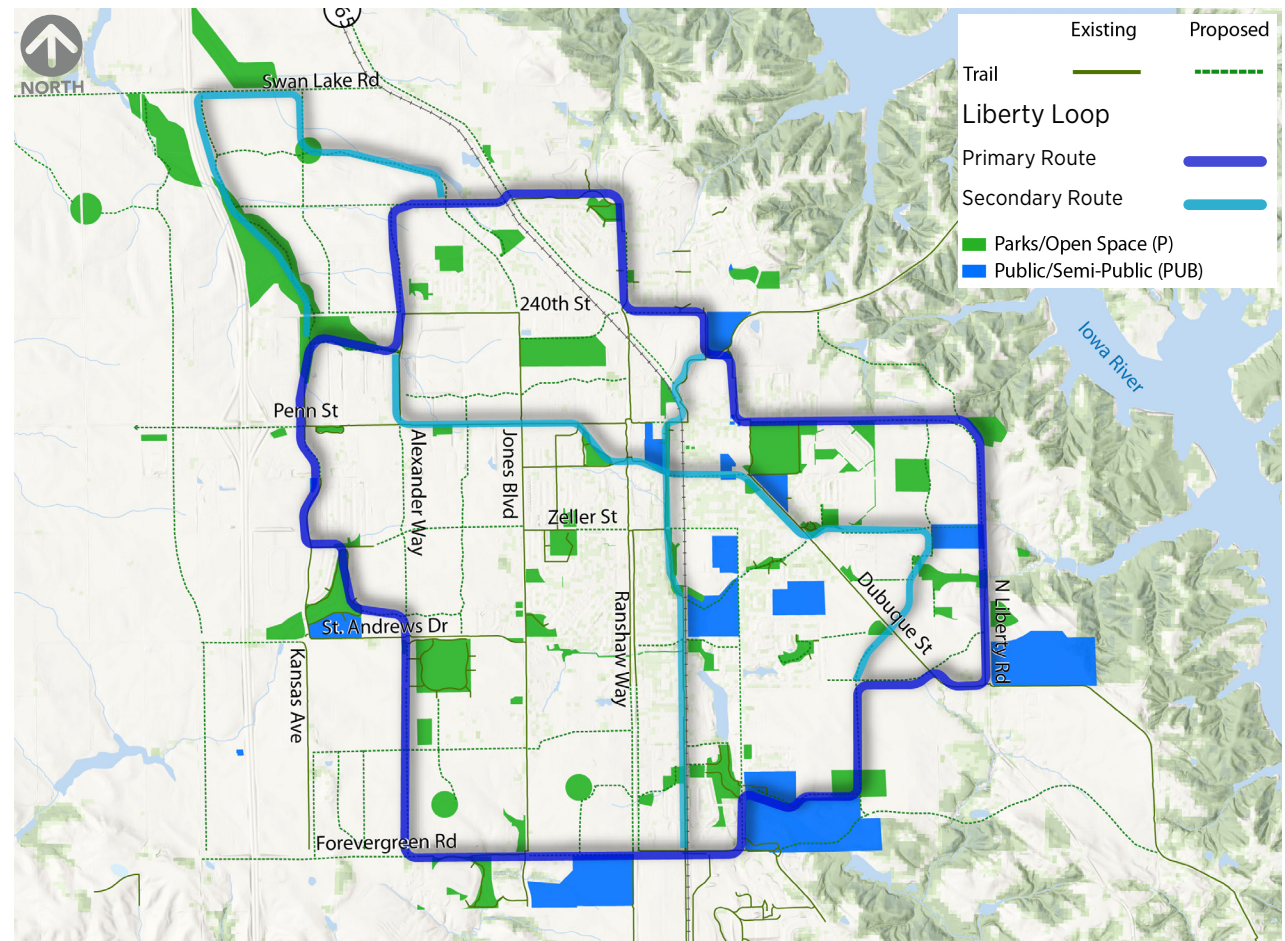


## 2. Complete the “Liberty Loop” trail corridor concept

The Liberty Loop was first envisioned in the 2019 Community Visioning and Branding effort. It represents much more than a connected mobility corridor throughout the city but an experience connecting recreational destinations across the city. The Loop varies in the level of capital changes. Some areas could be implemented through relatively low-cost tactical improvements and projects while others involve infrastructure improvements like new trails and on-street bike routes. Key concepts of the Loop routes versus other trail routes include:

- » More frequent wayfinding with distance markers and maps.
- » More prevalent pedestrian scale features like public art, destination branding, seating, and public spaces.
- » Destinations and areas along the trail that are programmed with recreational activities, events, and private businesses.
- » Parks do not have to be confined parcels of land. A well landscaped Loop route can become an extension of the park system as a trail network linking major parks in North Liberty.

Figure 3.6: Future Trail Map and the Liberty Loop





## Bicycle Route Enhancements

A critical component of making the Liberty Loop successful is the ability for people to get to the Loop from their doorstep. Fortunately, the City already requires sidewalks in all new developments and most existing neighborhoods have sidewalks. However, there will be portions of the Loop and other parts of the city where bicyclists prefer to ride on the street. Reasons often are because too many pedestrians are on the trails or they want to ride at faster speeds. A citywide designated on-street bike system should be developed to provide safer and more comfortable alternative routes for inexperienced and experienced cyclists.

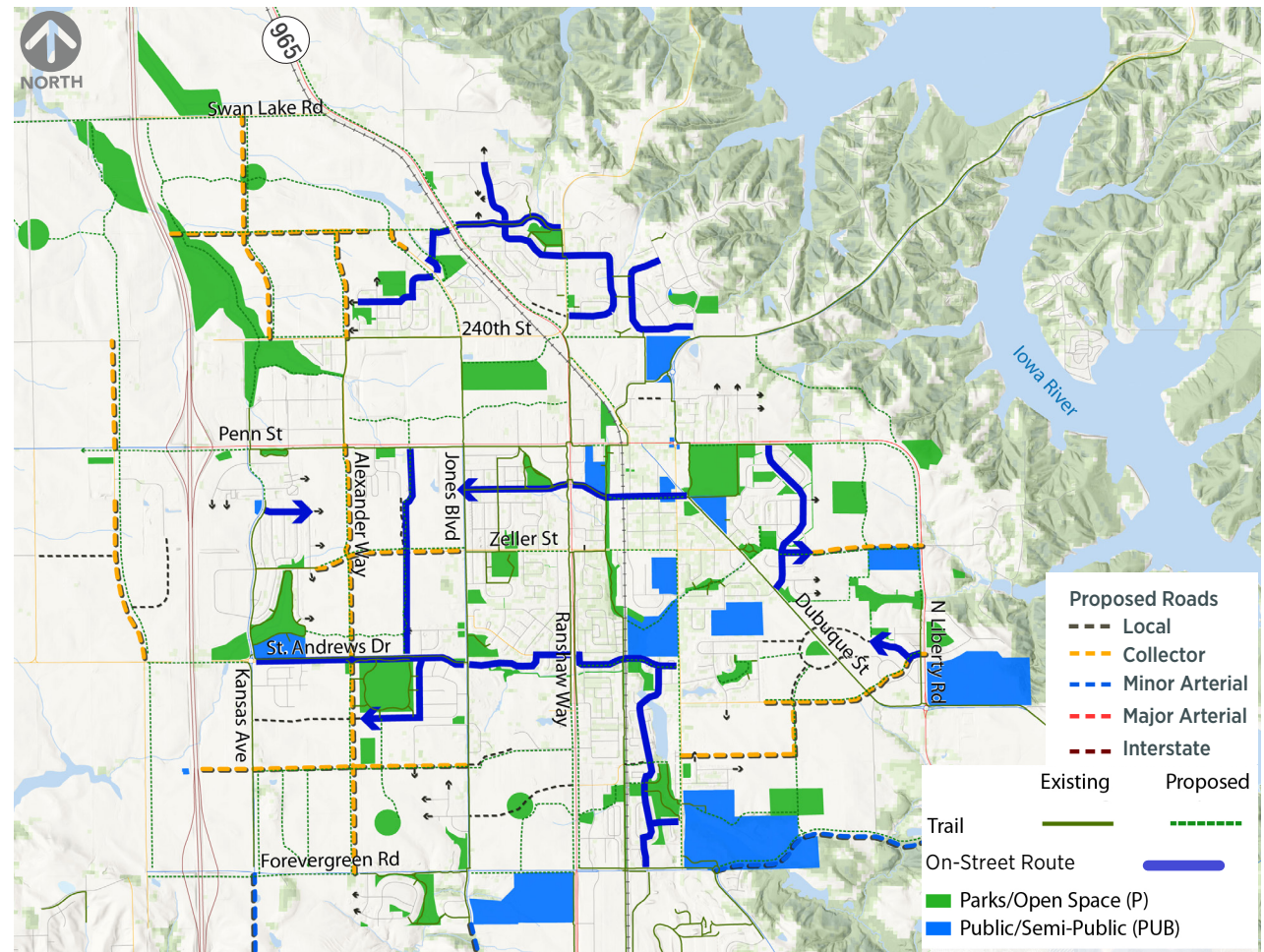
An on-street bike route system should use the following design principles:

- **Destination based.** The ability of a system to link starting points continuously to destinations, and to be easily and clearly understood by users.
- **Popular routes.** It is unnecessary to force bicycle access on streets they do not already travel on and deem the best alternative.
- **Lower volume streets.** The ability to minimize hazards and improve safety for users of all transportation modes.
- **Continuous segments.** The capacity to provide direct routes with minimum misdirection or unnecessary distance.

Figure 3.7 illustrates lower traffic volume streets that can be near-term targeted routes for safe on-street riding. These are places where motorists would expect to see people riding bikes on the streets. Approached to enhance these near-term routes should make parents feel comfortable letting their kids ride on the street to get to school or a park.

Enhancements would include different facilities like shared lane markings and signage. A longer-term plan should identify and plan on-street routes for experienced cyclists who want to avoid sidepaths. These streets would include bike lanes and other facilities that separate cyclists from vehicles.

Figure 3.7: Future Trail Map and On-Street Bike Routes



*The City should explore the benefits of a Complete Streets Policy. A “Complete Streets” approach is appropriate in most contexts that integrate people and place in the planning, design, construction, operation, and maintenance of the transportation network.*

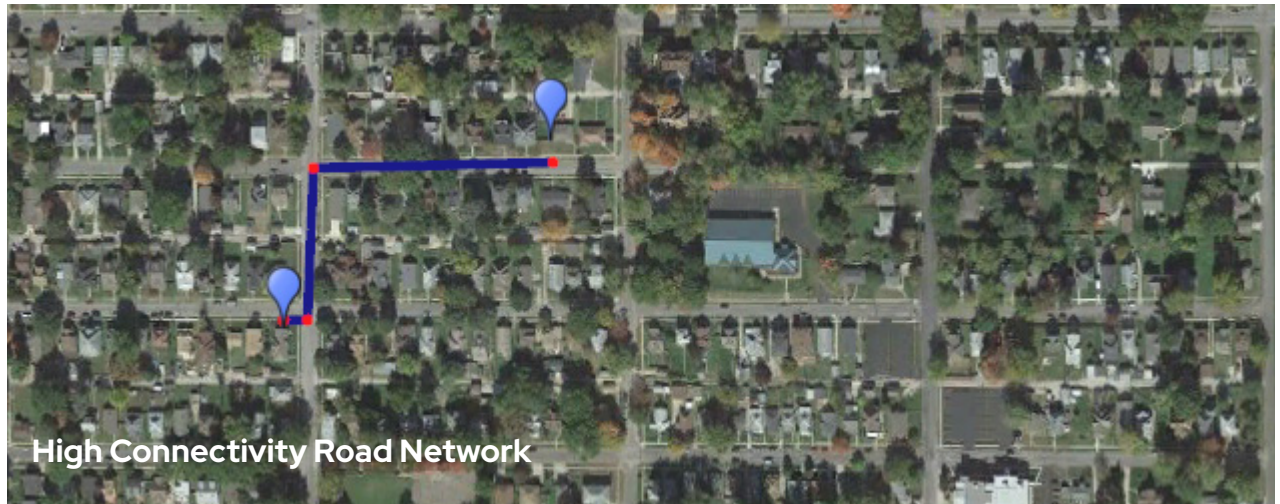
<https://smartgrowthamerica.org/what-are-complete-streets/>



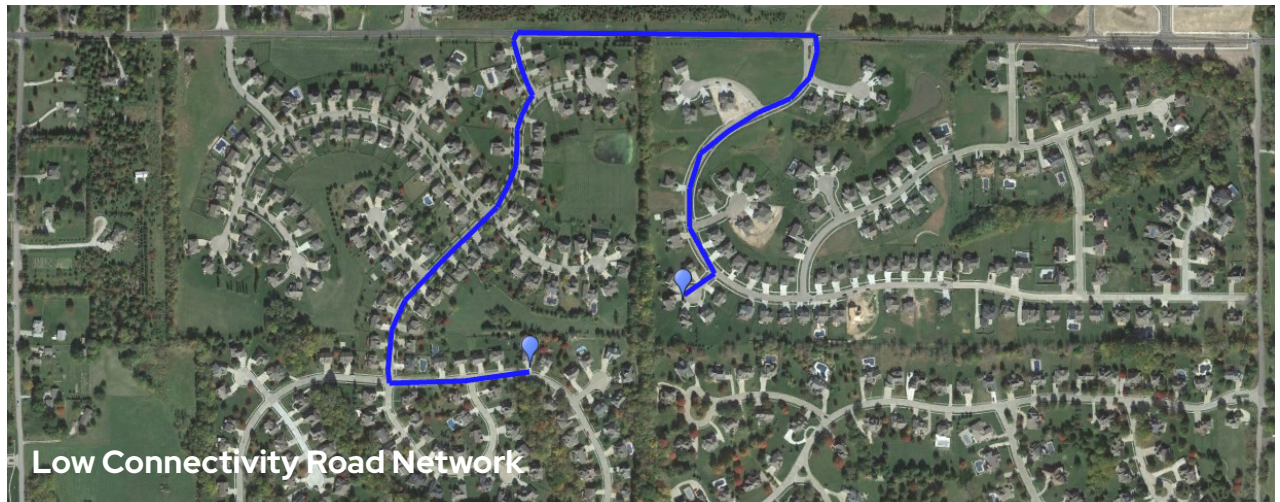
### 3. Require all new development to provide multiple local street and pedestrian access points.

Transportation and land development are codependent systems – a transportation system is created to serve land as it develops. Land can only develop as access is granted. Land use and transportation plans must be coordinated to provide adequate access to development sites and to advance a coherent land use plan. Additionally, proper access management improves the safety, congestion, and walkability of an area.

- » **Regulations review.** Continue to update regulations for ways in which connectivity and safety can be improved in subdivision and development design.
- » **Access management strategies.** Use access management strategies to manage access on the city's transportation system through infrastructure improvement projects or when modifications in access are needed, such as:
  - › Constructing backage roads for traffic to access parallel developments.
  - › Limit direct access to major arterial streets to only the major intersections.
  - › Reduce the number of curb cuts, and encourage interconnectivity of parking areas and shared access points.
  - › Optimize traffic signal timing and phasing.
  - › Use sidewalks as the primary pedestrian connections between properties and if a dead end street must be used, require gaps for pedestrian trails between properties.



0.13 Miles as the crow flies. 0.16 Miles via road network



0.13 Miles as the crow flies. 0.97 Miles via road network



#### 4. Advance conversations and investment into possible regional transit to North Liberty

Regional transit to North Liberty is an ongoing discussion. Shorter term considerations are to reach high-demand services in the region. Current services to and within North Liberty is based on-demand with limited hours of operation. North Liberty has a growing role in the regional transit system as population centers shift.

- » **Short-term.** The City should explore investing additional resources in existing assisted transportation programs. Funding sources might include using capital budgets, state and federal funding sources, and other available grants.
- » **Long-term regional partnerships.** Connected to Tomorrow alone will not be able to implement a regional transit system, whether bus or rail. As the area's population continues to grow and mobility demand evolves, transit support will get closer to reality. North Liberty should continue communication with these regional partners to keep efforts relevant and a priority in regional planning efforts.

#### 5. Prepare for new transportation modes like connected and automated vehicles

Spaces for vehicles, motorized mobility, and personal transportation devices are changing rapidly. For example, it is estimated that by 2040, one-third of the world's vehicles and over half of all new vehicles sold will be electric. Additionally, several electric personal mobility devices like scooters, hoverboards, and electric bikes add speed and convenience for short trips.

These technologies change how transportation spaces function. Standard design and planning should incorporate:

1. Updates to pavement marking, signing, and temporary traffic control standards as updated by the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD).
2. A local expert with the City on technology advances and how to prepare for electric and automated vehicles.
3. Pilots for connected vehicle infrastructure technologies to gain experience.
4. Signal phase and timing readiness into traffic signal construction and upgrade projects.
5. Complete Street strategies when rethinking right-of-way design for different mobility types.
6. Opportunities for non-traditional transit options that use these new technologies.



Source: [www.icgov.org/project/iowa-city-area-transit-study](http://www.icgov.org/project/iowa-city-area-transit-study)



Public Electric Vehicle Charging Stations



# SPACES & PLACES FOR TOMORROW



North Liberty is a place to grow and be part of a community. While many know North Liberty for its rapid growth and development visible from the Interstate, its history and character are much more. North Liberty does provide a unique living and visiting experience that goals and policies should advance through existing and new neighborhoods. These significant assets should be considered essential quality of life amenities and catalysts for investment and reinvestment.

# VISION

**Evoke a special feeling of resident pride, visitor interest, and business collaboration in North Liberty.**

## Goals and Guiding Principles

- 1. Provide and maintain** *adequate neighborhood and community parks and recreational facilities to serve local and regional needs.*
- 2. Create experiences** *at all entrances to North Liberty.*
- 3. Support efforts** *that increase the physical and social well-being of the community by bringing people together.*
- 4. Foster partnerships** *across the community and region to build North Liberty's identity and uniqueness.*
- 5. Incorporate arts and culture** *into public projects and support private efforts to enhance cultural features.*





## THE NORTH LIBERTY EXPERIENCE IS:

1. *Distinctly different from neighbors*
2. *Low stress and comfortable*
3. *Positive for all ages, demographics, and abilities*

### Efforts in North Liberty Today

The 2019 Community Identity and Branding effort initiated ideas to elevate how people remember North Liberty. Many of these ideas are happening already. A sample of other efforts include:

- » Ranshaw Way art and design improvements.
- » New City Hall public spaces.
- » Centennial Park enhancements and grant pursuits.
- » New park spaces being proposed near 240th St.
- » A range of events year round such as Welcoming Week, Blues and BBQ, and Beat the Bitter.
- » Improvements and additions to existing parks like Penn Meadows, Red Fern Dog Park, and Fox Run Park.

### Opportunities

**Cherry Street corridor.** The Cherry Street corridor has the most concentration of amenities and services in North Liberty. It should become a central public activity area that is walkable, identifiable, and welcoming.

**Gateways and entrances.** On the south, North Liberty and Coralville city limits are indistinguishable. In contrast, I-380 is the primary entrance on the west. Various entry signs and monuments are planned or already implemented. More significant features at I-380 entrances create statements. Examples could include bridge artwork or monuments with the Penn Avenue bridge being improved in the future.

**New development.** North Liberty will continue to see strong development interest as the region's institutions remain strong. The approach to land use development lends opportunities to require private and public open spaces within development and larger reservations for community park spaces along greenways, wetlands, and stormwater protection areas.

**Greenways and connected stormwater basins.** Many developments have stormwater detention basins. The City has successfully connected many of these areas to other greenways, drainage areas, trails, parks, amenities, and wildlife.

### Policies and Strategies

1. *Continually enhance existing parks over time, starting with a master plan for Centennial Park.*
2. *Dedicate parks in the development process based on local needs and the land use plan.*
3. *Create experiences by expanding streetscapes throughout the community with mobility, landscaping, and culture.*
4. *Monitor the application of design standards to ensure they produce good community aesthetics without overly restricting design creativity.*
5. *Advance the multi-modal wayfinding program with development and create gateway elements at community entries.*
6. *Partner with community groups to integrate community themes and unique features, including art/cultural amenities into developments.*

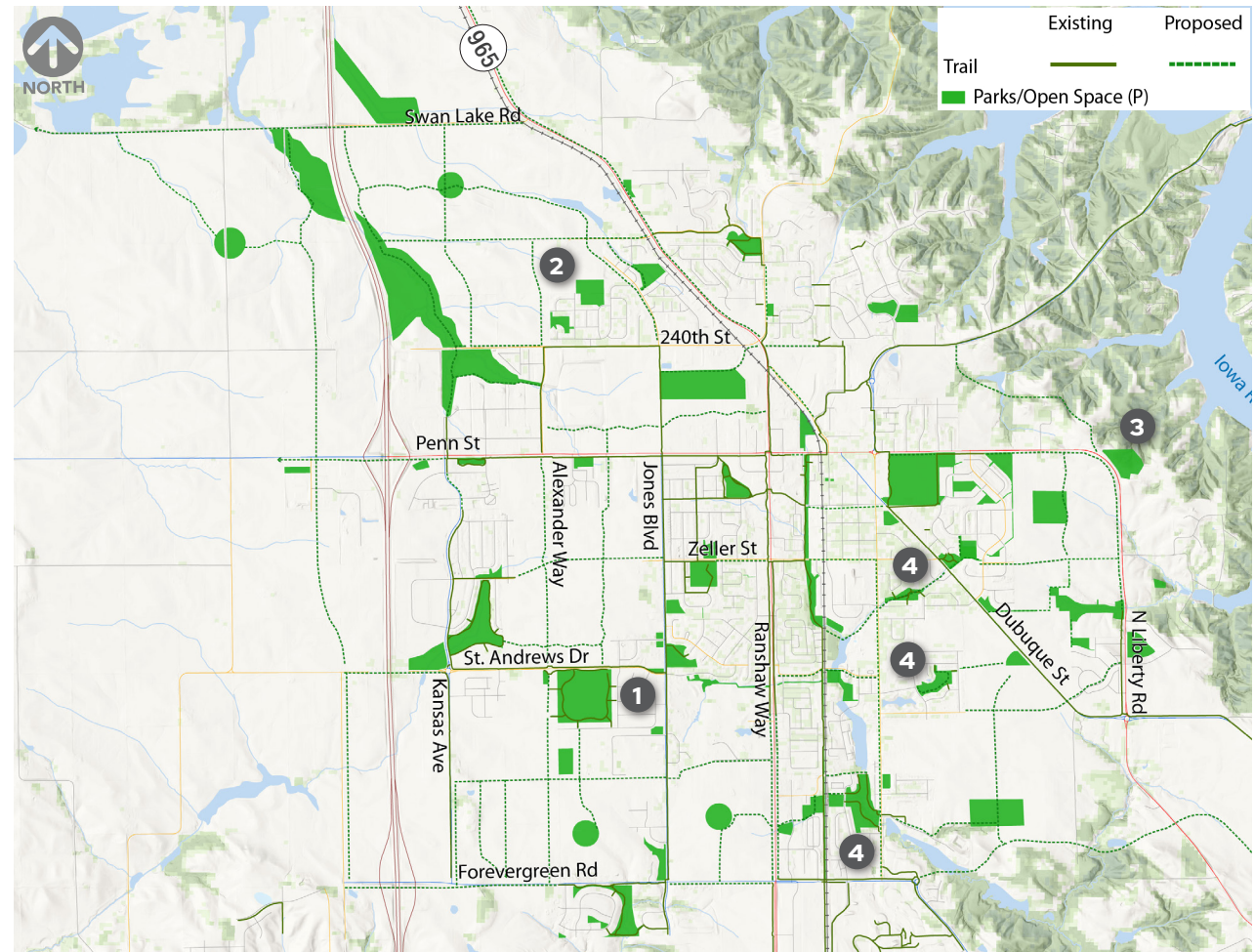
## 1. Continually enhance existing parks over time, starting with a master plan for Centennial Park.

Existing park spaces are crucial components of existing neighborhoods as spaces for interaction, neighborhood meetings, and character. Just like new parks, the needs within existing parks will change over time. Parks within existing developments are like the existing housing stock; if taken care of and updated occasionally, they can last through the next planning horizon. When parks become in disrepair, people don't want to live next to them, the space becomes unappealing to visitors, and the facilities can become unsafe.

All neighborhoods should have close access to a park, but a poorly maintained park does not count.

- » **Budget adequately based on a routine assessment of maintenance needs.** A systematic evaluation of maintenance needs and priorities will help ensure that funds for operations and maintenance are both adequate and targeted to address critical needs.
  - » This assessment begins with updating the 2016 Parks Master Plan that develops and maintains a thorough inventory of the conditions, with maintenance and replacement needs, of existing parks and facilities.
  - » It then establishes a maintenance standard and sets criteria and investment priorities. A systematic approach can help ensure adequate annual funding through the City's budget process.
- » **Evaluate recreational trends, demands, and facilities and adapt parks appropriately.** Evaluating changing interests and research ensures that the park system continues to meet

**Figure 3.8: Future Parks and Open Spaces - Existing Park Priorities**



the needs and desires of residents. Evaluation often occurs through regular conversations with special interest groups and advocates.

- » **Reinvest in existing parks located near neighborhoods with limited parks within walking distance.** While community parks are feature amenities in North Liberty, many families rely on existing neighborhood parks.

Key existing parks in Figure 3.8:

1. Centennial Park Master Planning.
2. Deerfield Park expansion to the north.
3. Additional space at Red Fern Dog Park.
4. Trails to and within Beaver Creek Park, Creekside Commons Park, and Broadmoor Estates Park.



## 2. Dedicate parks in the development process based on local needs and the land use plan.

Parks are a stable feature of North Liberty and an essential element for such a family oriented community. However, there are many users of North Liberty's parks beyond families. Therefore, variety is critical for a truly inclusive park system. By focusing on providing variety across the park system while offering comfortable ways to get between parks that are near every neighborhood, residents can safely get to an outdoor activity.

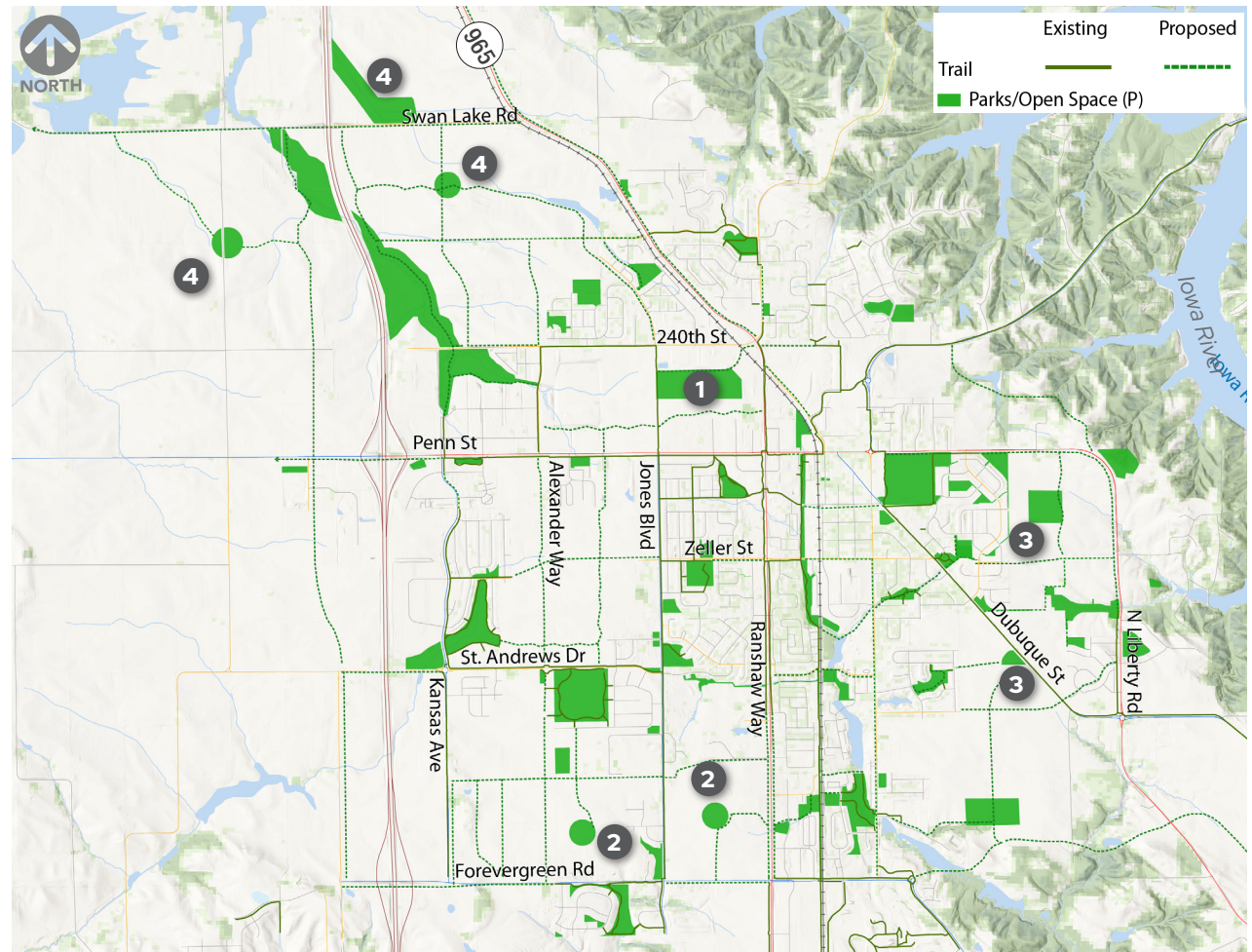
The Future Park map shows several areas that should incorporate a new park with development. **Final decisions for locating new park spaces should evaluate the following criteria:**

» **New growth and service gaps.** Residents should expect the City to maintain the current level of service or acres per resident. Figure 3.9 identifies general areas for parks that meet the potential future service needs. Priority areas include:

1. Develop a community park in the growth area north of Penn Ave.
2. Two neighborhood scale parks north of Forevergreen Rd and south of Centennial Park.
3. A neighborhood park near future neighborhood growth along Dubuque St.
4. Neighborhood parks and greenway/flood preservation areas north of 240th St as North Liberty grows.

» **Opportunities that align with the vision of Connected to Tomorrow.** Philanthropic opportunities can present themselves at any time. If opportunities arise, the City should work with partners to meet a community-supported vision.

**Figure 3.9: Future Parks and Open Spaces - Future Growth Areas**



» **Budget available for development of existing land.** North Liberty must be ready to assist in developing park projects in needed areas when the private sector proposes development, or at least reserve the land.

» **Visibility and accessibility.** Areas that have, or can have, good access by all modes of transportation are high priority park locations.

» **Environmental features.** Floodplains and greenways are an excellent opportunity to enhance stormwater protection, connect residents to the region's ecosystem, and expand the park system. Some parks should be kept passive with the natural tree and landscape cover to maintain sound stormwater control.

» **Recommendations from an update the parks master plan.** Ideally, the master plan is updated within the 10 year planning horizon.



### 3. Create experiences by expanding streetscapes throughout the community with mobility, landscaping, and culture.

The Liberty Loop described under Mobility Tomorrow is a primary opportunity to highlight unique multi-modal trail corridors that display an active community's image. Other key community corridors to enhance after Ranshaw Way include:

- » Penn Street
- » Kansas Avenue
- » Dubuque Street
- » Forevergreen Road
- » Cherry Street

By treating with special street landscape planting and maintenance requirements, these streetscape corridors should use greenery to increase transportation safety and maintain a visually uncluttered environment.

## ELEMENTS OF HEALTHY COMMUNITY DESIGN

The recommendations throughout Connected to Tomorrow reinforce or have a goal toward community design that makes healthy choices easier. These elements include:

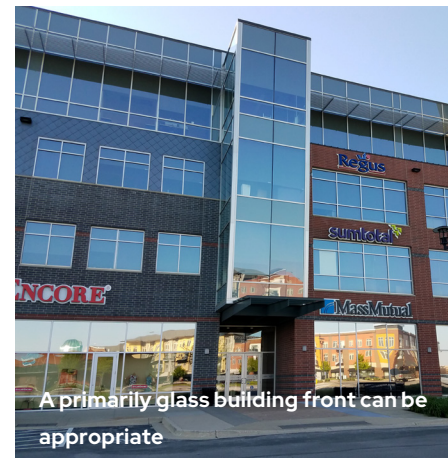
- Mixed-land use: homes, shops, schools, and work are close together.
- Pedestrian and bicycle-friendly.
- Accessible and socially equitable community.
- Housing for different incomes and different stages of life.
- Green spaces and parks that are easy to walk to.
- Safe public places for social interaction.

Source: Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Health Community Design Toolkit. [www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/toolkit/default.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/toolkit/default.htm)

### 4. Monitor the application of design standards to ensure they produce good community aesthetics without overly restricting design creativity.

Design standards can create a positive community aesthetic. However, they can also have unintended consequences, such as increasing housing costs or improper application. Recognizing the importance of creating an enjoyable, attractive, and envious community, North Liberty has adopted limited design standards for commercial districts and relies on the goals of the Comprehensive Plan to enforce.

**It will be important for the City to respond to undesirable design applications.** Most objective standards in the code today focus on masonry requirements, while other enforcement criteria are more subjective. This grants flexibility but does leave some questions unanswered on what should or should not get approved.



### Special Policy Areas

Several special areas are core to expressing an identity and unique place in the city. Standards for these commercial areas warrant different treatment to respect older character.

## 5. Advance the multi-modal wayfinding program with development and create gateway elements at community entries.

North Liberty's wayfinding system for motorists and pedestrians is evolving with growth to direct people to destinations. City signage should regularly be updated with the City brand. Wayfinding in new growth areas needs to be a priority for consistency. Lastly, a system of pedestrian scale signs along trail routes should be enhanced to maintain the active transportation experience and recommended strategies for the Liberty Loop in the Mobility Tomorrow section.

**The primary entry points into North Liberty deserve additional treatment as gateways to the community.**

» **Priority along I-380 exits and Ranshaw Way.** As community entryways, the Penn St., Forevergreen Rd, and Ranshaw Way corridors should welcome visitors as the gateway to North Liberty. Community gateways are the transportation routes where virtually all residents and visitors first begin to experience North Liberty. The City should design appropriate treatments to welcome residents and visitors. Gateway treatments like those identified in the 2020 Community Branding and Visioning report may include:

- » Art Sculptures
- » Landscaping
- » Welcome Signage



Source: Community Branding and Visioning. deNovo, Shive Hattery

» **Follow a consistent theme in all elements of the system.** The theme for all street and pedestrian scale signage should remain the same so travelers know they are on the right path when following the procession of sign directions.

» **Pedestrian and bicycle routes.** Include signs along trail routes that give directions and distances to citywide destinations within five miles (lower priority destinations can be listed at shorter distances), building entrances, and detour routes when a site is under construction.





*6. Partner with community groups to integrate community themes and unique features, including art/cultural amenities into developments.*

Art and culture help the public environment come alive. Cultural displays add to the aesthetics of a community and create a unique aspect of the public environment. Elements of culture can also become items of community involvement where residents can take part in creating elements. Ways to integrate unique community features could include:

- » **Remove barriers and encourage public art across the community from all age groups.** Public art is a great asset and one way to ensure its continuation is to establish a formal public art program or establish a commission that is charged with selecting and fundraising for new artworks or paths.
- » **Cultural displays (art, landscapes, play structures, etc.) should be integrated into public gathering places, including those planned for construction.** Priority areas for cultural installations include mixed-use areas, new streetscapes, the Liberty Loop, community gateways, and around schools.

The City's 2019 Public Art Guide and Recommendations document provides initial guidance on public art locations.

### Art in Placemaking



Pavement Art



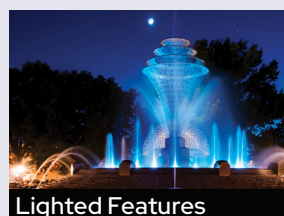
District Markers/Theme



History in Public Spaces



Play Spaces



Lighted Features

### Participatory Art



Performance/Theaters



Art in Play Features



Local Artist Exhibits

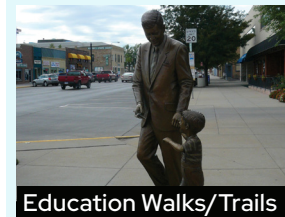


Street/Sidewalk Paint



Events/Gatherings

### Educational Art



Education Walks/Trails



Youth Art



Art in Play Features

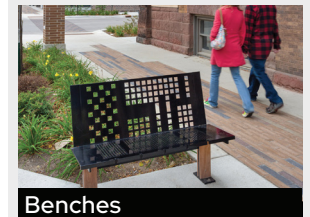


Sidewalk Education



Boards/Displays

### Functional Art



Benches



Art Walls



Planters and Seating



Art Through Pathways




Wayfinding Art





# OUR ENVIRONMENT TOMORROW



North Liberty benefits greatly from being near unique outdoor recreation spaces to the east and north. Additionally, its residents understand how development influences the character of these areas. Water quality, flooding, and energy consumption are some examples affected by rapid growth. North Liberty is taking a proactive approach to sustainable development in several ways.

# VISION

**Support natural environmental features while taking measures to mitigate and adapt to changing climate.**

## Goals and Guiding Principles

- 1. Protect** all environmentally sensitive areas and unique physical features within the municipal boundaries – including habitats.
- 2. Maintain** and, where feasible, **improve** the natural and aesthetic quality of the region's water resources.
- 3. Examine the influence** on climate from site development and seek ways to mitigate negative influences.
- 4. Take innovative approaches** to sustainability and being climate friendly – be proactive rather than reactive.
- 5. Expand natural landscapes** through street design, commercial development, trail corridors, parks, and public spaces.
- 6. Support and cooperate** with regional efforts to improve water quality.

## A SUSTAINABLE NORTH LIBERTY IS:

1. *Adaptable to environmental changes*
2. *Conscientious how decisions affect the environment*
3. *A leader in innovative sustainability*

### Efforts in North Liberty Today

The sustainability framework is strong in North Liberty. These current programs, policies, and regulations are consistent with the objectives of the Future Land Use Map.

- » Continued facility enhancements to improve water quality and reduce pollution.
- » Various creek stabilization projects.
- » Incorporating bio cells into public projects.
- » LED lighting fixtures as the standard.
- » Operates a Tree and Stormwater Advisory Board.
- » Enforces a stormwater management ordinance with best management practices according to the Iowa Storm Water Management Manual.

### Opportunities

**An involved community.** Participants in the planning process acknowledge the need to be mindful of changing environmental conditions. There would be strong support for efforts to be proactive and mitigate North Liberty's contribution to known climate change factors.

**Surrounded by leading institutions.** The advancements of institutions in the region in environmental fields provide many examples of innovative designs to protect natural features. North Liberty can contribute to these innovative approaches and be a leader in Iowa.

**Many standards and policies are in place.** As North Liberty grows, a good framework is in place to ensure environmental conservation and mitigation of development impacts.

### Policies and Strategies

1. *Based on community input, consider completing a climate action plan.*
2. *Add an environmental/climate impact statement to all staff reports for City Council decision making.*
3. *Ensure codes have conservation standards and best management practices that protect sensitive features but allow density accommodations where least influential.*
4. *Evaluate using alternative energy sources in infrastructure and public facilities that save costs, are more efficient, and improve the environment.*
5. *Pursue actions in other local or regional plans relevant to North Liberty.*



### *1. Based on community input, consider completing a climate action plan.*

As the general public becomes more aware of the research, terminology, and impacts related to climate change, comes more desire for accountability by public and private entities. Several larger cities in Iowa have or are adopting climate action plans. North Liberty can lead the way for the next tier of cities. These plans serve purposes beyond a general strategic or comprehensive plan to focus on specific actions related elements such as:

1. Energy and Resource Use
2. Buildings and Infrastructure
3. Food Systems and Security
4. Waste Management and Reduction
5. Climate Preparedness and Resilience

### *2. Review environmental/climate impacts in staff reports for City Council decision making.*

Urban planning, development, and other traditional policies affect our climate future, whether large or small. But small design decisions can add up to higher costs. For example, large minimum lot size requirements that strain public services and consume land create a less walkable and unsustainable environment.

The long-term or aggregated environmental impact of design decisions, policies, equipment, and so on are not obvious to untrained professionals. A simple statement, review, or best practice based on industry research or expert knowledge will improve decision-making outcomes and keep the public informed.

### *3. Ensure codes have conservation standards and best management practices that protect sensitive features but allow density accommodations where least influential.*

The Future Land Use Map significantly focuses on allowing many uses in neighborhood development. The intensity levels on the map are not meant to occur at the expense of environmental features in North Liberty or surrounding areas. North Liberty is fortunate to generally be free of major flood hazards. However, poor development patterns and management still influence site-specific flooding and downstream effects.

## Resources

### *Iowa - State Climate Summaries 2022 (ncics.org)*

<https://statesummaries.ncics.org/chapter/ia/>

### *National Risk Index for Natural Hazards*

<https://www.fema.gov/flood-maps/products-tools/national-risk-index>

### *EPA's Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool*

<https://ejscreen.epa.gov/mapper/>

## **"GREEN" INFRASTRUCTURE WITH COMMUNITY BENEFITS**

The sample of tools illustrated on the next page also provide aesthetic enhancements and potential for passive recreation spaces.

## Site Design Approaches

Effective management starts on individual sites:

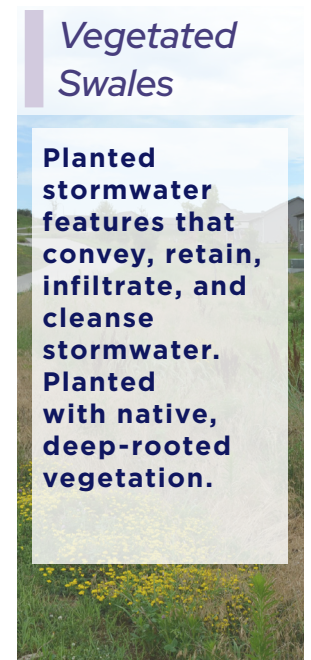
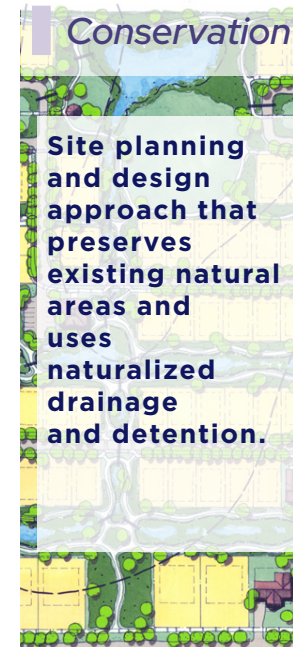
- » **Adopt more stormwater best management practices.** An environmentally oriented approach using best management practices can supplement structural infrastructure and lessen maintenance costs for traditional infrastructure. North Liberty already requires some level of on-site best management practices under the Iowa Stormwater Management Manual. However, the guidelines in the Manual can be strengthened for North Liberty.
- » **Subdivision regulation for outlots.** Sometimes a developer will manage on-site stormwater by placing a detention or retention pond in an outlot contained in the development. While the outlots achieve their intended purpose, they often require engineering the natural water courses on the original site. North Liberty should continue making these outlots usable to the public.
  - » A preferred alternative is naturalized detention. These systems work with the environment and natural drainage patterns and/or prairie vegetation to improve water quality and habitat benefits.
- » **Preserve existing trees.** With the pace of development, preserving existing mature trees to the greatest extent possible maintains habitats, mitigates soil erosion, and improves the community's aesthetics. Much of North Liberty has developed in the last 20 years. These areas are starting to be shaped by street trees planted at the time of their development. Older parts of the city have a mature tree canopy that add a desirable character.
- » **Ensure there are trash and recycling receptacles in all parks and spaces along all trails.** While not directly related to stormwater

management, this reduces the impulse of littering and presents a clean and responsible city.

## Land Preservation Approaches

Developments near natural open spaces and parks should incorporate additional considerations. The Future Land Use Map preserves many of these natural areas from development.

- » **Conservation easements.** These are legal mechanisms for landowners to place voluntary restrictions on the future use of their land. It generally requires a landowner to sell, permanently relinquish, or donate the rights of development. Tax benefits may be available for some easements. Conservation easements can facilitate the protection of the natural environment and stormwater system to create interconnected open space networks or buffers from sensitive areas. Future growth areas to the north and northwest have better use for this tool.
- » **Public acquisition.** In certain instances, the City may have the opportunity to acquire land in sensitive flood or stormwater areas. However, with acquisition comes future maintenance and upkeep costs. The City might only consider acquisition if significant community amenities are included in its development. These add to the neighborhood's value and allow the City to recoup costs through higher quality neighborhoods.
- » **Cluster subdivisions.** Allowances for concentrated density can be allowed to developers when preserving drainageways or wetlands. The practice maintains an aggregate minimum density in a neighborhood.
- » **Drainageway buffers.** An ordinance can require new developments to include more detailed studies to define required buffer widths. The practice aims to minimize soil loss and impacts on natural areas to support a healthy stormwater and stream system within the drainage system.





#### 4. Evaluate using alternative energy sources in infrastructure and public facilities that save costs, are more efficient, and improve the environment.

Residents of North Liberty want to improve the environment and know that their city does too. The costs of installing renewable energy systems continue to decline to compete with traditional energy systems. Using renewable energy in some public facilities helps defray utility costs in the long run and shows North Liberty's efforts to preserve the environment.

#### 5. Pursue actions in other local or regional plans relevant to North Liberty.

North Liberty cannot and should not expect to have its largest influence without taking a regional approach. Local stakeholders should remain involved in regional efforts to manage environmental resources and offer solutions. These regional strategies are part of North Liberty's strategy. Examples include:

- » **Implementing the pedestrian and bicycle actions in Mobility Tomorrow.**  
The option to safely and comfortably walk or bike to nearby destinations like downtown reduces vehicle trips, reduces parking needs, and shows an inclusive community for all modes of transportation. This includes ADA accessible routes.
- » **Enforce the future land use and mobility plan that preserves greenways and natural features while maintaining compact and contiguous development patterns.**
  - » In addition to creating more comfortable and healthy living arrangements for residents, this pattern is also efficient for infrastructure and community services. If implemented as a standard development practice, contiguous and compact development reduces the total infrastructure needed while reducing stormwater runoff and environmental impacts.
- » **Coordinate with Johnson County and the Johnson County MPO on regional planning efforts that involve greenway preservation, flood mitigation, and climate adaptation.**

## RENEWABLE ENERGY PROGRAMS

There are many programs to assist public and private entities transition. Some offer incentives while other encourage requirements for renewable energy use.

**Solar Energy.** SolSmart is a national program that helps cities achieve "solar ready" designations for the private market. No cities in the Wichita metro currently have a designation. [solsmart.org](https://www.solsmart.org)

**Sustainable Development Code.** Many cities are starting to incorporate incentives into code regulations, and at time requiring better energy use. The Sustainable Development Code is one resource to discover code updates related to sustainable energy for public or private projects. [sustainablecitycode.org](https://www.sustainablecitycode.org)

**Private Programs.** The City can lead efforts to educate residents and businesses on programs available to them. Examples include property tax exemptions, personal tax deductions, and corporate tax deductions. [epa.gov/statelocalenergy](https://www.epa.gov/statelocalenergy)



A regional approach with all stakeholders seeking the same objective is most effective for environmental benefits





# AN INCLUSIVE TOMORROW

North Liberty is a model of neighborhood level organizing with resource support provided by the City. Neighborhoods are much more than places to live. A neighborhood includes parks, public spaces, and opportunities to welcome many different households. The future success of North Liberty will depend on its ability to diversify to meet the needs of various age groups, demographics, and income ranges. Most essential is providing housing options for those with limited means and abilities in areas close to needed services.



# VISION

**Grow by creating neighborhood nodes of commerce or recreation that provide diversity in housing types, demographics, and income levels.**

## Goals and Guiding Principles

- 1. Encourage a variety** of dwelling unit types, styles, sizes, and price points to satisfy the needs, desires, and income levels of all people and household sizes.
- 2. Elevate housing** as a public good to attract residents, promote economic development, and increase quality of life.
- 3. Regulate the transitions** of site intensity rather than the type of use to grow neighborhoods.
- 4. Reinforce, maintain, and upgrade** the character of individual residential neighborhoods.
- 5. Connect all neighborhoods** with mobility options, public spaces, parks, and commercial services.
- 6. Celebrate** and seek opportunities for diversity across all neighborhoods.
- 7. Proactively attract** and welcome diversity and inclusion of residents and business owners of all demographic backgrounds.



## LIVING IN NORTH LIBERTY IS:

1. *Welcoming*
2. *Easy to navigate and accessible*
3. *Connected to community services and destinations*

### Efforts in North Liberty Today

Quality of life and inclusivity bleed through all parts of Connected to Tomorrow. The existing efforts reinforce the importance the community already places on these topics.

- » An active Neighborhood Ambassadors program.
- » Increasing role of an Outreach & Equity Coordinator and a Diversity, Equality, and Accessibility Committee (IDEA).
- » Adoption of codes that support diversity and inclusion.
- » Code updates to allow more housing variety.
- » A variety of annual community events that welcome new residents and cultures.
- » Improvements to Old Town around the new City Hall location.

### Opportunities

**Existing neighborhoods.** Existing neighborhoods, especially those from the first city plat, are vital to providing some affordable housing options in North Liberty. In addition, these neighborhoods contribute varying characters to the built environment.

**Growing diversity.** While today North Liberty is not any more diverse demographically than the State of Iowa, it is in a much more diverse region than other areas in Iowa. The current efforts to enhance cultural amenities and activities are above and beyond many other cities and create a community that will feel more welcome for various households to call home.

**Embracing growth.** People in North Liberty accept the growth trajectory and strong housing construction but desire new housing types throughout the city. This support for variety offers the development community and the City the opportunity to introduce innovative neighborhood configurations, housing products, and amenities.

**School district.** While Connected to Tomorrow does not explicitly provide direction or analysis of school districts, it is nonetheless an essential part of North Liberty's identity. Schools are why many residents migrate to North Liberty. Residents will continue to bond and socialize over school events, intramurals, and other activities. The District's influence on the community is significant.

### Policies and Strategies

1. *Continue to direct CIP funds to infrastructure improvements in older neighborhoods, with consideration for how to concentrate investments to achieve maximum impact.*
2. *Consider incentive programs for housing that meets determined community needs.*
3. *Leverage the Neighborhood Ambassadors to continue programming ways to welcome new residents and cultures to North Liberty.*
4. *Complete a policy, program, and code audit to evaluate unintentional barriers or missed opportunities to welcome diversity in North Liberty.*
5. *Create neighborhood subarea plans/ strategies to conserve quality neighborhoods, starting with the policy areas identified in this plan.*
6. *Continually evaluate the market and respond to demands.*



*1. Continue to direct CIP funds to infrastructure improvements in older neighborhoods, with consideration for how to concentrate investments to achieve maximum impact.*

For any city, the best source of affordable housing is the city's existing housing stock. Maintaining those units and the services provided in neighborhoods like Old Town is essential to ensure a continued supply of safe and affordable housing. Strategies should ensure the stability and livability of established neighborhoods.

- » **Target areas with regular repair orders, areas of affordable housing, and community institutions.** These areas are important to the community and should receive equal treatment as newer growth areas visible to most visitors to improve the image and character of the community.
- » **Evaluate investments needed to better serve the Holiday Mobile Home Court and Golf View Mobile Home Park.**

#### 2022 Neighborhoods

- |                           |                      |                                     |                            |   |                                       |
|---------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Aspen Ridge            | 8. Kansas Ave        | 16. Cedar Springs                   | 22. Beaver Creek           | 27. Creekside Adjacent/<br>Woodland Meadows | 32. Penn Heights                      |
| 2. Fox Run                | 9. West Lake         | 17. W Penn St                       | 23. Holiday                | 28. Creekside                               | 33. Scanlon Farms                     |
| 3. Deerfield              | 10. The Preserve     | 18. Penn Meadows                    | 24. Golfview               | 29. Windsor Farms                           | 34. Vintage Estates                   |
| 4. 8 Point Trail          | 11. Harvest Estates  | 19. W Zeller St/<br>Liberty Heights | 25. Cottonwood/<br>Lynwood | 30. Fox Valley                              | 35. Mickelson Estates                 |
| 5. Progress St/Jones Blvd | 12. Quail Creek      | 20. Old Town                        | 26. Broadmoor Estates      | 31. Arlington Ridge                         | 36. Keystone Place<br>at Forevergreen |
| 6. Goose Lake             | 13. Quail Ridge      | 21. Garner                          |                            |   |                                       |
| 7. Chesterfield Commons   | 14. Quail Ridge Park |                                     |                            |   |                                       |
|                           | 15. Liberty Centre   |                                     |                            |   |                                       |

**Figure 3.10: North Liberty Neighborhoods and Target Investment Areas (2022)**



## 2. Consider incentive programs for housing that meets determined community needs.

North Liberty has one of the higher median household incomes in the area and the state. The community is desirable for raising a family and attracts higher income earners looking to move into or build new homes that fit their needs. Most new construction is valued higher and beyond the reach of households making moderate to lower incomes.

North Liberty should be a place with options for all people to thrive regardless of age, abilities, or means. Strategies offer opportunities in a market that may not produce all housing needs naturally.

### Design & Environmental Impact

It will be important when guiding growth to avoid creating secluded enclaves of housing that cater to one type of household based on age or ability. The mixed-use intensity approach of the Future Land Use Map encourages a broad mixing of uses that creates richer neighborhoods and close access to services.

- » **Direct City investments and redevelopment dollars toward mixed-use projects.** The City should prioritize infrastructure and redevelopment dollars toward projects that create mixed use destinations.
- » **Evaluate City programs and development standards for diversifying housing types, tenure, and price points within developments over a certain size.** This includes consideration of financial incentives and acquisition of land for low-income housing and consideration of public participation in infrastructure or other development costs to create additional housing opportunities.

### Age and Ability

With a growing city that attracts families also comes the attraction of grandparents. The diversity of housing styles and development design is vital, but housing must also accommodate individuals with varying levels of independence at various stages of life. Homes and neighborhoods that offer the ability to age comfortably in North Liberty are essential to future growth.

- » Work with neighborhoods to explore the modification of selected single-family zoning districts to permit **accessory dwelling units and duplexes** on lots that meet specific criteria focused on design compatibility.
- » Require large scale projects to **incorporate accessible design standards** into at least a portion of units. This includes housing for the physically and mentally disabled. Often these may be in more group quarters settings. Accessible design standards include features that are hard to add later. Therefore, homes can easily be adapted for aging or physical disabilities and should be considered as requirements in certain developments.
- » Recognize that rental and condo units are for everyone. Closely tied to accessible design, **Universal Design** means that every aspect of a home from the bathroom to the garage is more convenient and comfortable to use for everyone, not labeled by age or ability. Universal Design standards should be applied to at least a portion of all units within more substantial projects or subdivisions.

### Underserved Price Points

Consider repair and maintenance programs that provide financial assistance for lower income households to invest in their homes. These price points may be rental or owner units.

- » **Emergency repair program** for very low-income residents in need of emergency repairs. Once a lower-income household finds attainable housing in North Liberty, they may need further security. These programs are designed to meet critical individual needs and keep viable housing from deteriorating.
- » **Energy efficiency loans** for improvements that can extend the life of a house and substantially reduce utility bills for a household. While most housing in North Liberty is new, some of the most attainable options are older with potentially lower efficiency.
- » **Include development criteria for housing assistance.** Any incentives to projects with a residential component, whether from the City or the economic development community, should favor housing developments that blend income levels.

## AVAILABLE PROGRAMS TODAY

- *Johnson County Housing Trust Fund Homeowner Rehab (varied funding)*
- *East Central Iowa Council of Governments Housing Rehab Program*

### 3. *Leverage the Neighborhood Ambassadors to continue programming ways to welcome new residents and cultures to North Liberty.*

North Liberty is already doing a fantastic job at introducing a variety of programming to engage new residents and welcome many cultures. Much of this is a testament to recently adding an Outreach & Equality Coordinator. These efforts should continue to grow with devoted resources and participation. Principal ongoing objectives include:

- » **Review and regularly monitor all policies, ordinances, and programs for their influence on encouraging or discouraging diversity and inclusion in North Liberty.**
  - › Urban planning, development, and other traditional policies affect social diversity. Historically, some land policies were rooted in racial motives to separate white and non-white households. Research shows that some policies still influence diversity and inclusion in communities. The effects reduce the ability to grow as an enriching place for all people and backgrounds. This includes celebrating and representing existing residents' diverse social and cultural backgrounds.
- » **Continue to offer public events celebrating social and cultural diversity in the community.**
  - › These could be incorporated into other events and should empower residents with different backgrounds to champion events with the City assisting with resources.

- » **Maintain policies to encourage diversity in local government appointments to specific boards and commissions.**
  - › These policies can relate to gender, race, and ethnicity. Outreach and encourage applications but allow exceptions for long-standing vacancies, given the City actively encouraged these residents to volunteer.
- » **Foster partnerships to mitigate costs that can make living in North Liberty difficult for lower-income households.**
  - › Coupled with Strategy 2 in this section, costs other than housing greatly contribute to where people can afford to live. Programs, partnerships, and policies should seek ways to assist with these costs for qualified households based on income and need. For example:
    - Day Care – Initiatives could be in the form of direct assistance to homeowners or increasing the supply of options to reduce fees and balance the market.
    - Transit Options – Explored under the “Mobility Tomorrow” section of this plan.

### 4. *Complete a policy, program, and code audit to evaluate unintentional barriers or missed opportunities to welcome diversity in North Liberty.*

The relatively new City Outreach & Equity Coordinator is already advancing ways to improve communications with residents. This position is essential to maintain in the future and not isolate as its own “department.” Much like Connected to Tomorrow, diversity, equity, and inclusion should be interwoven into all City functions. This begins with understanding potential long-standing barriers and policies that should change given a better understanding of outcomes.

## EFFORTS IN NORTH LIBERTY TODAY

- *Neighborhood Ambassadors Program*
- *Welcoming Week for new residents*
- *Videos to highlight social service agencies*
- *Embody/Embrace annual celebration*
- *Hate Crime Ordinance and transparent police reporting*
- *Outreach & Equity Coordinator as a full-time staff position*
- *Inclusion, Diversity, Equality, and Accessibility Committee*
- *Great Neighborhood Grant Program*



## 5. Create neighborhood subarea plans to conserve quality neighborhoods, starting with the policy areas identified in this plan.

The framework of neighborhood planning is already in place through the Neighborhood Ambassadors program. **More strategic directions for each specific neighborhood can create more efficient action as City resources and staff get stretched or turnover.** These neighborhood plans don't always have to be a traditional land use plan. Many of the newer established neighborhoods are better served with a strategic plan for programming, neighborhood involvement, and monitoring conditions. Creating the plan could be led by each neighborhood ambassador with City assistance.

## 6. Continually evaluate the market and respond to demands.

The City should not enforce regulations for artificial markets. The Future Land Use Map is built with flexibility, and so should regulations. North Liberty will be flexible to market demand and how the market can fit into the community vision for the future. Accommodating the market means accommodating new resident demands and the builder's ability to provide affordable and diverse housing. Continual strategies include:

- » **Review and update codes for barriers to housing diversity, building on previous amendments.** There is a growing interest in what some might consider "non-traditional" housing types. The City should not rule out the possibility of tiny homes, accessory dwelling units, smaller lot sizes, and more mixed-use buildings.
- » **Coordinate with private developers to discuss barriers to building mixed-use and mixed density developments.** Developers often have the best insight into where the code does not meet the market and can help identify issues. While practices for quality mixed-use development are provided in this plan, the public and private sectors should work together to identify additional barriers and create a plan to overcome them.
- » **Provide infrastructure to sustainable, fiscally responsible growth, not sprawl.** Housing proposals should still align with the goals of Connected to Tomorrow to be fiscally responsible with public funds. Doing so will naturally mitigate sprawl of homes on large lots that require significant infrastructure extensions. Large lot development (over 12,000 square feet for urban neighborhoods):
  - » Decreases the return to the City from infrastructure development.
  - » Increases the home price for consumers.
  - » Increases impacts on the environment via more land consumption and less walkability.

## RESPONDING TO MARKET DEMANDS

### Pre-Approved Housing - South Bend, IN

Facing a shortage of affordable housing and hundreds of potential infill lots, the City of South Bend, Indiana developed a set of pre-approved, ready to build housing plans. The plans are small to middle scale housing developments or what the city has described as a "Sears Catalog" of housing options that are contextually appropriate to South Bend's neighborhoods and fit with local building materials and techniques. The plans can be used in any zoning district that allows the selected building type per the current zoning ordinance. [South Bend Neighborhood Infill](#)



Option B



Option C

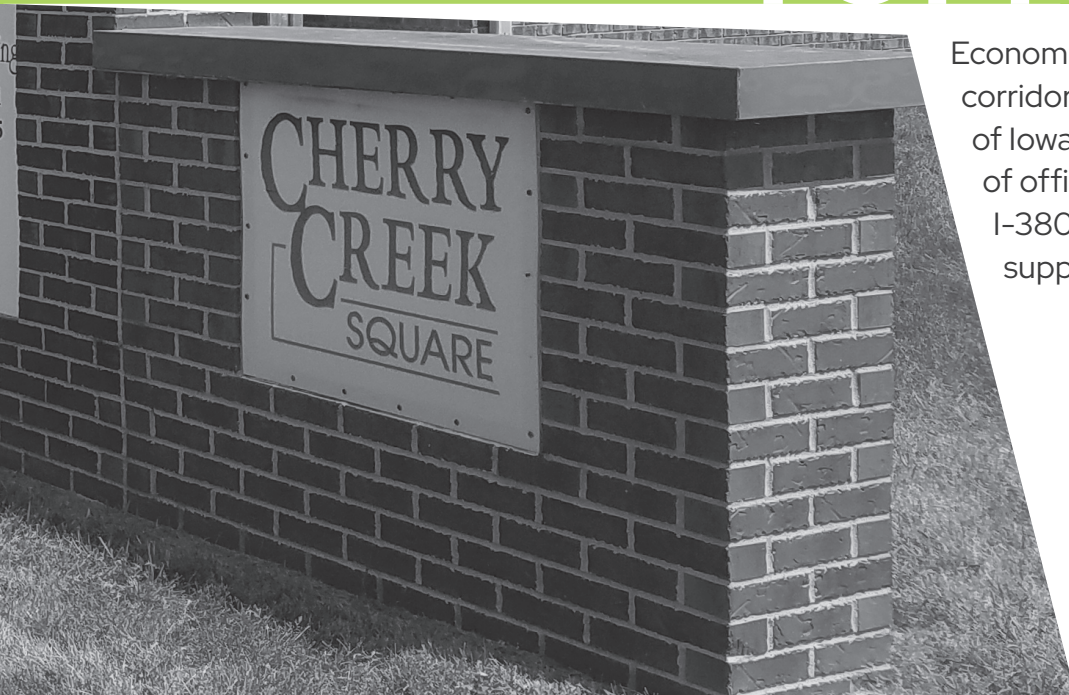


Second Floor

Building Type Overview	
<b>Building Dimensions</b>	
Building Height	2 story
Building Width	20'
Building Depth (incl. porch)	36'
<b>Program</b>	
Unit Configuration	2 bed / 1.5 bath
Unit Size (finished gross)	1120 sq. ft.
Basement (unfinished)	560 sq. ft.
Porch (unconditioned)	136 sq. ft.
1st Floor	560 sq. ft.
2nd Floor	560 sq. ft.
<b>Lot Standards</b>	
Lot Width (min.)	30'
Lot Width (max.)	60'
<b>Cost Assumptions</b>	
Preliminary Construction Estimates *	\$200,000 - \$250,000
Financing Options	30-yr mortgage
*Numbers shown are for basic estimation purposes only. Pricing is based on Fall 2021 cost assumptions and are subject to future market variation.	



# DOING BUSINESS TOMORROW



Economic development interest is strong in North Liberty. The I-380 corridor is a medical and research park hub anchored by the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics. North Liberty already caters to a variety of office development. Land available along Penn Avenue and I-380 also lends to future economic growth in North Liberty, which supports employment opportunities and its economic base.

# VISION

**Support desirable economic growth that contributes to the long-term directions of North Liberty**

## Goals and Guiding Principles

- 1. Market** *the high quality of life in North Liberty.*
- 2. Ensure** *adequate public services and infrastructure to support new commercial and industrial growth areas.*
- 3. Establish programming** *that keeps targeted mixed-use centers "active."*
- 4. Support** *entrepreneurship, local businesses, and community non-profits.*
- 5. Remain attractive to** *businesses in target market sectors that align with the policies of the Comprehensive Plan.*
- 6. Promote** *projects that assist in the redevelopment and/or restoration of substandard and deteriorating property within the city.*
- 7. Support economic growth** *potential by implementing other portions of the Comprehensive Plan.*





## DOING BUSINESS IN NORTH LIBERTY IS:

1. *Community-driven*
2. *Innovative and diverse*
3. *Collaborative between many entities*

### Efforts in North Liberty Today

North Liberty is at a growth juncture where more and more business growth and institutions will be attracted to the community. Efforts today are establishing the framework to support business growth and desirable development types.

- » Updated Economic Development Strategy.
- » Podcasts that feature local businesses.
- » Added service areas to the southwest growth area for new medical centers.
- » New City logo and branding guide.
- » Continued coordination with the Iowa City Area Development Group.

### Opportunities

**New medical campuses.** The proposed new University of Iowa medical campus on Forevergreen Rd and Steindler Orthopedic Clinic on Kansas Ave will create an influx of employees and development interest for surrounding vacant land. Vacant land next to the sites are prime opportunities for daily services, complementary office spaces, and more compact residential options.

**Penn Street.** Penn Street is an emerging corridor for a variety of commercial opportunities. Easy access to I-380 makes indoor manufacturing, distribution, and commercial uses desirable for the western part of the corridor.

**Infrastructure for economic development.** Infrastructure plays a requisite role in land development and must be seamlessly integrated into negotiating how land is developed. Connected to Tomorrow is the vision the City and other economic development organizations can pursue.

**Remote work and office environment.** In 2022 the future of office and remote working was still uncertain but trending towards less need for office space. However, because of their hands-on nature, medical professions and manufacturing do not permit as much remote work. Many of North Liberty's economic strengths will still require employees to live nearby and land for growth.

### Policies and Strategies

1. *Invest in infrastructure for emerging commercial areas to provide developable land that is flexible for a variety of businesses.*
2. *Implement policy recommendations for the Cherry Street district.*
3. *Develop a unique mixed-use center north of the future University of Iowa medical campus along Forevergreen Rd.*
4. *Create an action plan for providing sustained services that North Liberty lacks for those in need.*
5. *Complete corridor studies for critical economic corridors in North Liberty.*
6. *Use the Economic Development Strategy to guide business attraction, retention, and incentive strategies.*

*1. Invest in infrastructure for emerging commercial areas to provide developable land that is flexible for a variety of businesses.*

As discussed under the Places and Spaces for Tomorrow section, several more visible corridors should have higher placemaking and image standards. These same corridors are also better suited for commercial business growth with good transportation access. Figure 3.11 shows target areas for business diversification in retail, services, office, and flexible manufacturing and distribution.

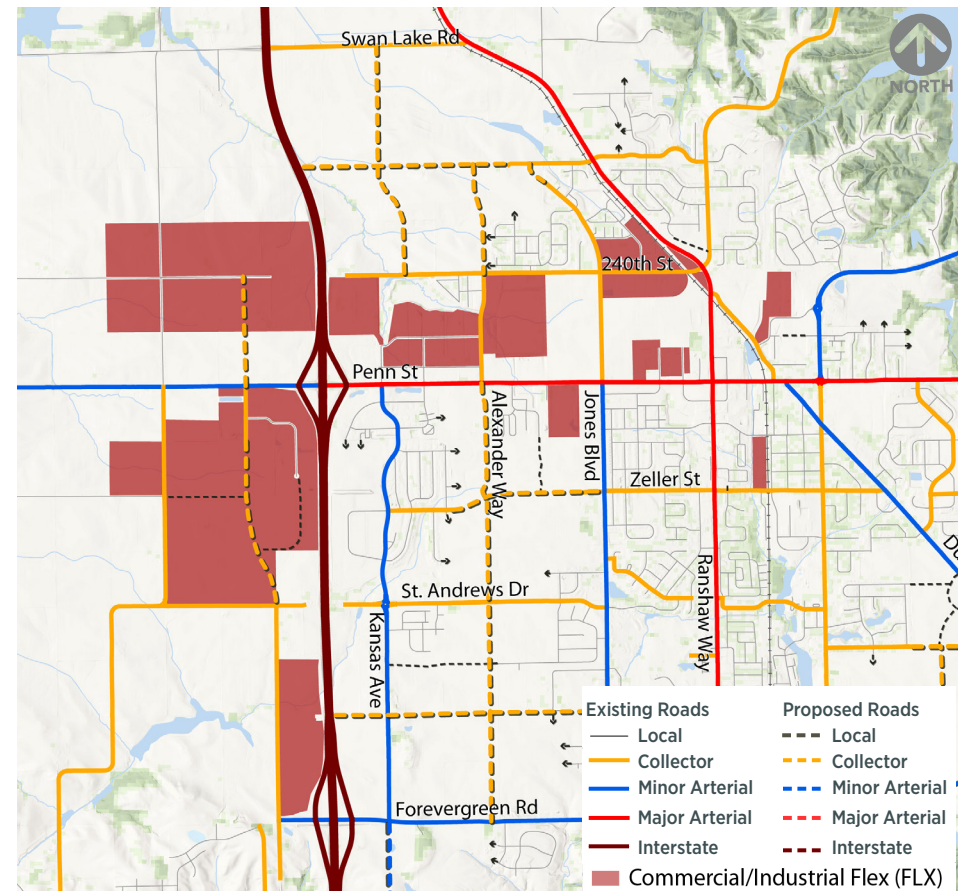
Additionally, North Liberty should encourage the development of high density residential near business areas to provide an accessible workforce for potential new uses.

### What is Flex Space?

Flex spaces are buildings designed to allow a variety of non-residential uses flexibility to customize the space to their needs. This is often some combination of warehousing, distribution, office, or light manufacturing space. For North Liberty, providing adequate opportunities for these spaces is crucial to adapt to changing business needs, business growth, and efficiency near major transportation routes. Site design for these spaces needs to consider:

- » **Whether the spaces require heavy distribution traffic.** If so, conduct a traffic impact study to understand transportation and access management needs.
- » **Landscaping and building material standards.** These facilities will be on gateway corridors into the community and should represent quality design aesthetics. Additionally, large areas of impervious coverage should be offset with distributed stormwater management throughout the site.
- » **Flex spaces require large buildings and, thus, larger development sites.** Adequate pedestrian systems should be maintained between sites and within parking areas.
- » **There may be opportunities for small public spaces for employees and stormwater management features.**

**Figure 3.11: Emerging Business Development Areas**





## 2. Implement policy recommendations for the Cherry Street district.

The Future Land Use Map identifies Cherry Street and Old Town as special policy areas because of their unique characteristics versus other areas of North Liberty. Figure 3.12 shows a development concept for a portion of the Cherry Street area that incorporates infill and reuse of underused spaces. Key policy directions for the area include:

- 1. Community Dr through access north and south.** Community Dr becomes a north/south connector in the district with streetscaping and sidewalks. The alignment connects Commercial Dr and Heritage Dr with Community Dr.
- 2. Add a traffic circle on Community Dr south of Green State Credit Union.** The traffic circle creates safer movement from the Community Center parking lot east and west.
- 3. Infill commercial development.** Internal parking and street oriented buildings provide opportunities for additional activity in the district with outdoor spaces.
- 4. Residential/commercial mixed use.** Opportunities for infill residential along Community Dr with commercial space oriented toward Ranshaw Way.
- 5. Possible infill townhome opportunities near the N Ridge Trail.** The space allows for internal parking and access to Cherry St.
- 6. Small lot residential infill.** An opportunity along the N Ridge Trail to add housing variety and create a connection to Green Meadow Ct and Zeller St.
- 7. Small scale industrial infill.** Space along the railroad offers relocation opportunities for industrial uses or new ventures.

Figure 3.12: Cherry Street Area Development Concept



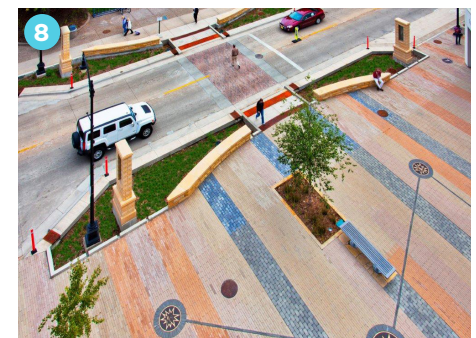
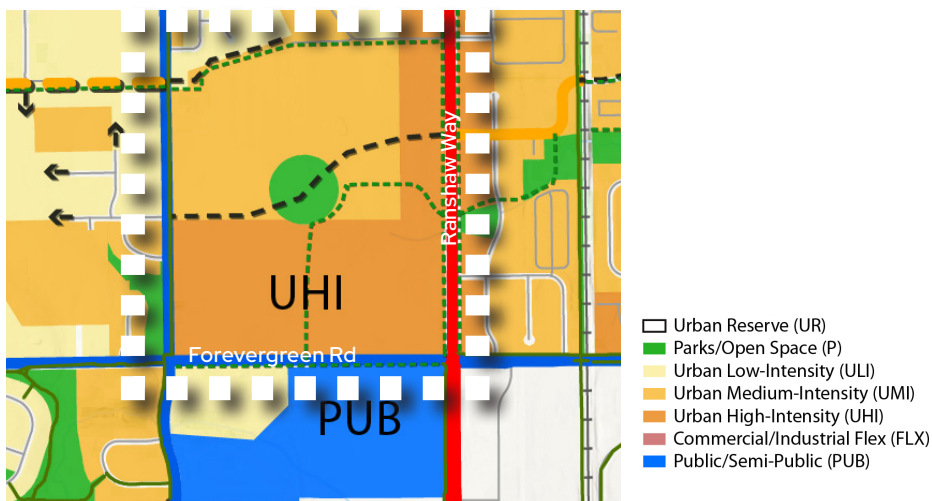


### 3. Develop a unique mixed-use center north of the future University of Iowa medical campus along Forevergreen Road.

Like the Cherry Street corridor, there is a unique opportunity for a community node at the northwest intersection of Forevergreen Road and Ranshaw Way. The uniqueness comes from the influx of daily employees and visitors to the University of Iowa medical campus south of Forevergreen Road. Several special design features should be enforced for this area.

1. High quality architectural features and materials.
2. Community gathering spaces such as plazas, eating places, play places, and greenspace.
3. Facilities for safe pedestrian mobility within sites.
4. Safe crossings across Forevergreen Road.
5. Services, restaurants, and commercial uses along Forevergreen Road.
6. Interior parking. If provided, parking structures are incorporated as useful elements in the development.
7. Incorporation of mixed-density housing throughout.
8. A landscaped and innovative stormwater management approach.

**Figure 3.13: Mixed-Use Center Concept**



#### 4. Create an action plan for providing sustained services that North Liberty lacks for those in need.

Economic development involves every facet of the community, from housing to industry, infrastructure, and quality of life. North Liberty must attend to all these facets to support existing businesses, maintain a quality workforce, and foster new economic ventures. To fully support economic development in North Liberty, the community must implement the other components of Connected to Tomorrow. In particular, the following items are critical to economic development:

- » Consider **investments in transit** to North Liberty an economic prosperity priority that can attract development and supply workforce (Mobility Tomorrow).
- » Provide **housing for workers** at a variety of income levels (Land Use Tomorrow and Inclusive Tomorrow).
- » Develop the **community image and character** to attract a robust workforce (Spaces and Places for Tomorrow).
- » Reserve areas for **flexible but strategic business growth** (Land Use Tomorrow).
- » Business & industry depends on the availability of **quality infrastructure**, including water, sewer, electric, technology, and streets (Supporting Tomorrow).

#### 5. Complete corridor studies for critical economic corridors in North Liberty.

Like Ranshaw Way, other corridors will require future study over the twenty year life of Connected to Tomorrow. The order of priority and sequence of proceeding with studies are subject to available resources and their priority. Future corridors for investment include Penn Street, Forevergreen Road, and Swan Lake Road (long-term horizon).

#### 6. Use the Economic Development Strategy to guide business attraction, retention, and incentive strategies.

The City will continue to actively participate with area economic development groups. The regularly updated Economic Development Strategy is considered fully incorporated and aligned with the vision of Connected to Tomorrow. Key elements of the Strategy include:

- » Promote entrepreneurship and support the growth of locally owned businesses.
- » Foster relationships with business and City leaders.
- » Determine businesses best suited for the future of North Liberty based on assets and create opportunities to attract them.



Building reuse co-working space, Bloomington, IN





# SUPPORTING TOMORROW



The role of government is to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of its citizens. This mandate extends from the day-to-day decisions to how those decisions accumulate over time. The services provided by the City set the foundation that supports everyday life in North Liberty. The provision of these services in a cost-efficient manner is the chief role of the City and its partners.



# VISION

**A high quality experience for all that live, work, or visit North Liberty that does not decrease as the city grows.**

## Goals and Guiding Principles

- 1. Plan** for public facilities and services in a **coordinated and cost-effective** manner that is consistent with the nature of development and emergency service plans.
- 2. Regularly monitor and maintain** all utility systems to ensure a safe and high quality standard of service.
- 3. Promote cooperation and coordination** between governmental units in the provision of public utilities and services.
- 4. Coordinate** with school districts and major private entities to understand anticipated growth and expansion plans.
- 5. Provide opportunities** for active and direct participation of residents, business owners, and property owners within the community.
- 6. Be financially sustainable** with investment by considering costs and benefits.



## SERVICE IN NORTH LIBERTY IS:

1. *Reliable, consistent, and efficient*
2. *Equally provided in for all residents*
3. *State of the art with facilities and applications*

## Efforts in North Liberty Today

- » New City Hall
- » Ranshaw House renovations
- » Fire station #2 planning
- » Community Center repairs
- » Centennial Park planning
- » Northside Park planning

## Opportunities

**Space for service expansion.** While North Liberty is growing rapidly, there is still ample land for new city facilities to serve these new growth areas. The City is already planning some facility expansion, and land will need to continue being reserved for critical facilities like pump stations, fire stations, and city maintenance facilities.

**Premier public facilities.** Leaders are creating a tradition of upgrading to create excellent public facilities. These facilities show the quality expected of developers and for residents to attract people to live in North Liberty.

**Planning for infrastructure.** The City continues to invest in studying service needs. Infrastructure is required for urban land development and should be used as a tool to guide the implementation of this plan.

## Policies and Strategies

1. *Continue to involve all city departments in development review to ensure the safety and quality of services in site design.*
2. *Continue to require land dedication, easement establishment, and other means at the time of subdivision and development to ensure the adequacy of public/semi-public utilities and improvements.*
3. *Continue installing all new utility services underground and converting existing overhead systems to underground systems.*
4. *Add utility extensions and facilities reinforced by a detailed study and support the Future Land Use Map.*
5. *Budget to maintain all facilities in a good state and adapt existing facilities to changing needs.*
6. *Monitor Fire and Rescue response times to determine additional facility needs.*
7. *Assess changing community needs to determine locations for additional indoor recreation space.*
8. *Continue to partner with the school districts where sharing facilities and services can benefit students and citizens.*

### *1. Continue to involve all city departments in development review to ensure the safety and quality of services in site design.*

City Staff are currently well connected and hold regular team meetings. As the city grows, there will be a need to add more department staff to maintain service. As this happens, a formal process for development review should continue. An ideal process includes:

**A consistent development review meeting schedule.** This is a time for applicants to meet with staff representatives and hear comments related to building requirements, code violations, and where flexibility is allowed. Sometimes this meeting could include potential applicants before submitting a formal application.

**A comprehensive staff development review committee.** The committee should include a representative of each department below. If a department cannot be represented at a meeting, they should submit comments before the meeting to respect the applicant's time.

- › Planning and Building Permitting
- › Streets and Municipal Utilities
- › Fire
- › Economic Development
- › City Engineering

**Ensure all City departments understand the vision and goals of Connected to Tomorrow and act together.**

### *2. Continue to require land dedication, easement establishment, and other means at the time of subdivision and development to ensure the adequacy of public/semi-public utilities and improvements.*

Many public and private use facilities can be significant market and transportation drivers. For example, a new school or a facility can attract new growth but also congestion. Additionally, large developments with one access point can isolate homes and businesses during emergencies. The more access points or street connections a development has, the easier it is for emergency personnel to reach areas needing their services.

Therefore, cooperation between the City and significant landowners is important. Regular communication partners include:

- » **School District.** To understand growth plans and identify sites with good vehicle and pedestrian connections.
- » **The University of Iowa.** With a new significant presence in North Liberty, the University should be a regular entity to communicate with on plans and desires.
- » **Utility Providers.** Providers include state and federal agencies to ensure alignment with Connected to Tomorrow goals and when appropriate, express needs to find common ground.

### *3. Continue installing all new utility services underground and converting existing overhead systems to underground systems.*

North Liberty is fortunate to be a relatively young community in terms of age of development. Because of this, certain modern technologies and practices are more widely used that add to North Liberty's public curb appeal. One of those is placing as many utility services underground as possible. The practice and private signage management create a clean and uncluttered public streetscape with more room for active transportation facilities and safety features. Exiting overhead systems could be converted to underground when economically feasible.



#### 4. Add utility extensions and facilities reinforced by a detailed study and support the Future Land Use Map.

To accommodate North Liberty's growing population, the City will need to extend infrastructure to developing areas. Often, infrastructure is extended through a combination of private and public actions and investments. While the landowner typically finances the initial installation, all long-term maintenance projects (10 – 100 years into the future) most times fall to the City. Therefore, the development's specifications, configuration, and character are a matter of public interest.

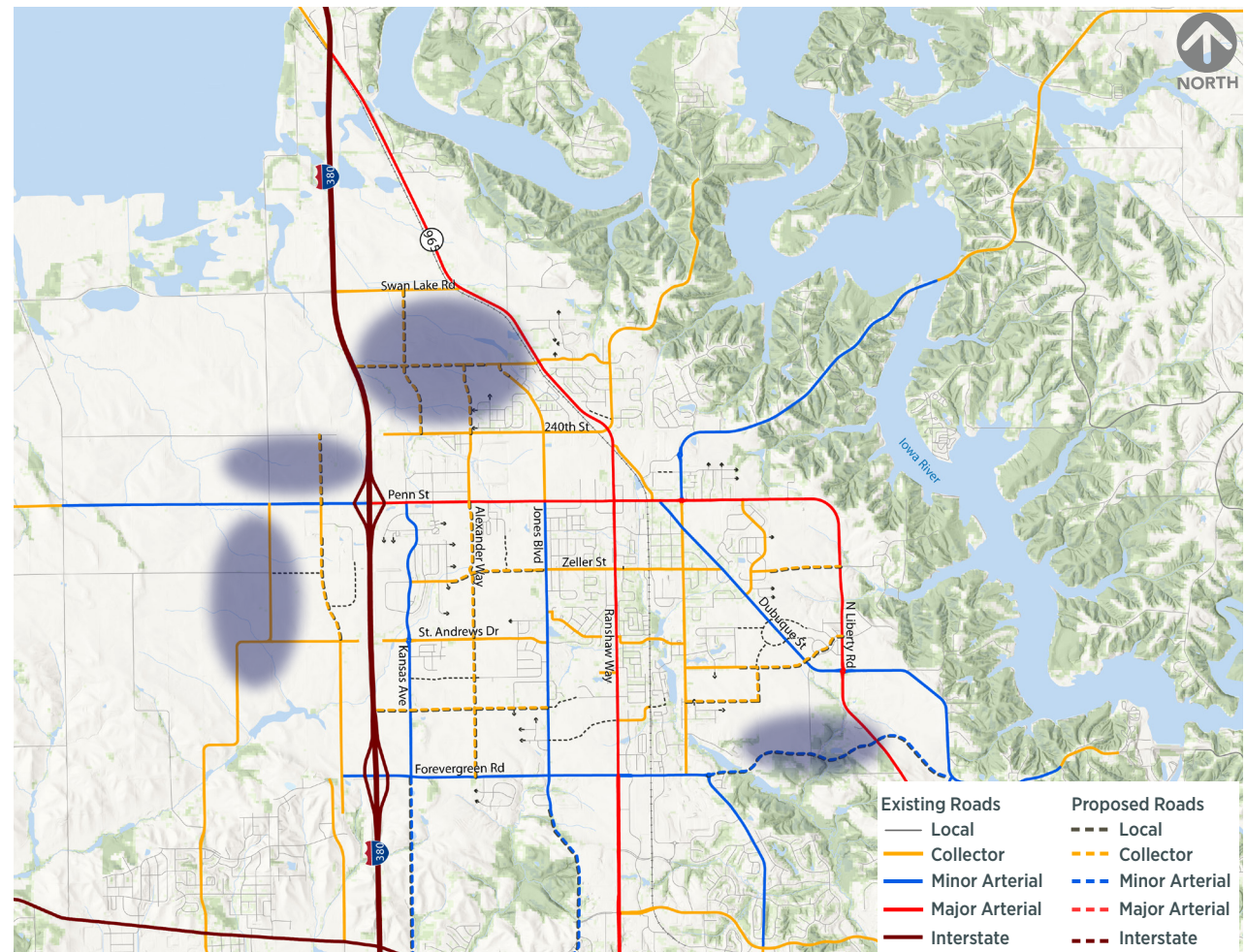
#### 5. Budget to maintain all facilities in a good state and adapt existing facilities to changing needs.

Public buildings and facilities should be maintained in good repair and regularly evaluated for appropriateness. However, when demands change, facilities should be studied to determine their future – can they be adjusted to serve their current purpose better, or should they be re-purposed?

#### If its current use is no longer practical, several options should be considered:

- » Is the facility appropriate for another public use?
- » Is the location appropriate for another city use?
- » If not, can the facility be put to a private purpose that is supportive of the goals of this plan (examples: housing, business development, recruitment, and retention)?

**Figure 3.14: Future Service Area Needs**



**Budget for studies to regularly evaluate facility and resource needs (every 5-7 years).** Detailed engineering or planning studies for utility, safety, and public facilities that occur twice a decade or more often as needed ensure the City is informed and proactive in improvements.

- » Near term needs might include a facilities manager or supervisor at the Community Center and Library.

- » A full-time social worker as described in the Library Strategic Plan. The services needed are increasing yearly, especially for those without transportation to other cities.

#### Budget steps might include:

- » Incorporate new facilities and enhancements into the capital improvements plan (CIP).
- » Identify funding sources.
- » Create a strategy for successful bond issues.

## 6. Monitor Fire and Rescue response times to determine additional facility needs.

North Liberty is currently served by one fire station, which is becoming inadequate for the future population. Ways to improve existing facilities and equipment include:

**A second fire station on the southwestern part of the existing city.** The facility should provide a command center and emergency shelter space, capacity to house a ladder truck, living quarters with offices, accommodate Johnson County Ambulance services, and ADA compliance.

- » A possible community space would further create value for public investment.

**Completion of a second fire station, or sooner, requires city budgeting for more full-time paid fire crew members.** Long-term growth over 20 years in the future would necessitate a third fire station on the city's north side. These investments ensure the safety of firefighters and help them perform their job the best.

### Continue to evaluate and act on:

- » **Evaluate equipment and space.** The City should continually check that adequate Personal Protective Equipment is available and research the adoption of the most state-of-the-art models.
- » **Response time monitoring.** The response time is directly tied to North Liberty's street pattern and the direction of growth. Response times for facilities should be evaluated when considering major land development proposals and proposed street patterns, especially east/west connections that are currently lacking.

## 7. Assess changing community needs to determine locations for additional indoor recreation space.

The Community Center (recreation center, pool, and library) is perhaps the most significant hub of public activity in North Liberty. The consequence is limited space and more frequent maintenance investments. Questions and criteria to consider before investing in expansion include:

- » The ability to recruit and maintain staffing.
- » Service to a new area of the community and ability to connect to the trail system.
- » The capacity to fund or bond for the improvements.
- » Whether the amenities match a desired community need.
- » Programming to generate revenue for the space.
- » Availability of other similar amenities in the area.
- » How the space will serve underrepresented and lower income households.

## 8. Continue to partner with the School Districts where sharing facilities and services can benefit students and citizens.

As North Liberty grows, the schools are expanding along with it – several new facilities are expected for the schools within the time frame of this plan. The schools and the city benefit when the school district and citywide planning are coordinated. Continued coordination opportunities include:

**Recreation facilities and pedestrian connections.** New school facilities and site selection planning should be coordinated with the City's plans for pedestrian and bicycle routes and the possibility of sharing recreation facilities for the public.

**Youth programs.** Schools provide a critical resource for after school programs and youth improvement. Coordination with programs organized by the Recreation Center or Library creates efficiencies in staff and more opportunities for youth.





4

**REALIZING TOMORROW**



# VISION

**Ensure that all city initiatives, development, and redevelopment that occurs in North Liberty are in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan.**

## Implementation Policies and Strategies

The following steps will guide implementation of Connected to Tomorrow.

### 1. Be Transparent and Inclusive

This means more than just keeping people informed but keeping them engaged as part of visionary decision making processes.

- » Use existing business and civic organizations to communicate and inform project area landowners and tenants of area plans and accomplishments.
- » Use public media and communications outlets to inform citizens of all development projects and plans.

### 2. Use Consistent Decision Making Criteria

Connected to Tomorrow cannot predict every situation that might arise in the future. Leaders and staff will have to make decisions based on the vision and intent of the Plan. Decision makers should contemplate the following criteria and questions when evaluating growth, development, and policy plans.

- » Those criteria identified in the annexation policy and process.
- » Whether it complies with the spirit of the vision, goals, and principles of land use and development.

### 3. Regularly Review and Update

Connected to Tomorrow should be viewed as a dynamic changing document that adapts to conditions and markets to be used actively by all in the city.

- » Develop an annual action and evaluation program to ensure the Plan is current and reflects the community's interests and changing needs.

**A. Action Program.** The Planning & Zoning Commission and the City Council should use the Plan in goal setting sessions and further define strategic work programs of policies, actions, and capital investments. This annual process should be completed before the beginning of each budget year.

**B. Evaluation Program.** An evaluation should occur annually. This evaluation should include a written report that:

- Summarizes key land use developments and decisions during the past two years and relates them to Connected to Tomorrow.
- Review actions taken by the City during the past two years to implement plan recommendations.
- Defines any changes to make to Connected to Tomorrow.

## 4. Coordinate With Partners

For greater success, it is important for the City and its boards to partner with other entities interested in implementing the recommendations of Connected to Tomorrow.

- » Maintain communication and continued coordination between the City and neighboring and related governmental jurisdictions.
- » Use a variety of funds and partnerships to implement the Plan rather than having the City assume the burden.
- » The City and County must continue to evaluate land use proposals for compatibility with future urban development at the urban fringes.

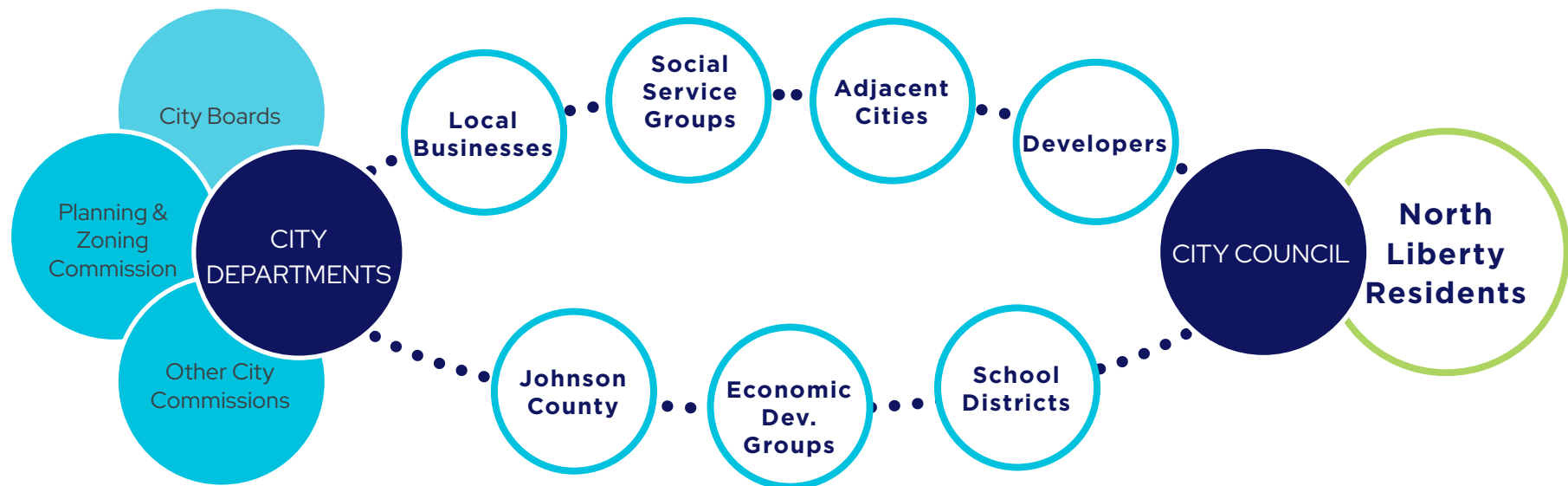
## 5. Responsible Groups

The primary audience of Connected to Tomorrow is the City Council, City Staff, and the Planning and Zoning Commission. However, it is important for the City to partner with other entities interested in implementing the plan's recommendations, such as groups represented on the Advisory Committee. The implementation tables recommend which group should take the lead in carrying out the recommendation and potential partners.

- » **Responsibilities: Elected/Appointed Officials.** Decision-makers, along with staff, must be conscious of the rights of others. Decisions should expand choices and opportunities for all persons, including the disadvantaged, and promote economic integration. Officials include the City Council and City Boards and Commissions.

- » **Responsibilities: City Staff.** City Staff should continue seeking meaningful input from the public when developing plans and programs. The Connected to Tomorrow Plan is rooted in a public engagement process, and thereby the goals and initiatives represent the aspirations of the community as a whole. Recommendations from staff to decision-makers should provide accurate information on planning issues to all affected persons and governmental decision-makers.

This designation of "leadership" is not meant to be exhaustive or to exclude any group that would like to take the lead on a project or policy. Any group or resident is invited to work with the city to support the implementation of this plan. However, this list can serve as a starting point and provide guidance on the expectations of the groups listed here.



## 6. Intentional Annexation Policy

One of the important regulatory tools that the City can use when addressing growth and development is annexation. Iowa state law prescribes the process by which communities can annex land. North Liberty's annexation policies should take into consideration the following:

- » **Protection of Future Growth Areas.** To effectively guide growth and development, future growth areas will need to be managed through annexation. Annexation will allow the City to extend its zoning and subdivision jurisdiction, thus guiding development in a direction that will provide safe and healthy environments.
- » **Public Services.** Public service issues can provide compelling reasons for annexation. Areas for consideration should include:
  - › Parcels that are surrounded by the city but remain outside of its corporate limits. In these situations, city services may provide enhanced public safety with improved emergency response times. These situations should be resolved and avoided in the future.
  - › Areas that are served by municipal infrastructure. North Liberty's sewer and water system should not be extended without an annexation agreement.
- » **Community Unification.** Establishing unified transportation and open space systems while maintaining a common commitment to the city's future is important when considering annexation.
- » **Opportunistic Market Forces.** Opportunities may arise under changing market conditions for a new subdivision or commercial growth at locations outside of city limits. These opportunities are a valid consideration for annexation to support overall job and population growth in North Liberty.
- » **A Positive Cost Benefit Analysis.** The economic benefits of annexation, including projected tax revenues, should compensate for the additional cost of extending services to newly-annexed areas. The review policy for annexation should include the following:
  - › Estimated cost impact and timetable for providing municipal services.
  - › The method by which the City plans to finance the extension and maintenance of municipal services.
  - › Identify tax revenues from existing and probable future development in areas considered for annexation.
  - › Calculate the added annual operating costs for urban services, including public safety, recreation, and utility services, offered within newly-annexed areas.
- » Decisions about annexation should be based on more than one consideration. All considerations should be evaluated and a plan should be in place to ensure development satisfies the goals and objectives of Connected to Tomorrow:
  - › Adjacency to existing infrastructure.
  - › Ability to fulfill a community need.
  - › A strategy to add new civic and park uses.
  - › Protection of environmental features.
  - › Ability to be reached by emergency services.
  - › Economic development opportunities.

## Annexation Process

The annexation policy provides guidelines for decision making that helps minimize unnecessary conflicts and expenditures. North Liberty should consider the following procedure when annexation is deemed beneficial or necessary.

1. **Pursue Voluntary Annexation.** North Liberty should use the "voluntary annexation" provisions of Iowa annexation law and avoid annexing areas under "involuntary" procedures if possible. The drawbacks of involuntary annexations include:
  - A. More complex annexation process.
  - B. Confrontation with landowners.
  - C. Susceptibility to court challenges, which add delays and expenses.
  - D. Costly extension of city services is mandated within a short time period (3 years), even if development is not imminent.
  - E. It may be appropriate to pursue involuntary annexation for any areas already receiving city services.

In contrast, the benefits of voluntary annexation are:

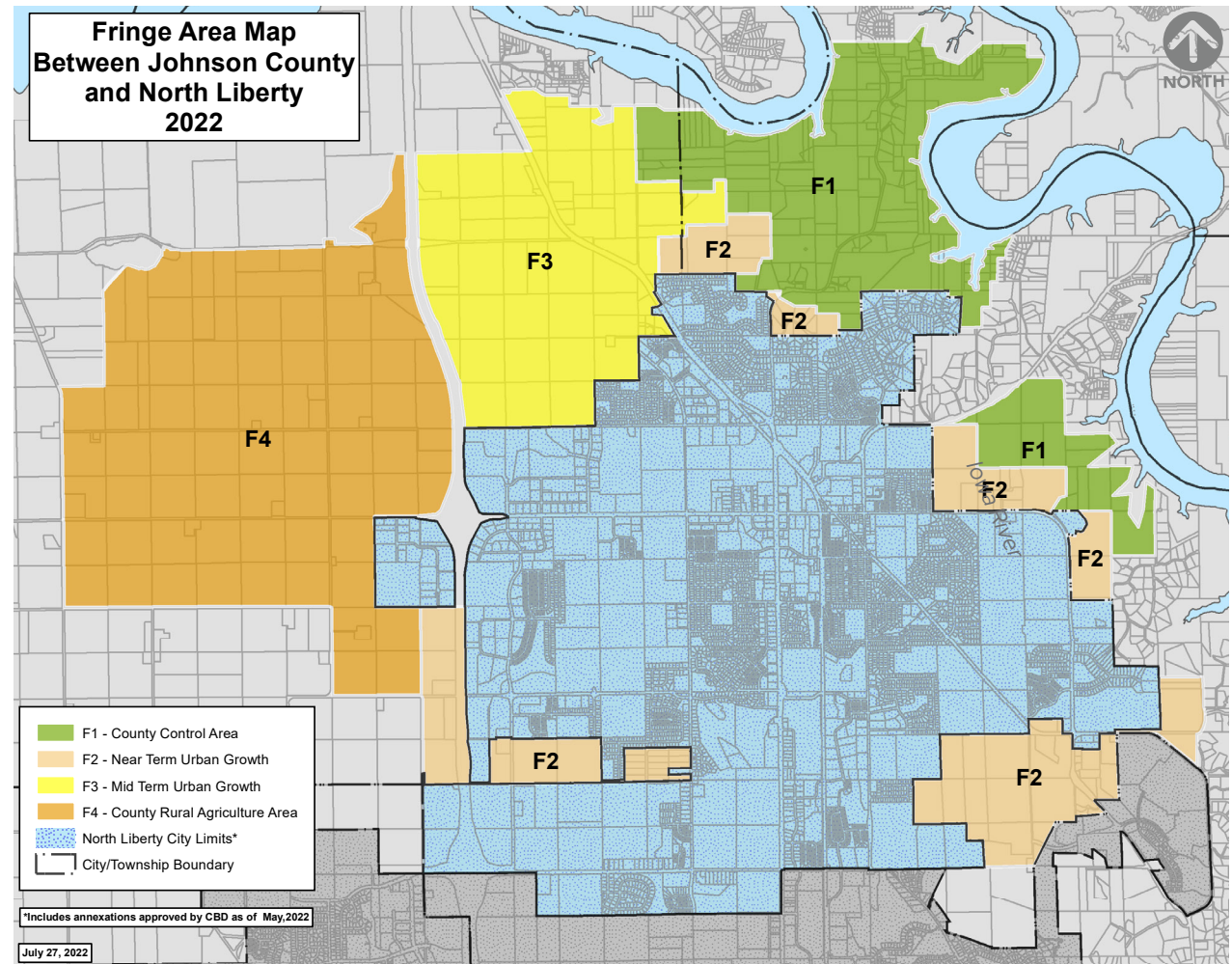
- A. Allows the City to promote areas for development without having to install costly infrastructure ahead of that development. The annexation/infrastructure extension plan is required but becomes a negotiated process between the property owner, developer, and the City.
- B. Does not require the City to choose among potential annexation areas. Instead, the private market determines development timing and location.
- C. Simpler process, less controversial, and generally more productive.



To make the voluntary annexation approach work, the City must:

- A. Enact Parts 2-6 of this process.
  - B. If necessary, it may be appropriate to use involuntary annexation (<20 percent of the total land area) to include areas of urban character as part of a larger voluntary annexation to create logical jurisdiction boundaries.
- 2. Initiate Outreach to Property Owners.**  
Initiate ongoing communication with interested owners in the annexation priority areas. Communicate the potential benefit of annexation, including that the extension of city services/infrastructure greatly enhances the development potential and maximizes its sale value.
- 3. Wait to Zone.** Annexation areas should only be zoned for future uses once the areas are voluntarily annexed and a negotiated development deal is accomplished. Discussion of appropriate zoning, consistent with the Future Land Use Map, should be a part of the negotiation process.
- 4. Place Priority on Contiguous Parcels.**  
Annexation priority should go to parcels contiguous to current city boundaries and not create islands, as required by Iowa law.
- 5. Continue use of agreements between adjacent jurisdictions.** These agreements, as shown in Figure 4.1, set expectations for growth in the area.

**Figure 4.1: Fringe Area Plan**



## 7. Align Existing Policies and Codes

City leadership has already made strides to update the zoning code to be more compatible with community needs and market demands. Given the flexible future land use categories in Connected to Tomorrow, the following additional code amendments might be necessary for successful implementation and alignment with the Comprehensive Plan.

- » Be more clear on the intent of residential districts and seek consolidation.
  - › RS-8 and RS-7 District consolidation.
  - › Evaluate the use of the RS-9 District, reduce standards.
  - › Reduce minimum lot widths in the RS-6 through RS-9 Districts.
  - › Consider allowing two-unit structures in certain RS districts, eliminate the RD-8 and RD-10 districts.
  - › The RM-21 District could allow more density.
- » Eliminate the PO Overlay and combine standards into existing RS Districts.
- » Review past modifications and exceptions granted on PAD Planned Area Development applications.
- » Consolidate Districts Commercial District Structure.
- » Consider allowing more neighborhood commercial character uses within residential districts.
- » Consider opportunities to reduce the minimum parking requirements.
- » Add standards to allow Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs).
- » Consider future ways that developers and homeowners might use renewable energy.
- » Evaluate whether all review timelines are appropriate and where there are opportunities to reduce approval periods.
- » There are important aspects of ISWMM to consider when creating stormwater ordinances or policies that reference or adopt that manual.
- » Adopt or update policies on buffers along floodplains and greenbelts.

## 8. Implementation Schedule

Connected to Tomorrow articulates many recommendations to help the community achieve the vision expressed by residents throughout the engagement process. Realizing Connected to Tomorrow requires:

**Policies.** Continuing efforts over a long time period

**Actions.** Specific efforts or accomplishments

**Capital.** Investments and public capital projects

### Timing

Additionally, the implementation of Connected to Tomorrow must be flexible, multi-faceted, and also respect the finite resources of all stakeholder organizations. The timing of policies and strategies from the previous chapters was explored by the City.

- » **Ongoing.** Most of the recommendations fit into this category. These are matters related to general policy and operations and have no completion date.
- » **Short Term.** Implementation within 5 years.
- » **Medium Term.** Implementation in 5-10 years.
- » **Long Term.** Implementation in 10-20 years.

Although the implementation timing can help with the question of “where to start,” it should not dictate the order of implementation. The City should be open to implementing any of these recommendations if/when the opportunity arises or the conditions are right.

**Figure 4.2: Implementation Schedule**

POLICY/STRATEGY	TYPE	TIME FRAME	PARTNERS
<b>Mobility Tomorrow</b>			
Continue to advance local and regional transportation plans.	Policy, Action	Ongoing	Johnson County; Adjacent Cities
Complete the “Liberty Loop” trail corridor concept.	Action, Capital	Ongoing, Short Term	Local Businesses; School Districts
Require all new residential development to provide multiple local street and pedestrian access points.	Policy	Ongoing	Local Businesses; Developers
Advance conversations and investment into possible regional transit to North Liberty.	Actions, Capital	Ongoing	Johnson County; Adjacent Cities; Economic Dev. Groups
Prepare for new transportation modes like connected and automated vehicles.	Policy	Ongoing	Local Businesses
<b>Spaces &amp; Places for Tomorrow</b>			
Continually enhance existing parks over time, starting with a master plan for Centennial Park.	Capital	Ongoing, Short Term	Social Service Groups
Dedicate parks in the development process based on local needs and the land use plan.	Policy	Ongoing	Developers
Create experiences by expanding streetscapes throughout the community with mobility, landscaping, and culture.	Policy, Capital	Ongoing	Developers; Local Businesses
Monitor the application of design standards to ensure they produce good community aesthetics without overly restricting design creativity.	Policy	Ongoing	Developers; Local Businesses; Economic Dev. Groups
Advance the multi-modal wayfinding program with development and create gateway elements at community entries.	Action, Capital	Ongoing, Medium Term	Economic Dev. Groups
Partner with community groups to integrate community themes and unique features, including art/cultural amenities into developments.	Action	Ongoing	Social Service Groups; Local Businesses; School Districts
<b>Our Environment Tomorrow</b>			
Based on community input, consider completing a climate action plan.	Policy, Action	Ongoing, Medium Term	Social Service Groups; Economic Dev. Groups
Review environmental/climate impacts in staff reports for City Council decision making.	Policy	Short Term	
Ensure codes have conservation standards and best management practices that protect sensitive features but allow density accommodations where least influential.	Policy	Short Term	Developers
Evaluate using alternative energy sources in infrastructure and public facilities that save costs, are more efficient, and improve the environment.	Action, Capital	Short Term	Developers
Pursue actions in other local or regional plans relevant to North Liberty.	Action	Ongoing	Johnson County; Adjacent Cities; Economic Dev. Groups



**Figure 4.2: Implementation Schedule**

POLICY/STRATEGY	TYPE	TIME FRAME	PARTNERS
<b>An Inclusive Tomorrow</b>			
Continue to direct CIP funds to infrastructure improvements in older neighborhoods, with consideration for how to concentrate investments to achieve maximum impact.	Actions	Ongoing	Local Businesses; Economic Dev. Groups
Consider incentive programs for housing that meets determined community needs.	Policy, Capital	Ongoing, Short Term	Social Service Groups
Leverage the Neighborhood Ambassadors to continue programming ways to welcome new residents and cultures to North Liberty.	Policy	Ongoing	Social Service Groups
Complete a policy, program, and code audit to evaluate unintentional barriers or missed opportunities to welcome diversity in North Liberty.	Policy, Action	Short Term	Social Service Groups
Create neighborhood subarea plans/strategies to conserve quality neighborhoods, starting with the policy areas identified in this plan.	Action	Medium, Long Term	Social Service Groups; Economic Dev. Groups
Continually evaluate the market and respond to demands.	Policy	Ongoing	Economic Dev. Groups; Developers; Local Businesses
<b>Doing Business Tomorrow</b>			
Invest in infrastructure for emerging commercial areas to provide developable land that is flexible for a variety of businesses.	Capital	Ongoing	Economic Dev. Groups; Local Businesses
Implement policy recommendations for the Cherry Street district.	Policy	Ongoing	Economic Dev. Groups; Local Businesses; Developers
Develop a unique mixed-use center north of the future University of Iowa medical campus along Forevergreen Rd.	Policy, Action	Short Term	Developers; Economic Dev. Groups
Create an action plan for providing sustained services that North Liberty lacks for those in need.	Action	Ongoing	Social Service Groups
Complete corridor studies for critical economic corridors in North Liberty.	Action	Medium Term	Economic Dev. Groups; Local Businesses
Use the Economic Development Strategy to guide business attraction, retention, and incentive strategies.	Policy	Ongoing	Economic Dev. Groups
<b>Supporting Tomorrow</b>			
Continue to involve all city departments in development review to ensure the safety and quality of services in site design.	Policy	Ongoing	Developers
Continue to require land dedication, easement establishment, and other means at the time of subdivision and development to ensure the adequacy of public/semi-public utilities and improvements.	Policy	Ongoing	Developers
Continue installing all new utility services underground and converting existing overhead systems to underground systems.	Policy, Capital	Ongoing	Developers
Add utility extensions and facilities reinforced by a detailed study and support the Future Land Use Map.	Capital	Ongoing	Developers
Budget to maintain all facilities in a good state and adapt existing facilities to changing needs.	Capital	Ongoing	
Monitor Fire and Rescue response times to determine additional facility needs.	Action	Ongoing	
Assess changing community needs to determine locations for additional indoor recreation space.	Action	Ongoing	Economic Dev. Groups; School Districts

# 5

## SUPPORTING INFO

Developing Connected to Tomorrow included the collection of a wealth of information, analysis, and complementary planning efforts. This section contains many of these supplemental materials not included in the body of Connected to Tomorrow.

### OTHER RESOURCES:

**Johnson County Economic Development Plan** – [www.johnsoncountyiowa.gov/pds-non-menu-pages/economic-development](http://www.johnsoncountyiowa.gov/pds-non-menu-pages/economic-development)

**Inclusive Economic Development Plan in Johnson County** – [https://issuu.com/astigplanning/docs/iedp\\_final\\_11\\_10\\_22](https://issuu.com/astigplanning/docs/iedp_final_11_10_22)

**Johnson County Comprehensive Plan** – [www.johnsoncountyiowa.gov/compplan](http://www.johnsoncountyiowa.gov/compplan)

**Future Forward Long-Range Transportation Plan** – [www.mpojc.org/article/mpojc-future-forward-long-range-transportation-plan-update](http://www.mpojc.org/article/mpojc-future-forward-long-range-transportation-plan-update)

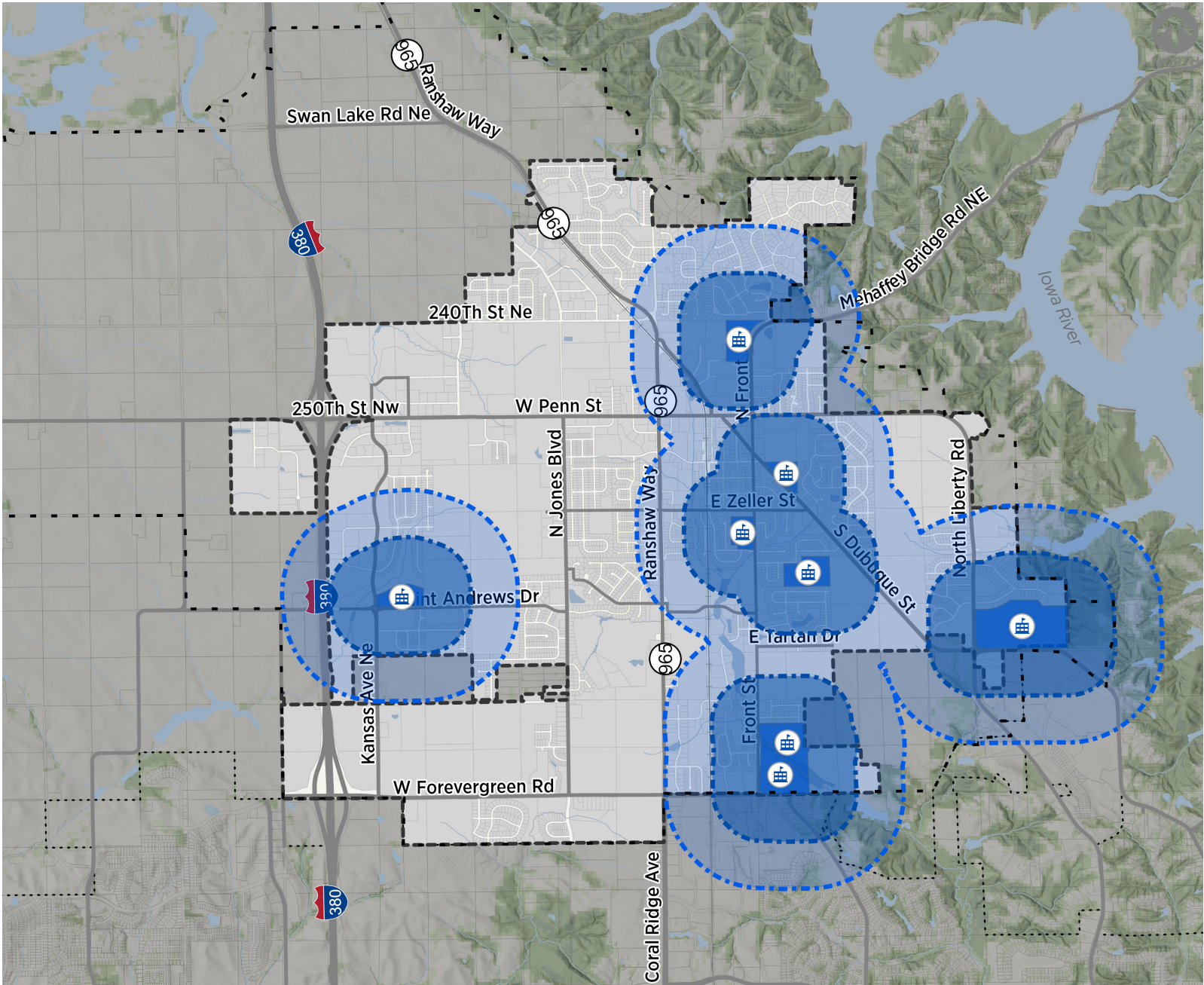
**Iowa City Area Transit Study** – [www.icgov.org/project/iowa-city-area-transit-study](http://www.icgov.org/project/iowa-city-area-transit-study)



North Liberty  
Today -  
Expanded  
Information

Schools Service  
Areas

Figure 5.1: Schools 1/4 and 1/2 Mile Service Area



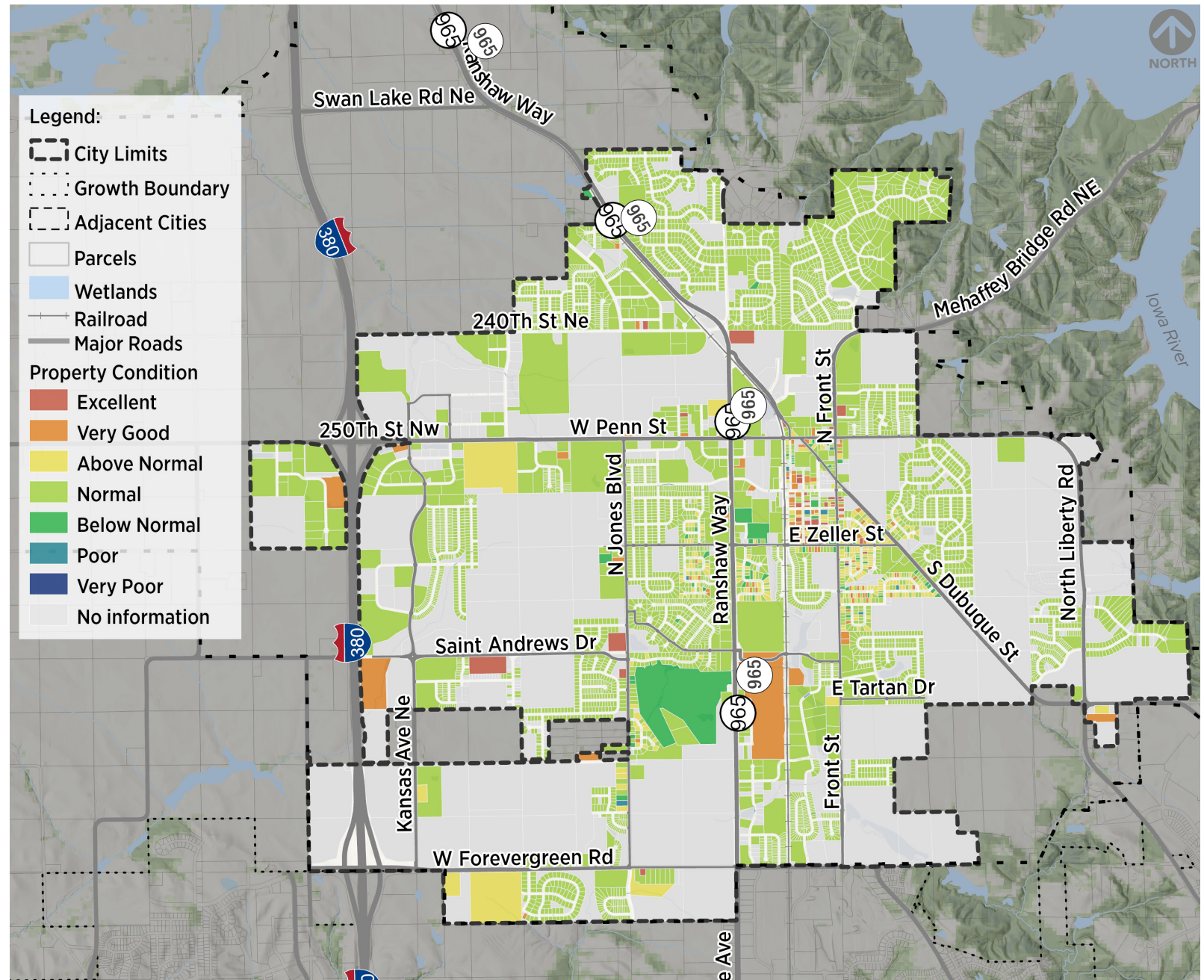
Source: RDG Planning & Design



# North Liberty Today - Expanded Information

## Property Conditions

Figure 5.2: Condition of Commercial and Residential Properties, 2021

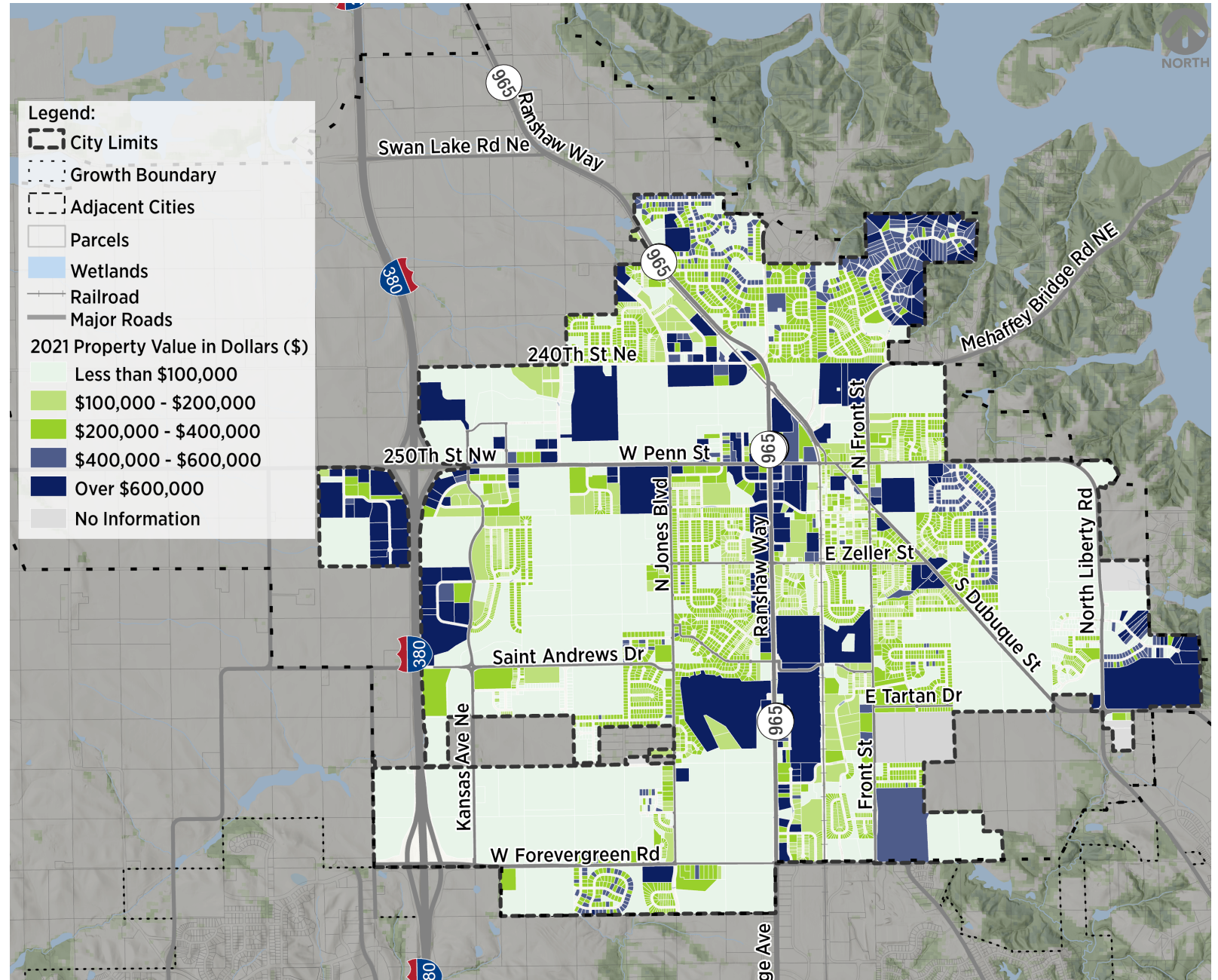


Source: Johnson County Assessor

# North Liberty Today - Expanded Information

## Property Values

Figure 5.3: Property Value, 2021



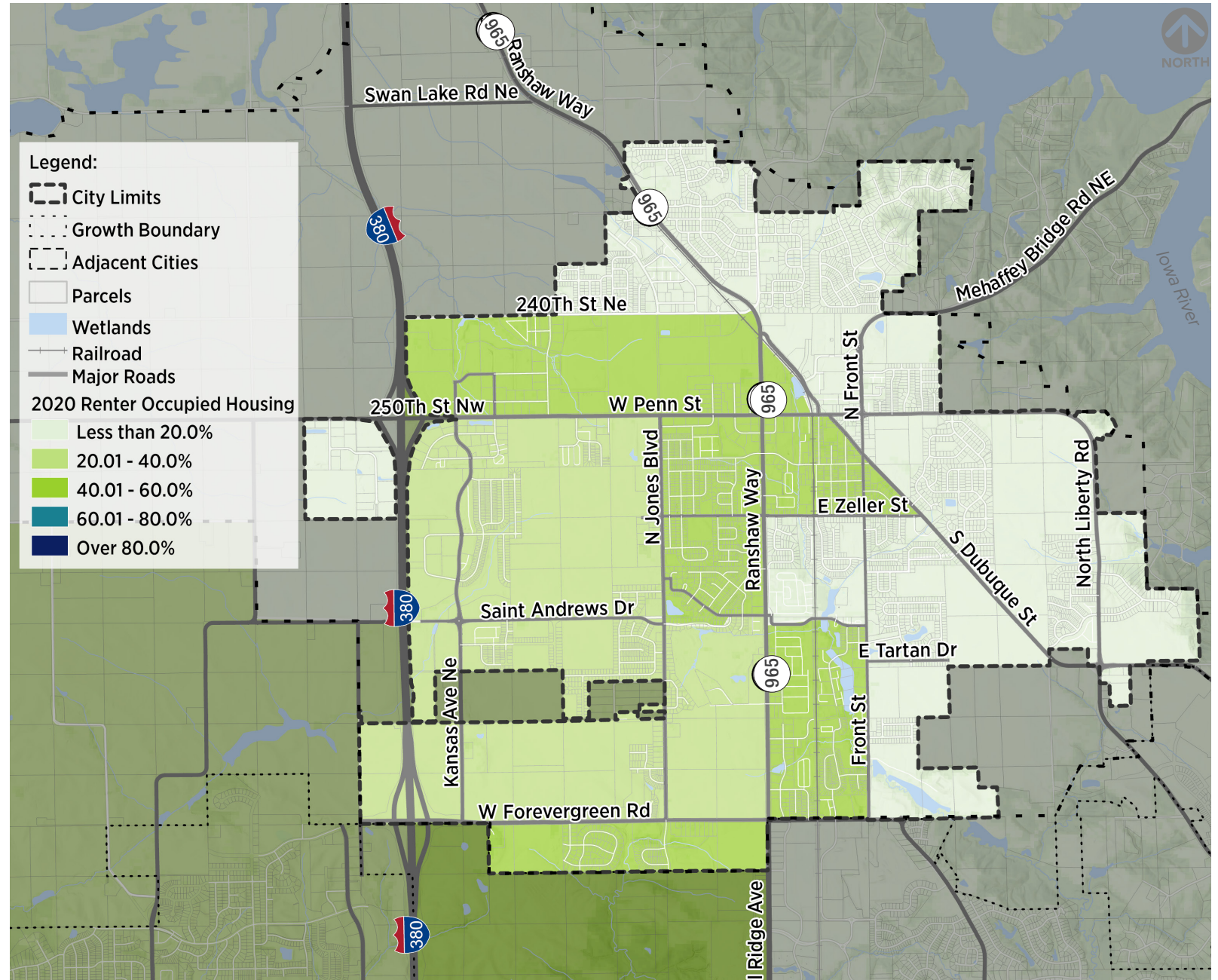
Source: Johnson County Assessor



# North Liberty Today - Expanded Information

## Renter Occupancy

Figure 5.4: Percent of Renter Occupied Housing by Census Tract, 2020



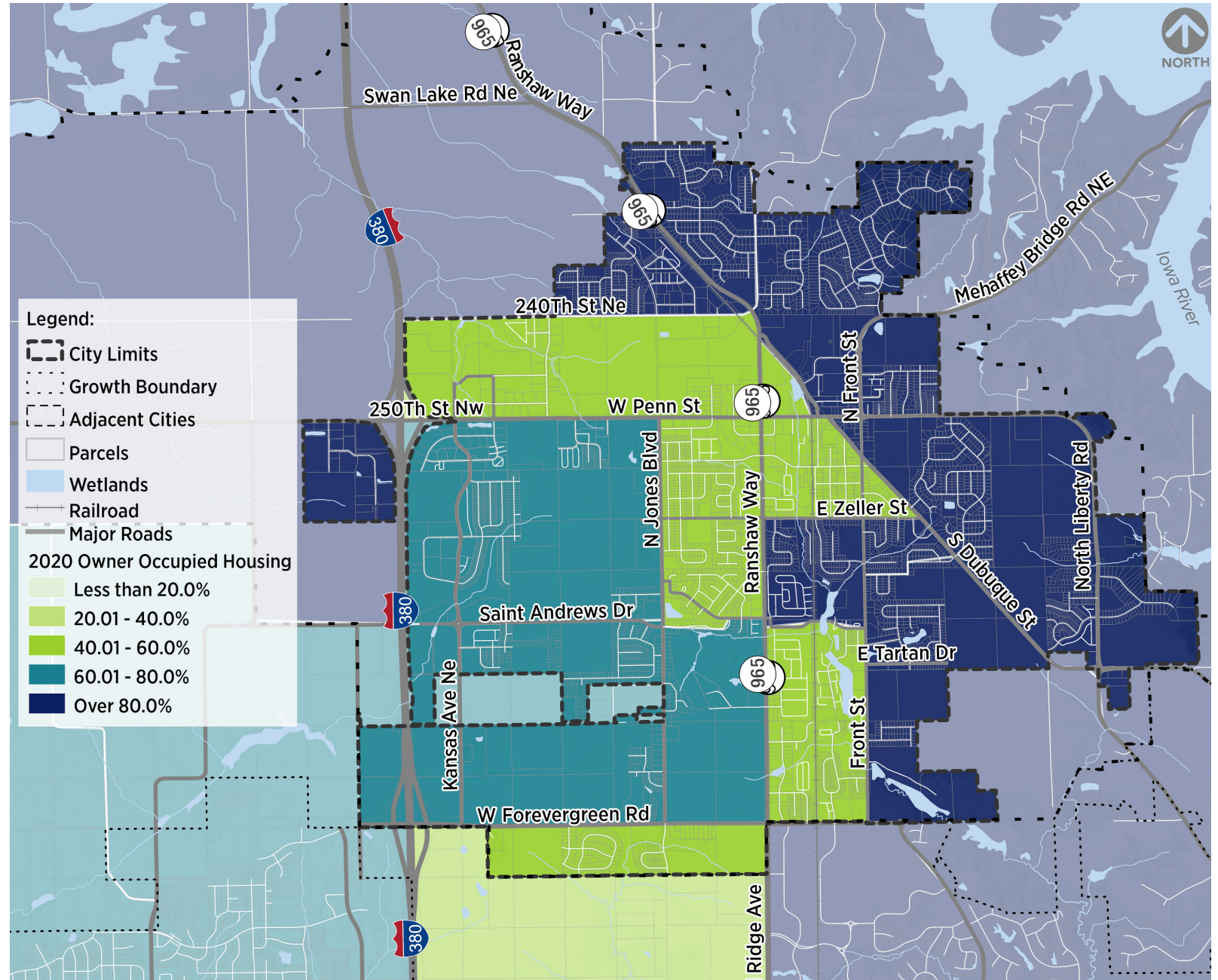
Source: 2020 U.S. Census Bureau



# North Liberty Today - Expanded Information

Owner  
Occupancy

Figure 5.5: Percent of Owner Occupied Housing by Census Tract, 2020



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

## North Liberty Today - Expanded Information

### Infrastructure

North Liberty's infrastructure system is a combination of water, wastewater, and stormwater systems designed to serve North Liberty's needs. These systems are in good condition to serve current and future populations as a result of proactive planning efforts in the past.

### Water Distribution

North Liberty gets its water from four Silurian aquifer wells and three Jordan aquifer wells. Approximately 75% of the water is produced from the Jordan aquifers. The City pumps approximately 750 gallons per minute from two Jordan wells. On average, the Jordan wells run 8.4 hours per day. The third Jordan aquifer allows the City to operate at full capacity and to store excess water during low-use periods. The City can then recover about 800 gallons per minute during peak usage.

Two variable-speed (high service) pumps replenish the water towers on demand. These pumps were part of a recent plant upgrade and are capable of producing over 1,000 gallons per minute. The pumps are alternated on a weekly basis so only one runs at a time.

The two water towers can hold 1.4 million gallons of water when full. A 400,000-gallon tower is located on 240th Street, with a 1-million-gallon tower on Kansas Avenue.

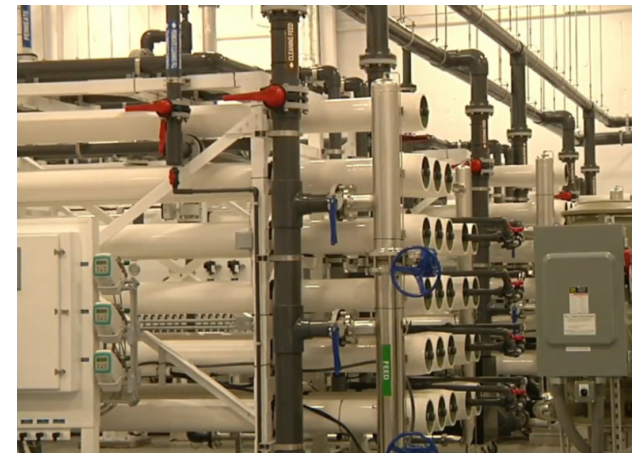
### Waste Water Treatment & Storm Sewer System

North Liberty's water pollution control plant underwent a major renovation and upgrade in 2008 to meet the growing population of North Liberty. The plant uses a state-of-the-art bio-membrane reactor, which uses filters to remove particles. The plant's upgrade from a conventional treatment facility vastly improved the output and has benefited the local ecosystem, with fish and other wildlife returning to Muddy Creek immediately adjacent to the plant.

The plant was recognized as a top performer and featured in the industry publication Treatment Operator Magazine for its cleanliness. A second phase to expand capacity was completed in 2018 to meet North Liberty's continued growth.

### Energy System

North Liberty has two electricity providers, one natural gas provider, and four different telecommunication/Internet providers. North Liberty has the gigabit broadband fiber network. It was built locally and it is an education and economic engine for the entire community, enabling a wide range of applications to meet consumer, business, government and institutional needs.

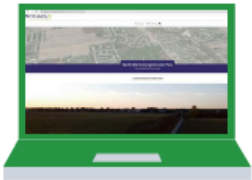




# Engagement Results

## Project Webpage

### PROJECT WEBPAGE



**+6,000  
Visits**



**+2,000  
Unique  
Users**

*"There's a real opportunity to make Liberty Centre a walkable commercial and residential hub"*

*"Protect this large area for single-family development"*

*"North Liberty needs more spaces/entertainment for them as they grow into tweens/teens"*

*"More art, art gallery, movie theatre, and affordable housing"*



## Interactive Map

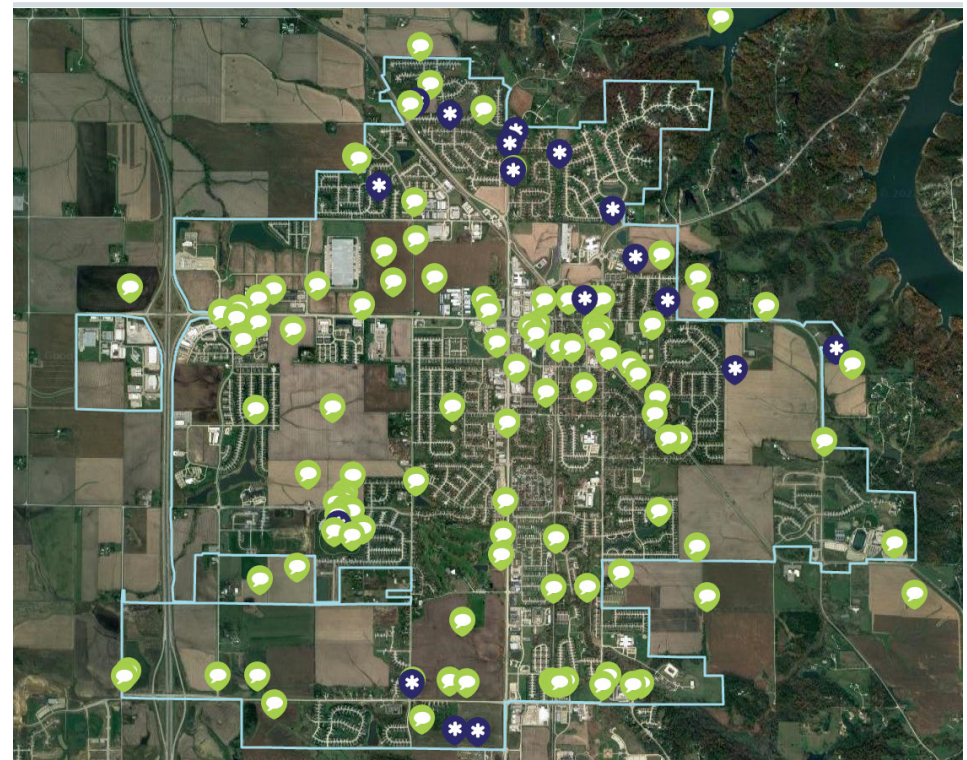


**+200 Comments**

### Most comments:

- › Park space on north side
- › General traffic flow and street connections
- › Trail and sidewalk safety, safe routes to school
- › Various development related comments - mixed use, single family

Drag to comment >  My Idea  My Concern



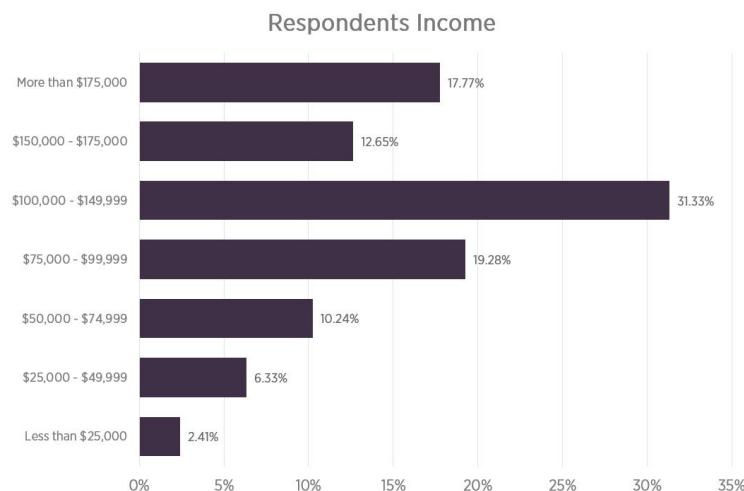
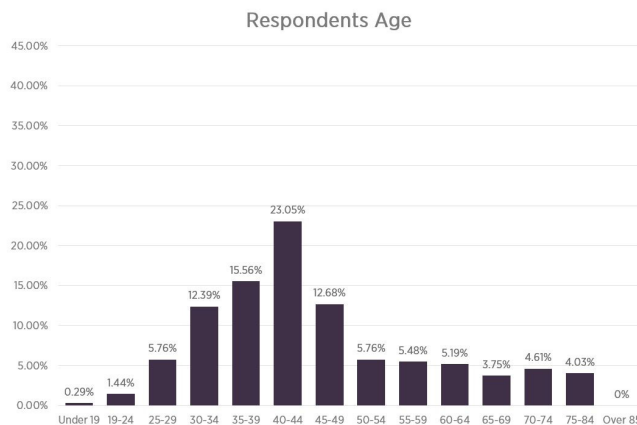


# Engagement Results

## Community Survey



**490 Responses**



## North Liberty Top 10 Greatest Assets

- ① Family Friendly
- ② Parks and Outdoor Recreation
- ③ Housing Quality
- ④ Housing Affordability
- ⑤ Modern Character
- ⑥ Engaged and Educated Citizenry
- ⑦ Arts and Cultural Attractions, Events
- ⑧ Economy - Employment and Business Community
- ⑨ Community Leadership and Philanthropy
- ⑩ Entrepreneurial and Spirit of Innovation

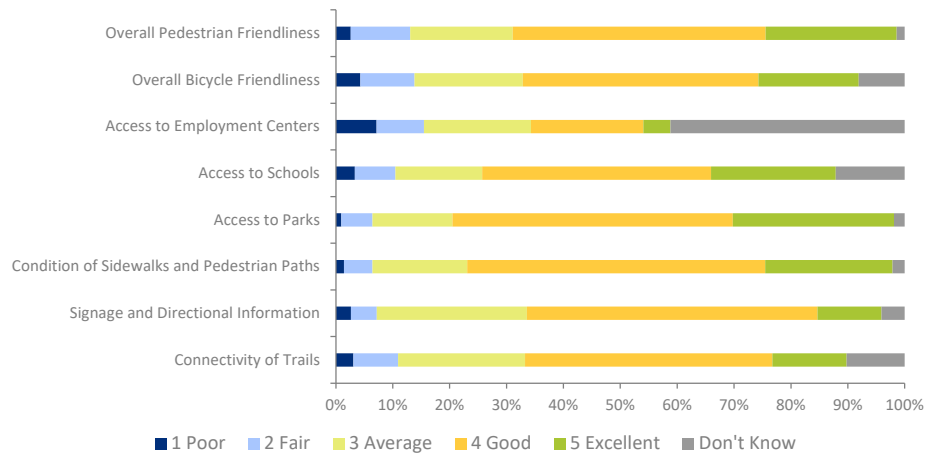
## North Liberty Top 10 Community Priority Projects

- ① Grow local businesses
- ② Increase affordable housing
- ③ Expand access to recreational areas
- ④ Strengthen community spaces as destinations
- ⑤ Increase walking and bicycle facilities
- ⑥ Improve infrastructure in older neighborhoods
- ⑦ Attract more diverse industries
- ⑧ Increase regional commercial development
- ⑨ More variety of housing types
- ⑩ Improve stormwater management and flood control programs

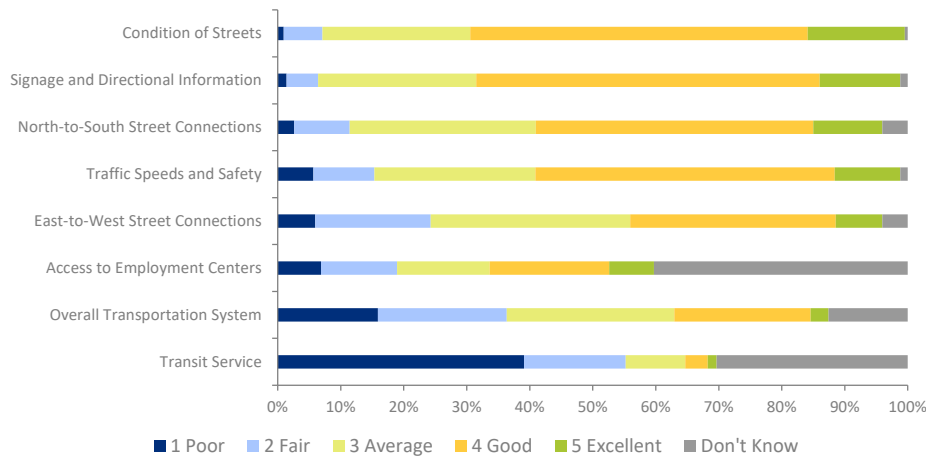
What is your employment status?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Employed Full-Time	73.46%	357
Employed Part-Time	6.38%	31
Retired	13.79%	67
Student	1.03%	5
Unemployed	0.82%	4
Other (please specify)	4.53%	22
TOTAL		486

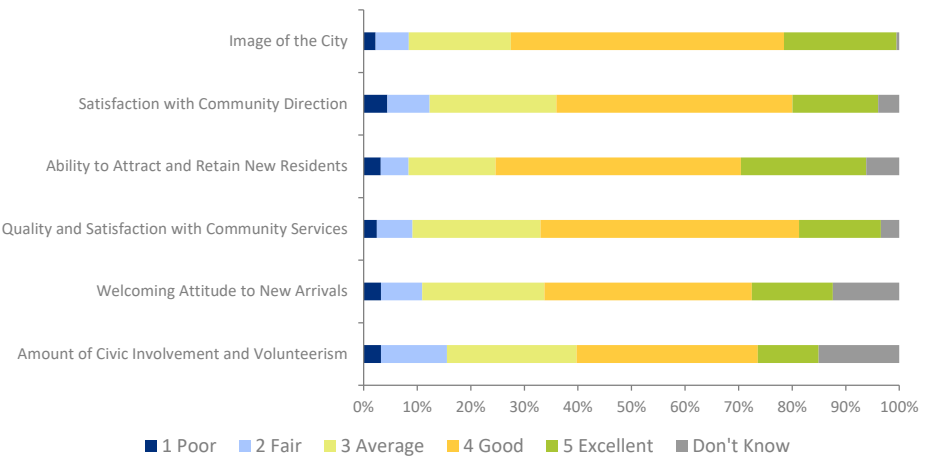
On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being poor and 5 being excellent), how would you rate North Liberty in regards to walking and bicycling?



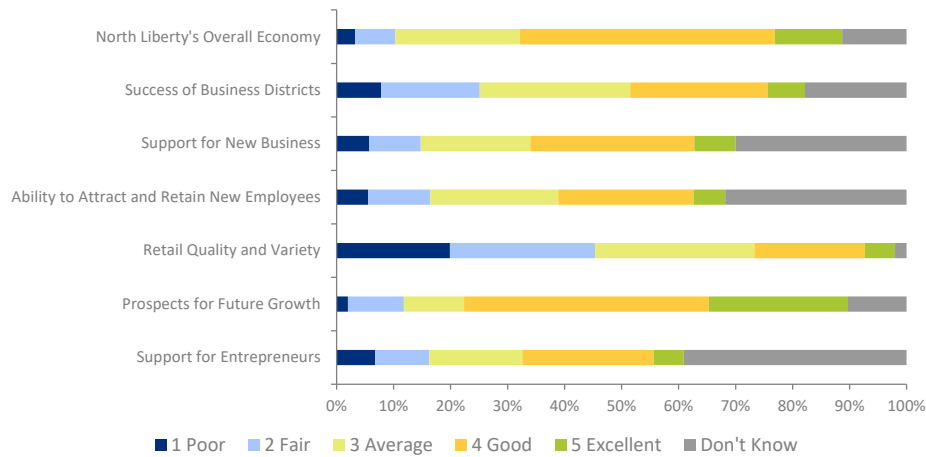
On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being poor and 5 being excellent), how would you rate North Liberty in regards to transportation?



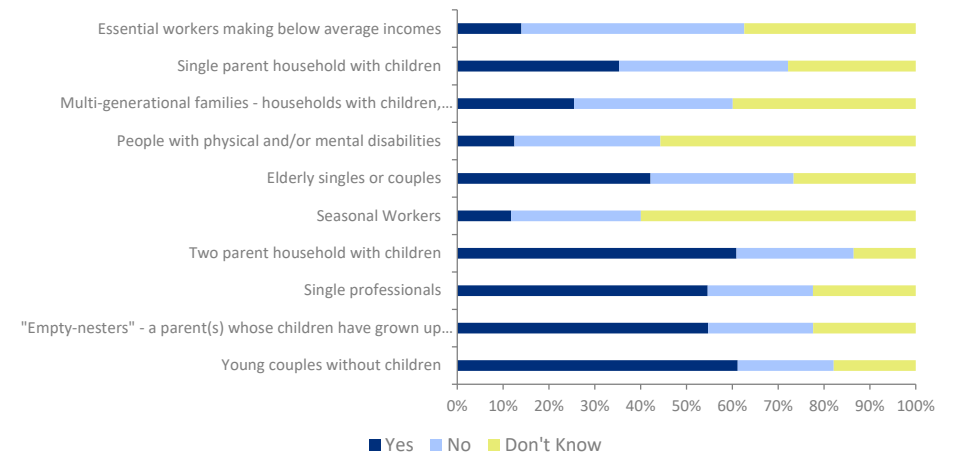
On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being poor and 5 being excellent), how would you rate North Liberty in regards to Community Image and Values?



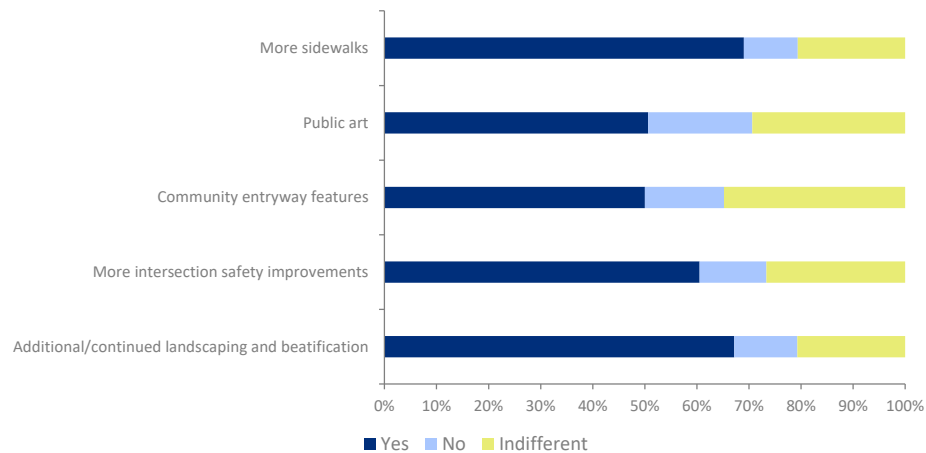
On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being poor and 5 being excellent), how would you rate North Liberty in regards to Economic Development?



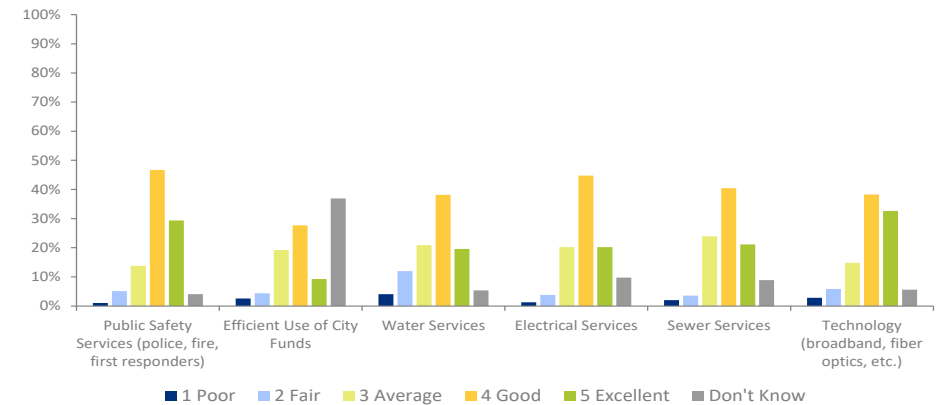
Do you believe that the current housing supply adequately meets the needs of the following household types in North Liberty?



On Ranshaw Way, would you like to see any enhancements to the corridor?

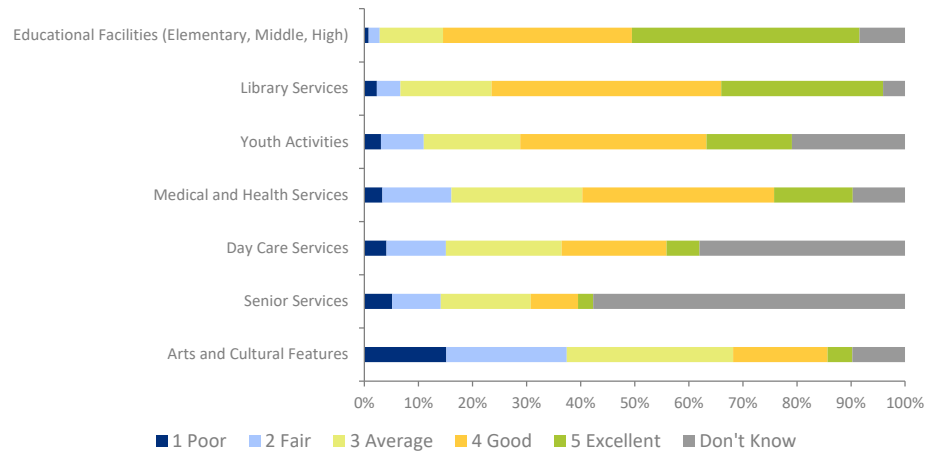


On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being poor and 5 being excellent), how would you rate North Liberty in regards to Public Services?

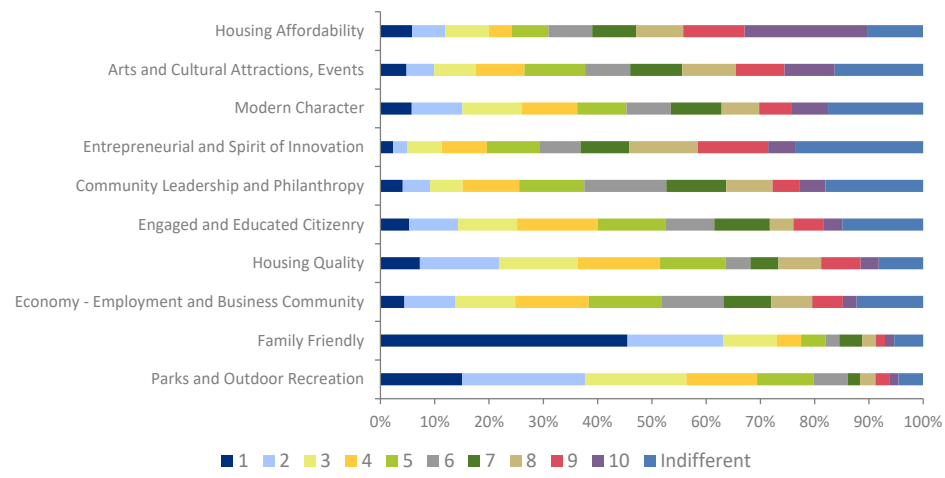




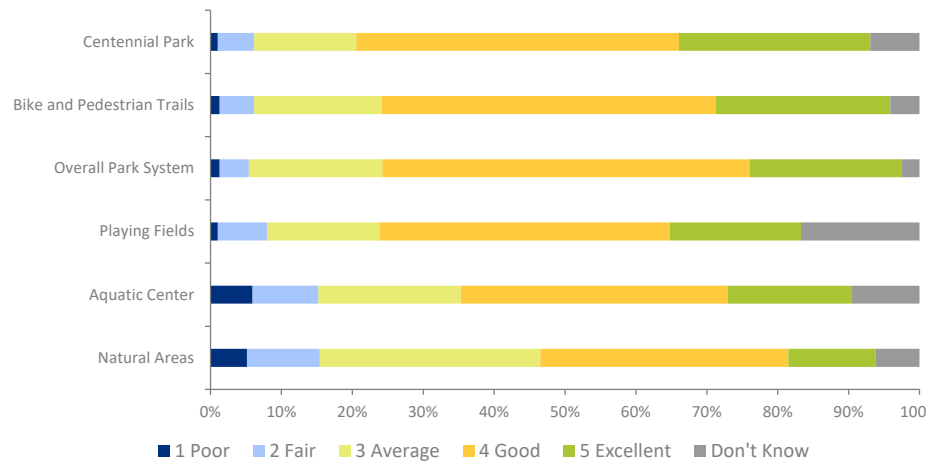
On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being poor and 5 being excellent), how would you rate North Liberty in regards to Community Services?



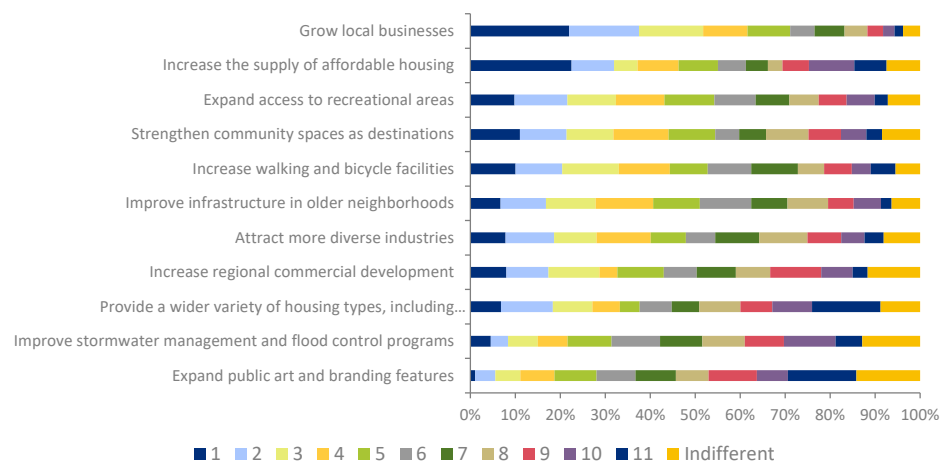
What do you believe are North Liberty's greatest assets? (please rank at least 5)



On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being poor and 5 being excellent), how would you rate North Liberty in regards to Parks, Recreation, and Culture?



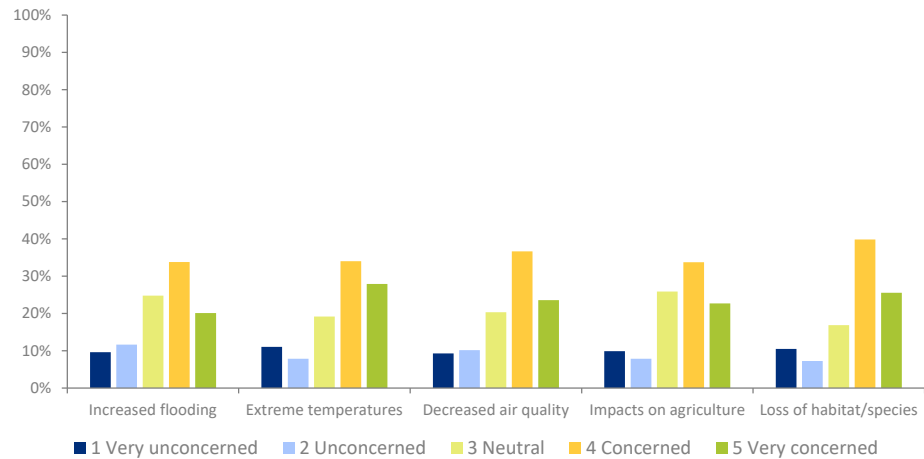
Below is a list of possible community priorities or projects. Of this list, please rank items that you believe should be the city's top priorities. (1 is the highest priority)



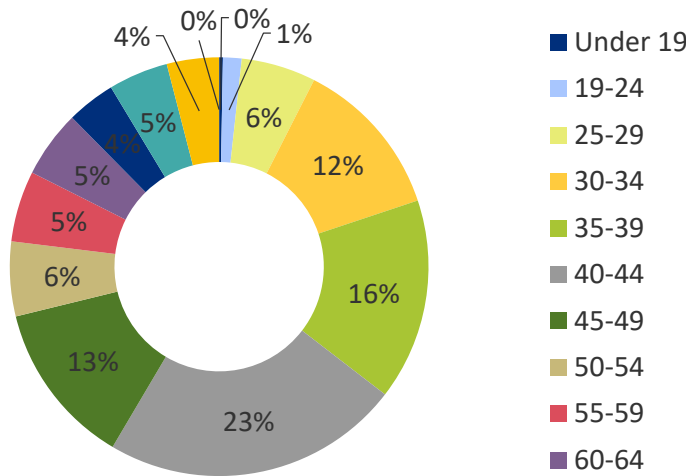
How important is planning for climate change to North Liberty's future? (1 is unimportant, 5 is important)

ANSWER CHOICES	AVERAGE NUMBER	TOTAL NUMBER	RESPONSES
Responses	4	1,251	330

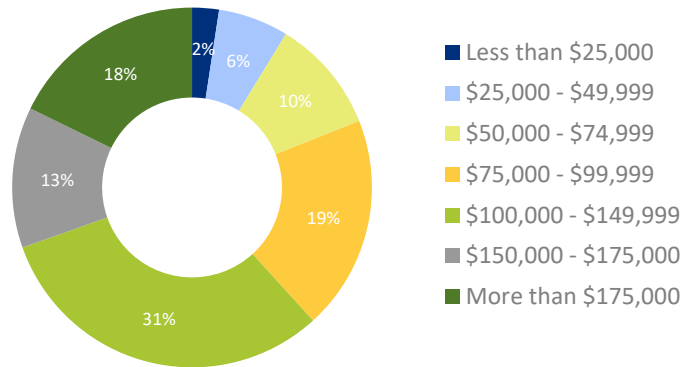
Rate your level of concern on the following climate change related impacts on North Liberty?



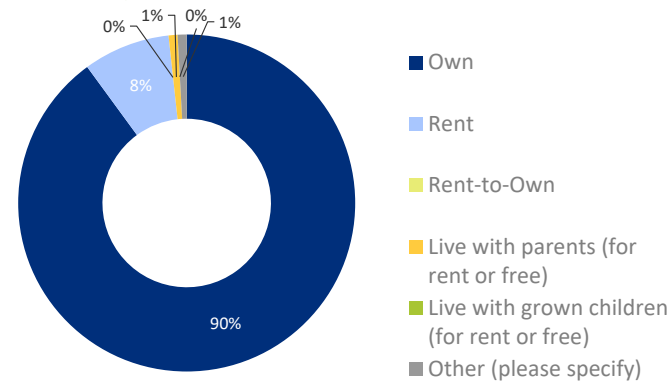
How old are you?



What is the total annual income of all residents living in your household?



Do you own or rent your home?



What is your race (check all that apply)?

