

# City of Elk Run Heights 2017 Comprehensive Plan Update



Recommended for adoption by the Planning and Zoning Commission on May 24, 2017

Adopted by City Council on June 13, 2017

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## RESOLUTION NO. 2856

A RESOLUTION TO ADOPT  
THE CITY OF ELK RUN HEIGHTS 2017 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

WHEREAS, said plan is authorized under Chapter 414 and 403 of the Iowa Code, as amended, and

WHEREAS, a public hearing was held by the Elk Run Heights Planning and Zoning Commission on May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2017 and the City Council on June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2017 in the Council Chambers of the City Hall on the proposed adoption of the City of Elk Run Heights 2017 Comprehensive Plan Update, and

WHEREAS, said plan was developed with consideration of the smart planning principles under section 18B.1 of the Iowa Code and includes information specified in section 18b.2, subsection 2 of the Iowa Code,

WHEREAS, said plan is a policy document that considers the community's demographics, public facilities, land use, transportation, housing and implementation procedures, and

WHEREAS, said plan looks at community development by outlining a land use plan and is the basis for the City of Elk Run Heights's zoning, subdivision, annexation, and urban renewal tools and regulations, and

WHEREAS, an integral part of the plan is providing opportunities for public input in the 2017 Comprehensive Plan Update process, including the use of Task Force meetings, community survey, community open house, Elk Run Heights Planning and Zoning Commission public hearing and meeting, and an Elk Run Heights City Council public hearing, and

WHEREAS, the 2017 Comprehensive Plan Update has been the subject of, or a discussion item on the agenda of, numerous public task force meetings, and

WHEREAS, the 2017 Comprehensive Plan Update is a primary land use tool of the Elk Run Heights City Council, Planning and Zoning Commission; Board of Adjustment; and city staff, and

WHEREAS, said plan is in the best interests of the City of Elk Run Heights, now therefore BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that the City Council hereby approve and adopt the City of Elk Run Heights 2017 Comprehensive Plan Update as a replacement in its entirety to the existing Comprehensive Plan this 13<sup>th</sup> day of June , 2017.

Signed:   
(Mayor)

Date: 6-14-17

ATTEST:

Signed:   
(City Administrator/City Clerk)

Date: 6/14/17

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# Acknowledgements

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The City Council would like to thank all the volunteers who provided input and time, as well as financial means to make this Plan Update a reality. A special thanks to the Planning and Zoning Commission and the citizens of Elk Run Heights who participated in the process to develop this Plan.

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# Executive Summary

The 2017 Elk Run Heights Comprehensive Plan Update is the result of a collaborative effort between the City Council, Planning and Zoning Commission, City staff, Task Force, citizens, and INRCOG.

This Plan Update begins with the 1995 Comprehensive Plan and incorporates the principles and elements of the 2010 Iowa Smart Planning legislation. Based on input from officials, stakeholders, and citizens, the following goals, objectives, and actions were identified for inclusion in the Plan:

**Agriculture/Natural Resource Goal #1: To maintain a park and open space system, and incorporate a wide range of social and cultural activities into the community.**

Objectives:

- a. Provide maintenance and general upkeep of existing parks, facilities, and recreational areas.
- b. Continue to support current boards and organizations which provide recreational opportunities in the community.
- c. Research possible reuse of the ball diamonds.
- d. Upgrade volleyball court.
- e. Identify possible future recreation areas.

**Agriculture/Natural Resource Goal #2: Protect, preserve, and/or restore environmentally sensitive or natural features in the community, whenever possible.**

Objectives:

- a. Maintain Tree City designation.
- b. Make efforts to be “green”, in city practices, policy, and development.
- c. Continue to protect the floodplain and the Elk Run Heights watershed area to ensure no development disrupts the natural water flow.

**Hazards Goal #1: Continue to participate in the Black Hawk County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan**

Objectives:

- a. Enhance the quality of life and safety of all residents.



- b. Take steps to mitigate the probable negative consequences that may occur as a result of natural, technological, and/or man-made disasters.
- c. Identify potential funding sources needed to accomplish identified mitigation projects.
- d. Protect the health and welfare of the entire community by sufficiently maintaining all first responder organizations.
- e. Return to pre-disaster or improved conditions as soon as possible after a disaster occurs.
- f. Continue to support the incorporation of the city into the Black Hawk County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan.
- g. Continually re-assess and re-evaluate the plan and mitigation activities.

**Community Character Goal #1: To maintain an on-going planning process in which informed public input is an important element.**

Objectives:

- a. Update the Elk Run Heights Comprehensive Plan as needed, review modifications or changes in city policy and incorporate them as amendments to the Plan.
- b. Continue to encourage public input in zoning and subdivision review and approval process.

**Community Facilities Goal #1: To ensure adequate and efficient service to all persons in the community.**

Objectives:

- a. Provide services that meet all State and Federal guidelines.
- b. Promote and continue to use the Community Room in City Hall for public rental space.
- c. Maintain the recycling program.
- d. Maintain working relationships with partners who provide services for the City.

**Public Infrastructure and Utilities Goal #1: Continue to improve infrastructure to serve the community**

Objectives:

- a. Addition of new bike/walking/nature trail connections.
- b. Enhance street lighting to ensure safety.
- c. Encourage sidewalk improvements.
- d. Address sanitary sewer treatment facility.
- e. Identify and remove existing septic tanks.
- f. Repair/replace aging infrastructure when needed.
- g. Construct additional lift stations.
- h. Research the possibility of an agreement with Evansdale for snow removal and street maintenance.
- i. Develop a Capital Improvements Plan, which would identify projects and potential funding sources that are tied to this Plan and the City's municipal budget.

**Housing Goal #1: Continue to develop and promote Elk Run Heights as a desirable residential community.**

## Objectives

- a. Provide a mixture of single family residential, condominiums, and duplexes for residents.
- b. Promote and build upon the small town atmosphere in Elk Run Heights.
- c. Providing public facilities and services as necessary.
- d. Advertise and market the community.
- e. Take advantage of proximity to larger cities
- f. Provide resources and programs to help improve and maintain housing stock.
- g. Consider affordable housing while looking at future developments.
- h. Ensure that the quietness and friendliness of the community is preserved.
- i. Encourage development of assisted living facilities for residents.

**Economic Development Goal #1: Encouraging the retention and growth of existing businesses, as well as encourage new businesses to locate in Elk Run.**

## Objectives:

- a. Provide adequate land for development, which has the necessary infrastructure.
- b. Encourage more local retail/shops development.
- c. Attempt to entice restaurant development into the community.
- d. Utilize the TIF district.

**Transportation Goal #1: Provide an efficient transportation system for orderly development of the community while maintaining safety and economy.**

## Objectives:

- a. Continue to monitor local street conditions and to provide for improvements through long range street improvement projects.
- b. Research and possibly use the Regional Transit Commission to provide dial-in transportation services to residents.
- c. Continue to provide easy access to transportation.

**Land Use Goal #1: Maintain orderly growth and development to ensure that the land in Elk Run Heights is used the most advantageous way to benefit the community as a whole.**

## Objectives:

- a. Research potential hazards that may be associated with large scale fueling facilities.
- b. Maintain zoning and subdivision ordinance.
- c. Work to maintain lower taxes which may provide more opportunities to grow.
- d. Research annexation of land, which may create opportunities for expansion in the future.
- e. Use TIF to foster development.
- f. Encourage public input in land use process.

**Intergovernmental Collaboration Goal #1: Continue to work collaboratively and communicate effectively with other levels of government and agencies in order to benefit its residents as well as those in the region.**

Objectives:

- a. Continue to work cooperatively with the Federal government.
- b. Continue to work cooperatively with the State Government.
- c. Continue to work cooperatively with Black Hawk County.
- d. Continue to work cooperatively with neighboring communities.

**Public Participation Goal #1: Promote public participation.**

Objectives:

- a. Invite citizen groups to take part in development and implementation of City plans.
- b. Make a continuous effort to encourage participation by residents in City Council Meetings.

**Quality of Life Goal #1: Maintain the City's quality of life.**

Objectives:

- a. Support local schools.
- b. Support a variety of religious centers.
- c. If proposed, the community would like to see development of a fitness/wellness center.

**Quality of Life Goal #2: Public Safety.**

Objectives:

- a. Consider adding law enforcement hours in order to ensure safety of residents
- b. Obtain monthly reports on incidents, citations, and accidents reports from the Evansdale Police Department.

**Implementation Goal #1: Maintain land use management program.**

Objectives:

- a. Maintain and update zoning ordinance, as necessary.
- b. Maintain and update subdivision regulations, as necessary.
- c. Maintain boards/commissions.
- d. Maintain TIF district.
- e. Maintain and update building codes, as necessary.

# Introduction

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## **SECTION 1 – LEGAL BASIS OF A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

The Elk Run Heights Comprehensive Plan, and its sequential updates, is designed to meet the statutory requirements of the State of Iowa. The ability of the city to plan and regulate land use within its borders is granted through Chapter 414 of the Code of Iowa, which may also be referred to as “state enabling legislation” for planning powers. Also, this Plan is intended to meet planning requirements for its implementation tools, chief among those being the community’s zoning ordinance (Code Chapter 414), land subdivision ordinance (Code Chapter 354), urban renewal program (Code Chapter 403), and the newly adopted Iowa Smart Planning Principles (Code Chapter 18B).

## **SECTION 2 – HOW TO USE THE PLAN**

Comprehensive land use planning is a conscious act of a community to plan for its physical development. In addition, planning requires that the existing circumstances of a community be defined and evaluated, including existing land use patterns, population characteristics, community and area plans, public service availability, and public sentiment. In the City of Elk Run Heights, Iowa, the Comprehensive Plan Update is the written result of these efforts. The Plan Update is designed to be a general guide for physical development of the community.

The Comprehensive Land Use Plan, which may also be referred to as a General Plan, Master Plan, or Comprehensive Plan, represents the principal document that organizes concepts and states goals and objectives relating to the future physical development of the city. Predictable and desirable development in the city depends upon the establishment of a vision for the future that perceives the interrelationships of governmental services, private development needs, public finances, free market dynamics, population characteristics, environmental health, and the desires of the majority of the citizenry. The Comprehensive Land Use Plan Update strives to integrate and balance those various forces so as to promote the most beneficial physical development and community welfare possible in the next 10 to 20 years.

The most beneficial future portrait of the city requires that the Comprehensive Plan Update incorporates the vital input of two major civic forces:

1. Governmental agencies which administer critical phases of building development, such as infrastructure provision and important public resources such as parks and schools; and
2. Private sector investment and enterprise which provide the capital and energy necessary to construct homes, businesses, services, and industry.

The Comprehensive Plan Update seeks to incorporate the best visions and ideals of the citizens along with realistic needs and aspirations of private development in order to capitalize upon the city's ongoing productivity and potential.

Furthermore, the Plan promotes managed growth that is cost-effective and logical. The City hopes to prevent leapfrog development or urban sprawl, as well as minimize conflict between incompatible uses that locate next to each other. In addition, the Plan Update establishes a circular process of implementation, review, and amendment for itself.

### **SECTION 3 – SMART PLANNING**

This update, Plan Update 2017, is an updated comprehensive plan for the City of Elk Run Heights. It is derived from the original 1995 Comprehensive Plan, as part of the continuing process involved in evaluating and modifying the Plan to keep it as a current and effective means of guiding the future growth and development of the city. This Update was under the direction of the City of Elk Run Heights City Clerk and City Council.

The City of Elk Run Heights had help with the completion of the Plan with the assistance of Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments (INRCOG). The Commission provided input and guidance to INRCOG planners to ensure the direction of the update was consistent with city citizens and current development trends.

The Plan was developed using the Iowa Smart Planning Principles (Iowa Code 18B.1) and the identified thirteen elements of a comprehensive plan (Iowa Code 18B.2). These principles and elements assisted in shaping what and how information was discussed and compiled in this Plan.

#### **Smart Planning Guiding Principles**

The Plan was guided by Iowa's Smart Growth and Sustainable Principles (Iowa Code 18B.1 and 18B.2). As Iowa Code 18B.1 states "...local governments, ... shall consider and may apply the following principles during deliberation of all appropriate planning, zoning, development and resource management decisions." These principles include:

- Collaboration – Governmental, community, and individual stakeholders, including those outside the jurisdiction of the entity, are encouraged to be involved and provide comment during deliberation of planning, zoning, development, and resource management decisions and during implementation of such decisions. The state agency, local government, or other public entity is encouraged to develop and implement a strategy to facilitate such participation.
- Efficiency, Transparency, and Consistency – Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should be undertaken to provide efficient, transparent, and consistent outcomes. Individuals, communities, regions, and governmental entities should share in the responsibility to promote the equitable distribution of development benefits and costs.

- Clean, Renewable, and Efficient Energy – Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should be undertaken to promote clean and renewable energy use and increased energy efficiency.
- Occupational Diversity – Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should promote increased diversity of employment and businesses opportunities, promote access to education and training, expand entrepreneurial opportunities, and promote the establishment of businesses in locations near existing housing, infrastructure, and transportation.
- Revitalization – Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should facilitate the revitalization of established town centers and neighborhoods by promoting development that conserves land, protects historic resources, promotes pedestrian accessibility, and integrates different uses of property. Remediation and reuse of existing sites, structures, and infrastructure is preferred over new construction in undeveloped areas.
- Housing Diversity – Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should encourage diversity in the types of available housing, support the rehabilitation of existing housing, and promote the location of housing near public transportation and employment centers.
- Community Character – Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should promote activities and development that are consistent with the character and architectural style of the community and should respond to local values regarding the physical character of the community.
- Natural Resource and Agricultural Protection – Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should emphasize protection, preservation, and restoration of natural resources, agricultural land, and cultural and historic landscapes, and should increase the availability of open spaces and recreational facilities.
- Sustainable Design – Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should promote developments, buildings, and infrastructure that utilize sustainable design and construction standards and conserve natural resources by reducing waste and pollution through efficient use of land, energy, water, air, and materials.
- Transportation Diversity – Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should promote expanded transportation options for residents of the community. Consideration should be given to transportation options that maximize mobility, reduce congestion, conserve fuel, and improve air quality.

### **Smart Planning Elements**

Under subsection 2 of the Iowa Code (18B.2), it stated a city “shall consider the smart planning principles” and “may include” the elements listed below, if applicable, when developing or amending a comprehensive plan. The twelve smart planning elements that are discussed in this chapter are:

- Community Overview
- Agricultural & Natural Resources
- Hazards
- Community Character
- Community Facilities
- Public Infrastructure & Utilities
- Transportation
- Housing
- Economic Development
- Land Use
- Intergovernmental Collaboration
- Implementation – Action Plan

## **SECTION 4 – PLAN ORGANIZATION**

The Plan is divided into three chapters for the ease of citizens, development interests, local and regional agencies, and decision-makers who will be its primary users. These three chapters include: Introduction, Smart Planning Elements, and Plan Implementation.

### **Chapter 1: Introduction**

This first chapter discusses what a comprehensive plan is, the legality of a plan, the components of a plan, and the public participation conducted to update the plan.

### **Chapter 2: Smart Planning Elements**

The heart of the Plan is found in this chapter. This chapter discusses in detail the two process elements and the ten background elements to a comprehensive plan.

Chapter 2 is comprised of the twelve smart growth elements. The reader who understands these sections will understand Elk Run Heights’ implementation plan (outlined in Chapter 3) and the extensive citizen, task force, commission, and staff effort that created it. Each element or section contains the goals, objectives, and action strategies developed by citizen, Task Force, local Commissions, and the Planning and Zoning Commission, recommended by the Planning and Zoning Commission, and adopted by Elk Run Heights’ City Council. Each group of goals, objectives, and action strategies is preceded by a summary of existing conditions and issues and opportunities. The twelve sections or elements of Chapter 2 are:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| ▪ Section 1: Community Overview (location, history, population) | ▪ Section 6: Public Infrastructure & Utilities |
| ▪ Section 2: Agricultural & Natural Resources                   | ▪ Section 7: Housing                           |
| ▪ Section 3: Hazards  | ▪ Section 8: Economic Development              |
| ▪ Section 4: Community Character                                | ▪ Section 9: Transportation                    |
| ▪ Section 5: Community Facilities                               | ▪ Section 10: Land Use                         |
|   | ▪ Section 11: Intergovernmental Collaboration  |

Each section provides the information needed to understand how the Plan is intended to guide growth and development in Elk Run Heights, but the sections, as well as all chapters, work in connection with one another. For instance, to understand the local economy, the reader needs to know about the community history and population trends. The income levels, age and other community characteristics help determine land use needs, the location and type of housing that the market needs to provide, and so on.

As mentioned earlier, this chapter contains plan elements or sections that provide details supporting the Action Plan recommendations. Each element is generally organized as follows:

- Introduction – provides a brief overview of the specific context of the section.
- Existing Conditions – examines the current conditions specific to element in discussion.
- Issues and Opportunities – provides a summary of the identified issues and opportunities that would impact future development of the city.
- Goals, Objectives, and Action Strategies – provides formulated strategies for resolving the major issues of the city.

### **Chapter 3: Plan Implementation**

Also known to some as the Action Plan (Implementation – Smart Growth Element), this chapter should be viewed as the user’s manual to work through implementing the identified goals, objections, and action strategies in Chapter 2. This chapter also discusses the adoption and amendment processes, how to evaluate and effectively participate in continued – and in some cases – improved collaboration events with local, county, and regional agencies and organizations.

The Action Plan sets an agenda for future work to be done. To many persons involved in the Plan, it has become clear that the planning process is one of discovery and working together. While we know more about the community, the values and desires of the people who live here, much remains to be done over time by citizens, city officials, city staff, city commissions, and community organizations to work through this city’s more difficult land use, economic, cultural, housing, and governance issues.

The Action Plan builds on Elk Run Heights’ history of successful planning and development initiatives. Experience gained from previous planning documents and ongoing efforts (financial and time) provided the groundwork to refine the goals, objectives, and action strategies found in the Plan.

These main assumptions were used in developing the Action Plan.

- The plan must be concise, user-friendly, and visionary.
- The plan must be reasonably internally consistent, well integrated, financially feasible and generally capable of implementation.
- The plan must be developed on strong public insight.

## **SECTION 5 – GOAL SETTING**

The goals, objectives, and action strategies are the heart of each section, as well as the entire comprehensive plan. Much time and considerable effort by numerous people have been invested in developing goals, objectives, and action strategies, as documented in Chapter 2 and in the Action Plan in Chapter 3. The Plan takes into account past planning efforts and comments received during task force meetings, recommendations of the various citizens' commissions, and the guidance of the city's Planning and Zoning Commission, department heads, and city staff.

All goals, objectives, and action strategies takes into consideration the ten Iowa Smart Planning Principles, of the Iowa Code, and Elk Run Heights' overall vision.

### **Components of Goal Setting**

*Principle Statement* describes the current condition or consideration that makes the goal(s) and its associated objectives and action strategies necessary and explains how they address the problem or condition.

*Goals* are broad statements of a community's desires. Goals tell us where we want to go. The language of a goal statement includes directives, such as "ensure", "provide," and "retain." "Ensure" in this plan means the city will do whatever they can within their physical, legal, and financial means.

*Objectives* are more specific and measurable activity, a benchmark, to be reached in pursuit of the goal.

*Action Strategies* express a commitment to a course of action in one of three ways:

- The action strategies themselves, as they appear in an adopted comprehensive plan, provide clear guidance for decision making when a situation arises;
- They form the basis for revised development regulations (i.e., zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations, building codes, etc.); and
- They provide the overall direction for implementation of a strategy or course of action.

## **SECTION 6 – PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

This section summarizes the numerous phases and tasks completed in order to develop the Plan, defines the roles and responsibilities of different citizens, stakeholders, and groups involved in the planning process. It also summarizes the public involvement opportunities used to gather public input.

### **The Planning Process**

The planning process used to update the City of Elk Run Heights' Comprehensive Plan engaged a diverse group of community stakeholders, concerned citizens, elected and appointed officials, city staff, and county representatives. The process allowed numerous opportunities for participation

### **SMART PLANNING ELEMENT - PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

*This is a process element that includes: Information relating to public participation during the comprehensive plan or land development regulations, including documentation of the public participation process, a compilation of objectives, policies, and goals identified in the public comment received, and identification of the groups or individuals comprising any work groups or committees that were created to assist the planning and zoning commission or other appropriate decision-making body of the municipality.*

and involvement throughout the project. Throughout the project, the process balanced preserving and improving upon Elk Run Heights' existing strengths, enhancing economic opportunities, preserving community character and quality of life, identifying means for redevelopment and infill, and creating a community that is livable.

### **Public Involvement Plan**

Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments (INRCOG) worked closely with the City of Elk Run Heights throughout the course of this project. To ensure public education and involvement throughout the comprehensive planning effort, a Public Involvement Plan (PIP) was developed. The PIP identified an approach using planning techniques that have proven successful with previous planning projects and strategies applicable to the city and its citizens.

Encouraging active public participation during plan development was the primary goal of the PIP. The PIP adhered to the Iowa's Smart Planning Principles of Collaboration, Efficiency, Transparency, and Consistency. The PIP identified task force meetings and public hearings for the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council. The PIP also identified various media methods – press releases, public notices, flyers, city website postings, and city newsletters. Below are details of the roles, responsibilities, and outcome of the PIP efforts.



### Task Force Meetings

Three structured and facilitated Task Force meetings were held between October and November, 2016. These meetings provided discussion of existing conditions, objectives, and draft recommendations for each of the 13 Plan Elements. Each meeting ran approximately one and one-half hours from 7:00pm to 8:30pm.

TASK FORCE MEETINGS		
Meeting Dates	Location	Discussion Topics
October 17, 2016	City Hall Community Room	Benefits of a Comprehensive Plan, legal requirements, components of Plan, project schedule, and the role of Task Force and public in planning process. Identifying and discussing existing conditions, key issues, opportunities, and potential goals for community character, agricultural and natural resources, and hazard mitigation.
November 7, 2016	City Hall Community Room	Identifying and discussing existing conditions, key issues, opportunities, and potential goals for public infrastructure and utilities, community facilities and services, and intergovernmental collaboration.
November 21, 2016	City Hall Community Room	Identifying and discussing existing conditions, key issues, opportunities, and potential goals for economic development, housing, transportation, and land use.

### Planning & Zoning Commission Meetings

Two work sessions were held with the Planning and Zoning Commission between February and March, 2017 to develop goals and objectives for the Plan along with recommendations for the Future Land Use Map. Each meeting ran approximately one and one-half hours from 7:00pm to 8:30pm.

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MEETINGS		
Meeting Dates	Location	Discussion Topics
February 22, 2017	City Hall	Comprehensive Plan overview, role of Commission and public in planning process. Review of Task Force meetings: existing conditions, key issues, opportunities, and potential goals. Discussion of proposed goals and objectives for the Plan.
March 22, 2017	City Hall	More discussion of proposed goals and objectives. Review of current and future land use maps. Review of draft Plan document.

### Joint Task Force, Planning and Zoning Commission, and City Council Meeting

Following meetings with the Planning and Zoning Commission, the draft the Plan was revised based on the Commission's comments and presented to a joint meeting of the Task Force, Planning and Zoning Commission, and City Council on April 18, 2017.

JOINT TASK FORCE, PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION, AND CITY COUNCIL MEETING		
Meeting Date	Location	Discussion Topics
April 18, 2017	City Hall	More discussion of proposed goals and objectives. Review of current and future land use maps. Review of draft Plan document.

### Public Hearings

The Planning and Zoning Commission held a public hearing on May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2017. Following discussion, the commission recommended adoption of the draft the Plan to the City Council.

The City Council held a public hearing on June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2017, after which the Council adopted the Comprehensive Plan Update by resolution.

PUBLIC HEARINGS			
Meeting Dates	Location	Body	Actions Taken
May 24 <sup>th</sup> , 2017	City Hall	Planning and Zoning Commission	Recommend adoption of the Plan Update.
June 13 <sup>th</sup> , 2017	City Hall	City Council	Adopted the Plan Update.

# Smart Planning Elements

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## **SECTION 1 – COMMUNITY OVERVIEW**

In this section, the city and county past population trends, population characteristics, and population projections are examined. The information generated from this section will be valuable to accomplish multi-generational planning - takes into consideration the needs of all age groups throughout all stages of planning - for years to come and to understand how Elk Run Heights came to be.

### **Location**

As shown in Map 1, Elk Run Heights is located near the center of Black Hawk County, in the northeast corner of the State of Iowa. With Elk Run Creek flowing through the northwest portion of the city, it is also located to the northeast of the Cedar River. Only a few miles from Waterloo, Elk Run Heights is located north of Interstate 380.

### **History**

Originally plotted in 1947 by Everette Sutton, Elk Run Heights was originally called Sutton's First Addition. It was seen as a retreat from city life for a small group of people. In April 1951, the people of Sutton's First Addition started the petition for incorporation, in which they renamed themselves as Elk Run Heights. This event was followed closely by the holding of their first mayoral and council election in June 1951.

Expansions began shortly starting with street lights in the Toneff Division, followed by the Elk Run School in 1952, along with traffic ordinances, IPS franchise, Waterloo Fire protection, and Gray Addition. Large expansions and additions continued over the next couple years which created the additions of Howard Fox, Wilshire Heights, and Edna Fox. During this timeframe is also when Elk Run Municipal Water Works was also created. By 1961 Elk Run Heights was renting a building that was the first official city hall, the city water was officially turned on, and the first ice skating rink was opened in Elk Run Park.

The 1970s brought a lot of changes to the town, there was an update to the sewer system in 1971, the city roads were black topped, city staff used a multiple-use building where the police department, water department, mayor's office, and council chambers were all housed. In 1976, Elk Run Heights was declared a bicentennial city in the celebration of the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the adoption of the *Declaration of Independence*.

In commemoration of two former mayors of Elk Run Heights, in 1978, two city parks were renamed honoring Walt Saveraid and Howard King. Throughout the 1980s, Elk Run Heights began to merge with other cities in terms of police, fire, and library services. The City initially joined the Tri-City Police in 1983, but later contracted with Black Hawk County and Waterloo in 1988 for services. Elk Run Heights was named a Tree City USA city in 1988 as well as the construction beginning for the I-380 Connection Link, which finished in 1989.

## Government Structure

Elk Run Heights has a Mayor-Council form of government. The Council consists of five members elected at large for concurrent terms of four years. The Mayor is also elected for a term of four years.

## Population

Based on the data that was collected by the U.S. Census, Elk Run Heights had a population of 1,117 as of 2010. Figure 1, presented below, shows the population trend from the 1960 to 2010. As shown in the figure, Elk Run Heights has seen increases and decreases in the population during this time period. The average population over the past six census compilations is 1,124 persons with the peak being in 1980 at 1,186 and low in 2000 with a population of 1,052. The struggling farm economy throughout the Midwest was the primary reasoning for the large 9.0 percent population decrease between 1980 and 1990. In the most recent U.S. Census, the population of Elk Run Heights had increased a total of 6.2 percent between the years 2000 and 2010.

Figure 1: Population Trend for Elk Run Heights

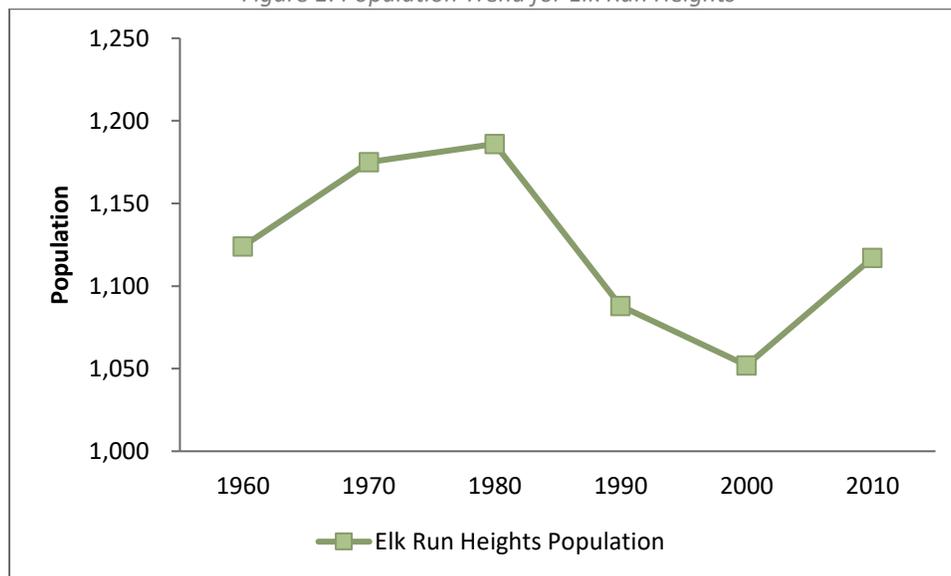


Table 1.1 shows the population trends for all incorporated communities in Black Hawk County since 1970, as well as the total for the county and the State of Iowa. Elk Run Heights’ population has fluctuated over this time, not unlike the other jurisdictions presented.

TABLE 1.1: POPULATION TRENDS OF SELECTED COMMUNITIES					
Community	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Cedar Falls	29,597	36,322	34,298	36,145	39,260
Dunkerton	563	718	746	749	852
<b>Elk Run Heights</b>	<b>1,175</b>	<b>1,186</b>	<b>1,088</b>	<b>1,052</b>	<b>1,117</b>
Hudson	1,535	2,267	2,037	2,117	2,282
La Porte	2,256	2,324	2,128	2,275	2,285
Raymond	582	655	619	537	788
Waterloo	75,533	75,985	66,467	68,747	68,406
Black Hawk County	132,916	137,961	123,798	128,012	131,090
State of Iowa	2,825,368	2,913,808	2,776,831	2,926,324	3,046,355

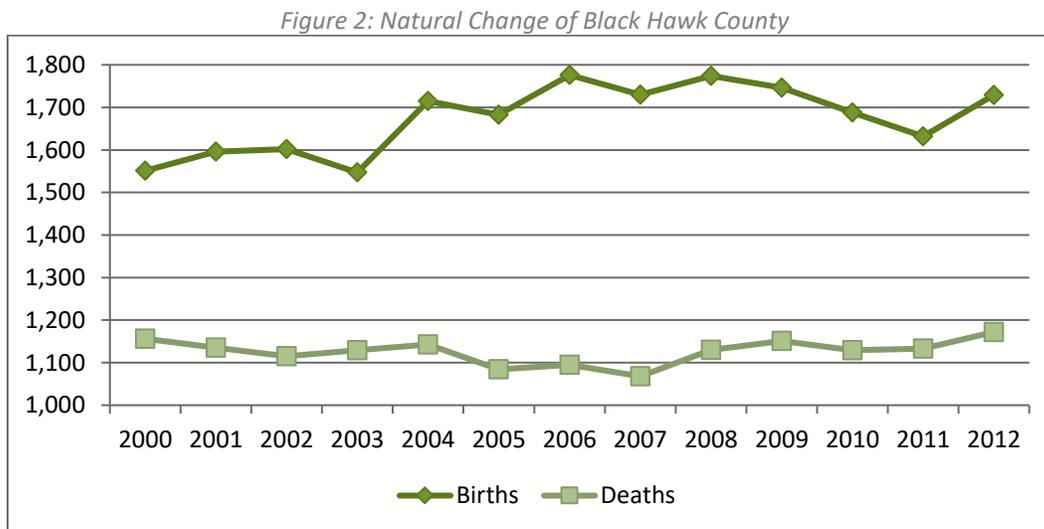
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

### Characteristics

A community’s population characteristics are the specific elements that make the community unique and diverse. This analysis examines the natural change, age, sex, and dependency ratio.

#### Natural Change

Figure 2 illustrates Black Hawk County’s natural change by comparing the number of births and deaths. Births have regularly outpaced deaths in the county with a peak birth rate in the past twelve years of 14.1 births per 1,000 population in 2006. The death rate peaked in 2000 and 2004 at 9.0 deaths per 1,000 population.



## Age, Sex, Race

While populations of areas are constantly changing, so are the community's characteristics such as age, sex, and race. The following tables will show these breakdowns for Elk Run Heights and how they have changed from previous U.S. Census data collections. Table 2.1 provides the age breakdown between the years of 2000 and 2010. As Table 2.1 indicates, there have been a few places where there were some dramatic increases in the ten year timeframe. The biggest places of growth are in the age groups of 85 and older (266.67%), 55-64 (77.55%), 75-84 (68.18%), and 20-24 (40.0%). There were also some groups that had a significant decrease in persons of that age, the largest decreases were as follows: 10-14 (-38.46%), 35-44 (-29.14%), and 5-9 (-21.74%). These rates of change are relatively similar to the changes in the age cohorts for the State of Iowa, with only a few outliers being the 85 and older and 75-84 age groups.

**TABLE 1.2: AGE COHORTS FOR THE CITY OF ELK RUN HEIGHTS**

Age Cohort (in years)	2000		2010		% Change between 2000-2010
	#	% of Total	#	% of Total	
Less than 5	52	4.94%	60	5.70%	0.76%
5-9	69	6.56%	54	5.13%	-1.43%
10-14	91	8.65%	56	5.32%	-3.33%
15-19	83	7.89%	75	7.13%	-0.76%
20-24	50	4.75%	70	6.65%	1.90%
25-34	120	11.41%	129	12.26%	0.86%
35-44	182	17.30%	129	12.26%	-5.04%
45-54	155	14.73%	196	18.63%	3.90%
55-64	98	9.32%	174	16.54%	7.22%
65-74	105	9.98%	89	8.46%	-1.52%
75-84	44	4.18%	74	7.03%	2.85%
85+	3	0.29%	11	1.05%	0.76%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,052</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1,117</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau*

Table 1.3 details race and sex characteristics for Elk Run Heights' residents as reported in the 2000 and 2010 Censuses. Overall, the table indicates that the city became slightly more diverse between 2000 and 2010, but White or Caucasian was the predominantly reported race at 94.6 percent of residents. Also, while not recognized as a race category by the Census Bureau, persons of Hispanic origin numbered 28 persons in 2010 compared to 21 persons in 2000.

TABLE 1.3: RACE & SEX OF ELK RUN HEIGHTS RESIDENTS						
	Total Population	White or Caucasian	Black or African American	Am. Indian, Eskimo, Aleut	Asian or Pacific Islander	Other Race or 2+ Races
<b>2010</b>						
Male	557	524	11	2	0	20
Female	560	533	8	1	1	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,117</b>	<b>1,057</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>2000</b>						
Male	534	521	4	0	0	9
Female	518	505	3	1	1	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,052</b>	<b>1,026</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>17</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

### Dependency Ratio

One way of expressing the general age composition of the local population is through the use of a 'dependency ratio.' A high dependency ratio for a community results in significant planning directed to address the dependents' needs.

Table 1.4 analyzes the number and percent of persons under the age of 18 and over the age of 64 for Elk Run Heights, Black Hawk County, and the State of Iowa. In Elk Run Heights, the number and percentage of persons under the age of 18 decreased from 2000 to 2010 while the number and percentage of persons over 64 increased slightly. In correlation to how Elk Run Heights compares to Black Hawk County and the State of Iowa, as of 2010, the percentage for persons over the age of 18 was lower, while the percentage of persons over the age of 64 was higher than both county and state numbers. Elk Run Heights has a lower proportion of dependents – 32.3 percent of the population in 2010. Neither the county nor the state has dependent proportions lower than 35 percent. Median age in 2010 for Elk Run Heights was 44.1, an increase from 39.1 in 2000.

TABLE 1.4: PERSONS UNDER THE AGE OF 18 AND OVER THE AGE OF 64								
Community	2000				2010			
	#<18	%	#>64	%	#<18	%	#>64	%
Elk Run Heights	271	25.80%	152	14.40%	186	16.70%	174	15.60%
Black Hawk County	29,545	23.10%	17,899	14.00%	28,496	21.70%	18,131	13.80%
State of Iowa	733,638	25.10%	436,213	14.90%	727,993	23.90%	452,888	14.90%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

**Population Estimates and Projections**

Population projections are generally based on the assumption that past trends will continue in the future. As a result, future population will change according to a mathematical formula that best describes past population changes – what happened in the past will happen in the future.

Table 1.5 provides 20-year population projections or estimates for the City of Elk Run Heights. These projections were made using historical population trends as their basis and do not express an exact population figure for the years 2020 and 2030. An explanation of each of the types of projections follows.

TABLE 1.5: POPULATION PROJECTIONS FOR THE CITY OF ELK RUN HEIGHTS		
Type of Projection	2020	2030
<b>Linear</b>		
1960-2010	1,303	1,117
1990-2010	1,094	1,097
<b>Geometric</b>		
1960-2010	1,489	1,117
1990-2010	1,071	1,077
<b>Mean or Average</b>	1,239	1,102
<i>Source: U.S. Census Bureau, INRCOG</i>		

Linear and Geometric projections are straight-line or averaging methods of predicting population change. The Linear method uses the actual change in the total number of persons over a predetermined period of time in the community. Conversely, the Geometric method utilizes the percent change in population over that same period of time. For both of these projections, this Plan uses trend information from two time periods, between 1960 and 2010 and between 1990 and 2010, for determining the figures shown in Table 1.5. The former period looks at the trend over the past 50 years while the latter looks at the trend over the past 20 years.

In reviewing Table 1.5, it is important to note the similarities and dissimilarities in the figures for each of the projection years. It is also important to identify any unusual or unique projection figures that may have been calculated. Caution should be used when considering one of these unusual figures for use. The projection averages indicate that the City’s 2020 population may be approximately 1,106 persons, while the City’s 2030 population may be approximately 1,095 persons. This plan anticipates that Elk Run Heights will experience minimal decrease at approximately one percent per decade. An interesting note to look at with the population projections is that while using the linear and geometric projection model, the numbers seem to be very similar while using the same timeframe, no matter which method used. When using different timeframes, 50-year compared to 20-year, is when there seemed to be a slight difference.

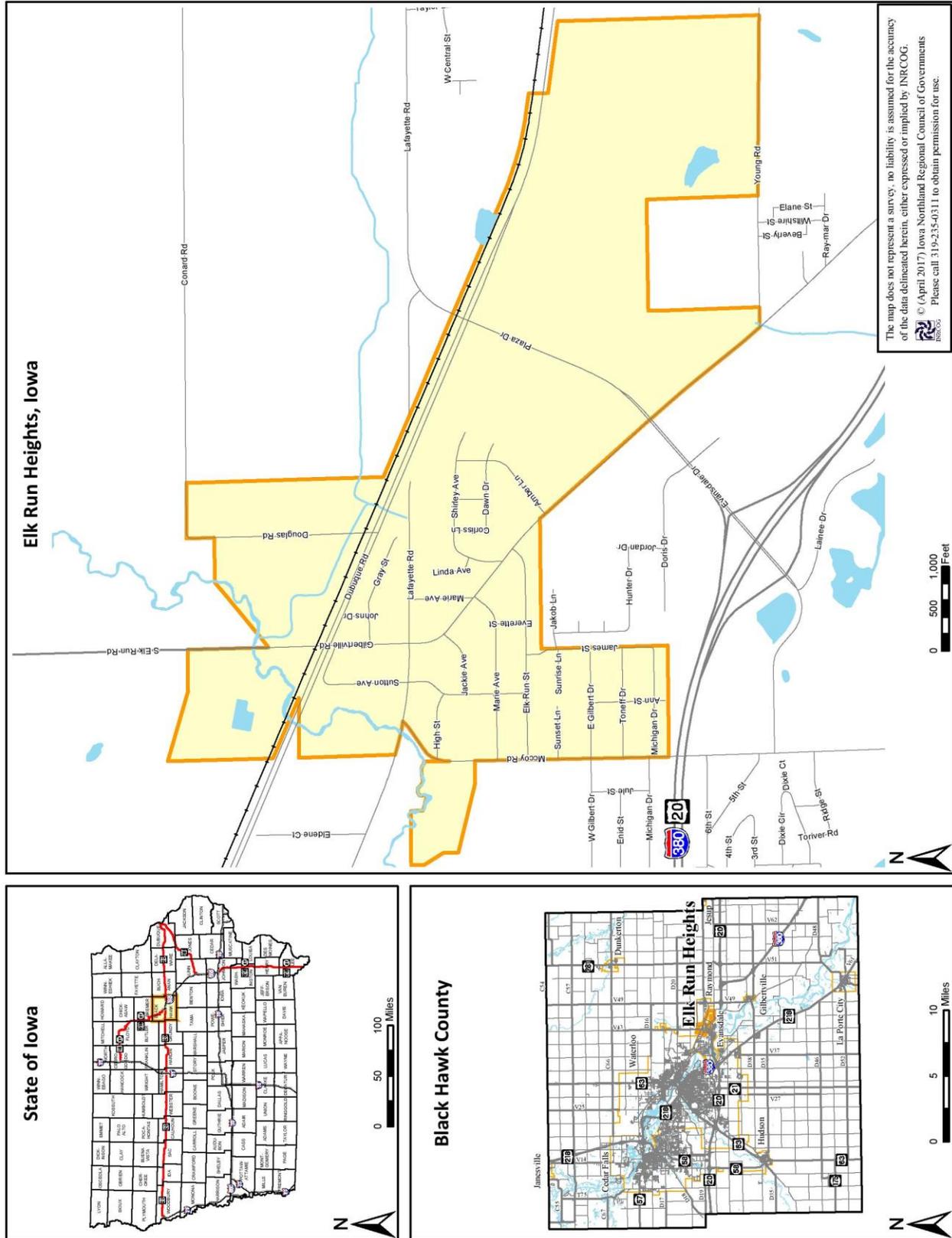
**Population Summary**

Population statistics, in summary, show that Elk Run Heights has experienced both, slight decline and growth since the large decline of the 1980. Looking at age cohorts, the city has seen a large increase in the 55-64, 75-84, and 85 or older age groups. There has also been a large decrease in the age groups of 10-14 years of age and also in the 34-44 year of age. The city has a lower proportion of its population, about 34.9 percent, in ‘dependent’ categories – under age 18 and over age 64. This is lower than both Black Hawk County and also the State of Iowa for dependency

ratio. It is projected that Elk Run Heights will continue to maintain a relatively steady population with only a 1 percent decrease per decade through the life of this Plan.

Map 1: Location Map of the City

City of Elk Run Heights Comprehensive Plan Update



## **SECTION 2 – AGRICULTURAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

The Agricultural and Natural Environment element serves two purposes. The first is to clarify the relationship between the natural environment and the built-out surroundings. The second is to secure a balanced or sustainable approach to future development. To help complete these purposes, the following guiding principles and assumptions were used, as well as the Smart Planning Principle identified in the column to the left:

### SMART PLANNING ELEMENT A&NR

Objectives, policies, and programs addressing the preservation and protection of agricultural and natural resources.

- ✓ The cultural landscape where we work, live, and play is shaped by the natural surroundings.
- ✓ The economic base of agriculture products is dependent upon the city and county's natural setting and its' resources.
- ✓ In order to protect the long-term capacity of the environment to support growth, the community needs to understand the limits of natural systems.
- ✓ Responsible growth requires the city to work with and within their natural setting. We must work with nature rather than against it.
- ✓ Elk Run Heights must recognize their limits. Humankind's problems, especially in regards to the natural setting, cannot always be solved with better science or a technological fix.
- ✓ Understanding the linkages between the natural and cultural landscapes is an important dimension of sound growth management.

The natural environment of Elk Run Heights is comprised of multiple factors that combine to form the environmental setting. The importance and status of the man-made elements or the state's roads, water, sewer, businesses, and residential areas are commonly viewed, or mistaken, as being independent of the natural environment. Such misconceptions have led to the residential and commercial development of flood plains and prime agricultural land, and loss of irreplaceable natural elements such as native prairies, forests, prominent vistas, and other scenic resources.

The following section will identify the physical elements that make up the environmental setting of Elk Run Heights and Black Hawk County. From the identification and analysis of the individual elements, areas can be identified as sensitive, or in need of protection. The City of Elk Run Heights, like all government bodies, must learn from past mistakes and implement simple rules and regulations to ensure the protection of elements that have been destroyed in the past.

The health and stability of Elk Run Heights and Black Hawk County, and both the natural and man-made environments, can be measured by the diversity within the system and the ability of the city and county to develop responsively to the natural systems, which shape its ultimate path.

## Existing Conditions

Elk Run Heights' agricultural and natural resources existing conditions include agricultural lands, topography, waterways, climate, vegetation, and soils.

### *Agriculture*

Elk Run Heights has some agricultural lands located to the north and west of the city. The primary row crops in the city are usually either corn or soybeans.

### *Geography*

The city is located near the Cedar River and Elk Run Creek. The topography of the community, as shown in Map 2, is generally flat, with only a small number of elevation peaks and valleys.

### *Waterways & Watershed*

The Cedar River flows in close proximity to the community, but Elk Run Creek, a tributary to the Cedar River, bisects the northwestern corner community. Elk Run Creek passes through the community, generally flowing in a southwestern direction.

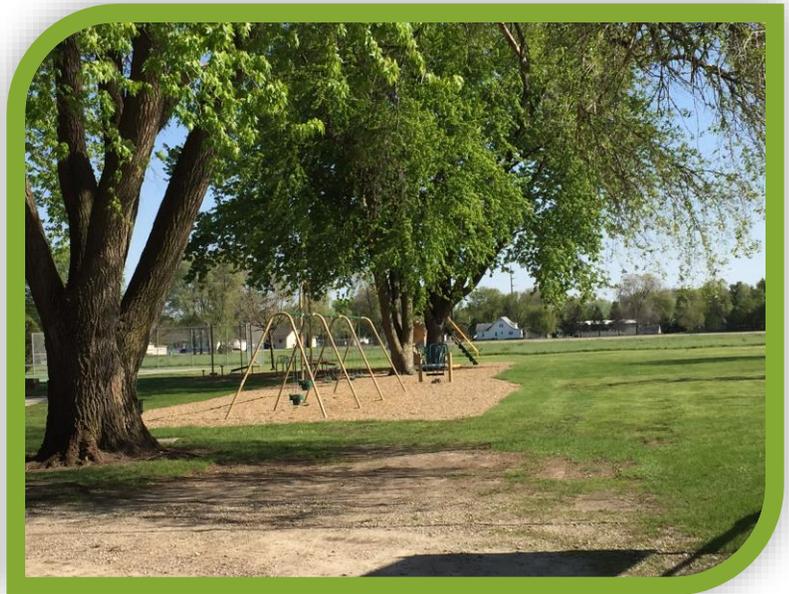
### *Climate*

Elk Run Heights' climate is similar to those of most cities in the upper Midwest. Due to its location in the central portion of North America, the climate is of continental character. Because the city is far away from the moderating influence of a large body of water, a wide variation is experienced in both temperature and precipitation during the four distinct seasons.

The distribution of precipitation through the year is very favorable for agriculture with an average 72 percent of the annual total falling in the April to September crop season. The annual temperature range is large. January, the coldest month, averages near 15 degrees Fahrenheit and July, the warmest month, averages 72 degrees Fahrenheit.

Elk Run Heights averages approximately 191 sunny days yearly. Precipitation in the area averages around 31.9 inches of rain and 28.4 inches of snowfall annually (Source: City-Stats).

Summer precipitation results primarily from thunderstorm activity, although longer, less intense rains are not uncommon in the area. Other forms of precipitation recorded in the area include: snow, hail, ice pellets, and sleet.



### Vegetation

Trees, shrubs, weeds, and grass are prevalent in the undeveloped portions of the community. In some areas, where development has not occurred there are row crops that are planted in the spring and harvested in the fall.

### Soils

Soils in the Elk Run Heights area, as shown in Map 3, are typical of those found in Iowa. These soils are not known to have any unusual characteristics that would have a substantial impact on flooding in the community. According to the Black Hawk County Soil Survey conducted in 2005 by the United State Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service, the majority of soils in Elk Run Heights are of the Finchford Series. The Finchford Series “consists of nearly level to moderately sloping, excessively drained soils on high alluvial terraces and adjacent escarpments. These soils have very low available water capacity and very rapid permeability”.

### Key Issues & Opportunities

Elk Run Heights recognizes the integral link between the health of the natural setting and the health of its inhabitants; therefore, a thorough discussion was conducted with the Task Force on what is currently being done, what can be done, and what can be improved upon in the future.

To maintain the present quality of life as defined through the natural surroundings while accommodating growth over the next 20 years, certain measures must be taken. If the city is able to accommodate the natural setting by anticipating and preventing environmental problems, the city can avoid the long-term costs associated with correcting them. The long-term goal is to work with the natural environment rather than against it. By doing so, the community of Elk Run Heights can all live better, healthier lives.

This element and the Hazards Element involve and affect all other plan elements. While the city is protecting those natural features most sensitive to growth and development (wetlands, floodplains, and stream and river edges) other aspects of the physical and cultural landscape deserve consideration as well.

The greatest challenge for Elk Run Heights in the future will be continuous reference to this element and other city documents and ordinances that discuss and provide means to protect the vulnerable natural environment. The information within these documents should be



recognized, further developed, and monitored, to ensure a quality of life and balance for current and future generations alike.

During the Task Force meetings, members were asked to identify the current issues and opportunities. To assist with the dialogue, members were presented these questions: *“Is enough being done to protect, preserve, and restore the community’s natural resources? What can be done to protect environmentally sensitive areas (floodplain, wetlands, wooded areas, habitat, unstable soils, etc.) from encroachment?”* Responses to these questions contributed to the following issues and opportunities.

### **Environmentally Sensitive Areas**

Flooding has not been much of a problem for the City in the past, but current flood mapping affects only a small area of the City. It is important that development be restricted in these areas to mitigate potential flood damage. “Green space” along riverbanks - natural vegetation, woodland or parks - allows these sensitive areas to absorb the impact of flooding. Agriculture is another possible use for these areas and should be encouraged where the soils are suitable. In addition to enforcing the City’s flood ordinance, the land uses in these environmentally sensitive areas should be carefully considered.

## **Agricultural & Natural Resource Goals**

**Goal #1: To maintain a park and open space system, and incorporate a wide range of social and cultural activities into the community.**

Objectives:

- a. Provide maintenance and general upkeep of existing parks, facilities, and recreational areas.
- b. Continue to support current boards and organizations that provide recreational opportunities in the community.
- c. Research possible reuse of the ball diamonds.
- d. Upgrade volleyball court
- e. Identify possible, future recreation areas.

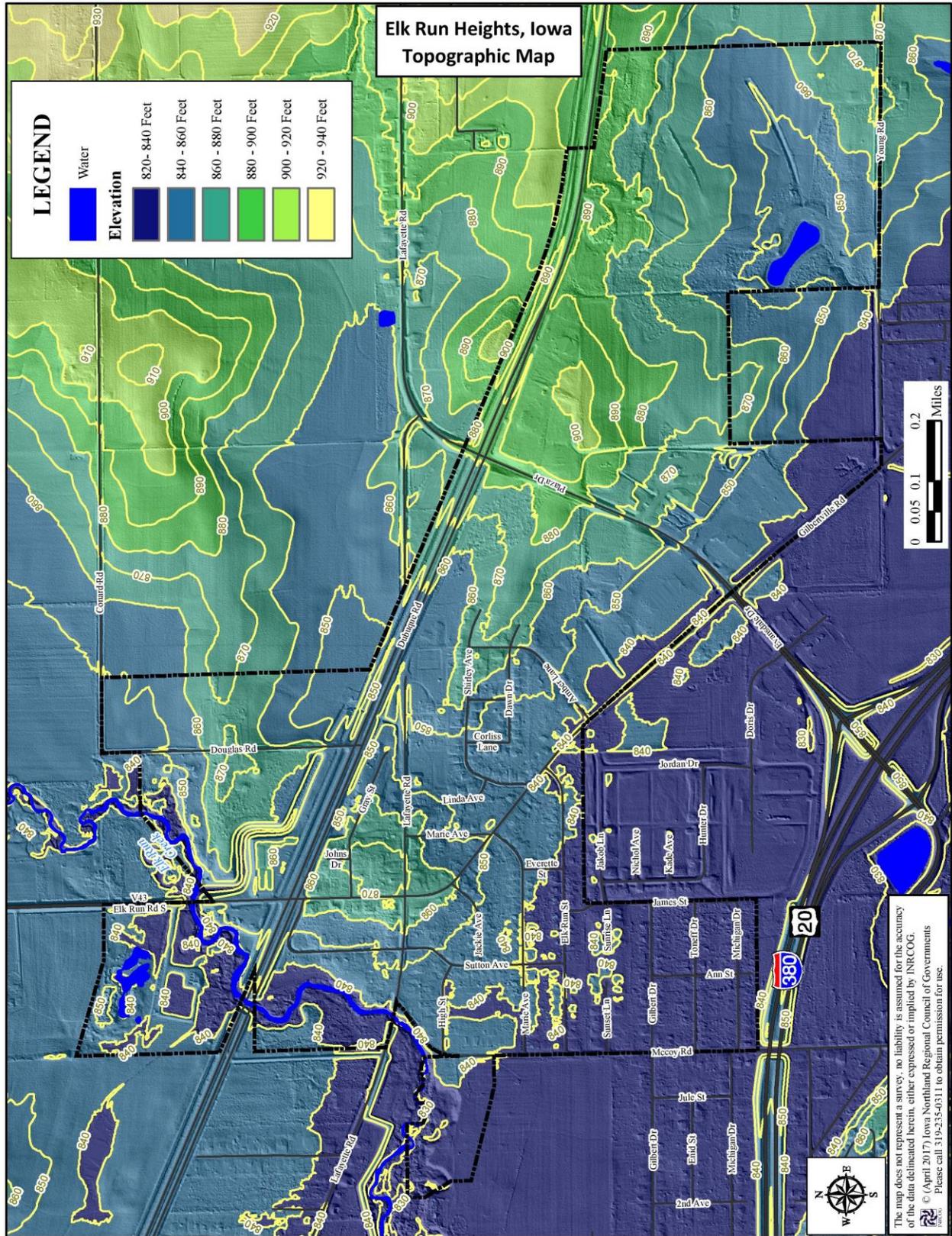
**Goal #2: Protect, preserve, and/or restore environmentally sensitive or natural features in the community, whenever possible.**

Objectives:

- a. Maintain Tree City designation.
- b. Make efforts to be “green”, in city practices, policy, and development.
- c. Continue to protect the floodplain and the Elk Run Heights watershed area to ensure no development disrupts the natural water flow.

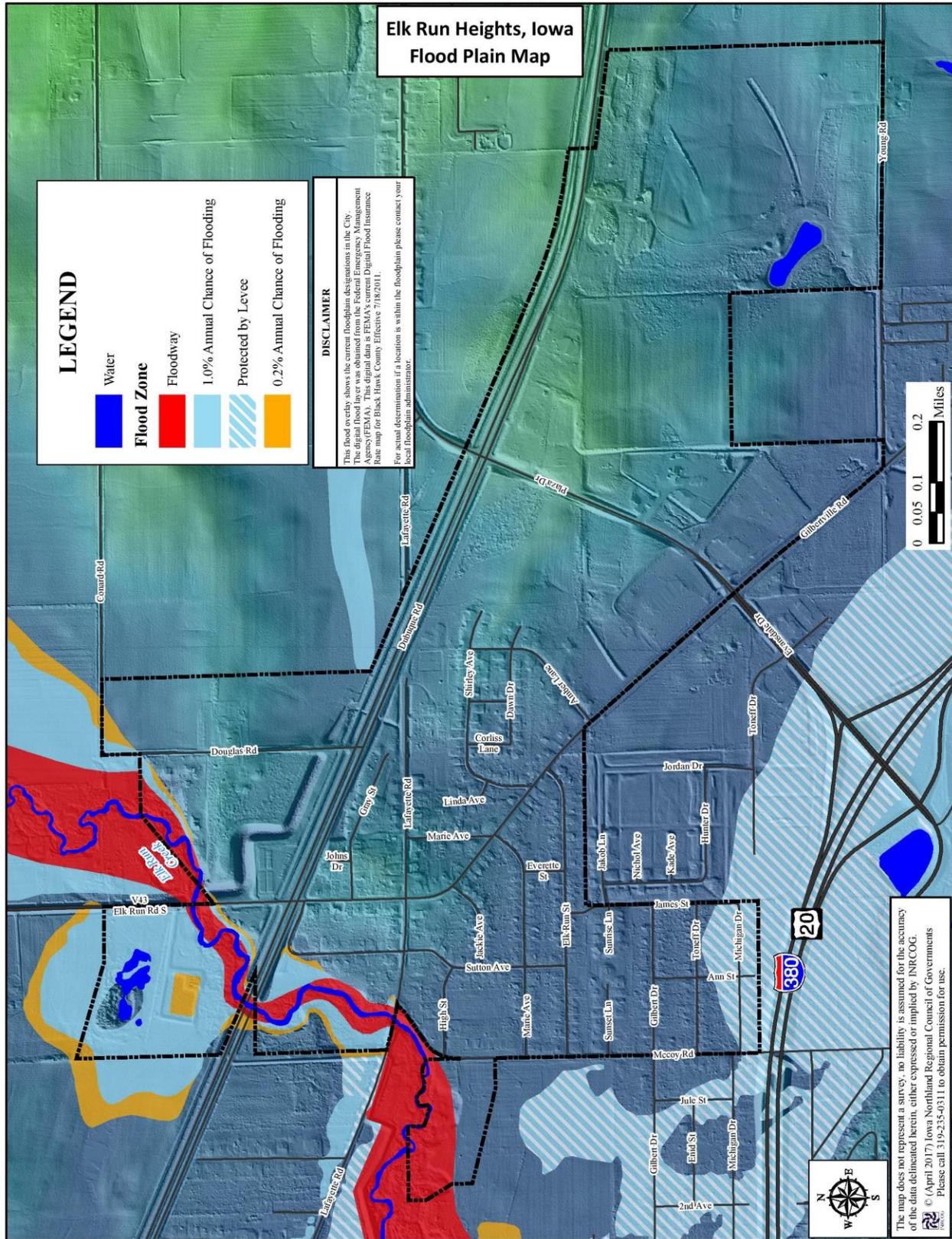
Map 2: Topographic Plain Map of the City

City of Elk Run Heights Comprehensive Plan Update



Map 3: Flood Plain Map of the City

City of Elk Run Heights Comprehensive Plan Update



## **SECTION 3 – HAZARDS**

This section addresses the goals, policies, and actions to mitigate the risk of future hazards (natural or man-made) for Elk Run Heights.

Given the fact that Elk Run Heights is partially split by Elk Run Creek, there is always a chance of flooding that would affect the northwestern portion of the City. With little history of flooding, it is not as prominent of threat, but still is an important hazard to be aware of, in the case of a 100 and 500-year flood occurrence. Additional details on other hazards can be found in the *2015 Black Hawk County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan* (HMP).

According to the *2015 Black Hawk County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan* (HMP), Elk Run Heights assessed the potential hazards of the community, the top five hazards identified were: River Flooding, Flash Flooding, Windstorms, Tornadoes, and Extreme Heat. Hazards can have a devastating impact on a community and Elk Run Heights is no stranger to the power of mother nature and what enormous amounts of rain can do to a community along a water way. Elk Run Heights has an opportunity to become a better and stronger community as they move forward from the lessons they have learned from previous hazardous events that affected the community or surrounding neighborhood communities.

### **SMART PLANNING ELEMENT - HAZARDS**

Objectives, policies, and programs that identify the natural and other hazards that have the greatest likelihood of impacting the municipality or that pose a risk of catastrophic damage as such hazards relate to land use and development decisions, as well as the steps necessary to mitigate risk after considering the local hazard mitigation plan approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

### **Existing Conditions**

The following existing conditions were taken from the *2015 Black Hawk County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan*.

#### ***Flooding***

Elk Run Creek is the only major creek that runs through Elk Run Heights. The Cedar River is located near Elk Run Heights, but does not come into the city limits. Elk Run Creek flows into from the Cedar River which is exactly one mile away from the city center. Elk Run Heights endured notable flood and high water events in 1969, 1993, 1999, and 2008. The magnitude of each flood varies, but considerable damage occurred during several of these events. With the city's mitigation actions prior to the 2008 flood, little damage was sustained to the community.

#### ***Tornados***

Since 1950, two tornados have affected Elk Run Heights. The first was a F3 tornado that formed in 1975 and a F2 in 1976. Both of these tornados took almost identical paths through the county travelling north-northeast.

### ***Additional Hazards***

Other hazards with a high probability of occurring include thunderstorms, severe winter storms, hailstorms, extreme heat, and grass or wildland fire, are also included in the *2015 Black Hawk County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan*.

### **Key Issues and Opportunities**

The following are the key hazard issues and concerns for Elk Run Heights.

#### ***Vulnerable Populations***

Some populations are more likely to require assistance during times of disaster and are therefore, generally speaking, more at-risk than the remaining population. The at-risk population must be identified and targeted in successful mitigation efforts.

According to 2010 U.S. Census data, approximately 174 residents of Elk Run Heights are 65 years or older. Persons under the age of 18 are also at higher risk during some disasters. This is mostly due to the fact that young people often are not aware of the proper actions to take in the event of a disaster. In addition, very young children would be more susceptible to a disaster such as a disease epidemic simply due to their age. In 2010, approximately 217 residents of Elk Run Heights were under the age of 18.

Persons living in mobile homes and persons living in multi-family housing units are also considered at risk. There are no persons living in mobile homes, and a few in multi-family housing units which minimize the risk due to this factor.

#### ***Flooding Vulnerability***

Due to the location of Elk Run Heights in relation to the Cedar River and Elk Run Creek, the community can expect there to be slight flooding events at some time in the future. Map 4 shows the flood-prone areas of the City.

Approximately 15 parcels of land of Elk Run Heights are within the 100 year floodplain, this land's value totals \$1,492,160. Expanding the floodplain to the 500 year floodplain, there are 57 parcels of land in Elk Run Heights that would fall into this floodplain, these parcels total \$5,046,250.

Critical facilities that could stand to be impacted include City Hall, electric substation, multiple fuel storage facilities, lift stations, public works building, school, sewage treatment facility, warning siren, and sports complex.

#### ***Future Development***

Future development within identified hazard areas can change the threat level of an area by placing critical facilities, businesses, transportation networks, utilities, and populations within vulnerable areas. While it can be difficult to curb development in the planning area, it is the jurisdiction's advantage to be aware of development trends in order to successfully mitigate future hazards as risk increase. However, continued conformity with the State Building Codes and local land use ordinances and regulations (zoning, subdivision, floodplain management, etc.) will help to mitigate the effects hazards have on new and future development.

### *Repetitive Loss Properties*

FEMA defines a repetitive loss property as an insurable building that has experienced no losses in a 10-year period in which each loss is \$1,000 or more. According to available FEMA data, Elk Run Heights participates in the National Flood Insurance Program and has no repetitive loss properties.

### **Hazard Goals**

The following goals were taken from the *2015 Black Hawk County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan*. For a complete list of objectives and action strategies, please refer to the previously mentioned document. The hazard mitigation plan goals were reviewed by the Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee at their second committee meeting. The HMP committee set as a priority the development of broad-based goals that would address a multitude of hazards and encompass a variety of mitigation activities; as well as numerous strategic actions; therefore the hazard mitigation plan goals for the City of Elk Run Heights are listed below. The related policies and actions can be found in the *2015 Black Hawk County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan*.

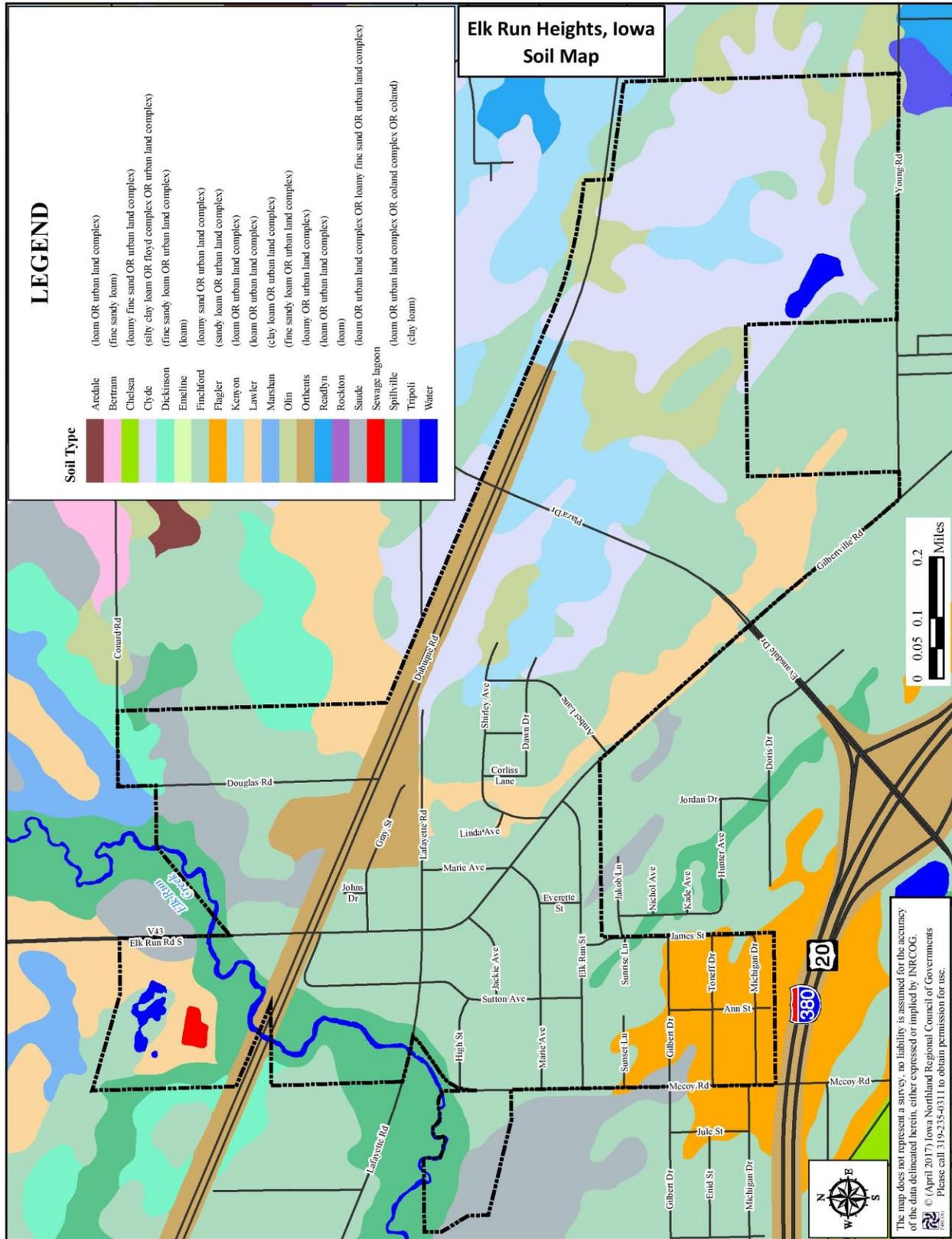
#### **Goal #1: Continue to participate in the Black Hawk County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan**

##### Objectives:

- a. Enhance the quality of life and safety of all residents.
- b. Take steps to mitigate the probable negative consequences that may occur as a result of natural, technological, and/or man-made disasters.
- c. Identify potential funding sources needed to accomplish identified mitigation projects.
- d. Protect the health and welfare of the entire community by sufficiently maintaining all first responder organizations.
- e. Return to pre-disaster or improved conditions as soon as possible after a disaster occurs.
- f. Continue to support the incorporation of the city into the Black Hawk County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan.
- g. Continually re-assess and re-evaluate the plan and mitigation activities.

Action steps to complete each objective are included in the *Hazard Mitigation Plan*.

Map 4: Soil Map of the City



## **SECTION 4 – COMMUNITY CHARACTER**

An attractive, well-designed city will attract quality development, instill civic pride, improve the visual character of the community, and create a strong, positive image for the City of Elk Run Heights.

The Community Character Element contains the community design goals and their action strategies that encourage innovation and imagination in building design and site planning, while ensuring that certain universal principles of good community design are upheld.

### **Existing Conditions**

Below are the existing conditions, commissions, and events of the City that help maintain or improve community character as identified by stakeholders throughout the planning process.

#### ***Planning and Zoning Commission***

The Planning and Zoning Commission consists of five members who are appointed by the Mayor. The commission reviews rezoning applications, subdivision plates, site plans, zoning and subdivision code amendments, and recommends approval and amendments to the comprehensive plan of the city.

#### ***Board of Adjustment***

The Board of Adjustment consists of five members who are appointed by the City Council. As their positions have a number of purposes, the main functions of the Board is to serve as a body that can hear administrative reviews, consider special use permits, and provide variances to relieve hardships relating to property.

### **Key Issues & Opportunities**

During the planning process, city stakeholders were asked the following questions: *What makes your community unique? What quality of life assets does it have? What quality of life assets do you believe are missing, need improving, or are lacking? What can be done to improve your community's character?* Answers to these questions helped define the community character issues, opportunities, and goals of the Plan.

#### ***Sense of Community***

One theme that came out of the planning process was the feeling that Elk Run Heights was a good community in which to raise a family. Task Force members commented on how community groups worked together to benefit each other and generally were supportive of the city government. Other comments speaking to the sense of community included the availability and variety of local services and locally-owned businesses.

### **SMART PLANNING ELEMENT – COMMUNITY CHARACTER**

Objectives, policies, and programs to identify characteristics and qualities that make the municipality unique and that area important to the municipality's heritage and quality of life.

### *Opportunities for Growth*

One thing that the Task Force and Planning and Zoning Commission saw as a foreseeable issue was the opportunities for growth. This is because the opportunities to expand the city are limited by the fact neighboring community boundaries nearly land lock the community

Both, the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Task Force saw the opportunity for growth internally (infill) as a potential way to improve the overall community. Improving the housing stock, being open for new business opportunities, and addition of recreational opportunities were some of the ways of fostering growth for the City.

### **Community Character Goals**

**Goal #1: To maintain an on-going planning process in which informed public input is an important element**

Objectives:

- a. Update the Elk Run Heights Comprehensive Plan as needed, review modifications or changes in city policy and incorporate them as amendments to the Plan.
- b. Continue to encourage public input in zoning and subdivision review and approval process.

## **SECTION 5 – COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

Community facilities and services are commonly used as a measure of the quality of life in a community. These facilities and services are often what potential citizens and businesses consider when determining if they should relocate to a community – in addition to a well-connected and diverse transportation network, and economic diversity. In regard to community facilities and services, potential citizens and businesses are attracted to the cities that provide responsive and competent public safety system, a variety of parks and recreational opportunities, an exceptional and supported school system, and cultural events and opportunities. Existing citizens and businesses also consider these features when deciding whether or not to remain in the community or move elsewhere. To some degree, community facilities can be used to enhance a community's quality of life, as well as be used to help guide the rate of growth.

### **Existing Conditions**

A brief overview of Elk Run Heights' community facilities is given below, including city buildings, parks, and schools. Maps 5 and 6 show the locations of the public facilities throughout the City.

#### ***City Hall***

City government is managed from City Hall, which is located at 5042 Lafayette Road. Services that are provided to the community from City Hall include: City Administration; Public Works; Building; Utilities Billings; and oversight of various Boards and Commissions.

#### ***Police***

Elk Run Heights has contracted with the Evansdale Police Department for law enforcement services.

#### ***Fire/Rescue***

Similar to police service, Elk Run Heights also contracts for their fire/rescue/ambulance services currently, these services are contracted to the City of Waterloo.

#### ***Parks and Recreation***

The City owns three parks within city limits, Mayors Park, Saveraid Park, and Shirley Park; the fourth park, Kid City, is owned by Waterloo Community Schools. City parks have recently been given improvements such as playground equipment.

In addition to city parks, there are multiple state parks and recreation areas for camping, fishing, and hunting near Elk Run Heights in Black Hawk County and surrounding counties. Cedar Rock State Park, George Wyth Memorial State Park, and Pleasant Creek State Park are all in the general vicinity of Elk Run Heights. Also, the Cedar Valley Nature Trail runs through Evansdale which provides access to the Elk Run Heights residents.

#### ***Library***

Elk Run Heights currently contracts public library service through the City of Evansdale. The public library is located at 123 N. Evans Road and Evansdale offers circulation services including books, magazines, music CDs, VHS, and DVDs for checkout. Services that are provided include:

photocopying, fax, notary, and inter-library loaning of materials. Computers are also available with internet access, wireless internet, and printing.

### Education

Waterloo Community School District operates a number of facilities, three of which children from Elk Run Heights may attend. Poyner Elementary School and Bunger Middle School are in Evansdale, while East High School are located in Waterloo. Table 5.1 shows current enrollment, by facility. The offices for the district are also located in Waterloo.

Community	Grades	Enrollment 2013/2014
Poyner Elementary School	K-5	521
Bunger Middle School	6-8	426
East High School	9-12	1068
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2012</b>

*Source: Iowa Department of Education*

### Key Issues & Opportunities

The following key issues and opportunities were identified at Task Force meetings held during the planning process. Task Force members were asked: *What are the key concerns and/or needs regarding schools, parks, playgrounds, library, recreational opportunities, and municipal services in general?* Input received from the public and current planning documents also assisted in identifying the following issues and opportunities for Elk Run Heights.

#### Parks Upgrades

With having four total parks within the City, issues and concerns came up in discussion about a few updates that could be beneficial. One thing that was discussed was usage of the ball diamonds, including complete removal; comments indicated they are underutilized and not properly maintained. Two other park issues were discussed, which were the need to update the restrooms in the parks and upgrade the volleyball courts. Both these may help with visitors usage in public spaces throughout the City.

#### Fitness Center

The lack of a fitness center was brought up in the Task Force meetings as well. This may draw younger populations as well as be used for the older population as a way of staying active.

#### Funding

Having adequate funds to complete projects that would benefit the City was an issue that was presented at the Task Force meetings as well. With a modest budget, only prioritized projects can be completed before any other additional projects are planned.

#### Community Room

One of the opportunities that the Task Force mentioned was that the Community Room at City Hall is a great asset that is well used by people in the community. This brings in extra money for the City, along with allowing the residents to access a building for their events.

### *Recycling*

The recycling bins and containers were also mentioned as an opportunity that exists in Elk Run Heights. With this addition, residents are allowed to recycle certain things so they do not end up in the landfill.

### **Community Facilities Goals**

#### **Goal #1: To ensure adequate and efficient service to all persons in the community.**

##### Objectives:

- a. Provide services that meet all State and Federal guidelines.
- b. Promote and continue to use the Community Room in City Hall for public rental space.
- c. Maintain the recycling program.
- d. Maintain working relationships with partners who provide services for the City.





**SECTION 6- PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE & UTILITIES**

The infrastructure and utilities of the community are the backbone of a city. Without proper, up-to-date infrastructure, the quality of life in the city may be reduced. In order to avoid problems, the City needs to bring them up-to-date to the best of their ability.

**Existing Conditions**

A brief summary of public infrastructure and utilities offered to residents and businesses is below, and maps 7 and 8 show the location of these amenities.

**Water Service**

Elk Run Heights currently contracts with Waterloo Waterworks for water service.

**Sewer Service**

The Elk Run Heights sanitary sewer plant is located in the northern part of the City, and also serves the City of Raymond. With that, the current plant is dated and needs to be replaced.

**Telephone**

Telephone service in the community is provided by Mediacom Communications Corporation or CenturyLink.

**Other Utilities**

Table 6.1 shows which utility providers are used for electric, natural gas, cable TV, and garbage collection services to City residents and businesses.

Table 6.1: Elk Run Heights Utility Providers	
Electric	MidAmerican Energy
Natural Gas	MidAmerican Energy
Cable TV	Mediacom Communications Corporation; Satellite Providers
Garbage	Waste Management

**SMART PLANNING ELEMENT – PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE & UTILITIES**

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Objectives, policies, and programs to guide future development of sanitary sewer service, storm water management, water supply, solid waste disposal, wastewater treatment technologies, recycling facilities, and telecommunications facilities. The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may include estimates regarding future demand for such utility services.

**Key Issues & Opportunities**

To develop this section of the Plan, participants in the planning process were asked the following: *What are the key concerns and needs with regard to public infrastructure and utilities?* Answers helped shape the following key issues, opportunities, and goals.

The city’s public and contracted utilities are meeting the current demands of the community and providing high quality services. While the current state of affairs is good, meeting future needs

will require more investments in public infrastructure, specifically in complying with state and federal requirements for water and sanitary sewer services.

### *Sewer Plant*

There is concern that the sewage treatment plant is going to be a burden on the City in the near future and the City would have to come up with a solution to address the issue. This is seen as a multiple issue problem, both due to the funding, location, and how long a project like a sewage treatment plant would take to plan, construct, permit, and go online.

## **Public Infrastructure & Utilities Goals**

### **Goal #1: Continue to improve infrastructure to serve the community**

#### Objectives:

- a. Addition of new bike/walking/nature trail connections.
- b. Enhance street lighting to ensure safety.
- c. Encourage sidewalk improvements.
- d. Address sanitary sewer treatment facility.
- e. Identify and remove existing septic tanks.
- f. Repair/replace aging infrastructure when needed.
- g. Construct additional lift stations.
- h. Research the possibility of an agreement with Evansdale for snow removal and street maintenance.
- i. Develop a Capital Improvements Plan, which would identify projects and potential funding sources that are tied to this Plan and the City's municipal budget.

Map 7: Water and Sewer Map of the City

City of Elk Run Heights Comprehensive Plan Update





## **SECTION 7 – HOUSING**

This section addresses the goals, policies, and actions related to housing diversity and opportunities for housing development in Elk Run Heights. This section also discusses the existing housing trends, including new subdivisions, areas in need of housing, and forecasts for residential demand and development.

The city's housing goals and policies also help maintain and improve the quality of life or sense of place that the residents of the community value and enjoy.

### **Existing Conditions**

Housing is an important aspect of a community and its economy, in addition to providing ones basic need for shelter. In addition, housing is one of the largest parts of the US economy and a dominant land use in most cities.

#### ***Housing Occupancy***

As shown in Table 7.1, Elk Run Heights added 68 housing units to its stock between the 2000 and 2010 Censuses. The community also saw almost no change in both vacancy and occupancy rates. While not an official count like the Census, the latest 5-year data (2010-2014) from the American Community Survey estimates there are 494 total housing units in Elk Run Heights with a lower occupancy rate of 93.1 percent when compared to those reported in two prior decennial censuses. The previous two occupancy rates had been over 99 percent. This lower rate would be due to new developments that have recently gone into the City within the last couple years.

<b>Status</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2014 (Est.)</b>
<b>Occupied</b>	394 (99%)	461 (99%)	460 (99%)
<b>Owner-Occupied</b>	363	408	408
<b>Renter-Occupied</b>	31	53	52
<b>Vacant</b>	3 (1%)	4 (1%)	34 (7%)
<b>Total</b>	397	465	494
<b>Source: U.S. Census Bureau</b>			

### Age of Housing Stock

Table 7.2 shows an estimate of when each housing unit in Elk Run Heights and the State of Iowa was built. Most of the city's housing units were built between 1950 and 1959, just over 40 percent. As the chart below shows, Elk Run Heights has an older housing stock than the State of Iowa, with more than 80% of the housing stock built prior to 1980, compared to just fewer than 70% for the State of Iowa.

Time Period	Percentage of Total Units	
	Elk Run Heights	State of Iowa
2010 or Later	1.4%	1.2%
2000 to 2009	8.5%	11.9%
1990 to 1999	3.2%	10.8%
1980 to 1989	4.5%	7.2%
1970 to 1979	20.6%	14.7%
1960 to 1969	10.7%	10.7%
1950 to 1959	40.7%	10.9%
1940 to 1949	7.1%	5.9%
1939 or Earlier	3.2%	26.7%

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014*

### Housing Values & Gross Rent

In general, homebuyers are taught that “affordable” homes cost 2.5 times their annual gross income. Elk Run Heights’ median household income is \$50,833, which means that an average affordable home should be approximately \$127,082. Table 7.3 shows that Elk Run Heights’ homes are generally below this figure, with a median home value of \$125,300.

Value	408 Units
Less than \$50,000	12.7%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	10.3%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	47.3%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	19.4%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	9.6%
\$300,000 to \$499,999	0.7%
\$500,000 to \$999,999	0.0%
\$1,000,000 or more	0.0%
Median (dollars)	\$125,300

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014*

Another measure of affordability is looking at average monthly housing costs. A general rule is that a household should not spend more than 30 percent of its gross income on housing for it to be considered affordable. Using Elk Run Heights’ median household income, the average family makes about \$4,236 per month. For housing to be considered affordable, the average family should not pay more than about \$1,270 per month in housing costs.

Table 7.4 presents monthly housing costs for occupied housing units in Elk Run Heights. While renter-occupied housing costs are gross rents, owner-occupied housing costs include units with and without a mortgage. In general, owner-occupied housing units with a mortgage pay higher monthly costs than those without a mortgage because of escrow expenses such as property taxes and insurance costs. Based on the financial information in the table, the average family would find affordable housing in Elk Run Heights.

Table 7.4: Monthly Housing Costs		
Monthly Costs	Owner-Occupied Units	Renter-Occupied Units
Less than \$100	0.0%	0.0%
\$100 to \$199	1.1%	0.0%
\$200 to \$299	5.7%	0.0%
\$300 to \$399	18.9%	13.5%
\$400 to \$499	9.8%	13.5%
\$500 to \$599	8.0%	9.6%
\$600 to \$699	5.7%	25.0%
\$700 to \$799	4.8%	5.8%
\$800 to \$899	10.9%	0.0%
\$900 to \$999	8.5%	0.0%
\$1,000 to \$1,499	16.3%	11.5%
\$1,500 to \$1,999	6.3%	0.0%
\$2,000 or more	1.7%	0.0%
Median (dollars)	\$692	\$606

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014

### Development Trends

Elk Run Heights' housing stock is predominantly single-family homes. About 95 percent of housing units are detached 1-unit structures, while the rest are other types of housing (i.e. duplexes, apartments, etc.).

### Key Issues & Opportunities

The following is a synopsis of the major issues and opportunities facing Elk Run Heights with respect to its housing needs based on input from the public and participants in the planning process. City stakeholders were asked these questions to inform the issues, opportunities, and goals of housing in Elk Run Heights: *What is the current housing environment in regard to ordinances, regulations, policies, programs etc. for homeowners/renters/developers? Is it favorable for non-traditional development? Is there a desire for more flexibility – setbacks, lot sizes, density? What could or should be done to foster additional housing choices?*

### Housing Upkeep/Quality

There was an expressed desire to see rehabilitation of some current homes in the community. It was determined that the housing market is currently strong. The planning committee has determined that conducting research on opportunities and programs to improve homes for those who cannot afford to do so. According to Census data, the City's housing stock is aging with a majority of housing units being built prior to 1980. Programs to help homeowners improve the quality of their homes would help the overall housing market for the City.

### *Senior Housing*

As shown in the statistical profile of the community, between the 2000 and 2010 Censuses, there was an overall decline in the percentage of children and young adults, with the exceptions of children less than 5 years of age (0.76% increase) and adults between 20 and 24 (1.90% increase). With this age shift, a supply of new housing has not been built in the community to house seniors of the community. During the planning process, stakeholders commented on the lack of senior housing options in the community. The addition of senior housing allows the elderly population to remain in the community. City leaders should carefully examine opportunities to increase housing options for elderly households.

### *Condominiums and Duplexes*

During the planning process, it was made known that the community would be open to different types of housing. Duplexes and condominiums seem to be the best fit for the community and would be able to be integrated into the existing residential areas.

## **Housing Goals**

**Goal #1: Continue to develop and promote Elk Run Heights as a desirable residential community.**

### Objectives

- a. Provide a mixture of single family residential, condominiums, and duplexes for residents.
- b. Promote and build upon the small town atmosphere in Elk Run Heights.
- c. Providing public facilities and services as necessary.
- d. Advertise and market the community.
- e. Take advantage of proximity to larger cities.
- f. Provide resources and programs to help improve and maintain housing stock.
- g. Consider affordable housing while looking at future developments.
- h. Ensure that the quietness and friendliness of the neighborhoods are preserved.
- i. Encourage development of assisted living facilities for residents.

**SECTION 8 – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

This section discusses the current economic trends such as employment, the supply of retail, office, and industrial space. It also considers market forecasts and marketable areas for future development. This section provides guidance on the types of economic development the city may wish to foster through the next 10-20 years, as well as actions the city can take, in partnership with local economic development organizations, to encourage these efforts.

**Existing Conditions**

This section looks at the existing condition of various factors related to economic development in Elk Run Heights. These factors include industry trends, major employers, and residents’ income and education.

**Trends & Statistics**

Table 8.1 shows Census estimates for the number of employed persons, by industrial category, in Elk Run Heights and Black Hawk County. Education, Health, and Social Services is the largest industrial category in the community with Manufacturing second-largest. There is also a sizeable percentage of employed persons in the Construction industry. When looking at these numbers, it is important to remember that some of these workers may be commuting to jobs.

**SMART PLANNING ELEMENT –  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

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Objectives, policies, and programs to promote the stabilization, retention, or expansion of economic development and employment opportunities. The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may include an analysis of current industries and economic activity and identify economic growth goals for the municipality.

**Table 8.1: Economic Base of Elk Run Heights in 2014**

Industrial Category	Elk Run Heights		Black Hawk County	
	#	%	#	%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Mining	1	0.2%	847	1.3%
Construction	64	11.4%	3,596	5.4%
Manufacturing	229	19.4%	12,125	18.3%
Wholesale Trade	38	4.0%	1,840	2.8%
Retail Trade	114	9.8%	7,995	12.1%
Transportation, Warehousing, Utilities	150	4.0%	2,727	4.1%
Information	19	0.0%	892	1.3%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	76	4.8%	3,889	5.9%
Professional and Scientific	110	2.8%	4,619	7.0%
Educational, Health, Social Services	266	22.0%	16,923	25.6%
Art, Entertainment, Recreation	65	10.6%	6,225	9.4%
Other Services	70	5.0%	3,054	4.6%
Public Administration	9	6.0%	1,449	2.2%
<b>Total Employed Persons</b>	<b>499</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>66,181</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey 2010-2014

Education, Health, and Social Services may be the largest industry among employed persons in Elk Run Heights because of close proximity to major medical centers in the Waterloo/Cedar Falls metro area, along with a number of schools in the area. While some manufacturing may exist in the city, many employed in this sector are likely commuting to companies in the Waterloo/Cedar Falls area. Compared to Black Hawk County, Elk Run Heights has a much higher percentage of employed persons working in the Construction industry.

Table 8.2 classifies employees into general employment categories. The occupations of Elk Run Heights' employed persons are similar to those in Black Hawk County as a whole. The largest occupation category in the City is Service Occupations, while in the County it is Management, Business, Science, and Arts Occupations.

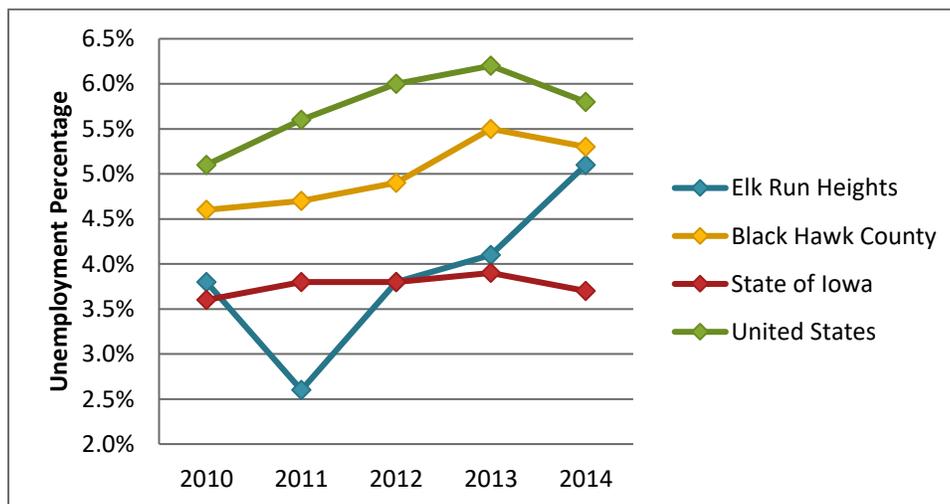
**Table 8.2: Occupation Classification of Persons Employed in 2014**

Industrial Description	Elk Run Heights		Black Hawk County	
	#	%	#	%
<b>Management, Business, Science, and Arts Occupations</b>	120	24.1%	20,593	31.1%
<b>Service Occupations</b>	129	25.9%	12,035	18.2%
<b>Sales and Office Occupations</b>	123	24.6%	16,404	24.8%
<b>Natural Resources, Construction, and Maintenance Occupations</b>	44	8.8%	5,142	7.8%
<b>Production, Transportation, and Material Moving Occupations</b>	83	16.6%	12,007	18.1%
<b>Total Employed Persons</b>	<b>499</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>66,181</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2010-2014*

Unemployment rates are shown in Figure 3. Specifically, this chart shows how Elk Run Heights compares to Black Hawk County, the State of Iowa, and the United States in terms of unemployment rates. As the figure illustrates, currently Elk Run Heights has a higher unemployment rate than the County, but it is lower than the State of Iowa and the United States unemployment rates.

*Figure 3: Unemployment Rate Trends 2010-2014*



### Major Employers

Many of Elk Run Heights' businesses are smaller, in terms of number of employees; current larger employers include the Elk Run Early Childhood Center, Harrisons Truck Center, Road Ranger, United Concrete, and Town and County Home Improvements.

### Income and Education

Median household and per capita income levels for selected communities are provided in Table 8.3. Elk Run Heights' statistics are near the middle of the other communities shown. Regarding these two income measures, the city figures are higher than the County as a whole.

Another factor that influences income and employment is

education. Table 8.4 compares estimates for educational attainment for Elk Run Heights, Black Hawk County, and the State of Iowa in 2014. The city reported more high school graduates, including equivalency, than both the county and state. Conversely, the City reported a smaller percentage of residents with a college degree (Associate's or higher) than the other two units of governments: 16.3 percent for Elk Run Heights, 36.8 percent for the county, and 37.2 percent for the state.

Community	Per Capita Income		Median Household Income	
	2010	2014	2010	2014
Cedar Falls	\$23,730	\$25,850	\$47,339	\$52,678
Dunkerton	\$23,192	\$23,320	\$57,000	\$51,458
<b>Elk Run Heights</b>	<b>\$32,173</b>	<b>\$25,060</b>	<b>\$54,712</b>	<b>\$50,833</b>
Evansdale	\$21,684	\$22,607	\$39,412	\$44,498
Gilbertville	\$21,042	\$27,052	\$46,740	\$53,250
Hudson	\$31,460	\$34,781	\$72,000	\$81,417
Raymond	\$24,763	\$27,630	\$58,125	\$69,375
Waterloo	\$22,057	\$22,628	\$40,517	\$41,461
Black Hawk County	\$23,357	\$24,771	\$44,178	\$47,002
State of Iowa	\$25,335	\$27,621	\$48,872	\$52,716

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Table 8.4: Educational Attainment for Persons 25 Years of Age and Older in 2014

Category	Elk Run Heights		Black Hawk County		State of Iowa	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Less than 9 <sup>th</sup> Grade	39	4.9%	3,058	3.7%	2,893	3.5%
9 <sup>th</sup> to 12 <sup>th</sup> Grade, No Diploma	72	9.0%	5,538	6.7%	4,298	5.2%
High School Graduate, includes GED	390	48.6%	27,607	33.4%	26,863	32.5%
Some College, No Degree	170	21.2%	16,035	19.4%	17,853	21.6%
Associate's Degree	63	7.9%	8,844	10.7%	8,927	10.8%
Bachelor's Degree	55	6.9%	14,547	17.6%	14,878	18.0%
Graduate or Professional Degree	12	1.5%	7,026	8.5%	6,943	8.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>803</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>82,655</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>82,655</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

## Key Issues & Opportunities

Following are some of the key issues facing economic development efforts in Elk Run Heights. These issues were identified by stakeholders during the planning process while considering these questions: *How is the current economic development environment in regard to objectives, policies, programs for existing and new businesses? What are current efforts and challenges in the community to retain and attract businesses? What should the city focus on with regard to economic development?*

Other chapters of the Plan contribute to the business-attracting characteristics of the city, including transportation and housing. In addition, availability of labor, affordable and diverse housing, and quality of life are also important ingredients in attracting targeted industries and basic businesses.

### Opportunities

Community stakeholders provided input on various ways the city could help foster economic development.

### Annexation

The City sees an opportunity to expand the city limits toward the southeast. This annexation would bring in more population, land, and revenue to the city. With a current issue of becoming land-locked between cities, this would give the city a chance to continue to grow.

### TIF District

The recent capability to use tax increment financing (TIF) has brought interest from the Task Force and Planning Commission. TIF can help with things such as redevelopment, infrastructure projects, tax rebates, and other community-improvement projects within the area.

### Locally-Minded Environment

Elk Run Heights should foster a “shop local” environment in the community. This includes supporting locally-owned businesses and seeking a diversity of business types. Based on input received, the city is lacking in local service sectors providers.

### Education

As shown by Table 8.4, Elk Run Heights has a lower percentage of residents with college degrees when compared to Black Hawk County. Access to higher education is limited in the community. However, access to nearby options such as the University of Northern Iowa and Hawkeye Community College is readily available.

## Economic Development Goals

**Goal #1: Encouraging the retention and growth of existing businesses, as well as encourage new businesses to locate in Elk Run.**

Objectives:

- a. Provide adequate land for development which has the necessary infrastructure.
- b. Encourage more local retail/shops development.
- c. Attempt to entice restaurant development into the community.
- d. Utilize the TIF district.

## **SECTION 9 – TRANSPORTATION**

Transportation facilities are a part of the infrastructure needed to support and maintain the existing economic development efforts including the importing and exporting of goods, commuter traffic and recreation. To accurately plan for the future transportation needs of Elk Run Heights, an inventory of existing facilities has been prepared and analyzed.

Transportation facilities connecting the residents of Elk Run Heights to other areas in Black Hawk County, Iowa, and the nation are very important, but just as these areas are important to the residents of Elk Run Heights, the connection of Black Hawk County to other regional service centers are important to business and industry. For this reason, the transportation inventories will examine the transportation facilities for vehicular, freight, air, rail, public, and recreation modes.

In developing this section it was necessary to study the relationship between service centers and their users. Following is a brief discussion of specific elements, their users, and their importance.

### **Existing Conditions**

This section gives a brief summary of transportation in Elk Run Heights. Map 9 shows the transportation infrastructure in the City.

#### ***Streets & Highways***

Generally, the local streets are in safe condition, but this assessment is subject to change with time, weather, and traffic levels. Standard maintenance on the streets is the responsibility of the local Public Works Department.

#### ***Airport***

The closest airport to Elk Run Heights is Waterloo Regional Airport, a regional facility northwest of the community. The Waterloo Regional Airport is located on Airport Boulevard, near the northern edge of the Waterloo-Cedar Falls metropolitan area, and it is easily accessed by an interchange with Highway 218. The airport is one of ten commercial airports in Iowa, according to the Iowa Department of Transportation.

The Waterloo Regional Airport has three operable runways. The longest is a paved runway extending 8,400 feet. The elevation of the airport is approximately 873 feet above sea level.

Currently, there is one commercial airline, American Airlines, which has flights originating or passing through the airport. Service is available to and from O’Hare Airport in Chicago. In addition

### **SMART PLANNING ELEMENT – TRANSPORTATION**

Objectives, policies, and programs to guide the future development of a safe, convenient, efficient, and economical transportation system. Plans for such a transportation system may be coordinated with state and regional transportation plans and take into consideration the need for diverse modes of transportation, accessibility, improved air quality, and interconnectivity of the various modes of transportation.

to commercial flights, the airport is also host to the Iowa National Guard Air Wing, 194th Air Cavalry. This complex operates 25 helicopters and is involved in routine reconnaissance flights.

Other area commercial airports that are in easy driving distance of the City of Elk Run Heights include Cedar Rapids, Dubuque, Des Moines, Minneapolis, and the Quad Cities.

### **Railroad**

The Canadian National Railroad Company owns the rail line that passes through the northern part of the community. Although owned by the Canadian National Railroad Company, the tracking rights have also been granted to Chicago, Central & Pacific Railroad. The rail line operates between the communities of Dubuque and Merrill, Iowa, stretching across the entire state of Iowa.

### **Sidewalks**

Sidewalks are present in older sections of the community and newer developments, but there are areas of the community missing sidewalks. Not surprisingly, many of the older sidewalks are in need of replacement.

### **Trails – Pedestrian & Bicycle**

The City of Elk Run Heights has the potential to connect with the Cedar Valley Nature Trail, which runs through Evansdale. The Cedar Valley Nature Trail is a recreational trail that connects the larger communities of Waterloo and Cedar Rapids. And is a segment of the American Discovery Trail spanning coast-to-coast

## **Key Issues & Opportunities**

The following issues and opportunities are based on input received from city stakeholders. During the planning process, these questions were asked to facilitate discussion: *What are the key transportation concerns and/or needs regarding traffic, transit, air, pedestrian, bicycle, and other modes of transportation?*

### **Transit**

Transit options are needed between Elk Run Heights and the Waterloo/Cedar Falls area. In addition to providing another commuting option for workers, transit would allow Elk Run Heights' residents to access services not available in the community. Elk Run Heights should work with the regional transit commission to meet this need.

### **Downtown Pedestrian and Bicycling Trail**

An opportunity exists to connect to the Cedar Valley Nature Trail with a loop through the City. While being part of the recreational trail network, this loop would also provide an alternative mode for workers and customers to reach downtown businesses. Creating the loop and connecting it to the larger trail provides a safe route for downtown patrons to use.

### **Sidewalks**

Sections of the city lack sidewalks or have sidewalks in bad condition. Sidewalks provide a safe place for people to walk, apart from traffic. As a compact community, Elk Run Heights has an

opportunity to improve pedestrian routes. Gaps in sidewalk coverage should be identified and filled, and older sidewalk sections in disrepair should be fixed.

## Transportation Goals

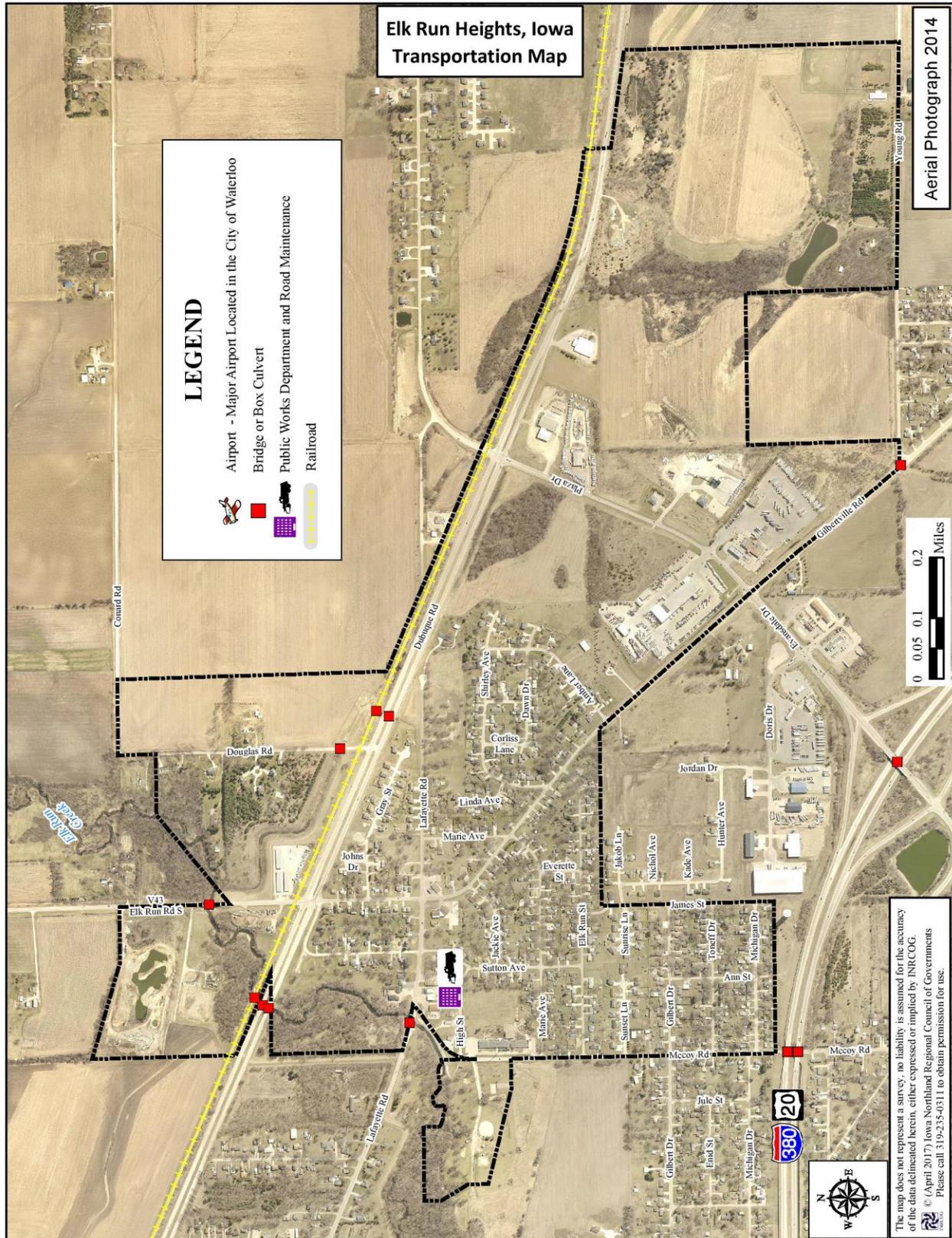
**Goal #1: Provide an efficient transportation system for orderly development of the community while maintaining safety and economy**

Objectives:

- a. To continue to monitor local street conditions and to provide for improvements through long range street improvement projects.
- b. Research and possibly use the Regional Transit Commission to provide dial-in transportation services to residents.
- c. Continue to provide easy access to transportation.
- d. Addition of new bike/walking/nature trail connections.
- e. Develop a sidewalk program.

Map 9: Transportation Map of the City

City of Elk Run Heights Comprehensive Plan Update



## **SECTION 10 – LAND USE**

Land is a finite resource. Only so much usable ground is available and, unlike many assets, we cannot simply make more of it.

Most people realize that land drives a large portion of Iowa's economy. With that said, some lands need to remain open for natural, aesthetic and recreational uses; conversely, some open lands may need to be in filled and used more productively.

How land is used is an important factor of a community's character. But what goes largely unnoticed is that growth and land development require significant costs; costs not only to a developer or builder, but to surrounding land users and possibly the broader community. And what's even more misunderstood is that once land is developed, an on-going financial responsibility results for the entire taxpaying public. Roads, water and sewer operations, police and fire protection, and other services all have costs, which must be considered when designating land for development.

Because fiscal resources, both public and private, are scarce, it only makes sense to think carefully about how we use our land. Careful planning better secures and protects the substantial investment needed to develop or conserve land.

By defining the extent to which our various lands can and should be used, we provide more predictability for nearby individuals and businesses making long-term decisions. More importantly, the public costs associated with serving these lands can be addressed and the qualities that make many of them unique are preserved.

Just as land use is an important aspect of our economy, the Land Use element of the Plan can be described as vital to the comprehensive plan. The goals and polices of this section are intended to weigh the adverse environmental impacts of growth versus the benefits of growth.

This section describes the existing land use in Elk Run Heights by cataloging the activities currently taking place on land within the city's jurisdiction. It then reconciles the existing use and character of these lands to the possible land use categories identified by the city on the Future Land Use Map.

### **SMART PLANNING ELEMENT – LAND USE**

Objectives, policies, and programs that identify current land uses within the municipality and that guide the future development and redevelopment of property, consistent with the municipality's characteristics identified under the Issues and Opportunities Element. The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may include information on the amount, type, intensity, and density of existing land use, trends in the market price of land used for specific purposes, and plans for future land use throughout the municipality. The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may identify and include information on property that has the possibility for redevelopment, a map of existing and potential land use and land use conflicts, information and maps relating to the current and future provision of utilities within the municipality, information and maps that identify the current and future boundaries for areas reserved for soil conservation, water supply conservation, flood control, and surface water drainage and removal. Information provided under this paragraph may also include an analysis of the current and potential impacts on local watersheds and air quality.

## Existing Conditions

In order to project future land use, existing land use needs to be observed, reviewed, analyzed, and mapped. This section will attempt to describe the City's existing land use patterns.

### *Existing Land Use Patterns*

Agriculture or open land uses are prevalent in the eastern sectors of the City. The majority of the City's developed land is categorized as single-family residential use. Public uses, such as parks, schools, and government buildings, are also scattered throughout the City. Commercial uses are clustered in three areas: along Plaza Drive, Dubuque Road, and Lafayette Road. Industrial uses are along Plaza Drive.

### *Existing Land Use Map*

The Existing Land Use Map (Map 10) provides a visual representation of how Elk Run Heights has developed at the time this Plan Update was being prepared. Table 10.1 shows the amount of land in each existing use category within the City.

<b>Land Use Category</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Total Land Area</b>
Agricultural/Open	226.9	32.34 %
Recreation	16.3	2.32 %
Residential	195.1	27.81 %
Public	36.82	5.25%
Commercial	55.0	7.84%
Industrial	44.3	6.31%
Right of Way	119.5	17.03%
Water	7.74	1.10%

*Source: INRCOG*

## Key Issues & Opportunities

### *Potential Annexation*

Annexation is an opportunity that may or may not present itself for decades, but the long term vision is for Elk Run Heights to grow to the southeast. City stakeholders have identified this area as a potential annexation area.

### *Compatible Land Uses*

Where pockets of one type of use are adjacent to differing uses, development or redevelopment that is similar or complimentary to the prevailing surrounding uses should be encouraged.

### *Environmentally Sensitive Areas*

Elk Run Heights has a very small portion of land within the floodplain. Uses that are compatible with the floodplain, such as parks and recreational areas, should be encouraged in these areas, while other uses should not be encouraged.

## Future Land Use

The Future Land Use Map (Map 11) focuses on infill development throughout the city. It suggests that single-family residential uses be encouraged next to existing residential uses, as well as for commercial development to occur along Plaza Drive in order to create a buffer from the road.

### *Relationship of Zoning and Future Land Use*

City zoning consists of both a zoning map and a written ordinance that divides the jurisdiction into zoning districts, including agricultural, residential, commercial, and industrial districts. The zoning regulations describe what type of use and specific activities are permitted in each district and also regulate how buildings, signs, parking, setbacks and bulk requirements may regulate on a lot. The zoning regulations also provide procedures for rezoning and other planning applications.

The zoning map and text regulations provide properties in Elk Run Heights certain rights to development, while the Comprehensive Plan serves as a guide for future development of the property. The Future Land Use Map and related policies contained in this Plan should be used as a guide for future rezoning decisions undertaken by the City.

### *Future Land Use Map*

With input from the Task Force and Planning and Zoning Commission, Elk Run Heights' Future Land Use Map was created. This map shows a vision of how Elk Run Heights may look 15-20 years in the future. The remainder of this section then provides a general overview of each land use category shown on the Future Land Use Map.

### **Future Land Use Classifications**

General descriptions of the land use categories shown on the Future Land Use Map follow:

- **Agriculture/Open Space:** Agricultural land and green/open spaces where future development would likely not occur.
- **Recreation:** Land used for recreation. For purpose example, sports fields, gymnasiums, playgrounds, public parks and green areas, swimming pools, and camping sites would be included in this classification.
- **Residential:** All varieties and types of housing that may exist, is planned, or that may develop in the community.
- **Public:** Schools, churches, and City buildings that may be used by the general public.
- **Commercial:** Uses that involve retail sales or wholesaling of goods and/or services to the public for purpose of a profit.
- **Industrial:** Intensive uses classified by the fact that they produce, manufacture, or assemble product. These uses may generate significant traffic, noise, dust, and/or excessive light.
- **Right of Way:** Land used for roads and railroads.
- **Potential Annexation:** This is not a typical land use classification, but is advantageous to the community to identify potential areas immediately adjacent to the City that may be annexed during the life of this Plan.
- **Water:** Distinguishes Elk Run Creek and other water bodies from surrounding uses.
- **Floodway:** The channel of a stream plus any floodplain areas that must be kept free of encroachment. Development is prohibited

- **1.0% and 0.2% Annual Chance of Flooding:** Although not typically considered a land use category, Elk Run Creek and the Cedar River have a profound impact on development in Elk Run Heights. Specifically, development in the floodways with 1.0% and 0.2% annual chance of flooding, as designated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency is strongly discouraged. Current land uses may continue, but any further development or redevelopment in this area is restricted by city ordinance. Thus, we have shown the floodplain on the Future Land Use Map so that residents and City staff may be aware of it and understand its impact on potential development.

Table 10.2 shows the estimated amount of land in each land use as demonstrated on the Future Land Use Map.

<b>Land Use Category</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Total Land Area</b>
Agricultural/Open	0	0.0%
Recreation	16.3	1.84%
Residential	377.9	42.85%
Public	38.3	4.35%
Commercial	96.9	11.0%
Industrial	45.1	5.11%
Right of Way	119.5	13.55%
Water	7.7	0.88%
Potential Annexation	180.1	20.43%

*Source: INRCOG*

## Land Use Goals

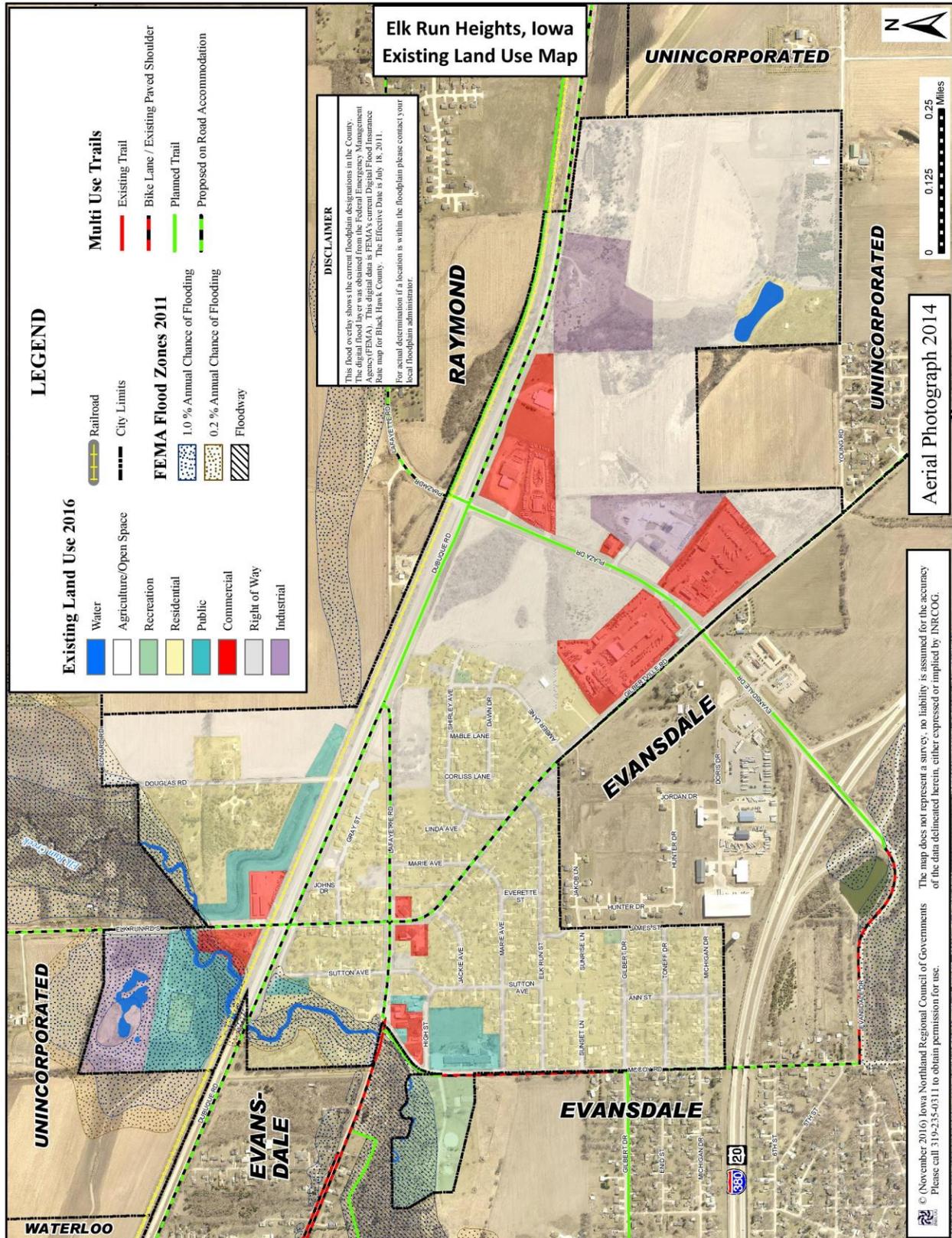
**Goal #1: To maintain orderly growth and development to ensure that the land in Elk Run Heights is used the most advantageous way to benefit the community as a whole.**

Objectives:

- g. Research potential hazards that may be associated with large scale fueling facilities.
- h. Maintain zoning and subdivision ordinance.
- i. Work to maintain lower taxes which may provide more opportunities to grow.
- j. Research annexation of land, which may create opportunities for expansion in the future.
- k. Use TIF to foster development.
- l. Encourage public input in land use process.

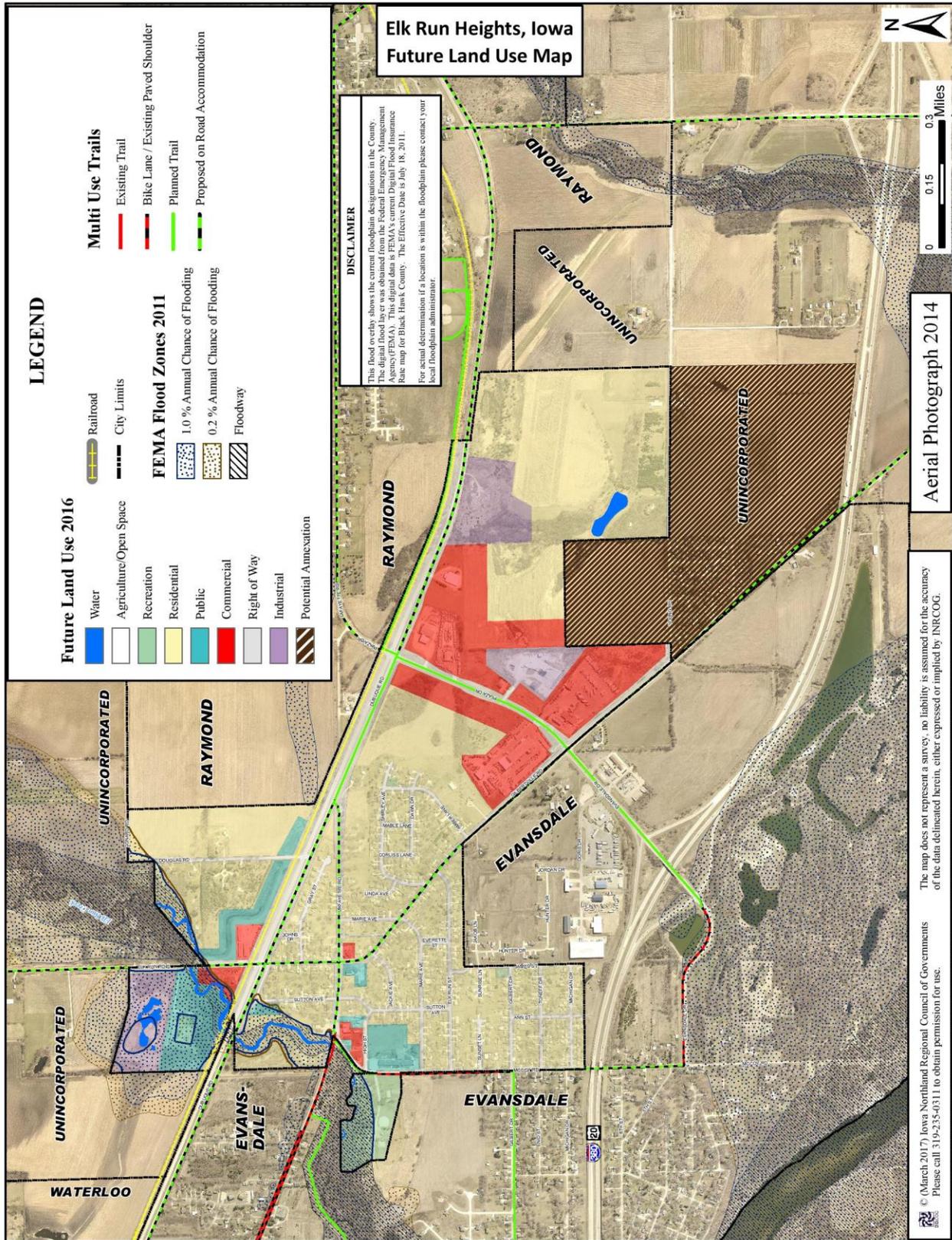
Map 10: Existing Land Use Map of the City

City of Elk Run Heights Comprehensive Plan Update



Map 11: Future Land Use Map of the City

City of Elk Run Heights Comprehensive Plan Update



## **SECTION 11 – INTERGOVERNMENTAL COLLABORATION**

Success for any type of planning relies on the ability of a community to work together as a whole to achieve a common goal. Historically, Elk Run Heights has a good work relationship with internal parties and its neighbors. Individual agencies, groups, boards, committees, and the like have been able to cooperate to complete projects of mutual interest. These entities also work together to share information, resources, and are active in several regional organizations. However, communities could also be taking advantage of many opportunities for collaboration in economic development, environmental and agricultural protection, and resource sharing. This section will outline current collaboration efforts within the city and county, and profile several regional organizations that facilitate collaboration. The section will also discuss past conflicts and identify opportunities for further collaboration. Recommendations included in this section will allow Elk Run Heights to prevent and resolve conflicts as well as continue to work together to achieve the City's goals.

### **SMART PLANNING ELEMENT – INTERGOVERNMENTAL COLLABORATION**

Objectives, policies, and programs for joint planning and joint decision-making with other municipalities or governmental entities, including school districts and drainage districts, for siting and constructing public facilities and sharing public services. The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may identify existing or potential conflicts between the municipality and other governments related to future development of the

### **Benefits of Collaboration**

Some of the benefits of intergovernmental collaboration include:

**Cost Savings** - Cooperation can save money by increasing efficiency and avoiding unnecessary duplication. Cooperation can enable some communities to provide their residents with services that would otherwise be too costly. Examples include shared services like waste water treatment, police and fire protection, recycling of household hazardous waste, water service, and shared government buildings (such as a shared community center).

**Address Regional Issues** - By communicating and coordinating their actions, and working with local, regional and state agencies, local communities are able to address and resolve issues which are regional in nature. Examples include the construction and maintenance of highways, provision of transit service, and planning and construction of facilities for storm water management and water supply.

**Early Identification of Issues** - Cooperation enables jurisdictions to identify and resolve potential conflicts at an early stage, before affected interests have established rigid positions, before substantial funds have been expended, before the political stakes have been raised, and before issues have become conflicts or crises.

**Consistency** - Cooperation can lead to consistency of the goals, objectives, plans, policies, and actions of internal groups, neighboring communities and other jurisdictions.

**Predictability** - Jurisdictions that cooperate provide greater predictability to residents, developers, businesses, and others because they communicate. Lack of predictability can result in lost time, money, and opportunity.

**Understanding** - As jurisdictions communicate and collaborate on issues of mutual interest, they become more aware of one another's needs and priorities. They can better anticipate problems and work to avoid them.

**Trust** - Cooperation can lead to positive experiences and results that build trust and good working relationships.

**History of Success** - When jurisdictions cooperate successfully in one area, the success creates positive feelings and an expectation that other intergovernmental issues can be resolved as well.

**Enhanced Service to Citizens** - The biggest beneficiaries of intergovernmental cooperation is citizens for whom government was created in the first place. They may not understand, or even care about, the intricacies of a particular intergovernmental issue, but all residents can appreciate their benefits, such as cost savings, provision of needed services, and a strong economy.

## Existing Conditions

Elk Run Heights has collaborated with many groups and organizations to provide services for its residents. These range from local connections within the city to working relationships with state agencies. This section provides an overview of these collaborative relationships.

### Local Partnerships

Several organizations, agencies, and committees work with the city to provide the highest level of service for their citizens and visitors. These partnerships work toward meeting many of the goals within the City's comprehensive plan.

- Library service: Evansdale
- Police service: Evansdale
- Sewer service: Raymond utilize the Elk Run Heights' sanitary sewer treatment facility
- Fire/Ambulance service: Waterloo
- Water service: Waterloo
- School District: Waterloo
- City Departments
- Newspaper coverage
- Utility providers: electric, natural gas, telephone, internet,
- Solid waste/Recycling: Waste Management (private)

### Regional Partnerships

Regional partnerships can also benefit the City and some have been identified throughout this document. Key regional agencies that can help implement strategies in this plan include:

- **Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments (INRCOG)** provides services in community planning, government grant writing (community facilities, sewer/water, downtown revitalization and housing), workforce, housing rehab and rental assistance programs and transportation projects.

- **Black Hawk County Landfill**
- **Northeast Iowa Response Group** provides service to 11 counties in Iowa. The group handles hazardous material incidents within their 11 county areas.

### *State Partnerships*

The following is a list of state agencies whose departments and areas of expertise could assist the City as it moves forward with the implementation of this Plan.

- Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA)
- Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS)
- Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs
- Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR)
- Iowa Department of Transportation (IDOT)
- Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division

### *Intergovernmental Agreements*

Formal agreements between Iowa governments are generally referred to as 28E agreements as they are permitted under chapter 28E of the Iowa Code. The chapter permits “state and local governments in Iowa to make efficient use of their powers by enabling them to provide joint services and facilities with other agencies and to co-operate in other ways of mutual advantage.” Examples of 28E agreements include those used to create the regional partners defined above and mutual aid agreements, which is better defined below.

**Mutual Aid Agreements** – Mutual aid agreements provide the procedures for sharing of resources between communities. Elk Run Heights has entered into agreements for sharing fire response, ambulance services, law enforcement, and criminal investigations. The Black Hawk County Emergency Management Agency is responsible for establishing local mutual aid arrangements, and coordinates with Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management to ensure emergency management and response for communities is adequately planned and is well-equipped, trained, and exercised. These 28E agreements may also define responsibilities for road maintenance, public transportation, landfill operation and maintenance, and building and facilities maintenance, among others.

### *Key Issues & Opportunities*

Good planning is a result of collaborative efforts between and within governments. Elk Run Heights has cultivated and developed relationships in the county, region, and state and will need to maintain these relationships while actively seeking out new opportunities in order to continue providing exemplary services to its residents.

#### *City and Evansdale Police Department*

One partnership that has recently been revised is how many hours that are contracted for police services from Evansdale’s Police Department. The City has also requested information on what kind of activity is being reported and/or addressed by the police within the city.

### *Sanitary Sewer*

As a sanitary sewer treatment facility project is in the near future for not only Elk Run Heights, but also other surrounding communities, the City will likely hope to develop an agreement with one, or more of the surrounding communities to provide service for its residents.

### *Maintaining Existing Agreements*

Maintaining existing agreements is essential to continuing to bring quality services to residents of the community.

## **Intergovernmental Collaboration Goals**

**Goal #1: Continue to work collaboratively and communicate effectively with other levels of government and agencies in order to benefit its residents as well as those in the region.**

Objectives:

- a. Continue to work with the Federal government
- b. Continue to work with the State Government
- c. Continue to work with Black Hawk County
- d. Continue to work cooperatively with neighboring communities

# Plan Implementation & Maintenance

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## **SECTION 1 – ACTION PLAN**

This Plan includes goals and objectives for the City of Elk Run Heights that will help maintain and improve the community itself.

While each goal and objective is important, it is critical to set priorities among the strategies. These priorities will lay the foundation for developing future capital improvement plans and annual departmental work plans for the City, as well as help with organizing and prioritizing future implementation efforts. The Action Plan provides a means for working through a variety of immediate, short- and long-range issues with other agencies, jurisdictions, and stakeholders by articulating a concept, premise or position to start constructive discussion and completion.

### **Implementation Priorities**

Throughout the course of developing this Plan, community input focused on creating a more sustainable community that manages growth, supports businesses, improves community facilities, diversifies and expands economic development and housing, embraces its natural resources, while maintaining and enhancing the small-town atmosphere of Elk Run Heights – this is not a small task. Listed below are the major implementation efforts to reach the goals community stakeholders and citizens have agreed upon for the future of the City.

### **SMART PLANNING ELEMENT – INTERGOVERNMENTAL COLLABORATION**

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A compilation of programs and specific actions necessary to implement any provision of the comprehensive plan, including changes to any applicable land development regulations, official maps or subdivision ordinances.

Table 11.1: Elk Run Heights Action Plan

**Agriculture/Natural Resource Goal #1: To maintain a park and open space system, and incorporate a wide range of social and cultural activities into the community.**
**Objective 1: Provide maintenance and general upkeep of existing parks, facilities, and recreational areas**
*Lead Role: City Council*      *Key Partners: Public Works Staff*      *Timeline: Life of the Plan*
**Objective 2: Continue the support of current boards and organizations which provide recreational opportunities in the community.**
*Lead Role: City Council*      *Key Partners:*      *Timeline: Life of the Plan*
**Objective 3: Research possible reuse of the ball diamonds.**
*Lead Role: City Council*      *Key Partners:*      *Timeline: Life of the Plan*
**Objective 4: Upgrade volleyball court**
*Lead Role: City Council*      *Key Partners: Public Works Staff*      *Timeline: Life of the Plan*
**Objective 5: Identify possible, future recreation areas**
*Lead Role: City Council*      *Key Partners: Public Works Staff*      *Timeline: Life of the Plan*
**Agriculture/Natural Resource Goal #2: Protect, preserve, and/or restore environmentally sensitive or natural features in the community, whenever possible.**
**Objective 1: Maintain Tree City designation.**
*Lead Role: City Council*      *Key Partners: Staff*      *Timeline: Life of the Plan*
**Objective 2: Make efforts to be “green”.**
*Lead Role: City Council*      *Key Partners: Staff/Citizens*      *Timeline: Life of the Plan*
**Objective 3: Continue to protect the floodplain and drainage area to ensure no development disrupts the natural water flow.**
*Lead Role: City Council*      *Key Partners: Staff*      *Timeline: Life of the Plan*
**Hazards Goal #1: Continue to participate in the Black Hawk County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan**
**Objective 1: Enhance the quality of life and safety of all residents**
*Lead Role: City Council*      *Key Partners: Staff*      *Timeline: Life of the Plan*
**Objective 2: Take steps to mitigate the probable negative consequences that may occur as a result of natural, technological, and/or man-made disasters.**
*Lead Role: City Council*      *Key Partners: Staff*      *Timeline: Life of the Plan*
**Objective 3: Identify potential funding sources needed to accomplish identified mitigation projects.**
*Lead Role: City Council*      *Key Partners: Staff*      *Timeline: Life of the Plan*
**Objective 4: Protect the health and welfare of the entire community by sufficiently maintaining all first responder organizations**
*Lead Role: City Council*      *Key Partners: Volunteers*      *Timeline: Life of the Plan*
**Objective 5: Return to pre-disaster or improved conditions as soon as possible after a disaster occurs**
*Lead Role: City Council*      *Key Partners: Staff; Black Hawk County EMA*      *Timeline: Life of the Plan*
**Objective 6: Continue to support the incorporation of the city into the Black Hawk County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan**
*Lead Role: City Council*      *Key Partners:*      *Timeline: Life of the Plan*
**Objective 7: Continually re-assess and re-evaluate the plan and mitigation activities**
*Lead Role: City Council*      *Key Partners: Staff*      *Timeline: Life of the Plan*

### Community Character Goal #1: To maintain an on-going planning process in which informed public input is an important element

**Objective 1:** Update the Elk Run Heights Comprehensive Plan as needed, review modifications or changes in city policy and incorporate them as amendments to the Plan.

**Lead Role:** City Council

**Key Partners:** Staff; Planning and Zoning Commission

**Timeline:** Life of the Plan

### Community Facilities Goal #1: To ensure adequate and efficient service to all persons in the community.

**Objective 1:** Provide services which meet all State and Federal guidelines.

**Lead Role:** City Council

**Key Partners:** Staff

**Timeline:** Life of the Plan

**Objective 2:** Promote and continue to use the Community Room in City Hall for public rental space.

**Lead Role:** City Council

**Key Partners:** Staff

**Timeline:** Life of the Plan

**Objective 3:** Maintain the recycling program.

**Lead Role:** City Council

**Key Partners:** Staff; Vendor

**Timeline:** Life of the Plan

**Objective 4:** Continue to have working relationships with partners who provide services for the City

**Lead Role:** City Council

**Key Partners:** Current Providers

**Timeline:** Life of the Plan

### Public Infrastructure and Utilities Goal #1: Continue to improve infrastructure to serve the community

**Objective 1:** Addition of new bike/walking/nature trail connections

**Lead Role:** City Council

**Key Partners:** Staff; Volunteers

**Timeline:** Life of the Plan

**Objective 2:** Enhance street lighting to ensure safety.

**Lead Role:** City Council

**Key Partners:** Staff; Vendors

**Timeline:** Life of the Plan

**Objective 3:** Encourage sidewalk improvements.

**Lead Role:** City Council

**Key Partners:**

**Timeline:** Life of the Plan

**Objective 4:** Resolve sanitary sewer treatment facility project

**Lead Role:** City Council

**Key Partners:** Staff; Contractors

**Timeline:** Life of the Plan

**Objective 5:** Identify and remove existing septic tanks

**Lead Role:** City Council

**Key Partners:** Staff

**Timeline:** Life of the Plan

**Objective 6:** Repair/replace aged infrastructure when needed

**Lead Role:** City Council

**Key Partners:** Staff

**Timeline:** Life of the Plan

**Objective 7:** Construct additional of lift stations

**Lead Role:** City Council

**Key Partners:** Staff

**Timeline:** Life of the Plan

**Objective 8:** Research a possible agreement with Evansdale for snow removal and street maintenance

**Lead Role:** City Council

**Key Partners:** Staff; Mayor

**Timeline:** Life of the Plan

**Objective 9:** Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) funds to ensure projects are able to be funded when the time comes

**Lead Role:** City Council

**Key Partners:** Staff

**Timeline:** Life of the Plan

### Housing Goal #1: Continue to develop and promote Elk Run Heights as a desirable residential community.

**Objective 1: Provide a mixture of single family residential, condominiums, and duplexes for residents**

**Lead Role:** City Council      **Key Partners:** Staff; Mayor      **Timeline:** Life of the Plan

**Objective 2: Promote and build upon the small town atmosphere in Elk Run Heights.**

**Lead Role:** City Council      **Key Partners:** Staff; Volunteers      **Timeline:** Life of the Plan

**Objective 3: Providing public facilities and services as necessary.**

**Lead Role:** City Council      **Key Partners:** Staff      **Timeline:** Life of the Plan

**Objective 4: Advertise and market the community**

**Lead Role:** City Council      **Key Partners:**      **Timeline:** Life of the Plan

**Objective 5: Take advantage of proximity to larger cities**

**Lead Role:** City Council      **Key Partners:**      **Timeline:** Life of the Plan

**Objective 6: Provide resources and programs to help improve and maintain housing stock**

**Lead Role:** City Council      **Key Partners:** Citizens      **Timeline:** Life of the Plan

**Objective 7: Consider affordable housing while looking at future developments**

**Lead Role:** City Council      **Key Partners:**      **Timeline:** Life of the Plan

**Objective 8: Ensure that the quietness and friendliness of the neighborhoods are preserved**

**Lead Role:** City Council      **Key Partners:** Staff      **Timeline:** Life of the Plan

**Objective 9: Encourage development of assisted living facilities for residents**

**Lead Role:** City Council      **Key Partners:** Staff; Developers      **Timeline:** Life of the Plan

### Economic Development Goal #1: Encouraging the retention and growth of existing businesses, as well as encourage new businesses to locate in Elk Run.

**Objective 1: Provide adequate land for development which has the necessary infrastructure.**

**Lead Role:** City Council      **Key Partners:** Staff      **Timeline:** Life of the Plan

**Objective 2: Encourage more local retail/shops development.**

**Lead Role:** City Council      **Key Partners:**      **Timeline:** Life of the Plan

**Objective 3: Attempt to entice restaurant development into the community.**

**Lead Role:** City Council      **Key Partners:** Developers      **Timeline:** Life of the Plan

**Objective 4: Utilize the TIF district**

**Lead Role:** City Council      **Key Partners:** Staff      **Timeline:** Life of the Plan

### Transportation Goal #1: Provide an efficient transportation system for orderly development of the community while maintaining safety and economy

**Objective 1: To continue to monitor local street conditions and to provide for improvements through long range street improvement projects.**

**Lead Role:** City Council      **Key Partners:** Staff      **Timeline:** Life of the Plan

**Objective 2: Research and possibly use the Regional Transit Commission to provide dial-in transportation services to residents.**

**Lead Role:** Mayor      **Key Partners:** City Council      **Timeline:** Life of the Plan

**Objective 3: Continue to provide easy access to transportation.**

**Lead Role:** City Council      **Key Partners:**      **Timeline:** Life of the Plan

**Objective 4: Utilize the TIF district**

**Lead Role:** City Council      **Key Partners:**      **Timeline:** Life of the Plan

### Land Use Goal #1: To maintain orderly growth and development to ensure that the land in Elk Run Heights is used the most advantageous way to benefit the community as a whole.

**Objective 1: Research potential hazards that may be associated with large scale fueling facilities.**

**Lead Role:** City Council      **Key Partners:** Staff      **Timeline:** Life of the Plan

**Objective 2: Work to maintain lower taxes which may provide more opportunities to grow.**

**Lead Role:** City Council      **Key Partners:** Staff      **Timeline:** Life of the Plan

**Objective 3: Research annexation of land, which may create opportunities for expansion in the future.**

**Lead Role:** City Council      **Key Partners:** Staff      **Timeline:** Life of the Plan

**Objective 4: Use TIF to foster development**

**Lead Role:** City Council      **Key Partners:** Staff      **Timeline:** Life of the Plan

### Intergovernmental Collaboration Goal #1: Continue to work collaboratively and communicate effectively with other levels of government and agencies in order to benefit its residents as well as those in the region.

**Objective 1: Continue to work with the Federal government.**

**Lead Role:** City Council      **Key Partners:** Staff      **Timeline:** Life of the Plan

**Objective 2: Continue to work with the State Government.**

**Lead Role:** City Council      **Key Partners:** Staff      **Timeline:** Life of the Plan

**Objective 3: Continue to work with Black Hawk County.**

**Lead Role:** City Council      **Key Partners:** Mayor; Staff      **Timeline:** Life of the Plan

**Objective 4: Continue to work cooperatively with neighboring communities**

**Lead Role:** City Council      **Key Partners:** Mayor; Staff      **Timeline:** Life of the Plan

### Public Participation Goal #1: Promote public participation

**Objective 1: Invite citizen groups to take part in development and implementation of City plans.**

**Lead Role:** City Council      **Key Partners:** Mayor; Staff      **Timeline:** Life of the Plan

**Objective 2: Make a continuous effort to encourage participation by residents in City Council Meetings.**

**Lead Role:** City Council      **Key Partners:**      **Timeline:** Life of the Plan

### Quality of Life Goal #1: Maintain the City's quality of life

**Objective 1: Support local schools.**

**Lead Role:** City Council      **Key Partners:**      **Timeline:** Life of the Plan

**Objective 2: Support a variety of religious institutions.**

**Lead Role:** City Council      **Key Partners:**      **Timeline:** Life of the Plan

**Objective 3: If proposed, the community would like to see development of a fitness/wellness center**

**Lead Role:** City Council      **Key Partners:**      **Timeline:** Life of the Plan

### Quality of Life Goal #2: Public Safety

**Objective 1: Consider adding law enforcement hours in order to ensure safety of residents.**

**Lead Role:** City Council      **Key Partners:**      **Timeline:** Life of the Plan

**Objective 2: Obtain monthly reports on incidents, citations, and accidents reports from the Evansdale Police Department.**

**Lead Role:** City Council      **Key Partners:** Staff      **Timeline:** Life of the Plan

<b>Implementation Goal #1: Maintain land use management program</b>		
<b>Objective 1: Maintain and update zoning ordinance.</b>		
<b>Lead Role:</b> City Council	<b>Key Partners:</b> Planning and Zoning Commission; Staff	<b>Timeline:</b> Life of the Plan
<b>Objective 2: Maintain subdivision regulations.</b>		
<b>Lead Role:</b> City Council	<b>Key Partners:</b> Planning and Zoning Commission; Staff	<b>Timeline:</b> Life of the Plan
<b>Objective 3: Maintain boards/commissions.</b>		
<b>Lead Role:</b> City Council	<b>Key Partners:</b> Staff; volunteers	<b>Timeline:</b> Life of the Plan
<b>Objective 4: Maintain TIF districts</b>		
<b>Lead Role:</b> City Council	<b>Key Partners:</b> Staff	<b>Timeline:</b> Life of the Plan
<b>Objective 5: Maintain and update building codes</b>		
<b>Lead Role:</b> City Council	<b>Key Partners:</b> Staff	<b>Timeline:</b> Life of the Plan

### Implementation Strategies

Many of the identified goals, objectives, and action strategies will only be met through the expenditure of public funds and attention of time. Achieving the components of the Action Plan should lead to more efficient use of both public and private resources. Each project should be viewed with the full range of funding alternatives and technical assistance available to it before action is taken. These sources must not only provide sufficient funds to accomplish the goals and action strategies intended, but they should be tapped in ways that are as equitable as possible in balancing costs against benefits received.

Another method for implementing the elements of the Plan could be developed through a system of incentives and compensation. The benefits and costs involved in the achievement of public objectives should be considered; which are equitable to the individual and to the general public. Specific steps should be taken to enable progress to be made in each area of the plan.

### SECTION 2 – PLAN MAINTENANCE

The Plan is designed to be a working document. Its adoption by the City Council is not the end of the community’s long-range planning effort, but rather the means by which the city will see growth occur. City staff, citizens, and the private sector will use Plan as a dynamic tool to manage growth over the next ten to fifteen years to protect the high quality of life and foster a healthy economy for Elk Run Heights.

A relevant, up-to-date plan is a critical element to ongoing planning success. To maintain public and private sector confidence, evaluation and modifications based on sound judgments should be made to the planning document as necessary. The Plan must be current. Therefore the, City Council of Elk Run Heights may, from time-to-time, want to consider amendments or updates to this Plan, including any and/or all of the maps, tables, and/or illustrations.

### Continued Participation and Leadership

Broad public support and involvement are required as a prerequisite to the development and use of virtually any implementation policy or program. If adequate support is to be developed, a vigorous and continuing program of discussion, education, and participation must be carried on.

Moreover, people who are in a position to understand the needs of the city and ways of meeting those must take the initiative to stimulate the interest and the understanding that must be involved to assure that support and action is developed.

To produce the levels of consensus required, vigorous and continuing public involvement will be required in such areas as:

1. Detailing of plans and proposals to clarify their impact on specific areas, groups, and individuals;
2. Developing of specified implementation activities and organization arrangements; and
3. Continuing monitoring and interpretation of the Plan.

### **SECTION 3 – Amendment Process**

In order to consider an amendment or update to this plan, first the Planning and Zoning Commission shall consider the proposed amendment and conduct a properly noticed hearing, notice of which shall be published once, not less than seven (7) nor more than twenty (20) days before the date of the hearing, in a newspaper with local circulation. The Commission shall make a recommendation to the City Council on the proposed amendment or update, after the public hearing. Said recommendation of the Commission shall be carried by an affirmative vote of a simple majority of its members. The Commission shall send its recommendation, either for approval or denial of the proposed amendment or update, to the City Council for consideration.

After receiving the recommendation from the Planning and Zoning Commission, the City Council shall also hold a properly noticed public hearing on the proposed amendment. The notice shall follow the same publication guidelines as those prescribed for the Commission above. The City Council is authorized to make the final decision, including alterations to the amendment or update prior to adoption. Adoption shall require an affirmative vote of a simple majority of the membership of the Council.