

## ***Chapter II: Land Use and Development Framework***

This chapter describes the foundation for the future physical development of Sioux City. The land use and development framework consists of several components including future land use, growth and infill, and development form and design. These components of the plan will guide development decisions and shape the future of the City by forming the basis for land use and development decisions that will be made in pursuit of accomplishing the vision for Sioux City.

### **SIoux CITY VISION**

*My Home, Our Neighborhood, Everyone's Hometown*

How does this vision relate to the future physical development of Sioux City? This vision recognizes the importance of several key physical development forms. First, property ownership and maintenance in general reflects acceptable land use patterns and the level of pride of citizens and the community. Second, the neighborhood and other identifiable districts are physical building blocks of any city and strong neighborhoods and districts with distinct qualities and a variety of experiences will distinguish Sioux City from other communities in the region. And finally, the reference to hometown reflects the feeling provided to

**My Home, Our Neighborhood, Everybody's Hometown**

Chapter II: Land Use and Development Framework

Page 21

people as they experience the design character of the City.

The vision reflects the desire that everyone will take responsibility for making Sioux City a great community to live in by taking pride in home, neighborhood, and a city where quality reigns and everyone is welcome. Many different paths can be taken to achieve this vision and three alternatives were evaluated as part of the planning process. Those alternatives are described in a technical supplement to the comprehensive plan. The preferred physical plan for the City of Sioux City is a combination of ideas and concepts coming from public discussion about the alternatives.

After evaluating the three alternatives described in *Section 1: Planning Process and Participation* of the **Technical Supplement** of the previous section, a preferred direction for a future land use and development framework was developed. Based on the evaluation of the alternatives there were several key principles that form the core for the land use and development framework for Sioux City. These core principles are:

1. Protection and creation of quality neighborhoods.
2. Establishment of economically viable and discernable development centers and corridors.
3. Provision of commercial goods and services to the residents of Sioux City and the region.
4. Integration of neighborhoods that support commercial goods and services.
5. Protection and development of existing industrial areas within Sioux City.
6. A transportation system and network that serves all sectors of the population and provides access to the City and the region.
7. Establishment of east / west connections in the northern portions of Sioux City.

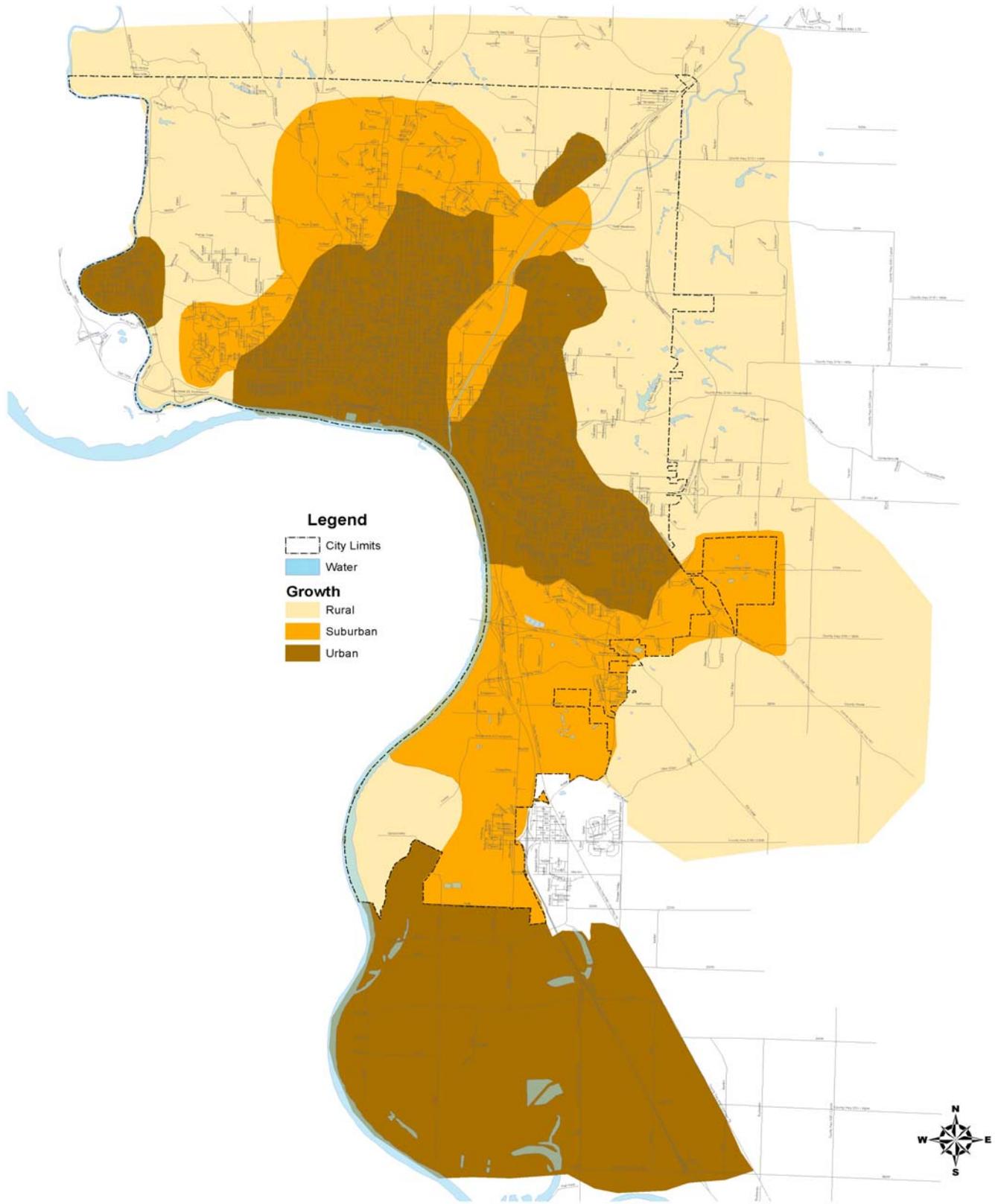
8. Protection and enhancement of the character of unique places and neighborhoods in Sioux City, particularly downtown and the riverfront.
9. Assurance of quality development that respects the physical features and natural environment in which it exists.

The physical foundation and recommendations in this chapter of the plan will guide growth, infill, and development of Sioux City by setting forth a desired future growth and land use pattern along with strategies for improving and expanding the City.

#### **FUTURE DEVELOPMENT ZONES**

Sioux City is made up of a variety of unique natural and built environments. Urban, suburban, and rural development patterns exist within the City limits of Sioux City. This variety is something that few other communities, if any, in the region can offer. The diversity of living choices and experiences should be reinforced and protected as a strength that sets Sioux City apart from other communities in the area.

A key method for enhancing this strength includes the recognition and definition of three different development zones in appropriate locations within Sioux City. The Development Zone Map (Figure 2-1) generally locates Urban, Suburban, and Rural zones based on existing development patterns (i.e. street layouts, densities, and natural features) and the potential for development in currently undeveloped areas. The definitions and criteria outlined below are meant to be guidelines that can be applied to all types of development including residential, commercial, industrial, and mixed-use. The implementation of these guidelines will ensure that a variety of natural and built environments continue to be part of Sioux City in the future.



*Figure 2-1: Development Zone Map*

### Urban Development Zone

The Urban Development Zone represents the older higher density areas of the City where infill and redevelopment are appropriate. Infill and redevelopment should be in forms and densities similar to existing urban development types and densities within these areas.

- Development in the Urban Development Zone is based on traditional neighborhood / urban development standards.
  - Residential densities with a maximum lot area of 7,500 square feet.
  - Traditional grid road system with the traditional hierarchy of streets (local, collector, arterial) and historic urban development standards in the right-of-way (curb and gutter, continuous sidewalks, narrow road width, on-street parking, potential alleys).
  - Building envelopes that are consistent with the established surrounding character for site design, setbacks, heights, mass / bulk of buildings for infill development.
  - New development that is consistent with established design and development standards for urban areas in Sioux City.
- Unique residential opportunities exist and should be encouraged in the urban zone as part of mixed-use of individual buildings and sites – higher density residential including lofts, and upper level apartments / condominiums.

### Suburban Development Zone

Development in the Suburban Development Zone should be consistent with contemporary development practices that are sensitive to existing environmental characteristics of the location.

- Suburban development will occur in areas that currently have adjacent access to or are planned to receive urban level services (per the Urban Services Plan and capital improvements program).
- The type of residential development that occurs in these areas may include single family, duplex, town home, or garden style apartments. This development is based on several contemporary design and development practices.
  - Residential densities with a minimum of 3,600 square feet per lot and a maximum of 12,000 square feet per lot.
  - Higher density housing types are generally located as buffering to commercial or other areas of intense land use in a step down manner.
  - Adjacent neighborhoods are connected via roadway and pedestrian circulation systems.
  - Neighborhoods and adjacent commercial areas are connected via pedestrian circulation systems.
  - Significant drainage routes, wetlands, vegetative stands, and slopes are integrated into the development as valuable inherent resources to create unique neighborhoods. These areas are “no build” or “sensitive build” zones serving as conservation or

public areas, or unique building opportunities.

- Development follows standards that are sensitive to the aesthetic, visual, and functional qualities of the topography and vegetative patterns associated with the Loess Hills.
- Residential development at urban development zone densities is appropriate in the Suburban Development areas when included in a mixed-use center and infrastructure for such density is available.
- Cluster or conservation by design standards may also be appropriate for Suburban Zone Development based on environmental factors.

#### Rural Development Zone

Development in the Rural Development Zone is not provided nor planned to receive urban level services.

- Rural residential development may occur in three forms – agriculturally based (35 + acres/per unit), rural residential lots (10 + acres/per unit), and cluster or conservation subdivisions (1 + acres/per unit – based on capability for the provision of on-site water / septic).
- To encourage cluster or conservation by design standards (i.e. adjacent to suburban development with easy access to urban level services, meeting / exceeding certain design standards, etc) rural development, under certain circumstances, may be eligible for density bonuses.

### **FUTURE RESIDENTIAL GROWTH AND INFILL STRATEGY**

As previously noted, with the exception of the 1990s, Sioux City has experienced a decline in population in recent decades. Similarly, the MSA has shown population loss that is comparable to that of Sioux City in previous decades. In the 1990s Sioux City and the MSA shared a modest growth rate, 5.6% and 5.7% respectively. While a declining population trend has been the standard in the past, it is the intent of this plan to prepare land use and development policies that build on the population gains of the last decade and change the development trends in Sioux City to help the City grow.

Future growth is a desired vision for Sioux City. The City must continue to develop vacant lands and aggressively promote the expansion of the corporate limits into the Urban Services Area. The general concept behind the strategies is based on balancing new development with redevelopment. It is important that these concepts be balanced by creating new opportunities for development and repositioning existing areas of the City to attract redevelopment.

To implement a method for focusing resources a critical first step is making strategic decisions about growth and redevelopment. Six area types have been identified for Sioux City (Figure 2-2). Each of the area types describes the dominant conditions of the area and outlines different strategies for addressing and promoting orderly development.

#### **Emerging Areas**

Emerging areas are defined by an increase in population and housing units and exist predominately on the growing northern, eastern, and southern periphery of the City. These areas are located in the fringe areas of the City that have seen residential development over the past decade. The continuation of high quality development in and around these areas is critical to sustaining the positive trend.

*Strategies:*

- Promote detailed land use planning that seeks to minimize conflict between differing land uses and to protect the existing land use patterns.
- Prepare and implement design standards to create high quality built environments.
- Promote quality development that is an efficient use of resources.
- Promote innovative design and development that differentiates development in Sioux City from that in the surrounding region.
- Proactive code enforcement to protect the physical and visual quality of the area.
- Foster public / private partnerships to new housing.
- Package development incentives, including property tax abatements, to boost the City's residential lot inventory and new housing starts.

*Conservation Areas*

The areas within Sioux City that are designated as "conservation areas" exhibit specific development patterns and characteristics. Typically these areas are well maintained with little or no vacant or undeveloped land. These areas are ordinarily physically sound and economically viable. Typically conservation and stabilization areas do not need major redevelopment efforts, rather they need minor rehabilitation and maintenance services. Examples of conservation areas are prevalent throughout Sioux City and can be identified by their quality housing stock and in some cases by their historic character. Areas that fit this description need to be enhanced and protected from physical and fiscal decline.

*Strategies:*

- Promote detailed land use planning that seeks to minimize conflict between differing land uses and to protect the existing land use patterns.
- Implement design standards to ensure the uniqueness of an area by protecting the existing character and promoting quality development.

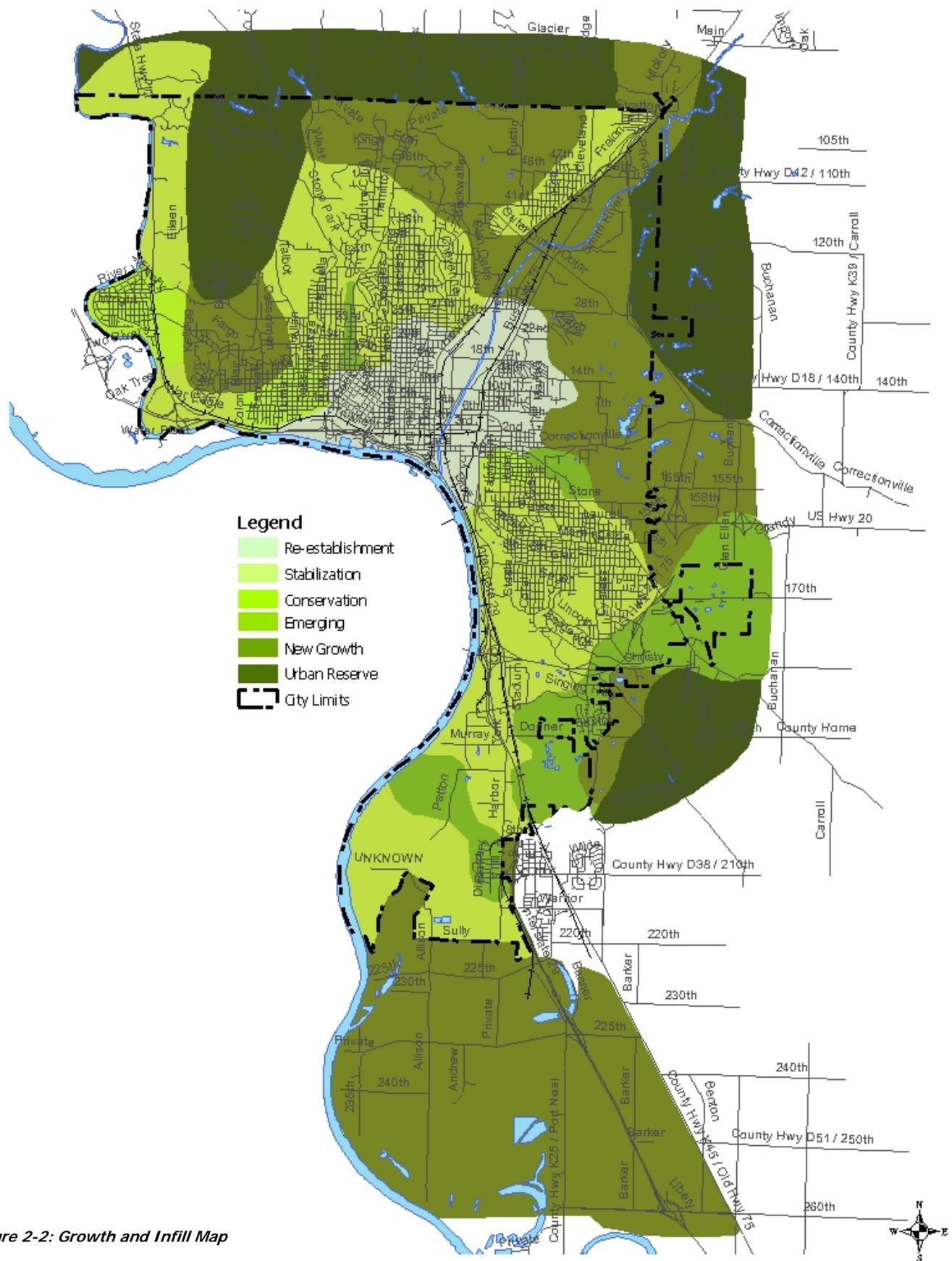


Figure 2-2: Growth and Infill Map

- Promote proactive code enforcement to protect the physical and visual quality of the area.
- Continue to upgrade maintenance of public facilities and amenities, such as streets and parks to preserve the quality appearance and character of the area.
- Retain neighborhood institutional elements and public places (schools, churches, parks, etc.).

### Stabilization Areas

Areas within Sioux City that are exhibiting a decline in their physical and economic characteristics are classified as stabilization areas. The primary concern in these areas is to reduce further deterioration. Policies should be put in place to stabilize these areas, enhance the attractiveness of the area, seize market and development opportunities, and promote quality maintenance and redevelopment. These areas are beginning to see vacant land and structures and a decline in the general appearance of the area. The primary goal of these areas is to attract private development back to the area. This is typically achieved by some public investment through maintenance oriented programs and resources. It is the intent of this plan that pride in these areas can be energized in an effort to move toward becoming conservation areas. Private investment is necessary and could be encouraged and expedited within stabilization areas by targeting appropriate actions and resources.

### *Strategies:*

- Improve the full range of community services, including police and fire protection, and public area and infrastructure maintenance and improvement.
- Prepare design standards to ensure quality infill development for commercial and residential properties, as well as public areas.
- Make greater investments in strategic capital improvements such as streets, sidewalks, streetscape, and public spaces to enhance the appearance of the area.

- Target financial incentives to encourage improvements.
- Step-up code enforcement to repair and / or enhance deteriorated or vacant properties.

*Re-establishment Areas*

Areas that exhibit severe deterioration and prolonged neglect evidenced by damaged foundations, deteriorated roofs, an abundance of vacant lots, and general structural damage are classified as re-establishment areas. This classification denotes the areas lack sufficient physical fabric and social organization for revitalization or stabilization. Rather the entire area must be re-established as a vital part of the City. These areas are typically in the process of deteriorating to less desirable conditions over a long period of time. The primary goal for these areas is to attract private reinvestment to assist in re-establishing the built environment and social organization that has deteriorated. In many instances wholesale redevelopment of areas is needed. In addition to physical redevelopment of the area, social, educational, and economic rehabilitation services for the inhabitants may be needed.

*Strategies:*

- Provide City assistance in the acquisition and preparation of land for redevelopment.
- Establish targeted programs that promote property revitalization and major repair, such as low interest loan funds.
- Target incentives for redevelopment.
- Establish a progressive code enforcement policy that does not place an undue hardship on remaining property owners and residents.
- Target social programs such as education, job training, community outreach, counseling, and health services.
- Focus efforts on the use of residential incentives such as property tax abatement to promote redevelopment and preservation of housing stock.

### New Growth Areas

New Growth Areas are developing areas that exist near the City limits or those areas that have the potential to become developed as part of the City of Sioux City due to the potential service area of water and sewer utilities provided by the City. These are areas that can accommodate the anticipated new growth of the City. These areas are characterized by the market growth pattern, the provision of service infrastructure including water and sewer, and are accessible by the existing transportation network or by planned service and facility extensions and expansions. Aggressively pursue voluntary annexations and orderly growth to expand the corporate boundaries to areas served or to be served by public infrastructure. The City of Sioux City must establish a dual approach to future growth and development. The City must focus on not only the internal physical and social issues but also on the new growth markets in the region.

#### *Strategies:*

- Continue to pursue opportunities to expand its physical boundaries to accomplish the vision of the comprehensive plan.
- Target and phase in growth and new development in a contiguous and logical manner to create efficiencies in the use of existing resources.
- Phase in service infrastructure, including water, sewer, and roads, in a contiguous, efficient manner to accommodate and promote new development within Sioux City.
- Create specific area plans to promote quality growth and development on the periphery of and in future voluntary annexation areas of Sioux City.
- Take action to require City building permits and inspections of all new structures proposed to be built within the Urban Services Area.
- Annex and promote the development of the areas served by the Highway 75 Bypass.

### Urban Reserve Areas

Adjacent to New Growth areas are areas of potential future urbanization. These are areas that could see urban development levels with contiguous, cost effective, and efficient extensions of infrastructure and services by Sioux City or other cities in the metropolitan area. Until a phased pattern of urban development reaches these areas, only rural scale development should be encouraged in Urban Reserve areas.

#### *Strategies:*

- Monitor and plan for phased long term growth into the Urban Reserve areas.
- Work with the Woodbury and Plymouth Counties and surrounding cities to determine logical expansion patterns and service areas to ensure effective and efficient delivery of services.
- Develop regulatory policies to minimize small parcel development prior to incorporation of these areas.

### **FUTURE LAND USE MAP**

The future land use map, a critical component of any city's comprehensive plan, provides the physical depiction of the desired development pattern to guide and shape the location of various land development types within the City. The future land use map is a resource for elected and appointed officials, citizens, and City staff to evaluate development proposals and make recommendations and decisions about the location and type of development that is acceptable in light of the vision for the City.

The future land use pattern proposed respects historic and existing development patterns and proposes changes that will enhance and sustain the viability of Sioux City in the long term future. The pattern also reflects many of the policies and recommendations found in other sections of the plan. While it is easy to consider the map as a stand alone piece of the plan it is important to place it in the context of the rest of the land use and development framework in order to

understand why the map reflects certain land use patterns and changes.

The text below describes and defines the land use designations of the future land use map (Figure 2-3). It also reinforces the development zone, growth and infill, and development building blocks discussion in this chapter of the plan.

### *Residential*

#### *Urban Residential*

The urban residential category allows higher density residential development. The Near Northside neighborhood is a good example of this type of residential development. This category may include a mixture of housing styles and types including single family, townhomes, duplexes, and apartment houses. Such residential uses may be integrated into neighborhoods or neighborhood centers, community centers, and regional centers per specified location and design guidelines outlined in the development building blocks section of this chapter.

#### *Suburban Residential*

This residential category represents prevailing development standards in housing and neighborhood design. Suburban residential development is primarily reserved for single family uses, but may include a mixture of housing types subject to the residential locational guidelines. In areas of suburban residential development where sensitive land forms or environmental constraints exist, cluster developments are encouraged.

#### *Rural Residential*

This category provides for large-lot residential development where a full range of municipal services may not be available. This category is intended to allow for flexibility of choice for individuals preferring an estate residential environment. This category is in areas that are not prime agricultural resources or conservation areas - a person living in this area should

not expect the full range of urban services to be delivered by City of Sioux City unless located adjacent to existing or planned urban service areas that can logically and cost effectively be expanded in the future. Ultimately, the development pattern in this area is intended to retain a rural character feeling.

The rural residential category can accommodate a higher intensity of residential development known as “cluster development.” Net densities of 1+ unit(s)/acre can be achieved through clustering residential units on a portion of land and leaving the remaining land undeveloped. Clustering can assist in protecting the natural and rural character of portions of Sioux City through environmentally sensitive development. The key to clustering is the availability of utilities to serve the development. Clustering is further discussed in other sections of the Comprehensive Plan. This is a particularly useful practice in areas where the Loess Hills, floodplains, and other inherent environmental qualities impact the amount of developable land.

#### *Residential Locational Guidelines*

- Low-density residential uses should be separated from adverse surrounding land use types such as major industrial and commercial areas. Appropriate buffering includes open space, bodies of water, abrupt changes in topography, and a combination of landscaping and walls.
- Low-density residential lots should not front directly onto arterials, but onto local and neighborhood streets, so as to minimize the number of access points along major streets.
- Medium-density residential uses may serve as a transitional land use between low and high density residential uses, as well as serve to buffer lower-density residential from commercial uses.

- Medium-and-high-density residential uses should be located within walking distance of neighborhood centers and commercial services, parks, schools, and public transportation routes and be in proximity to employment concentrations, major thoroughfares, and utility trunk lines.
- Medium-to-high-density residential lots should be directly accessible to arterial or collector streets so that traffic generated by these uses does not pass through less intensive land uses.
- Medium-to-high-density residential areas should be located where they will not overload existing and planned facilities and utilities.
- Higher density residential uses such as apartments, condominiums, and lofts should be located and encouraged in downtown.
- Mobile home parks should be located on larger tracts, buffered by physical features (e.g. drainageways, open space, other land uses)

### *Mixed-Use Commercial*

#### *Downtown*

Downtown Sioux City is the best example of a true "mixed-use center" containing a mix of cultural, financial, governmental, institutional, entertainment, residential, and recreational uses. Continued growth of all types of land uses is appropriate for downtown. New uses and development in this category may be integrated with existing development and surrounding neighborhoods per specified guidelines found in the other sections of this chapter.

Housing in the downtown area and within the designated mixed-use centers should strive for higher densities. Within the downtown, the density of housing should be in excess of 10 units / acre on

average. Acceptable housing in downtown can include several residential types / styles mentioned in the previous residential categories but also includes garden apartments, condominiums, and special residential accommodations for the elderly (assisted living, congregate care, and nursing homes), as well as lofts and medium to high-rise residential development.

#### *Regional Center*

Regional Centers are traditionally large in size, comprised of many city blocks or acres, and having concentrated development that supports a varied and large employment base while addressing the needs of a regional market. Mixed-use Centers usually contain activities such as regional shopping centers and commercial uses, government and financial institutions, and / or major cultural, recreational, medical, and / or entertainment features. Neighborhood and community size business uses may complement larger service and retail uses. Further discussion related to mixed-use Regional Centers can be found in the Development Building Blocks section of this chapter.

#### *Community Center*

A Community Center provides a general merchandising and convenience destination for residents of the City. It can include a wide range of commercial services, such as big box and strip retail centers, restaurants, fast food and dine-in, and office uses, as well as higher density housing and institutional uses. Further discussion related to mixed-use Community Centers can be found in the Development Building Blocks section of this chapter.

#### *Neighborhood Center*

A Neighborhood Center consists of a small commercial/retail center providing locally focused services that may include a residential component. Convenience goods, such as grocery stores, personal services (dry cleaning, beauty salon, bank), restaurants, gas stations, and small office uses are the primary commodities and services that are provided

within Neighborhood Centers. The provision of services is intended to serve the neighborhoods immediately adjacent to the center. Small institutional uses, such as a churches, library, or school, are also appropriate for inclusion in a Neighborhood Center. Further discussion related to mixed-use Neighborhood Centers can be found in the Development Building Blocks section of this chapter.

*Commercial / Office Locational Guidelines:*

Commercial

- Commercial sites should be located adjacent to arterials or major thoroughfares which provide needed ingress and egress in order to avoid congestion.
- The location of major commercial uses should be coordinated with mass transit routes, high-density residential, centers of employment, and other intensive uses.
- Commercial development should have required site design features which limit noise, lighting, and other activity so as to not adversely impact surrounding residential areas.
- Commercial uses should be located in compact clusters versus extended strip developments.
- Commercially-generated traffic should not feed directly onto local residential streets.
- Commercial uses not located in planned centers, including large freestanding buildings, auto-related, and non-retail uses, should be guided to areas such as the CBD fringe and other appropriate areas and streets where these uses may already exist or to locations where traffic patterns, surrounding land uses, and utilities can support such uses.

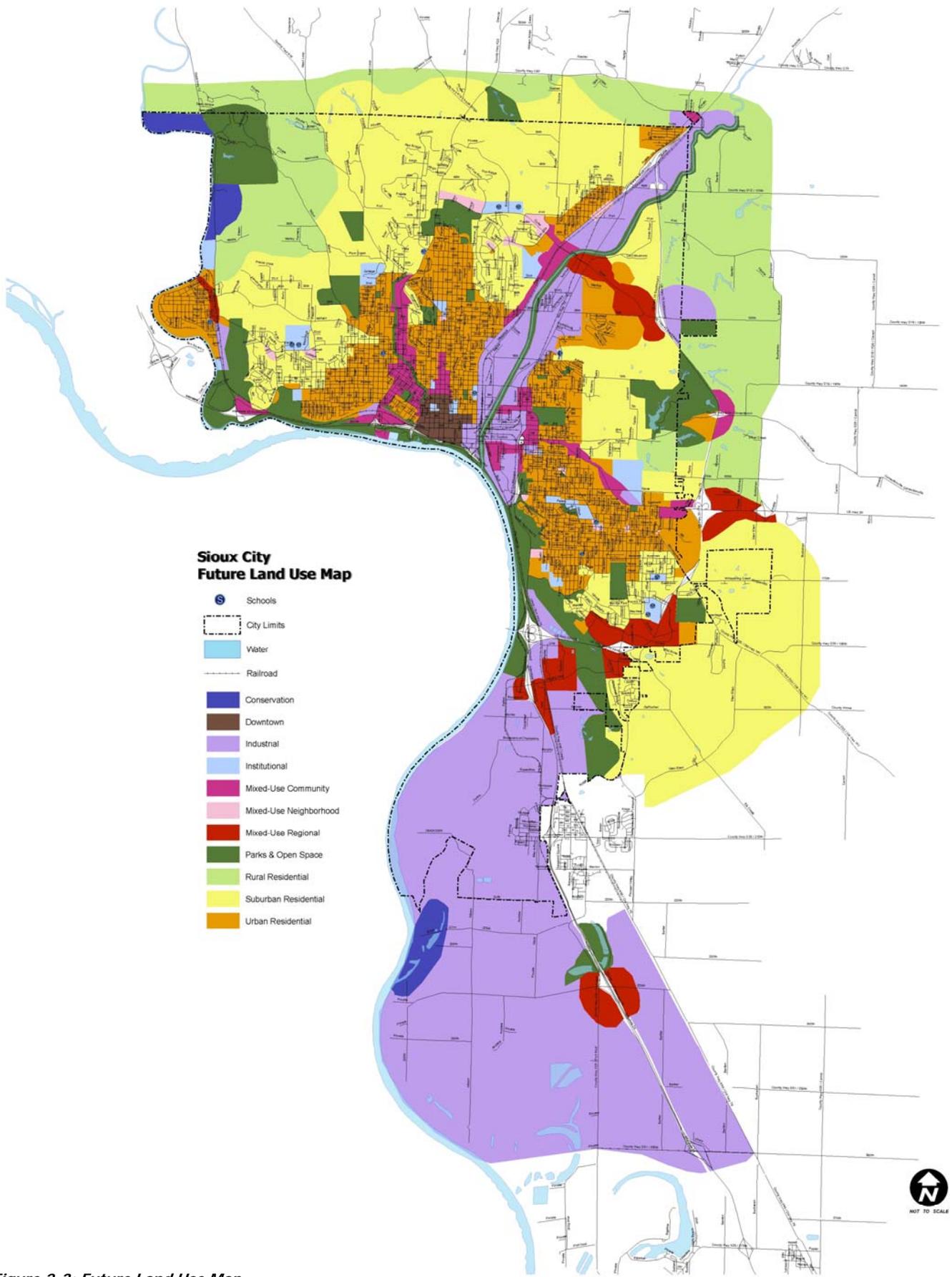


Figure 2-3: Future Land Use Map

## Office

- Office uses should generally be located adjacent to arterial streets.
- Large scale office developments should be encouraged to locate in downtown.
- Local, service-oriented offices should be incorporated within or adjacent to neighborhood and community commercial developments.
- Low-density office uses can serve as a transitional land use between residential uses and uses of a higher intensity.

## Industrial (Light & Heavy)

Industrial and warehousing uses are generally considered the most intensive use of land because of operational impacts or functions. These uses provide employment opportunities and may be located along major transportation facilities (road, rail, air, and barge). It is intended that these uses should be located in established viable locations such as existing business / industrial parks.

Light industrial uses include those uses that are typically related to warehousing, distribution, fabrication, parts assembly, and value added agricultural businesses and rely on large land areas and large single story buildings. Heavy industrial uses are typically those uses that are production or manufacturing related, such as assembly plants and more intense manufacturing uses, including animal slaughtering, grain processing, ethanol production, and bio diesel plants. These uses also rely on large amounts of land, large single story buildings, and rely heavily upon convenient transportation connections and access to high capacity infrastructure. Sioux City currently has two areas that are primarily developed

for heavy industrial uses - the Hoeven Industrial Valley and the Bridgeport West Industrial Park. Sioux City has other areas developed for light industrial uses, including Expedition Business Park and The Yards. However, Sioux City currently lacks sufficient large scale, shovel-ready, heavy and / or light industrial areas and future land use patterns need to incorporate areas south of Sioux Gateway Airport and in the Highway 75 North area (250 plus acres) to accommodate these uses. Sioux City also lacks development-ready sites that offer opportunities to attract corporate parks that offer high amenities to attract businesses to that area to compete regionally, nationally, and globally in today's marketplace.

*Industrial Location Guidelines:*

- Industrial areas should be located in proximity to support services with good access to major arterials, City truck routes, belt highways, utility trunk lines, along railroad spurs, near airports, and as extensions of existing industrial uses.
- Traffic from this category of land use should not feed directly onto local streets in residential areas.
- Industrial uses should be generally located away from existing or planned residential areas, and sited so as not to travel through less intensive land uses.

*Recreation / Open Space*

This category includes public park land and publicly owned open space. These areas may be used for recreational purposes or may be held for future public use.

*Recreation / Open Space Locational Guidelines*

- New park and recreation facilities as well as expansion of existing park and recreation

facilities should be located according to population and proximity to neighborhoods.

- Park and recreation opportunities should be included in all levels of mixed-use centers.

### Public / Institutional

The institutional land use category consists of those public and semi-public land uses including government centers and facilities, educational facilities, and other public uses and places. Other uses that fall into this category include "places of worship", hospitals, private schools, libraries, and cemeteries. New uses in this category may be integrated with residential neighborhoods or as part of neighborhood, community, or regional centers per specified guidelines in the Development Building Blocks section of the plan.

### Public/ Institutional Locational Guidelines

- Public facilities such as branch libraries, post offices, and schools that serve residential areas should be grouped together with neighborhood commercial centers, and located near parks or intersections of "greenways / recreational corridors" when possible.
- Public and semi-public facilities should have convenient access to arterials, public transportation, and major utility trunk lines.
- Libraries, parks, and fire and EMS stations should be located according to population and distance and response time standards as established in adopted facility plans and other standards.

### Conservation

This category represents those areas of the City and adjacent unincorporated counties in which development should not occur. Development may not be encouraged for numerous reasons, most notably, to

protect natural resources or environmental elements and / or lack of planned infrastructure expansion. In keeping with the goals of the plan, the land and natural topography of the Loess Hills should be protected. Similarly, the extension of infrastructure including water, sewer, and streets can be expensive to parts of the City and surrounding counties.

Allowable development within a conservation area is limited to residential with a minimum lot size of 60+ acres; although certain "cluster development" opportunities may exist on a case by case basis. A rural level of public service should be expected including, well water, septic systems, gravel roads, and rural level of service from public safety agencies.