



University of Iowa School of Urban & Regional Planning
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SPECIAL THANKS

**THANK YOU TO THE NUMEROUS DECORAH
STAKEHOLDERS; YOUR TIME, EFFORTS, AND INSIGHTS
WERE INVALUABLE TO OUR PROJECT:**

Bike Decorah
Bruening Rock Products, Inc.
Buy Fresh By Local
City of Decorah, Historic Preservation Commission
Decorah Chamber of Commerce
Decorah City Council
City of Decorah, Parks and Recreation Department
Decorah Public Library
Decorah School District Superintendent
Donlon Healthmart
Finholt Construction
Various local food producers
GROWN Locally
Northeast Iowa Food and Fitness Initiative
Luther College
Luther Shuttle Service/Hawkeye Stages
Northeast Iowa Community Action Corporation
Oneota Community Food Cooperative
Scott Bassford
T-Bocks
Trout Run Trail
Upper Explorerland Regional Planning Commission
Vesterheim Norwegian-American Museum
Winneshiek County Development, Inc.
Winneshiek County, Planning and Zoning Administrator
Winneshiek County Farmers Market
Winneshiek Soil and Water Conservation

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SMART PLANNING PRINCIPLES

Iowa's 10 Smart Planning Principles are legislated for application in local comprehensive plan development and public investment decision-making.

1. 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.

2. 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.

3. 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.

4. Occupational Diversity

Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should promote increased diversity of employment and business opportunities, promote access to education and training, expand entrepreneurial opportunities, and promote the establishment of businesses in locations near existing housing, infrastructure, and transportation.

5. 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.

6. 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.

7. 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.

8. Natural Resources & 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.

9. 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.

10. 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.

LOCAL COMPREHENSIVE PLANS

Iowa's Smart Planning legislation outlines 13 elements that may be included in a city or county comprehensive plan:

A. Public Participation Element

Information relating to public participation during the creation of 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.

B. Issues and Opportunities Element

Information relating to the primary characteristics of the municipality and a description of how each of those characteristics impacts future development of the municipality. Such information may include historical information about the municipality, the municipality's geography, natural resources, natural hazards, population, demographics, types of employers and industry, labor force, political and community institutions, housing, transportation, educational resources, and cultural and recreational resources. The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may also identify characteristics and community aesthetics that are important to future development of the municipality.

C. Land Use Element

Objectives, information, 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.

D. Housing Element

Objectives, policies, and programs to further the vitality and character of established residential neighborhoods and new residential neighborhoods and plans to ensure an adequate housing supply that meets both the existing and forecasted housing demand. The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may include an inventory and analysis of the local housing stock and may include specific information such as age, condition, type, market value, occupancy, and historical characteristics of all the housing within the municipality. The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may identify specific policies and programs that promote the development of new housing and maintenance or rehabilitation of existing housing and that provide a range of housing choices that meet the needs of the residents of the municipality.

E. Public Infrastructure and Utilities Element

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.

F. Transportation Element

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.

G. Economic Development Element

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. The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may also identify locations for future brownfield or grayfield development.

H. Agricultural and Natural Resources Element

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

I. Community Facilities Element

Objectives, policies, and programs to assist future development of educational facilities, cemeteries, health care facilities, child care facilities, law enforcement and fire protection facilities, libraries, and other governmental facilities that are necessary or desirable to meet the projected needs of the municipality.

J. Community Character Element

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

K. Hazards Element

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.

L. Intergovernmental Collaboration Element

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 local governments related to future development of the municipality and may include recommendations for resolving such conflicts. The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may also identify opportunities to collaborate and partner with neighboring jurisdictions and other entities in the region for projects of mutual interest.

M. Implementation Element

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.

SECTION I: OVERVIEW

Decorah is well-known for its high quality of life, natural amenities, and strong Norwegian cultural heritage. The City of Decorah is in the process of updating their comprehensive plan, which will determine how to maintain Decorah’s unique character and strengths as the city changes over time. In preparation for the extensive public process that will create the new plan, the city of Decorah has worked with a volunteer task force and a team of University of Iowa students to determine how Decorah’s goals can reinforce larger goals of state-wide smart planning and worldwide sustainability.

This document provides recommended modifications to the comprehensive plan that can reinforce the larger goals referenced above, as well as resources and recommendations for putting these goals into action. These recommendations are submitted, not as a final plan, but as a resource for Decorah citizens and staff and a jumping off point for the public change process.

Background

The previous edition of the comprehensive plan contained a wide variety of goals for transportation, housing, agriculture, and other areas. In 2010, a comprehensive planning task force composed of Decorah citizens pulled

out approximately 70 “policy statements” that summed up the goals of the 1992 plan. The group proposed changes to these statements based on changing conditions in Decorah.

In August 2010, Decorah City Administrator Jerry Freund brought in a team of graduate students from the University of Iowa to add another layer onto the update process. The State of Iowa had recently passed legislation for “smart planning,” which outlined 10 smart planning principles and 13 key elements for local comprehensive plans. Mr. Freund wanted to see Decorah’s plan comply with the legislation, both as a gesture of Decorah’s progressiveness and a desire to make Decorah eligible for potential funding associated with these smart planning principles.

The University of Iowa team worked from August to December to integrate the principles of the legislation into the “policy statements” created by the comprehensive plan task force. The team then interviewed approximately 35 citizens in Decorah, to begin to identify Decorah’s unique opportunities and challenges in implementing those principles. From this process, the team proposed a set of new and updated policy statements and recommendations for action, including how to capitalize on opportunities and

overcome challenges. The team also provided case studies and other resources for city staff to use in the planning process ahead.

Priorities

Decorah is a strong, vibrant small town and already has many progressive, successful planning strategies in place. To supplement these strengths, the University of Iowa team identified ten priorities that Decorah can use to further take advantage of Decorah's unique opportunities for success, and align the Decorah comprehensive plan with Iowa's smart planning goals and nationwide best practices. The priorities are listed below, followed by their corresponding section where they are covered in the document:

1. Implement Inclusionary Zoning to ensure housing is available to all citizens. (Land Use - Residential & Housing)
2. Use Traditional Neighborhood Development to maintain the small-town character of residential areas. (Housing)
3. Implement Minimum Density Zoning where appropriate, to lower intrusion into Decorah's agricultural and natural landscapes. (Residential Land Use)
4. Adopt a Complete Streets policy, to provide diverse transportation options. (Transportation)
5. Create a mechanism for Stormwater Management. (Utilities)

6. Craft a Formal Fringe Area Agreement with Winneshiek County. (Urban Growth)
7. Support the addition of Storage and Processing Facilities for Local Food. (Economic Development)
8. Demonstrate Green Building and Sustainable Design practices in all municipal projects. (Sustainable Design)
9. Create a Master Plan for Community Facilities. (Community Facilities)
10. Invest in Economic Gardening to capitalize on Decorah's diverse small business base. (Economic Development)

How To Use This Document

This document is intended as a resource for the comprehensive planning process. As Decorah citizens identify their goals, the information in this document can inform strategies for carrying out these goals in a way that reinforces state-wide planning. The layout of the document is as follows:

1. Comprehensive Plan Policy Statements - Possible goals for Decorah, organized according to 13 Comprehensive Plan Elements. Each of the 13 categories contain the following:
 - Original (1992) and Revised Policy Statements
 - Recommendations for Action
 - Opportunities and Challenges for Decorah
 - Recommendations for overcoming challenges

2. Case Studies – Summaries of best practices for implementing smart planning principles at the municipal level
3. Resources for Implementation – A directory of smart planning resources for city staff

Next Steps

This document is being provided to the comprehensive planning task force and city staff as a resource to inform the comprehensive planning process. These recommendations are not intended as a final plan, but as a jumping off point for the public change process. The next step in the comprehensive plan process is to hold a series of public meetings where citizens and staff will work together to map out Decorah’s future.

** Denotes available information included in the Resources Section.

SECTION 2: POLICY STATEMENTS

A) Public Participation Element



***PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
In the City of Decorah,
governmental, community, and
individual stakeholders, both
within the city limits and beyond,
are often encouraged to be
involved and provide comment
during deliberation of planning,
zoning, development, and resource
management decisions and during
their implementation. The policies
below will help to ensure that the
City of Decorah continues this
tradition and that its administrators
facilitate such participation.
Furthermore, City activities shall***

1. NEW POLICY STATEMENT FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

To promote social equity, Decorah should ensure that all Decorah residents: have access to a wide variety of experiences, resources, goods, and services; are protected from health, economic, environmental, and social disparities; have the opportunity to participate in public decisions; and are treated fairly regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, income, gender, age, or disability.

Recommendations for Action:

- Provide education on city and community issues to ensure information is equally accessible.
- Balance the benefits and costs of city projects between all stakeholders and social groups, provide equitable access to community facilities, and allow equal say in decision-making.
- Respect and consider diverse preferences based on age, gender, cultural diversity, or other factors in the decision making process.
- Involve a wide variety of stakeholders to promote collective decision-making and collaborative management, and build partnerships based on trust, respect and solidarity.
- Utilize different engagement and idea generating techniques to engage stakeholders.**
- Utilize existing faith based and social groups to engage the community during times of public involvement.**
- Support staff members that are interested in taking advantage of opportunities for professional training in public participation.**

2. NEW POLICY STATEMENT FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Decorah officials shall conduct business in a manner that makes efficient use of resources and time.

Recommendations for Action:

- Develop a means of evaluating the efficiency of city employees and works, and carry out this evaluation regularly.

3. NEW POLICY STATEMENT FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Decorah officials shall conduct business with the greatest degree of transparency possible, allowing for comprehensive public understanding of municipal operations.

Recommendations for Action:

- Develop a means of evaluating the transparency of city work and documents and carry out this evaluation regularly.

4. NEW POLICY STATEMENT FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Decorah city policies shall promote the equitable distribution of benefits and costs among its residents.

Recommendations for Action:

- Engage in benefit-cost analysis when appropriate. Analyses should weigh the full range of costs and benefits for all segments of the population.
- Identify underserved populations and identify strategies to increase equality of service.

continue to be undertaken to provide efficient, transparent, and consistent outcomes. Individuals, communities, regions, and governmental entities shall continue to share in the responsibility to promote the equitable distribution of development benefits and costs, ensuring that Decorah will continue to be a great place to live for all.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Opportunities

Community engagement is common in Decorah. For example, The Decorah School District utilizes a School Improvement Advisory Committee, which is made up of 25 people, mostly parents and patrons. The Committee provides an important community link and acts as the District's engagement method to the community. Further, the Districts' Superintendent reaches out to the community through local media, radio and newspaper, to interact and receive feedback from the community.

Another example of involvement is the current Comprehensive Planning Process for the City of Decorah and Winneshiek County. To get people involved in the process the county intends to reach out through media and newspaper articles. The goal is to have the planning process 70 percent general public and 30 percent appointed participants.

The library is considered a community gathering place and information hub and can continue to be a good tool for getting information out to citizens.

The benefits of engaging students in school are acknowledged. One interviewee noted that if "you can create a sense of civic pride when young, you will be more likely to get [students] more involved in city decisions in the future."

Those interviewed feel that Decorah city staff and City Council receive ideas well and that everyone has the opportunity to be heard. It was noted that there are “watchdogs” in Decorah who keep the city responsive.

Challenges and Recommendations

Challenge: Several interviewees felt that it is a challenge to get residents involved in a planning process if they are not directly affected or the issue at-hand does not directly relate to them.

*Recommendation: Publicize how a topic will affect all residents. For large plans, ensure there are several types of planned community engagement opportunities. These could include written comments, public hearings, one-on-one meetings, open houses, on-line forums, or community workshops. Utilize various types of meeting structures, such as Nominal Group Technique or a Charette**, to accommodate different types of input. Ensure sound and consistent dissemination of information to the public throughout the process.*

Challenge: Some citizens are typically absent from planning meetings, such as day laborers (due to time of meetings) and the elderly (if location is not accessible.)

Recommendation: Consider holding meetings at a variety of times (day, evening, early morning) and providing day care and food for participants. Ensure that the meeting spaces are ADA accessible, such as a school or library. Consider hosting a round of meetings at larger places of work if possible.

Challenge: There is a notable gap in civic communication in which individuals talk openly in opposition to an issue but do not directly speak to the council or commission involved and making the decision.

Recommendation: Although it may be easier to voice critical remarks to the public rather than within a Board Meeting, it is important to encourage direct discussions when advertising a Board meeting. A written comment process should also be established to gain the community perspective of those unable or unwilling to attend Board Meetings.

Challenge: Some governmental agencies lack a formal feedback system, and rely solely on word of mouth to make improvements.

*Recommendations: Consider creating an online one-stop multi-agency feedback system. A web application could be added to the City website that allows citizens to leave a compliment, suggestion, question, or complaint for the agency of their choice.***

Challenge: Some community groups struggle to identify the needs of future clients. Market studies that address current situations may not be applicable 5 years later, and some non-profits cannot regularly advertise their accomplishments due to confidentially restrictions.

Recommendation: Partner with Luther College and/or the Northeast Iowa Community College to regularly investigate needs in the community. College students may be able to do class projects or internships related to finding out specific needs of the community.

Challenge: “Not in my backyard” (NIMBY) mentality occurs in Decorah, just as it does in all other towns. This issue was reported by both affordable housing agencies and an agency promoting new and innovative transportation ideas. There is a need to work through these issues and debunk myths.

Recommendation: Overcoming NIMBYism, is difficult and usually takes place over time. Utilize case studies and research that alleviate fears about tax increases and educate individuals on how change can benefit a community. Create a community history of issues that experienced NIMBYism, but resulted in a positive change for all involved.

Challenge: Public agencies need funding to purchase marketing materials (such as informational packets) for tradeshows and other community engagement opportunities.

Recommendations: Partner with Luther College and Eastern Iowa Community College to generate marketing materials and informational packets through a class project or internship. Encourage agencies to apply for educational grants or work in partnership with other agencies to find funding for marketing materials.

Challenge: Decorah’s higher priced housing market makes it difficult for agencies to build affordable and transitional housing in Decorah.

Recommendations: Consider providing the opportunity for affordable housing agencies to purchase existing homes that have been foreclosed or condemned by the city. These properties may be rehabilitated at an affordable price. Secondly, when devising the land use plan, consider areas where condos, town houses, and zero-lot parcels may be allowed to allow for housing diversity.

B) Issues and Opportunities Element

This comprehensive plan element is not within the scope of this report, but will be created as part of the comprehensive plan update to be performed by the city through a public process.



ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

This section will outline the primary characteristics of Decorah, and discuss how those characteristics impact future development potential. It may cover topics such as Decorah's geography, natural resources, population, demographics, types of employers, labor force, community institutions, housing, recreation and transportation network.

C) Land Use Element

1. NEW POLICY STATEMENT FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Ensure that land use decisions are equitably determined and that appropriate stakeholders are included in the decision-making process.

Recommendations for Action:

- Continue to involve the public in the planning process on several levels, including the design of a land use plan through the comprehensive planning process.
- Conduct and/or participate in a region-wide affordable housing study to determine the existing and future trends in housing. Utilize this study to encourage specific types of development in Decorah
- Consider going over and above state guidelines for advertising planning and zoning applications to the public.
- Equitably distribute urban density.
- Provide incentives to developers to incorporate a variety of housing options.
- Ensure that preservation of historic areas does not impede equitable housing needs.

2. NEW POLICY STATEMENT FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Ensure that any new development protects and conserves natural resources, especially those that are determined sensitive areas.

Recommendations for Action:

- Avoid development on sensitive natural areas.
- Promote land and water conservation strategies.**
- Encourage conservation subdivisions in low-density areas.
- Encourage PUD development when building in sensitive areas.
- Encourage compact and denser development.**
- Encourage native landscapes.**
- Utilize natural buffers between agricultural land and developed land, i.e. trees.

3. NEW POLICY STATEMENT FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Encourage revitalization and restoration of non-residential buildings for residential use when appropriate.

Recommendations for Action:

- Permit rezoning to allow mixed-use development.



LAND USE

The way a city grows and changes over time has a tremendous affect on the health of its citizens, its environment, and its physical and social infrastructure. Cities that plan for growth can better manage their financial obligations for infrastructure, preserve community character, maintain a desirable urban form, and create constructive relationships with the county and surrounding municipalities. Equitable and sustainable land use must involve all stakeholders in the decision making process, protect

natural resources, encourage revitalization, and utilize “green” design practices. The following section outlines general policies for all land use, followed by specific policies for commercial, industrial and residential land decisions.

- Promote inclusion of green space in all new and redevelopment, based on a percent of total land developed.
- Encourage infill development to utilize existing infrastructure.

4. NEW POLICY STATEMENT FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Sustainable Design should be encouraged in new and renovated developments.

Recommendations for Action:

- Encourage green building practices and promote use of a “Green Construction Certificate” for local developers. Include green building practices and certificate info on city website.**
- Provide information and education on federal and state “green” tax credits.**
- Adopt guidelines to support home modifications to allow Senior Citizens to remain in their homes.**
- Require solar access protection for new buildings, ensuring that nearby properties will not obstruct solar access and local zoning and building codes will not prohibit solar energy collection.
- Encourage “Green Street” design practices, as illustrated by the Community Development Division of Iowa Department of Economic Development.**
- Connect various land uses through multi-use paths; develop a comprehensive urban trail system, prioritizing areas that are currently not walkable. Include trail system in site plan review process.**

5. NEW POLICY STATEMENT FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Encourage mixed-use development within existing and future growth areas. Mixed use will be defined as development that incorporates two or more different uses within walking distance of one another and may include office, hotel, retail, entertainment, and public uses, in addition to a variety of housing types.

Recommendations for Action:

- Establish zones for mixed-use, referencing sample municipal codes as presented by the Decorah WE CAN Report, and local goals as presented in the Decorah sustainability plan.
- Consider requests to rezone properties for mixed-use development, provided the conversion of property use would not adversely impact the planned land use pattern for the surrounding area.

6. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Solar access rights and energy conservation are encouraged in the review process of subdivision plats and site plans.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

Accept as is.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Accept as is.

Recommendations for Action:

- Collaborate with and educate developers on solar power and energy conservation.**
- Orient buildings to make the greatest use of passive and active solar heating and cooling.
- Promote solar power and energy conservation during redevelopment.**
- Establish design guidelines for renewable energy sources.
- Continue working with the Winneshiek Energy District for funding energy audits.
- Provide incentives and/or regulatory permission for practices such as green building, geothermal/solar/wind energy, and day light shelves. Day light shelves are structures mounted on the south and west facing windows of a building. They distribute sunlight toward the ceiling, allowing it to reflect deeper into a room, reducing the need for interior lighting.

7. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Preservation of wetlands in accordance with state and federal regulations will be implemented in the review process of subdivision plats and site plans.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

Accept as is.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Accept as is.

Recommendations for Action:

- Establish riparian buffers areas around wetlands to preserve integrity.**
- Establish local wetland protection regulations beyond state and federal rules.**

8. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Tree replacement guidelines should be developed and incorporated in the subdivision and site plan ordinances.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

Tree replacement and preservation guidelines should be improved and incorporated in the subdivision and site plan ordinances.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Accept 2010 as is.

Recommendations for Action:

- Tree planting should be incorporated into the subdivision and site plans for all new development. Number of trees should depend on the area built/number of units developed.
- Encourage a variety of native species.
- The Decorah Department Parks & Recreation and the Decorah Tree Board should be consulted, as necessary, for major decisions.

9. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Future land use needs will be developed based on a population estimate of 10,000 by the year 2010.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

Future land use needs will be developed based on a population estimate of 15,000 by the year 2020.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Accept 2010 as is.

Recommendations for Action:

- Communicate growth projection to the public as appropriate.

10. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Urban Development will be encouraged to extend outward from developed areas to insure the orderly growth of Decorah.

and

Development of vacant land within the existing and future corporate limits will have a high priority in meeting future land-use demand.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

Controlled urban development will be encouraged to extend outward from developed areas to ensure the orderly growth of Decorah.

and

Accept as is.

**PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:
(COMBINE STATEMENTS)**

Development of vacant land within the existing corporate limits and the redevelopment of existing structures will have a high priority in meeting future land-use demand. Outward development will occur only in dedicated growth areas with available access to infrastructure.

Recommendations for action:

- Formally designate growth areas.**

11. NEW POLICY STATEMENT FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

New development shall be cohesive with existing development and Decorah’s character.

Recommendations for Action:

- Based on the success of Central Business District (CBD) design standards, citywide design standards should be explored through a public process.**
- Members of the public will continue to be consulted regarding “Decorah’s character” as appropriate.

12. NEW POLICY STATEMENT FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

As Decorah grows, a healthy balance of residential, commercial and industrial development shall occur.

Recommendations for Action:

- Identify priorities for infrastructure improvements and maintenance to accommodate new and existing development opportunities.

13. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Coordination and cooperative efforts will be maintained with Winneshiek County to control development outside and encourage it to occur in the city.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

Accept as is.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Coordination and cooperative efforts will be maintained with Winneshiek County to

control development outside corporate limits and encourage it to occur in the city, focusing on the preservation of sensitive natural areas and farmland.

Recommendations:

- Draft a formal fringe area agreement between Decorah and Winneshiek County.**

14. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

The voluntary annexation process should be encouraged to the extent possible. Consideration should be given to involuntary annexation of certain areas with potential for development during the 20-year planning period, and to enhance orderly development and compatible land use as expressed through the policies and land-use plan.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

The voluntary annexation process should be encouraged to the extent possible. Consideration should be given to involuntary annexation of certain areas with potential for development, and to enhance orderly development and compatible land use as expressed through the policies and land-use plan.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

The voluntary annexation process should be encouraged within designated growth areas. Consideration should be given to involuntary annexation of certain areas with potential to enhance orderly development and compatible land use as expressed through the policies and land-use plan.

Recommendations for Action:

- Identify designated growth areas as shown in the future land use plan.
- Decorah will continue to avoid annexations that would create 'islands' or non-contiguous properties, as stipulated in the Iowa code.

15. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Areas within the two-mile limit with potential for urban development should be annexed to the city during the planning period.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

Areas within the two-mile limit with potential for urban development should be considered for annexation to the city during the planning period

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Areas within the two-mile limit with potential for urban development should be considered for annexation to the city during the planning period.

Recommendations for Action:

- Draft a formal fringe area agreement between Decorah and Winneshiek County.**

16. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

City-owned land such as the parks, airport and wastewater treatment facility should be annexed to the city during the planning period.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

City-owned land should be considered for annexation to the city.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

All annexation areas, including city-owned land, shall be contiguous. Development shall be discouraged on sensitive natural areas, farmland, or natural native landscapes to the greatest extent possible.**

**Note: Additional Statements regarding Land Use can be found in:
Agricultural and Natural Resources - Statement 2**

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR LAND USE

Opportunities

*Affordable housing agencies utilize a point scheme for “smart site planning” in accordance to federal and state grant applications. Points are given for walkable amenities and walking paths are documented for residents. Similarly, Iowa Green Streets provides Smart Site Planning guidelines, which can be utilized by cities for improved development standards. The city can provide similar guidelines to traditional developers to improve city connectivity and green infrastructure.***

The citizens of Decorah continue to embrace sustainability, expressing the hope that the City of Decorah and the region as a whole will continue to grow responsibly. In terms of growth, this means continuing to build regional partnerships with entities such as Winneshiek County, the area schools and more.

Challenges and Recommendations

Challenge: The Decorah Historic Preservation Commission examines opportunities for redevelopment and infill in Decorah. Their role is solely to advise and education, which they find somewhat limiting.

Recommendations: It is common for Historical Preservation Commissions to have an advisory role. Such commissions can increase their influence through strategic planning for a local historic designation and through cultivating partnerships with local stakeholders.

Challenge: Residents are concerned about the strength of farmland protection ordinances in the area.

Recommendation: Create a fringe area agreement with Winneshiek County to ensure that any future growth does not impinge on valuable farmland.

Challenge: Despite citizens' concern about sustainability and developers' interest in alternative housing development, citizens were skeptical of mixed-used development. Many felt that it wasn't right for Decorah and or were not sure what mixed-use development would look like.

*Recommendation: Public education may be necessary to determine if mixed-use development is indeed a sustainability and affordability solution for future development in Decorah.***

COMMERCIAL LAND USE

Decorah values its diverse array of employment, service, and shopping options.

Responsible commercial development is a critical part of maintaining that diversity. The policies below encourage strategic, efficient, and appealing commercial land development.

1. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Large bulk commercial uses, and general highway related service uses, should be encouraged to locate along Highway 9, and in Freeport in areas suitable for that type of development. Commercial and industrial development along Highway 52 should be discouraged.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

Large bulk commercial uses, and general highway related service uses, should be encouraged to locate along Highway 9, in the Decorah Business Park, and in Freeport in areas suitable for that type of development. Unless planned, commercial and industrial development along Highway 52 should be discouraged to protect the conservation of open spaces and retain the visual aesthetics of this gateway entrance and corridor into the community.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Large bulk commercial uses, and general highway-related service uses, should be encouraged to locate along Highway 9, in the Decorah Business Park, and in Freeport in areas suitable for that type of development. Commercial and industrial development along Highway 52 should be discouraged to protect the conservation of open spaces and retain the visual aesthetics of this gateway entrance and corridor into the community.

(Removed phrase “unless planned”)

Recommendations for Action:

- Consider shared driveways/shared parking and permeable parking surfaces.
- Encourage green building practices, recommending building orientation to maximize solar effectiveness for natural day-lighting and heating.**
- Connect these districts with the regional trail system/sidewalks to downtown to enhance access for workers.**
- Review sign ordinance for billboard regulations and other signage to ensure solutions fit Decorah’s character.

2. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Site plan standards and regulations should be adopted and enforced, as part of the zoning ordinance, to improve visual quality of commercial development, traffic circulation, and compatibility with adjoining land uses.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

Additional site plan standards and regulations should be adopted and enforced, as part of the zoning, including a defined gateway ordinance, to improve visual quality of commercial development and redevelopment, traffic circulation, and compatibility with adjoining land uses.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Additional site plan standards and regulations – including a defined gateway ordinance – should be adopted and enforced as part of zoning to improve visual quality of commercial development and redevelopment, traffic circulation, transportation diversity, and compatibility with adjoining land uses.

Recommendations for Action:

- Consider building to the street rather than using typical larger setbacks; encourage walkable blocks and street connectivity even in these primarily commercial areas.**

- Refer to the town of Greenville, Wisconsin's established Gateway Overlay District zoning ordinance applying to parcels abutting the right-of-ways of major highways and/or the frontage roads in the community. This ordinance establishes a series of gateway corridors with special architectural and landscaping requirements to enhance the visual and aesthetic character.**

3. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

To minimize congestion and improve traffic movements, cluster commercial development should be encouraged, in lieu of strip development, along major streets.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

Accept as is.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Cluster commercial development should be required along major streets in lieu of strip development to minimize congestion and improve traffic movement.

Recommendations for Action:

- Create cluster districts with a unified or planned clustering of development served by a common parking area with a common means of ingress and egress.
- Design cluster developments to decrease traffic congestion and reduce distractions from sources such as signs.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR COMMERCIAL LAND USE

Challenges and Recommendations

Challenge: Many developers interviewed expressed concern about the business environment in Decorah. One concern was the high cost of doing business in the area caused by high taxes and fees, another was the loss of time due to bureaucratic delays.

Recommendation: Explore ways to expedite the permitting process, such as creating a one-stop shop for permits. Review fees to determine if any could be reduced or eliminated.

INDUSTRIAL LAND USE

Industrial and manufacturing businesses provide valuable jobs for Decorah workers, and contribute to the economic health and occupational diversity of the area. Due to the complexities of industrial activity, the location and character of such uses should be carefully managed in order to ensure their success and maintain a healthy environment for

all Decorah citizens. The following policy statements provide clear guidelines to achieve these goals.

1. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Development of light industrial uses within planned industrial parks should be encouraged and promoted.

And

Development of planned industrial parks should be encouraged in the Freeport area and other areas suitable for industrial development.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

Accept as is.

And

Development of planned industrial parks should be encouraged in areas suitable for industrial development.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Development of planned industrial parks should be encouraged in areas suitable for industrial development. Light industrial uses in these parks will be particularly encouraged.

Recommendations for Action:

- Give priority to older industrial areas that are now vacant before pursuing new industrial development in green-fields.
- Federal grants are available for site clean up.**
- Give priority to sites that:
 - Have access to infrastructure such as sewer, water and industrial-quality roads
 - Are close to their worker base
 - Do not include sensitive natural areas
 - Are not in a flood plain
 - Are within the planned growth area for Decorah
 - Can be buffered from neighboring residential uses
- If NO industrial land with existing infrastructure is available, continue to allow developers to strike an agreement with the city in which the developer pays for all or a portion of cost of extending services to the new area.

2. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

All residential and certain commercial land uses should be prohibited from areas that are set aside for future industrial development.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

Accept as is.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Accept as is.

Recommendations for Action:

- Periodically reassess the amount of designated industrial land to ensure that it is in keeping with demand and growth patterns.

3. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Buffers in the form of natural barriers of streams and wooded areas, landscaping and screening should be provided when industrial uses adjoin residential and other incompatible uses.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

Accept as is.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Accept as is.

Recommendations for Action:

- Consider the interests of homeowners, business owners, and industrial developers, and solicit input from environmental experts in determining buffers.**
- When possible, avoid buffers that make the area inaccessible for workers who choose to walk or bike to work.
- Prohibit the use of housing, multi-family or otherwise, as a buffer.
- Plant landscaped buffers with native plant species to encourage stormwater infiltration, prevent erosion, and enhance community character.**

4. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

An ordinance defining mixed use and sustainable development should be encouraged encompassing commercial, business, and industrial should be considered for mixed-industrial sites for existing industrial sites adjoining residential and commercial zones.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

An ordinance defining mixed use and sustainable development should be encouraged.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Moved to “Land Use” section, policy statement #6.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDUSTRIAL LAND USE

Opportunities

Few industrial expansions are expected in the near future, but interviewees report that existing industrial areas are functioning well.

Challenges and Recommendations

Challenge: Workforce skill gaps may become a problem in the near future, particularly in the industrial field.

*Recommendation: Partner with Winneshiek County Development to identify these skills gaps, and reach out to Northeast Iowa Community College to offer training in these areas. The Iowa Workforce Development office periodically provides a Laborshed analysis for Winneshiek County, which provides details that could help with this process, including employee willingness to change jobs and desired occupations.***

RESIDENTIAL LAND USE

Decorah’s community character is tightly inter-twined with its treatment of residential land use. The traditional neighborhood grid pattern, the mixed-use downtown, well-preserved historic homes, and accessible public spaces are all integral to Decorah’s magnetic appeal. Responsible, inclusive residential development policies can maintain and build upon this desirable composition.

1. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Density of residential development should be related to the physical characteristics of the area, including topography and soils, and the availability of municipal utilities. The following densities are considered to meet these criteria:

Areas that are served by municipal sanitary sewer and water systems or the equivalent.

Low Density: 6 – 8 persons per gross acre

3 – 4 housing units per gross acre

Typical net lot size – 10,000 square feet

Medium Density: 8 - 12 persons per gross acre

4 - 6 housing units per gross acre

Typical net lot size - 8,000 square feet

High Density: 14 - 32 persons per gross acre

7 - 16 housing units per gross acre

Typical net lot size - 4,500 square feet

Areas that are served by the municipal water system only:

Low Density: 4 - 6 persons per gross acre

2 - 3 housing units per gross acre

Typical net lot size - 18,000 square feet

Areas that are not served by municipal utility systems or the equivalent:

Low Density: 2 - 4 persons per gross acre

1 - 2 housing units per gross acre

Typical net lot size - 22,000 square feet

Areas that are designated for agricultural use, residential reserve and acreage development:

Low Density: 2 persons per 10 gross acres

1 unit per 10 gross acres

Typical net lot size - 10 acres

2010 Policy Statement Update:

Accept as is.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Accept as is.

2. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Residential development, such as the planned unit development (PUD), should be encouraged to provide flexibility and better utilization and preservation of land, particularly in areas where soils, topography and tree cover are limiting factors.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

Accept as is.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Accept as is.

Recommendations for Action:

- Encourage PUD for infill development.
- Utilize the existing COS/ and future Sensitive Areas Plan to assist with PUD.
- Allow PUD to include mixed uses and permitted accessory uses.**
- Encourage grid street pattern in redevelopment.**
- Encourage multi-use paths in redevelopment.**

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR RESIDENTIAL LAND USE

Opportunities

*Some local developers see a movement away from planning single family residential developments in Greenfield (previous farmland) and towards a diversity of housing types, such as condominiums and town houses. This is a positive change because Greenfield development can lead to environmental degradation, lack of connectivity and increases in transit trips. Further, excessive Greenfield development in low-density pattern of development is often considered sprawl. It is vital that the City of Decorah provide a detailed land use map that dictates where development should be and how it will be connected to the existing city and future development in the area. To assist in achieving density, minimum density zoning could be applied to maximize the use of the Greenfield land, specifically in Decorah's R-1 Single Family Residential District. Two Minimum Density Zoning districts are applied to residential, university and central city locations in Ames, IA.***

Minimum Density Zoning

When considering the future of growth in Decorah, it is important to examine potential for excessive land use (sprawl), which result in increased infrastructure costs and environmental degradation. Minimum density zoning can be used to prevent this issue.

Decorah should consider modifying the R-1 Single Family Residential to produce higher and consistent density. Currently, the R-1 district establishes a minimum of 15,000 square feet per dwelling unit per acre, which translates to a maximum density of 2.9 dwelling units per acre. In the R-2 district the maximums range from 4.3 dwelling units per acre for single-family homes, to 3.3 dwelling units per acre for four-family dwellings. While these numbers reflect the maximum density allowable on a given acre, the actual density may be much lower. If very low densities become a trend in Decorah, the infrastructure and environmental issues referenced above may appear.

We recommended that a citywide study be conducted to determine the occurrence of zoning for the R-1 Single Family district and the density of developments in those districts.

If this study finds a high occurrence of low densities, it may be deemed appropriate to establish Minimum Density Zoning, requiring a minimum of 4 dwelling units per acre. This density would maintain the character of the R-1 district, but would likely reduce the occurrence and effects of sprawl.

Challenges

Challenge: High land values of larger towns like Decorah often price out low-income homebuyers, forcing them to live in the county or in bedroom communities. As transportation costs rise, this displacement will become more of a burden. Affordable housing advocates believe cities need to enact inclusionary zoning to create housing diversity and affordable options for all workers.

*Recommendations: Explore establishing inclusionary zoning**, a mechanism that would provide for affordable housing as new development occurs and would generate high quality, attractive, and continue affordable housing is available in Decorah.*

Challenge: Developers in Decorah have not used R5 Planned Unit Development zoning because they are reluctant to be the first one to test the waters, and feel it is a limiting and constraining designation.

*Recommendations: Developers and area stakeholders should collaborate to revise the R5 policy. PUD's that have been successful should be examined and a simple benefit-cost analysis of proposed changes should be done to weigh changes to the policy.***

Challenge: One developer reported that zoning prohibits zero-lot line single-family developments, and that 30-foot setbacks are excessive. Setbacks limit the type of feasible housing and lessen affordability. There is need for housing stock that is appropriate for first-time homebuyers and individuals wishing to downsize.

Recommendations: The Zoning Code should be reexamined for clarity, and education on the code may be necessary as zero lot lines are possible. However, the Code should be reevaluated to allow for a diversity of affordable housing types.

D) Housing Element

1. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

A variety in the type of housing construction should be encouraged and supported to meet the housing needs of the population. The housing mix should reflect anticipated trends to higher density development, and demands for affordable housing, while being compatible with existing residential density and development. Housing types may include apartments, townhouses, and single-family dwellings, including manufactured housing and mobile homes.

2010 Policy Statement Update:
Accept as is.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Accept as is.

Recommendations for Action:

- Develop and establish a Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) area, designed for new neighborhoods and the revitalization or the extension of existing neighborhoods. TND areas are structured upon a fine network of interconnecting pedestrian-oriented streets, public spaces, and a defined center. The TND district can be applied to infill sites in existing urbanized areas and to “Greenfield” development.**
- For larger development projects, consider inclusionary zoning, which requires developers to make a percentage of housing units in new residential developments available to low and moderate-income households, in exchange for non-monetary development bonuses. A nexus study that examines existing availability and need will be necessary to adopt the regulation.**
- Consider adopting home design guidelines for developers as they explore new types of housing. Guidelines should be consistent with existing housing stock and community character.
- Consider partnering with the Northeast Iowa Regional Housing Trust Fund, administered by Upper Explorerland Regional Planning Commission, which can apply for the flexible funds available through the State Housing Trust Fund to increase the supply of affordable home and rental opportunities in Decorah.



HOUSING

Citizens of Decorah have a diverse set of housing needs and budgets. The Recommendations for Action include new concepts to enhance diversity and housing options in Decorah, including: Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND), which encourages connectivity and mixed-use for both revitalized and new projects; inclusionary zoning, a progressive and proactive mechanism to provide affordable housing for diverse spectrum of residents; and green infrastructure, that can save Decorah residents money by increasing energy efficiency.

- Provide education on the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), which assists low income and elderly individuals with utility costs and is offered by the Northeast Iowa Community Action Corporation**
- Consider adoption of Minimum Density Zoning to in the R-1 Single Family District.**

2. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Redevelopment of older residential areas in the city should recognize and preserve the historic architecture of the buildings.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

Any development in and around areas of the city meeting the criteria as a historically significant area should recognize and preserve the historic setting, architectural character and architectural design characteristics of the buildings and area of the city.

a. The committee should define and develop identification criteria for what is “historically significant area” and define “and around” with community’s input during ordinance development.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Accept as is.

Recommendations for Action:

- Provide a local historic timeline of architecture for the area to help guide rehabilitation.**
- Explore a national historic district designation for community-defined areas.**
- Educate on/Provide assistance for restoration and rehabilitation.**
- Identify funding mechanisms for historic preservation.**
- Support “green building” upgrades, i.e. to enhance water and energy efficiency.**
- When possible, allow elderly to modify homes to provide for successful aging.**
- Allow permitted uses in historic districts.**

3. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Abatement of air and noise pollution will be encouraged in residential areas through consideration of the location of streets, landscaping, setback requirements and buffers. Guidelines in subdivision and site plan regulations should be established for abatement of air and noise pollution.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

Abatement of air and noise pollution will be encouraged in residential areas.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Abatement of air and noise pollution will be encouraged in residential areas, as outlined in subdivision and site plan regulations.

Recommendations for Action:

- Utilize buffers and setback requirements with native landscape features.**
- Establish standards for acceptable levels for noise and air pollution as identified by the EPA's document "Information on Levels of Environmental Noise Requisite to Protect Public Health and Welfare with an Adequate Margin of Safety" and in accordance with the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS).**

4. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Appropriate buffering should be provided between residential and other land uses. This may include open space, landscaping and architectural screens.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

Appropriate buffering should be provided between residential and other land uses.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Accept as is.

Recommendations for Action:

- Set guidelines to distinguish appropriate buffers for land use types. Utilize riparian buffers, with native vegetation, and bioswales for urban stream corridors.**
- Prohibit the use of housing, multi-family or otherwise, as a buffer.
- Consider establishing multi-use paths within buffers as circumstances allow/warrant.**

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR HOUSING

Opportunities

Retaining historic buildings is often more efficient than building new structures. The Historic Preservation Commission should consider allowing certain "green" updates to historic structures, such as solar panels on the roof, as long as the aesthetic quality is not disturbed.

The funding guidelines for affordable homes have been problematic for buyers that increase their incomes over time. Administering agencies have told buyers to "knock off the overtime" to avoid losing the opportunity to purchase. New programs, such as JUMPSTART, are more flexible and do not penalize the homebuyer for increasing their income over time.

Challenges

Challenge: Decorah is landlocked with the bluffs around it. Affordable housing agencies can only spend \$5,000 on a lot and Decorah's land typically exceeds that limit.

Recommendations: As discussed in the Equity section, agencies should be notified of the opportunities to purchase foreclosed or condemned homes. Reuse of buildings for mixed use purposes should also be explored.

Challenge: Low Income Individuals are having a hard time getting mortgages. Affordable housing advocates fear that if interest rates go higher it will be a struggle for new homeowners.

Recommendations: Explore opportunities for Financial Literacy for adults. Investigate opportunities to partner with the Decorah School District to improve financial literacy education for students and their parents.

Challenge: The funding guidelines of the State Historical Preservation Office prevent building affordable homes in historically designated areas, and restrict building on infill lots. This limits the opportunity for affordable homes to be built.

Recommendations: As historical areas do not allow affordable housing to be built, consider options of reuse from non-residential to residential in a historic district. Collaborate with affordable housing agencies and area stakeholders to determine if areas should be designated as affordable housing friendly, to offset the areas where affordable housing is restricted by state mandate.

*Recommendations: Zero-lot lines homes, including townhouses, condominiums, and duplexes, should be supported when reviewing the zoning ordinance in order to increase diversity of housing. Guidelines should determine which types of homes are most consistent with the community character and aesthetic. The City should conduct a study to determine the current need and forecasted need for housing types. The study could be a project for Luther College or Northeast Iowa college students.***

Note: Refer to the Land Use Section (Residential) for more information on inclusionary zoning, a tool that can help cities like Decorah provide more affordable housing.

E) Public Infrastructure and Utilities Element

1. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Coordination of the immediate and long range plans of the wastewater treatment and sanitary sewer system with the land-use plan and policies will be encouraged and implemented.

2010 Policy Statement Update:
Accept as is.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Accept as is.

2. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

A detailed water system plan addressing problems of water supply and protection from contaminants, water treatment, and water distribution to provide adequate fire flows and pressures, and providing future service should be developed and coordinated with the land-use plan and policies.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

A detailed water system plan addressing current and projected needs for production, storage, treatment, transmission and distribution should be developed. The plan should address both domestic and fire flows, and should be developed in conjunction with the land use plan.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Accept as is.

Recommendations for Action:

- Include water conservation and green building techniques as part of the plan.
- Determine if water-intensive industries are predicted to be part of Decorah's growth, and include those needs in projections.

3. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

The water supply wells should be protected from extraneous surface contamination.

2010 Policy Statement Update:
Accept as is.



PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE & UTILITIES

Utility and infrastructure networks are safest and most efficient when they are strategically coordinated. Poorly planned networks can quickly drain public finances or cause threats to citizen health. These statements provide guidelines to help Decorah maintain a high-quality network of utilities and environmentally friendly infrastructure.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

The water supply wells should be protected from extraneous surface contamination by limiting access and encouraging collaboration with the agricultural and industrial sectors.

Recommendations for Action:

- Pursue collaborative efforts with environmental experts to ensure that supply wells are adequately protected as outlined by the Decorah Wellhead Protection Ordinance.

4. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

City standard specifications for street and utility improvements should be developed to provide uniform design of utilities and streets.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

Accept as is.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Accept as is.

Recommendations for Action:

- Ensure that these policies apply to streets and/or utility lines that may need to be repaired, retrofitted, or redeveloped.

5. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Storm drainage system design criteria should be developed in accordance with the land use policies and plan to serve as a guide for developers and the city to improve and expand storm drainage systems. The storm sewers in areas subject to future development by sub-dividers should be designed to convey runoff from storm events of a 10-year recurrence.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

Storm drainage system design criteria should be developed in accordance with the land use policies and plan to serve as a guide for developers and the city to improve storm drainage systems. The storm sewers in areas subject to future development by sub dividers should be designed to accommodate runoff from storm events of a 10-year recurrence.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Storm drainage system design criteria should be developed in accordance with the land use policies and plan to serve as a guide for developers and the city to improve storm drainage systems. The storm sewers in areas subject to future development by subdividers

should be designed to accommodate runoff from storm events of a 10-year recurrence, and should include green or “natural” infiltration methods where possible.**

Recommendations for Action:

- Build in provisions and financial resources to retrofit existing storm drainage systems where possible. Some ways to dedicate financial resources are through the creation of a stormwater management utility or by expediting building permits for projects that include green infiltration methods.**
- If Decorah decides to pursue a stormwater management utility, the city could provide additional financial incentives to businesses/residents who take steps to reduce stormwater runoff through the installation of rain gardens, pervious pavement, rain barrels, and other various methods to help increase storm drainage capacity. These financial incentives could come in the form of a fee discount. **

6. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Recycling of solid waste and safe methods for disposal of toxic waste should be promoted.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

Accept as is.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Recycling of solid waste should be promoted and safe methods for disposal of toxic waste should be required.

Recommendations for Action:

- Consider educating citizens about the dangers associated with a failure to comply with this policy statement.

7. NEW POLICY STATEMENT FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Extending the life of the Winneshiek County landfill to 2040 should be promoted through a combination of encouraging recycling, diverting waste streams, and public education.

Recommendations for Action:

- Promote deconstruction instead of demolition for properties in order to help reduce waste streams. Deconstruction is the selective dismantlement of building components, specifically for re-use, recycling, and waste management.**

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR UTILITIES

Challenges and Recommendations

Challenge: Other towns have found funding to be a major barrier to building and maintaining sustainable stormwater systems.

Recommendations: Several ways to address this issue include implementing stormwater service fees, utilizing property taxes or general funding, creating special assessment districts, system development charges, or pursuing state or federal grants.

Challenge: Though deconstruction was not discussed in our interviews, costs associated with promoting deconstruction could make it an unpopular idea with builders and/or developers.

*Recommendations: There are strong benefits to promoting deconstruction such as greater local job creation and reduced waste. Education is likely the best way to overcome this barrier. A model ordinance can be found in the resource section.***

Note: Additional Statements regarding Public Infrastructure and Utilities can be found in: Hazards Element - Statement 2

F) Transportation Element

1. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

A major street plan should be adopted that is integrated with the regional street system and reflects major traffic generators and adjacent land-use patterns.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

The major street plan should be maintained that is integrated with the regional street system and reflects major traffic generators and adjacent land-use patterns.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

The existing major street plan that is integrated with the regional street system and reflects major traffic generators and adjacent land-use patterns should be maintained.

Recommendations for Action:

- Integrate best practices from other cities of similar size where possible in the major street plan.
- Require street connectivity for new developments.

2. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Standards for major and local streets should be developed and enforced in the subdivision ordinance, and city standard specifications to ensure adequate right-of-way, pavement width, street access, and dedication of street right-of-way prior to development. SUDAS guidelines should be considered for planning and construction.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

Accept as is.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Accept as is.

Recommendations for Action:

- Promote native plants along roadsides to promote a natural landscape where possible.**
- Ensure that the subdivision ordinance allows flexibility in public street width, to give developers the option to reduce the amount of impervious surfaces where safety permits.
- Explore using pervious pavement where possible.**



TRANSPORTATION

Effective transportation networks provide mobility and accessibility at local and regional scales, while balancing fiscal and environmental concerns. Decorah values environmentally friendly modes of transportation such as biking and walking, and sustainable approaches to automobile infrastructure, such as narrower streets, roadside plantings, and pervious paving. These statements support a sustainable, diverse transportation system that meets the needs of all Decorah citizens.

3. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Provision of frontage drives and limited access along Highways 9 and 52 to provide for adequate traffic control and land-use development should be encouraged.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

Accept as is.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Accept as is.

4. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Residential areas and residential local service streets should be protected from the impact of industrial traffic by enforcement of truck routes in the city, to the greatest extent possible.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

Accept as is.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Accept as is.

Recommendations for Action:

- Ensure that street planning is coordinated with county and state transportation officials to achieve this task in an efficient and consistent manner.

5. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

The street improvement program priorities should generally be based on existing and future traffic volumes based on land use projections.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

The street improvement program priorities should generally be based on existing and future traffic volumes based on land use projections and street maintenance evaluations.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Accept as is.

Recommendations for Action:

- Projects that utilize green infrastructure options should be given higher priority where feasible (i.e. may be impractical on steep sloped roads).

6. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

An alternate traffic route between the Freeport area and the central business district should be considered.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

Alternative traffic routes between the outlying areas and the city should be considered as traffic volumes warrant.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Accept as is.

Recommendations for Action:

- Collaborate with Winneshiek County to determine possible routes.

7. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Various options regarding mass transit to serve citizens of Decorah should be explored.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

Various options regarding mass transit to serve Decorah should be explored, including the development of a regional transportation center.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Various options regarding transit to serve Decorah should be explored through studies measuring their viability in the area. If determined to be appropriate, the city should pursue the development of a regional transportation center in an accessible and walkable location.

Recommendations for Action:

- Collaborate with Winneshiek County and other surrounding counties that may be served by a regional transit system.
- If a regional transportation center is built, consider higher-density and transit-oriented development near the facility.
- Note: Towns similar to Decorah have successfully incorporated options such as paratransit, voucher systems and charter bus service.

8. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Continued improvements and development at the Decorah Municipal Airport should be in accordance with the airport master plan.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

Continued improvements and development at the Decorah Municipal Airport should be in accordance with an updated airport master plan. The development of a regional airport should be considered.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Continued improvements and development at the Decorah Municipal Airport should be in accordance with an updated airport master plan. The development of a regional airport should be considered if a feasibility study determines it to be viable.

Recommendations for Action:

- Perform a comprehensive feasibility study regarding the development of a regional airport.

9. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Use of the airport by commuter aircraft should be promoted.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

Accept as is.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Accept as is.

10. 2010 POLICY STATEMENT ADDITION:

Streets should be planned with consideration for bicycle and pedestrian accommodations. This should include new development as well as street redevelopment. **

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Accept as is.

Recommendations for Action:

- Create more bicycle parking in central locations, such as in the downtown and other business districts. **
- Consult and follow guidelines set forth by the National Complete Streets Coalition.**
- Encourage developers to include provisions for bicycle parking in commercial, industrial and multi-family developments.
- Cut curbs to allow for easy transitions from sidewalk to street.
- Follow the recommendations of the Sustainability Plan to paint bike “sharrows.”

11. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Access Management for major streets should be considered and State Access Management Guide should serve as a reference for new and existing streets.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

Access Management for major streets should be encouraged and implemented and utilize SUDAS guidelines as a reference for new and existing streets.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Accept as is.

CHALLENGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TRANSPORTATION

Challenge: There appears to be strong community support for a complete streets policy and improving bike access city-wide. However, some community members believe this policy would be prohibitively expensive.

*Recommendations: Focus on educating Decorah residents and developers as to why a complete streets policy is important and desirable for the community. Also, it is important to note that costs can be minimized by pursuing a variety of policies, such as constructing a 'complete street' when a road is scheduled for maintenance.***

Challenge: There appears to be support for implementing sustainable transportation design, but some interviewees noted that safety needs to be the focus.

*Recommendations: The city should focus on education as the key to showing how sustainable design elements (such as impervious pavement) can be both beneficial to the city and the environment while not compromising safety.***

Challenge: Many residents believe there is a need to address traffic congestion and parking downtown, as well as a need to expand bike access in downtown.

Recommendations: Land use regulations and development practices in most communities (such as minimum parking requirements and prohibitions on mixed land use) tend to favor automobile transport to the detriment of other forms of access. These regulations and practices could be altered to help alleviate traffic congestion in downtown Decorah, as well as to require more bicycle parking and access. Downtown bike access could also be addressed through an adopted complete streets policy.

Challenge: There is mixed support for pursuing a regional transit center.

Recommendations: Ultimately, there would likely be support if the center could be shown to be feasible and desired by Decorah and its surrounding communities. Therefore, the city should have a feasibility study done in order to determine if these would be viable for the community.

Challenge: A lack of interagency cooperation can cause problems when promoting sustainable transportation ideas.

Recommendations: Make sure to include all affected agencies and departments in the discussion of new policies to minimize conflict and maximize program success.

Challenge: Sometimes an unclear set of standards for transportation policies can be a strong barrier to reforming or enforcing transportation policy.

Recommendations: Especially for new policies (such as if a regional transit center was to be built in Decorah), make sure there are guidelines in place that can be easily followed and integrated into existing practice. As the city generally tends to follow SUDAS guidelines, it should be clearly noted in city policy that these are the set of standards the city follows for transportation policies and procedures.

Challenge: Funding for new transportation policies and ideas is perhaps the largest barrier to implementation.

*Recommendations: In order to overcome this barrier, is it important either to secure outside funding (likely in the form of grants and other federal funding) or show local investors why a new program may be important. Some information on previous grant funding for these types of programs and policies can be found in the resources section.***

**Note: Additional Statements regarding Transportation can be found in:
Community Facilities - Statement 5
Land Use - Commercial Statement 3**

G) Economic Development Element

1. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Continued efforts to maintain and improve the central business district as the principal retail center of the city will be encouraged and supported.

And;

Preservation of historic buildings and structures, in and around the downtown area, will be encouraged and supported.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

Continued efforts to maintain and improve the central business district and contiguous business districts as the principal retail center of the city will be encouraged and supported.

And;

Preservation of historically significant buildings and structures in all commercial areas of the city will be encouraged and supported. The committee should define and develop identification criteria for what is of “historically significant” with community’s input.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Encourage and support continued efforts to maintain and improve the central business district and contiguous business districts as the principal retail center. As part of this effort, historically significant buildings and structures in all commercial areas of the city should be preserved.

Recommendations for Action:

- Ensure connectivity to the central and contiguous business districts through pedestrian and bicycle pathways to nearby neighborhoods.**
- Encourage updating these structures to meet minimum water- and energy-efficient standards.
- Recommend continued participation in the Certified Local Government Program and adopt recommendations from pages 101-102 of the Planning and Preservation Project Report and Research Guide regarding “Management, Protection and Preservation” of Decorah’s comprehensive land use plan.
- With the public’s input, define and develop identification criteria for what “historically significant” means to Decorah.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Decorah has a diverse array of healthy small businesses, large steady employers, and a solid manufacturing base. The policies outline responsible economic development strategies that respect Decorah’s unique community character, encourage employment diversity, support local food industry, and maintain the vitality of established town centers. Decorah’s tax incentive policy promotes the prudent use of local tax dollars, while still allowing for public supports where necessary.

2. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Continued revitalization, development, and expansion of the central business district, including building front improvement programs, provisions for off-street parking, and improvements to the appearances of buildings, traffic circulation, and landscaping will be encouraged.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

Consider the extension of the C3 design standards to other business districts. Encourage continued revitalization, development, and expansion of the central and contiguous business districts, including building front improvement programs, provisions for off-street parking, and improvements to the appearances of buildings, traffic circulation, and landscaping.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Consider extending C3 design standards to other business districts. Encourage continued revitalization, development, and expansion of the central and contiguous business districts, including building front improvement programs, provisions for off-street and bicycle parking, and improvements to the appearances of buildings, traffic circulation, and landscaping.

Recommendations for Action:

- Consider implementing a self-funded Community Improvement District to take care of the “street to the door” public spaces.
- Actively support infill through the following policies: waive minimum parking requirements, implement shared driveways whenever possible and limit unnecessary access points to enhance the pedestrian experience.
- Encourage landscaping that actively supports stormwater infiltration to capture the first 1.25” of any rain event.**
- Reduce impervious surfaces whenever possible.**
- Explore lighting that doesn’t cause light pollution.**
- Consider incentivizing green building practices by increasing FAR allowances or density maximums.
- Consider adopting a building code specific to Decorah as referenced in the Decorah WE CAN Report.

3. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Programs that require flexibility and innovation, regarding renewal and redevelopment of existing poorly developed commercial areas in the central business district and other

areas in the city, will receive favorable consideration and support through establishment of urban renewal districts, tax increment financing (TIF), and other development programs and standards.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

Accept as is.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Decorah will focus its economic development work on non-financial-incentive tools, such as property identification assistance, workforce development, and other start-up resources. Occasionally, developments that require flexibility, such as those involving renewal and redevelopment of existing poorly developed commercial/industrial areas, may warrant the establishment of urban renewal districts, tax increment financing (TIF), and/or other financial incentive programs, provided that the criteria below are met.

Recommendations for Action:

Decorah recognizes that TIF designations diminish the tax base that funds public services and schools, which can in turn increase the tax burden on other citizens. In light of this fact, and in keeping with state requirements, Decorah will continue to use TIF only as a “last resort” and when the following criteria are met:

- The proposed development could not occur “but for” the tax assistance.
- The proposed development fulfills a stated need and public purpose, as outlined in the comprehensive plan.
- The proposed development will be located in an area designated for commercial/industrial development.
- The developer can demonstrate that sufficient market demand exists to make the development financially viable once the TIF or Urban renewal designation expires
- Public comment from all stakeholders is solicited, and full transparency is provided throughout the process.
- Refer to “City of Decorah Tax Increment Financing Policy” for more information on TIF criteria. The above criteria are in compliance with this established policy.

In order to avoid “smokestack” chasing, wherein outside companies locate in a town solely because of financial incentives (and may relocate as soon as those benefits expire), incentives will be targeted toward developments that have specific and unique reasons for choosing Decorah, such as:

- The Decorah work force is uniquely suited for their needs.
- Their business is dependent on unique local resources.

- Their business is dependent on a unique local demand.
- Related industries in the area would provide unique collaborative opportunities.
- The business is founded in, or otherwise culturally rooted in Decorah.

Developments receiving TIF or other public financing incentives will continue to be held to a high standard of performance, by meeting criteria such as:

- Providing desirable employment – In evaluating desirability, the City shall consider factors such as the projected number of employees, wages, stability of employment, public investment per employee, and the reliability of these projections.
- Contributing to the diversity of employment options in Decorah.
- Not enticing a company to relocate from a neighboring community.
- When neighboring communities compete with each other, the entire regional economy suffers, and only the developer benefits.
- Consistency with community character.
- Promoting multi-modal transportation options.
- Utilizing alternative energy sources such as geothermal, solar, and wind.
- Refer to “City of Decorah Tax Increment Financing Policy” for more information on TIF criteria. The above criteria are in compliance with this established policy.

For projects that require the construction of a large commercial or industrial space, consider establishing a policy that requires an advance agreement regarding the re-use of that building if/when the current tenant leaves or relocates. For example, leaders in the Fairfield, Iowa struck an agreement wherein a former employer sold their abandoned space to the City for \$1.

The Decorah Area Chamber of Commerce currently acts as a property liaison and provides start-up resources for new businesses. Decorah can partner with the Chamber to support these services and examine possible needs for expansion.

Northeast Iowa Community College and Luther College provide a well-trained workforce. Decorah can partner with NICC and Luther to offer education that matches local workforce needs, where appropriate.

4. NEW POLICY STATEMENT FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Policies that increase the diversity of the Decorah business environment will be encouraged.

Recommendations for Action:

- Continue to encourage small business/entrepreneurial education and support through organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce and Northeast Iowa Community College.
- Continue and expand partnership with the Chamber of Commerce or Winneshiek County Development to evaluate the existing business climate and identify areas for growth and diversification.
- Consider partnering with Northeast Iowa Community College and/or Luther College and/or local workforce development agencies to evaluate the workforce and identify skills that are either underutilized or lacking. These education organizations could develop plans to address skill gaps.**
- Explore Economic Gardening as a way to grow existing small to mid-size businesses. See opportunities section below and resources section for more details.**

5. NEW POLICY STATEMENT FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

City officials shall support the development of local food-supportive industries such as processing, aggregation, storage and distribution facilities in designated areas and partner with relevant local organizations to support their development.

Recommendations for Action:

- Partner with relevant local organizations such as Winneshiek County officials, the Northeast Iowa Food & Farm Initiative, Northeast Iowa Business Network, the Chamber of Commerce, the Decorah Community School District, Luther College, etc to identify potential facility locations and interested business owners.**

Additional Statements regarding Economic Development can be found in: :

Land Use - Industrial Statement 1

Agriculture and Natural Resources - Statement 5

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Opportunities

*Decorah has a strong, diverse base of small business. Many of these businesses may be primed for job growth, given the right mix of resources. Economic Gardening, a strategy that provides high-end business development tools for “second stage” companies (10-100 employees), could be employed in Decorah to grow local businesses and create more occupational diversity.** Economic Gardening may not be as politically attractive, since it*

does not have headline-making short-term impact of attracting a large manufacturing firm, but in the long-term it is a more cost effective, productive, and sustainable strategy.

Decorah's commerce is very diverse, but several interviewees indicated that there is room to diversify further. Shoe stores and children's items were mentioned by name, but it is also understood that it is difficult to compete with Walmart.

The downtown design regulations were viewed positively. Respondents appreciated the built-in flexibility and would be less accepting of more stringent requirements. The currently proposed street tree policy – where more trees would be planted downtown and then be maintained by business owners – was supported.

Most interviewees felt that TIF is used responsibly in Decorah, and preferred that this tool be used for public projects and existing building repairs, not for attracting new businesses. One respondent felt TIF was abused by being provided to companies who would have proceeded with their project without the incentive.

CHALLENGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Challenge: Although there are many successful small businesses in Decorah, many business owners are nearing retirement with no clear plan for succession.

Recommendation: Organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce should be supported in their efforts to help small business owners create succession plans. Luther College grads could be a potential source for the “next generation” of Decorah business owners.

Challenge: Aging downtown buildings are not always kept up well. Some interviewees speculated that the buildings haven't been fixed due to fear of tax increases, or simply complacency. Dead properties, such as the old creamery and the Well-Mar building, were also a concern.

Recommendations: Interviewees recalled that the city had previously provided low-interest loans or other types of financial support for fixing up buildings in the downtown. They would like to see more of this support. Some buildings could be eligible for historic preservation grants. The city should give priority to development of existing, abandoned buildings over new development.

Challenge: Business owners are unclear on sidewalk regulations regarding outdoor eating space and signage.

Recommendations: The City can work with a business organization such as the Chamber of Commerce to communicate the regulations more clearly to downtown business owners.

Challenge: Shared commercial driveways and parking lots can be difficult to achieve when development happens over time and different owners are involved.

Recommendation: The comprehensive and land use plans help predict the location of new development, and the city can require developers to build in consideration of these future plans. For example, a new road can be built with an unfinished end that leads to adjacent future development areas, so that the road can easily be extended when those parcels are later developed. A driveway can be located at the edge of a parcel so that a future development in the adjoining plot could share the drive.

Challenge: The school district hopes to integrate more local produce into school lunches but is struggling with financial and storage considerations. The school district is incorporating a flash freezer in the new kitchen, but much more processing and storage capacity is needed in the region to accommodate the integration of local foods into the schools and the community as a whole.

Recommendation: Work with Winneshiek County and school officials to identify potential locations for food storage and processing facilities and economic development strategies to promote economic growth in this sector.

Challenge: Local food advocates feel that Winneshiek County agriculture policies are biased towards industrial-scale production. There is a shortage of appropriate canning, processing, freezing, storage and distribution facilities in the area, which hinders the proper functioning of the local food economy.

Recommendation: City officials should create a new or join an existing food systems policy council and encourage county officials to do so as well. This council should examine: increasing the viability of small local-production farmers, increasing the availability of locally grown food to consumers in the area, strengthening the infrastructure of processing facilities in the area, assisting local food producers in marketing and selling their products locally, and increasing knowledge among citizens about local foods, and other pertinent issues. Northeast Iowa Food and Fitness Initiative, the Winneshiek County Farmers Market, the Oneota Community Co-op and other existing local food advocates may be partners in this effort.

Challenge: Unlike a traditional grocery store, property taxes from the Farmer's market do not go to support local schools. School officials feel a conflict of interest when supporting the Market and hope that the City can help facilitate an improved relationship between the two entities in the future.

Recommendation: City officials should work to facilitate a partnership between these two entities. Farmers Market administrators should be apprised of this issue and encouraged to partner with the school district to provide educational opportunities to students and the community at large. The City should also continue to support the economic viability of local grocery stores, especially by encouraging the sale of local foods at traditional markets.

Challenge: Several interviewees believe that Decorah's commercial property taxes are artificially high, particularly in the downtown area. One individual questioned the overall process; an outside company does the assessment and huge increases (more than doubling in the past 10 years) are common. The overall costs of owning a business are a burden. Respondents cited rising utility costs, healthcare and other miscellaneous fees as significant challenges.

Recommendations: These challenges may be outside the city's purview, but are useful feedback to consider when crafting policies that directly effect business owners.

H) Agricultural and Natural Resources Element

1. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

The preservation and protection of historical and archaeological sites and environmentally sensitive areas should be encouraged.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

The preservation and protection of historical and archaeological sites and environmentally sensitive areas should be continued.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Accept as is.

Recommendations for Action:

- Create designations for historical and archaeological sites and environmentally sensitive areas.
- Continue to consult experts from a variety of fields to determine these sensitive and significant areas.
- Prioritize sites and areas for preservation and protection and seek funding for preservation and protection.**

2. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Preservation of agricultural land not required for the orderly growth and development of the city during the planning period should be encouraged.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

Delete – perhaps as green space/parks, but not cropland in city limits as a rule.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Agricultural land in city limits that is not required for the orderly growth and development of the city should be encouraged for use as green space, parks, and small-scale food production.

3. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

The steep rock land, limestone outcroppings, and other scenic landscapes should be preserved through acquisition of easements and other methods.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

The steep rock land, limestone outcroppings, and other scenic landscapes should continue to be preserved through acquisition, easements and other methods.



AGRICULTURAL & NATURAL RESOURCES

Decorah is blessed with breathtaking natural amenities and over 500 acres of parkland and trails. Proactively preserving and protecting this environment is essential to maintaining the high quality of life that Decorah residents enjoy. The preservation strategies outlined below include: documenting and managing sensitive areas, identifying and maintaining valuable historic sites, preserving agricultural land outside the city, and providing floodplain regulations. The recommendations

for action highlight federal programs, state programs and industry standards that can help Decorah protect its environmental treasures.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Accept as is.

Recommendations for Action:

- Promote multi-use paths through these areas and limit roadways.
- Consult sensitive areas plan, COS, and bluff protection ordinance to identify landscapes to be preserved.

4. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Dry Run, the principal drainage channel through the developed part of Decorah should be improved and maintained as open space through residentially developed areas and enclosed only where necessary due to extension of streets and commercial and industrial development in the central business district.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

Accept as is.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Accept as is.

Recommendations for Action:

- Use native landscaping along the Dry Run banks.**
- Minimize streets over Dry Run to maximize open space.
- Designate a buffer area around the channel to promote water quality and provide habitat.**

5. NEW POLICY STATEMENT FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

City officials will continue to partner with relevant local organizations to encourage the preservation of farmland, support the business growth of the local food industry, provide public education resources, and encourage the sale of locally produced food and related products to schools, institutions, supermarkets, restaurants and citizens.**

Recommendations for Action:

- City officials should continue to form partnerships with important local organizations and individuals such as: Winneshiek County officials, the Northeast Iowa Food & Farm Initiative, Northeast Iowa Business Network, the Chamber of Commerce, the Decorah Community School District, Luther College, etc.**

6. NEW POLICY STATEMENT FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

City officials shall encourage backyard and community gardens that fit reasonably within the urban landscape.**

Recommendations for Action:

- Ensure that city ordinances do not prohibit reasonable urban agricultural activities.**
- Develop public education campaigns regarding issues such as canning, gardening, cooking, and nutrition.

7. NEW POLICY STATEMENT FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

City officials shall continue to ensure that all Decorah residents have access to nutritious, sustainably-produced food products and continue to consider new city policies and programs that may increase this access.**

Recommendations for Action:

- City officials shall establish new or joining existing food policy task force groups to determine potential food-supportive programs and policies.
- City officials should partner with local organizations to consider creating a regional branding system similar to Woodbury County, Iowa’s “Sioux City Sue.”**
- City officials should consider providing tax incentives for local food producers and related industries.** City officials should create partnerships with local organizations to ensure that local food is available to underserved populations including: women and children, minorities, seniors, low-income individuals, the disabled, etc.**

Note: Additional Statements regarding Agricultural and Natural Resources can be found in: Land Use - Statements 6-8

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR AGRICULTURAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Opportunities

Interviewees felt Decorah does a good job with land preservation and environmental protection.

Luther College is a valuable sustainability partner, and the city could increase its collaboration with the Campus Sustainability Office to promote environmental protection.

Decorah has been proactive in acquiring land for conservation. Additional funding options can be explored to drive additional conservation purchases and environmental education.

Decorah High School collaborated with Northeast Iowa Food and Fitness and the local Seed Savers Exchange to start a garden program, and are continuing improvements to the successful program this coming season. The program provides practical skill development and nutritional education for 17,000 students.

The Winneshiek Farmers Market in Decorah is an important part of the local food movement. Farmers Market administrators are pleased with their relationship with the City. A Market administrator suggested that a more prominent location downtown can help the market grow.

*Local food advocates identified ways to increase community engagement with the local food movement. They encouraged the City of Decorah to continue exploring options for public garden space, and partnering with local organizations and government entities to strengthen local food supportive programs and policies. The City of Decorah can partner with Winneshiek County and other nearby counties to strengthen county and city policies.***

Challenges and Recommendations

Challenge: Environmental conservation is sometimes seen as too costly or anti-growth.

*Recommendation: Education can be used to bridge the gap between liberals and conservatives to show them that protecting these areas will maintain Decorah's high quality of life. Education programs could be implemented through the Decorah schools or the Winneshiek Soil and Water Conservation District.***

Challenge: Wind turbines are a valuable opportunity to reduce carbon emissions, but are sometimes seen as visually interruptive to the landscape.

*Recommendation: Establish a wind turbine ordinance that regulates the positioning and look of wind turbines in Decorah's city limits.***

Challenge: Environmental elements are always presented but often not fully considered by the County.

I) Community Facilities Element

1. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

A detailed parks and recreation plan should be developed that will assess demand for recreation activities and provide a guide for improvement and development of parks during the planning period.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

A detailed written plan should be established that will reflect development, maintenance, and orderly growth of area trails, parks, recreation activities and community facilities.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

A detailed written plan should be established, based on public input, to determine the development, maintenance, and orderly growth of area trails, parks, recreation activities and community facilities.**

Recommendations for Action:

Include strategies for:

- Sustainable park design** (see sustainable design section) – Examples include:
- Pervious trail surfaces.
- Buffalo grass/blue gamma plantings to encourage better storm-water infiltration, preventing erosion and contaminants from being flushed into the surface water.
- Native plantings and public fruit or nut trees in public parks and along trails
- Limited disturbance of sensitive areas.
- Trail network connectivity – In particular, schools, parks, and major work centers should be connected to residential areas through the trail network.
- Public engagement – Gather public input on major parks and recreation decisions. Stakeholders such as schools, children, parents, local sport and environmental organizations, and the general public should be involved in the development and growth of area trails, parks, recreation activities and community facilities.**
- Equity – Ensure that the benefits and costs of parks, recreation, and community facilities continue to be equitably distributed among all neighborhoods, particularly low-income neighborhoods.
- Collaboration – Work with community facilities such as libraries, museums, and recreation facilities to encourage the expansion of programming to include community development initiatives.



COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Decorah's community facilities honor the city's pride in its unique cultural heritage and impressive natural amenities. These facilities provide much needed services that build community character and keep our citizens safe, active and informed. Decorah's recreational, educational, and cultural institutions will continue to be developed through a strategic process that utilizes sustainable design practices, provides greater integration and connectivity of services, and promotes cooperative efforts between related institutions throughout the area.

- Smart Location - To reach the most residents, give priority to potential park locations within current development before considering parks in “Greenfields” or on the edge of town.

2. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

A system of neighborhood parks that serve existing and future residential areas should be developed in accordance with the parks and recreation plan and this plan.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

A system of neighborhood parks that serve existing and future residential areas should be developed in accordance with the parks and recreation plan.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Combined with policy statement #1, “Community Facilities” section

3. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

A neighborhood park to serve the southeast part of the residential area in Decorah and a neighborhood park to serve the Freeport area should be developed during the planning period

2010 Policy Statement Update:

Delete - completed.

4. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

A system of bikeways and trails to link parks, recreation areas and schools with residential areas should be established during the planning period.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

The system of bikeways and trails that links parks, recreation areas and schools with residential areas should be further developed in the Decorah area.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Combined with policy statement #1, “Community Facilities” section

5. 2010 POLICY STATEMENT ADDITION:

The local trail system should be expanded and integrated with county and regional trail systems to enhance connectivity and multi-modal use.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Accept as is.

Recommendations for Action:

- Encourage strategies that reuse existing pathways, such as Rails to Trails projects.

6. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Cooperative efforts with the Decorah Community School District and Luther College regarding planning and development of recreational facilities and programs and joint use of facilities should be encouraged and maintained.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

Cooperative efforts with all public entities, governmental agencies and surrounding municipalities; including schools, colleges, and counties including Winneshiek, regarding planning and development of recreational facilities and programs and joint use of facilities should be encouraged and continued.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM (REWORD):

Cooperative efforts regarding planning and development of recreational facilities and programs and joint use of facilities should be encouraged and continued. Potential partners include: public entities, governmental agencies, surrounding municipalities, counties, non-profit organizations, schools and colleges.

7. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Public park dedication standards for developers and sub-dividers should be established.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

Public park dedication standards for developers should be established.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Accept as is.

Recommendations for Action:

- Require new residential and commercial developments to dedicate a set percentage of their land to green space based on local need (typical requirements in other cities range from 3-12%).**
- Require developer-dedicated green and park space to adhere to the same standards as City-developed properties as outlined in Policy Statement #1.

8. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Future needs of the Decorah Community School District and Luther College will be coordinated and incorporated into this plan.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

Future needs of area school districts and colleges will be coordinated and incorporated into this plan.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Future needs of area school districts and colleges will be coordinated and incorporated into the master plan. City, school district, Luther College and other educational officials shall meet regularly to determine whether educational needs are being met effectively.

9. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Future needs of the Decorah Fire Department will be coordinated in accordance with the standards of the Insurance Service Office (ISO) and this plan.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

Accept as is.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Accept as is.

10. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Relocation of the city maintenance facility to an industrial area should be considered during the planning period.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

Relocation and potential consolidation of City facilities should be considered during the planning period.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Relocation and potential consolidation of City facilities should be considered during the planning period. City facilities shall be located in or near the Central Business District in existing buildings when possible.

11. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

The city library should be expanded as proposed by the library board.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

The city library should be recognized as a vital part of this community and overall maintenance and operations should be supported.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Accept as is.

Recommendations for Action:

- The library is a strong community hub, and should continue to be employed as a valuable partner for community development and public engagement.
- As/if expansions become necessary, expand library facilities in the existing building if possible.

12. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Development of a civic/convention center should be encouraged.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

Development of a community center should be encouraged.**

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Accept as is.

Recommendations for Action:

- Encourage location of center in or near the city center.
- Involve the public in the development of this project to the highest extent possible.

13. 2010 POLICY STATEMENT ADDITION:

The Vesterheim Museum should be recognized as a vital part of this community and the City should participate in a cooperative and coordinated planning process in support of the Museum's integration and development in its existing downtown area.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Accept as is.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Opportunities

*Residents would like to see a recreation and community center in Decorah. Such a center could be funded through bonds, a trust fund that solicits private and public contributions, a temporary sales or property tax increase, or state grants.** If a new building is not feasible, an attractive alternative would be to build an addition on an existing public building, such*

as a school. For example, Iowa City's Grant Wood Elementary School houses a public gym for neighborhood residents to rent or use.

The Trout Run Trail has strong support from the community.

Challenges and Recommendations

Challenge: Some developers may be opposed to park dedication requirements, since they do not see how it will help them.

*Recommendation: Education and mutual dialogue are important to help all understand the benefits and challenges of open space and park dedications. Make it clear to developers that the requirements can be relatively small. For example, the requirement in Grimes, Iowa is .005 acres per person. ** A development that would house 100 people would therefore require only .5 acre of open space. Make dedication standards flexible so that the required open space can be provided off-site if on-site space is not needed or is impractical.*

Challenge: Green infrastructure, such as pervious trail surfaces and native plantings, are seen as more expensive and more difficult to maintain than traditional infrastructure.

*Recommendation: Additional research and staff training may be necessary in order to make these methods cost effective. See "Sustainable Design" resources for more information on how to implement green infrastructure. ***

J) Community Character Element

1. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Potential historic and archaeological sites should be identified in the development and redevelopment of publicly and privately owned land and structures. Standards should be provided in subdivision regulations and site plan regulations that require the identification of the historical or archaeological potential of sites and structures.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

Accept as is (recommendation reviewed by Decorah Historical Preservation Commission)

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Accept as is.

Recommendations for Action:

- Consult standards of other towns of similar size and character.
- Ensure historical and archeological regulations are consistent and easy to understand for developers and property owners.**

2. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

A Decorah historic preservation commission should be established to develop programs for identifying and preserving historic places in Decorah.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

The Decorah Historic Preservation Commission should be consulted for consideration and integration of historic preservation opportunities in Decorah.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Accept as is.

Note: Other Statements regarding Community Character can be found in:
Agricultural and Natural Resources - Statement 1
Economic Development 1
Land Use - Commercial 2, Land Use 11

OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMUNITY CHARACTER:

The Historic Preservation Commission wants to make a database of historically significant sights for the city website. In conjunction with this project, they could establish local historic landmark designations. These would then be adopted by the City Council and would be binding.



COMMUNITY CHARACTER
Decorah's historic sites and structures contribute to its charm, whether in its skyline of bluffs, church steeples, varied downtown buildings or the courthouse.



HAZARDS

Decorah’s waterways are a tremendous asset for quality of life and provide valuable recreational opportunities. However, development patterns and stormwater drainage must be managed effectively in order to lower flooding risks. These policies aim to ensure that Decorah’s waterways remain a community asset, not a liability.

K) Hazards Element

1. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

The protection of the floodplains of the Upper Iowa River, Dry Run, Trout Run Creek and other tributary stream channels and embankments from incompatible development will be given high priority.

2010 Policy Statement Update:
Accept as is.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

The floodplains of the Upper Iowa River, Dry Run, Trout Run Creek and other tributary stream channels, and embankments should be protected from incompatible development. Protection in these areas will be given high priority.

Recommendations for Action:

- Encourage collaboration with private and public entities in the regional watershed.
- Establish specific, stringent flood plain development limitations.**

2. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Storm drainage easements for Dry Run and other drainage channels and storm sewers should be established.

2010 Policy Statement Update:
Accept as is.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Accept as is.

Recommendations for Action:

- Include buffers as easements and provide connections between easements where possible.**
- Reference storm-water best practices as presented by the Decorah WE CAN Report and guidelines of the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship.

3. 1992 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

The 100-year flood limits should be established along the natural drainage courses within developed and undeveloped areas. Development within the 100-year flood limits, and areas identified as wetlands should be prohibited.

2010 Policy Statement Update:

An ordinance should be considered that addresses development within established flood limits. This ordinance should be established using the City's accepted flood map. Full or partial prohibition should be considered for development in wetland and flood limit areas.

PROPOSED REVISION FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

An ordinance should be considered that addresses development within established flood limits. This ordinance should be established using the City's accepted flood map. Development within these flood limits should be prohibited to ensure public safety and promote responsible growth.

Recommendation for Action:

- Continue to follow the guidelines outlined in the National Floodplain Insurance Program (NFIP) ordinance to allow certain exceptions for residents or businesses that currently reside within flood plain limits.

**Note: Other Statements regarding Hazards can be found in:
Public Infrastructure and Utilities - Statement 5**

L) Intergovernmental Collaboration Element

1. NEW POLICY STATEMENT FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Decorah officials shall encourage the involvement of governmental, community, and individual stakeholders, both from within and beyond the jurisdiction of the City, to be involved in the drafting and implementation of city policies, programs and other municipal documents when appropriate.

Recommendations for Action:

- Identify potential collaborators and develop strategies to increase their involvement in city affairs.

**Note: Other Statements regarding Collaboration can be found in:
Community Facilities - Statements 6 and 8
Land Use - Statement 13
Agriculture and Natural Resources - Statement 5**



INTERGOVERNMENTAL COLLABORATION

Decorah citizens believe that individuals and governmental entities should share responsibility in creating and maintaining a successful community. Decorah strives to maintain a high level of collaboration and transparency, while still working as efficiently as possible.

M) Implementation Element

The implementation element provides a compilation of programs and specific actions necessary to implement any provision of the comprehensive plan. “Recommendations for Action” are included in each section. These recommendations can be used to inform the implementation section of the comprehensive plan.



SUSTAINABLE DESIGN
 Decorah can address climate change and conserve natural resources by prioritizing sustainable design practices in its codes and regulations. Zoning and subdivision regulations can reduce vehicle miles traveled by encouraging mixed use, street connectivity, walkable blocks, inclusionary zoning, parking maximums, increased densities, access to fresh food locally grown and home occupations. City

NEW COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ELEMENT FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Sustainable Design Element

1. NEW POLICY STATEMENT FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Encourage sustainability and the reduction of individual vehicle miles traveled by revising zoning and subdivision regulations to promote mixed use zoning, street connectivity, walkable blocks, inclusionary zoning, parking maximums, increased densities, and access to fresh food locally grown and home occupations.

2. NEW POLICY STATEMENT FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Create building and energy codes that encourage energy efficiency for buildings, lighting, and mechanical equipment.

Recommendations for Action:

- Consider promoting building orientation for maximum solar efficiency, solar access protection, solar shading, natural day-lighting with light shelves or skylights, dark-sky lighting standards, cool roofs and/or green roofs, and incentives for meeting LEED® standards.

3. NEW POLICY STATEMENT FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Promote large- and small-scale renewable energy production.

Recommendations for Action:

- Identify barriers in city codes that prevent renewable energy production.**
- Create an ordinance allowing for small-scale wind or solar production within city limits.**

4. NEW POLICY STATEMENT FROM UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TEAM:

Enhance water quality and conservation techniques at the regional, neighborhood, and site level by encouraging improved stormwater management while minimizing developed land and paved surfaces.

Recommendations for Action:

- At the regional level, collaborate with neighboring jurisdictions to consider reserving open space, creating conservation buffers, encouraging infill development and planting trees.
- At the neighborhood level, consider enhancing street networks, zoning for mixed uses, and creating maximum parking guidelines.**

- At the individual site level, encourage installation of stormwater planters, parking filter strips, rain gardens, green roofs and permeable paving, and amend degraded soils to increase absorption.**

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

Opportunities

The City of Decorah has already made great strides in addressing a wide range of sustainability issues throughout the community, and discussion about and implementation of sustainable design techniques and practices have been part of this effort. Local observations about these best management practices, and opportunities to reinforce and expand these efforts, are included below.

“Going green” is either pulled by demanding consumers or pushed by a city’s – or better yet a region’s – mandates. Although green development can be marketed as such, creating potential sales opportunities for developers, it is not typically the driving force, especially in a constrained geographical area such as Decorah.

In early 2011, Decorah passed a bond referendum that included funding for green measures to upgrade the high school building. Upgrades include a new gym, a new cafeteria, and more space to accommodate additional students and fix scheduling issues. Furthermore, the bond will support green building techniques, such as geothermal, new windows and doors to create a “tight” facility. The school district’s use of a local financial institution is beneficial since that organization promotes and models green design itself and has been very supportive of the school’s initiatives, recognizing the long-term operational savings are worth the additional upfront costs.

One affordable housing agency built “green” before it was common because it reduces utility bills for residents. It financed green initiatives through partnerships with local community colleges who had received special grants to explore green technologies. With other projects, the agency used EnergySTAR appliances; however, federal and state funding no longer support these initiatives.

One developer views new types of technology and development as a business opportunity, viewing maintenance of permeable paving and other green infrastructure as a potential new business venture.

codes can encourage clean energy alternatives such as solar, geothermal and wind, and emphasize energy efficiency strategies for buildings, lighting, and mechanical equipment. Strategic stormwater management can use natural methods of slowing down and filtering stormwater runoff to decrease flooding risk, improve water quality, enhance aesthetics and provide natural habitat. While these topics are included in other policy statement areas, sustainable design is directly addressed here to illustrate its valued role in Decorah.

Challenges and Recommendations

Like most communities, identified challenges to sustainable design implementation in Decorah can be broadly categorized into four main areas: policy, education, maintenance and funding.

Policy

- Most local developers seem to rely on one consultant engineer who also acts as the city engineer. It seems as though private projects are commonly structured to easily pass existing city standards, and all involved are reluctant to “rock the boat” with other types of solutions that expand or don’t exactly fit any standard due to potential costly and controversial delays in the review process.
- Newly built homes are becoming more efficient, but they could still be better.
- Low-impact development requirements can be viewed as anti-development in general.
- Reuse of buildings, the ultimate in sustainable practices, is difficult for affordable housing agencies since so many different issues have to align for success.

Recommendations: Specific ordinances, building codes and subdivision regulations should mandate actual green practices. For example, requiring development to manage stormwater runoff to the same extent as pre-development conditions but not explaining the specific BMPs that must be used (i.e. bioswales, rain gardens, permeable pavement, and/or rain barrels) opens the door to traditional but less desirable detention ponds. The City should actively promote these green infrastructure practices on its own property, providing on-the-ground case studies to educate and encourage local developers.

Complete streets and low-impact development techniques should be mandated, requiring an even playing field for developers and reinforcing City buy-in rather than requiring an exception to existing standards.

Ensure parking requirements are flexible, allowing redevelopment to be feasible with in-lieu fees rather than required number of spaces. Without this flexibility, the requirement could easily kill a deal that might be the right solution for the overall area. Identify if underground parking is a feasible option, and allow it.

Actively seek and nurture public-private partnerships to make building reuse an attainable goal. Transform historical preservation approaches into historical conservation, allowing necessary modifications to allow a building to achieve new life while still retaining some of its historical value.

Education

- Educational challenges exist across a broad spectrum of audiences, from citizens to developers to commission volunteers to City staff and elected officials.
- Aesthetics involved for green infrastructure measures – with potentially “messy” native plantings and rain gardens that may hold water for a day or so – require community education on why they are necessary to improve water quality, help eliminate flash flooding and potentially minimize widescale flooding. Upper Explorerland likes the idea of green infrastructure, but the public needs to be educated as to why these measures are important.
- Developers identified one of the biggest challenges to green building techniques is the time it takes to learn about new approaches to building. In much less time, business could be accomplished in the traditional way, which is better for the bottom line. Additionally, there is hesitancy to add time to City processes by trying something different from the status quo.
- Opportunity for education/discussion between developers and the City on the following:
 1. Narrower streets, but if they become narrow they become private drives
 2. Using shared commercial driveways and parking, does happen organically sometimes but how to coordinate in the future
 3. Passive solar orientation, often limited by site constraints
 4. Benefits of deep tine tillage and compost amendments for newly developed or redeveloped landscapes, not expensive but significant benefits

Recommendations: Community outreach for proposed municipal green infrastructure needs to be open-ended, asking questions early in the process rather than presenting already designed solutions.

Develop partnerships and/or continue to work with Center on Sustainable Communities, Rainscaping Iowa, Trees Forever and other green-minded organizations to provide local opportunities for green building education. For example, an affordable housing agency teamed up with the Center for Sustainable Design to demonstrate green building techniques on a model home where green certification training was completed by developers in the area.

Technological advances require some trial and error plus ongoing evaluation since installed solutions may not deliver their promised benefits. During case study research, for example, Clear Lake’s stormwater filters without a flow control mechanism washed themselves clean

during peak flow periods. No one objects to the goals of sustainability, but all concerned want required measures to be well-researched and to actually work as promised.

Work with developers to create consensus on achievable green measures, prioritizing goals and specific implementation steps.

Maintenance

- Green infrastructure maintenance of non-traditional landscaping (i.e. requiring care other than mowing) needs to be addressed. Who is responsible, and how often? Native planting installations need to consider eventual plant height to ensure visibility around roadways and common areas.
- Maintenance of permeable pavement can be an issue if proper equipment is not available and staff are not educated on winter treatment, for example using sand is not appropriate since it clogs the permeability.
- Safety concerns were also mentioned, for example boulevard gardens could be a sustainable solution but may be impossible for snow removal equipment to navigate around.

Recommendations: When planting a bioretention cell or rain garden, plugs take off faster than seeds, are easier to maintain and are easier to identify as “good plants” when weeding. Another solution is to use traditional ornamental plants (i.e. daylilies or spirea) that can handle the cycle of wet and dry conditions, requiring less of an aesthetic transition.

Apply for grant/low interest loan funding from the State Revolving Fund to purchase equipment specifically for permeable paving maintenance under its Green Projects reserve funding. Encourage City maintenance staff to talk with other communities who have successful installations of permeable paving and/or boulevard gardens.

Funding

- Money seems to be a primary obstacle for building and implementing green measures, both from a consumer and developer perspective.
- Private banks funding construction loans look at comps to determine allowable loan values. Since green measures typically cost more up front and banks don't consider monthly operational cost savings for energy efficiency, etc., they can easily push budgets past the fundable amount. Nonprofit agencies use their 100% compliance rating to secure

their funding from banks. Other developers should also work toward this standard and may gain similar support.

- Conservation subdivisions may not “pencil out” for the developer. Typically lot price is 20% of total house cost, with smaller lots it can’t put in enough units to compensate for smaller sizes and still make it work financially to pay for infrastructure, interest and commissions.
- Green infrastructure implementation often averages about 30% more than traditional practices.
- Although the school will be built to LEED Silver standards, the school district will not pursue LEED certification since it is costly and provides no additional perceived benefits.

Recommendations: Encourage local banks to support green building efforts through “relaxed” funding formulas.

Identify state and federal green building tax incentives and other “carrots” and promote those through City efforts to consumers and developers.

Green infrastructure initial cost objections may be overcome by showing how money will ultimately be saved using these practices, however, for example downsizing pipe sizes, eliminating curb and gutters, etc.

Encourage meeting LEED standards and work with developers after construction to ensure proposed LEED measures are actually implemented. Consider establishing financial or certificate of occupancy time-based penalties for not meeting any required measures.

SECTION 3: CASE STUDIES

CLEAR LAKE, IOWA

The Central Gardens of North Iowa

The Central Gardens of North Iowa, established in 2003, remain the only public gardens in northeast Iowa. Located in the heart of Clear Lake, the gardens receive 16,000 visitors annually and are frequently used for business affairs, weddings, family parties, and leisurely strolls. The Gardens contain 22 distinct gardens and two lawns on a 2.75-acre parcel, previously home to an elementary school. When the school was removed in the late 90s, the city sold a section of the land to a developer for a residential condominium development. However, residents of Clear Lake and neighboring cities wanted a different use, and began campaigning for the remaining land to become a public garden. The city deemed the garden idea viable, and a group of residents established a renewable 25-year lease with the City. A well-known landscape and architecture firm, Buettner & Associates in Wisconsin, created the Master Plan for the garden. In 2003, the Central Gardens established a board and became a non-profit organization. Volunteers have been central to the garden's success, assisting with fundraising, grant writing, public relations, hospitality endeavors, planting, and garden maintenance.

Challenges and Solutions

The Gardens faced the challenge of funding with a dedicated and knowledgeable committee member, a regional perspective, and an endowment provision. Early fundraising for the garden was given a boost by a young woman in the financial sector and who set a framework

for future fundraising efforts. Because the Garden was designed as a regional amenity, the committee successfully sought funding across north central Iowa, including businesses in Clear Lake, Mason City, and Fort Dodge. The committee secured the financial future of the garden by putting 50% of all fundraising in an endowment fund. This strategy eased the city's concerns over maintenance.

In 2004 the Garden Committee worked with Clear Lake City staff to acquire a Vision Iowa Community Attraction Tourism (CAT) grant for \$225,000, on top of the \$1,500,000 previously raised. The City agreed to fund exterior amenities, such as the sidewalks and street lighting. When these amenities came in under budget, the committee put the remaining funds toward a donor recognition wall. Though this decision was controversial at first, it was eventually carried through.

The Garden Committee has faced some internal challenges, such as faulty promises from board members, unapproved purchases, unexpected construction costs, or missed funding opportunities. During the recent development of the Nature and Education Pavilion, grant money was lost due to timing and complexities of multiple grants. However, these situations are rare and dealt with appropriately. The Committee now prepares for additional costs before they begin a new project, while the Board works to maintain a trustworthy Committee for the long-term success of the Gardens.

CLEAR LAKE, IOWA

Green Infrastructure: Stormwater

Managing Clear Lake's urban stormwater is essential to preserving water quality, preventing soil erosion and protecting against flooding. Unfortunately, city ordinances that focus only on stormwater quantity often ignore potential quality improvements to the water. Though new development is often required to maintain pre-development runoff levels, there is no prescription for how runoff must be handled. As a result, most developers are using detention ponds, rather than more environmentally friendly alternatives such as bioretention cells or rain gardens. Low impact development ordinances that strictly regulate stormwater can be interpreted as "anti-development" and even developers who want to "go green" for marketing differentiation often choose an option with a minimal effect on water quality. The City of Clear Lake is responding to this problem by providing 75% cost share for rain garden installation on commercial properties, and installing stormwater filtering systems. However, these strategies have not been without their challenges.

Rain Gardens: Challenges and Solutions

Clear Lake residents initially objected to rain gardens for aesthetic reasons, but as natural landscaping became more common, acceptance grew. To increase acceptance, the city began using more traditional ornamental flowers such as daylilies, despite the fact that these are less proven in treating stormwater.

Rain garden maintenance has been delegated to volunteers, which makes it difficult to properly educate about distinguishing weeds from native plantings. The city responded to this problem by using plugs (small plants) for initial plantings instead of seed, which has helped in distinguishing between plants and weeds. The city has

found that residential rain gardens are more likely to be successful since the homeowner has a vested interest in aesthetics, but it is more difficult to motivate individuals to take ownership of public areas.

Stormwater Filtering: Challenges and Solutions

It took the City of Clear Lake some time to figure out the technology for the stormwater filtering system. The first installations didn't have a flow control aspect so high flows would self-clean the system and/or blow off the manhole cover. These issues have been resolved, and the new systems are successfully filtering the stormwater.

Clear Lake administrators feel that stormwater efforts are being accepted by the public. One program administrator heard talk "on the street" from members of the public explaining to visitors that these are "our stormwater filters" – these individuals actually knew about the installations and were proud of them. Onsite signage educates the public about the efforts, and the program has been promoted extensively in local media.

Funding

Funding for green infrastructure projects in the public realm has come from various sources, including the CLEAR project (a private foundation for water quality) and the Cities of Ventura, Clear Lake and Cerro Gordo. To fund maintenance, the City Administrator has proposed a stormwater utility fee. Apartment owners were initially concerned that this fee would be assessed by unit, since this would penalize them unfairly. In response, the fee was assessed by building rather than unit, with larger multi-family buildings paying a somewhat higher rate than single family homes.

CORALVILLE, IOWA

Traffic Calming with Roundabouts

When a Coralville Y intersection was backing up traffic and causing hazardous traffic situations, the Assistant City Engineer pushed for a roundabout. Though traffic roundabouts are not common in the Midwest, they can provide better service and safety by handling higher traffic flows without the need for a traffic light. The City contacted California roundabout expert Leif Oursten for guidance, and modeled multiple scenarios to verify the roundabout as a plausible long-term solution. The roundabout was found to be an efficient solution, both in terms of cost and traffic flow.

Since roundabouts were unfamiliar to Coralville citizens at the time, the City took measures to ease concerns, including holding a public hearing. Attendance at the hearing was sparse, and few concerns were raised throughout the construction phase. A few citizens expressed concerns about the City building a high-speed “East Coast” roundabout, but were assured it would be a calmer, smaller iteration. The City provided roundabout driving instructions on their webpage, and posted signs at the construction site directing users to the page. With the money they saved on traffic lights, the City installed additional landscaping in the roundabout, designed to lower confusion by obscuring distractions and screening oncoming headlights.

The morning of the roundabout grand opening, two TV stations arrived to capture potential chaos, only to go home with shots of smooth traffic flow. Traffic problems such as backups are no longer an issue, and complaints and confusion have been minimal. Most of the confusion that did occur involved the yield signs, which a few users misinterpreted as targeting those in the roundabout (as opposed to those entering).

Coralville now has four roundabouts and is in the process of planning more as a solution to traffic issues. There have been only three main accidents in the roundabouts, all of which involved drunk drivers that hit the median. However, even these accidents have shown the increased safety of a roundabout: had the drunk driver entered a standard intersection in a similar way, they could have driven straight into the side of a crossing vehicle.

DUBUQUE, IOWA

Sustainable Dubuque

In 2006, the Mayor and City Council of Dubuque identified city-wide sustainability as a top priority. A Sustainability Task Force of 40 community representatives worked with the newly appointed Dubuque Sustainability Coordinator to gather public input and outline goals for creating a more vibrant and sustainable Dubuque. These goals became the basis for Dubuque’s Sustainability Plan.

Sustainable Dubuque focuses on a holistic approach to making the community sustainable. Their model involves a three-part approach that addresses environmental integrity, economic prosperity, and social and cultural vibrancy. Using these overarching goals and a variety of public input, Dubuque developed a plan based on eleven key sustainability principles.

These principles are as follows:

- Social and Cultural Vibrancy
- Green Buildings
 - Healthy Local Food
 - Community Knowledge
 - Reasonable Mobility
- Environmental Integrity
- Healthy Air
 - Clean Water
 - Native Plants & Animals

Economic Prosperity

Regional Economy

Smart Energy Use

Smart Resource Use

Community Design

Crafting a sustainability plan has only been the beginning for Dubuque. Since that time the city has been able to accomplish or sponsor numerous projects to promote sustainability. Some select highlights include:

- Developing an asset map of Dubuque to identify current sustainable programs, projects, and facilities that exist within the community.
- Hosting an annual Growing Sustainable Communities event that welcomes nationally-recognized speakers, regional policy makers, and business leaders to discuss ways to live more sustainably.
- Working to create a Greenhouse Gas emissions inventory and a climate action plan for the city.
- Restoring Bee Branch Creek to help mitigate storm water flooding during major rain events.
- Preparing a citywide Unified Development Code (UDC) that combines updated zoning, subdivision, sign, and historic preservation regulations. The UDC also provides regulations, standards, and guidelines for sustainable design.

Challenges to Success

Similar to many other cities pursuing sustainability goals, Dubuque has had numerous challenges in implementing sustainability programs and procedures. Perhaps the two most significant barriers have been securing funding and public education. Thankfully, the education component has been partially addressed due to the large amount of public involvement that surrounds the Sustainable Dubuque

initiative. Public representatives serve the sustainability movement through the Sustainable Task Force and the Dubuque 2.0 program—a website that offers information and community forums on sustainability.

In tackling the funding difficulties that surround sustainable initiatives, Dubuque Sustainable Community Coordinator Cori Burbach noted that it is important to lead with the economic piece of sustainability. By showing that sustainable practices will help a business or city save money and keep or create jobs locally, people will be much more likely to support sustainability and designate funding for these opportunities.

Keys to Success

Despite several barriers, Dubuque has many factors that create a supportive environment for sustainability initiatives. First and foremost, building partnerships within the community has allowed Dubuque to promote and accomplish many goals they could not have achieved on their own. By beginning their process with a broad-range coalition of business interests, educational and regional institutions, and concerned citizens, Dubuque has been able to voice numerous perspectives sustainable ideas and practices. As a result, different stakeholders are invested in establishing policies that provide the greatest benefit for the community as a whole.

Another key to success has been the strong support of the Mayor and City Council. This support has shown that the city takes sustainability seriously, and is willing to take the lead on these critical issues.

IOWA CITY, IOWA

Trail Acquisition and Construction

In the wake of the 1993 floods, the City of Iowa City used FEMA funding to purchase right-of-way easements along an urban stream corridor, in order to prevent future building in the floodway. The Right-of-way purchase, which would allow the City to travel across private property, was priced based on tax assessments, with payments stretched out over twelve years. Once a continuous right-of-way was attained, the Federal Surface Transportation Program funded the construction of a multi-use trail along the network, as part of a three-phase interconnected trail project. During the construction phase, the City conducted stream bank stabilization to ensure a quality environment for trail users to enjoy.

After the completion of the trail, the city continued its efforts to expand and enhance connectivity of the trail network. A new link is now proposed to connect the stream corridor trail to a trail system in a new development, constructed as part of the City's Open Space Linkage Program. The trail network is also incorporated into the City's site plan review process. As land is developed or redeveloped, the City asks for the right-of-way for trail extensions. For example, during a review for a strip mall, the City asked for and received a right-of-way easement for a trail connection along the river way.

Though Iowa City's acquisition methods have been fairly effective, they do have some challenges. Acquiring right-of-way through development review can be a lengthy process, since the City must wait until an area is redeveloped to attain the land. Once right-of-way becomes available, there are limitations on payment, since the City cannot pay more than the appraised land value. In order to overcome this restriction on bargaining power, the City has utilized

alternative "carrots," such as installing fences between the property and the trail. The lengthy construction timeline makes it difficult to maintain support from adjacent property owners, since there may be substantial turnover in the decade or so necessary to attain property and build the trail.

The City has managed to overcome the hurdles and provide a valuable amenity for the community. The trail network serves not only as an alternative transportation mode and recreational amenity, but also an environmental safeguard. Trails along streams and rivers prevent building in the floodway, improve storm-water infiltration, and preserve wildlife habitat.

MANKATO, MINNESOTA

City-Wide Sustainability

"Sustainability efforts are a marathon, not a sprint," – City Planner, Mankato, Minnesota

In 2010, Forbes.com, America's Promise Alliance, and Bizjournals (an online medium for America City Business Journals, the largest publisher of U.S. business newspapers) all ranked Mankato as one of the best small cities to live and raise a family. The city ascribes these awards to their smart growth and sustainability initiatives, detailed below. Mankato is located in south central Minnesota, two hours southwest from the Minneapolis-St. Paul metro area. With a population over 36,000 residents, the city is a regional center and known for its extensive parks, trails and landscapes.

Policies

SMART GROWTH

The City incorporated smart growth guidelines, energy efficiency, and conservation policies into its development practices and land use planning. For example, the

city's Industrial Service District includes green storm-water infrastructure, green building designs, and native landscaping. In conjunction with the city's policy to maintain sensitive lands, the city has created flexible design standards and conservation easements that assist in preserving wooded areas, ravines, and wetlands during new residential development.

SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES

The City has endorsed the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, which aims to reduce carbon emissions below 1990 levels. As a part of the endorsement, the City adopted a Strategic Plan for Sustainability that outlines ways to reduce energy consumption. By creating these "green" policies, the City is providing a model for other businesses and entities in the city. (See the Resources Section for a full list of policies)

Challenges and Solutions

Mankato's success is due to a combination of community outreach and education. City Planners utilize the City's Public Information Department to collaborate on outreach and education efforts. Most frequently, in order to save money and resources, the City uses social media, such as "Mankato Minute" videos. The videos are available online and air locally on public access channels. "Mankato News" is a resource for residents and allows the City to inform the public through multiple mediums, including television, Internet, and Smart Phones. Local residents can also sign up for the city's email listserve. The City utilizes Facebook and ties in all forms of outreach into their Facebook page.

On the city administration level, the Community Development staff has worked to make sure that sustainability policies are integrated into ordinances. Before adoption, each policy is closely reviewed so that it meets the specific needs of the community. The Strategic Plan for Sustainability is reviewed and evaluated annually. The

City occasionally receives complaints that it is allocating too many resources to sustainability initiatives, as budgets are tight in the City and the country. Staff responds to complaints by providing details on how the new strategies are important to long-term sustainability of the City. Many of their efforts have resulted in near-term quantifiable cost savings, such as their city idling policy, which states that City owned vehicles must not be left running unattended or parked. Other policies have whole-hearted support, such as the efforts to preserve and protect natural areas.

Mankato is currently in the process of quantifying building energy consumption and operational modifications data. This process will benchmark the City's energy consumption and aim to decrease these demands and costs. The City is working with the Minnesota GreenStep Cities program to compile accurate data and ultimately reach their goal to be more sustainable.

NORTHFIELD, MINNESOTA

A "Smart" City in Progress

When Northfield updated their comprehensive plan, they were not trying to implement "smart growth." However, when they then began to articulate what they wanted for their community – things like connectivity, a walkable street pattern, and diverse neighborhoods – they unintentionally honed in on key "smart growth" principles. Northfield's comprehensive plan now includes goals such as maintaining small town character, preserving open space, and mixing land uses.

In addition to their comprehensive plan, Northfield has taken many other steps toward smart growth and sustainability, as detailed below. Like many other cities, Northfield is still a work in progress when it comes to sustainability and smart growth. It is one of several examples of towns that Decorah can look to as a peer; it is

a city that is making great strides toward sustainability, and still has much left they would like to do.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Northfield recently became one of the first cities to begin “GreenSteps,” a program that helps Minnesota cities implement 28 sustainable development practices. These practices focus on cost savings and energy use reductions that lead cities beyond compliance, and encourage a culture of innovation. The GreenSteps web-site is a great resource for any city that wants to be more sustainable, regardless of their location (www.MnGreenStep.org)

ENERGY REDUCTION

Northfield has participated in the Minnesota Energy Challenge for several years. The Environmental Quality Commission has tackled the education and marketing for the challenge, and Northfield currently ranks #8 in the state, with an annual savings of 2,781,185 lbs of CO₂ and 364 members participating.

BUY LOCAL

The Northfield Downtown Development Corporation organizes a “buy local” campaign, and the City recently started a new summer market to encourage local buying. The River Walk Market Fair offers distinctive local goods on Saturdays from June to October.

TRANSPORTATION

Northfield Lines established express bus service to the Minneapolis metro area in October of 2009, hosting 20,000 riders in the first year of operation. The Northfield Grassroots Transit Initiative helped initiate the new service and continues to promote it.

Challenges

While Northfield has had considerable success, they have also had challenges in reaching their goals. Northfield is currently going through the process creating new

regulations, such as zoning for higher densities that will enable city practices to comply with the comprehensive plan. Other challenges include:

- A lack of sufficient resources available implement measures the community’s smart growth goals.
- A lack of a cohesive action plan from elected officials and appointed Boards and Commissions - Officials need to align themselves with the principles, learn how they affect different citizen groups, and learn how to resolve conflict and implement policies.
- Resistance to smart growth strategies from various stakeholders - Developers for example, are sometimes resistant to new policies, since they don’t know if they will be accepted in the market. The business community questions restrictions on issues such as parking requirements, mixed-use, street widths, and complete street requirements such as sidewalks.
- A lack of inertia - In regards to smart growth, city officials feel that Northfield talks more than they act.

WOODBURY COUNTY AND SIOUX CITY, IOWA

The Organic Market Project

In 2005, Rob Marqusee, director of Rural Economic Development for Woodbury County, IA, was faced with a problem. Tasked with improving the local economy and limited by a lack of funding, Marqusee examined his economic surroundings. He saw a rural community where he says the concept of the small, family farm had been compromised by federal subsidies for large industrial-scale agricultural operations. In addition, an aging population of farmers and relegation of small towns to little more than bedroom communities for nearby Sioux City and Omaha

threatened the county's economic future. With little funding available, Marqusee turned to the county's two major resources, land and taxes, to create a thriving local economy.

Marqusee used economic analysis tactics to examine what local residents were spending their money on and what the area could produce. The answer was food. "Importing food in a top agricultural state just doesn't make sense" says Marqusee, so he set out to develop low cost programs that would help right this economic wrong.

LEADING THE WAY IN LOCAL FOOD

In 2005 Woodbury County adopted the Organics Conversion Policy, offering a full rebate of real property taxes for 5 years to any farmer who converted from conventional to organic farming. The project benefitted farmers who wished to make the transition, did nothing to harm farmers who didn't, and required no upfront monetary outlay by the county (aside from administrative fees). After the success of the tax rebate, the county adopted the Local Food Purchase Policy, which decreed that Woodbury county would purchase local food for its own internal operations.

In 2007, the county embarked on the "Sioux City Sue" marketing campaign, adopting a logo and brand name made available to any producer who resides within 100-miles of Sioux City and complies with the terms of the license. Later that year, a historic partnership was formed between Woodbury County, the City of Sioux City, and the Siouxland Chamber of Commerce to market the region as the leader in organic production and processing. Through the partnership, called the Organic Market Project, cities contributed buildable unimproved lots within city limits for new organic farmers, the region began hosting an annual Organic Growers Conference, and regional Hy-Vee stores and Whole Foods Omaha made a commitment to stock

local organic produce. A non-official centralized broker, the Firehouse Market, helps streamline distribution of local foods and ensures that foods receive the Sioux City Sue trademark. Through this process, farmers get the best price for their products from a wide variety of purchasers including large supermarkets and restaurants. In 2008 the "Sioux City Sue Local Foods Network Program" was established to facilitate the sale of locally produced food in regional restaurants, hospitals, schools, and other food service establishments.

Successes and Challenges

Since the first local food policy was established, the farmers market has grown from about 11 vendors to over 50, increasing gross market income to approximately \$550,000. About 600 acres of Woodbury County farmland have been converted to organic, inspiring farms in neighboring counties to convert as well, including a 440 acre farm in Monona County that now boasts the highest profit in the county.

Not every city was equally successful. The City of Danbury had no interest in its available residential lot and reported little interest in organic farming in the properties surrounding the city. However, this revolutionary program offers innovative ideas for city and county officials to support organic farming the boost the economy in their own area.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Woodbury County
Robert B. Marqusee
Woodbury County - Courthouse 6th Floor
Department of Rural Economic Development
620 Douglas Street
Sioux City, IA 51101
712.279.6609
rob@marqusee.com

RELATED LINKS:

www.woodburyorganics.com.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lziCZhY62f4&feature=player_embedded#at=48

<http://firehousemarket.blogspot.com/>

<http://www.hy-vee.com/company/sustainability/default.aspx>

SECTION 4: RESOURCES

RESOURCES FOR RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

Resources are organized by Local Comprehensive Planning Element, and subgroups for each Element are identified where applicable.

LEGEND: + = PDF INCLUDED IN RESOURCE CD

Public Participation Element

METHODS FOR CREATING PUBLIC DIALOGUE

Everyday Democracy, Study Circle How To Guides

<http://www.everyday-democracy.org/en/HowTo.aspx>

Published by Everyday Democracy

The Study Circles Resource Center is an advocate for public dialogue and problem solving. The organization provides “How To” guides to help inform and organize cities on different methods of interaction and involvement to engage the public.

“Nominal Groups CDC” +

“Nominal Group Technique Handout” +

Published by the Center for Disease and Control and the University of Kentucky, College of Agriculture

These two publications are guides based on the Nominal Group Technique, from Andre Delbecq, the author of Group Techniques for Program Planning: A Guide to Nominal Group and Delphi Processes, a famous text on group idea-generation and problem identification. These references provide an overview of the method.

“Tips for Charette Procedure” +

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/>

Published by Iowa State University Extension

Charettes is a method utilized to generate ideas within a group and then prioritize the ideas. The Iowa State Extension Office offers straightforward guidelines for charettes for community engagement activities.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TOOLS

“Building Strong Neighborhoods: A Study Guide for Public Dialogue and Community Problem Solving” +

www.everyday-democracy.org

Published by Everyday Democracy

This resource focuses on discussion and strategies to get people involved, acting and building strong neighborhoods.

“Technology of Participation Brochure” +

<http://www.ica-usa.org/>

Published by the Institute of Cultural Affairs

The Institute of Cultural Affairs in the U.S.A offers Technology of Participation (ToP) training to leaders and group facilitators. The training covers collaboration, public engagement and communication techniques. They have assisted municipalities, nonprofit agencies and private firms across the nation.

Faith-Based Community Engagement

http://portal.hud.gov:80/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/faith_based

Provided by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

HUD administers a center for Faith based and secular organizations to assist their local communities with housing and community related issues.

Iowa City Citizen Feedback System

<http://www.icgov.org/default/apps/serviceCenter/feedback/>

Offered by the City of Iowa City

The City of Iowa City offers a citizen feedback system that allows questions, comments, concerns, and suggestions to be expressed. Responses by the city are returned within a week and the type of feedback is tracked.

Land Use Element

Community Development Division of Iowa Department of Economic Development

http://www.iowalifechanging.com/community/green_initiatives.aspx

The Community Development Division provides several resources on Green Streets, including a wide range of Project Profiles, Pilot Communities, Criteria for the Green Streets Program, Sustainable Housing, and resources for Community Facilities and Services.

“Sustainable Communities Institute”

www.sustainablecitiesinstitute.org

Sustainable Communities Institute

The Institute, established by The Home Depot Foundation, works with cities across the nation. The Institute provides training and consultation for the planning and

implementation of sustainable practices. The Institute provides education and training sessions.

“New Community Design to the Rescue: Fulfilling another American Dream” +

Published by the National Governor’s Association

This document highlights the importance of New Community Design (NCD), as well as provides information on the market for NCD—including its demand, incentives, and barriers to its implementation.

“Greenville, Wisconsin Gateway Overlay District” +

Adopted by the Town of Greenville, Wisconsin

This Gateway Overlay District is designed for parcels that abut the right-of-ways of major highways and/or the frontage roads in the community. This ordinance establishes a series of gateway corridors with special architectural and landscaping requirements to enhance the visual and aesthetic character.

PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT CODES

“Planning Implementation Tools: Planned Unit Development”+

www.uwsp.edu/cnr/landcenter/

Published by the Center for Land Use, University of Wisconsin

This document defines Planned Unit Development (PUD), provides a scorecard and examples of PUD application in Wisconsin.

“Planned Unit Development Implementation Manual”+

<http://www.vpic.info/>

Published by the Vermont Planning Information Center (VPIC)

The VPIC is a clearinghouse of regulatory materials for Vermont’s land use planning commissions, zoning boards and development review. The Manual provides an overview and application of PUDs.

“Crawford County PUD Ordinance- Eliminating Barriers to Quality Growth Project” +

Published by Crawford County, Georgia
Planned Unit Development Ordinance.

FORM-BASED CODES

“Form-Based Codes in Action: Four North American Examples” +

<http://www.planning.org/thenewplanner/2010/spr/formbasedcodes.htm>

Written by Kimberley Moore and Susannah Barton,
published by The New Planner

This article uses four specific examples to examine form-based codes. The four examples come from: Two Kings, Toronto, Ontario, Miami, Florida, Knoxville, Tennessee, and the Columbia Pike Corridor, Arlington, Virginia.

“Miami 21 Code” +

Adopted by the City of Miami, Florida
This is the full Miami 21 Zoning Code.

“Peoria IL Form District Code”+

Published by the City of Peoria, Illinois

Article six outlines many different principles of Form Districts. It includes but is not limited to: the guiding principles, rules for new development, information on specific examples within Peoria, and rules/standards about specific types of building such as signage, streetscape, etc.

Form-Based Codes Institute

www.formbasedcodes.org/

This a list of resources compiled by FBCI on Form-Based Codes.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT CODE

“Dubuque Creates Sustainable Development Code”+

Published by the City of Dubuque

“In 2009, the City of Dubuque’s new Unified Development Code (UDC) went into effect. The UDC updates and consolidates zoning, subdivision, site development, historic preservations, and sign regulations into a single city code.” This document gives a quick overview of the UDC.

“Design Standards and Mixed Use, Austin, Texas” +

Published and Adopted by the City of Austin, Texas
This ordinance provides citywide design guidelines for commercial and retail development. These are considered best practices and are intended to increase the level of quality in a structure that allows flexibility.

Housing Element

Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND) is based on traditional small town development patterns. Highlights include the grid system, mixed use, walkability and connectivity. The concept has been promoted and implemented by the state of Wisconsin.

TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN

“Traditional Neighborhood Design Information Sheet” +

www.uwsp.edu/cnr/landcenter/

Published by Wisconsin’s Center for Land Use Education
This informational sheet provides an overview of the use and application of TND and provides neighborhood examples.

“A Model Ordinance for Traditional Neighborhood Design” +

<http://urpl.wisc.edu/>

Published by University of Wisconsin-Madison, Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Approved by the Wisconsin Legislature

This Model Ordinance is a guide for cities interested in developing a TND ordinance. It provides an implementation

plan, ownership and maintenance of public space recommendations and design guidelines for elements, such as neighborhood uses, development units, stormwater management, architectural standards and landscaping and screening standards.

Inclusionary Zoning is a regulatory tool that provides homes for people who earn low to moderate incomes. For example, Inclusionary Zoning can provide homes to people who may be priced out of the housing market, such as preschool teachers, store managers, and bank tellers. An inclusionary zoning ordinance requires that all new residential developments designate a percentage of units or pay in-lieu fees for affordable homes for low- and moderate-income households.

INCLUSIONARY ZONING

“Opening the Door to Inclusionary Zoning”+

<http://www.bpichicago.org/>

Published by the Business and Professional People for the Public Interest (BPPPI). BPPPI is a public interest and law center in Chicago, Illinois.

This article provides an overview of the legal issues concerning inclusionary zoning and case studies from across the nation.

“The Impact of Inclusionary Zoning on Development”+

Published by the Business and Professional People for the Public Interest (BPPPI)

This article examines existing programs to discuss the benefits, impacts on development, and production of homes over time in areas that have adopted an inclusionary zoning program.

“Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance, Boulder, Colorado” +

Published by the City of Boulder, Colorado

This ordinance was adopted in 2000 and recently amended in 2007. Included in the ordinance is eligibility, application requirements for projects, cash-in-lieu contributions, on-site construction, maximum allowable rent, documentation requirements and owner occupancy requirement, among many other elements.

“Quick Facts on Inclusionary Zoning” +

<http://www.bpichicago.org/>

Published by BPPPI

This resource provides a brief overview of Inclusionary Zoning and how it can be implemented.

“Inclusionary Zoning”

www.policylink.org

Available at Policy Link

Policy Link, a national research and action institute that works towards developing economic and social equity. Policy Link provides comprehensive information on inclusionary zoning, including financing, challenges, success factors, and resources on their website.

“Validity Construction and Application of Inclusionary Zoning Ordinances.”+

Authored by Jay M. Zitter, J.D.

American Law Reports. ALR 6th. 2007, a secondary law review designed for legal research.

This is a legal introduction to inclusionary zoning. The article illustrates the necessary nexus for city’s inclusionary zoning ordinance and that the specified need falls into police powers and the due process matters.

Minimum Density zoning provides for efficient use of land, resources, and local amenities. When considering the future of growth in Decorah, it is important to examine the potential for sprawl which affects a city's urban form, results in poor efficiency of land and environmental degradation. To counter sprawl, minimum density zoning, a growth management technique, can be used to generate consistent and efficient development.

MINIMUM DENSITY ZONING
“Minimum Density Zoning” +

<http://www.dca.state.ga.us/>

Provided by the Georgia Quality Growth Partnership

This resource describes key steps and issues to consider when adopting minimum density zoning.

Zoning Code, City of Ames, Iowa+
www.cityofames.org

Administered by the City of Ames

The City of Ames has established minimum density for two zoning districts. The following is an excerpt from their Zoning Code, Chapter 29, and Article 7 - Residential Base Zones. The two minimum zoning districts are located in the urban core as well as throughout the city and the Iowa State University districts.

Iowa's population is aging and modifications to homes can enable elderly residents to successfully remain in their homes for longer. Two publications, provided as resources, examine the reality of an aging American population and propose concepts and policies to assist cities and their elderly populations.

AGING IN PLACE
“Maturing of America” +

<http://livable.org/>

Published by a consortium: MetLife, n4a, ICMA, NACo, National League of Cities, Partners for Livable Communities

This report examines communities across the nation that assists their elderly populations. The article puts forward ideas, activities, services and opportunities to accommodate the Baby Boomers and future generations.

“Aging in Place” +

<http://livable.org/>

Published by MetLife

This publication walks through goals for the movement of “aging in place” and outlines five steps cities can take to ensure residents can successfully stay in their homes for longer. These five steps include private and subsidized investments to improve homes as well as partnerships and connections for providing care.

“Finding a Home to Grow Old In” +

<http://columbia.news21.com/2010/rx-aging-nation/retirement-housing.html>

Written by Alex Berg and Josh Trapper, Columbia University

This article discusses the opportunity for college campuses to provide services to an aging population. Several senior communities have been successfully established on college campuses and receive care from students specializing in the related care. Further, proximity permits seniors to partake in the university amenities, including classes and extracurricular events.

GREEN BUILDING: WORKSHOPS, RETROFITS, AND TAX CREDITS

“Affordable Green Building Training Workshops”

<http://www.icosc.com>

Certification is offered by the Center on Sustainable Communities (COSC)

The Center on Sustainable Communities is an educational resource for sustainable building practices. They provide educational sessions, materials, and organize or communicate related “green” events. COSC offers a 10-part series on affordable green homes that instructs building professionals on methods for building affordable, energy efficient, durable, and environmentally conscience homes.

“Retrofitting a Historic Home: Case Study” +

<http://neo-terra.org>

Published by Neo-Terra

Neo-terra is a Pennsylvania based organic farm that provides expertise on green housing design, ecological landscaping, and ecological wastewater treatment. This case study illustrates methods for retrofitting an historic home.

“Historic Texas Bungalow Gets a Green Renovation” +

www.greenbuildingadvisor.com

Published by Green Building Advisor

Green Building Advisor is a resource for green construction and building. This case study details a green renovation of Texas bungalow.

“Understanding Tiered Billing”

<http://www.sce.com/Customerservice/billing/tiered-rates/understanding-tiered-rates.htm>

Published by Southern California Edison (SCE)

Tired energy billing is described by SCE. A model of tiered billing, based on the amount of consumption of energy is provided.

“Home Energy Planning with Cost Share”

<http://energydistrict.org/projects/energy-planning-cost-share/>

Provided by the Winneshiek Energy District

The Winneshiek Energy District received a grant to establish an energy improvement cost-share program for homeowners in the City of Decorah. Participants pay for an Energy Assessment of their home that identifies cost effective upgrades. Recommendations and upgrades completed will be eligible for a 30% rebate from the Energy District, up to \$2,000 per home.

“Iowa: Incentives/Policies for Renewables & Efficiency”

<http://www.dsireusa.org/incentives/index.cfm?re=1&ee=1&spv=0&st=0&srp=1&state=IA>

DSIRE is a database for incentives, tax credits and policies for renewable energy. Information is listed by state.

AIR AND NOISE POLLUTION

“Information on Levels of Environmental Noise Requisite to Protect Public Health and Welfare with an Adequate Margin of Safety” +

<http://www.nonoise.org/library/levels74/levels74.htm>

Published by the EPA and the Office of Noise Abatement and Control

This links directly to the Information on Levels of Environmental Noise Requisite and is in accordance with the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS).

Public Infrastructure and Utilities Element

DECONSTRUCTION

Green Building and Green Points Program +

<http://www.bouldercolorado.gov/index.php>

Provided by the City of Boulder

This resource provides an example of an ordinance that includes mandatory green building requirements to ensure that construction waste and deconstruction materials are recycled, reused, or otherwise diverted from landfills.

Deconstruction

<http://www.urbanhabitatchicago.org/blog/deconstruction/>

Provided by Urban Habitat Chicago

This website provides a number of additional links regarding different Illinois deconstruction agencies, ordinances, and general information on deconstruction and the benefits it can provide for a community.

Construction and Demolition Debris Recycling

http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/doi/supp_info/construction_anddemolitiondebrisrecycling.html

Provided by the City of Chicago

This link provides additional information on the City of Chicago's construction and debris recycling program and ordinance.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

Funding Stormwater Programs +

<http://www.epa.gov/>

Published by the Environmental Protection Agency

This document is intended to assist local governments by helping them understand the alternatives available to fund a stormwater program. The resource also describes in more detail three different types of stormwater utility

rate structures and the basic steps involved in creating a stormwater utility.

“Application of Market Mechanisms and Incentives to Reduce Stormwater Runoff” +

<http://www.msdcg.org/>

Published by Environmental Science & Policy

This paper presents a background on several types of market instruments and their related incentives as possible approaches for reducing the risks associated with both the magnitude and frequency of recurrence for excess stormwater runoff flows.

Using Incentive Programs to Promote Stormwater Best Management Practices

<http://www.werf.org/livablecommunities/toolbox/incentives.htm>

This website offers different types of incentives a local government could offer in order to reduce stormwater runoff, as well as programs that other stormwater incentives that other US Cities currently utilize.

“State Revolving Fund 2010 Green Projects”+

Published by the Iowa State Revolving Fund (SRF)

This document outlines the types of green projects that are eligible for the fund, forgivable loan terms, and additional public funding sources.

“State Revolving Fund: What's in it for Stormwater?” +

Published by the SRF

This document provides an overview of the types of loans awarded, loan terms, and the other public sources of funding.

Transportation Element

COMPLETE STREETS

“Complete Streets in the United States” +

<http://www.sacog.org/complete-streets/>

Published by the Sacramento Area Council of Governments

This resource discusses the growth of the Complete Streets movement and its role in road design and planning processes, particularly in relation to Context Sensitive Solutions. It also addresses potential ways to measure the performance of a complete streets policy from a bicycle and pedestrian perspective.

“Auto Oriented or Complete Street? Pedestrian and Bicycle LOS in the New Multimodal Paradigm” +

<http://www.dowlinginc.com/publications.html>

Published by Dowling Associates, Inc

This research outlines important criteria for designing a complete street by exploring various cross sectional layouts and how they affect level-of-service (LOS) scores of bicycle and pedestrian transportation modes. Ultimately, the resource explores four different right-of-way street widths to see how these modes of transport are affected when an auto-oriented design is compared to a complete street design.

“Complete Streets Analysis” +

<http://bss.sfsu.edu/bss/>

Provided by San Francisco State University

Students of the university conducted a study for Transportation for a Livable City (TLC) which provided an overview of complete streets, case studies, barriers to implementing complete streets in San Francisco, and recommendations for overcoming these barriers.

“What makes a ‘Complete Street’ Complete” +

<http://www.trb.org/Main/Home.aspx>

Published by the Transportation Research Board

This paper presents a novel way to assess “completeness” based on context and public input. This approach uses a four dimensional audit for automobiles, transit users, bicyclists, and pedestrians, and a review of the results revealed that some streets, due to community-defined context, actually received completeness scores better than expected.

Potential Transportation Grant Funding Sources

<http://www.bikesbelong.org/grants/>

<http://www.dot.gov/recovery/ost/tigerii/>

Bikesbelong.org features grants aimed to increase bike usage, while dot.gov features information about the TIGER II Discretionary Grant Program—which has previously offered millions of dollars’ worth of competitive transportation grants.

National Complete Streets Coalition

<http://www.completestreets.org/changing-policy/policy-elements/>

This resource provides a list of ten elements that should be embodied in an ideal complete streets policy as outlined by the National Complete Streets Coalition.

SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION

“Electric Cars: How Local Governments Can Jump Start Preparations for the Next Wave in Transportation” +

Written by Maury Blackman, published by ICMA

This article discusses the use of electric cars and how it will impact the national and local government. It includes ideas local governments could pursue to begin to prepare for electric cars being more prevalent.

“You Can Get There From Here: Evaluating Transportation Diversity” +

<http://www.vtppi.org>

Published by the Victoria Transport Policy Institute

This paper describes transportation diversity benefits, objectives, barriers, and solutions. It also discusses methods for evaluating transportation diversity where twenty-five specific transport options are considered.

Economic Development Element

SUSTAINABLE INCENTIVES

“Grow Your Own - How Economic Gardening Nurtures Local Businesses”+

Published by the Stanford Social Innovation Review

Economic Gardening is a strategy to help communities move beyond incentive-based economic development. The strategy focuses on providing high-end business development tools for “second stage” companies (10-100 employees) that are ripe for growth. This brief article outlines the principles of Economic Gardening.

“Economic Gardening - SBA Report”+

Published by the Small Business Administration

This report provides an in-depth analysis of Economic Gardening, an economic development strategy to help communities grow their “second stage” companies (10-100 employees).

“Can Small Towns Be Cool?”+

Michigan Rural Partners Conference, Michigan State University

This resource discusses small town success stories from the Midwest and illustrates strategies beyond general best practices to create community sustainability.

***TAX INCREMENT FINANCING AND FUNDING
“State-Facilitated TIF to Encourage Brownfields Redevelopment”+***

Published by Restoring Prosperity

This document provides an overview of utilizing a TIF for successful brownfield redevelopment in cities. Wisconsin’s Environmental Remediation TIF is provided as a positive example of careful TIF application.

“Do Tax Increment Finance Districts in Iowa Spur Regional Economic and Demographic Growth?” +

Written by Dave Swenson and Liesl Eathington, Iowa State University

The authors review the increase of use of tax increment financing in Iowa for economic development and then discuss their findings on whether that growth has been influential in community and regional economic, demographic, and fiscal change.

ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

“Measuring Economic Development Return On Investment (ROI): Wisconsin Models”+

Published by the Wisconsin Economic Development Institute

A survey was conducted to examine the “return on investment” benchmarks and measurements utilized by Economic Development organizations in Wisconsin. The findings and a discussion are provided.

“Winneshiek County Laborshed Analysis - 2008”+

Published by Iowa Workforce Development

A Laborshed is defined as the area or region from which an employment center draws its commuting workers. This Laborshed analysis addresses underemployment, the availability and willingness of current and prospective employees to change employment within the workforce,

current and desired occupations, wages, hours worked, and distance willing to commute to work.

BROWNFIELD REDEVELOPMENT
“Financing Strategies for Brownfield Cleanup and Redevelopment”*

Published by the Northeast-Midwest Institute
The Institute provides research to demonstrate that public financing is essential to brownfield development due to costs of testing and potential costs of remediation.

“Guidebook of Financial Tools: Paying for Environmental Systems”*

Published by the EPA
The Guidebook examines comprehensive financial tools, such as environmental finance organizations and websites, public-private partnerships, and traditional means of raising revenue, as well as specialized financial tools to pay for pollution prevention, community-based environmental protection, and brownfields redevelopment. Further discussion is given to methods of increasing access to capital for small businesses.

“State Incentives for Achieving Clean and Renewable Energy Development on Contaminated Lands”*

Published by the EPA
This resource document provides a large array of tax incentives, funding sources, exemptions, and recovery system to assist individuals and businesses in moving to clean and renewable energy.

“River Enhancement Community Attraction and Tourism Program Application”*

Provided by Vision Iowa
This is a competitive grant application and is submitted on a quarterly basis.

“Brownfield Clean Up Grants”

http://epa.gov/brownfields/cleanup_grants.htm
http://epa.gov/brownfields/assessment_grants.htm
<http://epa.gov/brownfields/sustain.htm>
<http://www.iowalifechanging.com/business/brownfields.aspx>

Brownfields are sites where expansion, redevelopment, or reuse may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. Federal grants are available for cleanup on brownfield sites, to aid in their development. Cleaning up and reinvesting in these properties protects the environment, reduces blight, and takes development pressures off greenspaces and working lands.

LOCAL FOODS

“Buy Fresh, Buy Local Website”

<http://www.iowafreshfood.com/>
Published by Northeast Iowa Buy Fresh Buy Local
“Buy Fresh, Buy Local Chapter” affiliates connect consumers in communities throughout the country to the freshest, most delicious locally grown and locally produced foods available. The northeast Iowa BFBL chapter can be a valuable partner for growing Decorah’s local food market. Their website contains a local foods directory, and marketing and operations resources for producers.

LOCAL FOODS PARTNERS

Local food is a valuable part of the Decorah economy. There are many organizations that the city can partner with to grow this industry. A few key organizations are listed on page 92.

The Oneota Community Food Co-op is a cooperatively owned grocery store specializing in organic, local, and sustainably produced products since 1974.
<http://www.oneotacoop.com/>

The Northeast Iowa Food & Fitness Initiative works with citizens in Allamakee, Chickasaw, Clayton, Fayette, Howard and Winneshiek counties to increase accessibility to healthy, locally grown foods and opportunities for physical activity.
<http://www.iowafoodandfitness.org/>

GROWN Locally is a cooperative of small, local farms in Northeast Iowa dedicated to providing fresh, high quality foods to local food service institutions.
<http://www.grownlocally.com/>

Seed Savers Exchange is a non-profit organization of gardeners dedicated to saving and sharing heirloom seeds.
<http://www.seedsavers.org/>

“Local Foods Connection Website”
<http://www.localfoodsconnection.org/>
Published by Local Foods Connection
Local Foods Connection, in Iowa City, IA, is a service organization for local foods that could serve as a resource or sister organization for similarly minded farmers and citizens in Decorah. The Connection purchases produce, bread, eggs, meat and other products from local earth-friendly farms and donates these goods to families who cannot afford such nutritious, tasty and fresh food. The organization also provides opportunities for families to visit a farm and to learn healthy cooking methods.

“Iowa Local Food & Farm Plan”+

Published by the Leopold Center at Iowa State University
This plan, created at the request of the Iowa legislature, identifies challenges for local food systems and provides policy and funding recommendations to expand the accessibility and profitability of these systems.

“USDA Community Gardening Guide, Vegetable Garden Planning and Development”+

Published by the USDA
This publication provides a broad overview of how to start garden, guidelines for vegetable production per person, and determining the size of a family garden.

Agricultural and Natural Resources Element

PRESERVATION OF AGRICULTURAL LAND

“A Strategic Plan for Preserving Ag Lands and Revitalizing the Ag Economy in the Town of Porter, NY”

Written by the Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee and George R Frantz and Associates
This report focuses on preservation and revitalization of the Town of Porter, an agricultural-based town, to improve the long-term sustainability of the town.

Riparian Buffer research shows that establishing and maintaining riparian buffers around wetlands and waterways improves water quality, aquatic habitat, and maintains the integrity of the water body (reduced erosion). The EPA has conducted numerous studies and produced various publications that assert the importance of riparian buffers.

RIPARIAN BUFFERS

“Review of Information on Riparian Buffer Widths Necessary to Support Sustainable Vegetation and Meet Aquatic Functions.”*

Published by Acklund Regional Council, TE Rauhitanga Taiao, New Zealand

This report describes the importance of riparian buffers and the use of indigenous vegetation, and the width of buffers for urban, forests and rural areas.

“Riparian Buffer Width, Vegetative Cover, and Nitrogen Removal Effectiveness: A Review of Current Science and Regulations” *

www.epa.gov

Published by the EPA

This article examines riparian buffers, a Best Management Practice, that effectively reduces in nitrogen along waterways.

“Research Shows Importance of Riparian Buffers For Aquatic Health” *

www.epa.gov

Published by the EPA

This resource document illustrates that buffers greater than 50 meters were more effective and consistently removing nitrogen.

“Aquatic Buffer Model Ordinance”

www.epa.gov

Published by the EPA

This model ordinance focuses on stream buffers and walks decision makers through important aspects of a buffer ordinance, including background, intent, definitions, and application.

STORMWATER AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Greenseams Program, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

<http://www.floods.org/index.asp?menuID=513&firstlevelmenuID=185&siteID=1>

Video published by the ASFM

The Greenseams Program is a conservation project administered by the Metropolitan Sewerage District project in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Working in partnership with the Conservation Fund, hydric (soil that retains a high level of water) agricultural land is purchased at a competitive price and is put in conservation. Greenseams is a program to assist with flooding in the Milwaukee area.

“Philadelphia’s Stormwater Management Guidance Manual V2.0”*

<http://www.phillyriverinfo.org/>

Published by the Philadelphia Water Department, Office of Watersheds

This manual provides a fresh take on comprehensive stormwater management through green infrastructure. Rather than rely on traditional ‘gray’ infrastructure (concrete tunnels, pipes and sewers), the City plans to construct ‘green’ infrastructure to manage its stormwater. In the process, the City will create jobs, invest in the community, and make spaces more attractive in the City. The manual provides guidance for the complete site design process, starting with initial design considerations to the post-construction stormwater management plan submission. Tools are provided to assist in completion and submission of a stormwater management plan consistent with the intent of the City.

“Water Quality Scorecard: Incorporating Green Infrastructure Practices at the Municipal, Neighborhood and Site Scales”*

Published by the EPA

The scorecard is designed to assist municipalities identify and remove challenges, revise and create codes that incentive improved stormwater management. It aims to assist cities create codes at various levels within the city that will work together and make it easier for developers to meet several requirements.

The Conservation Trust

http://www.conservationfund.org/green_infrastructure

Provided by The Conservation Trust

The Trust partners with cities and individuals across the nation to protect and conserve wetlands and water bodies. Its materials discuss a broad concept of ‘green’ infrastructure and its benefits.

The Environmental Protection Agency’s Green Infrastructure program

http://cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/home.cfm?program_id=298

Provided by the EPA

The EPA has outlined how green infrastructure can manage wet weather conditions. They provide a sample of case studies and training opportunities.

“North St. Paul Water Management Plan”*

Published by North St. Paul, Minnesota

The North St. Paul Water Management Plan (WMP) sets the course for the city’s management of the water resources and stormwater within the city. The WMP sets goals and policies for the city and its resources, provides data and other background information, outlines the applicable regulations, assesses city-wide and specific issues, and lists implementation tasks and funding sources to achieve goals.

WETLAND PROTECTION

“Handbook for Developing Watershed Plans to Restore and Protect our Waters”*

www.epa.gov

Published by the EPA

The EPA published the handbook to assist communities, watershed organizations, and state, local, tribal and federal environmental agencies produce and implement watershed plans to meet water quality standards and protect their water resources. It is designed and intended to aid any organization begin a watershed planning effort. It is seen as particularly beneficial for groups working with impaired or threatened waters.

“Using Local Watershed Plans to Protect Wetlands”*

www.cwp.org

Published by the Center for Watershed Protection (CWP)

This resource document presents detailed methods for integrating wetland management into the local watershed planning process. It is part one in a series; the remaining related documents can be found on the CWP’s website.

“Adapting Watershed Tools to Protect Wetlands”*

www.cwp.org

Published by the CWP

This report examines 37 techniques for protecting wetlands through local programs and ordinances related to development and other land use activities. The strategies discussed are organized by the “Eight Tools of Watershed Protection,” a method of implementation for local watershed plans to provide comprehensive watershed protection. The report describes each watershed protection tool, and provides guidance on ways to adapt the tools to protect wetlands.

“A Local Ordinance to Protect Wetland Function” +

www.cwp.org

Published by the CWP

This report outlines the key elements of an effective ordinance to protect wetlands from the indirect impacts of land development and provides adaptable model ordinance language.

“An Introduction and User’s Guide to Wetland Restoration, Creation, and Enhancement”+

www.epa.gov

Published by the EPA

This is a guidebook for the public and includes information on wetlands and restoration, project planning and implementation and monitoring, as well as a list of resources, contacts and funding sources.

“Conservation Reserve Program and Wetland Reserve Program: Primary Land Retirement Programs for Promoting Farmland Conservation” +

www.rff.org

Published by Resources For the Future

This report provides an overview of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and Wetland Reserve Program (WRP). These two programs are the main agricultural land retirement programs in the nation and are important to land conservation. The report discusses current statistics and benefits of the programs.

COUNTY AGREEMENTS

“Shelton Urban Growth Area Plan, Mason County Comprehensive Plan, Washington”+

Published by the City of Shelton

This is one component of the Shelton Comprehensive Plan and describes the special district created for future growth.

“Fringe Area Agreement between Johnson County, IA and Iowa City, IA” +

Published by Johnson County, Iowa and the City of Iowa City

Fringe Area Agreements help to regulate land use conflicts that occur as cities grow into the surrounding county.

“City of Iowa City’s Sensitive Areas Map”+

Published by the City of Iowa City

This is a simplified version of the Sensitive Areas Inventory. Contact the Planning and Community Development Department at 319 356-5230 to review a copy of the detailed Sensitive Areas Inventory.

FUNDING SOURCES

Catalog of Federal Funding Sources for Watershed Protection

EPA Watershed Funding

<http://cfpub.epa.gov/fedfund/>

<http://water.epa.gov/aboutow/owow/funding.cfm>

Provided by the EPA

The EPA has provided a search engine for funding and grants related to watershed management and restoration efforts.

Community Facilities Element

“Public Park Dedication standards - Model Ordinance from Grimes, Iowa”+

Published by the City of Grimes

This is an ordinance for public park dedication standards from Grimes, Iowa, a city of 5,000 in Dallas and Polk Counties.

“Parks and Recreation Master Plan – Iowa City Model”+

Published by the City of Iowa City

This is the master plan for parks and recreation in Iowa City, Iowa. Pages 3-5 lay out the process for creating the plan. Both the executive summary and the full report are included on the resource CD.

“Gypsum Recreation Center Development Process”+

Published by Recreation Management Magazine

This story outlines how Gypsum, Colorado, a town of 5,000, got a state-of-the-art community and recreation center.

Community Character Element

Historic Conservation, a movement to protect and restore historic buildings, but not necessarily to authenticity, is a growing movement. The concept permits a historic building to be reclaimed and repurposed. Often the building is modified to a degree that no longer permits it to be considered authentic to the time period in which it was built. For example, windows and heating system may be added. The building may lose its historic preservation designation but is used and enjoyed.

HISTORIC CONSERVATION AND PRESERVATION

“RCA Building Undergoes \$60M Rehab”

<http://www.constructionequipmentguide.com/RCA-Building-Undergoes-60M-Rehab/3217/>

Written Chris Volker, Construction EquipmentGuide.com

This article outlines the rehabilitation of a historic vinyl record building in Camden, New Jersey. The building was transformed into residential units, Radio Lofts, and is one component of a larger regional reinvestment in the disadvantaged city.

“Portfolio-Radio Lofts”

<http://www.dranoffproperties.com/portfolio/radio-lofts/>

Published by Dranoff Properties

Dranoff Properties is a multifamily housing development firm that designs, builds, and manages the properties it generates. They specialize in adaptive and historic reuse. Dranoff led the efforts for the rehabilitation of the Radio Lofts. The portfolio piece provides details of the property and nearby attractions.

State Historical Society

<http://www.iowahistory.org/>

There are several state and national resources to assist Decorah with historic preservation. The State Historical Society of Iowa can provide timelines on history in the area, assistance with restoration projects, as well as technical and financial assistance.

National Park Service

<http://www.nps.gov/nr/>

The National Register of Historic Places is a Federal Agency within the National Park Service. The agency maintains the official list of the nation’s historic places. The website offers information on how to register a historic place, architectural resources, and related institutions that can support local efforts.

National Trust for Historic Preservation

<http://www.preservationnation.org/>

The National Trust for Historic Preservation is an organization established by the Federal government but currently operates on privately fundraised monies. The entity provides education, outreach, and funding for preservation of historic places across the nation.

Hazards Element

FLOOD CONTROL

“Reducing Damage from Localized Flooding: A Guide for Communities” +

www.fema.gov

Published by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

FEMA provides methods for floodplain management that goes beyond the National Flood Plain Insurance Program’s standards. FEMA’s publication is not technical but rather provides tools and techniques for neighborhoods and individual building to mitigate flooding.

“Managing Floodplain Development through the National Flood Insurance Program, “Unit 6: Additional Regulatory Measures” +

www.fema.gov

Published by the National Flood Plain Insurance Program (NFIP)

NFIP’s resource document includes a chapter on additional regulatory measures that go beyond the Federal minimums established. The chapter provides communities additional flood preparation and protection strategies. The chapter discusses opportunities to improve building standards, require greater setbacks, regulate hazardous materials and establish public health standards. The chapter also describes the legal concept of a “taking,” to provide communities information on the limitations associated with regulating private property.

“No Adverse Impact: A Toolkit for Common Sense Floodplain Management” +

<http://www.floods.org/>

Published by the Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFM)

ASFM is a national organization that promotes floodplain regulations and analyzes national policy. The organization provides recommendations and training for officials who manage and regulate floodplains.

“Building Public Support for Floodplain Management, Guidebook” +

<http://www.floods.org/>

Published by ASFM

This resource document provides strategies for leaders who work directly with a community.

“Use of Benefit/Cost Analysis for FEMA Programs” +

<http://www.floods.org/>

Published by ASFM

This publication outlines the advantages and disadvantages of utilizing the Benefit-Cost Analysis program administered by FEMA. This information can support reasons for going beyond traditional minimum standards in floodplains. Further, the document provides case studies of successful mitigation programs, such as the Greenseams Program.

Sustainability and Smart Growth

SUSTAINABILITY BARRIERS

“2010 Sustainability Strategies Publication”+

Published by National Association of Counties (NACo)
The NACo’s Green Government Initiative conducted a nationwide survey on the sustainability efforts of counties. Highlights of the survey include the benefits realized, cost savings, the types of sustainability efforts pursued and the challenges to implementation, such as funding and staff time.

“Listening to the Public: Understanding and Overcoming Barriers to Sustainability” +

Published by Viewpoint Learning, Inc.
The report informed policy makers on the perceptions and opinions of Vancouver residents on sustainability issues. The report identified that there is strong support for sustainability, yet practical barriers hinder greater citizens participation in Vancouver.

“Identification of Legislative and Policy Barriers”+

Published by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
This is a technical memorandum, which discusses legal issues and case law related to access management from both a United States and Pennsylvania Constitution perspective. A survey is also included that examines statewide access management perceptions.

“Removing Market Barriers to Green Development” +

Published by the EPA, Northeast-Midwest Institute, and the Delta Institute
This document identifies green development barriers and outlines recommended action steps to overcome the identified market barriers. Additional thoughts on future issues and next steps to promote green development practices are provided.

“Breaking through the Barriers to Sustainable Building” +

Written by Miriam Landman, Tufts University
This paper provides data and discussion on the barriers to the expansion of widespread sustainable buildings and non-regulatory government programs that provide educational and economic strategies to promoting green building. Further, public-private collaborative efforts, that may or may not be effective in lowering the primary barriers are examined.

“Overcoming Obstacles to Smart Growth through Code Reform” +

Published by Local Government Commission, Sacramento, California
This guide is intended to assist local officials enhance community livability through code reform. Over 250 codes across the nation were examined to provide examples in specific categories, such as, traditional neighborhood development, mixed use, transit-oriented development, street and parking design.

GREEN STREETS AND GREEN DESIGN

“West Union Green Streets Program”+

Published by the City of West Union, IA
This is a short presentation on program and the funding mechanisms, which enabled the City’s Green Streets program.

“A Conceptual Guide to Effective Green Streets Design Solutions” +

Published by the EPA
This guide provides information on green stormwater infrastructure and green retrofits for residential, commercial, arterial and alleyways. Photographs and drawings of the architectural features depict before and after green street design solutions.

“Chicago’s Green Alley Program” +

Published by Chicago Green Alley Program

This publication illustrates the green stormwater concepts used in alley redevelopment in the City. The objective of the program is to reduce flooding and the urban heat island effect. Information about materials utilized and critiques of this program are included.

“The Chicago Green Alley Handbook: An Action Guide to Create a Greener, Environmentally Sustainable Chicago”+

Published by the Chicago Department of Transportation

This Handbook illustrates the Department’s new green approach to the existing alleys program. As alleyways are reconstructed or repaired, solutions to common flooding are addressed. Solutions included permeable pavers and other BMPs.

“Chapter 5: Environmental Site Design- Permeable Pavement”+

Available at www.rainscaping.org

This document offers information about permeable pavers and their applications, performance, and constraints. It also provides examples of different permeable pavers which could be used.

Maintenance and Restoration of Porous Pavement Surfaces”+

Published by the Elgin Sweeper Company

This publication discusses the need for maintenance of porous pavement and the role of street sweepers in porous pavement surfaces.

“Guide to Greening your District” +

Published by Conservation Design Forum for the Iowa Department of Economic Development / Main Street Iowa
This publication provides information and resources to Main Street communities throughout Iowa regarding green - or

sustainable - approaches to building or re-constructing public spaces within historic commercial districts (downtowns), including streets, sidewalks, alleys, and parks to provide a wide range of benefits.

“The Design Strategies in Northern Kentucky”+

Published by the EPA

This resource illustrates, through pictures and drawings, different sustainable design strategies for residential streets, commercial main streets, arterial streets/boulevards, parking lots, and buildings. Case studies of applied sustainable design strategies used at the regional and neighborhood scale are also included.

“Testing a Bioswale to Treat and Reduce Parking Lot Runoff 2009”+

Published by the USDA, US Forest Service

This is a report of an experimental bioswale project in California; the trial was done to evaluate the system’s effectiveness of reducing storm runoff and pollutant loading from the parking lot and supporting tree growth. The study found that compared to the control site, the BMP location reduced amount of surface runoff by 88.8%. The loading reduction for nutrients, metals, organic carbon, and solids were 95.3%, 86.7%, 95.5%, and 95.5%, respectively. The outcome of the BMP established its potential use for reducing runoff from parking lot and supporting tree growth.

“Pollution Prevention BMPs”+

Published by Metropolitan Council / Barr Engineering Co.

This resource provides information about the pre-design, selection process and construction phases of Pollution Prevention BMPs.

“Building Green: Overcoming Barriers in Philadelphia”+

<http://www.pecpa.org/buildinggreen>

Published by the Pennsylvania Environmental Council

This resource provides an overview of barriers the City of Philadelphia has faced in regards to ‘green building,’ as well as potential solutions to these barriers.

“Implementing LID in Special Areas” +

Published by SEMCOG

This chapter from a larger publication identifies how Low Impact Development (LID) can be implemented in the design and development process for special areas, such as transportation corridors, brownfield sites, and high-risk areas such as wellhead protection areas, karst areas, and special water designation areas.

“The Sustainable Site Initiative: Guidelines and Performance Benchmarks 2009” +

Published by the American Society of Landscape Architects, et. al

The Initiative aims to complement existing green building and landscape guidelines as well as to provide a stand-alone tool for site sustainability.

STORMWATER

“City of Davenport Stormwater Management and Drainage Utility Credit Manual for Non-Residential Customers”+

Produced by the City of Davenport, Iowa

Following the adoption of a Stormwater Management Utility Fee, the City of Davenport provides methods and incentives for non-residential customers to reduce their utility fee through on-site controls, many of which are green infrastructure in nature. The manual establishes eligibility criteria and application procedures to determine the proportional amount of credit due to providers of these benefits.

“Managing Stormwater with Low Impact Development Practices: Addressing Barriers to LID” +

Published by the EPA

This publication, in a question and answer format, seeks to address potential concerns and challenges to LID techniques, compared to conventional stormwater management practices.

CLIMATE CHANGE

“Getting Smart about Climate Change”+

Published by ICMA

This report outlines nine strategies for successfully applying smart growth principles to climate concerns on the local and regional levels.

“The Value of Green Infrastructure for Urban Climate Adaptation” +

Published by the Center for Clean Air Policy

This paper presents information on the benefits and costs of “green” infrastructure solutions for supporting local adaptation to climate change, evaluating the performance and benefits of green infrastructure solutions by using technological, managerial, institutional, and financial measures.

“Getting Back on Track: Aligning State Transportation Policy with Climate Change Goals” +

Published by Smart Growth America and NRDC

This report assesses the extent to which each state’s transportation policy framework supports reduction of [Green House Gas] GHG emissions.

LIGHTING

“Light Pollution and Energy”+

Published by the International Dark-Sky Association

This brochure provides information on light pollution, energy savings, and conservation of light production.

“Light Pollution and Safety”+

Published by the International Dark-Sky Association
This describes Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), which is a multidisciplinary crime prevention approach as well as light security while driving and Walking.

“A Dark Sky Solution for Environmentally Responsible, Architecturally Appealing, Area Lighting”+

Published by the International Dark-Sky Association
This flier provides descriptions on types of lights as well as recommendations for lighting specific areas.

SMART GROWTH AND CASE STUDIES

“Putting Smart Growth to Work in Rural Communities” +

Published by the Smart Growth Network
This publication is designed to provide rural decision-makers with a resource for putting smart growth into practice in rural communities. The publication identifies three key goals to help a community pursue its vision for accommodating and attracting sensible growth in the future, while maintaining and enhancing its rural character and quality of life.

“EPA Smart Growth Publications” +

Published by the Environmental Protection Agency
This is a guide to 24 EPA smart growth publications including short summaries and links to each publication. It also includes summaries and links to online resources.

“Education for Sustainable Development Toolkit” +

Published by Rosalyn McKeown, published the Education for Sustainable Development
This toolkit includes challenges and barriers to education for sustainable development.

“IA Smart Planning Legislation” +

Written by Gary Taylor, AICP, Iowa State University Extension
This webinar outlines the components of the Iowa Smart Planning legislation.

“Envisioning and Implementing Smart Growth in Small Towns and Rural Communities” +

Published by the EPA, Smart Growth Program
This report provides a framework for smart growth in the rural/small town context.

“Smart Growth and Community Development: The Rural Context” +

Published by the EPA and New Partners for Smart Growth
This document describes the composition of rural towns, and their opportunities to use smart growth principles to adapt to a changing world.

“Towards a Smart Growth Community” +

Published by City of Keene, New Hampshire and New Partners for Smart Growth
This is a case study detailing smart growth projects in Keene, New Hampshire, including the challenges those projects have faced.

“Sustainable Cities: 10 Steps Forward” +

Published by the National League of Cities
This document outlines 10 different areas where cities focus their sustainability efforts.

“Essential Smart Growth Fixes for Urban and Suburban Zoning Codes”+

Published by the EPA
Many cities are interested in creating a more environmentally sustainable community lack the resources and/or expertise to make specific code changes to create

the impact they want. The EPA created this document as a way of helping communities who want to create a “smarter, more environmentally responsible, and sustainable community” (2) by showing them the “essential” things they should do in order to accomplish their goals. To create these guidelines the Development, Community and Environment Division (DCED) of the EPA convened a panel of national smart growth code experts in January and October 2008 to “identify what topics in local zoning codes are essential to creating the building blocks of smart growth” (3). The document includes 11 Essential Fixes (listed below) with each including a section on: response to the problem, expected benefits, steps to implementation (further broken down into modest adjustments, major modifications, and wholesale changes), practice pointers, and examples and references. The 11 Essential Fixes are:

1. Allow or Require Mixed-Use Zones
2. Use Urban Dimensions in Urban Places
3. Rein In and Reform the Use of Planned Unit Developments
4. Fix Parking Requirements
5. Increase Density and Intensity in Centers
6. Modernize Street Standards
7. Enact Standards to Foster Walkable Places
8. Designate and Support Preferred Growth Areas and Development Sites
9. Use Green Infrastructure to Manage Stormwater
10. Adopt Smart Annexation Policies
11. Encourage Appropriate Development Densities on The Edge

“Can We Work with USDA? Waverly, Iowa” *

Published by USDA, Rural Development, et al.

This document contains a list of policy priorities from Waverly’s leaders.

“Langley’s New Approach to Planning” *

Written by Robert Gilman, published by New Partners for Smart Growth

This document contains pictures of different land use concepts with captions from the community of Langley.

“Eco-City Alexandria: Reflections from the Frontlines of Sustainability” *

Published by Green Regions Initiative Metropolitan Institute, Virginia Tech

This document details how the city of Alexandria has implemented sustainability, and how other towns can do the same.

Case Study Resources

CITY OF IOWA CITY, IOWA

“Iowa City Metro Area Trails Map” *

Published by the City of Iowa City

This map shows the existing and proposed trails in Iowa City. It is used during the site plan review process when developments or improvements are proposed to the city.

CITY OF MANKATO, MINNESOTA

“City of Mankato Idling Policy”

Published by the City of Mankato

This policy outlines the change in procedure for all city owned vehicles with regard to idling. It is an example of a city becoming a model for sustainable practices.

CITY OF DUBUQUE, IOWA

All resources can be found at:

<http://www.cityofdubuque.org/index.aspx?nid=606>

“Downtown Design Guidelines”+

This document provides guidance for improving properties within Downtown Dubuque. The guidelines are for exterior alterations and additions to or the rehabilitation of existing buildings, but they also apply to the design of new structures.

“Drainage Basin Master Plan”+

This report represents a plan for the entire watershed to ensure that efforts to solve stormwater problems are efficient and cost-effective and address the concerns of taxpayers and drainage system users.

“A Guide to the Dubuque Comprehensive Plan”+

This resource provides a clear and streamlined understanding of the goals outlined in Dubuque’s comprehensive plan.

“Unified Development Code (UDC)” +

The UDC combines the City’s Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Regulations, Historic Preservation Ordinance, and portions of the Building Code into one document.

“Creating a National Model for Sustainability”+

This resource focuses on ways that Dubuque has set itself apart as an example of a national model of sustainability, as well as highlights the 11 sustainability principles that Dubuque is pursuing.

“Port of Dubuque Planned Unit Development Ordinance”+

This is an amendment to the Dubuque Zoning Ordinance that creates a Planned Unit Development. This new zoning district seeks to promote mixed-use development.

“Dubuque’s Sustainability Plan”+

This document provides a brief overview of Dubuque’s 11 sustainability principles and examples of projects that have been accomplished to date promoting sustainability.

Dubuque 2.0

<http://www.dubuque2.org/>

This website acts as a public forum that outlines how businesses, schools, neighborhoods, and non-profits can become involved with Dubuque’s sustainability initiatives.

WOODBURY COUNTY, IOWA

Woodbury County - Case Study Resources+

Woodbury County has had great success with their local foods programs, including the famous “Sioux City Sue” campaign. The following documents provide background information for the story outlined in the case study section:

Woodbury County Local Food Purchase Policy

Sioux City Sue Logo

Woodbury County Sioux City Sue Local Foods Network Program

Organic Growers Conference Agenda

Woodbury County Press Release - Organic Market

Organic Growers Conference Session Information

Woodbury County Organics Conversion Policy

Woodbury County Sioux City Sue press release



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