

[Comprehensive Plan Update]

R A L S T O N

2034

Adopted April 1st, 2014

INTRODUCTION

PROFILE

ENVISION

ACHIEVE

IMPLEMENT



## Participants and Acknowledgements

The following individuals committed their time and gave our consulting team valuable information to complete this comprehensive plan update:

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JEO Consulting Group would like to thank everyone for their time and effort through this process. There are numerous possibilities that Ralston can choose to maintain its prosperity. This is an exciting time for Ralston and it will need the support from city staff, elected officials, and the public. With coordinated team efforts and relentless advocates, Ralston can continue to achieve economic and social success over the next twenty years. Your commitment will produce long-term success.





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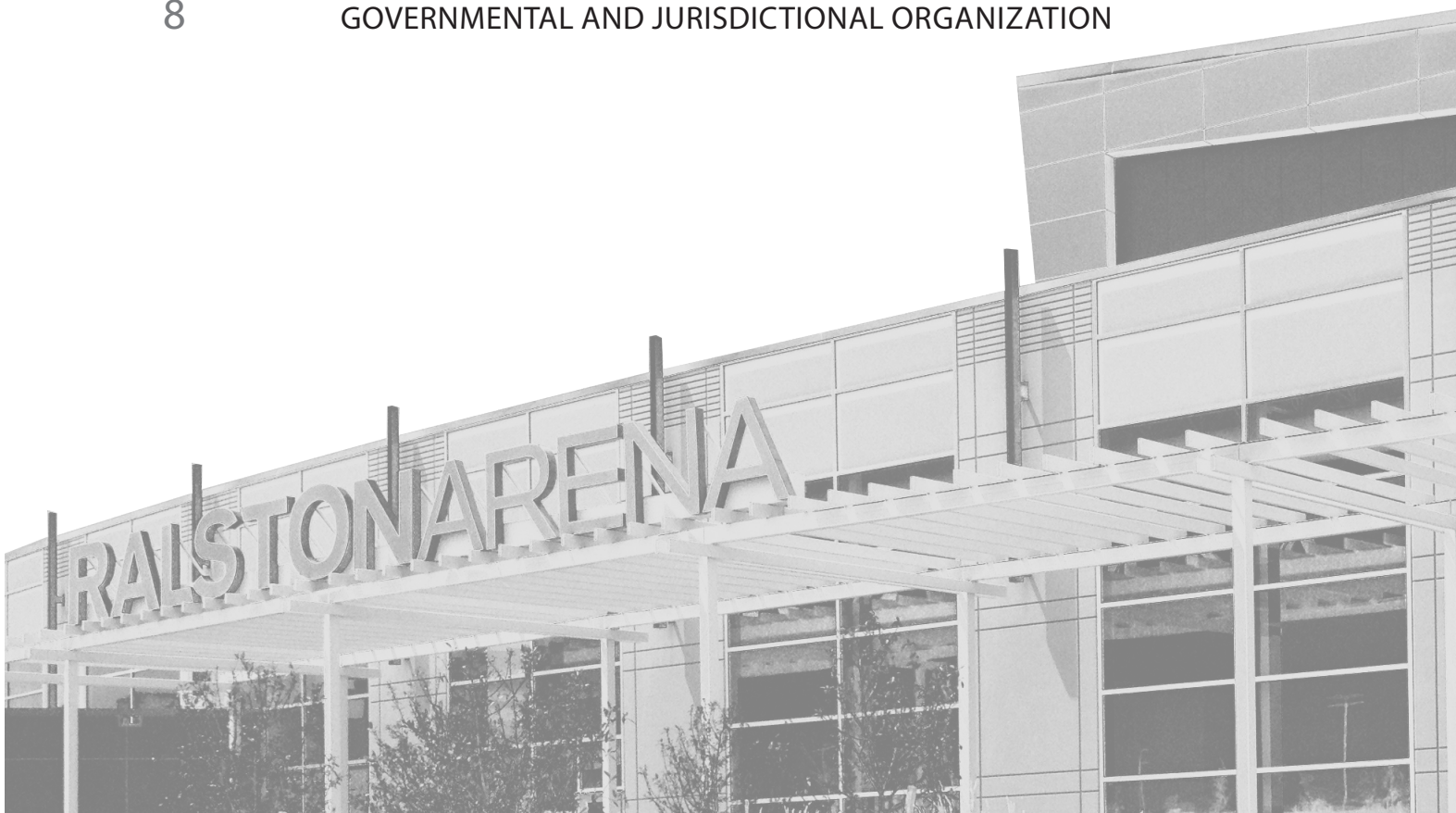
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# 1 [Introduction]

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# Ralston

is one of the most unique cities in Nebraska. It maintains its own identity while being surrounded by urban development on all sides. This prevents future expansion yet allows for the possibility of redevelopment. This hindrance can be a positive opportunity with the correct approach of the citizens and leadership. Ralston has a great situation with major transportation and economic advantages of the Omaha Metropolitan Statistical Area.

It is evident that Ralston has already embraced redevelopment with the Lakeview Golf Course property. The decision capitalized on Ralston's limited real estate with the addition of the Ralston Arena and new multifamily housing options. The location is highly visible on a major transportation corridor and establishes Ralston's northeast boundary. The amenities offered at the Arena can lead to greater returns with additional commercial and residential development. Ralston's previous comprehensive plan established the foresight to reserve the location of the Arena. This shows the importance of long range planning and how Ralston followed through by making the most of its land use potential.

Ralston has fully developed over the last twenty years and maintained a strong sense of community. This is what makes Ralston different with its independence and tight knit group of residents. Few people in the Omaha area can claim to have the personal touch that Ralston possesses. The size of Ralston allows its citizens the convenience and accessibility to City Hall staff as well as amenities and services of the metro area.

This update will define the new direction of what the planning committee and public want to see in their daily lives. This direction includes rebranding itself as a progressive community for all ages while maintaining the quality of life that Ralston currently has. Redevelopment efforts should support Ralston's vision as an arts and entertainment destination.

Ralston's ongoing relationship with neighboring communities will continue to play a major role in its success. Ralston's assets were evaluated to create strategies that can be coordinated and achieved within a twenty year planning window. The development of this update to Ralston's Comprehensive Plan will continue to take advantage of its geographic and economic advantages. Few cities have the amenities that Ralston has. This update will show why the City and its citizens are excited about its future and proud to call Ralston their home.



## Location

Ralston is located in eastern Nebraska on the southern boundary of Douglas County. The City of Omaha has grown westward from the Missouri River and currently surrounds Ralston on three sides. Ralston's southern boundary is Harrison Street which is shared by the City of La Vista and Sarpy County. The general boundaries of Ralston's corporate limit are L Street and Harrison Street between 72nd and 84th Streets. However, the Ralston school district boundary exceeds the corporate limits, much like the City of Omaha, on all three sides within Douglas County. Ralston is located at Latitude 41.20 N, Longitude 96.04 W and contains 1,043 acres within its 1.63 square miles.



## Climate

Much like eastern Nebraska, Ralston experiences a wide range of temperatures throughout the year. The coldest month is January with a low average of 21 F. The hottest months of the year are July and August with recorded averages of 76 F.



## History

Dr. George L. Miller moved back to Omaha in 1865 to begin what is known today as the Omaha World Herald. In 1867, he purchased 280 acres and later amassed some 630 acres. In 1882, Dr. Miller donated land for the District #54 schoolhouse. Shortly thereafter, he purchased 40,000 trees from his friend J. Sterling Morton and had them planted throughout his property. He also built a seventeen room mansion made of Wisconsin stones that resembled the look of a castle. After fencing in a portion of his property and stocking it with deer, he dubbed his estate and the surrounding area as "Deerfield" until 1908. A budding ice industry and an amusement park was created at the local lake. Its success led to an extended rail line for ice as well as passengers. In 1907, Dr. Miller sold 272.13 acres to the Ralston Investment Company and in 1908 the village of Deerfield was changed to Ralston. The Ralston Townsite Company was impressed by C.A. Ralston who formed the Locomotive Cars & Contractors Equipment. This promising plan of four large buildings of locomotive and railway repair shops failed due to lack of funding.



## Topography

The hills are a very unique feature of Ralston. The change of elevation begins at 1,100 feet above sea level. A portion of a contour map is shown here that gives a representative look to the diverse landscape found throughout Ralston and some areas that were best used as open fields for neighborhood parks. The Ralston hills possess the established trees as a result of its terrain and location. The lowest lying areas are found on the eastern side of Ralston along the Big Papillion Creek and the Ralston creek. Ralston citizens enjoy a diverse mix of terrain and hills. Ralston's topography, established trees, and tailored street layout, has been described as an oasis from its surroundings.



## 1.2 PURPOSE OF COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

This Comprehensive Plan Update will become the City's long range planning instructional tool to encourage fiscal responsibility in redevelopment decisions. This document provides policy guidelines that enable citizens and elected officials to make informed decisions about Ralston's future. With Ralston's unique landlocked situation, future growth and housing will only need to occur within the current boundaries. Therefore, the existing composition and future land use decisions will become extremely important. As stated throughout this planning process, Ralston has nowhere to grow but up.

The importance of comprehensive planning can be seen in the Ralston Arena development. Twenty years ago, the city did not determine exactly what should replace the Lakeview Golf Course property. It was reserved to become a vital community asset and has recently been developed to its full potential. This plan will show recommendations of potential redevelopment areas that would meet both the community's wishes but also the city fiscal needs. Continued analysis of Ralston's changing social and economic demographics will determine redevelopment within Ralston.

The comprehensive plan gives realistic projects that can be achieved within a twenty

year timespan. The excitement and unique opportunity of the Ralston Arena and the overwhelming desire to revitalize downtown lead to The Hinge concept. The potential build out of this particular concept can fulfill multiple goals and objectives set forth by the planning committee. The city will not be asked to fund these projects but there will be a number of recommendations and policies that incentivize underutilized areas. The private sector will be encouraged to invest in Ralston's designated underutilized areas.

The following statements led to the creation of the goals, objectives, and policies, as well as the Future Land Use Plan.

The City of Ralston will deliver economic, creative, cultural and community development strategies to generate a quality of life that is a beacon of dynamic and independent small town culture within the metro area.

## VISION STATEMENT



The City of Ralston is a dedicated and caring team of volunteers, staff, and officials who provide high-quality, equitably priced services to sustain a safe and progressive community that supports family values.

## MISSION STATEMENT

## 1.3 THE COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING PROCESS

The Ralston Plan is designed to identify, assess, and develop actions and policies for the following areas: population, land use, transportation, housing, economic development, community facilities, and public utilities and energy.

To begin the Ralston Comprehensive Plan, readily available information is gathered to gauge the current status of the community. Data collection begins with the 2010 Census, city hall documents, and on-site field surveys. Demographic and economic information reveal the underlying trends for the current community status and provide a foundation for the future projections of land use and economic development. After the initial assessment of the community, additional information is gathered through correspondence with city hall employees and the planning committee.

The next stage of the planning process is creating the goals and objectives for the community. Meetings are held with focus groups and the public to define the identity of Ralston as well as the changes that are desired. The public is heavily involved to prioritize its vision which are reflected in the goals and objectives. With public input, additional concerns and issues are addressed when creating the goals, objectives, or policies needed to stimulate positive change. This update gives practical guidelines to maintain and improve conditions in the community. A comprehensive plan shows the community's vision through text, graphics, and tables.

Implementation is the final stage of the planning process. Multiple development policies and programs are required to implement the Ralston Plan. The Ralston Plan identifies the tools, programs, and methods necessary to fulfill the recommendations. Adoption of the Ralston Plan is needed to implement the development policies. The governing body as well as the

future leadership of Ralston will need to continue to push forward for this Ralston Plan's implementation.

The Ralston Plan was prepared under the direction of the Comprehensive Plan Planning Committee. It was comprised of the Mayor, City Staff (Consultant) and a broad based group of citizens or local stakeholders. Review and recommendations by the Ralston Planning Committee were completed prior to the recommendation of the planning commission and adoption of the comprehensive plan update by the Ralston City Council.

This update's planning period spans the next twenty years. However, it is recommended that the city hold annual reviews to track progress of its goals and objectives. Another recommendation is to update the document completely every five years for relevance. This will allow also for new input from Ralston's future leadership and stakeholders.



## 1.4 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMPONENTS

The Profile Section is based on information that comprises Ralston. It is based on definitive information and historical trends. It establishes where the community has been and defines the starting point for this update. Profile information is established with demographic and economic data. The current picture shows Ralston's unique characteristics. It can show obvious information to lifelong residents or inform the outside public of misleading information. One example is comparing the size of the Ralston School District to the corporate limits of Ralston.

The next process is the Envision Section which verifies gathered information and includes public input to begin the formation of the community's future goals. The Envision stage relies heavily on public input to create a comprehensive plan that meets the desires of the community. Citizens typically know what they want and are very realistic about their needs. However, the Envision stage calls for extreme ideas and concepts. The Envision Stage can lead to creative ideas that solves multiple citywide issues. The perfect example would be the Ralston Arena. It would have seemed outrageous twenty years ago to locate an Arena within Ralston.

The Achieve Section is the Ralston's projected future. It contains the future ideas and vision developed during the Envision Section. Achieve filters for constraints and opportunities to build upon. This section discusses the Population Projections, Future Land Use Plan, Urban

Design redevelopments that resulted from the Design Charrette, Parks and Trail Plan, and Transportation Plan.

The success of a Comprehensive Plan is not measured by the aesthetics of the pictures or graphics, but by the usability of the planning tool to guide development and redevelopment of Ralston. The Implementation Section within the Comprehensive Plan is the core of this planning tool. The section will identify the action steps that are necessary to achieve the community's envisioned goals. In addition, it suggests:

1. The action steps to specific "Project Champions" or groups responsible for the implementation of the task.
2. A specific timeframe for completion that directly links dependent action items and potential funding sources, if necessary.

[Introduction]  
RALSTON

[Profile]  
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## 1.5 GOVERNMENTAL AND JURISDICTIONAL ORGANIZATION

The Ralston City Council is a board of elected officials, including the Mayor, who perform governmental functions on the city's behalf.

The city may enforce zoning and subdivision regulations including building, electrical, plumbing, mechanical code, and property maintenance codes within its jurisdiction. Ralston does not have extraterritorial jurisdiction with the surrounding development and adjacent corporate limits of Omaha and La Vista..

The planning and zoning jurisdiction of Ralston, pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 19-901 through 19-933 (Reissue 1997), includes all of the incorporated portions of the city.



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DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

HOUSING PROFILE

ECONOMIC AND EMPLOYMENT

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND UTILITIES

ENERGY ELEMENT

NATURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

EXISTING LAND USE

# 2 [Profile]

RALSTON

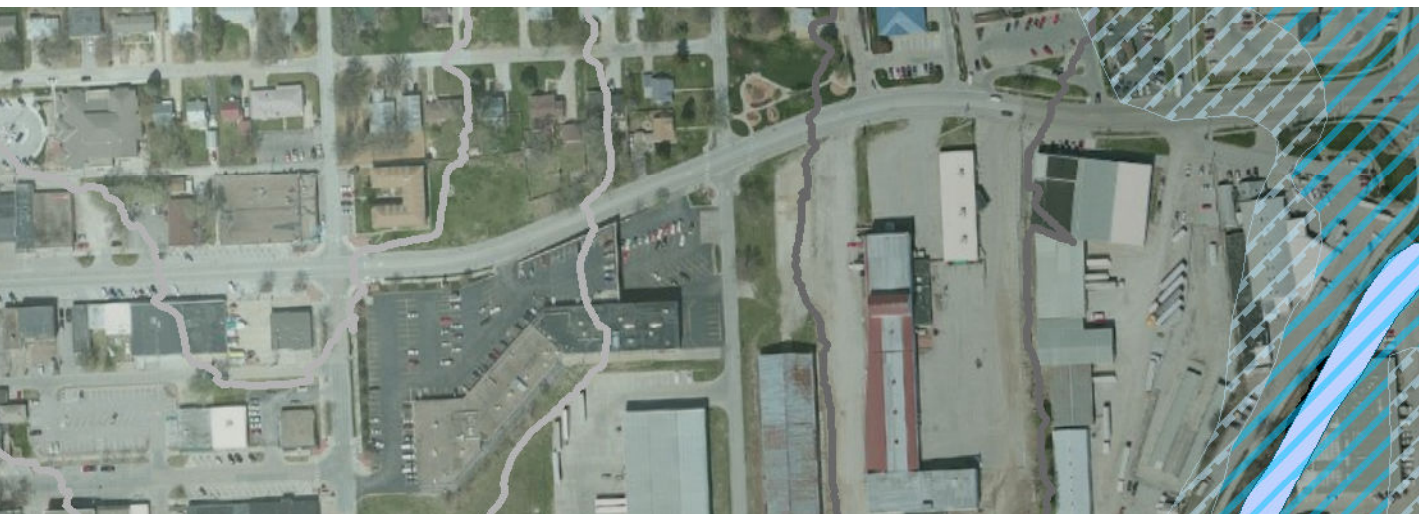


## 2.1 INTRODUCTION

The underlying reason for a comprehensive plan is to understand a community. This Section focuses on how Ralston grew and where it currently stands. The Profile Section illustrates the typical indicators that determine and often show the evolution of a community. This section relays statistics of past decades and how they relate to the current situations. These Profile characteristics will be examined to determine relationships and explain how the Ralston experience was created.

The City of Ralston and the planning committee set goals for this update to the comprehensive plan. Comprehensive plans reveal many facets of a community and future goals will relate to these Profile elements.

The individual chapters of the Profile Section are: Demographics, Housing, Economic and Employment, Public Facilities and Utilities, Natural Environment, and finally Existing Land Use.



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## 2.2 DEMOGRAPHICS

The Demographic Chapter will look at Ralston's previous population trends, current demographics, and comparisons to surrounding communities. Population analysis gives a community key statistics of where it's been and in what direction it is going.

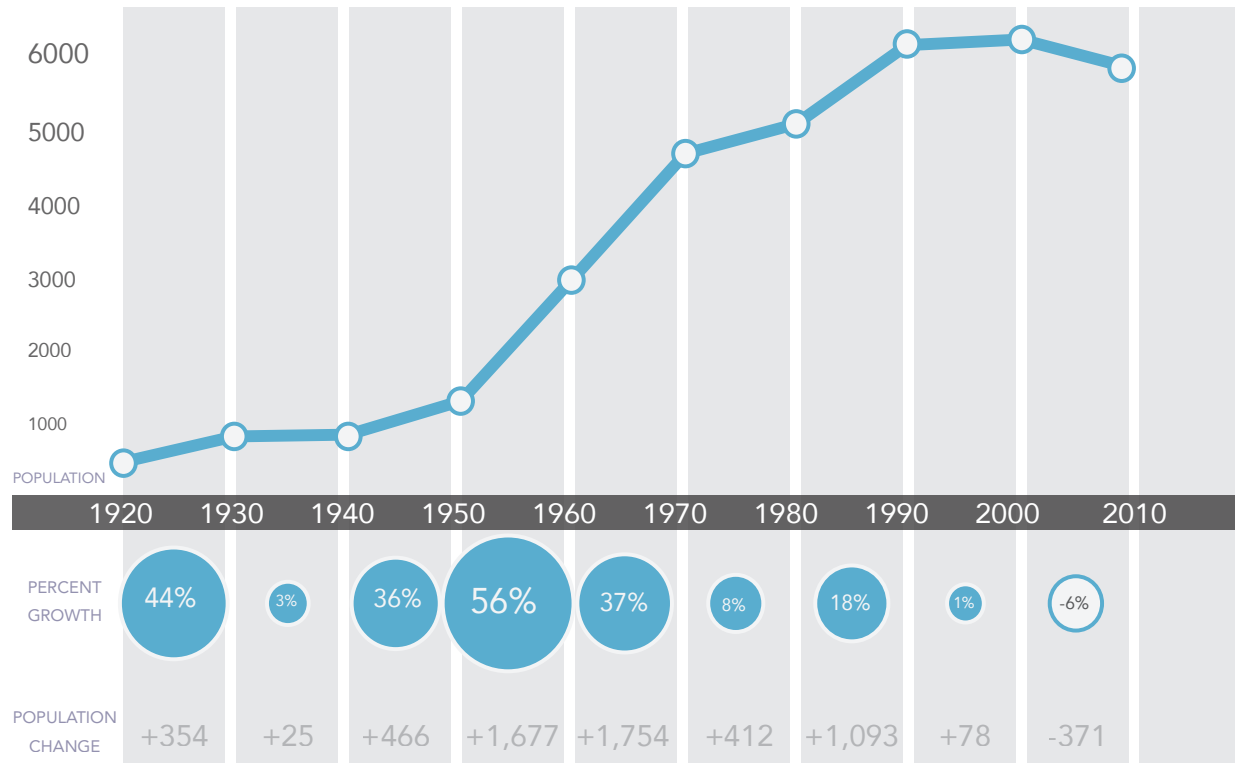
Ralston has filled its boundaries with a variety of development. Its population growth reached its natural population peak and withdrew slightly due to cyclical advancement. Given its prime location in the Omaha area, this population stability has given Ralston a unique small-town experience over the past twenty years.

This Ralston experience is to be preserved while offering options to a new, younger demographic. Change is inevitable and each generation desires something different. In order to increase Ralston's population while maintaining the Ralston experience, understanding its changing demographics is the first step. Regional statistics can give insight into Ralston's changing environment.

After studying and understanding Ralston's shifting demographics, it became evident that specific changes are needed to harbor an inviting environment to new demographics. Ralston's population, like any community, is strongly tied to its economy and housing. The economic and housing chapters will be discussed following this chapter.

## Population Trends Analysis

Table 1  
Historic Population Trend and Growth

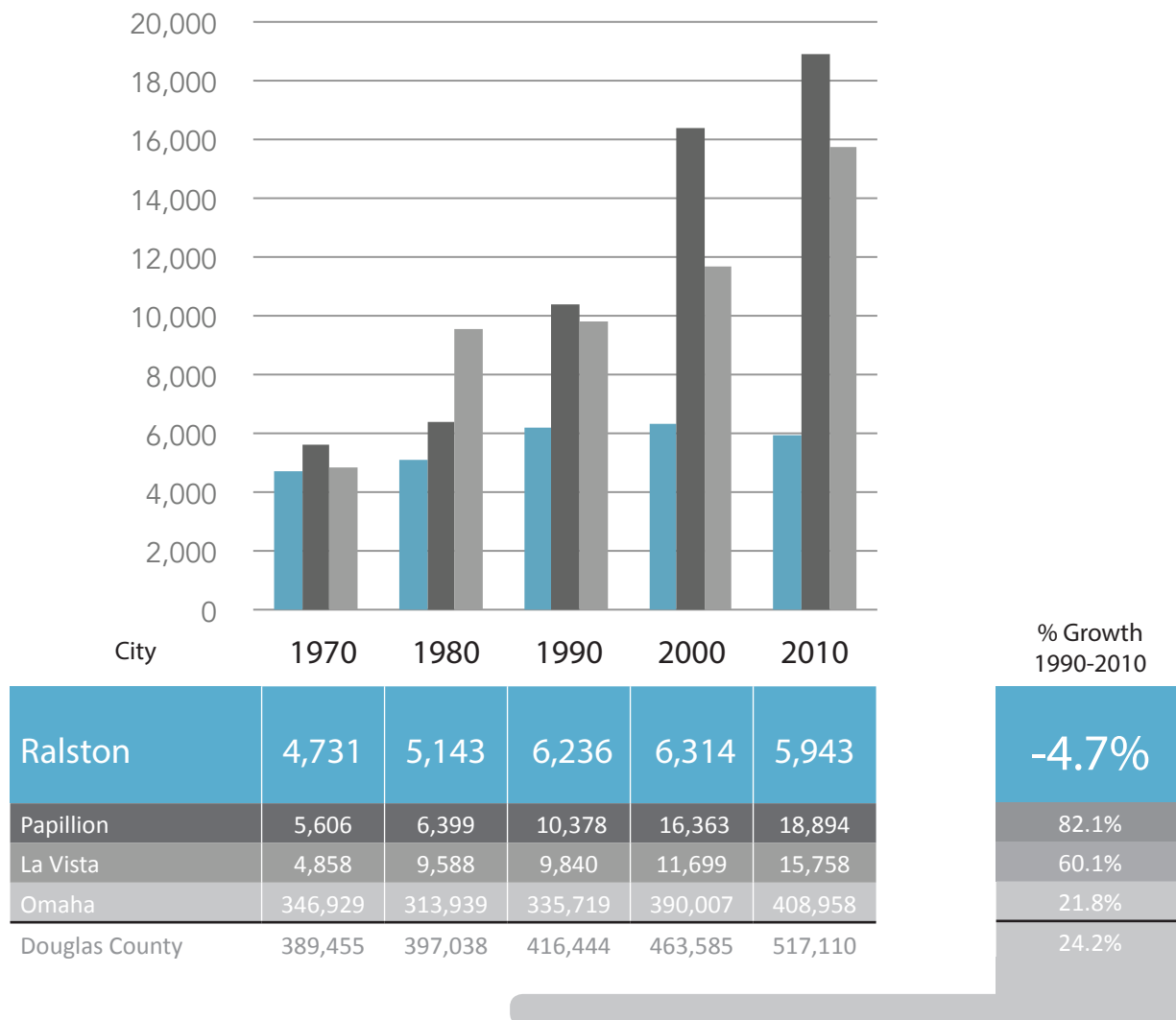


Population trends allow the community to understand how it's grown. The more recent population trends influence immediate needs and future decisions.

The slight decline of Ralston's population over the past twenty years has led to urgency in defining its future growth.

One of the main goals of this comprehensive plan is to find ways to increase Ralston's population within a static city boundary. It should be stated that this goal is not meant to replace the current aging population but to complement Ralston's established small-town feel and create more housing choices for all.

Table 2  
Historic Population and Growth Comparisons



Source: U.S. Census 1970 to 2010

Table 3

### Selected Demographic Comparisons

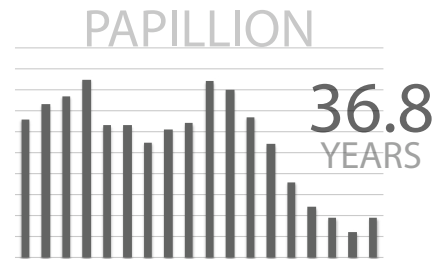
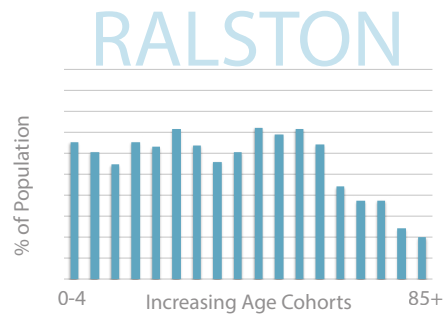
	Ralston	Papillion	La Vista	Omaha	Douglas County
2010 Total Population	5,943	18,894	15,758	408,958	517,110
2011 Total Housing Units	2,711	7,240	6,670	177,518	221,663
Median Household Income	\$51,545	\$69,837	\$59,379	\$46,978	\$52,929
% Poverty	6.9%	5.8%	7.0%	15.5%	13.3%
Home-ownership Rate	71.40%	70.90%	56.70%	59.80%	64.10%

Regional population trends factor into this decision to increase population. Ralston will not continue to naturally grow like its peers. Population growth decisions become an important factor with these limitations. Ralston does not have the capability to build new large lot subdivisions that have been a popular trend over the past twenty years. The influx of population in surrounding communities has attracted large lot single family homes. Unlike the other communities, Ralston has the advantage to decide how it will increase its population. By creating this type of controlled growth, the city will have more options available over its future than others. During the planning process, it was revealed that the community wants Ralston to evolve by providing options to young family needs and attracting the young, professional demographic. These elements will be discussed in the following Housing Chapter as well as the Urban Design Chapter of the Achieve Section.

Ralston's Median Age is the highest of its contemporaries and this situation may lead to different decisions than its 'neighbors' might conclude. This confirms growth found in each age cohort 45 years and older over the past twenty years. Ralston may need to partner with its surrounding communities to research and find solutions to support its aging population and attract new populations. Ralston is consistent with the state's average child bearing age cohort. However, Table 4 reiterates the public concern that Ralston was lacking in Under 25 population. Echo Boomers are defined by the 15 to 29 Age Cohorts and this population has been "targeted" as one of the population goals to include for future growth.

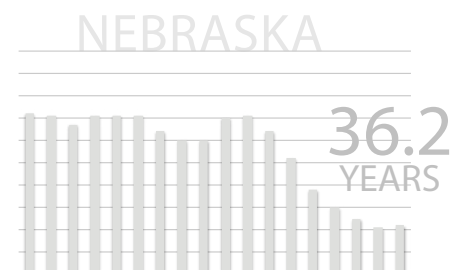
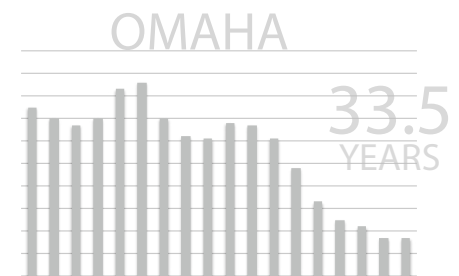
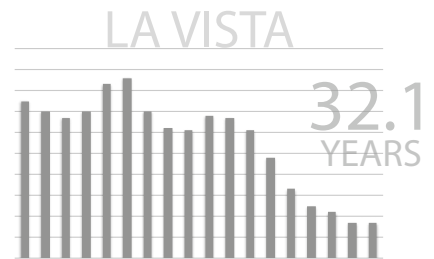


Table 4  
2010 Population Composition Comparisons



Age Cohort	Ralston	Papillion	La Vista	Omaha	Nebraska
0 to 4	6.5%	6.6%	7.7%	7.5%	7.2%
5 to 9	6.1%	7.3%	7.7%	7.0%	7.1%
10 to 14	5.5%	7.7%	6.5%	6.7%	6.7%
15 to 19	6.5%	8.5%	6.4%	7.0%	7.1%
20 to 24	6.3%	6.3%	7.9%	8.3%	7.1%
25 to 29	7.1%	6.3%	10.2%	8.6%	7.1%
30 to 34	6.4%	5.5%	7.8%	7.0%	6.4%
35 to 39	5.6%	6.1%	6.9%	6.2%	6.0%
40 to 44	6.0%	6.4%	6.8%	6.1%	6.0%
45 to 49	7.2%	8.4%	7.5%	6.8%	7.0%
50 to 54	6.9%	8.0%	6.9%	6.7%	7.1%
55 to 59	7.2%	6.7%	5.8%	6.1%	6.4%
60 to 64	6.4%	5.4%	4.4%	4.8%	5.2%
65 to 69	4.4%	3.6%	2.8%	3.3%	3.8%
70 to 74	3.7%	2.4%	2.1%	2.5%	3.0%
75 to 79	3.8%	1.9%	1.3%	2.2%	2.5%
80 to 84	2.4%	1.2%	0.8%	1.7%	2.1%
85+	2.0%	1.9%	0.5%	1.7%	2.2%

Median Age  
**40.0** YEARS  
**36.8** YEARS  
**32.1** YEARS  
**33.5** YEARS  
**36.2** YEARS



## Age Structure Analysis

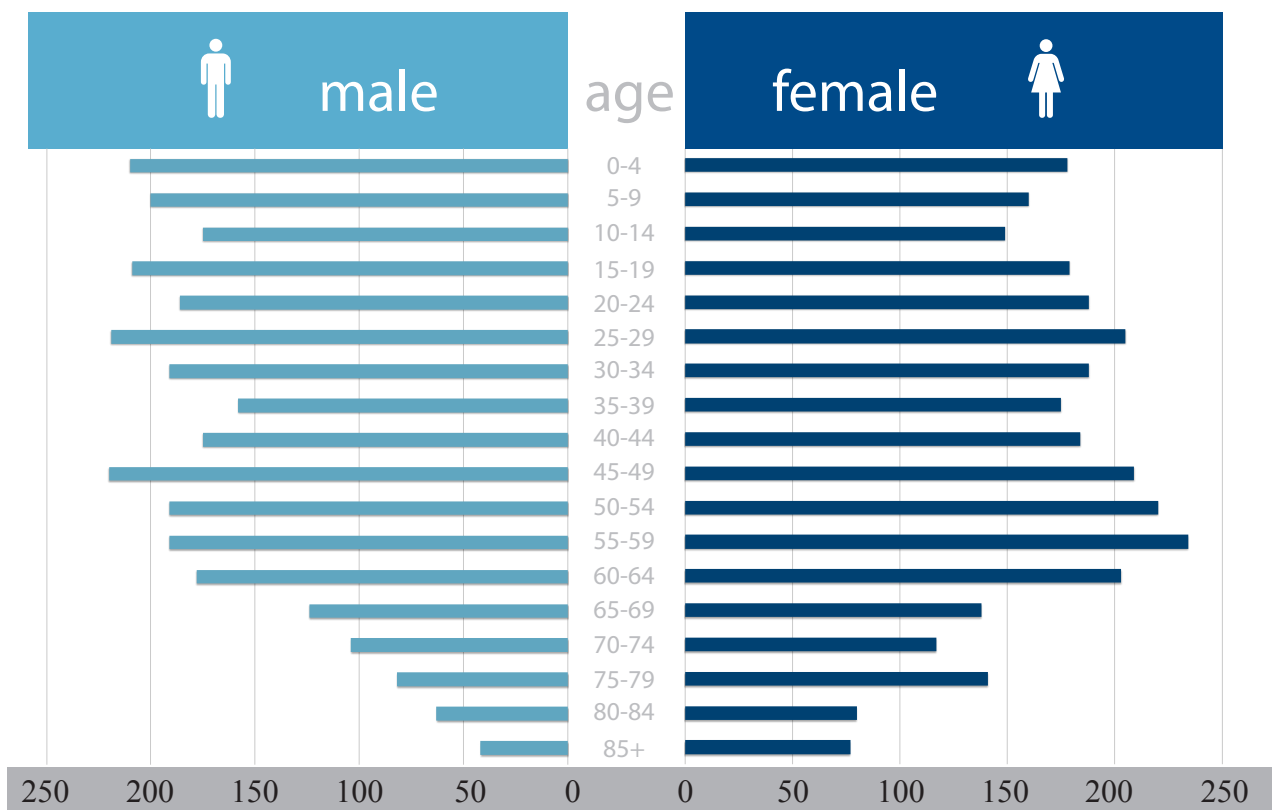
Age Structure analysis will determine what a city is experiencing within its age groups. Long-term planning decisions are influenced by how a city's population is composed. Determining the ranking of importance to the population will determine how to budget for future needs. The city's priority may not coincide with the desires of the community. There is a great responsibility when deciding on future investments.

Ralston's current Median Age has increased to 40 from 32.5 in 1990. There are multiple factors involved in its shifting demographics. First, Ralston's traditional residential development reached a natural apex. Secondly, Ralston is

a desirable market with a high percentage of homeownership and a median household income above the state average. Lastly, the stagnant population growth can be contributed to grown children leaving their families while original homeowners stayed in Ralston.

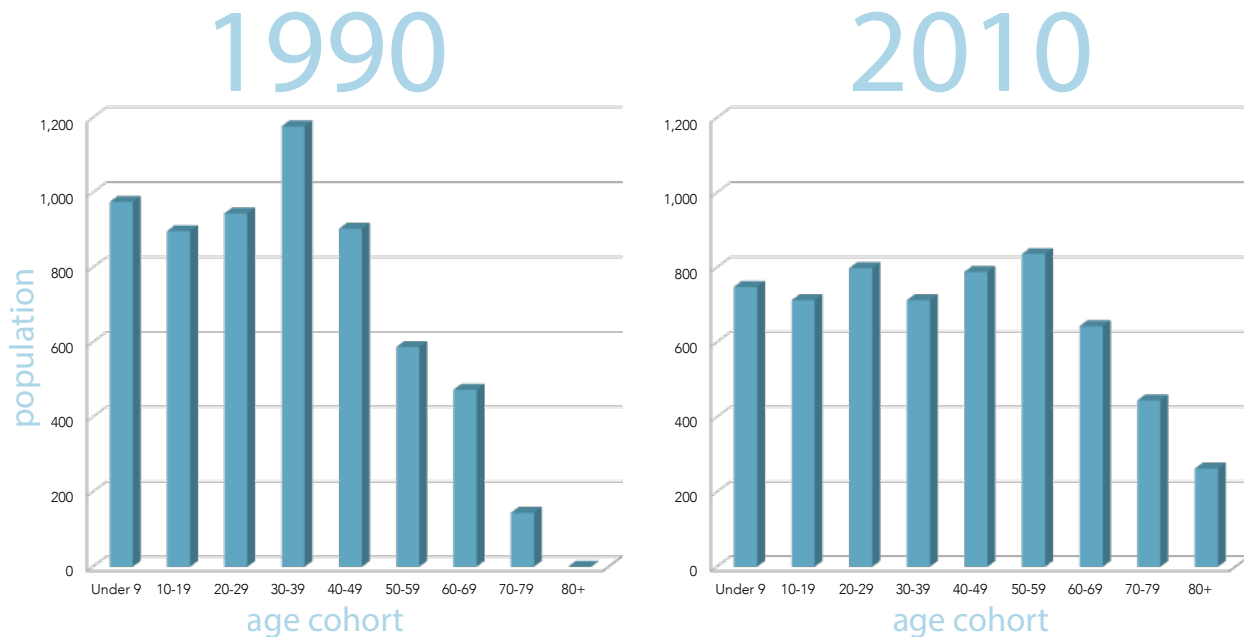
These homeowners can be found in the 45 to 64 Age Cohorts of the 2010 Census. This population, known as the "Baby Boomers", was born between 1946 and 1964. It signifies an unprecedented growth event after World War II. Baby Boomers account for 27.7% of Ralston's population which is consistent with Nebraska's 25.7%. As seen in the 1990 Age Cohort graph, this baby boomer phenomenon is represented

Table 5  
2010 Age Cohort



## Age Structure Analysis

Table 6  
Age Cohort Trends



in the 30 to 39 age bracket and half of the 40 to 49. The enlarged “graying” population trend emerges in the 2010 Age Cohort graph with Ralston’s established Aging in Place population.

The 75 and older population experienced a large increase from 136 in 1990 to 485 in 2010. Of this increase, 119 are 85 and older. The 75 and older age cohort had the largest increase and will become an immediate concern to address. Communities with a high elderly population may need to conduct studies and investigate programs that focus on affordable housing and other potential alternatives. This 8.2% of Ralston’s 2010 population may be small enough to survey and investigate for effective ways to support the larger population behind them. This is just the beginning with a “wave” of baby boomers aging in place.

After looking at the 1990 and 2010 Age Distributions by Decade Figures, it gives a

broad picture of how Ralston has grown. For continuity, both figures use a 1,200 population capacity. The 1990 Age Distribution shows one part of baby boomer parents at age 30 to 39 while having very low elderly population. The 2010 Age Distribution graph displays the evenly spread age groups with a larger elderly population. The 30 to 39 decade lost over 150 residents per decade to be 836 in 2010.

The 20 to 29 age group, just fewer than 800, has become a priority that Ralston wants to benefit from. Ralston’s natural growth is an important factor in population analysis and can be found in the child-bearing age cohort. By analyzing a community’s 20 to 44 age cohorts, this demographic group reveals Ralston’s natural supply of future in-migration. By simply rearranging cohort data, trends can be established and further examination can take place for each demographic change.

## Migration

Table 7 shows age cohorts as individual trends. By using this method, Ralston can track how each demographic changed since the last census. For example, 0 to 4 Age Cohort in the 2000 Census becomes the 10 to 14 Age Cohort in 2010. This explains the city's population and migration patterns.

Census population numbers can be misleading. The overall statistics show Ralston's population decreased; however, trends explain how that 371 were lost. Table 7's population change column shows that Ralston lost almost 1,000 citizens from its 2000 Census. More importantly, the 20 to 44 age cohorts lost a total of 438 and 213 children moved with them. Over a ten year span between 2002 and 2011, the State of Nebraska vital records show Ralston's natural growth was a positive 274 people. The female child bearing cohort has decreased by 213 in the recent decade. The continued loss of these women is a concern for increasing Ralston's population naturally.

It is difficult to isolate why people out-migrate. A population dip with the 20 to 24 age cohort is typically seen due to post-secondary education or job opportunities. The Child Bearing age cohort has similar life changes in family dynamics, housing needs, and career

changes. The out-migration statistics seems to support the public input that Ralston's young, growing families continue to move out of town as their families grow.

The retiring population appears to be looking to relocate elsewhere. This may be for medical reasons. Public comments pointed to a lack of assisted living or nursing care in the area. With Ralston's growing demographic, investments will need to be made by either the private or public sectors to serve and keep this population. The comment was made that grandparents move to their grandchildren. If Ralston does attract the younger generations, this may drive the market.

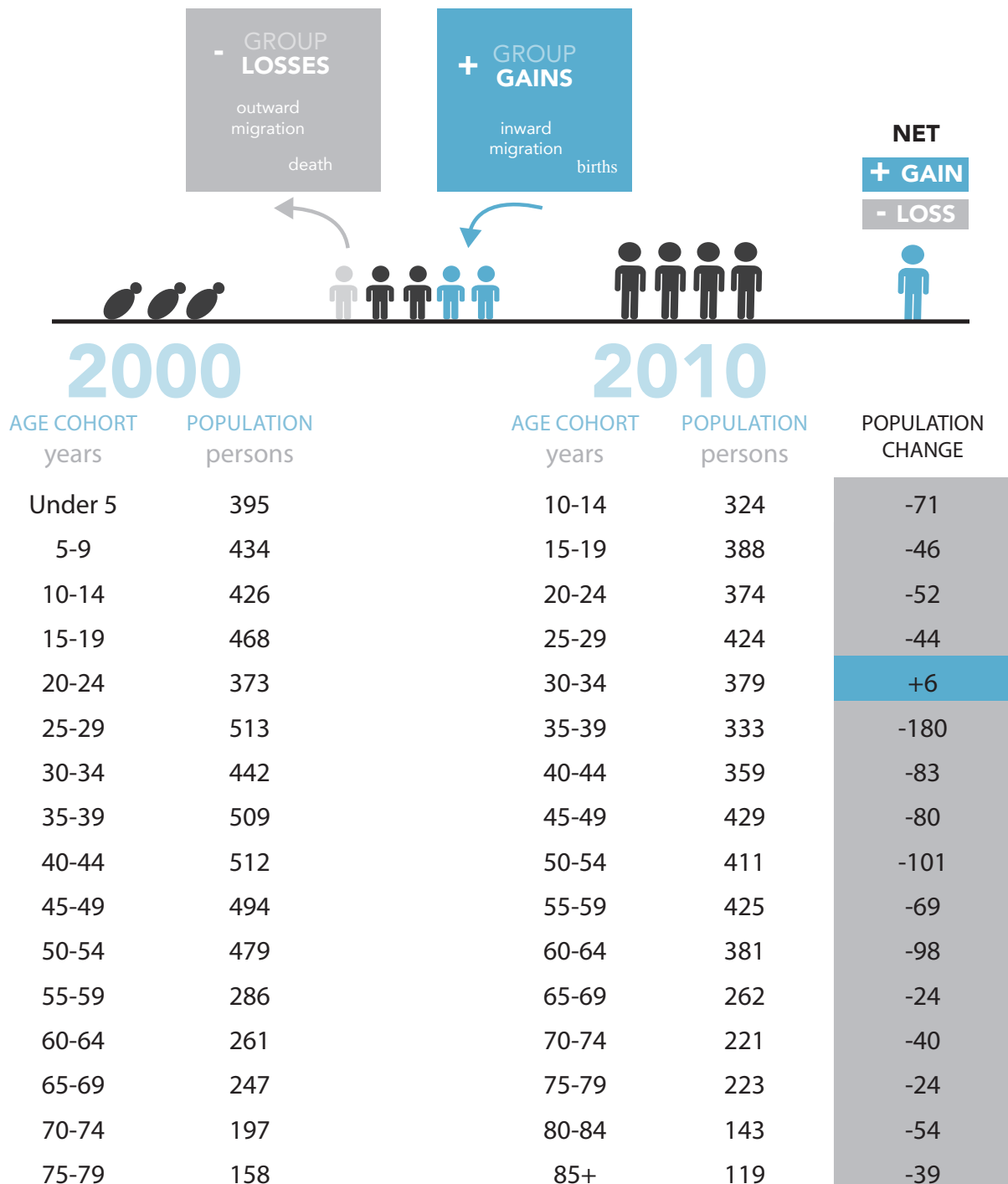
It is obvious that the Baby Boomer population left a large footprint which makes forecasts seem more dreadful than they are. It may be difficult to duplicate similar past statistics, but it is apparent from public input that there is a need to provide options to keep the younger generations in Ralston. Although the age cohort trend exhibits large out-migration of residents, it will help to determine what changes need to be made to alleviate this out-migration and create in-migration.



## Individual Age Cohort Trends

Table 7

## Individual Age Cohort Trends



Source: 2000, 2010 U.S. Census

## Migration

The national trends of aging and racial shifts are expected to change dramatically over the next thirty years. According to the Administration on Aging, one in every eight, or 13.1%, of the population in 2010 is an older American. As discussed previously, the aging Baby Boomer population will result in roughly one of every five Americans will be over the Age of 65 by 2030. The other large change in demographics will be the racial composition of America. The Under 18 demographic is projected to not have a majority before 2020. Also, U.S. Census projections estimate that there will be no majority race by 2043.

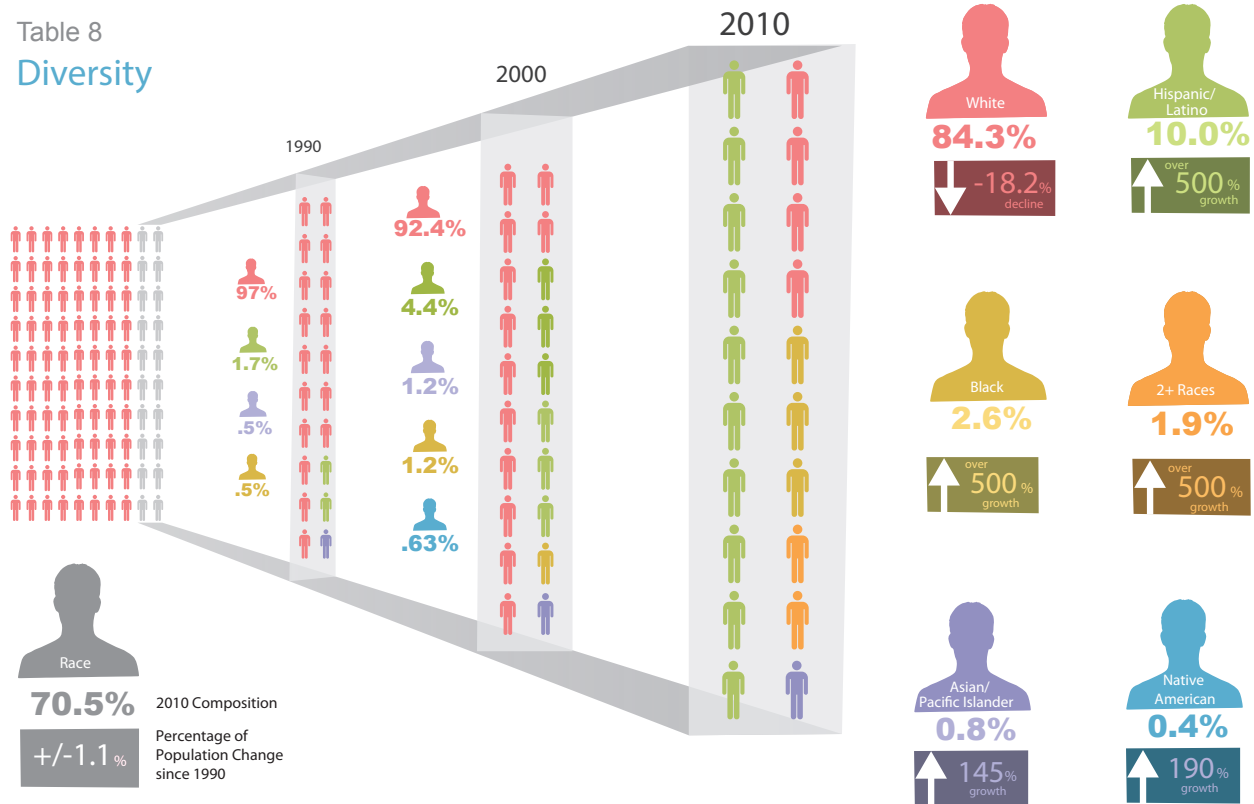
This emerging trend is more evident when comparing the past two decades of racial characteristics in Ralston. As table 8 indicates, new Hispanic and Latino populations have steadily increased to ten percent of Ralston's 2010 population. As discussed before, cohort trends illustrated that child bearing families were out-migrating. This void may have been filled by Hispanic, Latino, and African American populations. Ralston strengthens its position in attracting new residents with this continued period of diversification.

The shift of Ralston's racial composition will need to be continually evaluated to ensure its population's needs are met. This will include a vast majority of public services. As Ralston's population continues to diversify, supporting and marketing to a bilingual workforce will help keep Ralston competitive for these high-demand workers. The Library may become even more important as an informational resource. The Ralston Public School system will continue to address its curriculum as well as workforce. A short term goal should be implemented to encourage a continuous effort to reach out to the the Hispanic and Latino communities. Public information and notices may need to be altered to be inclusive for this shift of demographics as well.



## Migration

Table 8  
Diversity



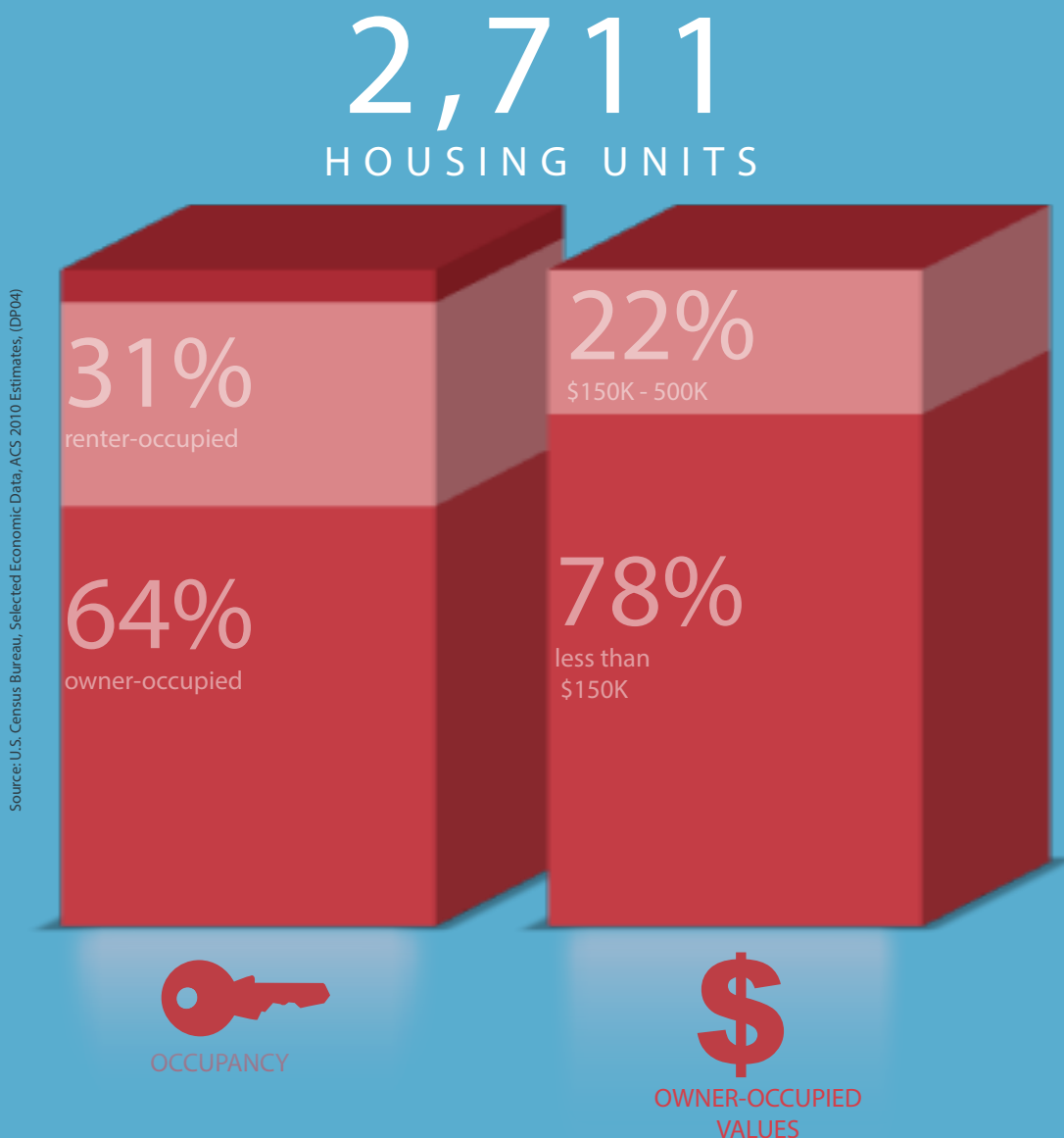
	1990		2000		2010		1990-2010
	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total	Composition Change
White, not Hispanic	6,051	97.03%	5,833	92.38%	5,010	84.30%	-12.73%
Black	30	0.48%	78	1.24%	155	2.61%	2.13%
American Indian and Alaskan Native	11	0.18%	10	0.16%	21	0.35%	0.18%
Asian and Pacific Islander	33	0.53%	76	1.20%	48	0.81%	0.28%
Other, not Hispanic	4	0.06%	40	0.63%	0	0.00%	-0.06%
Two or more races				0.00%	115	1.90%	1.90%
Hispanic or Latino Origin	107	1.72%	277	4.39%	596	10.03%	8.31%
Total Population	6,236	100%	6,314	100%	5,943	100%	0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population and Housing, 1990, 2000, 2010.

## 2.3 HOUSING

Much like the historical population growth of Ralston, its housing stock mirrors this development with the ages of its housing inventory. The 1950s through the 1980s saw substantial growth and residential developments throughout Ralston. Today, those houses have been well-maintained by their owners through the decades. As Ralston's demographics continue to change, its housing needs will follow. This Housing Chapter will focus on the Ralston's current housing stock and past trends.

Table 9  
Selected Housing Demographics





## Housing

All the housing built before 1960 is located on the north side of the railroad and represents a quarter of Ralston's housing stock. Small lots sizes are typical of this era in Ralston's residential development. Ralston's housing unit density is higher than any surrounding community. Therefore, this may lead to difficulties in future redevelopment within neighborhoods due to current setback and lot size standards.

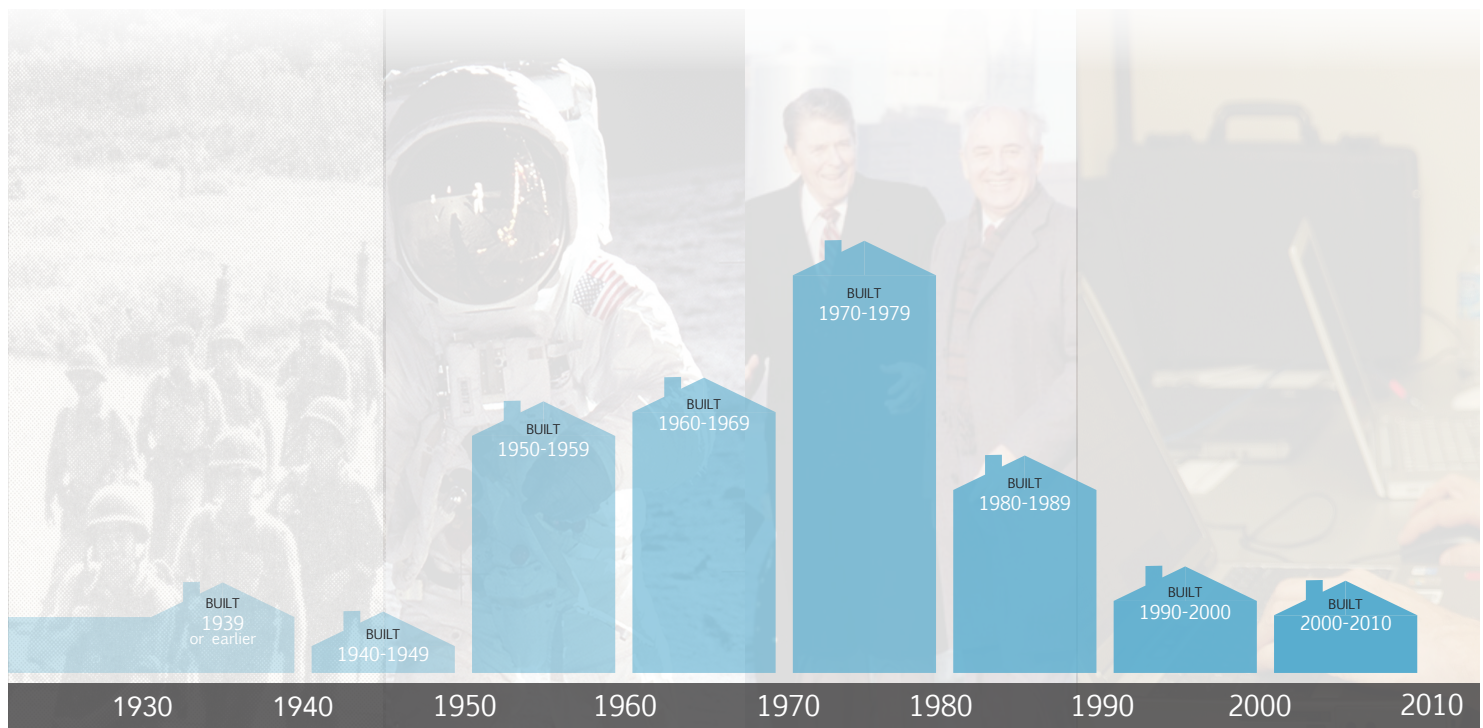
After 1960, the majority of current housing was built in neighborhoods south of Downtown. As shown in table 10, forty-five percent of Ralston's current housing stock was built between the 1970s and 1980s. Over the past twenty years, Ralston did not have the need to redevelop and or diversify its housing stock. The success of Ralston's baby boomer generation contributed

to its stability by staying and taking great care of their properties. This has created a well-maintained community with above average median incomes and maturing families. However, much like its population, the housing inventory is aging with three quarters of their housing stock built before 1980.

It is comprised mainly of 2 to 3 bedroom, single-family housing. The average family size has remained consistent with approximately three people per household but the percentage of family households have declined due to grown children leaving. On the other hand, this 70% of Ralston's housing stock may be too small for the desires of growing families. The 2011 American Community Survey revealed that only 13.8% of the housing units have 4 or more bedrooms.

Table 10

### Housing Stock Ages



## Housing

Table 11

### Housing Trends, 1990-2010

	1990	2000	2010
Persons in Households	6,236	6,314	5,943
Persons per Household - Owner	-	2.65	2.46
Persons per Household - Renter	-	1.99	1.98
Persons per Household	2.65	2.49	2.3
Family Households	1,714	1,698	1,560
Family Household percentage	72.90%	66.90%	60.40%
Family Average Size	3.15	3	2.94

## HOUSEHOLDS

Total Housing Units	2,437	2,601	2,711
Occupied Housing Units	2,351	2,538	2,581
Owner-occupied units	1,708	1,782	1,734
Renter-occupied units	643	756	847
Vacant Housing Units	-	63	130
Owner-occupied vacancy rate	-	0.3	1.2
Renter-occupied vacancy rate	-	4.4	7.3

U.S Census, 1990, 2000, 2010

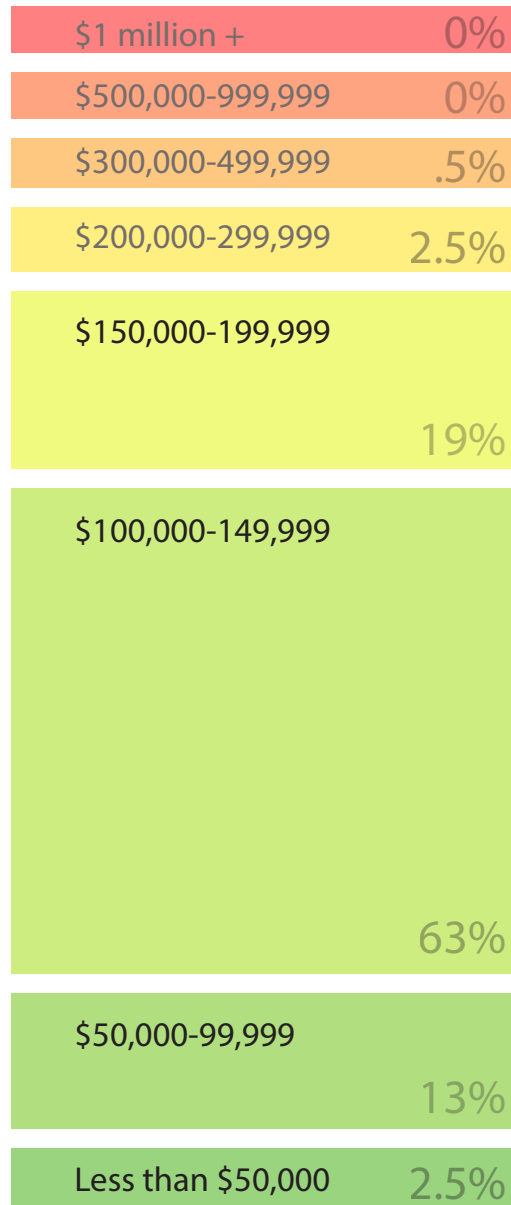
## UNITS

Although for different reasons, Ralston's person per household trend echoes the national statistics of declining household sizes. The 2010 Census also revealed that 67.5%, or 1,741 housing units, of Ralston had one or two person households. The owner-occupied units remained at roughly 1,700 units showing that Ralston added mostly rental units and slowly diversified its housing stock as a result. Due to Ralston's inability to continue building single-family homes, future percentages will continue to favor the renter-occupied units. With the exception of The Colonies, there was not much land to add single-family detached developments within Ralston. Over the next twenty years, the cyclical nature of available housing may increase the number of young families but may not keep them without a larger housing stock available.

Concerns were expressed for the 1,700 owner-occupied single family houses. Ralston wants to keep their high owner-occupied percentage because it signifies investment made by the community. The fear is that this housing stock will become investment properties for absentee owners who do not contribute into the fabric of Ralston's experience. This may lead to less "buy-in" that Ralston has enjoyed over the past twenty years.

## Housing

Table 12  
Values of Owner-Occupied Units



2,581  
TOTAL OWNER OCCUPIED UNITS

2011 American Community Survey, 5 Year Estimates

Public input advised that Ralston houses sell fast. Smaller single family detached housing units, when compared to the current market, have a much lower ceiling in their asking prices. Ralston offers an ideal residential experience within the Omaha area; therefore, this anxiety of who will ultimately purchase its reasonably priced housing units is a legitimate concern.

Regardless of who purchases this large portion of single-family homes, there is going to be a large shift in ownership of Ralston property over the next twenty years. The hope is that the owner-occupied units will retain the previous percentages and preserve the Ralston experience. If the city deems it necessary, programs and policies can be developed to ensure the safety and welfare of its rental properties. For example, requiring annual inspections for investment properties would ensure that absentee owners keep their properties in compliance with city codes and regulations. This could help Ralston maintain its high standard of living and protect property values.

Ralston has an older demographic with a very specific housing type. This has allowed the city to maintain its identity but the future housing needs of the community will be established by this aging demographic. The elderly population may choose to stay in their homes and have home-based medical care over the next ten to twenty years. Ralston desires housing options for a younger demographic; however, trends show that the young professionals do not seek Ralston's typical housing stock. Without ruining Ralston's identity, city officials will need to create an environment for economic developments with housing choices desirable to this young demographic and viable option for developers to redevelop larger homes.

## 2.4 ECONOMICS AND EMPLOYMENT

Ralston's location within the Omaha's Metropolitan Statistical Area gives the City of Ralston economic advantages that few cities could claim. The City of Ralston is in a unique situation to capitalize on these benefits. The following data is collected to understand Ralston's past setting in the surrounding markets, current activity, and to discover its needs and opportunities.

This Economic and Employment Chapter explores Ralston's Income Statistics, Industry Employment, Commuter Trends, and Sales and Fiscal reports.

### Income Statistics

#### Household Income Trend

Income trends can show the buying power of a community. As stated before, population is strongly tied to housing and economics. The following tables both show Ralston's buying power in 1990. This position continued into the 2000s with the highest per capita income. Ralston has since leveled out with the surrounding communities and counties. As Ralston's population growth slowed, so did their economic advantage/growth of their Median Household Income. La Vista, which is not included in the table, had similar income levels but has spiked in the past decade with a median household income of \$57,697.

Table 13 **Income Trends, 1990-2010**

	Ralston	La Vista	Omaha	Douglas County	Sarpy County	Nebraska
1990	15,545	11,217	13,957	14,644	13,284	12,452
2000	23,230	19,612	21,756	22,879	21,985	19,613
2010	27,523	28,457	26,123	28,910	29,212	26,113

U.S. Census 1990, 2000; 2010 ACS 5-year estimates

### PER CAPITA INCOME

	Ralston	La Vista	Omaha	Douglas County	Sarpy County	Nebraska
1990	\$38,625	\$31,836	\$26,927	\$29,857	\$35,575	\$26,016
2000	\$47,252	\$47,280	\$40,006	\$43,209	\$53,804	\$39,250
2010	\$49,685	\$57,697	\$46,230	\$51,878	\$68,280	\$49,342

U.S. Census 1990, 2000; 2006- 2010 American Community Survey 5-year estimates

### MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

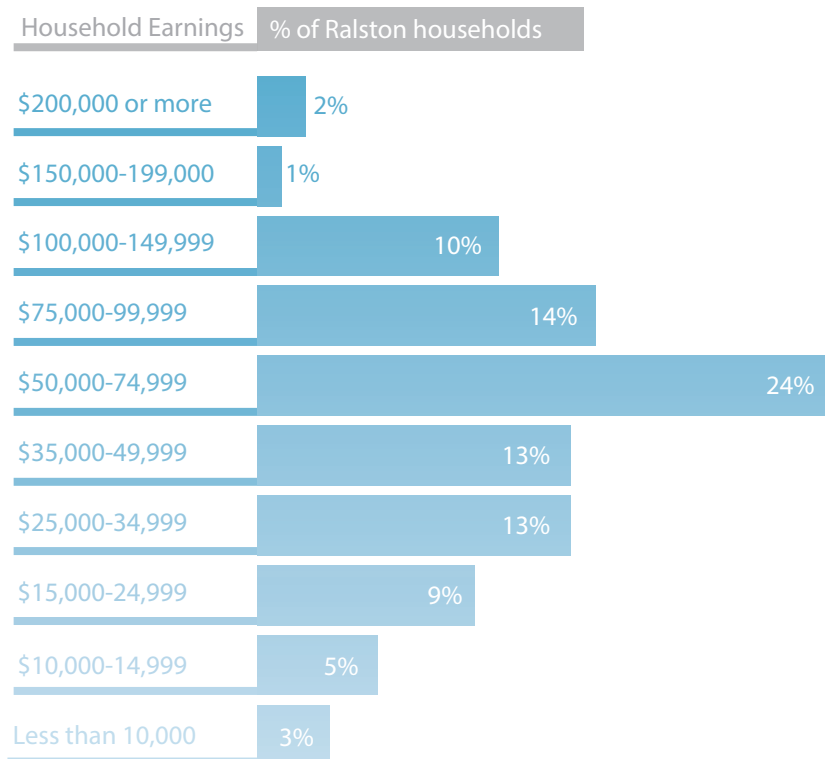


## Economics and Employment

Much like a community's age cohort, communities need to understand its economic composition. This is accomplished by utilizing the American Community Survey. These 5-year estimates give the most recent information available. These estimates are taken from approximately three and half million housing units per year. It is a critical element in the Census Bureau's decennial census program.

The distribution of Ralston's population into income ranges is found below. Ralston's economic household income ranges are very similar to that of Nebraska's, whereas Douglas County has a more evenly spread distribution of \$35,000 to \$149,000.

Table 14  
2011  
Household  
Incomes



Source: \*2007 - 2011 American Community Survey  
Estimates (Margin of Error exists from 31 to 107)



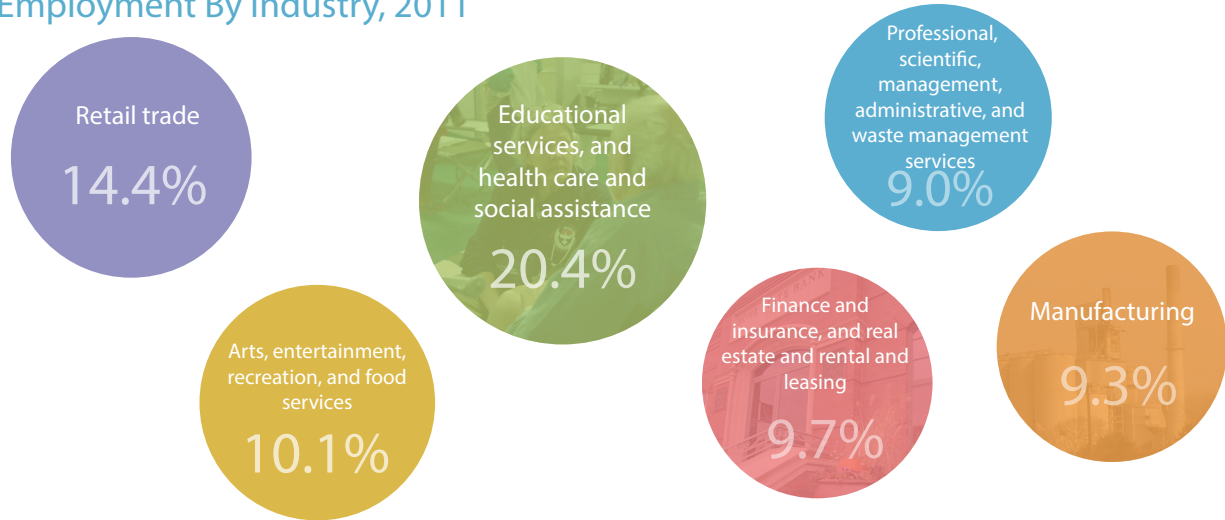
## Industry Employment

As stated in the previous comprehensive plan, Ralston is a fully integrated member of the Omaha metropolitan area. However, Ralston does not have a large independent employment base, assuring that most residents work outside the city's boundaries.

Employment by Industry helps to define a community's labor force. Ralston's local economy is mixed into Omaha area markets. The city can better understand its deficiencies by translating Ralston's current labor force. The previous census revealed similar arrangement of employment. Much like its population in the 2000s, Ralston lost workers aged 16 and older. Manufacturing and wholesale industries lost workers while Arts and Transportation gained slightly.

Table 15

### Employment By Industry, 2011



	Number	% of Total
Educational, health and social services	764	20.4%
Retail trade	539	14.4%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	378	10.1%
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	364	9.7%
Manufacturing	348	9.3%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	335	9.0%
Construction	245	6.6%
Wholesale trade	197	5.3%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	191	5.1%
Other services (except public administration)	180	4.8%
Information	103	2.8%
Public administration	92	2.5%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	0	0.0%

## Employment

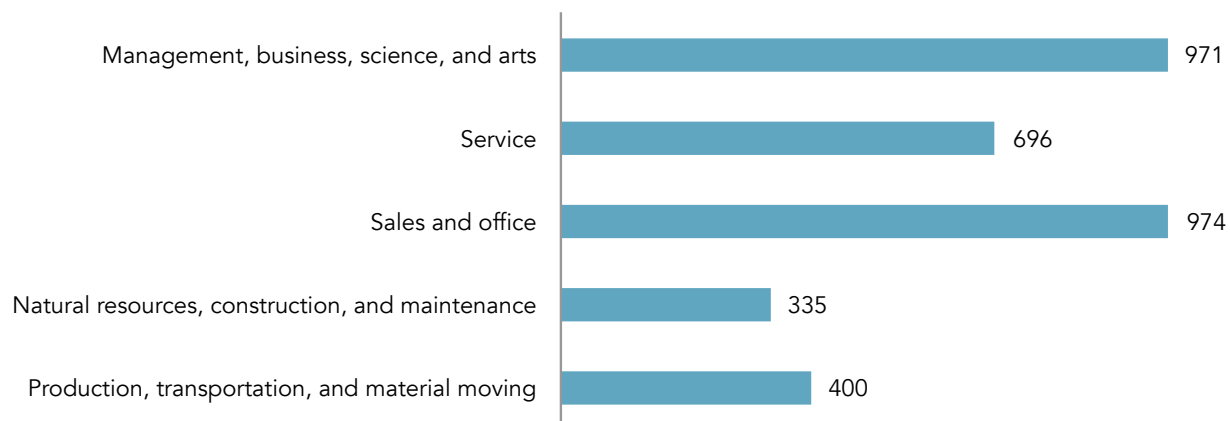
Ralston's current employment has three industries to combine for 45% of its labor force. The highest employment sector is educational services, health care, and social assistance industry at 20.5%. This is consistent with Douglas and Sarpy counties. However, Ralston differs with the Retail trade industry as the second highest industry with 14%. The Arts, entertainment, and recreation industry is the third highest division of workers with 11.4%. Douglas and Sarpy counties have Professional, scientific, management, and admissions as their second largest industries followed by Retail as well as Finance.

Ralston's economic structure is also defined by its occupation type. As stated earlier, Ralston lost population and workers. The largest shifts are represented with the management and service occupations.

Management, business, science, and arts represented 35% of Ralston's 2000 workforce. This group lost 360 workers or 6.8% to be evenly split with the 2010 sales and office occupations. The majority of this percentage loss was gained in the service occupations. The loss of management jobs and higher salaries may help explain part of Ralston's leveling trend of Median Household Income.

Table 16

### Employment By Occupation Type, 2011



## Commuter Trends

Ralston is located in the heart of the Omaha market and has terrific transportation corridors. Omaha's growth to the west has created additional employment opportunities. However, Omaha's downtown is still one of the largest employment centers and may explain why Ralston's mean travel time has not deviated from seventeen minutes since the 1990 Census. With more opportunities available, this travel time could contribute to additional rush hour traffic in order to reach their workplace.

According to the 2011 estimates, the majority of the Ralston workforce travels alone and stays within Douglas County. It is not surprising to find that twenty-two percent of the laborers work in Sarpy County due to its proximity. The current success of infill projects like Aksarben Village and Midtown Crossing will have an ongoing impact to Ralston's commuting time. The potential for Ralston to create its own large-scale infill projects can only benefit its employment base and commuting time of its residents. As compact as Ralston is, there was less than one percent that either walked or used other means to get to work in 2010.

Table 17

### Commuter Trends

	2000		2010	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Workers 16 and over	3,722	100.0%	3,318	100.0%
Car, Truck or Van			3,224	97.2%
Drove Alone	3,273	87.9%	3,009	90.7%
Carpooled	254	6.8%	215	6.5%
in a 2 person carpool			139	4.2%
in a 3 person carpool			53	1.6%
in a 4 person carpool			23	0.7%
Public Transportation	49	2.5%	30	0.9%
Workers per vehicle			1.04	
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	17.6		17.6	

## MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION

Worked in state of residence	3,245	97.8%
Worked in county of residence	2,522	76.0%
Worked outside county of residence	723	21.8%
Worked outside state of residence	73	2.2%

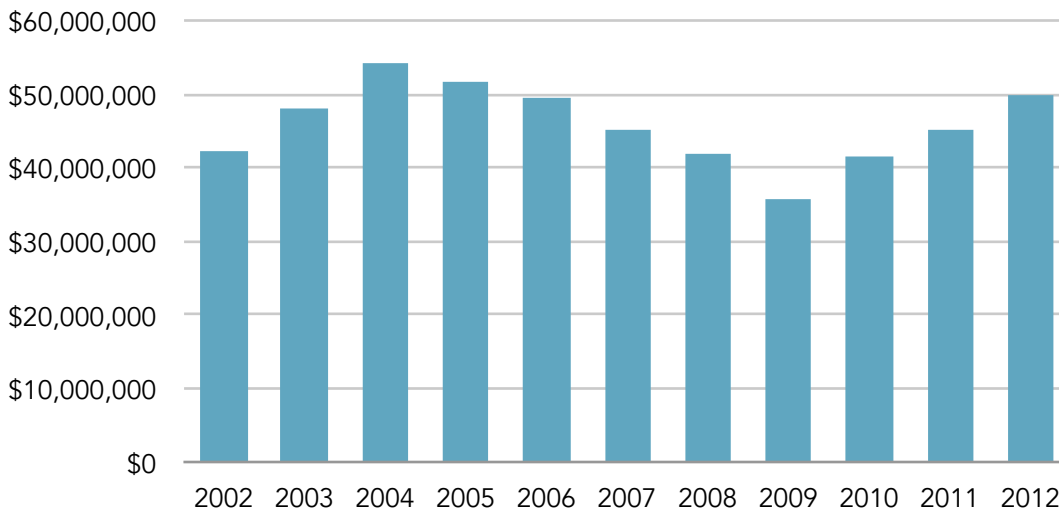
## PLACE OF WORK

2000 U.S. Census, 2011 ACS Estimates

## Sales and Fiscal Profile

Table 18

### Net Taxable Sales Trend



Ralston had some new development along 72nd Street that helped to increase their taxable sales. However, the decline and poor result of 2009 was related to a nationwide financial crisis. This is one example of why comprehensive plans should be continually reviewed and reassessed. This unforeseen event created a widespread economic recession which Ralston could not avoid. However, Ralston has shown that it can quickly rebound. Each of the previous three years have returned the net taxable sales close to its 2004 figures.

Nebraska's Department of Revenue releases monthly reports on the progression or regression of county and cities. These monthly reports show Ralston continuing to

improve from the previous year statistics. As of the September 2013 report, Ralston's average monthly increase was 16.6%. To put that into perspective, the increase between 2009 and 2010 was 16.36%.

It looks as though the entire Omaha area is rebounding well. Most of the cities and counties have consistently had positive sales figures. Papillion had had the largest monthly percentage growth from last year with 49.4%. Omaha and La Vista are averaging 6.0% increases while the state's average is slightly lower at 5.2%. Strategic decisions, such as the Arena, are vital to the city's fiscal health and development. The continued success of increases will help Ralston's economic independence from the Omaha market.



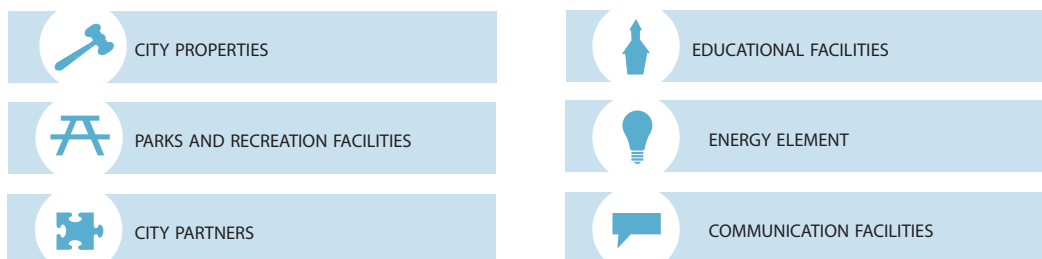
## 2.5 PUBLIC FACILITIES AND UTILITIES

State and local governments provide a variety of services to the public. This chapter will discuss the existing conditions of its buildings, utilities and services of Ralston. The goal of public facilities or services is to offer social, cultural, educational, and recreational opportunities. The public's safety and well-being is a priority of city hall, law enforcement, and fire protection. It is important for Ralston to evaluate its current facilities and services in order to properly project its future needs.

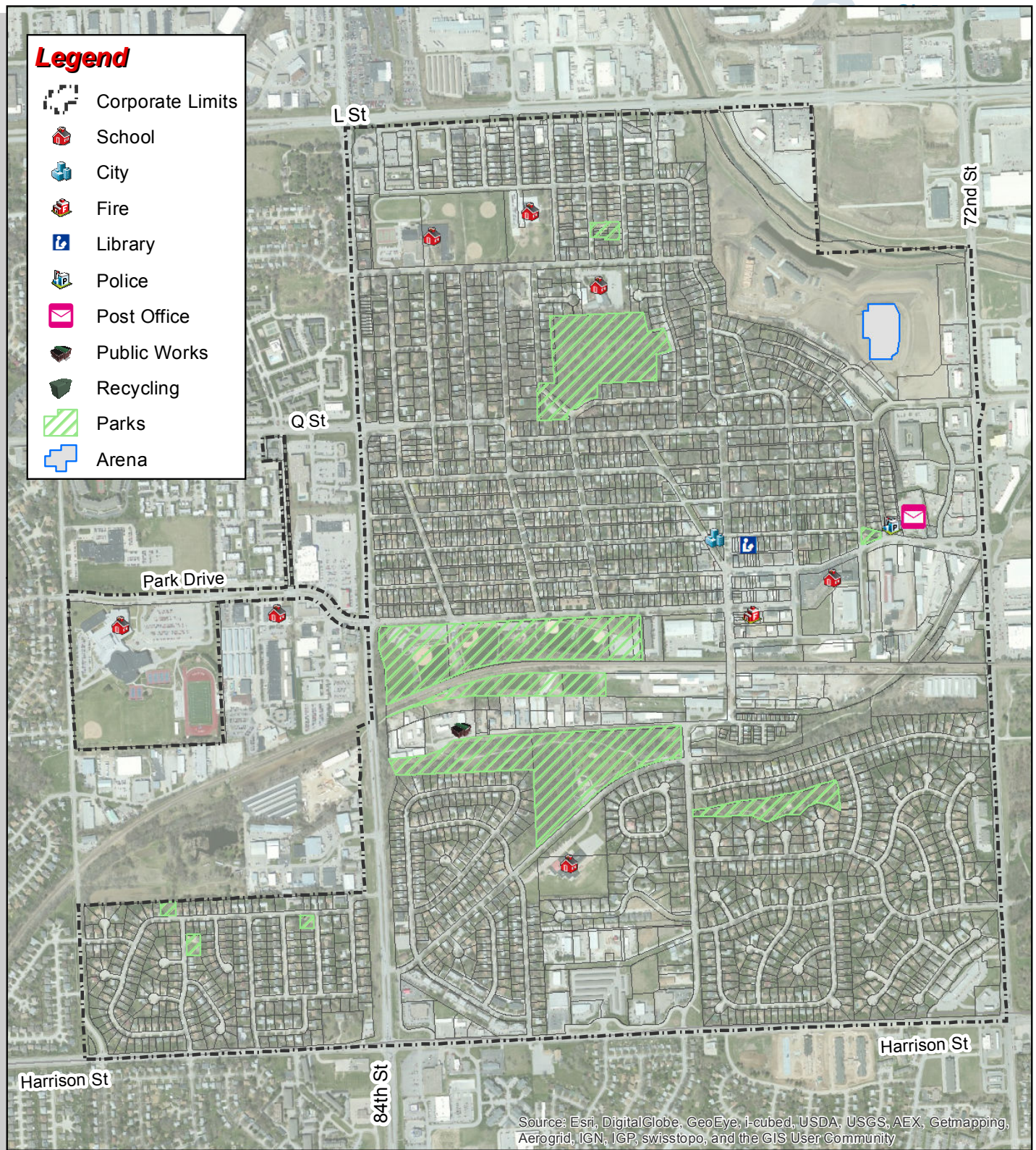
City departments shoulder a large burden of responsibility to the public. Ralston, much like the entire Omaha metro area, has a high standard of living and certain expectations are made from this. As discussed in previous chapters, the median household income and the home values have leveled off. Therefore, it becomes difficult for a city to provide the same level of service with rising expenses due to inflation, additional services, and investments. Ralston has continued to meet its fiscal challenges while maintaining its high level of service and investing in its future with the Ralston Arena.

The comprehensive plan process allows the citizens to engage with decision-making and help prioritize future investments. Alternatively, there are some services not provided by the local or state governments but are provided by non-governmental, private or non-profit organizations for the community. These organizations are equally important providers of services to the community and therefore should not be overlooked. The city will need to continue to search for solutions to its long-term needs. The increasing demand for public-private partnerships will become evident as the proposed redevelopments will be discussed in the Achieve Section.

Community Facilities will be divided into the following:







**HDR**

## City of Ralston Douglas County, Nebraska

### Public Facilities Map Figure 1

Created By: SMS  
Date: August 2013  
Revised: Jan 2014  
Software: ArcGIS 10.2  
File: 121169



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Community Facilities CITY PROPERTIES



The City of Ralston has a well-maintained website that informs the public of city meetings, local events, and important connections to various partners of the community.

#### City Hall

Public services are operated out of City Hall which is located in the heart of Ralston at 5500 S. 77th St. The City Hall employs four workers along with the elected mayor. City staff that keep Ralston running smoothly are the city clerk, deputy clerk, deputy treasurer, and administrative assistant. The focus group and public meetings continually praised the hard work of the city staff. As residential and commercial development continues in Ralston, the additional workload will need to be addressed in order to continue its high standard of service.

#### Ralston Police Department

Visitors are welcomed by the police department on Main Street as they enter Ralston from the east. The Police Department has thirteen sworn officers and two administrative staff. The Department continuously involves itself with the community and offers various services for assisting the health and welfare of Ralston.

The police department offers an investigations unit, K9 unit, school resource division, bike patrol, as well as a patrol division. These are some of the tools used to fulfill the goals and vision of Ralston.



## Community Facilities PUBLIC DEPARTMENTS



### Public Works

Public Works is located at 8220 Serum Avenue in the Industrial area south of the railroad. This department is in charge of streets, sewer, and transportation. Each focus group spoke of the speed and efficient service of snow plowing the city streets. The city hires seasonal workers to help with the upkeep of Ralston.

Much like City Hall, people are very comfortable with the workers and services. It is prudent to state the need to increase public works staff and equipment with additional development, population, and infrastructure. In one of the meetings, it was mentioned that a new city storage building would be appropriate to evaluate.

### Hollis and Helen Baright Public Library

The Library is located across the street from the City Hall at 5555 South 77th Street. This downtown library is constantly busy with a steady stream of visitors.

It is a place for education, technology, as well as a public gathering place. It offers a variety of services to the citizens of Ralston. The public can take advantage of interlibrary loans through Omaha Public Library if necessary. Wi-Fi is offered in the library and is noticeably used and appreciated.

The importance of the library to the future of Ralston should not be overlooked. This facility will continue to be a collecting spot for visitors and residents alike. Investing in energy efficiency during renovations will be needed as services expand with a larger population.





### Ralston Arena

Ralston's commitment to its future can be represented in the Ralston Arena. This city-owned property gives the community a state of the art facility to hold first-class events. It has many contracts to hold sporting events in this venue to draw a wider audience from outside of Ralston. Tradeshows and Banquets can also be held here for additional options for vendors.

This site holds great potential to bring the Ralston community together. It may be used for local events such as the Arena's free public skating event. This has become a popular event since its infancy.

The expenses to maintain this large facility will become a priority. Continued investment in the latest technologies and energy efficiency will become vital for success over the next twenty years.



25.5 acres

200,000 gross square feet

7,718 square feet banquet space and lobby

3,500 seat venue

Projected to hold:  
Over 150 events per year  
Over 350,000 in attendance





Community Facilities RALSTON ARENA



Community Facilities PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES



Parks and Recreation

There are currently eight public parks within Ralston totaling 73.5 acres. The following gives basic information on each park. Detailed individual reports are found in the Achieve Section.

Facilities	Location	Acres	Amenities
Ralston Park	7700 Park Drive	21.7	2 larger ball fields, 2 smaller ball fields, 2 large parking lots, 1 smaller lot, large playground area with equipment, two large picnic areas, 2 sets of restrooms, 2 concessions stand
Wildewood Park	S. 81th St. and Ralston Ave	23.7	Restroom with sheltered roof, small picnic area, large playground equipment, sand volleyball, part of Trail system
Oak Park	S. 79th Ave & Park Lane	15.1	Large Pavilion, restrooms, picnic areas, wide trail path
Leo Adams Park	S. 78 <sup>th</sup> and Lakeview St.	1.1	Small picnic shelter, medium sized playground equipment
Ponderosa Park	S. 78 <sup>th</sup> and Washington St.	4.2	Sidewalk surrounding the green space, swings and playground area; lighted horseshoe pits
Fairview Park	S. 85 <sup>th</sup> and Monroe	0.4	Two picnic table areas, various educational playground equipment
Woodbine Parks	6600 S. 87 <sup>th</sup> St.	0.8	North lot: open green space, two picnic table areas South lot: covered picnic shelter, playground equipment, open green space, basketball
Koch Park	S. 75 <sup>th</sup> and Main St.	0.1	Benches to sit, open green space
Soccer Complex	S. 80th and Serum Drive	6.4	Limited public access, three soccer fields, concession stand and storage





## Community Facilities CITY PARTNERS



The City is not alone in servicing the community. Its success and achievements would not be possible without the dedication of Ralston's City Partners. The investment and history of the city's partners show their commitment to the community. Both the Ralston Volunteer Fire Department & Rescue Squad as well as the Ralston Public School system are located inside Ralston but serve more than just the corporate limits of Ralston.

The Chamber of Commerce is located in the basement of City Hall and continues the push for economic development in the area. The Chamber of Commerce has the potential to extend far beyond the boundaries of Ralston through marketing and network building. Ralston's Chamber of Commerce currently has a large number of members, many who work and live outside the community. The continued efforts to maintain these business relationships will have a decisive impact of the future of Ralston. For further information, the City of Ralston's website has links to each partner's website.





### Fire Department - Ralston Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad

The Fire station is located at 7629 Park Drive the Fire Department has been serving the surrounding community since 1932. This volunteer fire and rescue department is a great sense of pride and importance to Ralston residents. Their commitment to the community should be admired and celebrated.

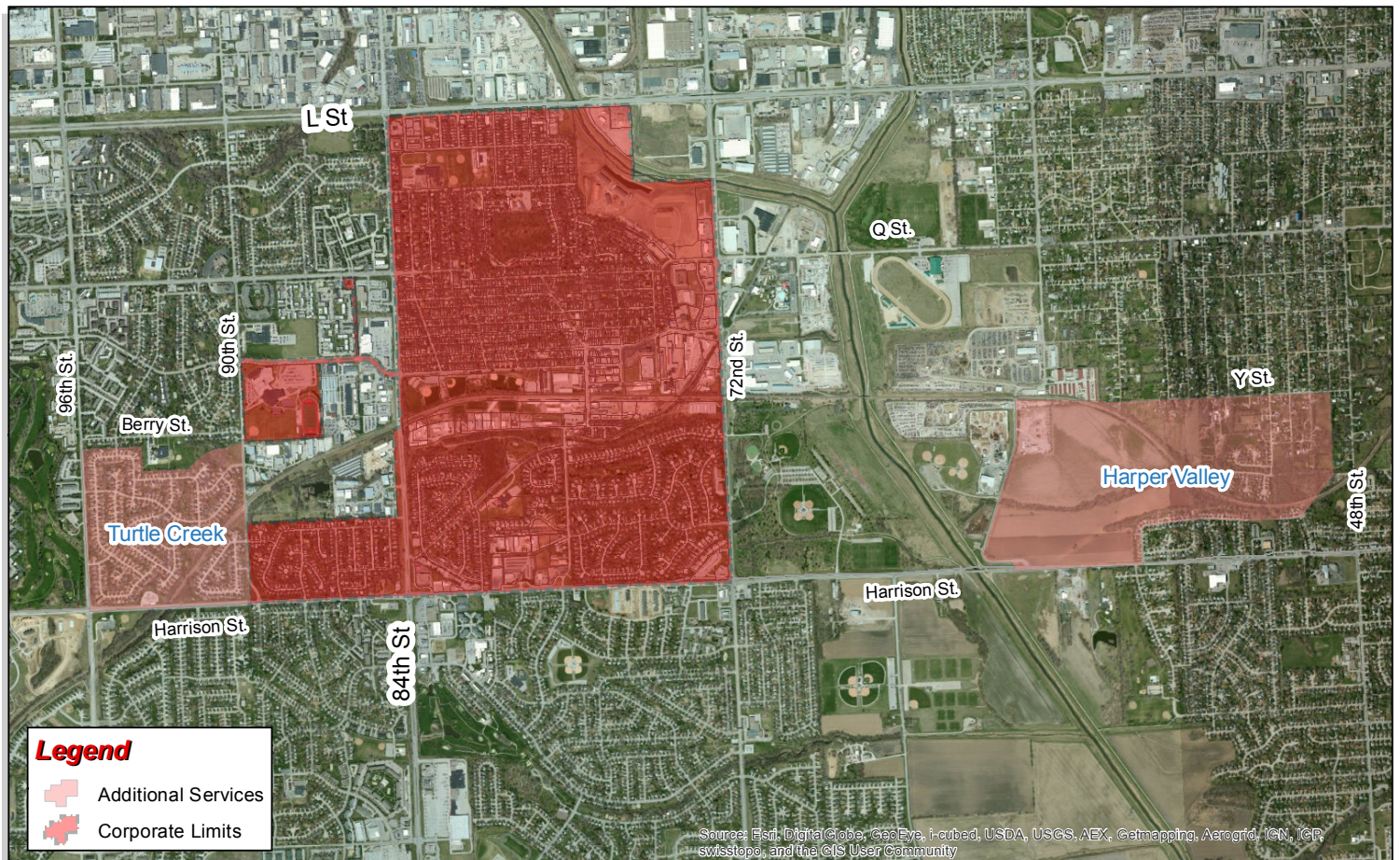
The City of Ralston contracts with Ralston Fire & Rescue to provide fire suppression and advanced life support EMS. Ralston also have a yearly contract with the Turtle Creek Sanitary Improvement District (SID) and Harper Valley subdivision. There are six officers, eight administrative officers, and 43 fire fighters with numerous explorers and retired veterans listed on their website.

The inventory currently lists a 2002 Spartan Precision Pumper as an available Rescue and Engine. They alternate monthly between the two Front Line Seagrave Engines. The 1998 Seagrave Engine has 1250 gpm and 750 gallons while the 1993 model has 1500 gpm and 1000 gallons. There is a 1990 brush truck available for grass fires. The rescue squad fleet includes two ambulances, a 2002 Road Rescue and 2010 Braun, equipped with Advanced Life Support. A 1997 Ford F-350 and 2008 Ford Crown Victoria are the two utility vehicles in the fleet. The two command vehicles are a 2001 Chevrolet Suburban and a 2014 Chevrolet Tahoe.





Community Facilities VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT



**City of Ralston**  
**Douglas County, Nebraska**

**Ralston Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad**  
**Figure 2**

Created By: SMS  
Date: August 2013  
Revised: January 2014  
Software: ArcGIS 10.1  
File: 121169



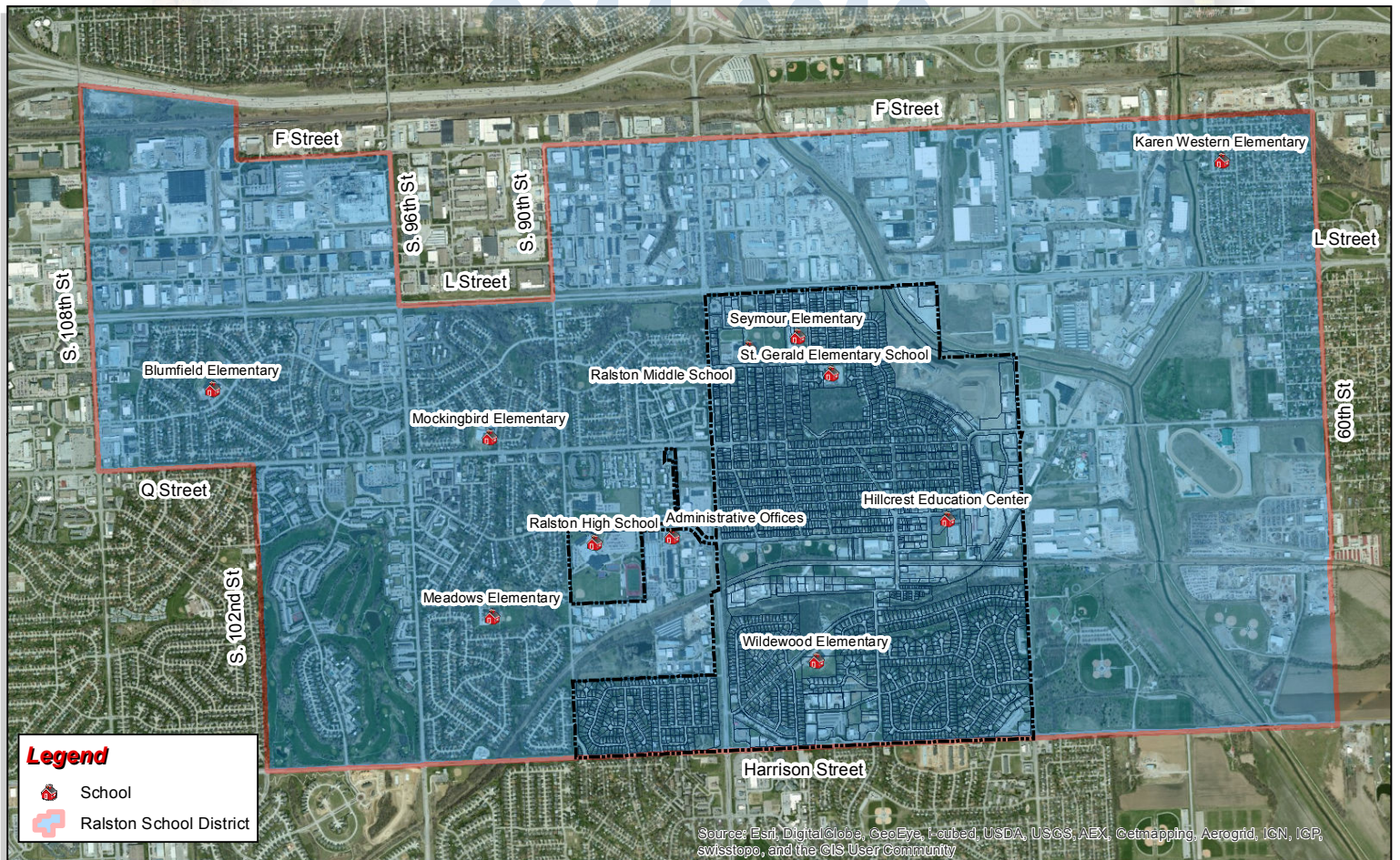
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# Ralston Public Schools



## City of Ralston Douglas County, Nebraska

Ralston Public School District  
and St. Gerald Elementary  
Figure 3

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File: 121169



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## Education Facilities

## K-12 SCHOOLS

School Name	Location	Dec 2012 Enrollment
Blumfield Elementary	10310 Mockingbird Drive	402
Karen Western Elementary	6224 H. Street	141
Meadows Elementary	9225 Berry Street	274
Mockingbird Elementary	5100 S. 93rd Street	374
Seymour Elementary	4900 S. 79th St.	205
Wildewood Elementary	8071 Ralston Avenue	263
Ralston Middle School	8202 Lakeview Street	498
Ralston High School	8545 Park Drive	954
<b>Total</b>		<b>3,111</b>
St. Gerald Elementary School	7857 Lakeview St.	415

## POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Facility	Location	Enrollment	Miles from Ralston
University of Nebraska - Omaha	Omaha, NE	15,364	5.1
Creighton University	Omaha, NE	7,700	8.7
Metro Community College	La Vista, NE	36,881	2.9
College of Saint Mary's	Omaha, NE	942	3.1
Grace University	Omaha, NE	438	8.5
Bellevue University	Bellevue	9,942	9
ITT Technical Institute - Omaha	Omaha, NE		9.6
University of Nebraska Medical Center	Omaha, NE	3,655	6.6
Nebraska Christian College	Omaha, NE		8.8
Nebraska Methodist College	Omaha, NE	900	5.9
University of Nebraska - Lincoln	Lincoln, NE	24,207	52.3













## Communications Inventory

### TELEVISION STATIONS

KBIN - PBS (32-1)  
KETV - ABC (Channel 7-1)  
KMTV - CBS (3-1)  
KPTM - FOX (Channel 42-1)  
KUON - PBS (Channel 12-1)  
KXVO - CW (15-1)  
KYNE - PBS (Channel 26-1)  
WOWT - NBC (Channel 6-1)

Source: www.dtv.gov

### PRIVATE SERVICE PROVIDERS

	Cable / Satellite Television	Telephone	Internet
Cox Communications			
Direct TV			
Dish Network			
Century Link			
Comcast / Xfinity			

### NEWSPAPERS

Omaha World Herald  
Ralston Recorder  
Ashland Gazette  
Bellevue Leader  
Gretna Breeze  
La Vista Sun  
Papillion Times  
Wahoo Newspaper  
Waverly News

### RADIO STATIONS

KWMT - 540 AM	KZOT - 1180 AM	KFFF - 93.3 FM
WNAX - 570 AM	KFOR - 1240 AM	KQCH - 94.1 FM
WIBW - 580 AM	KOIL - 1290 AM	KRRR - 95.1 FM
KXSP - 590 AM	KHUB - 1340 AM	KISO - 96.1 FM
KCSP - 610 AM	KLIN - 1400 AM	KZKX - 96.9 FM
WOI - 640 AM	KOTK - 1420 AM	KBLR - 97.3 FM
KCRO - 660 AM	KOMJ - 1490 AM	KBBX - 97.7 FM
KFEQ - 680 AM	KLNG - 1560 AM	KQKQ - 98.5 FM
WHB - 810 AM	KNCY - 1600 AM	KGOR - 99.9 FM
KTIC - 840 AM	KOZN - 1620 AM	KGBI - 100.7 FM
KRVN - 880 AM	KMLV - 88.1 FM	KOOO - 101.9 FM
KJSK - 900 AM	KLCV - 88.5 FM	KVSS - 102.7 FM
KYFR - 920 AM	KYFG - 88.9 FM	KXKT - 103.7 FM
KMA - 960 AM	KIWR - 89.7 FM	KSRZ - 104.5 FM
KMMQ - 1020 AM	KZLW - 90.1 FM	KKCD - 105.9 FM
WHO - 1040 AM	KVNO - 90.7 FM	KFRX - 106.3 FM
KOAK - 1080 AM	KIOS - 91.5 FM	KOPW - 106.9 FM
KFAB - 1110 AM	KEZO - 92.3 FM	KBBK 107.3 FM

Source: www.radio-locator.com

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## 2.6 ENERGY ELEMENT

The purpose of an energy component within comprehensive plans allows the opportunity to prepare Ralston for future energy needs. Nebraska Legislation LB997 states that public jurisdictions are required to include an energy component into their comprehensive plans. It allows residents to be informed of its energy use, costs, and consequences. This document will be added as the Energy Element for Ralston's obligation for its completed Comprehensive Plan.

### NEBRASKA LEGISLATION LB997



According to LB997, there are three main components. These three components include the following:

- 1 Energy infrastructure and energy use by sector, including residential, commercial, and industrial sectors.

Energy infrastructure and energy use by sector for Ralston is found in the statistics section of the Energy Element document.

- 2 Utilization of renewable energy sources.

Energy source statistics are not available for Ralston, however there is a list found in the Renewable Energy Sources section of this document that shows what is possible in Nebraska.

## Energy Element



## 3 Energy conservation measures that benefit the community.

Energy Codes –

Under §§81-1608 to 81-1616, the State of Nebraska has adopted the International Energy Conservation Code as the Nebraska Energy Code. Any community or county may adopt and enforce the Nebraska Energy Code or an equivalent energy code. If a community or county does not adopt an energy code, the Nebraska Energy Office will enforce the Nebraska Energy Code in the jurisdiction.

Energy Codes –

The purpose of the Code, under §81-1608, is to ensure that newly built houses or buildings meet uniform energy efficiency standards. The statute finds:

that there is a need to adopt the . . . International Energy Conservation Code in order (1) to ensure that a minimum energy efficiency standard is maintained throughout the state, (2) to harmonize and clarify energy building code statutory references, (3) to ensure compliance with the National Energy Policy Act of 1992, (4) to increase energy savings for all Nebraska consumers, especially low-income Nebraskans, (5) to reduce the cost of state programs that provide assistance to low-income Nebraskans, (6) to reduce the amount of money expended to import energy, (7) to reduce the growth of energy consumption, (8) to lessen the need for new power plants, and (9) to provide training for local code officials and residential and commercial builders who implement the . . . International Energy Conservation Code.

The Code applies to all new buildings, or renovations of or additions to any existing buildings. Only those renovations that will cost more than 50 percent of the replacement cost of the building must comply with the Code.

As of December 2013, Ralston has not adopted an energy code. If a community does not adopt an energy code, the Nebraska Energy Office will enforce the Nebraska Energy Code in the jurisdiction.

## Energy Element



### Energy Usage Statistics Consumption by Source

In the Electric Power Sector, Nebraska's Energy Consumption in 2009 consisted of mainly two sources. 68.61% (242.326 Trillion Btu) of consumption came from coal while the second highest use was 27.94% (3.326 TBtu) generated by Nuclear Electric Power.

According to the 2009 EIA State-Level Energy Consumption statistics, Nebraska was ranked 34th in total consumption with 759.1 Trillion Btu. This consumption per person in Nebraska is 9th highest with 422.9 Million Btu. The upper Midwest Region is represented poorly for consumption per person with Wyoming, North Dakota, Iowa, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Montana in the top ten. However, this is due to the rural and agricultural nature of these states. Therefore, they are found with the lowest prices in the top ten for Dollars per Million Btu with the exception of Montana being 20th.

The agricultural economies and cheap prices lead to high energy consumption per person. When this level of production is needed, it can result in less urgency to conserve these resources. It becomes a way of life and hard to change course with both isolated farmers as well as urban citizens who have low and affordable public prices. Nebraska's energy consumption by source as it compares to the United States in 2010 is shown below.

Table 19 2010 Energy Consumption

Consumption in Trillion Btu (US State Rank)	
Coal	254.6TBtu (#31)
Natural Gas	169.6 TBtu (#38)
Petroleum	222.1 TBtu (#36)
Retail Electricity Sales	101.8 TBtu (#36)
Total	1,429 TBtu

## NEBRASKA CONSUMPTION BY SOURCE

Consumption Per Capita (US State Rank)	
Nebraska	461.1 (#8)
United States	315.9

## CONSUMPTION PER CAPITA



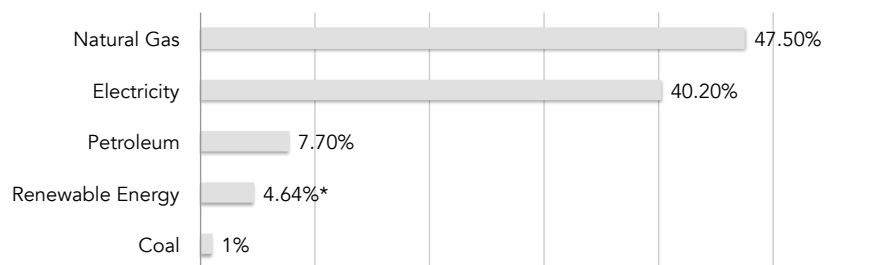
## Energy Element



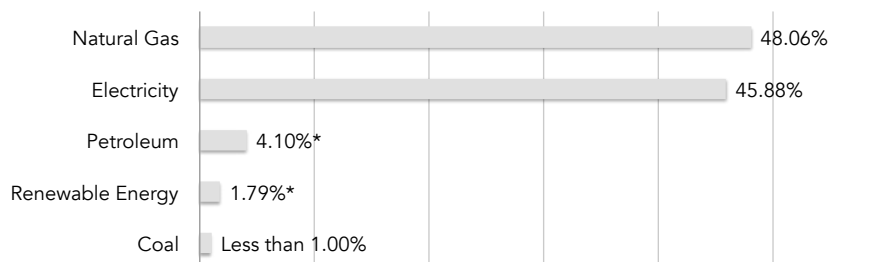
## Consumption by End User

The Nebraska Energy Office compiles statistics on energy consumption in the state by sector. In 2007 the Nebraska Energy Office compiled the following Nebraska Energy Consumption per Residential, Commercial and Industrial Sectors:

Table 20 2007 Nebraska Energy Usage

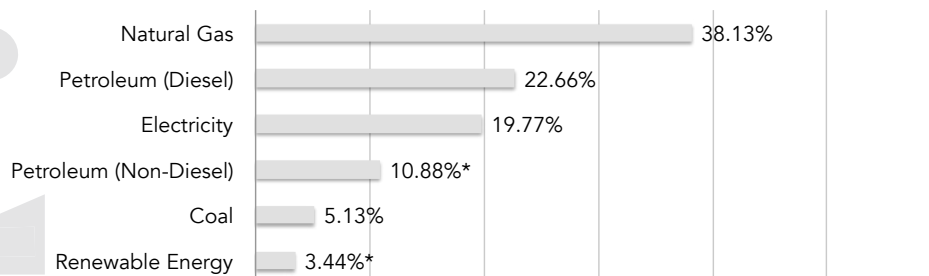


\*Renewable Energy: 4.64% (wood 4.38; geothermal 0.22; solar 0.04)



\*Petroleum: 4.1% (diesel fuel 1.65; propane 1.58; motor gasoline 0.88; kerosene 0.01)

\*Renewable Energy: 1.79% (geothermal 0.92; wood 0.85; ethanol 0.02)



\*Petroleum: 10.88% (asphalt and road oil 3.82; propane 3.51; motor gasoline 2.33; residual fuel 0.19; lubricants 0.14; kerosene 0.01; other petroleum 0.88)

\*Renewable Energy: 3.44% (wood/wood waste 3.38; ethanol 0.06)

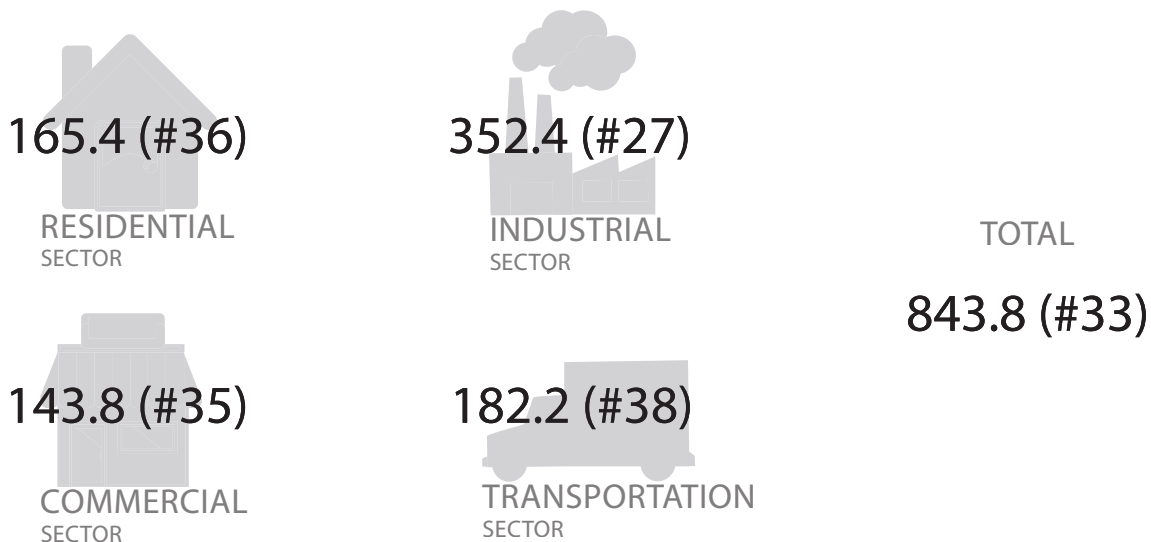
Energy Element



Nebraska's energy consumption by end-user sector as it compares to the United States in 2010 is shown in Table 31. This information was compiled by the United States Energy Information Administration (EIA).

Table 21 2010 Energy Consumption by End-Use Sector

Units Trillion Btu (State Ranking)



Local Utility Provider

The City of Ralston serves its citizens affordable utilities by purchasing energy from Omaha Public Power District. Additional energy costs and continued investment into the Arena's energy usage will be important. The City should continue to invest in the updates to other municipal buildings, especially the Library which is extensively used by the public. It can be helpful to report annual costs during the comprehensive plan reviews. Most of Ralston's energy usage will be a result of single family detached housing. Future promotions and potential inspections can reiterate the importance of energy usage by the public.

Recycling Programs

Recycling in Ralston is promoted through private waste haulers. Citizens are encouraged to support these efforts and recycle whatever consumables they can.



## Additional Information and Documentation

### Nebraska's Energy Plan

In 2011, the Nebraska Energy Office released the Nebraska Energy Plan which provides strategies for the state to consider in meeting their three objectives:

- Ensure access to affordable and reliable energy for Nebraskans to use responsibly
- Advance implementation and innovation of renewable energy in the state
- Reduce petroleum consumption in Nebraska's transportation sector

This short and information-packed document is full of examples and future plans of how the State of Nebraska is advancing our diversity of energy sources while maintaining low-cost and reliable energy to its citizens. [neo.ne.gov/Energyplan2011.pdf](http://neo.ne.gov/Energyplan2011.pdf)

### Energy Saving Tips

The Nebraska Energy Office has listed ways to save money on energy bills for the home, farm, business, and vehicles. Options for energy savings can be found on the Office's web site at [neo.ne.gov/tips/tips.htm](http://neo.ne.gov/tips/tips.htm). Ralston residents and businesses are encouraged to learn more and take advantage of these conservation measures.

On their homepage, [www.nppd.com](http://www.nppd.com), Nebraska Public Power District has a "Save Energy Section" which has more informational energy tips and incentives for your home and business. There is also information on renewable energy and net metering. NPPD operates in almost every county in Nebraska and is a great resource to use.

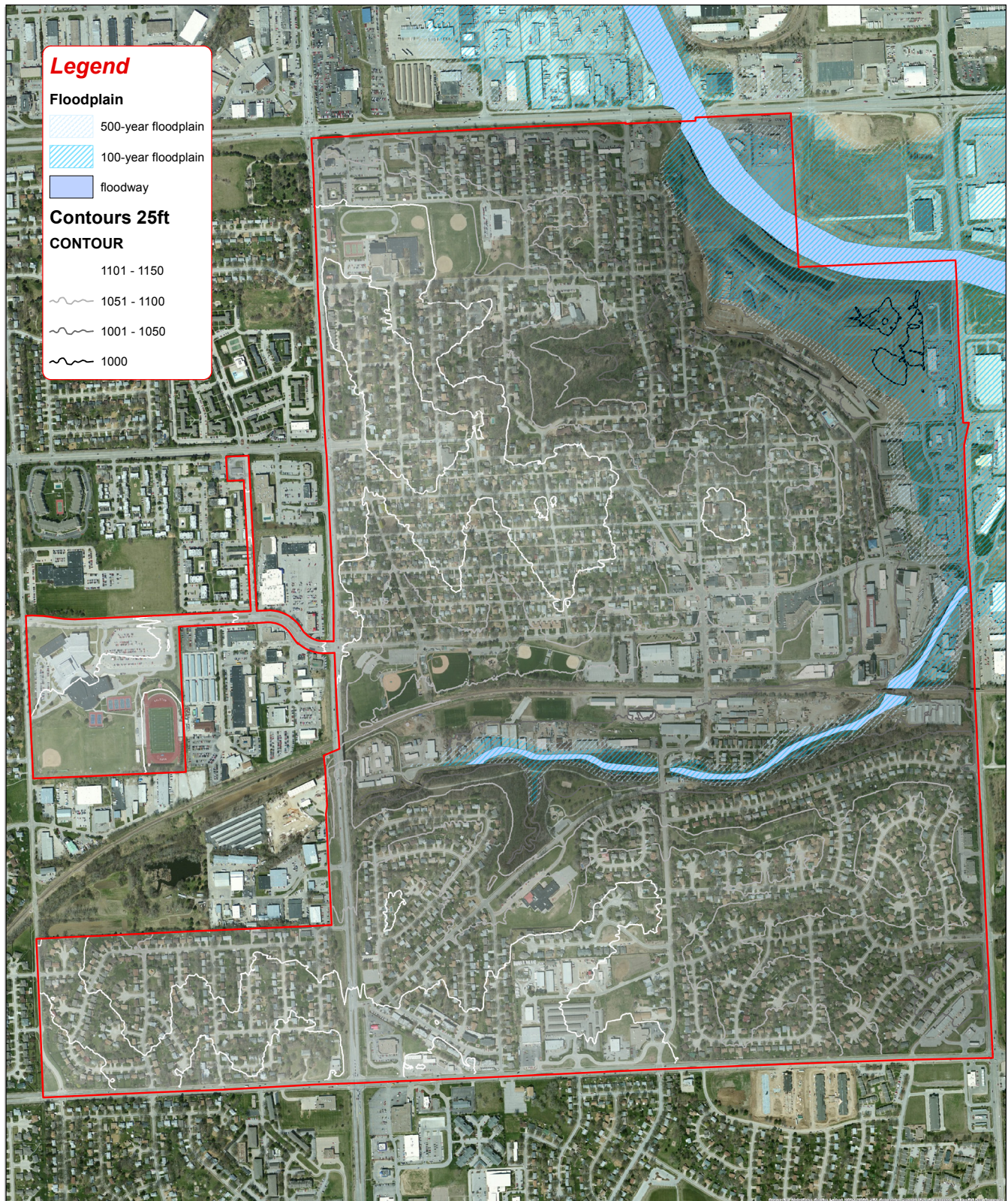
## 2.7 NATURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

George Miller originally established this area of Ralston prior to urban development. He supplied his large suburban estate with a mass planting of various trees. The history of this rural planting can still be appreciated with the mature trees throughout Ralston's corporate limits.

The terrain and slopes of the Ralston corporate limits contain drastic elevation changes for such a compact city. The slopes of Ralston can be experienced when walking from Ralston Park to Oak Park along South 79th or 80th Streets.

The City of Ralston is comprised of urbanized land with the soil types that are generally found on developed properties. The slight differences in the urban soil types can be found in conjunction with the slopes and possible runoff that occurs. Along the Ralston Trail and Wildewood Park, the low lying soil is categorized as Pohocco-Judson silt loams with 11 to 40 percent slopes. The soils along the Big Papio Creek near The Oaks at Lakeview apartment complex and Ralston Arena was categorized as Kennebec silt loam, occasionally flooded. This particular development area required infill and precautions to account for the 100-year floodplain. The mapping of the contour lines and 100-year floodplain have since changed from this official floodplain map shown. The floodway is depicted on the map and shows natural area which Ralston developed portions of their trail system.





# **City of Ralston** **Natural and Environmental Conditions** **Figure 4**

Created By: MBG  
Date: August 2013  
Revised: Jan 2014  
Software: ArcGIS 10.1  
File: 121169.00



This map was prepared using information from record drawings supplied by JEO and/or other applicable city, county, federal, or public or private entities. JEO does not guarantee the accuracy of this map or the information used to prepare this map. This is not a scaled plot.



## 2.8 EXISTING LAND USE

This section of the Plan explains the current development patterns and land use types found in Ralston. In order for a community to plan for future land uses and land use changes, knowledge of existing land uses must be established.

Land uses and properties do not have to be arranged in a 1:1 ratio with one land use per parcel. Uses are often mingled within a development, and can be stacked on each other, such as in a Downtown building that is used for residential uses on upper floors and commercial uses on the ground floor.

The number and type of land uses found in a vibrant community is constantly changing to meet the needs and desires of residents, which can produce a number of impacts that either benefit or detract from the overall sense of community and quality of life. Because of this, the success and sustainability of a community is directly influenced by the manner in which available resources are utilized given the constraints the city faces during the course of the planning period.

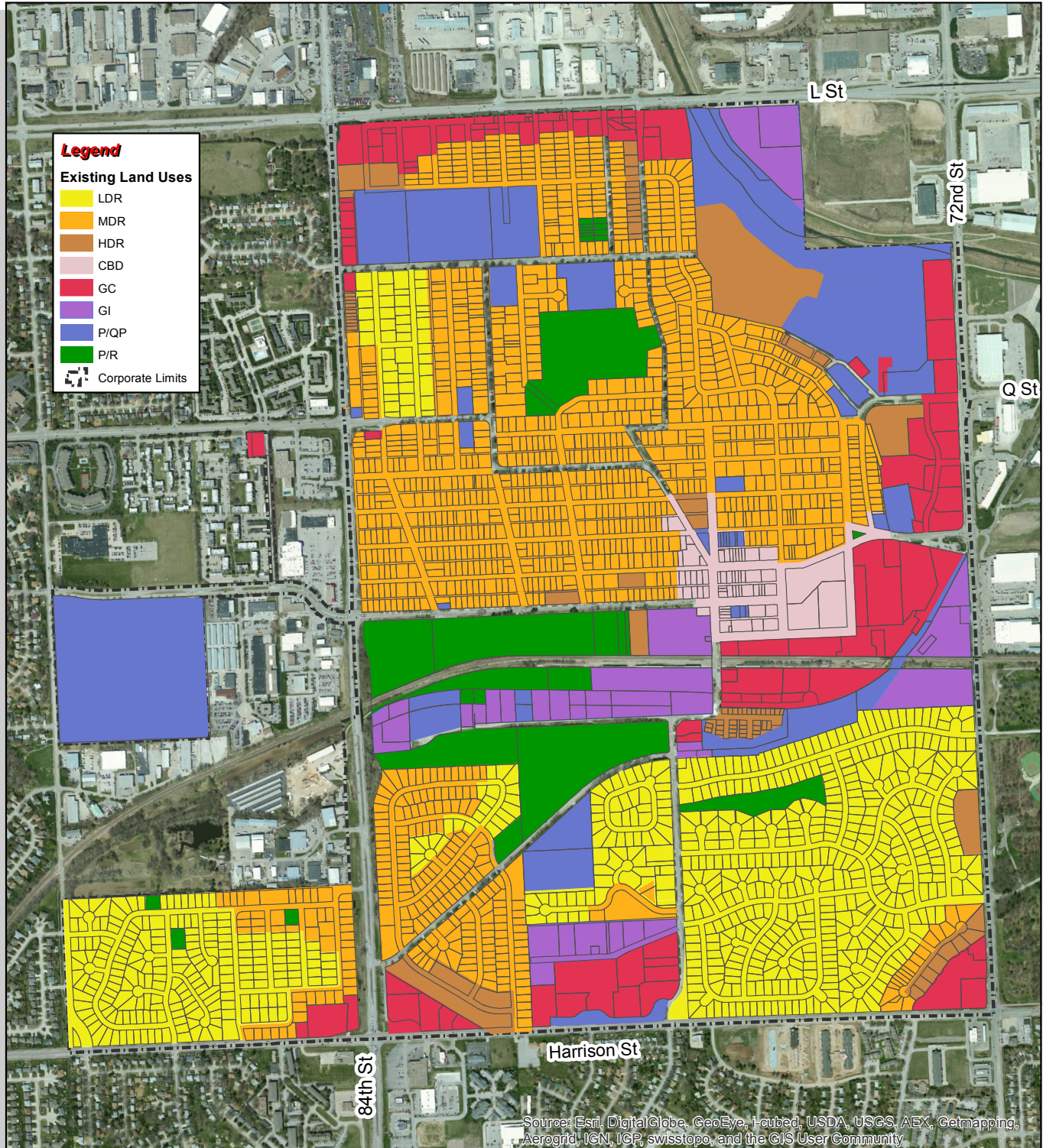
The following existing land use is based on current zoning regulations and the current land uses utilized in Ralston.











**City of Ralston**  
**Douglas County, Nebraska**

**Existing Land Use**  
**Figure 5**

Created By: SMS  
Date: August 2013  
Revised: January 2014  
Software: ArcGIS 10.1  
File: 121169



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LDR Low Density Residential	A parcel of land with a residential structure occupied by one family, such as a traditional home on its own lot, surrounded by yards on all sides.		23.0%	
MDR Medium Density Residential	A parcel of land with a residential structure occupied by one family. This land use has homes on a smaller lot. It is typically found in older housing developments.		30.8%	
HDR High Density Residential	A parcel of land containing a structure being utilized by three or more families within a same structure.		4.9%	
CBD Central Business District	A parcel of land that is within the boundaries of the original downtown area. This contains multiple public and quasi-public land uses as well as various businesses. Residential living would be allowed above the businesses.		3.1%	
GC General Commercial	A parcel of land containing a commercial use which may sell a good, but mostly provides a service, such as automotive repair, hair salon, and includes the Downtown.		10.5%	
GI General Industrial	A parcel of land containing a commercial use involved in manufacturing or packing, storage, or assembly of products, which does not have a major external effect on surrounding properties or uses.		5.6%	
P/QP Public/ Quasi Public	A parcel of land owned or maintained by a federal, state, or a local governmental entity and open for enjoyment by public, or a parcel of land containing a use that is generally under the control of a private, religious, or non-profit entity, that provides social benefit to the community as a whole.		14.4%	
P/R Parks and Recreation	A parcel of land containing public or private land available for recreational, educational, cultural or aesthetic use.		7.7%	



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66

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION  
VISIONING

# 3 [Envision]

RALSTON



## ENVISION SECTION

This portion of the planning process creates a “wish list” of all the items identified by the public input process. The citizens of Ralston would like to see many physical changes happen in the community while maintaining its unique small town feel. The passion and commitment from the public, interviews, focus groups and online participation gave great ideas and insight with their specific scope of interest.

The City of Ralston wanted this comprehensive plan update to focus on adding residential density and creating economic development. With this established, the planning committee was comprised of a representative group of various expertise and demographics. The future leadership of Ralston was important for inclusion to help follow through with the ideas of envisioning. The planning committee provided guidance between each milestone of the planning process. The biggest decisions were made from the ideas generated in the Envisioning process.





## 3.2 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Successful comprehensive plans involve the community to represent their needs and dreams. One goal of comprehensive planning is supply a variety of options to participate in the decision-making process. Community members have specific information and understanding of locations to make the most of Ralston's potential.

Before holding focus group meetings, the Planning Committee gathered to conduct an analysis of Ralston. This Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats exercise helped to create a foundation from which to build the public input from.

### Top 3 Strengths

Arena  
Sense of Community  
Accessibility and Major Corridors

### Top 3 Weaknesses

Downtown  
Housing Market  
Private Investment

### Top 3 Opportunities

72nd & Main/Arena/Country Club Road  
Redevelopment of Downtown and housing  
areas with incentives  
Youth Leadership

### Top 3 Threats

Aging Housing  
Business Leaving/Eroding Tax base  
Arena – being a large investment risk

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION



## FOCUS GROUP MEETINGS

There were five focus group meetings including city staff, chamber of commerce, parks and recreation, young leadership, and faith leaders. Below are the combined observations, concerns, hopes, and issues for Ralston.

## August 2013

## Strengths:

It quickly became clear how tight-knit the Ralston community is with its friendly, small town feel. Ralston's community pride is built through multiple options to attend community events. The success of Ralston's Public school system is due to continued involvement of parents, alumni, and the community. There was excitement that the Ralston Arena, Hotel, and Menards will generate additional jobs for its residents, especially younger generations. There was a request that redevelopment should focus on walkability and create community areas. The Arena and Downtown has the potential for large scale business development. Tax Increment Financing may allow for an incentive or matching sidewalk program to encourage citizens to complete missing segments of sidewalks.

## Weaknesses:

Ralston needs more restaurants and dining establishments downtown while solving its current parking problem. Both the city and police department will need additional office and storage space with additional development. The City could have better partnerships with utilities. Ralston needs more gathering spaces like the Library which utilize Wi-Fi. The downtown is a ghost town at night.

## Opportunities:

Large redevelopment areas are difficult to accomplish. However, public-private partnerships can allow the public to create flexibility to achieve a common goal. The other Omaha infill projects, such as Aksarben Village and Midtown Crossing, were mentioned as examples to follow. New businesses should complement the Arena. Ralston can focus on providing services to young professionals. The possible parking issues immediately around the Arena could lead to shuttles from the downtown area businesses. Ralston needs to designate a large scale Arts and Entertainment District to draw new businesses and sales. Not many cities have an ice rink available and there are many possibilities such as youth hockey, adult leagues, something unique like curling. From a sports point of view, Ralston loses youth to other programs that practice and play year round. Try to find an old warehouse to retrofit and create a partnership with a private business on one half. This warehouse could also store the city's future storage needs. Lot consolidation was wanted to remove unsightly houses and replace with larger homes. It was mentioned multiple times that Ralston needed a locally owned grocery store. Zero depth pools seem to be the popular civic project.



## FOCUS GROUP MEETINGS (CONTINUED)

August 2013

### Threats:

The 72nd Street and Main entrance to Ralston needs to be redeveloped and more welcoming. People are unaware of downtown and the City needs to draw them in. Downtown has too many vacant lots and parking problems. Additional parking, possible parking garage, will be needed around the Arena as development begins to fill the space.

### Items to be maintained in the 20 years:

Ralston will need to retain good people whether they are on staff or serve on committees. The tightness of city staff with the public will need to continue. Ralston's interlocal agreements with its neighbors will need to be retained and improved. Parks and sporting fields will need to have revenue in order to expand. Country Club Road should be maintained to preserve its natural beauty

There was concern for low and moderate income families during redevelopment discussions. The fear was that it may increase the price of living and displace this population without helping them. They would like to see the redevelopments incorporate low-to-moderate income housing.

Efficient growth and development is important for the city's fiscal success. The city personnel were realistic in their needs. The harsh reality is that any additional service above and beyond the current standard of service requires financial commitment and the need to produce revenue.

During our conversations with the public, many claim that families move out once they

become too big for Ralston's housing market. If Ralston plans to keep growing families within its corporate limits, it will need to offer more bedrooms or larger homes that are typical of the surrounding real estate market.

## Design Charrette

August 2013

The adjacent area near the Arena was already predetermined to be part of this process. After touring and reviewing the Ralston area, the consulting team had chosen locations that could be better utilized. In conjunction with the focus group meetings, the consultant team held the design charrette in the City Hall and allowed anyone present to give their expertise of the area and opinions of what they want. By using aerial photography of Ralston and the urban design standards, the team began to create new urban visions of what could be in developed in specific, underutilized areas or strategic locations to provide Ralston with unique mixed uses that allow for greater choices and opportunities.

## Town Hall meeting

August 2013

This meeting was open to the general public. After the presentation, there was a lively conversation of what the citizens would like to see. Most came to gather information and see the progress. Many seemed to be pleased with the direction of these proposed changes. The biggest concerns were that people would be forced from their homes with this redevelopment plans. It was explained that this

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION



is a twenty year window and the importance to have similar expectations of new development while the visions are only conceptual and intended to provide inspiration.

Ralston will want to offer different products than its immediate neighbors to ensure that they are not competitors. 72nd Street is an opportunity to take advantage of since it is a major north-south corridor for Omaha. The partnership with the Papio-Missouri River NRD is essential to the potential wetland park of the Hinge project to capitalize on restoration of a natural resource and development of a gateway feature.

Does the police station and/or fire department need to expand or relocate in regards to the potential redevelopments? If the answer is no, this question can be reevaluated with annual reviews to gauge its demands and space needed to continue their long standing service to the citizens.

It is important to develop a wayfinding system to allow visitors to easily locate their destination and to guide more traffic downtown.

## Ralston School presentation

September 2013

A presentation was given to the Ralston High School. It allowed one of the Ralston's youngest generations to be informed of the process and how they can become involved with their community. The students participated by discussing their future dreams of working and living in Ralston.



## Mindmixer

Ongoing during the Envision Process

A new type of public input is using online media to generate ideas. Mindmixer is a website that helps communities exchange thoughts about different facets of the comprehensive plan. The growing trend of using social media may become another way for the city to reach out to its citizens. Envision Ralston had over 750 visitors to the site and 23 ideas were generated and discussed.



## 3.3 VISIONING

Early in the process, it became clear how close this community is with their collective desires and direction for the city. It is common knowledge for current residents that Ralston is a great place to live. However, Ralston may be misunderstood outside of its school district. The ambitious goals set forth are exciting and in-line with the resident's desires to be properly represented. The proposed development in this plan would meet the goals of fiscal responsibility while increasing the quality of life for the citizens.

Input from the planning committee and public, such as out-migrating families and other suggestions indicate Ralston will need to inject diverse housing options in developments. This will attract a new, younger demographic to Ralston. By attracting this new demographic while supporting growing families, Ralston can rebrand itself to a new generation. It is not feasible, nor is it recommended that Ralston replace the majority of its typical starter homes. The diversity of neighborhood architecture tells Ralston's story of how it's grown over the decades while creating a successful, vibrant community. An overwhelming percentage of the community has taken great pride in their properties and it shows when driving the hills of Ralston. Housing trends and preferences always change but it is in Ralston's best interest to diversify its housing stock where feasible. Most of this diversity will happen with new developments on a larger scale rather than replacing one or two houses at a time.



## DEVELOPMENT OF GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

## Goals, Objectives, Policies

As depicted in the Implementation Section, many goals of this comprehensive plan update will be met by diversifying the housing stock and creating economic development opportunities. The Achieve Section offers suggestions of new redevelopment plans that can benefit the city both with additional population and economic development. The public, city, and decision makers will have the opportunity to change priorities over the next twenty years of where new housing, population, and economic development should occur.

Ralston is not alone regionally or nationally as young professionals with disposable incomes are always the hot commodity and housing trends change with each generation's preferences. The Ralston Arena is a great catalyst for providing the type of amenities this demographic is currently searching for. There does not seem to be a glaring void in young professionals but the trends showed that they were out-migrating. However, attracting more of this demographic will affect the community through the benefit of engagement, activity, and additional taxes from money spent in town. If policies that are put in place to support building larger homes by combining smaller lots, this can keep growing families. With the excitement of the Arena developments and amenities available, Ralston's current home stock can attract new young families to move in.

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URBAN DEVELOPMENT

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FUTURE LAND USE

93

PARK AND RECREATION

133

TRANSPORTATION

# 4 [Achieve]

RALSTON



## ACHIEVE SECTION

The Achieve Section informs the public in what direction Ralston wants to go. This includes the analysis of the Profile Section and desire of the Envision Section. In order to achieve future success and fiscal responsibility, the main emphasis for the comprehensive plan update is to provide an environment for new housing options, desirable jobs and office space, as well as encourage new commercial development in conjunction with the Arena through Arts, Culture and Entertainment. Ralston is one of the few cities in Nebraska that has the luxury to declare these goals and have realistic expectations to meet them. Its ideal development location in the Omaha metro and the desirable potential of the Ralston Arena provides an exciting environment for such success.

The unique situation of “creating” its own population growth stems from its defined boundary and desire to add new mixed use developments. Therefore, the analysis of Land Use is vital to Ralston’s economic health. The concepts developed by the consulting team and influenced from citizen input will become an important catalyst to further develop Ralston’s goals of economic and population growth.

The Achieve Section includes Urban Development, Future Land Use, Parks and Recreation Plan, Transportation System, including vehicular and pedestrian.



## 4.2 URBAN DEVELOPMENT

### Future Land Use

The City of Ralston will need to continue to maximize opportunities within its boundaries with mixed use developments. The objective to supply alternative housing options is consistent with nationwide changes found in household and population demographics. Younger generations are living alone and looking to rent small units with nearby amenities. Omaha's infill projects have shown that this emerging trend is applicable to Ralston.

Ralston's surrounding communities currently supply the needs of growing single family homes but it would be in the Ralston's best interest to cater to that demographic as well. With its limited infill and redevelopment opportunities, this approach will help continue the success of Ralston while providing housing stability to its future families. Ralston cannot expect to compete in every economic category. A good example of the Planning Committee's focus on its goals was changing the Harrison Street Industrial Redevelopment. The appeal of redeveloping the industrial area was not to make better utilized industrial bays, but too add housing options and community value. This potential value to add more housing choices for elderly and affordable housing, as well as medical services, is a forward-thinking option.

### Redevelopment Opportunities

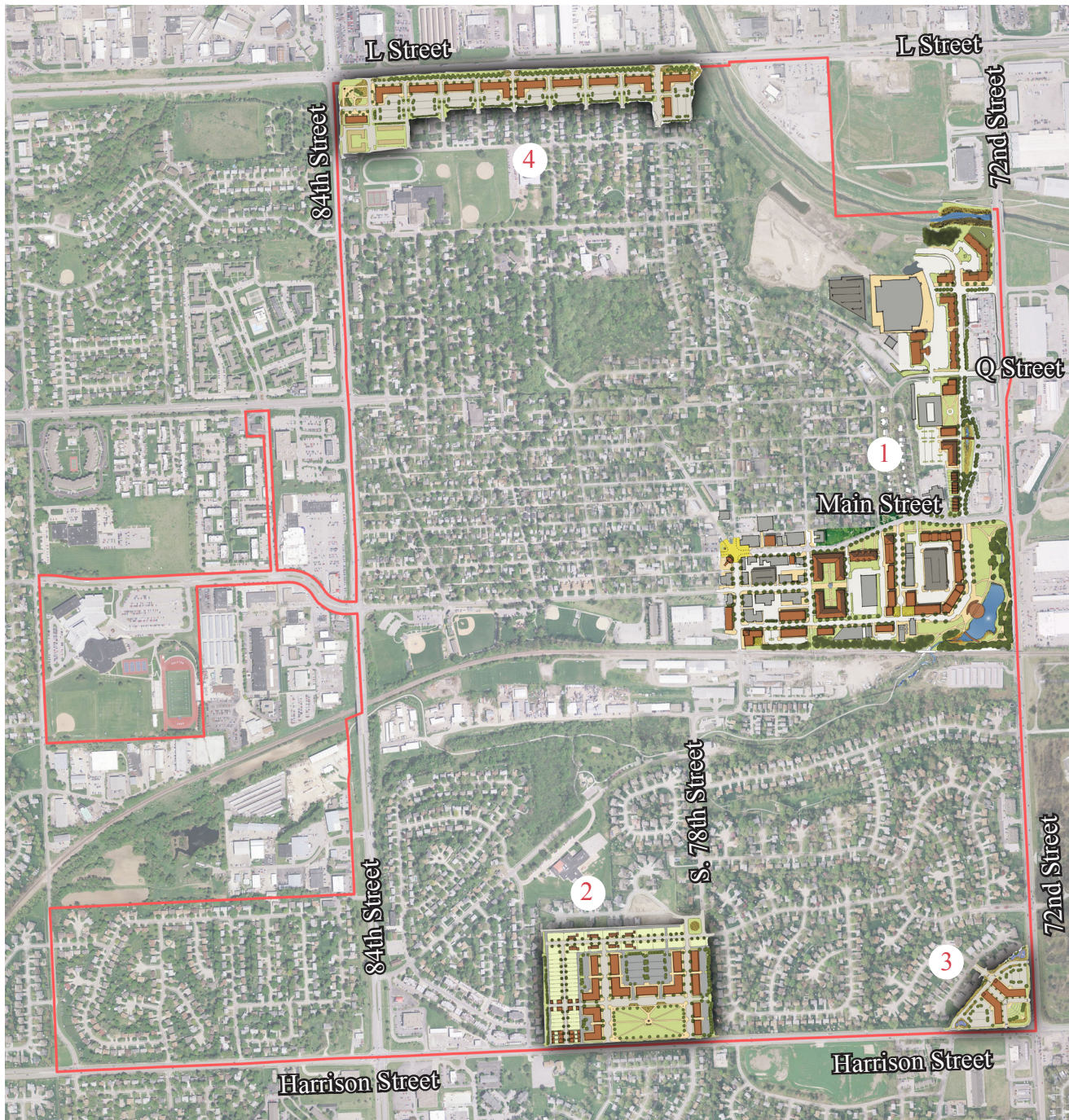
Demographics within the metropolitan region are dramatically changing. For Ralston to remain competitive, the city must continue to foster an environment where people want to live, work, shop, and play. In creating a long term redevelopment framework for Ralston, the consulting team looked for areas where new development could make the most impact. Because the City of Ralston is 'landlocked', with Omaha located to the north, east, and west, and La Vista located to the south, the city cannot expand beyond its current borders. As a result, new development must occur on existing, underutilized sites. Redevelopment sites were chosen to act as gateways into Ralston, to further define the city's edge, and to act as a catalyst for future development. Four key redevelopment areas and opportunities are identified in the following locations.



REDEVELOPMENT LOCATIONS

The projects are numbered in the order they are discussed in this reference image:

1. The Hinge
2. HarrisonStreet Neighborhood Center
3. 72nd and Harrison Gateway
4. L Street Liner



## The Hinge

The Hinge is the key redevelopment opportunity for the city, and will help connect downtown Ralston to the recently constructed Ralston Arena. This design includes a new lake and park along 72nd Street, a new 'market' street on existing industrial property, infill development in downtown, and new apartments and retail connecting to the arena. A park along 72nd Street, which includes a lake and central open space, serves as the front door to the community and provides a dramatic entry into the downtown district, all while helping manage stormwater quality and quantity. The new 'market' street will terminate on the existing grain elevator, creating a one of a kind retail experience in the Omaha metro area. A laser show will light up the grain elevator at night, creating a focal point at the edge of the park, as well as a dramatic display that will be visible from 72nd Street.

### Key Elements of this plan includes:

Retrofit of the Granary for use as a public market

New mixed use market oriented buildings lining the new 'market' street

Apartment buildings with frontage onto the lakefront park and main street

New infill development in downtown, including street oriented buildings and a potential parking structure

New plaza and 'gas backward' at the intersection of 77th and Main Street.

Stormwater lake and park

New residential development and realignment on 73rd Street

Mixed use and apartment buildings around the Ralston Arena, with new structured parking behind the arena

Country Club infill and renovation into a cottage 'pocket neighborhood'



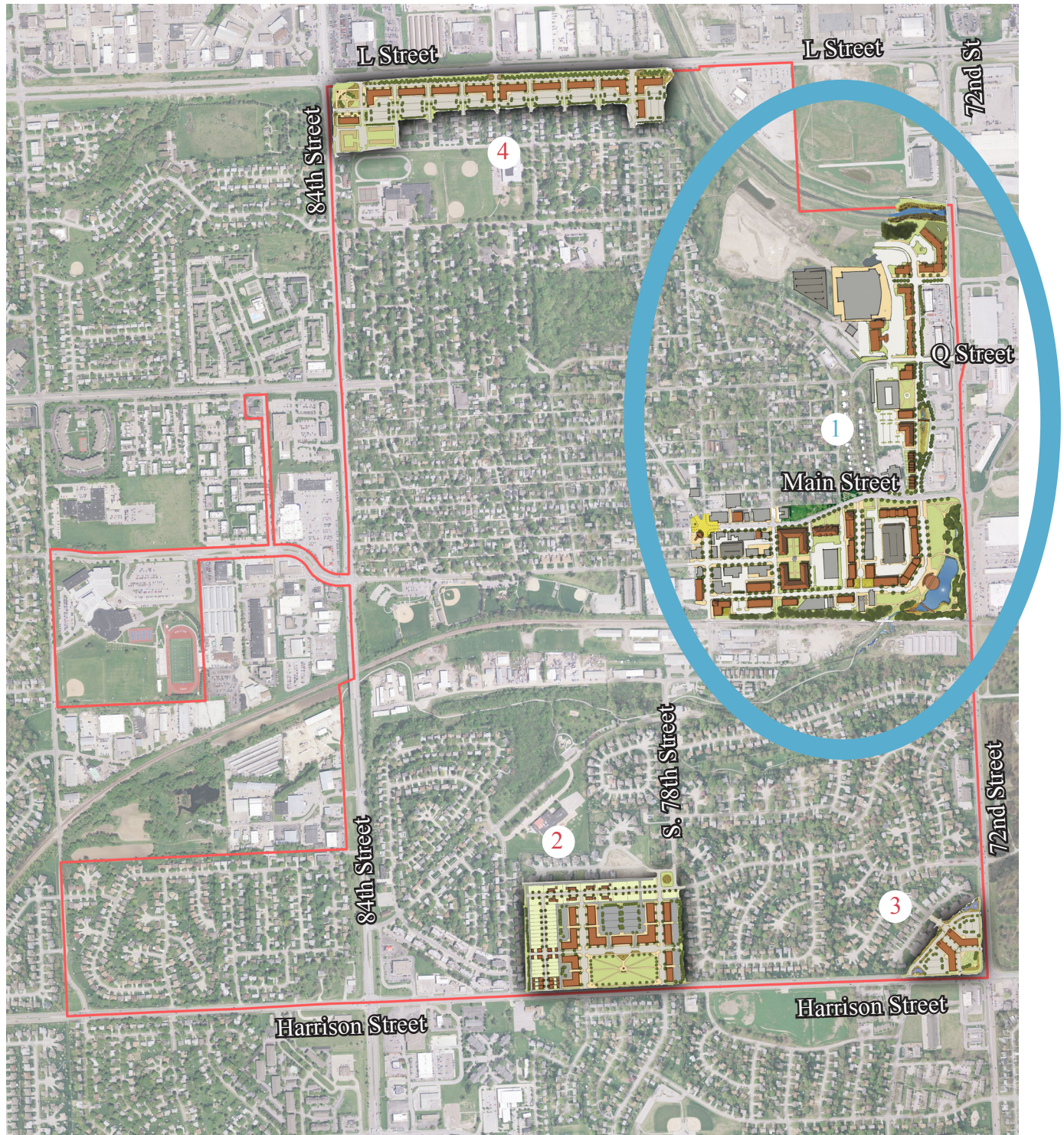
THE HINGE

1. The Hinge

2. Harrison Street Neighborhood Center

3. 72nd and Harrison Gateway

4. L Street Liner



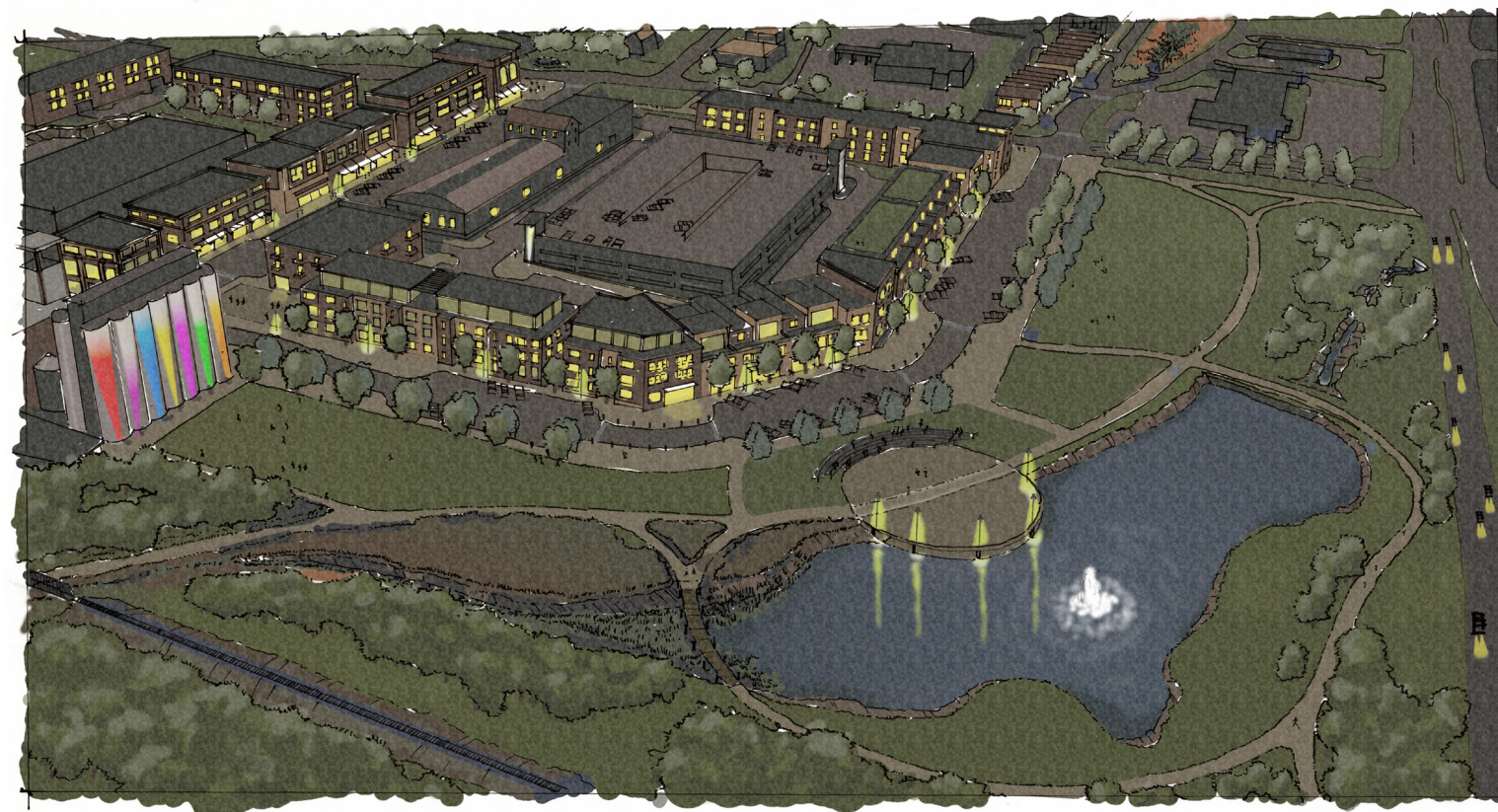
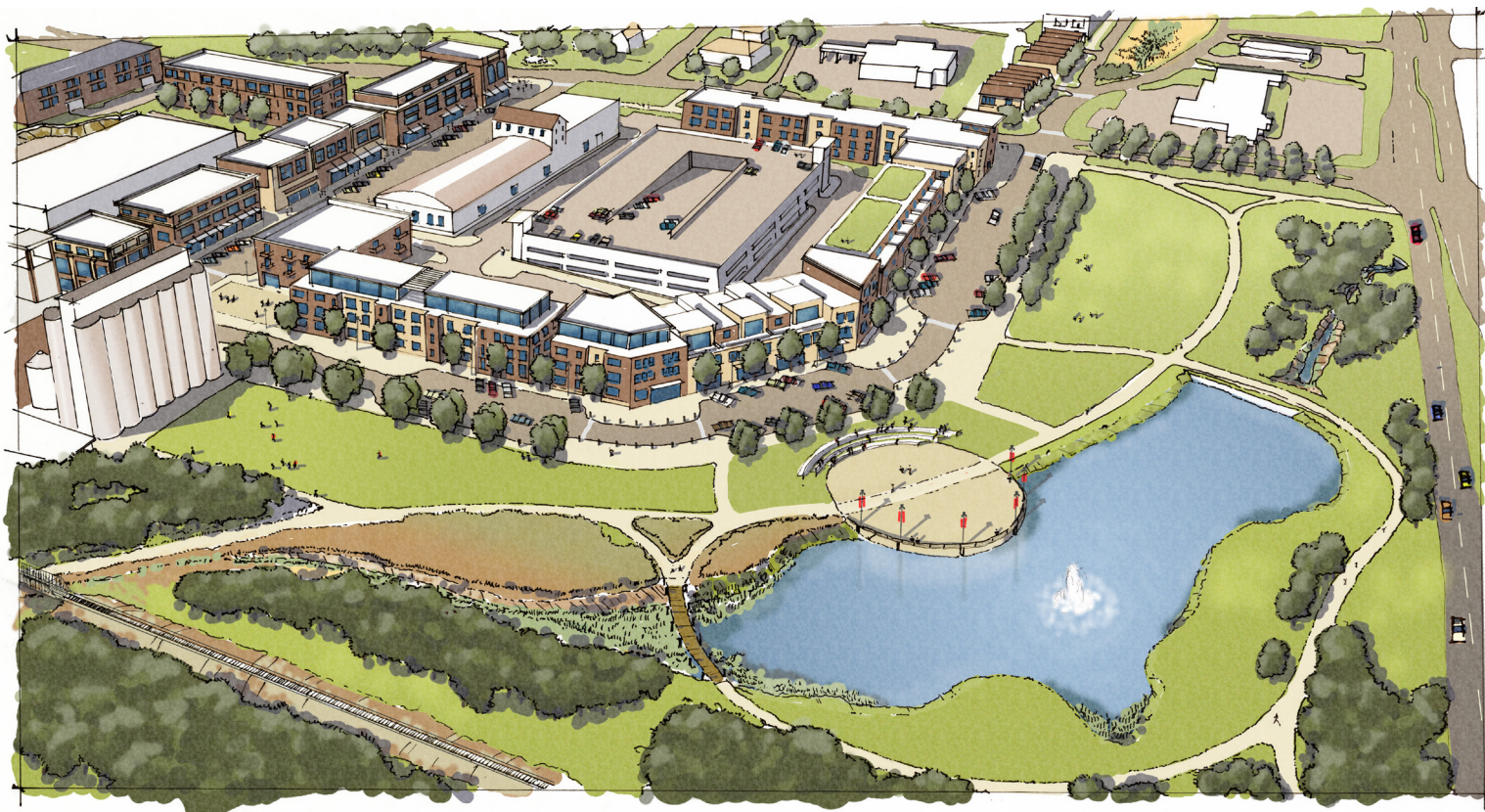


REDEVELOPMENT LOCATIONS 72ND AND MIAN STREETS





THE HINGE - BIRDSEYE VIEWS LOOKING NORTHWEST





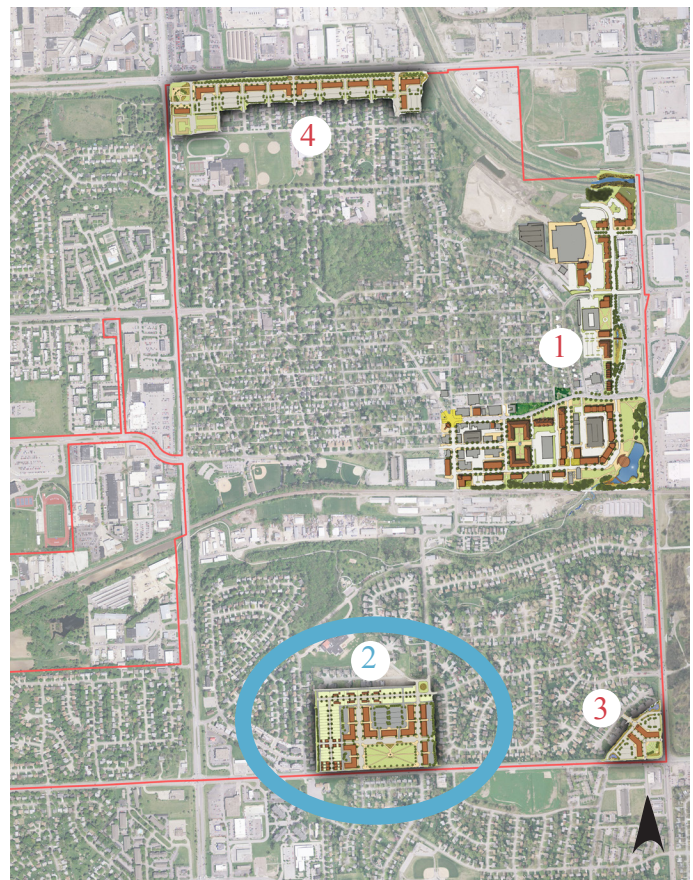
## Harrison Street Community Center

As Ralston continues to grow, the city should redevelop existing industrial sites, retrofitting these for denser residential and commercial uses. The industrial park on Harrison Street is a key opportunity, and will be redeveloped into a mixed use neighborhood center that is connected to, and contextual with the adjacent neighborhoods. This redevelopment would include mixed use buildings that front onto an open space, townhomes, and single family houses. The multiple housing types will allow for different needs and family sizes, and the retail core will create a walkable, pedestrian friendly environment that benefits the neighborhood and adjacent areas.

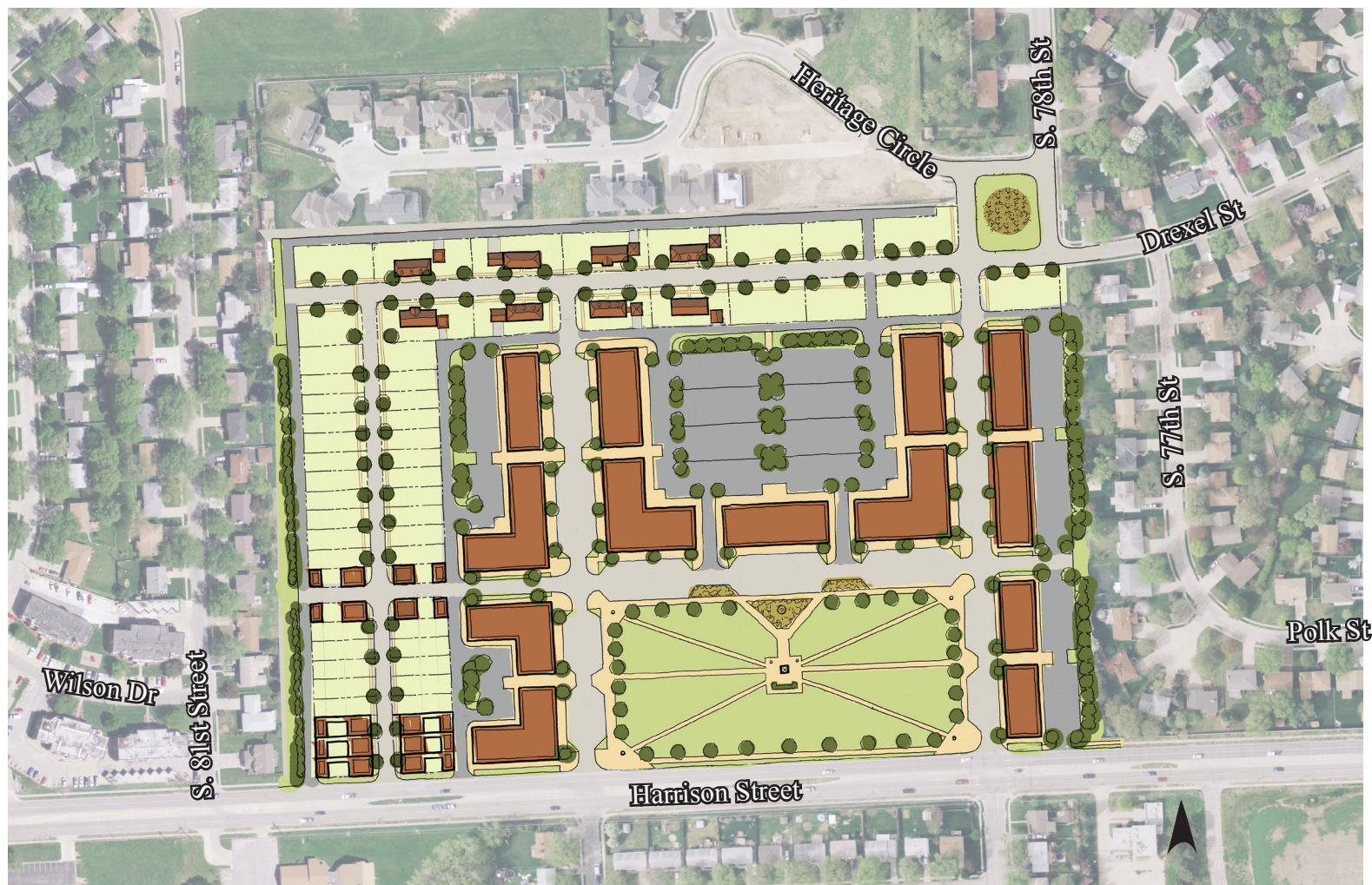
### Key Elements of this plan includes:

- Reestablishing the street grid
- Additional Green Space
- Multiple housing typologies
- Streetscape enhancements
- On-street and rear surface parking
- Additional larger Single Family housing stock

- 1. The Hinge
- 2. Harrison Street Neighborhood Center
- 3. 72nd and Harrison Gateway
- 4. L Street Liner



HARRISON STREET COMMUNITY CENTER REDEVELOPMENT





## 72nd and Harrison Gateway

The 72nd and Harrison intersection is a unique opportunity for redevelopment on the southeast edge of Ralston. Taking advantage of the existing topography, an amphitheater can be built into the hillside, which will be a terminus for a new mixed use development. This development creates an opportunity for a gateway feature, letting people know that they have entered Ralston city limits. Indirect access into the adjacent neighborhood is also created, allowing residents to walk to the development but not impacting neighborhood traffic.

### Key Elements of this plan includes:

Replacement of existing strip shopping center with new mixed use retail, office and residential buildings

Entrance park and amphitheater

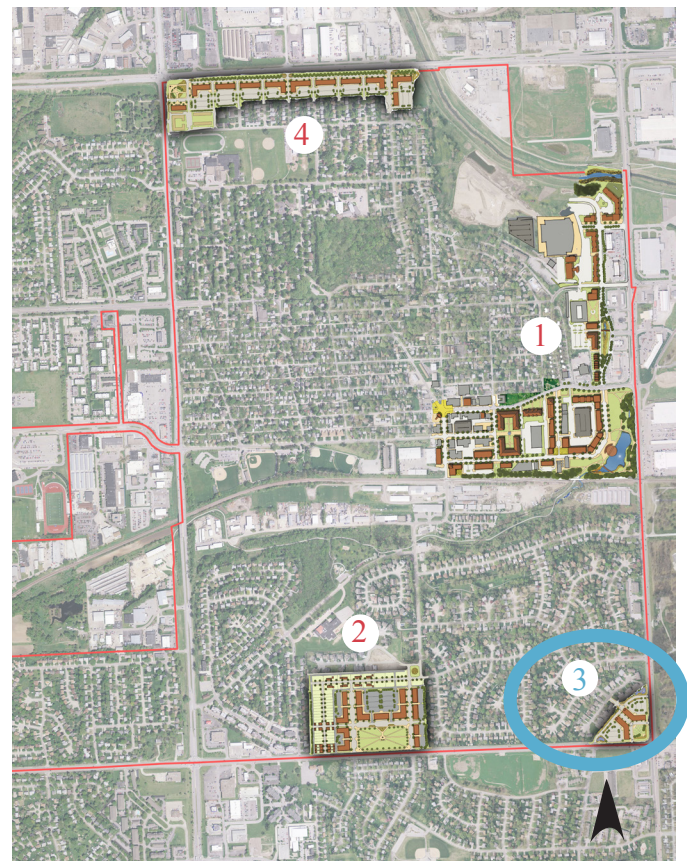
Entrance gateway feature

Streetscape enhancements

Stormwater retention areas

Off-street and rear surface parking

- 1. The Hinge
- 2. Harrison Street Neighborhood Center
- 3. 72nd and Harrison Gateway
- 4. L Street Liner





72ND AND HARRISON STREET REDEVELOPMENT



## The L Street Liner

The L Street Liner concept would replace existing buildings along L Street between 77th and 84th Streets with new mixed use buildings, creating an attractive and inviting northern urban edge for Ralston. Instead of resting in a sea of parking, these new buildings will front onto a slip lane, an urban design tool that separates local traffic from through traffic, creating a more pedestrian friendly atmosphere with street trees, on-street parking, and active frontages, all without impeding traffic flow. The plan calls for a gateway plaza at the intersection of 84th and L, which could become a prime location for a clock tower or other entrance feature, and celebrate the entrance into Ralston.

### Key Elements of this plan includes:

- Phased approach to replacing existing buildings with new mixed use buildings

- Urban retail, office, and residential options

- L Street Slip lane

- Entrance Plaza

- Vertical gateway or entry feature

- Streetscape enhancements

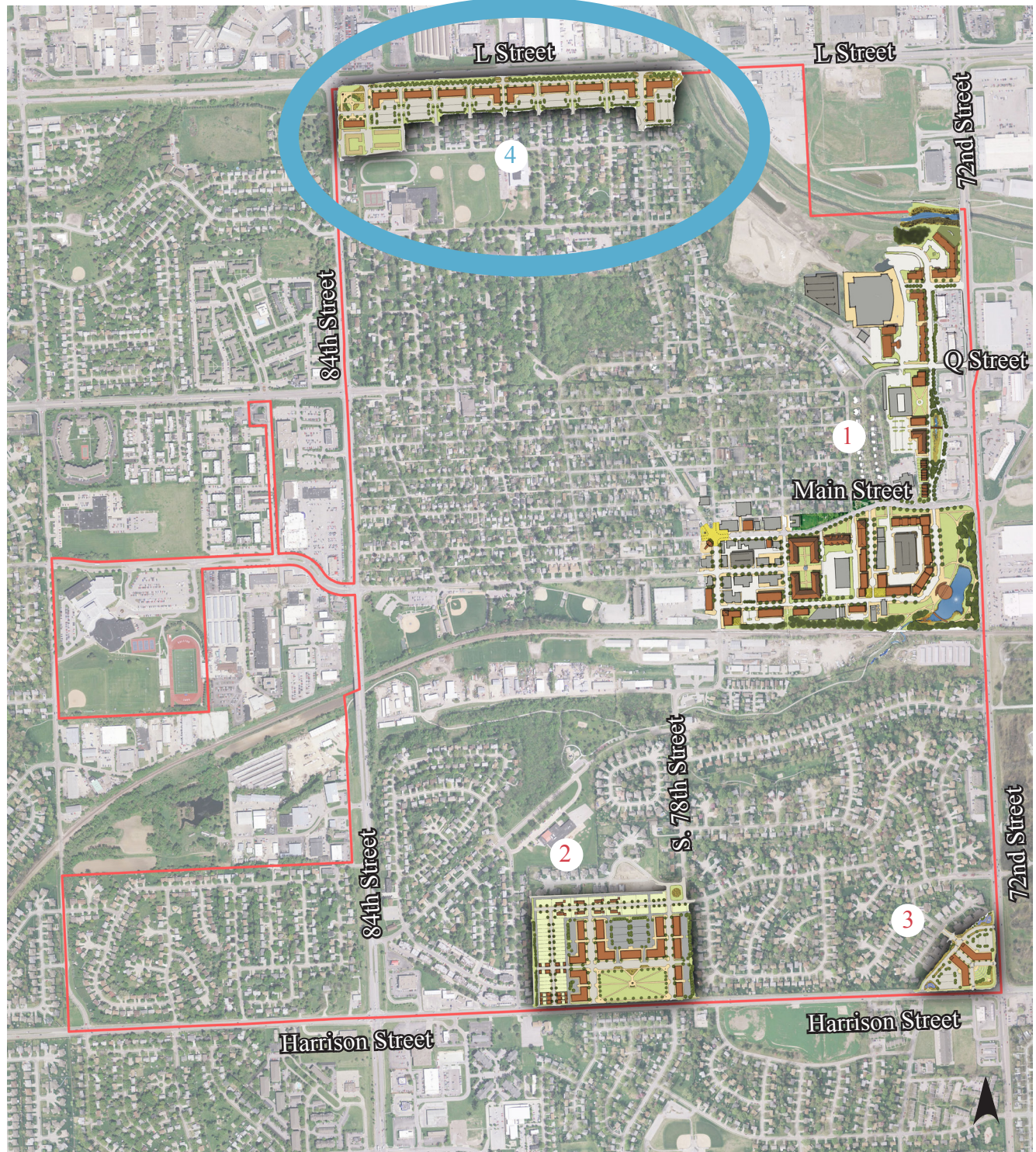
- On-Street and rear surface parking

- Limited impact on adjacent neighborhood



THE "L" STREET LINER REDEVELOPMENT

1. The Hinge
2. Harrison Street Neighborhood Center
3. 72nd and Harrison Gateway
4. L Street Liner





THE "L" STREET LINER REDEVELOPMENT

2013



Potential development in 2034





"L" STREET LINER REDEVELOPMENT - LOOKING SOUTHWEST

Today



Potential Redevelopment



## Resulting Concept's Population and Housing Projections

Generating population exclusively through redevelopment is an exciting prospect. The proposed redevelopment plans were analyzed and calculated for their impact on the community. Each redevelopment was created purely based on the thought that the land can be better utilized and addresses different goals for Ralston to create long term benefits.

The vast majority of residential units in the redevelopments will be focused on small condo-style living units. This type of living unit is found throughout mixed unit developments. The core reasons to create mixed use developments are to attract younger professionals who also seek amenities nearby and develop greater density within the boundary of Ralston. This demographic of the young professional typically live alone.

However, this style of development does not exclude others who seek “maintenance-free” living and nearby conveniences. Multiple discussions highlighted the lack of elderly housing options in Ralston. This perceived problem can be addressed and included into future development decisions.

Each concept has different focuses and purpose. Ralston attracts young families; however, they outgrow the typical starter home. There is limited number of larger homes in Ralston, therefore, the only available housing for their requirements are found elsewhere. Besides the infill merging of lots to create larger homes, the example of the Harrison Street Community Center gives the City unique option for meeting the previously mentioned demographics. It suggests a wide range of housing and business options while enhancing The Colonies residential development. The larger homes on the north side give Ralston the rare occasion to add new large homes while maintaining the values of the Colonies as well with similar housing nearby. This proposal also included elderly housing as well as creating a medical partnership while adding another great entryway into Ralston.



## URBAN DEVELOPMENT

### Current Landowners and Businesses

All of the suggested developments would require landowners and businesses to work with the city and community in order for this to work. Although it may not be ideal to relocate or build a new building, existing businesses can see their added value. If these projects move forward; not only would they have incentive to meet the community's wishes to improve the neighborhood but it increases the value of their own property with the possibility to generate additional rent with second or third stories.

### Statistics

The younger demographic is sought out with a total number of 1,146 new residential units available. This could also be a market for a population who has no interest in the upkeep of property. This represents the typical renter with a lower ratio of person per household. The 2011 ACS 5 year estimates show that the renter ratio was 1.98. Therefore, to simplify this breakdown, the projected population of condo units is 2,269 people.

For those seeking more space, 53 townhomes were proposed and 17 new single family units. The 2011 ACS 5-year estimates reported Ralston family's person per household is 2.30. The additional projected family sized units total 161 people. This number may increase due to the interest of changing some of the plans for additional larger homes.

The height of Ralston's population occurred when the majority of the single family housing units had growing families. Ralston can reach those numbers again by attracting developers to consolidate lots and provide the necessary housing stock to keep larger families from moving. If there is concern for losing single family homes, the benefit will be seen by the surrounding home values going up due to new investment and diversifying its inventory. The concern of losing the population will be offset by numerous small units proposed in the redevelopments. Ultimately, this will diversify the community by offering more than the smaller units that exist today.

## URBAN DEVELOPMENT

In 2010, there were 2,581 housing units, mainly single family housing, with a 2.49 household ratio. If 15% of those housing units were chosen for consolation over the next 20 years, the loss would be 387 single family homes. By replacing that housing stock with new larger homes, the City of Ralston would gain back an additional 190 larger single family homes. This addition would help alleviate the loss of out-migrating, growing families within Ralston.

The proposals are concepts of what the City of Ralston can envision for future development within these areas. The following estimates of the four proposed redevelopment areas as they were created in the design charrette and slightly altered during the envisioning process. These estimated statistics are subject to change over the next two decades with multiple visions, economic influences, and future public leadership.

### Downtown:

50,000 square feet new commercial/  
office  
86 new residential units

### 72nd Street Gateway:

36,000 square feet new commercial  
(replacing existing strip retail)  
60 new residential units

### Hinge:

120,000 square feet new commercial/  
office  
614 new residential units  
11 townhomes

### Harrison Industrial:

127,000 square feet new commercial  
245 new residential units  
42 townhomes  
17 single family units

### L Street:

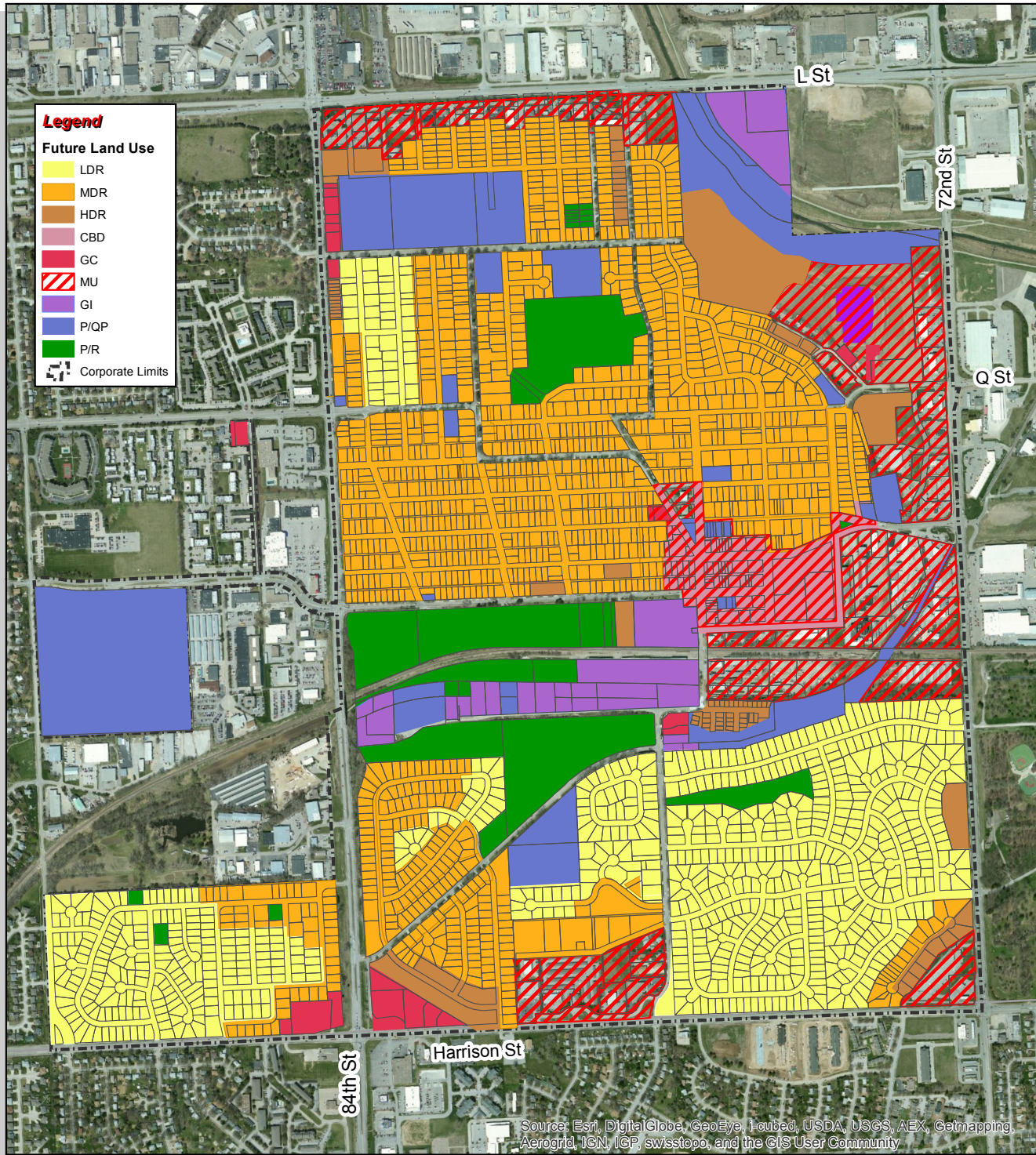
136,000 square feet new commercial/  
office (replacing existing commercial)  
227 new residential units

## 4.3 FUTURE LAND USE

The Future Land Use Chapter reflects the intentions of the community for increased population and housing. The city will need to continue looking for underutilized areas that do not meet the expectations of the updated comprehensive plan goals. The biggest change in future land use is the addition of the Mixed Use Development Designation. This land use covers 196 acres and represents roughly twenty percent of Ralston.

The Future Land Use map identifies the different land use designations, including Low Density Residential, Medium Density Residential, High Density Residential, Commercial Downtown District, General Commercial, Mixed Use Development, General Industrial, Public/Quasi-Public, and Parks and Recreation.





## ***City of Ralston*** ***Douglas County, Nebraska***

**Future Land Use  
Figure 6**

Created By: SMS  
Date: August 2013  
Revised: January 2014  
Software: ArcGIS 10.1  
File: 121169



This map was prepared using information from record drawings supplied by JEO and/or other applicable city, county, federal, or public or private entities. JEO does not guarantee the accuracy of this map or the information used to prepare this map. This is not a scaled plat.

## FUTURE LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

## Residential

### Low Density Residential (LDR)

The Low Density Residential land use area is intended for typical suburban scale residential development densities. This category is the least common residential land use types in Ralston.

### Medium Density Residential (MDR)

The Medium Density Residential land use area is intended to provide higher residential densities than LDR, but still commonly found within urban neighborhoods. Most of the earlier housing and lots sizes of Ralston represent this density and represents a large percentage of housing. Ralston may choose to combine lots and build larger homes similar to low density residential. Typically, this density plays a significant role as a transitional use between most commercial areas and lower density residential development.

### High Density Residential (HDR)

The High Density Residential land use area is intended to accommodate denser residential development. This area would support apartment complex-types development, or a mixture of townhomes, condos, and apartments. The location of this area is intended to act as a buffer between more intensive commercial uses and lower density residential uses. This density can be found scattered throughout the community. It is efficient to place near easy access to transportation corridors.

## FUTURE LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

## Commercial

The Commercial land use includes the Ralston's downtown and other areas that encompass all retail, office and service uses. Commercial uses may vary widely in their intensity of use and impact, varying from low intensity offices, specialty shops, and indoor storage to more intensive uses such as gas stations, restaurants, grocery stores, sales and service, or automobile repair. The lots in the downtown area are usually small and the area offers higher pedestrian access.

Each area designated as commercial in the land use plan may not be appropriate for every commercial zoning district. The appropriateness of a commercial district for a particular piece of property will depend on a review of all the elements of the Comprehensive Plan. The Commercial land use includes the Central Business District, General Commercial, and Mixed Use Development.

### Central Business District (CBD)

This business district focuses on downtown and has an intensity of particular uses. Pedestrian scale and orientation should be in consideration with design elements for businesses of all types. A wayfinding system should be incorporated to make the vital connection between the CBD and The Hinge. The signs and pedestrian-friendly sidewalks will help to add more foot traffic to the CBD and enhance the Arena experience. The design and exterior surface treatments should reinforce existing development patterns consistent with the character of Ralston's past. Uses within this area do not include those generally associated with big box stores, large open parking lots, or industrial uses.

### General Commercial (GC)

Located throughout town, the intensity of particular uses are suited to the character of the surrounding area. Larger, more intense commercial developments are best located closer to the corridors. Pedestrian scale and orientation will be an important design consideration for commercial projects of all sizes. The design and exterior surface treatments should reinforce existing development patterns; in newly developing areas design themes should strengthen the overall image of the development consistent with the redevelopment concept or the character of Downtown Ralston. Landscaping, berms, fences, and setbacks should be used to screen and buffer commercial uses from residential uses; the scale of which should be appropriate to the relationship between the uses.



## FUTURE LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

## Urban Development

### Mixed Use (MU)

The four concepts proposed mark three of the four edges of Ralston. They are highly visible areas with easy access to transportation corridors. The combination of residential and commercial spaces can achieve economic development and additional population. With a focus on pedestrian scale, higher density residential areas do not have to feel overcrowded. This land use utilizes public space to create a friendly and inviting atmosphere for the community to gather. This type of development would be located in Ralston's downtown and the proposed Hinge project. Its business frontage would focus on pedestrian scale more than automobile traffic. The combination of living space, office, retail, arts and entertainment give leeway to multiple solutions to the same problems.

## Industrial

### General Industrial (GI)

Industrial land use includes both light and heavy industrial designations. Location is important, as proximity to major streets and railroad can help ensure heavy traffic avoids residential areas and prominent pedestrian activity centers. Careful consideration shall be given before designation of any industrial uses so as not to encroach upon or conflict with less intrusive uses or destroy important new corridors. The light industrial land area is intended to accommodate smaller, less intensive industrial uses, compared to those that are larger and have more intensive industrial activity.

## FUTURE LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

## Public

### Public / Quasi-Public (P/QP)

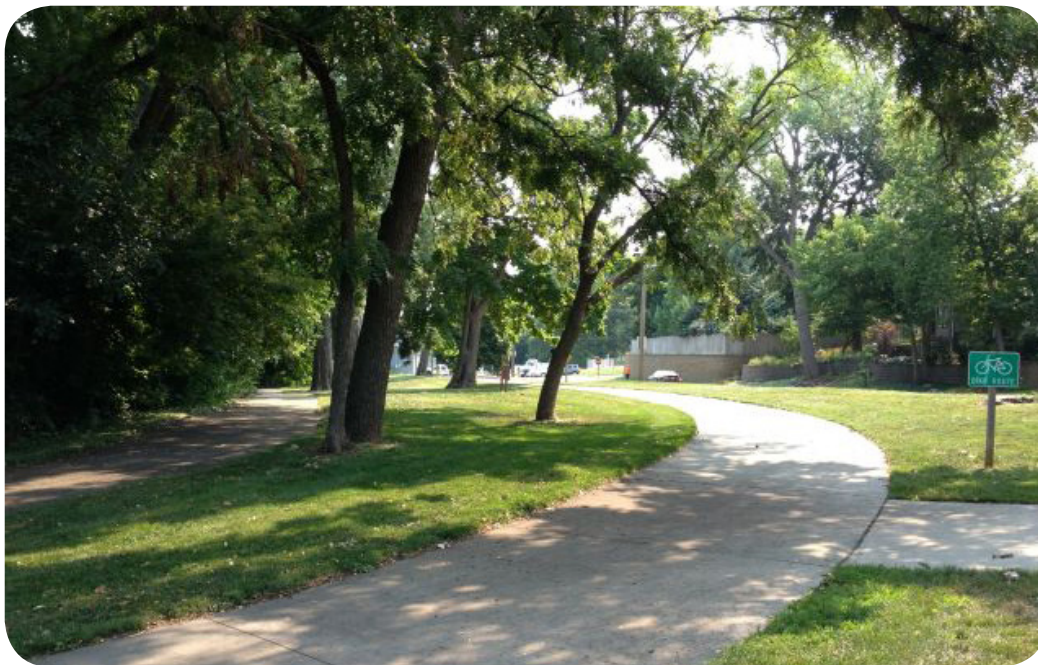
The Public and Quasi-Public land use areas, including Churches, Schools, and City Facilities, are intended to provide easy, convenient access for residents use. The public and quasi-public facilities host a variety of activities and provide services. The locations of public and quasi-public facilities have not changed recently but updates to such facilities have taken place over the years. The level of services provided has always been more than adequate. However, with additional development, continued updates or changes may be needed in order to meet the demands of additional development.

### Parks / Recreation (P/R)

The Parks and Recreation land use accommodates those undeveloped properties that are intended to benefit the public by remaining undeveloped as open space or parks. However, many of the park areas identified tend to be already developed with uses specific to this category. The designation allows the city to offer open space in new developments such as mixed use development.

## 4.4 PARKS AND RECREATION

The Parks and Recreation Chapter of the Achieve Section will give the inventory and recommendations of Ralston's Parks. Ralston has an amazing park system serving its neighborhoods. The services provided in the parks go above what similar communities would be able to achieve. There is an existing city trail system which connects to the larger regional trail along the Big Papio Creek, but improved connectivity is needed.





PARKS AND RECREATION CLASSIFICATIONS

The following is a chart to determine Ralston’s classification of current parks and the typical service requirements. This chart may be referenced as a guide for the City in the future park plans for additional open space and greenways. A park classification helps to determine the required (R) and optional (O) facilities, amenities, and services. A dash in the column means that the particular facility, amenity, or services is not appropriate.

Table 22 **Park Classifications**

Classification	General Description	Location Criteria/ Service Area	Size Criteria
<b>Mini-Park</b>	Used to address limited, isolated or unique recreational needs.	Less than a ¼ mile distance in residential setting.	Between 2500 sq. ft. and one acre in size.
<b>Neighborhood Park</b>	Basic unit of the park system and serves as the recreational and social focus of the neighborhood. Focus is on informal active and passive recreation.	¼ to ½ mile distance and uninterrupted by non-residential roads and other physical barriers.	5 acres is considered minimum size. 5 to 10 acres is optimal.
<b>Community Park</b>	Serves broader purpose than neighborhood park. Focus is on meeting community-based recreation needs, as well as preserving unique landscapes and open spaces.	Determined by the quality and suitability of the site. Usually serves two or more neighborhood and ½ to 3 mile distance.	As needed to accommodate desired uses. Usually between 30 and 50 acres.
<b>Natural Resource Areas</b>	Lands set aside for preservation of significant natural resources, remnant landscapes, open space, and visual aesthetics/buffering.	Resource availability and opportunity.	Variable.
<b>Greenways</b>	Effectively tie park system components together to form a continuous park environment.	Resource availability and opportunity.	Variable.
<b>Sports Complex</b>	Consolidates heavily programmed athletic fields and associated facilities to larger and fewer sites strategically located throughout the community.	Strategically located community-wide facilities.	Determined by projected demand. Usually a minimum of 25 acres, with 40 to 80 acres being optimal.
<b>Special Use</b>	Covers a broad range of parks and recreation facilities oriented toward single-purpose use.	Variable – dependent on specific use.	Variable.
<b>Private Park/ Recreation Facility</b>	Parks and recreation facilities that are privately owned yet contribute to the public park and recreation system.	Variable – dependent on specific use.	Variable.

Source: Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines. A Project of the National Recreation and Park Association and the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration. A Publication of the National Recreation and Park Association. James D. Mertes, Ph.D., CLP and James R. Hall, CLP

Table 23a Required and Optional Facilities

Possible Facilities	Mini-Park	Neighborhood	Community	Special Use	Sports
<b>Park and Recreation FACILITIES</b>					
Play Equipment/Structures	R	R	R	O	O
Open Play Area	R	R	R	O	O
Soccer Fields	-	O	O	O	O
Softball Fields	-	O	O	O	O
Baseball Fields	-	O	O	O	O
Paved Multi-use Areas	O	R	R	O	O
Tennis Courts	O	O	O	O	O
Basketball Courts	O	O	O	O	O
Volleyball Courts	O	O	O	O	O
Multi-Purpose Trails	O	R	R	O	O
Picnic Facilities (shelters)	R	R	R	O	O
Special/Unique Features	O	R	R	O	O
Natural Areas	O	O	O	O	O
Trees/Shaded Areas	R	R	R	O	R
Special Use Facilities	-	O	O	R	O
Swimming Pool		O	O	O	O
Aquatic Center	-	-	O	O	O
Wading Pool	O	O	O	O	-
Ice Skating Park	-	O	O	O	-
Amphitheater/Outdoor Gathering Area	-	O	O	O	-
Arboretum/Botanical Gardens	-	O	O	O	O
Fine Arts Facility/Public Art Displays	-	-	O	O	-
Community Center or Indoor Rec.	-	O	O	O	O
Camping Facilities (RV facilities)	-	-	-	O	-
Dog Park	-	-	O	O	-
Horseshoes	O	O	O	O	O
Disc/Frisbee Golf	-	O	O	O	O
Roller Hockey	O	O	O	O	O
Football/Rugby Field	-	-	O	O	O
Outdoor or Exercise Circuit	-	O	O	O	O
Skating Facility (indoor/skateboard)	-	O	O	O	O
High-Risk Area	-	-	O	O	O
Golf Course	-	-	O	O	O
Youth Sports Complex	-	O	O	O	O
Competitive Sports Facility	-	-	O	O	O

PARKS AND RECREATION CLASSIFICATION AND ANALYSIS CRITERIA

Table 23b Required and Optional Amenities and Services

Possible Facilities	Mini-Park	Neighborhood Park	Community Park	Special Use Facility	Sports Complex
<b>Park and Recreation AMENITIES</b>					
Security Lighting	R	R	R	R	R
Activity Lighting	O	O	R	O	R
Public Telephone	O	O	R	R	R
Off Street Parking	O	R	R	R	R
Bike Racks	R	R	R	R	R
Restrooms	O	R	R	O	R
Drinking Fountains	R	R	R	R	R
Benches	R	R	R	R	R
Picnic Tables	O	R	R	O	R
Signage	R	R	R	R	R
Information Kiosks	-	-	O	O	O
ADA Accessibility	R	R	R	R	R
<b>Park and Recreation SERVICES</b>					
Security	R	R	R	R	R
Emergency Telephone Service	O	O	O	O	O
Reservations for Facility Use (shelters, group picnics, sports leagues, for-profit use)	R	R	R	R	R
Activities/Facilities for Groups, Companies, Teams	-	O	R	O	R
Special Events (programs, concerts, fairs)	O	O	O	O	O
Facilities and Grounds Maintenance	R	R	R	R	R

*R : Required Facility/Service*

*O : Optional Facility/Service*

*(Dashes): Not Appropriate*





## City of Ralston Douglas County, Nebraska

### Parks and Recreation Map Figure 7

Created By: SMS  
Date: August 2013  
Revised: Jan 2014  
Software: ArcGIS 10.2  
File: 121169



This map was prepared using information from record drawings supplied by JEO and/or other applicable city, county, federal, or public or private entities. JEO does not guarantee the accuracy of this map or the information used to prepare this map. This is not a scaled plat.



# Fairview Park

Mini Park (0.4 acres)  
S. 85th and Monroe St



Google earth  
LEGEND

feet 100  
meters 40



- ① Signage
- ② Play Structure
- ③ Play Equipment
- ④ Seating





Table 24 Fairview Park Amenities

Park Component	Condition Poor/Fair/Good			Capacity Under/At/Over			Notes
Vegetation (Trees, shrubs, turf)		X			X		Large trees on along the street, planters and landscaping along sidewalk
Play Areas		X			X		Minimum open space due to terrain
Sports Fields					X		No sports field
Sports Courts					X		No sports courts
Walks/Trails			X		X		Sidewalk maintains a relative flat walking paved surface
Play Equipment			X			X	Medium sized play equipment with educational panels, 2 spring riders, 1 teeter totter, playground padding throughout the play area
Structures					X		No Structures
Picnic Facilities		X			X		2 Metal Tables with 7 attached Seats
Drinking Water			X			X	1 Water Fountain
Restrooms					X		No Restrooms
Parking					X		On Street Parking
Lighting	X			X			street lighting
Benches			X			X	six permanent benches
Signage			X		X		wooden sign on the northeast corner



# Koch Park

Mini Park (0.1 acres)

S. 75th and Main St



Google earth  
LEGEND

feet 100  
meters 40



1 Signage

2 Seating





Table 25 **Koch Park Amenities**

Park Component	Condition			Capacity			Notes
	Poor	Fair	Good	Under	At/Over		
Vegetation (Trees, shrubs, turf)			X			X	Medium sized trees and scrubs, very good landscaping
Play Areas			X		X		Flat, open area on the north size for games
Sports Fields					X		No sporting fields
Sports Courts					X		No sporting courts
Walks/Trails			X			X	Sidewalk along the southern edge and around a landscaped area
Play Equipment				X			No play equipment
Structures				X			No structures
Picnic Facilities				X			No traditional tables or grills but open, flat area
Drinking Water				X			No water fountain (did not see a hydrant)
Restrooms				X			No restrooms
Parking		X			X		on street parking (not adjacent to park)
Lighting			X			X	Park lights along trail/sidewalk, Street lights along southern edge
Benches			X		X		3 metal benches on trail/sidewalk
Signage			X		X		Located on the south side along Main Street
Miscellaneous	X			X			No sidewalk on eastern and western edges to connect with the neighborhood



# Leo Adams Park

Mini Park (0.76 acres)

S. 78th Ave/St and Lakeview St



Google earth  
LEGEND

feet 100  
meters 40



① Signage

③ Play Structure

② Gazebo with bench and table

④ Play Equipment

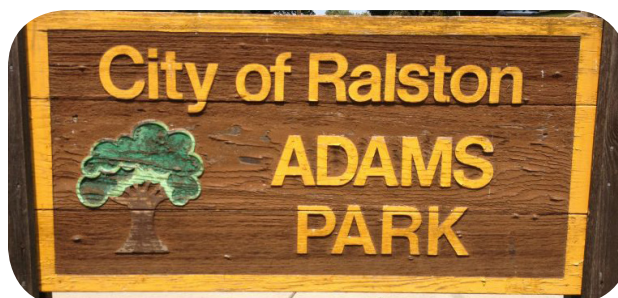






Table 26 Leo Adams Park Amenities

Park Component	Condition Poor/Fair/Good			Capacity Under/At/Over			Notes
Vegetation (Trees, shrubs, turf)			X		X		Medium to Large trees along the perimeter; two retaining walls surround the playground and shelter
Play Areas			X		X		Large, flat open area on the eastern edge
Sports Fields					X		No destined field (large open area)
Sports Courts					X		No sporting courts
Walks/Trails			X		X		ADA trail goes from east to west
Play Equipment			X			X	Large (educational - younger children) play equipment/structure, two Diggers, merry-go-round, padded flooring
Structures		X			X		Metal picnic shelter
Picnic Facilities		X			X		Picnic shelter with two attached metal tables/benches
Drinking Water	X				X		Yes (not working on August 21st, 2013)
Restrooms					X		No restrooms
Parking					X		On street parking
Lighting			X		X		Street lighting, large “parking lot” light shining on Open Space
Benches		X			X		four attached benches to tables under shelter
Signage			X		X		Both sides of park along the sidewalks

# Woodbine Parks

Mini Park (0.8 acres)

6600 S. 87th St



Google earth

miles 50  
km 80



## LEGEND

- |                  |                           |
|------------------|---------------------------|
| ① Signage        | ④ Swing Set               |
| ② Gazebo         | ⑤ Basketball Court        |
| ③ Play Structure | ⑥ Picnic Table with Grill |





Table 27 Woodbine Park Amenities

Park Component	Condition Poor/Fair/Good			Capacity Under/At/Over			Notes
Vegetation (Trees, shrubs, turf)			X		X		Medium and large trees
Play Areas			X		X		North portion: open green space South Portion: open green space near sidewalk
Sports Fields					X		No sporting fields
Sports Courts		X			X		Basketball court
Walks/Trails			X		X		Walkway goes along play equipment, shelter, swings and basketball court
Play Equipment			X		X		Medium sized play equipment, 4 swings (baby seat)
Structures		X			X		Wooden gazebo structure for picnics
Picnic Facilities			X		X		Metal picnic shelter with table and seating, one grill; North Locaiton has two picnic tables with attached bences and 2 grills
Drinking Water		X			X		Drinking fountain on the southern portion
Restrooms					X		No restroom
Parking					X		On street parking
Lighting		X		X			Street lighting
Benches		X			X		2 benches
Signage			X		X		Signage at both locations
Miscellaneous			X		X		Petroleum pipeline going through the two portions of Woodbine Park



# Ponderosa Park

Neighborhood Park (4.28 acres)  
S. 78th and Washington



Google earth

miles 100  
km 200



## LEGEND

- |                          |                        |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| ① Signage                | ④ Playground Structure |
| ② Parking                | ⑤ Swing Sets           |
| ③ Picnic Shelter         | ⑥ Horseshoe Pits       |
| ● Neighborhood Entrances |                        |





Table 28 Ponderosa Park Amenities

Park Component	Condition Poor/Fair/Good			Capacity Under/At/Over			Notes
Vegetation (Trees, shrubs, turf)			X		X		Medium to large trees
Play Areas			X			X	Open spaces throughout the park
Sports Fields		X			X		No sports fields but large, open area for games
Sports Courts		X				X	2 sets of Horseshoe pits
Walks/Trails		X			X		Trail runs the perimeter of the park
Play Equipment			X		X		One large play equipment area, two younger children swings, four regular swings
Structures					X		No structures
Picnic Facilities			X			X	One metal shelter with three grills nearby, 6 picnic tables
Drinking Water		X			X		Water fountain near shelter
Restrooms					X		No restrooms
Parking			X		X		Off street parking lot
Lighting			X			X	Horseshoe pits lights, other lights along the path have street-style lights
Benches			X		X		Two around tree with play equipment and a couple along the trail
Signage			X		X		Signage on the west side entrance (did not see other entrance signs)
Miscellaneous			X		X		Natural Gas line runs through the park; Two entrances on the east side are not ADA (20 steps each with railing)



# Oak Park

Neighborhood Park (15.1 acres)

S. 79th Ave and Park Lane



Google earth

miles 100  
km 200



## LEGEND

- |                          |                                 |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| ① Signage                | ④ Restroom Structure with water |
| ② Parking                | ● 8 x 10 Concrete Picnic Areas  |
| ③ Large Gazebo Structure |                                 |







Table 29 **Oak Park Amenities**

Park Component	Condition Poor/Fair/Good			Capacity Under/At/Over			Notes
Vegetation (Trees, shrubs, turf)			X		X		Mature trees throughout the park, outdoor classroom with educational planting around the gazebo, new landscapes at both entrances
Play Areas		X			X		Not large open space but some good areas for games
Sports Fields					X		No sporting fields
Sports Courts					X		No sporting courts
Walks/Trails			X			X	Wide, dedicated trail throughout the park
Play Equipment		X		X			No play equipment
Structures			X			X	Lighted rest room building (with storage) & large gazebo
Picnic Facilities			X			X	Great areas for picnics with 8 by 10 concrete slabs along the Oak Park walkways
Drinking Water			X		X		Water fountain at restroom structure
Restrooms			X		X		Lighted structure with two security cameras
Parking			X			X	Lighted off street parking lot found on the west side (S.79th Ave), on street parking for the east side (S. 77th Ave)
Lighting			X			X	Lighting both open areas and trails, future trail lighting was being installed
Benches			X			X	Over 10 Benches throughout the trail system
Signage			X			X	3 signs (Parking lot and both entrances)



# Wildewood Park

Neighborhood Park (15.8 acres)

S. 79th and Park Lane



Google earth

miles 200  
km 400



## LEGEND

- |                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| ① Wildewood Signage     | ⑤ Picnic Shelter and Tables                       |
| ② Parking               | ⑥ Restroom Building with covered tables and water |
| ③ Playground Structures | ⑦ Sand Volleyball Court                           |
| ④ Swing Set             | ● Trail System                                    |





Table 30 **Wildewood Park Amenities**

Park Component	Condition			Capacity			Notes
	Poor	Fair	Good	Under	At	Over	
Vegetation (Trees, shrubs, turf)			X		X		Mature trees throughout the park (continued maintenance required)
Play Areas			X			X	Large open green space, sloping hills may limit activities available
Sports Fields		X			X		No Sporting Fields
Sports Courts		X			X		Sand Volleyball Court (street light nearby in open area)
Walks/Trails			X			X	Designated Trail (with trail markers) along the North side of the park, wide sidewalks connects everything around the playground equipment/picnic shelter/restrooms and along Ralston Avenue
Play Equipment			X			X	Large playground structure, climbing rope tower, climbing rock, 4 swings (2 baby seats) with retaining walls around the equipment
Structures			X		X		1 Lighted Structure with partial picnic area and 3 Rest Rooms
Picnic Facilities			X		X		Two metal picnic shelters (1 lighted), 2 Grills, 10 picnic tables
Drinking Water			X		X		Water Fountain at Restroom
Restrooms			X		X		3 Rest Rooms (1 Women, 1 Men, 1 Unisex)
Parking			X		X		Off street parking (3 sections)
Lighting		X			X		Street Lighting, 2 Street Pole lighting inside field
Benches		X			X		
Signage			X		X		Signage west entrance of parking lot, signage at east intersection of Park



# Ralston Park Complex

## Special Use Parks (23.1 acres)

### Park Drive and Serum Ave



Google earth

miles 200  
km 400

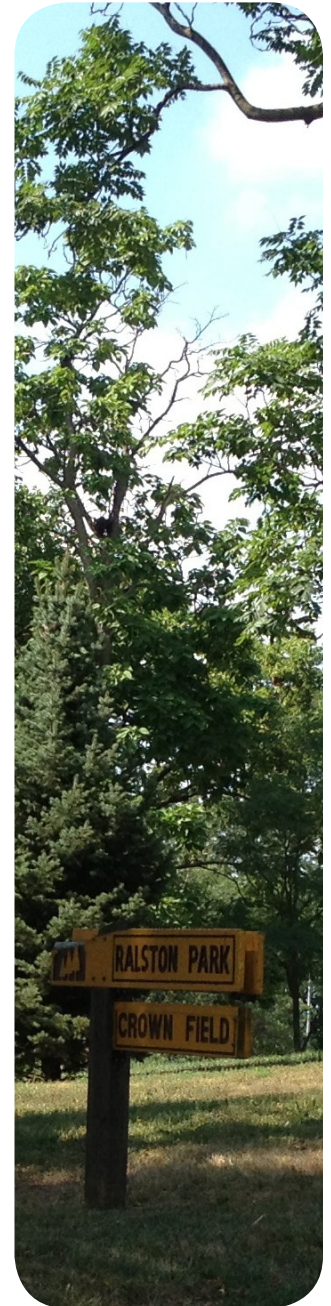


#### LEGEND

Listed in order of individual park amenities following:

- |                                 |                          |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| ① Pierson Field                 | ④ Joe Wager Field        |
| ② Orval R. Smith Memorial Field | ⑤ Crown Field            |
| ③ Ralston Park                  | ⑥ Ralston Soccer Complex |







# Pierson Field

## Part of the Ralston Park Complex

### S. 84th and Park Drive



Google earth

feet 300  
meters 90



#### LEGEND

- |                         |                       |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| ① Pierson Field Signage | ④ Batting Cages       |
| ② Parking               | ⑤ Restroom with water |
| ③ Concession Stand      | ⑥ Youth Soccer Field  |





Table 31 Pierson Field Amenities

Park Component	Condition Poor/Fair/Good			Capacity Under/At/Over			Notes
Vegetation (Trees, shrubs, turf)		X			X		Small to medium trees around the ball field and parking lot, larger trees along the perimeter
Play Areas		X			X		Open area on the west side
Sports Fields			X		X		Lighted Ralston Area Baseball Association Field with dugouts and bullpens and scoreboard, 2 batting cages along the first base fence, youth soccer field on southwest portion of the property
Sports Courts					X		No sporting courts
Walks/Trails			X		X		Sidewalk along 84th Street and Park Drive, Flat, paved walkway surrounds the ball field and to the off street parking lots
Play Equipment					X		No play equipment
Structures			X			X	Lighted concession stand, shared restroom building on east side, large structure with indoor and onsite storage for city equipment
Picnic Facilities		X			X		4 picnic tables near the concession stand
Drinking Water			X		X		hydrant (north of field), water fountain at restroom (northeast of field)
Restrooms			X		X		Shared building between Pierson Field and Orval Smith Ball field
Parking			X			X	Three separate parking lots, tiered due to topography,
Lighting			X		X		Pierson Field has eight towers, parking lots are lit with five light poles
Benches		X			X		Four sporting event bleachers, three benches along walkway
Signage			X		X		Typical wooden park signage at entrance of parking lot, fundraising/monument signage



# Orval R. Smith Memorial Field

## Part of the Ralston Park Complex

### Woodlawn Ave and Park Drive



Google earth

feet 300  
meters 90



#### LEGEND

- |   |                                  |
|---|----------------------------------|
| ① Orval R. Smith Memorial Field Signage | ④ Batting Cages                  |
| ② Parking                               | ⑤ Restroom with water            |
| ③ Concession Stand                      | ⑥ Storage Building and Materials |



Table 32 Orval R. Smith Memorial Field Amenities

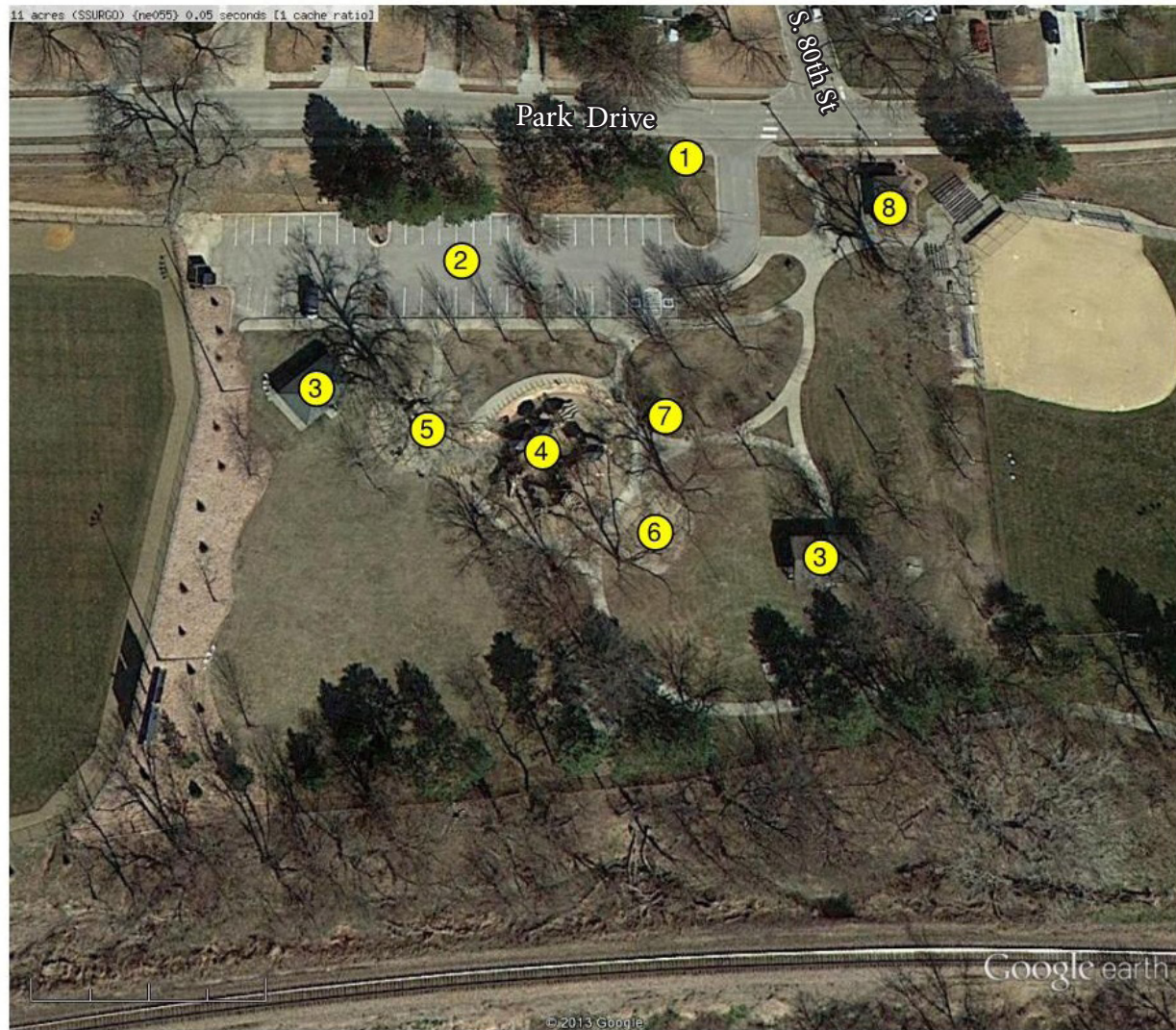
Park Component	Condition Poor/Fair/Good			Capacity Under/At/Over			Notes
Vegetation (Trees, shrubs, turf)		X			X		some landscape inside 6' fenced-in ballpark area, smaller new landscaping outside left field fence
Play Areas		X			X		No play areas
Sports Fields			X		X		Legion baseball park with press box, dugouts, and scoreboard, Rod Stuehm Memorial batting cages
Sports Courts					X		No sports courts
Walks/Trails		X			X		Sidewalk along Park Drive, paved walkway around ballfield is fenced in/locked
Play Equipment					X		No equipment
Structures		X			X		Press box (stacked bleachers with press box on top/ storage below)
Picnic Facilities		X			X		No picnic facilities
Drinking Water		X			X		Water fountain between Pierson Field, hydrant north side of field
Restrooms			X		X		Shared restroom with Pierson Field
Parking		X			X		Parking lots on the west and east sides
Lighting			X			X	Seven light towers
Benches		X			X		Five sporting event bleachers
Signage		X			X		Park signage at entrance of parking lot (northwest) On the backside of Pressbox structure, Advertisement on scoreboard



# Ralston Park Playground

## Part of the Ralston Park Complex

### S. 80th and Park Drive



Google earth

feet 200  
meters 80



#### LEGEND

- |                                |                        |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| ① Ralston Park Signage         | ⑤ Playground Equipment |
| ② Parking                      | ⑥ Swing Set            |
| ③ Picnic Facilities with water | ⑦ Bike Rack            |
| ④ Large Playground Structure   | ⑧ Restroom with water  |





Table 33 Ralston Park Playground Amenities

Park Component	Condition Poor/Fair/Good			Capacity Under/At/Over			Notes
Vegetation (Trees, shrubs, turf)			X		X		Medium to large trees, landscaping behind Orval Smith Field fence
Play Areas		X			X		Open areas for simple games
Sports Fields					X		No sports fields
Sports Courts					X		No sports courts
Walks/Trails			X		X		Trail comes from behind Joe Wager Field outfield fence and along the two picnic shelters and large play equipment and ends at the parking lot
Play Equipment			X		X		Very large play equipment area with multiple options, swing set, climbing equipment around large structure
Structures		X			X		Two large picnic shelters (1 metal, 1 wooden), restrooms located near Joe Wager field,
Picnic Facilities			X		X		Two great picnic shelters, six grills, 11 picnic tables
Drinking Water			X		X		Two water fountains (one near Joe Wager Field)
Restrooms			X		X		Shared restroom with Joe Wager Field
Parking			X		X		Off street, lighted parking 48 stalls (ADA accessible), bike rack near play equipment
Lighting			X		X		Lights throughout park and parking lot
Benches			X		X		Benches along trail and around the large play equipment
Signage		X			X		Joe Wager Field Sign at parking lot entrance



# Crown and Joe Wager Ball Fields

## Part of the Ralston Park Complex

### S. 79th and Park Drive



Google earth

feet 400  
meters 100



#### LEGEND

- |                                     |                                       |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| ① Joe Wager Field Signage and Field | ⑤ Batting Cages                       |
| ② Crown Field Signage and Field     | ⑥ Restroom with water                 |
| ③ Parking                           | ⑦ Playground Equipment with Swing Set |
| ④ Concession Stand                  | ⑧ Bike Rack                           |





Table 34 Joe Wager Field Amenities

Park Component	Condition			Capacity			Notes
	Poor/Fair/Good			Under/At/Over			
Vegetation (Trees, shrubs, turf)		X			X		Landscaping around the west entrance restrooms
Play Areas		X			X		Open area behind the outfield fence for warmup/small games
Sports Fields			X		X		Lighted Little league baseball field with dugouts, batting cages in the outfield
Sports Courts					X		No sporting courts
Walks/Trails			X		X		Sidewalk goes along Park Drive, walkway runs along the third base fence to connect to Crown Field (east)
Play Equipment					X		No play equipment
Structures			X		X		Concession stand/press box between Joe Wager and Crown Field
Picnic Facilities		X			X		Picnic tables by concession stands
Drinking Water			X		X		Water fountain at restroom structure, concession stand, and near the first base fence
Restrooms					X		Restroom structure (west of field) and at concession stand
Parking			X			X	Parking lot west of field
Lighting			X		X		Six light towers
Benches		X			X		Three sporting event bleachers
Signage			X		X		Joe Wager Field sign at entrance to parking (north of restrooms)

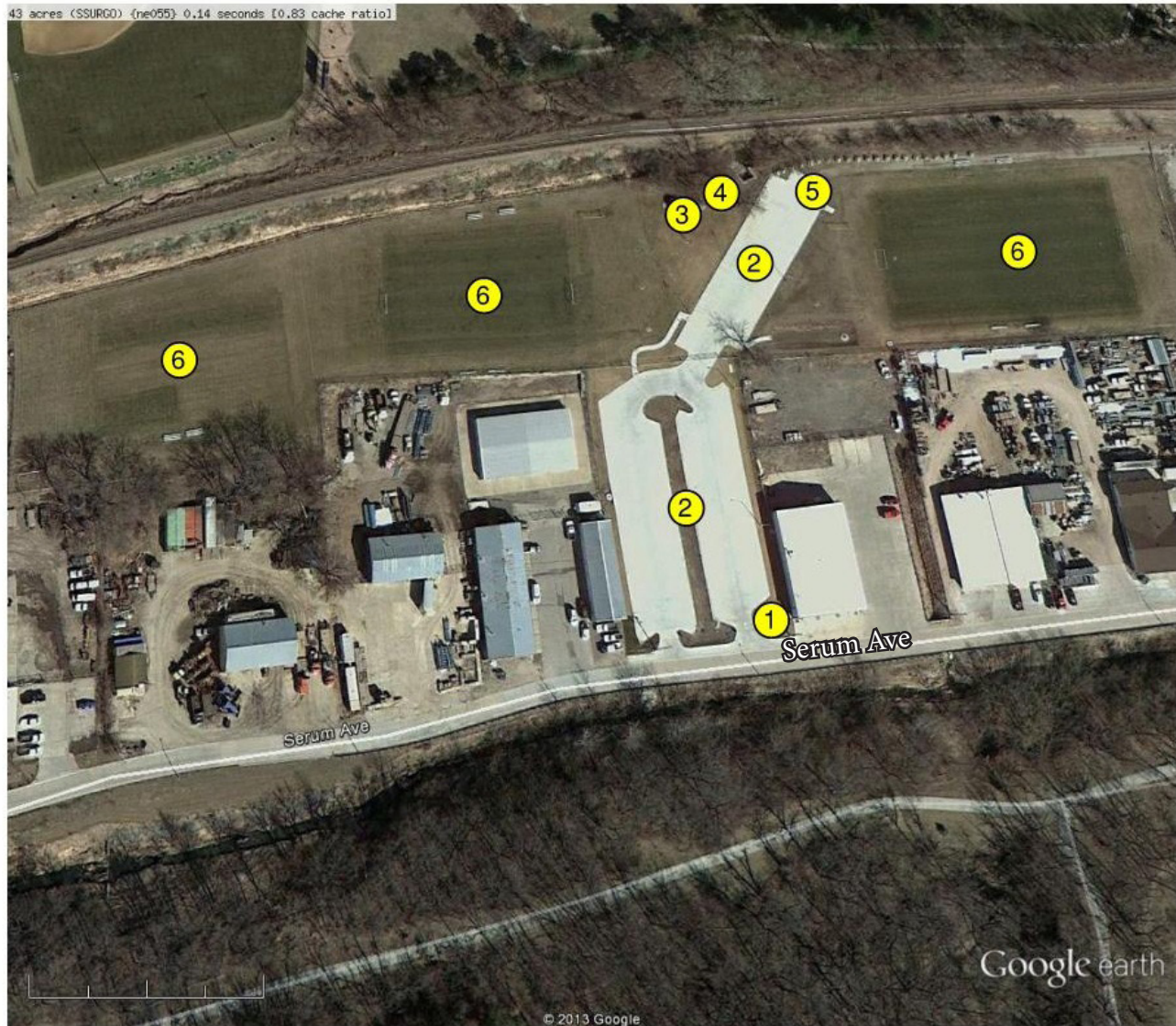
Table 35 Crown Field Amenities

Park Component	Condition			Capacity			Notes
	Poor/Fair/Good			Under/At/Over			
Vegetation (Trees, shrubs, turf)		X			X		The hill to the north has medium to large trees
Play Areas		X			X		Large, sloping area with trees
Sports Fields			X		X		Lighted softball field with dugouts and scoreboard; playground east side of field, batting cages south of concession stand (right outfield fence)
Sports Courts					X		No sporting courts
Walks/Trails			X		X		Sidewalk along Park Drive, walkway along the north side of the baseball field, trail along the south side of field
Play Equipment			X		X		Playground equipment, two swing sets and diggers
Structures		X			X		Concession stand with 2nd story press box
Picnic Facilities		X			X		Picnic tables by concession stands
Drinking Water			X		X		Concession stand
Restrooms		X			X		Restrooms at concession stand (west of field)
Parking			X		X		ADA parking lot to the east with a bike rack
Lighting			X		X		Six light towers
Benches		X			X		2 wooden sporting event bleachers, 4 benches around the field
Signage		X			X		Crown field signage at entrance to parking lot

# Soccer Complex

## Part of the Ralston Park Complex

### S. 80th and Serum Drive



Google earth

feet | 400  
meters | 100



#### LEGEND

- |                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| ① Ralston Soccer Complex Signage | ④ Storage Building  |
| ② Parking                        | ⑤ Portable Restroom   |
| ③ Concession Stand               | ⑥ Soccer Fields with movable goals, player benches, and bleachers |





Table 36 Ralston Soccer Complex Amenities

Park Component	Condition			Capacity			Notes
	Poor	Fair	Good	Under	At	Over	
Vegetation (Trees, shrubs, turf)			X		X		Small trees, irrigated fields, natural plantings inside the median
Play Areas		X			X		Limited Access and gated complex, open space is limited
Sports Fields			X		X		Three large well-drained soccer fields
Sports Courts					X		No sporting courts
Walks/Trails		X			X		Sidewalk connects parking lot to concession stand
Play Equipment					X		No playground event
Structures		X			X		Soccer Complex building and concession stand
Picnic Facilities		X			X		Picnic tables
Drinking Water		X			X		
Restrooms		X			X		1 portable restroom
Parking			X		X		ADA and two lighted parking lots
Lighting			X		X		Eight street lights
Benches		X			X		12 players benches, Four sporting event bleachers
Signage			X		X		Signage at the entrance of parking lot



### Park Recommendations

The City of Ralston shall continue to maintain the high quality service of the parks system. The mature trees throughout Ralston will require vigilance of residents to inform the city staff of down branches or hazardous trees. This can help provide a safe environment for the parks and trails.

## MINI PARKS

### Fairview park:

- *Include as part of the Park Connection with a trail along Monroe St. (see Figure 8)*
- *Additional lighting needed for sidewalk if feasible.*
- *Provide additional aesthetic and identification amenities where feasible.*
- *Continue to provide ADA accessibility and ADA facilities where feasible.*
- *Continue to provide basic requirements that are feasible and optional additions that are desired through public input*

### Koch park:

- *Include as part of the Park, Neighborhood, and Hinge Connections with trails. (see Figure 8)*
- *This small property will become important as a collection point and offer public information via kiosks.*
- *Additional sidewalk needed on the west side for connectivity of S. 75th and State Streets.*
- *Provide additional aesthetic and identification amenities where feasible.*
- *Continue to provide ADA accessibility and ADA facilities where feasible.*
- *Continue to provide basic requirements that are feasible and optional additions that are desired through public input*

### Adams park:

- *Include as part of the Park Connection with trails. (see Figure 8)*
- *Encourage residents to repair/complete sidewalks to the park.*
- *Provide additional aesthetic and identification amenities where feasible.*
- *Continue to provide ADA accessibility and ADA facilities where feasible.*
- *Continue to provide basic requirements that are feasible and optional additions that are desired through public input*

### Woodbine park:

- *Include as part of the Park and Neighborhood Connections with trails. (see Figure 8)*
- *Provide additional aesthetic and identification amenities where feasible.*
- *Continue to provide ADA accessibility and ADA facilities where feasible.*
- *Continue to provide basic requirements that are feasible and optional additions that are desired through public input.*

## INDIVIDUAL PARK RECOMMENDATIONS

**NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS****Ponderosa park:**

- *Include as part of the Park and Neighborhood Connections with trails. (see Figure 8)*
- *Provide additional aesthetic and identification amenities where feasible.*
- *Continue to provide ADA accessibility and ADA facilities where feasible.*
- *Continue to provide basic requirements that are feasible and optional additions that are desired through public input*

**Oak park:**

- *Include as part of the Park and Neighborhood Connections with trails. (see Figure 8)*
- *Install Wi-Fi for the outdoor, educational classroom.*
- *Will require continued tree maintenance with overhead utility lines through the park.*
- *Provide additional aesthetic and identification amenities where feasible.*
- *Continue to provide ADA accessibility and ADA facilities where feasible.*
- *Continue to provide basic requirements that are feasible and optional additions that are desired through public input.*

**Wildewood park:**

- *Include Ralston Avenue as part of the Neighborhood Connection with a trail within the right-of-way. (see Figure 8)*
- *Provide additional aesthetic and identification amenities where feasible.*
- *Continue to provide ADA accessibility and ADA facilities where feasible.*
- *Continue to provide basic requirements that are feasible and optional additions that are desired through public input.*

## **SPECIAL USE PARKS**

### **Pierson field:**

- *Include as part of the Park Connection with trails. (see Figure 8)*
- *Maintain additional aesthetic and identification amenities where feasible.*
- *Continue to provide ADA accessibility and ADA facilities where feasible.*
- *Continue to provide basic requirements that are feasible and optional additions that are desired through public input.*
- *Continued support from nonprofit organizations is vital to the success of this special use field.*

### **Orval R. Smith Memorial field:**

- *Include as part of the Park Connection with trails. (see Figure 8)*
- *Maintain the additional aesthetic and identification amenities where feasible.*
- *Continue to provide ADA accessibility and ADA facilities where feasible.*
- *Continue to provide basic requirements that are feasible and optional additions that are desired*
- *Continued support from nonprofit organizations is vital to the success of this special use field.*

### **Ralston park playground:**

- *Include park playground as part of the Park Connection with trails. (see Figure 8)*
- *Repairs and upkeep needed on the wooden picnic facility.*
- *Will require continued tree maintenance with overhead utility lines through the park.*
- *Provide additional aesthetic and identification amenities where feasible.*
- *Continue to provide ADA accessibility and ADA facilities where feasible.*
- *Continue to provide basic requirements that are feasible and optional additions that are desired through public input.*

### **Joe Wager field:**

- *Include as part of the Park Connection with trails. (see Figure 8)*
- *Develop a master plan for the north side of Joe Wager and Crown Field as part of the Park Connection to S. 79th Street.*
- *Maintain the additional aesthetic and identification amenities where feasible.*
- *Continue to provide ADA accessibility and ADA facilities where feasible.*
- *Continue to provide basic requirements that are feasible and optional additions that are desired*
- *Continued support from nonprofit organizations is vital to the success of this special use field.*



## INDIVIDUAL PARK RECOMMENDATIONS

**SPECIAL USE PARKS (Con't)****Crown field:**

- *Include field as part of the Park Connection with trails. (see Figure 8)*
- *Repair and replace bleachers as needed.*
- *Maintain the additional aesthetic and identification amenities where feasible.*
- *Continue to provide ADA accessibility and ADA facilities where feasible.*
- *Continue to provide basic requirements that are feasible and optional additions that are desired*
- *Continued support from nonprofit organizations is vital to the success of this special use field.*

**Soccer Complex:**

- *Include as part of the Existing Trail System if feasible. (See Figure 8)*
- *Maintain the additional aesthetic and identification amenities where feasible.*
- *Use the parking lot water drainage technique as a learning tool for students.*
- *Continue to provide ADA accessibility and ADA facilities where feasible.*
- *Continue to provide basic requirements that are feasible and optional additions that are desired*
- *Continued maintenance and nonprofit organizations is vital to the success of this special use field.*

## NEW PARKS IN HINGE PROJECT

### **C-1:**

*Develop Master Plan and layout for the new Community Park (C-1) and drainage project of the 11 acres along 72nd Street through public input.*

*Include new park as part of the Existing and Hinge Connection Trails.*

*Partner with Papio-Missouri Rivers NRD to create stormwater lake and water feature.*

*Integrate the open green space with amenities such as an amphitheater.*

*Provide aesthetic and identification amenities where feasible.*

*Provide ADA accessibility and ADA facilities where feasible.*

*Provide basic requirements of a community park that are feasible and optional additions that are desired through public input.*

### **M-1:**

*Develop Master Plan for the new one acre Mini Park (M-1) on 73rd Street.*

*Include new park as part of the Hinge Connection Trails*

*Provide aesthetic and identification amenities where feasible.*

*Provide ADA accessibility and ADA facilities where feasible.*

*Provide basic requirements of Mini Parks that are feasible and optional additions that are desired through public input.*

Create pedestrian-friendly environments for both the trail and walkways within this mixed use area.

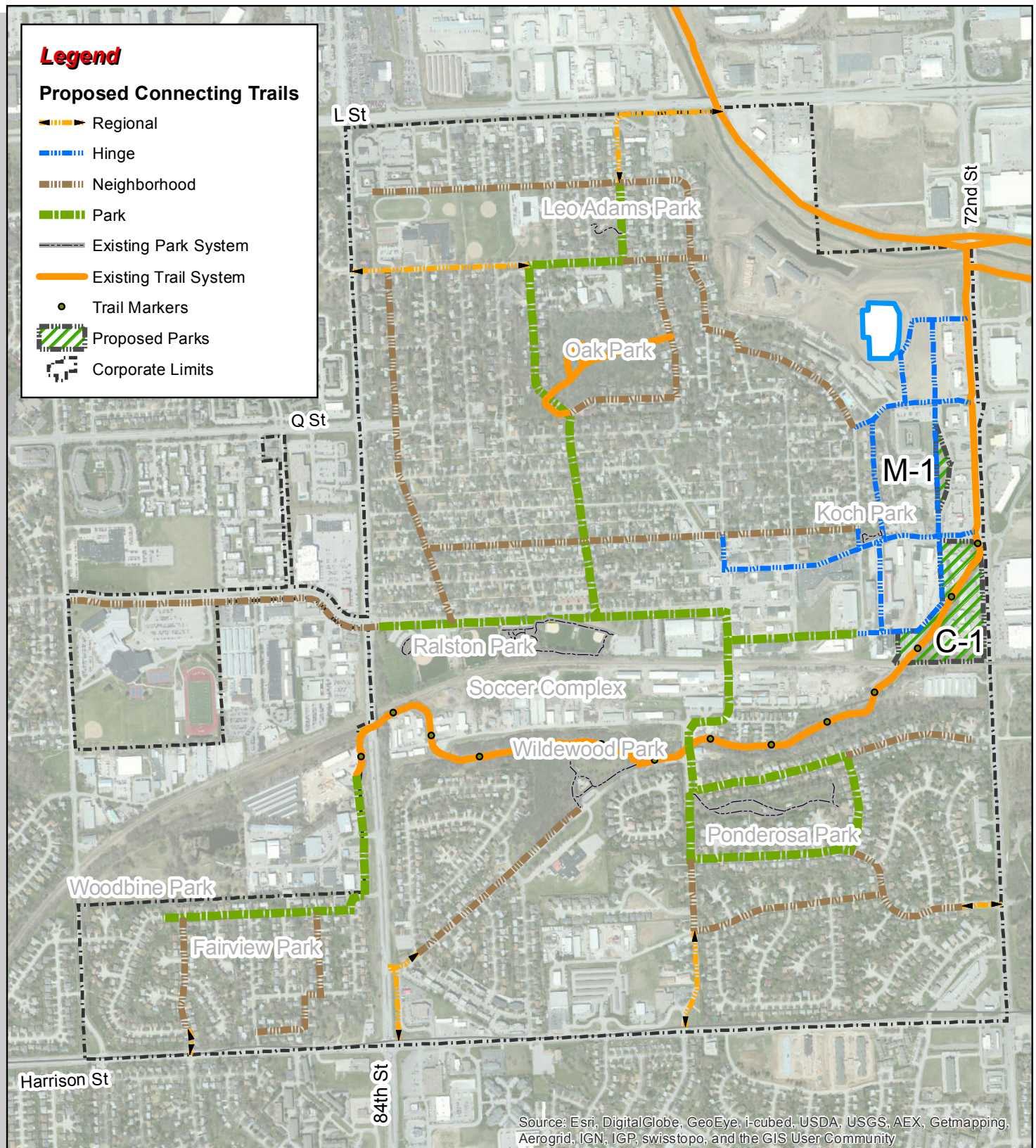
### **Continued projects:**

The city plans to install wireless fidelity, or WiFi, to the new educational classroom in Oak Park. This will allow students to interact within the area and conduct further research. The city should consider the potential to offer WiFi in other parks, particularly Ralston Park Complex, Koch Park, and the proposed community park (C-1). Park equipment will need to be repaired or replaced over the next twenty years. Annual reviews and budgeting should include the needs of the parks.

INDIVIDUAL PARK RECOMMENDATIONS

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## City of Ralston

### Park and Trails Map

Figure 8

Created By: SMS  
Date: August 2013  
Revised: Jan 2014  
Software: ArcGIS 10.2  
File: 121169



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## PARK SYSTEM RECOMMENDATIONS

## Parks System Recommendations

Ralston has a large number of parks for a city of its size. It is recommended that connections between these parks can be improved through additions in sidewalks or alternatives such as a bike lane on less traveled streets. It is not cost effective for the city to add sidewalks but may be possible to create a sidewalk program which will identify needed walkways. At this time, the City does not plan to have such a program but encourages residents to add sidewalks for better connections and safer neighborhoods.

As the City reviews its one and six year transportation plans, it is encouraged to include these amenities with regular maintenance and future construction. Bike lanes may be feasible if budgeted for. A further park and trails study could potentially be combined with a wayfinding study system. The residents would be involved and the routes taken by the public could greatly influence the connections between neighborhoods.

## CONNECTION TRAILS

Four types of connections can improve the City of Ralston's Parks and Recreation. They are Park connections, Neighborhood connections, Pedestrian-friendly Redevelopment connections, as well as regional trail system connections. These connections would take the form of widened sidewalks along the determined connections or creating bike-friendly lanes on appropriate streets.

## Park Connections

Connectivity between Ralston's parks will maximize their benefit to the community and these connections are the highest priority. As noted previously, the Ralston Trail is a great asset for the community especially with the underpass of 84th Street, however, there lacks a predetermined network for visitors and trail enthusiasts. Ralston can capitalize on traveling visitors and expand the current system to include the Parks. The main concern is safety when using bike lanes and is successful on lower traffic streets with limited crossing of high speed intersections.

This connection will provide a safe environment as families and individuals go from one park to the next. Bike lanes may be preferred due to the lack of complete sidewalks in certain neighborhoods of Ralston. It will be encouraged for the residents to replace or install sidewalks to help increase the safety of alternative modes of transportation.



### Neighborhood Connections

These connections are determined by absent trails and will establish a network for both the local neighborhood as well as routes through Ralston for outside visitors. This can also help local traffic be aware of such activities. In conjunction with this type of connection, national programs like SafeRoutes or Walk/Bike to School Day can begin to utilize this network and encourage activity by the community.

It is important to continue public input in such matters that affects resident's day-to-day activities. Priorities may change as development of Ralston continues in the next twenty years. Choosing different routes for these connections may better fit changing needs.

### Redevelopment Connections

As the previous proposals have shown, the higher density redevelopment plans require additional communal open space and pedestrian friendly walkways. The Hinge connections show Ralston's existing roads and network to be utilized within the large redevelopment plan. As this future trail network shows, the walkways and trails create a satisfying experience between the downtown area and the Arena.

### Regional connections

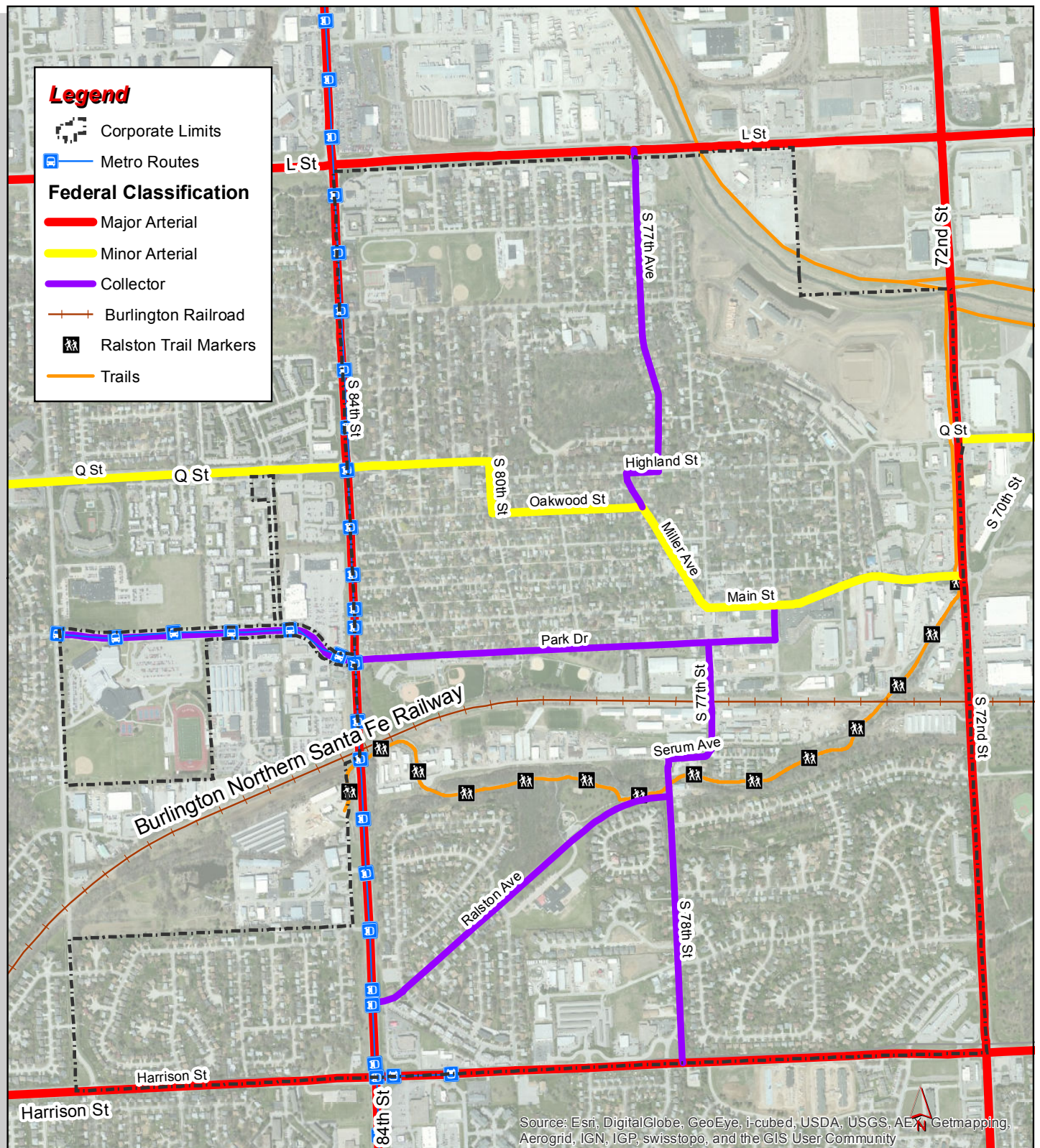
The Ralston Trail currently connects to the Big Papio Trail on the northeast corner of the city limits. East of Ralston, Q street has a planned sidepath that would resemble Ralston's 72nd Street Trail. It will become increasingly important for the City of Ralston to accommodate this alternative transportation because the younger demographic seeks this type of amenity.

Ralston is in a prime location with the Big Papio Trail, Keystone Trail and Seymour Smith Park nearby. Further connections to larger regional networks will become important for continued success for Ralston and continue to promote its image.



## 4.5 TRANSPORTATION

This portion of the Achieve Section will look at the Ralston's current transportation network and provide additional items in regards to future transportation. The Ralston transportation network is something to envy as the street layout stems from its past. At Dr. George Miller's request, the streets were laid out to emphasis the beauty of Ralston's hills. In a community surrounded by a grid system, this transportation network is something to behold. Although some will say otherwise, the insulation of its street network forms a sense of community. Hurried local commuters know better than to cut through Ralston. This has been a long term benefit for preserving the local integrity within the metropolitan area. Its street layout may not generate additional tax money, but a drive through the hills has visitors wondering what's around the next bend and increases desirability.



## City of Ralston Douglas County, Nebraska

### Transportation Map Figure 9

Created By: SMS  
Date: August 2013  
Revised: January 2014  
Software: ArcGIS 10.1  
File: 121169

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## EXISTING TRANSPORTATION

## Federal Classification

Functional classification is the process by which streets and highways are grouped into classes or systems, according to the character of service they are intended to provide. The brief explanations of the federal functional classifications and the corresponding map are found below:

### Major Arterial (Harrison, L, 72nd, 84th Streets)

Provide for land access and traffic circulation within and between residential neighborhoods and commercial and industry areas, as well as distribute traffic movements from these areas to other arterial streets. Frontage roads are required in most cases.

### Minor Arterial (Q Street, Miller Ave, Main Street)

Collect and distribute traffic from principal arterials and interstates to streets of lower classification, and, in some cases, allow traffic to directly access destinations. Access to land use activities is generally permitted, but is oftentimes consolidated, shared, or limited to larger-scale users.

### Collector (Park Drive, Ralston Avenue, S. 77th Ave, S. 78th St)

Collectors typically accommodate for lower speeds, shorter distances, and connect local traffic to arterials.

### Local

Offer the lowest level of mobility and highest level of local property access. Local streets typically make up the largest percentage of street mileage and provide direct access to adjacent land uses. This is all other neighborhood streets in the city.

### Railroad

The Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway currently serves the area. The railroad tracks run east to west which divides Ralston into northern and southern sections. There is one at-grade crossing on S. 77th Street. Currently, the track has at least five trains running through Ralston each day.

### Public Transit

Omaha's Metro bus system serves Ralston along the 84th Street corridor and Park Drive with routes 93 and 55.

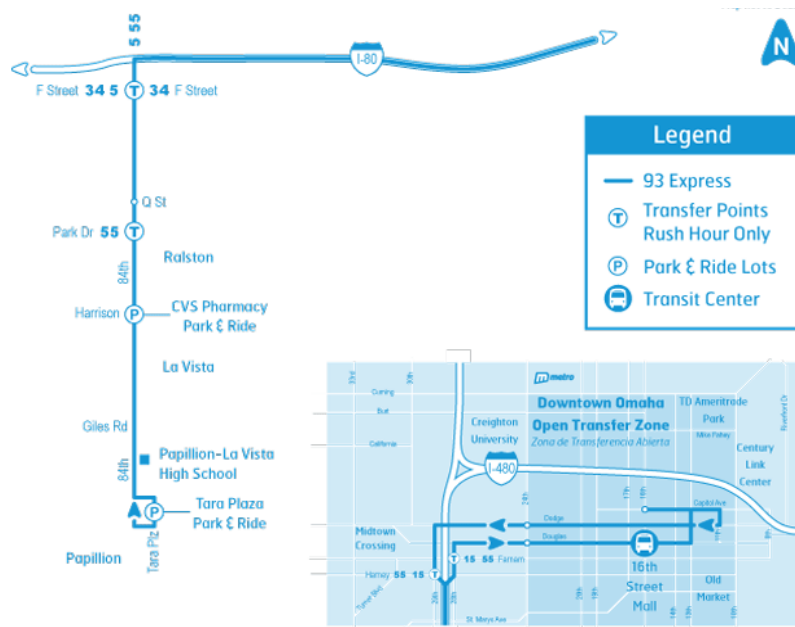


## Alternative Transportation

### Omaha Metro

Route 93 is an express route with limited stops to the Interstate and travels directly to the downtown Omaha area via Douglas Street exit to the 16th Street Mall Transit Center. Ralston is served with a Park and Ride Lot at 84th and Harrison Street (currently CVS pharmacy). Another Ralston stop for Route 93 is a bench located at 84th and Q Street.

Route 55 also serves the Ralston area. Its scheduled stop is located at 84th and Park Drive. This is not an express route but does give mobility options for residents and employees that work along this route. It travels west along I Street to retail, industrial, and large employment centers. When traveling east, the bus travels north to the 84th and Center transfer point for additional options. Route 55 continues east to other retail and employment centers such as Bergan Mercy Hospital, Aksarben Village, Midtown Transit Center, and the Midtown Crossing area.



## EXISTING TRANSPORTATION

### Shuttle Service

Residents also have a shuttle service available to them through a city partnership with La Vista. The shuttle is available by appointments that charge \$1 per trip.



### Biking Opportunities

The local Ralston trail system connects to the larger Big Papio Trail on the northeast corner of the corporate limits. This allows the residents of Ralston the option to travel on a regional scale. The Big Papio and Keystone Trail networks take alternative traffic north, northwest, and southeast. According to the ActivateOmaha Bike Map, there is a planned trail that would take alternative traffic east along I-80 to the Field Club Trail.

As mentioned in the Parks and Trail recommendations, further review of the comprehensive plan and recommendations can be included while the City reviews its one and six-year transportation plans for biking opportunities and regional significance of Ralston proximity within the Omaha Metro area.



## Future Transportation

The general maintenance of the transportation network will be an ongoing endeavor for the City. There will be a sufficient amount of construction with the proposed concepts, however the majority of transportation system will be similar. As Ralston grows with higher density, the resulting traffic volume will be located near the corridors. There will be large changes to the current street grids in these areas as the proposed developments occur.

The one change that should be evident is creating the pedestrian-friendly atmosphere surrounding the Ralston Arena, along 73rd Street, and continuing to draw people toward the downtown district via Main Street. By having more pedestrian focused development, it will allow visitors to Ralston to feel comfortable exploring their surroundings.

The majority of additional transportation services would be found with alternative transportation and developing the connections between neighborhoods, parks, and regional trail systems as discussed in the Park and Recreation recommendations. These recommendations and options should be incorporated into the one and six-year transportation plan reviews.

## Wayfinding System

The City of Ralston invites visitors on Main Street with “Welcome to Ralston” banners that change in coordination with the seasons. This polite recognition can be further developed into a wayfinding system. With increased traffic in the Ralston area due to events at the Arena, the interest for such a system would be expected as part of the Hinge project.

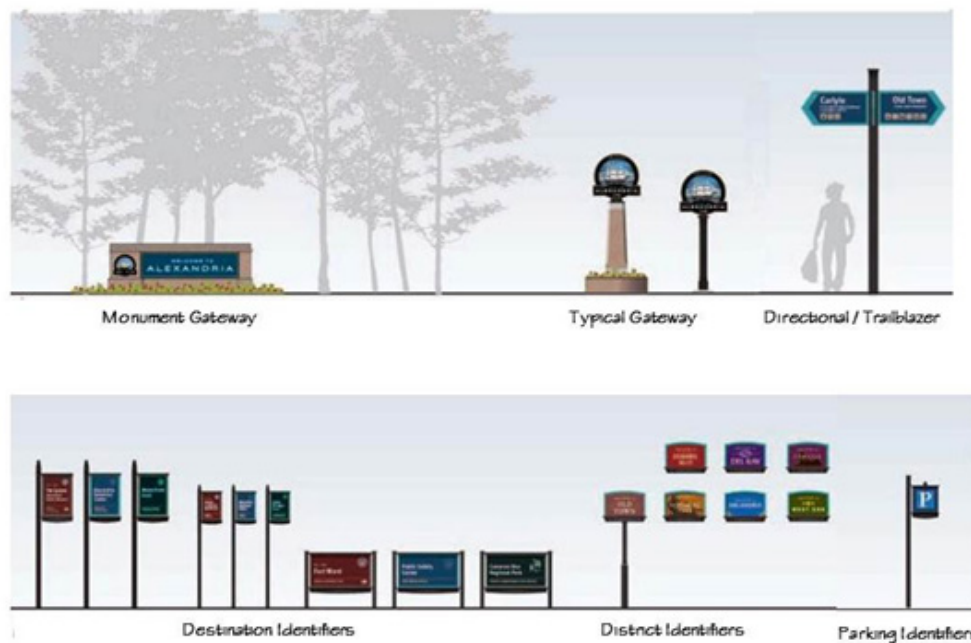
In general, the wayfinding plan should:

- Provide a coordinated and comprehensive signage system.
- Provide directions to key destinations from major arterial roadways.
- Limit signage to key locations, to reinforce the importance of each sign.



## FUTURE TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

- Establish and define the destinations that the wayfinding system needs to support.
- Surveys, interviews with stakeholders, or other methods might be used as the means of establishing the destinations to include in the wayfinding system.
- Organize the destinations into a hierarchy or groupings, with different signage classes for each grouping of destinations.
- Work with stakeholders to develop a signage typology. These varying sign types will relate back to the wayfinding goals, and will include the different functional groupings of signs.
- Examples are shown below:



Source: City of Alexandria, VA Wayfinding Program Design Guidelines

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# 5 [Implement]

RALSTON

## PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation refers to the objectives, policies and actions that have been identified to carry out the vision of this comprehensive plan update. It includes actions designed to improve the long-range planning process, strengthen links between the plan and capital improvement budgeting, establish a process reporting system to monitor the progress and a schedule for updating and amending the plan in the future.

Successful comprehensive plans are ones that are implemented. While the role of the Planning Commission is to ensure the orderly growth of the community by adherence to the Comprehensive Plan, it is up to the citizenry to champion the projects envisioned to implement the plan. Developing a plan is relatively easy compared to the implementation of it. What happens with the plan, how it is used in day-to-day decision-making, and the extent to which it is followed over time will all influence its overall success. This plan is a living guidance document; it is not the end of a planning process but the beginning of a coordinated effort to direct growth and development in ways that are important to the citizens of Ralston.



## 5.2 IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS

Rarely will a single tool or category of tools be sufficient to achieve the goals in a comprehensive plan. The steps toward each goal require the use of several tools from different categories in order to be obtained, realized, and sustained. The City of Ralston will need to continually develop its own set of implementation tools and strategies, recognizing that each has unique strengths and weaknesses.

The City of Ralston has a number of tools at its disposal to shape development patterns, protect natural resources and human infrastructure, and enhance the quality of life for its residents. Implementation strategies can be separated into several distinct tool categories and programs, each with its distinct characteristics that make it suitable for specific goals and circumstances.

## IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS

## Support Programs

Four programs will play a vital role in the success of the comprehensive plan update. These programs are:

### Capital Improvements Financing

An annual predictable investment plan that uses a one to six-year planning horizon to schedule and fund projects integral to the plan's implementation.

### Zoning Regulations

This updates zoning districts and regulations, including design guidelines and can allow the city to provide direction for future growth.

### Subdivision Regulations

This will establish criteria for erosion control and runoff and dividing land into building areas, parks, trails, utility easements, and streets. Implementing the Transportation Plan is a primary function of subdivision regulations.

### Plan Maintenance

An annual and five-year review program will allow the city flexibility in responding to growth and a continuous program of maintaining the plan's viability.

## Public Education

In addition to the identified programs, broad public support and involvement is necessary in the development and use of any implementation policy or program. If adequate support is to be developed, a program educating residents is necessary. People who understand the needs and ways of meeting those needs of the community must take the initiative to stimulate the interest and the understanding required to ensure action is taken. The City Council and/or Planning Commission of Ralston should annually strive to implement an active public participation process by creating an educational process on land use issues. The city should continue to use its website and make the comprehensive plan and development regulations available online. Ongoing education and promotion will be an important factor in sustaining interest and motivation from community members.

Some of the objectives of the comprehensive plan cannot be achieved unless the actions of two or more public agencies or private organizations can be coordinated. Frequently, constraints prevent organizations from working with one another (i.e. financial resources, legal authority, restriction of joint uses of facilities, etc). Efforts should be made to bridge this gap with open communication, cooperation and the realization that the issue at hand could benefit the health, safety, and general welfare of the residents in Ralston.

## Special Studies and Plans

Additional studies and plans can be helpful to further explore and define a vision of a certain area, corridor, or development site. Conducting studies and making decisions area by area can enhance the Comprehensive Plan. Some examples of additional planning efforts that can further develop ideas expressed in the Achieve Section include:

- Housing Master Plan
- Facilities Management Plan
- Site Development Plan for city property
- Blight and Substandard Determination Study



## IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS

### Land Use Suitability

How will this be implemented? The major assumption of this Comprehensive Plan is:

“Specific development criteria will be adopted to help guide builders, investors, and community leaders in making good decisions concerning the future of Ralston.”

These criteria will be specific statements that:

Describe the relationship between/  
among land uses.

Minimize land use conflicts between  
neighboring parcels.

Establish criteria or design  
standards that new development or  
redevelopment must meet.

Create consistent characteristics within  
each land use district.

### Land Use Transition

Redevelopment projects should provide, if needed, screening, buffers, or additional setback requirements when located next to existing uses. Screening or buffers may be plant material, low earthen berms, solid fences, or any combination of the above. Boundaries between different land uses are done along streets, alleys, or natural features (streams, railroads, etc.) whenever possible.

### Community Entrances

First impressions of the community are made at the entrances. These impressions are critical to a community’s overall image. Redevelopment should have higher landscaping standards when located at any of the boundaries or entrances to the city. This in turn with appropriate sign regulations along the major transportation corridors adjacent to the Ralston will promote a better community image and improve the quality of life in the City of Ralston.

## 5.3 ACHIEVING THE PLAN

In order to solve community problems or concerns, successful city comprehensive plans have the key ingredients of consensus, ideas, hard work, and the application of each of these. This section of the plan contains the inspiration of the many city officials, school district, chamber, businesses, and concerned citizens who have participated in the planning process. Nevertheless, the ultimate success of the plan remains in the dedication offered by each and every resident.

There are numerous goals and objectives in this plan and it is recommended to review the relevant goals and objectives during the city planning and budget sessions. However, it is also recommended that the city select elements of the plan for immediate action as identified by the Steering Committee in the Vision Implementation Plan (VIP) in this section; the goals of highest priority which will ultimately lead to the success of other goals and objectives. It will be critical to earmark the specific funds to be used and the individuals primarily responsible for implementing the goals, objectives and policies in Ralston.

## ACHIEVING THE PLAN

## Community Growth

New development for Ralston shall consist of redevelopment of strategically placed or underutilized properties. The growth will be in denser mixed use projects or on limited infill sites scattered throughout the city.

The Future Land Use Plan is one of the requirements of a Comprehensive Development Plan, as stated in the Nebraska State Statutes. The Land Use Plan, along with the Transportation Plan, provides the necessary tools to direct future development in and around Ralston. The city's Land Use Plan is based on existing conditions and projected conditions for the community.

The need for residential uses will be driven by the future population, the ratio of owner-occupied to renter-occupied housing units, and the projected number of future dwelling units needed. New residential development can drive the need for additional commercial development, public and park facilities, and internal job growth. Therefore, decisions regarding future residential development will have a direct impact on other uses throughout the entire community. Conversely, commercial and industrial development in a community will lead to further economic development and the need for more residential units. Although Ralston's population appears to have plateaued which is contributing to property value stagnation, it has the possibility with the redevelopment envisioned in this plan to increase the population and commercial enterprises through strategic redevelopment projects. These opportunities and population growth will ultimately lead to greater property value and revenue for the City of Ralston.



## 5.4 ANNEXATION

Typically, communities grow their size, area and population by annexing areas that are urban in nature and adjacent and contagious to the corporate limits of a city. Ralston is unique and shares a corporate boundary with the City of Omaha and City of La Vista on all sides except a small area known as Turtle Creek.

The Turtle Creek Sanitary Improvement District (SID) located on the western edge of the corporate limits is the only development that Ralston would have the option to annex. At this time, it is not financially feasible to annex the Turtle Creek SID.

As a result, Ralston's growth policy shall be focused on internal redevelopment within its existing corporate limits.

## 5.5 GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

Ralston's vision statement can be further delineated into broad based goals and objectives. They can be referred to help guide and direct future decisions on growth and development in Ralston. The goals will help express a broad viewpoint for decision makers to evaluate and consider. The goals refer to decisions based upon the overall growth of Ralston instead of individual transactions. The objectives in this update will create consistency in decision making to help make smooth transitions as Ralston redevelops.

The goals and objectives will also be further developed into policies with action plans, which aim to provide the kind of "day-to-day" direction and monitoring that will be useful in implementing and realizing the comprehensive plan vision. Consensus on "what is good land use?" and "how to manage change in order to provide the greatest benefit?" is formed.

Ralston's goals, objectives and policies attempt to address various issues, regarding the question of "how" to plan for Ralston's future. The goals, objectives, and policies also reiterate the input given by Ralston residents and how they prefer to see the city change.

## “a broad-stroke comment or aspiration”

Goals are the desires and projected state of affairs which the community intends to achieve. Goals are the most general statement of future preferences and outcomes, and set a broad framework for objectives and policies. Goals should be established in a manner that is clearly understood and allows them to be accomplished. It is noted that the goals may need to be modified or changed from time to time to continue to reflect community preferences.

## “what the desired outcome is”

Objectives provide the intermediate steps that guide the community in its future decisions. Objectives provide direction and benchmarks that can be used to monitor progress. Objectives also help maintain support and interest in Plan implementation by providing tangible actions that provide perceptible results. By actually observing and participating Plan activities and their results, community residents are allowed to involve themselves in the evolution of their community, which enhances their support for the Plan and instills excitement for continued involvement.

## “how to make it happen or what needs to be done”

Policies give more detail and describe the actions needed to achieve the desired goal of the community. Policies are part of the value system linking goals with action. Policies represent plans of action that guide decisions in order to achieve rational outcomes, and are concerned with defining and implementing the goals and objectives of the comprehensive plan. The adopted policies synthesize the information from the existing growth condition and responses from the public input process in order to develop solutions or actions that will achieve the various goals. Policies are a means to achieving the goals established by the community and they imply a clear commitment to the city’s future development.



## GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

## Categories of Goals, Objectives, and Policies

The following represent general Community Goals for Ralston:

1. Strive to improve the quality of life and sense of community for all residents of Ralston.
2. Foster the value of family in Ralston. Encourage the development of local action to preserve and strengthen families, while emphasizing Ralston's cultural diversity.
3. Implement appropriate community and economic developments to achieve an increase in the population and housing choices.
4. Provide all residents with access to a variety of safe, decent, sanitary housing types, including elderly households and persons with disabilities.
5. Stabilize and diversify the economic base in Ralston to create and expand employment opportunities and better the job situation for existing and incoming households.
6. Preserve and improve the physical appearance and character of Ralston, including the Downtown and the 72nd Street, L Street, 84th Street and Harrison Street corridors.
7. Update and maintain the community land use plan and zoning and subdivision regulations.
8. Maintain a community and economic development program with a process capable of providing both job stability and growth. Improved jobs for youth and young adults should be given top priority. Community development activities should focus on mixed use redevelopment initiatives.
9. Maintain a modern utility system. Future public facilities, services and transportation systems will need to be updated during the planning period.
10. Encourage an ongoing forum for citizen participation to build consensus for local action associated with improved economic and social conditions in Ralston.
11. Include the citizens and stakeholders in the annual reviews of the Comprehensive Plan and the city's capital improvement budget process.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

# COMMUNITY IMAGE AND GROWTH



## GOAL 1:

Establish Community Initiatives supportive of population growth and improved economic conditions for the Ralston citizenry.

## OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES:

- **Objective 1.1**

**Increase the population in Ralston by promoting redevelopment with mixed use projects.**

Policy 1.1.1

Create housing, facilities and services to maintain the older adult population of Ralston. Attempt to attract seniors living in the metro area to retire in Ralston.

Policy 1.1.2

Plan and implement programs to higher density infill redevelopment.

Policy 1.1.3

Maintain and improve both public and private services, business and industry in Ralston, in an effort to increase and diversify employment opportunities.

Policy 1.1.4

Housing initiatives should be coupled with job creation activities in mixed use projects.

Policy 1.1.5

Promote Ralston as a great place to live, work, raise a family and retire.

- **Objective 1.2**

**Protect and strengthen Ralston's special sense of place and physical character.**

Policy 1.2.1

Remove dilapidated buildings. Promote infill developments on vacant land areas. Implement a rental housing inspection program.

## COMMUNITY IMAGE

### Policy 1.2.2

Encourage the planting of landscapes and the maintenance and preservation of trees.

### Policy 1.2.3

Improve streetscapes in Ralston, by fully implementing the urban design components envisioned in this plan.

### Policy 1.2.4

Implement the downtown revitalization plan, including parking, landscape and façade restoration.

### Policy 1.2.5

Build upon recent efforts to enhance the overall physical appearance of the City.

## GOAL 2:

Maintain itself as an independent community within the metropolitan area by securing resources for the future betterment of Ralston.

## OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES:

- **Objective 2.1**

**Create and implement a program of securing both public and private funding to finance improved living conditions and job creation in Ralston.**

### Policy 2.1.1

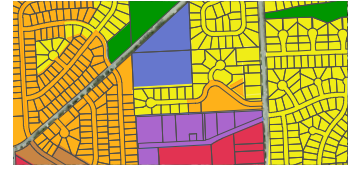
Create public / private partnerships for the development and redevelopment of residential and commercial areas in Ralston.

### Policy 2.1.2

Maintain a program of actively pursuing federal, state and local funds, to preserve and improve the Community.



## LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT



### GOAL 1:

Adopt a land use plan capable of fulfilling the residential, recreational, social, shopping, and employment needs of the Ralston community citizenry through the year 2033.

### OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES:

- **Objective 1.1**

**Maximize the existing area of Ralston by adding additional housing units and commercial property currently served by municipal infrastructure.**

Policy 1.1.1

Designate areas for redevelopment for future mixed use and residential development.

Policy 1.1.2

Increase residential land use density in established neighborhoods having redevelopment potential. Focus efforts on residential neighborhoods included in the four designated redevelopment areas within the City of Ralston.

Policy 1.1.3

Conduct infill residential development activities.

Policy 1.1.4

Locate future higher density residential developments to buffer commercial areas from lower density single family and duplex developments.

- **Objective 1.2**

**Designate future commercial land areas that provide greatest access for both locals and commuter travelers along the major corridors that border Ralston.**

Policy 1.2.1

Maintain existing and expand arts and entertainment, and commercial retail service land uses in the Downtown and existing corridors.

## LAND USE &amp; DEVELOPMENT

## Policy 1.2.2

Future mixed use and commercial land areas should be concentrated along the existing corridors with neighborhood commercial uses along L Street and Harrison Street.

## Policy 1.2.3

The Hinge at 72nd Street and Main Street should be utilized as a gateway to the community and the linkage to Downtown Ralston from the Ralston Arena.

- **Objective 1.3**

**Encourage increased planned open spaces / recreational areas in Ralston. Focus should be on additional common space with mixed use developments and linear trails connecting individual parks, schools and other public facilities.**

## Policy 1.3.1

Maintain a program of sufficient open spaces and parklands in Ralston at such locations as is necessary to provide outdoor recreation, to conserve natural resources and to preserve historical sites and as a means of giving the Community a sense of identity.

## Policy 1.3.2

Encourage the development of a trails system in Ralston that serves the residents of the Community and provides connections to existing regional trails.

## Policy 1.3.3

Explore opportunities with Douglas County and the Natural Resources District to develop open space with wetland restoration.

- **Objective 1.4**

**Maintain proper land use development ordinances and regulations in Ralston.**

## Policy 1.4.1

Adopt revised zoning and subdivision regulations, while maintaining appropriate building codes, all which conform to the future land use plan of the City and are compatible with current development trends and local attitudes.

## Policy 1.4.2

Explore use of design guidelines and development incentives through Planned Unit Development and overlay districts.

## GOAL 2:

Adopt a land use plan supportive of redevelopment efforts in Ralston.

## OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES:

- **Objective 2.1**

**Prioritize redevelopment efforts to address areas of greatest needs for renovation and restoration.**

Policy 2.1.1

Areas of greatest redevelopment need in Ralston include the area identified as the Hinge that links Downtown Ralston to the Ralston Arena.

Policy 2.1.2

Continue to conduct blight / substandard determination studies and redevelopment plans in areas of greatest redevelopment need and opportunity.

- **Objective 2.2**

**Create programs of redevelopment that combine selected residential uses with neighborhood (local) commercial land uses.**

Policy 2.2.1

Emphasize mixed land uses in the Downtown which promote general commercial, service, public and residential activities.

- **Objective 2.3**

**Utilize both public and private resources to finance redevelopment efforts in Ralston. This would include the use of local, state and federal funding sources to aid in financing redevelopment programs.**

Policy 2.3.1

Utilize all available public programs of financing to aid in funding redevelopment programs including, but not limited to HOME funds, tax increment financing, community development block grants, MAP 21 (Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century), Nebraska Housing Trust Fund, NIFA (Nebraska Investment Finance Authority), etc.



## LAND USE &amp; DEVELOPMENT

## Policy 2.3.2

Continue to support the redevelopment budget to assist in financing both redevelopment planning and implementation programs.

**GOAL 3:**

Adopt a land use plan that encourages the preservation and protection of environmental resources.

**OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES:**

- **Objective 3.1**

**Future development should be encouraged to locate in areas which are free of environmental problems related to ground and surface water features, soil and topographic slope. As an example, identified growth should not be located within 100-year flood plain areas.**

## Policy 3.1.1

Preserve unique and sensitive or critical natural areas within the planning jurisdiction of Ralston from adverse development. These areas include waterways, unique scenic vistas, and unique Tree habitats.

## Policy 3.1.2

Future development and redevelopment activities should be supported by a modern infrastructure system of public and private utilities.

## Policy 3.1.3

All future, major developments in Ralston should be accompanied with a stormwater drainage plan. Further study of usage fees should be considered by the City Council to provide the necessary funding to develop the City-wide stormwater drainage system.

## Policy 3.1.4

All new development / redevelopment activities should include a safe and sanitary environment, free of air, water and noise pollution.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

# HOUSING



## GOAL 1:

Provide all Ralston residents with access to a variety of safe, affordable and sanitary housing types.

## OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES:

- **Objective 1.1**

**Establish a plan of action for the development of residential options for residents of all ages and income levels.**

**Policy 1.1.1**

Develop a variety of housing choices in Ralston during the next 20 years. The redevelopment opportunities should plan for both rental and owner housing units for all income levels, age sectors, and family types / sizes in the Community.

**Policy 1.1.2**

Plan housing for a) new households, b) the replacement of up to 40 percent of substandard housing units and c) affordable units for local households with a housing cost burden status.

**Policy 1.1.3**

Provide additional housing in Ralston to eliminate the “pent-up” demand for housing for the current citizens of the Community, especially families and retirees and non-traditional households.

**Policy 1.1.4**

Develop a rental housing inspection program to alleviate any housing deficiency that might occur in Ralston, during the planning period.

**Policy 1.1.5**

Plan for a continuum of residential options for retirees and other older adults in Ralston and Douglas County.

## HOUSING

### Policy 1.1.6

Produce housing for special populations, including both owner and rental options for persons with a disability. Participate in the state-wide “home modification” program for persons with disabilities and the elderly.

### Policy 1.1.7

Actively pursue affordable housing programs available from local, state and federal agencies / departments.

### Policy 1.1.8

Maintain a minimum community housing vacancy rate of 5 percent for modern, marketable housing stock.

### Policy 1.1.9

Encourage future infill residential development which is compatible and complements existing neighborhoods.

### • Objective 1.2

**Protect and preserve both existing and future neighborhoods through the implementation of programs and supporting best building practices.**

### Policy 1.2.1

Rehabilitate up to 30 to 40 housing units, annually, in Ralston, by 2033.

### Policy 1.2.2

Remove and replace those units of housing that are substantially deteriorated.

### Policy 1.2.3

Enforce existing building, plumbing, electrical, and fire codes for all residential developments, to ensure Ralston residents live in sound, decent, affordable housing.

### Policy 1.2.4

Promote maximum energy efficient housing standards and provide incentives for implementation.

### Policy 1.2.5

All new residential development should be served by a modern municipal utility system.



## HOUSING

### GOAL 2:

Coordinate housing programs with economic development efforts and available public and private funding sources.

### OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES:

- **Objective 2.1**

**Maximize local public and private resources and organizations to assist in the promotion and development of housing opportunities.**

**Policy 2.1.1**

Secure grants and other financial assistance to develop owner and renter housing rehabilitation / repair programs for low-and moderate income households to upgrade their homes to minimum housing quality standards.

**Policy 2.1.2**

Coordinate the development of affordable housing needs of Ralston with related educational, health and social services programs, both public and private.

## GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

## PUBLIC FACILITIES, INFRASTRUCTURE & TRANSPORTATION



### GOAL 1:

Maintain and improve the existing public facilities and utilities in Ralston and develop, as needed, new facilities and services to reflect the community's needs and demands.

### OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES:

- **Objective 1.1**

**Provide public services in an efficient and economic manner in order to protect and enhance the safety and welfare of Ralston's residents to address health, educational and supportive services needs.**

**Policy 1.1.1**

Insure public services are maintained to keep pace with population growth.

**Policy 1.1.2**

Provide adequate law enforcement and fire protection services, with increased emphasis on community relations as well as adequate civil defense and emergency service. Insure facilities necessary to support such services are available throughout the Community and promote the coordination of these services among the various governmental and quasi-governmental entities.

**Policy 1.1.2**

Encourage public and private development of storm shelters to create a more resilient community.

PUBLIC FACILITIES, INFRASTRUCTURE & TRANSPORTATION

- **Objective 1.2**

**Preserve and enhance existing parks and open spaces throughout the community to provide improved recreational opportunities in Ralston.**

Policy 1.2.1

Provide and improve recreation programs for the youth, elderly, persons with disabilities and families.

Policy 1.2.2

Implement a hiker / biker trails plan to connect existing City parks and buffer varied land uses throughout the Community.

Policy 1.2.3

The City of Ralston should strive to apply for Federal and State grants to develop linear trails for expanded recreational opportunities for current and future residents.

- **Objective 1.3**

**Maintain the provision of facilities and services necessary to prevent pollution of the environment. Provide sewage treatment; refuse collection and disposal, street cleaning, flood control, and similar environmental control processes.**

Policy 1.3.1

Provide adequate, efficient and appropriate utilities and services throughout the community of Ralston to existing and future residential, recreational, commercial and industrial areas.

Policy 1.3.2

Maintain an adequate supply of potable water and expanded distribution system suitable for present and future consumption and fire protection within Ralston.

Policy 1.3.3

Educate developers and the general public on solid waste management and the recycling of materials.

Policy 1.3.4

Coordinate developments with the future land use plan to target the portions of the community ideally suited for redevelopment, where all appropriate infrastructures can service the redeveloped area.



PUBLIC FACILITIES, INFRASTRUCTURE & TRANSPORTATION

## GOAL 2:

Provide an efficient transportation system throughout Ralston for the safe and efficient movement of people, goods and services.

## OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES:

- **Objective 2.1**

**Provide an efficient transportation system throughout Ralston for the safe and efficient movement of people, goods and services.**

Policy 2.1.1

Maintain design standards and policies for various classes of streets, roads and highways to enhance the function and safety of the roadway and street system in Ralston.

Policy 2.1.2

Coordinate the future land use plan and the One- and Six Year Street Improvements Plans, to prepare the City of Ralston for future growth and redevelopment.

Policy 2.1.3

New redevelopments in Ralston should have appropriate and adequate streets, curbs, gutters and sidewalks.

- **Objective 2.2**

**Downtown Ralston serves as the focus for retail commerce, government, public services and social activities. As such, a renewed emphasis on landscaping and pedestrian movement is imperative.**

Policy 2.2.1

Promote Downtown revitalization efforts by implementing redevelopment techniques such as tax increment financing, historic preservation tax credits and CDBG projects in Downtown Ralston.

Policy 2.2.2

Concentrate efforts within the Downtown to alleviate conflicts between pedestrians and motorized vehicles.

Policy 2.2.3

Partially "screen" parking areas with shrubbery and flowering plants to enhance the appearance of the Downtown.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

# COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



## GOAL 1:

Utilize the Ralston Comprehensive Plan as a community and economic development resource and guide.

## OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES:

- **Objective 1.1**

**Maximize economic opportunities for all residents by fostering increased employment and business types in Ralston by implementing mixed use redevelopment projects.**

Policy 1.1.1

Create new jobs in Ralston that support the local residents and provide services to visitors.

Policy 1.1.2

Focus efforts of business and residential redevelopment to attract new companies and residents that diversify Ralston's population.

Policy 1.1.3

Create a business stewardship program to insure the continuation of well established businesses in Ralston.

Policy 1.1.4

Provide incentives to encourage former residents of the community to move back to Ralston to start their own businesses in order to provide a broader selection of services and employment options to the citizens of Ralston.

Policy 1.1.5

Utilize local technical and financial resources to assist existing and future businesses and industries to exist, develop and grow.

Policy 1.1.6

Continue and improve working relationships with Regional and State organizations / agencies, to promote economic development in Ralston.

## COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### Policy 1.1.7

Encourage the development of arts and entertainment that will utilize local resources.

### Policy 1.1.8

Promote the redevelopment of industrial businesses to mixed use facilities in the Hinge area to enhance the health, safety and welfare of the community.

### Policy 1.1.9

Provide infrastructure and needed amenities to support future higher density redevelopment of commercial, industrial and residential buildings.

### Policy 1.1.10

Utilize Federal, State and Local governmental incentives to recruit and retain job opportunities.

## GOAL 2:

Community and economic development practices should strive to both stabilize and improve the Ralston economy.

- **Objective 2.1**

**Promote proper renovation, adaptive reuse, additions and new construction activities.**

### Policy 1.2.1

Encourage local reinvestment in Ralston by both the private sector and the City.

### Policy 1.2.2

Encourage the revitalization or removal of vacant and substantially deteriorated commercial / industrial buildings in Ralston.

### Policy 1.2.3

Enhance the attractiveness of the business and industrial areas in Ralston through revitalization and beautification efforts of redeveloped mixed use projects.

### Policy 1.2.4

Expand shopping facilities, thus opportunities to attract non-local businesses.

### Policy 1.2.5

Promote the existence and development of commercial / business types that will maximize the opportunity for job creation and future job quantity and quality.



COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Policy 1.2.6

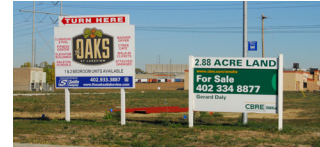
Utilize the potential of the Ralston Chamber of Commerce, Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce, Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA), state and city government, local public power companies and other existing and potential organizations such as a Ralston Community Foundation or special committees for technical and financial assistance for securing new economic development activities.

Policy 1.2.7

Utilize local, state and federal funding sources to strengthen existing and assist in the creation of new business / housing, including the use of tax increment financing.

## GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

# PLAN MAINTENANCE & IMPLEMENTATION



### GOAL 1:

Maintain a current and modern comprehensive plan and regulatory ordinances.

## OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES:

- **Objective 1.1**  
**Update the Ralston Comprehensive Plan annually.**

### Policy 1.1.1

Establish an annual review process of the Comprehensive Plan and associated zoning and subdivision regulations. Elected officials and local governmental volunteers and community and economic development groups should be involved in this review.


## 5.6 VISION IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

As the comprehensive plan prepares a Ralston for future growth and development; the Vision Implementation Plan (VIP) helps identify and prioritize the specific projects that will assist the city to reach its ultimate destination. These projects do not happen overnight, nor are they accomplished by one person. Careful planning and consideration should be given to each. The city should rely on staff, appointed officials, elected officials, community groups, and other organizations to help achieve these identified projects planned for the benefit of the entire community.

Based upon the strategic issues and priority setting with the identified timeframes, the Ralston Steering Committee developed the following VIP to strengthen the community and improve the quality of life for the citizens of the City. This Plan will empower Ralston residents and businesses to look toward the future with confidence and resolve and boldly commit to undertaking the identified redevelopments.

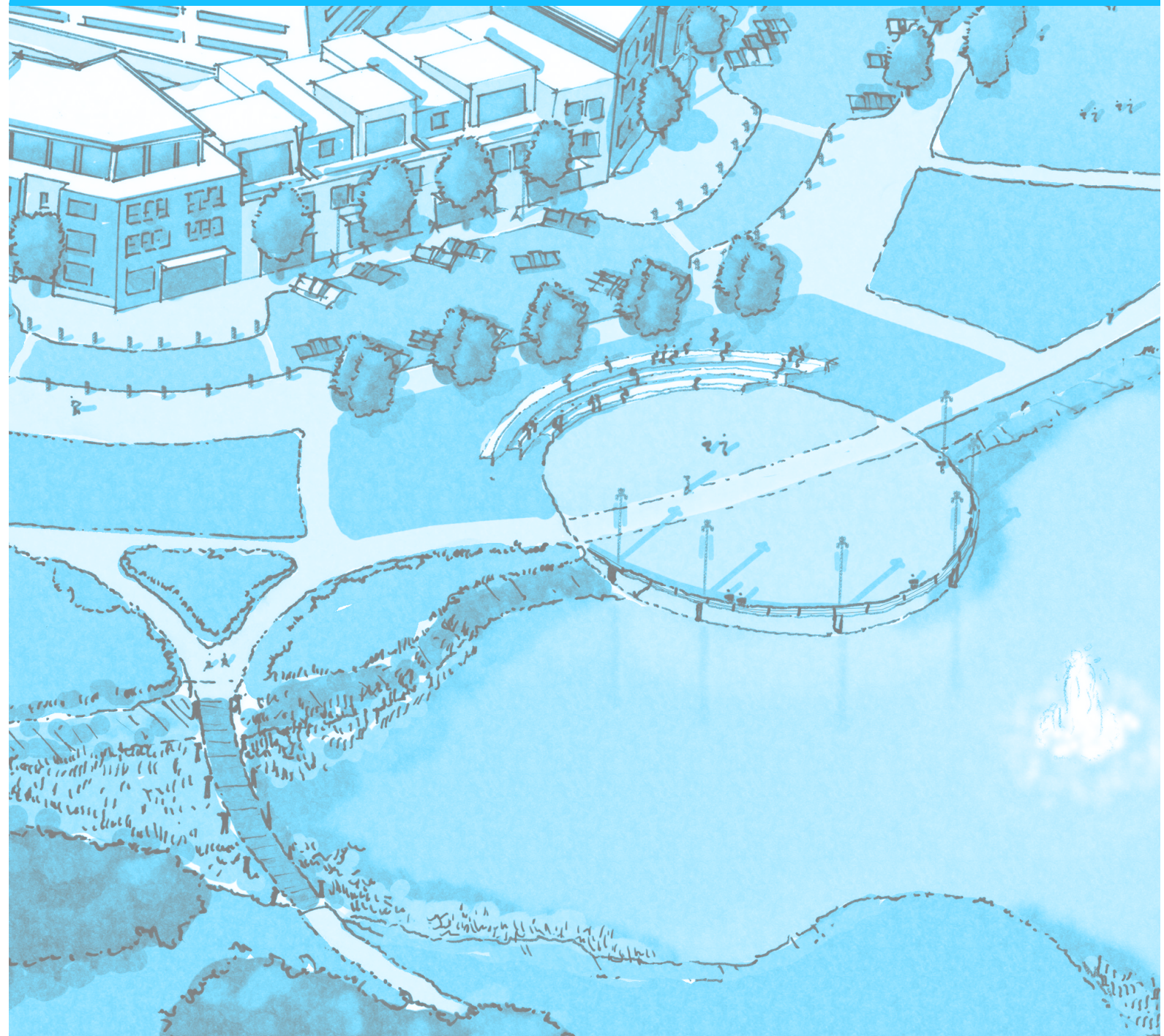
The VIP lists individual concerns/needs, objectives, actions, timelines, suggested responsible groups/agencies, potential resources, and measurable outputs. Although the following goals are numbered, it is realized that such goals may take on different forms, be consolidated with other goals/projects or be re-prioritized based upon unforeseen issues or opportunities. In such cases, this VIP shall be re-examined and adopted to provide proper guidance. At a minimum, the city should conduct an annual review of the Plan to assure all goals, objectives and actions are kept current.



An aerial sketch of a city street scene. It shows a row of multi-story buildings with many windows, interspersed with trees. A road runs alongside the buildings. The style is a loose, hand-drawn sketch in shades of blue and white.

The City of Ralston will deliver economic, creative, cultural and community development strategies to generate a quality of life that is a beacon of dynamic and independent small town culture within the metro area.

## VISION STATEMENT



## THE HINGE

Redevelopment Priority 1  
(Arena south to RR and west to Downtown)

### PROS:

- This would connect the Arena to Downtown.
- The entire area is TIF eligible.
- The Arena turnback tax is seventy (70%) percent of any newly generated state sales tax (5.5%) within six hundred yards of the Arena.
- The entrance to Ralston would be improved at 72nd & Main. This would replace underutilized land while giving Ralston a new look to its community. The goals of the participants continually spoke of giving a great first impression for visitors driving by Ralston. This also ties into the renovation of industrial and commercial properties with new development.
- It would promote additional housing options, demographic, and businesses and restaurants near the Arena to pull the Downtown and Arena areas together.
- One focus is to rejuvenate the downtown, for new businesses, building, and storefronts. This would include the added energy missing in the downtown nightlife.
- This project would invite visitors into Ralston. It would make them curious to see what else Ralston has to offer. The connection between the Arena and Downtown would eventually morph into one collective area over time.
- If this area is created for the pedestrian, people will find more to do.
- It should be built on the pedestrian scale and make it walkable
- Country Club Drive is roughly three and a half blocks and is a rare, flat road. This street has the potential to be a great connection between the Downtown and Arena. It is isolated from the surrounding area with no intersections. With the original stone homes and canopy from the mature trees, it creates the perfect pedestrian scaled connection to and from the Arena.
- Another walkable area is directly south of the Arena. It currently illustrates a restructured street to take advantage of the current curved road to be converted into green space. This new street would add some open area for additional businesses and residential housing. The pedestrian scale street would also be an alternative and more inviting walkway than the major arterial traffic along 72nd Street.

## PROS AND CONS OF REDEVELOPMENTS

## THE HINGE

Redevelopment Priority 1  
(Arena south to RR and west to Downtown)

**CONS:**

- The scale and scope of project is large.
- This project is a long term commitment. This long range plan looks like a daunting task to accomplish. The city will need to focus on what it can provide while consistent support from the community will be needed.
- There are multiple property owners and it will be expensive. Property acquisition and assembly will be required.
- The benefit in the Arena area will be the demand and interest that follows the City Council's decisions in determining what incentives or properties are available.
- Developers are looking for a sound investment from their perspective. Portions of this project will require purchasing a property and creating public/private partnerships.
- Working with the Papio Missouri River Natural Resource District is another participant to include in the early stage. Timing in this relationship will become important to formulate the water feature wanted in this design.
- The distance between the Arena and downtown for pedestrians may be too far for some people. The topography of some hills could play a role in walking distances. Alternative mobility options may be needed.



PROS AND CONS OF REDEVELOPMENTS

## HARRISON STREET NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

Redevelopment Priority 2  
(Harrison & S.78th Street)

### PROS:

- This meets the goal of adding rooftops and creating more commercial development.
- This would allow Ralston to offer more than it currently does and is seen as the best example of what the Ralston community represents.
- Allows focus more on office space and care facilities opportunities. This neighborhood center may focus on medical businesses and facilities due to the demand for Assisted Living. Future demand of independent living is and senior housing was also cited in this project.
- With higher density included in this development, it would create a favorable area for multiple businesses.
- The desire for a local grocery store, as cited in multiple focus groups, has potential in this development.
- Along the north boundary of this area, The Colonies make it possible to add similar high-end housing to “keep its value.”
- This also eliminates the current need for an industrial buffer for residential housing.

### CONS:

- The neighborhood center displaces current businesses owners. However, it is possible to take into account existing businesses while planning for this redevelopment.
- 78th Street is a busy road with industrial traffic. It is also a main road to downtown so it would be very important to allow for heavy traffic and large vehicles.

## PROS AND CONS OF REDEVELOPMENTS

### HARRISON GATEWAY

Redevelopment Priority 3

(Northwest corner of 72nd Street and Harrison)

#### PROS:

- Much like the “L” street liner, this project would repurpose the Ralston’s corner lot to help define its boundary.
- Establish the corner with a landmark at the intersection to provide a new look and first impression of Ralston.
- The size of the project is manageable. It may be the easiest to accomplish of all the proposed redevelopment projects.
- It replaces underutilized land use at this corner to be more in-line with Ralston’s future goals. With additional “rooftops” with housing above office spaces and storefronts, the design would better utilize the corner and give the visitors and traffic on 72nd or Harrison more to see.
- The topography of the corner slopes away from the intersection and the strip mall is barely seen. Current situation does not give Ralston much of an image.
- The proposed design is environmentally friendly.
- This redevelopment would give better access to the apartments and the neighborhood behind the strip mall.
- It is beneficial for redevelopment that there are few owners of the properties at this intersection.

#### CONS:

- These are not vacant lots and the existing businesses that currently reside onsite would be displaced.
- The cost of redeveloping the sites and properties is a concern.
- The purchase price of the properties is a concern.

PROS AND CONS OF REDEVELOPMENTS

## THE 'L' STREET LINER

Redevelopment Priority 4  
(L Street from 84th to S. 77th Ave)

### PROS:

- It beautifies Ralston's northern edge with trees and plantings along L Street. This development can stand apart from industrial land uses on the north side of L Street.
- It offers a pedestrian-friendly street with the traffic calming technique of a slip street next to the high speeds of L Street.
- It can add curb appeal while attracting additional economic development and housing options.
- This establishes a boundary line of 84th and L as "Ralston" with a landmark on the southeast corner.
- Additional businesses may like to relocate there due to its location in Omaha metro and easy access to L Street and other major arterials.
- The proposal would put standards in place for uniform development and give businesses reinsurance that their investment will be sound with a strategy in place. The plan would create uniformed parking in the rear of the buildings.
- It would be "different from the rest" to set Ralston apart from Omaha and the L Street corridor.

### CONS:

- This proposal would displace existing property owners. Existing buildings and lots would need to be adjusted accordingly. There are multiple owners.
- It is a long term proposal. The entire stretch of the L Street Liner would not occur all at one but in the span of 20 year to develop. The city could create a private-public partnership to help create two or three nodes to begin the process and allow the private sector to "fill in" between the nodes.
- It would be a difficult place for retail with traffic volume and speeds. It does not have to be retail. It can be treated as a business park with residential housing. Offices and restaurants that are currently there can have new facilities.
- Tax Increment Financing (TIF) finance would result in loss of tax money to other taxing entities for the public-private partnership nodes.
- The plan does displace some residential homes but upper floor residential units make up for lost homes.



## VIP OBJECTIVES AND ACTION STEPS

The following Objectives and Actions Steps should be considered to implement the redevelopment envisioned in this comprehensive plan.

### **Objective #1: Establish a Redevelopment Committee to pursue revitalization efforts.**

#### Action Step #1:

Identify and appoint local stakeholders to serve on the Ralston Revitalization Committee. This committee will oversee and coordinate redevelopment and revitalization efforts.

#### Action Step #2:

Review the Program Requirements associated with the Leadership Community designation through the Nebraska Department of Economic Development.

#### Action Step #3:

Consider the cost/potential benefit of securing the designation.

#### Action Step #4:

If feasible, address the Program Requirements associated with the Leadership Community designation.

#### Action Step #5:

Apply and receive the Leadership Community Designation from the Nebraska Department of Economic Development.

**Timeline: 2014**

VIP OBJECTIVES AND ACTION STEPS

**Objective #2: Evaluate the physical condition of the Ralston Redevelopment Areas.**

Action Step #1: Procure the services of a professional engineering and architecture firm to inspect the physical condition and capacity of the existing buildings, including, but not limited to, building conditions, streets, sidewalks, lighting, landscaping, grade changes, parking, surface drainage and underground utilities.

Action Step #2: Meet with business-owners to evaluate the future needs of the area, including parking, public infrastructure, patron and delivery access, landscaping and street lighting.

Action Step #3: Meet with Downtown Committee to create a vision for the Hinge with the central business district.

Action Step #4: Hold a working conference with downtown stakeholders to foster cooperation and communication. Gather information on the needs, thoughts and desires of downtown stakeholders.

Action Step #5: Identify potential niches that will make the Ralston downtown a visitor's destination that will lead to lasting economic activity.

Action Step #6: Identify potential programs/measures to incentivize downtown property-owners to renovate storefront facades or demolish structure entirely.

Action Step #7: Develop general cost opinions and strategies for implementing long-term capital improvements.

**Timeline: 2014-2015**

**Objective #3: Create a Revitalization Master Plan for Redevelopment Areas of Ralston.**

Action Step #1: Develop a Revitalization Master Plan for Ralston with private developers that reflect stakeholder's vision for the area.

Action Step #2: Present cost opinions for long-range capital improvements.

## VIP OBJECTIVES AND ACTION STEPS

Action Step #3: Hold a meeting with stakeholders to unveil the Revitalization Master Plans. Revise the plan as necessary to ensure that it reflects the needs, thoughts and desires of local residents and local business-owners.

Action Step #4: Hold a working conference with downtown stakeholders to foster cooperation and communication. Gather information on the needs, thoughts and desires of downtown stakeholders.

Action Step #5: Present the Revitalization Master Plans to the Ralston City Council for their review and approval.

**Timeline: 2016 -2033**

### **Objective #4: Determine the community’s fiscal capacity for long-term capital improvements within the redevelopment areas.**

Action Step #1: Consider stakeholder’s willingness and financial capacity to support implementation of the Revitalization Master Plans.

Action Step #2: Meet with the City’s fiscal agent to determine the bonding debt capacity of community, including the use of Tax Increment Financing.

Action Step #3: Identify local, regional, state and federal resources for redevelopment improvements.

Action Step #4: Maximize the impact of revitalization efforts by leveraging local monies with “outside” resources.

Action Step #5: Package all necessary financial resources and address the Ralston sewer enterprise fund.

**Timeline: 2016 - 2033**



VIP OBJECTIVES AND ACTION STEPS

**Objective #5: Secure plans and specifications for long-term improvements.**

Action Step #1: Consider stakeholder's willingness and financial capacity to support implementation of the Revitalization Master Plans.

Action Step #2: Meet with the City's fiscal agent to determine the bonding debt capacity of community, including the use of Tax Increment Financing.

Action Step #3: Identify local, regional, state and federal resources for redevelopment improvements.

Action Step #4: Maximize the impact of revitalization efforts by leveraging local monies with "outside" resources.

Action Step #5: Package all necessary financial resources.

**Timeline: 2017 - 2033**

**Objective #6: Reconstruct public infrastructure within the Ralston's redevelopment areas.**

Action Step #1: Consider stakeholder's willingness and financial capacity to support implementation of the Revitalization Master Plans.

Action Step #1: Bid phase to include advertising, letting and contract award to the lowest, responsible/responsive bidder.

Action Step #2: Hold a preconstruction conference.

Action Step #3: Construction related activities.

Action Step #4: Project close-out.

**Timeline: 2019 - 2033**

**Objective #7: Promote activities that will complement revitalization efforts.**

Action Step #1: Create a marketing plan for the downtown area.

Action Step #2: Recruit businesses that are consistent with the downtown marketing plan.

## VIP OBJECTIVES AND ACTION STEPS

Action Step #3: Incentivize local business-owners to improve the physical condition, appearance and energy-efficiency of their buildings by capitalizing a Facade Improvement Program.

Action Step #4: Encourage local property-owners to work with City officials to remove dilapidated structures in the redevelopment areas.

Action Step #5: Invest in aesthetic improvements along perimeter properties and featured streets that usher traffic into the heart of the downtown area.

Action Step #6: Encourage civic events/programs within the downtown area.

### **Timeline: Ongoing**

### **Responsible Groups/Agencies**

Ralston City Council, Planning Commission, Downtown Committee, Business-owners, Chamber of Commerce, residents, private developers and Nebraska Department of Economic Development.

### **Potential Resources**

General Obligation Bonds, Special Assessment Districts, Local Option Sales Tax, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program Downtown Revitalization Category, Community Enhancement Program (CEP), Tax Increment Financing, private assessments, private monies, private foundations, Building Entrepreneurial Communities Act, Nebraska Arts Council, Nebraska Energy Office, Nebraska Enhancing, Developing and Growing Entrepreneurs (EDGE), GROW Nebraska™, Nebraska Investment Finance Authority (NIFA), Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE), Community Development Assistance Act, Federal Home Loan Bank – Joint Opportunities for Building Success and Small Business Administration.

### **Measurable Outputs**

Ralston residents recognize that the redevelopment areas are the future image of the community. It is the place that defines the larger community - culturally, economically and politically. The physical setting of the areas reveal the values and underpinnings of the local society (the opportunities and constraints therein) and serve as a measure of civic health and vitality.

## 5.7 PLAN MAINTENANCE

The Comprehensive Plan Update is the community's collective vision, yet, change is inevitable. Major technologies and new community needs will arise during the planning period, which were not foreseen during the plan's development. Jobs, housing, transportation, goods and services will shift over time. The amendment process to the Comprehensive Plan must accommodate and help manage the inevitable change in a way that best promotes, and does not compromise, the community's core values, health and well-being. The plan amendment process must be an open and fair process, utilizing sound planning, economic, social and ecological principals.



## REASONS FOR REVISITING A PLAN

If major, new, innovative development opportunities arise which impact several elements of the plan, and are determined to be of importance, a plan amendment may be proposed and considered separately from the annual review and other proposed plan amendments. The City Council or Planning Commission shall compile a list of proposed amendments received during a year in preparation for a report to provide pertinent information on each proposal, and recommend action on the proposed amendments. The comprehensive plan amendment process should adhere to the adoption process specified by the Nebraska State Statutes and should provide for organized participation and involvement of interested citizens.

Since this plan is a living, breathing document, it needs to be monitored for continued relevancy. Although the plan uses a 20-year planning time period, intervening time points should be utilized to measure progress toward long term goals, to make adjustments based on changed conditions or preferences, and to provide short-and mid-term guidance for land use decisions. In doing so, the ultimate planning time period will move as well, constantly advancing into the future as the currency and relevancy of the plan is maintained by a cycle of periodic updates and amendments.

Once every five years, the Comprehensive Plan should undergo a major update. Five years is recommended as the appropriate time interval for major updates for several reasons. Experience in other communities suggests that more frequent major updates are too much of a burden on staff, while less frequent updates lead to plans that can become seriously out of date. Finally, federal census data is available every decade, making a five year review schedule that falls at the mid-point between census years reasonable and logical. The common elements of a five-year update include reviewing and extending growth projections, reviewing community goals, and analyzing amendments.

## ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE PLAN

### Annual Review of the Plan

A relevant, up to date plan is critical to the on-going planning success. To maintain the confidence of both public and private sectors, evaluate the effectiveness of planning activities and, most importantly, to make mid-plan corrections on the use of city resources, the plan must be current. Thus, an annual review should occur where the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, Planning Commission, City Council, residents, and staff are able to review the plan and recommend necessary changes.

After adoption of the comprehensive plan, opportunities should be provided to identify any changes in conditions that would impact elements or policies of the plan. The annual review process needs to involve regularly monitoring trends and changes in the local, regional, state and federal landscape. Such trends and changes may include changes in development activity and use, trends in development regulation amendments, and changes in planning and zoning law. At the beginning of each year at the annual review, a report should be prepared by the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee and/or the Planning Commission that provides information and recommendations on whether the plan is current in respect to population and economic changes and if the recommended policies are still valid for the city and its long-term growth.

The Planning Commission should hold a public hearing on this report to:

Provide citizens or developers with an opportunity to comment and/or present possible changes to the plan;

Identify any changes in the status of projects or action items called for in the plan; and

Bring forth any issues, or identify any changes in conditions, which may impact the validity of the plan.

If the Commission finds major policy issues or major changes in basic assumptions or conditions have arisen which could necessitate revisions to the plan, they should recommend changes or further study of those changes. This process may lead to identification of amendments to The Ralston Beacon that would be processed by staff, recommended by the Planning Commission and considered by the Ralston City Council.

## PLAN ADMENDMENTS

### Conditions of Plan Amendment

Comprehensive Plan amendment procedures are necessary to determine what constitutes conformity or non-conformity with the plan. It is impossible to set hard and fast rules for such decisions but consistent criteria should be used when making this determination. The following criteria are recommended:

- A request for increases in residential density or non-residential floor area in excess of the guidelines established in the plan, depending upon the degree of increase, may require a plan amendment.
- Land use request involving minor differences in boundaries from those shown in the plan should be considered in conformity with the plan unless precedent would be set for more extensive and non-conforming changes in adjacent areas.
- Requests for variations or changes in the alignment of designated roadways should be considered in conformity if the continuity of the roadway is maintained, the alignment does not result in traffic safety problems or reductions in needed capacity, does not constrain the proper development of contiguous properties, and does not conflict with or preempt other planned uses or facilities.
- Requests to deviate from plan-specified requirements such as open space and traffic reduction measures generally should not be permitted in order to ensure equitable treatment of all property owners and to avoid arbitrary decisions which would undermine the legal foundations of the plan. If changes are to be made, they should be done through a plan amendment process.
- The final criteria must always be whether the request, whatever its nature, will set a precedent for cumulative changes which are not consistent with the plan. Therefore, in those instances where the implications of the request are not easily observed or detected, a request for a plan amendment should be required.



### Methods for Evaluating Land Development Proposals

The interpretation of the plan should be comprised of a continuous and related series of analyses, with references to the goals and objectives/policies, the overall land use plan, and specific land use policies. Moreover, when considering specific proposed developments, interpretation of the plan should include a thorough review of all sections of the plan.

If a development proposal is not consistently supported by The Ralston Beacon, serious consideration should be given to making modifications to the proposal, or the following criteria should be used to determine if a comprehensive plan amendment would be justified:

- The character of the adjacent neighborhood
- The zoning and uses on nearby properties
- The suitability of the property for the uses allowed under the current zoning designation
- The type and extent of positive or negative impact that may affect adjacent properties, or the city at large, if the request is approved
- The impact of the proposal on public utilities and facilities
- The length of time that the subject and adjacent properties have been utilized for their current uses
- The benefits of the proposal to the public health, safety, and welfare compared to the hardship imposed on the applicant if the request is not approved
- Comparison between the existing land use plan and the proposed change regarding the relative conformance to the goals and objectives/policies
- Consideration of professional staff recommendations

## 5.8 RECOMMENDATIONS

As part of the implementation process for Ralston, various recommendations or actions are suggested. These recommendations are based upon public input, staff input, observations, and experience. Such recommended actions are classified as immediate, short-term, long-term and continuing. These actions are only recommendations and may change annually.

### Immediate Recommendations

1. Adopt The Comprehensive Plan Update.
2. Evaluate current zoning and subdivision regulations and zoning districts based upon the adopted comprehensive plan.
3. Pursue funding opportunities to provide improvements/development of city infrastructure.
4. Work with the Ralston Chamber, Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce, the Nebraska Department of Economic Development and other groups to market Ralston for quality commercial developments.

### Short Term Recommendations

1. Work with property owners and residents to develop methods and strategies to redevelop the downtown.
2. Develop methods to provide for ongoing maintenance and replacement of facilities and equipment.
3. Develop a site/concept plan for the city property and future city facilities.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### Long Term Recommendations

1. Educate residents, businesses, and property owners with respect to develop methods and policies that reduce the amount of runoff, erosion, and pollutants.
2. Develop a Facilities Management Plan to determine needs for all city facilities.
3. Consider developing and implementing a Capital Improvements Plan in consideration of long term debt.

### Continuing Recommendations

1. Develop an annual public education program for residents, businesses, and property owners that provide information about the ongoing planning process and how they can be involved.
2. Organize an annual 'town hall meeting' to evaluate how implementation strategies are working, if goals and objectives are being achieved, and to identify new issues.