

VILLAGE OF BENNET, NEBRASKA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2006 - 2026



Prepared for:
**BENNET
PLANNING
COMMISSION**

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BENNET, NEBRASKA

Comprehensive Plan

2006-2026

VILLAGE OF BENNET

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SECTION 1
THE VILLAGE OF BENNET
PLANNING PROCESS

SECTION 1

THE BENNET PLANNING PROCESS

THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

This **Bennet Comprehensive Plan** is designed to serve as a tool to assist the Village in planning for future stability and development in the Community and its respective One-mile Planning Jurisdiction. The Plan contains information about existing conditions within the Village, including population, land use, housing and public facilities and transportation. The projection of these important social and economic variables are presented in an attempt to create a community and economic development “**Vision**” for Bennet for the next 20 years.

The planning process included the development of a **general plan**, which establishes specific and practical guidelines for improving existing conditions and controlling future growth. The Plan, itself, presents a planning program designed to identify and develop policies in the areas of **land use, population, economics, housing, public facilities and transportation and plan maintenance/implementation**.

The **Comprehensive Plan** was prepared under the direction of the Bennet Planning Commission, with the assistance of the Village Board of Trustees, Village Clerk, and Consultants, Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C., of Lincoln.

The Bennet Planning program was enhanced by the “**Bennet Community Vision**” Program, sponsored by the University of Nebraska Extension. This program included the Bennet Planning Commission as the local organization that worked jointly with the UNL Extension. The methodology was centered on developing a Citizen Advisory Committee of volunteers from the residents that attended the Town Hall meetings. Several visioning task force committees were established to organize the Community Visioning process and compile background information. The end result of the process was to identify the strengths and challenges of and to Bennet, prioritize Community projects and to establish a Community Vision slogan:

***Remember Yesterday’s Values
Live Today’s Dreams
Invest In Tomorrow’s Families***

PLANNING PERIOD

The planning time period for achieving the goals, programs and community development activities identified in this Bennet Comprehensive Plan is 20 years.

PLANNING JURISDICTION

The “official” planning jurisdiction of the Village of Bennet includes the Bennet Corporate Limits and the area within the One-mile Planning Jurisdiction. Cooperation between the Lincoln/Lancaster County Planning Commission and the Village of Bennet provides the Village opportunity to express its opinions regarding planning and development trends/projections in the rural Bennet area, generally two to three miles beyond the Corporate Limits.

AUTHORITY TO PLAN

This Comprehensive Plan for Bennet is prepared under the Authority of Section 19-924-929, Nebraska State Statutes 1943, as Amended.

RESPONSIBLE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

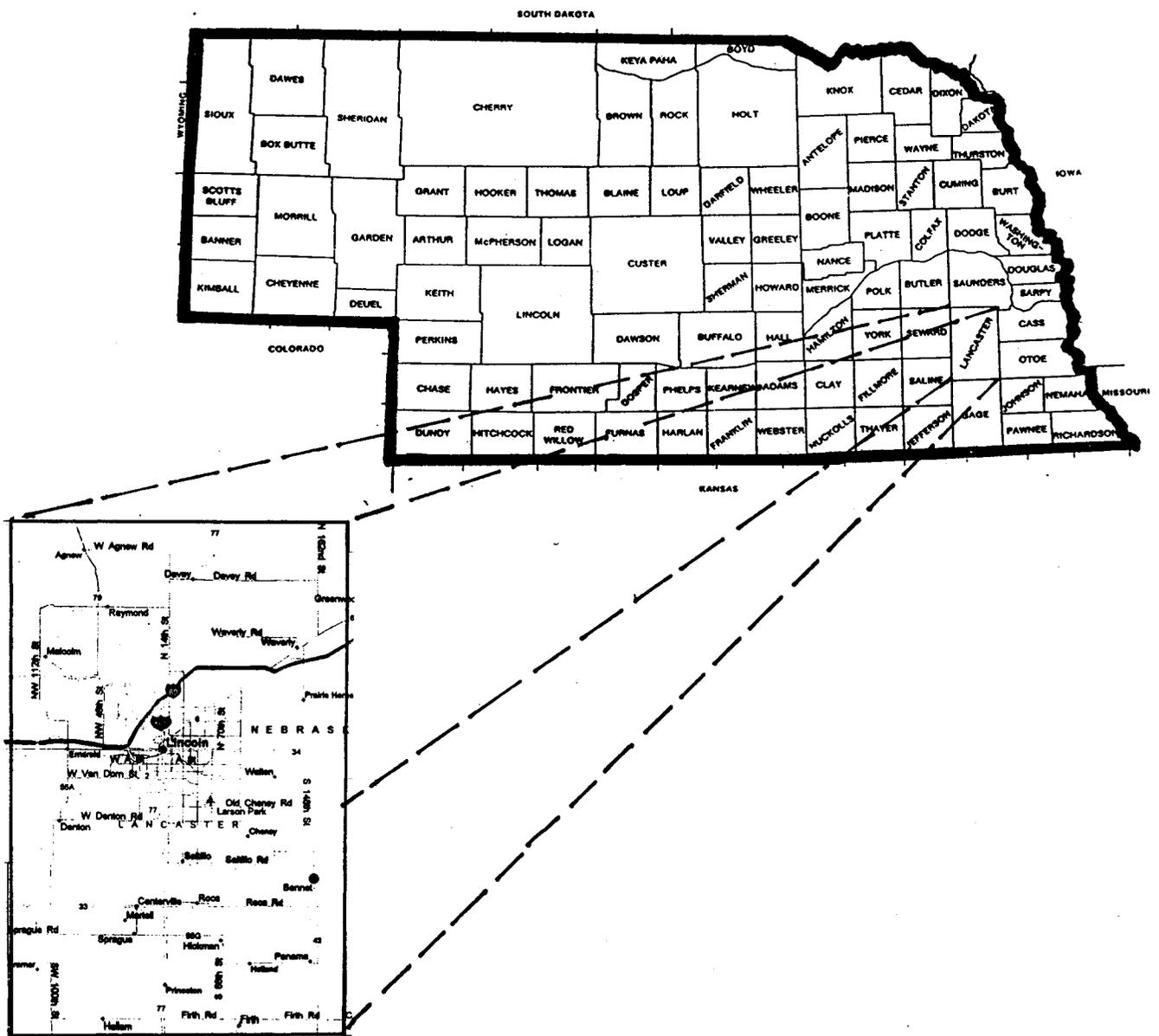
The Village of Bennet is located in southeastern Nebraska, in Lancaster County, an estimated 6.5 miles southeast of Lincoln, Nebraska, via Highways 2 and 43. The Village of Bennet is in a position to determine what community and economic development enhancements it needs and desires to better service persons and families interested in small town living. The Community offers a Downtown commercial district, with several small scale commercial and industrial facilities, as well as farming and other agricultural support services to maintain a stable and diverse population and economy. Due to its proximity to Highway 2, residents of the Village of Bennet can easily commute to the City of Lincoln for employment.

The **Bennet Comprehensive Planning Process promotes responsible growth.** This includes a firm understanding of the growth potential within the existing built environs of Bennet, as well as the support for preserving the agricultural and associated natural resources adjacent the Village. Undeveloped areas, within the One-mile Planning Jurisdiction of Bennet, will be assigned land uses and zoning classifications capable of preserving the integrity of these areas, while providing for controlled, well planned growth potential throughout the 2006 to 2026 Planning Period.

Responsible growth and development activities will include the ongoing planning and implementation of needed public facilities in Bennet. The Community is cognizant of its social and recreational needs, but will need to continue to upgrade and develop modern, accessible public facilities and infrastructure.

Currently, the Village is in the process of planning for the construction of a new sanitary sewer treatment facility to allow the Village to achieve its growth potential during the next 20-years.

AREA LOCATION MAP BENNET, NEBRASKA ILLUSTRATION 1.1



THE PLAN AS A COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TOOL

The Village of Bennet **Comprehensive Plan** has been designed to **enhance both community and economic development efforts**, which will promote stability within the Community and the local economy. To accomplish this, Community leaders will need to react to changing economic conditions and access programs available to meet these changes. Local decisions will need to enhance community and economic development opportunities, as well as preserve local values. Citizen input will be needed to assist and enhance this political decision making process.

The use of the Community Development Agency, or Community Redevelopment Authority, as a vehicle to plan and implement residential, commercial, and industrial development activities in Bennet, is strongly encouraged. The Future Land Use Plan, identified in this document, encourages growth and expansion of the Village during the 20-year Planning Period. However, the Village must continue to enhance and redevelop the older portions of Bennet, not just the Downtown, but aging residential areas, generally located throughout the western half of the Community, as well. Bennet must continue to provide incentives for public and private partnerships for redevelopment to coincide with community growth and expansion. Incentives such as Tax Increment Financing, Historic Preservation Tax Credits, Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) and a variety of housing and economic development funding sources coupled with local lending support, should be utilized by the Community to achieve the goals contained within this Comprehensive Plan.

Providing safe, modern and affordable housing in Bennet, during the next 20 years, will insure a population base capable of supporting various important businesses and services in the Community. Housing rehabilitation activities, coupled with new housing opportunities for both elderly and young families, must be addressed. The Community should support housing improvement and development efforts as a means of both stabilizing the population and increasing the local tax base. **The construction of elderly (retirement) housing will enable the Village to retain its retirees, rather than see them relocate to available housing facilities in the City of Lincoln.**

ORGANIZATION OF THE PLAN

The Village of Bennet Comprehensive Planning process utilized both a **qualitative** and **quantitative approach** to gathering pertinent information. The **qualitative approach** included a comprehensive citizen participation process consisting of Planning Commission and public meetings.

The **quantitative approach** included the analysis of the various components of the Comprehensive Plan utilizing numerous statistical data bases provided by the 1980, 1990, and 2000 Census, and Census projections, as well as other pertinent Local, State and Federal Agencies.

This quantitative approach also included numerous field research activities to determine the present condition and profiles of local land use, housing, public facilities, transportation and environmental issues. **Combining the results of these two important approaches produced a Comprehensive Plan.**

This Comprehensive Plan includes the following six Sections:

- ▶ The Village of Bennet Planning Process
- ▶ Goals, Policies & Action Strategies
- ▶ Community Background Analysis
- ▶ Community Housing Plan
- ▶ Future Land Use Plan
- ▶ Future Public Facilities & Transportation Plan

The system embodied in this community planning framework is a process that relies upon continuous feedback, as goals change and policies become more clearly defined. Planning is an ongoing process that requires constant monitoring and revision throughout the proposed planning period.

ELEMENT 1

This Comprehensive Plan is organized in three elements. The **first** element of the Comprehensive Plan is the **Goals, Policies and Action Strategies**. The Goals and Policies represent the foundation for which planning components are designed and eventually implemented. The Goals and Policies identified in this Bennet Comprehensive Plan address each component of the Plan itself. Action Strategies identify specific activities the community should undertake to accomplish the goals and policies.

ELEMENT 2

The **second** element is the **Background Analysis**, which presents the research, both quantitative and qualitative, necessary for the development of the Plan's Goals, Policies and Action Strategies. This research included the investigation of demographic, economic, land use, housing, transportation and public facilities and utilities in Bennet. The careful research of past and present data allowed for the projection of future population and development needs.

ELEMENT 3

The **third** and final element of the Comprehensive Plan is the **Planning Components**, which present general background analysis and future plans for land use, housing, public facilities, infrastructure and transportation.

SECTION 2
GOALS, POLICIES AND ACTION
STRATEGIES

SECTION 2

GOALS, POLICIES & ACTION STRATEGIES

INTRODUCTION

The **Bennet Comprehensive Plan** is an **essential and the most appropriate tool** to properly guide the future development of the community. An important aspect of the Plan is the **planning goals, policies and action strategies**, which provide local planners direction in the administration and overall implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. In essence, the goals and policies are the most fundamental elements of the Plan; the premises upon which all other elements of the Plan must relate.

Goals are broad statements, identifying the state or condition the citizenry wishes the primary components of the planning area to be or evolve into within a given length of time. Primary components include **Community Image, Land Use and Development, Housing, Public Facilities and Transportation, Community and Economic Development and Plan Maintenance and Implementation**. Goals are long-term in nature and, in the case of those identified for the Bennet Comprehensive Plan, will be active throughout the 20-year planning period, 2006 to 2026.

Policies help to further define the meaning of goals. In essence, policies represent a specific statement or achievement to be accomplished as a step towards fulfilling a goal. Policies, or often referred to as objectives, are sub-parts of a Goal and are accomplished in a much shorter time span.

Action Strategies represent very specific activities to accomplish a particular Goal. In many cases, specific time lines are attached to Action Strategies. Action Strategies are the most measurable component of the Bennet Comprehensive Plan.

The process of establishing the Goals, Policies and Action Strategies was greatly assisted by the “Bennet Community Vision” process, sponsored jointly by the Planning Commission and the University of Nebraska Extension.

COMMUNITY GOALS

The first step in developing goals, policies and action strategies for this Comprehensive Plan is the identification of general **Community Goals**. The following Community Goals were developed via input from the Bennet Planning Commission, Bennet Listening Sessions, the 2004 Bennet Community Survey and public meetings, all in an effort to "highlight" **six important elements** of the comprehensive planning process; **Community Image, Land Use and Development, Housing, Public Facilities and Transportation, Community and Economic Development and Plan Maintenance and Implementation.**

THE FOUR MAIN COMPONENTS OF THE BENNET VISIONING PROCESS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1. Protect and build on our unique small town atmosphere through people who respect and care for one another.
2. Support well-planned growth and a vibrant business community.
3. Seek to enhance quality of life by improving infrastructure and creating a variety of recreational opportunities, while maintaining the natural beauty of our environment.
4. Promote quality education and multi-generational family values.

THE FOLLOWING REPRESENT GENERAL COMMUNITY GOALS FOR BENNET:

1. *Strive to improve the quality of life and sense of community for all residents of Bennet, by retaining the small town atmosphere and unique identity of the Community of Bennet.*
2. *Plan for a larger population base, in the Village of Bennet and its one-mile planning jurisdiction, during the 20-year planning period. Implement appropriate community and economic developments to enable an increase in the population of Bennet by an estimated 5.3 percent annually, up to **1,437 people**, by 2026.*
3. *Expand public facilities and services and transportation systems, during the planning period .*
4. *Maintain and expand, as needed, a modern utility system, including water, sewer, street, sidewalk and electricity service, in the Village of Bennet.*

5. *Be cognizant of and participate in County-wide planning initiatives in Lancaster County. Be an active participant in future developments at the Highway 2 and 43 interchange and in areas within a three-mile radius of the Community.*
6. *Promote controlled, responsible growth in and around the Community, including increased business district development, recreational opportunities and a greater variety of housing options.*
7. *Provide all residents with access to a variety of safe, decent, sanitary housing types, including options for the elderly and persons with disabilities.*
8. *Preserve and improve the physical appearance and character of Bennet, with emphasis on the Downtown area and the Little Nemaha River Basin.*
9. *Insure the safety of the residents of Bennet by providing adequate streets, sidewalks, fire protection and law enforcement.*
10. *Include community participation in the ongoing maintenance and update of the Bennet Comprehensive Plan.*

COMMUNITY IMAGE

Goal 1

ESTABLISH COMMUNITY INITIATIVES SUPPORTIVE OF POPULATION GROWTH AND IMPROVED ECONOMIC CONDITIONS IN BENNET.

- **Policy 1.1**

Increase the population of Bennet to 1,437, or 741 additional residents, by 2026.

Action Strategy 1.1.1

Encourage continued citizen participation to build consensus for local action associated with improved economic and social conditions in Bennet.

Action Strategy 1.1.2

Combine housing development opportunities with planned population growth, for all age and income sectors.

Action Strategy 1.1.3

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

- **Policy 1.2**

Improve and beautify the built environment in Bennet.

Action Strategy 1.2.1

Repair or demolish dilapidated buildings that are not cost effective to rehabilitate.

Action Strategy 1.2.2

Promote the planting of landscaping and the maintenance and preservation of trees.

Action Strategy 1.2.3

Improve streetscapes in Bennet. Focus on the “Gateway Entrances” to the Community at the north and south on Highway 43. A large “Welcome to Bennet” sign, with lighting and landscaping would enhance the main entry to the Community.

Action Strategy 1.2.4

Create and implement an aesthetic revitalization plan for the Community of Bennet. Primary emphasis should be place upon the Highway 43 corridor and Downtown Bennet, however, both public and private improvements are needed throughout residential areas of the Village as well.

Action Strategy 1.2.5

Create and implement a revitalization plan in the Downtown commercial area of Bennet, including greenery, landscaping, facade restoration, and overall property improvements. Create areas for “gathering” for special events; i.e. garage sales, flea markets.

Action Strategy 1.2.6

Continue to encourage participation in a Community Cleanup Day. Implement and enforce codes to remove abandoned/junk vehicles and trash from properties.

Goal 2

SECURE RESOURCES FOR THE FUTURE BETTERMENT OF BENNET.

- **Policy 2.1**

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

Action Strategy 2.1.1

Support and develop public /private partnerships for the development and redevelopment of residential, commercial, and light industrial areas in Bennet.

Action Strategy 2.1.2

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

Action Strategy 2.1.3

Utilize programs such as Tax Increment Financing, CDBG programs and the local tax base to further enhance the community and maintain existing and attract new businesses.

LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT

Goal 1

ADOPT A LAND USE PLAN CAPABLE OF FULFILLING THE RESIDENTIAL, RECREATIONAL, AND SOCIAL NEEDS OF THE BENNET CITIZENRY THROUGH THE YEAR 2026.

- **Policy 1.1**

Maximize the existing land areas presently served by municipal infrastructure.

Action Strategy 1.1.1

Increase land use density in residential areas having redevelopment potential. Emphasis should be placed upon the areas directly adjacent the west, north, and east of the Downtown.

Action Strategy 1.1.2

Conduct infill residential development, as well as utilization of the designated growth areas beyond the Village limits to the northwest, north and northeast of the Community.

Action Strategy 1.1.3

Locate future higher density residential developments in close proximity to the Downtown. Tri- and four-plexes would be appropriate size structures in the Village of Bennet. Also consider locating mixed density residential developments north of the current corporate limits of Bennet.

- **Policy 1.2**

Designate future industrial land areas that are compatible with neighboring land uses, while optimizing the Community's ability to expand existing and attract new industrial types.

Action Strategy 1.2.1

Future light industrial areas should be allowed to expand from the existing locations to adjacent vacant lands along the Omaha Public Power District Railroad corridor, within and south of the Downtown.

- **Policy 1.3**

Preserve and promote commercial businesses in Downtown Bennet, while also locating land in other areas of the Community to expand existing and attract new commercial businesses.

Action Strategy 1.3.1

Encourage the preservation and enhancement of the Downtown commercial district by promoting the growth of existing businesses and attracting new businesses.

Action Strategy 1.3.2

Enhance the Downtown by implementing beautification programs, such as facade improvement programs, lighting, new sidewalks, trees and shrubs.

Action Strategy 1.3.3

Develop Highway Commercial areas for new businesses which may not be appropriate in the Downtown (i.e., fast food restaurants).

- **Policy 1.4**

Enforce land use development ordinances and regulations in Bennet that are in conformance with the Comprehensive Plan.

Action Strategy 1.4.1

Maintain zoning and subdivision regulations and appropriate building codes which comply to the future land use plan of the Village.

Goal 2

MONITOR, REVIEW AND, WHEN NECESSARY, UPDATE THE LAND USE PLAN TO REFLECT SUPPORT FOR REDEVELOPMENT EFFORTS IN BENNET.

- **Policy 2.1**

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

Action Strategy 2.1.1

Redevelopment efforts should be directed, first, to the Downtown and along the Highway 43 Corridor.

- **Policy 2.2**

Create programs of redevelopment that combine private and public improvement initiatives.

Action Strategy 2.2.1

A facade improvement program, in conjunction with street and sidewalk improvements, street and pedestrian lighting (ornamental or cast-iron), benches and trash receptacles would greatly enhance the historical character of the Community.

Action Strategy 2.2.2

Future priority land use activities in the Downtown should promote commercial and public/quasi-public uses.

Goal 3

MAINTAIN A LAND USE PLAN THAT ENCOURAGES THE PRESERVATION AND PROTECTION OF ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES WITHIN THE VILLAGE OF BENNET AND ITS PLANNING JURISDICTION.

- **Policy 3.1**

Future developments should be encouraged to locate in areas that are free of environmental problems related to ground and surface water features, soil and topographic slope.

Action Strategy 3.1.1

All future development and redevelopment activities should strive to eliminate any existing occurrences of deteriorating or dilapidated buildings.

Action Strategy 3.1.2

Future development and redevelopment activities should be supported by a modern infrastructure system consisting of an appropriate water source and distribution, sanitary sewer collection, storm sewer collection, and electrical and natural gas system.

Action Strategy 3.1.3

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

HOUSING

Goal 1

PROVIDE ALL BENNET RESIDENTS WITH ACCESS TO A VARIETY OF SAFE, AFFORDABLE AND SANITARY HOUSING TYPES.

- **Policy 1.1**

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

Action Strategy 1.1.1

Develop up to 385 units of housing in Bennet, during the next 20 years. This would include the development of both rental and owner housing units, for all age and income sectors and for persons with special needs.

Action Strategy 1.1.2

Plan housing for a) new households, b) the replacement of up to 60 percent of substandard housing units and c) affordable units for local households with a housing cost burden status.

Action Strategy 1.1.3

Provide additional housing in Bennet to eliminate the "pent-up" demand for housing for the current citizens of the Community, with emphasis on family households.

Action Strategy 1.1.4

Develop housing rehabilitation programs and projects to improve the overall condition of housing in the Community.

Action Strategy 1.1.5

Develop a variety of senior housing options to provide a complete continuum of care for senior residents of Bennet, including independent living, assisted living and nursing care units. Housing types may include two-bedroom townhomes, one- and two-bedroom four-plexes, and one- and two-bedroom assisted living units, as well as a nursing care facility.

Action Strategy 1.1.6

Provide housing for special populations, including both owner and rental options for persons with a disability. Participate in a State-wide "home modification" program for persons with disabilities and the elderly.

Action Strategy 1.1.7

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

Action Strategy 1.1.8

Maintain a minimum Community housing vacancy rate of 5 to 7 percent for modern, marketable housing stock, to insure the ongoing of available housing.

Action Strategy 1.1.9

Encourage future residential developments which are compatible and complement existing neighborhoods.

- **Policy 1.2**

Protect and preserve both existing and future residential areas through the implementation of programs and policy supporting best building practices.

Action Strategy 1.2.1

Target approximately 38 dwellings for moderate rehabilitation and nine dwellings for substantial rehabilitation in Bennet, by 2026.

Action Strategy 1.2.2

Remove and replace up to four units of housing that are substantially deteriorated.

Action Strategy 1.2.3

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

Goal 2

COORDINATE HOUSING PROGRAMS WITH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS AND AVAILABLE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE FUNDING SOURCES.

- **Policy 2.1**

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

Action Strategy 2.1.1

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

Action Strategy 2.1.2

Support and utilize the State of Nebraska Consolidated Housing Plan to create affordable housing opportunities in Bennet.

Action Strategy 2.1.3

Promote housing development opportunities by replacing structures identified as not cost effective to rehabilitate.

Action Strategy 2.1.4

Focus on the development of single family and duplex dwellings for both owner and renter occupancy. Associated with this is the securing of builder-contractors to serve the Bennet housing needs.

PUBLIC FACILITIES, INFRASTRUCTURE & TRANSPORTATION

Goal 1

MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE THE EXISTING PUBLIC FACILITIES AND UTILITIES IN BENNET AND DEVELOP, AS NEEDED, NEW FACILITIES AND SERVICES TO REFLECT THE COMMUNITY'S NEEDS AND DEMANDS.

- **Policy 1.1**

Provide public services in an efficient and economic manner in Bennet, in order to protect and enhance the safety and welfare of all residents. Address needed health, educational and supportive services.

Action Strategy 1.1.1

Insure public services are maintained and improved to keep pace with population growth. Special emphasis should be placed on maintaining a high quality school system.

Action Strategy 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. Bennet should employ its own law enforcement officials in the future.

Action Strategy 1.1.3

Improve recreational opportunities for all age and ability levels.

- **Policy 1.2**

Preserve and expand existing parks and open spaces, throughout the community, to provide improved recreational opportunities in Bennet.

Action Strategy 1.2.1

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

Action Strategy 1.2.2

Insure accessibility for all persons of Bennet to the Community's parks by adhering to the standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) for all new park improvements.

Action Strategy 1.2.3

The Village Park and Ballfield are used by both Community residents and visitors. Continue and improve maintenance efforts to reinforce a positive Community image.

Action Strategy 1.2.4

The Village should plan for the expansion and development of new parks, ballfields, a swimming pool and a recreation center, in conjunction with the development of new subdivisions to the north of the Community.

Action Strategy 1.2.5

Phase in the construction of the planned hiker/biker trails system, which connects existing parks and important public facilities. The completed trails system will circumvent the Community, offering a variety of safe pedestrian corridors.

- **Policy 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.

Action Strategy 1.3.1

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

Action Strategy 1.3.2

Maintain an adequate supply of potable water and expanded distribution system suitable for present and future consumption, as well as for fire protection within Bennet. Work with the Lancaster County Rural Water District to expand the quantities of water available to the Village of Bennet.

Action Strategy 1.3.3

Strive to improve the quality of drinking water provided to residents of Bennet. Work with the Village staff to insure water system improvements are addressed as the population of the Village continues to increase.

Action Strategy 1.3.4

Coordinate future growth areas with the future land use plan to target the portions of the Community suited for development, where all appropriate infrastructure can be extended in a cost effective manor.

Goal 2

PROVIDE AN EFFICIENT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM THROUGHOUT BENNET FOR THE SAFE AND EFFICIENT MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE, GOODS AND SERVICES.

- **Policy 2.1**

Maintain and adopt a coordinated plan for maintenance, improvement and future location of all streets, roads, and highways in the Community, including paving, curbs, gutters, street lighting, curb cuts, replacements, etc.

Action Strategy 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 Bennet.

Action Strategy 2.1.2

Develop a program to implement and maintain hard surfaces on all streets within the corporate limits of Bennet. A combination of Community Development Block Grants, Tax Increment Financing and various other sources of public and private monies should be combined to increase the development potential of existing neighborhoods.

Action Strategy 2.1.3

Prioritize street resurfacing improvement projects through the One-and Six-year Roads Plan in areas throughout the Village with priority given to Highway 43, as well as to Cottonwood, Garden, Fir, Madison and Tyler Streets to promote efficient traffic flow throughout the Community. Secondary importance should be established for streets with businesses located adjacent to them.

Action Strategy 2.1.4

New residential subdivisions in Bennet should have appropriate and adequate hard surfaced streets, curbs, gutters and sidewalks.

Action Strategy 2.1.5

As the Village of Bennet continues to develop and expand to the north, implement traffic control devices along the Highway 43 corridor to ensure the safety of the residents of the Community.

PLAN MAINTENANCE & IMPLEMENTATION

Goal 1

MAINTAIN A CURRENT AND MODERN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND REGULATORY ORDINANCES.

- **Policy 1.1**

Review and, if necessary, update the Bennet Comprehensive Plan annually.

Action Strategy 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.

SECTION 3
COMMUNITY BACKGROUND
ANALYSIS

SECTION 3

COMMUNITY BACKGROUND ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

The **Community Background Analysis** examines the population, economic and housing trends in the Village of Bennet and its respective planning jurisdiction. This information serves as valuable indicators of future development needs and patterns for the Community and provides a basis for the realistic projection of the future population. The quantity, location and density of demographic and housing features play an important role in shaping the details of various development plans to meet the needs of the Community.

The population trends and projections for the years 1980 through 2026 were studied and forecasted for Bennet, utilizing a process of both trend analysis and popular consent. Bennet is projected to increase in population during the next 20 years. To meet this goal, the Village of Bennet will need to develop existing land within the corporate limits and develop land within its Planning Jurisdiction adjacent the Corporate Limits.

This population goal would also require the creation of additional housing stock and related public facilities and utilities for the Village.

GENERAL POPULATION TRENDS AND PROJECTIONS

The analysis and projection of population are at the center of all planning decisions. This process assists in understanding of important changes which have and will occur throughout the planning period.

Estimating population size is critical to a community planning process. Further, projecting the population of a community is extremely complex. Because projections are based upon various assumptions about the future, projections must be carefully analyzed and continually reevaluated due to the changing economic and social structure of a community.

POPULATION

- ◆ **Table 3.1 identifies population trends and projections** for the Village of Bennet from 1980 through 2026. The population of Bennet increased from 1990 to 2006, to reach a current (2006), estimated population of 696. It is estimated the population of Bennet will increase 47.3 percent from 2006 to 2016, to reach a population of 1,025 persons (Medium Projection). From 2016 to 2026, the population of Bennet will increase an estimated 40.2 percent, or by 412 persons, to reach a population of 1,437 persons.
- ◆ *The Bennet “Community,” generally including the three-mile area beyond the Corporate Limits, has a current (2006) estimated population of 1,354 persons. By 2026, the Bennet Community population is expected to be at least 2,502.*

TABLE 3.1
POPULATION TRENDS AND PROJECTIONS
VILLAGE OF BENNET, NEBRASKA
1980-2026

	<u>Year</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Total</u>		<u>Annual</u>	
			<u>Change</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Change</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Bennet:	1980	523	-- --	-- --	-- --	-- --
	1990	544	+21	+4.0%	+2	+0.4%
	2000	570	+26	+4.8%	+3	+0.5%
	2006	696	+126	+22.1%	+25	+4.4%
	Low 2016	798	+102	+14.7%	+10	+1.5%
	Medium 2016	1,025	+329	+47.3%	+33	+4.7%
	High 2016	1,250	+554	+49.6%	+55	+8.0%
Medium 2026	1,437	+412	+40.2%	+41	+4.0%	
Bennet						
Community:	2006	1,354	-- --	-- --	-- --	-- --
Low 2016	1,537	+183	+13.5%	+18	+1.4%	
Medium 2016	1,853	+499	+36.9%	+50	+3.7%	
High 2016	2,206	+852	+62.9%	+85	+6.3%	
Medium 2026	2,502	+649	+35.0%	+65	+3.5%	

NOTE: Bennet Community Equals the Bennet Village plus a 3-Mile Planning Radius.

Source: 1980, 1990, 2000 Census; 2001-2004 Census Estimates

Census Estimates - Bennet - 2001-599; 2002-620; 2003-649; 2004-671

Lancaster County - 2001-253,234; 2002-256,443; 2003-260,007; 2004-261,545

Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C., 2006

POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

- ◆ For planning purposes, the various cohorts of population are important indicators of the special needs of a community. The cohorts of age, sex and family structure can assist in determining potential labor force and the need for housing, public facilities and other important local services

An analysis of age characteristics can be used to identify the potential need for public school, recreational areas and short- and long-term health care facilities.

AGE DISTRIBUTION

- ◆ **Table 3.2** provides **age distribution** for the Village of Bennet, from 1990 to 2026. Bennet will experience rapid population growth during the next 20 years, with growth in all age categories. By 2026, it is estimated that the 35 to 54 age group will comprise the largest portion of the population, with 487 persons. The 85+ age group will remain the smallest with 22 persons, however this identifies an 18 person increase in this category.

Median age in the Village of Bennet is projected to decrease from an estimated 36.2 years in 2006, to 34.5 years in 2026.

TABLE 3.2
POPULATION AGE DISTRIBUTION
VILLAGE OF BENNET, NEBRASKA
1990-2026

<u>Age Group</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>1990-2000</u>			<u>2006-2026</u>	
			<u>Change</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2026</u>	<u>Change</u>
19 & Under	187	170	-17	194	277	381	+187
20 - 34	127	92	-35	123	184	252	+129
35 - 54	115	192	+77	232	331	487	+255
55-64	55	42	-13	63	95	126	+63
65-74	30	52	+22	55	83	108	+53
75-84	18	20	+2	25	42	61	+36
85+	<u>12</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>-10</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>+18</u>
TOTALS	544	570	+26	696	1,025	1,437	+741
Median Age	33.4	36.7	+3.3	36.2	35.4	34.5	-1.7

Source: 1990, 2000 Census

Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C., 2006

INCOME TRENDS AND PROJECTIONS

Table 3.3 identifies **household income trends and projections** for Bennet, Nebraska. In 2000, 37 percent of the Bennet households earned an annual income of \$50,000 or more. By 2026, an estimated 54.8 percent of all households are projected to earn annual incomes of \$50,000 or more, a 17.8 percent increase from 2000. The median household income is anticipated to increase from an estimated \$55,083 in 2006, to \$114,650, by 2026.

HOUSEHOLD INCOME

- ◆ By 2026, an estimated 15.5 percent of all households in Bennet will earn an annual income of \$35,000 or less. This will represent a 13 percent decrease, from 2006.

**TABLE 3.3
HOUSEHOLD INCOME
TRENDS AND PROJECTIONS - ALL HOUSEHOLDS
VILLAGE OF BENNET, NEBRASKA
1990-2026**

<u>Income Group</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2026</u>	<u>% Change 2006-2026</u>
Less than \$10,000	28	14	10	7	0	-100.0%
\$10,000 - \$19,999	11	12	11	10	10	-9.1%
\$20,000 - \$34,999	87	52	57	65	83	+45.6%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	38	63	83	130	177	+113.3%
<u>\$50,000 or More</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>83</u>	<u>112</u>	<u>201</u>	<u>328</u>	<u>+192.9%</u>
TOTALS	190	224	273	413	598	+119.0%
Median Income	\$26,607	\$42,237	\$55,083	\$81,589	\$114,650	+108.1%

Source : 1990, 2000 Census

Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C.,2006

COST BURDENED HOUSEHOLDS

- ◆ **Tables 3.4, 3.5 and 3.6 identify households with housing problems/cost burdened** in the Village of Bennet, in 2000, 2006, 2016 and 2026. Cost burdened households are households that spend 30 percent or more of their household income on housing costs. Housing costs may include rent, mortgage, utilities, taxes and insurance.

Table 3.4 identifies owner households with housing problems/cost burdened households. In 2006, an estimated 39 owner households have housing problems/are cost burdened.

Table 3.5 identifies renter households with housing problems or are cost burdened. In 2006, an estimated 13 renter households have housing problems/are cost burdened.

Table 3.6 identifies elderly renter households experiencing housing problems or are cost burdened. In 2006, an estimated one elderly renter household has housing problems/is cost burdened.

By 2026, each of the three household income categories discussed will increase in the number of households that are cost burdened and have housing problems.

**TABLE 3.4
ESTIMATED OWNER HOUSEHOLDS BY INCOME
COST BURDENED/ HOUSING PROBLEMS
VILLAGE OF BENNET, NEBRASKA
2000/2006/2016/2026**

<u>Income Range</u>	<u>2000</u> <u># / #CB-HP</u>	<u>2006</u> <u># / #CB-HP</u>	<u>2016</u> <u># / #CB-HP</u>	<u>2026</u> <u># / #CB-HP</u>
0-30% AMI	20 / 16	22 / 17	27 / 19	32 / 21
31-50% AMI	32 / 12	35 / 13	42 / 15	47 / 19
51-80% AMI	30 / 8	38 / 9	50 / 11	58 / 16
TOTALS	82 / 36	95 / 39	119 / 45	137 / 56

= Number of Households; #CB-HP = Households with Cost Burden - Housing Problems

Source: 2000 Census, 2000 CHAS Table
Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C., 2006

TABLE 3.5
ESTIMATED RENTER HOUSEHOLDS BY INCOME
COST BURDENED/ HOUSING PROBLEMS
VILLAGE OF BENNET, NEBRASKA
2000/2006/2016/2026

<u>Income Range</u>	<u>2000</u> <u># / #CB-HP</u>	<u>2006</u> <u># / #CB-HP</u>	<u>2016</u> <u># / #CB-HP</u>	<u>2026</u> <u># / #CB-HP</u>
0-30% AMI	12 / 8	13 / 8	15 / 9	18 / 10
31-50% AMI	4 / 4	5 / 4	8 / 6	11 / 7
<u>51-80% AMI</u>	<u>10 / 0</u>	<u>12 / 1</u>	<u>15 / 2</u>	<u>19 / 3</u>
TOTALS	26 / 12	30 / 13	38 / 17	48 / 20

= Number of Households; #CB-HP = Households with Cost Burden - Housing Problems

Source: 2000 Census, 2000 CHAS Table
Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C., 2006

TABLE 3.6
ESTIMATED ELDERLY RENTER HOUSEHOLDS BY INCOME
COST BURDENED WITH HOUSING PROBLEMS
VILLAGE OF BENNET, NEBRASKA
2000/2006/2016/2026

<u>Income Range</u>	<u>2000</u> <u># / #CB-HP</u>	<u>2006</u> <u># / #CB-HP</u>	<u>2016</u> <u># / #CB-HP</u>	<u>2026</u> <u># / #CB-HP</u>
0-30% AMI	4 / 0	5 / 1	7 / 2	8 / 3
31-50% AMI	0 / 0	1 / 0	2 / 1	4 / 1
<u>51-80% AMI</u>	<u>0 / 0</u>	<u>0 / 0</u>	<u>2 / 0</u>	<u>6 / 1</u>
TOTALS	4 / 0	6 / 1	11 / 3	18 / 5

= Number of Households; #CB-HP = Households with Cost Burden - Housing Problems

Source: 2000 Census, 2000 CHAS Table
Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C., 2006

EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC TRENDS

The most recent and comprehensive employment data available for Lancaster County was obtained from the Nebraska Department of Labor. Since these figures are only available county-wide, a review and analysis of Lancaster County labor force statistics will be needed to provide a general understanding of the economic activity occurring in and around the Village of Bennet.

CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE AND EMPLOYMENT

- ◆ Since the Village comprises a percentage of the total County Civilian Labor Force, it can be assumed the economic pattern of Lancaster County reflects the economic pattern of Bennet. However, some variation due to differences in rural and urban may not be truly identified, based upon this assumption. **Table 3.7** identifies the **civilian labor force and employment trends and projections** in Lancaster County, from 1980 to 2026. During the next 20 years, it is estimated the number of employed persons in Lancaster County will increase an estimated 29.8 percent, to a total of 198,207, by 2026. The unemployment rate is expected to decrease from 3.7 percent, in 2006, to 1.7 percent, in 2026. **The Village of Bennet should strive to secure 30 to 60+ new job positions, by next 20 years through business development.**

**TABLE 3.7
CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE AND EMPLOYMENT
TRENDS AND PROJECTIONS
LANCASTER COUNTY, NEBRASKA
1980-2026**

<u>Lancaster County</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2026</u>
Civilian Labor Force	106,545	123,107	149,477	158,515	181,518	201,671
Unemployment	3,562	2,643	3,507	5,870	3,634	3,464
Rate of Unemployment	3.3%	2.1%	2.3%	3.7%	2.0%	1.7%
Employment	102,983	120,464	145,969	152,645	177,884	198,207

Change in Total Employment

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Annual</u>	<u>% Change</u>	<u>% Annual</u>
1980-1990	17,481	1,748	17.0%	1.7%
1990-2000	25,505	2,551	21.1%	2.1%
2006-2016	25,239	2,524	16.5%	1.7%
2016-2026	20,323	2,032	11.4%	1.1%

Source: Nebraska Department of Labor, Labor Market Information, 2006
Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C., 2006

PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT

- ◆ **Table 3.8** identifies **place of employment** for Bennet, Nebraska, in 2000. A total of 18 percent of Bennet residents, or 58 persons, were employed within the Village of Bennet. Conversely, on a daily basis, 264 persons, or 82 percent of the employed persons residing in the Village, commute to their place of employment outside the Village of Bennet.

TABLE 3.8
EMPLOYMENT IN PLACE
VILLAGE OF BENNET, NEBRASKA
2000

<u>Place of Employment</u>	<u>Bennet Residents</u>	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Village of Bennet	58	18.0%
Outside of Bennet	264	82.0%
TOTALS	322	100.0%

Source: 2000 Census

Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C., 2006

ECONOMIC SUMMARY

- ◆ Overall, the economic outlook for Bennet could be considered “good” for the planning period (2006 to 2026). Economic opportunities exist, as the population diversifies and jobs expand in Lancaster County. Additional commercial business, as well as the expansion of existing business in Bennet, should be pursued if the Community desires more commerce. Existing local based business and industries provide the Village with a stable economic base. The close proximity to the City of Lincoln also provides ample job opportunities and necessary services to the residents of Bennet.

HOUSING PROFILE

The **Housing Profile** of the **Bennet Comprehensive Plan** serves to profile and analyze the existing housing stock in the Village of Bennet. The following information includes the documentation of pertinent U.S. Census information and the identification and analysis of future housing characteristics and demand.

"It should be the goal of any community to provide safe, decent and affordable housing for its residents, regardless of race or social and economic status."

COMMUNITY HOUSING CONDITIONS

COMMUNITY HOUSING PROFILE

- ◆ The Bennet housing stock is comprised of a variety of housing types ranging, from single family homes to mobile homes. The highest percentage of residential land area is occupied by single family homes. **Tables 3.9 and 3.10** identify the 1990 and 2000 Bennet **housing stock and substandard housing conditions**, based on U.S. Census data. From 1990 to 2000, there was an increase in the Bennet housing stock by 26 units. A total of five units, or 2.2 percent of the housing stock in Bennet, had overcrowding conditions in 2000. No units lacked complete plumbing.

BUILDING TRENDS

- ◆ **Housing units added in Bennet, between 1990 and 2000, equaled 26 units. Since 2000, an additional 46 dwelling units have been constructed in the Village.**

TABLE 3.9
HOUSING STOCK PROFILE/UNITS IN STRUCTURE TYPE
VILLAGE OF BENNET, NEBRASKA
1990/2000

	<u>Number of Units</u>				<u>Total</u>
	<u>1 unit</u>	<u>2 - 9 units</u>	<u>10+ units</u>	<u>Mobile Homes</u>	
1990	184	10	0	15	209
2000	210	12	0	13	235

Source: 1990, 2000 Census
 Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C., 2006

TABLE 3.13
HOUSING STOCK PROFILE
DEFINING SUBSTANDARD HOUSING - HUD
VILLAGE OF BENNET, NEBRASKA
2000

<u>Total</u>	<u>Complete Plumbing</u>		<u>Lack of Complete Plumbing</u>		<u>Units with 1.01+ Persons per Room</u>	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
225	225	100.0%	0	0.0%	5	2.2%

Source: 2000 Census
 Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C., 2006

OCCUPANCY/VACANCY STATUS

- ◆ **Table 3.11** summarizes estimated **housing stock occupancy and vacancy status** in Bennet, Nebraska, in 1990, 2000 and 2006. The 2000 Census recorded a total of 231 housing units, including 222 occupied units and nine vacant units. Occupied units consisted of 191 owner occupied and 31 renter occupied households. Vacant housing units consisted of seasonal and/or vacant housing units neither for sale nor rent and vacant year-round housing units. There was an overall vacancy rate of 3.9 percent.

TABLE 3.11
HOUSING VACANCY/OCCUPANCY RATES
VILLAGE OF BENNET, NEBRASKA
1990/2000/2006

	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2006</u>
a) Housing Stock	209	231	281
b) Vacant Housing Stock	8	9	8
c) Occupied Housing Stock	201	222	273
Owner Occupied*	175	191	237
Renter Occupied*	26	31	36
d) Housing Vacancy Rate*	3.8% (8)	3.9% (9)	2.8% (8)
Owner*	3.3% (6)	3.0% (6)	2.5% (6)
Renter*	7.1% (2)	8.8% (3)	5.3% (2)
e) Adjusted Vacancy Rate**	2.4% (5)	2.6% (6)	2.1% (6)
Owner**	2.2% (4)	2.1% (4)	1.7% (4)
Renter**	3.7% (1)	6.1% (2)	5.3% (2)

* Includes Seasonal Housing

** Includes only units available for rent or purchase, meeting current housing code. Does not include vacant units for sale or rent, seasonal units, or units not meeting current housing code.

Source: 1990, 2000 Census
 Village of Bennet
 Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C., 2005

A standard community vacancy rate is 5 percent. This rate may fluctuate higher or lower for different time periods, depending upon the anticipated population growth and overall structural condition of the existing housing stock.

The 2000 year-round adjusted housing vacancy rate, in Bennet, was 2.6 percent for year-round housing stock. Dwelling units that are not cost effective for rehabilitation were factored out of the original 3.9 percent vacancy rate. The 2006 adjusted housing vacancy rate in Bennet is estimated to be 2.1 percent, overall, 1.7 percent for owner housing units and 5.3 percent for available, marketable rental units.

AGE OF HOUSING STOCK

- ◆ **Table 3.12** identifies **year structure built** in Bennet, up to 2006. Approximately, 43.8 percent of the housing stock in Bennet is over 46 years of age. The highest number of housing units built in Bennet, since 1939, was 48, during the period of 1970 to 1979. However, from 2000 to 2005, 46 housing units have already been constructed in Bennet.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Housing Units</u>
April 2000 to December 2005	46
1999 to March 2000	5
1995 to 1998	13
1990 to 1994	9
1980 to 1989	13
1970 to 1979	48
1960 to 1969	24
1950 to 1959	15
1940 to 1949	9
<u>1939 or Before</u>	<u>99</u>
SUBTOTAL	281
<u>Units Lost (2000 to 2005)</u>	<u>(0)</u>
TOTAL	281
%1939 or Before	35.2%
%1959 or Before	43.8%

Source: 2000 Census, Village of Bennet, 2006
Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C., 2006

CONDITION OF HOUSING STOCK

- ◆ **Table 3.13** identifies the **housing structural survey** for Bennet, in December, 2005. A total of 274 housing structures were surveyed in Bennet via a windshield survey, which consisted of rating the exterior of the structure only. The Consultant did not enter any of the structures.

Of the 274 housing structures reviewed, 146 structures, or 53.3 percent, were rated as “sound,” being in good condition and needing no apparent improvements. A total of 27 housing structures, or 9.8 percent, were rated as “deteriorated” or “dilapidated,” requiring major rehabilitation, or, in some cases, demolition. At least 40 units will require some level rehabilitation, by 2026, while an additional four units should be demolished/replaced.

TABLE 3.13
HOUSING STRUCTURAL SURVEY
VILLAGE OF BENNET, NEBRASKA
DECEMBER, 2005

Rating	Single Family		Multifamily		Mobile Home		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
1	146	54.9%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	146	53.3%
2	94	35.3%	0	0.0%	7	87.5%	101	36.9%
3	22	8.3%	0	0.0%	1	12.5%	23	8.4%
4	<u>4</u>	<u>1.5%</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0.0%</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0.0%</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>1.4%</u>
Totals	266	100.0%	0	0.0%	8	100.0%	274	100.0%

NOTE: 1 = Sound, 2 = Minor Deficient, 3 = Deteriorated, 4 = Dilapidated

Source: Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C., 2006

HOUSEHOLD TRENDS AND PROJECTIONS

An analysis of household characteristics provides a profile of data necessary to plan for a community. Recent trends in household characteristics, combined with income, employment and population data can assist in determining the overall future needs of a planning area.

HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

- ◆ **Table 3.14 identifies trends and projections** of household characteristics for the Village of Bennet. As the population of Bennet continues to increase, so will the number of households. Currently (2006), there are an estimated 696 persons residing in 273 households in Bennet. The number of persons per is estimated to be 2.55 persons.

By 2026, the population of Bennet is projected to increase to 1,437 persons, which will reside in 598 households. The number of persons per household is projected to decrease to 2.40 persons by 2026. No group quarters exist in Bennet in 2006 and no new group quarters are anticipated during the next 20 years. Group quarters are generally non-household temporary living quarters, such as nursing homes, dormitories and jails/prisons.

**TABLE 3.14
SPECIFIC HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS
TRENDS AND PROJECTIONS
VILLAGE OF BENNET, NEBRASKA
1990-2026**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Group Quarters</u>	<u>Persons In Households</u>	<u>Households</u>	<u>Persons Per Households</u>
1990	544	0	544	201	2.71
2000	570	0	570	222	2.57
2006	696	0	696	273	2.55
2016	1,025	0	1,025	413	2.48
2026	1,437	0	1,437	598	2.40

Source: 1990, 2000 Census

Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C., 2006

TENURE BY HOUSEHOLD

- ◆ **Table 3.15** identifies **tenure by household** trends and projections, for Bennet, for the period 1990 to 2026. By 2026, an estimated 18.6 percent of the households in Bennet will be rental units. This will equal an increase of 75 renter households, from 2006 to 2026. The number of owner households are also expected to increase, by 250 households, during that same time period.

TABLE 3.15
TENURE BY HOUSEHOLD
TRENDS AND PROJECTIONS
VILLAGE OF BENNET, NEBRASKA
1990-2026

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Owner</u>		<u>Renter</u>	
	<u>Households</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1990	201	175	87.1%	26	12.9%
2000	222	191	86.0%	31	14.0%
2006	273	237	86.8%	36	13.2%
2016	413	345	83.5%	68	16.5%
2026	598	487	81.4%	111	18.6%

Source: 1990, 2000 Census
Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C., 2006

HOUSING COSTS - CONTRACT RENT

- ◆ **Table 3.16** identifies trends and projections for **contract rent** in Bennet from 1990 to 2026. From 1990 to 2000, the median contract rent in Bennet increased from \$214 to \$290, an estimated 35.5 percent. Currently (2006), the estimated median contract rent in Bennet is \$340. By 2026, the median contract rent in Bennet will be an estimated \$880 an increase of 160 percent, from 2006.

TABLE 3.16
CONTRACT RENT
VILLAGE OF BENNET, NEBRASKA
1990-2026

	<u>Less</u> <u>than \$150</u>	<u>\$150</u> <u>to \$249</u>	<u>\$250</u> <u>to \$349</u>	<u>\$350 or</u> <u>More</u>	<u>Total</u>
1990	5	12	4	3	24
Median Rent	\$214				
2000	3	2	14	7	26
Median Rent	\$290				
2006	\$340				
2016	\$595				
2026	\$880				

Source: 1990, 2000 Census
Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C., 2005

HOUSING COSTS - HOUSING VALUE

- ◆ **Table 3.17** identifies trends and projections for **owner occupied housing value** in Bennet from 1990 to 2026. From 1990 to 2000, the median owner occupied housing value in Bennet increased from \$38,800 to \$82,300, by 112 percent. Currently (2006), the estimated median owner occupied housing value in Bennet is \$109,400. By 2026, the median owner occupied housing value in Bennet will be an estimated \$304,260 an increase of 178 percent, from 2006.

TABLE 3.17
OWNER OCCUPIED HOUSING VALUE
VILLAGE OF BENNET, NEBRASKA
1990-2026

	Less than <u>\$25,000</u>	\$25,000 to <u>\$49,999</u>	\$50,000 to <u>\$99,999</u>	\$100,000 to <u>\$149,999</u>	\$150,000 or <u>More</u>	<u>Total</u>
1990	30	78	43	1	0	152
Median Value	\$38,800					
2000	4	27	100	37	7	175
Median Value	\$82,300					
2006	\$109,400					
2016	\$195,920					
2026	\$304,260					

Source: 1990, 2000 Census
Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C., 2005

SECTION 4
COMMUNITY HOUSING PLAN

SECTION 4

COMMUNITY HOUSING PLAN

INTRODUCTION

This **Community Housing Plan** identifies the housing opportunities in Bennet, Nebraska, during the next 20 years. Included is an identification of housing demand for both owner and renter housing.

FUTURE HOUSING DEMAND

HOUSING VACANCY DEFICIENCY

Housing vacancy deficiency is defined as the number of year-round, structurally sound vacant units lacking in a community, whereby the total percentage of vacant units is less than 5 percent of the total year-round units. A vacancy rate of 5 to 7 percent is the minimum rate recommended to allow a community to have sufficient housing available for both new and existing residents.

- ◆ The housing stock of a community is considered a basic necessity, while the adequate supply of safe and decent housing is a key factor in a community's social and economic well being. As previously stated in this Comprehensive Plan, the Village of Bennet provides a variety of housing types for the local population. The Village makes a true effort to encourage the construction of new housing. In 2006, an estimated 281 housing units exist in Bennet. Only an estimated 2.1 percent of these units, or eight units were vacant.

Also discussed was the condition of housing in Bennet. An estimated 40 housing structures are in need of some level of rehabilitation, with up to four units in need of removal/replacement.

The Village of Bennet had an overall 2000 housing vacancy rate of 3.9 percent. It is estimated that at least three of the nine vacant housing units were not marketable, or ready for immediate occupancy, reducing the housing vacancy rate of available, sound housing stock to an estimated 2.6 percent. Today, 2006, this adjusted vacancy rate is close to 2.1 percent; 1.7 percent for owner housing and an estimated 5.3 percent for rental housing.

The Village of Bennet has a current housing vacancy deficiency demand for modern, marketable housing of at least **eight units**.

PROJECTED HOUSING DEMAND POTENTIAL

- ◆ Also considered in the future housing demand for Bennet are new households expected during the 20-year planning period, households living in substandard units and households experiencing a cost overburden.

A substandard unit is defined as a unit lacking complete plumbing plus the number of households with more than 1.01 persons per room. Persons experiencing rent or owner cost overburden are persons paying more than 30 percent of their income towards housing. Consideration is also given to the number of new households, demolitions, and any other projects in the planning stage for the designated community. Based on this criteria, **an additional 350 housing units** could potentially be developed in Bennet, by 2026.

“PENT-UP” HOUSING DEMAND

- ◆ In addition to the previously discussed housing demand and deficiency factors, the **"pent-up" housing demand for current residents in the community, desiring and having the capacity to afford alternative housing, must also be considered**. This is a highly speculative demand and one which must be locally promoted and market driven by resident desire. The process to monitor this desire, however is somewhat difficult to determine and implement. **An estimated 27 additional housing units will be needed in Bennet**, by 2026, to meet the Community's pent-up demand.

TOTAL HOUSING DEMAND

- ◆ **The total estimated housing demand, or housing potential, in Bennet, by 2026, is 385 units**. This includes the combined consideration of new households, replacement housing (for dilapidated structures), affordable housing for low to moderate income elderly and families and a "pent up" demand for alternative housing for existing residents of Bennet. The 385 units would equal an estimated 286 owner units and 99 rental housing units. The most appropriate future type of rental housing for Bennet would be three+ bedroom single family homes and two- and three-bedroom duplexes. The single family homes would be attractive to new and existing families and the duplexes could be utilized by both non-elderly families or elderly households. Assisted living units, in Bennet, would also be appropriate. Future owner housing should also include the construction of entry-level housing for first time home-buyers.

Table 4.1 summarizes the **projected housing demand potential**, in Bennet, by 2026. The Village of Bennet will potentially need an estimated 286 additional owner units and 99 additional renter units, by 2026. The Village of Bennet has a housing demand target of 269 housing units, consisting of 200 owner units and 69 renter units, by 2026.

The Community of Bennet, which includes the Village of Bennet and a three-mile planning radius, will need an estimated 516 housing units by 2026. The housing demand target for the Community of Bennet is 361 units, consisting of 292 owner units and 69 renter units.

TABLE 4.1
PROJECTED HOUSING DEMAND POTENTIAL / TARGET
VILLAGE/COMMUNITY OF BENNET, NEBRASKA
2016/2026

	<u>Village of Bennet</u>		<u>Community of Bennet*</u>	
	<u>Owner</u>	<u>Renter</u>	<u>Owner</u>	<u>Renter</u>
1. New Households	103 / 238	36 / 73	175 / 365	36 / 73
5% Vacancy	5 / 12	2 / 4	5 / 12	2 / 4
20% Cost Burdened with Housing Problems	<u>9 / 17</u>	<u>3 / 6</u>	<u>12 / 19</u>	<u>3 / 6</u>
SUBTOTALS	117 / 267	41 / 83	192 / 396	41 / 83
2. Vacancy Demand	4 / 8	0 / 0	4 / 8	0 / 0
3. <u>Expected Pent-up Demand</u>	<u>5 / 11</u>	<u>8 / 16</u>	<u>7 / 13</u>	<u>8 / 16</u>
TOTALS	126 / 286	49 / 99	203 / 417	49 / 99
HOUSING DEMAND TARGET	95 / 200	37 / 69	271 / 292	37 / 69

*Includes the Village of Bennet and a 3-Mile Planning Radius.

Source: Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C., 2006

HOUSING EXPECTATION / IMPLEMENTATION

- ◆ The creation of a new and improved housing stock in Bennet will depend on the implementation of development activities by both the public and private sectors, both independent of one another as well as a team. The **potential housing demand for Bennet, by 2026, is 385 units**. This would require 90 to 125 additional acres for residential development. Based upon the availability of land, and resources, the expected housing units to be built, in Bennet, by 2026 is 269. This expected number of 269 housing units would have an estimated land requirement of 85 acres and a development budget of close to \$51 million.
- ◆ A program to rehabilitate and remove substandard housing and, if necessary, relocate tenants will be needed to improve the overall character of the Village, as well as to provide a safe and decent housing stock. The expected number of units to be rehabilitated in Bennet, by 2026, is 40, at an estimated budget of \$1.3 million. At least four units, in substandard condition, should be removed.

New construction activities, to create both modern owner and renter housing, will need to be implemented as soon as possible. The strategic planning and locating of these units will heighten the Village's ability to grow.

HOUSING INITIATIVE

- ◆ The Village of Bennet should create and implement a **20-Year Housing Initiative**, in an effort to meet its future population goals. This Housing Initiative should be developed by a team of concerned citizens from both the public and private sector. At a minimum, the Initiative should address the following: condition, should be demolished and removed from the existing housing stock.
 - Develop a **marketing plan** to promote Bennet as a place to live and retire, as well as to live and work elsewhere.
 - Join efforts with other smaller communities in Lancaster County to establish a program to increase the **capacity of local builders and developers** to produce more housing units. This program should concentrate on increasing the number of trades and skilled construction labor in the Bennet area.

- The **identification and scheduling of housing projects**, both new and rehabilitation, most appropriate for Bennet, including both subsidized and non-subsidized housing projects.
- The **identification of land areas** for both renter and owner housing. Areas should include land inside the Village. Projects planned for these areas should be compatible with adjacent land uses.
- **Review and modify local ordinances**, as well as the overall political decision-making process as it pertains to residential development. This effort should attempt to eradicate any and all impediments to residential development or rehabilitation.
- **Identification of financial resources** to finance residential development in Bennet, including both public and private sources. Lancaster County lending institutions should form a partnership for financing housing projects.

and

- Establish the **necessary organizational structures** for the creation of housing projects in Bennet, including the securement of land for future developments. Utilize the housing development services of the Lincoln Action Program (LAP) to complete needed affordable housing projects. LAP can access important financial resources to deliver affordable housing in a timely manner.

HOUSING RESOURCES

To produce new and upgrade both renter- and owner- occupied housing in Bennet, the Community, in partnership with the private sector, must access housing programs to reduce the cost of development and/or long-term operations. The following information identifies funding sources and programs available to assist in financing the housing demand in Bennet. The strategic combination of two or more sources can assist in reducing development and/or operational costs of proposed affordable housing projects.

A document entitled *Affordable Housing Resource Programs - Inventory*, distributed by the Nebraska Department of Economic Development identifies and defines all available housing programs.

LOCAL FUNDING OPTIONS

Local funding for use in housing development and improvement programs are limited to two primary sources: (1) local tax base and (2) dollars secured via state and federal grant and loan programs, which are typically only available to local units of government (Village, or County).

LOCAL TAX BASE

- ◆ Utilizing the Nebraska Community Development Law, the Village of Bennet could create either a **Community Development Agency**, or a **Community Redevelopment Authority**. This Agency/Authority has the power to study and declare an area or areas of the Community as blighted/substandard, create a redevelopment plan and then Utilize Tax Increment Financing for commercial, industrial and residential oriented public improvements.

STATEWIDE FEDERAL GRANTS to the LOCAL UNIT of GOVERNMENT

- ◆ The primary funding grants available to local municipalities is the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), administered by the Nebraska Department of Economic Development (DED). The CDBG provides funding for both community and housing development programs to assist in financing both owner- and renter occupied rehabilitation, residential building conversions, First Time Home-Buyers program and infrastructure for housing activities.

DED is also the administrator of **HOME** funds. HOME funds are available to authorized, local or regional based Community Development Housing Organizations (CHDOs) for affordable housing repair and/or new construction. An annual allocation of HOME funds is established for CHDOs, based on individual housing programs.

The **Nebraska Homeless Shelter Assistance Trust Fund and Emergency Shelter Grant** also exist to assist local or regional based groups in the provision of housing improvements for homeless and for persons and families "at risk" of becoming homeless.

HOUSING TRUST FUNDS

- ◆ The **Housing Trust Fund**, also administered by DED, is available as financing for affordable housing programs.

NIFA

- ◆ The **Nebraska Investment Finance Authority** is a leader in providing finance for housing, including both owner and renter housing stock. Programs range from Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, a rent-to-own program, tax exempt bond financing, to a single family mortgage program.

NEO

- ◆ Another important State funding source available to be pooled with other resources or operate independently is available through the **Nebraska Energy Office (NEO)**.

REGIONAL FUNDING

The **Federal Home Loan Bank (FHLB)**, located in Topeka, Kansas also provides funding for affordable housing activities. The FHLB joins forces with a local lending institution to provide "gap" financing rental programs.

FEDERAL FUNDING

The two primary providers of federal funding to Nebraska for housing development, both new construction and rehabilitation, are HUD and RD (formerly the Farmers Home Administration). Housing programs provided by these groups are typically available for local base nonprofit developers. Funds from these programs are commonly mixed or pooled with other public funding sources, as well as conventional financing.

HUD

- ◆ a) **Section 202 Program** - Provides a capital advance to nonprofit developers for development of elderly rental housing for either independent living or congregate (frail elderly) living. The program provides 100 percent financing, with a capital advance (no repayment loan) and operational subsidy.
- b) **Section 811 Program** - Provides a capital advance to nonprofit developers for development of renter housing for persons with disabilities. The program provides 100 percent financing with an operational subsidy.

and

- c) **Mortgage Insurance** - The HUD 221(d)(3) or 221(d)(4) provides up to 100 percent mortgage insurance for nonprofit developers [(d)(3)] and 90 percent mortgage insurance coverage for profit-motivated developers [(d)(4)]. Permanent financing can be provided via the public funds (i.e., CDBG, HOME) and/or conventional financing.

USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT

- ◆ a) **Section 515 Program** - Provides a direct interest subsidized loan for the development of family and elderly housing, including congregate, and rental housing for persons with a disability. Rent subsidy is also available, as per demand. **A Section 538 mortgage insurance program for multifamily housing is also available.**
- b) **Section 502 Program** - Provides either a mortgage guarantee or direct loan for single family home-ownerships for low- and moderate-income persons/families, including persons with a disability.

- c) **Community Facilities Program** - Provides a direct, interest subsidized loan for a variety of specific projects, community facility improvement programs including new construction or housing rehabilitation for "special populations."
- d) **Business and Industries Program** - RD allows its Business and Industries program to assist in financing assisted living housing for elderly, utilizing a long term mortgage guarantee.

and

- e) **Preservation Program** - Administered by qualified local and regional organizations/agencies to assist in housing rehabilitation programs in Nebraska communities. This could include a local based, planned program of home modification **income eligible to low/moderate-income persons and families.**

FINANCIAL "POOLING"

Financial "pooling" of funding sources is defined as the mixing of two or more program resources to obtain a total operating fund capable of meeting a specific housing program budget. Previously described were local, state and federal funding sources, all suitable to meet the safe, affordable and accessible housing needs of low/moderate income persons and families. Each of these funding sources have "rules" of allocation, as it relates to the use of dollars for housing development and recipient qualifications. The mixing of funds results in the mixing of rules, thus more time attributed to administration.

The majority of funding sources discussed are only available to nonprofit organizations, typically local, community based groups having a well-defined mission statement and plan for housing low/moderate income persons. These organizations are typically of a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status.

The securement and eventual "pooling" of public funding sources is enhanced by the use of private, conventional financing. This informs public providers that a good faith effort is being made by an organization to create a **workable public/private partnership**. This partnership not only creates a greater amount of dollars for a specific housing program but relays a message to the community that the private sector is in support of the program.

SECTION 5
FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

SECTION 5

FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

INTRODUCTION

The Future Land Use Plan for this Comprehensive Plan identifies the land use development patterns which have occurred in Bennet upon its initial platting in 1871, later incorporated by 1881, and future land use needs/opportunities. This Section examines **development opportunities, requirements and future utilization of land in and around the “Community” of Bennet.** A discussion of the **environmental and physical characteristics** of the Community precedes a description and analyses of **existing and future land use** conditions in the Village. The final section of this Chapter discusses environmental impact of future development activities in Bennet.

PROPER LAND USE PRACTICES

Proper land use practices can protect the natural resources of a community and be a compliment to the built environment. The natural environment of the community provides both opportunities and constraints for existing and future developments. As residents strive to create a sustainable living environment, they must work and live in harmony with their natural surroundings. This can occur by designing with nature, conserving unique features, protecting watersheds and using sensitive development practices. In Bennet, the major development constraints and opportunities are associated with the Little Nemaha River environs and associated flood plains.

IDENTIFICATION OF FUTURE GROWTH AREAS

The **proposed future land use** concentrates on the use of land in Bennet and its respective One-Mile Planning Jurisdiction, during the **2006 to 2026 planning period.** An analysis of both a 10 and 20-year Planning Period for Future Land Use development needs is provided. The identification of land uses beyond the current corporate limits is imperative to support growth opportunities throughout the next 20 years.

LOCATION

The Village of Bennet is located in eastern Nebraska, along the Little Nemaha River. The Community is approximately 1.75 miles south of Nebraska Highway 2, via Nebraska State Highway 43. This geographic setting directly links Bennet to the Lincoln metropolitan area, approximately 6.5 miles to the northwest, and presents opportunities for creating a viable and prosperous community.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

Bennet came into existence as a result of the development of an independent railroad line between Nebraska City and Lincoln, eventually heading on to “Fort Kearney” and connecting to the Omaha Public Power District Railroad main line. The City was originally named after Mr. John Bennett (with two t’s), Vice President of the independent railroad company. The Town’s name was shortened in 1872, when the Community was officially incorporated as “Bennet, Nebraska.” The first buildings were completed in 1871 and, by 1875, the Downtown’s commercial business were beginning to thrive, when a large grain elevator was constructed by the Nebraska City Elevator Company.

THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

SOILS

The soils in and around Bennet are classified into three soil groups, or associations, each with a broad range of characteristics. **Illustration 5.1** graphically displays the soil types super-imposed over an image of Bennet. The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service conducted the field soils survey and developed the boundaries of the soil types found on the Illustration.

The three soil associations depicted in **Illustration 5.1** are the **Kennebec-Nodaway-Zook, Wymore-Pawnee, and Pawnee-Burchard Associations..** Each of these Associations are discussed in detail in the following paragraphs.

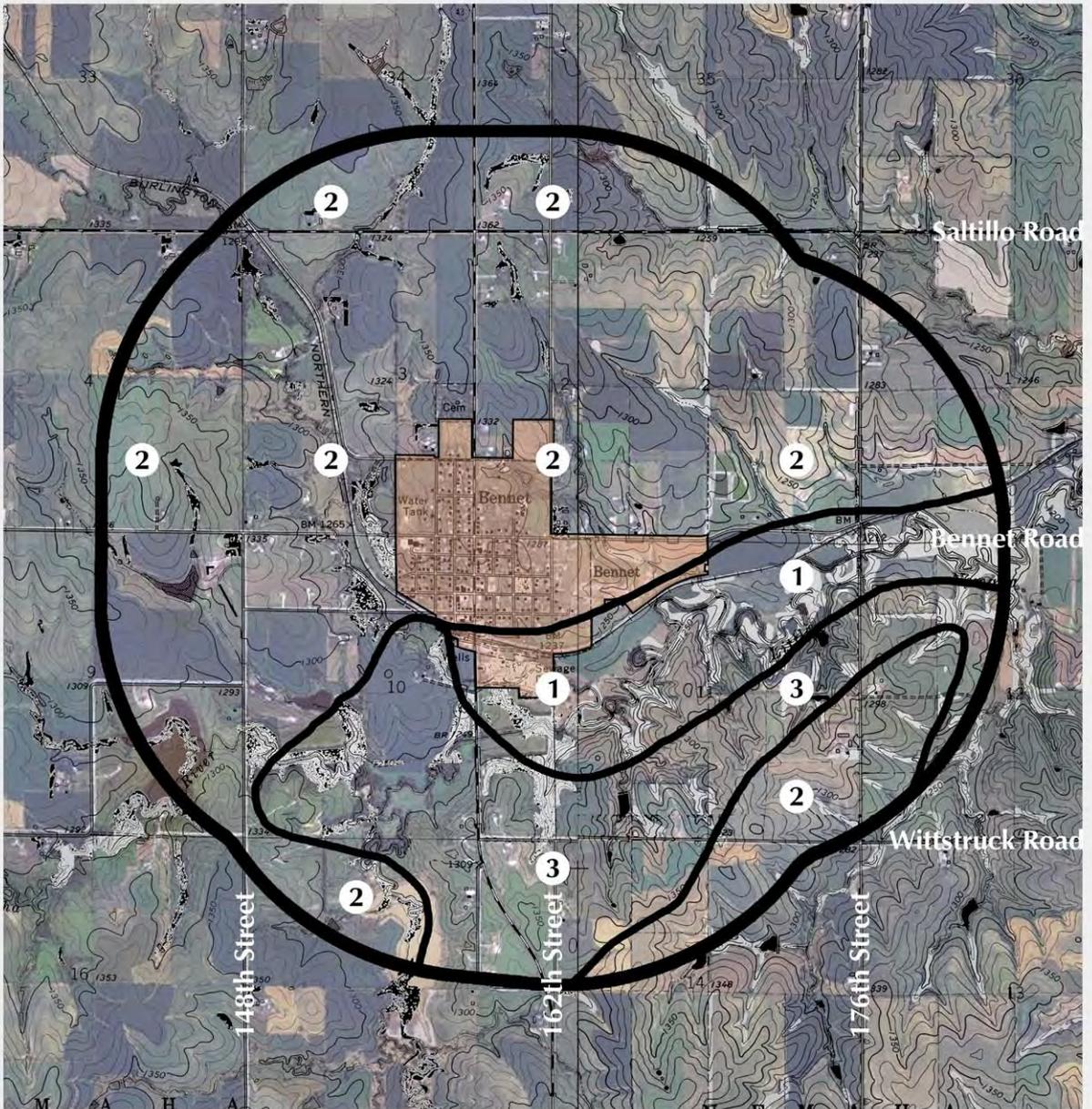
KENNEBEC-NODAWAY-ZOOK ASSOCIATION

- ◆ The southern portion of the Bennet Corporate limits, as well as the east-central portion of the One-Mile Planning Jurisdiction centered about the Little Nemaha River, are comprised of the **Kennebec-Nodaway-Zook Association** (see **Illustration 5.1**). Individual soils are generally described as, “*deep, nearly level and very gently sloping, moderately well drained to poorly drained, silty soils that formed in alluvium; on flood plains.*” This Association consists of soils is generally located on major flood plains along major drainage ways.

General Soils Map

Planning Jurisdiction

Bennet, Nebraska



Legend

- 1 Kennebel-Nodaway Zoor
- 2 Wymore-Pawnee Association
- 3 Pawnee-Burchard Association



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Architecture **1** NE
AN Association of Architects & Planners in Nebraska

The soils in this Association are mainly used for cash grain farming. Flooding is common during years of more than normal precipitation. Soils in this association are severely limited for sanitary sewer lagoons and leach fields, as well as for building sites due to the hazard of flooding. Even the construction of roads and streets are limited because of the flooding hazard and frost action during winter.¹

WYMORE-PAWNEE ASSOCIATION

- ◆ Nearly all of the area included in the Corporate Limits of Bennet, with the exception of the extreme southern portion adjacent and south of the Railroad corridor are included in this Association. Additionally, the northern half and southwest portion of the One-mile Planning Jurisdiction, as well as a thin strip at the extreme southeastern portion of the Jurisdiction are included in the **Wymore-Pawnee Association** (see **Illustration 5.1**). Soils of this Association are described as “*deep, nearly level to strongly sloping, moderately well drained, silty soils that formed in loess and loamy soils that formed in glacial till; on uplands*”.

Limitations for dwellings, streets and roads are stated as severe due to shrink-swell potential. Sewage lagoons are impacted by severe limitations for steep slopes. Soils of this type are also severely limited for septic tank absorption fields due to slow permeability and slope. *Buildings located in this area can overcome these limitations by constructing re-enforced foundations that are designed to withstand these limitations.*²

PAWNEE-BURCHARD ASSOCIATION

- ◆ Lands within the Bennet rural One-Mile Planning Jurisdiction, along the bluffs of the upper elevations of the bluffs over the Little Nemaha River, in the extreme southern portion of the Planning Jurisdiction, are comprised of the **Pawnee-Burchard Association** (see **Illustration 5.1**). This Association type is generally described as “*deep, gently sloping to steep, moderately well drained and well drained, loamy and clayey soils that formed in glacial till; on uplands.*”

The soils in this Association are, generally, severely limited for septic absorption fields because of slow or moderately slow permeability and slope. They are severely limited for sewage lagoons because of slope. This Association is also severely limited for building sites because of high shrink-swell or slope and for roads and streets because of high shrink-swell and high frost action.³

WATERSHEDS

The topography and terrain of Bennet and the One-Mile Planning Jurisdiction are varied. The natural landscape has been formed by wind and water erosion and deposits creating areas of nearly level lands on stream terraces. The Village of Bennet generally rests above and to the north of the Little Nemaha River. The natural topography of Community is gently rolling hills to areas that are nearly level. Lands slope from developed areas of Bennet to the south, southeast, carrying storm water run off the Little Nemaha River and other drainage ways, ultimately converging with the Missouri River in the extreme southeastern portion of Nebraska.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Federal Insurance Administration, on September 21, 2001, authorized the effective date of the Village of Bennet Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) upon the completion of the "Flood Insurance Study" for the Village of Bennet "to investigate the existence and severity of flood hazards."⁴ The Village should refer to the Study for official hydraulic analysis.

The Study outlined the flood plain management applications to guide future land use and the Village flood plain which prohibits building in areas declared as the 100-Year Flood Hazard Zone. Flood plain and flood hazard areas are delineated on the official Flood Insurance Rate Map, or commonly known as the "flood plain map". **Illustration 5.5** generally depicts the Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHA's), which are subject to inundation by the 1 percent annual chance flood. No Base Flood Elevation were determined.

No flood protection structures exist or are planned for the subject watershed. As the Community continues to grow, future development within the floodway and flood plain should be discouraged and only allowed through the strict adherence to the local flood plain regulations.

The citizen's protection against natural hazards is the responsibility of the local government and its officials. The effect of high water or flooding can be lessened by planned open space within the designated flood plain, maintenance of the floodway and the application of design standards to reduce run-off.

Surface drainage and streams account for a small percentage of the water resources in the Bennet Planning Jurisdiction. The Village of Bennet relies upon the Lancaster County Rural Water District to supply municipal water to the Community. A 2004 Community Survey indicated that the majority of respondents stated the water quality is "poor" and "too expensive for the quality of service provided."

The underground water supply is vital to the region. It is the source of water for numerous private and irrigation wells. Any endangerment to the supply threatens public health, as well as the local farm economy. This natural resource must be protected.

Securing the quality of drinking water from private wells in the rural areas within the Bennet One-Mile Planning Jurisdiction is very important, if in fact the rural dwellings are not connected to the Rural Water District. A minimum lot size of three acres is recommended for residences in agriculturally zoned areas. This standard generally ensures that adjacent households do not contaminate each others drinking water.

Lot sizes less than three acres would allow rural residences to locate too close to one another. Rural dwellings typically have septic tanks and, or leech fields. If located too close to each other, contamination might occur. Adequate residential lot sizes are the means by which residents health, safety and welfare are ensured into the future.

The Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (NDEQ) regulates ground water quality and quantity. To assist local municipalities with protecting their municipal drinking water supply, the NDEQ has developed the **Nebraska Wellhead Protection (WHP) Program**. The voluntary “program intends to prevent the contamination of ground water used by public water supply wells.”⁵ Due to the fact that the Rural Water District provides all of the drinking water to the Village, Bennet does not participate in the Wellhead Protection Program, as all of the municipal water is supplied by the Lancaster County Rural Water District.

CLIMATE

The climate of the Bennet area is continental and characterized by widely ranging seasonal temperatures and rapidly changing weather patterns. The temperature ranges from an average daily minimum of 13.6° F in January and maximum of 87.9° F in July. The average annual precipitation in Bennet is 29.9 inches of rain and 28.3 inches of snow. These climatic characteristics and fertile soils create an environment for a productive agricultural industry.⁶

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The built environment of Bennet is characterized by its districts, paths, edges, nodes and landmarks. The combination of these items create a sense of place and image for the citizens and patrons of Bennet. The natural terrain enhances the built environment by providing a varying and aesthetic base for urban development.

The districts and neighborhoods are defined by their edges or boundaries. The major transportation corridors and the physical barriers of the terrain generally create the edge of each district with the paths, thus, giving the neighborhoods distinct boundaries.

Designating the proper land use adjacent to the State Highway 43 transportation corridor is essential. The general trend is to maintain commercial retail development within the Downtown, neighborhood commercial uses in the general area east of the Bennet Cemetery, and recommend to the County Board that Highway commercial uses be utilized on the southwest and southeast corners of the interchange of State Highway 43 and U.S. Highway 2. Industrial development is planned on the south side of Downtown and along the Omaha Public Power District Railroad corridor. The Community should take advantage of the development opportunities associated with each of these transportation corridors, to achieve the land use goals and policies in this Plan.

Land use is important within the residential areas, as well. Transportation systems should meet the daily needs of residents. Some residential areas lack needed amenities, have conflicting land uses and need to be redeveloped to improve the quality of life for the residents.

LAND USE ANALYSIS

EXISTING LAND USE PROFILE

Existing Land Use in and around Bennet is identified in **Table 5.1** and **Illustrations 5.2 and 5.3**. **Table 5.2** compares the results of the 2006 Comprehensive Plan of the Village of Bennet with similar sized Nebraska communities.

Table 5.1 identifies the existing land use, as of 2006, in Bennet, per land use type and acres per 100 people. As a reference, the planning standard for acres per 100 people per land use category is also shown. **The total area within the Village of Bennet is currently estimated to be 296 acres.**

**TABLE 5.1
EXISTING LAND USE
VILLAGE OF BENNET, NEBRASKA
2006**

<u>Land Use Type</u>	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Acres per 100 People</u>	<u>Planning Standard</u>
Parks/Recreation	22.4	7.6%	3.2	2.0
Public/Quasi-Public	11.3	3.8%	1.6	2.8
Residential	108.5	36.7%	15.5	10
• Single Family	104.2	35.2%	15.0	7.5
• Multifamily	0.7	0.2%	0.1	2.0
• Mobile Home	3.6	1.2%	0.5	0.5
Commercial	4.1	1.4%	0.6	2.4
Industrial	7.7	2.6%	1.1	2.3
<u>Streets/Alleys/Railroad</u>	<u>56.2</u>	<u>19.0%</u>	<u>8.1</u>	<u>--</u>
TOTAL DEVELOPED	210.2	71.0%	30.2	--
<u>Vacant</u>	<u>85.8</u>	<u>29.0%</u>	<u>12.3</u>	<u>--</u>
TOTAL VILLAGE AREA	296.0	100.0%	42.5	--

Source: Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C., 2006

The following provides a profile of existing land uses in Bennet:

VACANT

- ◆ **Vacant** land in Bennet equals an estimated 85.8 acres, or approximately 29 percent of the total platted Village area. No planning standards exist for this land use classification. An estimated 15 percent of the vacant land in Bennet, or 11.2 acres, is not suited for development due to flood plains, topography, or unsuitable soils. *Specifically, lands located south of the Omaha Public Power District Railroad corridor and areas adjacent drainage ways, flow storm water to the Little Nemaha River.*

PUBLIC/QUASI-PUBLIC

- ◆ **Public/Quasi-Public** land acreage in Bennet totals an estimated 11.3 acres, or 3.8 percent of the total platted Community area. This land classification includes Bennet Elementary School, churches and various public buildings. This land use classification equals an estimated 1.6 acres per 100 people, or nearly 43 percent less than the recommended 2.8 acres per 100 people, planning standard.

COMMERCIAL

- ◆ **Commercial** land usage in Bennet totals an estimated 4.1 acres. This amount is 75 percent less than the planning standard for commercial land area; 2.4 acres per 100 people. Although Bennet is currently considered a “bedroom community” to the City of Lincoln, the demand for local grocery and retail outlets will increase during the 10 and 20-year planning periods.

INDUSTRIAL

- ◆ **Industrial Land Use.** The total acreage of classified industrial land is 7.7 acres within the Corporate limits. Industrial acres per 100 people total 1.1, which is 52 percent less than today's planning standard requirement of 2.3 acres per 100 persons. The Village of Bennet has experienced an influx of industrial uses into its Downtown, to the point where too few commercial properties remain, with only a couple vacant lots for new businesses. Surveys and consensus of public opinion advocates for a stronger commercial presence in Downtown Bennet, limiting the growth of industrial uses throughout the 20-year Planning Period.

PARKS/RECREATION

- ◆ Lands associated with **Parks/Recreation** comprise approximately 5.3 acres of developed land in the Village of Bennet. Land attributed to parks and recreational use accounts for 3.8 percent of the total developed land in Bennet. The 5.3 acres of park land per 100 people is 15 percent more than the planning standard.

RESIDENTIAL

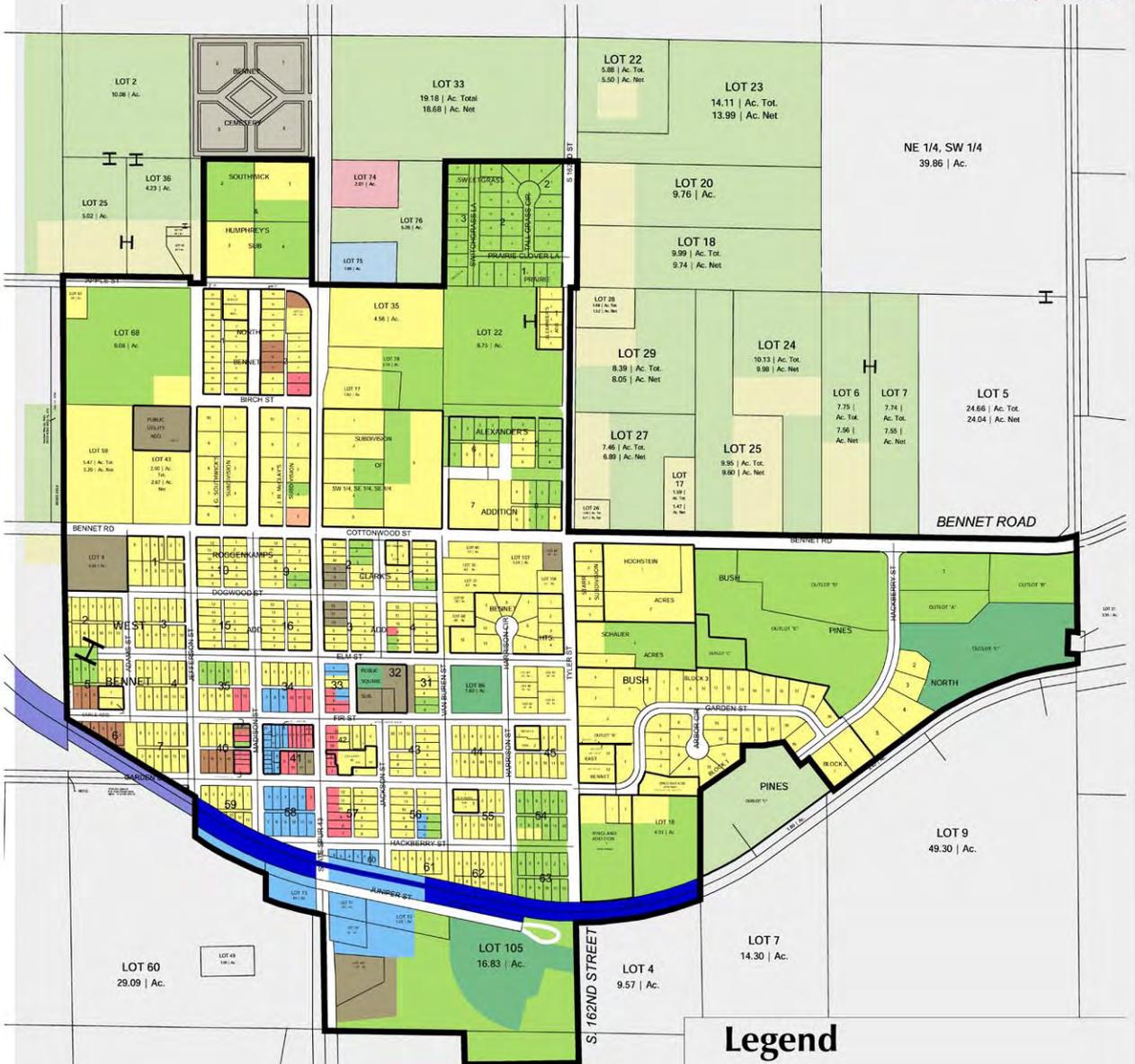
- ◆ **Residential** land usage consists of an estimated 36.7 percent of the total platted area. The 15.5 acres of residential land per 100 persons in Bennet is 55 percent more than the planning standard of 10 acres. However, the predominance of residential land in a “bedroom community,” such as Bennet, is to be expected.

Single Family land usage calculates to an estimated 35.2 percent of the total Village land area. This total is approximately 100 percent more than the planning standard per 100 people.

Multifamily land usage in Bennet equals an estimated 0.7 acres, or 0.2 percent of the Community's total land area. This total is 90 percent less than the acres needed per 100 people, based on current planning standards.

Generalized Existing Landuse Map

Corporate Limits
Bennet, Nebraska



Legend

- Vacant
- Parks & Recreation
- Public & Quasi-Public
- Single Family Residential
- Multifamily Residential
- Mobile Home
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Railroad Corridor

North

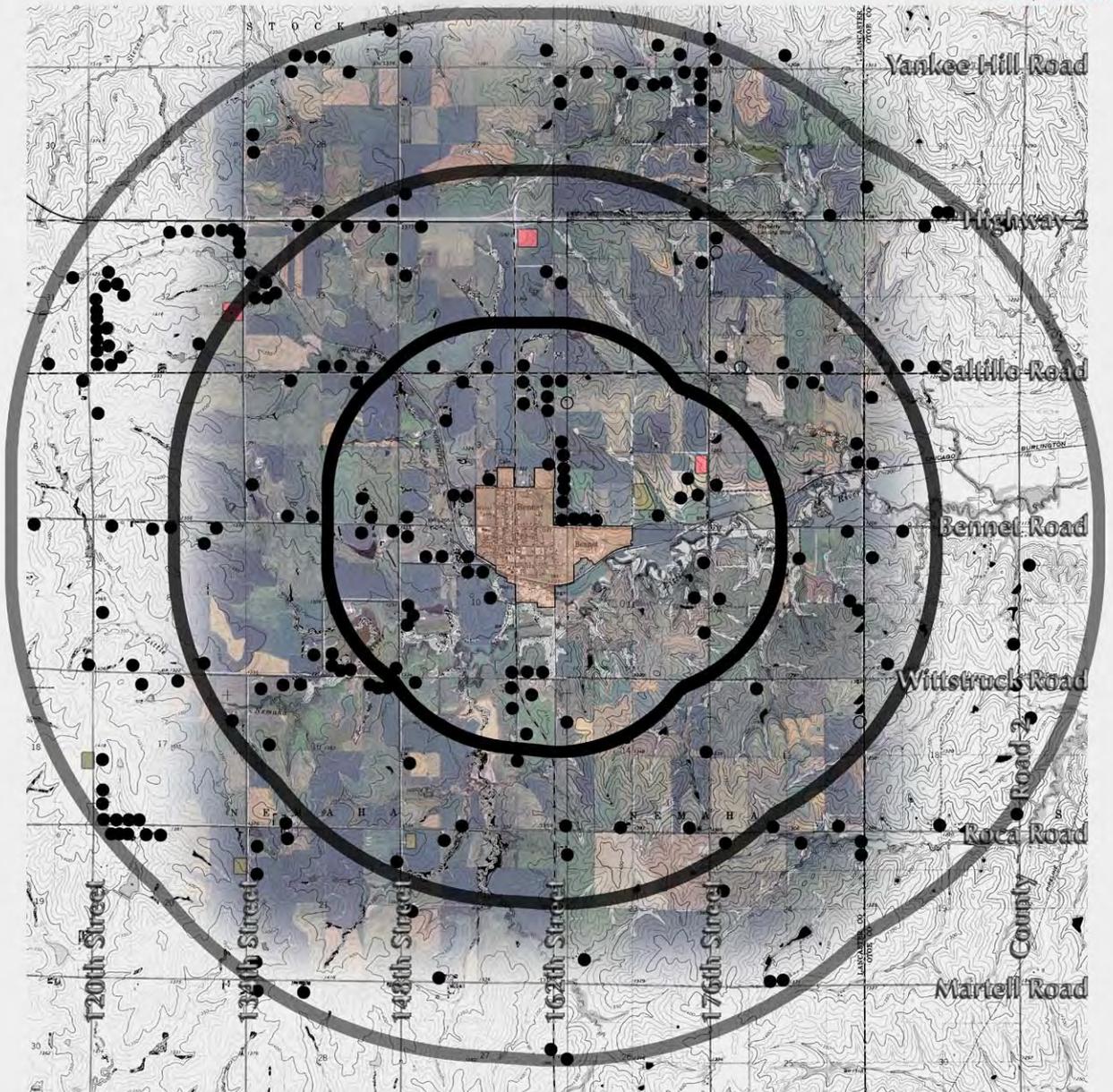
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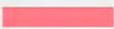
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Existing Landuse Map

Planning Jurisdiction
Bennet, Nebraska



Legend

- | | | | |
|---|---------------------------|---|------------------------|
|  | Corporate Limits |  | Intensive Agricultural |
|  | Vacant / Agricultural |  | Stream / Creek |
|  | Parks / Recreation |  | Commercial |
|  | Single Family Residential |  | Public / Quasi-Public |
|  | Mobile Home | | |
|  | Abandoned Residential | | |

 North

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Architecture  NE
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Mobile Homes comprise an estimated 3.6 percent of the total platted land within the Bennet Corporate Limits. An estimated 3.6 acres of mobile home area equals 0.5 acres per 100 persons. This total equals the planning standard of 0.5 acres per 100 persons.

Table 5.2 provides a **comparison of land use** in Bennet with other Nebraska communities of comparable size. Most noteworthy is the low ratio of commercial and industrial lands in Bennet, compared to the majority of the other communities.

TABLE 5.2
COMPARISON OF LAND USE
VILLAGE OF BENNET, NEBRASKA
2004

<u>Village (Population)</u>	<u>Residential</u>	<u>Commercial</u>	<u>Industrial</u>	<u>Public¹</u>
Bennet, NE (696)	70.5%	2.7%	5.0%	21.8%
Loup City, NE (954)	55.7%	4.7%	12.7%	26.9%
Harvard, NE (998)	67.3%	8.3%	2.3%	22.1%
Cambridge, NE (1,021)	41.5%	3.6%	3.1%	51.8%
Alma (1,214)	45.7%	9.2%	3.1%	42.0%
St. Paul (1,453)	52.5%	4.1%	20.3%	23.1%
Small Village Average ²	52.0%	10.0%	7.0%	31.0%

¹Includes Public, Quasi-Public, and Parks/Recreation
²American Planning Association, PAS Memo, August 1992

Source: Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C., 2006

SUMMARY STATEMENT

- ◆ The Village of Bennet has developed in a manner acceptable to the majority of local residents. The primary new land use developments have focused on single family residential development. Planning and land use development in Bennet is somewhat of a difficult task, due to several factors. These factors include the physical man-made barriers, such as highways and railroads, industrial development and the natural hazards of the topography and the Little Nemaha River and its associated flood plains.

These impediments to land use development can only be addressed by a commitment of the Community to (1) reinvest in existing land uses and prepare redevelopment plans to produce more efficient land uses and (2) expand community efforts to mitigate natural hazards by providing growth in non-sensitive areas.

The analysis of the existing land use situations in Bennet revealed a deficiency of public/quasi-public, multifamily, commercial and industrial acreage. These deficiencies should be corrected in the development of a new and balanced future land use plan for the Village and its respective Planning Jurisdiction.

FUTURE LAND USE PROFILE

The Village of Bennet has proposed a goal of at least a **4.7 percent annual growth in population** during the planning period 2006 to 2016. This goal will produce a total estimated **increase of 329 persons, during the first 10 years, 2006 to 2016**. The **Analysis of Recommended Land Use Needs, Table 5.3**, indicates that the current area within the Corporate Limits of Bennet can sustain the projected population and housing growth needs of the Community through 2016. Planning Standards suggest that in 2016, the 311.8 acres of future land use needs narrowly exceeds the 296 acres of land currently contained within the Corporate Limits. By 2026, it is projected, Bennet will need an estimated 438.3 acres, based on population growth.

**TABLE 5.3
ANALYSIS OF RECOMMENDED LAND USE NEEDS
BENNET, NEBRASKA
CURRENT AND PROJECTED POPULATION**

<u>Land Use Type</u>	<u>Acres Needed by 2006 Population (*) (**)</u>	<u>Existing 2006 Land Use (**)</u>	<u>Future 2016 Land Use (**)</u>	<u>Future 2026 Land Use (**)</u>
Parks/Recreation	9.7	52.6	17.4	24.5
Public/Quasi-Public	23.7	20.3	43.7	61.3
Residential	123.4	203.1	174.2	245.0
Commercial	19.5	6.9	38.9	54.5
<u>Industrial</u>	<u>18.1</u>	<u>13.1</u>	<u>37.8</u>	<u>53.0</u>
TOTALS	194.4	296.0	311.8	438.3

*Based on American Planning Standards

**Includes Streets/Alleys & Vacant Land Areas

Source: Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C., 2006

INFILL DEVELOPMENTS

- ◆ The strategic development of infill lots and other vacant land areas within the Corporate Limits would allow for managed growth and the utilization of the existing infrastructure, including streets, electrical, gas, water and sewer systems.

Illustration 5.4 identifies the proposed **Generalized Future Land Plan** with the Village's existing Corporate Limits. **Illustration 5.5** highlights future land use in the Bennet Planning Jurisdiction. The following describes the future land use needs of these areas.

FUTURE GROWTH AREAS

- ◆ The second 10-year period, 2016 to 2026, is anticipated to experience a **4 percent annual population growth**, from 1,025 persons, as of 2016, **to a population of 1,437, by 2026**, or an additional increase of 412 persons. If met, this growth will require the expansion of the Corporate Limits to approximately 438.3 acres, as per **Table 5.2**. The most cost effective areas for the Village of Bennet to sustain this anticipated growth is generally to the northwest and north of the current Corporate Limits.

The natural and man made limitations of the Omaha Public Power District Railroad corridor, and the adjacent flood plain of the Little Nemaha River, limits growth of the Village to the southwest, south and southeast. The requirement for the use of lift stations for sanitary sewer and booster pumps to provide adequate water pressure on the other side of the railway corridor and Little Nemaha River flood plains, further restricts development in these directions. Likewise the consensus of the Planning Commission and Citizen Participation Process of the **Bennet Visioning Process**, indicated that residents of the Community also desired the Community to grow to the north/ northwest, towards the Highway 2 and 43 interchange

The **Future Land Use Plan, Illustration 5.5** identifies that in the One-mile Planning Jurisdiction of Bennet, north of the Village, will be the most cost-effective direction for the Community to extend infrastructure to support an additional 127 acres of land use development anticipated to be needed to support the 2026 population.

ANNEXATION

- ◆ Future annexation should occur in the non-agricultural land use districts identified in **Illustration 5.5, Generalized Future Land Use Plan**. Priority areas planned as residential, commercial and parks/recreational growth areas, generally located west to the railway corridor, and to the northwest, north and northeast of the current Corporate Limits, should be annexed in conjunction with future subdivisions. These tracts could be annexed at a point-in-time when in conformance with and meeting the criteria of Nebraska's State Statutes that address annexation. A certain amount of **vacant land** will also be needed in each district to provide an overall functional Community land use system. To develop the Community in the most efficient and orderly manner possible, the focus should be placed on the development of suitable (developable) vacant land within the Corporate Limits of Bennet.

RESIDENTIAL GROWTH AREAS

Future residential development in and around the Village of Bennet should be of a high priority to the Community, during the planning period. An estimated **245 acres** will be needed for residential development through 2026, if the Village makes a conscious effort to provide additional housing options to all income sectors, age groups and family types/sizes.

The **Generalized Future Land Use Maps** identify the newly designated residential areas in and around Bennet as low- and medium- to high density. These designations will allow developers the option of providing a variety of housing for families, singles, older adults and special populations. The following narrative provides a description of the future residential land use compositions for the Community.

- **Single family** development should first occur in established neighborhood and new subdivision areas, both within and in close proximity to the Village. Development and redevelopment efforts should focus on infill of vacant lots throughout the Community and in concentrated areas adjacent Downtown Bennet.

Secondly, the development of future, low density, single family residential subdivisions, especially during the 2016 to 2026 Planning Period, should be encouraged within the planned single family growth areas. The consensus of the Planning Commission was that new single family construction should occur in planned growth areas to the west/northwest, and potentially to the north/northeast portions of the Community. The cost of development in these growth areas will be significantly more than on vacant parcels within existing neighborhoods of Bennet that have direct access to the existing infrastructure systems.

- **Multifamily** development should be pursued during the planning

period. The development of additional units in higher densities allow for more affordable housing and greater efficiency of resources. The **Future Land Use Plan, Illustration 5.4**, which identifies areas for development or redevelopment of multifamily housing adjacent the Downtown and the planned “Whispering Pines Park” in eastern Bennet, adjacent Hackberry Street.

- **Mobile Home Parks** are recommended to be located adjacent the west Corporate Limits of the Community, between Bennet Road and the Omaha Public Power District Railroad corridor. Individual mobile homes, located throughout the Village, are not wanted by consensus of the Planning Commission and Community Visioning Process. However, by allowing Mobile Home Parks with specific design standards included in the Zoning Regulations, an affordable entry level single family home can be made available to current and future residents of the Community.

PARKS AND RECREATION

An estimated 22.4 acres of land in the Village of Bennet is currently designated for parks and recreation. This acreage represents 3.2 acres of park land per 100 people in the Community and is 60 percent more than the planning standard of two acres per 100 people. However, the undeveloped “Whispering Pines Park,” located south of Bennet Road and east of Hackberry Street, is also included in this total acreage. The Village maintains a “city block” sized Community Park, with playground equipment, picnic shelter and bandstand; a quarter block sized “T-Ball Diamond,” with backstop and bleachers, concessions and restrooms; as well as the Legion Baseball field south of the railroad corridor.

An increased effort to replace outdated playground equipment and development of additional recreation fields, needs to be a focus during the 10-year planning period. Additionally, a Village hiker/biker trail system is recommended to diversify the available recreational facilities in the Community. This trail system is utilized in the **Future Land Use Plans, Illustrations 5.4 and 5.5**, to buffer single family residential uses from commercial and industrial uses. More importantly, the route, when completed would connect existing and future areas of the Community, while providing safe pedestrian routes to the Elementary School and Community Parks.

Throughout the 20-year planning period of this document, the Village of Bennet must maintain and expand available parks and recreation areas in conjunction with population increases.

Bennet should consider linking its existing park and recreation areas with a **linear trails system**. As the Community grows and expands its Corporate Limits, drainage ways and streams are recommended to be developed as both commons areas and hiker/biker recreational trails. These trail systems would provide safe pedestrian routes for recreation rather than streets and sidewalks throughout the Community.

PUBLIC/QUASI-PUBLIC

Future public/quasi-public land uses in Bennet will be primarily comprised of additional acreage to accommodate existing public/quasi-public uses. Existing land use configurations will occupy their present land area with proposed expansion to meet the service requirements of a growing Community.

COMMERCIAL

The Bennet future commercial land use areas are anticipated to include infilling of vacant parcels existing within the Downtown. Expansion of commercial areas are provided for in the **Future Land Use Plan, Illustration 5.4**, east of the Bennet Cemetery, to provide neighborhood commercial uses.

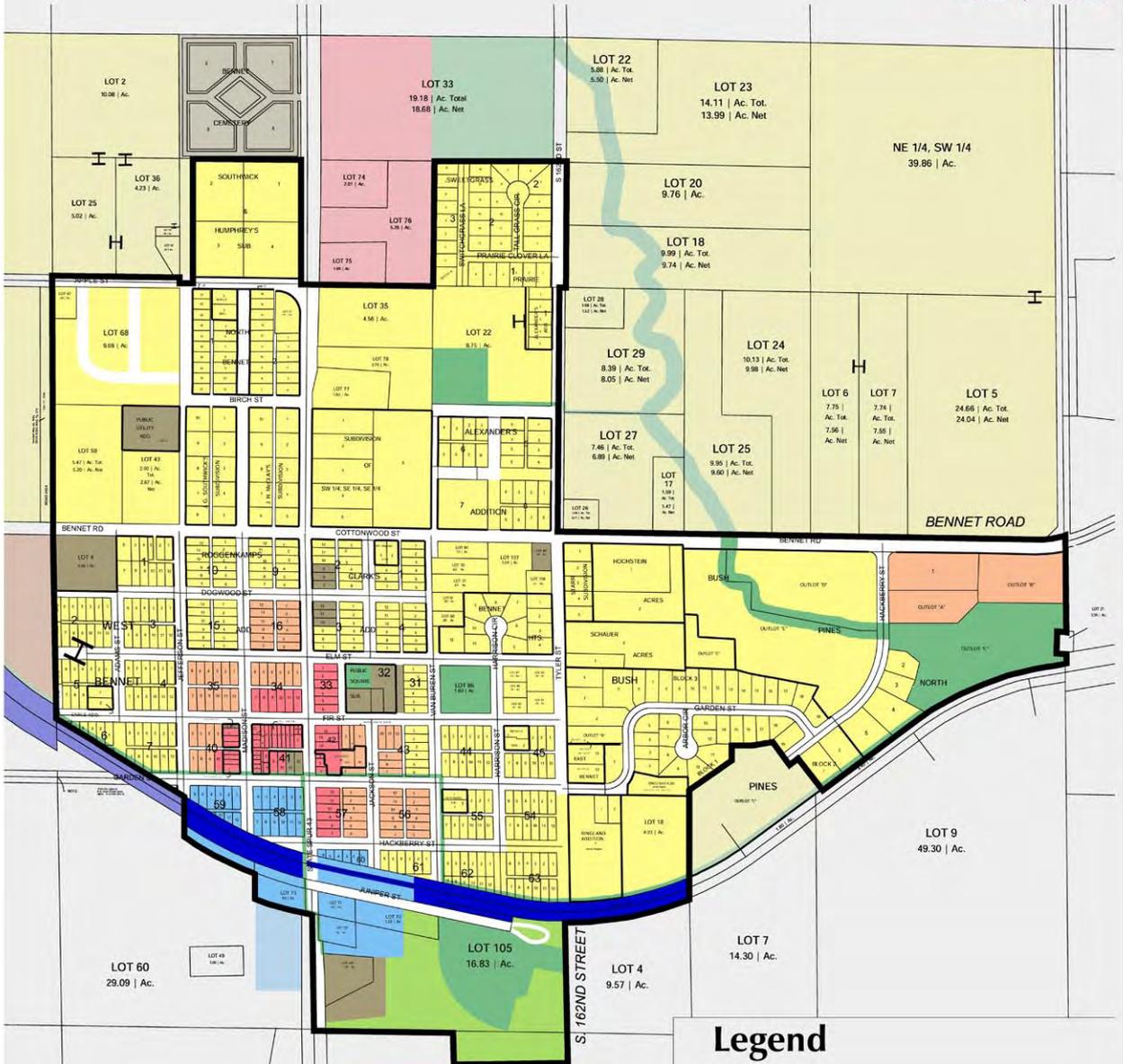
The result of the Bennet Visioning Process concluded that the majority of the residents of Bennet want the Downtown to remain the focus of commercial activity. Although the majority of the building types located behind, or west of the commercial businesses that abut Highway 43 are more in line with industrial building types, it is the recommendation of this Comprehensive Plan that businesses north of Garden Street transition into Downtown commercial retail uses. If this effort continues throughout the 20-year planning period, a revitalized Downtown Bennet will be better suited to a growing community of nearly 1,500 people. At the same time a variety of neighborhood commercial and professional uses are planned to support the growing Village at the north end of the current Corporate Limits. As the Community grows, demand for localized services will increase. Thus, a centralized neighborhood center is proposed east of the Cemetery.

INDUSTRIAL

The need for additional industrial land exists in Bennet. Currently, Bennet has an estimated 7.7 acres of industrial land. New industrial facilities could further diversify the employment and tax base in Bennet and to provide a variety of higher paying positions to residents of the Community. This will also provide additional jobs, as an alternative to those residents who presently commute beyond the Village for employment. The Village must maintain enough industrial land for growth and development. Local economic development organizations are encouraged to promote and continue their support for additional industrial land development.

Generalized Future Land Use Map

Corporate Limits
Bennet, Nebraska



Legend

- Vacant
- Parks & Recreation
- Public & Quasi-Public
- Single Family Residential
- Multifamily Residential
- Mobile Home
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Railroad Corridor

North

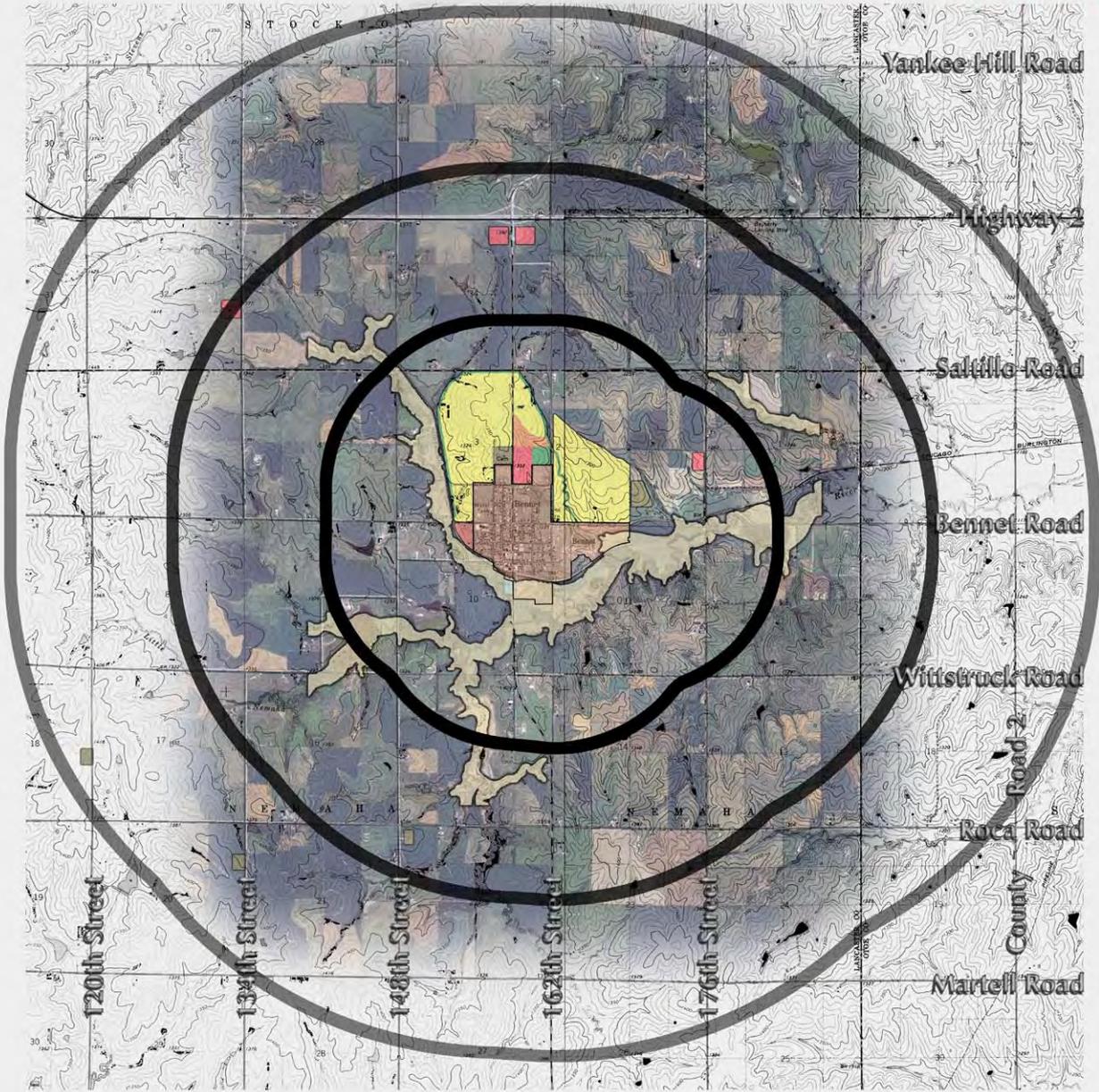
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Architecture 

Future Landuse Map

Planning Jurisdiction
Bennet, Nebraska



Legend

- | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|---|------------------------|
|  | Corporate Limits |  | Intensive Agricultural |
|  | Vacant / Agricultural |  | Stream / Creek |
|  | Parks / Recreation |  | Commercial |
|  | Mobile Home |  | Public / Quasi-Public |
| | |  | Single Family |
| | |  | Multi-family |



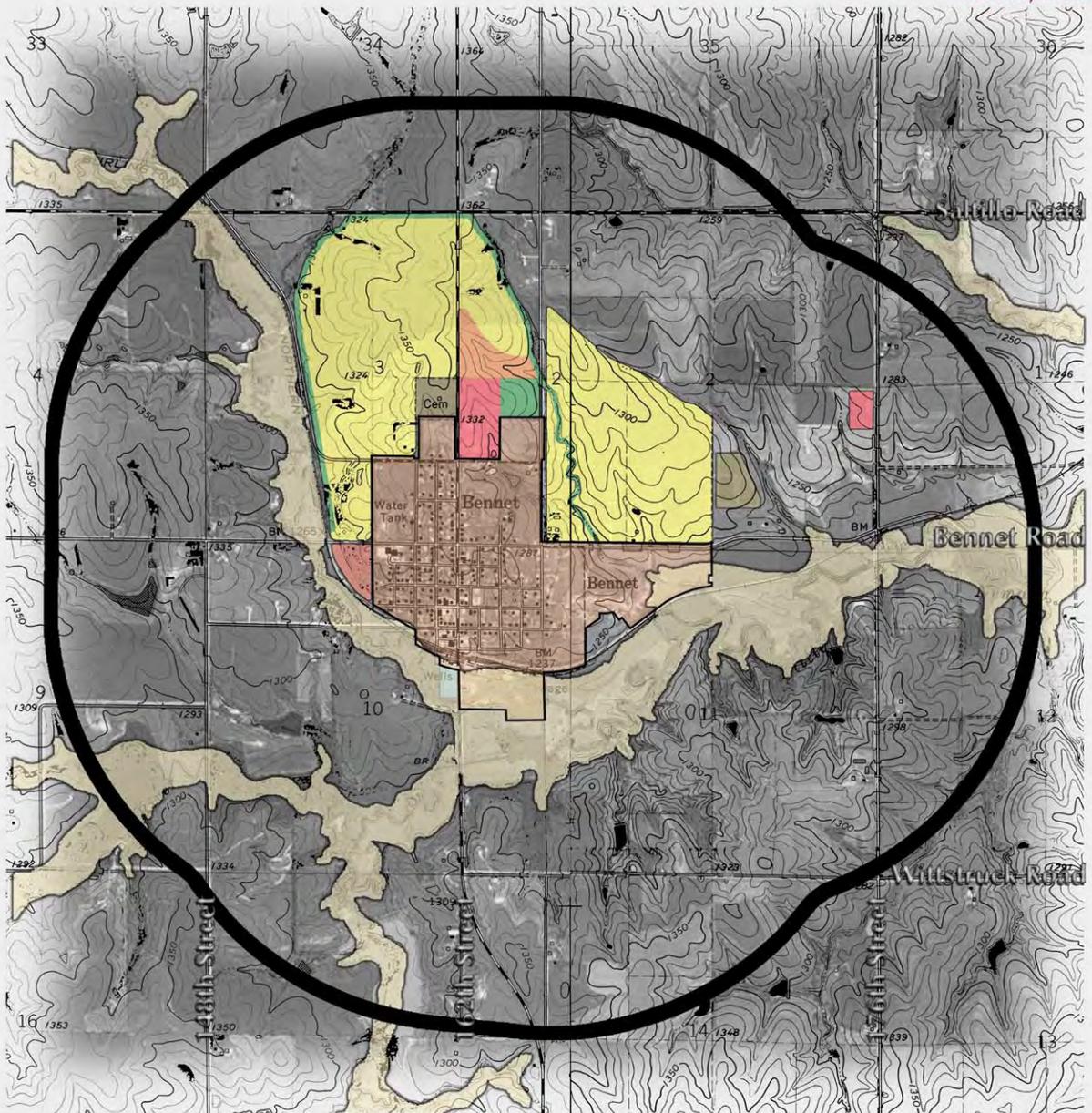
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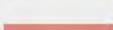
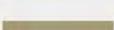


Generalized Future Land Use Map

Planning Jurisdiction
Bennet, Nebraska



Legend

	Corporate Limits		Intensive Agricultural
	Vacant / Agricultural		Stream / Creek
	Parks / Recreation		Commercial
	Mobile Home		Public / Quasi-Public
			Single Family
			Multi-family



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Architecture 

The **Future Land Use Maps, Illustration 5.4 and 5.5**, identify the proposed future industrial land areas are to be in highest concentration in the southern portion of the Village, south of the commercial Downtown, adjacent the railway corridor.

The current industrial tracts, within the Corporate limits that are in a state of transition or possessing vacant parcels in close proximity to residential development, are encouraged to develop as "light" industry. The reason is twofold: one, it creates a more compatible land use with adjacent commercial and residential properties; and two, it satisfies a need in the Community.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

This Land Use Plan should serve as a **guide** to the development of the Village and its surrounding area. The Plan is not intended to dictate changes to the community, but rather evaluate existing conditions and recognize ongoing changes. In addition, the Plan is designed to allow change to occur in an orderly manner which will ensure the best interests of Bennet will be achieved.

Before the implementation of this land use plan, two steps should be undertaken. **First**, the possible effects of the Plan should be explored. Identification of the possible results of any action, program or policy and the determination of the intensity of the results will be the most significant factors ensuring successful Plan implementation, with a minimum of negative effects. **Second**, the positive impacts of a Plan must be weighed against the negative impacts resulting from implementation activities. Alternative strategies should be considered to select the implementation activities that achieve the most benefits with the least problems.

The following **environmental assessment** will review the basic scope of the land use plan and then identify any significant environmental impacts, both social and physical, of the Plan's proposed development and redevelopment actions. Precautionary measures will be noted, as well as unavoidable adverse effects. Actions which will lead to irreversible commitments of resources will be recognized as well as other long-term effects from immediate programs.

POTENTIAL ADVERSE IMPACTS

The Bennet land use plan anticipates a continued growth and expansion community-wide, in response to the needs of a potential expanding local population; up to 741 additional people, by 2026. If the Community continues to grow as projected, nearly all of the land use activities envisioned will have the potential for some type of adverse impact to the natural environment.

Continued growth will require additional commitment of construction materials, financial resources, fossil fuels and land resources which represent deductions from the total reservoir of resources. Additionally, continued economic and physical growth will mean the increased depletion of groundwater resources. Aside from the impacts possible from commitment of resources toward the realization of community growth, there will also be a continuing requirement for resources necessary for operation and maintenance of existing homes, industries, businesses and utility systems.

Commitment of land resources, in many cases, will mean the conversion of agricultural land from the production of food and fiber to developed uses which also represent an adverse impact, but one which is basically unavoidable if the community continues to prosper and grow. Among the by-products of continued community growth, which will contribute to environmental degradation, are increased storm water runoff, additional amounts of air, water and noise pollution and increased vehicular traffic on area streets.

No potential adverse effects to the natural environment are expected during the planning period. None are expected to become especially significant, due to the implementation of the future land use plan.

BENEFICIAL IMPACTS

The **implementation** of the Bennet land use plan includes a potential for diverse and far reaching beneficial impacts to both the man-made and natural environments during the planning period. One of the primary functions of the Plan will be to minimize negative impacts.

The overall effect of Plan implementation will be to either benefit the environment or lower the incidence and severity of adverse effects. Sound local **development standards** and **zoning regulations** will provide a significant beneficial influence towards partial mitigation of the potential for environmental damages due to continued land use development.

The most significant positive or beneficial environmental effects should be as follows:

- **Recognition of local environmental characteristics;**
- The encouragement of growth in areas contiguous to existing development and the **maximum use of existing utilities and streets;**

- The implementation of a coordinated and **comprehensive housing initiative and development program** will ensure the preservation of existing housing resources, combined with the provision of new housing units;
- The **appropriate locating and provision of housing, commercial, educational, recreational and employment opportunities** will act to positively reinforce the social structure of existing and future populations of the Village; and
- The **proper mixing and separation of land uses** and appropriate classification of the street system will minimize adverse effects of noise, odor, and air pollution.

The presence of land use or zoning regulations should continue to ensure an efficient and appropriate development pattern through; density control to prevent overcrowding, prevention of mixing of incompatible land uses and prevention of further improper development in sensitive or hazardous natural areas, such as steep slope, floodplain areas and lakes, rivers or streams.

ALTERNATIVES

Within the full scope of possible community actions, there are basically **three alternatives**. The **first** is to continue a planned approach to future community expansion. A **second** alternative would be a more rigidly controlled and intensely monitored regulation which would essentially restrict a high percentage of anticipated future growth. The **third** possible choice is a less intense regulation, which in terms of municipal planning, represents the "do nothing" alternative.

The last alternative has most often been typical of many communities, large and small, and has often resulted in the maximum adverse impact to both the man-made and natural environments. The alternative of a more rigid control would avoid many of these potentially adverse impacts, but would be so restrictive as to hamper economic expansion, and thus, the ultimate growth and development of the entire community.

The **most beneficial alternative** is to guide future community growth and expansion through a land use plan, in combination with realistic land use control regulations. The land use plan prepared for Bennet, coupled with the revisions to the existing zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations, will provide a means by which the community may achieve proper development practices.

ACTIONS TO MITIGATE AVERSE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

Adverse impacts resulting from continued growth and expansion of Bennet can be substantially mitigated through adoption and application of the land use regulations and design standards. These measures will provide a positive influence for conservation and proper use of land, materials and energy. As such, these measures will help to mitigate the adverse impacts of development upon the allocation of resources.

The land use plan recognizes the character of the natural environment and charts a course for future growth, which will allow maximum efficient use of available resources without serious permanent alteration or depletion.

The future development of the Village of Bennet, as outlined in this land use plan, is expected to provide a beneficial impact on the man-made environment with few, if any, adverse impacts upon natural environments.

1. United States Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service, In cooperation with University of Nebraska, Conservation and Survey Division, "Soil Survey of Lancaster County, Nebraska," May 1980, Page 7.
2. Ibid., Page 10.
3. Ibid., Page 12.
4. Federal Emergency Management Agency, National Flood Insurance Program, "Firm Flood Insurance Rate Map - Village of Bennet, NE, Lancaster County", (May 1984).
5. Nebraska Wellhead Protection Program: Submittal to EPA, Ground Water Section, Water Quality Division, Department of Environmental Control, State of Nebraska, p.1.
6. Soil Conservation Service, Ibid, pp. 93-94.

SECTION 6
FUTURE PUBLIC FACILITIES &
TRANSPORTATION PLAN

SECTION 6

FUTURE PUBLIC FACILITIES & TRANSPORTATION PLAN

INTRODUCTION

Section 6 of the Bennet Comprehensive Plan discusses the existing conditions and planned improvements to the public facility and transportation systems in the Community. **Public Facilities** provide citizens with social, cultural, educational, health care, law enforcement, fire protection and recreational facilities. **Transportation** systems provide for safe travel of pedestrians and automobiles. Quality public facilities, utilities and transportation systems are provided to ensure a quality of life for all residents of Bennet.

PUBLIC FACILITIES

The Public Facilities component of this Comprehensive Plan serves to identify existing public facilities in Bennet and determine future needs and desires of pertinent public facilities during the planning period (2006 - 2026). The location of pertinent public facilities in Bennet is identified in **Illustration 6.1**.

PARKS AND RECREATION

An integral part of the quality of life in a Village is the park system and recreation opportunities provided to its residents and visitors. Recreational opportunities and the availability of open space plays an important role in enhancing the quality of life in Bennet. The role of the Community in adequately planning for open space and providing a full range of recreational opportunities directly impacts community and economic development activities.

VILLAGE OF BENNET PARKS

- ◆ **The Bennet Village Park**, occupies a 1.6 acre block bounded by Elm and Fir Streets on the north and south, and Van Buren and Harrison Streets on the east and west. Amenities available at the Village Park include newly built playground equipment, restrooms, and a picnic shelter, a sand volleyball court, and small band shell. The new picnic shelter and restroom facilities are handicapped accessible, and were built by the Bennet Builders organization. The new construction at the Park was funded partly by a \$5,000 matching grant, which also helped to improve the parking lot. The Village anticipates spending an additional \$36,000 in new equipment and park improvements over the planning period.

Other park facilities in Bennet include a public **T-ball diamond**, located a half-block west of the Village Park, the undeveloped ***Whispering Pines Park*** on the east edge of the Bush Pines Subdivision, and outdoor basketball/tennis courts and playground equipment at the Elementary School.

VILLAGE BALLFIELD

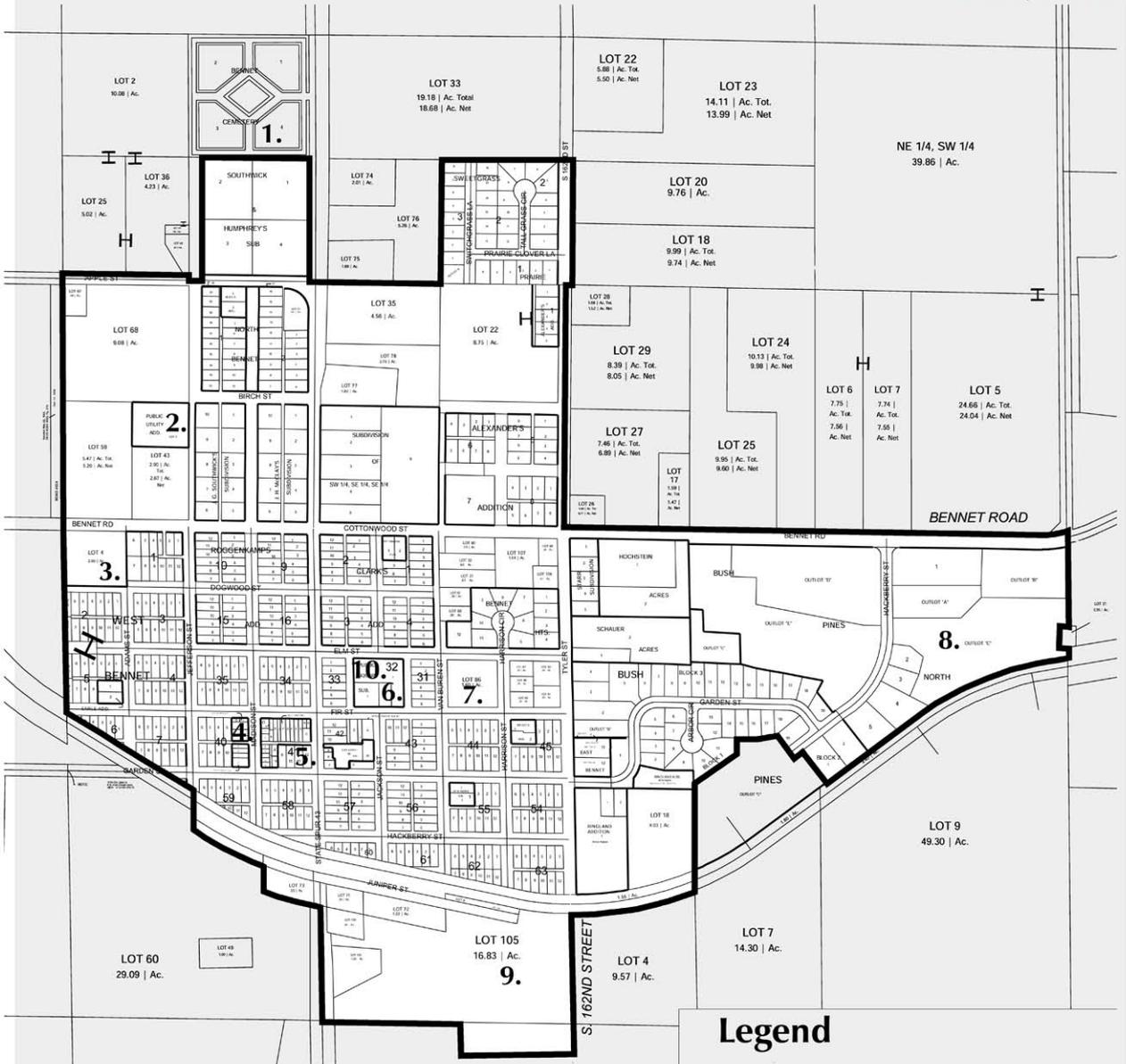
- ◆ The **Village Ballfield** is located on approximately 10 acres in the south of Bennet, along Juniper Street and near the Legion Hall. Amenities include modern restrooms, a concession stand, new outfield fence, and electronic scoreboard. The Legion baseball team schedules games here during the regular season.

FUTURE PARK SYSTEM PLANS

- ◆ Park maintenance and improvement has, and will continue to be, an important part of continuing the Community's excellent reputation in providing ample opportunities for recreation for its current and future residents.

Public Facilities Map

Corporate Limits
Bennet, Nebraska



- | | |
|-----|--------------------------|
| 1. | Bennet Cemetery |
| 2. | Water Tower |
| 3. | Bennet Elementary School |
| 4. | U. S. Post Office |
| 5. | Bennet Village Hall |
| 6. | Village Fire Hall |
| 7. | City Park |
| 8. | Whispering Pines |
| 9. | Legion Ballfield |
| 10. | "T" Ball Park |



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EDUCATION

Education is becoming increasingly important as the need for a broader-based education with emphasis on technical and human relation skills increases in today's society. Standards developed by educators and planners can provide guidance in the creation of, and additions to, the School District's educational facilities.

Schools in Bennet should meet the following standards/guidelines:

- Schools should be centrally located;
- Schools should not be located near high traffic or heavily concentrated areas with high noise levels;
- Land acquisition should be made with future expansion in mind; and
- Adequate open space should be available to students.

AREA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- ◆ The Palmyra District OR-1 serves the Village of Bennet and vicinity. Students from Bennet attend grades K through 6 at Bennet Elementary School, then attend grades 7 through 12 at Palmyra Junior/Senior High School, located approximately nine miles east of Bennet, in Palmyra. Bennet school aged children also option out of the Palmyra/Bennet School District in instances when parents work in other communities, or they desire programs, athletics, or services not available in the Palmyra/Bennet District. Bennet school age children are known to attend school in a variety of City of Lincoln public and private schools, or in adjacent Districts such as Norris Public Schools and Sterling Public Schools.

PALMYRA-BENNET PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- ◆ **Bennet Elementary School**, located in Bennet, contains 19 classrooms and a gymnasium. The Elementary School has computers in every classroom and a computer laboratory. Bennet Elementary enrolls 239 students, and the student to teacher ratio is 14:1. Although enrollment at the School is not currently growing, the projected growth in population of the community will help to increase enrollment as well.

- ◆ **Palmyra High School** contains grades 7 thru 12, and employs a certified staff of 25 to support an enrollment of 232 students. The High School is located in a building that was completely modernized and updated in 1998. The School houses three computer laboratories, and each classroom has at least one computer. Two portable computer “labs” contain computers with wireless Internet access. Special programs the School offers include: Title I programs, distance learning, and college credit-earning classes.

The Village of Bennet takes great pride in the local area school system and will continue to improve and expand its resources during the coming years. The majority of schools, particularly the elementary schools, expressed a need for expansion to continue to support the educational needs of the School Districts.

Created by the Nebraska Unicameral in 1965, Educational Service Units were intended to fill educational services gaps in local school districts budgets that did not provide for audio/visual aids, special education, school nurse services and other specialized personnel, equipment, or diagnostic needs.

Educational Service Unit #6 is headquartered in Milford and serves an area of southeast Nebraska, including Lancaster County and the school districts surrounding Bennet.

SOUTHEAST COMMUNITY COLLEGE

- ◆ **Southeast Community College** has two campuses which are easily accessible to Bennet residents, one in Lincoln and one in Beatrice. Programs the college offers include online courses, dual credit agreements with other schools, easy transferring of credits, and excellent computer access. The Community College is well connected within the surrounding area, and is planning to focus on promoting entrepreneurship and economic development within the region it serves.

OTHER EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

- ◆ Some of the surrounding colleges and Universities within driving distance of the Bennet vicinity include:
 - Nebraska Wesleyan University** - Lincoln
 - University of Nebraska** - Lincoln
 - Doane College** - Crete and Lincoln
 - Union College** - Lincoln

LIBRARY

- ◆ The Village of Bennet does not currently have a library facility within its Corporate Limits. As residents of Lancaster County, however, the citizens of Bennet have access to libraries in other parts of the county, including the City of Lincoln library system. The nearest branch is Gere Public Library, located at 56th Street and Normal Boulevard, in Lincoln.

The Bookmobile Program serves the residents of Bennet every second Wednesday of the month, from 1:30 to 5 p.m., at the Bennet Community Church Parking Lot. This Program serves all age groups, and receives requests for specific materials. Materials checked out from Bookmobile may be returned at any Lincoln City library location, or back to the Bookmobile. Library personnel indicated that the Bennet Bookmobile location was the most well-used of all the 31 stops throughout Lincoln and Lancaster County.

MEDICAL / ELDERLY SERVICES

The Village of Bennet has all the necessary modern health and hospital services within reasonable distance of the Community. Regional health and elderly services available to the Village of Bennet include St. Elizabeth Regional Medical Center, Bryan LGH Hospitals, and the Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital, all in Lincoln, approximately 15 miles northwest of Bennet. In addition, the Lincoln-Lancaster County Public Health Department provides basic preventative medical care to all residents of Lancaster County, including Bennet.

ST. ELIZABETH REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

- ◆ The nearest health delivery facility in the Bennet area is the **St. Elizabeth Regional Medical Center**, located at 555 S. 70th Street in Lincoln, approximately 14 miles to the northwest. The Medical Center is a full service regional hospital equipped with a specialty clinic, fitness center and full laboratory. The 242-bed Hospital currently is associated with a physician's network of over 475 doctors and specialists.

At this time, the Hospital is currently adding on a physician's clinic, which is scheduled to open in 2006. This is the latest of four major expansions to the Hospital since it was first built in 1952, the most recent expansion being in 1997.

BRYAN LGH HOSPITAL

- ◆ **Bryan LGH Medical Center** is another full service regional hospital located within easy reach of Bennet residents. Bryan LGH has two main locations in Lincoln, as well as health clinics located throughout the city and the surrounding region. The Hospital provides a full array of medical services, including acute care, emergency unit, helicopter patient transport, outpatient care, pediatrics, pathology, radiology, and cardiac unit. With more than 4,000 staff and 583 licensed beds, Bryan LGH is one of the largest medical service providers in the region.

LINCOLN-LANCASTER COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

- ◆ Qualified residents may be eligible to receive reduced-cost services provided by the **Lincoln-Lancaster County Public Health Department**, which serves the Village of Bennet. Medical services offered at the Primary Health Clinic, located at 3140 N Street in Lincoln, include a Child Health Clinic, preventative care, immunization and flu clinics, and women’s health services. Nurses from the Public Health Department visit the Bennet Elementary School twice a month to offer free immunizations and basic health screenings to students and Bennet residents.

EUGENE TURBES COMMUNITY CENTER

- ◆ The **Eugene Turbes Community Center** is managed by the Local Chapter of the American Legion and is located on south Monroe Street (Highway 43), south of the railroad tracks. The hours of operation are every Thursday, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., and by appointment with the American Legion, on other days of the week. Approximately 40 to 55 people attend the “Senior Citizen” lunches offered on Thursdays. The American Legion hosts many events and activities by appointment, including concerts and social dinners, such as the Bi-Annual Soup Supper. A local board sets activities and programs for the Center through regular committee meetings. The building offers community space for public meetings and large gatherings. The facility meets all ADA standards.

Additionally, several senior citizens volunteer their time on Thursdays to deliver meals to elderly persons homes. The meals are delivered to the Community Center from the main kitchen at the Lincoln Senior Center, and distributed throughout the Bennet vicinity by the volunteer drivers.

GOVERNMENT / PUBLIC SAFETY

Public administration facilities are facilities which serve the citizens of the community and conduct the business of government and carry out its operations. Therefore, it is essential these services are centrally located and convenient to the majority of the citizens in the Community.

POLICE PROTECTION

- ◆ The Village of Bennet is served by the **Lancaster County Sheriff Department**, located at 575 S. 10th Street in Lincoln. There is no Local Law Enforcement Facility in the Village of Bennet. The County Sheriff Department has 70 commissioned officers, 18 part-time civilian employees, eight Building Security officers and the Chief of Police. The officers utilize a fleet of 60 patrol vehicles and various technological resources, such as radio communication, radars, video cameras and traffic control lasers. The Lancaster County facility maintains a 236-inmate capacity jail, located in Lincoln, at the Lancaster County Jail. Currently, the Village contracts for extra patrol hours per month with the Sheriff's Department. Sustained growth in Bennet might require the Village to hire a full-time officer, rather than contract for extra hours, as the Lancaster County communities of Waverly and Hickman have done.

FIRE PROTECTION

- ◆ The **Bennet Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad** is a single entity governed by the Bennet Rural Fire District. The Fire Department has a total of 26 volunteers, including four officers, and the Rescue Squad has a total of three officers, plus associated staff and volunteers. The Department receives approximately 100 calls annually, about two-thirds of which are responding to non-fire related calls. The average response time for the Fire Department and Rescue Squad is 4 minutes within the Village, and up to 10 minutes throughout the entire 95 square mile service area. The Fire Department and Rescue Squad have various types of equipment available. Recent facility expansions and upgrades of equipment within the last five years have helped the Department keep up with current needs. **The Village has an ISO rating of "7".**

CIVIL DEFENSE

- ◆ **Civil Defense** is coordinated and planned by the Lancaster County Civil Defense Office, which coordinates civil defense along with local volunteer fire departments, throughout the county, in planning for public safety. Civil defense is responsible for notifying citizens in the case of an emergency. In the case of an emergency, a list of trained volunteers is maintained on an as-needed basis.

VILLAGE OFFICES

- ◆ The **Bennet Village Office** is located at 685 Monroe Street, in the Bennet Village Hall. The facility houses the Village Clerk/Treasurer, Utility Office, Maintenance and other administrative offices. The Village Board of Trustees Chambers and Fire and Rescue Offices are also located in Village Hall. The office is utilized for pertinent government committee meetings and public use. The office is not currently ADA compliant, Public meetings for the Planning Commission and Village Board of Trustees are held in the Community Center.

POST OFFICES

- ◆ The **U.S. Post Office** of Bennet is located at 605 Madison Street. The Post Office is open weekdays from 7:30-11:00 a.m. and from 1:00-4:15 p.m. The Post Office is also open Saturdays from 7:45-9:15 am. Located in a former bank building Downtown, the Post Office employs four staffed personnel, and is in compliance with all ADA standards, except for vehicle parking. The Bennet Post office has 264 postal boxes, with a rural route serving 427 rural box holders in the Bennet vicinity.

TRANSPORTATION PLAN

INTRODUCTION

The availability of a convenient and efficient transportation system is essential to the continued economic and physical development of Bennet. An adequate transportation system is required to transport goods and services to and from major travel routes and market centers outside the Village, and provide for the circulation needs within the Community. The overall purpose of the transportation plan is to provide the necessary guidelines for the safe movement of people and vehicles throughout the planning area.

The primary sources of information utilized to develop the Transportation Plan were (1) Bennet “One and Six Year Plans,” (2) Lancaster County “One and Six Year Plans” and (3) State of Nebraska Department of Roads “Nebraska Highway Program” (Fiscal Years 2006-2011 and Beyond).

EXISTING TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Illustration 6.2, State Functional Classifications, Bennet, Nebraska, depicts the transportation system in the Village of Bennet. The transportation system comprises of Nebraska State Spur Highway 43, a north/south “*Major Arterial*” road connecting Bennet to U.S. Highway 2, which is designated as an “*Expressway*,” All other streets within the Corporate Limits of Bennet are classified as local streets. Local streets provide transportation services throughout the Village, while the state highway and county roads provide transportation services into the county, adjacent communities and areas beyond.

Traffic Volume

The Nebraska Department of Roads monitors traffic volume in the Bennet area, on county roads and state and federal highways. This tabulation process is done to identify the appropriateness of the existing road classification and engineering standards. **Illustration 6.2** also identifies the average daily traffic counts for state and federal transportation routes around Bennet. Each of these road segments are identified as “major arterial” roads. All roads within the corporate limits of the Village of Bennet are classified as “local” roads.

Road Classifications

Nebraska Highway Law identifies the eight functional classifications of rural highways as follows:

- (1) **Interstate**: Which shall consist of the federally designated National System of Interstate and Defense Highways;
- (2) **Expressway**: Second in importance to Interstate. Shall consist of a group of highways following major traffic desires in Nebraska and ultimately should be developed to multilane divided highway standards;
- (3) **Major Arterial**: Consists of the balance of routes which serve major statewide interests for highway transportation in Nebraska. Characterized by high speed, relatively long distances, travel patterns;
- (4) **Scenic-Recreation**: Consists of highways or roads located within or which provide access to or through state parks, recreation or wilderness areas, other areas of geological, historical, recreational, biological, or archaeological significance, or areas of scenic beauty;
- (5) **Other Arterial**: Which shall consist of a group of highways of less importance as through-travel routes which would serve places of smaller population and smaller recreation areas not served by the higher systems;
- (6) **Collector**: Which shall consist of a group of highways which pick up traffic from many local or land-service roads and carry it to community centers or to the arterial systems. They are the main school bus routes, mail routes, and farm-to-market routes;
- (7) **Local**: Which shall consist of all remaining rural roads, except minimum maintenance roads;
- (8) **Minimum Maintenance**: Which shall consist of (a) roads used occasionally by a limited number of people as alternative access roads for area served primarily by local, collector, or arterial roads, or (b) roads which are the principal access roads to agricultural lands for farm machinery and which are not primarily used by passenger or commercial vehicles.

The rural highways classified, under subdivisions (1) thru (3) of this section should, combined, serve every incorporated municipality having a minimum population of 100 inhabitants or sufficient commerce, a part of which will be served by stubs or spurs, and along with rural highways classified under subsection (4) of this section, should serve the major recreational areas of the state. Sufficient commerce shall mean a minimum of two hundred thousand dollars of gross receipts under the Nebraska Revenue Act of 1967.

FUTURE BENNET TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

The future transportation system in Bennet is outlined in the City **One and Six Year Road Improvement Programs**. Bennet's One-Year Plan is for projects to be undertaken in 2006. Bennet's Six Year Plan is for projects to be undertaken through 2011, or earlier if funding becomes available.

Village of Bennet - One-Year Road Plan

The One-Year Road Plan includes the following:

1. Normal Maintenance.

Village of Bennet - Six-Year Road Plan

The Six-Year Road Plan includes the following:

1. **M-151 (4):** Asphalt resurfacing on Hackberry Street between Monroe and Jackson Streets. (\$15,000)
3. **M-151 (3):** Grading, Drainage structures and Asphalt surfacing on Madison Street from Garden Street to Elm Street. (\$56,000)

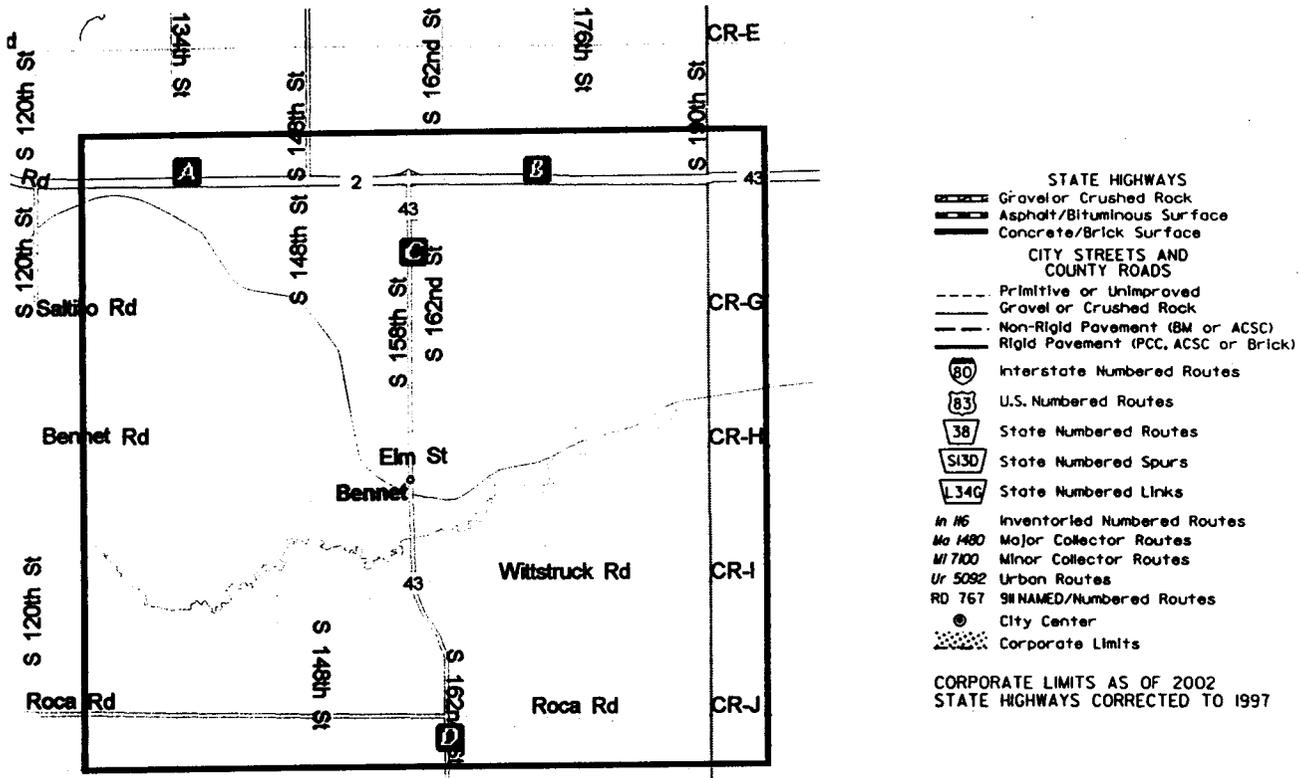
UPCOMING NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF ROADS PROJECTS WITHIN THE PLANNING JURISDICTION OF BENNET

The Nebraska Department of Roads has no projects to be completed in the Bennet planning jurisdiction within either the 2006 One-Year Roads Plan or the 2007 to 2011 Six-Year Roads Plan, or 2012 and Beyond Roads Plan.

UPCOMING LANCASTER COUNTY PROJECTS WITHIN THE PLANNING JURISDICTION OF BENNET

Lancaster County has no projects to be completed in the Bennet Planning Jurisdiction within the next several years.

STATE FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATIONS



	A	B	C	D
2004	12,595	10,085	4,500	2,580
	1,950	1,845	325	210
2002	11,790	9,424	4,425	2,375
	2,075	1,975	390	195
2000	9,730	7,570	3,675	2,215
	1,800	1,670	400	180

24 Hour average annual traffic
Motor Vehicles
Heavy Trucks

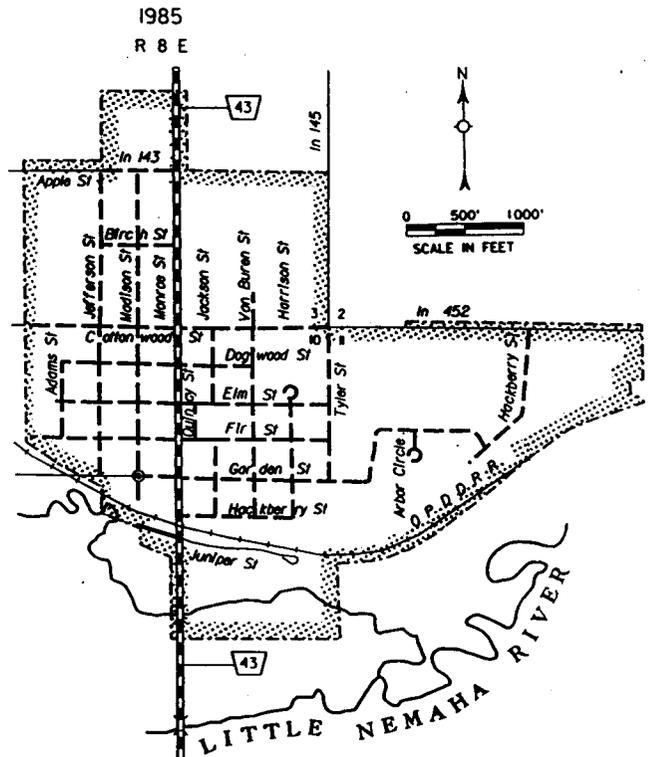
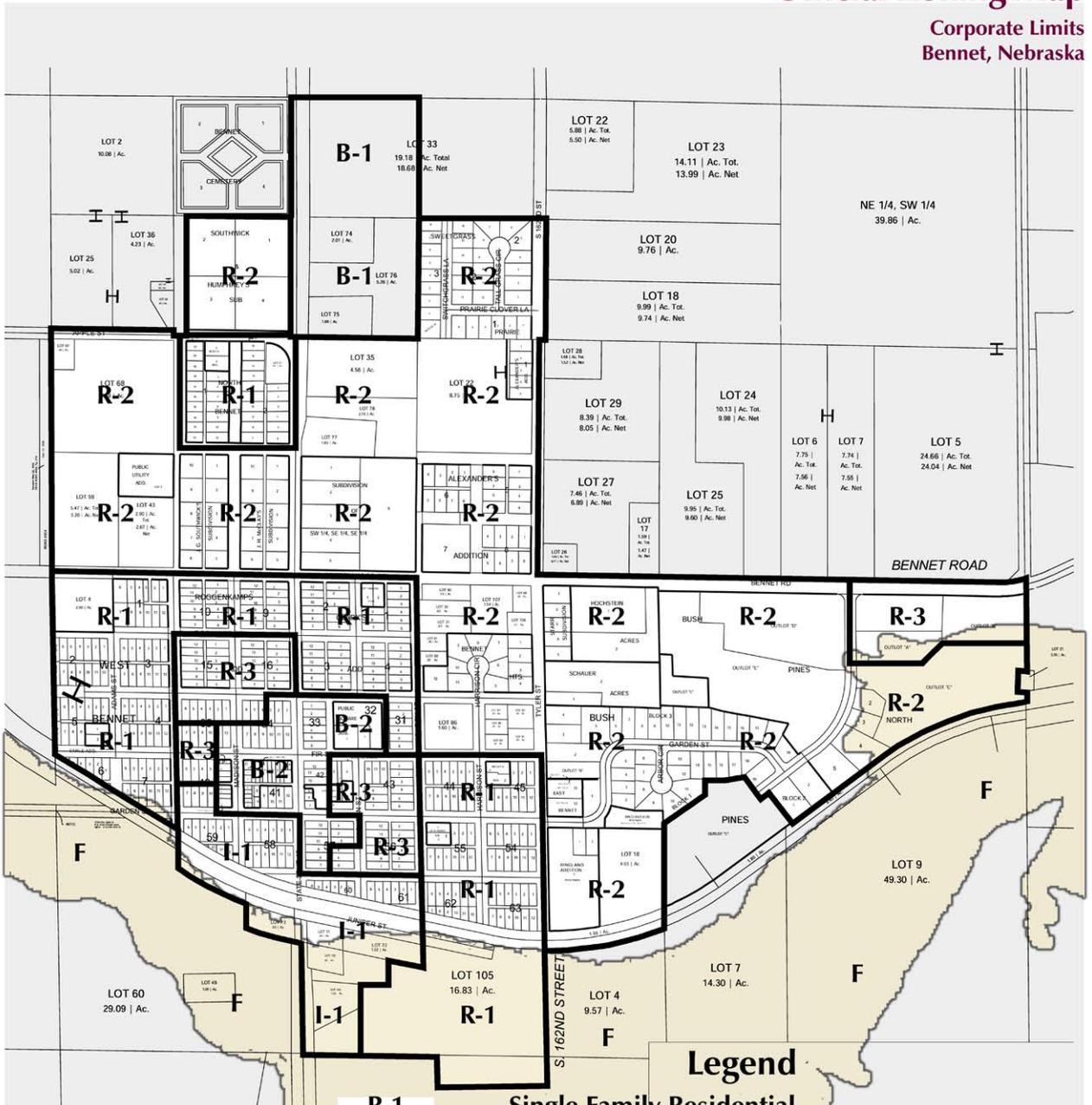


ILLUSTRATION 6.2

Official Zoning Map

Corporate Limits
Bennet, Nebraska



Legend

- R-1 Single Family Residential
- R-2 Medium Density Residential
- R-3 Multiple Family Residential
- B-1 Local Business District
- B-2 Central Business District
- I-1 Light Industrial
- I-2 Heavy Industrial
- HO Highway Overlay District
- F Flood Hazard District



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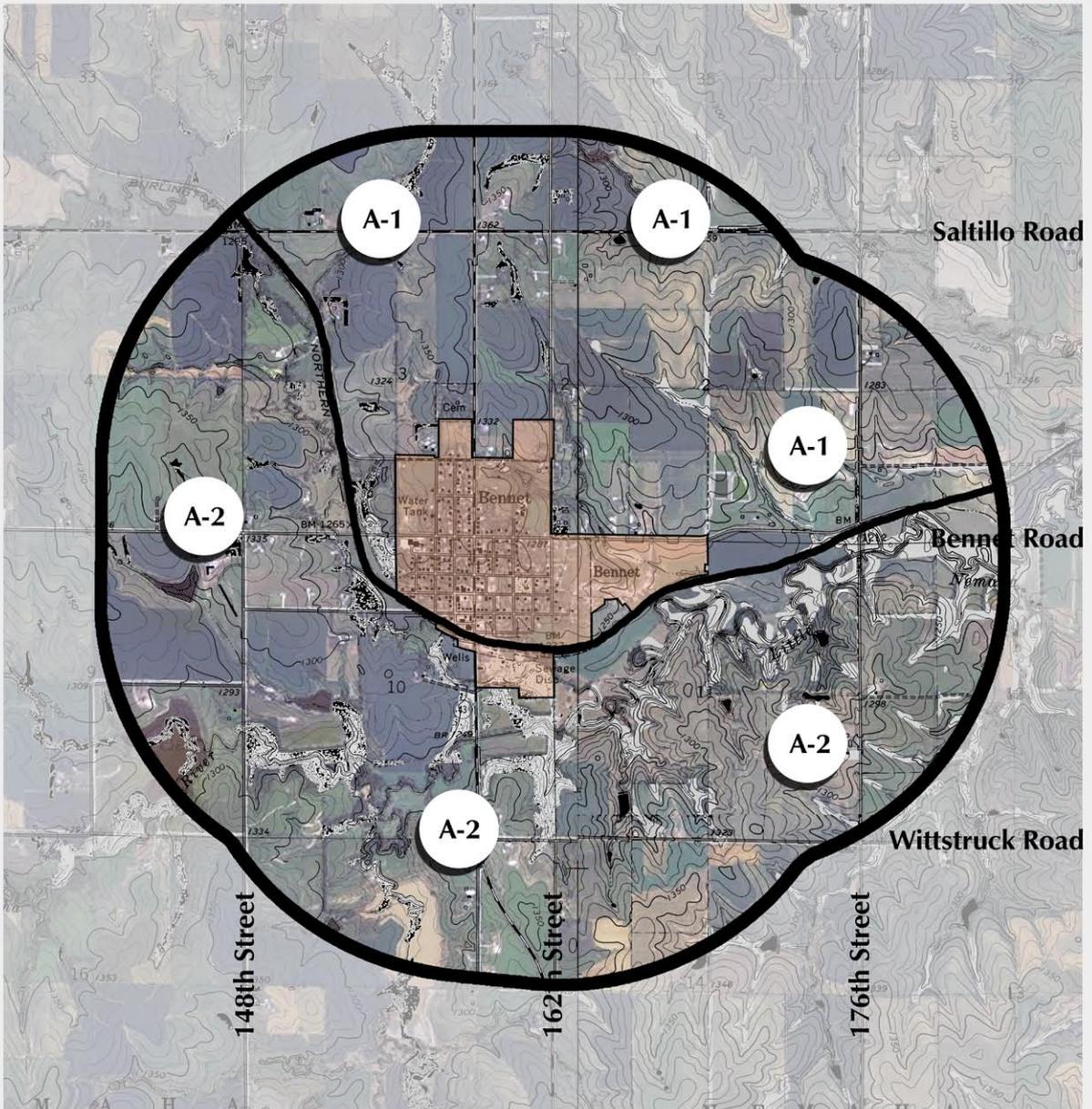
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Architecture 
An Association of Kurtis A. Sahr R.A. & James M. Koenig AIA

Official Zoning Map

Planning Jurisdiction

Bennet, Nebraska



Legend

A-1

Agricultural District

A-2

Rural Residential District

This is to certify that this is the Official Zoning Map referred to in Section xxx of Ordinance No. _____ of the Village of Bennet, Nebraska, adopted _____. The official zoning map of the area within the corporate limits and the planning jurisdiction area adjacent and one mile beyond the corporate limits of the Village of Bennet, Nebraska, together with all changes, amendments or additions thereto, shall be maintained in the office of the municipal clerk and available for public inspection during regular office hours.

Name Here _____

Date _____

Name Here _____

Date _____



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