Ashland Comprehensive Plan

Public Input Workshop May 12, 2025



Meeting Agenda

- 1. Meet Our Team
- 2. Project Scope + Schedule
- 3. Comprehensive Planning 101
- 4. Community Profile
- 5. Physical Profile + Current Land Use
- 6. Visioning Questions
- 7. Engagement Activities
- 8. What's Next?





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01. Meet our Team

Meet Our Team





Meet Our Team

- Midwest + Denver based landscape architecture, urban design and planning firm
- Experts in community engagement, comprehensive plans, and land use planning
- Client focused and stakeholder driven





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02. Project Scope + Schedule

Project Scope



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Project Schedule

ASHLAND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN																		
PROJECT SCHEDULE																		
	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	A
	2024	2024	2025	2025	2025	2025	2025	2025	2025	2025	2025	2025	2025	2025	2026	2026	2026	20
PHASE 1: PROJECT RESEARCH + ANALYSIS																		
1.1 Project Pre-Kick-Off Meeting with City Staff (virtual	3	Dec 1	16	3						- 8								
1.2 Public Outreach Plan																		
1.3 Kick-Off Meeting with Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (AC #1) (in-person)				January 2	8													
1.4 Data Gathering and Existing Conditions Analysis												/e a	are		ere			
1.5 Project Branding		2	22		— ž													
1.6 Project Website Launch																		
1.7 Existing Conditions Analysis Review Meeting with Advisory Committee (AC #2) (in-person)					<u> </u>								~		~			
						~												
PHASE 2: PUBLIC & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT																		
2.1 Stakeholder Interviews + Focus Group (virtual)	- 3		- 3					1		- 3	- 3		- 8				- 1	
2.2 Interactive Engagement Activities on Website			2															
2.3 Other Engagement Events (1 event, up to 3)																0		
2.4 Public Visioning Workshop (PM #1) (in-person)			2	2					500100				0	2	2	2	2	
2.5 Public & Stakeholder Engagement Review with Advisory Committee (AC #3) (in-person)		2		-	- 3		1			- 3	- 3		- 3	-	1			
2.6 Engagement Review Joint Workshop with Council and Commission (JW #1) (in-person)									- 11 - 1									
							0											
PHASE 3: DRAFT PLAN + EVALUATION									1									
3.1 Draft Plan								-							- 3			
3.2 Draft Plan Review with Advisory Committee (SC #4 - #6) (virtual)		- 3	- 3				_	_	- 2		1				- 3		-	
3.3 Draft Plan Public Open House (PM #2) (in-person)							Fal							1 James				
3.4 Draft Plan Joint Workshop with Council & Commission (JW #2) (in-person)					l î			- /							1			
3.5 Public Comment and Review Period		~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~														-	2	
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PHASE 4: FINAL PLAN + ADOPTION																		
4.1 Final Draft Plan																		
4.2 Planning Commission Public Hearing (PM #3) (in-person) (1st Mondays of the Month)																		
4.3 City Council Public Hearing (PM #4) (in-person) (1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month)	- 3	- 3	- 3			- 3	- 3		- 3			26			- 3			
4.4 Final Plan Deliverables															- 3			
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03. Comprehensive Planning 101

Comprehensive Planning 101

"The comprehensive plan, also known as a general plan, master plan or land use plan; is a document designed to guide the future actions of a community. It presents a vision for the future; with long-range goals and objectives for all activities that affects the local government."

- Gary D. Taylor, Iowa State University





Comprehensive Planning 101

What is the role of the Future Land Use Plan?

- Guides decision making related to rezonings and development proposals as they are brought to the Planning Commission and City Council
- Designed to create ideal land use schemes for the future of the city
- May require modifications over time to adapt to the ever-changing economic environment





Comprehensive Planning 101

Implementation Measures Fall Into Three Broad Categories

Development regulations that control the location, form and character of private projects

Capital projects

which are financed, designed, built and maintained by governments **Programs** that in some cases involve active government participation and in other cases simply mean endorsement or coordination of voluntary private efforts

CONFLUENCE

Effective implementation is the difference between having a good plan on paper and having a great community on the ground







Current Future Land Use Map CONFLUENCE



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Current Comprehensive Plan

Ashland Comprehensive Plan (2014)

- Last Comprehensive Plan update was adopted in 2014
- Previous plan goals included:
 - Maintaining Ashland's stock of historic buildings
 - Promoting recreational aspects of the community to attract visitors
 - Recruit, retain, and expand local primary/industrial companies that provide quality jobs
 - Encourage infill and redevelopment opportunities
 - Replace and upgrade aging infrastructure
 - Conserve and protect natural resource and encourage compact development/redevelopment





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04. Community Profile

Data Sources

Where can this data be found?

- United States Census Bureau
 - American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates – 2023
 - Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) Data – 2022
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
 - Flood Map Service Center (MSC)
- United States Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS)
 - Surface Waters and Wetlands
- United States Geological Survey (USGS)
 - Topography and Slope
- Local + State Sources
 - State of Nebraska
 - Saunders County + Cass County
 - City of Ashland

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Science for a changing world









Population

- 2023 population estimate: 3,083 residents
- Population is growing moderately

Ashland Population Change (1970-2023)



CONFLUENCE

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 1970-2023



City Limits Proper, no SIDs

CONFLUENCE

Age

- Median Age: 36.6 years
 - Younger than Saunders County (40.4 years)
- Fluctuations in age ranges, from male to female

What does this mean to us?

Ashland has a younger adult population, with children, possibly attracted by the great schools and park system!



Ashland Age Pyramid (2023)



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Source: U.S. Census Bureau ACS 5-Year Estimates (2023)

City Limits Proper, no SIDs

CONFLUENCE

Age

- Median Age (2023): **36.6**
- Median age of Ashland and comparison cities significantly lower than Saunders County and comparison city Louisville

Median Age - Regional Comparison (2023)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau ACS 5-year Estimates



City Limits Proper, no SIDs

Housing Characteristics - Tenure

- Average household size: 2.45 persons
 - Saunders County: 2.55 persons



Owner-Occupied 67.3% (Saunders County: 81.7%)

2.75 persons

Average owner household size (Saunders County: 2.64 persons)

Renter-Occupied 32.7% (Saunders County: 18.3%) **1.82 persons** Average renter household size (Saunders County: 2.14 persons)





City Limits Proper, no SIDs

Housing Characteristics - Age

- 60% of homes in Ashland were built prior to the 1980s
- 27.7% of homes were built in the last 25 years
- Ashland's housing stock is older than Gretna, Nebraska, which has had recent upticks in housing development.

What does this mean to us?

Ashland has a stock of older housing that may be vulnerable due to age or characteristics of the home.

Ashland Housing Stock Age (2023)



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City Limits Proper, no SIDs

Housing Characteristics – Housing Value

- 65% of Ashland's housing is valued between \$100-299K
 - 27% valued between \$300-499K
- 5% is valued below \$99K
- Over 2% is valued above \$500K

What does this mean to us?

Ashland has a healthy mix of mid-range "levelup" housing for households in a mid-income range.

60% 50% 40% 30% 20% 10% 0% \$50.000 Less than \$50.000 to \$99,999 \$300.000 to \$100.000 to \$150.000 to \$200.000 to \$500.000 to \$1.000.000 or \$149.999 \$299.999 \$499.999 \$199.999 \$999.999 more Ashland, NE _____ Saunders County, NE _____ Gretna, NE ······ Omaha-NE Metro

Ashland Housing Value (2023)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau ACS 5-Year Estimates (2023)



Household Income

• Over half of Ashland households generate an income over \$75,000

What does this mean to us?

Ashland has a share of higher household income ranges, especially when compared to nearby cities with similar characteristics

Ashland Housing Income (2023)





CONFLUENCE

Regional Income Comparisons

- Median Household Income in Ashland is \$80,948
 - Median household income is less than Springfield, Wahoo, and Louisville

Ashland Median Housing Income Comparisons (2023)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau ACS 5-Year Estimates (2023)



City Limits Proper, no SIDs

CONFLUENCE

Housing Costs and Gross Rent

- Median homeowner housing cost: \$1,654
 - Gretna: \$2,076
- Median rent in Ashland is \$913
 - Gretna: \$1,467

What does this mean to us?

Ashland has a healthy mix of mid-range "levelup" housing for households in a mid-income range.

Ashland Housing Costs (2023)





City Limits Proper, no SIDs

CONFLUENCE

Housing Costs

- The median average housing cost in Ashland is \$1,654
- Homeowners with a mortgage in Ashland slightly more than those in Wahoo and Springfield
- Homeowners are paying slightly less than those in Louisville

Median Monthly Housing Cost for Homeowners with a Mortgage – Regional Comparison (2023)





Source: U.S. Census Bureau ACS 5-Year Estimates (2023)

City Limits Proper, no SIDs

CONFLUENCE

Housing Costs

- The median rent in Ashland is \$913
- Median rent is slightly less than rent in Louisville, and significantly less than rent in Springfield

Median Monthly Rent - Regional Comparison (2023)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau ACS 5-Year Estimates (2023)



City Limits Proper, no SIDs

Household Cost-Burden

- Housing cost-burden is defined by 30% of household gross income being spent on housing costs
 - **37.9%** Ashland **renters** are cost-burdened (150 households)
 - 9.4% of Ashland homeowners with a **mortgage** are costburdened (23 households)

Ashland Percent of Household Income Spent on Housing Costs (2023)





City Limits Proper, no SIDs

Housing Costs

Iomeowners

Renters

- The share of cost burdened renters in Ashland is less than those renters in Louisville, Wahoo and Springfield
- The share of cost burdened **homeowners** with a mortgage compared to peer communities is lower,
- **Meaning that:** housing may be more attainable and affordable in Ashland than other communities

Percent Cost-Burdened - Regional Comparison (2023)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau ACS 5-Year Estimates (2023)

60%



City Limits Proper, no SIDs

Data **does not capture** educational services that are located outside of City's defined geographic area or that have obtained certificate of occupancy after 2021.

Commuter Trends

Ashland Commuter Trends (2022)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau LEHD OnTheMap Data (2022)

584 Live elsewhere,

work in Ashland

157 Live & work in Ashland

1,278 Live in Ashland, work elsewhere

- 66.8% of commuters travel to the Omaha-Council Bluffs Metro for work
- 23.8% travel to the Lincoln Metro for work



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05. Physical Profile + Current Land Use

Existing Land Use

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• Single-family residential and Public / Semi-Public are the two highest existing land uses.

Existing Land Use	Acres	Total Share (%)
Single-Family Residential	397.7	48.6%
Public / Semi-Public	225.6	27.6%
Commercial	53.4	6.5%
Parks and Recreation	50.8	6.2%
Agricultural / Open Space	48.9	6.0%
Multi-Family Residential	21.6	2.6%
Industrial	12.3	1.5%
Two-Family Residential	8.4	1.0%
	Single-Family Residential Public / Semi-Public Commercial Parks and Recreation Agricultural / Open Space Multi-Family Residential Industrial	Single-Family Residential397.7Public / Semi-Public225.6Commercial53.4Parks and Recreation50.8Agricultural / Open Space48.9Multi-Family Residential21.6Industrial12.3



Transportation

- Ashland is bisected by Highway 6 (Grand Army of the Republic Highway), Highway 66, and rail line
- Highway 66 provides an arterial connection to Interstate 80 to the southeast – carrying many trucks (275-425 ADT, 2023)
- Vacant rail line NE





Floodplain

- Areas adjacent to Ashland, predominately to the south, east, and north are within floodplain and floodways
- Extensive history of flooding due to the convergence of Platte River, Salt Creek, Wahoo Creek, Clear Creek and other smaller tributaries near the city's boundary





Existing Parkland and Open Space

- The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) recommends a Level of Service (LOS) of **10.5 acres** of parkland for every 1,000 population
- In total Ashland has **43 acres** of parkland within city limits.
- Ashland's LOS is **14.2 acres** of parkland per 1,000 population





Existing Parkland and Open Space

Park	Category	Acres
Euclid St. Park	Neighborhood	0.4
Kiddy Korner Park	Neighborhood	0.4
East Side Park	Neighborhood	0.5
Sabre Heights Park	Neighborhood	0.7
Wiggenhorn Park	Community	4.7
Ashland Sand Volleyball	Special Use	3.6
Central Bark Dog Park	Special Use	1.7
Saline Ford Park and Trail	Special Use	11.9
Jack Anderson Ball Park	Special Use	19.2

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Physical Profile

Bicycle and Walking Trails

- 2.93 miles of existing trails
- 5.33 miles of planned trails





Physical Profile

Bicycle and Walking Trails

- Ashland's current LOS = 0.95 miles of trail per 1,000 residents
 - If counting planned trails, the LOS would increase to 1.75 / 1,000 residents

	All Municipalities	Municipalities with a Population less than 20,000
Median LOS	16.0	4.5
Lower Quartile	6.0	2.0
Upper Quartile	46.0	9.2

Source: National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA)

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Physical Profile

Regional Attractions and Places of Interest

- Camp Ashland
- Iron Horse Golf Club
- Carol Joy Retreat & Conference Center
- Strategic Air Command & Aerospace Museum (SAC)
- Eugene T. Mahoney State Park
- Omaha Wildlife Safari Park
- And more! (Downtown, wineries, breweries)



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06. Visioning Questions

Why do you **CHOOSE TO LIVE/WORK/PLAY** in Ashland?

Small-town

It in between omaha and Lincoln...i work in both cities For family

Young and was able to buy house with some land Love the historic downtown. Small town but close to bigger towns.

We moved here because we could work in Lincoln and Omaha and they have a great school.



I love the community that a small town provides

Historic building stock! And park land.



Developed a business here.

It's been home for 50+ years. I like the small town, knowing everyone.



Love the small town vibe. We have a business.

Split the commute

Why do you **CHOOSE TO LIVE/WORK/PLAY** in Ashland?

Small town living, but close to larger cities.

I'm originally from Omaha and grew up coming out to the Hwy 6 & 66 corridor to camp anywhere and everywhere with my family. I wanted to live in the part of Nebraska I love and have flexibility.



Security and less crime than big city

It is a friendly community



Affordable, small community

Family is here, work is here.



Location, small town

Work Schools Close bigger cities

Why do you **CHOOSE TO LIVE/WORK/PLAY** in Ashland?

In country but near big cities

Ashland is a very tight community, there's no other place like it, the worries and concerns present in larger towns and cities are not found here, and it's on the cheap side!



Close to family

Equal distance to family's work.



Move in from farm. Loved in rural Ashland all my life

Location between Lincoln and his Omaha -destination or small town feel



It has been a great place to raise our family. Great schools, fantastic church community.

Split commute. Good place to raise kids.

Why do you **CHOOSE TO LIVE/WORK/PLAY** in Ashland?

Fun community events, shops, and restaurants

To help Ashland grow into the future.

CONFLUENCE

I love living in small town where it is easier to get to know people. It is safe to walk around for families

I've always wanted to live in a safe community with a charming mainstreet business district offering a variety of activities a short walk from my home.



Community support

Downtown



Local vibes, no regular chains, safety

Carol Joy Holling Camp

Intact downtown; small town feel

Silver street, lots of cute shops in walking distance



Location

Park areas



Fariner

Library

Downtown

Fairner

Oxbow lake

Jack Anderson Ball Park area



Downtown

Salt creek

Walking my dogs around downtown Ashland

Fariner, Salt Creek trail, Post Script Flutterby Finds 💔

My home

Library

All of down town

The downtown area. It's so fun to walk around and visit the shops.

Disc golf course



Downtown

Downtown

Dog Park

Silver Street shops and restaurants

BW's. It's been a great meeting place over the years.

Brickhouse fitness center



Glacial Till

The old (intermediate) school.



Cellar 426 Winery

Green space

Just one? Eeks... My home lol, our local Camground, Mahoney State Park, Downtown

My historic home

Downtown

Trail by salt creek



Local state parks

Salt creek trail

Carol Joy Holling Camp

Ballpark

Postscript

Downtown area. Parks. Salt Creek. Events The library!

Ashland Brewing Company

The walking path along Salt Creek

Growing up, definitely the park (I ain't spelling all that). Now that I'm older, the library is great, I want to see more places for public engagement.



River trail

6

Library



1 30

More food

Craft supply store

Hotel/motel

Diner with pancakes.

Pharmacy.

Fast food



Nice restaurants.

Pharmacy

22

Pharmacy and hotel

Lawn and garden services

Music venue

Pharmacy

Craft store

Right sized so as not to swallow up the coomunity.



Pharmacy would be awesome!

An updated grocery experience with a better facility and larger fresher selection.



Gas station

More food fast food

Hitel

Hotel Cafe Pharmacy with drive thru Bookstore

High end dining

Anything that accommodates the youth, every recent business in Ashland by the looks of it is alcohol related, and kids/students really can't do anything but wander in Ashland.



Hot shops like in Omaha! Great way to build the creative district!

Small farms for local food



A light industrial park on 66 between town and Mahoney

Pharmacy for sure!

Craft store

Ashland is designated creative district that doesn't offer much live music entertainment or art studio space.

Another grocery store

Farmers market



Good paying jobs

Possibly more festivals?



Rank the following items which the City of Ashland should prioritize, highest to lowest.

1st	
2nd	
3rd	
4th	
5th	
6th	
7th	
8th	
9th	
10th	
11th	
12th	

1.00



Parks, Recreation and Trails Expansion Retail/Restaurant Attraction, Expansion and Retention Business / Industry Employment Attraction, Expansion and Retention Preservation of Historical Resources and Buildings Promote Infill Development and Redevelopment Opportunities Roadway Expansions and Infrastructure Improvements Leveraging and Expanding Upon Tourism to Attract More Visitors Increase Variety / Number of Housing Units Provide additional City Services, such as police and fire. Community Identity and Branding Sustainability and Environmental Preservation and Protection



Rank the transportation improvements from highest to lowest priority.

1st	
2nd	
3rd	
4th	
5th	
6th	
7th	
8th	
9th	



Provide safe pedestrian Routes to school

Repair and Maintain Roads

Improve pedestrian / Trail Crossings

Improve Intersections

Construct a Truck Bypass

Expand Sidewalk Connections by Filling in gaps

Expand Trails

Manage Traffic/Congestion Management



Do you think the City of Ashland should provide incentives towards development? Check all that apply



YES, for new construction of commercial and industrial businesses YES, for new construction of residential homes

16

YES, for redevelopment or infill development of vacant or underutilized land



YES, for downtown facade and interior improvement incentives

13



No, the City of Ashland should not provide incentives



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07. Engagement Activities

Engagement Activities

Image Voting



CONFLUENCE

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Engagement Activities

- Preference Scales
- Priority Ranking
 - Housing
 - City programs
 - Alternative transportation
 - Parks and recreation
 - Beautification







Engagement Activities

Questionnaire

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• Imagine Ashland in 2035...





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08. What's Next?

What's Next?

Near-Term

- Online Activities Available on website until June 6
- Engagement Review Meeting with Advisory Committee Meeting #3 June 24

CONFLUENCE

- Engagement Joint Review Meeting with Planning Commission and City Council – Late June/Early July
- Stirrup Days Special Event Outreach July 18

Mid-Term

• Draft Plan Chapters Review – Fall 2025

Long-Term

Public Review of Draft Plan Elements – December 2025

