

# Ashland Comprehensive Plan

Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee Kick-Off Meeting  
January 28, 2025

# Meeting Agenda

01. Meet Our Team
02. Project Scope + Schedule Overview
03. Comprehensive Planning 101
04. Community Snapshot
05. Visioning Exercises
06. What's Next?

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01. Meet Our Team

# Meet Our Team

**CHRIS  
SHIRES, AICP**

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Principal-In-Charge

CONFLUENCE



**CAITLIN  
BOLTE, PLA,  
AICP**

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Principal Project  
Manager

CONFLUENCE

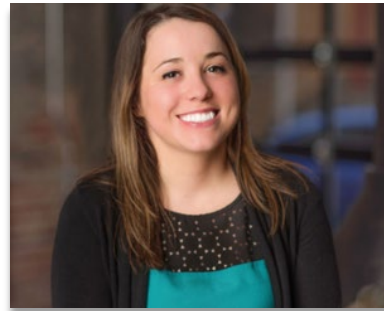


**JANE  
REASONER, AICP**

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Senior Planner

CONFLUENCE



**ABBIEY  
ECKBERG, AICP**

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Project Planner

CONFLUENCE



**EMILY  
RIZVIĆ**

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Project Planner

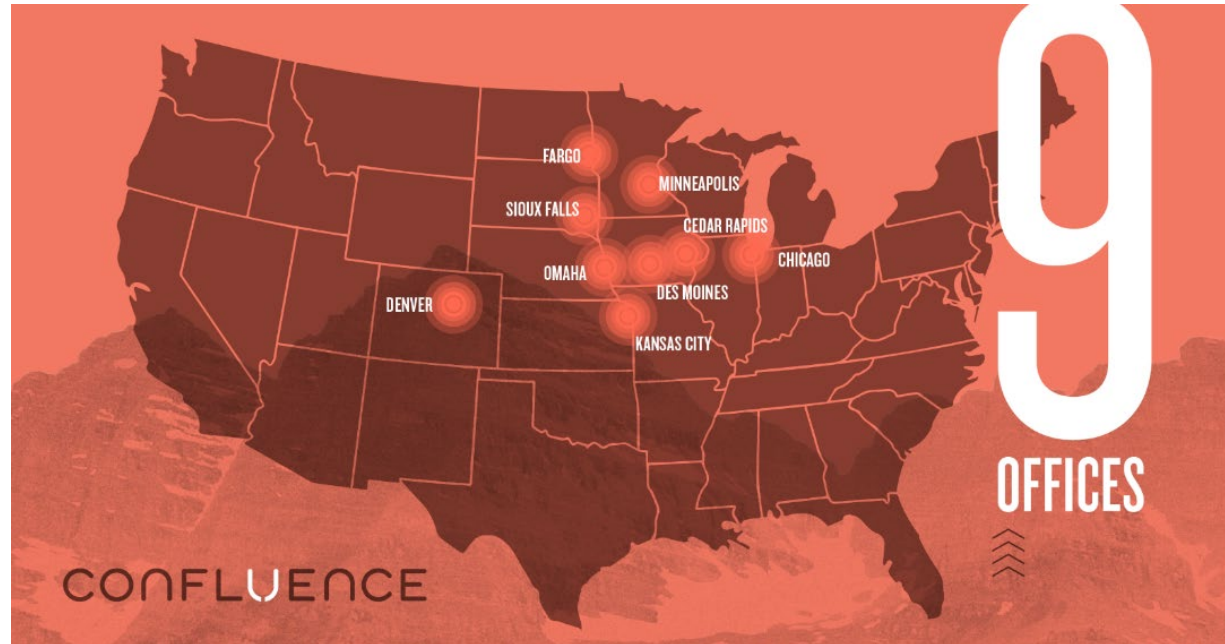
CONFLUENCE



# 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

CONFLUENCE



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## 02. Project Scope + Schedule Overview

# Project Scope

- **Phase 1:** Research & Analysis
- **Phase 2:** Public & Stakeholder Engagement
- **Phase 3:** Draft Plan & Evaluation
- **Phase 4:** Final Plan & Adoption

# Project Scope

## Phase 1: Research & Analysis

- Pre-Kick-Off Meeting with City Staff / December 16, 2024
- Public Outreach Plan & Project Branding / February 2025
- Project Kick-Off Meeting with Advisory Committee (CPAC #1) / January 28, 2025
- Project Website Launch / February 2025
- Existing Conditions Analysis Review with Advisory Committee (CPAC #2) / Feb 25, 2025

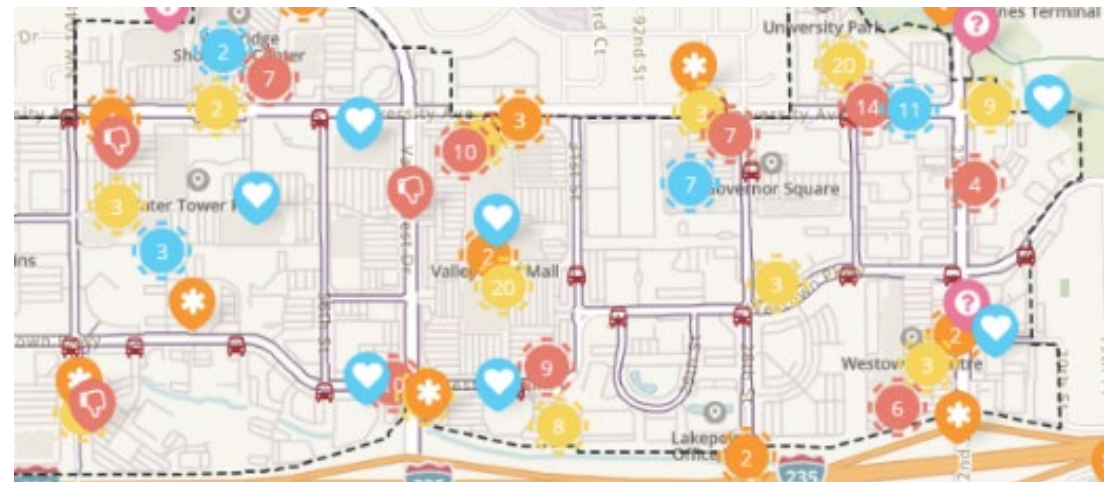




# Project Scope

## Phase 2: Public & Stakeholder Engagement

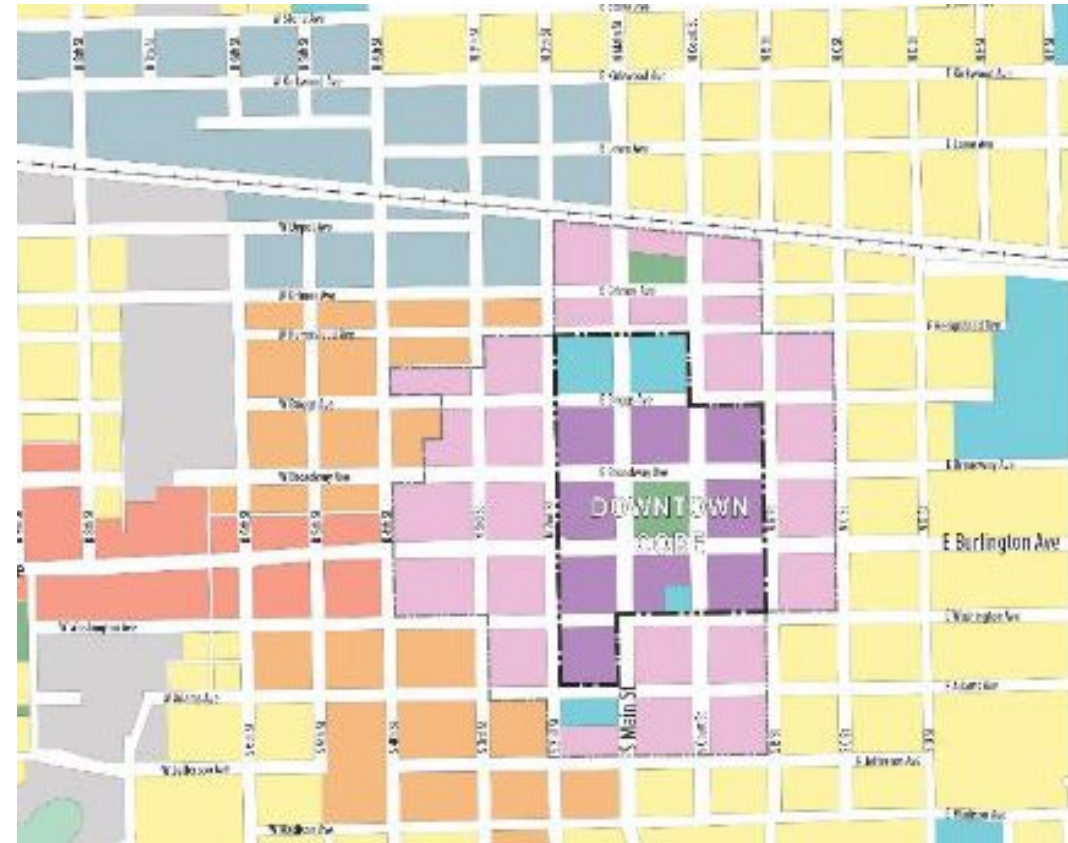
- Online Engagement Website
- Stakeholder Interview and Focus Group Meetings
- Public Visioning Workshop / TBD
- Other Public Engagement Options (Youth Workshop / Box City Event / Special Event Booths)
- Public & Stakeholder Engagement Review with Advisory Committee (CPAC #3) / TBD
- Public & Stakeholder Engagement Review Joint Workshop with Planning Commission and City Council (Joint Workshop #1) / TBD



# Project Scope

## Phase 3: Draft Plan & Evaluation

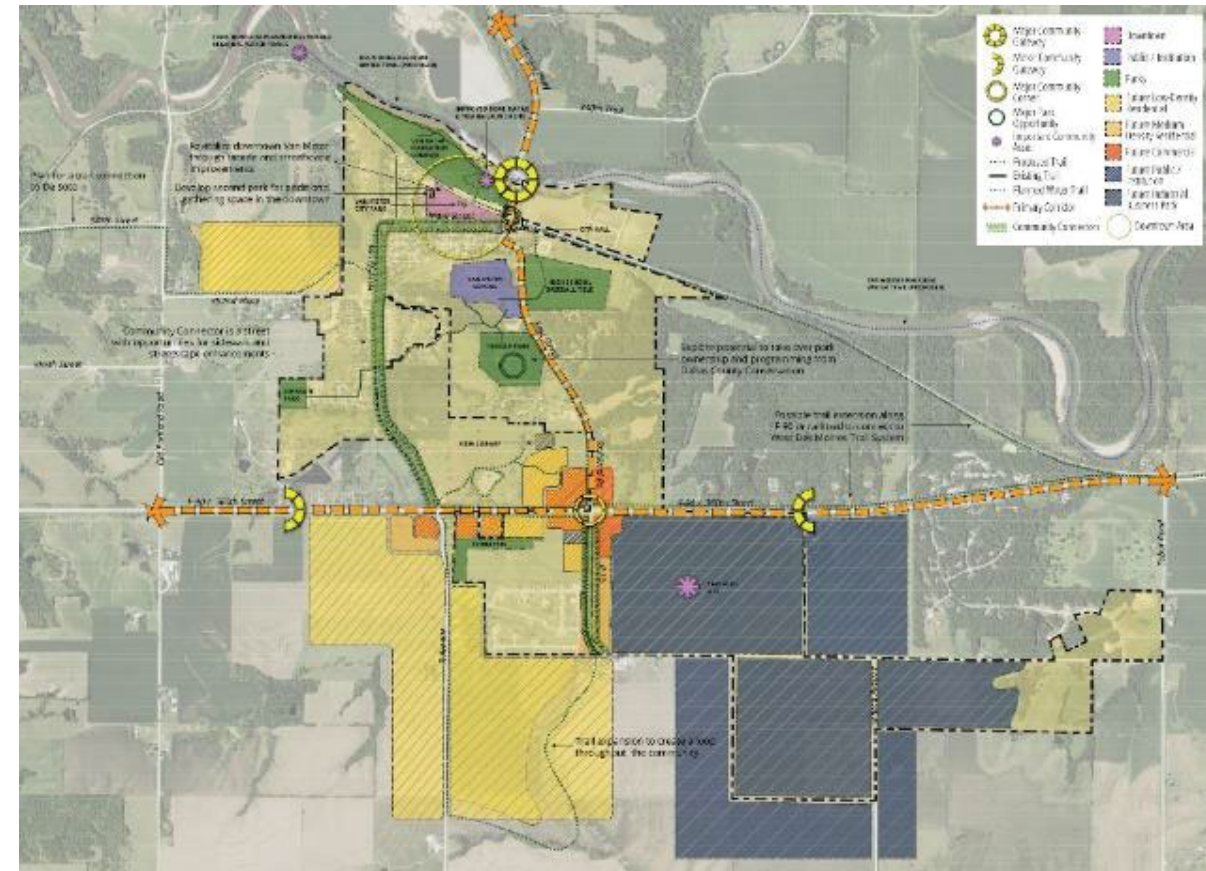
- Draft Plan
- Draft Plan Review Sessions with Advisory Committee (CPAC #4-6)
- Draft Plan Public Open House
- Public Comment and Review Period
- Draft Plan Presentation Joint Workshop with the Planning Commission and City Council (Joint Workshop #2)



# Project Scope

## Phase 4: Final Plan & Adoption

- Final Draft Plan
- Planning Commission Public Hearing
- City Council Public Hearing





# Project Schedule

**Advisory  
Committee  
Meeting #2:  
Existing  
Conditions  
Analysis  
Review**

- February 25, 2025 @ 6PM

	Nov 2024	Dec 2024	Jan 2025	Feb 2025	Mar 2025	Apr 2025	May 2025	Jun 2025	Jul 2025	Aug 2025	Sep 2025	Oct 2025	Nov 2025	Dec 2025	Jan 2026
PHASE 1: PROJECT RESEARCH + ANALYSIS (3 MONTHS)															
1.1 Project Pre-Kick-Off Meeting with City Staff (virtual)		Dec 16													
1.2 Public Outreach Plan															
1.3 Kick-Off Meeting with Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (AC #1) (in-person)			January 28												
1.4 Data Gathering and Existing Conditions Analysis															
1.5 Project Branding															
1.6 Project Website Launch															
1.7 Existing Conditions Analysis Review Meeting with Advisory Committee (AC #2) (in-person)															
PHASE 2: PUBLIC & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT (3 MONTHS)															
2.1 Stakeholder Interviews + Focus Group (virtual)															
2.2 Interactive Engagement Activities on Website															
2.3 Other Engagement Events (1 event, up to 3)															
2.4 Public Visioning Workshop (PM #1) (in-person)															
2.5 Public & Stakeholder Engagement Review with Advisory Committee (AC #3) (in-person)															
2.6 Engagement Review Joint Workshop with Council and Commission (JW #1) (in-person)															
PHASE 3: DRAFT PLAN + EVALUATION (6 MONTHS)															
3.1 Draft Plan															
3.2 Draft Plan Review with Advisory Committee (SC #4 - #6) (virtual)															
3.3 Draft Plan Public Open House (PM #2) (in-person)															
3.4 Draft Plan Joint Workshop with Council & Commission (JW #2) (in-person)															
3.5 Public Comment and Review Period															
PHASE 4: FINAL PLAN + ADOPTION (3 MONTHS)															
4.1 Final Draft Plan															
4.2 Planning Commission Public Hearing (PM #3) (in-person) (4th Thursday of the Month)															
4.3 City Council Public Hearing (PM #4) (in-person) (1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month)															
4.4 Final Plan Deliverables															

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## 03. Comprehensive Planning 101

# Comprehensive Planning 101

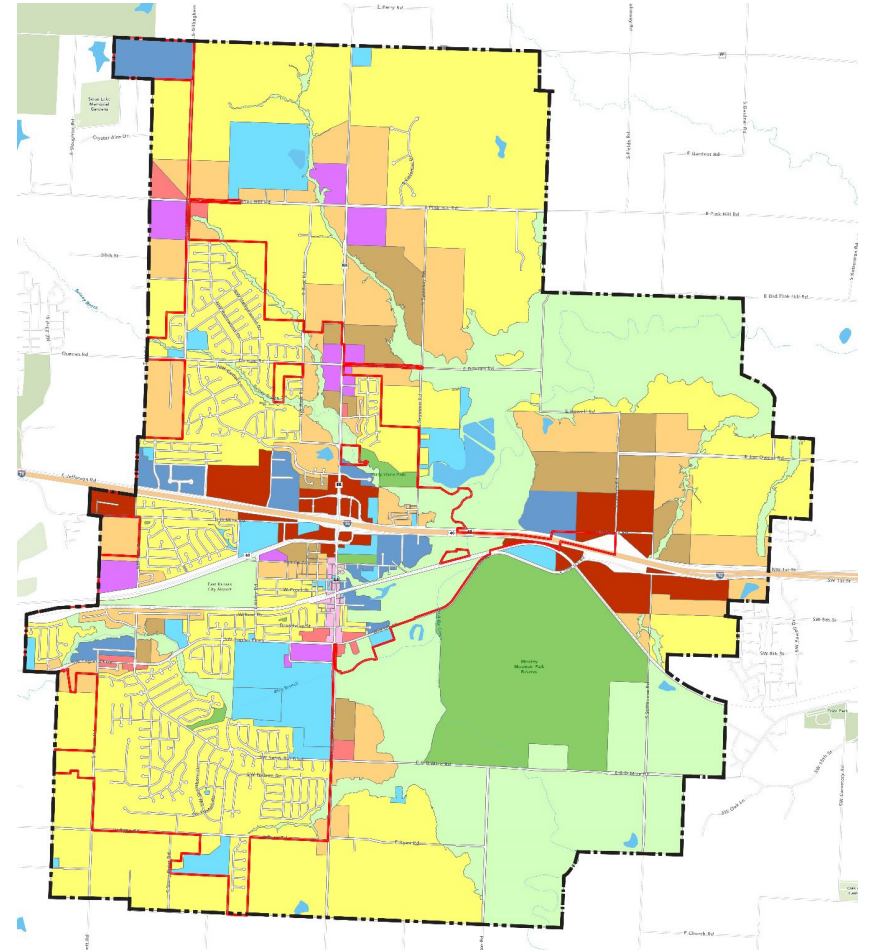
“The **comprehensive plan**, also known as a general plan, master plan or land use plan; is a document designed **to guide the future actions of a community**. It presents **a vision for the future**; with **long-range goals** and objectives for all activities that affects the local government.”

- 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

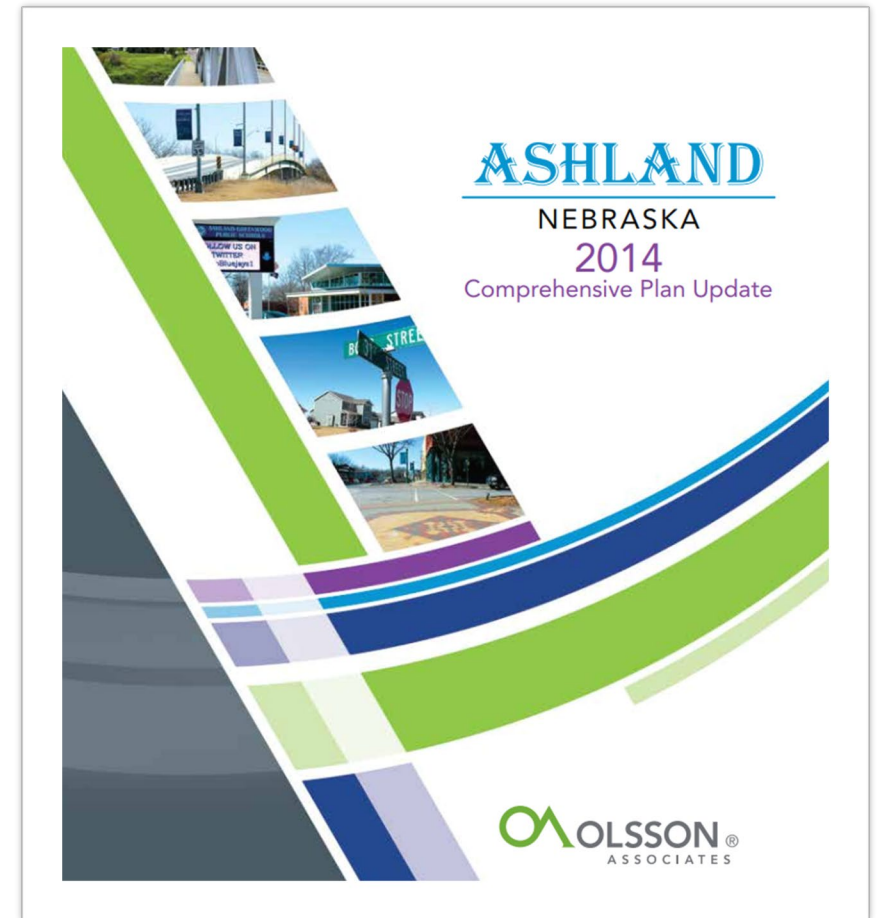
**Effective implementation is the difference between having a good plan on paper and having a great community on the ground**



# 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



# Current Zoning Map

## City of Ashland

### OFFICIAL ZONING MAP

OVERLAYS

- Corridor Overlay
- Preservation District
- Parcels

REFERENCE ITEMS

- City Limit
- Ashland ETJ
- County Line

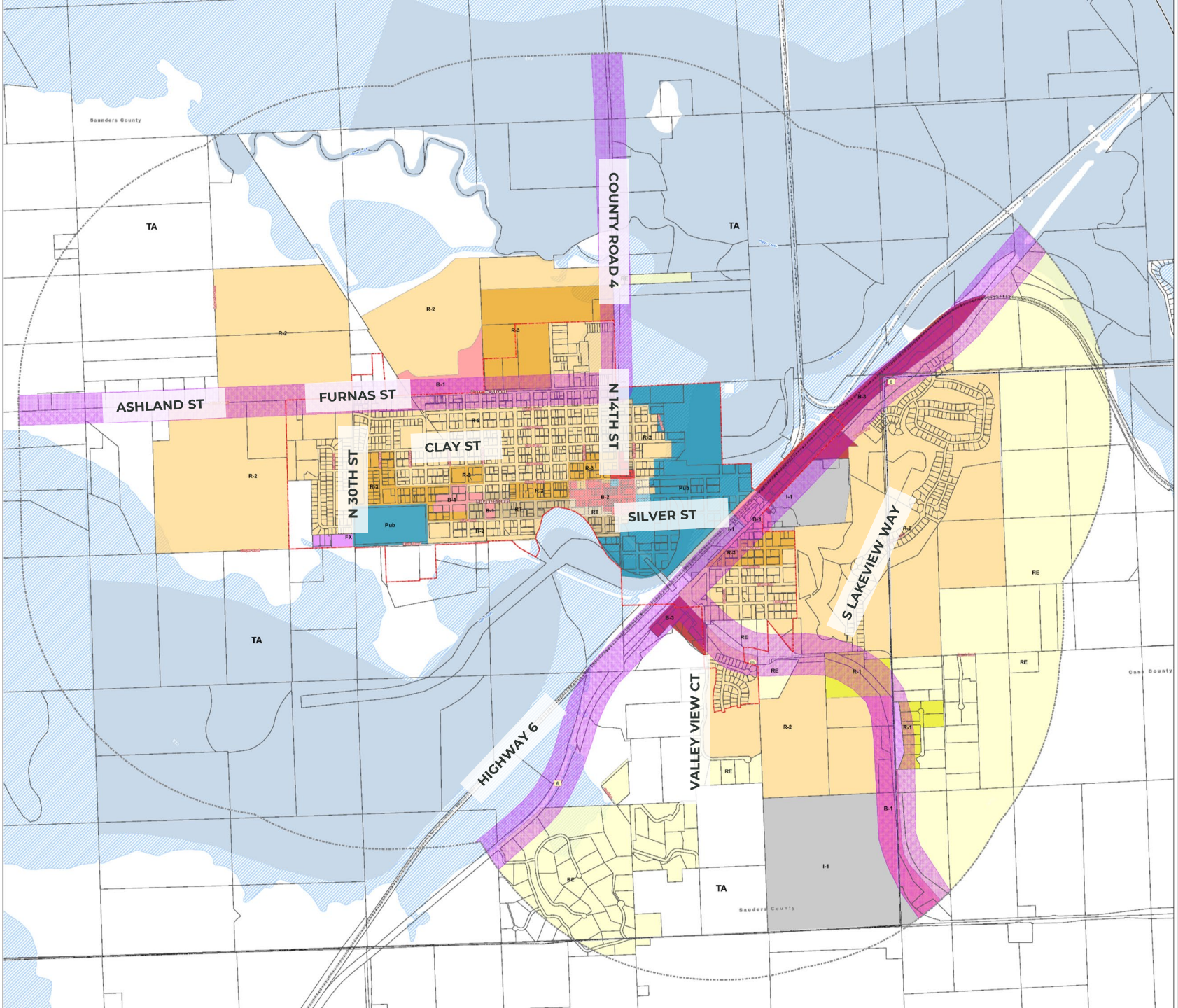
ZONING CODE

- Residential Estates (RE)
- Low Density Residential (R-1)
- Medium Density Residential (R-2)
- High Density Residential (R-3)
- Residential Transition (RT)
- Public (Pub)
- Flex (FX)
- General Commercial (B-1)
- Downtown Commercial (B-2)
- Highway Commercial (B-3)
- Light Industrial (I-1)

FEMA FLOODPLAINS\*

- 100-Year Floodplain
- Floodway

\*The 100-Year Floodplain shown on this map are a generalized representation of the Floodplain boundaries shown on the following FIRM panels:  
31155C0545D  
31155C0565D  
Both Panels are effective of 04/05/2010





# Current Future Land Use Map

## City of Ashland

### OFFICIAL FUTURE LAND USE MAP

#### FUTURE LAND USE CODE

- Residential Estates (RE)
- Low Density Residential (LDR)
- Medium Density Residential (MDR)
- High Density Residential (HDR)
- Residential Transition (RT)
- General Commercial (GC)
- Downtown Commercial (DC)
- Highway Commercial (HC)
- Flex Space (FX)
- Light Industrial (I)
- Public and Semi-Public (Pub)

#### ETJ

- City Limit

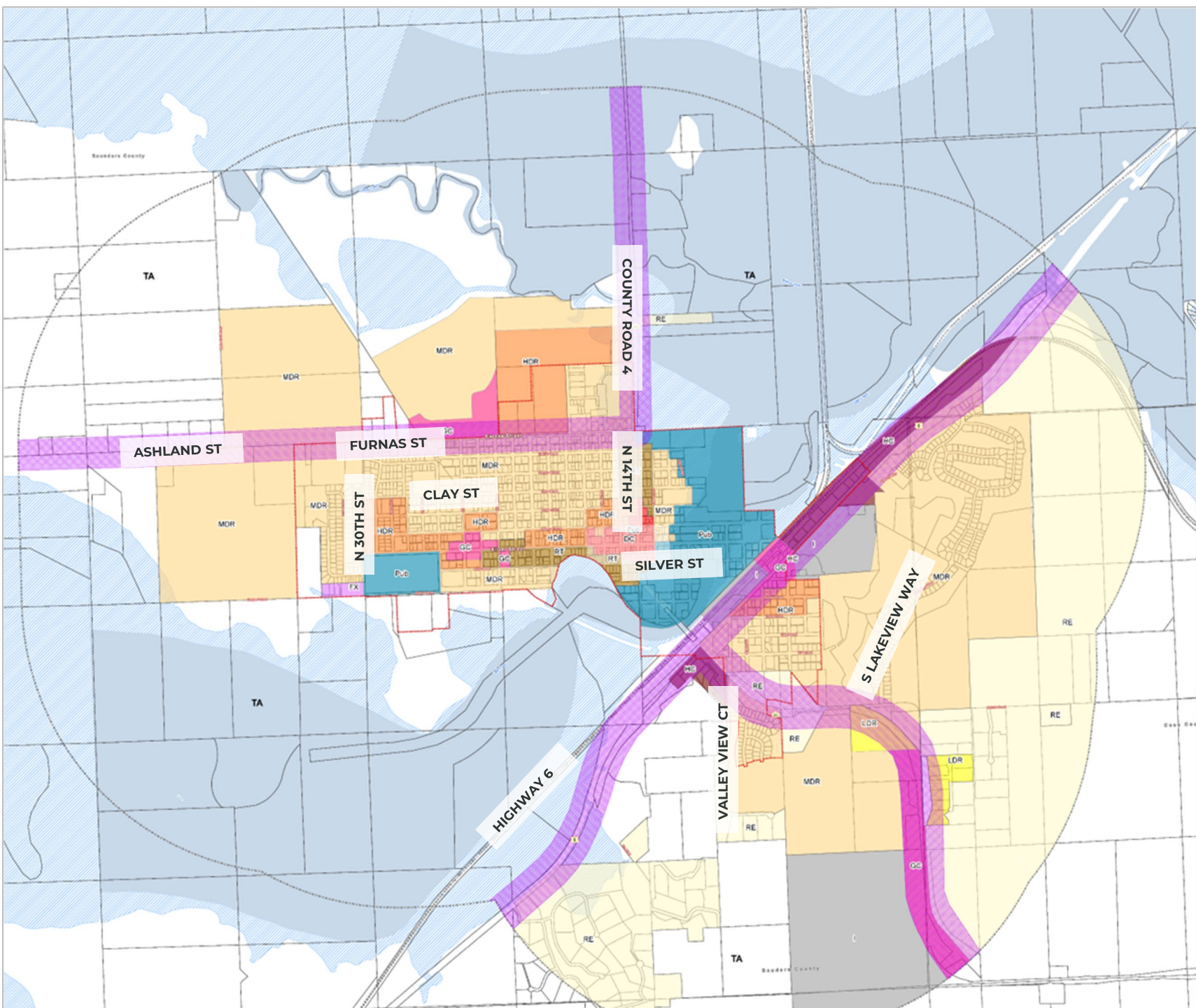
#### OVERLAYS

- Corridor Overlay
- Preservation District
- Parcels

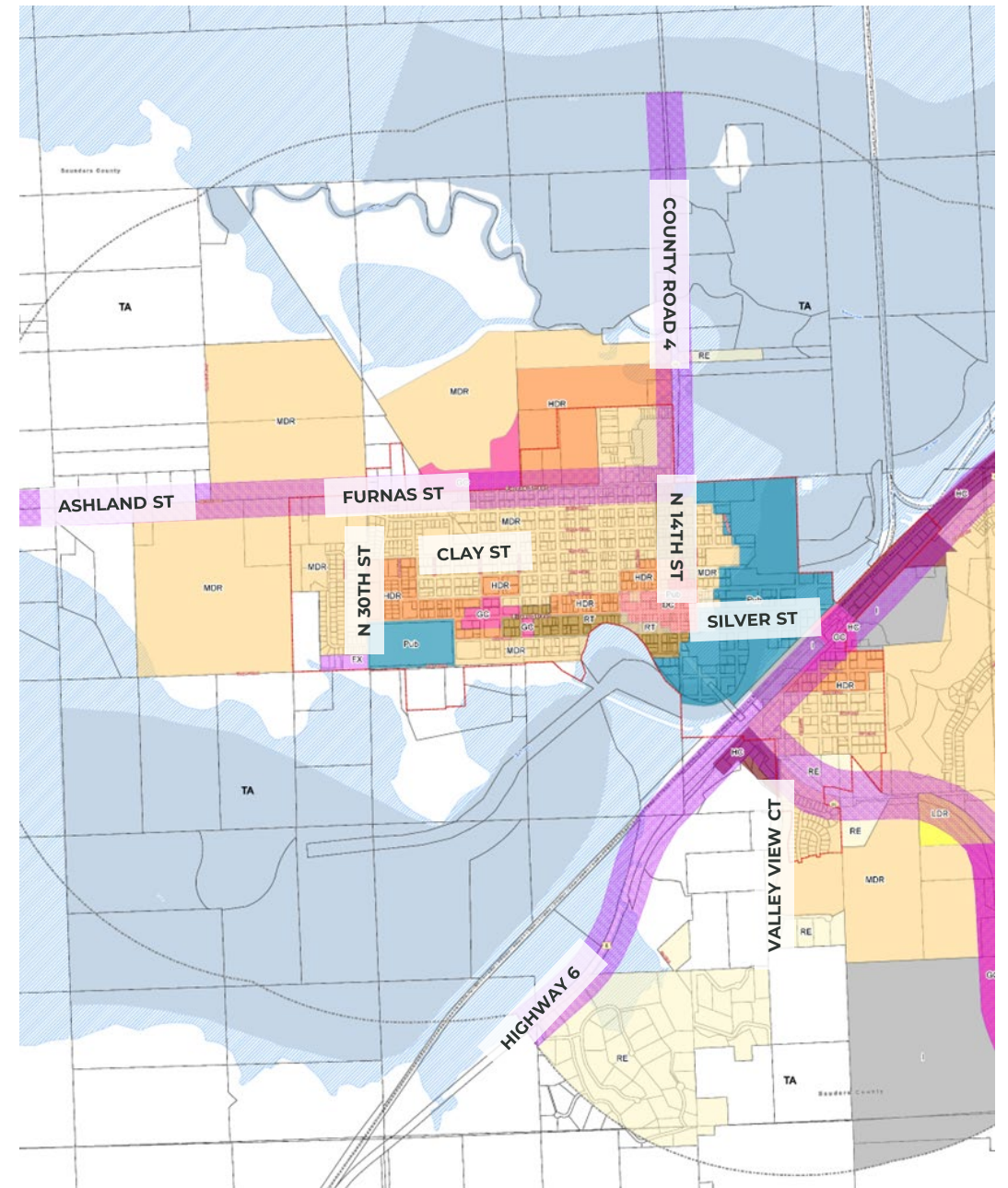
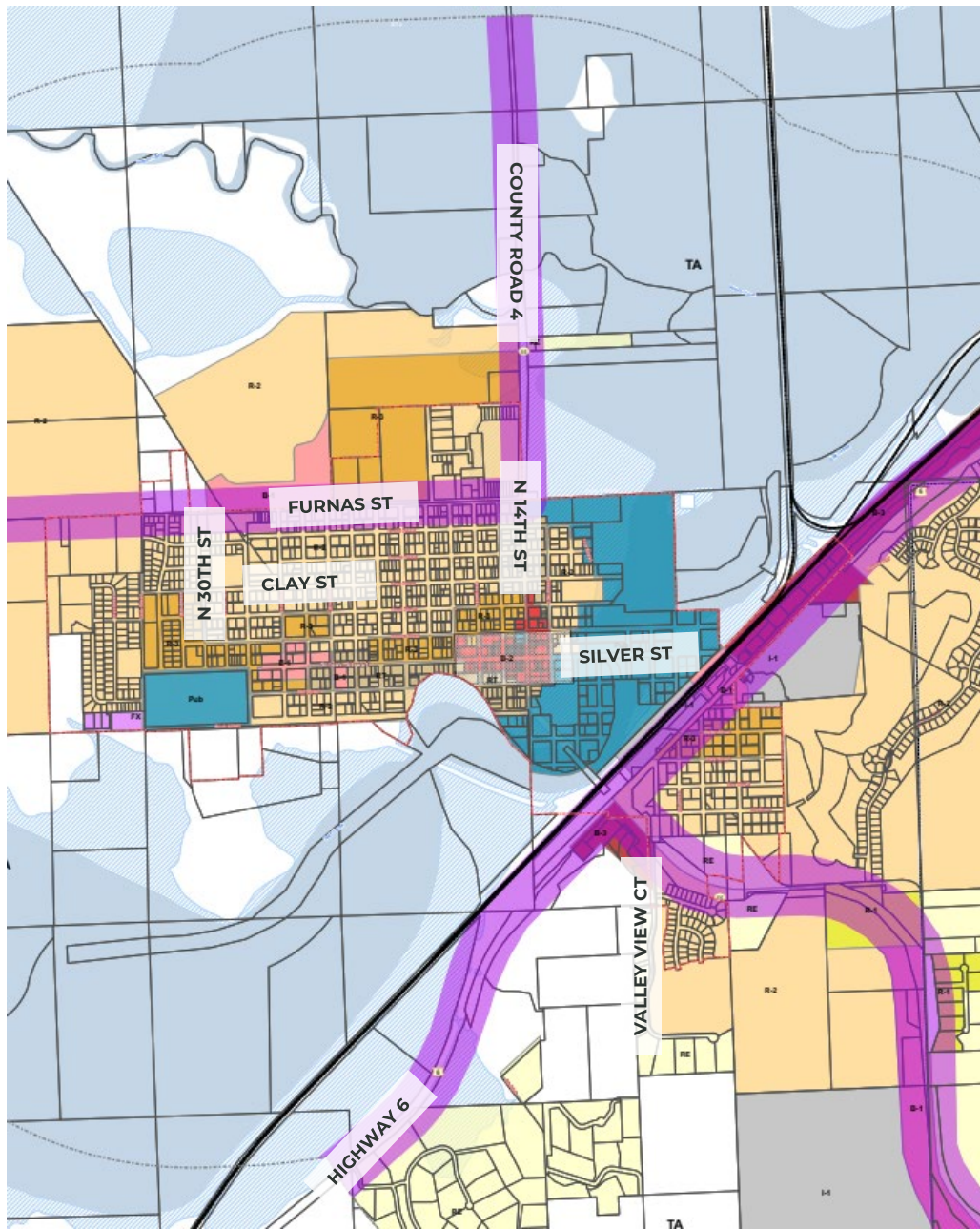
#### FEMA FLOODPLAINS\*

- 100-Year Floodplain
- Floodway
- Railroad

\*The 100-Year Floodplain shown on this map is a generalized representation of the Floodplain boundaries shown on the following FIRM panels:  
31155C0545D  
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# Current Comprehensive Plan

What **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN GOALS** from the previous plan should we keep?

- Maintain and preserve historic buildings in Ashland, especially the downtown area
- Address aging infrastructure
- Preserve natural resources and amenities
- Give a reason for the next generation / youth to stay in Ashland (retain population)
- Invest and plan for future sports growth (Jack Anderson Ball Park, Soccer Fields)
- Establish a Downtown City Park with a playground for children
- Bring live music to the downtown
- Recruit industry to create local jobs in Ashland
- Increase housing affordability and availability
- Provide connection/resources to east Ashland, that is currently divided by highway

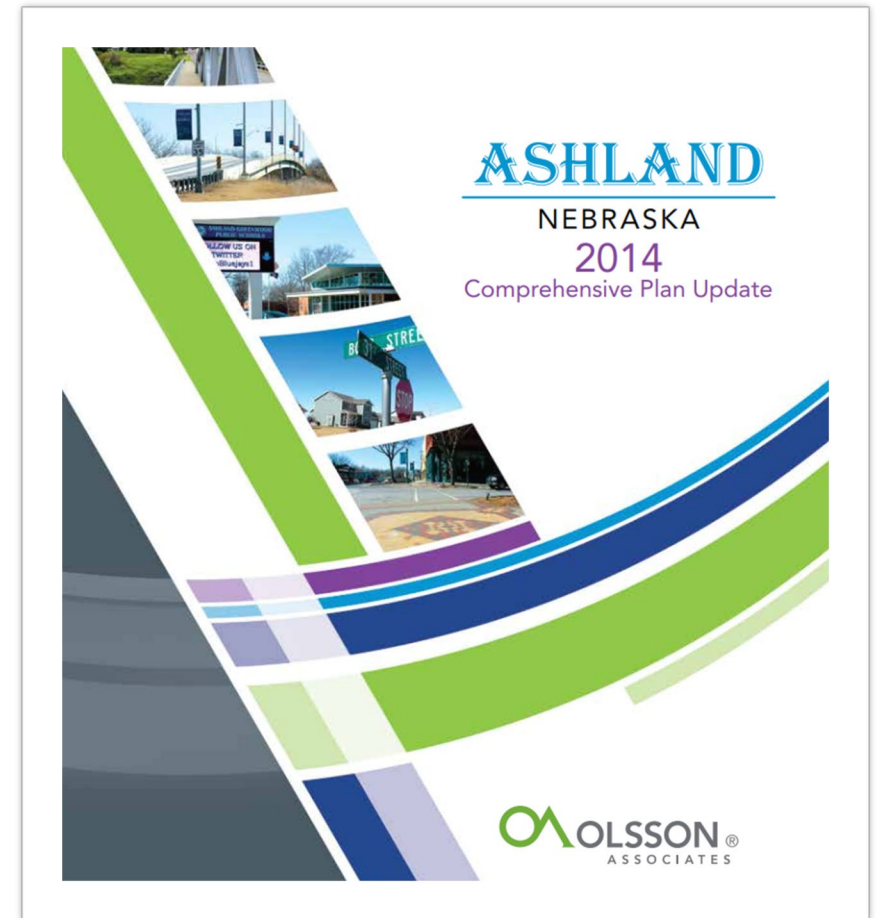


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All goals still seem relevant.



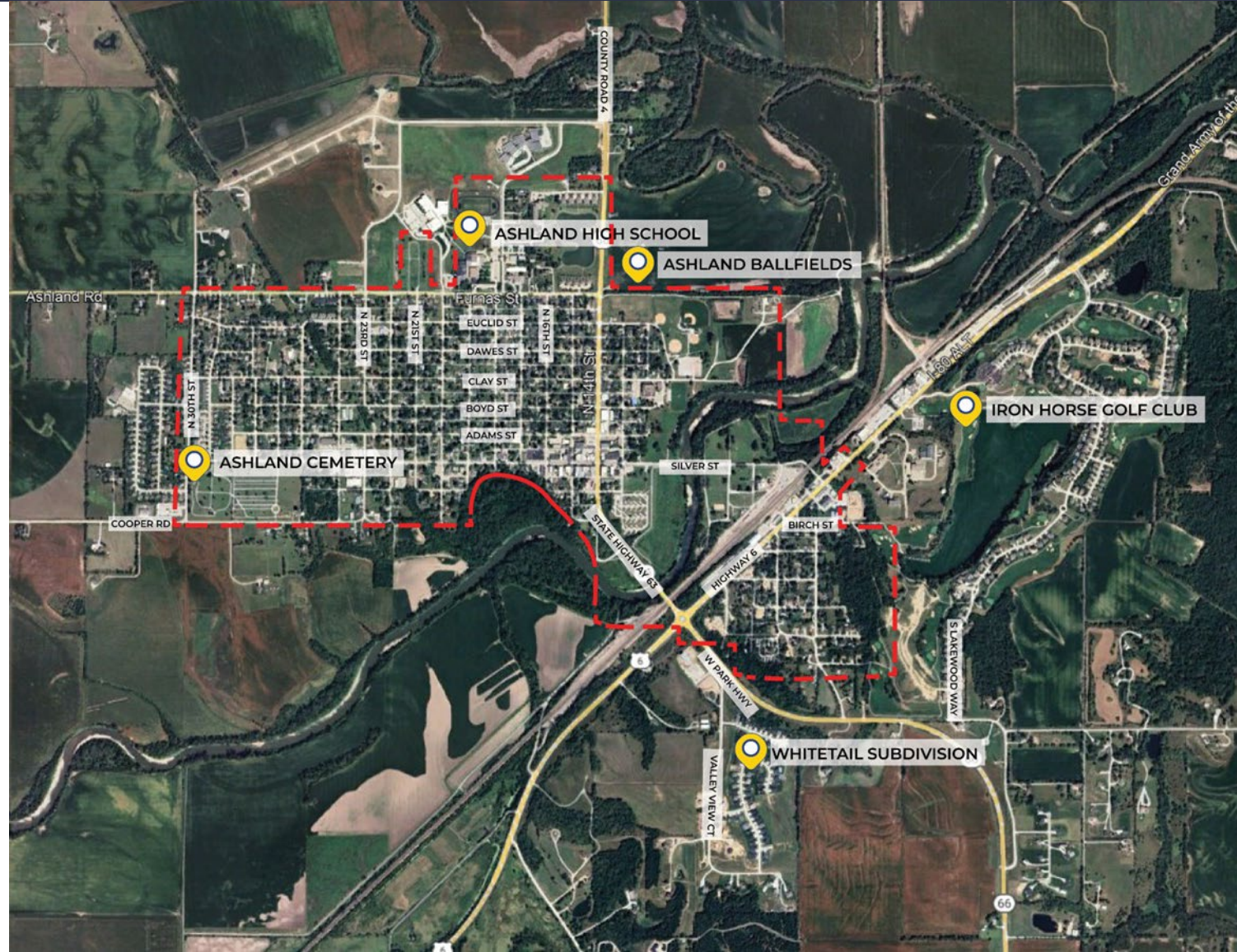
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## 04. Community Snapshot

# Community Snapshot Overview

## Analysis will include:

- Demographic Data
- Housing Analysis
- Jobs + Economy
- Physical Profile
  - Floodplain
- Tourism
- Federal Neighbor – Camp Ashland





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## 05. Visioning Exercises

# Current Comprehensive Plan

Why do you **CHOOSE TO LIVE (or work/play)** in Ashland?

- Location and proximity to Omaha and Lincoln (Close to big Cities)
- Education in K-12 Schools
  - Small class sizes
  - High level of education
  - Good school leadership + investment
  - Excellent special education programs
- Safe community
- Quality of life aspects
- Small town feel + charm
- Low property taxes (compared to adjacent communities)
- Family and community
- Great place to raise a family
- Affordable to start a business
- Walkability

# Current Comprehensive Plan

What do you think is Ashland's **BIGGEST CHALLENGE?**

- Cut-off by railroad and highways
  - Pedestrian access from West + East Ashland between Highway 6/Highway 66
- Hard to travel north-south
- Truck traffic cutting through town
- Floodplain limits growth
- Development pressures that challenge the small-town feel
- Being consumed by extension of metro / Loss of small-town feel and identity
- Capital planning
- Aging infrastructure
- Hard to prioritize use of limited resources
- Rural vs urban (or suburban) feel
- Lack of relationship with state representatives to advocate for Ashland
- Nestled between four counties

# Current Comprehensive Plan

What do you think is Ashland's **BIGGEST OPPORTUNITY**?

- Opportunity to start building relationships with state and economic development representatives
- Control the growth to preserve small-town feel
- Build off the positive momentum that is happening today (Brewery, Steakhouse, etc.)
- Develop in a manner that is not “cookie-cutter” or standard
- Access to resources and philanthropic community

# Current Comprehensive Plan

What is the **NEXT BIG THING** for Ashland?

- Brewery (Ashland Brewing Company)
- Ashland community center
- Indoor sports and recreation facilities
- Outdoor recreation field expansion (soccer, baseball/softball)
- Future bypass and bridge improvements
- Road infrastructure
- Growth of Gretna and spillover effect
- Community bandshell
- Outdoor public spaces near civic buildings (library + playground)
- Omaha Beltway
- Becoming a destination for the reverse commute (where you go after work)
- Tourism and recreation
  - More golf courses per capita than anywhere else in the state
- Hallmark movie feel – Christmas Downtown

# Current Comprehensive Plan

What are **TRANSPORTATION, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, OR HOUSING-RELATED** issues and opportunities in Ashland?

- Downtown off-street parking needs
  - Current off-street parking underutilized
- Downtown property acquisition for future development
- Business incubator program
- Lack of parks for future housing developments
- Bus service between Ashland and Lincoln/Omaha
- Infill housing development
- White collar jobs and companies
- Recruiting industry and jobs
- Showcasing current economic development and job growth
- Building appropriate housing for the types of jobs that are being offered, i.e. workforce housing to incentivize young adults stay or come back to Ashland

# Current Comprehensive Plan

Who are the **KEY STAKEHOLDERS** we should interview?

- New businesses and start-ups (such as Glacial Till)
- New residents
- Youth that leave the community/don't come back
- School board members / school district
- State representatives
- County planning and economic development groups
- Developers
- MAPA
- Major community donors/philanthropists (Ashland Library and Performing Arts Center)
- Civic foundations

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# What's Next?

## Near-Term

- Existing Conditions Analysis
- Public Outreach Plan + Project Branding
- Project Website Launch
- Existing Conditions Analysis Review Meeting with Advisory Committee  
February 25, 2025 @ 6PM

## Mid-Term

- Stakeholder Interviews + Focus Groups
- Online Engagement + Special Events
- Public Visioning Workshop
- Engagement Review Meeting with Advisory Committee
- Engagement Review Meeting with Planning Commission and City Council