



# 2015 Comprehensive Land Use Plan

*Where  
Families  
Come  
First!*

*Sheldon is  
“The Community  
of Choice”  
for families  
that want to  
live, work  
and play.*



*Prepared with Planning Assistance from*

**NorthWest Iowa Planning & Development Commission**  
*Spencer, Iowa*

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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# 2015 SHELDON COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The comprehensive land use plan is an essential planning document for those communities in Iowa intending to enforce zoning regulations, annexations, urban renewal tax benefits and other land use controls. This document is created to be Sheldon’s primary guide for future land use policy decision making. The comprehensive plan is general in nature and broad in scope, assessing past and current conditions and making projections for population, housing, economic conditions, and land use issues. The core of the plan is comprised of two primary sections to be supported by the remainder of the data and statistical analysis in this plan.



**1) Goals, Objectives & Policy Recommendations** for the next 10 to 15 years in Sheldon

**2) Future Land Use Map** creating a visual depiction of proposed land use development.

Included within this executive summary are the general comprehensive plan goals, plan implementation strategies, and the future land use map. Supporting data is available within the main body of the plan, as well as specific policy recommendations addressing each land use classification in Sheldon.

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### SUMMARY OF OVERALL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN GOALS & OBJECTIVES

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The comprehensive planning process provides tools for directing change in cities. The vision created for Sheldon will only happen if local leaders continue to consider new or nontraditional planning methods and techniques, and address problems that may arise. All participants must realize there is commitment and effort required to make the planning process and this plan successful. The commitment of the Planning and Zoning Commission to work with city leaders to guide the implementation of this plan and other development issues of the community is essential. Excluding segments of the community may result in the loss of productive and interesting ideas. This plan is not a “quick fix” to the future economic and community development of Sheldon. However, this plan can serve as a guide to future development decisions. A comprehensive land use plan needs to be modified and updated over time in order to maintain current plan goals and control ordinances. The extent of growth experienced by the city will play a major role in determining how often and what types of adjustments will be required.

***The overall goal of the Sheldon Comprehensive Land Use Plan is to establish and maintain a community land use plan and land use control system which provides for the orderly growth and development of the city while maintaining a diversity of its parts; allocates or specifies land through inclusion of the future land use map to be reserved for designated future uses; maximizes the opportunity for a wide range of land use alternatives; minimizes the number of conflicting land uses while preserving the community character; recognize and achieve a progressive balance between land uses that promotes the economic development potential of the city; preserve and promote the irreplaceable natural resources of the community; reflects local traditions and culture; and facilitates the provision of needed services and facilities to the people of Sheldon.***

General development goals and objectives guide the comprehensive planning process and are summarized as follows:

1. Land Use Development & Planning

- Maintain available and functional city planning organizations and programs which will direct the planned development of the community according to well established procedures, and provide the city with a development plan of legal force which facilitates the orderly growth and development of the city.

2. Annexation

- Encourage and utilize annexation as a tool to supply needed land for growth as existing subdivisions become developed.
- Encourage development of land within the city limits prior to actively annexing additional land. Insure new development will be compatible to existing neighborhoods or businesses.
- Utilize annexation as a tool to control uncontrolled rural growth and promote orderly development.

3. Community Facilities and Services

- Make all facilities and services available to all residents of the city, both existing and proposed.
- Continue to promote and develop community facilities which foster a high standard of living, public welfare, safety, and overall development.
- Provide opportunities for potential students within the community to receive a quality education to the level of their choice.

4. Residential Development

- Maintain available and functional city planning organizations and programs which will direct the planned development of the community according to well established procedures, and provide the city with a development plan of legal force which facilitates the orderly growth and development of the city.
- Maintain adequate space for future residential development so the city can grow in the future.
- Have a variety of living of residential living environments and also a variety of locations and housing options to provide for a variety of persons.
- Provide housing opportunities to all individuals regardless of age, sex, income, race, ethnicity, creed or religion.

## 5. Commercial Activities

- Develop a diversified local commercial base that will provide the city with a wide range of goods and services.
- Encourage future commercial development within the central business district or within identified highway commercial corridors along arterial transportation routes.
- Planned commercial developments will better utilize existing utilities and infrastructure and result in more efficient land use patterns.

## 6. Industrial Activities

- Strengthen and diversify the industrial base of the community.
- Encourage planned industrial or business parks or light industrial zoning areas where utility and infrastructure demands can be met without significant capital expense. Other less intense light industrial uses may be appropriate to locate in commercial areas, but not mixed with residential uses.
- Provide space, facilities, incentives and support for industries wishing to locate in the city and to integrate these industries and employees into the community in such a manner that the city will gain economic and job growth with minimal conflicting or adverse effects.

## 7. Recreation/Open Space

- Provide citizens with choices for the types and amounts of recreational activities desired.
- Preserve resources which have historical, scientific, scenic, or recreational value.
- Coordinate all possible funding sources to provide recreational facilities for the citizens of the community.
- Protect the integrity and public enjoyment of recreation and public open space areas.
- Plan and encourage new recreation and park spaces to be developed as the community grows.

## 8. Agriculture & Natural Resources

- Develop a community environment that encourages the preservation of prime agricultural land, preserves environmentally sensitive areas, and preserves historical areas. At the same time, agricultural lands within the city limits should be reserved for eventual development at such time that provisions for utilities, infrastructure and economic conditions warrant such development. The city should promote the best land use possible for areas to be developed, including considerations for flood prone areas as indicated by FEMA.

## 9. Transportation

- Develop and maintain a transportation system for the city that is planned, located and designed to enhance the efficiency of movement of people and goods, and which supports and promotes all areas of the city.
- Monitor and maintain highly used collected and arterial streets and infrastructure and it should be replaced as necessary.
- Maintain existing city streets should be regularly due to the cost of providing such transportation infrastructure and services.

## 10. Utilities

- Provide all residents and businesses of the city at the best quality of service and at the lowest possible rates.
- Provide necessary services such as fire, water, sewer, electric, communications, streets and gas to greatly enhance the living environment and economic potential of the community. New

land use developments should be encouraged to locate where adequate infrastructure is present, prior to developing where costly infrastructure needs to be expanded.

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## IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS PLAN

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The Sheldon Comprehensive Land Use Plan is to be used as a guide by both public and private sectors in land use decision-making processes. The private sector, including developers, investors, industry and businesses will use this document to become informed of the general positions of the city regarding land use objectives and policies. This land use plan and the associated existing and future land use maps will provide the general public with an outline and guide to make individual land investments, purchases or development decisions. The public will become more informed as to the city's policies in regards to those land uses that are permitted, encouraged, prohibited or protected. With this knowledge in advance, the public will be able to make informed and knowledgeable decisions complimentary to the city's comprehensive plan.

Community leaders and city officials in Sheldon are charged with the task of identifying, leading, and being the first to accept and embrace the future that this community has ahead. Suggested implementation measures the city may wish to review, address or incorporate include:

1. Establish a benchmark for Sheldon from which future community growth will be measured against. Create a three to five year action or strategy plan addressing specific growth, economic development and annexation policies.
2. Encourage city officials, planning and zoning commission members, board of adjustment members, and key community leaders to attend training in an effort to gain new perspective on current or innovative trends in planning and/or regulatory ordinances.
3. Establish an annual comprehensive plan review process in which public input is encouraged regarding the progress and development of the community. Furthermore, the planning and zoning commission will review the city's future land use plan and land use policies to and make a report to the city council to determine if changes need to be made or updated to reflect current development projects.
4. Create a plan to attract and/or retain young professionals and the younger population residing in Sheldon. Far too many communities see their younger populations leave the community upon graduation from school for larger metropolitan areas. Monitor results through affordable housing options, younger demographic trends, and recreational or entertainment activities intended for this demographic.
5. The City of Sheldon needs to continue to promote and exhibit a welcoming and accommodating feeling to new residents, businesses and visitors to the community. This may be accomplished through creating and sustaining a "welcoming committee" and packet of information for new residents and businesses to the community.
6. When considering creating and enforcing new or existing land use policies, remember to protect the rights and interests of property owners in Sheldon. Also, remember this strategy when looking to update the city's control ordinances such as zoning and subdivision regulations.



# CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION & PLANNING ELEMENTS

## *Where Families Come First!*

Sheldon is "The Community of Choice" for families that want to live, work and play.

A comprehensive plan is a collection of material and information designed to guide the future growth and development of the community. It is general in nature and provides a framework and policy context within which to make land use decisions relating to future development. The comprehensive plan is long range, looking forward 10 to 15 years, and does not plan a highly specific course. Rather, the plan points toward land use goals and general policies that the city should consider when making development decisions. While short term planning is important, such as capital improvement planning, strategic action plans, economic



development strategies, or municipal budgeting, it is not within the scope of this plan. Short term plans may be incorporated into the comprehensive plan by reference. The comprehensive city plan or master plan must therefore be first, a balanced and otherwise attractive general design best suited to present and future needs. Second, the plan must be in scale with the population and economic prospects of the community, and third the plan must be in scale with its financial resources.

### **DEFINITION OF A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

Comprehensive Planning is a transparent, public process in which communities establish a future vision and locally designated standards in order to promote public health, safety and prosperity. Successful planning attracts economic development, protects and preserves the city's resources, and encourages a strong community identity.

Defined by the Rebuild Iowa Office "Iowa Smart Planning" 2010

The comprehensive planning process consists of utilizing past and present planning efforts and integrating this information into a vision for the future. What exactly is a "vision?" A vision is an image or foresight into where the community wishes to see the city grow and develop in the future. A common vision is critical for the development of a comprehensive plan, because once a vision statement has been established; it serves as a focal point for all other long range plan goals and specific policy statements for which to aim.

The Sheldon Comprehensive Plan is an intense study and analysis into specific components that make the city work, including the physical growth and development of the community. Changes in land use patterns, infrastructure, transportation, municipal facilities and services, population, housing, and other features are very important in determining the current condition of the city. This information is useful in determining objectives and policies relating to the natural



environment, the built environment, land uses, and other such activities that directly affect the physical aspects of Sheldon. The plan's overall goals and policies; and future land use designations are intended to be updated and amended as needed. As the community grows or changes from year to year, so will its needs. Therefore, the comprehensive plan should reflect new changes and possibly new objectives or policies toward specific actions. Ideally, the comprehensive plan would be updated on an annual basis. Actions recommended

by the planning and zoning commission and approved by the City Council can amend this plan to reflect current trends or simply a change in philosophy regarding one or more of the policy statements.

According to Chapter 414, Iowa Code, if a city is to create zoning district then *“The regulations shall be made in accordance with a comprehensive plan”*. All cities involved in zoning and land use regulations need to have an updated plan to guide future development activities. In general this comprehensive plan should and will contain sections regarding population and housing trends, socioeconomic data, transportation & infrastructure, hazard mitigation actions, parks & recreation, city services & community facilities, economic development, smart growth and future land uses. Once the working definition of planning has been internalized by those involved, the steps of the actual process should commence.

According to the Iowa Land Use Planning Notebook published by Iowa State University Extension, a comprehensive plan serves the following functions for a community.

- **The plan provides continuity.** A comprehensive plan allows continuity within the city and provides successive public bodies a framework for addressing common land use issues.
- **Balancing competing private interests.** A thorough comprehensive plan can provide a balance between competing demands on land by establishing a plan for identifying future development patterns in an orderly and rational manner. The plan should be established that provides the greatest benefits for individuals and the community as a whole.
- **Protecting public interests.** A comprehensive plan is also a means by which the city avoids costly infrastructure expenses on low priority or non-beneficial projects. It is much less expensive for a city to provide public services to a well-planned, order and phased developments versus haphazard or scattered low density development that may only provide benefit to a few properties.
- **Protects the city's valued resources.** Planning can identify environmental features and other natural resources and suggest strategies or policies to protect and preserve those resources from destruction or degradation by development.
- **Shapes the appearance of the community.** A comprehensive plan can establish policies that create and promote a distinct sense of place.

- **Promotes economic development.** A comprehensive plan contains valuable information that can aid firms and the city’s economic development organizations in determining where to locate new businesses and industries.
- **Provides justification for decisions.** A comprehensive plan provides factual and objective basis for support of zoning and subdivision decisions, of which can be used to defend a city’s decision if challenged in court.
- **Expresses a collective citizen vision for the future.** The comprehensive planning process allows residents of the community to participate in a discussion, debate and visioning process to plan for the future of their community. A plan developed with a proactive public participation process will enjoy a strong community support. Decisions that are consistent with the comprehensive plan’s policies are less likely to be subject to public controversy.

Planning is a key element in the development of any comprehensive plan. The “planning” steps of the comprehensive plan process should include:

1. The primary stage of a planning program is **research and data collection**. It is from this supply of data that all decisions will be based, indicating that the more extensive and specific the data is the more accurate and functional the decisions. The following are the broad, general areas of data needed for the information base/inventory: Population, Housing, Economic Development, Physical Features, Land Use, Transportation, Public Works, Community Facilities, Parks and Recreation, and the Environment.
2. **Analysis of the data collected** is an ongoing activity conducted at the same time the research and data collection is being pursued. Analysis involves the collection and presentation of data in written and/or graphic form to establish a complete base of existing conditions. Once this base has been established, the analysis proceeds into projection of future trends and growth. Dynamic forces are identified as well as their relative effect on the future.
3. All of this input in turn will facilitate the evolvement of certain **broad general goals** for the planning area that aims towards which effort is to be directed. Objectives involve bringing the goals closer to reality and specifically establishing those accomplishments that are desirable and closer to realizing established goals.
4. The **objectives and policy recommendations** are the framework for plan preparation. The technical personnel involved in the planning effort prepare the actual comprehensive plan document. Before submission of the plan to the legal bodies concerned, it should have been studied and commented upon all the involved sectors and altered accordingly.
5. Legalization of the plan involves the **plan adoption** by the local legislative body. Public hearings and wide distribution of the plan should take place before formal adoption proceedings. The plan must meet with the approval of those in the planning area to function properly.
6. **Implementation of the plan** is not carried out by any one department or agency, but is out of necessity a combined effort of all government, private and related entities. It cannot be emphasized enough that cooperation and coordination are the keys to an effective plan implementation.

## CHAPTER 2. SHELDON HISTORY

Sheldon is located in the far northwest corner of O'Brien County and a part of the community lies in northeast Sioux County along the Floyd River valley. Sheldon is the largest city in O'Brien County.

Sheldon's history began in the early 1870s with construction of the Sioux City & St. Paul Railroad line through the unsettled prairies of northwest Iowa. For much of Sheldon's history, the community has been a railroad-oriented community. Sheldon, although the largest city in O'Brien County today, was actually one of the last communities to be organized in O'Brien County. The City of Sheldon was named for Israel Sheldon, a railroad promoter, shareholder of the Sioux City & St. Paul

Railroad Company and resident of New York City. The City of Sheldon was first surveyed and platted by railroad surveyors in 1871. By July 1872, the railroad construction reached the town site. The Original Town Plat of Sheldon, Iowa was filed for record with the O'Brien County on January 3, 1873. The railroad was called the Chicago & Northwestern line as far back as the 1980s, but has since been renamed the Illinois, Chicago & Milwaukee Railroad. Early on, the community was a strategic rail location for businesses as far away as Omaha and Minneapolis.

Figure 1 – Photo of Historic Train Depot in Sheldon



Figure 2 – Photo of a parade in historic downtown Sheldon



Upon completion of the railroad line to Sheldon, the community began to grow in the 1870s and into the 1880s. As early as 1872, the first buildings constructed in the community included a saloon, rail depot and lumber office. In 1874, the community recorded its first marriage and first birth. On April 19, 1875 an election for incorporation as a city in the State of Iowa was held but defeated. The following year, on March 25, 1876 the incorporation issue was brought up for a vote and passed. On May 1, 1876, the first town officers were elected. It was reported that first election was hotly contested with much bitterness between the candidates. The first Mayor of Sheldon was

H.B. Wyman. That same year, the Milwaukee Railroad reached Sheldon to be followed twelve years later by the Illinois Central Railroad. The population of Sheldon increased from its original 30 residents in 1873 to a recorded 730 persons in the city's first decennial census in 1880. The

community continued to grow rapidly during the late 1880s and positioned itself to become an important transportation, retail and industrial center for the northwest Iowa region.

One of the early progressive enterprises that gave Sheldon much popularity in the early days was development of the District Fair. This fair originally embraced several counties in northwest Iowa. The fair association was organized in 1880 and operated a fair until 1888. Then in 1900, the Sheldon District Fair was organized. That same year, the District Fair purchased 27 acres of land near the town, just over the county line in Sioux County. The land cost \$100 per acre, of which was thought to be high at the time. In addition to the land purchase, six thousand dollars were invested into the grounds including amenities such as a half-mile track, floral hall, cattle and horse sheds, and barns suited for training horses. The annual fair and horse races attracted people from both near and far and was a major attraction in northwest Iowa. Thousands attended annually.

One of Sheldon's more infamous stories from its past includes the Geiger family that owned the Sheldon National Bank. In 1961, the city made headlines when Burnice Geiger, the daughter of the bank owner and a cashier at the bank was found to have embezzled more than two million dollars from the bank operated by her father. Burnice was also the bank's largest shareholder at the time. She was found guilty and sentenced to fifteen years in prison, but paroled 5 years later.

*Note: Portions of this history section includes excerpts from Past and Present of O'Brien and Osceola Counties, Iowa Volume 1. F.B. Bowen 1914. P. 356. History of Western Iowa, Its Settlement and Growth. Western Publishing Company. 1982. P. 559*

#### **HISTORICAL SITES IN THE CITY OF SHELDON**

There is one building of national historical interest located in Sheldon. The old Sheldon Carnegie Library building was designated by the National Register of Historic Places in 1977. Today, this building is no longer used as the city's library, but rather it is used as the home of the Sheldon Prairie Museum.

*Sheldon Carnegie Library* – This Carnegie Library in the tradition of many Carnegie libraries is known for its historical Beaux Arts architectural style, historical educational significance and was added to the National Register in 1977. The building is one story measuring 54' x 60'. The raised foundation is of rusticated limestone, and the building itself is made from yellow brick. A brick chimney is located at the west rear of the tiled hip roof. The symmetrical façade features a projecting entrance pavilion with a classical pediment. Two Tuscan pillars are set within the rusticated sandstone pilasters, which frame the semi-circular entryway.



#### **SHELDON HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

The Sheldon Historical Society is instrumental in the preservation and documentation of the history of the community and surrounding areas. Sheldon has an active historical society comprised of many volunteers trying to preserve the history, traditions and culture of the community and area. The historical society is a separate nonprofit charitable organization

receiving assistance from many sources including the City of Sheldon. The Sheldon Historical Society is located adjacent to the Sheldon Prairie Museum located in the historic Carnegie Library Building along 10<sup>th</sup> Street, just to the southwest of the Community Services Center.

#### **HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE IN O'BRIEN COUNTY - NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**

In addition to the Sheldon Carnegie Library, there are three (3) more buildings or sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places in O'Brien County. These sites are important to the history of the county and provide a glimpse into what life was like more than one hundred years ago.

*General N.B. Baker Public Library (Sutherland)* – Placed on the Register in 1983, this historical library building the county's newest listing on the National Register.

*Indian Village Site (Sutherland)* – Also known as the Wittrock Indian Village State Park, this site was listed with the National Register in 1966. The historical significance of this site includes informational and prehistoric Native American artifacts. The cultural affiliation with this site is tied to Middle Missouri and Mill Creek. The periods of influence date back to 500 to 1000 A.D.

*O'Brien County Courthouse (Pringhar)* – The cornerstone for county government in O'Brien County, even to this day, is located in the historic O'Brien County Courthouse, listed on the National Register in 1981 for its Beaux Arts style architecture, engineering, the architect and builder.

# CHAPTER 3. PLANNING BACKGROUND & PUBLIC INPUT

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## **BACKGROUND OF COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING IN SHELDON**

The Northwest Iowa Planning and Development Commission (NWIPDC), formed in 1973, is responsible for coordinating activities in the region and assisting member governments with technical assistance and planning projects. The formation of NWIPDC marked the first real effort of a genuine “regional” planning commission in northwest Iowa. The City of Sheldon, similar to many other cities and counties across northwest Iowa initiated its first planning efforts in the 1970s by participating in a 701 Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Urban Planning Assistance Program. The original planning effort in Sheldon consisted of working with the Northwest Iowa Area 3 Regional Council of Governments (previous name of the NWIPDC) to complete the city’s first comprehensive plan. Sheldon’s first comprehensive plan was completed in 1977.

For almost 25 years, the planning and zoning commission, board of adjustment and city council utilized the city’s original comprehensive plan in making land use decisions to guide zoning issues and support growth within the community. However, by the early 2000s the city’s demographics, population, housing and economic conditions of the community changed. It became evident the city needed to update its land use policy document. During 2003-2004, the city once again worked with NWIPDC to complete an update of the Sheldon Comprehensive Plan.

In the fall of 2014, city officials once again indicated a need to update the city’s planning documents, especially with interest in community growth, annexations and land use policies affecting future growth trends. Sheldon city staff sought the planning assistance of the regional Council of Governments (NWIPDC). Northwest Iowa Planning and Development Commission staff planners initiated the third revision and update to the Sheldon comprehensive plan in December 2014. Once the city’s comprehensive plan update is completed, the Planning and Zoning Commission and city staff may also review the city’s zoning ordinance and subdivision ordinance regulations, to be consistent with the new goals and policies outlined in this land use planning document.

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND INPUT**

Sheldon city officials and staff have initiated several actions to ensure public input is an integral part of the comprehensive planning process. In an effort to better understand the current state of planning services within the community, Northwest Iowa Planning & Development Commission provided the city with an informational questionnaire intended to develop an overview of current planning activities in Sheldon and services offered by the community. This survey was distributed in January 2015 and the resulting input provided by members of the city staff and Planning Commission contributed an important role in providing information to support the update of the city’s comprehensive plan.

In addition to working with city staff, local officials, and the Sheldon Planning Commission, direct public input from the community’s residents is also an important part in developing a comprehensive plan representative of the citizen interests as well. Sheldon’s public participation involved the direct solicitation of public comments through a community wide survey.

The following public community planning survey was distributed to every one of the city’s utility customers in Sheldon. In early January 2015. There were 86 completed surveys returned to the city offering public thoughts, comments and suggestions on what makes Sheldon a great place to live and how to make Sheldon an even greater place.

## **SHELDON COMMUNITY PLANNING SURVEY**

### **City of Sheldon Community Visioning**

The following community visioning survey will provide Sheldon city officials valuable information to assist them in creating future community decisions and input into the city’s updated comprehensive land use plan. Please consider the following questions and think about how the city can strive to make Sheldon a greater place than it already is.

**COMMUNITY ACCOMPLISHMENTS:** PLEASE IDENTIFY ANY RECENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS OR SUCCESSES THE CITY OF SHELDON HAS ACHIEVED?

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_

**VALUES OR STRENGTHS OF OUR COMMUNITY:** WHAT ARE THE CURRENT STRENGTHS OR OPPORTUNITIES THAT MAKE SHELDON A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE?

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_

**ISSUES AND/OR CONCERNS:** WHAT ISSUES, CONCERNS, TRENDS OR CHALLENGES WILL THE CITY OF SHELDON NEED TO ADDRESS IN THE NEXT 10-15 YEARS? WHAT CAN BE IMPROVED IN SHELDON?

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_

**MOVING FORWARD – LEADING SHELDON INTO THE FUTURE:** PLEASE IDENTIFY ANY INITIATIVES, PROGRAMS, POLICIES OR ACTIVITIES YOU THINK THE CITY OF SHELDON SHOULD CONSIDER OR PLAN FOR IN THE NEXT 10-15 YEARS?

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:** PLEASE FEEL FREE TO SHARE WITH THE CITY ANY COMMENTS OR SUGGESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE REGARDING THE FUTURE OF SHELDON.

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## ANALYSIS OF PLANNING SURVEY RESULTS

The public input process generated several responses, ideas, concepts and suggestions pertaining to the future growth, development and land use composition of the community. Following is a compilation and summarization of the raw data and comments received from the Sheldon Community Planning Survey. This is followed up by a brief analysis of the results from the community survey and what these comments may mean for Sheldon's future land use goals, policies or decision making in the community.

## COMMUNITY ACCOMPLISHMENTS - recent accomplishments or successes of the city

### (#1 Community Accomplishment)

- Streets/curb/sidewalks/parking (downtown) (11)
- Upgrading the airport
- Additional rental housing available (3)
- LLRC (3)
- Hosting RAGBRAI (2)
- Sheldon Crossing Subdivision (10)
- Downtown improvements (8)
- Enlargement of Fieldcrest Assisted Living
- City trails (2)
- Collaboration with NCC
- School ball fields/sports complex (5)
- Drawing in new businesses (2)
- Housing/residential development (5)
- Golf Course
- Industrial park development on east side
- Moving forward with plans for borrow pit (3)
- Outstanding fire/rescue departments
- Farmers Market at the Depot
- Demolition of the bowling alley
- Community growth (2)
- Parade day/community celebrations
- Have a great police force
- Hwy. 18 conversion into 3 lanes (2)
- Population growth
- A great and safe community
- Outside pool/aquatic center
- Highway 60 bypass
- Changing street lights

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Highest Priority for Sheldon's accomplishments

- Beautification of downtown Sheldon (7)
- Well organized law enforcement
- RAGBRAI/Celebration Days/Community Events (2)
- Ball Fields/Sports Complex (5)
- Increasing number of building permits in 2014
- More rental properties/affordable housing (2)
- Schools (2)
- New streets/development east side of town (3)
- New residential lots at Sheldon Crossing (6)
- Trying to start new traditions
- New housing developments (4)
- Everyone pulls together to get things done
- Development of Runger Addition
- Identifying a need for events center (2)
- Industrial park development on east side (6)
- Nice bike trails
- Planning new rental housing projects
- NCC – love the rec center
- Outdoor swimming pool/aquatic center
- Clean up of demolished bowling alley
- New well
- Fireworks in Village Northwest
- Sheldon Crossing commercial dev. (3)
- 2013 State Basketball Championship
- Converting empty buildings
- New community park plans
- Looking hard at affordable housing

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Highest Priority for Sheldon's accomplishments

- New apartment building
- Hosting Risefest (2)
- SCDC
- New housing developments on east side (5)
- New ball fields/sports complex (7)
- School addition/upgrades (2)
- Growth/opportunities at NCC (2)
- Keeping a junk yard in town
- Completing downtown improvements (6)
- Industrial park development on east side (4)
- East side park
- Continue to expand water access/quality
- City's trails
- Maintainer expansion
- Clean up of the old bowling alley
- More development by the bypass

**VALUES OR STRENGTHS OF OUR COMMUNITY - what makes Sheldon a great place to live**

(#1 Community Strength)

- Great schools (public & private) & NCC (20)
- Upgrading the airport
- Good leaders in the community (3)
- Community events/celebrations
- Job opportunities (3)
- Opportunities to purchase affordable housing
- Good park system & trails (3)
- The Sheldon community – people are welcoming/friendly (4)
- The resident’s values (2)
- Willingness to spend money to make money
- Small community – small is not a bad thing (7)
- A safe community
- Good ambulance/fire/police departments
- A good family place to live (2)
- Access to transportation
- Faith/Churches (5)
- School/sports complex land
- Good choice of stores/shopping (3)
- Strong downtown/improvements downtown (2)
- Friendly/welcoming community
- A desire to continue to grow (2)
- Good streets
- New ball fields/sports complex
- Strong work ethic
- Wide range of professional & health services
- Improved housing
- New retail businesses and local restaurants (2)
- A variety of things to do
- Low taxes

2<sup>nd</sup> Highest Priority for Sheldon’s strengths

- Hospital (2)
- Well organized law enforcement (2)
- LLRC (3)
- City becoming more proactive
- A variety of businesses for shopping (7)
- Good schools/NCC/academics (12)
- Availability of medical services (2)
- Well-mannered/good values community (3)
- Opening up areas for residential development (3)
- Churches (6)
- Long tenured employers in the community
- A safe/clean/peaceful community (5)
- Keeping family first – good place to start a family (2)
- A variety of activities to keep one occupied
- Good neighborhoods
- Affordable housing (2)
- Recreation activities & trails
- Great community location along Hwy. 60 (2)
- No Wal-Mart yet – keep them out
- City’s ball fields/sports complex (2)
- Well rounded business & industry sector (2)
- Many employment opportunities
- Locally owned hometown businesses
- Downtown retail is strong
- Parks and camping facilities
- Freedom from government (few ordinances)

3<sup>rd</sup> Highest Priority for Sheldon’s strengths

- Caring people
- Risefest (3)
- Pool/aquatic center & recreation activities (3)
- New housing
- Forward looking – housing, jobs, amenities
- Strong local commitment for residents
- Churches/values (5)
- Progressive city leadership (2)
- All things for quality life are found in Sheldon
- Sheldon crossing development
- Great places to shop, eat & play (6)
- Safe/clean community (4)
- Good school system/NCC (7)
- We are a polite/friendly town (3)
- Letting people do what they want in town
- Strong work ethic
- Good employment opportunities (2)
- Volunteers for community activities (2)
- City’s parks & recreation trail (2)
- New indoor pool & Holiday Inn partnership
- Prompt street maintenance
- Many people believe Sheldon is a great town
- Good healthcare system
- Variety of activities for people to do

**ISSUES AND/OR CONCERNS - What challenges will the City needs to address in 10-15 years**

(#1 Community Issue/Concern)

- Need clean, well-kept rental properties (5)
- Jobs that pay a decent wage
- Need for rental properties for the working class
- Entrance corridors should be beautified
- Working together with a common vision
- Water problems/need good water source (5)
- New developments may leave empty housing
- Getting young people to stay in town (2)
- Better service – roads/sidewalks maintained (10)
- Fix 16<sup>th</sup> Street (2)
- Not much social night life for families-no karaoke
- More trail expansion
- Keeping up with technology – citywide Wi-Fi
- Support business/industry that want to expand (8)
- Try to keep businesses (downtown) open (8)
- Shrinking population
- Entertainment for teenagers
- Promote low income housing developments (2)
- All businesses need to stay open late (9 p.m.)
- Establish safe trail on Country Club Rd.
- Bring in more restaurants/Wal-Mart (3)
- Get rid of junk yard in Sheldon
- New bowling alley at old Hy-Vee store
- Accept and embrace diversity/be better people (2)
- Too many mosquitos
- Additional parking at LLRC for city rec activities
- Question city’s decision to offer housing lots and 10 year abatement for “affordable” housing (2)
- We have a lot of deteriorating older homes
- Need to address recycling problems
- Concerns over slope and grade of drives and walks
- Traffic enforcement
- Historic value of the community – RR Depot
- Snow removal (downtown bump outs) (3)
- Need an Events Center (4)
- City needs to expand
- Limit spending on projects like downtown
- Christmas lights (2)
- City needs open communication with residents
- Need for a senior center
- Need retail businesses for lower income families
- Middle class housing for families (80K-120K)

2<sup>nd</sup> Highest Priority for Sheldon’s concerns

- Need to keep properties clean & up to code (5)
- Upkeep of the community building and library
- Fill empty buildings/businesses downtown (6)
- City appearance and perception-is it inviting? (2)
- City needs to look at efficient water, electrical and recycling
- Attracting employers for local businesses (2)
- Need good paying jobs/industry (3)
- Fix storm sewer/drainage in the community (2)
- Building code
- City to be more aggressive on spending to improve the community – so people will come
- Need stores on the south side of 9<sup>th</sup> St.
- Keep city streets in good repair (4)
- Strengthen/support local businesses (3)
- Need new Christmas lights for the city
- Do not pick on the less fortunate
- Lower priced clothing stores
- Develop campground/housing by golf course
- Finish what was started with the Events Center
- Address rising crime rate
- Replace the bowling alley
- Need more for young people & children to do
- Parking in downtown
- Need to address water conservation
- Low income housing around Fieldcrest not a good idea
- Need affordable housing/rental options (3)
- Need to work together
- Need improvements in local parks (2)
- Large truck stop near the expressway
- Stray animal control
- New ball fields will require maintenance
- Affordable healthcare and childcare

3<sup>rd</sup> Highest Priority for Sheldon’s concerns

- Need a better variety of affordable shopping
- Maintain an adequate workforce
- Promote local shopping/stores (3)
- Dealing with a diverse population (3)
- Snow removal (3)
- Do more recycling (2)
- Nuisance properties/enforcement (2)
- Need more industry (2)
- Support our Police/Fire/EMT (2)
- Continue working on affordable housing (2)
- Promote more kindness and open minds
- Fill empty stores (4)
- Need a new bowling alley
- Clean up and make entrances pleasant to the city

- Have more activities to bring people to Sheldon
- Concern that east side development will overlook downtown businesses
- Affordable healthcare
- Concern for illegal drug use
- Water and waste issues
- Safer roads
- Events Center
- Volunteerism is down
- City needs to be proactive – don't sit on hands

## MOVING FORWARD – LEADING SHELDON INTO THE FUTURE

### (#1 Future vision for Sheldon)

- Activities for youth in the community (5)
- Upgrade appearance of downtown buildings
- Library leadership/improvements (2)
- Attract a travel plaza/truck stop by Hwy. 60
- Combine crazy days and hot dog days
- Incentives for people to move to town
- Attract industry/large retailers to Sheldon (9)
- Dog park (2)
- Online billing for city utilities
- Events Center (5)
- Clean up dilapidated properties in town (4)
- Continue affordable housing (2)
- Need a good, safe sledding area (4)
- Create a Harvest Festival
- Stricter zoning laws
- Concern over closing stores downtown
- Complete trail loop around Sheldon
- Add classes at NCC
- More interesting Labor Day parade
- Attract and retain healthcare workers
- Larger indoor swimming pool (for swim team)
- Glass recycling/recycling in general (2)
- Place to purchase youth clothing in town
- Strong leadership from the city (2)
- RV park/camping by borrow pit (4)
- Connect to Lewis & Clark water or new wells (2)
- Need a bowling alley again
- Create a “Shop with a Cop” program
- Maintain/replace old sewer & water mains
- Improve parks (3)
- Evaluate pool hours and times it is open
- Evening daycare
- Vendor fair for local vendors in Sheldon
- Promote tours of local businesses/industry
- Step up street improvement schedule
- More entertainment in Sheldon
- Need better snow removal
- A place to have bingo night/senior center (2)
- Ensure tax structure is balanced for everyone
- Consider special assessments on projects

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Highest Priority for Sheldon's future

- Winter activities/sports/skiing (2)
- Affordable family entertainment (2)
- Completing the city's trail loop (2)
- Events center near Holiday Inn
- Enhance city's recreation program
- Pay student loans of graduates moving to Sheldon
- The town/city entrances need to be attractive (4)
- Karaoke bar, country bar or something
- 1 Saturday per month – clean up days
- Support for small businesses
- Work on community unity/work together (2)
- Ice skating/sledding area (2)
- Keep the theatre open
- Continue work on affordable housing (3)
- Keep up Labor Day celebration
- Support downtown businesses – keep open (5)
- Make downtown planters more colorful
- Opportunities for new support groups
- Fix streets
- Attract new business/industry/large retail (6)
- Summer concert series – feature local artists
- Crosswalks on old Hwy. 60 (2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue)
- Car show with burn-out contest
- Additional land for industrial parks
- Make sure NCC stays open
- Need more family-oriented businesses
- Reduce taxes to attract business & expand tax base
- City sponsored health initiatives/Blue Zones (2)
- Need a General Motors (GM) auto dealer in town
- Develop business by south/southeast exists off 60
- Communicate city activities with residents
- Support Risefest
- Golf course clubhouse needs improvements
- Need a video store
- Camping and RV park opportunities
- City policy to check water lines in the house when bill is over-charged
- Concerns over water quantity and quality

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Highest Priority for Sheldon's future

- City representatives that listen to people
- Improve public works for better maintenance
- Camping/park area around borrow pit (2)
- More recycling

- Reduce the TIF taxable base or limit # of years
- Don't invest in parks, invest in jobs
- Work on entrance view from Hwy. 18
- Create a positive attitude toward Sheldon
- A 1<sup>st</sup> floor community center
- Support library, museum, Prairie Arts Council
- Create affordable housing at 100K-150K (2)
- Man-Made lake for camping/fishing
- Street improvements
- More city recreation activities
- Activities at downtown park
- Events Center (2)
- Bring back hot dog days (2)
- Build on existing land in town – not farmland

4<sup>th</sup> Highest Priority for Sheldon's future

- Fix residential streets
- Nuisance officer for city codes
- Create partnerships – NCC/businesses/people
- Don't chase out potential industry/businesses
- Open a bowling alley
- Incentives for residents to fix up housing (2)
- Create a logo or community "theme" for Sheldon
- More industry – promote Sheldon
- Camping by the borrow pit

5<sup>th</sup> Highest Priority for Sheldon's future

- Improve local medical care
- Outdoor soccer complex
- Attract employees to town
- Address adequate housing needs of the city
- Update city's website
- City Park next to the junk yard
- Sporting goods store
- Job training and job services
- Develop a municipal utilities system
- Make the city look the best it can
- Bring middle class housing and jobs to town

- Expand bike trail – connect the loop (4)
- National chain retail in downtown
- Continue with economic development activities
- Get rid of the "bump outs" on Main Street
- Christmas décor improved in town
- How to get people to invest in Sheldon
- Need stores and low rent housing downtown
- Consolidation discussion w/ Boyden-Hull, HMS
- Find ways to attract people to Sheldon
- NCC/City agreement for facility uses to public
- A place to play pool (billiards) in Sheldon
- Improve or expand the city library
- Would like to see a Wal-Mart
- Airport expansion/work with the County

- Improve home show
- Golf course clubhouse needs improvements
- Larger police force
- Fill vacant buildings downtown (2)
- Finish the rec trail (3)
- Employment exists – need people to work
- Retirement activities and healthcare for retirees
- Address water issues in the community
- Improve recreation programs and locations

**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS – Any additional comments or suggestions to share with the City**

- Forget the Events Center. We don't need it and it won't get used enough to spend the money on it. We have enough places already (school, NCC, comm. center). What big events are going to be using a large facility?
- Solve the recycle issue and get people who truly care about the common person.
- We think the pool should stay open later into the summer. Keep the downtown streets cleaner in the winter.
- Embrace the future while maintaining the small town attributes that makes people want to live here.
- Need to continue to work with local media in a cooperative effort to promote the "good" in Sheldon. Too many times negativity can result in a poor attitude with residents.
- This town is stagnant. Downtown is closing up. They are more expensive because there is no business. There is no business because no one will shop here. They can't afford it.
- It's an expensive place to live, especially tax-wise and utilities.
- Sheldon is a great town and has lots of potential
- White collar people run a lot of things. They have time to participate in lots of meetings and programs. We owe them many thanks. But just remember to try and get the help of the blue collar worker. Different ideas are good. Common sense goes a long way. Remember to use that as well. This is a great town full of great people so let's keep it that way, Okay.
- Must look to continue to grow in population; hard but needed. Continue to make Sheldon a destination because of shopping, schools, business, industry, churches, etc. We need a public relations person to really discuss positives about Sheldon. Almost a cheerleader – must push who we are.
- We are making good progress – keep it up.
- I like the way the city and school work together. I am proud of Sheldon and I think it is a great town to raise a family. Keep up the good work!
- I think the Chamber has made nice efforts to offer family activities throughout the year (especially at Christmas). Connecting our trail and all other attractions should continue to be explored.
- This survey is an awesome idea to get ideas flowing! No idea is dumb – gets people's imaginations going
- Town council needs to listen to people in the town. Farm more communities to research things before acting on matters. Vote on the need for a park, an events center, and camping.
- Keep up the good work
- I am surprised by how much Sioux Center has grown and what they have to offer compared to Sheldon. They are not even on the by-pass and they are expanding with gas stations, restaurants, etc. I think if Sheldon –elders- could see past what they think is good for the community is not and we could do so much more.
- I want to see them develop from Runger Addition straight north to the golf course. I want a golf course like all the other towns have around them – houses. And please get new businesses in town that employees 100-200 people. Events center with hotel by golf course to people can stay overnight, golf, and go to whatever maybe at the event center. Risefest can go there when it rains. Weddings! Houses around the golf course. Extend the bike trail out to this area around the golf course.
- Fix Oak and Pine Streets
- Too many trashy looking homes, cars parking on grass by houses, junk all over. Keep pool open through Labor Day – other towns do. Recreation Director could be there if additional help is needed. Also open earlier in the day.
- Due concern is keeping the downtown buildings filled with businesses. Sheldon could also use a new bowling alley, with a restaurant
- Continue to get more businesses
- Zone responsibly. If mistakes have been made, correct them. Then abide by them (zoning). Thank you for the opportunity to voice my opinion.

- We must try harder to bring new business downtown. Too many empty buildings. I have been hearing disturbing news about the heating/cooling system at the museum by the bakery. If it needs replacing – replace it. We have to take care of Sheldon’s history – we’ve already lost too much.
- Level pavement each of Hy-Vee
- All and all I feel the City Council is doing a lot of good things for Sheldon. I can definitely see a lot of improvements that came in the last few years. I do appreciate our city leaders.
- Please focus on bringing big business to downtown Sheldon. Use the bypass but don’t put all our attention out on Hwy. 18. We have many other exists that may help pull business to downtown. No I am not a business owner downtown.
- Probably new city leadership. More winter (outside) activities for kids (e. ice skating rink). Why when you clean streets do you leave large furrows at end of streets? We have to plow through. Why can’t you clear all intersections?
- I have noticed there are a lot of impatient people trying to get back on the highway from different businesses and trying to eat. The cars from the east are way too fast and sometimes it hard to know how close they are. Also, I think all the street lights on Highway 18 are way too dim. It’s really hard to see and I also think they should extend further out of Sheldon. I hate to drive down Highway 18 any time after 5:00 because it’s very congested and hard to see. I think it needs brighter lights and more of them.
- The City should fix the basketball court or make a soccer field to play.
- More special events in the spring, summer, fall. Music or entertainment. Develop the new park on the east side of Sheldon Crossings. A new campground for RVs.
- Make a better way to inform the public if current events. Let public know all information on what you do. Make a note that Sheldon has a lot of elder people who do not use computer so how about a monthly information paper with the water bills.
- I see Sheldon of the future filled with a variety of interesting retail shops and downtown sidewalks filled with shoppers. Downtown doing so well that all lots within 8 blocks of it are filled with houses because people enjoy walking to downtown. Maybe even row houses 2-3 stories tall where middle school once was. Architects are drawn to this city because people have money to spend and they are interested in making Sheldon beautiful.
- The city park needs repairs and is also not accommodating for small children
- Why are we building that bid double ball diamond by the school. Looks like a lot of wasted money. Yet the city didn’t try to keep the motocross track that brought in a lot of people and gave kids some place to hang out and have fun. That was something a lot of people miss.
- What is the city’s relationship with businesses? Example, did the city talk to Bomgaars about buying that building at where it is in now, to find out how the city could help move that process along?
- Basically, I think Sheldon is a good, safe, place to live. Good schools, lots of Churches and friendly people. Would you like to see some properties cleared up, especially any properties along highways.
- Stop giving land away.
- It is not always good to cancel Hot Dog days, Ice Cream days. That shows customer appreciation. More people will feel appreciated. They will come to this town and spend money.
- Thanks for this opportunity! Sheldon is growing in all areas. Keep up the good work. I’m proud of this community. Is it possible to get JC Penny back in town - Wolf Building? Re-activate the slogan! Shopping Center of N.W. Iowa. Promote our airport – they don’t need one in Sioux County.
- We have excellent leadership – find ways to get more citizens involved and active
- Nice place to live
- This may seem small, but our downtown Christmas lights are an embarrassment. They are so pitiful it would look better to have none. Surely we can do as well as smaller towns around us, who all have better ones. Ours are so dim they hardly show up. I’ve never seen worse.
- As I am near 102 years old – 1912 – August 25. I really just enjoy living here. All is good.
- Kudos to Mayor, councilmembers, City Manager, SCDC for so much effort and time to make Sheldon a wonderful place to live.
- Need more stores, eating places, factories and jobs.

- This has been a great community to raise a family and we will need to continue to make it such a community. Continue to balance job opportunities, with recreational opportunities, health care, education, religions, and keeping a solid family base. Traditions and Midwest culture is important (keeping this a safe town to live in!) to hold onto. Thanks for all the city efforts to date!
- Going backwards, so sad!
- Put more Christmas lights downtown. The “puny” bows were not enough. String lights and greenery down poles and downtown poles. Snowflakes on highway need bigger bulbs or something (barely noticeable).
- Need new Christmas lights, something to brighten things up.
- More information on what activities are going on, so we know before it’s over and then find out.
- Currently when you call 911 you can count on an ambulance responding. This is not the case in some surrounding communities. In my opinion, we need to do all we can to support this most important entity and the residents of Sheldon. We are known for being one of the best resources in the area.
- Be careful of city-funded enterprises such as an event center. Government should protect its citizens from each other, foster an economic climate for growth, and look to maintain infrastructure for growth. Help businesses/residents help the city, letting them fill market demands, not the city running programs/entities themselves.

**Summary of Community Accomplishments in Sheldon – results from public survey**

The top five (5) results of the public’s number one (#1) highest community accomplishments in Sheldon, Iowa are:

- |   |             |
|---|-------------|
| 1. Streets/curb/sidewalk/parking improvements in downtown Sheldon       | 11 comments |
| 2. Sheldon crossing subdivision and improvements                        | 10 comments |
| 3. General downtown Sheldon improvements                                | 8 comments  |
| 4. New ball fields/sports complex by the school                         | 5 comment   |
| New housing and residential development being built                     | 5 comments  |
| 5. Additional rental housing being made available                       | 3 comments  |
| The Lifelong Living Recreation Center (LLRC) at NCC campus              | 3 comments  |
| Moving forward with plans to develop the borrow pit by Sheldon Crossing | 3 comments  |

The top five (5) results of the public’s number two (#2) highest community accomplishments in Sheldon, Iowa are:

- |   |            |
|---|------------|
| 1. Beautification improvements in downtown Sheldon                    | 7 comments |
| 2. Industrial park development on the city’s east side                | 6 comments |
| New residential development occurring at Sheldon Crossing             | 6 comments |
| 3. New ball fields/sports complex by the school                       | 5 comments |
| 4. New housing developments throughout the community                  | 4 comments |
| 5. New streets/infrastructure and development on the city’s east side | 3 comments |
| The Sheldon Crossing commercial development                           | 3 comments |

The top five (5) results of the public’s number three (#3) highest community accomplishments in Sheldon, Iowa are:

- |   |            |
|---|------------|
| 1. New ball fields/sports complex by the school                       | 7 comments |
| 2. Completing the downtown infrastructure/beautification improvements | 6 comments |
| 3. New housing developments occurring on the city’s east side         | 5 comments |
| 4. Industrial park development on the city’s east side                | 4 comments |
| 5. The community hosting Risefest                                     | 2 comments |
| Recent school additions and upgrades                                  | 2 comments |
| Growth and new opportunities at NCC                                   | 2 comments |

In reviewing the top five (5) most comments about the priorities for accomplishments in Sheldon, one can begin to see some occurring in what the public perceives as good projects the city has accomplished in recent years. The top overall accomplishment as identified by residents of Sheldon is the recent infrastructure and street improvements in downtown Sheldon. Other top accomplishments identified by the community include the recent developments at the Sheldon Crossing area in the east part of the community, along with the nearly completed ball field/sports complex being constructed on the public schools campus along Highway 18. New residential developments being built in Sheldon also garnered the attention of Sheldon residents when responding to recent accomplishments in the community.

**Summary of Values or Strengths of the Community – results from public survey**

The top five (5) results of the public’s number one (#1) values or positive attributes of the community are:

- |   |             |
|---|-------------|
| 1. Great schools in Sheldon (private & public) & NCC campus             | 20 comments |
| 2. Living in a small community is not a bad thing (positive attributes) | 7 comments  |
| 3. Faith/religion/churches in the community                             | 5 comments  |
| 4. The Sheldon community – people are welcoming & friendly              | 4 comments  |
| 5. Good leaders in the community  | 3 comments  |
| Job opportunities available   | 3 comments  |
| Good parks system & trails  | 3 comments  |
| Good selection of retail stores and shopping                            | 3 comments  |

The top five (5) results of the public’s number two (#2) highest values or positive attributes of the community are:

- |  |             |
|--|-------------|
| 1. Good schools & NCC campus – good academics      | 12 comments |
| 2. A variety of businesses for shopping choices    | 7 comments  |
| 3. Faith/churches in Sheldon                       | 6 comments  |
| 4. A safe, clean and peaceful community to live in | 5 comments  |
| 5. The Lifelong Learning Recreation Center at NCC  | 3 comments  |
| Well-mannered & good values in the community       | 3 comments  |
| The city opening up new areas for development      | 3 comments  |

The top five (5) results of the public’s number three (#3) highest values or positive attributes of the community area:

- |   |            |
|---|------------|
| 1. Good school system & NCC campus                | 7 comments |
| 2. Sheldon is a great place to shop, eat and play | 6 comments |
| 3. Churches/faith/values                          | 5 comments |
| 4. Sheldon is a safe and clean community          | 4 comments |
| 5. The community hosting Risefest                 | 3 comments |
| The pool/aquatic center & recreation activities   | 3 comments |

In reviewing the top five (5) most comments pertaining to the strengths, values or positive attributes of living in Sheldon, it is very clear to see the top priorities for the community. By far and away, the number one positive attribute in the first, second and third priorities is the city’s affection towards its community, private and college educational opportunities. Other top strengths clearly identified in Sheldon include the positive aspects of living in a small community, along with the sense of living in a safe and clean community. Many people also commented that the

strong sense of faith, religion and the many church opportunities in Sheldon are also a highly valued attribute of the community.

**Summary of Issues or Concerns facing the Community today – results from public survey**

The top five (5) results of the public’s number one (#1) identified issues or concerns in the community:

- |   |             |
|---|-------------|
| 1. A need for better community service – maintain streets/sidewalks | 10 comments |
| 2. Supporting existing businesses that want to expand               | 8 comments  |
| Try to keep businesses to stay in the downtown                      | 8 comments  |
| 3. The need for clean and well-kept rental properties               | 5 comments  |
| Address water problems in the community – need good water source    | 5 comments  |
| 4. The need for an events center                                    | 4 comments  |
| 5. Bring in more retail businesses (restaurants & Wal-Mart)         | 3 comments  |
| Address issues with snow removal & the downtown bump outs           | 3 comments  |

The top five (5) results of the public’s number two (#2) identified issues or concerns in the community:

- |  |            |
|--|------------|
| 1. A need to fill empty buildings/businesses in downtown         | 6 comments |
| 2. Need to keep properties clean & up to code                    | 5 comments |
| 3. Keep city streets in good repair                              | 4 comments |
| 4. Need to strengthen and support local businesses               | 3 comments |
| Need for affordable housing and rental options                   | 3 comments |
| Need for good paying jobs & new industry                         | 3 comments |
| 5. Is the city’s appearance and perception inviting to outsiders | 2 comments |
| Attract employees for local businesses                           | 2 comments |
| Fix storm sewer & drainage problems in the city                  | 2 comments |
| Need improvements in local parks                                 | 2 comments |

The top results of the public’s number three (#3) identified issues or concerns in the community:

- |  |            |
|--|------------|
| 1. Fill empty stores in downtown Sheldon               | 4 comments |
| 2. Encourage people to shop in local stores            | 3 comments |
| Dealing with a diverse population                      | 3 comments |
| Snow removal issues in the community                   | 3 comments |
| 3. Encourage more recycling in the community           | 2 comments |
| Remove nuisance properties & enforce nuisance laws     | 2 comments |
| Need more industries and industrial/manufacturing jobs | 2 comments |
| Support our Police/Fire/EMT personnel                  | 2 comments |
| Continue working on affordable housing alternatives    | 2 comments |

In reviewing the top issues and concerns perceived in the community today, the comments received from residents of Sheldon were much more diverse than previous categories. With that said, there were some concerns of residents that seemed to have higher priorities than others. The overall top issue or concern of Sheldon residents relates to better community service in regards to maintaining streets and sidewalks. The need to fill empty stores and attract businesses to downtown Sheldon also ranked high across all three priorities. Other top issues and concerns of Sheldon residents include keeping properties clean, as well as the need to attract new businesses and jobs to Sheldon.

**Summary of Moving Forward in Sheldon-looking toward the Future-results from public survey**

The top five (5) results of the public’s number one (#1) vision for Sheldon’s future are:

- |   |            |
|---|------------|
| 1. Attract future industry and large retailers to Sheldon       | 9 comments |
| 2. Build an events center                                       | 5 comments |
| Need activities for youth in the community                      | 5 comments |
| 3. Clean up dilapidated properties in Sheldon                   | 4 comments |
| Need for a good and safe sledding area                          | 4 comments |
| Develop an RV/camping park near one of the borrow pits          | 4 comments |
| 4. Improve existing parks                                       | 3 comments |
| 5. Need for improvements at the Library                         | 2 comments |
| Create a dog park in Sheldon                                    | 2 comments |
| Continue developing affordable housing options                  | 2 comments |
| Improve recycling efforts including glass recycling             | 2 comments |
| Need strong leadership from the city                            | 2 comments |
| Explore options for better water quality (wells or rural water) | 2 comments |
| Have a senior center – a place to play bingo                    | 2 comments |

The top five (5) results of the public’s number two (#2) highest vision for Sheldon’s future are:

- |  |            |
|--|------------|
| 1. Attract new large retail and industry businesses to Sheldon     | 6 comments |
| 2. Support downtown businesses – encourage them to remain open     | 5 comments |
| 3. The city’s entrances need to be attractive/welcoming            | 4 comments |
| 4. Continue working on affordable housing                          | 3 comments |
| 5. Add winter activities and sports to city recreation activities  | 2 comments |
| Create affordable family entertainment                             | 2 comments |
| Complete the city’s trail loop                                     | 2 comments |
| Promote better community unity/learn to work together              | 2 comments |
| Create an ice skating/sledding area in the community               | 2 comments |
| Support and participate in healthy initiatives/Blue Zones projects | 2 comments |

The top results of the public’s third (#3), fourth (#4) and fifth (#5) highest vision for Sheldon’s future are:

- |   |            |
|---|------------|
| 1. Expand, connect and complete the city’s trail  | 7 comments |
| 2. Create a camping/park area around a borrow pit | 2 comments |
| Build an events center                            | 2 comments |
| Create additional affordable housing              | 2 comments |
| Bring back Hot Dog Days                           | 2 comments |
| Create incentives for residents to fix up housing | 2 comments |
| Encourage the occupancy of downtown buildings     | 2 comments |

Note: there are several additional comments in which only 1 person commented on a particular vision for Sheldon’s future.

In reviewing the top vision statements identified by residents of Sheldon, the comments received provide a picture of what projects the community may consider in the future. The top vision statement for Sheldon’s future, as indicated by local residents, is for the city to recruit large retailers, businesses and industry to locate in Sheldon. Additional top vision statements for the community include building an events center, completing the city’s trail loop and creating activities specific for the youth in the community. Creating a new RV/camping area, continuing efforts to address affordable housing, and promoting the clean-up of dilapidated or nuisance properties in Sheldon also received higher comment totals.

## **Survey Results of SHELDON Comp Plan Survey (Raw Data)** **From Planning Commissioners, City Staff and Community Leaders**

### **Agricultural Land Uses**

- We need to have some ag land to be developed. I see no conflicts.
- Regarding impact from confinements or ag industry, I feel we should need to keep them far enough from city limits so there is no odor problem.
- Regarding conflicts with ag uses, there are not that I am aware of.
- Some of the area confinements sometimes cause odors, but neither is near a large residential area
- Regarding ag use conflicts, not that I've seen
- Not sure about land usage, but they do impact other areas such as general appearance, housing, employment, etc.
- Yes, there are conflicts. Livestock next door to homes; can be an issue and messy
- What impact is there – odors
- No potential conflicts with other uses
- No impact from ag uses
- Agriculture is changing, just like urban areas, they need to work together in the best possible way. No conflicts that I know.
- They help to support businesses in town

### **Residential Land Uses**

- Regarding what types of residential uses are needed – single family, condos, senior independent housing
- Regarding concerns over urban sprawl or uncontrolled growth – if they receive city services, they should pay city and local taxes
- Affordability is always an issue, but not the only issue. Location to schools, recreation and safety are also concerns.
- The city has expanded its residential land which has been a good move for the city. The east side is a good place to expand.
- Single family will come if there are lots for sale. Multifamily residential is important for the low to moderate income.
- Regarding concerns over uncontrolled growth – it depends how far out the development is. If there is ag land between the city and development, they should not use city water and sewer unless the developer wants to pay to have it hooked it.
- We are somewhat limited in what can be developed so we should take what we can – where we can.
- Regarding affordable housing – if people have the money and want a new house the price will not be a factor, but there is a need for affordable housing.
- It seems like east and west sides are more industry. Houses could go to the north or south sides – north of the hospital and south of 16<sup>th</sup> Street.
- We have nothing for senior independent housing. It is difficult for young families/people at NCC to find housing.
- Regarding concerns over urban sprawl or uncontrolled growth – what do neighboring towns do or have in place?
- The mobile homes on south and west sides of town are depressing. Can we help them relocate or clean up their areas? What regulations do we have about renters or property owners who don't keep up their places?
- Yes, there are a lot of rental homes that are in poor condition. It would be nice to have some new middle range homes built so they are affordable but nice for a starter home/young family. Houses with a small yard, not apartments (like the housing area north of the ball fields and daycare in Sioux Center).
- Regarding types of housing needed – single family residential, apartments and condos
- No concerns over urban sprawl and yes, residents receiving city services should be brought into the city limits
- Natural characteristics, social and economic factors hugely affect housing
- Pricing and value do have an effect on new housing in Sheldon.

- We hope to see future growth – to the south and east
- Regarding the types of housing needed – low income single family dwellings
- It's nice to have a plan. Yes, if houses have city services, they should be brought into the city limits
- Pricing and value do have an effect on new housing; yes affordable housing is an issue in Sheldon
- Yes, new housing should grow in the east and north
- All types of housing are needed
- No concerns over urban sprawl issues
- No, pricing and value do not affect housing in Sheldon. Yes, need more affordable housing
- Yes, new housing should expand to the north and south, and also the east.
- Types of housing needed include affordable residential and condos. I work with several people that live in different towns.
- Yes, residents receiving services should be brought in the city limits
- Yes, affordable housing is an issue in Sheldon
- New housing growth should occur south of the railroad tracks that go to Sanborn
- Not sure if more housing is needed right now; we need to finish what is started
- No concerns over urban sprawl issues. Unsure if residences outside of the city receiving city services should be brought into the city limits.
- Social and economic factors affect housing by how many dollars they have to spend on new housing and maintaining current housing.
- Yes, price and value of housing have an effect on development in Sheldon. Unsure if affordable housing is an option.

## Commercial Land Uses

- Commercial uses should occur close to transportation. I would think we would want to expand along the fringe.
- For future growth, I think we would want to leave a buffer for future residential expansion for future years
- They should have a permit to have a home based business. Depending on the level or type of business, they should be allowed in residential, but they should have a permit so the city knows they exist and can have some control.
- Commercial development should grow along Highway 18 as well as old Hwy. 60 going south. By the Hwy 60 bypass would be the most appealing. Downtown is a great place for retail.
- Commercial development would be okay to be near residential housing, but not in.
- Regarding home based businesses, if the business is quiet enough that the neighbors don't complain it should not be a problem. If it starts to look like a business, then it's a problem
- We don't want commercial on all sides, then there's no place for residential to grow.
- Regarding proximity of commercial to residential – no, who wants to live next to a grocery store or gas station.
- An office in a home would not deter them from being a good neighbor.
- We must think long term, as well as outside the box
- All areas of town are ideal for commercial growth
- No, commercial development should be permitted in or near residential
- Home occupations should be permitted within reason
- Regarding future growth of commercial development – it depends where it fits best
- Regarding whether commercial development should locate in or near residential – it depends on the business it is
- Home occupations need to be reviewed. What does the city code say?
- Highway 18 & 60 corridors is where future commercial growth should occur.
- Low impact commercial development would be okay in or near residential uses
- Home occupations should not be permitted liberally, and should have a greater level of scrutiny
- Commercial development should occur along major transportation corridors and the fringe of the community.
- Commercial uses should not be permitted in or near residential developments, they should be located in commercial developments
- Home occupations should be liberally permitted

- New commercial development should occur along the highways
- No commercial development should occur in or near residential
- Home occupations should be liberally permitted.

## **Industrial Land Uses**

- Industrial development should occur along or close to transportation
- Yes, Sheldon should be welcoming to all types of industrial uses unless it is dangerous to the city and/or natural resources
- There is very little room if any left in the industrial park southwest of town. So it would have to be by CAT or across from there. O'Brien County, Iowa – try to tap into the wind energy since it is so close.
- Industrial development should expand by CAT. They don't need to be in the city limits, but if they need infrastructure it would be a good idea.
- Regarding the desire for specific types of industrial uses – take what you can get – they don't seem to be standing at the door – or the edge of town trying to get in.
- Industrial uses should stay away from residential uses.
- Manufacturing, alternative energy, value-added industry should all have growth in the next 10 years for Sheldon to grow.
- Industrial development should occur east of Sheldon – near or across from Caterpillar
- Regarding the types of industrial businesses targeted – Ideally, businesses requiring educated staff and employees
- Regarding conflicts with industrial uses – we can work to enhance & beautify our existing industrial & residential areas. More bushes, trees, wind breaks, landscaping, etc.
- Sheldon should look toward manufacturing and alternative energy industries
- Industrial development should be encouraged to located along the fringe of the community, and within city limits
- No Sheldon should not necessarily welcome all industries. Yes, the city should target specific industries
- Yes, there are concerns, conflicts or issues regarding the relationship between industrial land uses
- Future industrial development depends how aggressive our economic development group is.
- Industrial growth should be located wherever they will fit and yes they should be in the city limits
- Sheldon should target industries, but don't close the door on anyone
- I do not see significant industrial growth in the future of Sheldon
- Industrial development should occur in the east part of Sheldon in designated areas
- Sheldon should be very open-minded about industries
- No concerns, conflicts or issues with industries in Sheldon
- I would hope to see continued industrial growth
- Industrial development should occur east of the bypass
- Sheldon should welcome all types of industries
- Sheldon will see steady industrial growth
- Industrial development should occur on the eastside of Hwy 60 bypass
- Sheldon should be selective of industries
- Regarding conflicts with industries – follow all rules that are in place

## **Community Facility and Public Land Uses**

- I do not see community facility or public uses growing in the near term
- Yes, we as a community should always make sure that public land uses are safe and available buy a safe public path, etc.
- I would like to see more healthcare jobs like in Hospers – has the dialysis
- Regarding the relationship of public land uses and neighboring residential or commercial – I don't think it should be a problem
- I see no concerns, conflicts or issues with community facility land uses

- I like the idea of a unique event center in the area east of town, positioning it by the pond area and making it a classy place for weddings and other large banquets. It cannot just be functional. To appeal to a variety of groups, it should fit into the landscape of the area. It needs to be special or they will just go down the road to Orange City to host their event.
- Since we live in a flat area of the county, it would be nice to have a sledding hill – grass covered – by the east side of town/pit area. Hills Park is okay but too many trees – sometimes not safe for sledding.
- Do not see community facilities growing in the future
- Yes, consideration should be given toward community facility and neighboring residential/commercial uses
- The city should maintain some public land uses while developing other areas & uses
- Community facility and public land uses should be located wherever they fit
- Special considerations should be given for community facility land uses if necessary
- No concerns, conflicts or issues with community facilities
- Community facilities will likely expand to the east
- Regarding any special considerations for community facilities uses – not really
- No concerns, conflicts or issues with community facilities
- Yes, maybe more public areas
- Yes, there should be special considerations upon the impact of community facility uses
- No concerns, conflicts or issues with community facilities

### **Natural Resource/Environmental Land Uses**

- Yes, Sheldon should encourage the expansion of natural resource areas, because once these areas are gone they are difficult to get back. Natural resources are good for aesthetics, air quality, etc.
- I don't feel it would be a problem regarding the effect upon natural resources from development of other uses
- There should be a buffer zone, so the neighbors don't have the industrial noise
- Sheldon should encourage the expansion of natural resources, but I think it is pretty good right now
- Our borrow pit has already been designated a wetlands mitigation area, so there will be measures in place to protect it.
- Yes, there should be protective measures such as buffers in place to protect natural resources
- Yes, Sheldon should encourage natural resource protection – I love the outdoors and enjoy nature
- Regarding how the expansion of other uses will effect natural resources – it depends on how this expansion is handled. Use common sense and foresight.
- Yes, there should be protective measures such as buffers in place to protect natural resources
- Yes, Sheldon should encourage natural resource protection.
- No impact upon natural resources from development or expansion of other uses
- Yes, there should be protective measures such as buffers in place to protect natural resources
- No, Sheldon should not encourage the expansion of natural resource protection areas
- No impact upon natural resources from development or expansion of other uses
- Yes, there should be protective measures such as buffers in place to protect natural resources
- Yes, Sheldon should encourage natural resource protection.
- We need to protect our water systems
- Flooding from heavy rains could be more likely
- Yes, there should be protective measures such as buffers in place to protect natural resources
- Yes, Sheldon should encourage natural resource protection.

### **Parks and Recreation Land Uses**

- No to expanding the trail network and yes to expanding parks. Regarding city recreation programs – take the parents out of coaching.
- Yes, of course Sheldon should encourage new developments that include recreational components
- Expand the trail network by the borrow pit park. There are quite a bit of rec programs right now.

- A new golf course south of town would be nice
- There has been a push for this with the new ball park greenspace. Also, the land by the borrow pit. Complete those projects first then go from there to see if we need more.
- Yes, keep the parks we already have.
- As our residential area expands on the east side, we need a safe way for kids to get to school. It would be great if the trail did NOT go on the road so as the traffic increases the kids are still safe.
- Definitely, the city should encourage new developments to include a recreational component. Any town that wants to grow should be updating & expanding recreational opportunities of all kinds.
- Hopefully, with the addition of the ball fields along the highway our athletic areas are in good shape. We need to keep working to get the trail to circle the entire town.
- I don't think you want a lot of commercial or industrial next to a park or recreational area.
- Yes to expanding the trail network and yes to expanding parks. No to expanding city recreation programs
- Yes Sheldon needs to encourage new park development in town (like a golf course). All of these enhancements would be great.
- Yes, Sheldon should initiate development of new recreational land uses
- Yes, the city should have policies in place to protect recreational uses.
- Yes, recreational land uses will grow/expand in the future. I would like to see camping facilities near the borrow pit and a park.
- Sheldon should not necessarily encourage new developments in the community that include a recreation component.
- No, the city should not initiate development of new recreational uses.
- Yes, there should be policies established to protect recreational areas.
- We are doing a good job with current plans.
- Yes, the city should encourage developments that have a recreational component
- The city is already initiating development of new recreational land uses
- No, there should not be policies in place to protect recreational areas.
- I would like to see a nice campground with a lake, and continue to expand trails.
- Yes, the city should encourage developments that have a recreational component.
- Yes, the city should initiate development of new recreational areas
- Yes, there needs to be policies in place to protect recreational areas.
- Yes, I foresee recreational uses expanding in the future. Yes to expanding the trail network; yes to expanding parks; and yes to expanding city recreation programs.
- Sheldon needs to promote what we already have.
- No, Sheldon should not initiate development of new recreational uses – we have new uses that are not in use yet.
- No, there should not be policies in place to protect recreational uses.

## **SUMMARY OF PLANNING COMMISSION AND CITY STAFF LAND USE SURVEY**

In conclusion, a brief analysis of the results from the Planning Commission, city staff and community leaders land use survey showed many interesting opinions, thoughts and beliefs of those persons overseeing development decisions and reviews for both existing and future developments in Sheldon. Following is a brief summary and generalized conclusions drawn from the previously listed comments extruded from the completed surveys.

### **Agricultural Land Uses**

Analysis of comments regarding agricultural land uses in and around Sheldon. Overall, there were 12 comments regarding the impact and effects of agricultural land uses in and near Sheldon. 75% of survey respondents believe there are no conflicts with agricultural uses in or near the community. 13% of those responding believe there are conflicts with agriculture. The highest

percentage of response regarding impacts from agricultural uses is overwhelmingly tied to odor issues and the impact upon neighboring developing properties. One respondent commented that agricultural uses should be kept away from the city limits to promote growth. On the other hand, another survey respondent commented that urban areas and agricultural areas need to work together in the best possible ways.

### **Residential Land Uses**

Regarding the analysis of Residential land use comments and thoughts in Sheldon, there were 34 comments regarding current development trends of residential uses. The most common response for the type of housing needed in Sheldon was identified as single family residential, followed next by the need for condominium housing. Multiple family dwellings or apartments and senior independent housing tied for the third most needed types of housing in Sheldon. The fewest responses were for affordable or low income housing. Although affordable housing came in last place for the type of housing desired in Sheldon, more than 80% of the survey respondents indicated a need for affordable housing in the community. There was 1 survey response indicating they were “unsure” if Sheldon had a need for affordable housing. A unanimous 100% of survey respondent indicated that residential development should be brought into the city limits if it is located outside of the city limits and is receiving city services. Regarding where new should be built, the answers varied from the south, east to the north. However, the favorite response was to the east of current residential development in Sheldon.

### **Commercial Land Uses**

Survey respondents offered 25 specific comments regarding the development trends of commercial land uses in Sheldon. Regarding the best location for future commercial development, 50% of survey respondents indicated the Highway 18 corridor is the best location, followed by 38% who believe the Highway 60 bypass corridor is best suited for commercial development. The old Highway 60 route and downtown Sheldon only received 1 vote each for the ideal location of commercial development. Other comments regarding the location of new commercial development include “not on all side, no room for residential growth”, “where it best fits” and “all areas of town”. In regards to home businesses or home occupations, the opinions were across the board with nearly and equal amount of responses indicating a greater need for permitting, versus those who believe there should be a simple review process, and those that believe in liberally allowing the use of residences for home based businesses. Nearly all of those responding were in concurrence that commercial uses may be permitted near residential, but not within residential development. One survey respondent did indicate they felt that “low impact commercial development would be okay in or near residential developments”.

### **Industrial Land Uses**

There were 28 comments or thoughts directed toward industrial land uses in Sheldon. Regarding where is the best place for new industrial development, the following responses were tallied. 75% of survey respondents indicated the commercial/industrial park where Caterpillar is located (Crossroads Industrial Park). Other comments regarding the location of industrial land uses include, “close to transportation”, “along the fringe of the community”, and “where it best fits.” Interestingly, survey respondents were split on the question asking about recruiting new industry to Sheldon. Slightly more than half of the respondents indicated the city should not allow just any industry and should target specific industries. On the other hand, slightly less than 50% of those responding to this question believe the city should go after any types of industry available. Specific comments regarding the types

of industries, survey respondents indicated, “take what we can get” along with “industries with educated staff and employees”. Other industries sought after by survey respondents include manufacturing, alternative energy industries and value-added industries.

### **Community Facility and Public Land Uses**

Regarding comments and thoughts on Community Facility or Public land uses in Sheldon, there are 19 specific comments for this land use classification. Most survey respondents indicated they believe the potential for future community facility or public land use growth will be minimal in future years. A couple of comments received about future community facility growth focused on park, city recreation and events center development. All or 100% of the survey respondents believe there are no concerns, conflicts or issues with community facility or public uses in the community. Regarding where community facilities should be located in the future, some answers were specific and others were vague. Some of the responses received include, “...should be located where they fit” or “...will likely expand to the east”.

### **Natural Resources/Environmental Land Uses**

There were 20 comments and thoughts received in regards to Natural Resource/Environmental land uses. Of these 20 comments, 100% the survey respondents agree there should be protective measures such as buffers to protect natural resource areas. Again, close to all of the survey respondents agree the city should encourage the expansion of natural resource areas in and near the community. There was 1 survey respondents that indicated the city should not encourage the expansion of natural resource areas. Other comments received pertaining to natural resource areas include “we need to protect our water systems”, “Natural resources are good for aesthetics, air quality, etc.” and “I love the outdoors and enjoy nature”.

### **Parks & Recreation Land Uses**

In response to Parks and Recreation land uses in Sheldon, survey respondents offered 30 comments and thoughts pertaining to the future development of park and recreational land uses. Regarding the types of park and recreational land uses needed in Sheldon, 2 votes were for trails with 1 against additional trail development. 3 votes were for new park development. Lastly, 3 votes were for city recreational programs, while 1 vote was against additional city recreation programs. An overwhelming majority of survey respondents believe the city should seek developments that incorporate some type of park or recreation element. Similarly, nearly 100% of survey respondents believe the city itself should initiate new park and recreational area development. At least one survey respondent believes the city should not be in the business of developing new park and recreational areas. The survey respondents were split on the question as whether the city should incorporate new city policies to protect recreational uses. Several specific comments regarding the desire to see future growth of parks and recreation uses in Sheldon include “I would like to see a nice campground with a lake and continue to expand trails”, “Any town that wants to grow should be updating and expanding recreational opportunities of all kinds”, and “Sheldon needs to encourage new park development (like a golf course)”. On the other hand, several survey respondents also indicated the city’s parks and recreation programs appear to be adequate for the city’s needs. These comments include, “Sheldon needs to promote what we already have”, “take the parents out of coaching (city rec programs)”, and “the City should not initiate development of new recreational uses.”

# CHAPTER 4. PHYSICAL FEATURES & NATURAL RESOURCES

Physical features and the natural environment are important elements in land use planning. These natural elements have largely been ignored in the past in determining future land use trends. An emphasis on environmentally sensitive areas and the availability of advanced information on geological structure and soils make it possible to place more emphasis on physical features and the natural environment related to land use planning decisions. Climate, location, geologic structure, topography, drainage, surface waters, watersheds, and soils each uniquely affect the types of land uses best suited for a particular tract or parcel of land. Some of these factors such as topography, drainage or soil types weigh heavily when determining acceptable land uses for an area. The purpose of this section is to determine those limiting factors as they relate to Sheldon, so adequate consideration may be given when determining future land uses in a specific area of the community.

## GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

Sheldon is located in the far northwest portion of O’Brien County. A portion of the western part of the community lies across the county line into the northeast corner of Sioux County. O’Brien County, located in northwestern Iowa, is found in the second tier of counties south of the Minnesota border and in the second tier of counties east of the South Dakota border. The City of Sheldon is 4.4 square miles in size or approximately 2,816 acres. The City of Sheldon, within O’Brien County, is bordered by Lyon County to the northwest, Osceola County to the north, Dickinson County to the northeast, Clay County to the east, Buena Vista County to the southeast, Cherokee County to the south, Plymouth County to the southwest and Sioux County to the west.

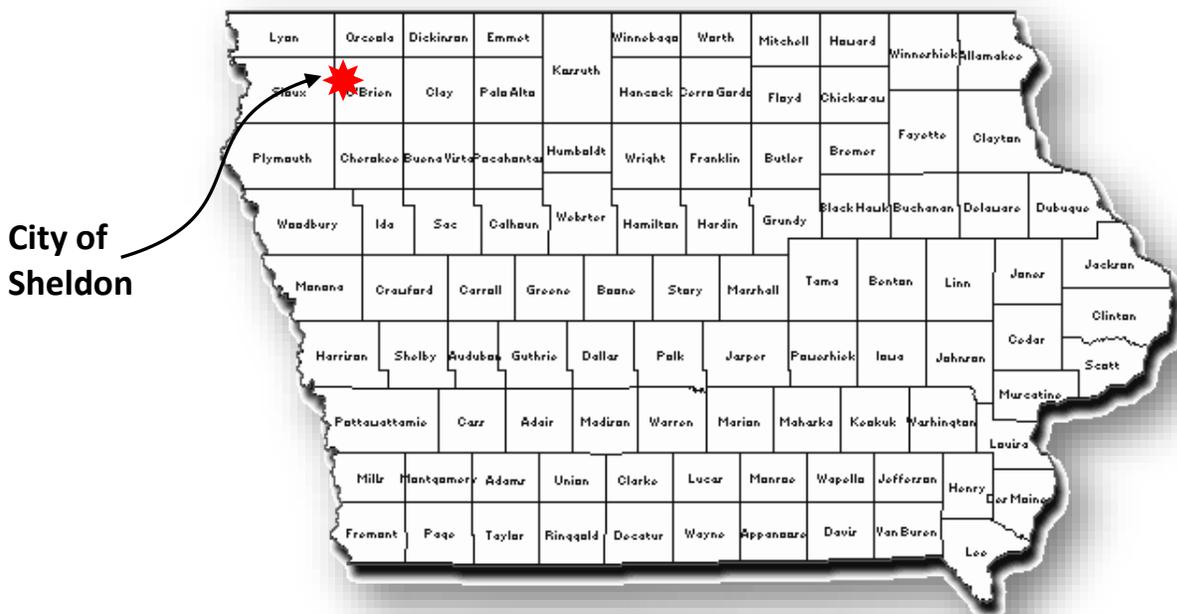
The nearest city of 10,000 + population is Spencer, IA (pop. 11,233) – 39 miles E

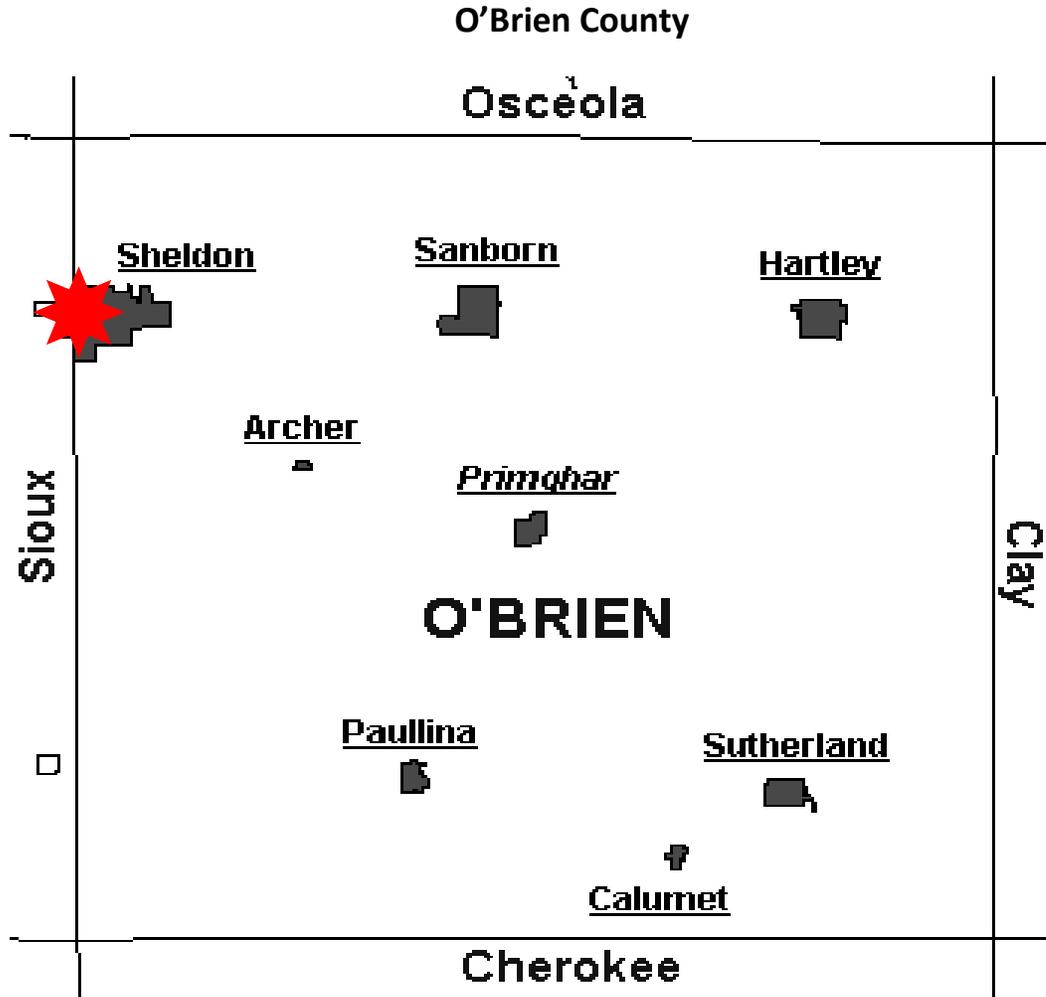
The nearest city of 50,000 + population is Sioux Falls, SD (pop. 164,676) – 51 miles NW

The nearest city of 200,000 + population is Omaha, NE (434,353) – 133 miles S

The nearest city of 1,000,000 + population is Chicago, IL (2,896,016) – 427 miles SE

Figure 3 - City of Sheldon Location Map



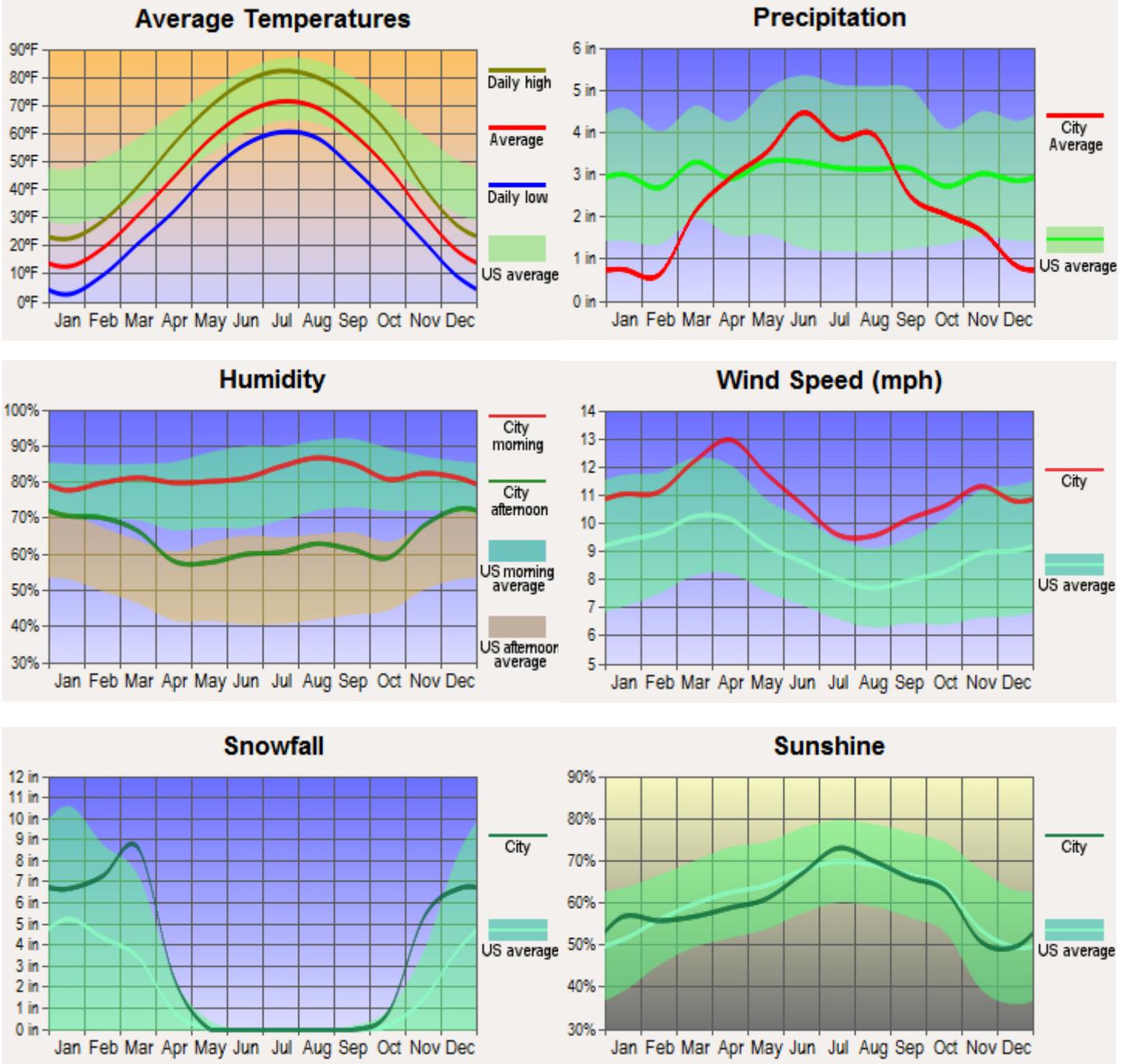


**CLIMATE**

Climate patterns become a factor in land use planning when it relates to crop production and construction seasons for roads and buildings. The climate of Sheldon in O'Brien County limits both activities to a certain part of the year. Most development, along with cultivation, planting, and harvest will occur from April to October. Sheldon has a typical mid latitude climate with cold, snowy winters and hot, humid summers. The total annual precipitation for Sheldon is 27 inches, of which about 20 inches or 74% fall in the form of rain between April and September. This amount of precipitation is normally adequate for row crops and hay. The average high temperature in Sheldon in July is 83° F with an average summer temperature of 71° F. The average coldest month in Sheldon is January with the average low of 9° F and an average winter temperature of 18° F. In terms of growing periods, the last freeze occurs around early May, with the first freeze taking place in late September, giving the Sheldon area an average growing season of 120-150 days. Average relative humidity for Sheldon is about 60%. Humidity is higher at night, with the average humidity at dawn being 81%. The sun shines 72% of the time in Sheldon during the summer months and 54% of the time in the winter. The prevailing winds are from the northwest, with the average wind speed of 13 miles per hour. The winds tend to be the greatest in April.

Below are climate charts showing the average climate in Sheldon, Iowa based on data reported by over 4,000 weather stations. Information is obtained from [www.city-data.com](http://www.city-data.com).

Figure 4 – Average Climate Patterns for Sheldon

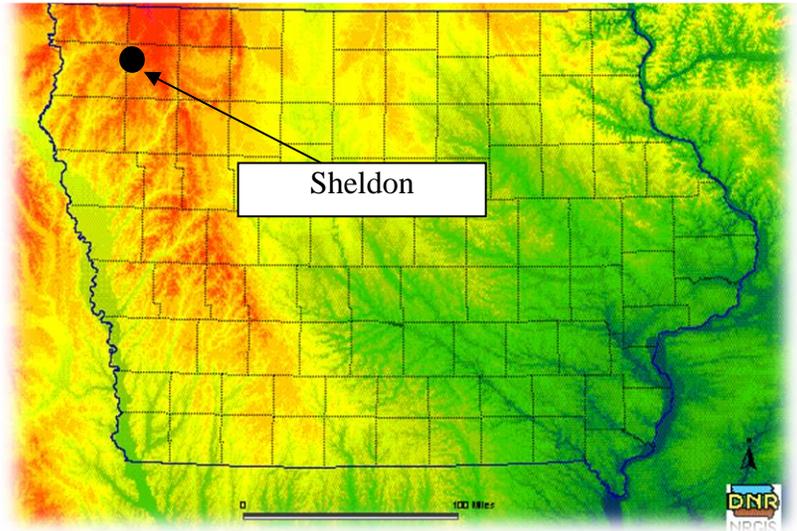


**TOPOGRAPHY AND LANDFORMS**

The topography of Sheldon and O’Brien County can best be summed up by a citation from “Northwestern Iowa – It’s History and Traditions 1804-1926” in which the author, Francis Allen, describes northwest Iowa as, “...not a land of lofty peaks and tremendous gashes in the ground, but a gently swelling country...It is not a land of which children are in awe, but which they love, and its expanses of mellow soil, sometimes varied along its water courses by rounded banks and hills, are a constant assurance of thrift, contentment and prosperity.”

The average elevation of Sheldon is 1,440 feet above sea level. The nationwide average elevation is 1,062 feet above sea level. Sheldon and much of O’Brien County is situated amongst some of the highest ground in the State of Iowa. In comparison, the highest elevation in the State of Iowa is at Hawkeye Point in Osceola County (22 miles north of Sheldon) at 1,670 feet above sea level and the lowest elevation in the State is at 480 feet above sea level near Keokuk in southeast Iowa (400 miles southeast of Sheldon). The gently rolling landscape combined with the high elevations known as northwest Iowa’s Great Plains region is perhaps why O’Brien County, just to the east of Sheldon, is the location of Iowa’s newest wind farm consisting of more than 200 wind turbines.

Figure 5 – Topography Map of Iowa



Topography map of Iowa with green/blue indicating the lower elevations in the state and red showing the highest elevations in Iowa.

As defined by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, from information obtained in Landforms of Iowa by Jean C. Prior, a

Figure 6 - Landform Regions of Iowa

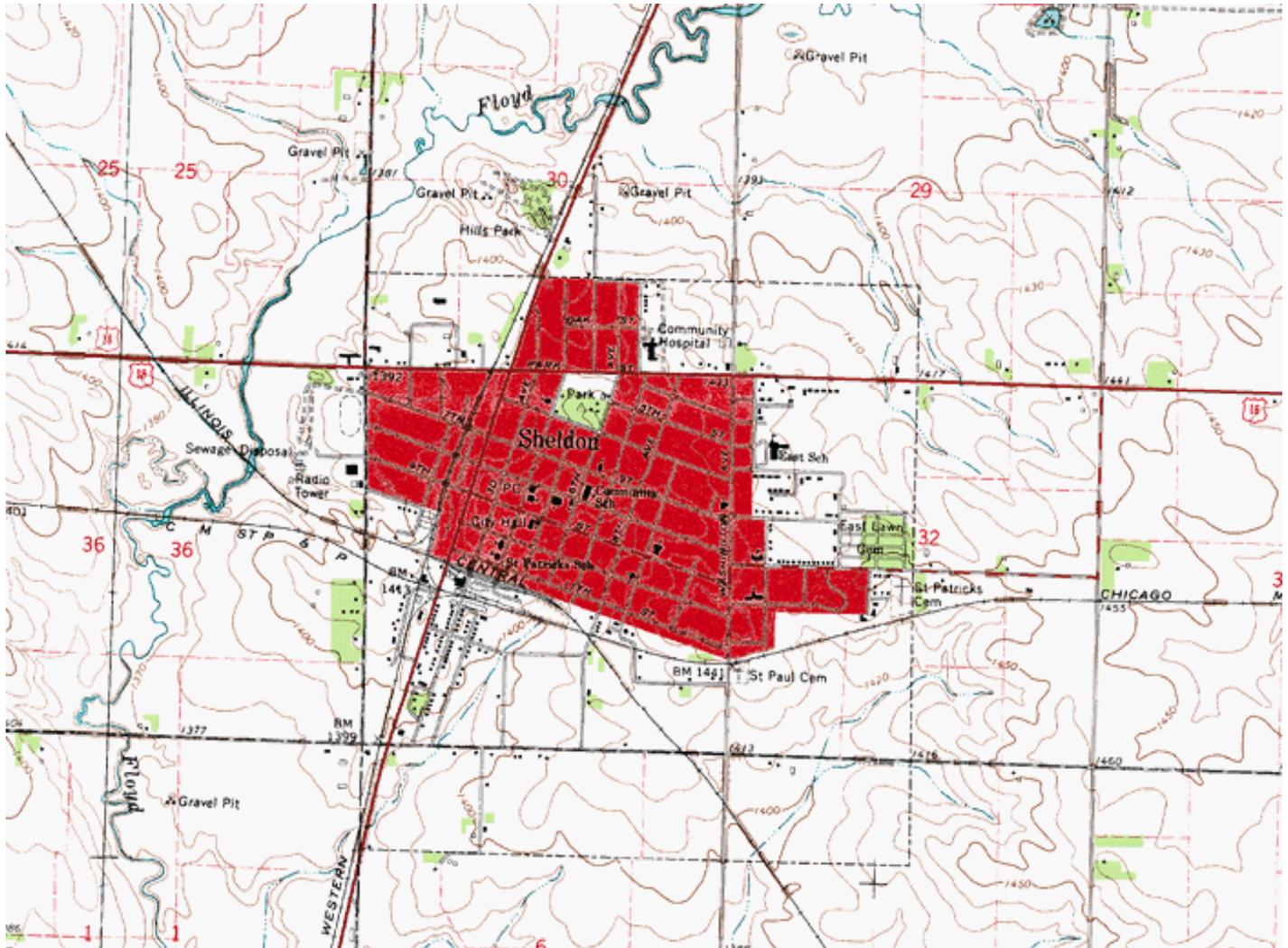


“Landscape” is a collection of shapes or landforms. Individual landform shapes reflect the diverse effects of deposits left by glaciers, wind, rivers, and seas in the geologic past. The City of Sheldon in O’Brien County is situated in the middle of the landform region of Iowa known as the Northwest Iowa Plains. This landform is characterized by a gently rolling landscape combined with a well-established network of streams and minor feeders with broad swales that merge

gradually with long even slopes to the interstream divides. These local streams and minor feeder creeks drain to the Floyd River in both O’Brien and Sioux counties. Sheldon is, for the most part, considered flat by appearance and topography.

The topography of the community makes it naturally suitable for gravitational collection of sanitary sewer and stormwater sewers. However, if Sheldon continues to grow toward the east and south, or beyond the main drainage rivers, the provision of sewer collection becomes more complex. The topographic relief of community lends itself more towards continued easterly growth, which may result in higher development costs in some circumstances. Lift stations may be required and/or necessary in proposed development areas to the east and southeast. When such additional development costs arise for such infrastructure components, the city will need to evaluate the development on a case-by-case basis to determine the cost-benefits for not only the short term, but also the long term growth strategy for the community. Additional development costs may also be incurred by the developer, depending upon the benefits to the specific development versus benefit to the community.

Figure 7 – USGS Topographic Map of Sheldon and surrounding areas



## SOILS

Soil conditions determine several important land use decisions when planning for future growth and development. Where community and economic growth occurs on a balanced and fragile ecosystem, the types of soils and their suitability or lack thereof to development becomes of great importance. Factors such as building suitability, percolation rate, productivity, and slope are all important in determining future growth patterns. These factors all have various effects on placement of utilities, recreation areas, transportation networks, sewer treatment facilities, residential development, industrial development, commercial development, and agricultural usage.

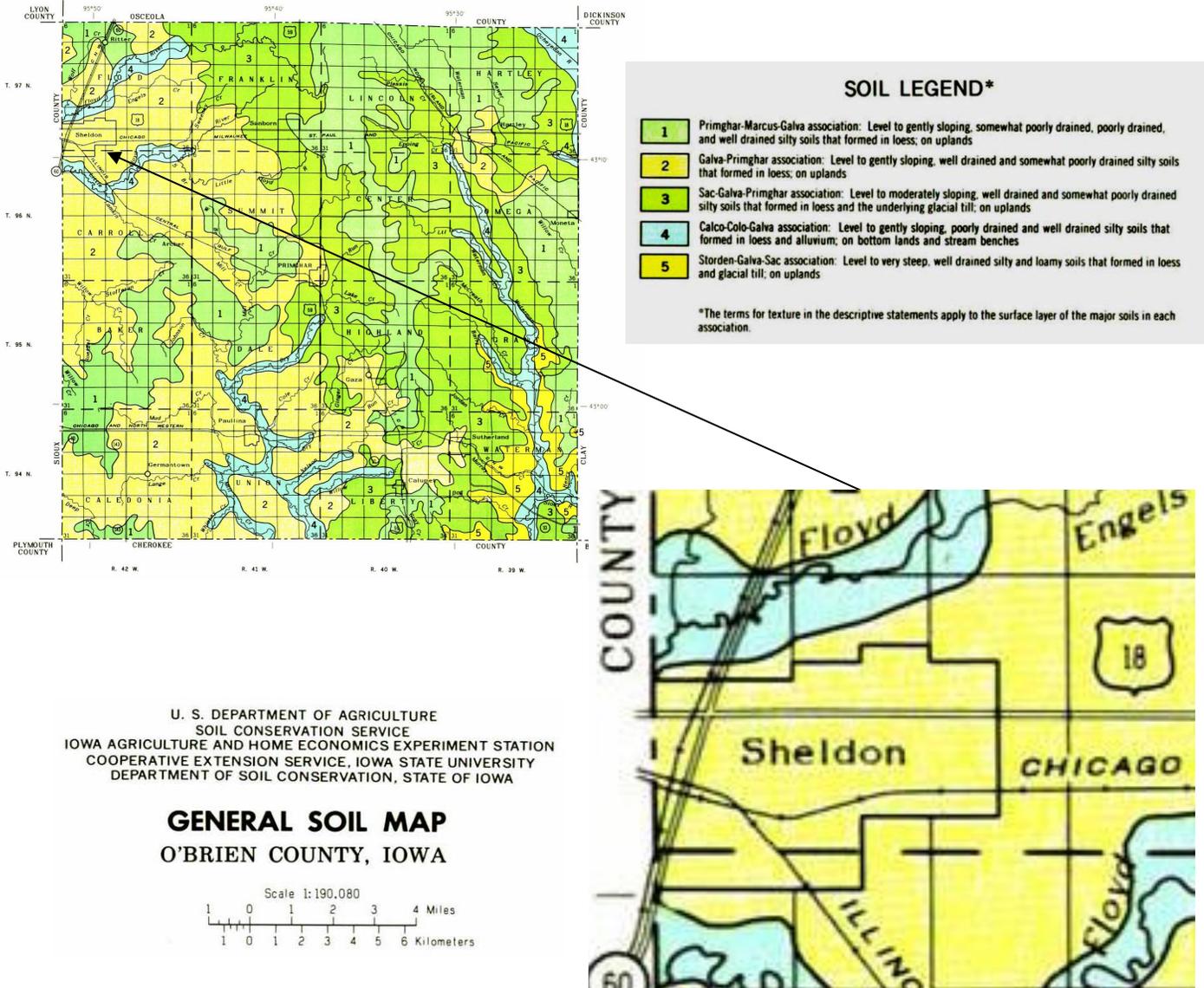
The material in this section is primarily accessed from the Soil Survey of O'Brien County, Iowa. This survey is a publication of the National Cooperative Soil Survey, a joint effort of the United States Department of Agriculture and other federal agencies, state agencies including the Iowa Agriculture Experiment Station, and local agencies. The Soil Conservation Service (now the Natural Resource Conservation Service [NRCS]) has leadership for the federal part of the National Cooperative Soil Survey. Although this document is several years old, the soils information remains accurate since the soil types do not change significantly over time. O'Brien County is characterized by five (5) major soil classifications. As with topography, the county's soil associations are a product of the intrusion of glacial ice. A listing of specific soil types with detailed information may be obtained in the O'Brien County Soil Survey through the local USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service. The general soil classifications in Sheldon and O'Brien County, Iowa include:

1. Primghar-Marcus-Galva Association of soils - comprises about 26% of O'Brien County.
2. Galva-Primghar Association of soils - comprises about 34% of O'Brien County.
3. Sac-Galva-Primghar Association of soils - comprises about 29% of O'Brien County.
4. Calco-Colo-Galva Association of soils - comprises about 8% of O'Brien County.
5. Storden-Galva-Sac Association of soils - comprises about 3% of O'Brien County.

The general soil map, shown on the following page, shows large areas with distinctive soils. These areas or tracts of common soil types are called associations. Each soil association is its own unique landscape with typically one or more major soil types and several minor or miscellaneous soil types scattered throughout the area. The general soil map can be used to compare the suitability of large tracts of land suitable for varying types of development as well for general land use discussions. When parcels of land are being reviewed for zoning compliance or building permits, the proposed use should be cross referenced in the soil survey with respects to the particular soil type being reviewed. If the Sheldon Zoning Administrator or Planning Commission is unsure of how to interpret the soil survey on a particular issue, the County NRCS office should be consulted.

Sheldon is located primarily within two types of major soil associations. A majority of the community is located in what is known as the Galva-Primghar Soil Association. These soils tend to be characterized as well-drained to somewhat poorly drained soils that are formed in Wisconsin Loess. The other soil type found in parts of Sheldon are soils included in the Calco-Colo-Galva Association. These soils generally follow the floodplain or low lying areas within the river and stream valleys near Sheldon. The soils in this association are in bottomlands and soils on stream benches.

Figure 8 - General Soil Maps of O'Brien County and Sheldon, Iowa



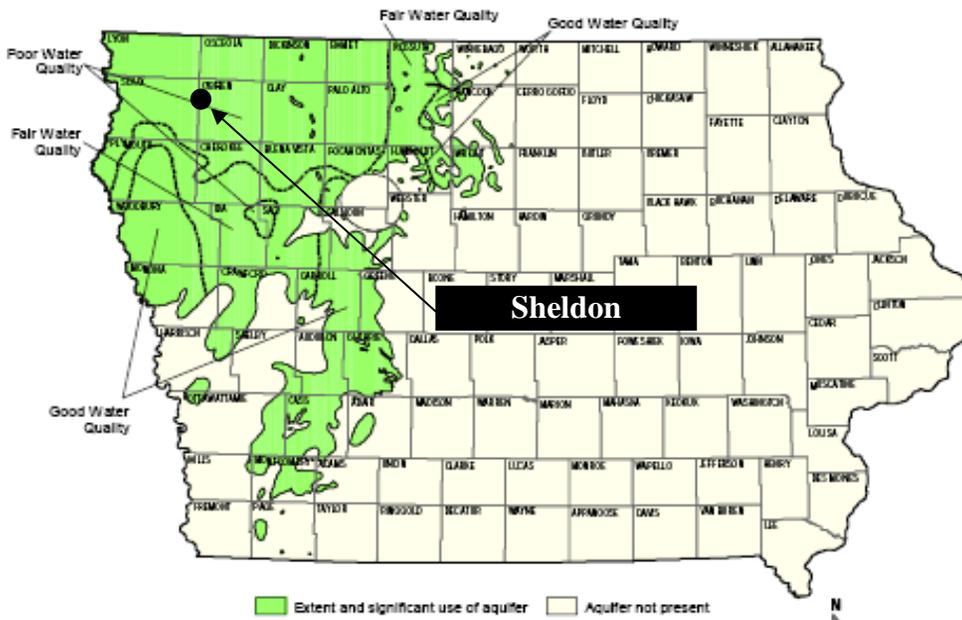
**How Soil Surveys Can Assist Land Use Planners (Planning Commission or Zoning Administrator)**

Soil surveys assist planners to make and substantiate decisions that local government officials translate into zoning ordinances, building permits, sewer projects, and other regulations. Information about soil limitations for given uses helps prevent major mistakes in land use and unnecessary costs to individuals and the county. Soil surveys help in determining flood prone areas, and identify hazards that affect such areas. In many states soil surveys are used to guide decision-makers in restricting the use of flood plains for housing, septic tank fields, and other intensive development. Zoning areas for housing, recreation, commercial, and other kinds of development should take account of the suitability and limitations of soils for such uses. Soil surveys describe soil properties in detail and can help planners establish general patterns of soil suitability and limitations for various land uses.

**AQUIFERS AND GROUNDWATER**

In the Iowa Department of Natural Resources’ book Iowa’s Groundwater Basics - A Geological Guide to the Occurrence, Use & Vulnerability of Iowa’s Aquifers, the City of Sheldon is located within the Northwest Iowa Hydrogeologic Region. Groundwater sources in northwest Iowa can generally be characterized as “fair” in terms of availability and quality. There are fewer options in northwest Iowa in comparison to those located in central or northeast Iowa. Groundwater resources in Sheldon are typically found through two major sources; surficial aquifers (shallow aquifers) including alluvial aquifers and the Dakota Aquifer (deep aquifer). The well sources in O’Brien County are primarily dependent upon the Dakota sandstone aquifer. The wells in the region average 100+ feet in depth and have the lowest levels of nitrates of any of the other hydrogeological regions in the state. In general, this region proved to have the overall lowest level of contamination when considering all forms of water contaminants.

Figure 9 – Map of Dakota Aquifer in Iowa



The City of Sheldon operates a municipal water utility and has water sources that include 14 wells. The city water plant is located just east of 5th Avenue north on Pine Street. All of the city’s wells are shallow (23 to 44 feet deep) spring-fed wells with the exception of Well #9 and Well #15, which are two deep wells located at the city’s water plant. The deep wells draws water from a separate deeper aquifer than the rest of the city wells. Due to the extreme hardness of the water produced by the deep wells, these wells are used daily, but blended with water from the shallow wells. Due to well’s shallowness (12 of 14 wells) there is always a greater risk of infiltration of nitrates, phosphates and other chemicals compounds making their way into the water source. Special consideration should be warranted for protection of the wells and the groundwater source(s). Sheldon’s wellhead protection plan is a useful measure in assistance in keeping out unwanted infiltration.

**WATERSHED AND NATURAL DRAINAGE**

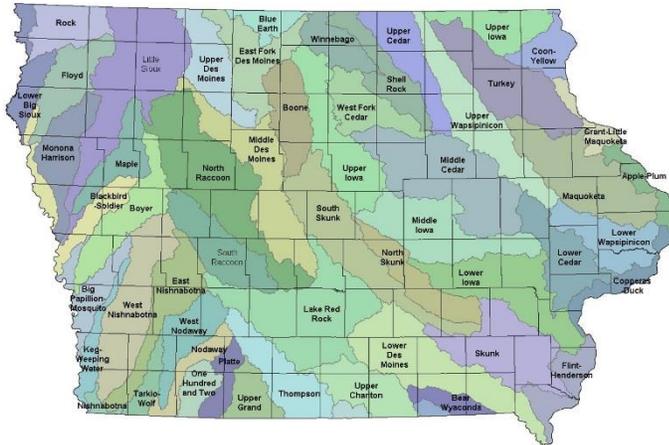
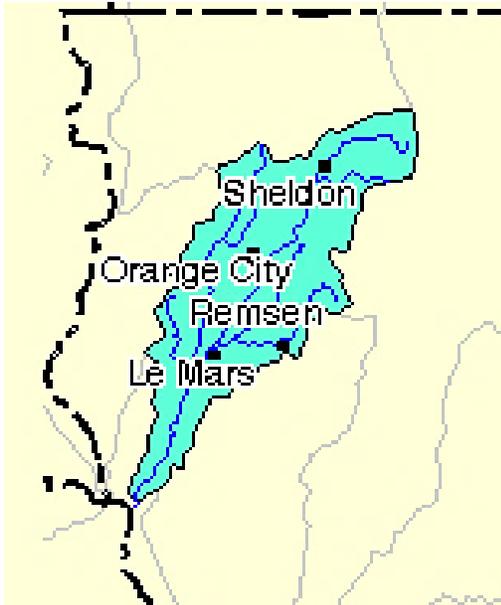
Watersheds are areas in which all water, sediments, and dissolved materials flow or drain into a common river, lake or other body of water. Watersheds may vary in size from the largest river

basins to just a few acres, but within their boundaries, all living things are linked by their common watercourse. EPA provides a number of different financial and technical resources to support local watershed protection efforts undertaken by state and tribal governments, public interest groups, industry, educational institutions, private landowners and concerned citizens. Through the EPA’s Office of Water, along with many local groups and other federal agencies integrate solutions and measure the success of these efforts through monitoring and other data gathering.

Sheldon lies in the Floyd River Basin and claims the Floyd River as the major watershed (Iowa Department of Environmental Quality Water Quality Management Division). The Floyd River, through Sheldon covers a greater than 917 square mile area, into which the intermittent streams and minor watersheds drain. There are two (2) minor watersheds directly affecting water drainage patterns in the City of Sheldon. Most of the community, including the western, northern and eastern portions of Sheldon drain into the Eagles Creek-Floyd River watershed. Much of the central part of Sheldon and portions of the southern and southeastern parts of the community are included in the Little Floyd River watershed; of which the river runs a couple of miles to the southeast. These smaller rivers, creeks and tributaries all eventually flow into the Floyd River. The Floyd River eventually empties into the Missouri River. The figure below provides information on the Floyd River watershed and its effects on Sheldon.

**Iowa Watersheds**  
Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC) 8

Figure 10 – Floyd River watershed map



**WATERSHED**--the land area that drains water to a particular stream, river, or lake. It is a land feature that can be identified by tracing a line along the highest elevations between two areas on a map, often a ridge. Large watersheds, like the Mississippi River basin contain thousands of smaller watersheds. *Source: USGS*

Watersheds affect every part of life as we know it. Watersheds are one of nature’s primary sources of recharging groundwater sources and aquifers referred to in the previous section. This action is necessary for people to continue to extract water from the ground to provide this basic essential human need.

### What can residents do to improve water quality?

As stated in the online resource, Iowa Learning Farms—Building a Culture of Conservation, through the Iowa State University Extension website; there are many ways individual residents living in a city or small town can do to improve water quality within their watershed. Some of these ideas include methods to reduce excess water runoff from property as well as improving soil quality such as rain gardens, soil quality restoration, bioretention cells, native landscaping, Bioswales or permeable pavement. The State of Iowa offers a number of public and private programs and services designed to protect water quality and our state’s natural resources. Additional resources may be obtained from the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS), Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), USDA Natural Resource Conservation Services (NRCS) or IOWATER.

### STORM WATER MANAGEMENT

During storms and heavy periods of rainfall, storm water travels across impervious surfaces collecting contaminants and ground sediment, eventually transporting them to water bodies (i.e. streams, rivers, ponds, lakes, etc.). Storm water is also intentionally directed into bodies of water through storm water

#### EPA describes STORMWATER runoff as:

Rain or snow melt that flows off the land, from streets, roof tops and lawns. The runoff carries sediment and contaminants with it to a surface water body or infiltrates through the soil to groundwater.

Source: EPA

drainage systems. Storm sewers are used to divert water away from streets, parking areas, rooftops, and other impervious services channeled through a series of piping eventually leading to a storm water collection basin or directly injected into a water body. The EPA wants the public to know that nonpoint source pollution, including storm water runoff is one of the most important sources of contamination of the nation’s waters. According to a nationwide survey, 77 of 127 priority pollutants were detected in urban runoff. These pollutants can range from heavy metals to toxic chemicals, pesticides and herbicides, sediments, organic compounds, and other substances. The EPA has identified several storm water management practices that help to alleviate direct storm water discharge into water bodies and allow a more natural dissolution of storm water runoff. Suggested management practices include:

- *Erosion and Sedimentation Control Measures* – After construction, the planting of fast growing vegetation such as grasses and wild flowers can prevent the runoff and erosion of construction sites.
- *Land Use Controls* – Zoning and subdivision regulations can be utilized to keep encroaching developments from impeding upon nearby drinking water sources, wetlands, marshes, streams or creeks.
- *Minimizing Directly Connected Impervious Areas* – The reaction of water moving from one impervious surface to the next causes increased retention of sediment and contaminants into water bodies. For instance, water runoff from rooftops should be directed over grass instead of concrete.
- *Structural Designs* – Are designed to create manmade areas that retain or hold storm water runoff and allow for proper ground infiltration. Examples of structural designs are: 1) Grassy swales, 2) Buffer strips, 3) Filter strips or 4) Storm water retention ponds (wet ponds)
- *Constructed Wetlands* – Similar to wet storm water ponds, however, they contain much more aquatic vegetation and natural plantings around the wetland. Constructed wetlands are intended to treat and retain storm water and generally have less natural biodiversity than natural wetlands.

- *Infiltration Basins and Trenches* – Long narrow stone-filled trenches, 3 to 12 feet deep where storm water runoff is stored and slowly infiltrates into the soil below, where filtering between the rocks and soil also helps to remove pollutants.

*QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN CONSIDERING DEVELOPMENT & SURFACE WATER*

- Are there visual or other indications of water quality problems on or near the site?
- Will the project involve discharge of effluent into surface water bodies? If so, will it meet state, federal, and other applicable standards?
- Will the project involve substantial impervious surface waters? If so, have runoff control measures been included in the design to insure protection of surface water?
- Is the proposed project located in a watershed management plan area?

*QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN CONSIDERING DEVELOPMENT & STORM WATER*

- Will the proposed project disturb 1 acre or more of land? If yes, then an NPDES permit may be required. Contact an engineer to determine the need.
- Will existing or proposed storm water disposal systems adequately serve the proposed project?
- If no storm water system exists, will the project promote storm water run-off? If yes, then a project engineer should be consulted to determine ways to minimize impact.

## CHAPTER 5. NATURAL HAZARDS & MITIGATION ACTIONS

As cited in the 2015 O'Brien County Hazard Mitigation Plan; floods, tornados, windstorms, and severe winter storms are all examples of natural hazards that affect Iowans each year. These events threaten millions of dollars of property damage annually and can sometimes be fatal to persons and animals in harm's way. To protect lives and property from natural or man-made hazards, it is vital for local leaders to identify potential losses and take measures to prevent such losses; this process is known as hazard mitigation planning.



This section of the Sheldon comprehensive plan addresses the identification of natural hazards affecting the community, in addition to the goals, policies and mitigation actions to address the future risk of natural hazards specific to Sheldon. Natural hazards can have a devastating impact on a community, county or region. Sheldon is not immune to the power of mother nature and the devastating effects that natural disasters can have upon the local economy, housing, businesses, public utilities and many other development or land use related issues.



The purpose of mitigation planning is to substantially and permanently reduce the county's vulnerability to natural hazards. The plan is intended to promote sound public policy designed to protect citizens, critical facilities, infrastructure, private property and the natural environment. This can be achieved by increasing public awareness, documenting resources for risk reduction and loss-prevention, and identifying activities to guide the community towards the development of a safer, more sustainable community.

A Hazard Mitigation Plan is intended to accomplish several things. First, through the planning process, hazards that pose a risk to the community are identified. Next, an assessment of those hazards is made. Once the assessment is completed, a list of current and historic mitigation efforts is evaluated. Once the hazards have been assessed and mitigation actions have been identified, the plan outlines implementation strategies. Some proposed projects are small in scope and thus relatively low cost. Other projects are broad in nature and would require more funding than the local community can reasonably provide. The plan highlights potential funding sources and identifies city departments responsible for implementation. Lastly, the plan outlines how to keep the public involved, and steps taken to ensure hazard mitigation remains a priority.

Hazard mitigation is defined as any sustained action taken to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk to human life and property from hazards. Mitigation encourages long term reduction of vulnerability to natural and man-made hazards. The goal of mitigation is to save lives and reduce property damage. However, it has been demonstrated that hazard mitigation is most effective when based on an inclusive, comprehensive, long-term plan that is developed before a disaster. (FEMA Local Multi-Hazard Mitigation Planning Guidance, July 1, 2008)

Those persons directly involved in the preparation and review of the Sheldon component of the O’Brien County Hazard Mitigation Plan include:

Lyle Bolkema-Sheldon Police Chief	Cindy Freeman-Sheldon Ambulance
Scott Wynja-City Manager	Angie Beckman-City Clerk
Kent Lohrenz-Sheldon EMA	Jerry Meyer-Sheldon Fire Chief
Randy Harms-Sheldon Assistant Fire Chief	Scott Meinecke-Sheldon Fire Department
Walt Pruikmsa-Sheldon Emergency Management	Lil Mastbergen-Sanford Sheldon Hospital
Wayne Barahona-Sheldon Emergency Management	Dustin Wright-Sanford Sheldon Hospital

**HAZARD MITIGATION ENABLING LAWS AND REGULATIONS**

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) provides assistance to local governments for disaster response and recovery through the Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Stafford Act). The basis for authority to create a natural hazard mitigation plan lies in Section 322 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Stafford Act), 42 U.S.C. 5165. This act was enacted under Section 104 of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000), P.L. 106-390. Section 104 is the legal basis for FEMA’s Interim Final Rule for 44 CFR Parts 201 and 206, published in the Federal Register on February 26, 2002.

The Stafford Act aims at assisting communities that are affected by disasters. The Act was amended in 2000 to include The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000. **This amendment requires local governments to have adopted an approved Hazard Mitigation Plan in order to qualify for mitigation project funding.** The purpose of this change is to encourage cities and counties to identify prevalent hazards and to determine appropriate mitigation strategies to protect property and save lives.

## IDENTIFICATION OF NATURAL HAZARDS

This section is intended to provide a brief identification of those hazards that the O'Brien County Planning Team, consisting of representatives from Sheldon, believe have either already affected or potentially will affect the city in the future. The descriptions of hazards presented on the following pages are derived and referenced from the Statewide Hazard Mitigation Plan for Iowa. Of the 16 identified natural hazards occurring in the State of Iowa, the local planning committee has concluded that 11 of these hazards have either already affected to could affect Sheldon.

- *Drought* - Droughts are defined as periods of prolonged lack of precipitation for weeks at a time producing severe dry conditions. The highest occurrence of drought conditions in Iowa are associated with agricultural and meteorological drought as a result of low soil moisture or a decline in recorded precipitation.
- *Extreme Heat* - Conditions for extreme heat are defined by summertime weather when temperatures (including heat index) are in excess of 100° Fahrenheit or at least three (3) successive days of higher than 90° F or warmer.
- *Flash Flood* - A flash flood is an event that occurs with little or no warning where water levels rise at an extremely fast rate. Flash flooding results from intense rainfall over a brief period, rapid snowmelt, ice jam release, saturated soil, or impermeable surfaces.
- *River Flood* - River flooding is a rising or overwhelming of a tributary or body of water that covers adjacent lands, not usually covered by water; and when the volume of water exceeds the channel's capacity. Floods are the most common and widespread of all natural disasters, except fire.
- *Hail Storm* - Hail storms are an outgrowth of a severe thunderstorm in which pellets or irregularly shaped lumps of ice greater than 1 inch in diameter fall with rain.
- *Severe Winter Storm* - Severe winter weather conditions affecting day-to-day activities can include blizzards, heavy snow, blowing snow, freezing rain, heavy sleet, and extreme cold. Winter storms are common during the months of October through April.
- *Thunderstorms and Lightning* - Thunderstorms are common in Iowa and can occur singularly, in clusters, or in lines resulting in heavy rains, winds reaching or exceeding 58 mph, producing a tornado, or dropping surface hail at least 1 inch in diameter. Lightning is an electrical discharge that results from the buildup of positive and negative charges within a thunderstorm.
- *Tornado* – Tornado is a violent wind characteristically accompanied by a funnel shaped cloud extending down from a cumulonimbus cloud that progress in a narrow, erratic path. Rotating winds can exceed 300 mph. Iowa is located in "Tornado Alley".
- *Wind Storm* - Wind storms are created when extreme winds, typically associated with severe thunderstorms, downbursts or very steep pressure gradients generate excessive and damaging wind speeds and can be responsible for structural and property damage.
- *Dam Failure* – Dam failure is the uncontrolled release of impounding water resulting in downstream flooding, which can affect life and property. Flooding, earthquakes, blockages, landslides, lack of maintenance, improper operation, poor construction, vandalism or terrorism can all cause dam failures.

- *Grass and Wildland Fires* - A grass or wildland fire is an uncontrolled fire that threatens life and property in either a rural or wooded area. Grass and wildland fires can occur when conditions are favorable, such as periods of drought, or they can occur from other natural occurrences such as lightning strikes.

**HAZARD MITIGATION RISK ASSESSMENT RESULTS**

The O’Brien County Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee determined the countywide hazard rankings. The city was also provided with information and statistics relevant to hazards affecting Sheldon, including records of past events and damages. The City was asked to review the information from the countywide rankings and determine if highest risk hazards for the County applied to Sheldon, and if not, how Sheldon’s situation differs from the county. Based on this discussion, prevalent hazards were determined for Sheldon. Along with the information and statistics provided, the people present were asked to draw upon their knowledge and experiences of hazards affecting Sheldon. After the discussion among the planning team, it was decided that the City of Sheldon would not re-prioritize the hazards of the countywide ranking for their jurisdictional portion of the plan. The City finds the countywide ranking of hazards to be reflective of Sheldon. The City did not eliminate any of the identified natural hazards listed in the countywide plan, since all of the natural hazards may affect the City in the future.

It is recognized the City of Sheldon may be susceptible to other hazards, such as the other hazards in the State of Iowa Hazard Mitigation Plan, but those hazards are not considered to be a high risk and are not examined at this time. However, if it is later determined that a hazard affecting Sheldon does pose a higher risk than originally determined, it will be examined at that time or when the plan is updated for the City of Sheldon.

Table 1 - Hazard Ranking City of Sheldon

HAZARD	HAZARD SCORE	HAZARD RANKING
Drought	2.20	9
Extreme Heat	2.65	6,7,8
Flash Flood	3.20	1
Hailstorm	2.80	4
River Flood	2.65	6,7,8
Severe Winter Storm	2.85	3
Thunder & Lightning	2.75	5
Tornado	3.10	2
Windstorm	2.65	6,7,8
Dam Failure	1.55	10,11
Grass or Wildland Fire	1.55	10,11

*\*The hazard identification and scoring was completed by the O’Brien County Hazard Mitigation Planning Team, and was used for all jurisdictions in O’Brien County. The hazard ranking comprised from the scoring was given to each jurisdiction and the jurisdictions identified which hazards could impact them according to their historical knowledge of their community.*

## IDENTIFIED HAZARD MITIGATION ACTIONS

The following are the mitigation actions that were identified by the local planning committee:

- Purchasing and encouraging the use of NOAA weather radios.
- Education materials given out to the public to improve awareness of natural hazards.
- Conducting a severe weather awareness week to educate the public about natural hazards.
- Promote storm spotter training and recruit new or additional storm spotters.
- Purchase and install backup generators.
- Purchase, install and maintain warning sirens.
- Designate and maintain a list of shelters to be used as temporary shelters during severe weather events.
- Complete and update floodplain maps.
- Relocate critical facilities out of flood prone areas.
- Encourage participation in national flood insurance program and remain complaint.
- Maintain and upgrade snow removal equipment.
- Enforcement of snow removal policies.
- Underground burial of power lines.
- Purchasing and installing portable water pumps at critical facilities with backup generation.
- Improving storm water systems and installing where there are none currently.
- Construction of a public tornado safe room.
- Have a cooling site available in extreme heat situations.
- Encourage usage of a Good Neighbor Policy.
- Enforcement of burn bans.
- Replace, upgrade and purchase fire equipment.
- Mutual aid between fire departments.
- Enforcement of water restrictions for residents when necessary.
- Inspection of pump wells.
- Continue and improve fire department training.
- Maintain and improve wastewater treatment systems.
- Maintain sewer lift station.
- Replace sewer lines.
- Acquisition, structural relocation or elevation of buildings located in floodplains.
- Elevate structures in the identified floodplain.
- Encourage citizens to create a family preparedness kit that will provide food and resources in times of a disaster.
- Upgrading of critical facilities to make capable of serving as a temporary shelter from storms or for post disaster services.
- Encourage the development of mobile home safe rooms to protect from storm events.
- Structural and non-structural retrofitting of public structures or facilities or utilities to protect against hazards.
- Minor structural hazard control or protection projects such as storm water management.
- Localized flood control projects, such as floodwall systems, that are designed specifically to protect critical facilities and do not constitute a section of a larger flood control system.
- Backup record keeping for important documents and files for O'Brien County and cities.
- Discourage development in the floodplain or flood prone areas.
- Cleaning and rehabilitating drainage ditches and culverts.
- Install new storm sewer systems and update any current storm sewer systems.
- Encourage or establish a tree trimming ordinance.



- Purchasing and installing backup generators at lift stations.
- Increase water storage at water towers.
- Encouraging natural snow fences and developing manmade snow fences.
- Updating and maintaining the county-wide hazard mitigation plan.
- Encourage appropriate landscaping and terracing to address land subsidence issues.
- Maintain debris sites.
- Review/Update Local Emergency Operations Plan
- Purchase/install Trash Pumps to help alleviate in the event of a flood.
- Maintain and improve sanitary and storm sewer system
- Promote landscaping and low impact development practices in an effort to curtail areas of the community prone to flash flooding from runoff
- Establish a sewer maintenance program to prevent backups during flooding events
- Consider storm sewer improvement, installation or sewer separation projects in an effort to remove storm water and alleviate flash flooding
- Construct or improve berms around infrastructure and critical facilities to protect against flooding
- Inspect and monitor the condition, depth, and working capacity of the city's wells

The Sheldon Planning Team and O'Brien County are responsible for overseeing the implementation of this plan. O'Brien County Emergency Management and other county and local agencies will assist with implementing and administering this plan. The mitigations actions were discussed with a high, medium and low priority ranking in mind. Once the plan is completed, approved, and adopted, local governments will be eligible for funding assistance from FEMA for mitigation strategies put forth in the plan. Potential funding resources are, but not limited to, include the FEMA Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program (PDM) and FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP). No timeframe was identified in implementing these mitigation actions will be acted upon as funding become available. It was discussed that additional mitigation actions would be examined during the update process. The mitigation actions that were discussed were what the Sheldon Planning Committee wanted to have included in the hazard mitigation plan.

#### **MAINTAINING AND MONITORING HAZARD MITIGATION ACTIONS**

Plan maintenance involves taking action to ensure that the plan stays current with information, priorities are still in order, and goals and objectives are maintained and updated. To accomplish this, the plan will be reviewed by the planning team annually and be incorporated into other city plans. Additionally, a comprehensive update is required at least once every 5 years and submitted to FEMA for certification. The revised plan will be adopted by the city council. To assist with the update, information is to be collected by the city annually to document efforts, hazard events, and other pertinent activities to mitigate hazards. Part of plan maintenance is maintaining the planning team. The planning team is composed of local elected officials, city employees and other interested parties. This is an important part of plan maintenance in order to reconvene the planning team when necessary.

The Sheldon Planning Team and O'Brien County Emergency Management are responsible for monitoring this portion of the plan. The plan will be monitored based on the mitigation strategies identified in the plan and the reported progress to accomplish the work. Projects that are complete will be monitored for effectiveness. Any strategies that are removed from the plan will be examined and documented. An annual reporting sheet is included in this plan for the city to keep track of the mitigation process.

**FLOODPLAIN MAPPING**

The Sheldon floodplain map referenced on the following page has an effective date of September 18, 1985. This is why the street, neighborhoods and city limits are not consistent with today's map of Sheldon. The accuracy of the below floodplain map is likely not correct as some properties in Sheldon have inevitably elevated their land to raise their dwellings or move structures out of identified floodplain areas. Similarly, there are likely areas within the community susceptible to flooding that are not identified as such on the map. With that stated, FEMA still recognizes the following map as the official floodplain map for the city, unless there is documented amendments to such map. The city does not have a process in place for the administration or compliance of floodplain permits. Persons living in Sheldon with questions pertaining to the administration of floodplain regulations should contact the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. Regarding membership with the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), the city is listed as one of the Iowa communities participating in the NFIP. According to the FEMA Community Status Book Report for Iowa, Sheldon received its initial Flood Hazard Boundary Map (FHBM) on February 8, 1974. The city's Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) was identified on September 18, 1985, of which is also the current map effective date.

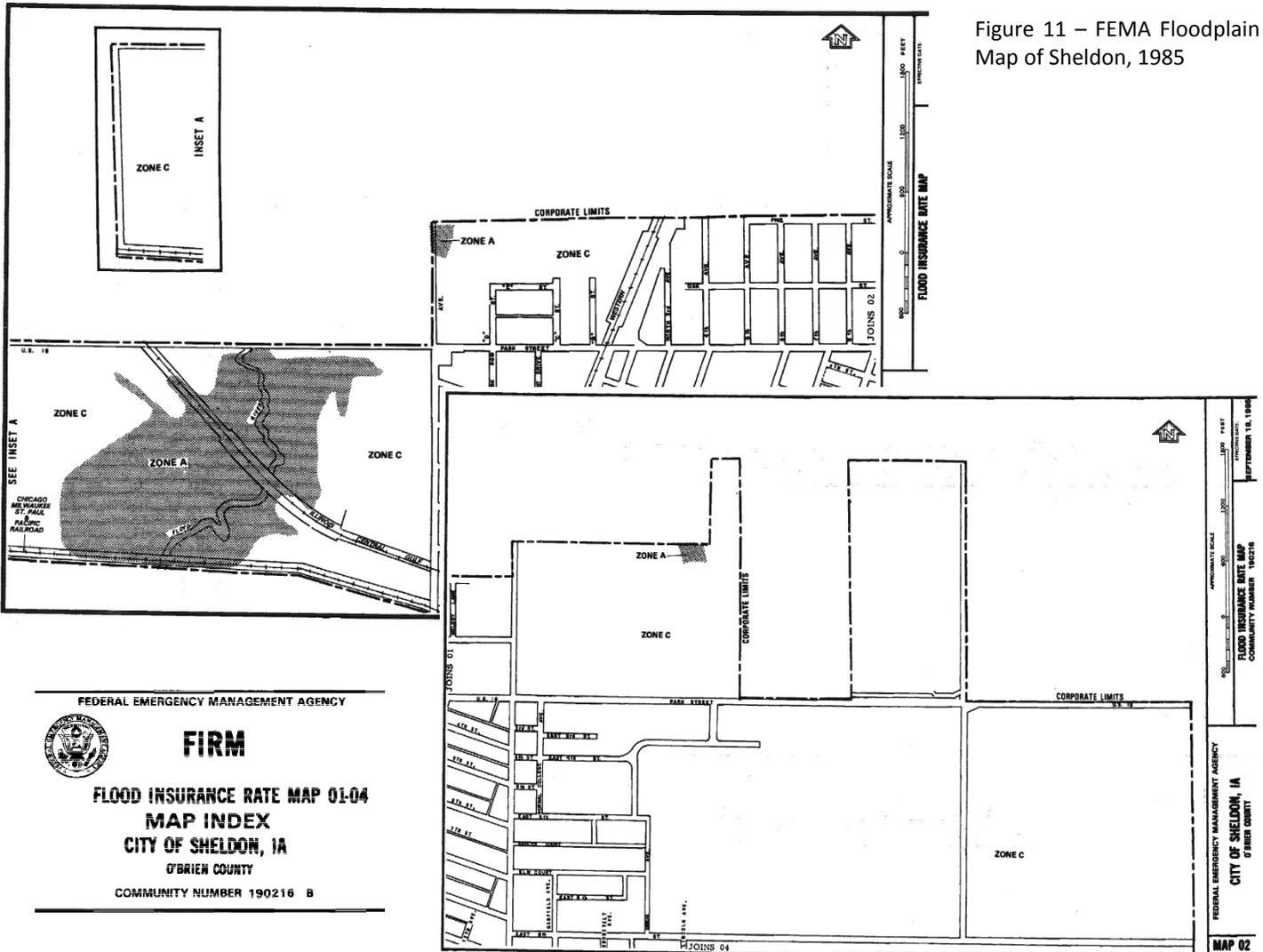
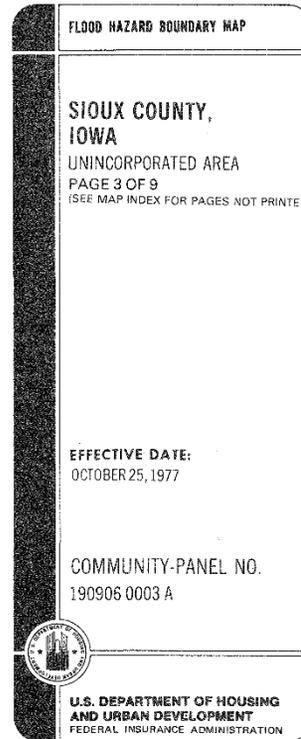


Figure 11 – FEMA Floodplain Map of Sheldon, 1985

Figure 12 – FEMA Floodplain Map of Sioux County, Iowa showing floodplain areas in proximity to Sheldon’s western city limits



**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SERVICES**

Emergency management services for the City of Sheldon are offered through the O’Brien County Emergency Management Director. The county’s emergency management officer is headquartered in Primghar (O’Brien County Seat) at the O’Brien County Courthouse. The city has an outdoor warning siren system in place, which includes four (6) warning sirens placed in strategic locations throughout the community and near the Northwest Iowa Community College. In addition to outdoor warning sirens, the city maintains a cable override system for the outdoor warning sirens. Early storm warnings are broadcast through NOAA weather radios located in the Community Services Building (i.e. City Hall, Police Department and Fire Department), Northwest Iowa Health Center, and the schools in the Sheldon Community School District. Northwest Iowa Community College has contracted with RAVE Emergency Notification Systems to provide notifications to those who sign up for the free service. The local cable service also provides the EAS warning system. Another component of early warning awareness is storm spotter training. There are volunteer firefighters trained as storm spotters in Sheldon that coordinate with county and state officials during time of hazardous storms or other natural events. Storm spotter training classes are held annually at the National Weather Service in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.



## CHAPTER 6. COMMUNITY TRENDS (Population & Housing)

The City of Sheldon, located in both O'Brien County and Sioux County, is in many respects similar to other small Iowa and Midwestern communities. With that stated, there are also community trends of Sheldon that make the community unique in many ways from other northwest Iowa communities. Being located in both O'Brien County and Sioux County, makes for a unique situation, as Sioux County has been slightly growing over the past years and O'Brien County has been declining in population in the past years. Over the past several years, Sheldon has experienced many challenges, successes, issues and opportunities that all affect population, housing and growth as explored in this next chapter. Growth, declines or shifts in a city's population and housing play a critical role in the planning process.

Examining community trends is fundamental in considering future infrastructure the need for future development opportunities. Population and housing information is necessary when assessing future needs of community facilities and development of industrial, commercial, and residential uses.



### HISTORIC POPULATION TRENDS

Since the turn of the century, much of the Midwest's and Iowa's rural population has been declining, largely as a result of technological advances in the agricultural industry allowing fewer people to farm the land with greater efficiency combined with cultural shifts of younger population bases to larger cities and metropolitan areas. For the most part, rural communities across northwest Iowa, including the City of Sheldon, are not immune to these lasting trends as shifts in population from rural to urban areas continue to take their toll on Iowa's rural population base.

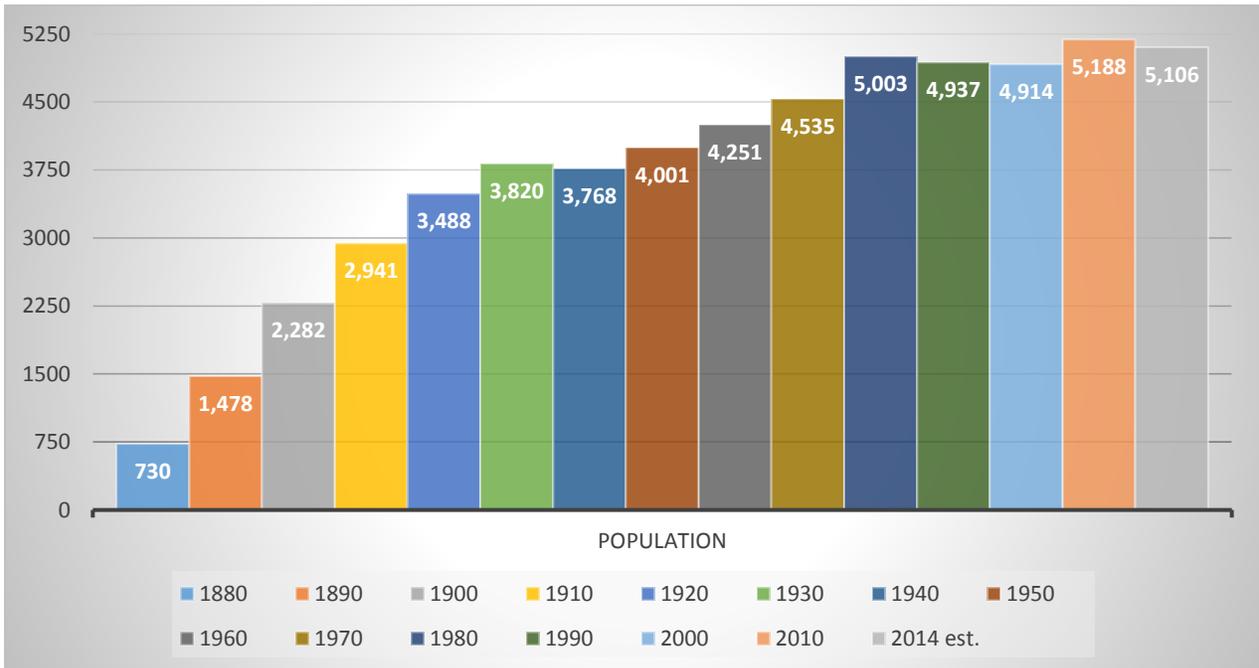
Reviewing Sheldon's population trends from incorporation to present shows a picture of the historic growth and periods of declining population in the community. According to the table below, Sheldon grew at an astounding pace in its early years as a community. Between 1880 and 1900, Sheldon grew from 730 to 2,282 residents in just two decades. Likewise, the city's population almost doubled from 2,282 to 4,001 residents over the next 50 years. Growth continued until 1980 when Sheldon reached a population of 5,003 residents. The next 30 years the population fluctuated ranging from 4,937 to 5,188, and by 2014 it was estimated to be 5,106. During the 1980s a lot of cities were hit hard with a population decline during the economic farm crisis. Sheldon, however only suffered a slight decline in population and was able to rebound relatively quickly from that decline.

Table 2 - Historic Population Trends, City of Sheldon

YEAR	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950
POPULATION	730	1,478	2,282	2,941	3,488	3,820	3,768	4,001
YEAR	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2014 est.	
POPULATION	4,251	4,535	5,003	4,937	4,914	5,188	5,106	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder, and Population (1850-1990) for Incorporated Places in Iowa – ISU Census Services

Figure 13 - Historic Population Trends. 1880-2010



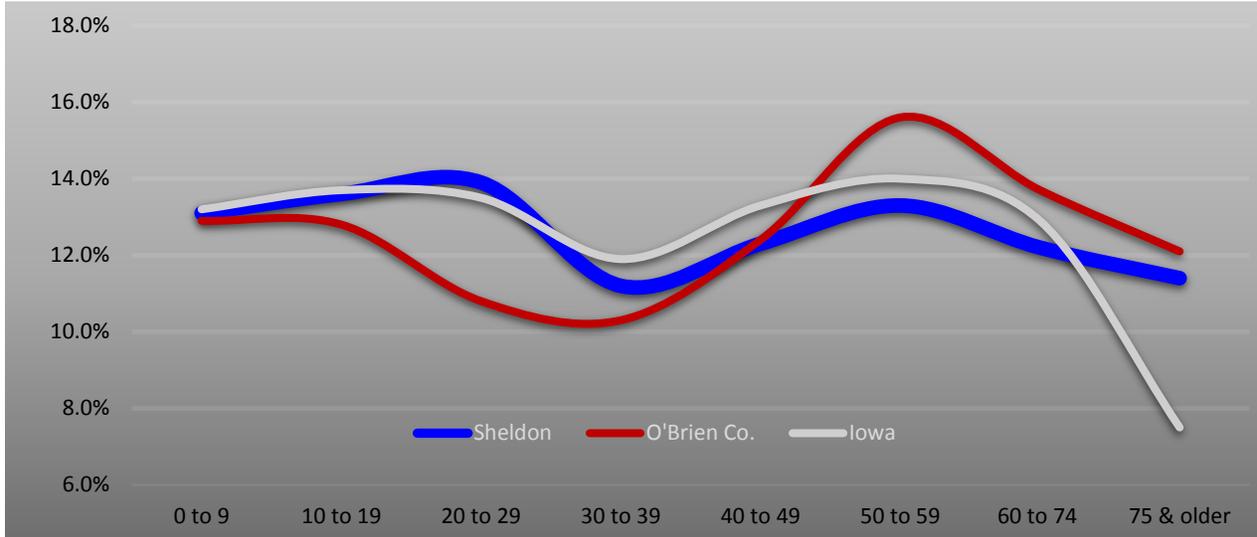
As Sheldon is in both O’Brien County as well as Sioux County, the majority of the population is in O’Brien County. Due to that, the following information will be based only on O’Brien County. The city’s percentage (or share) of O’Brien County’s total population increased in recent decades from 25.9% of the county’s population in 1970 to 36.0% in 2010 and most recently the community has grown to represent 36.3% of the county’s overall population in 2014. This is important when projecting future growth or decline of population since local growth is often based on projections previously developed for the county. In many cases, it can be assumed the city will continue to make up the same percentage of the county’s population.

**CURRENT POPULATION STRUCTURE**

As of the 2010 decennial census, Sheldon’s population is 5,188 persons. The median age of 39.4 is 1.3 years older than Iowa’s median age of 38.1 years. These numbers clearly indicate evidence of an older population residing in the community. Regarding the age of residents in Sheldon, 18.6% of the city’s residents are classified as “seniors” or those persons age of 65 and over. This is higher than the state’s average of nearly 15% for this same category. The number of young adults in the age class of 18-44 represents 33.5% of the community’s population; of which is slightly lower than the statewide average of 34.6% of persons considered young adults (ages 18-44). Lastly, the percentage of children

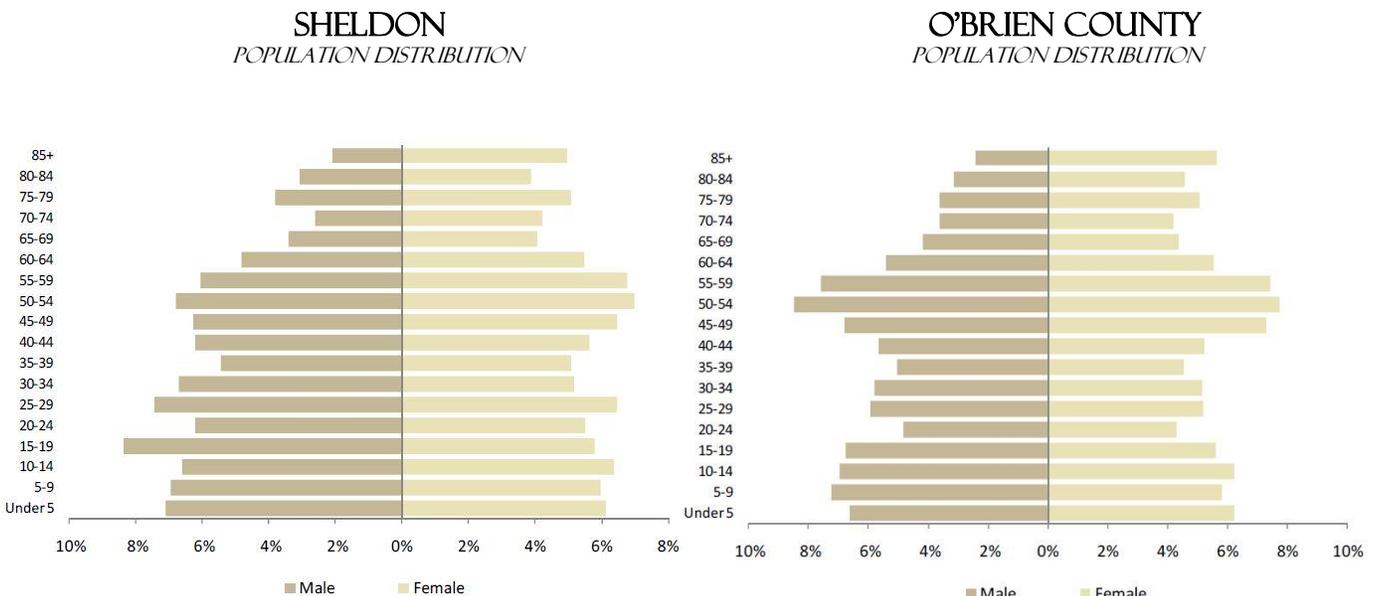
in Sheldon (those classified as ages younger than 18) is 23.1% of the total population. This is lower than both the state (23.9%) and national statistics (24.0%). Whether it is statistics for the elderly or statistics for the youth in a community, each of these numbers represent population trends in Sheldon and will need consideration when it comes to providing a variety of services in the future.

Figure 14 - Age Distribution Comparison of 2010 population for Sheldon, O'Brien County & Iowa



Below are population pyramids which provide a detailed look into the age distribution of male and female age groups in five year increments. The term “population pyramid” was given to this chart, since the ideal age distribution suggests a larger percentage of young residents (i.e. children, teenagers), with an average percentage of middle aged residents (i.e. working aged persons), and the senior or retired population comprising the smallest percentage of population.

Figure 15 - Age Distribution Pyramid for Sheldon and O'Brien County, 2010



The 2000 Census indicated 2.5% of the city's residents were members of a minority race or combinations of races other than white. By 2010, this figure had changed to reflect 6.6% of the city's residents are classified as a race or combinations of races other than white. In 2010, 93.7% of Sheldon residents identified themselves as being White. Those identifying themselves as Hispanic or Latino of any race in 2010 accounted for 338 residents or 6.5% of Sheldon's population. These race and ethnicity statistics are significant when determining the services that need to be provided to all residents of the community. As these minority and ethnic segments of the population continue to grow, the city's policies and goals with respect to personnel and services provisions may need to be evaluated and adjusted.

### FUTURE POPULATION PROJECTIONS

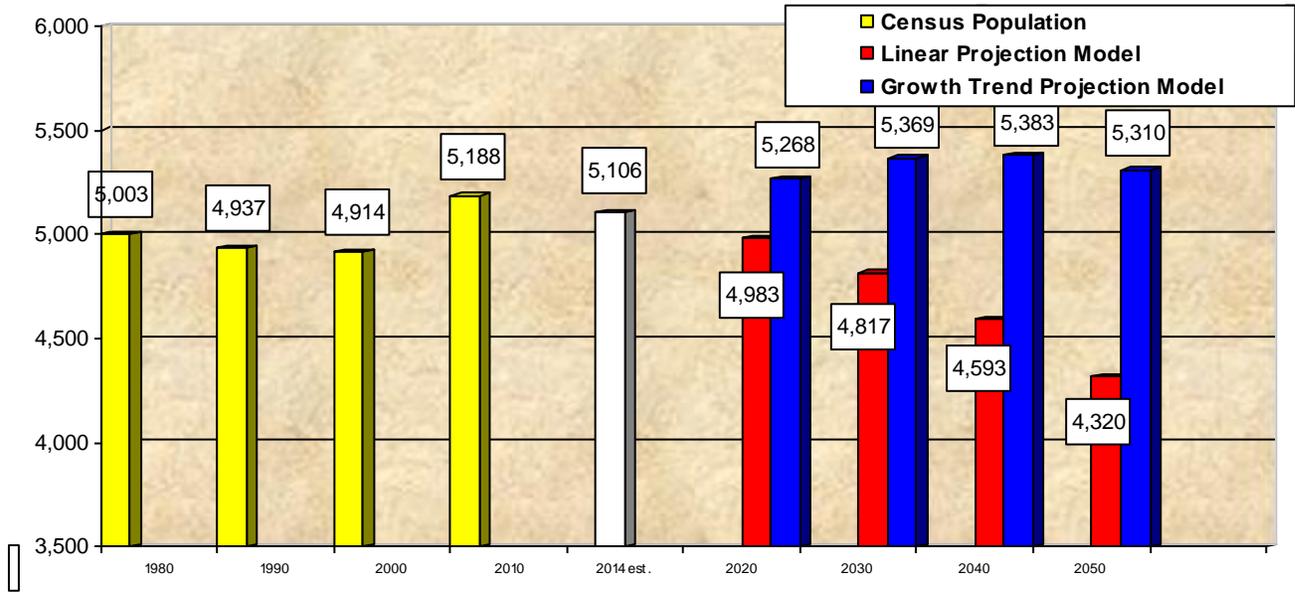
Accurate estimates of population for a city are important factors in determining future need for services, housing and infrastructure. Analysis of population projections can provide insight into the type and quantity of future development needed and allows local officials to establish land use policies to guide development. There are multiple sources that provide population and demographic projections. Unfortunately, nearly all these sources only provide projections at the state, county or metropolitan level. No known sources generate population projections for small cities (cities not classified as a metropolitan statistical area or a population under 50,000). For purposes of identifying future population projections for Sheldon the data presented by Woods & Poole Economics, Inc. will be used. Woods & Poole Economics, Inc. is an independent corporation located in Washington D.C. specializing in long term county economic and demographic populations. Woods & Poole maintains a database for every county in the United States containing projections through the year 2040 for more than 500 variables. Using Woods & Poole data is perceived to be more accurate than other sources or methods of calculating population projections. Whereas other projection models, such as the cohort-survival method is based strictly on the natural change, including births and deaths, of a given population the Woods & Poole data accounts for in-migration and out-migration in addition to other economic factors. Since projections are limited to the county level, the projected population for Sheldon will be extrapolated from O'Brien County data.

Table 3 - Projected Population, 2020-2050

Year	O'Brien County Population	% of Total County Population	Sheldon Projected Population (exponential)	% of Total County Population	Sheldon Projected Population (linear)
1970	17,583	25.90%	4,535	25.90%	4,535
1980	16,989	29.50%	5,003	29.50%	5,003
1990	15,451	31.80%	4,937	31.80%	4,937
2000	15,067	32.50%	4,914	32.50%	4,914
2010	14,400	36.00%	5,188	36.00%	5,188
2014 est.	14,185	36.30%	5,106	36.30%	5,106
<b>2020*</b>	<b>13,727</b>	<b>38.38%</b>	<b>5,268</b>	<b>36.30%</b>	<b>4,983</b>
<b>2030*</b>	<b>13,271</b>	<b>40.46%</b>	<b>5,369</b>	<b>36.30%</b>	<b>4,817</b>
<b>2040*</b>	<b>12,653</b>	<b>42.54%</b>	<b>5,383</b>	<b>36.30%</b>	<b>4,593</b>
<b>2050*</b>	<b>11,901</b>	<b>44.62%</b>	<b>5,310</b>	<b>36.30%</b>	<b>4,320</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1970-2010 and 2014 Census estimates \*2020-2050 are projections by Woods & Poole, Inc. 2015 Reprinted with permission from "2015 State Profile: Iowa", Woods & Poole Economics, Inc., Washington, D.C.; Prepared by: State Library of Iowa, State Data Center Program, <http://www.iowadatecenter.org>.

Figure 16 - Population Projections, 2020-2050



When analyzing population projections, existing and potential socioeconomic variables are not factored into these results. These projections are based solely on statistical data that quantifiably shows populations trends, migration patterns and current tax data. The population numbers shown in the table above do not factor economic and sociological forces affecting a community’s growth. Factors that may affect a city’s future population include business expansions or closures, new housing developments, a rise or decrease in unemployment, or the cost of living index.

According to the population projections shown above there are two projection models used for calculating Sheldon’s future population growth. The first method is simply utilizing the percentage of county population that Sheldon comprises from the last known census data of 36.30% and assuming Sheldon will maintain this percentage of population over the next 30 years. This “linear” method of population projection maintains the same level of population ratio between city and county and follows the projected county increase or decrease in population as reflected in the Woods & Poole population projections. The other method of projecting population takes a look at the historical population percentage ratio of Sheldon as compared to O’Brien County. In 1980 the city only comprised 29.50% of the total county population. By 2010, this percentage increased to 36.00%. By using the average growth per decade over the last 30 years Sheldon should continue to increase its percentage of population in O’Brien County each decade. With Sheldon comprising a larger share of the total O’Brien County population in the future, the city’s projected population decreases will occur at a much slower rate in comparison with the rest of the county.

## HOUSING TRENDS



By the end of the 1990s decade and the early 2000s the economy, as was the housing market, was robust across much of the Nation and even most parts of Iowa. Within many cities across the State of Iowa and even through parts of rural



northwest Iowa, new residential subdivisions were being platted and new housing units constructed. The first half of the 2000 decade showed promising signs for a strong period of housing growth. With that said, the City of Sheldon was growing steadily through portions of the 1990s and 2000s. In the times when surrounding communities may have been struggling to develop areas, and bring in newer housing units, Sheldon was able to bring in those developers. Sheldon's housing issues have not been without effort, as city staff, community leaders, the Chamber of Commerce and the Sheldon Industrial Development Corp. have worked collaboratively and proactively to promote continued development of subdivisions and housing lots. In order to promote available housing options across all incomes and to impact all population segments within the community, city officials along with economic developers need to provide adequate land, utilities and community services.

### AGE OF HOUSING

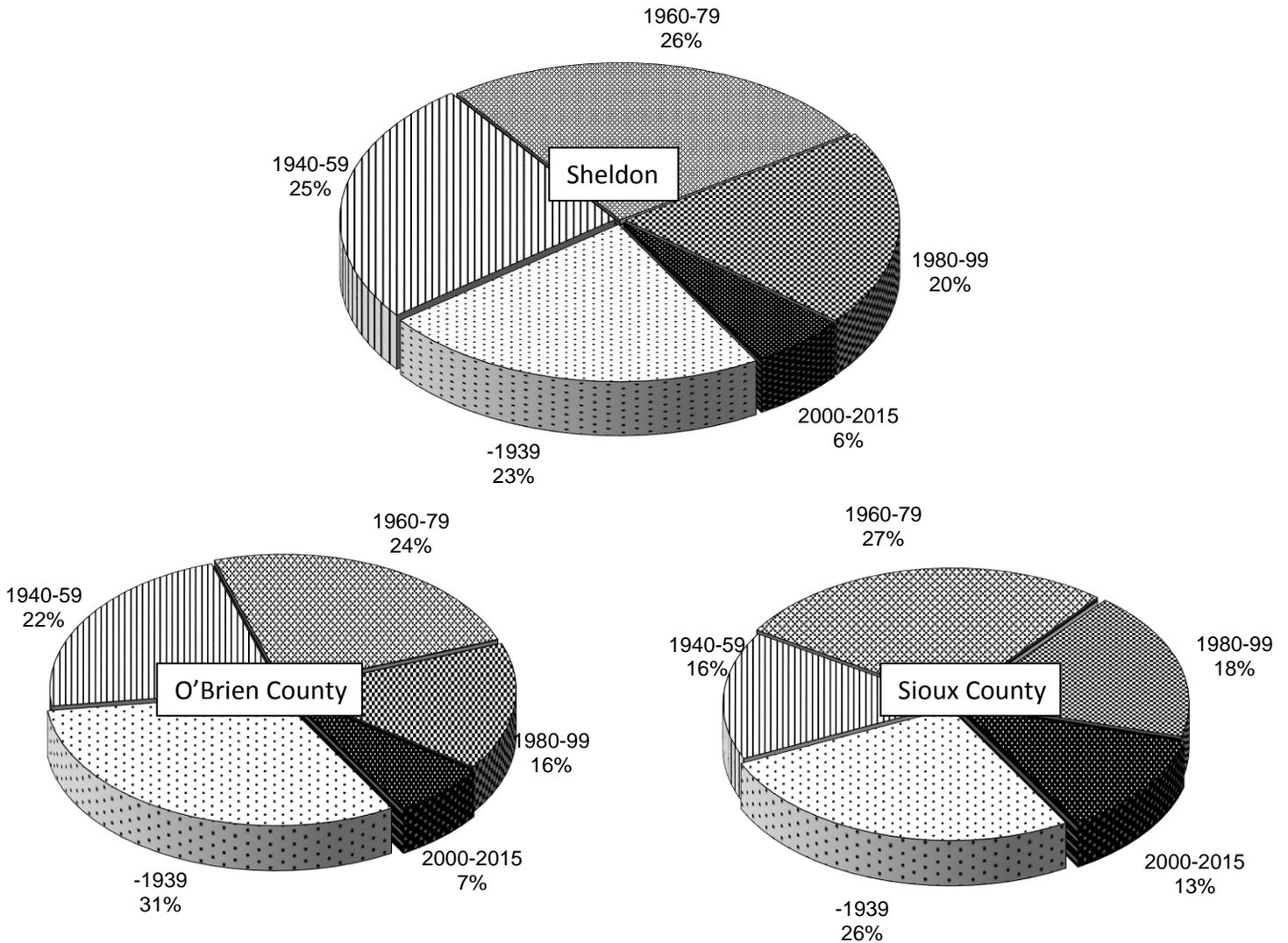
According to 2013 American Community Survey data, approximately 23% of housing units in Sheldon were built prior to 1939. This statistic decreased from 2000, in which 28% of the city's housing was this age. This statistic alone reinforces the statements in the previous section regarding new housing starts and new construction in Sheldon over the past two decades and how the community has been able to bring in the developers and residents to the area. Regarding housing construction since 2000, the addition of new housing in Sheldon is happening, but not at the rate at which communities like to see typically, by the percentage of housing constructed during this period (5.6%) when compared to O'Brien County (6.7%), Sioux County (12.5%) and the statewide average (11.8%). Overall, Sheldon has a lower percentage of newer housing units compared to O'Brien County, Sioux County, or the State of Iowa. The breakdown of the rest of the housing age is relatively close in percentage.

Table 4 - Year housing units were built in Sheldon, O'Brien County, Sioux County and Iowa

Time period	Sheldon		O'Brien County	Sioux County	Iowa
	No. of Occupied Housing Units	% of Units	% of Units	% of Units	% of Units
2000 to present	136	5.6%	6.7%	12.5%	12.5%
1980 to 1999	494	20.3%	15.7%	18.3%	18.4%
1960 to 1979	630	25.9%	24.1%	27.0%	25.8%
1940 to 1959	615	25.3%	22.2%	15.7%	17.4%
1939 or Earlier	557	22.9%	31.3%	26.5%	25.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census and 2009-2013 American Community Survey

Figure 17 - Age of housing units in Sheldon and O'Brien County and Sioux County



**HOUSING VALUATION**

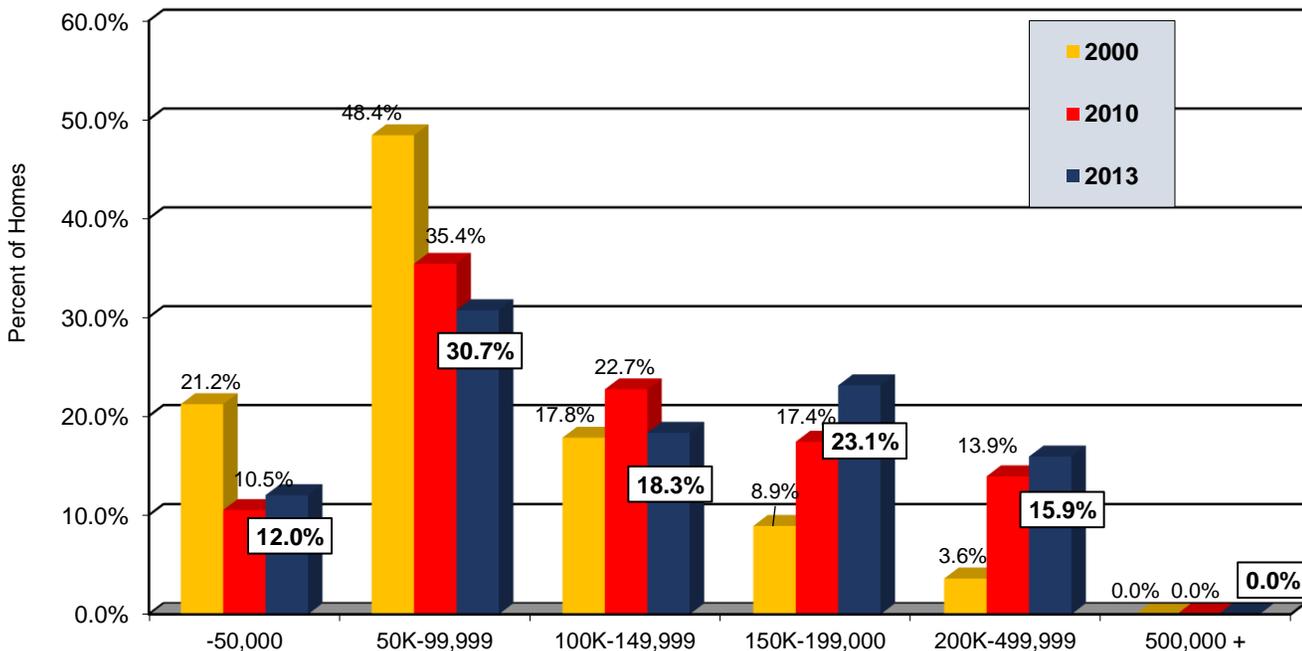
Sheldon's housing stock is comprised of a variety of housing styles and values. In order to analyze the current housing stock it is useful to identify changes in the current housing market and vacancy rates. From 2013 American Community Survey data, the largest number of housing units per valuation category is in the \$50,000-\$99,999 price range with a percentage of over 40%. The city's median house value in 2013 was \$123,600, an increase of 55% over the 2000 median value of \$79,600. Data from 2000 show the highest income category of all housing units in Sheldon were 8 houses valued in the \$300,000 to \$499,999 value range. No housing units were valued at more than \$500,000 in 2000. By 2013 the city recorded an increase of higher end housing resulting in 31 housing units valued in the \$300,000-\$499,999 range, an increase of 23 housing units or 348%.

Table 5 – Sheldon Housing Valuations, 2000, 2010 & 2013

Valuations of Housing - 2000						Median Value - \$54,500
Value in 2000	<\$50,000	\$50,000-\$99,999	\$100,000-\$149,000	\$150,000-\$199,999	\$200,000-\$499,999	\$500,000+
# of Homes	268	612	225	113	46	0
Valuations of Housing - 2010						Median Value - \$77,800
# of Homes	178	598	384	293	235	0
Valuations of Housing - 2013						Median Value - \$79,300
# of Homes	181	465	277	349	241	0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 & 2010 Census data, American Fact Finder-2009-2013 American Community Survey

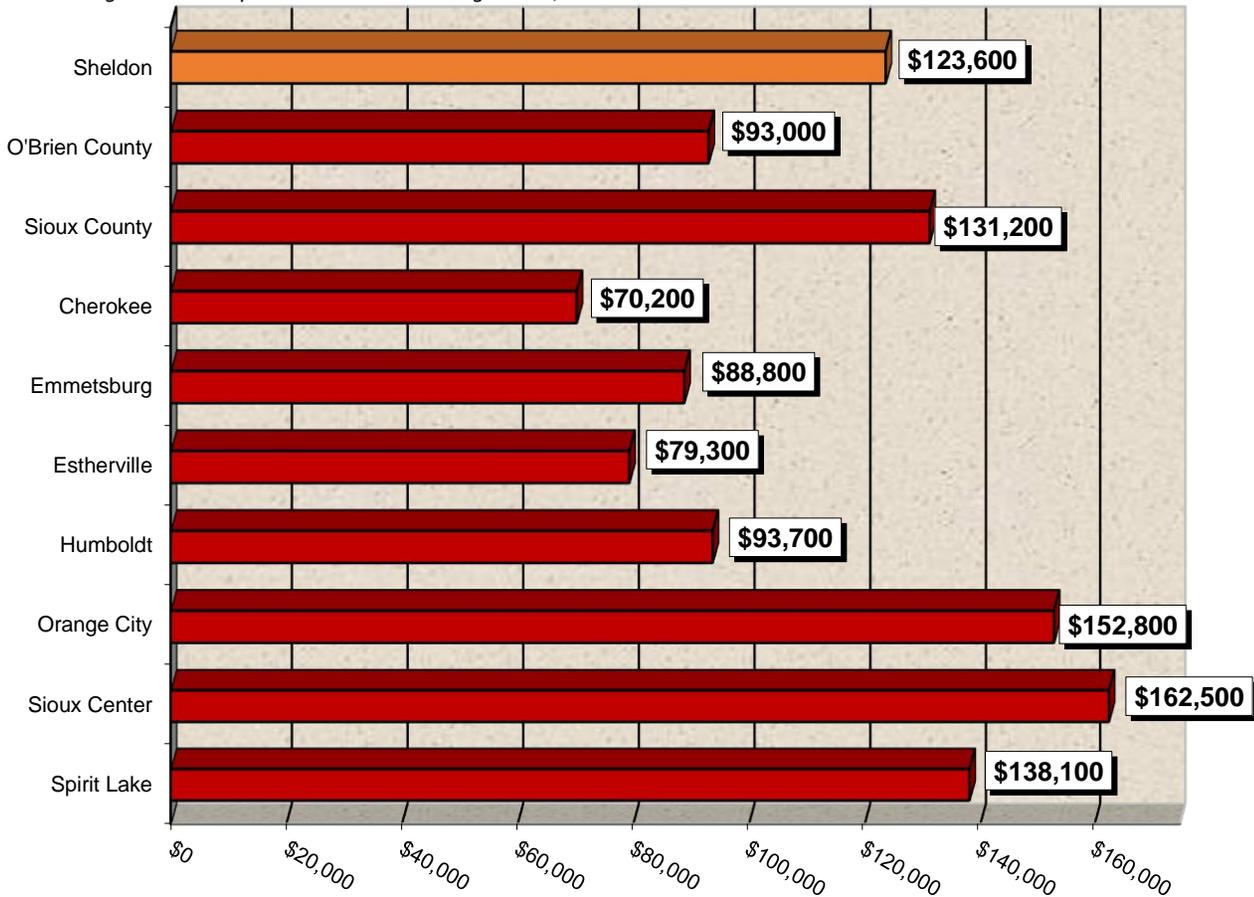
Figure 18- Valuation of Homes, 2000, 2010 & 2013 in Sheldon



It is expected the trend of increasing housing valuations will continue as the cost of new construction rises, the average sale price of housing increasing, and county residential tax assessments continue to rise. The trend may eventually lead to producing higher valued housing options that may not be as easily accessible for people who are first-time homebuyers, one-income or low-income families. Sheldon currently offers and participates in programs that offer financial loans and grants for new construction of housing units to homebuilders and qualified homebuyers. The Northwest Iowa Regional Housing Trust Fund program also provides housing assistance for rehabilitation and needed repairs to qualifying lower income families and households in Sheldon. These housing programs provide many benefits to current and prospective homebuyers in the community.

Another means of analyzing the value of housing is to look at the median housing values of other cities in the region. The chart below shows a comparison of median housing values for O’Brien County, Sioux County, Sheldon and seven (7) other cities of comparative size to Sheldon. During a thirteen year period, Sheldon experienced a 55% growth in housing values, as compared to a 60% increase in O’Brien County, a 55% increase in Sioux County and a 50.6% increase for the statewide average.

Figure 19 - Comparative Median Housing Values, 2013



**FUTURE HOUSING NEEDS**

The average household size in Sheldon in 2000 was 2.34 persons per household (pph) compared to O’Brien County at 2.42 pph and Sioux County being 2.71 pph. By 2010, the household size decreased to 2.28 pph for the City of Sheldon. It also decreased for O’Brien County to 2.31 and for Sioux County to 2.70. Sheldon and O’Brien County’s trend of a slightly declining household size is a trend experienced across much of Iowa; in which most communities experience lower household sizes due to a number of factors including an aging population, higher divorce rate, more single persons waiting to marry, or married couples having none or fewer children. For prediction purposes, Woods and Poole only projects by county, instead of by city, so O’Brien County will be the primary county used to compare the persons per household for the City of Sheldon. By 2025, O’Brien’s household size is projected to continue to decline to 2.17 pph. O’Brien County’s household size trend is indicative of regional and statewide trends. Using average household size data and population projections, one can predict future housing needs. Between 2000 and 2010, Sheldon’s total housing units increased slightly from 2,126 to 2,365, an increase of 11.2%. This increase shows that there has been development of new housing units. But due to the small percentage, it shows the struggles facing Sheldon finding the right developments for the area. Also, the small percentage could be due in part to the city proactively removing and/or demolishing several older dilapidated housing structures. The following table provides an estimate of the number of housing units the city will need over the next 35 years. The information makes a number of assumptions. One of these assumptions being the population projections are accurate to begin with. Another assumption is the average household size or persons per household will not change in the future. This is not likely since the average household size has been decreasing over the years. If the household size continues to decrease, this means a greater population will be supported by fewer housing units. If the household size continues to decrease in the future, the projected housing need should be reevaluated using the most current data. Lastly, these projections do not account for sociological considerations such as the impact that major employment expansions or closings may have.

Table 6 - Projected Housing Units Needed In 2020, 2030 And 2040

<b>Projected Housing Need</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2030</b>	<b>2040</b>	<b>2050</b>
Projected Population	5,268	5,369	5,383	5,310
Projected Household Size (based on 2010 pph)	2.28 pph	2.28 pph	2.28 pph	2.28 pph
Projected housing units needed for population	2,311	2,355	2,361	2,329
Maintain a 5% vacancy rate	2,427	2,473	2,479	2,445
Average demolition/removal of 1 houses per year	5	15	25	35
Total housing units needed	2,432	2,488	2,504	2,480
Current housing units in 2010	2,365	2,365	2,365	2,365
Additional increase in housing needed	<b>+67</b>	<b>+123</b>	<b>+139</b>	<b>+115</b>
	<i>13.4 units/year</i>	<i>8.2 units/year</i>	<i>5.56 units/year</i>	<i>3.29 units/year</i>

According to the table, the City of Sheldon shows a need for an increases in the number of new housing units through 2050. As previously mentioned, these projections are based on a number of considerations about population, household size, and new or demolished housing units over the next thirty five years. The housing need shows a projected need of 3.29 to 13.2 new housing units per year over the next thirty five years. Although this may seem like a sizeable goal to accomplish year after year, it should be noted the building permit data shown later in this Chapter indicates a current trend of 3-44 new housing units constructed in Sheldon over each of the past 10 years. With recent building permit numbers showing positive growth trends for new housing starts, this makes the projected housing need a much more attainable objective.



**Before**



**After**

*Note: The photos to the right are stock photos of a random housing rehabilitation project to show the potential of what can be done through repair and rehabilitation programs for housing in need of assistance or dilapidated housing.*

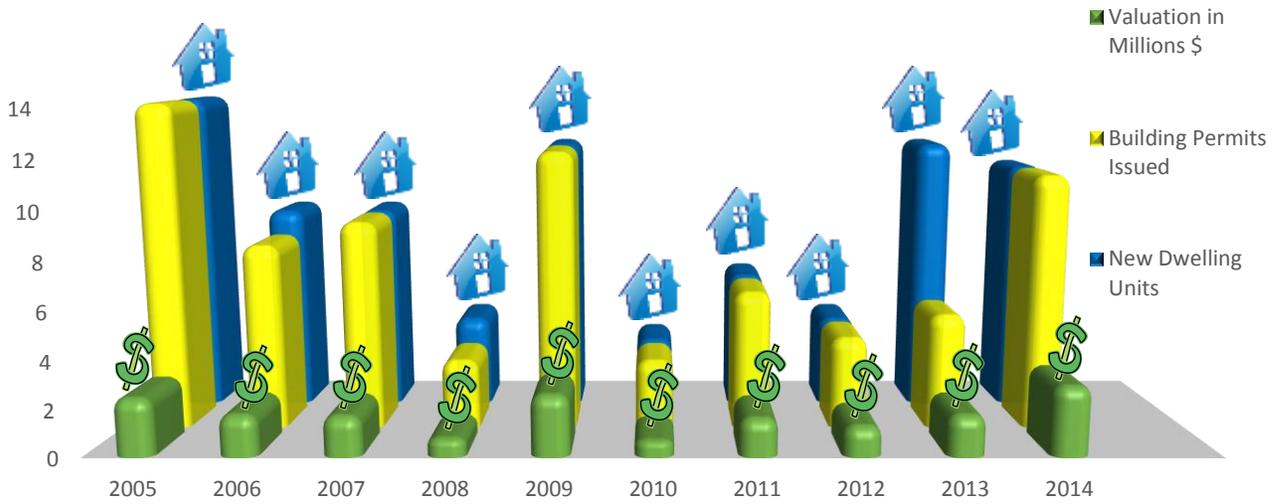
**RESIDENTIAL BUILDING PERMITS**

According to statistics from the U.S. Census Bureau, a combined 75 building permits were issued for the construction of 84 new single family and multiple family dwelling units in Sheldon over the past decade. From 2005 through 2014, the total valuation of new dwelling units constructed in Sheldon is nearly \$18 million. The following statistics are for new construction of residential housing units only and does not include the building permits or valuations for the construction of new commercial or industrial or agricultural related buildings and structures.

*Table 6 - 2004 to 2014 Residential Building Permits, New Dwellings Built and Valuation of Housing in Sheldon*

Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Permits	14	8	9	3	12	3	6	4	5	11
Dwellings	14	9	9	4	12	3	6	4	12	11
Value (Millions)	2.461	1.768	1.725	0.805	2.606	0.725	1.64	1.315	1.77	2.97

Figure 20 - Residential Housing Building permits in Sheldon, 2004-2014



Source: United States Census Bureau 2012 Building Permits and 2014 O’Brien County Assessor

**OCCUPANCY CONDITIONS**

As the total number of housing units has remained stable in Sheldon over the past several years, the vacancy rate appears to have decreased at a decent rate (over 3%). According to 2013 U.S. Census Bureau data, the vacancy rate for Sheldon is 5.3%. The city's vacancy rate is much lower than the State of Iowa's vacancy rate (8.6%), as well as both O’Brien County (7.9%) and Sioux County (5.8%). The “ideal” vacancy rate of five percent (5%), which is considered healthy for a buying and selling market. Seeing that Sheldon is near percentage means that there is a healthy market for all involved in the housing market. The occupancy rate of owner occupied housing is 62% in Sheldon, with 38% of residents being renters. The owner and renter occupancy rate is less than the statewide average of 72% and greater than the 28% claiming rental occupancy as their place of residence.

Table 7 - Single and Multiple Family Housing Vacancies, 2013

	Total Housing Units	Occupied Housing Units	Vacant Housing Units		Owner Occupancy Rate	Renter Occupancy Rate
			Number	Percentage		
<b>Sheldon</b>	2569	2432	137	5.3%	1,513	919
					62.21%	37.79%
<b>O'Brien County</b>	6,624	6,098	526	7.9%	4,569	1,529
					74.93%	25.07%
<b>Sioux County</b>	12332	11623	712	5.8%	9294	2329
					79.96%	20.04%
<b>State of Iowa</b>	1,336,417	1,221,576	114,841	8.6%	880,635	340,941
					72.10%	27.90%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder, 2013

An adequate supply of affordable and safe housing is often in high demand. The housing market's supply and demand for types and prices of housing will vary over time. Generally, if a market does not have a type or preference in choice of housing and if a household has the means to construct a new house, they will often do so. However, if a household does not have the financial means or capacity to construct or maintain single family housing, these homeowners will often times seek out multifamily housing as an alternative. If there is a shortage of adequate and affordable multifamily housing then it leaves homeowners with little choice but to accept substandard housing or move to another community that offers an adequate and affordable supply of all housing types. Below is a list of advantageous benefits of multifamily housing that cities should consider when planning.

**Multifamily housing is a key component of smart growth**

- Well-planned, higher density housing in areas designated for growth has always been an integral component of smart growth.
- Multifamily housing developments make it possible to preserve more open space and natural features than do single family housing.
- Multifamily housing usually requires less public infrastructure, including roads, sewer and water pipes, and electricity and gas lines.
- Multifamily housing makes it financially feasible to integrate commercial/retail uses into a neighborhood.

**Multifamily housing enables affordable housing options**

- Single income households may not be to afford median-priced single family housing in the community.
- Many working families spend more than half their income on housing or live in substandard housing.
- For financial reasons, some households move farther from their jobs, enduring long commutes, to find affordable housing options.
- Apartments and condominiums play an important role in housing the workforce.

**Multifamily housing can be an attractive and compatible**

- The design of today's apartments and condominiums is much more creative and sensitive to neighborhood context.
- Multifamily allow greater flexibility in making it possible to preserve open space and natural features.
- There is no discernible difference in price appreciation of single family housing near multifamily housing and those not located close to multifamily housing.

**SHELDON AFFORDABLE HOUSING**



In Sheldon, there are four affordable housing properties providing rental assistance to income qualifying persons. Rental assistance is a type of housing subsidy that pays for a portion of a renters monthly housing expenses. This rental assistance can come in the form of Section 8 housing voucher, public housing, USDA rental assistance, as well as HUD Section 202 properties. The four rental properties in Sheldon providing rental assistance to tenants are Sheldon Independent Living Apartments, East Oak Apartments, Prairie Ridge Apartments, and Autumn Park Apartment. The Northwest Iowa Regional Housing Authority (NWIRHA), located in Spencer Iowa, is the regional housing authority assisting low income residents in Sheldon with finding housing and rental assistance. The NWIRHA

provides low-rent housing options and Section 8 voucher program for those persons in need in a multi-county region in northwest Iowa, including the residents of O'Brien County and the City of Sheldon. The NWIRHA does business in accordance with the Federal Fair Housing Law (Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 as amended by the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974), and does not discriminate against any person because of race, color, religion, sex or national origin, disability and familial status.

#### **NORTHWEST IOWA REGIONAL HOUSING TRUST FUND**

Sheldon and O'Brien County are participating members of the Northwest Iowa Regional Housing Trust Fund, Inc. (NWIRHTF), a non-profit corporation whose mission is to improve the quality of housing for low and moderate income people in northwest Iowa. The six (6) member counties of the housing trust fund include Buena Vista, Emmet, Lyon, O'Brien, Osceola, and Sioux Counties. The 13 member Board of Directors consists of two representatives from each member county; one from the private sector and one from the public or government sector. The Northwest Iowa Planning & Development Commission is the trust fund's administrative agency. Housing improvement loans and grants are approved by the trust fund's board members. Financial assistance is limited to households at or below 80% of the area median income and at least 30% of the funding will be set aside to benefit the very low income households within participating counties. Households with incomes below 30% of the area median income limits are eligible to receive a 5 year forgivable grant for up to \$7,500 and a low interest loan (2%) for up to \$15,000. Applicants with incomes between 31% and 80% of the area median income is only eligible for the grant after two-thirds of the project costs are covered by the low interest loan. Financial assistance is granted to basic structural repairs such as roofs, windows, siding, etc. Applicants applying for housing assistance through the NWIRHTF must have a credit score higher than 620 to be eligible to receive assistance. Over the past four (4) years, the NWIRHTF has awarded more than \$775,000 in loans and grants to 130 low and moderate income households.



# CHAPTER 7. CITY CHARACTER & PUBLIC SERVICES

## SHELDON CITY HALL

The Sheldon City Hall building is located at 416 9<sup>th</sup> Street Sheldon at the corner of 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 7<sup>th</sup> Street. The office hours for City Hall are daily from 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The city’s administrative staff, housed at City Hall, is comprised of the City Administrator, the billing department, City Clerk/Finance Director, Community Development Director, Deputy City Clerk, Public Works Director, Recreation Director, Assistant Recreation Director, and the Secretary/Receptionist. The five member City Council meets the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month at 4:30 p.m.



*Photo of Sheldon City Hall*

## POLICE DEPARTMENT

The department employs 7 full time officers, consisting of the Chief and six Uniformed Patrol Officers. The Police Department and its employees take pride in their department and the community. The

city’s officers participate in school programs and community events. The department maintains a high level of proficiency by participating in continuing education programs and special instruction schools. Many of the city’s officers are certified law enforcement instructors proficient in pursuit driving, firearms, defense tactics, field sobriety testing, stop stick devices, pursuit intervention, DARE education classes and chemical munitions.

Police Department Mission Statement  
 “To deliver total quality service to the citizens of our community in a professional, friendly, and equitable manner which will result in a successful conclusion to all requests for service.”

## FIRE & RESCUE

The Sheldon Fire Department is comprised of 34 volunteers including the Fire Chief, 2 Assistance Chiefs, 3 Captains, 3 Lieutenant, 21 Firefighters, and 4 Student Firefighters. The Sheldon Fire & Rescue department is equipped with 1 aerial platform, and 4 pumpers. All of the city’s firefighters are trained in First-Aid and hazardous materials training. Most of the department’s staff have obtained the Firefighter I certification, with several members obtaining the Firefighter II certification, plus many more certifications.

*Photo of Sheldon Fire & Rescue Department*



## EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

Sheldon EMA, an arm of the Sheldon Fire Company, has specific responsibilities that include storm watch, traffic control emergency scenes plus S.C.A.T. and Fire assists. Since 2001 Sheldon EMA has

been recognized by the National Weather Service STORMREADY Community, the first STORMREADY community within a 45 county area in Iowa, Minnesota, South Dakota and Nebraska. Sheldon EMA has 13 members including two high school students and is headquartered in the Sheldon Emergency Service Building.

### **SHELDON COMMUNITY AMBULANCE TEAM (S.C.A.T.)**

The Sheldon ambulance services are provided by Sheldon Community Ambulance Team (S.C.A.T.). Originated in 1971, S.C.A.T. is primarily used for medical emergencies, but can assist with the Emergency Management Agency team. The mission statement of S.C.A.T. is to preserve and enhance quality of life by providing comprehensive emergency medical services skillfully and compassionately.



### **SHELDON PRAIRIE MUSEUM**

Located at 319 10<sup>th</sup> Street in Sheldon sits the Sheldon Prairie Museum. It is operated by the Sheldon Historical Society, and the building itself is the 1908 Carnegie Library building. Ralph Hollander was the main person behind transforming the Carnegie Library into the Sheldon Prairie Museum in 1976 when the library moved to another location. In the process of this transformation, the Sheldon Historical Society obtained a National Historical Certification for the site and building.



*Photo of Sheldon Prairie Museum*

### **HEALTHCARE SERVICES**

Hospitals, healthcare facilities and long term care facilities remain an important aspect of the community facilities offered within Sheldon. Given the statistics presented earlier in this plan regarding the continuing aging population of Sheldon's residents, the provisions of healthcare and long term care facilities will prove to be a valuable asset to the city's families and residents. Appropriate considerations should be considered and provided in support of needed healthcare and senior care facilities in the future.

Sanford Sheldon Medical Center



The city’s hospital is located at 118 North 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, north side of Sheldon adjacent to Highway 18. Sheldon’s Sanford Health is a members of the Sanford Health network, a nationwide healthcare system which has more than 43 hospitals and nearly 250 clinics, reaching into eight different states and two different countries.

Sanford Sheldon Medical Center is the hospital that is located in Sheldon, there are also Sanford Health Clinics that are located in Sheldon and in the surrounding areas. Hospital services provided to the community and surrounding areas include, but not limited to 24-hour emergency care; 25-beds – private and semi-private rooms; medical, surgical, obstetric and pediatric care; specialized, personal nursing care; prenatal and post-delivery education; Surgical and anesthesia services – same day surgery & inpatient surgery; CT, MRI, mammography, ultrasound, general radiology services & nuclear imaging; Full service laboratory; EKG and stress testing; respiratory care and testing; rehabilitation services – physical, occupational and speech therapy, cardiac rehab; nutrition

*"Improving the human condition through exceptional care, innovation and discovery."*

*-Sheldon Health Vision Statement*

counseling and diabetes management and education; swing bed for skilled care rehabilitation and transitional care; teleradiology – telemedicine; a member of the Sanford Chest Pain Network; helicopter access on-site; a member of the Sanford Trauma Network.



Sanford Sheldon Health Clinic offers an array of medical services to the residents of Sheldon and O’Brien County including but not limited to general family practice care, obstetrical care, well child and baby care, fracture care, injury treatment, comprehensive physicals, DOT physicals,

school and sport physicals, drug screenings, immunizations, hearing tests, nursing home and pre-operative physicals, and internal medicine.

Their promise to patients and employees is to “deliver a flawless experience that inspires.” According to Sanford Health’s website, Sanford Health as a whole has five main values. Those values are:

*Courage*

- The strength to persevere, use our voices and take action

*Passion*

- The enthusiasm for patients and work commitment to the organization.

*Resolve*

- The adherence to the systems that align actions to excellence, efficiency and purpose.

*Advancement*

- The pursuit of individual and organizational growth and development.

*Family*

- The connection and commitment we have to each other through it all.

Fieldcrest Assisted Living - Sheldon

Assisted living apartments that allow the residents to have their independence, but offer the support that one would need is offered at Fieldcrest Assisted Living. Personalized care towards each resident is something that Fieldcrest



VISTAPRAIRIE AT  
FIELDCREST

prides themselves on, anywhere from offering activities for all residents to the special treatment of their favorite dessert on their birthday is offered to all. Services and amenities included for residents



*Photo of Vistaprairie at Fieldcrest*

are as followed: 24 hour staffing; management on-site; health supportive services; personal care services available; registered nurse on staff; optional medication reminders and assistance; housekeeping services; laundry services; organized recreational and wellness activities; one and two bedroom apartments; elegant dining with chef prepared meals; emergency response system; sharing fireplace room; grand piano room; library/computer room; ecumenical spiritual services; coffee shop; outdoor patio areas; barber/beauty salon; arranged transportation available; central elevator; garage rentals; utilities paid (except

phone); basic cable TV; on site mail delivery. Fieldcrest also coordinates with most long term car insurance and VA Benefits, as well as a proud member of Iowa ICAL.

BeeHive Homes

BeeHive assisted living is a little different than other facilities. BeeHive focuses on smaller facilities to help resemble residential homes compared to large, apartment-like facilities. With a format developed around the concept of elderly people deserving a clean, comfortable family setting at an affordable price, the facilities are affordable and feasible for most families that are in need of assisted living facilities. The mission for BeeHive is to “provide the very best care





*Photo of BeeHive Homes*

environment available to those who need a little extra assistance with daily living.” The assisted living facilities typically include the following services: three meals a day served in common dining room; housekeeping services; 24-hour security; exercise and activities programs; personal laundry services; social activities; 24-hour staffing to facilitate planned and unplanned resident needs; assistance with activities of daily living; emergency call systems; medication

monitoring and charting; peace of mind, comfort, and freedom.

### **PUBLIC LIBRARY**

The public library can be found on the corner of 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 10<sup>th</sup> Street in Sheldon. The library is on the same block as the Sheldon Police Headquarters and the city offices. The public library has a public library board who have five main roles: advocate for the library; plan for the future of the library; monitor and evaluate the overall effectiveness of the library; set library policies; hire and evaluate the library director. The library also allows for online access to certain materials that are in electronic versions. It also has youth programs for children, these programs include things such as summer reading programs, e-book for kids, along with bringing in exhibits for the community to learn about interesting topics.

*Photo of Sheldon Public Library*



### **DAYCARE/CHILDCARE SERVICES**

A variety of childcare services is provided by both daycare centers and in-home daycare providers. Currently, there are five in-home daycare providers operating in Sheldon. Three licensed centers are currently operating in Sheldon. Sheldon Head Start and Sheldon Community DC&PS/Nursery School is located at 1221 E 6<sup>th</sup> St S, Noah’s Ark Preschool is located at 1425 Pleasant Ct. A few establishments do offer preschool to children who have reached the age requirement of typically four years of age. Some of these are also tuition free or some offer tuition assistance is available to those who are in need of financial assistance.

### **EDUCATION**

#### Sheldon Community School District

The Sheldon Community School District is committed to providing the highest educational standards in an environment promoting all students to achieve the full potential as productive residents, professionals and leaders. The Sheldon Community School District is the public educational institution

operating in the City of Sheldon. The School District has a current enrollment of 1,071 children in Preschool through 12<sup>th</sup> grade and employs nearly 75 full time teacher and 5 full-time administrators. While all the schools have individual mission statements, they all are making it a general goal to prepare their students to be good citizens and give them the skills to be successful in life. Sheldon Community School District is the largest public school district in O’Brien County. There are three (3) main school buildings supported by the district. East Elementary School serves students in Pre-K to 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Sheldon Middle School serves 5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. And Sheldon High School provides education to those students in 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grades. The school district serves towns and cities around the Sheldon region, ranging from Ashton, Iowa to Archer, Iowa.

Photo of Sheldon Middle School



**Sheldon High School Mission Statement**

*“...to prepare all learners to be productive citizens right to the last child.”*

*- Sheldon Community High School*



Figure 21 – Map of Sheldon Community School District Boundaries

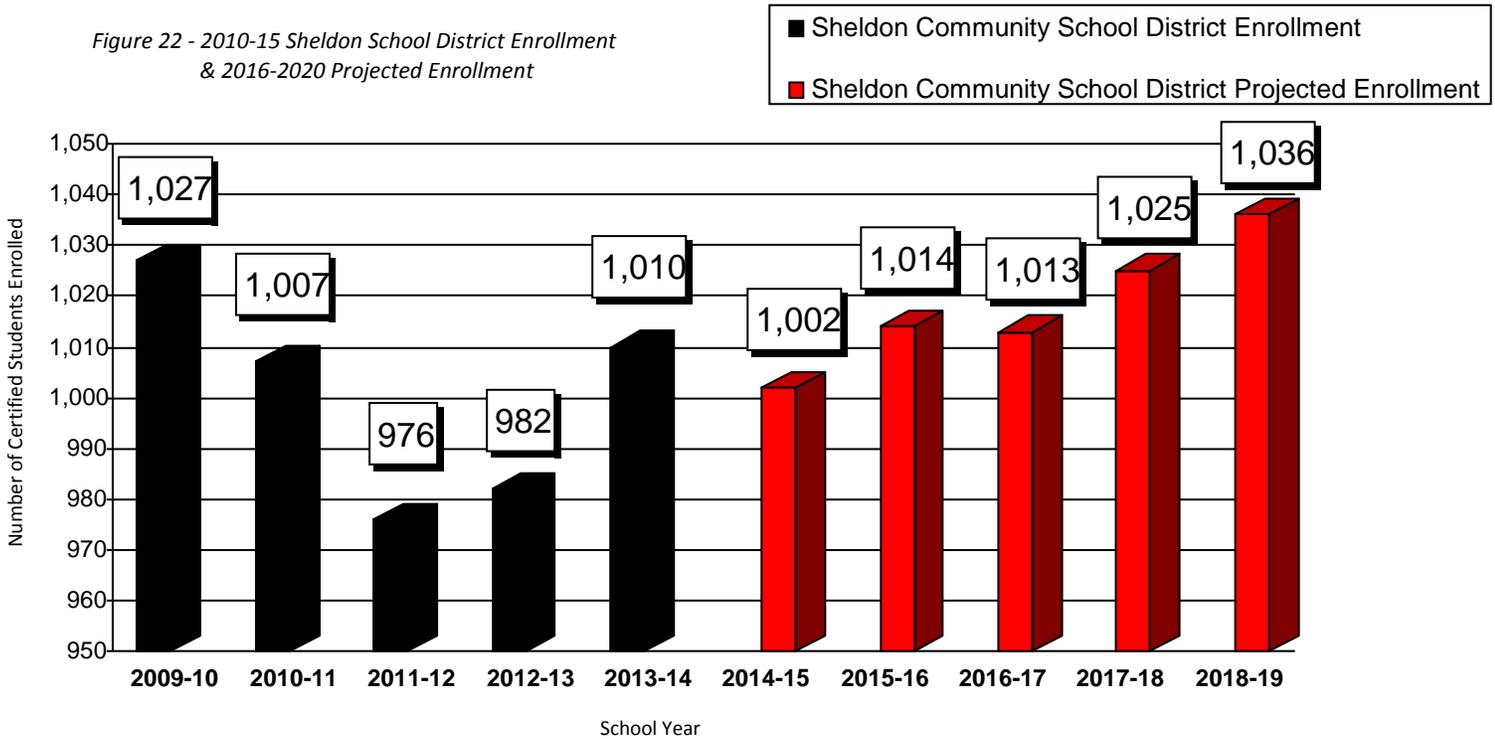
Map Source: 2008-2015 MapBoundary.com

The Sheldon Community School District enrollment has experienced slight decreases and slight increases in student population over the past few years. The school district’s population remained relatively steady over the last few years, only slightly decreasing from 1,027 students in the 2009-2010 school year to 1,010 students in the 2013-2014 school year, an decrease of 1.7% in student enrollment over 4 years. This trend is expected for the Sheldon Community School District, given the previous statistics regarding population changes and shifts in population aging. With that said, the Iowa Department of Education predicts the Sheldon Community School District’s enrollment has hit a plateau in population. For the next few years, enrollment is expected to increase slightly, from 2015-2019 the population is projected to increase by 34 students. The following information comes from the Iowa Department of Education’s website at <http://www.educateiowa.gov>.

Table 8- 2010-15 Sheldon Community School District Enrollments & 2015-2020 Projected Enrollment

<u>School Year</u>	<u>Certified Enrollment</u>	<u>School Year</u>	<u>Projected Enrollment</u>
2009-10	1,027	2014-15	1,002
2010-11	1,007	2015-16	1,014
2011-12	976	2016-17	1,013
2012-13	982	2017-18	1,025
2013-14	1,010	2018-19	1,036

Figure 22 - 2010-15 Sheldon School District Enrollment & 2016-2020 Projected Enrollment



Sheldon Christian School

Located in Sheldon, Iowa is the Sheldon Christian School. They offer a well-rounded integrated curriculum which includes things such as reading, math, Bible, language arts, social studies, science, fine arts, physical education,



computer instruction, and a wide variety of extracurricular and interscholastic activities. Currently the school has an enrollment of 110



students. The school opened in 1917 as a private institution, and has been serving the Sheldon community since. Each faculty member is fully licensed in Iowa, who is also educated and active in the Christian lifestyle.

St. Patrick's Catholic School

St. Patrick's Catholic School is located at 1020 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Sheldon, Iowa. The school was founded in 1956 as a private institution that serves the



Sheldon community. With a 13 educational staff, the school offers an integrated curriculum which

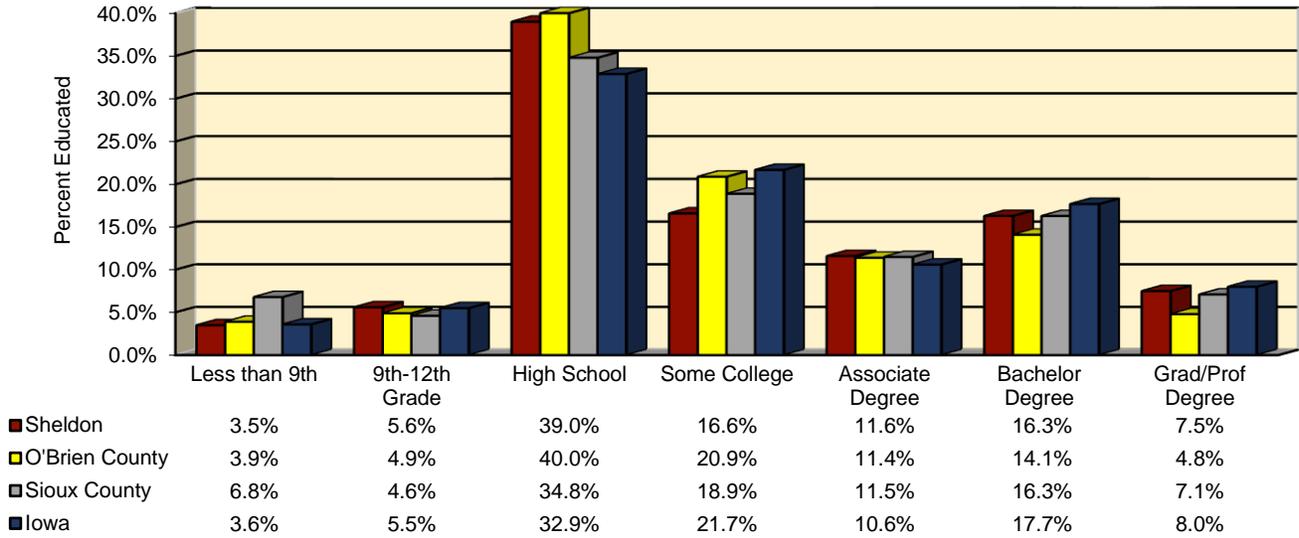


includes things such as Bible, social studies, reading, math, physical education, language arts, science, fine arts, computer instruction, and a wide variety of extracurricular and interscholastic activities.

**EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF SHELDON RESIDENTS**

According to the 2013 American Community Survey through the U.S. Census Bureau, 533 persons in Sheldon are between the ages of 18 to 24 years. Of these post-secondary education aged residents, 13.3% achieved a high school diploma or equivalency, 66.0% achieved some college or an Associate's Degree, and 2.4% achieved a Bachelor's Degree or higher. This data does not account for those persons in this age group that may still be furthering their educations. In comparison, statistics show there are 3,678 residents of Sheldon over the age of 25. Of these 3.5% indicated they had less than a 9<sup>th</sup> grade education, 5.6% attended high school but did not graduate, and 39.0% achieved a high school diploma or equivalency. Furthermore, for those persons in Sheldon over the age of 25, 16.6% indicated they attended some college, 11.6% obtained an Associate's Degree, 16.3% obtained a Bachelor's Degree and 7.5% of the population achieved a Graduate or professional degree.

Figure 23 - Educational Attainment of Sheldon, O'Brien, & Sioux County residents, 2013



**NORTHWEST IOWA COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

Northwest Iowa Community College (NCC) was established in 1966. NCC is unique in the fact that it was originally a pilot project for Iowa’s Community College System when it first opened. It has also been named three different things to be comprehensive of what the goal of the college was, those three names being Northwest Iowa Vocational School, Northwest Iowa Technical College, and currently Northwest Iowa Community College. Originally started with three vocational programs, then expanding with the addition of more members. Today, Northwest Iowa Community College offers programs of study in arts and sciences/transfer programs, health, construction, electrical, business and computers, manufacturing, transportation, and also some online options.



was, those three names being Northwest Iowa

*“Northwest Iowa Community College is a progressive learning college rapidly responding to the global needs of our changing community”*

*- Northwest Iowa Community College Mission Statement*

**LIFELONG LEARNING AND RECREATION CENTER**

Goals of the Lifelong Learning and Recreation Center:

- To provide a clean, safe, and friendly environment for all participants.
- To Provide opportunities for wellness and recreation for students of NCC and community members
- To be a resource for wellness information and promote lifelong wellness and learning.

Photo of the Lifelong Learning and Recreational Center



The Lifelong Learning and Recreation Center is a collaborative multi-use community and recreation center in Sheldon that is the result of a joint effort between the city, Northwest Iowa Community College, and Sanford Sheldon Medical Center. Situated near the Northwest Iowa Community College campus, this facility is a wellness center for residents of Northwest Iowa, NCC Students, NCC faculty and staff. With a mission of “...provide you with a safe, clean, and friendly environment where you can focus on the pursuit of lifelong learning, recreation, and wellness.” Their staff includes personal trainers, group fitness instructors, and support staff that are enthusiastic to welcome, educate, and inspire members. With 38,000 square feet of space, the recreation center offers an indoor track, cardiovascular equipment, strength training equipment, aerobic rooms, many different types of classes, along with shower and locker rooms.

**RELIGIOUS OPPORTUNITIES**

The Sheldon community and surrounding area is served by the following places of worship:

**ASSEMBLY OF GOD**

- Parkview Assembly of God
- 516 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue

**BAPTIST**

- Calvary Baptist Church
- 823 10<sup>th</sup> Street

**BRETHREN**

- Sheldon Church of the Brethren
- 3011 Marsh Avenue

**CATHOLIC**

- St. Patrick’s Catholic Church
- 310 10<sup>th</sup> Street

**EVANGELICAL**

- Crossroads Community Church
- 730 Western Avenue

**LUTHERAN**

- Our Savior Lutheran Church
- 1225 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue
- St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church
- 1425 Pleasant Court Drive

**METHODIST**

- Sheldon United Methodist Church
- 506 8<sup>th</sup> Street



**REFORMED**

- Bethel Reformed Church
- 611 7<sup>th</sup> Street
- Living Water Community Church
- 610 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue
- Immanuel Christian Reformed
- 601 Union Avenue
- First Christian Reformed Church
- 901 9<sup>th</sup> Street
- First Reformed Church
- 1101 7<sup>th</sup> Street

**COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS**

In addition to the above referenced churches found within Sheldon, there are many service organizations, clubs, social groups, youth organizations, fraternal clubs, athletic groups, and volunteer organizations that contribute to the quality of life in Sheldon. Volunteers and service organizations have a huge impact on the community. Whether it is local businesses, civic groups, churches, or service organizations the people of Sheldon come together to make things happen. Following Below is a listing of organizations and clubs in Sheldon. This list was compiled with

information from Sheldon Chamber of Commerce’s website: <http://www.sheldoniowa.com/>

- American Legion
- American Legion Auxiliary
- Avenue of Flags
- Boy Scouts
- Cadets
- Catholic Daughters
- Cub Scouts
- Eagles Auxiliary
- Eagles Club
- EMA (Emergency Management)
- Fare For All
- Fieldcrest Assisted Living Volunteers
- Fraternal Order of Eagles #2297
- Garden Club
- GEMS (Calvinettes)
- Girl Scouts
- Kinship
- Knights of Columbus
- Lions Club
- Love INC
- Modern Woodmen
- Moonlite Crewzers
- Noon Kiwanis Club
- Northwest Iowa Right to Life
- NW IA Health Auxiliary
- O’Brien County Democrats
- O’Brien County Economic Development
- O’Brien County Extension
- O’Brien County ProLife
- O’Brien County Republicans
- O’Brien County Sportsmen
- Oak Park Care Center Volunteers
- P.E.O. Chapter DU
- Prairie Arts Council
- Prairie Queens Kiwanis
- Quad County Riders
- Rise Ministries
- S.H.A.R.E.
- Sheldon Ambulance Team
- Sheldon Athletic Booster
- Sheldon Civic Music Association
- Sheldon Education Association
- Sheldon Gideon Camp
- Sheldon Hi Flyers
- Sheldon Historical Society
- Sheldon Lil’ Orab Football
- Sheldon Ministerial Association
- Sheldon Swim Team
- Sheldon United Fund
- St. Patrick’s Ladies Guild
- Starting Over Single
- T.T.T. Chapter GN
- Tops Club Chapter 1385
- Tops Club Chapter 797
- United Way Fund
- Veterans of Foreign Wars
- Weight Watcher

## **COMMUNITY CELEBRATIONS & EVENTS**

### Sheldon Home & Design Expo

Is held in March at the Lifelong Learning and Recreation Center, located on Northwest Iowa Community College Campus. Exhibitors showcase the best and latest in home improvements and personal products. Exhibitors welcome!

### Golden Easter Egg Hunt

The Golden Egg Hunt is held the week before Easter. A new clue is displayed each day at participating businesses until the egg is found. This is a wonderful event for individuals or families. Join us the week before Easter for a challenging and fun hunt.

### Children's Easter Egg Hunt

Over **15,000** eggs are hidden each year in the Sheldon City Park the Saturday before Easter, for children ages 2-12 years old. The Easter Bunny and the Spring Duck help hide the eggs. After the egg hunt, a drawing is held for eight bikes to be given away (two bikes per age category).



### Ladies Night Out

Ladies....tall, short, young, not-so-young, moms, grandmas, single, married.....anyone who's looking for a day out with the girls! Join Us for Ladies Day Out in April.....In Sheldon: Luncheon, Style Show, Entertainment, Prizes, Coupons and so much more!

### Community Clean Up Day

Many community members, businesses, and organizations come out to help spruce up the town every spring and fall. Thank you to our many volunteers, we appreciate you!

### Farmer's Market

Starts the first part of June and goes to the end of September. There will be a variety of fresh vegetables, baked items, crafts and so much more! Farmers Market is located at the Old Train Depot. Join us on Mondays from 4:30 - 6:30 pm and Fridays from 11:00 am - 1:00 pm. Vendors welcome!

### Sheldon Celebration Days

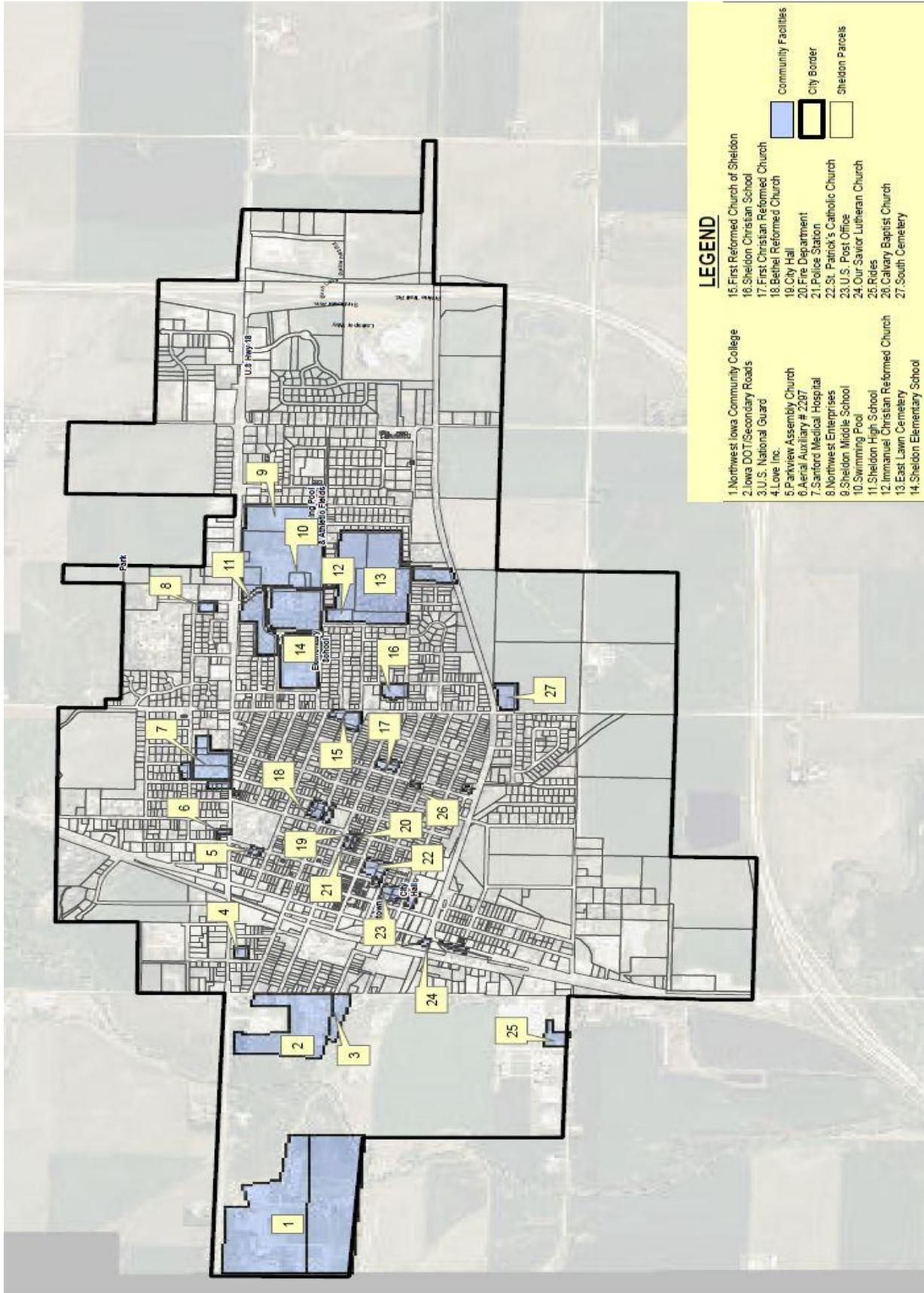
Join us Labor Day weekend for Sheldon Celebration Days. On Labor Day, many events are held in the city park and surrounding area. There is a parade, kid rides, wonderful food booths, free entertainment in the park, arts and crafts, car show, fly in pancake breakfast, antique tractor display and so much more. Fun for everyone! Don't miss it!

### 25 Days of Christmas

Holiday Open Houses start in November, along with the Festival of Trees, and Merry Money sales. The first Monday in December, Santa will arrive to hear the wishes of the children. 25 Days of Christmas continues throughout the months of November and December with various community and chamber events.



Facilities Map for the City of Sheldon



## CHAPTER 8. INFRASTRUCTURE & UTILITIES

The City of Sheldon utilities employees operate under the general supervision of the City Administrator. The city provides water, sewer, and storm sewer. The city franchises with HTC Communications for telephone, cellular, internet, and cable services to residents of the community. The Sheldon Utilities employees operate from the City Offices located at 416 9<sup>th</sup> Street.



### **SHELDON INFRASTRUCTURE & UTILITIES**

Those utility companies currently serving the residents and businesses of Sheldon include:

*Municipal Infrastructure and Utilities:* City of Sheldon provides water, storm sewer, and sanitary sewer. City employees are responsible for the installation, maintenance and repair of the city's water, sanitary sewer and storm sewer infrastructure on public right-of-ways. Private residents and businesses are responsible for the maintenance and repair of infrastructure on private property. Private services located in the right-of-way are the responsibility of private owners.

*Private and Franchised Utilities:* The electricity and natural gas system in Sheldon is operated and supplied by MidAmerican Energy. Local telephone services are provided through a number of different services in the area. Community residents have many options in choosing a nationwide long-distance carrier. Local providers of cellular telephone service are Verizon Wireless, US Cellular, and AT&T all with businesses in Sheldon. Additional regional and nationwide cellular telephone options are available from a variety of cellular service providers. Cable/satellite television service are provided by a number of different providers. Lastly, a variety of internet services are offered by several local companies including CenturyLink, HTC Communications, and Mediacom. Prior to digging at any location, have utilities located. Call IOWA ONE CALL at 1-800-292-8989

WATER SERVICE. The water supply in Sheldon is provided by the city and is in generally good condition. The average usage is 0.8 millions of gallons per day (mgd), but the water system is rated for a capacity that is 2.3 mgd. There are few properties within the community that are not able to be served by the city's water system, including those areas considered for annexation purposes. The rural water provider serves those rural areas adjacent to Sheldon with a water supply. The City of Sheldon will need to consider and evaluate the capacity and ability of rural water services to meet the ongoing needs of residents and businesses located outside of, but within close proximity to the City of Sheldon. This will especially come into play when the city considers properties for future annexation, and the provisions of utilities they are currently being served.

Name:	City of Sheldon		
Location:	Sheldon, Iowa ( O'Brien)		
Well Avg Depth:	Shallow: 30' Deep: 300'	Peak Demand (mgd):	1.3
Treated:	Unknown	Cost/1000 Gal:	Unknown
Rated Capacity (mgd):	2.3	Storage Capacity (gal):	1,500,000
Temp Range (F):	Unknown	Major Source:	City of Sheldon
Avg Capacity (mgd):	800,000	Hardness (ppm):	Shallow: 380 Deep: 1,200
Connection Fee:	Unknown		
Phone:	712-324-4651	Web Address:	www.sheldoniowa.com

WASTEWATER SERVICE (Sanitary Sewer). The wastewater treatment plant is located slightly north of the Sheldon city limits. The mechanical treatment plant serves 100% of Sheldon and both the wastewater collection and treatment facilities are in good condition. Average daily usage is around 680,000 gallons per day with the facility peaking at 1.4 million gallons daily.

Name:	City of Sheldon		
Location:	Sheldon, Iowa ( O'Brien)		
Ownership Type:	Municipal	Average Daily Demand (mgd):	1.0
Rated Capacity (mgd):	1.76	Peak Demand (mgd):	2.4
Cost/1000 Gal:	Lease	Connection Fee:	Unknown
Phone:	712-324-4651	Web Address:	www.sheldoniowa.com

ELECTRICITY. The electric utilities providing service to the residents and businesses of Sheldon are provided by MidAmerican Energy. The city's electrical distribution system meets the existing needs of the clientele served.

Name:	MidAmerican Energy		
Location:	Sheldon, Iowa (O'Brien)		
Ownership Type:	Private	Regulated:	Yes
Peak Demand (kW):	4,250	Generation Capacity (MW):	5,150
Customers Served (Local):	2,595	Website:	www.midamericanenergy.com

**NATURAL GAS.** The natural gas utility serving the Sheldon community is operated and supplied by Black Hills Energy. Currently, the provider is meeting the resident's needs for this utility.

Name:	MidAmerican Energy		
Location:	Sheldon, Iowa (O'Brien)		
Customers Served(Local):	3,700	Ownership Type:	Private
Customers Served (State):	700,829	Gas Transportation Available	Yes
Pipeline Source:	Private	Website:	www.midamericanenergy.com

*Source: The information shown in the above table comes from LOIS Location One Information System, an on-line economic development site selection tool for economic developers. Specific data sources is derived directly from the City of Sheldon and private utility providers. Additional information about the LOIS system and online economic development data for the City of Sheldon may be found at [www.locationone.com](http://www.locationone.com).*

**SOLID WASTE COLLECTION & RECYCLING**

There are private businesses that provide the services of residential solid waste collection and collection of recyclables as well as commercial solid waste collection in Sheldon. The charges for commercial establishments are based according to the volume of refuse generated and the number of pick-ups required. Two main businesses do the garbage and recycling pick up, those two businesses are DeKruif Disposal and Schwarz Sanitary Service.



**SHELDON ZONING CODES**

The City of Sheldon is zoned; and it does enforce subdivision regulations for the platting of land. The community’s zoning regulations, establishes by legislation, specific zoning districts within the city in which certain land uses are permitted by right or special exception and of which allowed uses will be subject to site development regulations such as yard setbacks, maximum height of buildings, and minimum lot area and lot width requirements.

Zoning enforcement services are provided in Sheldon by the City Manager. This position is responsible for enforcing the zoning laws and policies set forth in the city’s Zoning Ordinance and administrative procedures. A zoning permit is needed when any structure is built or altered by way of changing the square feet and/or elevation.

**ZONING PERMITS**  
 No land shall be occupied or used, and no building hereafter erected or structurally altered shall be occupied or used in whole or in part for any purpose whatsoever, until a permit is issued by the City Manager.

# CHAPTER 9. OCCUPATIONAL & EMPLOYMENT DIVERSITY

Employment and job growth or loss has become an integral part of economic development and community development in Iowa. Shifts in employment and diversification of the workforce is considered by many as one of the most importance aspects of economic development. If the city of Sheldon is to flourish, it must serve as a center for the production and distribution of goods and services. Many other factors play a role in the future of a community, however employment vitality is important to insure continued economic and community growth. Included in this section are Sheldon’s employment trends and occupational diversity as compared to O’Brien County, Sioux County, and the State of Iowa. Employment and occupational analysis provides vital statistics as to the relative health of the community and potential growth in each of the city’s respective land use categories.

## EMPLOYMENT

Sheldon's employment is characterized in terms of factors including unemployment rates, employment by industrial sector, major occupation trends and commuting patterns. Iowa Workforce Development generates employment and labor force data pertinent to determine the economic climate related to job creation or loss. Unfortunately, these numbers are only available at the county or metropolitan city level. Therefore, the following section will refer to O’Brien and Sioux County data. However, the trends experienced countywide should be reflective of trends occurring in Sheldon as well. As of June 2015, the unemployment rate in O’Brien County is 2.9% and the unemployment rate for Sioux County is 2.6%. The City of Sheldon, O’Brien County, and Sioux County, are following the trends of the surrounding counties in northwest Iowa by having some of the lowest unemployment rates in the state. Both O’Brien County and Sioux County are lower than the statewide average for unemployment. The statewide average unemployment for June is 3.6%. In comparison, the highest percentage of unemployment in 2015 for a county in Iowa is 5.6% in southeastern Iowa.

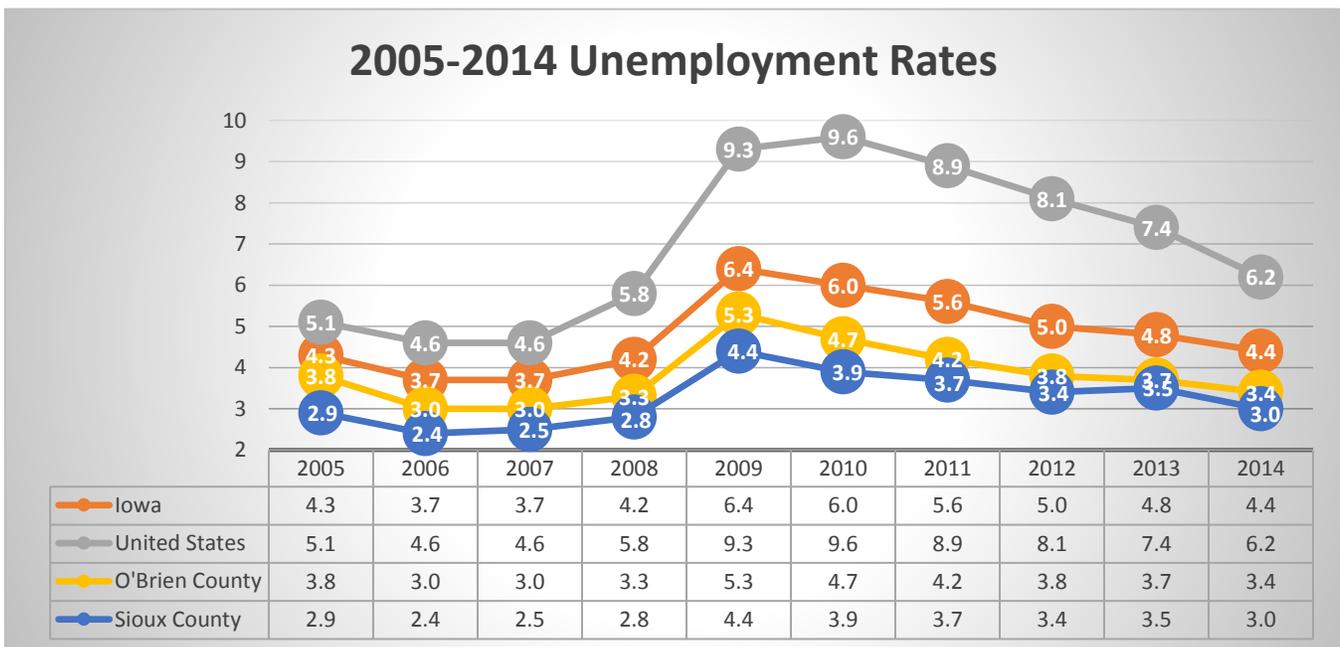


Figure 24 - Unemployment Rates for O'Brien County, Sioux County, Iowa, and U.S.

Sheldon’s local employment is similar in many respects to other rural northwest Iowa communities in that the economy relies, in part, on seasonal employment opportunities especially within the agricultural and construction trades. Looking at monthly unemployment rates for O’Brien and Sioux County in 2014 shows fluctuations in unemployment due to the agricultural, construction and seasonal businesses and industries.

2014 O’Brien Co.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Unemployment	4.6	4.3	3.9	3.1	3.1	3.3	3.4	3.1	2.9	2.9	2.8	3.6
2014 Sioux Co.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Unemployment	3.9	3.9	3.8	2.9	2.8	3.2	3.0	2.8	2.6	2.3	2.3	3.1

In January 2014, unemployment was 4.6% for O’Brien County and 3.9% for Sioux County. This is most likely due to a combination of winter or seasonal layoffs in construction and agricultural trades. Conversely, the lowest unemployment rates of 2.3%-3.4% occurred from April through November. These trends are indicative of hiring seasonal help during the agricultural and construction seasons.

**LABOR FORCE TRENDS**

Employment estimates for states and local areas are key indicators of economic conditions. The Bureau of Labor Statistics in the Department of Labor is responsible for the concepts, definitions, technical procedures, validation and publication of the estimates. According to the most recent labor force data available, there are 8,230 persons comprising the civilian labor force in O’Brien County and 20,260 for Sioux County. Of this total labor force, O’Brien County had 7,948 employed leaving the remaining 282 persons unemployed while Sioux County had 19,644 people employed leaving 616 people that were unemployed as of December 2014. The labor force in both O’Brien County and Sioux County appears to be thriving to in terms of unemployment rate compared with the rest of the county. According to Iowa Workforce Development, the O’Brien County’s labor force in 2014 is 8,230 persons which is the highest reported to Iowa Workforce Development since the year 2000. In the past 14 years, the percentage of increase has been 6%. Sioux County has been doing the same trend, 2014 has the highest reported civilian workforce of 20,260 people and since the year 2000 the workforce number has increased 15%.

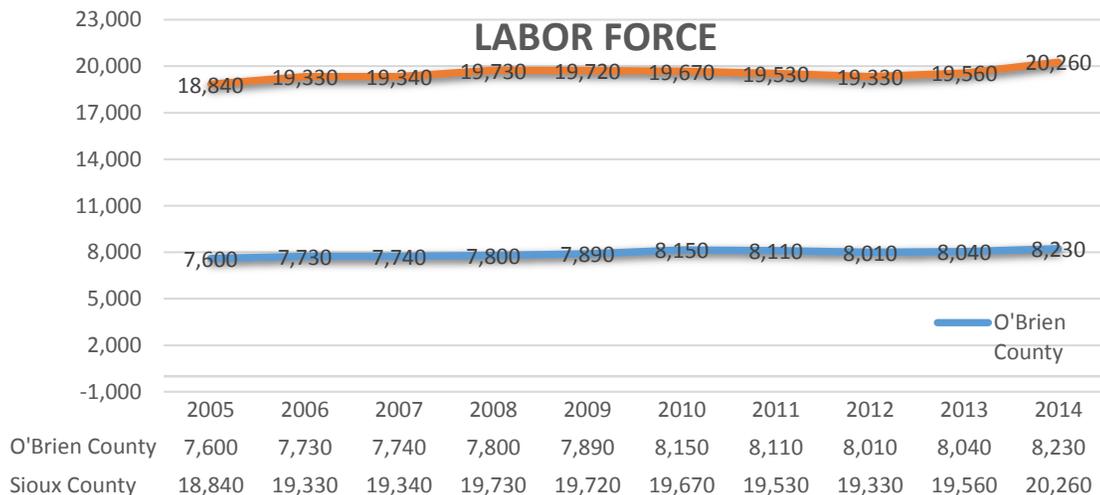


Figure 25 - Labor force trends in O’Brien and Sioux Counties, 2005-2014

Source: Iowa Workforce Development, Labor Market Information, 2015

**COMMUTING PATTERNS**

According to U.S. Census Bureau’s 2013 American Community Survey, the average commute time for Sheldon residents is 11.2 minutes. The inflow of workers coming from places outside of Sheldon is 2,413 workers per day. The number of people who are living in Sheldon, but working elsewhere is 1,440. And in turn, the number of people living and working in Sheldon is 1,326 people. With these numbers, one can see that there are more people travelling into Sheldon, and working in Sheldon than leaving and working elsewhere. This is a good sign for the economy of Sheldon, and shows that there are job opportunities within the community. While nearly 70.2% of Sheldon residents drive independently to work each day, another 15.6% carpool, 4.8% work at home, 3.5% use public transit to get to work and 5.4 % walk to work.

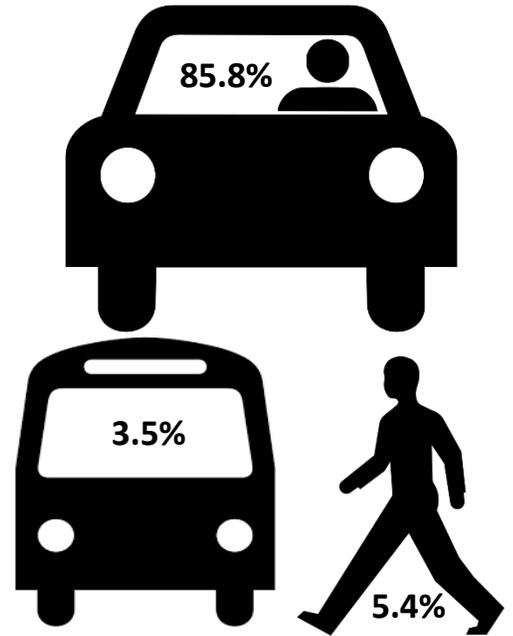


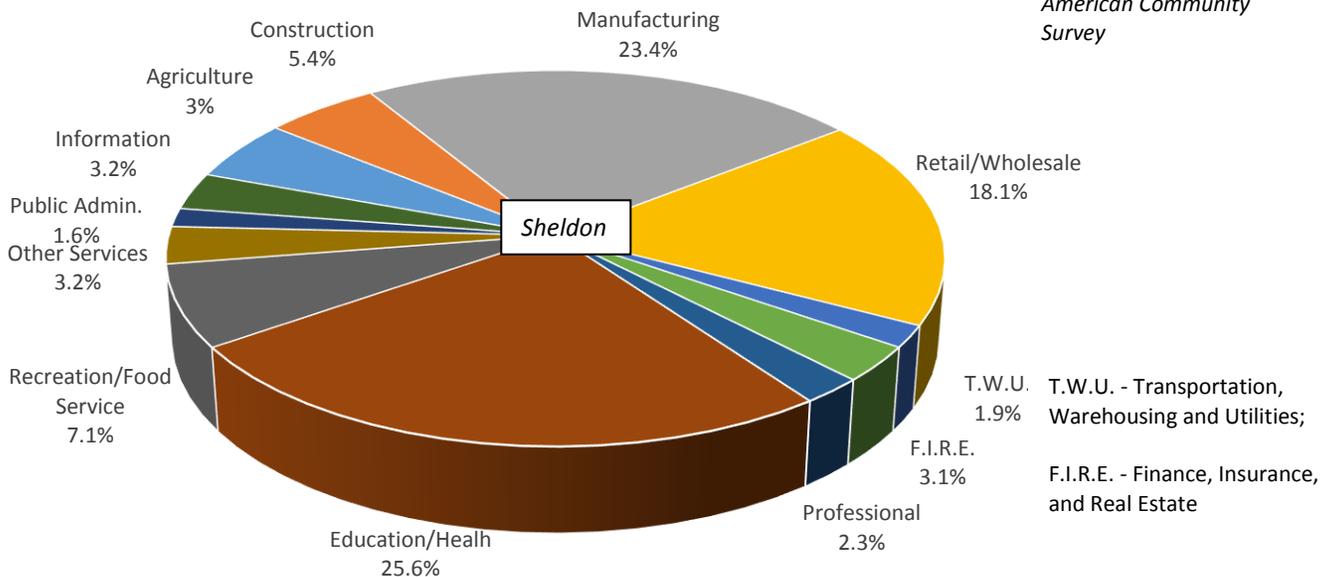
Figure 26 – Sheldon Commuting Methods

**EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY**

The charts below represent areas of employment by industrial sector for the City of Sheldon and O’Brien County. The industry sector employing the greatest majority of the workforce in Sheldon is the education/health/social services sector. This category employs slightly more than a quarter or 25.6% of all civilian employees over 16 years of age in Sheldon. The manufacturing sector is the second highest employee sector in the community comprising 23.4% of the workforce. In fact, a large percentage of the city’s workforce (74.2%) is comprised of only four industry classifications. The four industry sectors in which nearly 3 out of 4 people in Sheldon work in are the education/health/social services, manufacturing, retail/wholesale, and arts/recreation/food services.

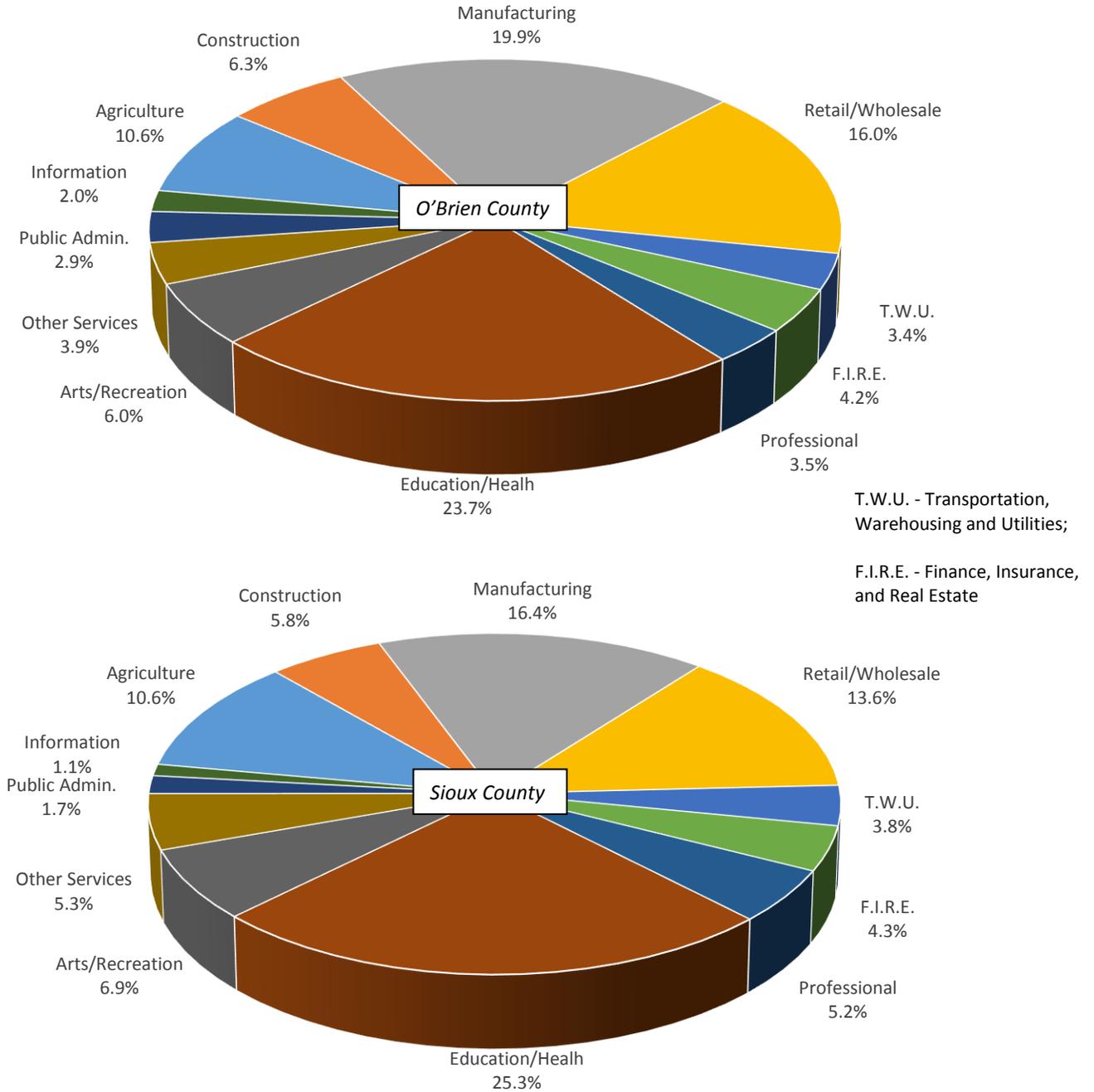
Figure 27 - Employment by Industrial Sector, City of Sheldon, 2013

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 American Community Survey



Sheldon is fairly similar in its composition of employed persons over the age of 16 in O'Brien County. Similar to Sheldon, O'Brien County's top employment sector is education/health/social services followed secondly by manufacturing sector. As would be expected for O'Brien County, the agricultural employment sector comprises a greater percentage (8.1%) of the county workforce in comparison to the City of Sheldon.

Figure 28 - Employment by Industrial Sector, O'Brien and Sioux County, 2013



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 American Community Survey

## MAJOR EMPLOYERS IN SHELDON

The largest manufacturing employers include, as expected, education/health/social service sector employers. The other employers that employ the most amount of people in Sheldon are of the manufacturing sector and also the recreation/food services. Below are the largest employers in Sheldon with more than 50 full time employees.

Table 9 - Sheldon's Largest Employers (more than 50+ full time employees), 2015

Company	Full-Time Employees	Industry
The Village	380	Education/Health/Social Services
Sanford Medical Center	352	Education/Health/Social Services
Rosenboom Manufacturing	284	Manufacturing
Van Wyk, Inc. Trucking	236	Recreation/Food Services
Maintainer Corporation of Iowa	181	Manufacturing
Sheldon Community School District	170	Education/Health/Social Services
Northwest Iowa Community College	145	Education/Health/Social Services

Source: City of Sheldon, Iowa Lakes Corridor Development Corp.

## OCCUPATIONAL EMPLOYMENT PROJECTIONS

Iowa Workforce Development compiles current levels of employment for workforce regions across the state and projects the level of anticipated employment in 10 years for each of the classifications. The employment projection for 2022 is only available on a regional basis. The data for Region 3-4 includes the counties of Lyon, O'Brien, Osceola, O'Brien, Dickinson, Clay, Buena Vista, Palo Alto, O'Brien and Kossuth. O'Brien and Sioux Counties constitutes the primary labor shed for Sheldon. Therefore, the employment projections presented below should provide useful data in regards to the employment trends and projected job growth in Sheldon's labor shed area.

Table 10 - Iowa Workforce Development Region 3 Employment Projections, 2012-2022

Industry Description	2012 Employment	2022 Projected Employment	Total Growth	Percent Change
Management Occupations	11,155	10,870	-285	-0.3%
Business and Financial	3,285	3,580	290	0.9%
Computer/Mathematics	615	690	75	1.2%
Architecture/Engineering	1,020	1,110	90	0.9%
Physical/Social Science	745	830	85	1.1%
Community and Social	1,345	1,585	240	1.8%
Education & Library	6,005	6,520	515	0.9%
Arts & Entertainment Sports	1,270	1,395	125	1.0%
Healthcare Practitioners	3,560	4,035	475	1.3%
Healthcare Support	2,885	3,325	440	1.5%
Protective Services	775	835	60	0.8%
Food Preparation/Serving	6,285	6,870	590	0.9%
Building and Grounds	3,755	4,230	475	1.3%
Personal Care and Service	2,230	2,635	405	1.8%
Sales/Related Occupations	8,775	9,520	745	1.0%
Office and Administrative	11,890	12,565	675	0.6%

Farm, Fishing & Forestry	2,115	2,195	85	0.4%
Construction/Extraction	4,390	5,245	855	1.9%
Installation/Maintenance	4,340	4,825	480	1.1%
Production Occupations	10,890	11,225	335	0.3%
Transportation/Moving	7,405	7,985	580	0.8%

Source: Iowa Workforce Information Network (IWIN), Iowa Workforce Development, 2015

# CHAPTER 10. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

An analysis of past and present economic trends is necessary to determine patterns, trends, and amount of potential economic growth expected in the future. Economic development has become synonymous with community development, as many consider economic development one of the most critical aspects of community development. An economic analysis provides important indicators as to the relative health of the city and potential growth in each of the land use categories.

## WAGES AND INCOME DISTRIBUTION

Income is one of the measures of the health of an area's economy and potential economic growth when expressed in real terms. By real terms, it is meant the purchasing power of income or the quantity of goods and services that can be bought. By comparing the amount of money it takes to buy a certain quantity of goods in current dollars, with the amount needed to buy the same goods in a previous base year can determine the real income growth of the economy. In other words, the determination is made as to how much of the income increase is due to inflation and how much is actual growth of the economy. Data showing median family income in 2013 for the city, county and the state is shown below.

Table 11 - Household, Family, & Per Capita Income - Sheldon, O'Brien County, Sioux County & Iowa

	Median Household Income	Median Family Income	Per capita Income
Sheldon	\$45,714	\$64,982	\$30,331
O'Brien County	\$48,185	\$63,912	\$28,086
Sioux County	\$57,227	\$67,067	\$24,324
Iowa	\$51,843	\$65,802	\$27,027

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013 American Community Survey

The median family income of Sheldon is approximately 5% lower than O'Brien County and 9% lower than the State of Iowa. When comparing the lowest and highest income ranges, closer examination shows 8.0% of families in Sheldon make less than \$15,000; compared with 6.5% for O'Brien County and 5.8% for the State of Iowa. The same trend holds true for Sheldon in regards to the highest range of family income. In Sheldon, there are 2.8% of families with incomes larger than \$150,000 per year. The percentage of families in O'Brien County earning in excess of \$150,000 during 2013 is 6.0% and 8.6% percent for the State of Iowa.

Studying income distribution of a community compared to other communities can indicate an overall wealth and subsequent purchasing power, providing insight into the economic health of Sheldon.

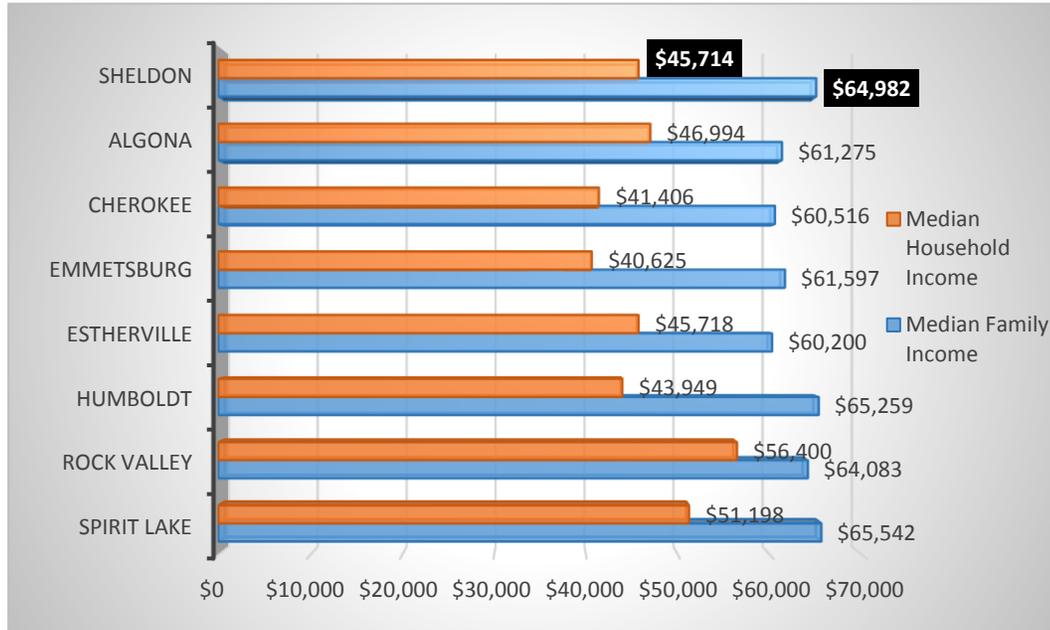
Table 12 - Household and Family Income Comparison of Sheldon and cities of similar size

	2013 Median Household Income	2013 Median Family Income	2013 Median Nonfamily Income
<b>Sheldon</b>	<b>\$45,714</b>	<b>\$64,982</b>	<b>\$30,331</b>
Algona	\$46,994	\$61,275	\$29,257
Cherokee	\$41,406	\$60,516	\$22,271
Emmetsburg	\$40,625	\$61,597	\$18,897
Humboldt	\$43,949	\$65,259	\$22,821

Rock Valley	\$56,400	\$64,083	\$24,238
Estherville	\$45,718	\$60,200	\$29,708
Spirit Lake	\$56,198	\$65,542	\$19,388

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013 American Community Survey

Figure 29 - Comparative Median Household and Family Income, 2013



The Iowa Workforce Development compiles data on current wage levels for several occupations and industries. Unfortunately, the following wage and salary data is only reported for Iowa Workforce regions across the state, and does not report at the county or city level. However, the regional workforce data provides an indication of typical wages and earnings represented in Sheldon.

Table 13 - Iowa Workforce Development Wage Survey for Region 3-4 Iowa Workforce Region, 2014

Occupation Description	2014 Mean Annual Wage	Occupation Description	2014 Mean Annual Wage
Management Occupations	\$76,150	Protective & Safety Services	\$34,575
Business & Finance (Accountants)	\$53,648	Food Preparation and Serving	\$19,481
Computer Support	\$52,192	Building & Grounds Maintenance	\$24,615
Architecture & Engineering	\$57,618	Personal Care/Service Occupations	\$22,898
Life, Physical & Social Science	\$47,145	Sales and Related Occupations	\$30,634
Community and Social Services	\$35,261	Office and Administrative Support	\$29,772
Legal Occupations	\$54,226	Farming, Fishing & Forestry	\$31,308
Education, Training & Library	\$41,188	Construction and Extraction	\$34,532
Art, Entertainment & Sports	\$30,862	Installation, Maintenance & Repair	\$40,238
Healthcare Practitioners & Technical	\$56,159	Production Occupations	\$31,545
Healthcare Support	\$25,568	Transportation & Moving	\$29,537

Source: May, 2014 Iowa Wage Survey Region 3 & 4

**RETAIL TRADE ANALYSIS**

Informative retail trade data and trends is available from the Iowa State University Extension, Regional Capacity Analysis Program or ReCAP. This information may help explain retail employment gains or losses over the last decade. Characteristics of retail activity are often times indicative of the overall economic vitality of a community. The data presented in this retail trade analysis compares retail trade sales data for the City of Sheldon, neighboring cities in O’Brien County and comparative cities of similar size in Northwest Iowa. The table below shows historic retail sales data for Sheldon over an almost 35 period between 1980 and 2014. This is done so historical comparisons can be made between the value of the dollar today as compared to sales in the community 25 or 35 years ago. It is interesting to note that while actual retail sales increased continually over this 35 year period, the number of retail firms remained fairly constant until a significant decrease over the past five years in Sheldon.

Table 14 - Number of Retail Firms v. Constant Sales per Firm, Sheldon

Year	FY 1980	FY 1990	FY 2000	FY 2010	FY 2014
Total Retail Sales (\$ Millions)	\$35.21	\$46.30	\$52.77	\$62.08	\$72.26
Constant Dollars (\$ Millions)	\$91.03	\$75.91	\$69.46	\$66.44	\$72.26
Number of Firms	234	240	257	251	245
Current Dollar Sales Per Firm	\$389,884	\$316,943	\$270,527	\$265,235	\$295,250
Constant Dollar Sales Per Firm	\$1,007,956	\$519,674	\$356,062	\$283,871	\$295,250
Current Dollar Sales Per Capita	\$18,270	\$15,397	\$13,803	\$12,831	\$14,122
Constant Dollar Sales Per Capita	\$47,232	\$25,244	\$19,796	\$12,558	\$14,122

Source: FY 2014 Retail Sales Analysis & Report, ISU Extension ReCAP, Iowa State University Dept. of Economics

The data presented below provide an overview of recent economic activity and retail trade occurring in Sheldon. Specifically, this data identifies the city’s retail trade trends since 2010. The subsequent graph shows total retail sales in Sheldon for a 10 year period from 2005-2014.

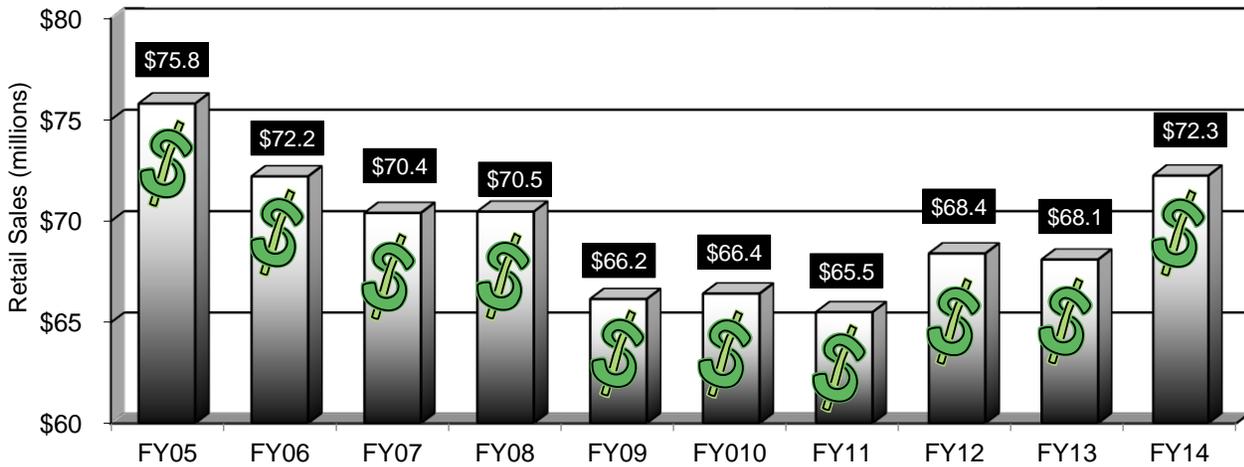
Table 15 - Retail Trade Overview for Sheldon, 2010-2014

	FY 2010	FY 2014	%Change 2010-2014
<i>Real retail sales (\$ millions)</i>			
Sheldon	\$62.08	\$72.26	16.40%
O’Brien County	\$104.99	\$120.34	14.62%
State of Iowa	\$34,188	\$35,848	4.63%
<i>Average Sales Per Capita (\$)</i>			
Sheldon	\$12,831	\$14,122	10.06%
O’Brien County	\$7,800	\$8,557	9.71%
State of Iowa	\$11,240	\$11,565	2.81%
<i>Average Sales Per Firm (\$)</i>			
Sheldon	\$265,235	\$295,250	11.32%
O’Brien County	\$199,406	\$225,241	12.96%
State of Iowa	-	-	-

Source: FY 2014 Retail Sales Analysis & Report, ISU Extension ReCAP, Iowa State University Dept. of Economics

According to 2014 Retail Sales Analysis provided by Iowa State University Extension ReCAP, Sheldon experienced retail sales of just over \$72 million in FY 2014. This represents a 6.1% increase in retail sales over the previous year. In comparison though, O’Brien County’s retail sales have increased approximately 2.7% from 2005-2014. The retail and service industries that constitute the commercial districts are just as vital to community development growth as manufacturing and industrial facilities.

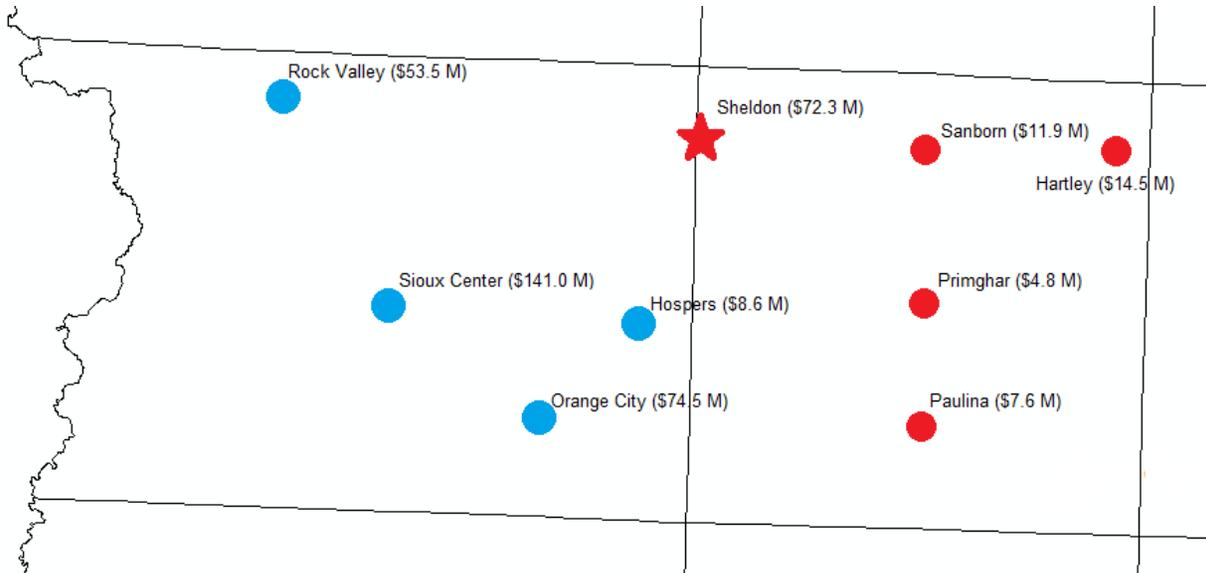
Figure 30 - Total Taxable Retail Sales in Sheldon, FY05-FY14



Source: This chart provided courtesy of the FY 2014 Retail Trade Analysis Report for Sheldon, Iowa  
Iowa State University, Department of Economics

The following map shows the FY 2014 total retail sales for the City of Sheldon in comparison to neighboring cities and regional communities.

Figure 31 - Region map showing Total Taxable Retail Sales for area cities



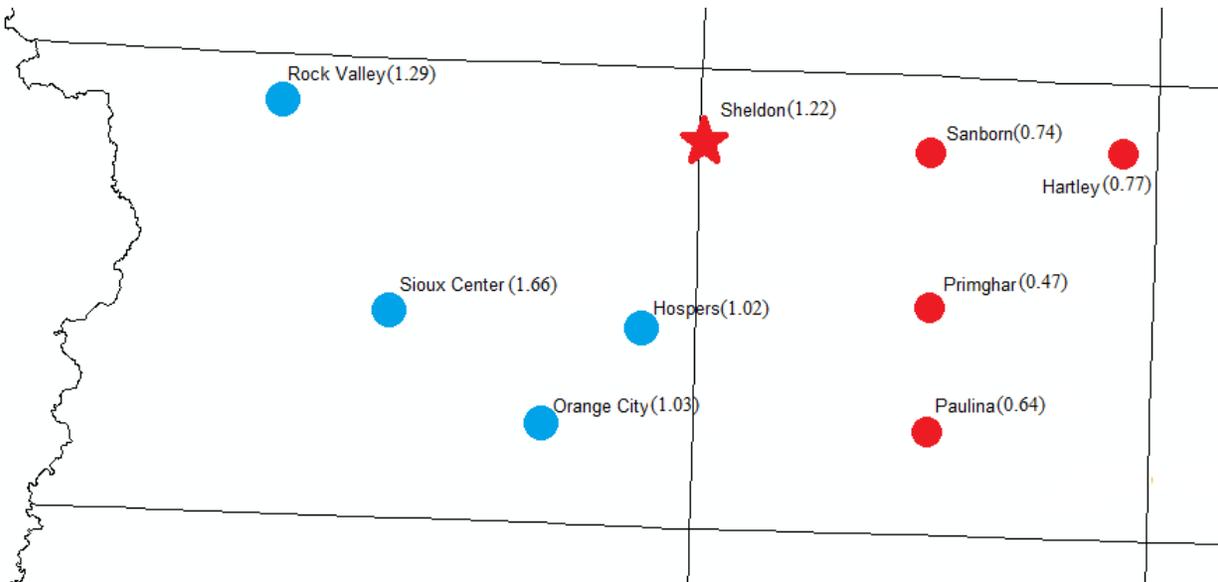
Source: Retail Trade Analysis Report. FY 2014. Iowa State University Dept. of Economics

**PULL FACTOR**

The pull factor was developed by Iowa State University Extension Service to provide a precise measure of sales activity in a locality. The pull factor is derived by dividing the per capita current dollar sales of a city or county by the per capita sales for the state. For example, if a town’s per capita sales were \$18,000 per year and the state per capita sales were \$9,000 per year, the pull factor is 2.0 (\$18,000/\$9,000). The interpretation is that the town is selling to 200 percent of the town’s population in full time customer equivalents. Pull factors are good measures of sales activity because they reflect changes in population, inflation, and the state’s economy. A strict interpretation of the pull factor indicates a 1.0 means the city is drawing all of its customers from within its boundaries and none from the outside. Less than 1.0 means there is leakage of customer sales to outside the community and a greater ratio over 1.0 means the city is attracting customer sales or purchases from residents outside its trade area boundaries.

In 2000, Sheldon’s pull factor was 1.11. By 2010, the pull factor increased to 1.14, indicating a growing share of retail dollars brought into the community. Most recently the pull factor for Sheldon has increased even more to 1.22. Sheldon is still considered bringing in retail sales from outsiders along with the community. In other words, even with strong retail competition from a heavily tourist region in Dickinson County to the northeast of Sheldon, and larger communities to the west, the city is still keeping a good overhead and profiting off the sales done in Sheldon.. Below is a map showing the comparative pull factor for cities in O’Brien County and regional communities.

Figure 32 - Region map showing the Pull Factor (retail surplus or leakage indicator) for area cities



Source: Retail Trade Analysis Report, FY 2014, Iowa State University Dept. of Economics

**TRADE AREA CAPTURE**

Another method for determining the amount of retail sales activity occurring in Sheldon is to calculate the city’s trade area capture. The purpose of the trade area capture formula is to examine how many customers or potential purchasers are spending their dollars in Sheldon to shop for any type of product at any given time. The trade area capture estimates the portion of customers the city actually

attracts or loses from within and outside its boundaries. The trade area capture analysis is also used by retail sectors to understand trade growth or decline.

Table 16 - Trade Area Capture analysis for Sheldon

<p><b>TRADE AREA CAPTURE FORMULA</b>  <math>A / [B \times (C / D)]</math>                  A = Total Retail Sales for Sheldon                  B = Per Capita Sales for the State of Iowa                  C = Sheldon Per Capita Income                  D = State of Iowa Per Capita Income</p>
---

Sheldon’s trade area capture for the year **2014** is as follows:

A (Sheldon Total Retail Sales)	= \$72,262,442
B (State Per Capita Sales)	= \$11,565
C (Sheldon Per Capita Income)	= \$31,131 *Note: 2013 Per Capita Income
D (State Per Capita Income)	= \$27,027 *Note: 2013 Per Capita Income

**2014 Trade Area Capture for Sheldon = 5,424 customers**

**2014 Estimated Population = 5,106 residents**

The above figures indicate that businesses in Sheldon captured the retail sales of 5,424 customers from its 2014 estimated population base of 5,106 residents. This results in the City of Sheldon capturing retail sales from 106% of its expected customers. In this calculation, the city is gaining an additional 6% of its retail sales above projected sales for the community from residents outside of Sheldon that are spending dollars within the community.

**SHELDON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

As stated on the chamber’s website at [www.SheldonIowa.com](http://www.SheldonIowa.com), the mission statement for the Sheldon Chamber of Commerce is “where families come first.” Membership with the Sheldon Chamber of Commerce will join with a number of businesses in support of the community. The Chamber of Commerce is a non-profit organization that provides business exposure to its members, networking opportunities, and supports many community events to enhance the quality of life in Sheldon. The Chamber of Commerce is supportive of and hosts communitywide events such as Sheldon Home & Design Expo, Golden Easter Egg Hunt, Children’s Easter Egg Hunt, Ladies Night Out, Community Cleanup Day, Farmer’s Market, Sheldon Celebration Days, and the 25 Days of Christmas.

**SHELDON CHAMBER AND DEVELOPMENT CORP. (SCDC)**

The city's local economic development efforts are led through the Sheldon Chamber and Development Corp. (SCDC). According to their website, Sheldon is a growing community with an emphasis on family, manufacturing/industrial, education, and communications. There is a lot to offer from its unique businesses to recreation facilities, and their excellent education institutions. These types of opportunities are the reason why Sheldon is a community like no other.

**NORTHWEST IOWA DEVELOPMENT - A PERSPECTIVE ON REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

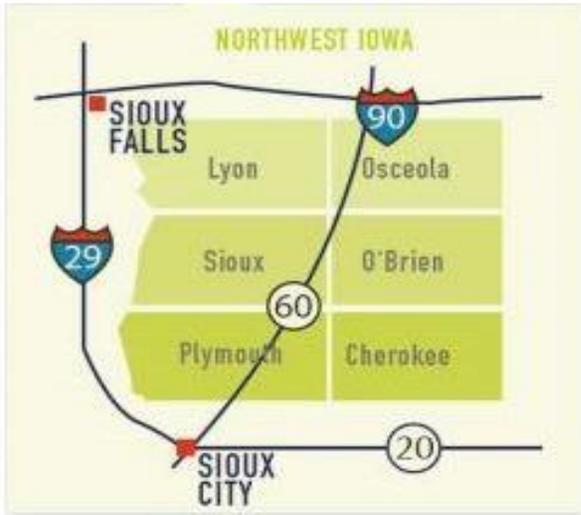
Northwest Iowa Development is a consortium of city, county, educational and utility economic developers from a six county region in northwest Iowa that have come together creating a unified approach to growing, branding and developing the northwest Iowa region.



**NORTHWEST IOWA DEVELOPMENT**  
Beyond Expectations.

This unified effort creates more opportunities for all participating city, county and non-governmental entities to attract quality new corporate businesses, expansions and retentions within the six county region. A primary effort of this group is to attract a skilled workforce to support the growing business sector in the region. Northwest Iowa Development

Figure - Map of Northwest Iowa Developers Region



is located on the campus of Northwest Iowa Community College campus in Sheldon.

The six counties that comprise Northwest Iowa Development include Lyon, Osceola, Sioux, O'Brien, Plymouth and Cherokee. The region is located with proximity to excellent transportation and shipping routes for new and expanding businesses, as the region is bounded by Interstate 90 to the north, Interstate 29 to the west and Highway 20 to the south. The four lane Iowa Highway 60 from Sioux City to the Minnesota state border transverses the region from the southwest to the northeast, opening up access to many of the region's communities to enhanced transportation routes and ease of shipping goods and services. The

collaborative efforts of the region's economic developers can assist with locating affordable building sites, find a qualified and dedicated workforce, and offer excellent workforce and equipment training opportunities. According to the organizations website, [www.northwestiowa.com](http://www.northwestiowa.com), ***"Let us show you how we can provide a low cost place to do business...Beyond Expectations."***



Figure 33 - O'Brien County Smart Site. Sheldon, Iowa

Opportunities exist for new and expanding industry, along with new jobs in Sheldon. If the community wants to look to grow and prosper in the future, there are several local, regional, and state opportunities for financial incentive programs to new prospective and existing expanding businesses. Incentives that may be available to qualifying and prospective new or expanding businesses include:

1. High Quality Jobs Program – The High Quality Jobs Program provides qualifying businesses tax credits and direct financial assistance to offset some of the costs incurred to locate, expand or modernize an Iowa facility.
2. New Jobs Tax Credit – The Iowa New Jobs Tax Credit is an Iowa corporate income tax credit and is available to companies that enter into a New Jobs Training Agreement and expands their employment base by ten percent.
3. Job Training Assistance - Several federal and State programs are available to assist industries in training new employees, as well as retraining workers.
4. Innovation Fund Tax Credit – This program was created to stimulate venture capital investment in innovative Iowa businesses. Certified Innovation Funds make investments in promising early-stage companies that have a principal place of business in Iowa.
5. NWIPDC Regional Loan Fund - The Northwest Iowa Planning & Development Commission offers low interest loans at interest rates below prime for new and expanding businesses.
6. Value-Added Agricultural Products & Process Financial Assistance - This State program provides financial assistance to new and existing companies that utilize agricultural commodities to create new, higher-value products or produce renewable fuels and co-products.
7. Iowa New Jobs and Income Program - This program provides financial assistance to new and existing companies that utilize agricultural commodities to create new, higher-value products or produce renewable fuels and co-products.
8. Industrial Property Tax (T.I.F. Rebate) - The City of Sheldon offers to rebate from property taxation the actual value of new construction added to industrial real estate. The following T.I.F. rebate schedule is applied in such cases:
  - Year #1 — 75%
  - Year #2 — 60%
  - Year #3 — 45%
  - Year #4 — 30%
  - Year #5 — 15%
9. TIF Financing - The City of Sheldon offers low cost fully developed land. We can also offer favorable financing on new construction and/or expansions.
10. Home Base Iowa -
11. SCDC Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) - A loan pool of in excess of \$1,800,000 is available to fund new or existing industrial and commercial projects. Projects are evaluated on the local economic benefits potential for the community. Projects must be unable to obtain full conventional financing. A maximum of one third of the funds can be obtained from the revolving loan fund. Applications are accepted at any time and are reviewed by the SCDC RLF Board.

12. O'Brien County Revolving Loan Fund - The objective of the O'Brien County Economic Development Revolving Loan Fund is to further the public purpose of economic development through joint private and public investments which involve the creation of new jobs and income, or the retention of existing jobs and income that would otherwise be lost.
13. Storefront and Interior Renovation Program - The Storefront Program is designed to aid in the refurbishing and repair of building facades or storefronts. Eligible renovation activities of commercial buildings include the replacement of awnings, signage, windows, doors and masonry repair. Forgivable loans are available for qualifying projects up to 40% of project cost. Applications are accepted at any time and reviewed by the SCDC RIF Committee.

# CHAPTER 11. TRANSPORTATION DIVERSITY

Transportation systems are created with the primary goal of transporting people and goods safely and efficiently. The components that comprise the transportation element of this plan include vehicular and pedestrian movement, traffic flow, street classifications, public transit, railroad and airport facilities. Community leaders and elected officials strive to commit the necessary resources to construct, improve and maintain the many miles of city streets and infrastructure throughout the community. Sheldon should continue to emphasize a balance between maintaining, rehabilitating or replacing existing streets with new construction of planned future streets in developing areas.

## TRANSPORTATION & LOGISTICS

Location and access to major markets for the shipment of goods and services is essential to survival in the business marketplace. Sheldon is centrally located in the Upper Midwest with access to interstates, rail and air service, making it a strategic base for transporting goods within the region and nationwide. On a regional level, Sheldon is centrally located between the two metropolitan centers of Des Moines, IA (225 miles) and Minneapolis, MN (179 miles). Sheldon is most closely located to commercial air and interstate access to the Sioux Falls, SD metropolitan area at only 50 miles northwest. Sheldon is served directly with rail and air access, along with two Iowa State Highways bisecting the community. Sheldon is located approximately 30 miles south of Interstate 90 in southern Minnesota. To learn more about Sheldon's transportation & logistics, contact the City Office at 712-324-4651.

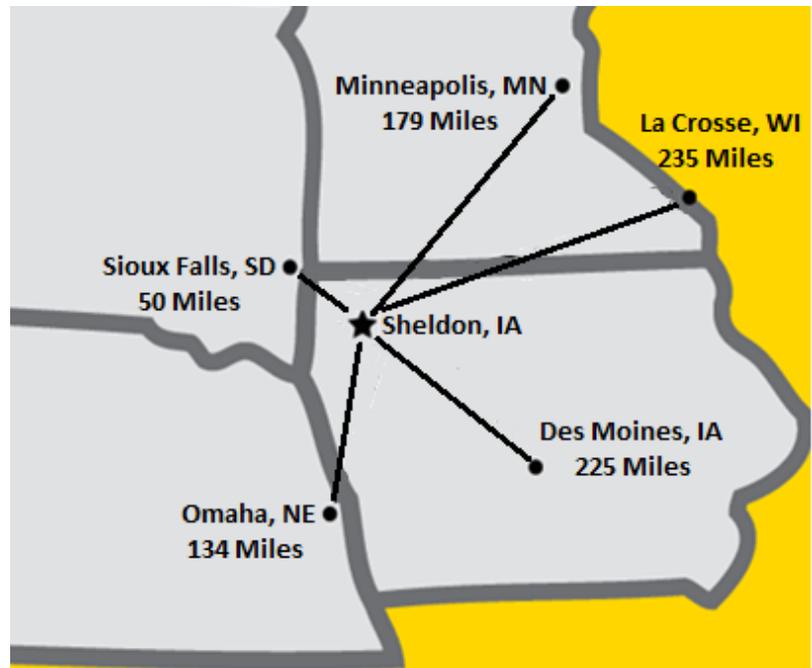


Figure 34 – Regional location map showing Sheldon's presence in the Midwest

## TRAFFIC FLOW

The primary transportation route in Sheldon remains to be the Iowa Highway 60 and U.S. 18 corridors. There has been a lot of construction over the past 12 years of traffic flow plans. In 1999, the Highway 60 bypass was not in place, but instead it was running straight through the city. Highway 18, however, has not changed in location, but only where it exits to for Highway 60.

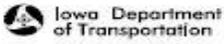
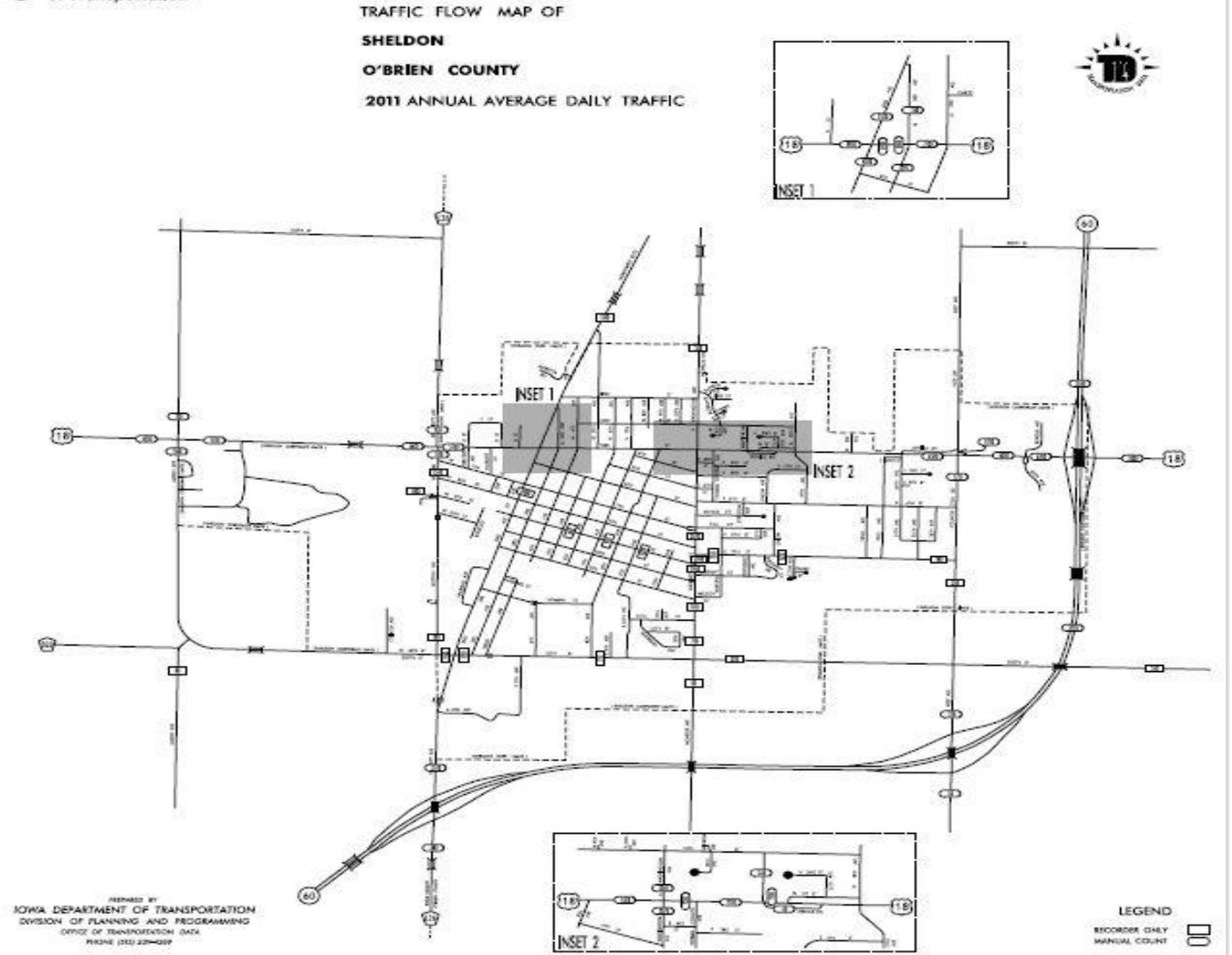


Figure 35 – IDOT Traffic Flow Map, 2011



In 1999, the traffic for Highway 60 going north and south totaled to 10,900 vehicles daily. With the bypass now in place, the 2011 traffic counts has the estimated number of vehicles travelling on Highway 60 every day at 7,330 vehicles. As mentioned before, the construction did not affect Highway 18, except where the people exited to Highway 60 at. In 1999 the counts coming in and leaving Sheldon on the east side of town were 16,190 vehicles, and in 2011 Highway 18 saw a drop in traffic to a total of 13,600 vehicles. On the west side of town, Highway 18 saw a total of 9,900 vehicles daily in 1999, compared to 11,500 in 2011. The reduction of traffic may be that more people are moving into Sheldon, and working where they live. Especially since the population has been on a plateau or rise over the past few years.

## STREET CLASSIFICATIONS

The streets of a community are indispensable. Few other elements so drastically affect the community's development. Therefore, this section shall devote attention to the street transportation system in Sheldon. Local traffic systems have evolved from a constantly changing set of determinants. A few of these determinants governing current and future roadway design include:

### Psychological Factors:

1. The population masses using the traffic system tend to follow the fastest course.
2. When a properly designed traffic system is not provided, the driving public establishes one by finding the routes, regardless of adjacent land uses and other planning considerations.
3. The driving public tends to drive according to environmental conditions of the roadway.

### Economic Factors:

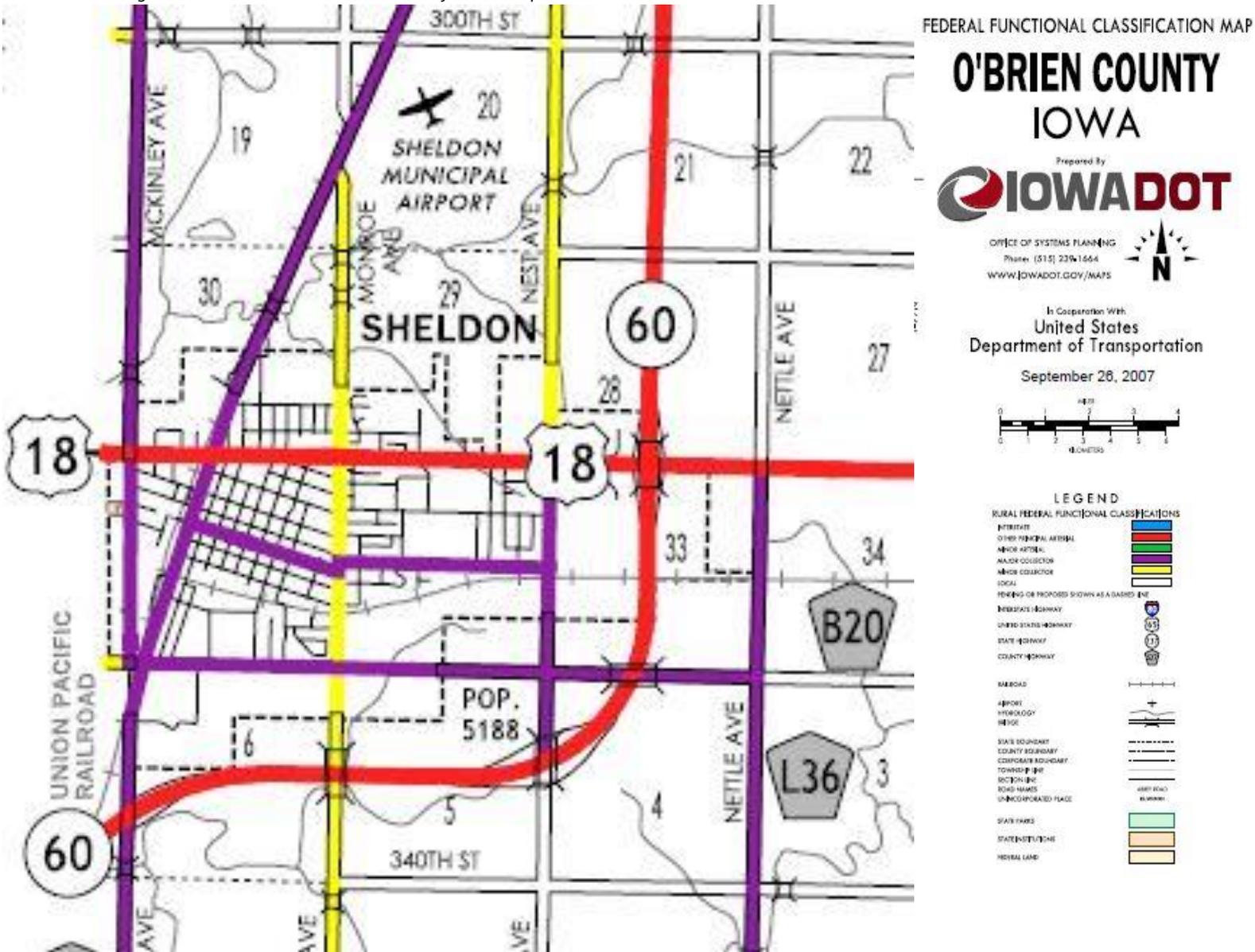
1. Streets and roadways comprise a large percentage of land acreage within the community. Consequently, a substantial capital asset of the city is tied up in land value of the roadways.
2. Capital expenditures for road improvements, maintenance costs, and construction costs of streets are a substantial portion of city, county, state, and federal expenditures.

### Physical Factors:

1. Street grades and the grades of abutting properties may severely restrict driver sight distances. This is a particular serious condition at street intersections or driveway entrances to streets.
2. Street intersections can have restricted sight clearances as a result of numerous private and public signs, trees, and shrubs improperly located, vehicles parked too close to the intersection, utility poles blocking view, etc.
3. Poor street alignment, right-of-way cross-sectional grading and drainage techniques, etc. can contribute additional safety hazards.

The map on the following page depicts those routes in Sheldon classified according to the Federal Functional Classification system. The highest traffic routes through Sheldon are Highway 60 and U.S. 18, which are both classified by the Iowa DOT as a principal arterial routes. The next highest classification of roads is a minor arterial route, but there are no routes that go through, or around Sheldon that are classified as this. The next level of street classification are major collector streets, B20 and L36 are classified as such streets. Minor collector streets are the second lowest level of classification, which, in this case, mainly go through the city limits. Monroe Avenue and Nest Avenue are the minor collector streets in Sheldon. And finally, the rest of the streets that go through Sheldon are classified as local.

Figure 36 - IDOT Federal Functional Classification Map



An explanation of the following street definitions is necessary for the proper understanding of the IDOT's Federal Functional Classification Map. These definitions are to be considered basic design guidelines that serve as a framework for satisfactory design of new street and highways facilities. The following street classification definitions are in accordance with the Iowa Statewide Urban Design and Specifications (SUDAS). The four major functional classifications for urbanized areas are arterial streets, collector streets, local streets and private streets. These classifications are consistent with American Association of State Highway & Transportation Officials (AASHTO).

**ARTERIAL STREETS**

1. Major/Principal Arterial - The major/principal arterials serves major centers of activity in urbanized areas and carries a high proportion of total urban travel on a minimum of miles.
2. Minor Arterial - The non-primary arterial connects with and augments the principal arterial system. It accumulates trips of moderate length at a somewhat lower level of movement.

**COLLECTOR STREETS**

1. Major Collector – Provides movement of traffic between arterial routes and minor collectors and, at lower speeds, collects traffic from local streets and residential and commercial areas.
2. Minor Collector - Provides movement of traffic between major collector routes and local streets as well as providing access to abutting property at low speeds.

**LOCAL STREETS**

Local streets provides for movement of traffic between collector streets and residential or commercial areas.

**PRIVATE STREETS**

Certain jurisdictions allow private streets in specific situations. Private streets are similar to the local streets but generally are located on dead-end roads, short loop streets, or frontage roads.

**TRANSIT SERVICES**

The City of Sheldon is not provided with direct connection to intercity or charter bus service. With that said, there are smaller private charter ride services available to the residents of Sheldon such as limousine and/or taxi cab services. In terms of public transit services, the community continues to be served by the Regional Transit Authority’s bus service called “RIDES,” which makes daily trips to and throughout Sheldon. Transit rides are offered Monday-Friday 6:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m. and Saturday 8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. for \$3.00 per ride for the public or monthly passes for \$75.00 (Village Only).

**RAILROAD SERVICES**

According to the Iowa DOT Railroad Map, the City of Sheldon is served by two rail line companies, the Canadian Pacific Railroad (CP) and the Union Pacific (UP) Rail line. The Canadian Pacific Railroad comes into Sheldon from the east, connecting it to Spencer, Emmetsburg, and going west from there. The Union Pacific Railroad goes north and south from Sheldon connecting Sibley to the north and Le Mars to the south.



Figure 37 – Detail from the IDOT Iowa Railroad Map, 2014

**SHELDON MUNICIPAL AIRPORT**

A well designed airport is a vital tool for community and economic development. The City of Sheldon is served by a municipal airport located approximately 2 miles north of the city’s northern city limits along Northwest Boulevard. The Sheldon Municipal Airport is a general service airport. According to the Iowa DOT’s Office of Aviation, a general service airport supports most twin and single engine general aviation aircraft. These airports generally support the regional and in-state air transportation needs. The Sheldon Airport is a general service airport. Midwest Flying Service, Inc. is the flight base operator, who is located on the airport grounds and services small general aviation aircraft along with providing flight instruction and aviation rentals to the general public.

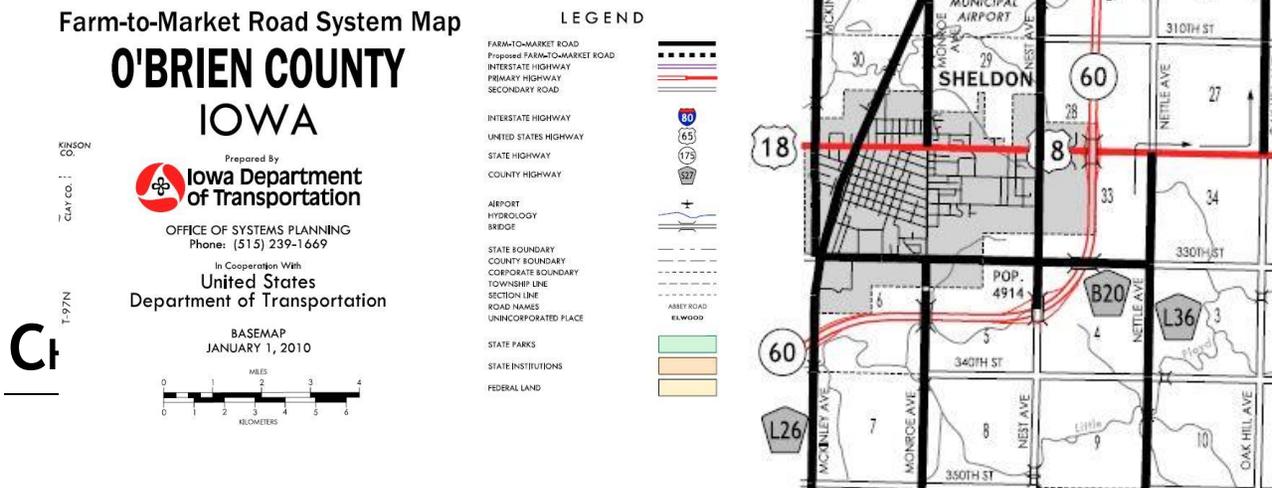


The Sheldon Municipal Airport offers two runways. The airport is situated at 1,418 feet above sea level. Runway 15 is concrete and in excellent condition, and measures 4,199 x 75 feet. The second runway, 33 is also a concrete runway in excellent condition with the runway measuring 1,280 x 23 meters. Services offered include hangers, fuel, maintenance and aircraft tie-downs. The nearest airport offering commercial air service is Sioux Falls, SD located 50 miles to the northwest. The nearest international airport is in Minneapolis, MN located 179 miles to the northeast.

**FARM TO MARKET ROAD SYSTEM**

Farm to market roads in Iowa connect principal traffic generating uses to primary roads or other farm to market routes. These designated county routes are maintained by each county, but paid for by a special fund. The Farm to Market Road Fund consists of federal secondary road aid and 8 percent of Iowa’s road use taxes. Farm to Market roads located within the City of Sheldon are Highway 60, U.S. Highway 18, Monroe Avenue, McKinley Avenue, Nest Avenue, N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, and Highways B20.

Figure 38 – IDOT Farm-to-Market Road Map



Many people choose to spend their leisure time in some form of recreation, whether it is active or passive recreation. This increased demand for recreational areas and activities can put excessive burden on existing facilities, causing them to become inadequate. A sound park system and recreation activities can be categorized as necessary components of a desirable living situation. Many psychologists and biologists have deemed recreation as a positive force. It is believed that recreation creates a peace of mind and increases pride within community residents. Therefore, it is apparent that recreation is not only desirable but necessary for the well-being of the residents. A set of goals and objectives are established which act as guidelines that promote orderly development and betterment of the community. Sheldon maintains a strong parks and recreational system, however these “green” amenities cannot afford to remain static. As the composition of the community changes over time, so must the recreation system change to meet new demands.

**RECREATION**, as defined by the Merriam-Webster online Dictionary:

***"Something people do to relax or have fun; activities done for enjoyment."***

Therefore, it is apparent that recreation is not only desirable but necessary for the well-being of the residents. A set of goals and objectives are established which act as guidelines that promote orderly development and betterment of the community. Sheldon maintains a strong parks and recreational system, however these “green” amenities cannot afford to remain static. As the composition of the community changes over time, so must the recreation system change to meet new demands.

### **CITY PARKS**

The city park spaces in Sheldon fall into one of three classifications: neighborhood, special use and community or school parks. The following section summarizes the facilities, amenities and acreages for the city’s parks.

Neighborhood Parks - neighborhood parks provide residents with a place for active recreation close to home. These spaces are designed for residents in a ¼ mile radius or 10 minute walk from their home. Neighborhood parks typically vary in size from 1 to 10 acres and may contain playground equipment, picnic areas, basketball court, parking, a single ball field or open field for recreational activities or games.

Special Use Parks - these parks typically contain golf courses, arenas, gardens, pools, plazas, historic sites, skate parks, disc golf, dog parks are areas based on the unique, cultural, historic or community feature or recreational activity.

Community and School Parks – typically provide facilities for a whole community and school district, and are multi-field athletic complexes or contain facilities that are unique to the particular park. Examples are: picnic shelter with rental, large aquatic facility, and multiple tennis courts. When making a school and community park the city and school district work together on a recreational facility planning, typically the large scaled park that can be used by the athletic teams of the school and also be used by community teams.

There are five (5) public parks owned and maintained by the city in addition to the aquatic center. Although not located within the city limits, the Sheldon Golf Course is situated near the city’s regional airport and is considered by many to be a recreational amenity in the community.

Hills Park - This community park is located on the very north end of Sheldon. This park is unique in the aspect that it has camping places, a Frisbee golf course, and a lot of space for family activities. It is a popular place for people to hike, picnic, and camp during the nicer season.



Schemper Park – This is the newest park to date in Sheldon. It is located in the Schemper Addition on 9<sup>th</sup> Street and 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The features that this park is most popular for are the playground equipment, and it also features a spring swing.

Sheldon City Park – The Sheldon City Park is located between 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Avenues just south of Highway 18. Its features include a shelter house, restrooms, picnic tables, grills, open air picnic shelters, a covered gazebo, also a feature called “Playground Paradise”. For more activities, there are also softball fields, basketball courts, sand volleyball courts, and a skate park all located in the area of this park.



Sunrise Park – Sunrise Park is a great place to access the eastern leg of the Sheldon Recreation Trail. In this park there is a covered picnic shelter, swings, and a small pond. The location is on the far north end of 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

Thorman Park – Located between 15<sup>th</sup> Street and Thorman Avenue in the southeastern portion of Sheldon, is Thorman Park. This park features a picnic shelter, swings, a slide, and playground equipment.



**SHELDON GOLF COURSE**

Although the Sheldon Golf Course is located outside of city limits, the golf course plays an integral role in providing additional recreational amenities to the residents and visitors of Sheldon. This beautiful, fun, yet challenging 9-hole golf course is open from April 1<sup>st</sup> to November 1<sup>st</sup>. According to the golf course’s website at [www.Sheldongolf.com](http://www.Sheldongolf.com), the Sheldon Golf course “...provides 9 holes of challenging golf for the beginning golfer, as well as the low handicapper, in all of us.”



**THE SHELDON RECREATION TRAIL**

Sheldon is making an effort to enhance the community with green spaces and trails. Our citizens look to the outdoors for safe, healthy and affordable recreation opportunities. As of 2008, approximately six miles of asphalt and concrete trail accommodates bikers, hikers, and inline skaters during the summer months. It is possible for senior citizens and individuals with physical disabilities to enjoy the trail using a golf cart with a city permit.



The Sheldon Recreational Trail has constructed a trailhead arch signifying the entrance. It is located in Hills Park, a location beneficial to campers, visitors, and all community members. Using 3,245 bricks salvaged from the Sheldon High School and Jr. College, the trailhead will honor organizations, businesses, and individuals who have made significant contributions and easements to make the trail possible. Trail enhancements include picnic and rest areas, restrooms, prairie restoration area, playgrounds, wildflowers, trees, berms, prairie grasses, wildlife and birds.

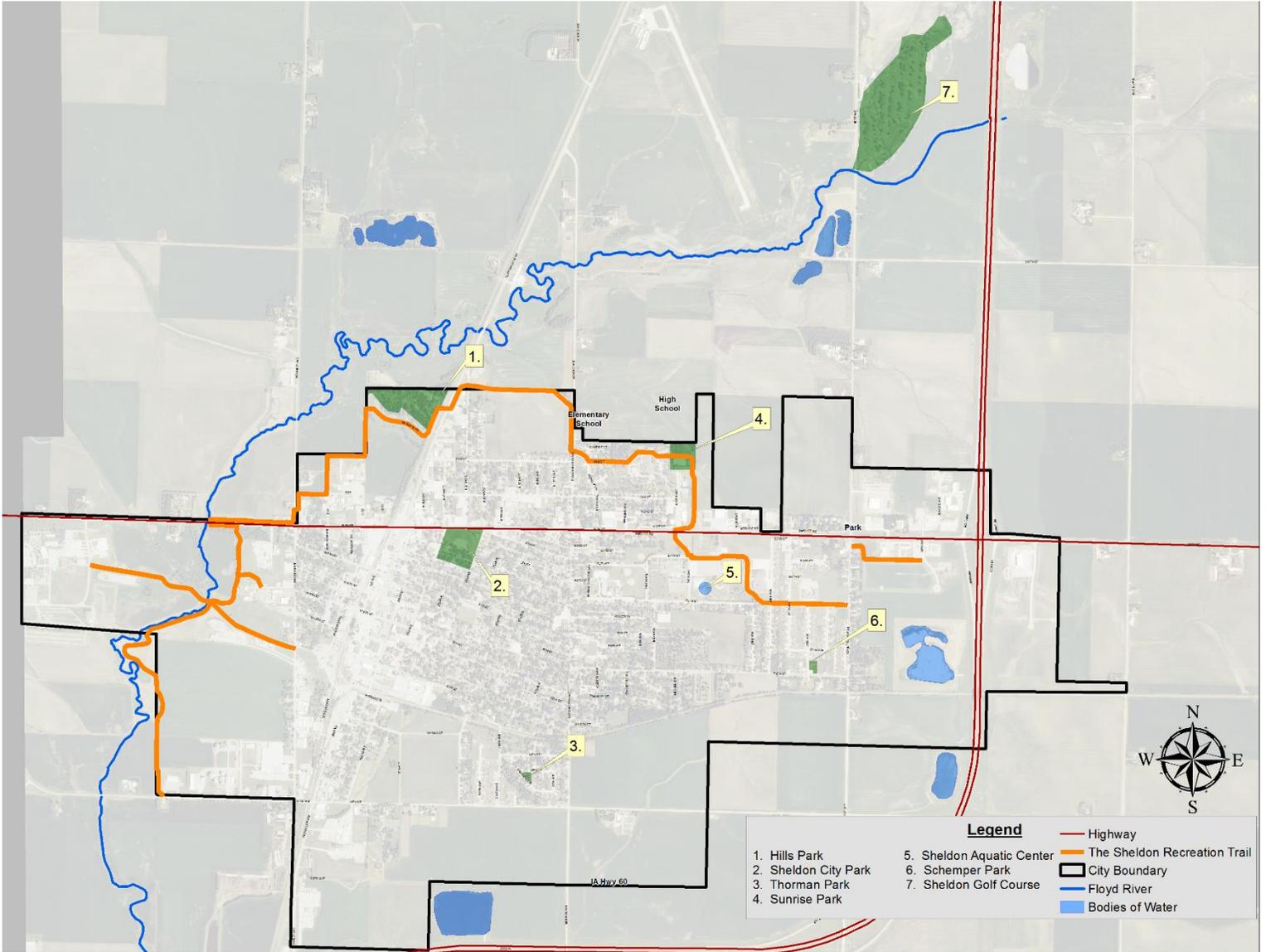
The goal of the trail committee is to create a trail that will network the community creating biking and walking paths to access the community college, parks, public schools, Village Northwest, senior living centers, swimming pools, etc.



### 2015 SHELDON PARKS & RECREATION MAP

Following is a map of the city's current park and recreation areas in and adjacent to Sheldon. This map is intended to show an inventory of current parks and recreational land uses. This map was created with information provided by Sheldon city staff.

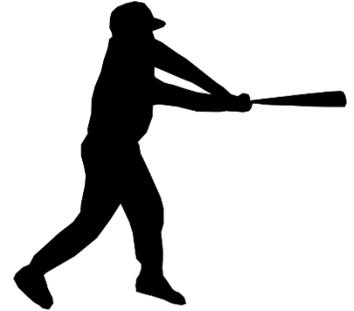
### 2015 Sheldon Parks and Recreation



## **CITY RECREATION ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMS**

The Sheldon Parks and Recreation Department is run by a five (5) member board comprised of volunteers from the community. The day-to-day operations of the Parks and Recreation Department's activities and responsibilities are covered by City of Sheldon staff. The Parks and Recreation Department is responsible for overseeing the operations, maintenance and future planning for the city's parks, trails, outdoor swimming pool, shelter house reservations, ballfield scheduling, and running the city's youth recreation programs.

The Sheldon Parks and Recreation Department offers a variety of recreational programs throughout the year. The different programs that are offered through the parks and recreation department for the City of Sheldon are: youth indoor and spring soccer, 3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade softball and baseball, summer recreation and swimming lessons, youth flag football, youth volleyball, youth basketball for grades 1<sup>st</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>, youth golf, and adult programs.



## **RESPONSIBILITIES FOR PROVIDING RECREATION USES**

Those entities responsible for providing and maintaining recreation uses involves both the public and private sectors, and it's essential that each sector understand its responsibilities. The federal government has little power affecting recreation uses in Sheldon. With that said, funding policies of federal agencies do influence the community. The primary concern of the federal government is the provision for and protection of areas that attract national attention. Sheldon's surrounding area does not contain any nationally significant landforms or attractions.

The State of Iowa is responsible for the provisions of facilities that have regional or statewide influence. The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) is the state agency directly concerned with outdoor recreation uses. The Iowa Department of Transportation, Iowa Economic Development Authority, Iowa Natural Resources Council, State Archeologists and the State Historical Society are other state agencies that may also exert direct and indirect influence on state recreation programs. Those areas nearest to Sheldon that that attract regional or statewide attention include the West Fork Des Moines River corridor and Fort Defiance State Park.

The principal agency involved with providing outdoor recreation at the county level is the O'Brien County Conservation Board. This Board is responsible for countywide recreation plans, the implementation of such plans and the general obligation to provide outdoor education and recreation areas to the residents of the county.

Within the City of Sheldon, the City Council is ultimately responsible for the provision of recreational uses and activities, with oversight and administration provided by city staff. The city's park system consists of public use areas such as the swimming pool, picnic grounds, playgrounds, tennis courts and baseball/softball fields. A high proportion of future recreation uses is expected to take place on or in public/private owned facilities. Generally speaking, the private sector provides recreation uses typical of high intensity uses, such as driving ranges, golf courses, roller-skating, laser tag, fitness centers, health clubs, and camping. With each of these agencies providing facilities appropriate to their particular scope a balanced program will be achieved. An organized continuation of recreation uses is essential for meaningful service to benefit Sheldon's residents. Changing priorities and demands on recreation amenities requires foresight if the city is to meet future needs, while

simultaneously continuing with maintenance and upgrading of existing facilities.



#### STATE OF IOWA PROJECTED RECREATION TRENDS & GOALS

In 2013, the most recent statewide comprehensive outdoor recreation plan or SCORP was developed and resulted in the [Outdoor Recreation in Iowa Plan](#). When planning future outdoor recreation uses and activities it becomes necessary to identify issues and priorities facing recreation activities. The Iowa Department of Natural Resources was granted the task of bringing together many diverse persons with a strong interest in outdoor recreation, representing varying interests. In support of

Governor Brandstad's "Goals for Iowa", the following recreation planning statistics support the Governor's future goals. According to new research by Iowa State University in 2012, spending in Iowa's state parks, county parks, lakes, rivers and streams, multi-use trails contributes to more than \$2 billion of economic activity of which helps support 31,000 jobs statewide. Furthermore, as stated in the plan, outdoor recreation opportunities help local businesses recruit new employees, as well as grow and sustain businesses.

As most of us are aware, parks and recreational uses provide many benefits to the individual user, families and the entire community. Examples of benefits derived from outdoor recreation include:

1. **Environmental benefits** – People with a connection to the outdoors also support conservation and preservation of natural resources.
2. **Physical benefits** – Walking, hiking, biking and other outdoor activities keep Iowans healthy throughout their life.
3. **Emotional benefits** – Spending time outdoors reduces stress and re-energizes us to take on the tasks of everyday life.
4. **Social benefits** – Open spaces and recreation areas are natural draws for people to come together and spend time with family and friends.
5. **Economic benefits** – People who participate in outdoor recreation contribute to their communities through local spending.

One of the primary components to the outdoor recreation plan is to explore and examine recreation trends across the state and comparisons to national trends. In order to accomplish this examination of current trends in recreational usage and desires, in 2012 the Iowa Department of Natural Resources distributed 1,000 surveys to residents of Iowa. Other methods of public input involved the Iowa Park Foundation working with ETC Institute on conducting focus group sessions around Iowa and surveying participants about State Parks. Additionally, Iowa State University completed an economic survey and report on outdoor recreation and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service released Iowa-specific survey data regarding outdoor recreation activities. Based on the recreation survey, the survey results from Iowa Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan show:

**Overall Participation in Outdoor Recreation in Iowa**

- Walking (89%)
- Picnicking, barbecuing or cooking out (83%)
- Driving for pleasure (56%)
- Family oriented activities (52%)
- Swimming (49%)
- Fishing (46%)
- Observing, feeding or photographing wildlife (44%)



**Most Interest in Outdoor Recreation Activities**

- Picnicking, barbecuing or cooking out (88%)
- Walking (82%)
- Family oriented activities (76%)
- Driving for pleasure (62%)
- Fishing (60%)
- Swimming (58%)
- Trails for physical fitness (56%)
- Lake fishing (55%)
- Camping (55%)
- Fishing from shore (53%)
- Visiting entertainment facilities (52%)
- Observing, feeder or photographing wildlife (51%)



**Average Number of User Days per Activity**

- Walking (120.9 days among all Iowans)
- Observing, feeding or photographing wildlife (59.0 days)
- Picnicking, barbecuing or cooking out (31.7 days)
- Driving for pleasure (25.1 days)
- Jogging or running (22.9 days)
- Trails for physical fitness (21.2 days)



Although the SCORP is a statewide plan, one of the more interesting statistics that was distinctive reports that residents in Iowa overwhelmingly utilize municipal or city parks the most (73%), whereas, only 60% report utilizing county parks or conservation areas. Furthermore, just less than half of the people responding to the survey reportedly use State parks (48%), and less than one third of Iowans (32%) use Federal parks.

**State Outdoor Recreation Priorities**

As stated in the State’s SCORP Plan, outdoor recreation in Iowa needs the support of Iowans in order to grow participation and conservation of natural resources in the state. As part of the planning process, the State developed five (5) primary priorities to be addressed in order for the State to move forward in a positive direction over the next five years. The priorities are not listed in any specific order of importance.

Priority 1. Address funding challenges as they relate to growing healthy and sustainable opportunities in outdoor recreation and open spaces for Iowa.

Priority 2. Create places to go in Iowa that exemplify best practices in natural resources conservation and protection while providing a variety of opportunities for outdoor recreation.

Priority 3. Encourage collaboration and planning efforts to advance outdoor recreation.

Priority 4. Promote outdoor recreation as a means to achieve healthier lifestyles, enhancing the quality of life for all Iowans.

Priority 5. Better understand Iowans' outdoor recreation wants and needs, and develop effective tools that connect them to Iowa's natural resource opportunities based on their unique demographics and interest.

### **RECREATION FUNDING ALTERNATIVES**

The Sheldon City Council, community schools (public and private), and various service clubs in the community are responsible for providing recreational activities in Sheldon. A community Park Board or advisory committee will certainly aid the City Council in making park related decisions. Generally speaking, revenues derived from taxation usually finance recreation facilities and activities. However, the city should continue to research, apply, and utilize state and federal grant funds administered through the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, such as the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LAWCON) or the Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) program. The City Council should remain flexible in all budgetary programs. There are a number of methods to finance park development or acquisition. The city should pursue all avenues of funding. Below is a partial listing of resource and revenue sources that Sheldon may utilize for continued park and recreation development.

- City Council appropriations
- Tax levies
- Donations of money and land by public, private and semi-private sources
- Revenue sharing
- User fees
- Cooperative funding by various levels of governments
- County, regional, state, or federal grants

Park improvements are included in the annual city budget. Future recreational needs will be programmed in the capital improvements section of this city's budget.

## CHAPTER 13. GOALS & LAND USE POLICIES

The comprehensive planning and visioning process provides tools for directing change in communities. A community vision created for Sheldon will only happen if local leaders are willing to consider new or nontraditional planning methods and techniques, and address land use problems that may arise. The City of Sheldon must realize there is a large commitment required to make the planning process and this document successful. The commitment of the Planning and Zoning Commission to work with city officials and key community leaders to guide the implementation of this plan and other development issues of the community is essential. Excluding certain segments of the community may result in the loss of productive and interesting ideas. This plan is not a “quick fix” for future economic and community development initiatives in Sheldon. However, this plan can serve as a guide to future development decisions. A comprehensive land use plan needs to be modified and updated over time in order to maintain current plan goals and control ordinances (e.g. zoning regulations, subdivision regulations or annexation plan). The extent of growth experienced by the city will play a major role in determining how often and what types of adjustments will be needed.

The previous sections of this plan contain background information upon which land use objectives and policies are based. The background elements are analyzed with regards to statistics, availability, inadequacies, preliminary recommendations, etc. Factors affecting development of such land use objectives and policies include considerations such as the public interest, social values, human behavior, economics, convenience, physical characteristics, and political climate. The unpredictability of how various interrelated determinants affect each other combined with an effort to control and plan for future development based on these factors necessitates a combination of objectivity and subjectivity. This plan is developed by

considering current trends, future needs, etc. from which the background supporting data indicates. By no means can the future be predicted with the accuracy that all portions of the plan can be carried out in an orderly fashion. Thus, flexibility is built into the plan in the form of goals, objectives, and land use policy recommendations to be utilized by the City Council and the Planning and Zoning Commission in making land use decisions. Goals, objectives and land use policies can aid in making future decisions by the city that are not specifically spelled out in this plan. The purpose of the overall goals is to state in general terms the end to which all objectives and land use recommendations point. Objectives, though more specific than goals, detail to some extent what the community is working toward in specific areas of focus or concern. Land use policy recommendations offer solutions to problems identified as part of the background studies.

The following planning terms should be defined for this plan:

1. **GOALS** are broad statements of intent or priority covering a long period of time
2. **OBJECTIVES** are specific land use decisions, are a means by which the goal is reached
3. **LAND USE POLICIES** delineate specific courses of action used to meet the objectives

## LAND USE TERMINOLOGY

### ***DEFINITION OF COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING***

***Comprehensive planning is a transparent, public process in which communities establish a future vision and locally designated standards in order to promote public health, safety and prosperity. Successful planning attracts economic development, protects and preserves the community's resources, and encourages a strong community identity.***

Defined by the Rebuild Iowa Office "Iowa Smart Planning", 2010.

- Vacant/No Land Use*** - Land having no impact, improvements, or any obvious current land use. This may include abandoned buildings or structures, or properties or land that is currently not utilized for any productive purpose.
- Agricultural Land Use*** - Land that is being used for crop production, the raising and/or production of livestock, and/or other agricultural-based commodities.
- Single Family Residential Land Use*** - Structures occupied for dwelling purposes by a single-family or two families living in separate dwelling units under a common roof.
- Multiple Family Residential Land Use*** - Structures occupied for dwelling purposes containing three (3) or more dwelling units.
- Commercial Land Use*** - Structures and/or land used primarily for retail trade and service such as retail, grocery, entertainment, food service, and other related businesses providing for the sale of goods, products, and services; but excluding wholesale trade and manufacturing businesses.
- Public/Civic Land Use*** - Structures and/or land available for use by the general public for non-commercial purposes such as schools, churches, cemeteries, fraternal or social clubs, and all government buildings.
- Industrial Land Use*** - Those uses of economic activity including forestry, fishing, mining, manufacturing, extracting raw materials, transportation, communications, and utilities.
- Parks and Recreation Land Use*** - Public and/or private areas devoted to active or passive recreation activities for use by the general public. This includes city, county and state parks, playgrounds, trails, and similar uses.
- Annexation*** - The incorporation of land into an existing community with a resulting change in the boundaries of that community.
- Growth Management*** - The pacing of the rate or controlling of the location of development via law enactment to manage a community's growth.
- Smart Growth*** - An approach to land use planning and growth management that recognizes connections between development and quality of life. In developing areas,

the approach is more town-centered, transit and pedestrian oriented. Smart growth also seeks to preserve open space and other natural resource amenities.

*Existing Land Use* - The current use of a lot or structure at the time of the comprehensive plan study.

*Future Land Use* - The proposed or intended use of properties or areas of land as depicted in the city's comprehensive land use plan and maps.

Often times, similar definitions are used within the city's zoning ordinance. Zoning definitions should not be confused with the categories listed above. Land use classifications are more general in nature and probable uses of the land are derived only from the appearance of a given land use or property. These categories are meant only to aid in studying the composition of the city's current and proposed future land use patterns.

**OVERALL GOAL OF THE SHELDON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

The City of Sheldon's planning program is based on the following overall comprehensive plan goal. This goal should be the most significant element underlying the comprehensive land use plan. Additional land use objectives or policies will guide the comprehensive planning process. These objectives and policies address growth and development issues in the areas of population and growth, economic development, community facilities and utilities, transportation, housing, parks and recreation and land use development.

***The overall goal of the Sheldon Comprehensive Land Use Plan is to establish and maintain a community land use plan and land use control system which provides for the orderly growth and development of the city while maintaining a diversity of its parts; allocates or specifies land through inclusion of the future land use map to be reserved for designated future uses; maximizes the opportunity for a wide range of land use alternatives; minimizes the number of conflicting land uses while preserving the community character; recognize and achieve a progressive balance between land uses that promotes the economic development potential of the city; preserve and promote the irreplaceable natural resources of the community; reflects local traditions and culture; and facilitates the provision of needed services and facilities to the people of Sheldon.***

## GENERAL LAND USE DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

General development goals and objectives guide the comprehensive planning process and are summarized as follows:

### 1. Land Use Development & Planning

Sheldon should maintain available and functional city planning organizations and programs which will direct the planned development of the community according to well established procedures, and provide the city with a development plan of legal force which facilitates the orderly growth and development of the city.

### 2. Annexation

Encourage and utilize annexation as a tool to supply needed land for growth as existing subdivisions become developed. Encourage development of land within the city limits prior to actively annexing additional lands, yet insure new development will be compatible to existing neighborhoods or businesses. To utilize annexation as a tool to control uncontrolled rural growth and promote orderly development.

### 3. Agriculture & Natural Resources

Develop a community environment that encourages the preservation of prime agricultural land, preserves environmentally sensitive areas, and preserves historical areas. At the same time, agricultural lands within the city limits should be reserved for eventual development at such time that provisions for utilities, infrastructure and economic conditions warrant such development. The city should promote the best land use possible for areas to be developed, including considerations for flood prone areas as indicated by FEMA.

### 4. Residential Development

Adequate space for future residential development must be maintained if the city is going to grow in the future. A variety of persons requires a variety of residential living environments; thus a variety of locations and housing options must be available. Housing growth should be controlled through land use management and zoning controls to ensure uncontrolled or haphazard growth does not occur. Provide housing opportunities and types of housing available to all individuals regardless of age, sex, income, race, ethnicity, creed or religion.

### 5. Commercial Activities

Although commercial development is important to the economic well-being of Sheldon, future commercial development should be encouraged within the central business district or within identified highway commercial corridors along arterial transportation routes. Planned commercial developments will better utilize existing utilities and infrastructure and result in more efficient land use patterns. Develop a diversified local commercial base that will provide the city with a wide range of goods and services.

### 6. Industrial Activities

The city will become stronger and more resilient as the industrial base of the community becomes stronger and more diversified. Industrial development should be encouraged in planned industrial or business parks or light industrial zoning areas where utility and infrastructure demands can be met without significant capital expense. Other less intense light industrial uses

may be appropriate to locate in commercial areas, but not mixed with residential uses. The city should look to provide space, facilities, incentives and support for industries wishing to locate in the city and to integrate these industries and employees into the community in such a manner that the city will gain economic and job growth with minimal conflicting or adverse effects.

7. Community Facilities and Services

To make available city facilities and services, both existing and proposed, to residents of the community. Continue promotion and development of those community facilities which greatly aid in facilitating a high standard of living, public welfare, safety, and overall community development. Provide the best opportunities for residents of Sheldon to receive a quality education to the level of attainment of their choice.

8. Recreation/Open Space

Recreation and open space (or greenspace) areas enhance the quality of life for those who have access to such amenities. Protect the integrity and public enjoyment of recreation and public open space areas. New recreation and park spaces should be planned and encouraged to be developed as the community grows. Provide citizens with choices for the types and amounts of recreational activities desired. Preserve resources that have historical, cultural, scenic, or recreational value. Coordinate possible funding sources to provide recreational facilities for the citizens of the community.

9. Transportation

Improvements to transportation systems along with provisions for necessary infrastructure is vital to a sound economic base and planned community. Due to the cost of providing such transportation infrastructure and services, existing city streets should be regularly maintained. Highly used collected and arterial streets and infrastructure should be regularly monitored, maintained and replaced as necessary. Develop and maintain a transportation system for the city that is planned, located and designed to enhance the efficiency of movement of people and goods, and which supports and promotes all areas of the city.

10. Utilities

To ensure utilities are available to all residents and business of the city at the best quality of service and at the lowest possible rates. Necessary services such as fire, water, sewer, electric, communications, streets and gas greatly enhance the living environment and economic potential of the community. New land use developments should be encouraged to locate where adequate infrastructure is present, prior to developing where costly infrastructure needs to be expanded.

11. Implementation

Development of the city must not become stagnant. At a minimum, existing businesses, industry and housing should be maintained and encouraged to expand. Citizen input is a critical asset to city planning; thus, with citizen input available, every effort should be made to implement the ideas and land use policies contained in this plan. Update the plan, related policies, and programs according to local changes and demands. Assure active participation and involvement of all residents in all elements of the program.

### LAND USE CHARACTERISTICS & COMMUNITY GROWTH TRENDS

The largest existing land use category in Sheldon is agricultural lands. Lands used for agricultural purposes occur in large tracts around much of the fringe of the community. Agricultural lands account for 731 acres in Sheldon or approximately 25 percent of all land within the city limits. The next largest land use category is comprised of residential uses within the city limits. All residential land uses in Sheldon cover more than 676 acres of land or approximately 23 percent of land within the city limits. When looking at all aspects of residential land uses, multi-family residential properties account for nearly 70 acres of land within the city. These properties are defined separately from single family residential uses due to their higher density and typically more intense use relative to single family residential. When combining multi-family with single family residential, this strengthens the evidence for the city providing adequate and diversified housing options in Sheldon. Those parcels or tracts of land utilized for civic, public or some other community facility type use includes more than 296 acres of land. These uses typically include churches, schools, hospitals, municipal buildings, library, wastewater facilities, water treatment plant, civic clubs or lodges, and other uses typically considered public in nature. A majority of the city's land dedicated to public and civic land uses are comprised of school and college owned lands, cemeteries, the hospital property and municipal owned properties and buildings. The fourth largest land use classification is commercial properties in Sheldon. For the most part, commercial land uses are limited to the city's central business district (downtown), the highway 18 and old highway 60 corridors and the Sheldon Crossing and Runger Addition on the city's east side. The next largest land use category is those uses consisting of industrial or manufacturing businesses. This land use category also includes agricultural industries and accounts for more than 179 acres of land in Sheldon. Industrial land uses are concentrated to the city's industrial park in the southwest part of Sheldon along with an industrial corridor comprised of agricultural related industries following the railroad line that parallels the old highway 60 corridor. Undeveloped properties, including vacant lots or property that has no identifiable land use, is the next largest land use category at 178 acres. Most of this land use category is comprised of currently platted lots that are yet to be developed in the Sheldon Crossing and Runger subdivisions, along with the recently platted Crossroads Industrial Park located at the intersection of Highway 18 and the Highway 60 bypass. Lands, that are considered in conservation, open space or floodplain areas account for nearly 103 acres of land and are found mostly on the city west side in close proximity to the Floyd River. Those land classified as conservation, open space or floodplain are not developed and primarily left in a natural state, as the land offers little value in terms of the development potential of such properties. The smallest percentage of developed land uses within the community, aside from water resources, are those properties classified as recreational land uses. Recreational properties account for 79 acres or 2.7% of all land within the city limits of Sheldon. With that said, the recreational land acreage calculated for Sheldon only considers those park and



recreation uses located within the city limits and not factoring recreational amenities close by the city such as the Sheldon Golf Course which significantly increases the amount of recreational land acres for Sheldon residents to enjoy.

Historical growth of Sheldon developed around the central business district in a grid street pattern following the alignment with old Highway 60 (2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue) along with the Union Pacific and Canadian Pacific railroad lines that intersect in Sheldon. Following the railroad and highway corridors resulted in the original portion of Sheldon having a northwest to southeast alignment for blocks and streets. However, once development crossed Washington Avenue to the east and Highway 18 (Park Street) to the north the street and block alignment changed to a more traditional north/south & east/west street alignment. The general residential growth of the community over the last ten to twenty years has been to the eastern portions of the community. Similarly, commercial uses are also experiencing growth to the east, especially within recently platted commercial subdivisions near the junction of Highway 18 and Highway 60 bypass. Unlike many other progressive cities in rural parts of Iowa, Sheldon is not experiencing trends of significant rural residential sprawl along the fringe of or in close proximity to the city’s corporate limits. This trend is most likely attributed to the fact that there is adequate land available to build within the city limits, along with the fact that the City of Sheldon and O’Brien County officials have done a good job over the years of planning to avoid urban sprawl and uncontrolled rural development in close proximity to Sheldon.

The exact amount of land to be devoted to each future land use category in the year 2030 is not known and cannot be accurately estimated because of many unknown variables. Instead, a realistic estimate of land areas is made relative to the following methodology. First, trends in past, current, and projected populations are examined and analyzed to determine the impact on existing and future planned land uses. Secondly, additional land use areas (future growth areas) are shown on the future land use map. This is done to assure the city’s Planning and Zoning Commission has future direction for making land use decisions. The future land use map is a valuable tool upon which development decisions and zoning controls are based. The future land use map helps direct future growth and development of the city.

The following table and corresponding chart identify the number of acres occupied by each existing land use category, as well as the percentage of total land in the community within in each respective land use.

*Table 17 - Existing Land Use Composition of Sheldon, 2015*

Agricultural Land Use	731.08 acres	24.7%
Natural Resource, Open Space or Floodplain	102.96 acres	3.5%
Undeveloped Lands	178.00 acres	6.0%
Single Family Residential Land Use	606.70 acres	20.5%
Multiple Family Residential Land Use	69.86 acres	2.4%
Commercial Land Use	262.28 acres	8.9%
Industrial Land Use	179.64 acres	6.1%
Civic & Public Land Use	296.53 acres	10.0%
Parks & Recreation Land Use	79.81 acres	2.7%
Lakes, Ponds & Rivers	14.94 acres	0.5%
Transportation Land Use (street & railroad ROW)	438.41 acres	14.8%
TOTAL	2,960.21 acres	100.0%
	4.63 sq. miles	

Figure 39 - Land use composition for Sheldon, 2015

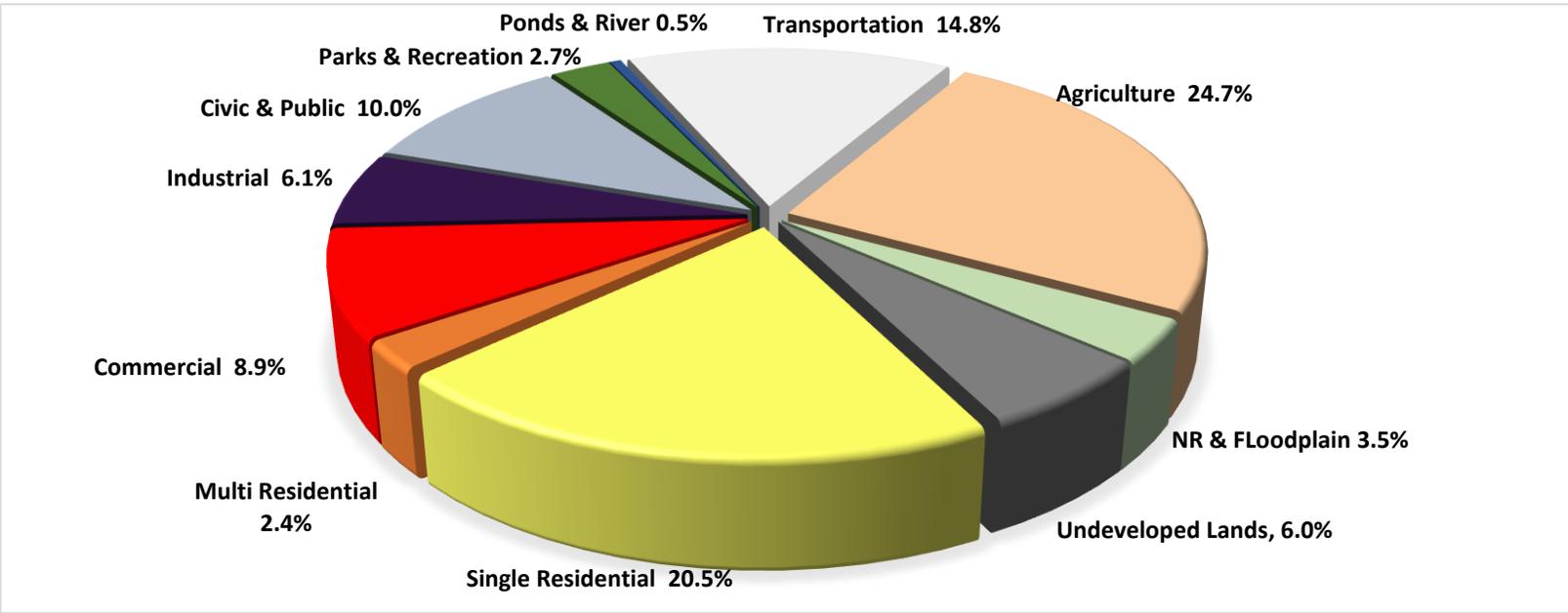


Table 18 – Developed Land Use Composition in Sheldon

Single Family Residential	606.70 acres	40.7%
Multi-Family Residential	69.86 acres	4.7%
Commercial Land Use	262.28 acres	17.5%
Industrial Land Use	179.64 acres	12.0%
Civic/Public Land Use	296.53 acres	19.8%
Parks & Recreation Land Use	79.81 acres	5.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,494.82 acres</b>	<b>100.00%</b>
	2.34 sq. miles	

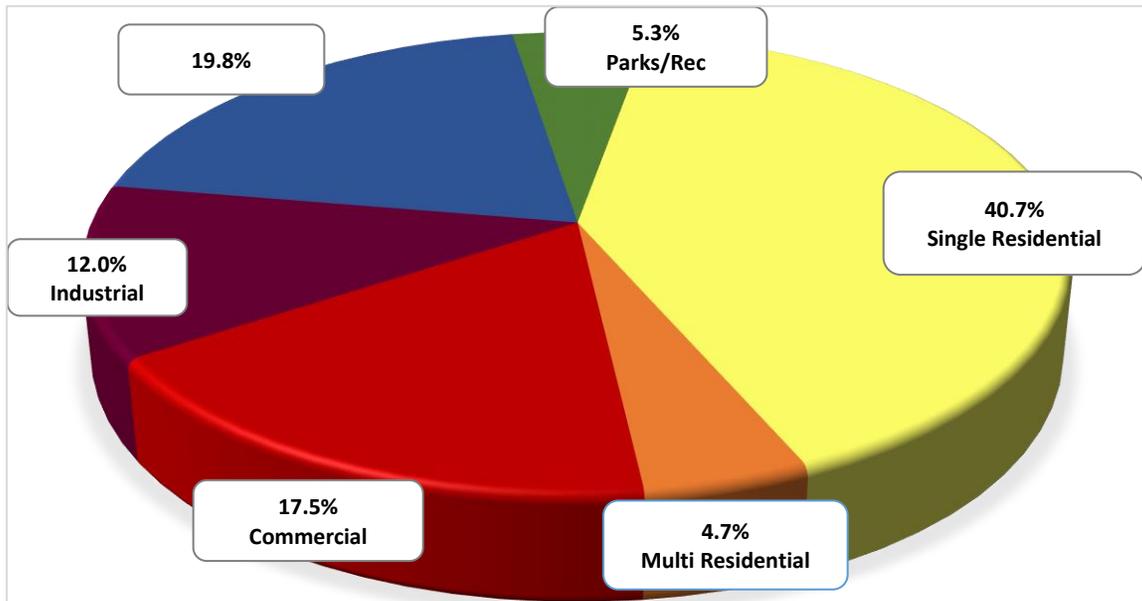
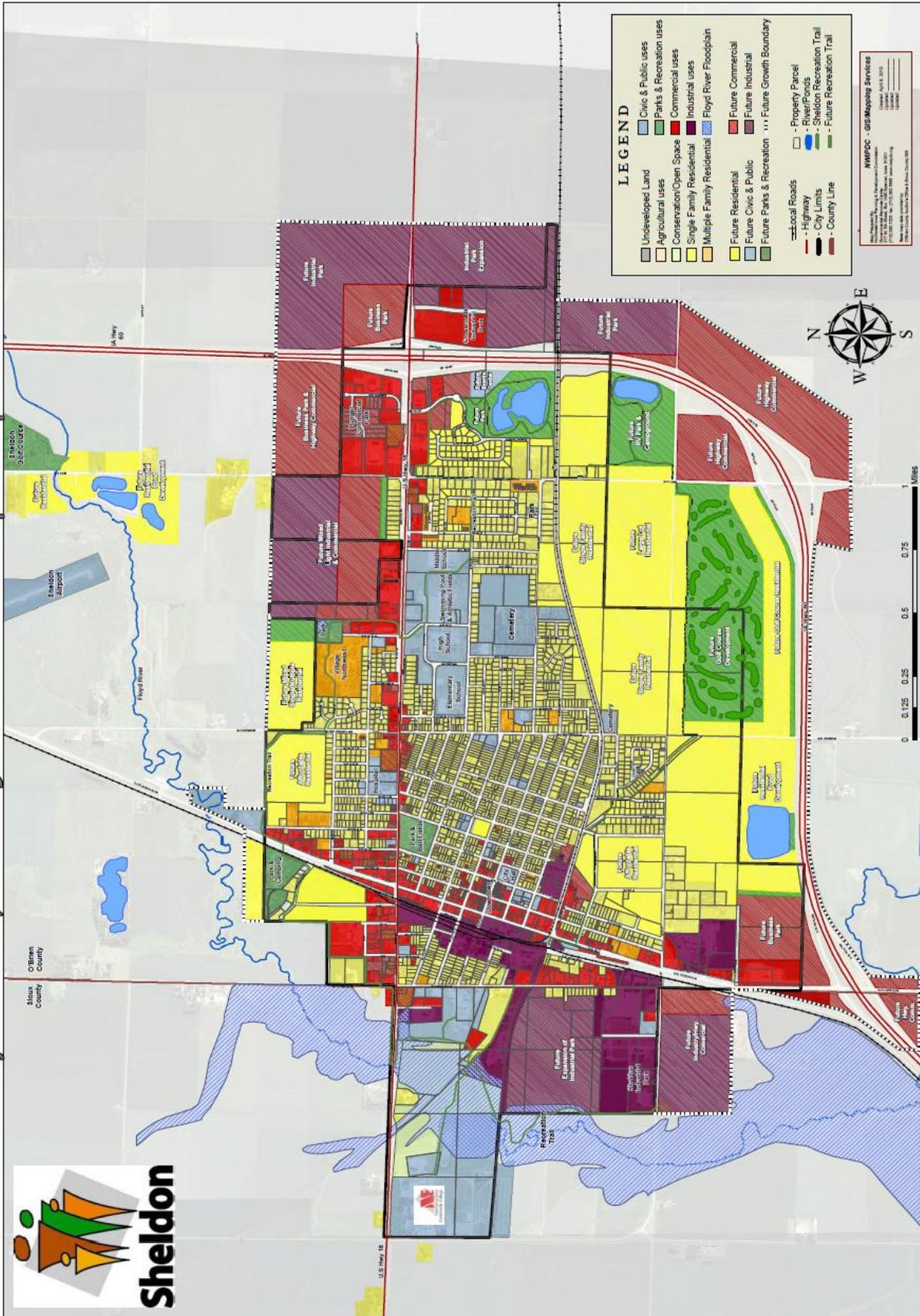


Figure 40 - Land use composition for developed land in Sheldon, 2015



2030 Sheldon Future Land Use Map

City of Sheldon, Iowa 2030 Future Land Use Map Comprehensive Plan



## Future Land Use Planning and Implementation Policies

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In addressing the future land use planning process effectively, the city has generated a framework of goals and objectives for the community, upon which the specific land use policy recommendations support and land use decisions should be based. One important thing to remember is that land use planning, and especially looking at future land uses, is not static. This will be an ongoing and developing process for the community. Henceforth, the City Council and the Planning and Zoning Commission should plan to review, update and change the city's comprehensive plan according to variations in land use and future development patterns. The extent of growth experienced in Sheldon will play a major role in determining how often and what extent of review and revision to the city's comprehensive plan will be necessary. It is important to remember the principal function of this plan in combination with the land use maps is to serve a guide for future development and for how decision makers in Sheldon address such development. The Sheldon city staff, zoning administrator, Planning and Zoning Commission and Board of Adjustment all have important responsibilities in carrying out the intent of this plan. It is also important to consider that board volunteers and city staff are conscious of the effect upon the entire community from each planning decision made, and not lean toward single issue tendencies. Determining land uses for a specific area within the community or along the fringe of the community is a product of many variables. Factors affecting the decision of where future land use planning should occur in Sheldon may include social values, human behavior, the local and regional economy, convenience, physical characteristics or topography of the land, the community's best interest, and the political climate. Identifying the causes of land use planning becomes even more complex as efforts are made to project or plan where future land uses are to be located. There is no crystal ball to identify where future development will occur in the community; however this plan along with the human resources of the community can help predict, plan and guide development where it will promote the greatest benefit and create the fewest conflicts for the city.

### **Objective 1.**

Encourage future development and redevelopment of Sheldon with sound planning principals and high quality design standards for the utilization of the land to its highest and best use, while also respecting the natural, physical and existing constraints on development of land.

**Policy Recommendations** for future land use planning, implementation and enforcement of this plan include:

Policy 1.a. - *The city should assure high quality developments through the use of land use controls including but not limited to zoning regulations, subdivision regulations, annexation plan and other development standards.*

Policy 1.b. – *Ensure adequate land is available to develop upon within the city for all permitted uses, while also alleviating existing or the potential for land use conflicts.*

Policy 1.c. - *The Planning and Zoning Commission should periodically review and recommend land use changes to the City Council.*

Policy 1.d. - *The city should enforce applicable property maintenance, nuisance and zoning regulations in an effort to maintain minimum property standards.*

Policy 1.e. - *The city should continue offering financial and human resources dedicated to zoning*

*enforcement, code enforcement and compliance with the city's land use controls.*

Policy 1.f. – *Adopt and utilize site plan review to ensure compatibility between existing and new developments.*

Policy 1.g. – *Designate on the city's future land use map desired land uses beyond the existing city limits where future development can be anticipated and proposed annexation can be planned or initiated, if needed to control development and in the best interest of the city.*

Policy 1.h. – *Anticipate infrastructure improvements and new utilities and infrastructure in areas where development is desirable.*

Policy 1.i. – *For subdivisions located outside of, but within 2 miles of, the Sheldon city limits, require developers to show how the proposed subdivision will meet the city's design standards for subdivision development in addition to a plat for the entire parcel from which the subdivision is to be divided.*

Policy 1.j. – *If economically, socially, and physically possible, and consistent with the city's future land use map, encourage development to occur on vacant properties within the city as a first choice in lieu of building upon prime agricultural lands.*

### **Agricultural, Conservation and Undeveloped Land Uses**

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Agricultural land uses are those properties within the city limits primarily used for grazing or pasture land, producing row crops, raising livestock, or other agricultural commodities. Of all land uses in Sheldon, agricultural uses comprise the largest amount of land acres in the community at more than 731 acres or 25.1% of land area in the community. According to the existing land use map, a vast majority of the existing agricultural lands found in Sheldon are located toward the fringe of the city limits in southern and southeastern portions of the community. There

Stock photo of agricultural farming operations similar to those near Sheldon.



are some tracts of agricultural lands in the far west, north and northeast parts of the community as well; however, the largest tracts of agricultural lands are located south of the Canadian Pacific railroad bisecting the community from the east to west. Since virtually all property in Sheldon has the potential for development of some kind, whether it is residential, industrial, or even conservation or open space, agricultural land uses are not a designated land use classification on the future land use

map. This is simply used to show the development potential of all lands in Sheldon, although in reality many of these acres will continue to be actively used for agricultural purposes well into the future.

Photo of undeveloped lands for sale in Sheldon



Another low impact land use classification, similar to agricultural lands but not as productive as agricultural lands, is those tracts of land consisting of natural resources, open space or otherwise undeveloped land. This may include land being utilized as conservation, floodplain areas or wooded timber lands. Although the development potential for most of the properties classified as open space, conservation or natural resource areas are limited at best, these areas provide benefits to the community that are often overlooked. Natural resource and open space lands can provide benefits such as floodplain protection, recreational benefits and general beauty or aesthetics of the community. On the other hand, those lots or parcels identified as undeveloped land uses are those properties classified as having no current land use associated with such property. Typically, undeveloped land uses may include a series of

vacant lots in a newly platted residential subdivision not yet built upon or vacant parcels in an industrial park. Natural resource, open space and floodplain properties are comprised of nearly 103 acres of land within the city limits. Most of the land classified as this use is in the form of low lying natural resource areas located in portions of the Floyd River floodplain. Undeveloped lots or parcels account for 178 acres of land in Sheldon. This land use classification includes vacant lots within the crossroads industrial park, Runger Addition and the Sheldon Crossing subdivision on the city's east side near the intersection of Highway 18 and the Highway 60 bypass. Also considered a natural resource, the amount of water acres in the community consists of only 15 acres or less than 1% of the land in Sheldon. Aside from the Floyd River bisecting the city's western side, the only water resource in Sheldon is a 15 acre pond located south of the Sheldon Crossing development near the Highway 60 bypass on the city's east side. This water body is currently used as a recreational development. Natural resource, open space and undeveloped lands are typically considered low impact in nature, but there may be development potential and recreational opportunities in these area.

## Objective 2.

To alleviate future conflicts between developed land uses and agricultural or other natural resource operations, specifically within the city limits of Sheldon. Similarly, the City should realize that many of the acres containing natural resource or conservation lands should be protected and avoid development. Many floodplain areas, sensitive natural habitats and open space areas serve a useful purpose in providing natural buffers between adjoining land uses. Conversely, undeveloped lands,

especially within platted subdivisions in the city, should be targeted for future development and productive use.

**Policy Recommendations** for agricultural lands and development related to agricultural or vacant land uses include:

*Policy 2.a. - The city should, when possible, direct future development of other land uses into adjacent land currently used for agriculture within the city limits. Efforts should be made to avoid leapfrog development to the edges of the community, leaving large gaps of agricultural land sandwiched between old and new residential and commercial uses.*

*Policy 2.b - While in-fill development of other land uses should be encouraged whenever possible, preservation of prime agricultural land within the city should not take such high priority that the city is forced to look outside its boundary for land to absorb growth of residential, commercial, and industrial uses.*

*Policy 2.c – The city needs to be sensitive to the operations of agricultural industries or businesses, while at the same time striving to protect the interests, property values, and quality of life of its residents of which may be compromised due to odors, dust, noise or other detrimental effects emanating from agricultural operations or industries.*

*Policy 2.d – Preserve and protect floodplain and other natural resource areas not suited for development, while promoting those undeveloped lots in Sheldon that are suited for development purposes.*

*Policy 2.e – Encourage low impact development and best practices for stormwater management in the community in an effort to protect the sensitive natural resource and floodplain areas.*

*Policy 2.f - The City of Sheldon will continue to participate in the NFIP and discourage building within designated floodplains. Any development within floodplain boundaries as defined by FEMA will be built in accordance with NFIP standards.*

### **Population, Housing and Residential Land Uses**

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Residential land uses, including both single family and multiple family residential, comprise the second largest amount of land area in Sheldon. Single family residential housing comprises more than 606 acres of land or 20.8% of all land within the city limits. Higher density residential uses, including multiple family residential housing units such as condominiums, group housing, assisted living facilities, or senior housing complexes consists of 69.8 acres of land or 2.4% of land in Sheldon. Future residential land uses are projected to occur adjacent to existing residential developments primarily within the south, southeast and eastern portions of the community. There are also projected future residential areas adjacent to existing residential neighborhoods on the north side of the community, although not to the extent as in the south and southeast. In order to make efficient use of existing public utilities and facilities it is essential that future residential growth occur first within existing developed areas of the city. However, this is not always a practical solution since newly platted subdivisions on the fringe of the city can offer highly desirable spacious building lots versus much smaller compact infill residential lots platted decades ago. Within the city limits, several newer residential lots are available to build upon in the far eastern portion of the community, including the

recently subdivided 57 lot Sheldon Crossing residential subdivision east of country club road. Recent growth trends show most of the newer single family housing being built in Sheldon is occurring between 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and Prairie Trail Road on the city's east side. With the Sheldon Crossing residential subdivision abutting adjoining commercial development to the north, a potential greenspace/recreational area to the east, and a railroad corridor to the south the city's next residential expansion area will likely not continue east, but begin to develop south of the Canadian Pacific railroad.



Photo of newer residential subdivision on the city's east side

Photo of Fieldcrest multiple family housing development



The city's multiple family residential developments are scattered throughout all parts of the community. With that said, the greatest concentration of multiple family uses are located east of the Sheldon Middle School south of Highway 18, and north of Highway 18 between Village Northwest and the hospital. Village Northwest is a large group housing complex and work center for persons with developmental disabilities. The multiple family uses located east of the Middle School is anchored by an assisted living and senior housing complex called Fieldcrest. There are additional townhouses, condominiums and other multiple family dwellings scattered amongst the single family residential developments. The other areas of multiple family residential uses in Sheldon include two mobile home parks, one on the city's north

side and one on the city's south side along old Highway 60 (2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue).

Existing residential neighborhoods in Sheldon are expected to remain stable with older units being rehabilitated or replaced with new construction or consolidation of older residential lots for accessory uses such as garages or storage buildings. Concentrations of older residential properties near the central business district will provide additional issues in maintaining viable neighborhoods in the central part of the community. The City of Sheldon should consider housing rehabilitation programs to revitalize these older neighborhoods. In areas where older and smaller single family dwellings are being eliminated either through blight or in favor of urban renewal projects, the city should consider multiple family dwellings or other medium/high density type construction. These types of housings will become increasingly important as construction costs continue to escalate for new single family residential dwellings. Residential neighborhoods must continue to be strengthened and revitalized to assure the city's continued viability and growth. Encroachment from incompatible land uses must be resisted. Realization of residential development by the types and areas proposed can be achieved through the use of regulatory measures such as zoning and subdivision ordinances and land use policies.

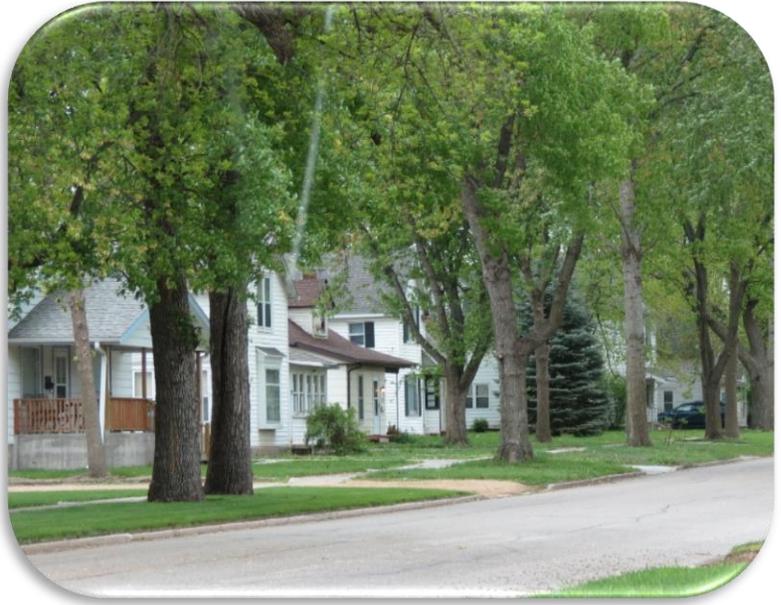


Photo of established existing single family neighborhood in Sheldon

### **Objective 3.**

Encourage residential developments that protect and improve property values, encourages the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing housing stock, contribute to the neighborhood and community, and provide safe and decent housing for all residents of Sheldon; acknowledging the needs of the aging population, low and moderate income families, and the physically or developmentally challenged.

**Policy Recommendations** for both single family and multiple family residential uses, to be used in conjunction with this comprehensive plan and to meet the city's housing needs include:

Policy 3.a. - *Promote the development and redevelopment of housing opportunities on existing lots in Sheldon's older neighborhoods, emphasizing and enhancing the historical value of these areas whenever possible.*

Policy 3.b. – *Discourage residential development in predominately commercial or industrial districts.*

Policy 3.c. – *Encourage the rehabilitation of older housing stock and encourage residential development within the existing city limits on parcels served by city services to enhance building opportunities.*

- Policy 3.d. – *Encourage in-fill development along with emphasizing the renovation of older homes and using existing vacant lots for construction. The city should also consider the demolition of housing structures beyond repair or nuisance properties to create options for housing redevelopment.*
- Policy 3.e. – *Compliment in-fill development with carefully planned new subdivision development as the demand for new single family residential increases. Care should be taken to make sure developers fulfill obligations with regard to infrastructure provisions as stated in the city's subdivision regulations, in order to minimize city expense.*
- Policy 3.f. – *Encourage development of additional multiple family residential housing. Consider redevelopment projects near the central business district or above downtown businesses (upper story downtown housing). Avoid isolation of multi-family housing units in remote or less desirable parts of the city.*
- Policy 3.g. - *Aid in making housing available to all individuals regardless of race, ethnicity, sex, creed, national origin or age.*
- Policy 3.h. - *The city should follow recommendations and suggestions outlined in additional housing plans and/or strategic planning sessions to ensure the city continues to pursue innovative and creative methods to alleviate housing issues.*
- Policy 3.i. - *The city should continue to support organizations such as the Northwest Iowa Housing Authority and the Northwest Iowa Regional Housing Trust Fund, Inc. so the residents of the community can take advantage of housing assistance programs.*
- Policy 3.j. - *Rehabilitation of existing neighborhoods and development of new affordable housing should be pursued in the form of the IEDA, CDBG, IFA or USDA programs and also through the enforcement of local zoning controls.*
- Policy 3.k. - *Encourage amenity related housing developments such as housing near or around a golf course, park or water features.*
- Policy 3.l – *Ensure the city continues to review and enforce zoning and subdivision controls within the two mile extraterritorial area outside of the city limits. Development within this area should comply with the city's subdivision development standards.*

**Commercial Land Uses**

Commercial and retail land uses should continue to be promoted for development within the central business district and along the Highway 18 and old Highway 60 (2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue) corridor, which is adjacent to downtown. In all respects, commercial land uses should receive the same protection from



Photo of commercial establishments in Sheldon’s Central Business District

incompatible land uses as one would expect for a residential district. Commercial developments classified as highway commercial which rely upon large expanses of open space and/or highway access should be strongly encouraged to locate along the Highway 18 corridor near the eastern city limits. Whenever possible, frontage roads should be recommended in conjunction with more intensive commercial uses along high traffic streets or highways. Where frontage roads

are not feasible, parking and access considerations need to be considered to help prevent highway congestion. For the most part, a vast majority of large commercial uses are appropriately located along either Highway 18 or the old Highway 60 (2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue) corridor. Other smaller, less intensive commercial uses are located sporadically throughout the community with heavier concentrations of commercial uses located along the south end of Western Avenue and also between B Street and D Street north of Highway 18.

Sheldon’s newest area of commercial development is located in the Crossroads Industrial Park on the southeast corner of the Highway 60 bypass and Highway 18 junction. Commercial development in the downtown business district should be limited to those uses that typically do not require large expanses of



Photos of highway commercial businesses along Highway 18 and old Highway 60

land for parking or open display lots. Central business district parking space is provided in public parking lots and otherwise limited to on-street parking. It is advisable to keep a majority of the lots and buildings in the downtown district available for retail establishments instead of removing such buildings for additional off-street parking. Downtown businesses tend to be mostly retail, professional and service based businesses interspersed with public, civic and governmental uses.



**Objective 4.**

To develop a diversified commercial base that will provide the community with a wide range of goods and services; and to make available all types of commercial activities and services demanded by the people of Sheldon as well as the commercial trade area; and to promote the location of commercial activities in areas conducive to the provision of highway commercial activities along with ensuring the stability of the central business district.

**Policy Recommendations** for commercial land uses that guide the city in making appropriate decisions on the location of new commercial development include:

Policy 4.a. – *Future commercial development should be guided to the central business district to fill vacancies and aid in maintaining a viable downtown district. Strengthen the position of the central business district as a focal point of the community through planning, promotion, and land use controls.*

Policy 4.b. – *The tendency for future commercial development will likely occur along the Highway 18 east corridor. This should be encouraged. The city should provide for planned highway commercial developments and maximize opportunities that minimize traffic congestion, conflicts with other uses, and promotes visually appealing developments.*

- Policy 4.c. – *Promote the development of commercial land uses in areas designated on the city’s future land use map.*
- Policy 4.d. – *Commercial land uses should be restricted from development in purely residential areas of the city, and future commercial development should not be in conflict with or jeopardize recreational and natural resource areas of interest to the community.*
- Policy 4.e. – The city has been successful in maintaining a vital Central Business District. Appropriate commercial uses for a downtown district should be guided to the Central Business District in an effort to fill existing vacancies.
- Policy 4.f. – Identify, market and promote the development or redevelopment of commercial building lots with infrastructure in place to enhance building opportunities in a financially responsible manner.
- Policy 4.g. – *Discourage the scattering and prohibit future spot commercial development in residential neighborhoods, aside from approved home occupations regulated by the city’s zoning ordinance.*
- Policy 4.h. - *Minimize negative influences from commercial development upon adjacent non-commercial areas such as natural resource, recreation or residential uses by the use of appropriate buffers such as physical screens and natural vegetative buffers.*
- Policy 4.i. – *Encourage public assistance or tax incentive programs, where deemed appropriate by local officials, such as tax increment financing or tax abatement to encourage expansion of existing facilities and development of new opportunities.*
- Policy 4.j. – *Existing and proposed commercial development locations should receive zoning protection from eventual residential or lesser intense land use encroachment limiting future expansion of commercial land uses.*
- Policy 4.k. – *Due to the amount of traffic generated from commercial uses, new highway commercial developments, both individually and collectively, should be required to address traffic safety and congestion by providing safe and convenient access, required off-street parking, and proper loading facilities for goods and vehicles.*

### **Industrial Land Uses and Economic Development**

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Industrial uses include the on-site extraction or production of goods by non-agricultural processes, including the warehousing and distribution of goods. Industrial land uses are often times difficult to plan due to many factors governing the location of industries, including land availability, transportation access, workforce availability, available utilities and city services, etc. The success of Sheldon in recruiting and attracting new industries and henceforth strengthening the local workforce is essential to the city’s ongoing economic development efforts. Industrial development is one of the most important variables related to land use planning since overall community and economic development and growth is extensively dependent upon it new job creation through expansion of existing businesses and industry or recruitment of new businesses and industry. Sheldon must anticipate expansion of its industrial base and henceforth additional land needs to be made available to accommodate anticipated future growth. There is limited space available within the city’s existing

industrial park in the southwest part of the community. As a result of needed space for industrial growth, the city’s response was to develop the Crossroads Industrial Park on the southeast corner of the Highway 60 and Highway 18 junction. However, to date the first two businesses to locate within the city’s newest industrial park have been highway commercial uses. Future industrial growth should



locate in carefully planned locations in the community, whether it is in the newly platted Crossroads Industrial Park or an expansion of the city’s existing industrial park in the southwest corner of the community. The city should see if land is available to expand the city’s industrial growth in the southwest part of the community. The Sheldon Chamber and Development Corporation (SCDC) continues to work extensively with city officials and key community leaders in promoting and expanding the city’s industrial base both in the existing industrial park as well as other places deemed appropriate for industrial and economic development opportunities as indicated on the city’s future land use map. According to the city’s 2014 land use survey of existing land uses, industrial uses comprise approximately 180 acres of land or

6.2% of all land within the corporate city limits of Sheldon. Those industrial areas already dedicated to serving the needs of the community along with additional acres of land identified as future industrial land use both within the existing city limits and in proposed future growth areas will allow the community to continue strengthening its industrial and economic development presence in Sioux and O’Brien counties.

**Objective 5.**

Sheldon should diversify its local economic base by recruiting new businesses and industry, while encouraging and facilitating the expansion of existing businesses and industry in the community. Sheldon should strive for an economically viable city able to support desired community services and facilities, provide opportunities for residents to



Photos of businesses located within the Sheldon industrial park and agricultural based industries located along Highway 4 near the city’s southern city limits.

achieve their employment potential, to meet the shopping needs of residents and guests, and to stimulate private investment in support of new business and job growth.

**Policy Recommendations** intended to guide future economic growth and support the expansion of existing industries and businesses include:

Policy 5.a. – *The city should strictly enforce land use controls and zoning regulations to differentiate between light and heavy land uses and their impact upon neighboring and adjoining properties. The city should look to utilize buffering effectively between especially heavy land uses and neighboring less intense uses such as residential properties.*

Policy 5.b. – *If possible, the city should look to infill industrial development on existing buildable lots prior to expanding or creating new industrial parks in the community. Adherence to this policy limits the amount of infrastructure construction and maintenance required from the city.*

Policy 5.c. – *Utilize the financial and planning benefits provided through urban renewal and urban revitalization efforts to encourage the development and redevelopment of industrial areas.*

Policy 5.d. – *Support the use of innovative and alternative financing methods to provide utilities, streets and other improvements necessary to facilitate industrial and economic development growth.*

Policy 5.e. – *Establish a low-interest loan pool and/or utilize local and regional revolving loan funds to assist with financing the start-up or expansion of local businesses and industries.*

Policy 5.f. – *Provide community and governmental support for the continuation of the existing industrial businesses and development of a diverse future industrial base to complement the local economy.*

Policy 5.g. – *Ensure the Sheldon Chamber and Development Corporation (SCDC) and local private efforts are directed toward meeting the shopping, workforce, community and economic development needs of area residents and visitors.*

Policy 5.h. – *Continue to promote the industrial developments within the city and support annexations of existing development or land that would support proposed future industrial and economic development in close proximity to the city limits (see future land use/annexation plan).*

Policy 5.i. – *Discourage industrial development in or near residential areas. Likewise, areas designated for future industrial development should receive protection from encroachment of incompatible land uses.*

Policy 5.j. – *Promote those industries in the city with aesthetically pleasing sites and buildings, tend to be non-polluting and are generally good neighbors to adjoining property owners as well as the entire community.*

Policy 5.k. – *Protect industrial areas from the encroachment of incompatible land uses that restrict development. Ample area must be reserved for future expansion.*

Policy 5.l. – *Support the efforts of those involved in promoting economic development.*

**Public & Civic Land Uses and Community Facilities**

Civic and public land uses include properties such as municipal, utility, educational, religious, cultural, fraternal, medical, public safety, governmental, and other uses strongly vested with public or social importance. These uses within the City of Sheldon are located on more than 296 acres of land that comprise 10.2% of the total land mass within the city limits. When looking at the Sheldon existing or future land use maps, it becomes evident there are a couple of large tracts of land within the community identified as civic or public in use. Both of the prominent civic/public land use locations in Sheldon are education related. First, in the far western edge of the community is the Northwest Iowa Community College (NCC) campus. This college campus is also location to the Lifelong Learning and Recreation Center, a joint project between the college and the city which resulted in a beautiful and functional community recreation facility for students and residents of the community to utilize. On the other end of the community, adjacent to Highway 18, is the Sheldon Community School District campus. In one large “campus” setting, the community school district has the elementary, middle and

Photo of Sheldon Community Services Center (i.e. City Hall, Chamber, Police, Fire, EMA,



high school. The Sheldon Community School District campus is a large “campus” setting, the community school district has the elementary, middle and high school. The Sheldon Community School District is a large “campus” setting, the community school district has the elementary, middle and high school. The Sheldon Community School District is a large “campus” setting, the community school district has the elementary, middle and high school.



high schools along with the school's athletic fields and the community outdoor aquatic center. Just to the south of the Sheldon Community School District campus is a cemetery that also shows as a large tract of civic/public land use. Other notable civic and public land uses in Sheldon include the Sanford Health campus (hospital), several municipal, cultural, religious and governmental buildings near the central business district. Other religious, educational, civic and public land uses are scattered among the residential neighborhoods in the community. Both the number of



acres and percentage of land utilized for public and civic land uses is somewhat higher in Sheldon than other similar sized communities throughout northwest Iowa. This is due primarily to the fact that Sheldon has a community college campus, hospital campus and several other large civic based land uses that utilize large amounts of land.

Generally speaking, civic and public uses usually have a light intensity relative to neighboring properties and have the flexibility to be scattered throughout residential and commercial areas in the community. These public or civic uses are largely benign in their impact on surrounding properties being used in varying capacities. With that stated, some issues that are noted pertaining to especially larger civic or public land uses include increased traffic and congestion at predictable times. This is most often associated with public uses such as schools, churches, community centers, and facilities housing civic groups. While periodic increases in traffic flow are often acceptable when adjacent to many other land uses, periods of heavy congestion and safety issues should be addressed in the development of future land use policies regarding civic and public uses.

#### **Objective 6.**

Both existing and proposed community facilities and city services should be made available to all residents of the community on a fair and equitable basis. Continue to develop and expand the quality and quantity of all community services and facilities to adequately meet the needs of a growing community; facilitating a high quality and standard of living, public welfare, safety and overall quality of life in Sheldon.

**Policy Recommendations** to support, attract and direct growth of cultural, civic, governmental, service and public land uses include:

- Policy 6.a. - *Opportunities for civic and public land uses should be made available in most zoning districts with the provision that more intensive utility and municipal services (e.g. water or sewer treatment facilities) which may be permitted in commercial or industrial districts.*
- Policy 6.b. – *Encourage public use of parks and recreation amenities through signage, landscaping, provision of amenities, and promotion of attractions and events for persons of all ages. The city should also recommend improvements for parks and recreation uses through municipal budgeting along with local and private support.*
- Policy 6.c. – *Anticipate the support and service needs of an aging population in the community and surrounding rural areas, and ensure their recreational and service needs are addressed.*
- Policy 6.d. – *Encourage residents of the community to support the city’s efforts in offering community and cultural events, recreational activities, and park and recreation amenities.*
- Policy 6.e. – *Realize the full potential of municipal owned building and property, parks and other public places in Sheldon. Additionally, the city should support city staff in trying to implement new technologies and equipment that will ensure city employees are working efficiently and productively.*
- Policy 6.f. – *Continue annual capital improvements planning to provide a public forum for prioritizing and scheduling capital improvements and equipment purchases for all city departments.*
- Policy 6.g. – *While public and community land uses are often times appropriate surrounded by other use types, the city should be careful to avoid obvious land use conflicts such as the placement of a civic or public uses surrounded by heavy industrial uses. Since civic and public land uses vary so much in intensity and use, each development needs to be examined on a case-by-case basis.*
- Policy 6.h. – *Continue to promote and support the high quality of education currently available for persons of all ages in the community. The city’s public school system, private education alternatives, and Northwest Iowa Community College are all assets to the community and should be supported.*
- Policy 6.i. – *Maintain and enhance athletic and educational facilities to insure the best use by all students within the district.*
- Policy 6.j. – *Construct a community events center in Sheldon to coordinate programs, activities, events and entertainment for all residents and guests of the community and surrounding areas.*

**Parks and Recreational Land Uses**

Parks and recreational land uses include city, county or state parks, trails, campgrounds, swimming pools, golf courses, and other public recreational areas in and adjacent to the City of Sheldon. For clarification, this section is identifying land uses actively used for the city’s park system and recreational activities. This section does not include areas determined to be passive recreation areas,



*Photo of the Sheldon Outdoor Aquatic Center*



*Photo of Thorman Park in Sheldon*



*Photo of the Lifelong Learning and Recreation Center on the NCC campus*

open space, natural resource areas or floodplains. Actively used parks and recreation land uses in Sheldon occur on nearly 38 acres of land comprising only 1.3% of the land area within the city limits. These numbers are slightly lower when compared to similar sized communities across northwest Iowa. However, when including the nearly 20 acres from the Sheldon Golf Course located approximately ¼ mile north of the north city limits, this increases the number of usable acres of parks and recreation spaces by 53% to 58 total acres. Current park spaces located in Sheldon today consists of: 1) City Park is a community park located north of the central business district along Highway 18; 2) Hills Park is a community park located in the northwest corner of the community and contains the city’s public campground; 3) Sunrise Park is a small neighborhood park located on the city’s north side adjacent to Village Northwest; 4) Thorman Park is a small neighborhood park located in the southwest side of the community; and 5) Schemper Park is the city’s newest neighborhood park located in the southeast corner of Sheldon. There is also the Borrow Pit Development, which is a 42 acre wetland mitigation area in the Sheldon Crossing area. There is also a sports complex made that has practice fields and baseball diamonds which has bleachers, rest rooms, and a concessions area.

City officials and key community leaders should remember that quality of life in Sheldon is one of the most important factors in promoting economic and community growth. Considerations for recreation and park space are an integral part of a community's population and growth patterns, and is also reflected in the decisions of local businesses and industries to locate or expand their business in Sheldon. The appeal of parks and recreation opportunities, especially for youth, is far too often overlooked as an important factor in economic and community development initiatives. Parks and recreational uses are typically one of the smaller land use categories relative to the amount of land acreage and percentage of land within a community. This holds true in Sheldon, but the community is maintaining and supporting its existing park and recreation uses and looking toward the future with additional possible park or recreational land uses, for example with the addition of the Borrow Pit Development and the sports complex, it shows the vision for the future. Prior to these most recent additions, there seemed to have been an inadequate amount of parks and recreation space throughout Sheldon, but with the latest additions, things seem to have gotten better. With that said, the percentage or ratio of recreational land use acres to the number of people increases substantially if the city takes into consideration the Sheldon golf course which is situated just to the north of the city's corporate limits.

**Objective 7.**

The city should provide each citizen and visitor with choices for the types of recreational activities and facilities desired, and to coordinate with county, state and federal programs to ensure the most effect utilization of public and private funding for recreational purposes. Sheldon should make recreation facilities available in all areas of the city with activities and programs designed for all age groups.

**Policy Recommendations** for parks and recreational uses to further identify the future needs for the community and those residents and visitors that regularly use the city's recreational amenities include:

Policy 7.a. – *To plan for the city's recreational needs through the development of and regular updating of a parks and recreation plan.*

Policy 7.b. – *The city should strongly support and establish a plan to complete planned or proposed trail segments in the community, along with planning to construct a complete trail "loop" around Sheldon.*

Policy 7.c. – The city should develop design standards relating to trail development, pathways, pedestrian areas, walkways, and buffers that may have an impact upon the city's park spaces or recreational amenities.

Policy 7.d. – Guide physical development of the community and integrate the city's parks and trails system in a coherent and cohesive manner, as if the city's public use spaces were designed along with the private development.

Policy 7.e. – In keeping consistency with the city's recent parks plan, the city should strongly encourage and explore the potential to develop a citywide recreational/open space areas around the borrow ponds created from the Highway 60 construction.

Policy 7.f. – The use of greenspace or buffers between residential uses and other more intensive land uses should be encouraged by the city, which will also help to strengthen the amount of greenspace within the community.

Policy 7.g. – The city should ensure sufficient and suitable land is planned, identified and reserved for future city park space and recreational amenities.

Policy 7.h. – Develop and implement a community wide beautification program, of which will also incorporate the regular maintenance and enhancement of playground equipment and other play or recreational amenities found within the city's parks.

Policy 7.i. – *Provide equal access of facilities and activities to all residents, guests and visitors of Sheldon and surrounding region.*

Policy 7.j. – *Preserve natural areas that incorporate historical, scenic and scientific significance.*

### Transportation, Infrastructure and Utility Policies

A well planned and designed transportation system is essential to the overall growth and development of a community. The city's streets system and all modes of transportation play a major role in the movement of people, goods and services within the community and from city to city. This is no more evident than when Sheldon was provided a tremendous opportunity when the State of Iowa paved a four-lane Highway 60 addition that bypassed around the southeast and east portions of Sheldon before reconnecting with the old Highway 60 a couple of miles north of the city. This major

transportation addition to the community occurred in 2006. Since that time, the City of Sheldon has capitalized upon the growth and development opportunities this major transportation arterial has brought to the city's east side. With growth already tending to gravitate to the east prior to the Highway 60 bypass, the completed four-lane highway accelerated development growth and the number of highway commercial businesses expanding in this part of the community increased substantially faster than growth elsewhere in Sheldon. At this time, it is not expected that new major arterial lines of transportation will be added, but existing transportation modes and infrastructure must continually be updated and improved. Although no new major transportation projects are planned within the community in the foreseeable future, the city still has the ability and should plan accordingly to further capitalize upon the Highway 60 bypass. With the growth and development

Photo of IA Highway 60 and U.S. Highway 18 junction along the east side of Sheldon



experienced at the intersection of Highway 60 with U.S. Highway 18 on the east side of Sheldon, the city should also plan to address future growth and development at the other two interchanges on the south side of the community. The interchange of Highway 60 and Nest Avenue in O'Brien County, just to the southeast of the Sheldon city limits holds the potential to be the next developable interchange for the community. According to the city's future land use map, the city is looking for a combination of highway commercial and future recreational amenities combined with residential subdivisions near this interchange. The remaining interchange is the exit where the Highway 60 bypass deviated from the old Highway 60 (2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue) route through Sheldon. This southwest interchange also holds great potential for the city to capitalize in bringing people into the community and directing traffic toward the city's central business district.

The City of Sheldon addresses street and infrastructure maintenance on an annual basis in order to improve the transportation efficiency and street conditions in the community. Surprising to many is the amount of land within the community that is consumed by transportation uses. Transportation land uses in Sheldon including the entire road right-of-way, not just street paving, in addition to railroad rights-of-way amounts to more than 438 acres of land, representing 15% of the total land area. Only the street and railroad right-of-ways were used in calculating the transportation land use acreage. Other city utilities and infrastructure such as lift stations, electrical substations, water plant, sewer treatment plant, etc. are calculated as part of the public & civic land use category. Sheldon generally has an adequate to good infrastructure and a reliable transportation system in place.

#### **Objective 8.**

To provide for the safe, orderly and efficient movement of people, goods and services throughout the city; to support and promote transportation development in all sectors of the community such as commerce, industry, housing or agriculture while minimizing the impact of the city's transportation system on the environment and character of the community.

**Policy Recommendations** in support of transportation, infrastructure and utility land uses include:

Policy 8.a. – *The city's transportation system should be designed to accommodate future growth; planned to separate commercial and industrial truck traffic from residential streets; and designed to be aesthetically pleasing and landscaped so as to beautify, identify and unify land use areas with a desirable pattern of transportation access.*

Policy 8.b. - *A good transportation system is vital to the overall growth of a community. Continued paving of deteriorated or unpaved streets is recommended in addition to regular maintenance of streets.*

Policy 8.c. - *Streets within new subdivisions or platted rural subdivisions not within the city limits of Sheldon should conform to the requirements of the city's subdivision regulations.*

Policy 8.d. – *All city utilities to be constructed in new subdivisions should be made in accordance with policies stated in the city's subdivision regulations.*

Policy 8.e. – The city, working in conjunction with the city's engineer, should regularly monitor the existing and proposed street system to identify current or potential problem areas and develop solutions.

- Policy 8.f. – The city should work with Iowa DOT (Department of Transportation), O’Brien County, and other jurisdictions to prepare future transportation plans, construct improvements and develop management programs to alleviate congestion and promote the smooth flow of traffic in and throughout the community.
- Policy 8.g. – The city should consider opening and paving new streets and redesign intersections, where appropriate, to improve traffic conditions.
- Policy 8.h. – Develop, expand and consider all forms of transportation facilities in direct response to local development.
- Policy 8.i. – Utilities and municipal infrastructure shall be provided in accordance with development needs. Providing utilities and municipal infrastructure shall be consistent with the city’s comprehensive plan and not represent an unreasonable cost to the city, with the development paying its fair share of the costs associated with such utility services and infrastructure.
- Policy 8.j. – Leap frog development should generally be discouraged and developments beyond the urban fringe of the community shall be responsible for development expenses due to the high costs associated with extending utilities and infrastructure into previously undeveloped areas.
- Policy 8.k. – New development should not result in the reduction of any utility or municipal service levels to the community.
- Policy 8.l. – New development should not exceed the capacity of private and public utilities, streets and municipal services; and unless otherwise waived, new developments shall connect to municipal sewer, water and stormwater facilities.
- Policy 8.m. – The city should regularly maintain and upgrade, where appropriate, community services and amenities (i.e. parks, streets, infrastructure, etc.) in older portions of the community as newer facilities and infrastructure is provided in developing areas.
- Policy 8.n. – All utilities within the public street right-of-way shall be installed in accordance with all city specifications to protect the integrity of other public improvements within the right-of-way.
- Policy 8.o. – The city shall work with municipal utilities to ensure the supply, distribution and storage of water meets all of the domestic, industrial and fire suppression needs. As part of the site plan review process, the city, fire, police, and public works shall evaluate proposed land uses for their vulnerability for fire, security and accessibility during emergencies.
- Policy 8.p. – The city should work with municipal utilities, public works and private utility companies to identify and preserve utility corridors or easements for future utility needs of the community.

# CHAPTER 14. ADDITIONAL DEVELOPMENT MATTERS

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## ANNEXATION

Annexation is the process through which contiguous fringe territory is added to an existing municipality. Laws that regulate annexation and corporate growth vary greatly from state to state, necessitating a brief narrative of the annexation procedures as they relate to Iowa cities. Annexation usually is not a simple process, but rather one that requires considerable thought and consideration as to benefits and cost requirements prior to an official act by a city. Once a city has annexed a parcel of land, the resulting economic, physical, and cultural results will be evident for many years. Annexation may become further complicated by recommendations developed by the legislature based upon input by those opposing urban sprawl trends occurring in other parts of Iowa. Cities must be kept abreast of current legislative proposals as they relate to annexation. This information will provide a general overview of annexation procedures, and indicate general areas adjacent to Sheldon's present city limits that may be suited for future annexations. Sheldon may find itself in situations where annexation of adjacent lands into the city limits must be considered in order to provide adequate space for growth or to protect the city's interests when the pattern of development outside the city's boundary threatens to have a negative impact on the community in the future. In Iowa, a city may annex land by one of five (5) different methods:

1. Voluntary annexation not in an Urbanized Area
2. Voluntary annexation in an Urbanized Area
3. "80/20" voluntary annexation not in an Urbanized Area
4. "80/20" voluntary annexation in an Urbanized Area
5. Involuntary annexation.

Since Sheldon is not bordered or within two (2) miles of another community, Sheldon is not considered an urbanized area. Therefore, only those voluntary and "80/20" annexation procedures for non-urbanized areas will be applicable to the City of Sheldon. The involuntary annexation procedure is the same for both urbanized and non-urbanized areas. The annexation process in Iowa is overseen by the City Development Board. The City Development Board is comprised of community officials and representatives from across Iowa operating under the direction of the Iowa Economic Development Authority. This board is granted authority by the State of Iowa to review and make recommendation on annexation proposals.

### Voluntary Annexations

Voluntary annexation is a relatively simple process that is handled at the local level between the city and property owner(s) requesting annexation. These annexations are classified as either being in an urbanized area or not. Only those voluntary annexations in an urbanized area require state involvement in the form of a review by the City Development Board. If the voluntary annexation is not located within an urbanized area, such as the case with Sheldon, the annexation may be directly filed and recorded with the Secretary of State. As the name would imply, voluntary annexations have complete support from the landowners requesting annexation into the city. Voluntary annexations, when in the best interest of the city and in keeping with the land use policies established herein, should be welcomed by the city. The resulting increase of tax base and future development potential generally translates to positive outcomes for the city.

## **Voluntary Annexation Procedures** **City Development Board, Iowa Economic Development Authority**

### Voluntary annexations not in an urbanized area

- a) Submit application for voluntary annexation
- b) The city shall provide a copy of the application to the Board of Supervisors.
- c) The city publishes a notice in an official newspaper and city council approves the annexation by resolution.
- d) The city files a copy of the resolution, map and legal description of the annexed land with Secretary of State, Board of Supervisors, public utilities, and Iowa DOT
- e) Records a copy of the legal description, map, and resolution with the County Recorder.
- f) The annexation is complete upon acknowledgement by the Secretary of State.

### Additionally, voluntary annexations which adjoin or are within two miles of another city must:

- Provide notice of the application to cities whose boundaries adjoin the land or that are within two miles of the territory, each affected public utility, the Board of Supervisors, and the regional planning authority.
- Upon approving the annexation by resolution, the city forwards the proposal to the City Development Board.
- City Development Board considers the annexation proposal and approves or denies the proposal.
- If the annexation is approved and no appeal is filed within 30 days, the Board files and records documents.

### **80/20 Voluntary Annexations**

The primary difference between a voluntary annexation and an 80/20 annexation is that a city may include up to 20 percent of the total land area to be annexed containing land owners not wanting to annex into the community, as long as the remaining 80 percent voluntarily consent to the annexation. Also, public land may be included in 80/20 annexations regardless of written consent. If a public land owner does not consent, the public land does not affect the 80/20 ratio calculation. The IEDA City Development Board may ask if city services are provided to residents in the annexed area.

## **80/20 Voluntary Annexation Procedures** **City Development Board, Iowa Economic Development Authority**

### 80/20 voluntary annexation including land without the owner's consent

- a) A city can include up to 20% of land without consent of the owner to avoid creating islands or square up boundaries.
- b) City holds a consultation with the Supervisors and Township Trustees at least 14 business days prior to application.
- c) At least 14 business days prior to any action, the city shall by certified mail provide a copy of the application to the non-consenting property owners and each affected public utility.
- d) The city must hold a public hearing on the application before taking official action.
- e) At least 14 days prior to any action, the city shall provide notice of application and public hearing to the Supervisors, non-consenting owners, owners of property that adjoins the territory, and public utilities that serve the territory.
- f) The City Development Board considers the annexation proposal. If the application is accepted, a public hearing is set.
- g) The City Development Board holds a public hearing for the county and property owners. After hearing all evidence the Board decides whether to approve or deny the annexation.
- h) If the annexation is approved, the Board notifies the parties and 30 days following the notification the Board files and records documents to complete the annexation if no appeal is file.
- i) If the annexation is denied the Board notifies the parties.

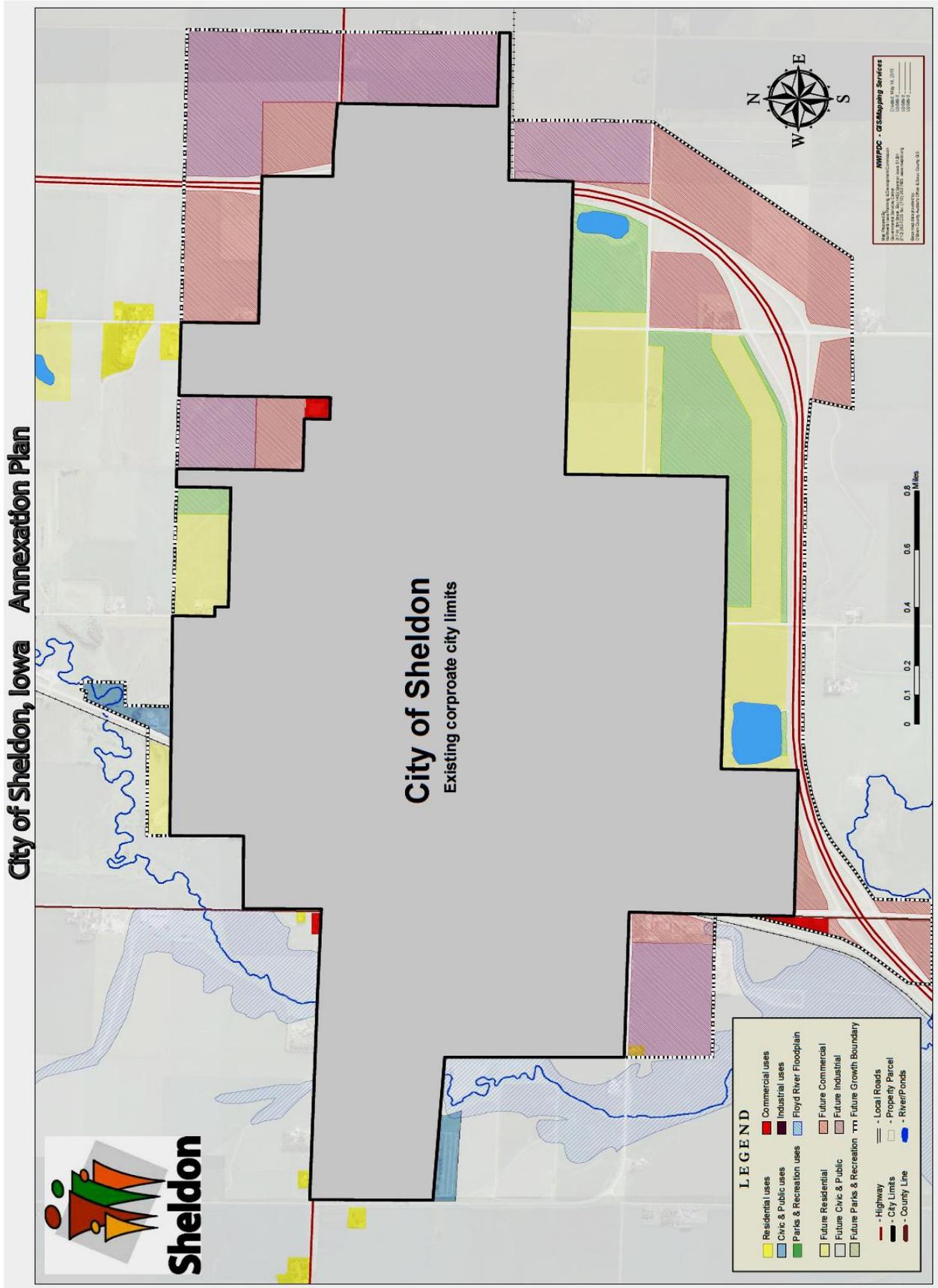
### **Involuntary Annexations**

Involuntary Annexations are initiated by the city and are opposed by the majority of landowners in the proposed annexation areas. Before a city attempts such a process, they should review Chapter 368, Code of Iowa, as amended and the most recent City Development Board Administrative Rules appearing in the Iowa Administrative Code. Furthermore, contacting the City Development Board to review and provide necessary coordination and advice on proceeding with the annexation should be also considered. Involuntary annexations can easily become a complex legal matter; thus, care should be given to assure that all requirements of the City Development Board are met. The city must be prepared to defend its actions by indicating how and when community facilities, services, and utilities can be extended into the proposed annexation. Once approved by the board, involuntary annexations must also be approved by a simple majority of the residents of the proposed annexation area and the residents of the city in a referendum vote. A city may be able to justify involuntary annexations based on the best interest of the public when, for example, adequate land area for a particular land use is not immediately available within the current city limits potentially causing the city to miss out on the creation of jobs or provision of expanded services for residents or businesses. Petitions requesting involuntary annexations must indicate how municipal services will be provided by the city to the annexed area within three years of July 1 of the fiscal year in which the city taxes are collected against property in the annexed territory. At the end of the third year, the city must submit a report to the City Development Board describing the status of the provision of services within the annexed territory. If the city fails to provide services or fails to show progress in providing services, the City Development Board has the power to cut ties between the city and all or part of the annexed territory. If good cause is shown, the city may request an additional three years to provide municipal services.

### **Involuntary Annexation Procedures City Development Board, Iowa Economic Development Authority**

- a) Notice of intent
- b) Prior to filing a petition, a letter of intent must be sent to each city whose urbanized area contains a portion of the land, the regional planning authority, affected public utilities, property owners listed in the petition, and the Supervisors.
- c) Prior to filing, the city must hold a public meeting on the petition, of which a notice is to be published.
- d) The city files a petition with the City Development Board
- e) Board reviews petition for completeness and proper filing. If accepted as complete, a committee is formed.
- f) A committee holds a public hearing to hear evidence for and against the petition.
- g) The Committee holds a decision meeting to approve or deny the petition for annexation.
- h) The Board works with the county to set an election date. The Board publishes the election results.
- i) If the petition is approved at election, and no appeal is filed within 30 days of the publication of the election results, the Board files and records the documents necessary to complete the election.
- j) Three years following the completion of involuntary annexation, the Board reviews the status of the provision of services provided by the city to the annexed territory, and determines if further action is required.

Sheldon Proposed Annexation Map

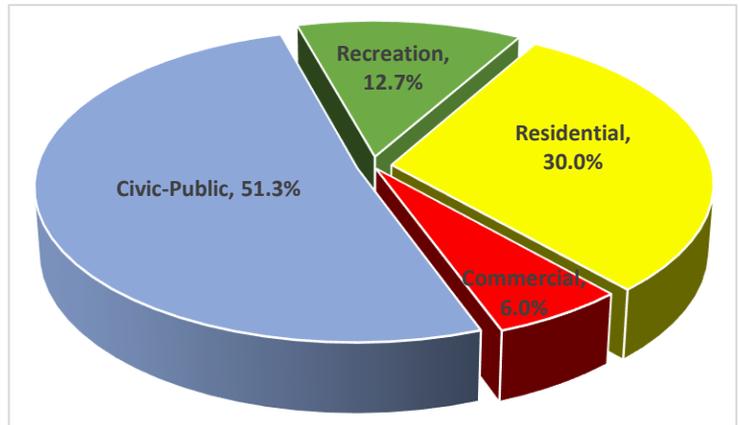


As shown on the Sheldon Annexation Plan map, the grey shaded area is the city’s existing corporate city limits. The lighter shaded areas with the black and white dashed border represent those lands with the greatest potential for annexation and interest to the City of Sheldon. One of the primary reasons why Sheldon is progressive in identifying and targeting potential future annexation areas is due to existing rural scattered development in proximity to the city limits. Although not a significant amount of rural development is located adjacent to or within close proximity to Sheldon, there is still According to a recent land use analysis, there is more than 172 acres of developed or actively utilized land adjacent near the Sheldon corporate city limits, but within the unincorporated portion of O’Brien County. Now some of these rural uses are better served to be located in the county such as the Sheldon airport. However, for the most part, these developed properties are simply rural residences or rural businesses located close to Sheldon, but outside of the city limits. Some of the larger tracts of developed property close to Sheldon’s city limits, but not within the city, include the 21 acre Sheldon Golf Course, more than 51 acres containing rural residential properties, only 10 acres consisting of rural commercial businesses and over 88 acres of land used for civic or public land uses. This category is comprised by only a few uses including the Sheldon municipal airport, the city’s water treatment plant and a portion of the NCC college campus on the far west side of the community. A listing of those rural developed land uses adjacent to the existing city limits of Sheldon include:

Rural Land Uses adjacent to or within close proximity to the Sheldon city limits:

- Residential properties – 51.6 acres
- Commercial businesses – 10.2 acres
- Industrial businesses – 0.0 acres
- Civic/Public uses – 88.4  
(Including the city water plant and airport)
- Recreation areas – 21.9 acres  
(Including the Sheldon Golf Course)

Figure 40 - Chart showing percentage of developed lands outside of the city limits



The City of Sheldon will need to prioritize the above listed rural developed areas for potential or proposed annexation into the city’s corporate limits. Future growth of the community is expected to occur primarily to the east and southeast, with some development to the north and northeast. Thus, the city should anticipate annexations within these adjacent territories in the future. Residential neighborhoods in the eastern and southeastern portions of the community are expected to see continued growth and development, and annexation should be reviewed in relationship to the needs for additional subdivision development. The provision of necessary infrastructure may also need to be considered. The areas to the east, northeast and southwest of the city’s corporate limits will continue to experience varying amounts of commercial and industrial land uses. Annexations in this area will likely provide the City of Sheldon with considerable land use controls over present and future land use development.

In summary, the City of Sheldon may be presented with the opportunity or need to pursue future annexations. The city should pursue voluntary annexation in most cases if proven beneficial to the community. Furthermore, the city should not deny the possibility of involuntary annexation if and

when the need arises to control haphazard urban sprawl or protect the city from rural developments not in the city's best interest. In all cases, a proposed annexation will result in both benefits and disadvantages. In general terms, the benefits to the annexing body include:

1. Protection for the city against uncontrolled and inappropriate rural scattered development.
2. The ability to control and direct fringe areas in a manner that will minimize future service costs and insure appropriate levels and type of development.
3. Expansion of taxes, debt limit, and revenue base of the community.

At the same time, the community should be aware that in some situations disadvantages might offset advantages. If Sheldon is to consider undertaking possible involuntary annexations, it should be aware that the burden of proof is upon the city to show the ability to offer the annexed area city services and municipal utilities in a better quality and quantity than the area is currently accustomed to. Annexation solely to increase revenue is not a justifiable process in the eyes of Iowa law. Involuntary annexations can offer the following advantages to affected properties:

1. Protection of property values through zoning and the application of municipal codes.
2. Improved availability of city services and utilities; particularly water, sewer, & waste disposal.
3. Concentrated police and fire protection services.
4. Improved infrastructure; including adequate streets and roads which incorporate the city's urban design standards.

### **Objective 9.**

The city should be open to and plan for annexations in order to promote future growth of the community, and to protect against haphazard and scattered rural growth in close proximity to Sheldon along with unwarranted or potentially harmful developments to the city.

**Policy Recommendations** to guide future annexations and growth of the community through the use and protection of designated land use patterns include:

*Policy 9.a. - The city should take measures, including involuntary annexation, when necessary, to address and control future development occurring near the city's existing city limits.*

*Policy 9.b. - Continued rural development around the perimeter of Sheldon's current city limits should be reviewed and considered for annexation by the city in an effort to properly plan and retain uniform development standards consistent within the community.*

*Policy 9.c. - The city should consider and maintain the option of utilizing annexation as an effort to protect its residents, businesses and land from unwanted or potentially harmful development, including agricultural animal confinements or agricultural industries, that may not be complementary to adjoining land uses in Sheldon.*

### **ZONING IN SHELDON**

Zoning divides the city into a number of different districts or zones. Different land uses are allowed in each area, and the goal is to separate those that are not compatible. Few people, for example,

would like to have their home near a heavy industrial site. While both residential areas and industrial districts are important to the community, it is better to find a way to separate these incompatible land uses. Thus, zoning is a set of regulations adopted by the city to guide development. These regulations, however, do not stand alone. Zoning must be based on a comprehensive plan for the community and is one of the primary ways in which the community's comprehensive plan is implemented. Traditionally, zoning involves the regulation of land in three areas: 1) Zoning controls how the land will be used. The use of a particular lot or piece of land such as agricultural, commercial, industrial, or residential is stipulated in the zoning ordinance. 2) Zoning usually includes height regulations. 3) There will normally be lot, area and building setback regulations. The City of Sheldon has adopted and enforces a municipal zoning ordinance.

A good planning and zoning program should help create a public dialogue about the future of the community. Citizen participation should be encouraged to allow input at every stage. While local officials diligently seek review and comment on proposed plans, often citizens do not become engaged until some issue, such as a zoning change, affects them directly. Zoning helps establish land use patterns that are logical and convenient. A good zoning ordinance, carefully administered, can over time help make the community more attractive. Cities that are well-planned invariably make a better first impression than those that are not.

Zoning regulations help communities use public resources efficiently. Cities that direct growth can provide expensive infrastructure improvements only to those parts of the community that have been identified as growth areas. In this way roads, sewers, water, and other services can be supplied on an as-needed basis. Zoning also helps protect private investment by providing those who purchase property with a sense of certainty about future development. Not only does a property buyer know what he or she can do with his or her land, but that buyer also knows what land uses will be allowed on adjoining parcels.

**To summarize, zoning can:**

- Serve as a planning and development tool to keep down future costs of public services.
- Group together those land uses that are compatible and separate those that are likely to conflict with one another.
- Provide adequate space for each type of land use in the community.
- Help protect agricultural land by directing other types of development, residences, and businesses away from prime agricultural areas.
- Prevent congestion on streets and highways, and help cities minimize the costs associated with the utilities, infrastructure and construction of streets or highways.

**To summarize, zoning cannot:**

- Cure all of the city's growth and development problems.
- Correct past mistakes in land use. Those structures, buildings and land uses that are in place when the zoning ordinance is established are called nonconforming uses and are "grandfathered" as a permitted use until such use or building ceases to exist. Henceforth, objectionable or incompatible land uses from the past will not be immediately corrected.
- Guarantee the soundness nor regulate the physical appearance of structures built in a zoning district.

Appointed by the city council, the Sheldon Planning and Zoning Commission prepares and oversees the development of both the zoning ordinance and the comprehensive plan on which it is based. The zoning ordinance consists of two parts: the zoning map and the text. The zoning map clearly indicates the boundaries of all of the zoning districts within the jurisdiction, and it should also be kept up to date reflecting any zoning changes that may have taken place. The texts of zoning ordinances may vary in terms of length and format, however certain elements undoubtedly will be present. Some reference will be made to the legal authority for zoning. In Iowa, this is Chapter 414, Code of Iowa, for cities. Similarly, there should be a statement of the public purpose to be achieved by the zoning regulations. The zoning ordinance should contain definitions, the establishment of zoning districts, authorization for official zoning map, specific regulations for each of the designated zoning districts, dimensional standards or bulk regulations for each district, and information on administration, enforcement and amendment of the ordinance.

### **EXTRATERRITORIAL ZONING AND LAND USE**

In accordance with Section 414.23 of the Iowa Code, “The powers granted by this chapter may be extended by ordinance by any city to the unincorporated area up to two (2) miles beyond the limits of such city, except for those areas within a county where a county zoning ordinance exists...” Sheldon is in a unique situation with portions of its corporate city limits falling within the boundaries of two (2) counties. To complicate the issue further, O’Brien County is not zoned and Sioux County does enforce zoning. Two restrictions apply that limit Sheldon’s ability to zone and control development in Sioux County. First, agricultural land uses in the State of Iowa are immune to zoning of any type regardless of proximity to city boundaries. According to the Iowa Code, the farm exemption clause identified in Section 335.2 exempts zoning controls on property used for agricultural purposes and is applicable for all agricultural lands in unincorporated areas near Sheldon in Sioux County. Because the majority of the land within the two-mile extraterritorial buffer around Sheldon in Sioux County is agricultural land uses, this severely limits the city’s ability to effectively direct development outside of its city limits to the west in Sioux County. Secondly, zoning jurisdiction over non-agricultural land uses within the two mile extraterritorial zoning area is not available to cities within zoned counties. This is the case with Sheldon as Sioux County practices and enforces zoning.

On the other hand, Sheldon can impose its extraterritorial zoning powers for up to two miles out from the corporate city limits in O’Brien County, since the county is not zoned. The City of Sheldon has chosen to exercise their right to provide zoning oversight and enforcement within this two mile extraterritorial area and has addressed this provision in the city’s zoning ordinance. As stated in Section 3.1(5) in Article III of the 2010 Sheldon Zoning Ordinance, it states *“All regulations within this ordinance shall apply to lands within 2 miles of the City of Sheldon generally described and shown on the official zoning map of the city. The exemption from regulation granted by the Code of Iowa to property used for agricultural purposes shall apply to said unincorporated area. The specific regulations and districts created under this subsection hereunder shall be terminated within three months of the establishment of the administrative authority for county zoning, or at such date as mutually agreed upon by the municipality and county.”*

City of Sheldon, Iowa Two Mile Extraterritorial Zoning Area

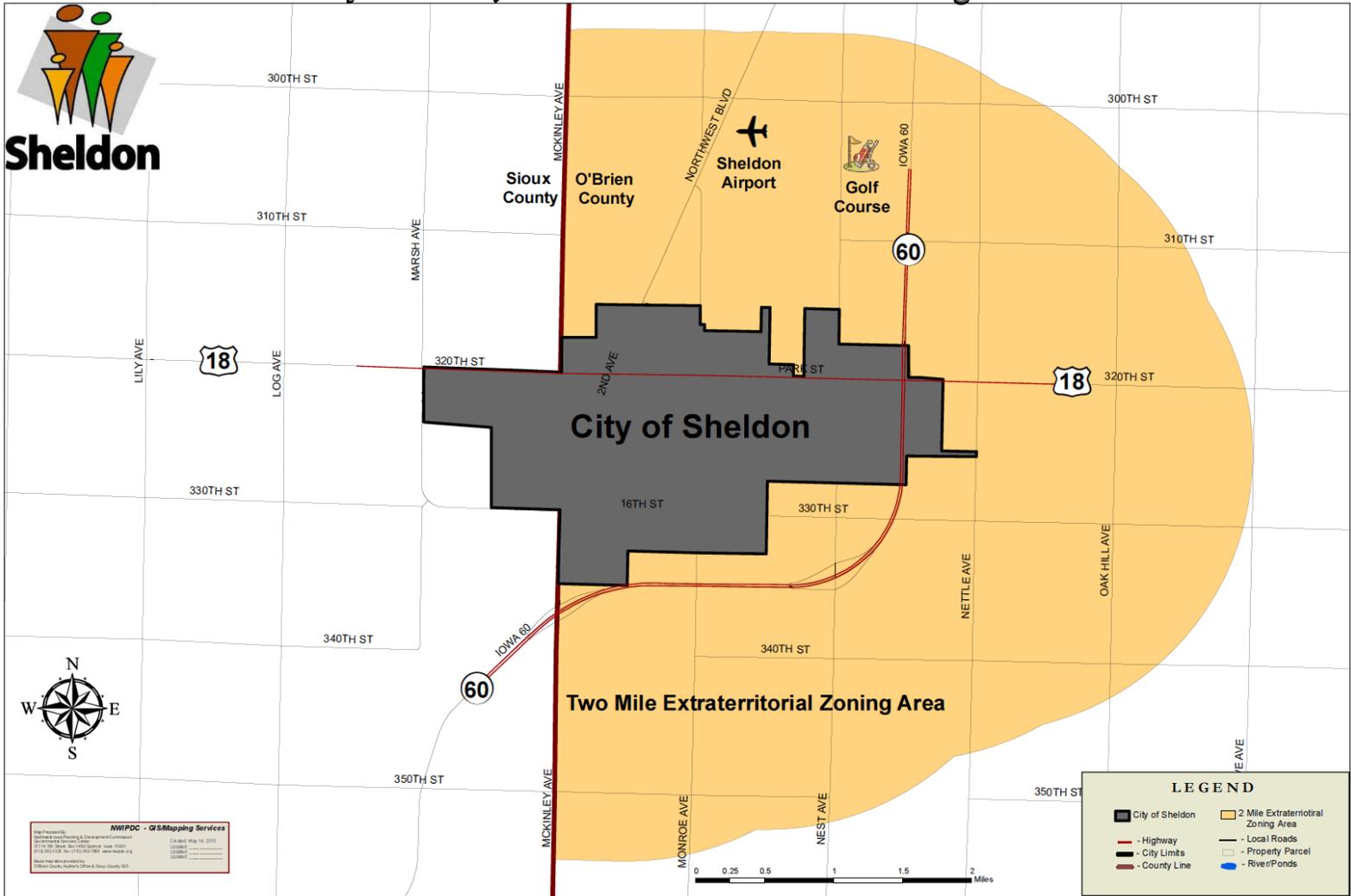


Figure 41 – Sheldon Two-Mile Extraterritorial Zoning Area Map

In addition to extraterritorial zoning, there are other alternative methods of working cooperatively between the City of Sheldon and O’Brien & Sioux counties with regards to extraterritorial planning and zoning. Another form of extraterritorial agreements that is not frequently used in northwest Iowa is for cities and counties to cooperatively establish 28E joint governmental development agreements authorizing a city to have specific levels of input into county land use matters, or vice-versa. 28E agreements are used more frequently in situations where both the city and county choose to exercise zoning controls over their respective jurisdictions. Currently, Sheldon and O’Brien County or Sheldon and Sioux County do not share any such zoning or land use related 28E development agreements. With that stated, the city should give consideration to cooperatively establishing a joint 28E policy agreement between the city and county(ies) that will spell out specific development opportunities concerning rural residential, commercial, industrial and agricultural business development within close proximity to the Sheldon city limits. A potential joint development agreement between the city and county could include and address topics such as:

- Primary land use allowable near the city
- Secondary land use allowable near the city
- Utilities- water, sewer, electric – in rural subdivisions
- Infrastructure- roads, storm sewer - in rural subdivisions
- Public roads - concrete/asphalt/unimproved – in rural subdivisions
- Zoning regulations in the joint development area
- Building and design standards in the joint development area
- Subdivision review and standards in the joint development area
- Subdivision plat review in the joint development area

Such 28E agreements may range from granting complete zoning control of the two-mile radius to the city, to allowing the city to occupy a non-voting seat on the county’s planning and zoning commission, to simply requiring that the city and county planning and zoning commissions meet jointly on occasion to discuss upcoming land use issues.

If Sheldon were to consider exercising extraterritorial land use or zoning powers, it is recommended that Sheldon focus on the review of potential development projects occurring within the following areas listed below. These areas are identified as potential growth areas outside of, but adjacent to, the city’s current city limits.

1. Rural residential subdivisions located primarily to the north and west of the city limits.
2. Highway commercial uses located along Highway 18 on the east and west sides of Sheldon.
3. Recreational land uses (primarily the golf course) located ¾ mile north of the city’s northeast side.

**SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY PRACTICES**

According to the “Sustainability Dictionary” website, the definition listed below was developed in 1987 at the World Commission on the Environment and Development. This definition is comparable to the Native American “seventh generation” philosophy in which the tribal Chief would always consider the effects or consequences of his actions on the descendants of the next seven generations. As expressed on this source’s website, there are many definitions and ways to measure sustainability. Some of the criteria used in measuring sustainability in your community may include:

- Financial Capital
- Natural Capital
- Human or Social Capital

In regards to sustainable development and how creating a sustainable community in Sheldon can be implemented, one of the best ways of describing sustainable development is to enhance economic opportunity and community well-being while protecting and restoring the natural environment upon which people and economies depend. In review of both the city’s



**DEFINITION OF SUSTAINABILITY:**

***“Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”***

As created and defined in 1987 at the World Commission on the Environment and Development (the Brundtland Commission)

Courtesy of: The Dictionary of Sustainable Development  
<http://www.sustainabilitydictionary.com/s/sustainability.php>

existing and proposed future land use maps, it appears from a spatial land use perspective, the city is attentive and observant of the city's needs in terms of promoting a sustainable community in Sheldon. The community has paid great attention to the city's existing natural resources primarily present in the Floyd River. The city is cognizant and critical of reviewing building permits in the floodplain. For this most part, the Floyd River valley through Sheldon is low-lying floodplain lands that have been left in their native state and undeveloped. It is the city's intention that these floodplain areas will remain undeveloped and in their native state in the future as well. The city needs to be consistent in its future planning and policy making decisions on allowing or promoting development opportunities by doing its due diligence and determining the impact of such development upon the natural environment.

According to the Institute for Sustainable Communities (ISC), headquartered in Montpelier, Vermont, a sustainable community is one that is: "economically, environmentally, and socially healthy and resilient. Sustainable communities meet challenges through innovative solutions rather than fragmented approaches that may achieve one goal at the expense of another. The mission of the ISC is to help communities address environmental, economic and social challenges to build a better future to be shared by all. Similar to the sustainable criteria mentioned above from the World Commission on the Environment and Development, the ISC also believes sustainability comes from managing human, natural and financial resources to meet current needs of the community while ensuring resources are available for future generations. As identified on the ISC's website at: <http://www.iscvt.org/>, following is a list of community practices that define sustainable communities.

#### Healthy Environment

- Protection and enhancement of local and regional ecosystems
- Conservation of water, land, energy and nonrenewable resources
- Utilization of prevention strategies and technology to minimize pollution
- Practice the use of renewable resource no faster than their rate of renewal
- The use of infrastructure that improves access to goods and services without comprising the environment

#### Social Environment

- Obtaining the satisfaction of basic human needs including clean air and water
- Provisions of affordable but quality healthcare and well-living for community members
- Safe and affordable housing accessible to all
- Access for all to a quality education
- Enhancement and appreciation of community cultural differences, treasures, customs and traditions

#### Economic Environment

- Community members benefit from a strong and healthy community economy
- Diverse and financially viable economic base
- Reinvestment of financial and human resources into the local economy
- Maximize local ownership of businesses
- Adequate and accessible employment opportunities for all residents

- Effective and accessible job training and education programs for the workforce to adapt to future demands
- Encourage those businesses that enhance community sustainability

### SMART GROWTH PRINCIPLES

Urban sprawl, by name alone, would appear to be a metropolitan issue. On the contrary, regardless of the name, urban sprawl is an issue for any community, town or rural area that has been impacted by uncontrolled or haphazard growth of large sprawling lots without regard to the impact upon the environment or surrounding uses. Many have heard of the term “smart growth”, but do we really understand what it means. According to the following website, <http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/>, smart growth can be defined as:

**SMART GROWTH IS A BETTER WAY TO BUILD AND MAINTAIN OUR TOWN & CITIES:**

***“Smart growth means building urban, suburban and rural communities with housing and transportation choices near jobs, shops and schools. This approach supports the local economies and protects the environment.”***



Courtesy of: Smart Growth America <http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/>

Smart Growth America is a national organization dedicated to researching, advocating for and leading coalitions to bring smart growth practices to communities nationwide. Many cities desire to create pedestrian friendly neighborhoods with nearby schools and shopping with ease of access for its residents, however, the reality is this is not the case with most rural northwest Iowa communities. Although supportive of new residential and commercial growth, many cities are beginning to question the costs of building further out from the city center. Smart growth planning principals are becoming increasingly more important especially as infrastructure, utility and transportation costs are continually escalating. Spurring the smart growth movement are shifts in demographics, a revived environmental ethic, and increased fiscal concerns over development costs. In older communities, smart growth can also play an integral role in urban renewal projects. In areas of older communities near the downtown central business district where older housing stock continues to deteriorate and cities look for ways to revitalize these neighborhoods smart growth principals can be applied to the redevelopment of these areas. Smart growth promotes connectivity between people and employment, recreation and services.

The information referenced below is summarized from the “Smart Growth Online” resource provided by the smart growth network ([www.smartgrowth.org](http://www.smartgrowth.org)).

**Quality of Life** – Create and preserve a sense of place through housing, green spaces, recreation and cultural attractions, and policies or incentives to encourage mixed-use neighborhoods.

**Design** – Offer health, social, economic, and environmental benefits for all. Suggest incorporating green building practices, low-impact developments and walkable neighborhoods.

**Economics** – Encourage small business investment adding to employment opportunities.

Environment – Environmental challenges we are facing today are due in part to the way neighborhoods, communities, and cities have been built up during the past half-century.

Health – Reduces threats from air and water pollution and indoor air contaminants through resource efficient building design along with promoting public transit, bike lanes and trails.

Housing – Create housing options for diverse lifestyles and socioeconomic levels by supporting mixed-use development, affordable housing alternatives and revitalize existing neighborhoods.

Transportation – Protects public health, environmental quality, conserves energy, and improves the quality of life by promoting new or innovative transportation choices.

In summary, smart growth can be summarized as the opposite of urban sprawl or anti-sprawl. Smart growth encourages infill development, redevelopment of brownfield or greenfield sites, along with redevelopment of thriving downtowns where nearby residents can once again come to gather, socialize, and shop with ease of pedestrian access and transportation to and within the central business districts. Smart growth principals support job growth, new housing, economic development and healthy communities. Simply stated, the smart growth movement supports the traditional means of community and economic development, but just looking at development from a differing perspective. Smart growth principals support walkable neighborhoods and communities that encourage mixed use developments within larger residential tracts. The City of Sheldon should look to smart growth principles and practices when considering potential future development, redevelopment or revitalization efforts in the central business district or surrounding older residential neighborhoods.

#### **LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT AND BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES**

The Clean Water Act gives the Environmental Protection Agency the regulatory control over cities and governments to control stormwater that is discharged into waterways. Much of Sheldon provides for natural and controlled stormwater drainage and runoff into the Floyd River or its tributaries. The concept behind low impact development and stormwater management practices is to capture the excess stormwater at the source point instead of trying to manage and control or direct the flow of water into natural drainage ways or waterways. The controlled flow of excess storm water promotes the collection of sometimes harmful waste products and materials that are intentionally directed and dumped into our natural waterways; promoting the pollution and contamination of sources of drinking water and or recreational waterways within the immediate vicinity of the community and those cities and people living downstream. Low impact development is a management approach and set of best practices promoted by the EPA intended to reduce runoff and pollutant discharges. These suggested practices are intended to help a community comply with EPA stormwater management rules by managing excess stormwater runoff as close to the source as possible. Low impact development (LID) practices include a variety of suggested methods of capturing stormwater runoff including small scale stormwater collection and management approaches, the implementation of natural storm water infiltration into the ground, areas to collect and allow evaporation or transpiration, and the harvesting and use of collected rainwater. Some of these low impact development examples include:

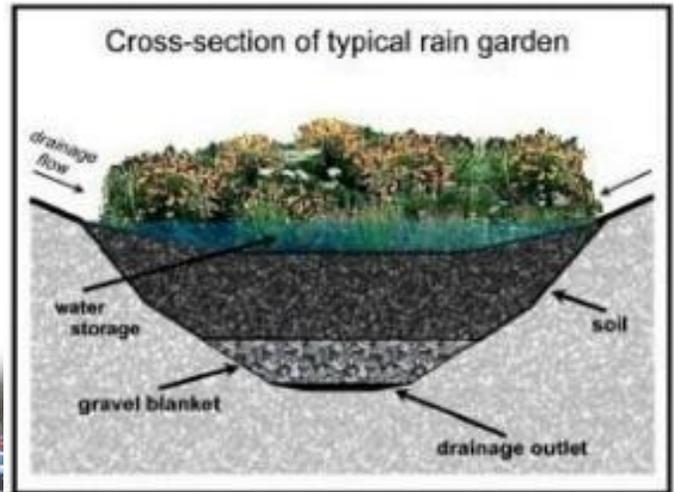
Pervious Paving – This low impact development practice allows stormwater to infiltrate into subsurface layers and eventually into the groundwater below. By containing the stormwater on-site, this reduces the amount of pollutants flowing into storm sewers and directly into natural rivers or lakes. This method of low impact development serves two purposes. One, it saves on stormwater sewer costs by alleviating sewer infrastructure in lieu of natural groundwater drainage; and two, it also serves as an aesthetically pleasing look that creates the appearance of old cobblestone roads. This could be a unique development approach in older neighborhoods.

Photo of pervious paving streets in Charles City, Iowa



Photo Source: Iowaagriculture.gov

Rain Gardens – Rain gardens are depressions within the landscape that are planted with flowers and native vegetation intended to collect and absorb excess stormwater. Rain gardens are strategically located to capture rain runoff from roofs or streets. Rain gardens will fill with a few inches of rain and then slowly absorb the water back into the ground, rather than directing it to a storm sewer.



Above: A typical cross-section of a rain garden. Image source: arundelonthebay.org

Left: Photo of a rain garden installed in the Arnolds Park Amusement park in Arnolds Park, Iowa.



**Bioswales** – This form of low impact development is similar to a rain garden in its objective, but instead of a strategically placed depression to collect water, Bioswales are a designed conveyance system to collect and move water in lieu of storm sewers. Bioswales improve water quality by filtering the first large push of storm water after a large rain event.

**Native Landscapes** – these plantings add beauty to any landscape and once established native landscapes become low maintenance areas that provide great habitat for birds and insects. Additional environmental benefits include the retention and filtration of stormwater through the root architecture of native plant species.



Photo of a bioswale or bioretention area constructed in a city park in Dennison, Iowa

**Soil Quality Restoration** – Native soils have been significantly altered by farming practices and grading over many years. By restoring the soils with high organic matter content and porosity, this will allow the ground to absorb rainfall and not shed runoff.

**Rainwater Harvesting** – The simplest form of rain harvesting is to install a rain barrel onto the downspout and collect the rain water. There are also more elaborate means to collect rooftop rainwater such as modern cisterns and bladder tanks. Harvested rainwater is intended for non-drinking water uses such as watering lawns or gardens.

Other forms of low impact development best practices include water gardens, green roofs, French drains, bioretention cells, constructed wetlands, butterfly gardens, native turf, sustainable landscaping, green wall, and a dry well.

The City of Sheldon should consider a demonstration site on city owned property to promote the use of low impact development practices in the community. This proposed demonstration site could also be used as an educational tool for local schools as well as educating and promoting individual property owners to consider incorporating low impact development alternatives on residential or commercial properties.

**Objective 10.**

Encourage new development to utilize green development practices such as low impact development (LID) or best management practices such as green roofs, solar energy, Bioswales, pervious paving or a number of other green alternatives.

**Policy Recommendations** to guide future low impact development decisions of the community through the use of low impact development practices include:

*Policy 10.a. - Investigate options for implementing low impact development or best management practices within a demonstration site on city owned property.*

*Policy 10.b. - The city should consider and review potential changes to the zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations and other building codes to encourage the utilization of green development practices.*

*Policy 10.c. - Work with community partners, developers and private landowners to inform the public of best management practices for containment of stormwater on-site in lieu of directing stormwater from the property directly into natural waterways.*

## CHAPTER 15. PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

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The Sheldon Comprehensive Land Use Plan is to be used as a guide by both public and private sectors in land use decision-making processes. The private sector, including developers, investors, industry and businesses will use this document to become informed of the general positions of the city regarding land use objectives and policies. This land use plan and the associated existing and future land use maps will provide the general public with an outline and guide to make individual land investments, purchases or development decisions. The public will become more informed as to the city's policies in regards to those land uses that are permitted, encouraged, prohibited or protected. With this knowledge in advance, the public will be able to make informed and knowledgeable decisions complimentary to the city's comprehensive plan.

The public or government sectors, including primarily the City of Sheldon, but possibly with considerations from O'Brien County and/or the State of Iowa, will utilize this comprehensive plan as a guide in making future land use decisions and interpretations of proposed projects. While this working document is the result of the efforts of the Sheldon Planning and Zoning Commission, it is prepared representing the interests of all community residents. Activities affecting land uses by the city, O'Brien County, State of Iowa or the United States Federal Government should follow the intent and spirit established by the policies and guidelines set forth in this plan. This document is intended to be flexible and should be reviewed for policy changes from time to time. The city will need to review this plan periodically to determine if clarifications, changes or land use policies should be changed, amended or deleted.

The Sheldon Comprehensive Plan may be amended as deemed necessary by the planning and zoning commission, with amendments recommended to the city council for approval. While actual or literal enforcement of the land use policy statements included in this plan may be difficult, the city should consider the policies established within this document as enforceable through the city's zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations. The intent, spirit and policies established in this comprehensive planning document are often times cited, referenced, and utilized in the city's other enforcement regulations. All governmental bodies, businesses, individuals, and corporations are strongly encouraged to comply with the spirit and intent set forth in the goals and land use policies outlined in this comprehensive plan.

The preceding chapters in this document form the core of the Sheldon Comprehensive Plan with narratives, maps, charts, tables, and statistics concerning desirable future development patterns. This chapter addresses possible means of implementing those objectives and policy recommendations identified in Chapter 13. Because the scope of the Sheldon Comprehensive Plan is long term in nature its policy recommendations and the idea of implementing such policies may seem daunting. It is for this reason that city officials and specifically the planning and zoning commission should utilize the plan to assist in developing annual or short term improvement programs such as a parks and trails plan, capital improvements plan, or financial budgeting. Additionally, the planning and zoning commission should evaluate the comprehensive plan on an annual basis in consideration of changing development patterns which may occur in any given year.

## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Community leaders and city officials in Sheldon are charged with the task of identifying, leading, and being the first to accept and embrace the future that this community has ahead. Suggested implementation measures the city may wish to review, address or incorporate include:

1. Establish a benchmark for Sheldon from which future community growth will be measured against. Create a three to five year action or strategy plan addressing specific growth, economic development and annexation policies.
2. Encourage city officials, planning and zoning commission members, board of adjustment members, and key community leaders to attend training in an effort to gain new perspective on current or innovative trends in planning and/or regulatory ordinances.
3. Establish an annual comprehensive plan review process in which public input is encouraged regarding the progress and development of the community. Furthermore, the planning and zoning commission will review the city's future land use plan and land use policies to and make a report to the city council to determine if changes need to be made or updated to reflect current development projects.
4. Create a plan to attract and/or retain young professionals and the younger population residing in Sheldon. Far too many communities see their younger populations leave the community upon graduation from school for larger metropolitan areas. Monitor results through affordable housing options, younger demographic trends, and recreational or entertainment activities intended for this demographic.
5. The City of Sheldon needs to continue to promote and exhibit a welcoming and accommodating feeling to new residents, businesses and visitors to the community. This may be accomplished through creating and sustaining a "welcoming committee" and packet of information for new residents and businesses to the community.
6. When considering creating and enforcing new or existing land use policies, remember to protect the rights and interests of property owners in Sheldon. Also, remember this strategy when looking to update the city's control ordinances such as zoning and subdivision regulations.
7. When implementing new land use policies, city leaders and elected officials must remember that consistency and fairness is a must for all residents and businesses in Sheldon.

Establishing planning or performance benchmarks is one method utilized to determine accountability for the implementation of this comprehensive plan. A benchmark system encourages the city to develop general descriptions of what it hopes to achieve by implementing the land use objectives and policy recommendations outlined in the plan. After identifying desired outcomes the city can set thresholds or goals for the achievement of the desired outcomes. Periodically, the city officials should track and review the achievement of desired outcomes from implementing this comprehensive plan. Below is a sample listing of benchmarks the City of Sheldon may consider using or expand upon in determining if it has met the desired objectives and policy recommendations of this comprehensive plan:

- The sales price of vacant and buildable land.
- The rate of conversion of vacant land to improved land.
- The average sales price of single-family housing.

- The average monthly rental costs for multiple family housing.
- The number of new single family and multiple family building permits issued.
- The goals of attaining 5 percent vacancy rate in housing.
- An increase in the amount (in acres) of parks and recreational land uses per capita.
- A reduction, or at least no new acreage of residential development located in floodplains or areas not best suited for residential developments.
- The number of miles (to be determined by the city) of street repair, resurfaced, or new pavement.

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