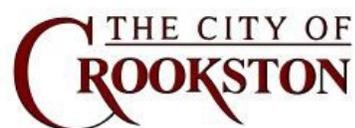


CROOKSTON

TOMORROW

Comprehensive Plan 2035

Adopted March 14, 2016



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CROOKSTON

TOMORROW

Comprehensive Plan 2035

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Introduction



INTRODUCTION

Crookston is one of America's special small cities with a vital community in a location rich in natural resources, scenic beauty and history. From its settlement more than 140 years ago and development as a lumbering, farming and railroad center, Crookston has grown to a mature city in Minnesota's historic northwest.

This is not Crookston's first comprehensive plan. The Comprehensive Plan Guide, Crookston, Minnesota, which was completed in 1961, included a series of five reports. The city's current plan, Comprehensive Plan for the City of Crookston, was adopted in 1981. CrookstonTomorrow is built on the foundation of the city's previous comprehensive planning efforts, the recent GreenStep Cities initiative, the Crookston InMotion project and the 2014 City of Crookston Housing Study.

. . . planning should be viewed as a dynamic process where a . . . plan must be evaluated and monitored in terms of changing conditions, and then modified to account for these relevant issues.

CROOKSTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN GUIDE 1981

There have been many changes in the City of Crookston since the current comprehensive plan's adoption in 1981. The city initiated an update to the comprehensive plan in early 2015 to express a long-range vision of how citizens want their community to look and function in the future, and to define the specific actions necessary to fulfill that vision. The City selected KLJ (www.kljeng.com) as the consultant for this project through a competitive process. CrookstonTomorrow, the city's 2035 comprehensive plan is organized into two parts. Part One presents a snapshot of Crookston in 2015, analyzing existing human, economic, and physical conditions and growth needs. Part Two establishes a comprehensive plan with a 20-year planning horizon that builds on the CrookstonTomorrow vision and the city's opportunities for growth and enhancement. The plan weaves traditional plan elements, like land use, housing, infrastructure and transportation, into an integrated development concept that provides added dimension and strategic approaches to the results of the CrookstonTomorrow program.

Part One: Crookston Today

Part One is a snapshot of current conditions. It reviews the status of Crookston in 2015 and provides the factual and analytical basis of the plan in five sections:

- Section 1: Demographic and Economic Profile
- Section 2: Community Character
- Section 3: Transportation
- Section 4: Land Use and Development
- Section 5: Parks and Community Facilities

Part Two: Crookston 2035

Part Two presents strategies and recommendations that accommodate potential growth and direct development potential in ways that maximize benefit to the City of Crookston.

- Section 6: A Vision for CrookstonTomorrow
- Section 7: Future Land Use Map and Decision-Making Framework
- Section 8: Implementing CrookstonTomorrow

Purpose and Effect of CrookstonTomorrow, the City's 2035 Comprehensive Plan

CrookstonTomorrow is focused on the physical form of the City of Crookston today and in 2035. It serves a number of broad purposes:

- Provides a guide for city decision-makers by identifying desirable actions, directions or objectives to be achieved.
- Addresses the adequacy of public facilities for existing and new development.
- Provides a framework upon which zoning and subdivision regulations are based.
- Provides a sound basis for Crookston investments and daily decision-making process.

- Provides guidance to landowner and developer investment and building decision-making. Effective planning gives individual, commercial and corporate investors the confidence to build or add capacity in the city.

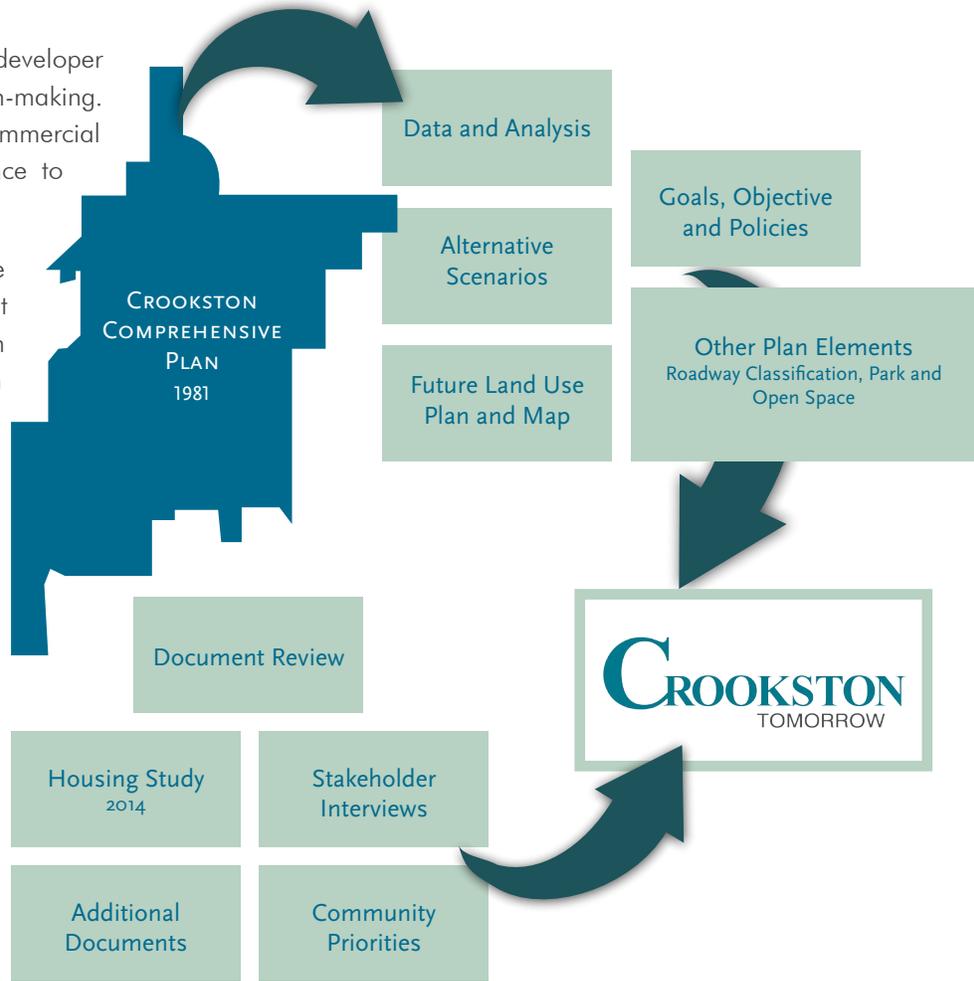
Its policies apply to both public and private properties. CrookstonTomorrow will not change the zoning of any property; the plan is about the future. It will depict a long-term vision of how the city will change over the next 20 years to accommodate expected population and job growth. The City of Crookston zoning map is about what is allowed today. Zoning changes will only happen if the property owner requests that the city change the existing zoning designation.

Data Collection, Research and Analysis

CrookstonTomorrow is informed by existing plans, reports, policies and regulations. In addition, KLJ analyzed data and created maps to further examine existing conditions. The following topics are included in the analysis: demographics, housing and economic conditions, land use, community character, transportation, environment and natural resources, parks and recreation, cultural and historic resources, community facilities, and utilities. In addition to data collected for mapping purposes, data were also collected to gain a better understanding of the conditions reflected on the maps. Many of these additional data were gathered through a review of relevant documents, Steering Committee input, interviews of key stakeholders and a tour of the city.

Community Engagement

Community participation and input helped shape CrookstonTomorrow. Understanding community values today assures that this comprehensive plan can support recommendations to maintain those priorities in the future. The plan has involved three levels of engagement: Steering Committee, community conversations and one-on-one discussions. Hundreds of city residents and property owners were involved.



Ox Cart Days 2015 provided the initial opportunity for community outreach. The CrookstonTomorrow booth provided information about the project, the on-line survey and the community workshop. Following that event the



Crookston Planning Commission hosted a community picnic and workshop on Tuesday, September 15 at the Crookston Town Square. Participants enjoyed the event, viewed constraints maps and charts representing socio-economic data and development trends. The KLJ team presented additional information, identified trends and assisted participants in providing their input. Members of the Planning Commission and volunteers from the University of Minnesota Crookston (UMC) facilitated the event. Media coverage of the event included coverage by both newspaper and radio. The project website (www.CrookstonTomorrow.com) was updated regularly. The online survey was a voluntary, non-probability sample used to help identify issues and preferences of people from the community; therefore, we are unable to know the degree to which the responses represent the population as a whole. It does, however, provide insight into the perspectives of a variety of people in the

Crookston community. To date, almost 200 people have taken the project's online survey. Appendix 1 provides more detailed information on the survey and community engagement.

The Crookston Planning Commission served as the CrookstonTomorrow Steering Committee. This group addressed the development of Crookston at their regular meetings throughout the process to address issues, provide input and feedback, and advise the project team on concepts and recommendations. Stakeholder interviews were completed to gain more in-depth insights on potential issues and opportunities. These stakeholders included people who had special knowledge that was helpful because of their role in development, their position in local government or their role in providing municipal services.





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Crookston Today

PART
one



SECTION 1: DEMOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC PROFILE

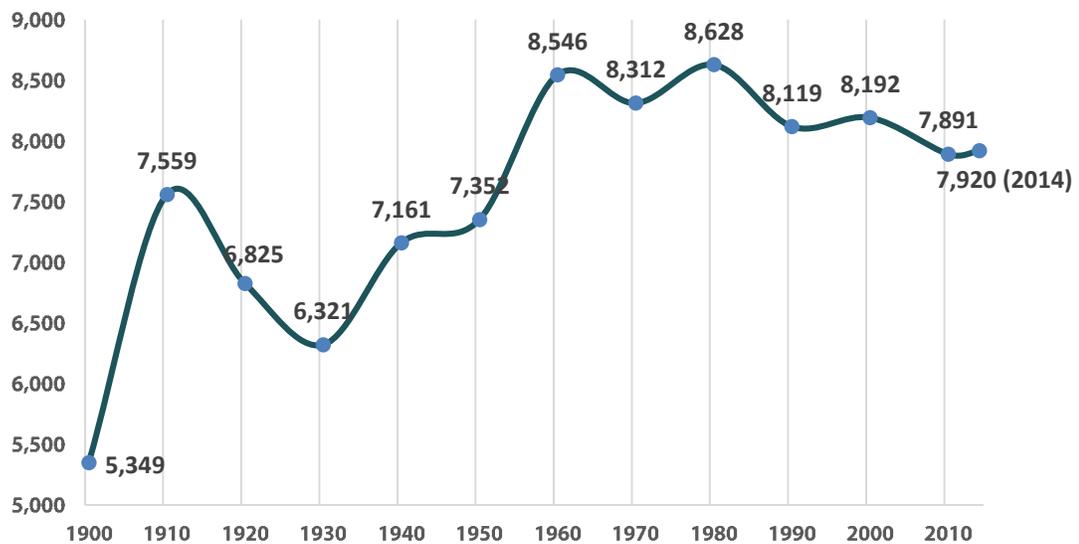
Understanding the key characteristics and trends that affect Crookston is important in looking forward to the city’s future. This section presents and interprets demographic and economic factors that have an impact on the city’s physical and community development, considers Crookston’s historic population change and includes forecasts for population growth for the next 20 years. These forecasts provide the basis for calculating future land needs for residential, commercial and industrial development.

Population trends in Crookston reflect national and regional events including the area’s initial growth surge, the growth after World War II when people moved from

the farms to the cities for employment (Figure 1-1). More recent population changes reflect the changing family size and the pull of major cities over smaller communities.

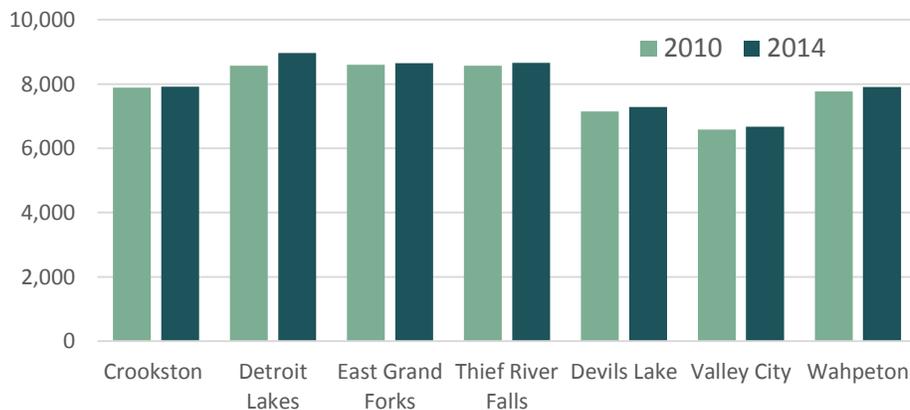
The most recent population trends in Crookston and Polk County are shown in Table 1-1. The 2014 population estimates credited Crookston with a population gain of about 0.4%. Recent growth in Crookston has been modest but is close to that of other regional cities, and is very similar to East Grand Forks’ growth (Figure 1-2). Generally, a good standard for healthy growth in a mature, non-metropolitan community is an annual growth rate in the range of 1%; Crookston’s is about half of that.

Figure 1-1: Historic Population Growth



Source: 1900-2010 decennial census

Figure 1-2: Growth in Other Area Cities



Source: 2010 decennial census

Table 1-1
Population Trends 2000 – 2014

			2000-2010		2010-2014		
	2000	2010	# Change	% Change	2014	# Change	% Change
Crookston	8,192	7,891	-301	-3.67%	7,920	29	0.37%
Polk County	31369	31,600	231	0.74%	31,704	104	0.33%

Source: 2000 and 2010 decennial census, 2010-2014 American Community Survey

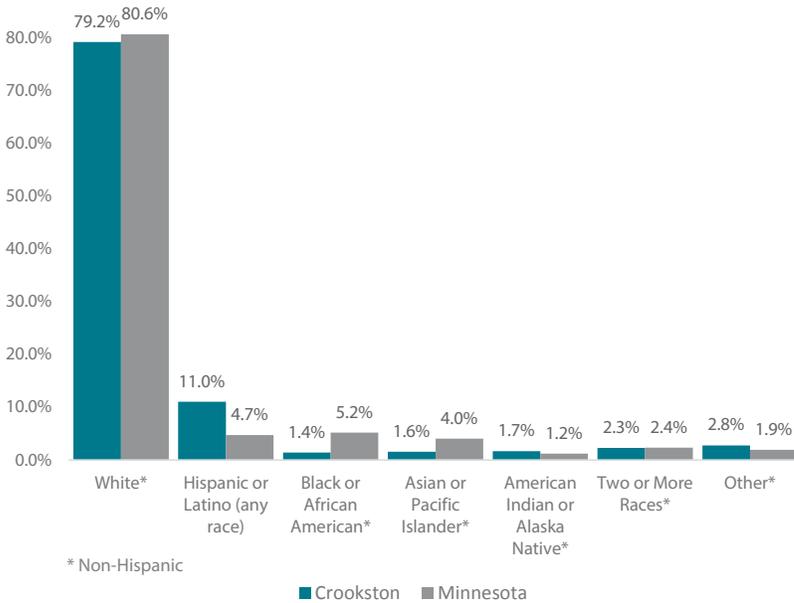
City Growth

Crookston’s proportion of total Polk County population grew from 15% in 1900 to a high of 26% in 2000. The city has been approximately 25% of the total county population since the 1960 US Census. With few exceptions, the city has mirrored the county’s growth pattern but has had a higher growth rate than the overall county (see Appendix 2).

Race

The city’s racial/ethnic composition is shown in Figure 1-3. Nearly all Crookston residents are White non-Hispanic.

Figure 1-3: Crookston and Minnesota Racial/Ethnic Composition



Source: 2010 decennial census

Age

The age cohort comparisons between Crookston and the state of Minnesota in 2010, shown in Figure 1-4, confirm that Crookston’s age profile is not a typical Minnesota population profile.

- Approximately 13% percent of the male and 10% of female city residents are between ages 20 and 24. These percentages are significantly higher than statewide percentages, especially for the males.
- One red flag for the city’s future economic growth is the low percentage of people in the 30-34 cohort. These older millennials are beginning their careers and families. “. . . there is evidence that many millennials also want to live in suburban single-family homes, even if they live in cities right now. Picket fence and all...Especially in the older millennials, we’re seeing a move towards more traditional patterns, just on a delayed time frame.”¹

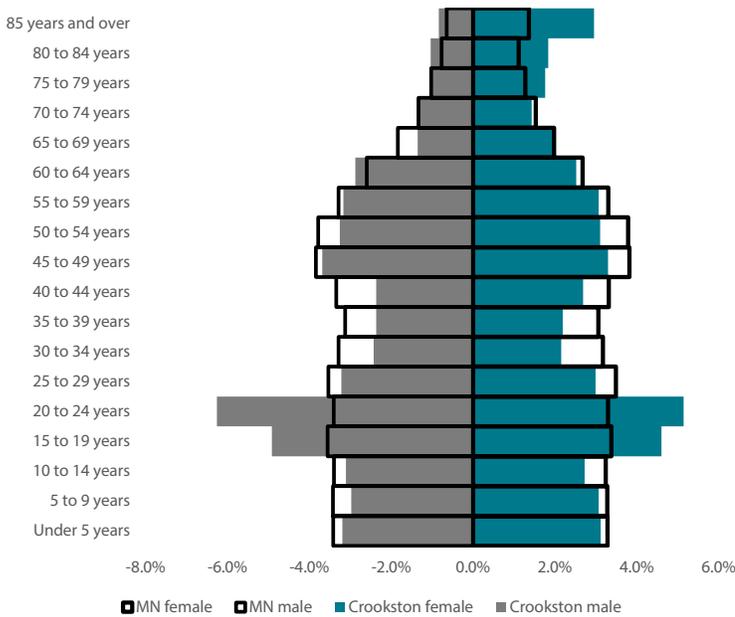
Another challenge is the aging population. Statewide, between 2010 and 2030, the number of adults over 65 is expected to nearly double². The CrookstonTomorrow survey (Appendix 1) indicates community concern about providing services for this population.

The low percentage of young children (under age 9) gives evidence of a slowdown in the number of younger households coming into the city.

¹ Wall Street Journal Generation Y Prefers Suburban Home Over City Condo, January 21, 2015.

² Minnesota Compass www.mncompass.org

Figure 1-4: Crookston and Minnesota Age Cohorts



Source: 2010 decennial census

Crookston’s median age is 36.1 according to the 2013 American Community Survey. Figure 1-5, which depicts the age of Crookston’s residents across the city, shows no clear segregation of age groups. The city’s median age is considerably lower than the statewide median of 37.6 years or Polk County’s median age of 39.8 years.

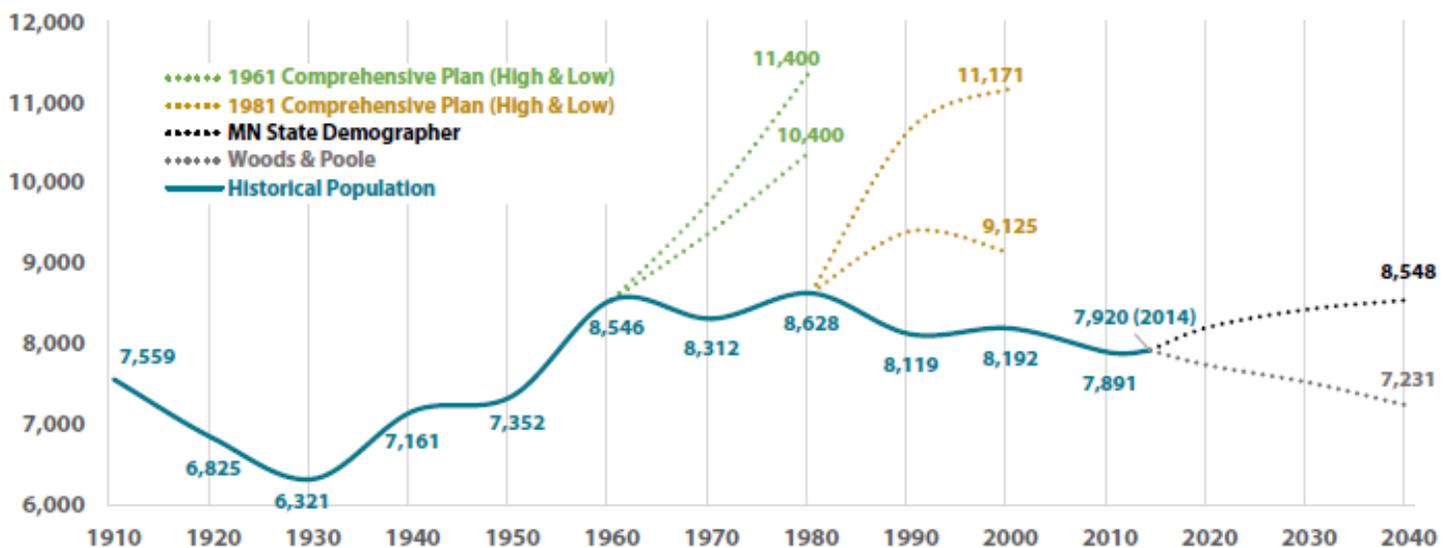
Density

Population density is shown in Figure 1-7. The more central parts of the city show the highest densities, more than 11 persons per acre. While the more outlying areas show the least density, the density calculation also reflects areas with no residential development.

Population Change

Projecting future population is an essential first step toward calculating future land needs for residential, commercial, and industrial development and community service needs. Several population forecasts have been developed for Crookston including those in the previous comprehensive plans, which projected much higher growth rates than the city has experienced. Figure 1-6 also includes two recent projections, one done by the Minnesota state demographer and one completed by Woods & Poole. Given the uncertain economic climate and the probable rate of technological change between the present date and 2035, it is impossible to describe the future face of the city with much certainty or precision. However, utilizing the current projected projection range should provide, at this time, a valid basis for the land use map. The last two population projections are the only ones extending to Crookston Tomorrow’s 2035 horizon.

Figure 1-6: Population Change and Projections



Source: Crookston Comprehensive Plan 1961 and 1981, Minnesota State Demographer, Woods & Poole, 1910 - 2010 Decennial Census

Figure 1-5: Median Age Map

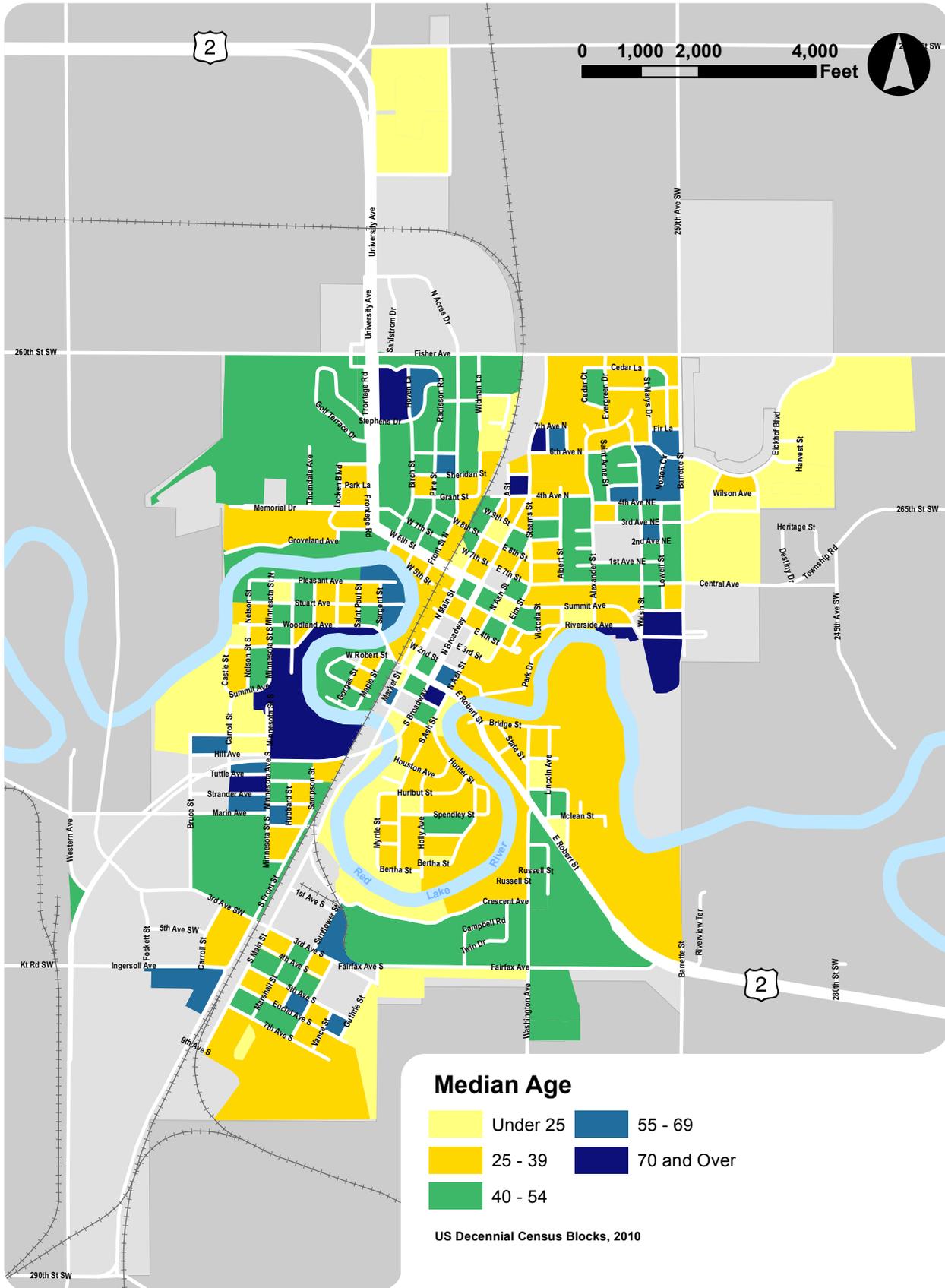


Figure 1-7: Population Density Map

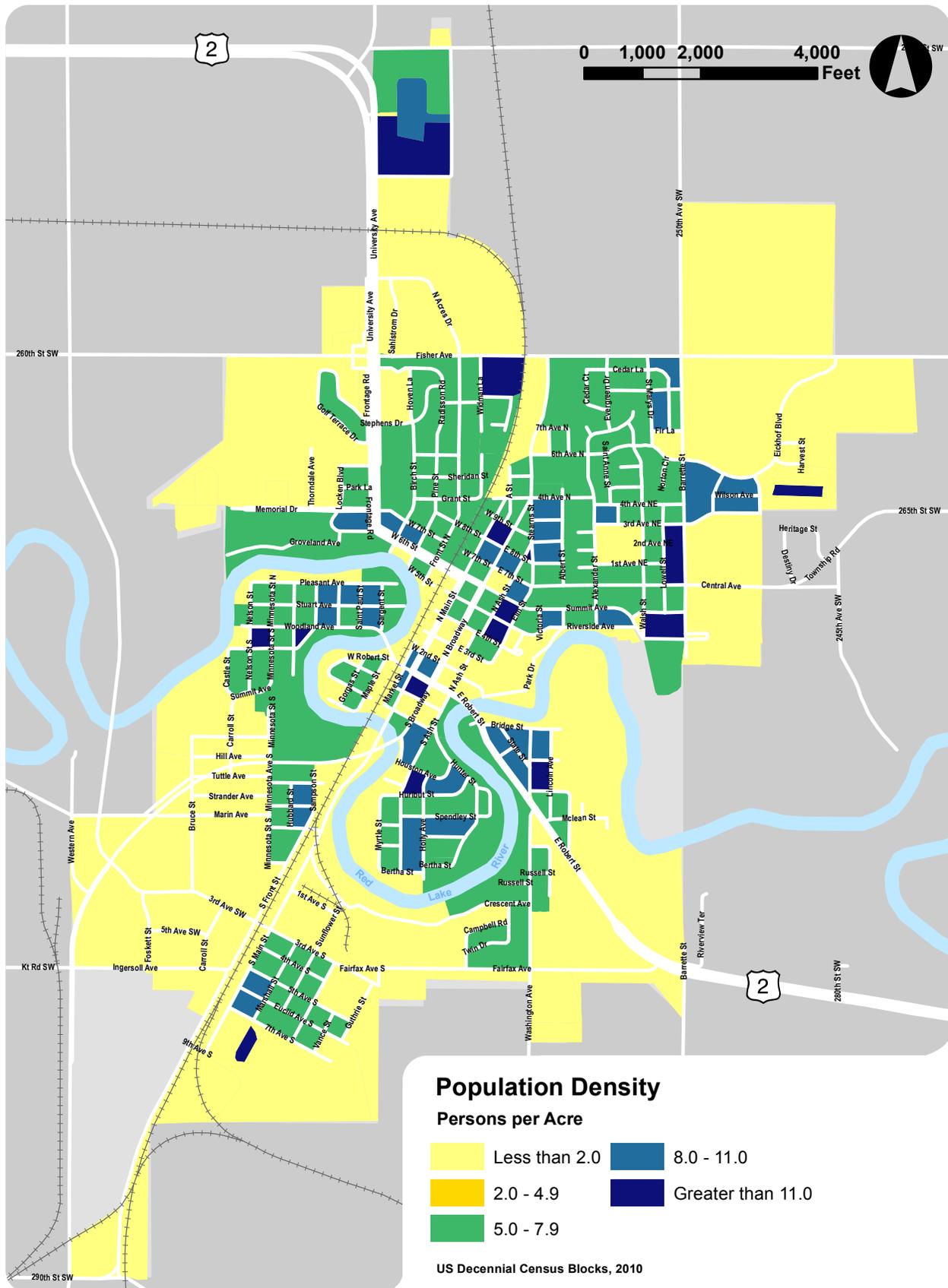
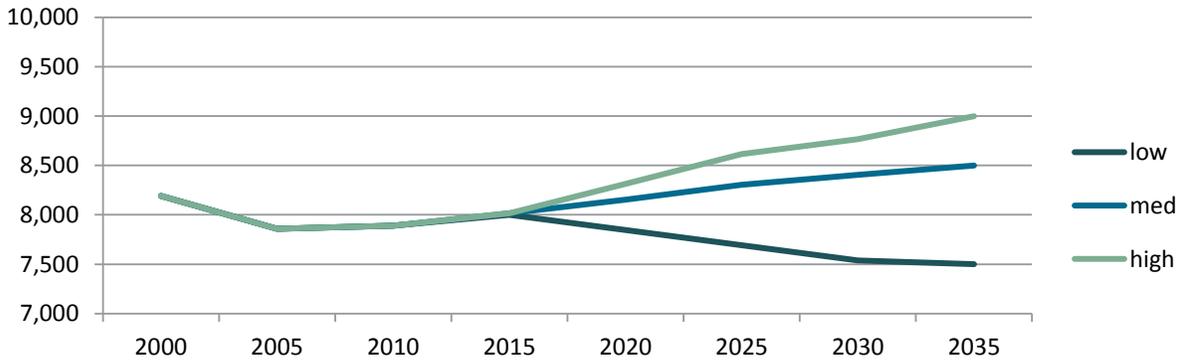


Figure 1-8: Crookston Population 2035-Range



Source: KLJ

For the future land use map, a population range between approximately 7,500 and 9,000 will be used for 2035 (Figure 1-8). These figures, adjusted for a 2035 planning horizon, bracket those of the state demographer and consider the city’s growth as compared to Polk County’s growth. In order to determine the acreage needed for each land use category in the year 2035, the acreage of existing land uses, as compared to the city’s overall acreage, is used as a basis or starting point. Empirically, it can be expected that acreage requirements for all uses, particularly residential uses, will increase as Crookston grows. Generally, acreage for non-residential uses will increase correspondingly.

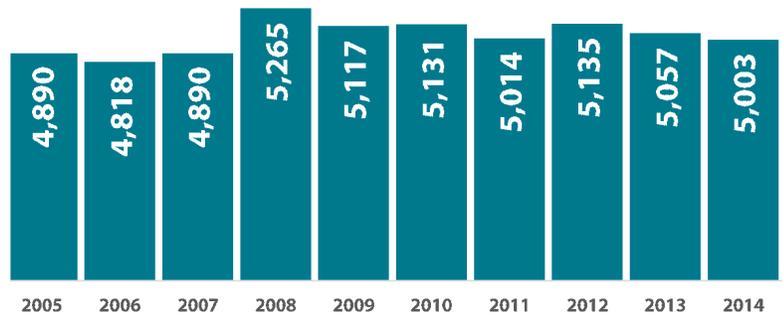
Economic Characteristics

Based on recent estimates, Crookston’s workforce is employed across the following sectors: manufacturing; trade, transportation, utilities; education and health services; leisure and hospitality; public administration and other services. About 36% of the city’s workers are employed in education and health services. The city’s top five employers are Riverview Healthcare, Crookston Public Schools, UMC, American Crystal Sugar Company and New Flyer of America Inc.

Income Characteristics

Crookston’s median household income (in 2013 dollars)³ of \$47,101 is higher than Grand Forks’ median household income of \$43,436 but lower than the \$59,836 for the State of Minnesota or the \$53,046 US median. About 50% of the city’s earners are employed in the traditionally lower-paying sales and service sectors. Crookston’s income distribution is shown on Figure 1-10.

Figure 1-9: Crookston - Number of Employees



Source: 2010 MN DEED QCEW

Figure 1-10: Crookston and Minnesota Income Levels



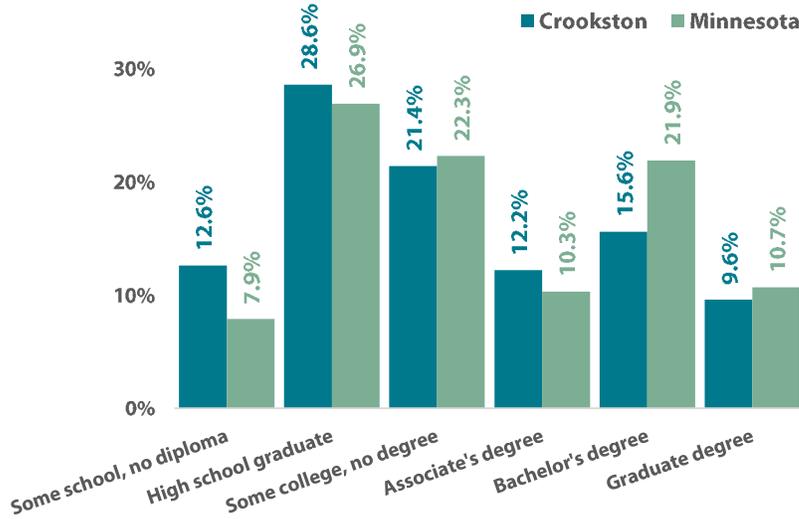
Source: 2010 decennial census

³ US Census QuickFacts (Median Household Income 2009-2013)

Education Characteristics

Crookston’s education levels are generally lower than the overall state levels as shown in Figure 1-11.

Figure 1-11: Crookston and Minnesota Education Levels



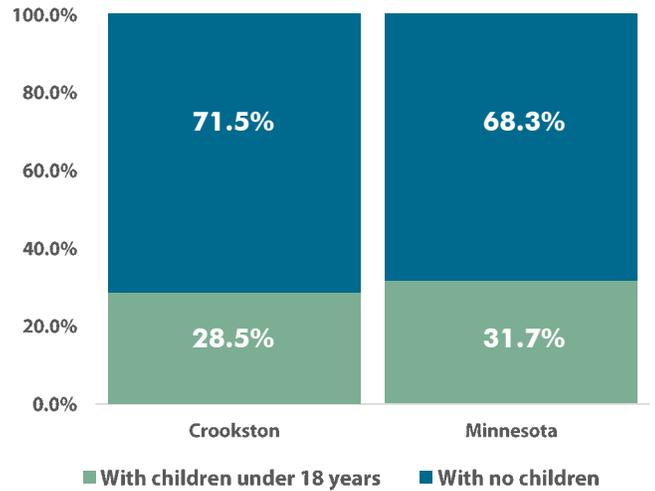
Source: 2009-2013 American Community Survey

Housing

The average number of persons per household, 2.27 persons per household in Crookston, is less than the state’s average of 2.47. Communities across the US have seen a steady decrease in average household size. The recent City of Crookston Housing Study indicates that “this has been caused by household composition changes, such as more single person and single parent families, fewer children per family, and more senior households due to longer life spans.”

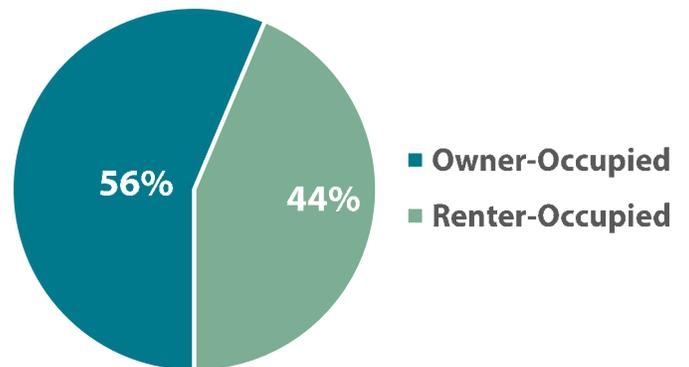
The city’s percentage of households with children under 18 years of age is comparable to the state’s (Figure 1-12). Housing occupancy for Crookston is shown in Figure 1-13. Crookston has a relatively common balance of owner and renter-occupied units. Over half of the city’s housing units are owner-occupied. Primary markets for rental development include people who prefer renting to owning at a specific stage of life, are transitioning to residency in Crookston, cannot get mortgage financing under tightened underwriting standards, or cannot afford to own a home. Rental housing is mapped in Figure 1-14.

Figure 1-12: Crookston and Minnesota Households with Children



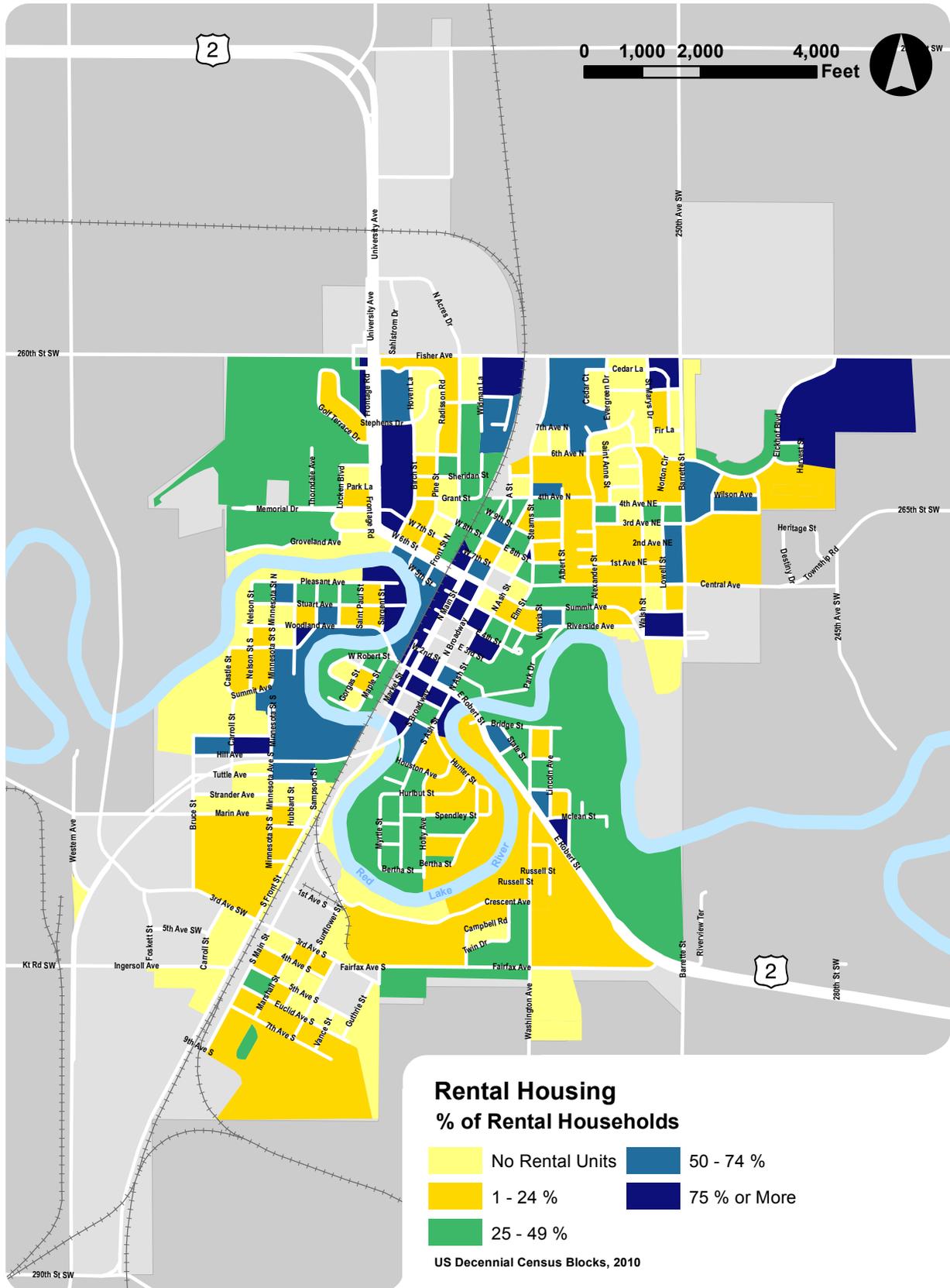
Source: 2010 decennial census

Figure 1-13: Housing Occupancy



Source: 2010 decennial census

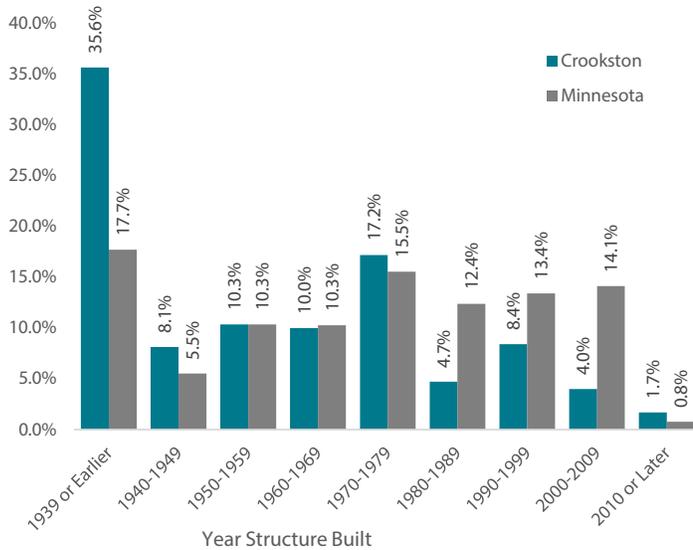
Figure 1-14: Rental Households



Structure Age

The age of housing in Crookston is shown in Figure 1-15. More than 50% was built before 1960. Figure 1-17, which indicates the age of housing structures within the city illustrates the city’s expansion from its historic beginnings and outward development.

Figure 1-15: Structure Age



Source: 2000 decennial census, 2010-2014 American Community Survey, Crookston Housing Study – 2014 and City of Crookston

Housing Condition

The recent Housing Study included discussion of the condition of housing stock in four neighborhoods (Table 1-2). They found that “30 houses are dilapidated and possibly beyond repair”. These units provide an opportunity for additional in-fill housing.

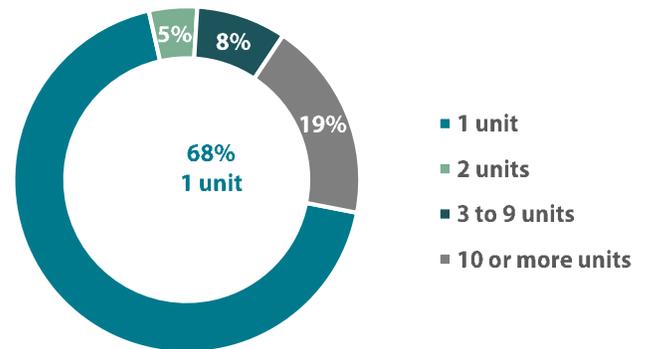
Table 1-2 Windshield Survey Condition Estimate				
Neighborhood	Sound	Minor Repair	Major Repair	Dilapidated
Sampson	100	66	43	7
Chase-Loring	9	7	14	4
Jerome	39	51	43	4
Woods	99	92	79	15
Total	248	216	179	30

Source: Crookston Housing Study – 2014

Residential Structure Type

Like Minnesota, most of the housing in Crookston is single-family (see Appendix 2). Figure 1-16 shows the estimated distribution of housing types in Crookston; 68% of the units are single-family.

Figure 1-16: Housing Units Per Structure



Source: 2009-2013 American Community Survey

Figure 1-17: Housing Age

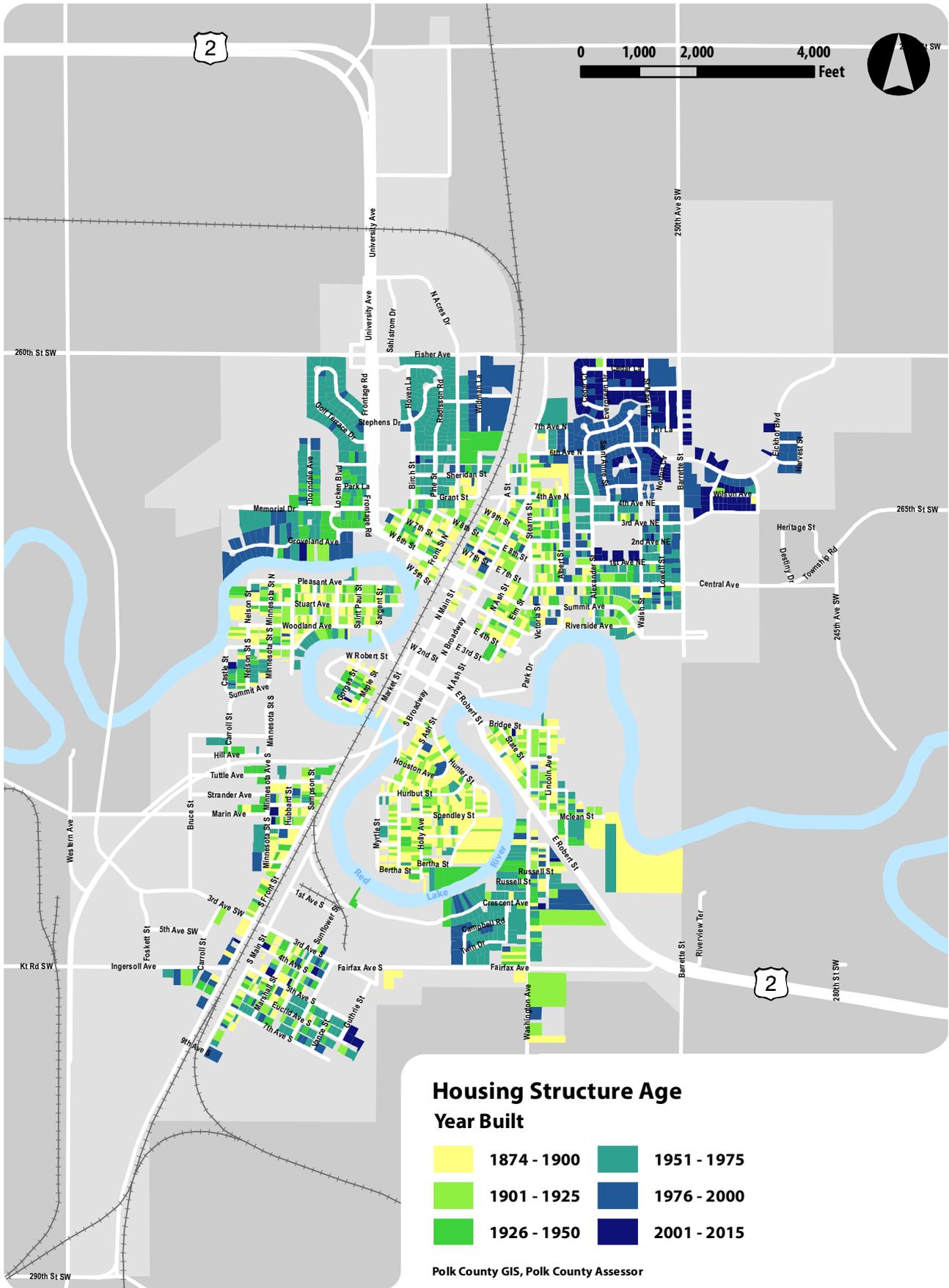
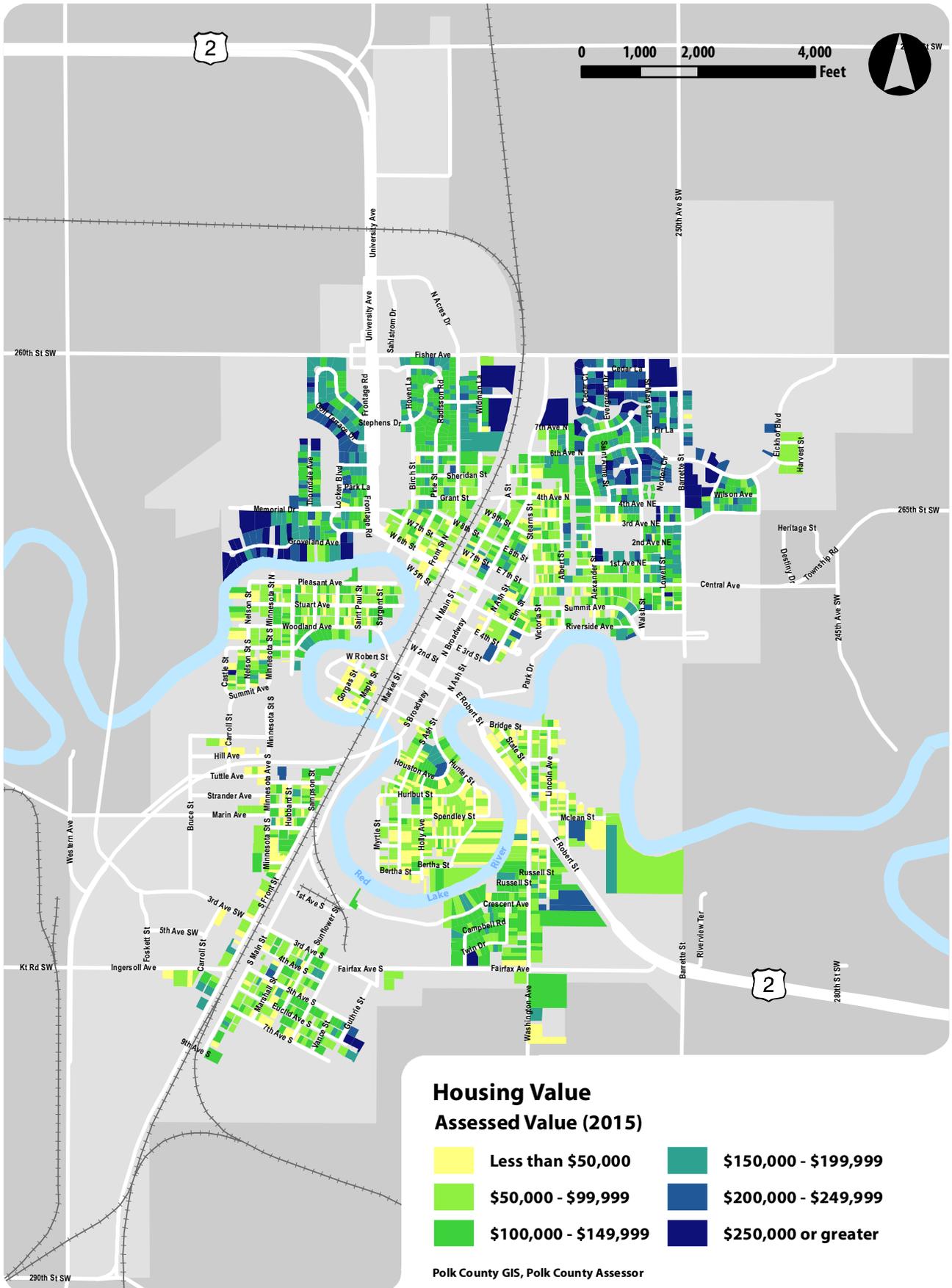


Figure 1-18: Housing Value



Median Value

Median housing value of housing in Crookston is \$102,900, which is significantly lower than the state’s median housing value of \$187,900 (Table 1-3). Housing values radiate from close to downtown, which has the lowest assessed valuations, to the edges of town, which has residential values of \$250,000 or greater (Figure 1-18).

Commercial Structures and Their Valuation

As with the residential structure, the oldest commercial structures are downtown. The assessed valuation for these commercial structures range from less than \$100,000 to more than \$500,000 (Figure 1-19 and Figure 1-20).

Table 1-3
Value of owner-occupied housing units

	Crookston	Minnesota
Less than \$50,000	12.9%	6.2%
\$50,000 - \$99,999	35.3%	10.4%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	30.0%	16.6%
\$150,000 - \$199,999	12.0%	21.4%
\$200,000 - \$299,999	7.2%	25.0%
\$300,000 or more	2.6%	20.5%



Figure 1-19: Commercial Structure Age

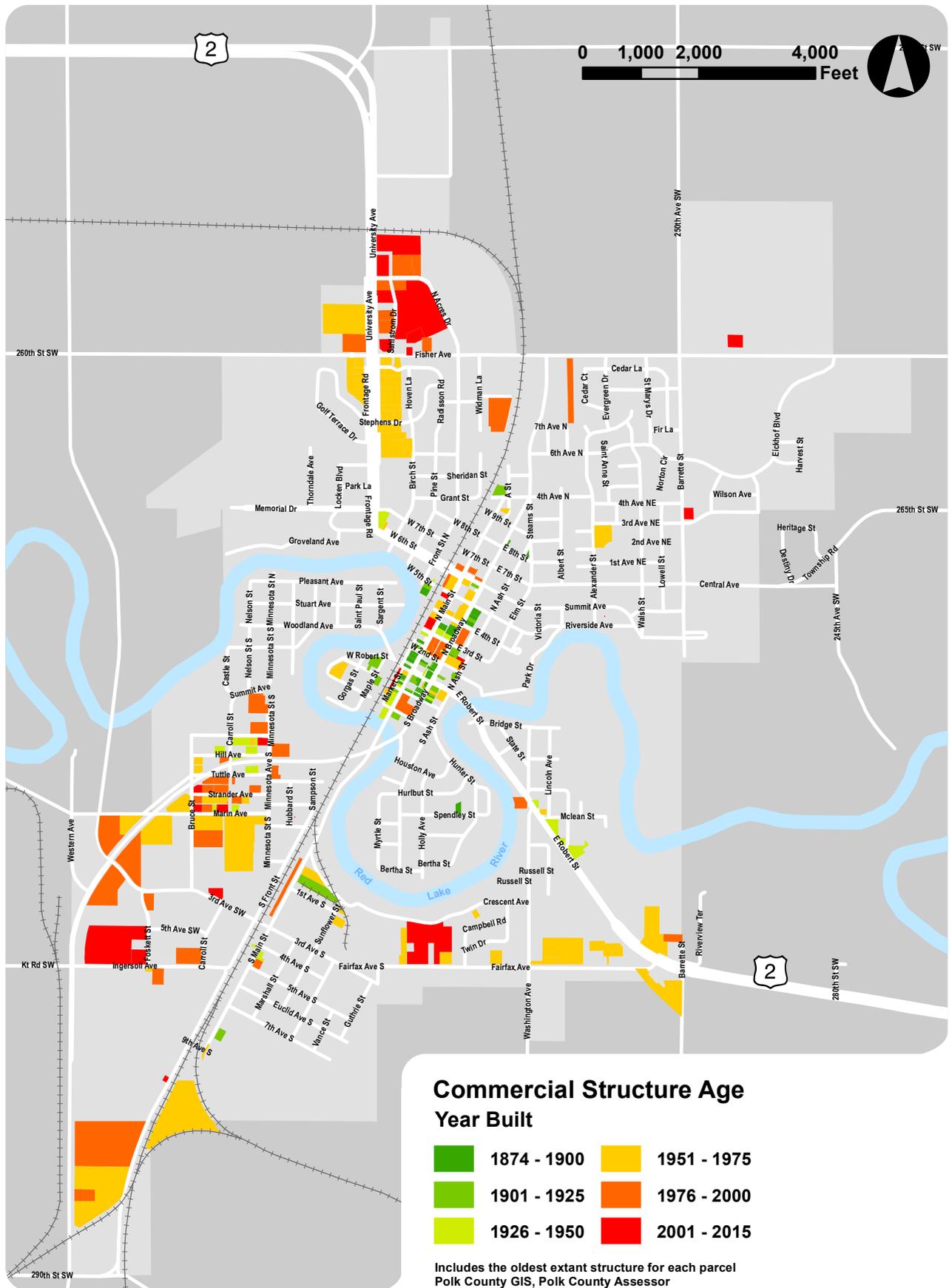
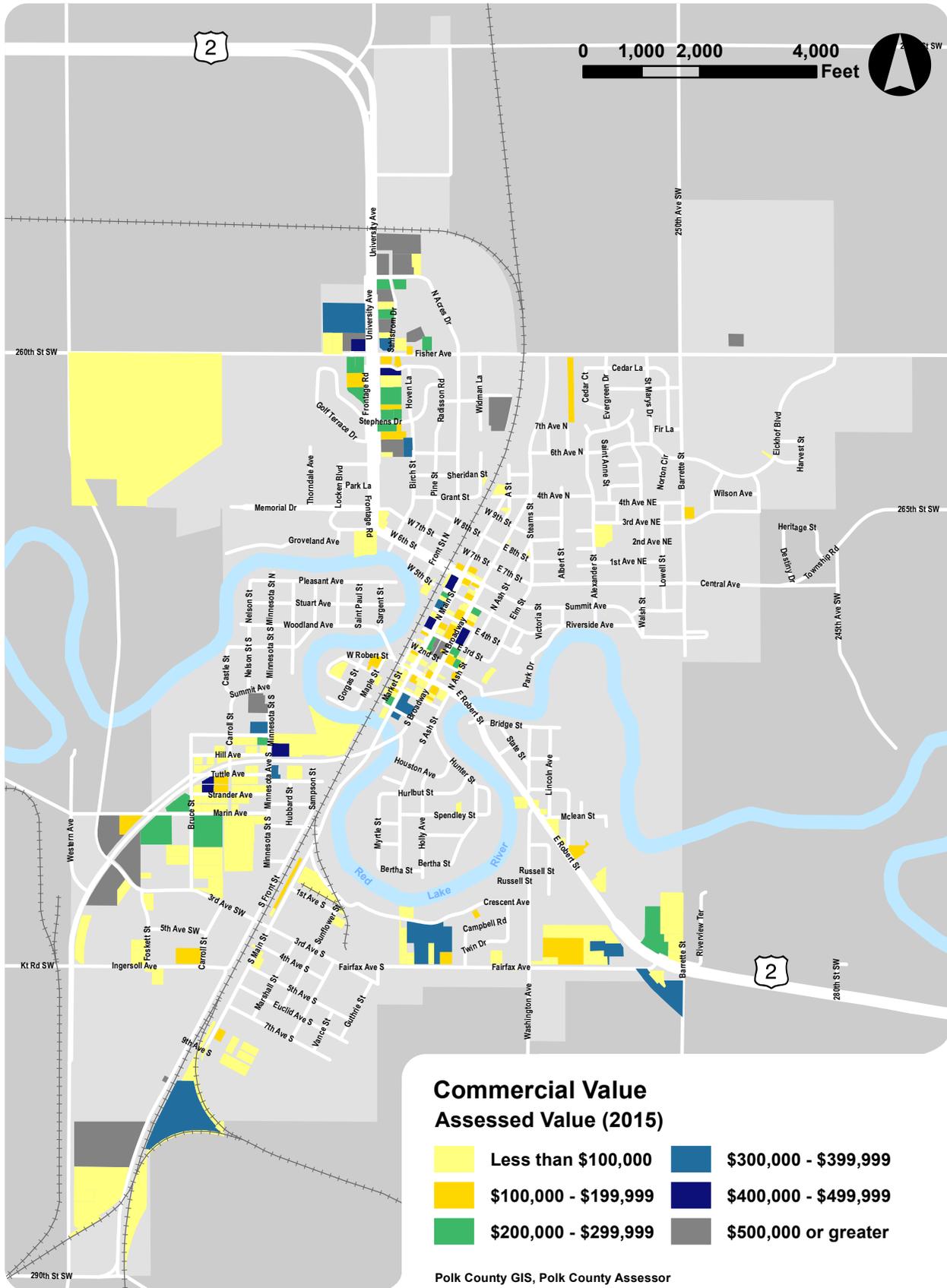


Figure 1-20: Commercial Value



SECTION 2: COMMUNITY CHARACTER

The character of a community is perhaps the most abstract, yet important, concept to address when developing a comprehensive plan like CrookstonTomorrow. Survey results from open-ended questions, steering committee meetings, interviews, community input at the September 15 community picnic and workshop, and previous work including Crookston In-Motion, provided the basis for this section.

The qualities or places these Crookston residents identified as contributing most to the city's character included the friendly small town atmosphere, the people, the river, downtown, rural setting, access to recreation, UMC and the city's history. The results verified the assumption that a composite of characteristics contributed to character including socio-cultural (the people), physical (Red Lake River) and economics (industry, downtown and the UMC).

These interrelated elements define the City of Crookston and its character today and are avenues for the city to reach a "viable, vibrant place for all to live, work and enjoy a high quality life"⁴. See Part Two of this plan for related recommendations.

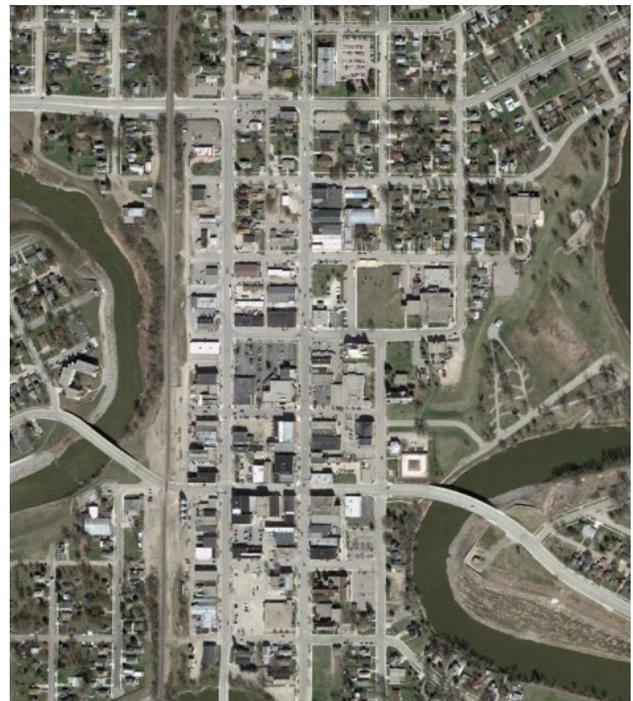
Location

Crookston's community character is tied to its location. The city is situated just east of the Grand Forks/East Grand Forks area, which provides residents with access to larger market areas and employment opportunities, retail/service options, educational facilities, government services, health and professional services and recreational opportunities. Commuting both to and from Grand Forks/East Grand Forks is frequent. The city is located in a prime agricultural area and close to numerous recreational amenities. Improved connections to these facilities could enhance the city's location. The UMC is a significant asset to the city.

Sense of Place, Sustainability and Small Town Community

The city has retained its ties to the past and its history. Crookston's downtown is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The historic district covers two city blocks and contains a concentration of late nineteenth and early twentieth-century commercial structures. Many buildings listed as contributing structures remain intact. Numerous other buildings, sites and neighborhoods within the city may be considered historically significant but have not yet been officially designated as such.

Figure 2-1: Downtown Crookston



The small-town feel and focus on active living and quality of life are defining characteristics of the city as well as valuable and valued assets. Many responses in the CrookstonTomorrow survey defined the city's character by its "small town" feeling. Recreational uses are scattered throughout the city. These uses incorporate city-owned parks and recreation facilities, as well as other open spaces that are open to the public, including school grounds, UMC open spaces and various trails and paths throughout the area. Availability of these and important nearby recreational uses add richness to the

⁴ Crookston Destiny Statement, introduction

community character and facilitate social connections. Community events like Ox Cart Days further contribute to Crookston’s distinct identity.

Downtown

Like Crookston, small city downtowns across the country contain many of the city’s oldest and most recognizable buildings and embody the heritage of a community. As one resident recommended:

Downtown Crookston needs a new life that takes its history and charm and makes it work today.

Experience shows that success is strongly correlated with the downtown’s ability to project a strong “sense of place” or people-friendly places which feel good, are unique and authentic, have a variety of services and are well-used and active. To reinforce this strong sense of place, most frequently used redevelopment strategies include:

- Renovating and preserving historic structures,
- Making downtown more pedestrian-friendly through streetscape improvements including new plazas, street trees, human-scaled lighting, benches, etc.
- Attracting people to live downtown or visit for entertainment, dining, retail or tourist activities.

The CrookstonTomorrow on-line survey asked two questions about downtown Crookston (Appendix 1). More than 34% of responders noted that they patronized downtown businesses once per week and another 32% indicated that their patronage was “more than once a week”. Asked in the survey: “To improve the quality of Crookston’s downtown area, would you favor an increase or decrease in any of the following?”, their responses indicated a desire for more retail shops and restaurants as well as “efforts to improve the look”.

Red Lake River

The Red Lake River has long been the driving force in Crookston. It has large stretches of natural vegetated shoreline and is one of the few canoing and kayaking rivers in northwestern Minnesota, but access is limited. A history of damaging floods has defined the city. The recent housing study estimated that “approximately 107 homes have been removed due to the flood mitigation project.”

Despite the city’s flooding history, residents today list proximity to the river as a key element in deciding where to live. Riverfront communities across the country and in the region have improved river access and their river/city connections to enhance both recreational and economic opportunities; the same focus is available in Crookston.

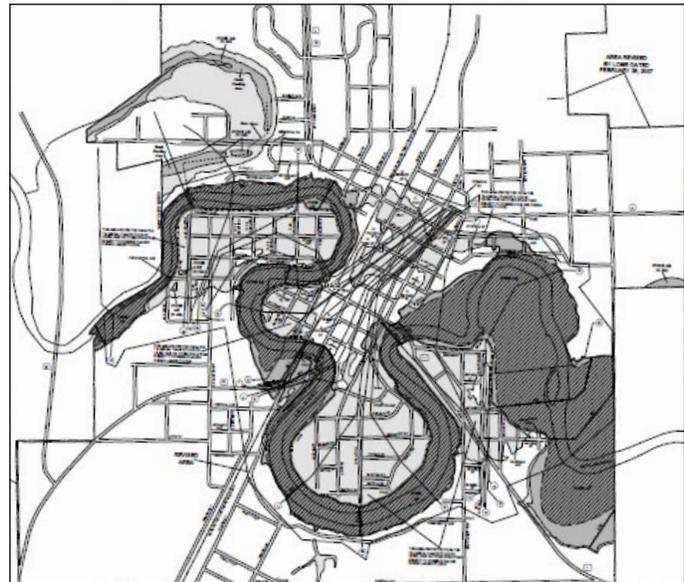
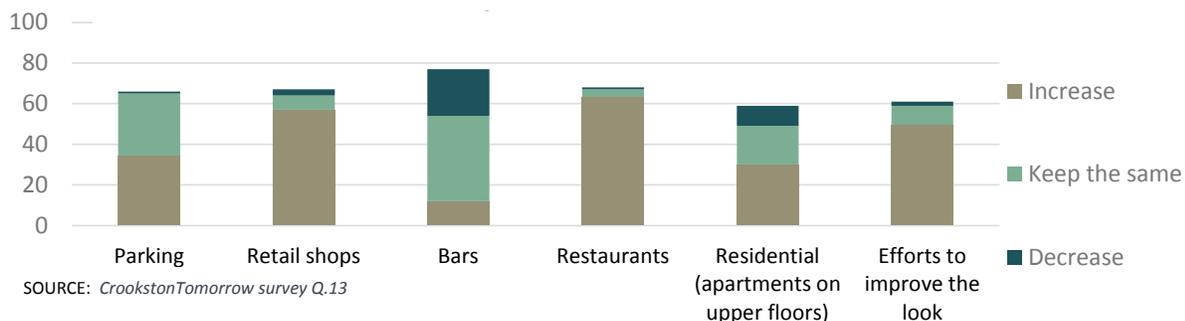


Figure 2-2: Desired Improvements to Downtown Crookston

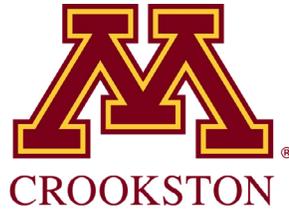


Crookston as a College Town

Today many college towns are focusing the relationship between the college and their town/city, working together toward a common future to bring out the best in the community. Where these relationships work best:

- The learning and living economies generate successful energy and draw the community together.
- Business and industry value the town-gown relationship as it retains and attracts other business and industry to their college town and benefits both the students and the workforce.

For the 2015-2016 school year, UMC reported an enrollment of 1,800 (900 on-campus and 900 on-line), along with faculty and staff members. The draw of students into the community by UMC creates a demographic with different needs and desires for housing and commercial uses than communities of a similar size that do not include a college or university.



People

Crookston residents represent a broad array of backgrounds, interests, and education levels. A note in the Destiny Drivers text (Appendix 3) summarizes the importance of “sense of community” which comes from Crookston’s people:

Harness and promote the idea of a sense of community in Crookston as a place that is creating the next generation of leaders in rural communities.

Numerous survey responses (Appendix 1) identified Crookston’s people as an element in the city’s community character and/or what they liked best about Crookston:

- Good, hardworking, caring people that value their family relations
- Good people by and large live and work here
- Great place to raise a family
- Caring and helpful
- “Pull together” when needed
- One big family that will come to your aid if you need it
- People, People are friendly
- I love that when times are good or bad, you have your friends and neighbors there to support you and lift you up
- ... everyone is your neighbor and almost everyone cares about you as a person
- While I don’t have a family, I am never lonely because most of the community has become my family

Volunteerism, including the UMC participation, is an integral component of community life in Crookston.



Image

The image of Crookston includes both physical and social elements. Survey responses and community meeting comments reflect diverse opinions about both the city’s image opportunities and its challenges.

Image - Physical Strengths and Opportunities

- UMC
- Amenities that contribute to quality of life
- Opportunities for healthy living to draw more people to stay in Crookston or come back home
- Historic, unique
- Community Gardens, Parks, Natural play space
- Small town America . . . historical, “Mayberry like”
- Good amount of park space/ green space
- Great healthcare system, great workout facility options, great parochial school systems
- The updated flower boxes and flowers hanging have really been a plus for the downtown

Image - Social Strengths and Opportunities

- Great place to raise a family
- Aging population
- Strong and proud
- We don’t have a huge amount of crime

Image - Physical Challenges

- Dying downtown
- Dangerous to pedestrians, no trails, hazardous crosswalks
- Why aren’t we dumping money into the development of Crookston/downtown Crookston with businesses that make people want to come here?
- Need new signs at city limits--the current ones are cheesy and dated
- Tear down the unsustainable and unrecoverable buildings that make us look like a dying community so we can focus on the buildings that have been maintained
- Empty buildings on Main Street

Image - Social Challenges

- Blue collar
- Aging population
- Divided sharply between poor renters and higher income individuals
- Crime is increasing
- Struggling to find its identity
- Needs more industry to create better paying jobs
- Many of our employers cannot find enough help
- Our leaders are busy looking for the “one” solution instead of looking at the large number of things that need to occur to return Crookston to a sustainable future
- . . . vocal community where good ideas are there, but no one wants to take the chance to do the work to get it done
- More childcare services needed



Crookston's Opportunities

The recent Crookston Housing Study⁵ listed “strengths for housing development” on pages 70 to 72 of that study (Appendix 4). While this information was intended to apply to the housing market, most strengths apply to all types of development including residential, commercial and industrial. These strengths included:

- Crookston serves as a small regional center
- Adequate land for development
- Desirable location for seniors and retirees
- Educational facilities
- University of Minnesota, Crookston
- Health facilities
- Infrastructure
- Commercial Development
- Affordable priced housing stock
- Increasingly diverse housing stock
- Large employers
- Housing agencies
- Annexation
- State, federal and non-profit funds
- Proximity to a major regional center
- Housing incentive programs
- Active developers in the City
- Flood Mitigation Project

More than ever, people are relocating to communities not seeking work, but instead looking for a quality of life that fits their desires, whether it is a place with great schools, walkability, sustainability, or family amenities. A number of guides have been developed to assist people who search online each year looking for great places to live; Crookston should be included.

Regions with amenities attract and retain more talent, which is necessary to compete effectively in a national and world marketplace.

Richard Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class*

The elements of Crookston's strengths and community character put the city in an enviable position when considered as one of the “Best Places to Live”. One of the city's key challenges, attracting residents and businesses, can be addressed best by enhancing and marketing the city's assets, and addressing its challenges.

While Crookston has a strong economic base, the changing dynamics of the regional and global economy mean that the city cannot be complacent and must continue to reinvent itself to meet the challenges of the future. Trends Crookston may need to address are:

- The agriculture industry is increasingly influenced by advances in technology. Geographic information systems and computerized controls are becoming common tools to help farmers produce more efficiently. Additionally, benefits and challenges of genetic modification will also increase implications for agricultural production in the region.
- The northwestern part of Minnesota is characterized by numerous manufacturing industries that have trouble finding sufficient employees to meet their workforce needs. Finding ways to attract and train workers of today is a significant issue. Changes in technology and global economic dynamics may create challenges for current Crookston industries.
- Economic development strategies for today and tomorrow are much different than in the past. Instead of “smokestack chasing” to land a large employer that will increase local jobs, the approach today is more about “economic gardening” where communities need to identify what is needed to help sustain and expand current businesses.
- Healthcare is increasingly becoming a business of large corporations instead of locally owned and operated services. Major changes in insurance, technology, government regulation and demographics will all have major impacts affecting local health care services in rural communities.

⁵ A link to the Crookston Housing Study is available on the city's website www.crookston.mn.us/ns/node/116

⁶ Some of the responses addressed multiple issues

Addressing the Challenges

When asked the open-ended question, “What do you see as the most important issue facing the City of Crookston”, the 98 separate responses can be categorized⁶ as addressing economic, parks, housing, safety, downtown Crookston and other issues (Appendix 1, Question 15). This input and other research inform Part Two of CrookstonTomorrow.



SECTION 3: TRANSPORTATION

Crookston's transportation and infrastructure systems form the fundamental framework of the community, both sustaining present development and supporting future growth. The access system includes the street network and the city's evolving trail and sidewalk network. This section addresses Crookston's transportation system, providing a basis for developing future policies and projects. It considers the structure of the city's street system and the roles of its individual components.

Existing Functional Classification

The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) uses four roadway classifications: interstate, principal arterial, minor arterial and collector. Of these, the interstate classification does not apply to the City of Crookston (see Functional Classification Map in Appendix 5).

Principal Arterials serve regional needs and connect major activity centers, and often carry state and/or federal highway designations. US Highway 2 (US 2) is Crookston's principal arterial.

Minor Arterials connect with and complement principal arterials by serving activity centers and linking various parts of the city. Minor arterials in the state classification system for Crookston include:

- US 75 bypass
- Broadway from Robert Street to 3rd Avenue SW
- Main Street from Broadway to Robert Street
- Fisher Avenue from University to the east

Major Collector Streets link neighborhoods together, and connect them to arterials and activity centers. Collectors are usually two-lane facilities with substantial system connectivity, often with on-street parking, designed for relatively low speeds (35 miles per hour or less). The state classification includes the following streets in the city's collector network.

- Fisher Avenue from US 75 to US 2
- Broadway from Fischer Summit Avenue
- 7th Street from Broadway to St. John Drive
- Woodland from Carrol Street to US 2
- Main Street from 3rd Avenue SW to Broadway
- 3rd Avenue SW from Broadway to US 2

Existing Traffic Volumes

The most recent average daily traffic (ADT) volume information for the primary roadways in Crookston was obtained from MnDOT. An excerpt depicting the counts is included as Figure 3-1, and Figure 3-2 is an overall map of citywide traffic counts. The ADT volume information showed few roadway segments with counts over 5,000 ADT:

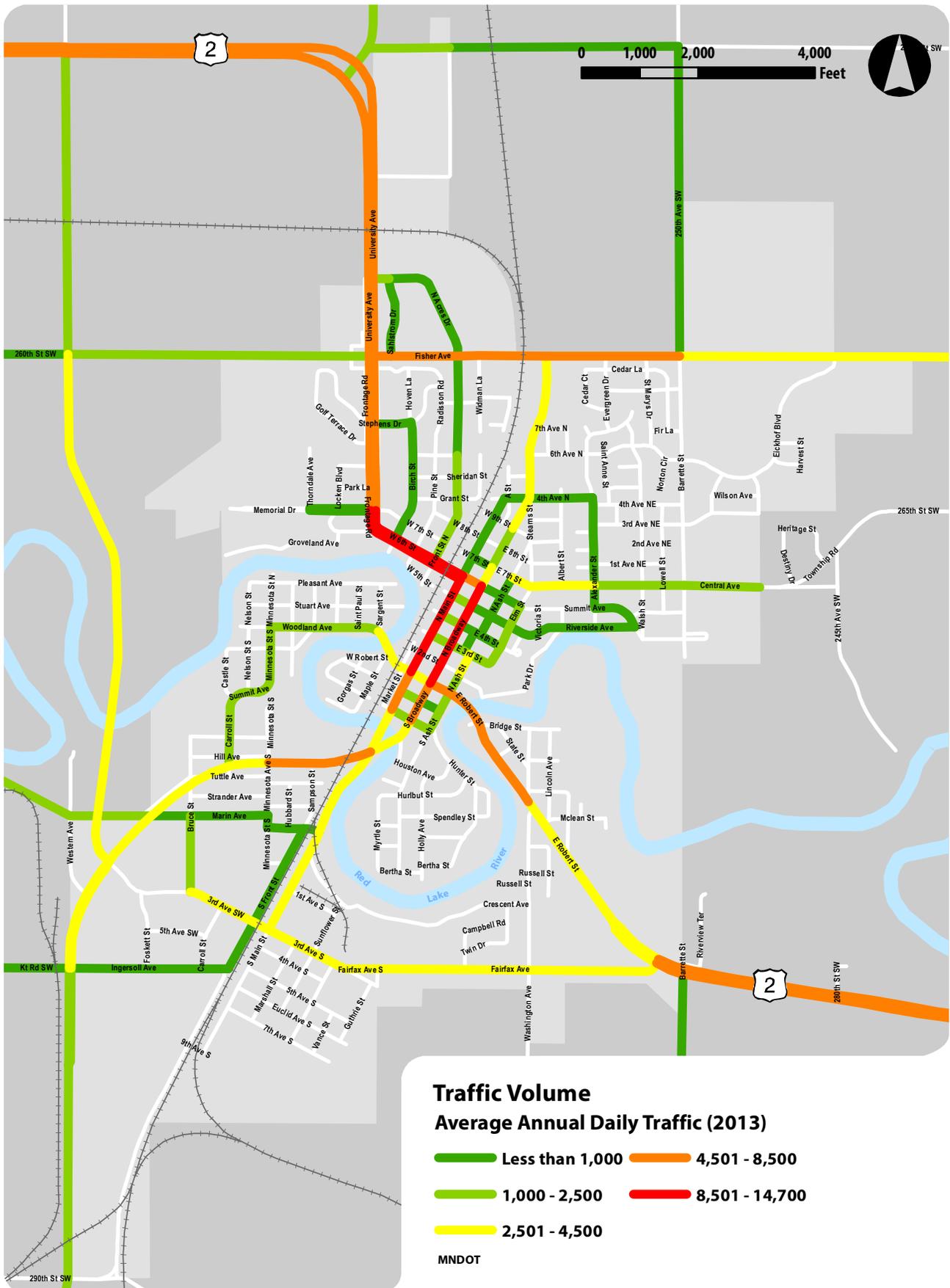
- Main Street in downtown Crookston (multiple segments)
- Fisher Avenue between US 2 and North Acres Drive
- US 2 between North Acres Drive and Fisher Avenue
- US 2 south of Highway 9
- US 2 near Bridge Street

Figure 3-1: Crookston Traffic Counts



Source: MnDOT

Figure 3-2: Traffic Counts



Crookston Commuting

Crookston is both an independent economic center and part of a regional economy. Consequently, many Crookston residents commute to workplaces outside Crookston, while others will travel from the city to jobs in Crookston. Information on area workers who commute for employment is available from the American Community Survey and CrookstonTomorrow on-line survey. The results are similar with both groups indicating that a strong majority of responders had a very short commute.

Commuting Time	Count	Percentage
Less than 10 minutes	2,131	62.4%
10 to 19 minutes	736	21.7%
20 to 29 minutes	133	3.9%
30 to 39 minutes	213	6.3%
40 minutes or more	186	5.5%
Total	3,399	100%

Source: decennial census

Commuting Time	Percentage
Less than 10 minutes	71.6%
10 to 15 minutes	7.8%
16 to 30 minutes	6.9%
30 minutes or more	5.9%
Did not commute	7.8%
Total	100%

Source: CrookstonTomorrow Study

This commuting relationship is especially relevant between Crookston and Grand Forks/East Grand Forks. Regional interdependence also affects consumer spending, as regional shoppers gravitate to larger, more diverse retail centers.

One-Way Pair of Broadway and Main Street

The one-way pair of Broadway and Main Street through downtown Crookston was discussed throughout the development of CrookstonTomorrow. It was a topic at a Steering Committee meeting, at the community event in September and was addressed in the project survey. The top two survey responses to the question “How do you feel about the one-way roadways on Broadway and Main Street through Crookston’s downtown?” were:

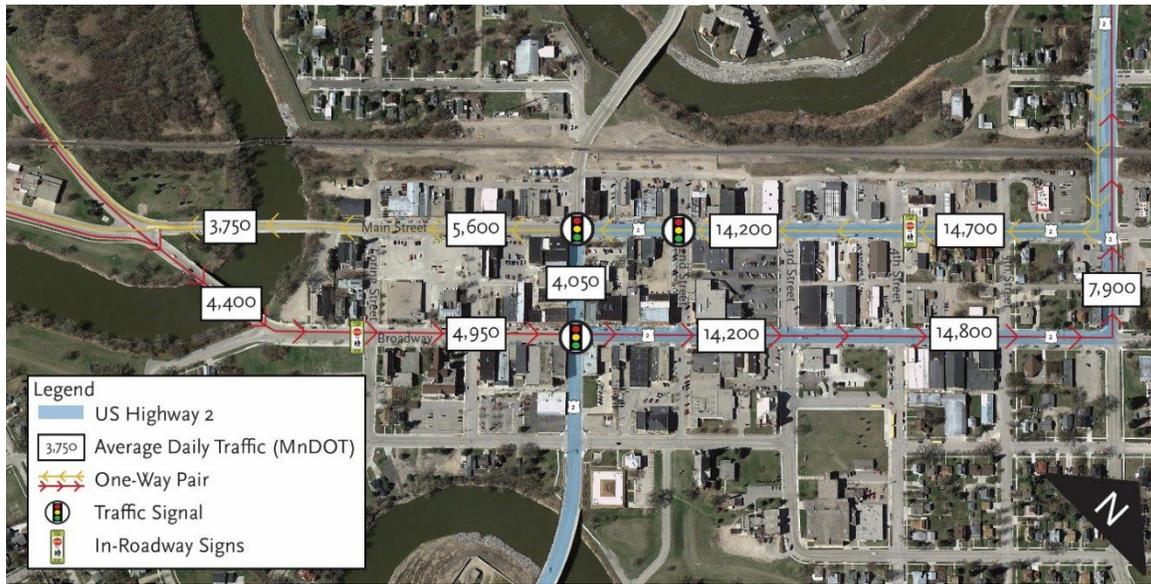
- The wide roadways and fast speeds make it challenging for pedestrians to cross each road
- The lack of bicycle facilities makes it difficult for bicyclists to access businesses downtown or pass through downtown

KLJ undertook a preliminary analysis of Crookston’s one-way pair. The focus was not to provide technical analysis or recommendations, but rather to determine feasibility, benefits and next steps if a conversion is desired. To date, there has been consensus for consideration of a change to the existing one-way pair analysis. However, a wider discussion, including conversation with the MnDOT will be needed.

Existing Conditions

US 2 cuts through the heart of downtown Crookston in a serpentine fashion. Prior to construction of the US Highway 75(US 75) bypass, this roadway also travelled through downtown Crookston. The convergence of these two major regional roadways, in addition to the needs of localized traffic, put an emphasis on traffic throughput through downtown. To facilitate high volumes of traffic through downtown, Main Street and Broadway were developed as three-lane one-way pairs starting at their intersection just south of Red Lake River north to 6th Street where US 2 (formerly US 75/2) routes east. Refer to Figure 3-3 for an illustration of the one-way configuration.

Figure 3-3: One-Way Pair Configuration through Downtown Crookston



The following is a summary of key characteristics of the one-way pair:

- Broadway is the northbound one-way. The roadway has three northbound through lanes; with on-street parking that varies by block from west side only, east side only, both sides and neither side.
- Main Street is the southbound one-way. The roadway has three southbound through lanes; with a parallel parking lane on either the east side only or both sides, varying by block.
- Each of the one-ways carries approximately 14,000 to 15,000 vehicles per day between Robert Street/US 2 and 6th Street. South of Robert Street, the volumes drop to between 3,750 to 5,600 depending on road and location.
- Approximately 390 to 440 trucks use US 2 per day. The number of trucks on Broadway and Main Street south of US 2 is unknown.
- Traffic signals are located at Main Street and Robert Street/US 2, Main Street and 2nd Street and Broadway and Robert Street/US 2.
- The corridor has sidewalks on both sides of the roadway, with protected crossing at the three traffic signals and two locations where in-roadway crossing signs are located. Several intersections also have curb bulb-outs with marked crosswalks to facilitate safe pedestrian crossings.
- Each roadway has several blocks where buildings are built to the lot line, providing an appealing downtown feel. The majority of the corridor is for commercial use with residential uses on just a small portion of Main Street.
- The roadway has accommodations for pedestrians with disabilities including accessible pedestrian signals and curb ramps.

Opportunities for Improvement

Both roads have several qualities that many downtown communities would welcome. However, there are a few areas for potential improvement. The following assessments are based on casual observations and should be confirmed, and quantified, with data collection and technical analyses. A future detailed review will likely uncover issues that are more specific.

Speeds

During off-peak periods the three lanes of directional capacity is far more than necessary. The excess capacity and lack of congestion results in motorists traveling at high speeds through downtown. This is not conducive to promoting business along the corridor and creates safety concerns for pedestrians crossing the roadway. Traffic calming techniques would increase travel times through the area but make the corridor more multimodal and business friendly.

Figure 3-4: Trees, Signs and Building Limit Sidewalk Width



Pedestrian Comfort

The majority of the corridor has eight to 10 feet of sidewalk. Generally, this would be ample space; however, with the presence of trees, signs, garbage cans, etc. combined with buildings built directly on the lot lines, the effective width of the sidewalk can be narrowed down to as little as three feet in some locations. Additionally, in locations where on-street parking is unavailable, there is a limited buffer for pedestrians from vehicular traffic, making the sidewalk less appealing to pedestrians.

Bicycle Facilities

There are no bicycle facilities along either one-way nor along any parallel corridor. Providing bicycle facilities would increase the multimodal appeal of the downtown and improve overall citywide connectivity.

Complete Streets

In communities across the country, a movement is growing to “complete” the streets and build roads that are safer, more accessible, and easier for everyone. These streets are designed to enable safe access for all users. Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and public

Americans want choices

66% of Americans want more transportation options so they have the freedom to choose how to get where they need to go.

73% currently feel they have no choice but to drive as much as they do.

57% would like to spend less time in the car.

Future of Transportation National Survey

transportation users of all ages and abilities are able to safely move along and across a complete street. Complete Streets is not about special projects; it is about changing the way we approach transportation projects on all streets.

The relatively short distance between major destinations in Crookston makes bicycle and pedestrian transportation a good option for many trips. Pedestrians in downtown are an important focus.

It is hard to imagine a vibrant downtown without pedestrians. Whether it's people who walk to the downtown area from surrounding neighborhoods, people who live downtown because they want easier access to their place of work or their favorite stores, or people who drive downtown and park their cars in a central location while walking from business to business, pedestrians are an important component to the success of any downtown.

Fargo One-Way Pair Analysis, Appendix 6

Many of Crookston's residential streets are also relatively friendly to bicycle use. However, the city does not have designated bicycle routes or lanes. While many consider bicycle facilities recreational, they are important to an integrated, sustainable transportation system.

Walking is the second most common form of travel⁷, representing about 11% of all trips. However, a full one-third of Americans report not taking a walking trip in the last week. Studies show how unsafe people feel on the roads in their communities because of the lack of sidewalks, poor lighting, and too few crosswalks. These problems with the built environment keep people from walking and biking.

Complete Streets policies are important for older adults, who want to remain in their communities and stay mobile, to young families and to millennials. Four out of five millennials say they want to live in places where they have a variety of options to get to jobs, school or daily needs. More than half say that they would consider moving to another city if it had more and better options for getting around.

Existing Freight Rail System

There are two operating railroads within the City of Crookston. The Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) line, a class 1 commercial rail line, runs through Crookston connecting north to Noyes, east to Boylston and Lake Superior and west to Grand Forks and beyond. Minnesota Northern Railroad, a shortline railroad, hauls grain, seeds, sugar and sugar by-products, coal, animal feeds and fertilizers.



⁷ National Household Travel Survey, 2009

SECTION 4: LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

Land use is the central element of the traditional comprehensive plan, establishing the physical configuration of the city, the mix and location of uses and the nature of community systems that support them. Because the land use plan is a statement of policy, public and private decision makers depend on it to guide individual actions such as land purchases, project design, and the review and approval process. This Section considers existing development patterns in Crookston and the influence of its natural environment. It concludes by calculating future land use needs, providing a basis for the future development plan in Part Two.

Crookston is irrevocably tied to its historic roots and river environment (Figure 4-1), both as a major determinant of the city's form and its character. While this comprehensive plan addresses elements of urbanization – growth, community development, transportation, parks and economics – it must do so with respect for the surrounding farmland (Figure 4-2). Figure 4-3 is the Existing Land Use Map, displaying Crookston's current land use patterns; Figure 4-4 presents zoning and Table 4-1 shows the approximate acreages of existing land uses.

Table 4-1
Existing Land Uses

Land Use	Acres	% of Total
Residential	1,100	35.4%
Commercial	460	14.8%
Industrial	210	6.8%
Public/Civic	680	21.9%
Park	120	3.9%
Agriculture	160	5.1%
Vacant	380	12.2%

Source: KLJ

Residential Uses

Residential land use makes up the largest single land use category in Crookston, accounting for about 35% of the city's acreage.

Most traditional residential neighborhoods surround downtown Crookston and extend along its major arterials. Crookston displays the relatively low-density development

pattern typical of small Minnesota communities with its preference for single-family owner-occupied units, and a relatively small amount of higher-density, multi-family housing. Lower-density cities typically have a higher per capita cost of services because of additional linear feet of road, sewer and utility lines needed to serve a fixed number of housing units. Because of valuable prime agricultural land (Figure 4-2) around Crookston, conversions from agricultural land to other land uses should be considered carefully and new development in these areas should use land more efficiently, while still maintaining the open small-town character of the landscape that is so much a part of Crookston. Transportation uses, including streets and the railroad, are included in the acreage for the abutting property.

Commercial Uses

Commercial uses in Crookston are concentrated in several settings, each with somewhat different roles. These include the traditional downtown commercial, the US 2/University Avenue and the city's southern entrance corridors. Crookston's proximity to Grand Forks directly affects the city's commercial environment. That regional center attracts consumer dollars, complicating the city's efforts to attract retailers and restaurateurs.

- Downtown Crookston commercial includes specialty retailers, offices, financial institutions and City Hall. A number of these buildings and sites are vacant or used for storage.
- The US 2/University Avenue corridor exhibits a mix of commercial uses including retail, hotel, restaurant and other uses. Commercial uses, including large format establishments like Walmart, are typically in detached structures with their own parking. These businesses serve the Crookston-area market.
- Uses along the city's southern entrance corridors are a mix of highway-oriented commercial, general commercial and light industrial uses.

Figure 4-1: Floodplain

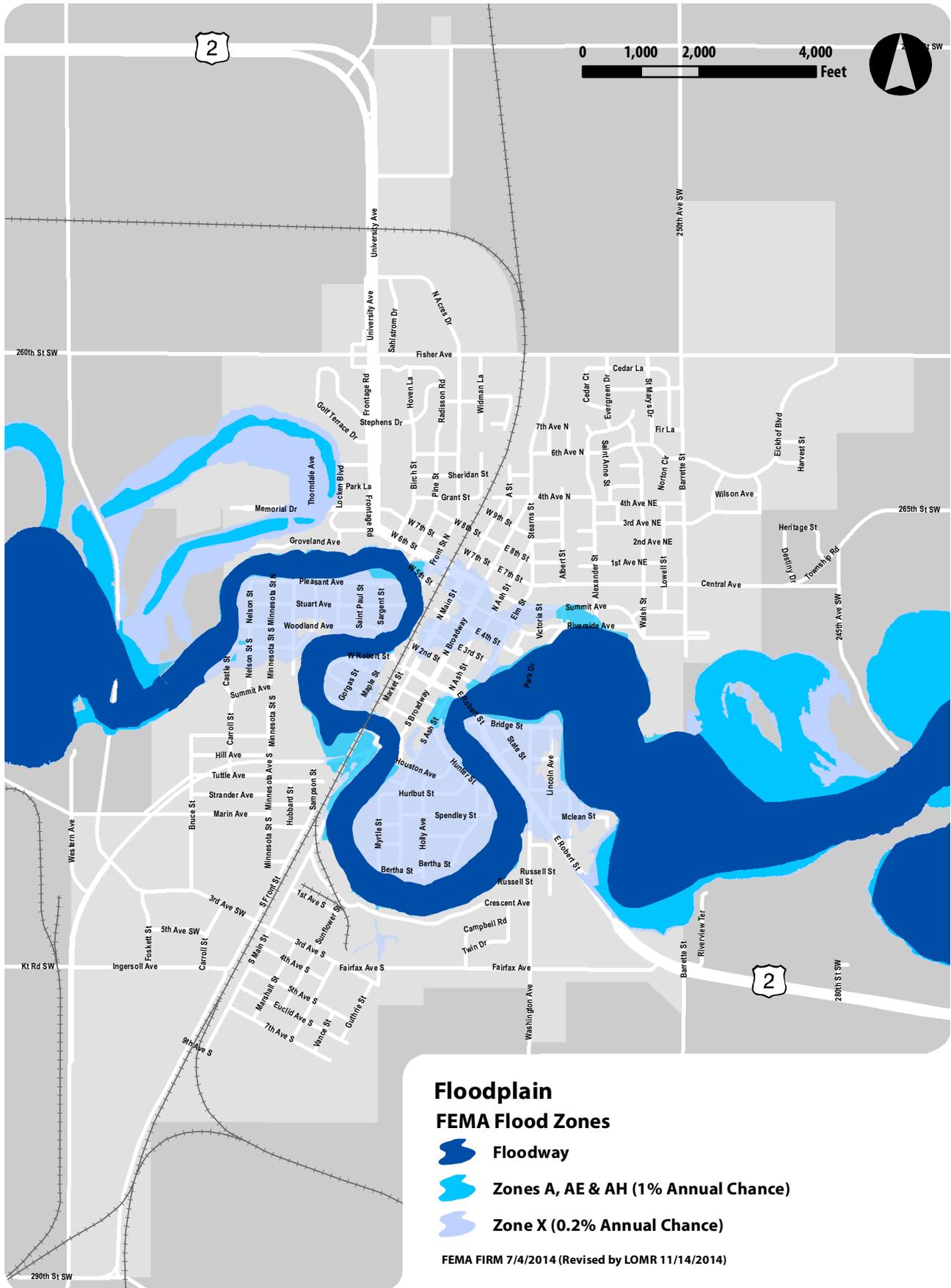


Figure 4-2: Prime Farmland

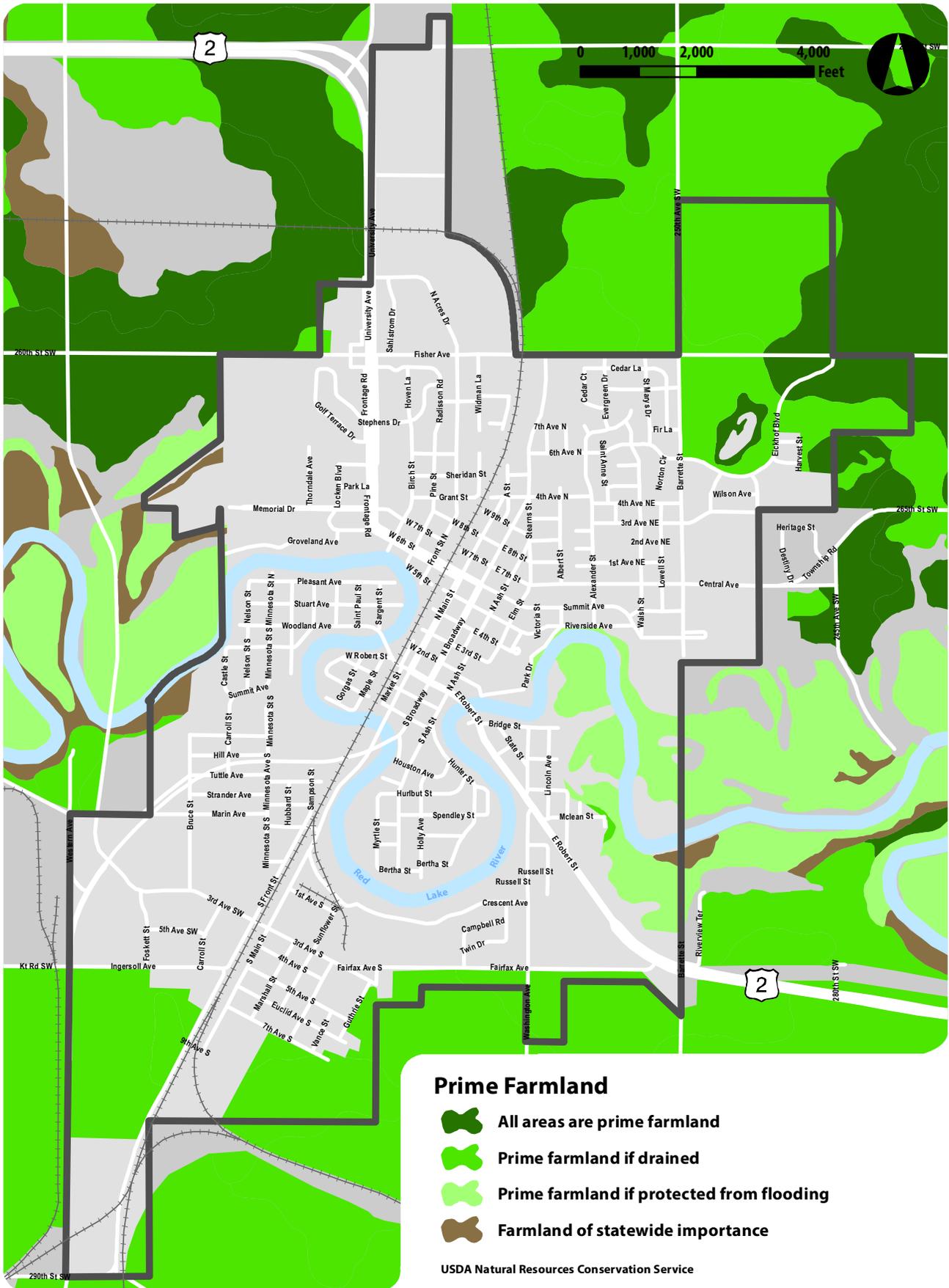


Figure 4-3: Existing Land Use

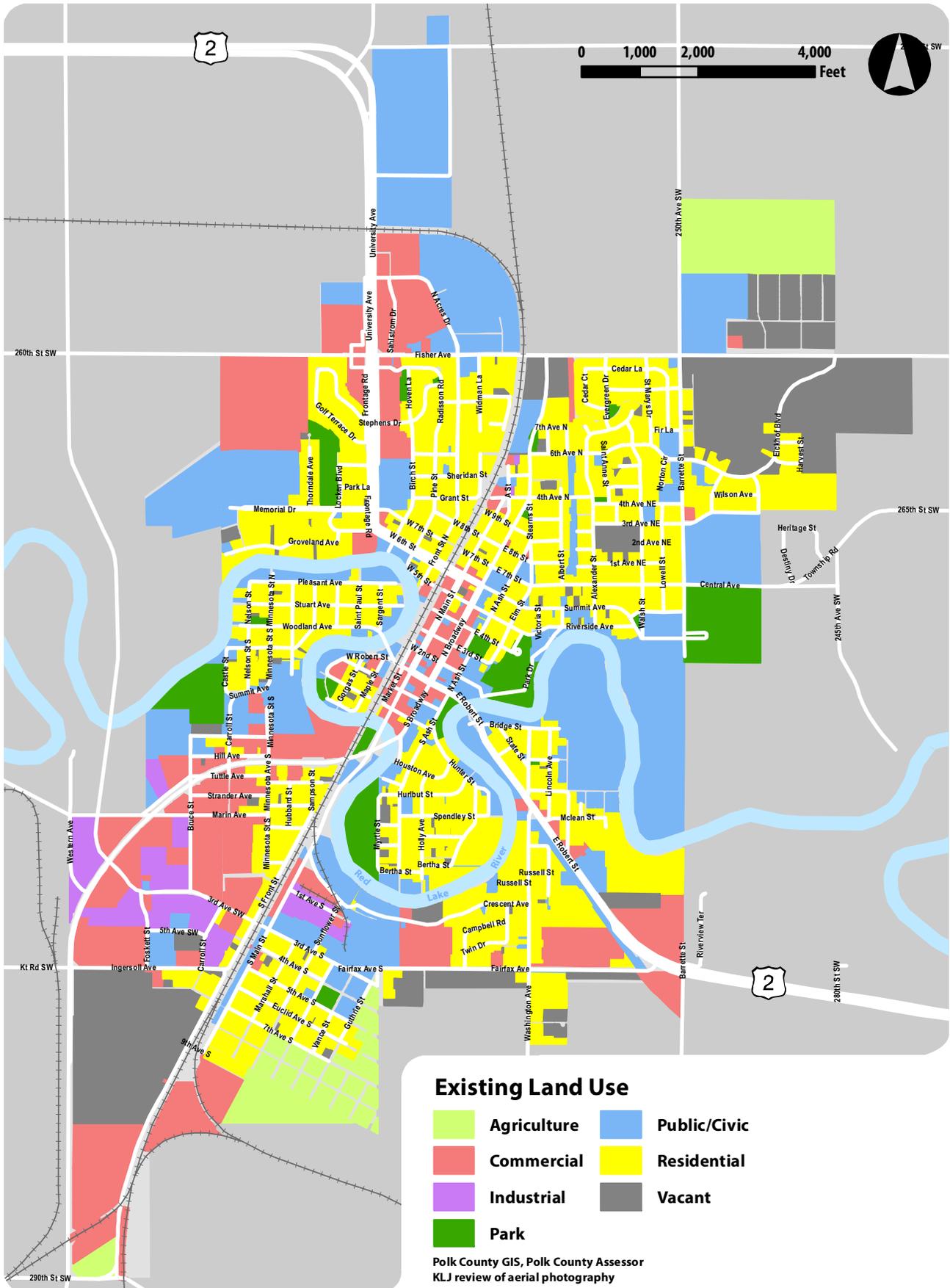
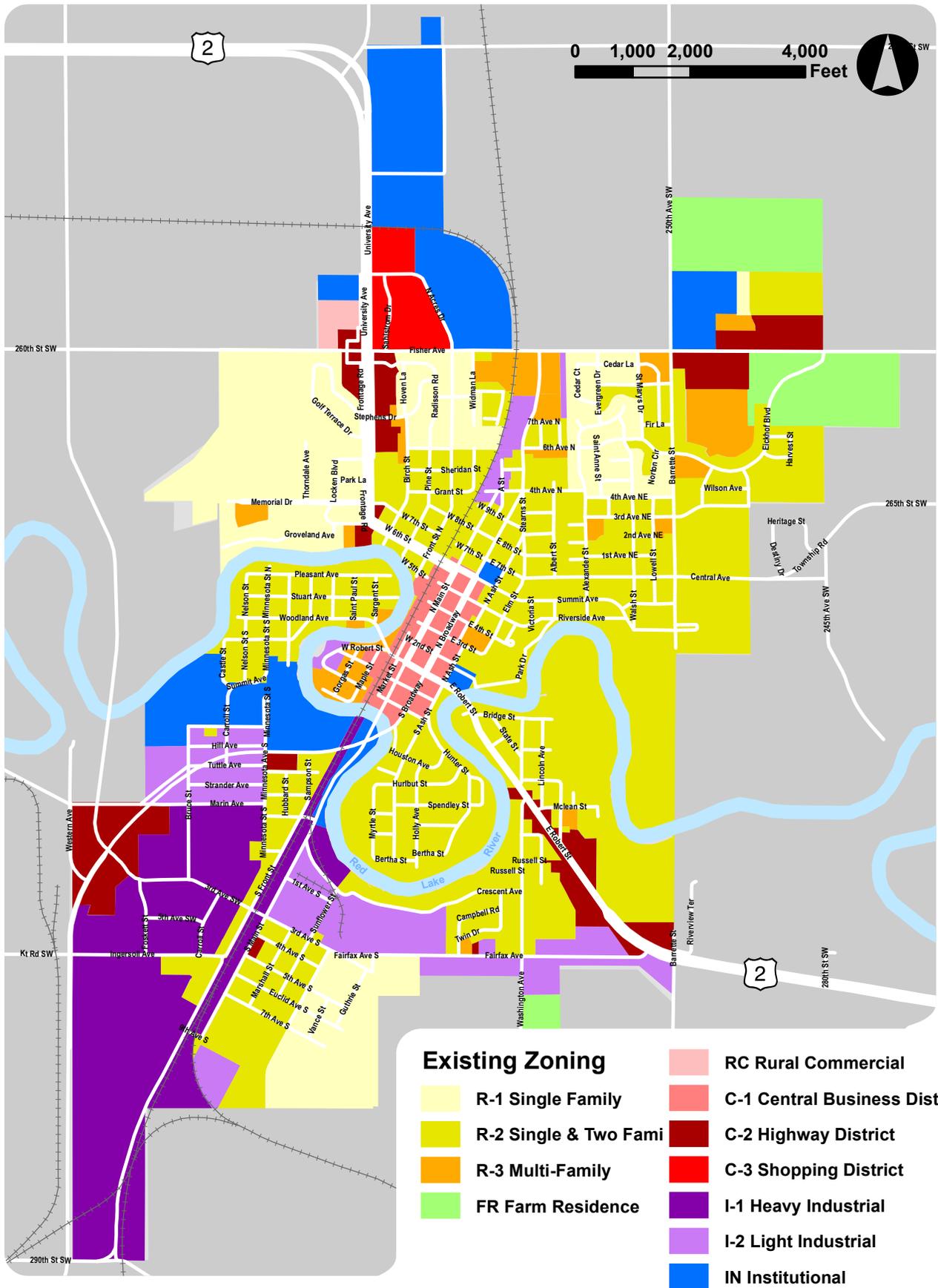


Figure 4-4: Zoning



Existing Zoning

- R-1 Single Family
- R-2 Single & Two Fami
- R-3 Multi-Family
- FR Farm Residence
- RC Rural Commercial
- C-1 Central Business District
- C-2 Highway District
- C-3 Shopping District
- I-1 Heavy Industrial
- I-2 Light Industrial
- IN Institutional

Crookston has approximately 460 acres of commercial use according to Polk County records. This is a large amount of commercial land relative to the city’s population. Significant regional commercial centers generally have between 1.5 and 2.0 acres of commercial land for each 100 residents, which would warrant between 119 and 148 acres for Crookston today. Places that have unusually low amounts of commercial land fall below 1.00 acres per 100 people. In contrast, Crookston has almost six acres per 100 people. A number of factors contribute to this high rate including:

- The county’s classification protocols considers many quasi-industrial uses as commercial
- Some of the city’s commercial acreage is not being used
- Crookston serves a larger geographic area than the city limits

Industrial Uses

Older industrial development in Crookston followed the railroad corridor. The Crookston Industrial Park, served by both the railroad and highway, is now the city’s largest industrial concentration. Some contemporary industrial development has occurred in this park.

Public and Semi-Public Uses

Crookston’s civic and public uses include school sites, parks, city and county government facilities, and the cemetery. The county records consider property as “public” if it is in public ownership. The UMC campus, located at the northern end of the city includes facilities open to the public.

Park

Park acreage is well above the traditional standard of 10 acres per 1,000 residents. It has been tracked separately in the land use acreages as has “open space” which is tracked separately because of the extensive areas along the river.

Future Land Use Needs

Population and development projections identify land needs for urban uses during the planning period. Section One proposed a population range between 7,500 and 9,000 for 2035. This section uses that range to calculate the amount of land needed for development during this period, providing the basis for the future land use map.

Residential Land Use Projection

As residential uses are the major component affecting the acreage for all land use types, the population accommodation analysis started there. Residential calculation are based on the following assumptions:

- Average persons per household will remain constant at 2.27 during the next 20 years.
- Households generate housing demand. Unit demand is calculated by dividing the number of people living in households (excluding people living in group quarters) by the average number of people per household.
- The proportion of the projected households in the various building types/densities is based on the current distribution and resulting ratio of residential acres to population.
- Typically, land designated for residential development in a land use plan is between 25% and about twice the “hard land demand” (the area actually needed for construction). This makes the plan flexible enough to respond to land availability issues, provides market choice and prevents artificially inflating land values.

Table 4-2 Projected Residential Acreage Needed	
2014 Residential Acres	1,100
Additional Acres – Lower Projection + 25%	200
Additional Acres – Lower Projection + 100%	1,000
Additional Acres – Higher Projection + 25%	450
Additional Acres – Higher Projection + 100%	1,400
Land Use Map Residential Acres	2,249

Source: KLJ

As demonstrated in Table 4-2, the Land Use Map includes almost twice the acres designated for residential uses than is needed for 2035 with a 100% flexibility factor.

Commercial and Industrial Land Needs

A growing population creates demand for new commercial development, and retail growth is an element of Crookston’s economic development strategy. In Crookston, new commercial development falls into two categories: projects that serve the local consumer market and projects that take advantage of Crookston’s location to attract business from outside the immediate market area. While a comprehensive plan (like CrookstonTomorrow) does not include a retail market analysis, it does identify adequate space to meet population demands and future growth potential. This discussion also needs to address the vacant commercial space across the city including downtown space and highway retail, office and service space.

On the other hand, demand for future industrial land is linked to opportunity and recruitment, rather than exclusively to population growth. A single major corporate decision can dramatically increase (or decrease) the projected industrial demand in a community. Despite these differences, similar projection methods are used to predict future commercial and industrial land needs (Table 4-3 and Table 4-4). The population proportion method relates land needs to population projections. It assumes that the absolute amount of commercial or industrial land per 100 people will remain relatively constant and that new development will grow in proportion to population growth.

Like the approach used in the residential model above, providing a flexibility factor of between 25% and 100% of hard land demand provides market choice and prevents artificial inflation of land cost. Using the highest of the alternative projections suggests:

- At this time, the total commercial acres shown on the land use map include no additional commercial acres but there are currently approximately 460 acres of commercial acres shown on the land use map. In the future, the city may want to identify additional land to accommodate a national retailer but the present focus is on in-fill and redevelopment.

- Designating about 250 acres of additional industrial land (twice the hard land demand). Combined with Crookston’s 210 acres of existing land in industrial use, this designates 450 total acres of industrial land. Again, the plan should include the flexibility to accommodate a very large industry not anticipated by this model.

**Table 4-3
Projected Commercial Acreage Needed**

2014 Commercial Acres	460
Additional Acres – Lower Projection + 25%	130
Additional Acres – Lower Projection + 100%	480
Additional Acres – Higher Projection + 25%	250
Additional Acres – Higher Projection + 100%	670
Land Use Map Commercial Acres	280

Source: KLJ

**Table 4-4
Projected Industrial Acreage Needed**

2014 Industrial Acres	210
Additional Acres – Lower Projection + 25%	40
Additional Acres – Lower Projection + 100%	190
Additional Acres – Higher Projection + 25%	90
Additional Acres – Higher Projection + 100%	270
Land Use Map Industrial Acres	450

Source: KLJ



SECTION 5: PARKS, COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND CITY SERVICES

If transportation and infrastructure are the framework of the city, parks and community facilities are the public features that bring the city to life and protect and serve its citizens. Crookston has built an enviable array of resources that have served the city well in the past and form the basis for excellent service in the future. This section considers Crookston's existing park and recreation facilities and community resources, including all city-owned and operated recreation areas and other parks with public access.

Crookston Park System

Crookston's residents enjoy a variety of open space, parks and recreation opportunities within and immediately surrounding the city. Because parks and recreational facilities are a fundamental part of community life, Crookston must provide additional facilities as the community grows to maintain the level of service that its citizens expect. This analysis of existing city-owned and operated recreation areas and other parks with public access considers the current levels of service in the existing system and the service coverage to identify park and facility development needs.

The Crookston park system includes almost 118 acres of parkland. Traditional park area standards set by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) suggest 10 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. At present, Crookston currently has approximately 15.15 acres per 1,000 residents, meeting this traditional, if somewhat outdated guideline. Contemporary evaluation uses a level of service standard, measuring local satisfaction with the current level of open space and making necessary additions as the community moves forward.

This analysis uses an NRPA-developed park classification system to classify Crookston's facilities. Table 5-1 lists Crookston's park facilities by category with amenities described. The categories of this hierarchy include miniparks, neighborhood parks and community parks. Park service adequacy is evaluated in three ways:

- **Facilities by Classification.** Parks are classified into different categories to determine the level and area they serve.

- **Facilities by Geographic Distribution.** The service radius of each facility is analyzed to identify geographical gaps in service.
- **Facilities in Relation to Population Service Standards.** National standards for the provision of park and recreation facilities are applied to Crookston's present system.

Miniparks

Miniparks generally address specific recreation or open space functions. These parks typically cover less than one acre and have a service radius of less than ¼ mile. Because of maintenance difficulties with multiple smaller sites and their small service area, most cities discourage the development of miniparks. Crookston currently has 12 miniparks that together total about 4.4 acres. The city should avoid future minipark development except for unique areas or special use open spaces. Parks of less than three acres provide limited services and numerous miniparks create higher maintenance costs.

Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood parks are the basic unit of a community's park system and provide a recreational and social focus for residential areas. These parks provide space for informal active and passive recreational activities. The typical service radius for neighborhood parks is between ¼ and ½ mile to provide for comfortable and safe pedestrian access. Neighborhood parks adequate in size to accommodate the requisite facilities should contain at least five acres. The Crookston planning area contains four parks in this category but some are smaller than the recommended size.

Traditional NRPA standards call for about two acres of neighborhood parks per 1,000 residents. Crookston currently has about 29 acres of neighborhood parks, which translates to 2.7 acres per 1,000 residents, which exceeds the NRPA standard. In addition, larger community parks also fill neighborhood park functions.

**Table 5-1
Crookston Parks**

Park	Size	Park Type	Facilities
Highland	40 acres	Community Park	Building, softball, baseball, horseshoe, playground, tennis, basketball, skate park
Central	15 acres	Community Park	Campground, bath house, boat launch, community pool, nine hole disc golf course
Schuster	10.1 acres	Community Park	Tennis, basketball, playground, picnic
Hoven Lane	1.1 acres	Neighborhood Park	Playground
Wildwood	8.5 acres	Neighborhood Park	Playground, restrooms, picnic
Castle	8.9 acres	Neighborhood Park	Playground, picnic
Wild Flower	1.6 acres	Neighborhood Park	Picnic, gardens
Maplewood	4.0 acres	Neighborhood Park	Playground
Carman	3.0 acres	Neighborhood Park	Playground, soccer, sand volleyball, picnic shelter
Eugene Field	2.0 acres	Neighborhood Park	Playground
Evergreen*	.5 acre	Neighborhood Park	Playground
Veterans Memorial – 1	.5 acre	Minipark	Memorial, picnic shelter
Old Museum – 2	.1 acre	Minipark	
Browns (State St.) – 3	.2 acre	Minipark	
Riverview – 4	.7 acre	Minipark	
Locken (S. Ash) – 5	.7 acre	Minipark	Memorial trees bench
Walsh & Summit – 6	.6 acre	Minipark	Playground
Stearns – 7	.4 acre	Minipark	Playground
Alexander & 4th – 8	.6 acres	Minipark	Playground
Broadway & 6th – 9	.2 acre	Minipark	Playground, picnic
Johnson – 10	.2 acre	Minipark	Playground
Crescent Avenue – 11	.1 acre	Minipark	Playground
Courtyard – 12	.1 acre	Minipark	Fountain, bench

** Because the level of activity at Evergreen Park is similar to neighborhood parks, it has been classified as a Neighborhood Park although its small size matches those of Miniparks in Crookston.*

Community Parks

These typically include areas of diverse use and environmental quality. Such parks meet community-based recreation needs, may preserve significant natural areas and often include areas suited for intense recreation facilities. Typical criteria for community parks include:

- Adequate size to accommodate activities associated with neighborhood parks, but with space for additional activity.
- A special attraction that draws people from a larger area, such as a swimming pool, pond or lake, ice skating rink, trails, special environmental or cultural features, or specialized sports complexes.
- Community parks generally contain between 30 and 50 acres and serve a variety of needs. The typical service radius of a community park is approximately ½ mile to three miles. Traditional NRPA guidelines for community park areas call for 5 to 8 acres per 1,000 residents. Crookston’s community parks cover approximately 65 acres. Athletic facilities associated with Crookston High School function as a community park, but are not included in the area to population analysis.

At about 8.2 acres per 1,000 residents, Crookston currently meets the NRPA standard for community parks. As Crookston continues to grow, additional space for a new community park should be identified.

Facilities by Geographic Distribution

As previously noted, neighborhood parks comprise the basic unit of a park system. A standard ¼ and ½-mile service radius, corresponding to comfortable walking distance, can be used to evaluate neighborhood park distribution. Because large community parks serve much larger areas, they often attract users beyond walking distance requiring bicycle or automobile access. Figure 5-1 illustrates the distribution of Crookston's parks.

Facilities in Relation to Population Service Standards

The population analysis in Section 1 projects a potential 2035 city population of between 7,500 and 9,000. This analysis assesses parkland needs based on a ratio of existing service levels to a projected 2035 population and suggests no need for additional acres of neighborhood parks and up to 43 additional acres of community parks. Future park sites should focus on providing quality park spaces that have adequate access for residents; their location should respond to the areas (shown on Figure 5-1) that are not currently served.

Other Community Facilities

Community facilities serving the City of Crookston include the Crookston Public Library and the municipal airport, in addition to the city's parks and recreation facilities. Crookston's airport is classified as an intermediate airport by MnDOT. This means that it has a paved and lighted runway under 5,000 feet that is capable of accommodating all single-engine and some multi-engine aircraft, and some business jets.

Municipal Services and Utilities

Police Department

The City of Crookston Police Department provides 24-hour law enforcement services from its location on West Robert Street. The department currently employs 15 full-time police officers and two full-time civilian support personnel. Licensed law enforcement positions within the Crookston Police Department include the Chief of Police, Lieutenant, Detective Sergeant, two Patrol Sergeants, Investigator, eight Patrol Officers and a Narcotics Officer.

Fire and Emergency Services

The City of Crookston Fire Department services the City of Crookston and a rural area consisting of 14 townships. The Department roster consists of a full-time Fire Chief, six full-time Career Firefighters, and 25 paid-on-call Firefighters. The Crookston Fire Department responds to approximately 30 incidents per month. In addition to Emergency Services provided, the Fire Department is also active in fire prevention/education classes and programs, fire and building code enforcement, building, plumbing and mechanical inspections, enforcement of city ordinances and the administration of the city's rental licensing program. The Fire Department has the ability to call additional personnel and equipment from other fire departments in Polk County as well as some departments from neighboring counties with mutual-aid agreements. Ambulance service, advanced life support and emergency transportation is provided by the Crookston Area Ambulance.

Transit

Tri-Valley Transportation provides curb-to-curb service and public transportation services.

Water and Wastewater Infrastructure

According to the providers, Crookston's water and sewer infrastructure can accommodate future growth, although, ongoing system improvements are needed. Both the water and wastewater departments are within the city public works department.

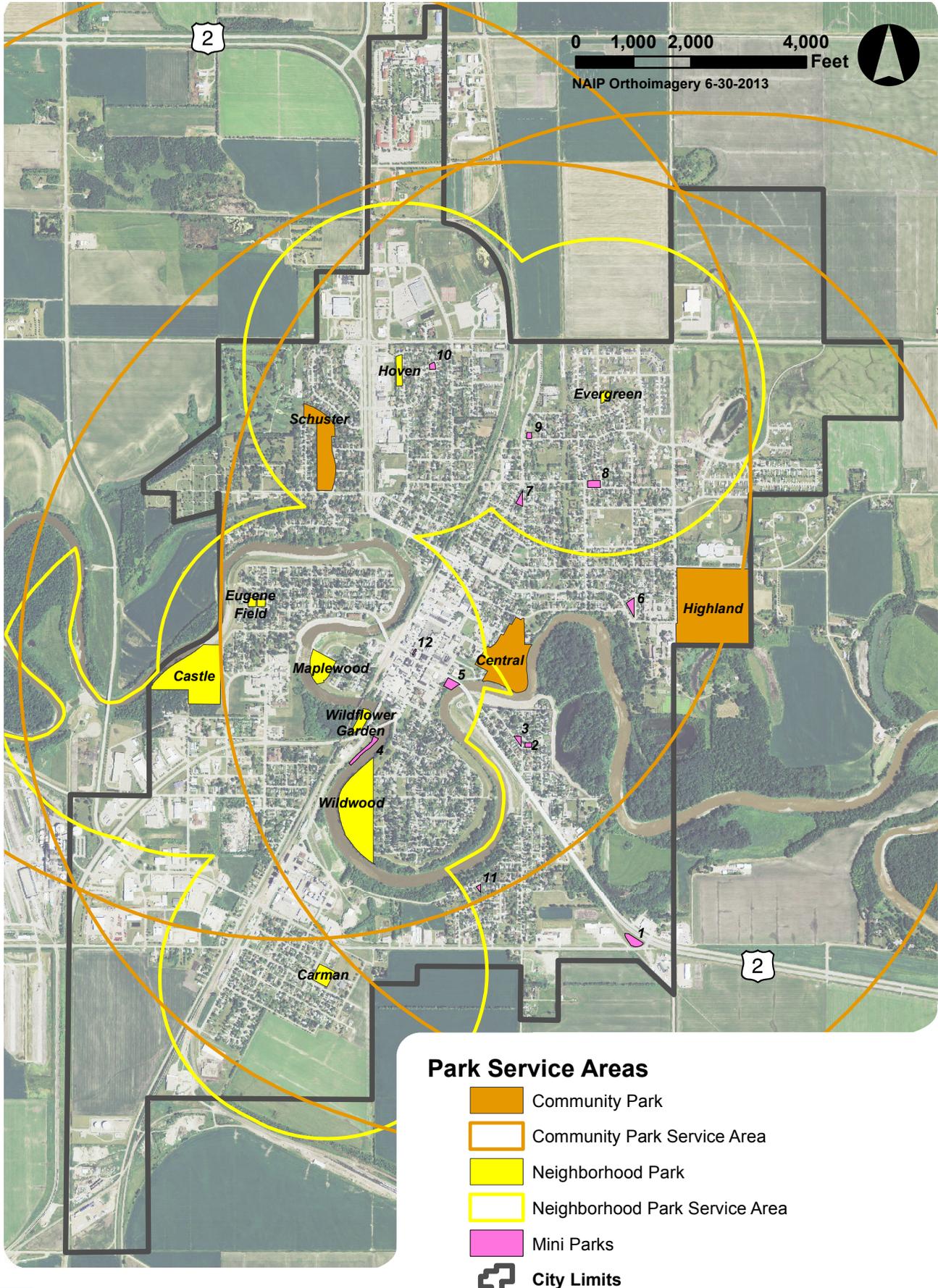
The wastewater department is responsible for 43 miles of sewer mains, almost eight miles of interceptor sewer mains and eight lift stations. Wastewater is treated by an open lagoon system owned and operated by the city.

The Crookston Water Division is committed to providing water that is safe and high in quality to meet the domestic, commercial, industrial and fire suppression requirements of the city and two areas outside city limits. Water supply is pumped from a wellfield (six wells) east of the city and treated in the city's water treatment plant.

Other Utilities

Other utilities providing services to Crookston residents and businesses include Otter Tail Power Co., Great Plains Natural Gas Co., CenturyLink Communications and Midcontinent Communications.

Figure 5-1: Park Service Areas



CROOKSTON

TOMORROW

Comprehensive Plan 2035

Crookston 2035

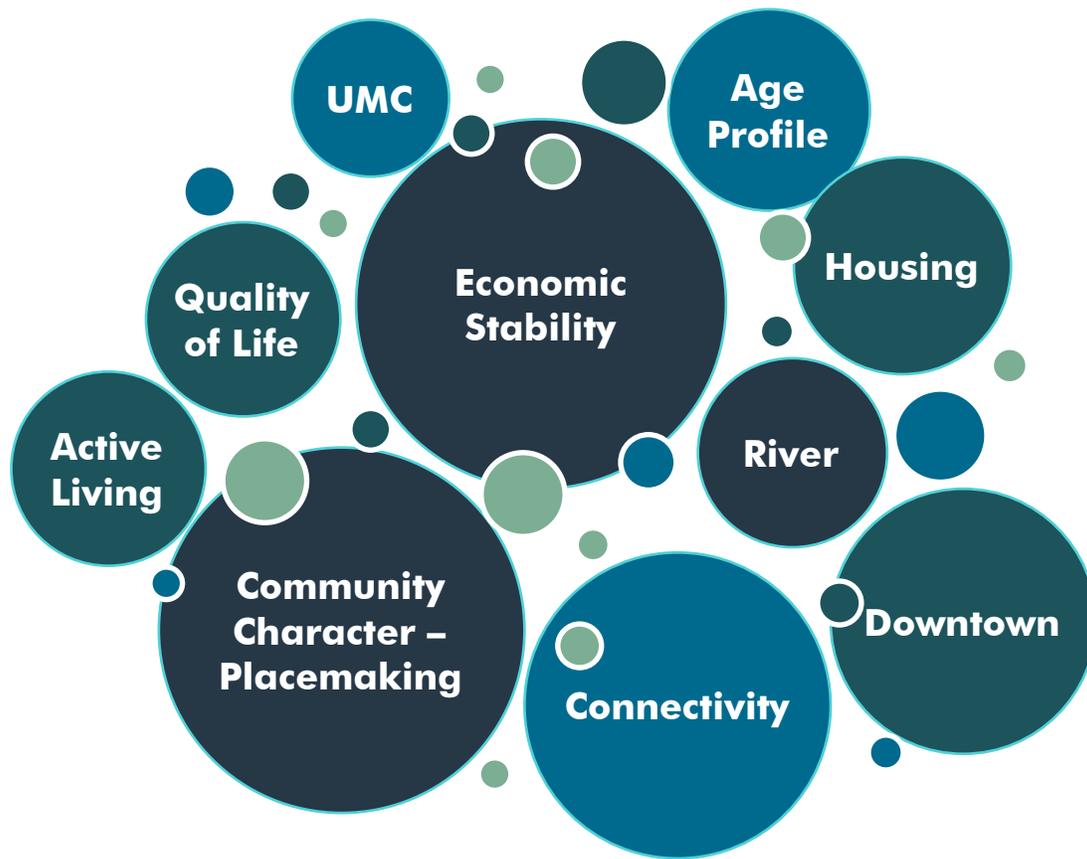
PART
two



SECTION 6: A VISION FOR CROOKSTONTOMORROW

CrookstonTomorrow was initiated to update the city's comprehensive plan to reflect current issues and to provide a vision of the city in 2035. The city's previous studies and initiatives, a basis for understanding the city today and the scope of its opportunities and challenges, were reviewed in detail and augmented by conversations with city staff. Engaging Crookston's residents and business owners was essential to the success of this CrookstonTomorrow planning effort and presented in Section 1.

The CrookstonTomorrow on-line survey (Appendix 1), Steering Committee meetings and the September 15 community picnic and workshop provided extensive input on many planning-related issues. Initial community input identified numerous priority areas, all overlapping in focus. They included Community Identity, Quality of Life, Housing, Downtown Revitalization and Economic Sustainability. Over time, these focus areas evolved into three primary themes to address the city's opportunities and challenges: Economic Sustainability, Community Character and Connectivity. Each of these themes and related strategies facilitate an approach to CrookstonTomorrow. While the scope of these strategies includes some features that are not ordinarily included in a comprehensive plan, the overall approach provides multi-faceted alternatives.



Economic Sustainability Focus

Section One projected Crookston's 2035 growth potential and estimated the amount of land needed to meet this potential. This new development should be distributed in ways that maximize benefit and minimize unnecessary costs to the entire community. It should use land efficiently, be environmentally and economically sustainable, and reinforce the quality and character of Crookston. "Smart growth" principles, applied to overall city development policy, can help Crookston develop in an economically sound, environmentally sustainable, and mutually beneficial way.

Economic Sustainability

Prepare a Strategic Economic Development Plan for Crookston. The plan should address the following:

- Inventory and analysis of existing businesses and industry
- Analysis of competitive advantages for Crookston
- Identification of target industries and other businesses for Crookston
- Work with local employers, including UMC to develop strategies for increasing percentage of employees who live in Crookston
- In evaluating city investments, consider the long-term economic cost/benefit to the city
- Encourage and support small and independent businesses
- Inventory existing small and in-home businesses to collect data for grant applications. Consider small grants or loans to encourage entrepreneurs and small businesses
- Identify partners to provide technical assistance (i.e., legal and financial advice for entrepreneurs and small business owners)
- Partner with the Chamber of Commerce to support "Shop local" and small business activities
- Support enhancement of the city's health care facilities as an economic asset to the community
- Develop a strategy in collaboration with UMC to address childcare services

OVERALL FOCUS OF CROOKSTONTOMORROW

ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

Enhance Crookston's identity and heritage, foster pride in the Crookston community, while expanding opportunities in Crookston to retain and attract residences and businesses.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

Strengthen existing retail services and enhance the way Crookston presents itself to fellow citizens and visitors.

CONNECTIVITY

Enhance the "small town feeling" of Crookston by connecting its best features.

Agriculture

Adjust the city code to require consideration of the importance of any prime farmland designation in any decisions to annex or rezone these properties.

Marketing/Promoting Crookston

Cities often utilize marketing activities to reach their target audience. The cost of this investment may vary widely but to be effective there needs to be a clear message. What would the message be for Crookston? Alexandria, MN announces "Easy to Get To, Hard to Leave" and Bemidji says it is the "First City on the Mississippi". Many cities consider their websites as important recruitment tools, presenting a good first impression and providing information useful to potential investors and future residents. The websites for other small Minnesota cities that are considered "Best Places to Live" (2015 livability list: Alexandria #22, Marshall #28, Northfield #33, Fergus Falls #62, Bemidji #74) meet these standards.

Downtown Crookston

Some consider Downtown Crookston to be the heart of the city, and the importance of the downtown to the city's economic sustainability is undeniable. A later part of this section addresses the challenge of empty storefronts, the appearance of downtown and absent landlords. Other important elements include transportation and parking.

One-Way Pair

The background of Downtown Crookston's one-way pair, including traffic flow through downtown and consideration of changes is presented in Section 3. There are two principal strategies, each with several sub-options, to mitigate the deficiencies noted previously. Sub-options would need to be studied in greater detail and include public involvement to identify strategies and options that provide the most benefit to the public and have the most support.

Strategy 1: Road Diet

A road diet would maintain the current one-way pair configuration but narrow to two lanes in each direction. This would reduce speeds and make the corridor more business and multimodal friendly. The extra space could be used for some combination of the following:

- Increased parking supply (i.e. parallel parking lane where not currently provided, or angled parking where demand exceeds supply).
- On-street (bike lanes, cycle tracks, shared lanes) or off-street bicycle facilities (widen sidewalk to shared-use path).
- Widen pedestrian facilities to increase comfort.
- Others as determined through public involvement.

Strategy 2: Convert To Two-Way Streets

Converting the corridor to two-way streets with a continuous left-turn lane would not provide additional space like a road diet would, but could provide the following benefits:

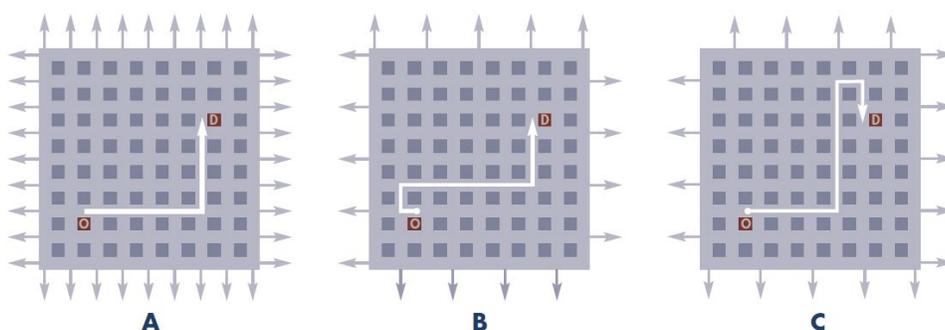
- Reduced capacity would result in slower speeds, making the corridor more multimodal friendly.
- The combination of reduced speeds and bidirectional flow could make the corridors more business friendly.
- Eliminate circuitous routing behavior required by one-way streets (see Figure 6-1).
- Increase space for aesthetic features typical of downtown (planters, gateways, etc.)
- Improved accessibility for emergency vehicles.

Barriers

The clear challenge with a road diet or a two-way conversion is the impedance to through traffic on TH 2. US 2 is the major thoroughfare in the area and slowing through speeds on this corridor may be undesirable to MnDOT. There does appear to be some excess capacity under current traffic volumes; however, a full study would be needed to evaluate future traffic volumes.

Another major challenge with a conversion would be determining which roadway is designated as US 2, the implications to a jurisdictional turn-back, and the impacts this may have to business. Impacts may depend on the type of business along the corridor. For example, removing through traffic would significantly impact businesses that rely on pass-by traffic, like a gas station or fast food restaurant. Alternatively, eliminating through

Figure 6-1: Demonstration of Circuitous Routing with One-Way Pairs



traffic may reduce traffic volumes while still maintaining slower speeds, potentially increasing the accessibility to specialty stores for all modes of local traffic.

Other barriers exist, although most could be overcome with a thorough technical study. Additional barriers might include the intersection of Main Street and Broadway south of the Red Lake River and operations of other key intersections.



**Figure 6-2:
Intersection of
Main Street and
Broadway**

Source: KLJ

Next Steps

A formal traffic study is necessary to fully quantify deficiencies along Broadway and Main Street, develop improvement strategies and work with key stakeholders to arrive at a solution. This process should include:

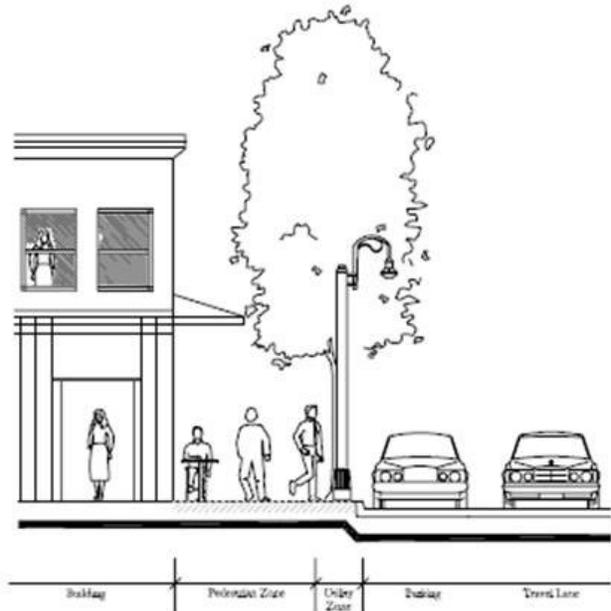
- Collecting relevant data and quantifying deficiencies
- Analyzing the road-diet and two-way conversion scenarios and various suboptions
- Obtaining recommendations on preferred strategies including implementation and funding
- Significant public and agency engagement, especially with MNDOT

Enhancing Downtown Streetscapes

The Complete Streets concept noted earlier aims to create streets that address more than the space between the curbs. They are designed to work well for pedestrians, bicyclists, as well as vehicles. Part of the change in the approach to streets involves creating streetscapes which feel safer, more inviting, and promote more economic activity. This involves promoting active uses at the street level, providing prominent windows and entrances that invite passers-by to investigate what is inside, creating a sense of enclosure and security on the sidewalk, and encouraging a shared identity to create a sense of place.

This approach promotes more activity in the downtown and often incorporates these design concepts:

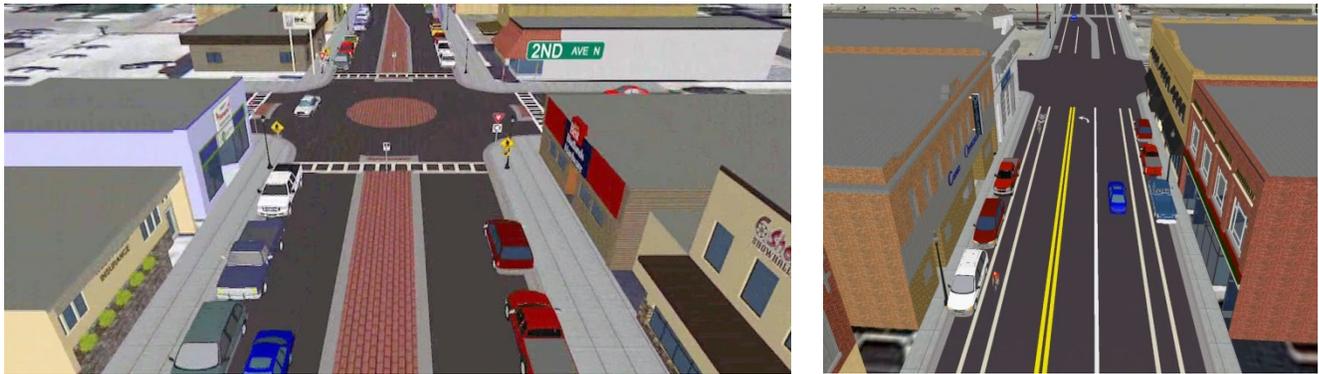
- Support or promote mixed uses including retail, restaurants, offices and residential with the more active uses located on the ground floor.
- Enhancing real and perceived safety for pedestrians.
- Investing in quality frontage, street furnishings and creating a safe zone on the sidewalk.
- Promoting multiple ways to make the streetscape more interesting, such as public art and high quality architecture and landscaping.
- It does not mean investing in fancy hard-to-maintain paving and sidewalk features.
- Encouraging buildings instead of parking lots to be located at street intersections.
- Differentiating between streets primarily needed for through traffic and those focused on pedestrian activity.



Downtown Parking

Parking in downtown Crookston is a frequent topic. In the on-line survey (Appendix 1, Q.13), participants responded “It is difficult to find parking” to the question “How do you feel about the one-way roadways on Broadway and Main Street”? An analysis of current and projected parking needs is warranted.

Figure 6-3: Examples of Previous Downtown Corridor Study Visualizations



Main Street Program

Consider utilizing the Main Street approach to focus downtown revitalization efforts.

Many communities have successfully utilized the Main Street approach to downtown revitalization. The Main Street Program's success is based on a comprehensive strategy of work, tailored to local needs and opportunities, in four broad areas, called the Main Street Four Point Approach:

Design: Enhance the physical appearance of the commercial district by rehabilitating historic buildings, encouraging supportive new construction, developing sensitive design management systems and long-term planning.

Organization: Building consensus and cooperation among the many groups and individuals who have a role in the revitalization process.

Promotion: Marketing the traditional commercial district's assets to customers, potential investors, new businesses, local citizens and visitors.

Economic Restructuring: Strengthening the district's existing economic base while finding ways to expand it to meet new opportunities and challenges from outlying development.

Some topics that could be addressed through the Main Street or an other program, or other approaches, are:

- Increase retail shops and restaurants downtown
- Reduce the number of empty storefronts
- Improve upon the tourist population

- Improve the appearance of downtown
- Address apathy of absent landlords in restoring deteriorating buildings
- Promote Crookston as a historical, cultural and environmental community

Senior Population

Section 1 provided information about the city's population pyramid. The city's senior population is growing. On-line survey and community conversations focused on the challenges of Crookston's aging population, but there are opportunities. Crookston has the basic elements to facilitate a senior focus: moderate housing costs, sense of community, access to health care and care giving, and social support including organizations and churches. Vibrant communities with a senior focus not only attract more seniors but they attract services (and people) needed to provide services to those seniors. In Brainerd they are preparing for the upcoming aging population with particular focus on health care opportunities/care giving; safety and security; housing and alternative means of transportation.

It is increasingly difficult for older residents in many communities to get to shops, services and recreational opportunities without an automobile. Unfortunately as age increases, our abilities to drive independently often begin to decrease. For older adults who do not drive often or who have stopped driving altogether, it is essential to find alternative means of transportation. Among these alternatives is walking and pedestrian-friendly means of reaching vital destinations, such as shopping and medical facilities. Their program, Brainerd for a Lifetime, has five transportation and walkability goals:

- Providing several transportation options for out-of-town travel
- Offering affordable transportation to common destinations that riders find convenient, safe and dependable
- Ensure walking is a practical, viable option for seniors
- Design and maintain physical environments that are sensitive to the needs of seniors
- Easy use of barrier-free multi-purpose trails and walking paths

The same approach could be used in Crookston.

Green Initiatives

In addition to continued participation in Minnesota's GreenStep program, the city might consider additional initiatives:

- Continue to raise awareness of the value of environmental and natural resources in Crookston
- Promote the use of green building techniques and rainwater capture systems in new developments
- Evaluate the use of native prairie grass in some city parks or other areas that currently require mowing to reduce the cost of mowing and weed control

Leadership

Leadership is essential to the success of CrookstonTomorrow. Each of the proposed initiatives will need a committed "Champion".

Community Character

More than ever in history, people are relocating to communities not seeking work, but instead looking for a quality of life that fits their desires, whether it is a place with great schools, walkability, sustainability or family amenities. Employers are establishing offices where the talent lives; with UMC, Crookston offers a special opportunity.

The on-line polling included the question "What do you like most about living and/or working in Crookston?"

More than half of those responding to this open-ended question states that what they liked best was the "small town feeling", "small town", etc. If responses like "One big family that will come to your aid if you need it" were added, the percentage would be even higher.

Community Image

Crookston's "image" has both positive and negative elements. The Red Lake River, the city's program of flower baskets along city streets, the Sports Center and Downtown are often mentioned as positive elements. The empty storefronts, schools and churches, dilapidated buildings and the junkyards are not.

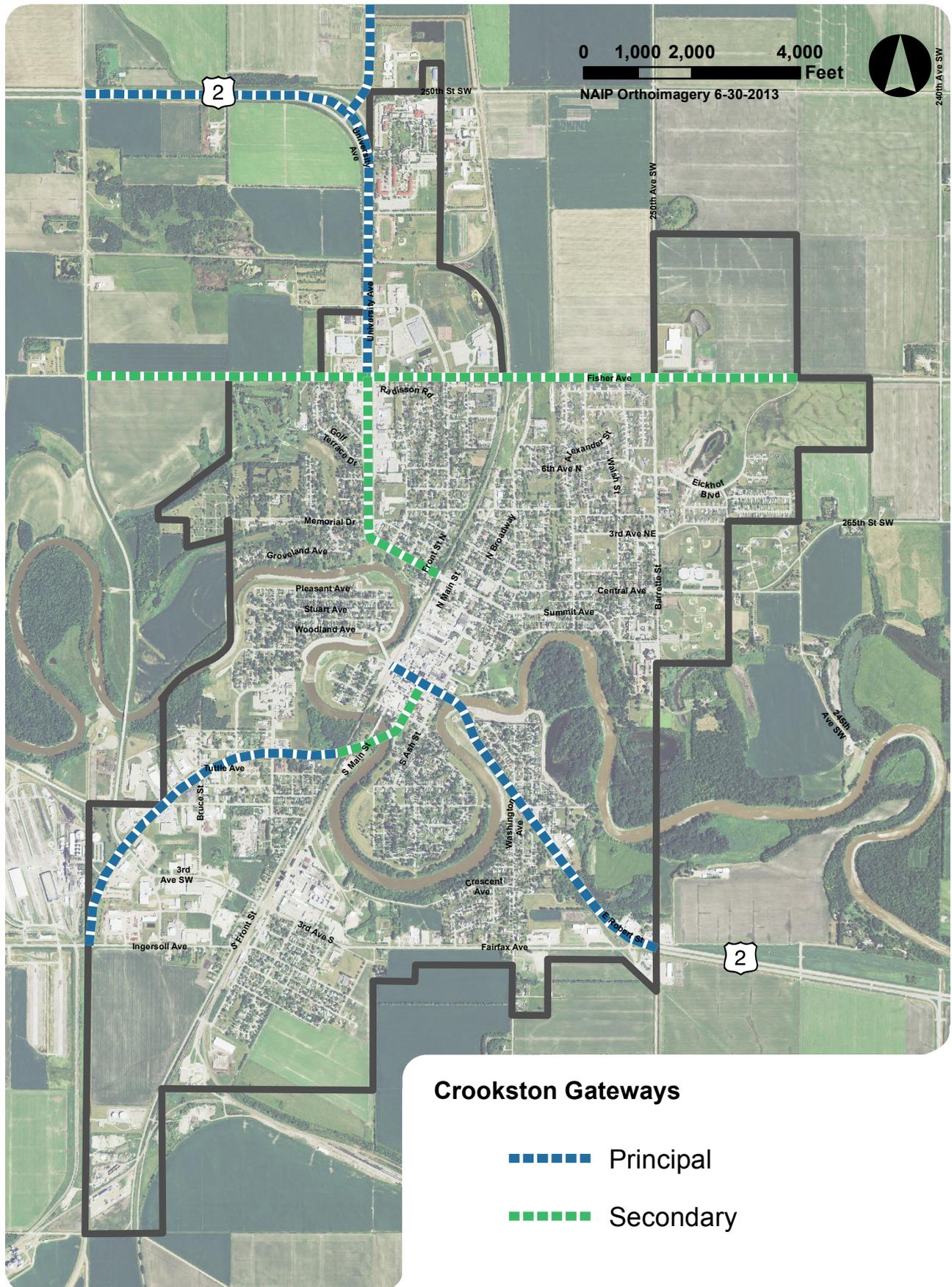
The city's Zoning Regulations include screening and buffering requirements for a number of uses; examples abound where the requirements are not met.

Gateway Corridors

Gateway corridors on US 2 and US 75 are important transportation corridors that carry significant volumes of traffic, making development along these corridors highly visible to the traveling public (Figure 6-4). They present a unique opportunity for gateways which provide a sense of identity, transition and anticipation. Installation of public amenities or landmarks for the gateway could include landscaping, signage features and concepts, wayfinding and street graphics concepts.

The identified corridors, or parts of them, can encourage high quality economic development and capital investment in the city. This is a classic example of the "land use connection" between development and transportation needs. Corridor overlays, a frequent implementation technique for important community gateways, are proposed for the city. It is anticipated that these corridors, or some of them, may be divided into a number of segments, each reflecting their context areas.

Figure 6-4: Gateways



Housing

Like today, Crookston in 2035 will require a mix of housing types and both owner-occupied and rental units. Additional consideration should be given to providing housing options for seniors who wish to age-in-place. This includes owner and renter options within close proximity to retail and medical services.

Additionally, there is need for housing that is both affordable and attractive to a broad spectrum of workers who may choose to live elsewhere because of current housing limitations. It is important for the City of Crookston to pursue ways to increase availability of housing to meet underserved markets and pent-up demand within the community. As noted elsewhere in this plan, providing amenities, including attractive and affordable housing, is an important economic development strategy to retain and attract people who would like to live, work and play in the Crookston community.

Reuse of abandoned, vacant and tax-delinquent properties, new construction on in-fill lots and rental housing above commercial uses in the downtown area can provide the needed workforce housing.

Historic Downtown Crookston

The downtown buildings protected by the National Register of Historic Places Historic District designation are a special city asset. Additional consideration could:

- Develop design guidelines for use in reviewing exterior changes to historic properties.
- Have Crookston become a Certified Local Government (CLG) as recognized by the National Park Service (NPS). As a CLG, Crookston can take advantage of technical expertise from NPS and become eligible for matching.
- Develop a historic marker program to identify area resources and to educate the public on the history of Crookston.

Connectivity Focus

Connections within the City of Crookston are physical, social and economic. One of the most important is the interrelationship between the city and the University of Minnesota Crookston (UMC). Crookston is home

to UMC, a “small college with a big degree”, where creativity, innovation and traditions thrive. Students bring energy and vitality to Crookston and push the city to learning, technology and environmental stewardship. In return, Crookston provides the UMC students, faculty, and staff with a welcoming “small town” environment and an excellent quality of life.

The key features of this college town are choices in where the residents live and how they travel from campus to work and from home to downtown. Complementary futures will include more cultural opportunities, more partnerships, more innovation and more integrated thinking about the place where residents call home.

Active Living

Make the healthy choice easier



Increased opportunities for physical activity...	...means more people get physical activity...	...leading to improved health...	Lowering health care costs and improving quality of life.
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Crookston and UMC are connected by people and places. The city’s partnership with the University is critical to Crookston’s continued growth and success. Faculty and students, staff and residents all share an interest in a community that meets their diverse needs. The city should continue to involve the UMC while implementing CrookstonTomorrow to take full advantage of ideas and resources to create a thriving economy and incorporate and utilize the intellectual capital that UMC and Crookston create and to foster an environment where students stay in the community after they graduate. Studies show that meaningful internships can assist in this transition.

Physical Connections

On-street bikeways, sidewalks, off-street trails, greenways and blueways facilities can serve both as transportation and recreation corridors, providing connections to parks, schools, civic facilities, historic sites, downtown and the city’s neighborhoods. They facilitate active living in Crookston and add to the city’s character. While the function of blueways is primarily recreational with launch points for canoes and kayaks, they do provide connections to other communities. Red Lake River provides the

opportunity for local and regional connections.

Local connections, both those discussed above and roadway connections can be enhanced by wayfinding. Navigation is fairly easy in Crookston but an effective wayfinding program can also be used to inform the public of Crookston's attractions which they may have missed otherwise. Wayfinding can also assist in setting the tone for the city. Wayfinding includes signage but in some locations it goes beyond that to include entry features and vegetation.

The US 75 bypass in Crookston presents a unique challenge. Drive-by traffic may not be aware of the shopping, restaurant and other opportunities available to them just off the road. Signage along the road could help Crookston businesses.

Regional Collaboration

Crookston is a small city that benefits from its relationships, both formal and informal with other local governments and agencies in the region. Fostering these physical and collaborative connections adds value to Crookston.

Technological Connections

One of the ways small communities are able to compete with major metropolitan areas is by providing high quality technological connections for the entire community. Many people, including the millennial cohort who are playing an increasingly important role in today's economy, are interested in being able to work wherever they find a great place to live. An increasing number of jobs and even whole industries can function primarily through internet access. Thus, broadband services are a critical part of a connectivity focus and economic sustainability that will help Crookston to thrive in the future. Although there is already significant access to broadband in some parts of Crookston, making it available throughout the community is an important initiative to consider. Another college town at the fringe of the Red River Valley recently provided broadband to every home and business in the city in an effort to spearhead a new economic development initiative aimed at retaining and growing more of their college graduates and technologically-based businesses.





SECTION 7: FUTURE LAND USE MAP AND DECISION-MAKING FRAMEWORK

The Future Land Use Map (Figure 7-1) expresses CrookstonTomorrow’s vision for the City of Crookston. As the city moves toward 2035, the planning horizon for CrookstonTomorrow, this Land Use Map may and most likely will be modified to reflect changing conditions. The Land Use Map is not to be construed as a rigid image of the city of Crookston in the future; it provides the geographic framework to guide the City’s land use policies and development decisions. The Future Land Use Map is part of the adopted CrookstonTomorrow and carries the same legal weight as the plan document itself.

Together with the CrookstonTomorrow text, this map will be used to help determine whether proposed changes to zoning— both text and map amendments— are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. It uses color-coded categories to show the general character, distribution, and intensity of recommended and planned land use for Crookston in 2035, the horizon year of CrookstonTomorrow.

Consistency with the Future Land Use Map is not the only criterion that will be used to determine the reasonableness of a zoning map amendment. Other criterion include, but are not limited to, compatibility with the existing character of the surrounding area and impact on public services, infrastructure, traffic, transit, hydrology, fire, safety, parks and historic resources.

This map seeks to achieve the following objectives:

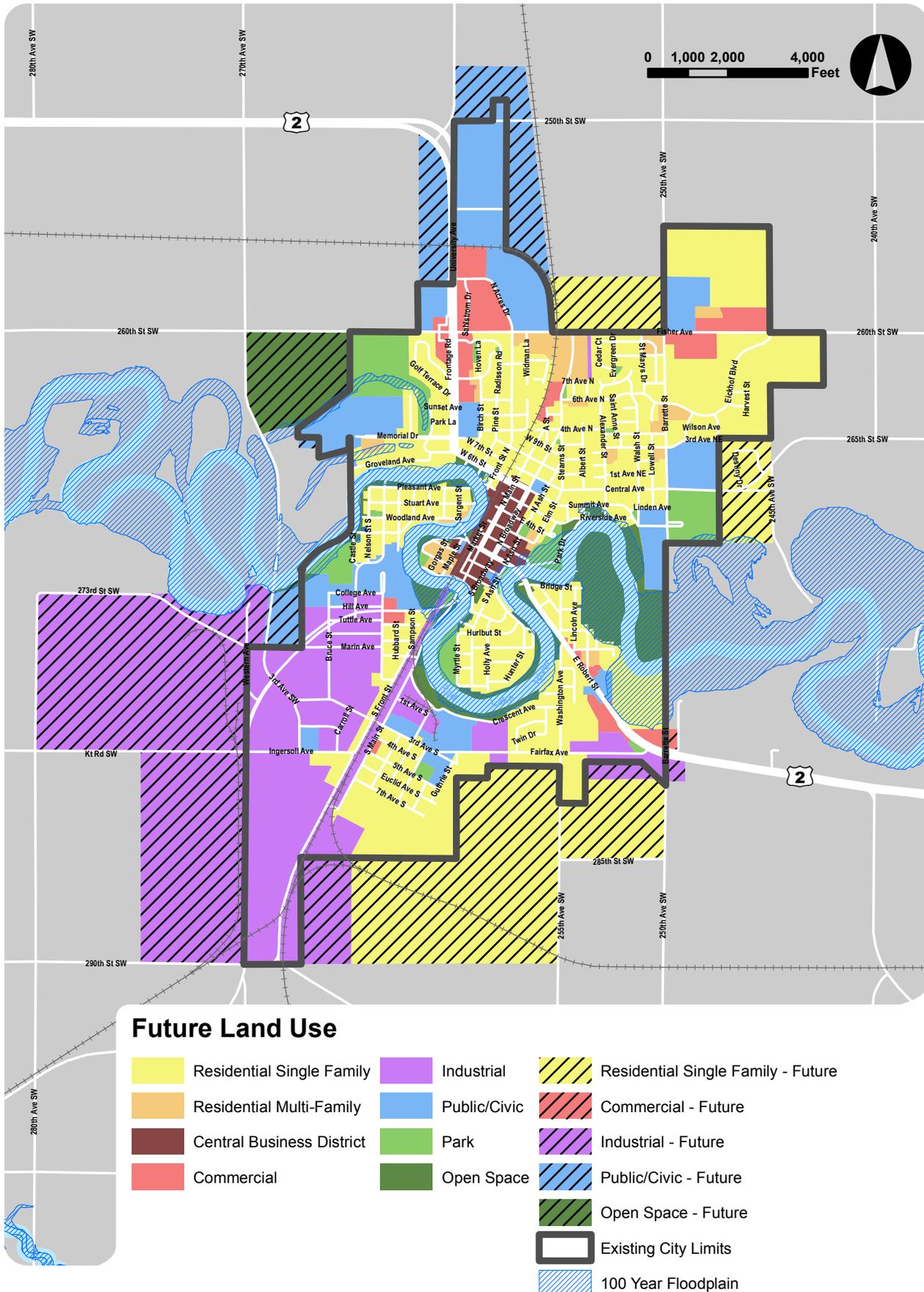
- Provide greater land use predictability and transparency
- Incorporate relevant aspects of the previous Urban Form Map that related to land use
- Advance Crookston’s vision for the future, as described in CrookstonTomorrow
- Create a logical framework for future zoning and development

The following parameters apply to the use and interpretation of the Future Land Use Map:

- The Future Land Use Map is a generalized depiction of intended uses. It is not an “existing land use map,” although in many cases future uses in an area may be the same as those that exist today.
- The rezoning of any given area should be guided by the Future Land Use Map, interpreted in conjunction with the policies of CrookstonTomorrow. However, the Future Land Use Map is not a zoning map.
- While the Future Land Use Map will influence future zoning, it does not alter current zoning or affect the right of property owners to use the land for its purpose as zoned at the time of the adoption of CrookstonTomorrow.
- Whereas zoning maps establish detailed requirements for setbacks, height, use, parking and other attributes, the land use categories of the Future Land Use Map recommend a range of potentially appropriate land uses and intensities.

The Future Land Use Map does not share the same legal status as the city’s Zoning Map. It should be considered a guide, expressing a vision for the city’s future, and should be used to influence future land use decisions, not regulate the activities in specific zones.

Figure 7-1: Future Land Use Map



Land Use Map Categories

Designations on the Land Use Map are based on site constraints, historic and developing growth patterns and community preferences. Gradations of densities are expected in many of the land use plan categories. Land uses and densities are proposed as the recommended “maximum allowed” and do not preclude lower intensity land uses or densities. Recommended densities are defined for “gross areas” and not on a per parcel or lot basis.

Residential Single Family

This category encompasses most of Crookston’s single family detached residential neighborhoods.

Residential Multi-Family

This category provides for a variety of housing options including single-family homes, townhomes and apartments.

Central Business District¹

This category applies to the traditional downtown Crookston.

Commercial

This category applies to commercial development outside of the Central Business District that serves Crookston and the surrounding area.

Industrial

This category designates areas programmed for industrial uses.

Public/Civic

This category identifies large publicly-owned non-park properties.

Park

This category designates neighborhood and community parks.

Open Space

This category generally applies to land along the Red Lake River.

100-Year Floodplain

This overlay designation generally depicts the FEMA floodplain² – an area with a 1% chance of flooding in any given year.

“Future” Categories

An additional five land use categories are depicted on the future land use map. Property with these designations are outside of the 2015 Crookston city limits. Much of this area is designated as prime farmland³ by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. The city recognizes the importance of lands with this designation for economic, environmental and historic purposes. Designating property with these future land use categories does not indicate that these properties should be converted from their current use; these designations recommend the type of land uses that could be appropriate if and when these properties are annexed. As with the other land use categories, each category is intended to indicate a predominant land use, or set of uses as well as other features that define the character of the category.

Decision Making Framework

Together, the CrookstonTomorrow text, the Land Use Map (Figure 7-1), the Land Use Decision Matrix (Table 7-1) and the Zoning Matrix (Table 7-2) will be used to help determine whether proposed uses or proposed zoning amendments, both text and map amendment, are consistent with CrookstonTomorrow.

Land Use Decision Matrices

The Land Use Decision Matrix identifies the land use categories depicted on the Land Use Map and provides guidance for uses and location criteria.

¹ Parcels with public ownership, except for City Hall, the County Courthouse and the police station which are designated as public, have been designated Central Business District.

² FEMA FIRM 7/4/2014 (Revised by LOMR 11/14/2014)

³ Prime Farmland designations are: “All areas are prime farmland”, “Prime farmland if drained”, “Prime farmland if protected from flooding” and “Farmland of statewide importance”.

**Table 7-1
Land Use Decision Matrix**

Land Use Category	Category Overview	Features and Location Criteria
Residential Single Family	This category encompasses most of Crookston’s single family detached residential neighborhoods.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovative other single-family and low density forms including twin homes and townhomes up to 6 units per acre may be permitted. • Small-scale civic uses and minor neighborhood-oriented commercial uses and churches are allowed in appropriate locations.
Residential Multi-Family	This category provides for a variety of housing options including single-family homes, townhomes and apartments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small-scale civic uses, minor neighborhood-oriented commercial uses, limited office uses and churches are allowed in appropriate locations. • Higher density uses should avoid traffic, scale and visual impacts on lower-density uses.
Central Business District ⁴	This category applies to the traditional downtown Crookston.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land uses include a mix of uses, primarily commercial, office, and limited upper level residential. • The Central Business District may expand with development of appropriately designed adjacent projects. • New projects and redevelopment should respect pedestrian scale, design pattern, and setbacks within the overall district. Historic preservation is a significant value.
Commercial	This category applies to commercial development outside of the Central Business District that serves Crookston and the surrounding area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The mixture of uses, character of development and intensity of commercial uses includes neighborhood-serving commercial, office use, large-scale retail centers and auto-oriented commercial development. • Commercial uses are expected to locate along arterials or other major streets, and in areas that are relatively isolated from residential, parks, and other vulnerable uses. • Potential negative effects on surrounding residential areas should be limited by location and buffering.
Industrial	This category designates areas programmed for industrial uses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Category allows a wide range of industrial uses including manufacturing, tech-flex, warehousing, distribution and processing facilities as well as heavy commercial uses. • Sites should have direct access to major regional roadways without passing through residential areas. • New and redevelopment projects are subject to review for external impacts. • Industrial sites should be well-buffered from less intensive uses.

⁴ Parcels with public ownership, except for City Hall, the County Courthouse and the police station which are designated as public, have been designated Central Business District.

Table 7-1
Land Use Decision Matrix

Land Use Category	Category Overview	Features and Location Criteria
Public/Civic	This category identifies large publicly owned non-park properties.	
Park	This category identifies large publicly owned neighborhood and community park properties.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parks vary in size, range of activities offered and level of programming depending on the type of park. • Golf courses are included in this category.
Open Space	This category generally applies to land along the Red Lake River.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most property is in public ownership. • Open space is expected to remain the principal use during the planning period.
100-Year Floodplain	This overlay depicts the FEMA floodway.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This category identifies property that may be subject to floodplain limitations.

"Future" Categories

An additional five land use categories are depicted on the future land use map. Property with these designations are outside of the 2015 Crookston city limits. Much of this area is designated as prime farmland⁵ by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. The city recognizes the importance of lands with this designation for economic, environmental and historic purposes. Designating property with these future land use categories does not indicate that these properties should be converted from their current use; these designations recommend the type of land uses that could be appropriate if and when these properties are annexed. As with the other land use categories, each category is intended to indicate a predominant land use, or set of use as well as other features that define the character of the category.

⁵ Prime Farmland designations are: "All areas are prime farmland", "Prime farmland if drained", "Prime farmland if protected from flooding" and "Farmland of statewide importance".

Zoning Compatibility Matrix

The Zoning Compatibility Matrix (Table 7-2) will be used to help determine whether a proposed zoning district is consistent with CrookstonTomorrow. Consistency with the Future Land Use Map is not the only criterion that will be used to determine the reasonableness of a zoning map amendment. Other criteria include, but are not limited to, compatibility with the surrounding area and potential impact on community services and infrastructure.

Table 7-2 Zoning Compatibility Matrix ⁶											
Land Use Category	Proposed Zoning Districts										
	R-1	R-2	R-3	FR	RC	C-1	C-2	C-3	I-1	I-2	IN
Residential Single Family	C	P	I	C	I	I	I	I	I	I	P
Residential Multi-Family	C	C	C	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	P
Central Business District	I	I	P	I	I	P	P	I	I	I	P
Commercial	I	I	I	I	I	C	C	C	I	I	P
Industrial	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	C	C	P
Public/Civic	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	P
Parks	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
Open Space	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I

⁶ Compatible

The proposed zoning district is considered compatible with the land use category. Development should be designed consistent with good planning practice.

Potentially Compatible

The proposed zoning district may be compatible but may have potential conflicts with existing adjacent uses that could be resolved or minimized through project design. Traffic and other external effects should be directed away from lower-intensity uses. Landscaping, buffering and screening should be employed to minimize negative effects.

Incompatible

The proposed zoning district is incompatible with adjacent land uses. Any development proposal requires extensive documentation to prove that external effects are fully mitigated. In general, proposed uses with this level of conflict will not be permitted.

SECTION 8: IMPLEMENTING CROOKSTONTOMORROW

This section, Implementing CrookstonTomorrow, summarizes CrookstonTomorrow’s recommendations and policies, and presents an implementation schedule with preferred time frames for executing individual projects and initiatives. The table is organized by three themes: Economic Sustainability, Community Character and Connectivity. Some recommendations are far-reaching; others are more limited in scope. Many theme details overlap with other themes but the discussion is not repeated. All of these recommendations need champions to track progress and rally the community to achieve them. It is anticipated that the list will be adjusted during the draft review, both as to the specific entries and their priorities and time frame.

CrookstonTomorrow Implementation

Theme and Topic	Recommendations	Time Frame
ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY FOCUS		
Economic Sustainability	Prepare a Strategic Economic Development Plan for Crookston. The plan should address the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventory and analysis of existing businesses and industry • Analysis of competitive advantages for Crookston • Identification of target industries and other businesses for Crookston 	
	Work with local employers, including UMC, to develop strategies for increasing percentage of employees who live in Crookston.	
	In evaluating city investments, consider the long-term economic cost/benefit to the city.	
	Encourage and support small and independent businesses.	
	Inventory existing small and in-home businesses to collect data for grant applications. Consider small grants or loans to encourage entrepreneurs and small businesses.	
	Identify partners to provide technical assistance (i.e., legal and financial advice for entrepreneurs and small business owners).	
	Partner with the Chamber of Commerce to support “shop local” and small business activities.	
	Support enhancement of the city’s health care facilities as an economic asset to the community.	
Agriculture	Adjusting the city code to require consideration of the importance of any prime farmland designation in any decisions to annex or rezone these properties.	
Marketing Crookston	Update the city website so that it compares favorably to small Minnesota towns that are considered “Best Places to Live” (2015 list - livability.com, Alexandria #22, Marshall #28, Northfield #33, Fergus Falls #62, Bemidji #74)	
	Consider a “tag line” for the city.	
	Actively promote the assets of the city.	

Theme and Topic	Recommendations	Time Frame
ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY FOCUS		
Downtown Transportation and Parking	Improve traffic flow through downtown: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider reevaluating the one-way pair • Consider street diet • Consider complete streets 	
	Support efforts to ramp up redirecting truck traffic away from downtown. Renew efforts to educate heavy trucks and concrete trucks to select alternate routes.	
	Complete a parking analysis.	
Main Street Program	Consider utilizing the Main Street approach to focus downtown revitalization efforts. Some topics that could be addressed through this, or other approaches, are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase retail shops and restaurants downtown • Reduce the number of empty storefronts • Improve upon the tourist population • Improve the appearance of downtown • Address apathy of absent landlords in restoring deteriorating buildings • Promote Crookston as a historical, cultural and environmental community 	
Senior Population	Study the feasibility (costs and benefits) of promoting Crookston as a “Best Small City for Seniors”.	
	Consider establishing a program like “Brainerd for a Lifetime” to address the city’s expanding senior population.	
Green Initiatives	Continue to raise awareness of the value of environmental and natural resources in Crookston.	
	Promote the use of green building techniques and rainwater capture systems in new developments.	
	Continue to participate in Minnesota’s GreenStep program.	
	Evaluate the use of native prairie grass in some city parks or other areas that currently require mowing to reduce the cost of mowing and weed control.	
UMC and Business Connections	Collaborate with UMC to identify internship and employment opportunities.	
	Collaborate with UMC in identifying training needed by local employers for their existing or prospective staff.	
Leadership	Support local leadership programs.	
	Identify a “Champion” for each of the city’s initiatives.	
Safety/Crime	Continue on-going efforts to minimize crime in the city and provide residents and business owners with a sense of security.	
City Services	Provide adequate fire, police and emergency service in all areas.	
	Continue to assess public facility needs to meet demand generated by existing as well as future growth and development.	

Theme and Topic	Recommendations	Time Frame
COMMUNITY CHARACTER FOCUS		
Community Image	Continue program to maintain and upgrade city facilities	
	Actively address the challenge of the large empty facilities, whether publicly or privately owned.	
	Continue the city’s program of flower baskets along city streets.	
	Address the landscaping requirements of Zoning Regulations regarding screening and buffering .	
	Adopt a Gateway Corridor Overlay along the city’s gateway roadways.	
	Update signage at the major entries into town with clear graphics, landscaping and/or other gateway features.	
	As a part of an overall study of the one-way pair in downtown, evaluate the width of the sidewalks.	
Compatibility	Ensure new development is compatible with existing neighborhoods in terms of scale, character and quality of construction.	
Housing (some of these elements could be in the economic sustainability section)	Accommodate a mix of housing by type (e.g. single-family homes, townhouses, multi-family) and tenure (own/rent) to serve a growing and increasingly diverse population.	
	Additional consideration should be given to providing housing options for Baby Boomers who wish to age-in-place. This includes owner and renter options within close proximity to retail and medical services.	
	Facilitate the reuse of abandoned, vacant and tax-delinquent properties for workforce housing.	
	Allow and encourage residential development, especially rental housing, above commercial uses in the downtown area.	
Historic	Continue to protect historic resources using the National Register of Historic Places Historic District designation and other tools.	
	<p>Enable and continue the preservation program at the local level. Initial tasks include the following to establish a local district if desired:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop design guidelines for use in reviewing exterior changes to historic properties. • Have Crookston become a Certified Local Government (CLG) as recognized by the National Park Service (NPS). As a CLG, Crookston can take advantage of technical expertise from NPS and become eligible for matching. • Develop a historic marker program to identify area resources and to educate the public on the history of Crookston. 	

Theme and Topic	Recommendations	Time Frame
CONNECTIVITY FOCUS		
UMC Connections	Promote connectivity and collaboration between UMC to the city's parks and recreation facilities	
	Encourage connections between UMC and downtown as well as the overall community: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to support the annual college connections' event Facilitate transit and other "commuting connections" 	
Greenways	Develop a long-range open space and trail/sidewalk plan including a focus on connectivity.	
	Develop criteria for the prioritization of greenway connections with priority given to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greenways that serve both as transportation and recreation corridors Greenways that provide connections to schools, civic facilities, historic sites, downtown and recreation 	
	Conduct an inventory of informal trails in Crookston and surrounding areas to identify future potential additions to the greenway/trail network and to help prioritize sidewalk projects.	
Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities	Continue building organizational support for bicycle and pedestrian facilities in Crookston.	
	Continue supporting local running/bicycle events.	
	Support bicycle facilities and bicycle connections to downtown.	
	Add bicycle facilities to downtown to increase the multimodal appeal of the downtown and improve overall citywide connectivity.	
	Consider adding an ice skating trail to Crookston's winter recreational facilities.	
Regional Connections	Foster physical and collaborative connections between Crookston's facilities and services and their regional counterparts.	
Transit	Continue to support regional connections of T.H.E. BUS	
Blueways	Support efforts to connect activities on Red Lake River with other regional blueways.	
	Encourage entrepreneurs efforts to promote activities on Red Lake River.	
	Support connections between Red Lake River and the city's bicycle and pedestrian facilities.	
	Support connections between the Red Lake River and downtown businesses.	
Wayfinding	Utilize uniform wayfinding to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Link parks, bicycle and pedestrian facilities Provide access to river and other regional amenities Facilitate focus on major destinations Attract potential customers from US 75 to Crookston's businesses 	



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