

Nebraska Investment Finance Authority  
Housing Study Grant Program.

# LAUREL, NEBRASKA

## Comprehensive Planning Program.



## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN – 2030.

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**SEPTEMBER, 2020**

# ***LAUREL, NEBRASKA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN - 2030.***

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The Laurel Community Housing Study was funded by the Nebraska Investment Finance Authority Housing Study Grant Program, with matching funds from Laurel Economic Development. The Housing Study was completed with the guidance and direction of City of Laurel Planning Commission and completed as a component of the Laurel, Nebraska Comprehensive Planning Program.

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# SECTION 1



**THE LAUREL PLANNING PROCESS.**



## **SECTION 1 THE LAUREL PLANNING PROCESS.**

### **INTRODUCTION.**

This **Laurel, Nebraska Comprehensive Plan** was prepared as a tool to assist in planning for the future development and stability of Laurel, Nebraska and the City's respective One-Mile Planning Jurisdiction. The **Comprehensive Plan** contains information about existing social and economic conditions within the City, including population, land use, public facilities, utilities and transportation.

The **Laurel Planning Process** included the development of a **General Plan**, which establishes specific and practical guidelines for improving existing conditions and controlling future growth. The **Plan** itself presents a planning program with “**Goals**” and “**Action Steps**” in the areas of “**Community Growth, Land Use, & Zoning;**” “**Housing & Neighborhood Redevelopment;**” and “**Education & Community/Economic Development.**”

The **Comprehensive Plan** was prepared under the direction of the **Laurel Planning Commission**, with the assistance of the **Laurel Economic Development, Laurel Planning Commission, City Staff** and Planning Consultants **Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C.** of Lincoln, Nebraska.

### **PLANNING PERIOD**

The planning period for achieving the goals, programs, and community and economic development activities identified in this **Comprehensive Plan** is **10 years, 2020 to 2030**. The **Plan** highlights necessary, broad-based community and economic development activities to meet the City's goals. This approach allows the Community of Laurel to focus on a long-term vision, accomplished by means of implementing specific activities to address the social and economic well-being of its citizens.

## **PLANNING JURISDICTION**

The **City of Laurel Planning Jurisdiction** includes the land areas within the Corporate Limits and within one mile of the City. The City enforces planning, zoning and subdivision regulations in the One-Mile Planning Jurisdiction, in accordance with Nebraska State Statutes.

## **AUTHORITY TO PLAN**

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

## **COMMUNITY SUMMARY**

The City of Laurel, is located in southeastern Cedar County, in northeast Nebraska. The City is approximately 16 miles north of Wayne, Nebraska, and 38 miles west of Sioux City, Iowa. The City is served by U.S. Highway 20, and State Highway 15. These two highway corridors meet in the south central portion of the Community and become a dual-listed highway, as they traverse northward along Willow Street.



Residential development in Laurel is primarily located along and south of West First and West Second Streets. The older housing stock of Laurel is generally located east of the Highway 15/20 (Willow Street) Corridor and north of the Highway 15 Corridor. More recent housing development has occurred south of the Highway 15 Corridor, while the newest housing developments are located in the western portions of the Community. It's within this western residential development area that the largest amounts of undeveloped land, planned for low density and upper income residential development, currently exists. Multifamily, elderly and skilled nursing/assisted living housing programs are also available in Laurel.

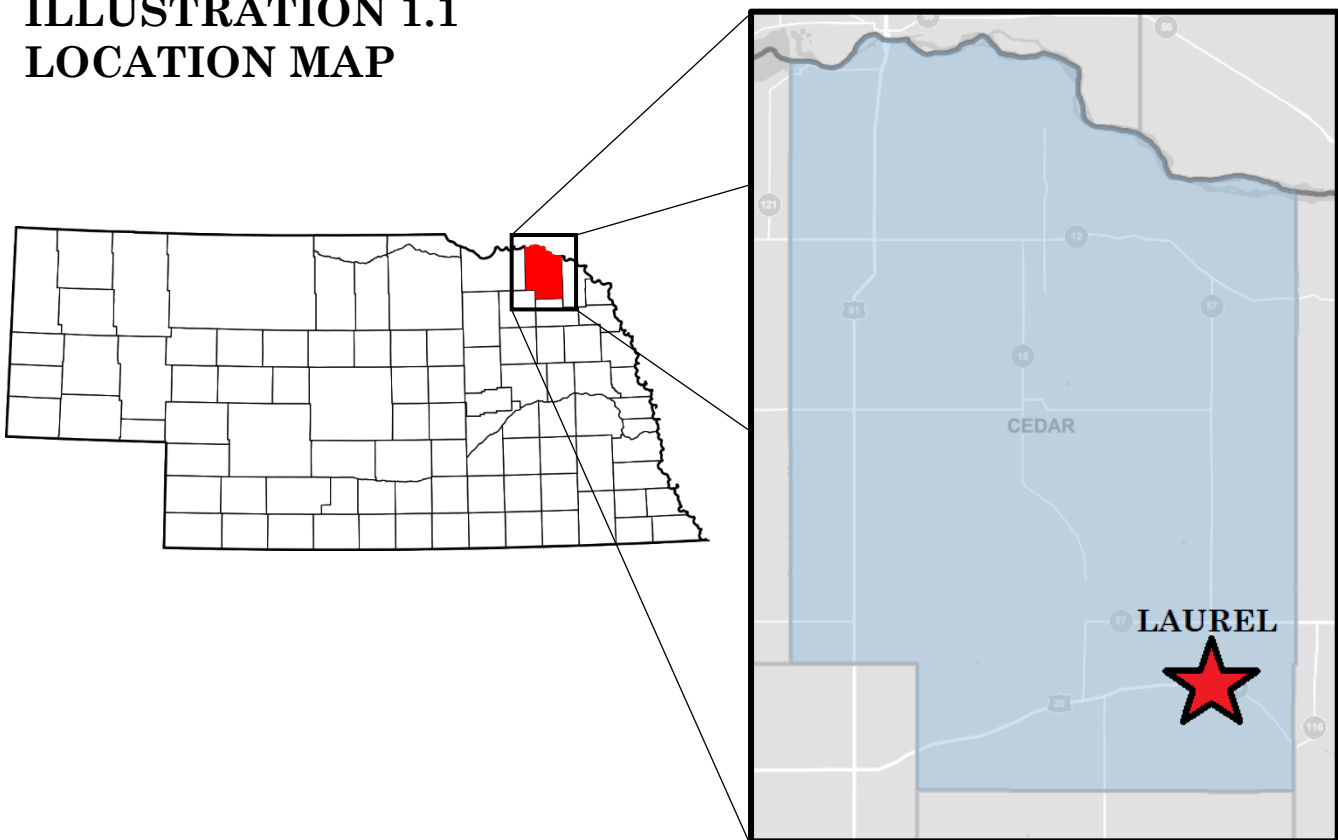
Downtown Laurel is located along East Second Street, in the northeast portion of the Community. The Downtown consists of professional offices, specialty retail stores, banks, senior center, restaurants and City government offices. **The City recently completed a Downtown Revitalization Plan and, currently, is in the process of implementing recommended public improvements in the Downtown.**

Highway Commercial development areas are generally located along the Highway 15/20 (Willow Street) Corridor and feature convenience stores, fast food restaurants, motels, a department store and banks. Industrial development is generally located in the Laurel Industrial Park (west of the Highway 15/20 (Willow Street) Corridor) and along the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad Corridor. Industrial operations in laurel are primarily agriculturally-based.

Park and recreation opportunities exist throughout Laurel. Public and private recreation facilities include Laurel City Park, Laurel Swimming Pool and the Cedar View Country Club/Golf Course. The City also maintains a large tract of land in the southwest portion of the Community, which contains a walking trail, the Laurel-Concord-Coleridge Public Schools football field and a frisbee golf course.

## **ILLUSTRATION 1.1**

### **LOCATION MAP**



## **RESPONSIBLE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT**

The City of Laurel is in a position to determine the community and economic development enhancements most needed and desired to better serve persons and families wanting the quality of life offered by small town living. The Community of Laurel offers a variety of amenities including public schools, restaurants, governmental services, grocery and convenience stores, senior center, medical clinic, etc.

**The primary goal of the Laurel Comprehensive Plan is to promote responsible growth, betterment and sustainability of Community services and values.** This includes an understanding of the growth potential within the existing built environs of Laurel, as well as the support for preserving the agricultural and natural resources associated with the City. Undeveloped land areas within the One-Mile Planning Jurisdiction of Laurel will be assigned land uses and zoning classifications capable of preserving the integrity of these areas, while providing for controlled, well planned growth throughout the 10-year planning period.

**Responsible growth and development activities** will include the ongoing planning and implementation of needed public facilities, utilities and transportation systems in Laurel. The Community is cognizant of its residential, commercial, industrial, social and recreational needs, but will need to continue to upgrade and develop modern, accessible public facilities and infrastructure to meet an increasing demand for these services.



## ***THE PLAN AS A COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TOOL.***

The **Laurel Comprehensive Plan** has been designed to **enhance both community and economic development efforts** to promote the stability and resiliency of the local economy. To accomplish this, local leaders will need to react to changing economic conditions and access both public and private financing programs available to meet and aid in financing these changes. Local decisions will need to enhance community and economic development opportunities, as well as preserve local values. The Community's ability to utilize Tax Increment Financing (TIF) will play an important role in growth opportunities for Laurel, especially in funding public infrastructure improvements. Citizen input will be needed to assist and enhance this political decision making process.

The **Future Land Use Maps** for the City of Laurel encourage controlled growth and expansion of the City during the 10-year planning period. The City must also continue to improve and enhance its older neighborhoods, including the Downtown. The City should establish incentives for public and private partnerships for redevelopment to coincide with community growth and expansion.

Incentives such as TIF, Historic Tax Credits, Community Development Block Grants and a variety of other State and Federal housing and economic development funding sources, coupled with private financing, should be utilized on an annual basis by the Community to achieve the goals contained within this **Comprehensive Plan**. **The City of Laurel will want to consider utilizing local tax dollars for economic development opportunities, via the passage of the Local Option Municipal Economic Development Act (LB840).**

Under the direction of **Laurel Economic Development**, a new **Community Housing Study** was completed in July, 2020. The Study highlights population, income, economic and housing stock data for the City of Laurel and includes a **10-Year Housing Action Plan**, complete with a list of specific housing programs for both the construction of new housing and the rehabilitation of the existing housing stock. Providing safe, modern and affordable housing in Laurel during the next 10 years is critical to the health and well-being of the citizens of Laurel. This will ensure a population base capable of supporting various important businesses and services in the Community.





## **ORGANIZATION OF THE PLAN.**

The creation of the **Laurel Comprehensive Plan** included the implementation of both **qualitative** and **quantitative research activities**, in an effort to gather pertinent planning information and data. The **qualitative approach** included a comprehensive citizen participation process consisting of meetings with the Laurel Planning Commission along with the implementation of a “Laurel Citizen Survey” in an effort to assess the needs and wants of the Laurel citizenry, including the local workforce.

The **quantitative approach** included the analysis of the various statistical databases provided by the 2000 and 2010 Censuses, the 2014-2018 American Community Survey and information from other pertinent local, state, and federal agencies. The **quantitative approach** also included on-site field research activities to determine the present condition and profiles of local land use, housing, public infrastructure and facilities, transportation and environmental issues.

**The combined results of these two important research approaches produced this Comprehensive Plan and includes the following Sections:**

- ❖ **Community Planning Goals & Action Steps.**
- ❖ **Population, Income & Economic Profile.**
- ❖ **Land Use, Growth & Redevelopment.**
- ❖ **Public Facilities, Utilities & Transportation.**
- ❖ **Energy Element.**

The system embodied in this community planning framework is a process that relies upon continuous feedback, as goals change and policies become more clearly defined. Planning is an ongoing process that requires constant monitoring and revision throughout the proposed planning period. This **Comprehensive Plan** is organized into three elements as summarized on **Page 1.7**.

### **ELEMENT 1**

The **first** element of the **Comprehensive Plan** are the **Goals and Action Steps**, which represent the foundation for which planning components are designed and eventually implemented. The **Goals and Action Steps** identified in this **Comprehensive Plan** address each component of the **Plan** itself. Action Steps identify specific activities the Community should undertake to accomplish the **Goals**.

### **ELEMENT 2**

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

### **ELEMENT 3**

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

## ***STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES & OPPORTUNITIES IN LAUREL.***

It is critical for the City of Laurel to support community and economic ventures that both maintain and improve quality of life and community resiliency. The provision of public services, grassroots-based community clubs and organizations, quality infrastructure and transportation, adequate and affordable housing and employment opportunities will result in a healthy and efficiently functioning community. The following highlights comments from the **Laurel Planning Commission** regarding the **strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for planning and development in Laurel**.

- **STRENGTH:** Several new public facility developments are planned for the City of Laurel, including the construction of a new Fire Department facility and a Downtown Community center to house an event area with a capacity of 400+ people, a new Senior Center, City Offices and additional Community meeting rooms. Other public facilities, including the Laurel-Concord-Coleridge Public Schools, Laurel Swimming Pool and local park and recreation opportunities have been consistently maintained or are in the planning/fundraising stage for necessary facility improvements. These facilities are critical to promoting and enhancing the health, safety and well-being of all Laurel residents.
- **OPPORTUNITY:** City leadership have expressed their desire to attract commercial businesses to the Community. Developable tracts of land are available along the Highway 15/20 (Willow Street) Corridor and in Downtown Laurel. Additionally, vacated buildings in these locations could support new business ventures. It would be beneficial to the Community of Laurel to consider the development of a “Business Incubator Program” to provide operation space for new start-ups and home-based businesses.
- **STRENGTH:** Downtown Laurel is currently undertaking significant redevelopments to public infrastructure, streets and sidewalks, including street and sidewalk pavement resurfacing and removal of the grass and curb median along East Second Street, between Elm and Cedar Streets. Additionally, Downtown property owners leveraged over \$250,000 in CDBG Downtown Revitalization Funds and local investment for façade and structural improvements on their buildings.
- **STRENGTH:** The Community greatly benefits from having effective relationships with community and economic development organizations, including the **Laurel Community Redevelopment Association (CRA)**, **Laurel Chamber Community Club**, **Laurel Area Community Foundation**, **Northeast Housing Initiative**, **Cedar Knox Public Power District**, **Northeast Nebraska Economic Development District** and the **Laurel City Council and Planning Commission**, to serve as a vehicle to plan and implement residential, commercial and industrial development and redevelopment activities in the City.

- **OPPORTUNITY:** Laurel is in the process of annexing a 110 acre tract of land adjacent the southeastern Corporate Limits, planned for varying densities of residential development.
- **STRENGTH:** The Laurel Industrial Park is developing rapidly. Since 2012, four new businesses have built facilities in the Park, thanks to a \$1.9 million electrical infrastructure expansion project and \$1 million in street extension projects that served as catalysts for the developments in the Park.
- **STRENGTH:** A group of local investors partnered with Faith Regional Physicians Services, based in the nearby City of Norfolk, to construct a new Downtown medical clinic, which houses Laurel Family Medicine.
- **STRENGTH:** Housing opportunities for elderly and frail elderly, including skilled nursing and assisted living, are available in Laurel, providing Laurel and the surrounding area/communities with adequate supportive housing for elderly persons seeking a level of care that requires specialized services.
- **OPPORTUNITY:** Residential lots for new housing construction are available in the Norris and Galvin Additions on the west side of Laurel. The City recently completed the 4<sup>th</sup> Street Paving Project to ensure all available lots in the Addition have paved access streets.
- **OPPORTUNITY:** The Laurel Recreation Board is currently developing initiatives to improve the Laurel City Park and softball field.
- **WEAKNESS:** Several segments of sidewalks, particularly in the eastern portions of the Community, are deteriorating or dilapidated with severe cracking, heaving and settling. Additionally, several residential parcels throughout Laurel have either an incomplete sidewalk system, or no sidewalks at all, creating a potentially hazardous situation for vehicles and pedestrians.
- **WEAKNESS:** Additionally, a number of residential streets in Laurel are exhibiting cracking, heaving and settling, as well as potholes that impede a consistent and safe flow of traffic. Gravel-surfaced roads also exist in Laurel that can become treacherous in extreme situations, such as flooding or heavy commercial vehicle use.

- **WEAKNESS:** The Community of Laurel has a significant deficiency in both affordable owner and multifamily rental housing. As of June, 2020, only five homes were for sale in Laurel. Only two rental housing programs exist in the Community, with one being designated as an independent living program for the elderly/seniors. The lack of mid-range priced housing, both owner and rental, was identified by the Laurel Planning Commission, as many teachers within the Laurel-Concord-Coleridge Public School District are searching for housing in neighboring Communities.
- **WEAKNESS:** Dilapidated housing exists in Laurel that is in need of either moderate or substantial rehabilitation, or demolition and replacement with new housing units that are safe, affordable and meet local development code.
- **OPPORTUNITY:** A “Redevelopment Area” has been designated in Laurel for the use of Tax Increment Financing as a means to improve public infrastructure, as well as improve and rehabilitate existing commercial and residential structures. This area **includes a large portion of northern Laurel, as well as the Downtown, Highway 15/20 (Willow Street) Corridor, Laurel Industrial Park and the residential development south of the Downtown.**

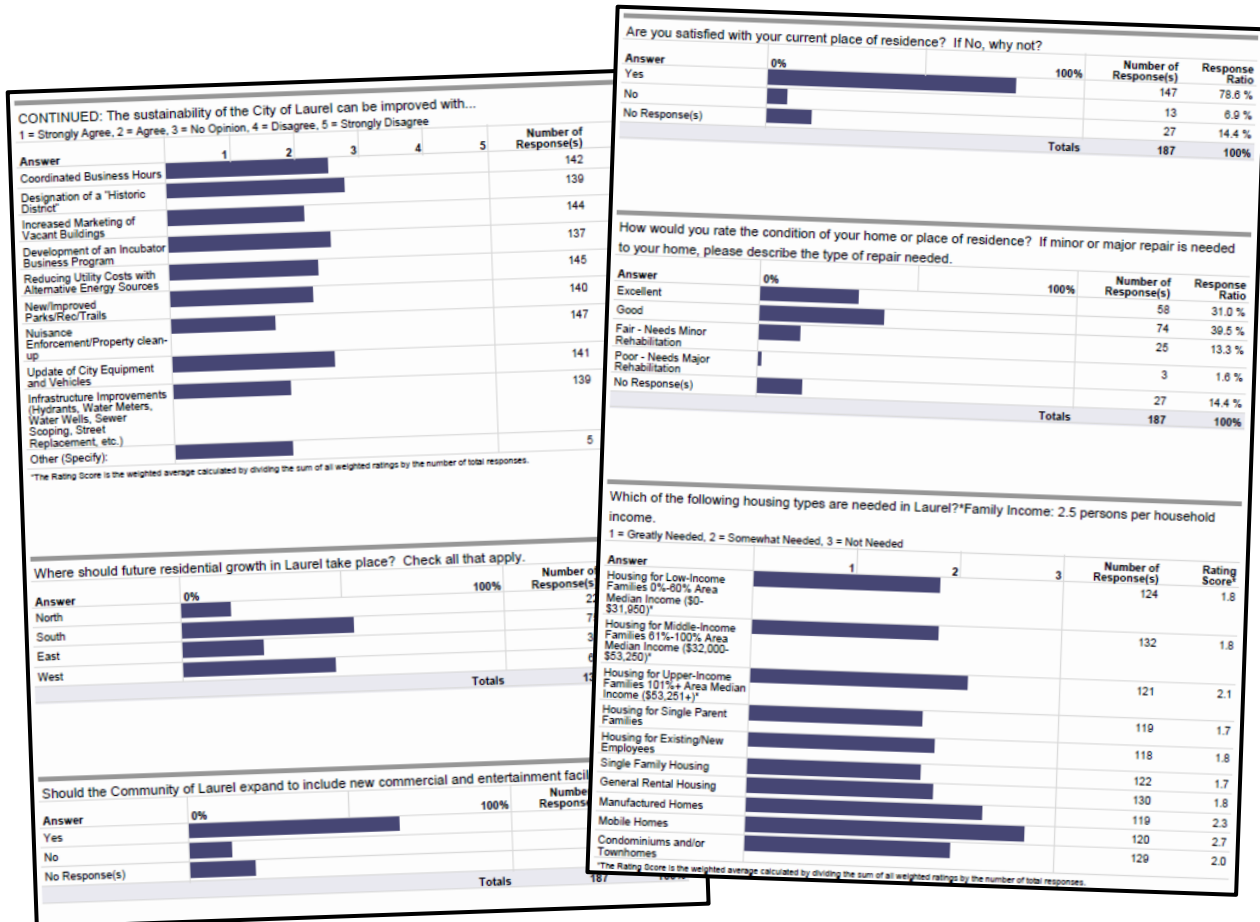
### **LAUREL CITIZEN SURVEY.**

A **comprehensive citizen participation program** was implemented to gather the opinions of the Laurel citizenry regarding Community planning and housing issues and needs. ***Planning for Laurel’s future is most effective when it includes opinions from as many citizens as possible.*** The methods used to gather information from the citizens of Laurel included meetings with the **Planning Commission** and the completion of a “**Laurel Citizen Survey.**”

The “**Laurel Citizen Survey**” was made available on various Community websites. **Survey** participants were asked to provide information regarding their opinion on community needs and wants, including new businesses, beautification and sustainability efforts and housing needs. A total of **187 Surveys** were completed. The following summarizes the results of the **Survey**. The complete results of the **Survey** are included in the **Appendix** of this **Comprehensive Plan**.



- 50.2 percent of the **Survey** participants identified having resided in the City of Laurel for 21+ years.
- An identified total of 139 identified homeowners and 23 identified renters participated in the **Laurel Citizen Survey**.
- 82.8 percent of the **Survey** participants resided in a single family home. **A total of 147, or 78.6 percent of the participants responded as being satisfied with their current housing situation. Remaining identified participants were either not satisfied or had no opinion. Common housing complaints were housing units being too old, too small, or needing substantial rehabilitation.**
- **Survey** participants identified softball and baseball field improvements, walking/hiking trails, wellness/fitness center and improved city park equipment as new public recreational opportunities that should be considered for Laurel.



- New businesses desired by Laurel residents include restaurants/breakfast cafe, a theater, bowling alley, clothing store and convenience store.
- New services that are desired by **Survey** participants to be offered in Laurel include curbside recycling and trash pickup, street improvements, manufacturing employment, street improvements and new City Hall/Senior Center.
- Top-rated Community Services and Public Facilities (including infrastructure) in Laurel included Churches, Grocery Store, Pharmacy, Fire Protection, Garbage Collection, Medical Clinic, Banks and Schools. Services and needed improvements and upgrades that are desired in the Community include Public Transit, Street/Sidewalk Replacement, Entertainment and Employment Opportunities.
- Pedestrian Trail Connections, School Traffic Circulation and Designated Truck Routes are transportation items that need to be addressed in Laurel. **Specific to improving the safety of school routes for children, participants identified a need for highway crossing guards, sidewalks from the Hillcrest Neighborhood and slower speeds for local traffic.**
- 74.3 percent of **Survey** participants support strict enforcement of Laurel city ordinances regarding parking, junk vehicles and property maintenance.
- Top responses to the question, **“The appearance of the City of Laurel can be improved with”** were:
  1. Nuisance Enforcement/Property Clean-Up.
  2. Housing Development/Rehabilitation.
  3. Street and Pedestrian Lighting.
- Top responses to the question, **“The sustainability of the City of Laurel can be improved with”** were:
  1. Improved Streets, Sidewalks and Alleys.
  2. Nuisance Enforcement/Property Clean-Up.
  3. Business Retention, Recruitment & Expansion.

# SECTION 2



**COMMUNITY PLANNING GOALS &  
ACTION STEPS.**



## SECTION 2 COMMUNITY PLANNING GOALS & ACTION STEPS.

### INTRODUCTION.

The Laurel Comprehensive Plan is an essential and most appropriate tool to provide a “**Vision**” and properly guide the development of the City. The **Community Planning Goals and Action Steps**, an important aspect of the **Plan**, provides local leaders direction in the administration and overall implementation of the **Comprehensive Plan**. In essence, the goals and action steps are the **most fundamental elements of the Plan**; the premises upon which all other elements of the **Plan** must relate.

“**Goals**” are long-term in nature and, in the case of those identified for the **Laurel Comprehensive Plan**, will be active throughout the 10-year planning period. The Goals involve identifying the state or condition the citizenry wishes the primary components of the planning area to be or evolve into within a given length of time. These primary components include:

- **Community Growth & Land Use/ Zoning.**
- **Housing & Neighborhood Redevelopment.**
- **Community Health & Wellness.**
- **Education & Community/Economic Development.**
- **Public Facilities, Energy & Transportation.**
- **Plan Implementation & Review.**

“**Action Steps**” help to further define the meaning of goals and represent very specific activities to accomplish a specific Goal and are the most measurable component of this **Comprehensive Plan**.



**COMMUNITY GROWTH, LAND USE & ZONING.**

**Goal 1: Population Growth.** Identify strategies to stabilize and, ultimately, increase the population of Laurel. Encourage residential, commercial and industrial developments to correlate with future population growth projections.

- **Action Step 1:** Meet the projected population growth and land use needs by **maximizing development in existing land areas** that are, or have to potential to be served by municipal infrastructure, including the development/infill of vacant parcels within the Corporate Limits of Laurel. Approximately 192 acres of vacant, developable land exists within the Corporate Limits of the City of Laurel.

*The City of Laurel overall population is projected to remain stable and increase through 2030, from the current (2020) population of 955, to 977 by 2030, an increase of 22 residents, or 2.3 percent. The Community, through more aggressive planning and development activities and the creation of 15 additional full-time employment opportunities, could reach a “high” population of 1,001 within the next 10 years, an increase of 46 persons. An **Economic Development “Boost”** scenario, consisting of creating 30 additional full-time employment opportunities, would result in an estimated 2030 population of 1,023, an increase of 68 residents, or 7.1 percent.*

- **Action Step 2:** Promote **infill development of vacant and undeveloped land areas** in the Corporate Limits of Laurel, as well as on vacant lots created after the demolition and removal of any substantially deteriorated dwellings. Currently, the City has a surplus of land acres designated for single family use and a shortage of land areas designated for multifamily and mobile home use, when compared to the requirements set forth in the National Planning Standard. Residential land uses should be increased through infill development of vacant land throughout the City, as well as the incorporation of multifamily land uses within and near the Downtown.

**Currently, the City of Laurel is in the process of annexing a 110 acre tract southeast of the current Corporate Limits, with the intent on encouraging varying densities of residential development. This will greatly increase the availability of developable land for housing programs in the Community.**



- **Action Step 3:** Continue the **development of Commercial land in Laurel.** An analysis of existing land uses in Laurel identifies a shortage of commercial land, but a surplus of designated industrial land areas, as per comparison of Laurel and National Planning Standards. Future professional services, specialty retail outlets and other pedestrian-oriented businesses should be targeted to Downtown Laurel, while automotive oriented businesses or other larger commercial uses should develop along the Highway 15/20 Corridor.



- **Action Step 4:** Continue to promote the development of **light industrial uses and manufacturing companies** within the Corporate Limits, specifically within the Laurel Industrial Park located in the northern portion of Laurel and along the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad Corridor.
- **Action Step 5: Identify additional growth areas for Laurel,** beyond the current Corporate Limits. Despite having a more than adequate amount of developable land within the Corporate Limits of Laurel, it is important for a “vision” of continued growth beyond the existing Corporate Limits to be recognized in support of modern community and regional planning practices. Future residential growth areas beyond the current Corporate Limits, Identified in the **Future Land use Map, Illustrations 2.1 and 2.2, Pages 2.6 and 2.7** are recommended to be concentrated primarily to the following areas.
  - ❖ **Eastern Residential Growth Area,** generally for moderate- to upper income single family and multifamily housing including undeveloped land in close proximity to the 110 acre tract that will be annexed into the Community of Laurel.
  - ❖ **Southeastern Residential Growth Area,** for moderate income single family housing, including undeveloped land adjacent the Cedarview Golf Course/Country Club.
  - ❖ **Western Residential Growth Area,** to include both single family housing and commercial development along and north of the Highway 20 Corridor.

- **Action Step 5: Address parks, open space land uses in Laurel.** Currently, the Community has a surplus of park and recreation-designated land, due to the a portion of the Cedarview Golf Course & Country Club being located within the Laurel Corporate Limits, as well as open space and park land surrounding the Laurel-Concord-Coleridge Public Schools football field. To accommodate the targeted population growth, the City should reserve, at a minimum, an additional **three acres of parks, recreation, or open space land uses.** This need should largely focus on the expansion of existing or creation of new public park and recreation facilities, including existing City parks, athletic fields and other public amenities.



**Goal 2 – Land Use Plan.** Adopt and maintain a **Land Use Plan** capable of fulfilling the residential, employment, recreational and entertainment needs of the Community of Laurel. The **Plan** should encourage the preservation and protection of environmental resources, while supporting light density development in the One-Mile Planning Jurisdiction of Laurel.

- **Action Step 1:** Develop solutions to **correct development barriers** in Laurel, including the prohibition of intensive agricultural uses, such as feedlot operations, from expanding or developing within the One-Mile Planning Jurisdiction.
- **Action Step 2:** Promote **residential, commercial and industrial growth areas** that are not located within designated floodplains and sensitive soil areas.
- **Action Step 3:** All future development in Laurel should be accompanied with a **modern utility and infrastructure system** of public and/or private utilities and a storm water drainage plan. A “**Water System Master Plan**” is currently being developed for the City of Laurel, in partnership with a professional engineering firm.
- **Action Step 4:** Maintain a program of sufficient open spaces, as is necessary, in order to provide outdoor recreation, conserve natural resources and preserve historical sites as a means of giving the Community a sense of identity. Encourage the creation of new trail systems and sidewalks throughout and around the City. Construct connecting trails as new subdivisions and other growth areas develop. **Walking and hiking trails were identified by participants of the Laurel Citizen Survey as a desired park and recreation need in the Community.**

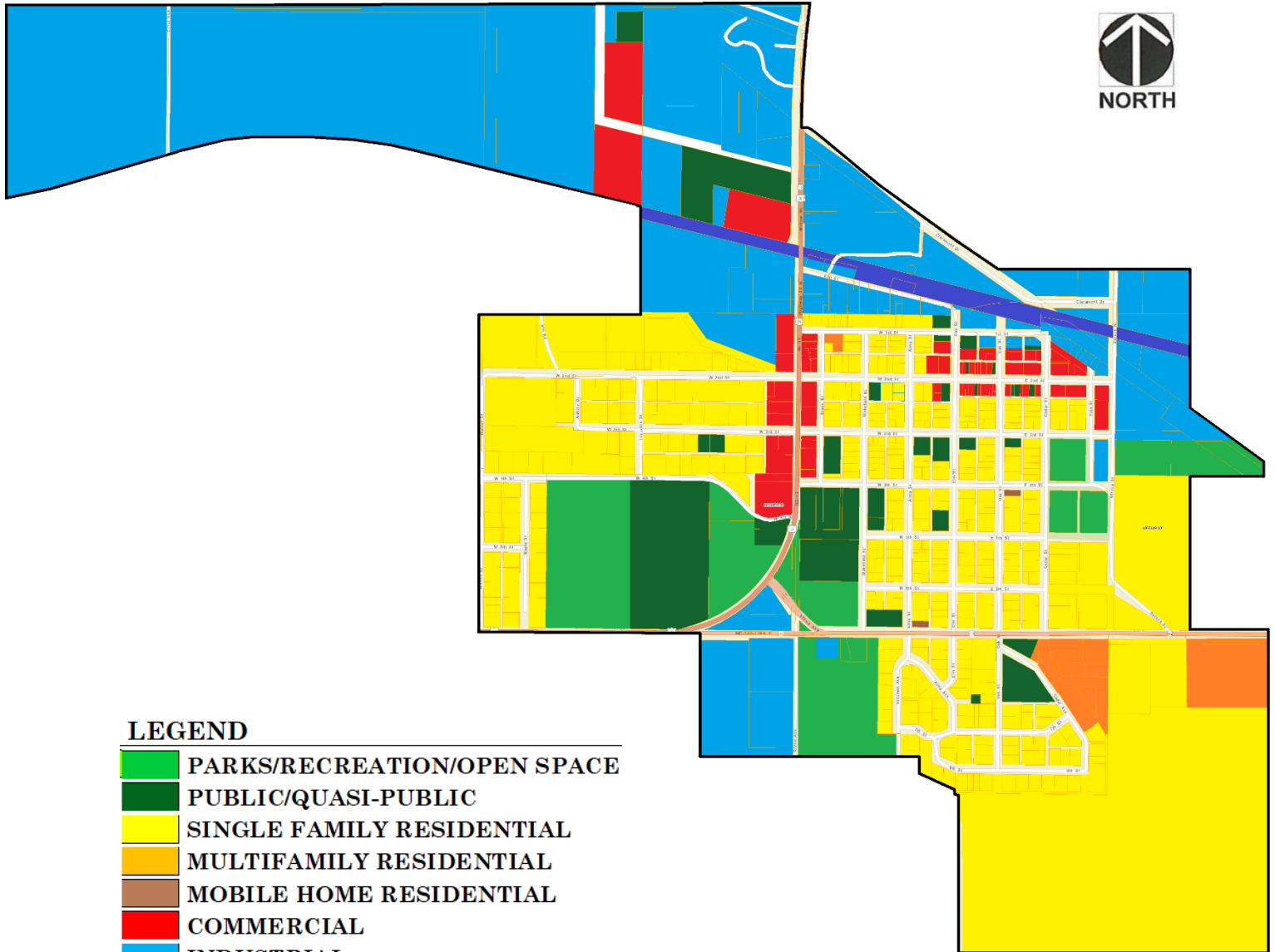
**Goal 3: Ordinances and Regulations.** Maintain proper **land use development ordinances** and **regulations** in Laurel. Utilize the City Zoning and Subdivision Regulations to implement the development provisions in the Land Use Plan.

- **Action Step 1:** Maintain the current **Zoning and Subdivision Regulations** and appropriate **Building Codes**, which support efficient implementation of the **Land Use Plan**. Establish new provisions within these regulations and codes that support mixed land use developments and promote sustainable development principles, smart growth and green building practices. Subdivision requirements should include modern infrastructure standards and the incorporation of storm water management and alternative energy systems.
- **Action Step 2:** Utilize both **voluntary and involuntary annexation policies** in conformance with Nebraska State Statutes. These policies should serve as a guide to integrate residential, commercial and industrial growth areas adjacent the current Corporate Limits of the City of Laurel. Future development should be encouraged to locate in areas free of environmental problems related to ground and surface water features, soil and topographic slope. **Floodplain Regulations** should be strictly enforced for all proposed developments in the City.
- **Action Step 3:** **Continue to enforce modern construction and property standards** by including the most up-to-date International Building, Residential and Property Maintenance Codes with the City's current municipal codes. All development/redevelopment activities should include a safe and sanitary environment, free of air, water and noise pollution. Such action ensures that the residents of the City of Laurel can live and work safely in structures that are built and maintained to modern safety standards.

## FUTURE LAND USE MAP

CORPORATE LIMITS  
LAUREL, NEBRASKA

2020



### LEGEND

	PARKS/RECREATION/OPEN SPACE
	PUBLIC/QUASI-PUBLIC
	SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
	MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL
	MOBILE HOME RESIDENTIAL
	COMMERCIAL
	INDUSTRIAL
	RAILROAD CORRIDOR

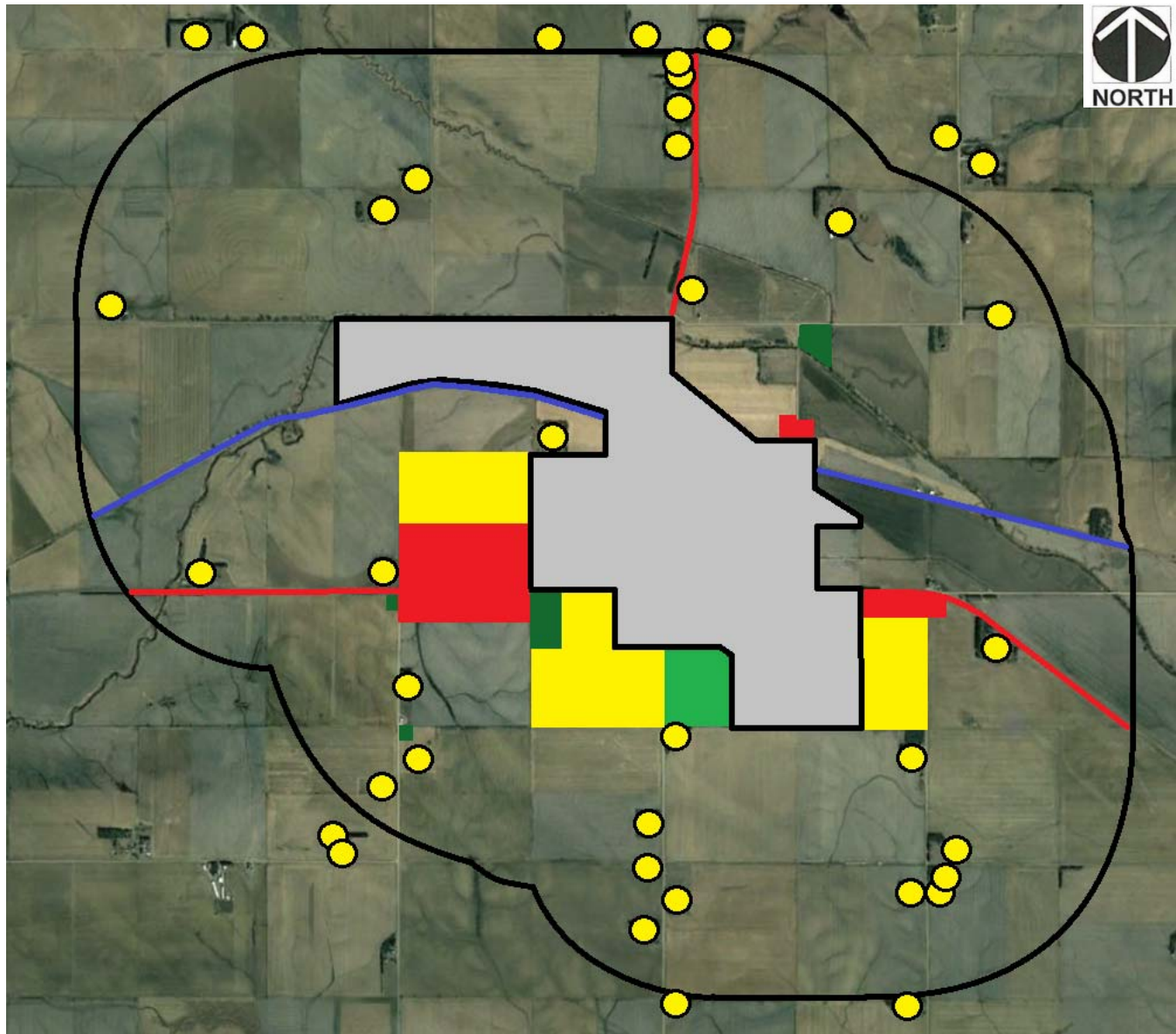
HANNA:KEELAN ASSOCIATES, P.C.  
COMMUNITY PLANNING & RESEARCH

\* Lincoln, Nebraska \* 402.464.5383 \*

ILLUSTRATION 2.1



**FUTURE LAND USE MAP**  
ONE-MILE PLANNING JURISDICTION  
LAUREL, NEBRASKA  
2020



**LEGEND**

- PARK/RECREATION
- PUBLIC/QUASI-PUBLIC
- SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL/FARMSTEAD
- COMMERCIAL
- HIGHWAY CORRIDOR
- RAILROAD CORRIDOR
- CITY OF LAUREL CORPORATE LIMITS/  
PLANNING JURISDICTION

**HANNA:KEELAN ASSOCIATES, P.C.**  
**COMMUNITY PLANNING & RESEARCH**

\* Lincoln, Nebraska \* 402.464.5383 \*

**ILLUSTRATION 2.2**



## **HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOOD REDEVELOPMENT.**

**Goal 1 – Establish the process of creating grassroots-based Community Housing Partnerships (CHPS) in Laurel, consisting of both local public and private sector entities, to actively assist in meeting the housing needs and demands of all income and family sector types in the City of Laurel. Creating CHPS will maximize the opportunity to safely house all individuals and families in appropriate, affordable owner and rental housing types, taking a lead role in encouraging and securing financing for housing development and preservation programs in the City of Laurel. Consider CHPS for both profit and not-for-profit housing development operations.**

- **Action Step 1:** Define potential **CHPS** with a “**mission statement**” that meets the selected housing cause or purpose, as it relates to the identified housing of needs and demands of the Community of Laurel.
- **Action Step 2:** Recruit local persons and organizations that meet or match the defined “**mission statement**” of each **CHPS**.
- **Action Step 3:** Based upon selected **CHPS** and associated “**mission statements**”, each **CHPS** will select and prioritize housing programs of both new construction and housing preservation for the **Laurel 10-Year Housing Action Plan**.
- **Action Step 4.** **CHPS** will first and foremost be comprised of existing Laurel area organizations, including, but not limited to the Laurel Economic Development, Laurel Chamber Community Club, Northeast Housing Initiative, Northeast Nebraska Community Action Partnership, Northeast Nebraska Area Agency on Aging, Nebraska Investment Finance Authority, and representatives from pertinent City Government Agencies and Departments, Laurel-Concord-Coleridge Public Schools. Memberships to selected **CHPS** should also consist of representation from the Laurel private sector, including, but not limited to major employers, homebuilders/remodelers, realtors and local banks, credit unions, insurance companies and Foundations.
- **Action Step 5.** **CHPS** will assist in implementing housing programs of greatest need in the Community of Laurel, as identified in the **10-Year Action Plan**. This would include meeting the housing needs and demands of the following priority *household sectors/types*:
  - *Housing for households of the highest incomes.*
  - *Owner and rental housing for households of all income ranges.*

- *Owner and rental housing and housing rehabilitation activities for elderly households, 55+ years of age, including independent, multi-level assisted living and long-term care/nursing home housing.*
- *Both temporary and permanent and emergency housing for “special needs” populations, including, but limited to persons and families with mobility and/cognitive disabilities, homeless and near-homeless, victims of domestic abuse, single parent households, multi-generational households, new American households and Veterans.*
- *Owner and rental housing development for the local workforce employees.*
- *Housing redevelopment, rehabilitation and preservation.*
- **Action Step 6: CHPS** will need to create local housing funding initiatives, such as a Housing Trust (or Investment) Fund (**HTF**), to assist in providing “gap” financing for proposed affordable housing development and rehabilitation programs in Laurel. For-profit, non-profit and philanthropic organizations, as well as commitments from major employers and local Foundations should be primary financial contributors. **HTF** monies could potentially be used for the following activities:
  - *Investment funding for individual owner and rental housing rehabilitation programs.*
  - *Development of a community purchase-rehab-resale and re-rent program. Vacated housing on the real estate market in need of rehabilitation could be purchased by a **CHPS(s)**, or a local economic development entity, for the purpose of being rehabilitated into a viable, livable housing unit for persons and families generally of moderate income. The house is, then, put back on the market for sale by a local realtor or other housing-related agency.*
  - *Gap financing and/or developer incentives for the construction of new, affordable housing units.*
  - *Down payment and closing cost assistance via low- or no-interest loans for persons and families purchasing a home in Laurel. Housing purchase price maximums and household income thresholds can be determined by **CHPS**.*
  - *First or second mortgage assistance for prospective or current homeowners, including reduced rate or deferred payment loans.*
- **Action Step 7: Create a local Land Trust/Land Bank Program**, as per LB424, via an existing 501(c)3 organization with an advisory Board, as a sub-group of the **CHPS**. The Land Trust/Land Bank will need to acquire developed or developable properties, via foreclosure or donation, to be repurposed and/or reutilized for new development projects, including housing.

**Goal 2 – Elevate the “housing intelligence” of the Community of Laurel, by providing the appropriate learning systems for educating CHPS and their members on the processes of housing financing and development, including appropriate methods for prioritizing both new construction and housing rehabilitation programs in the City.**

- **Action Step 1: CHPS** should have “housing” educational component of their “**mission statement**”, to successfully, both advocate for and assist in implementing needed housing programs in Laurel, as identified in the **10-Year Housing Action Plan**.
- **Action Step 2: CHPS** will need to fully understand the working connection between the **Laurel Community Housing Study** and other, current, local planning initiatives that will, in some capacity, have an impact on the future development, rehabilitation and preservation of both the current and future housing stock in Laurel.
- **Action Step 3.** Create a local “**Housing Development Education Program**” for **CHPS**, complete with certification of pertinent housing development topics, including, but limited to housing need recognition, housing advocacy, housing financial planning and housing development.
- **Action Step 4.** Train **CHPS** to monitor and understand Local, State and Federal housing legislative proposals and policies that could impact housing programs in Laurel, as identified in the **10-Year Housing Action Plan**.



**Goal 3: - General Housing Development.** Address the overall housing development needs of both owner- and renter households, of all age and income sectors, of varied price points/products. The **overall housing target demand** for the City of Laurel's general population/households, by 2030, is an estimated, minimum, **36 housing units**, consisting of **22 owner units** and **14 rental units**. This housing target forecast will require the City to designate between **29 and 35 acres** for residential land area to meet the specified housing target demand.

- **Action Step 1:** With the assistance of a newly-created Laurel Land Trust/Land Bank, purchase and secure developable lots necessary for housing development opportunities. A coordinated Land Trust/Land Bank will need to acquire developable lots in close proximity to major employment centers, for the development of housing that, in addition, could be marketed to prospective employees of that particular employer.
- **Action Step 2:** Develop an “**incentives plan(s)**” for local developers and contractors to utilize in the development of both owner and rental housing of **recommended “price points”** in Laurel. This could include impact and development fee waivers, reduced lot costs, materials purchase assistance, etc.
- **Action Step 3:** New housing development projects in the City of Laurel should utilize **place-based development components**, whereby development supports the Community's quality of life and availability of resources including, but not limited to: public safety, community health, education and cultural elements.
- **Action Step 4:** A total of **22 housing units**, including 14 owner and eight rental units, for persons of moderate income, or between **61 and 125 percent AMI** should be targeted for construction in Laurel. These housing units should have an average purchase price between \$159,720 and \$329,920 and an average monthly rent between \$695 and \$1,425. This income bracket represents much of the “**missing middle**” housing development product, considered to be in the highest demand among young professionals and workforce populations, but also in the smallest supply due to a lack of supportive funding availability and land and development costs, etc.

The **CHPS** are encouraged to work with the City of Laurel in developing new and/or enhancing existing codes and ordinances to advance the development of housing in this price range, as well as creating a grassroots-level housing development/rehabilitation program, including purchase-rehab-resale and re-rent activities for existing housing.

- **Action Step 5:** The City of Laurel, by designating between 29 and 35 acres for new housing products, by 2030, will need to monitor the City's available, buildable land areas, to match the development or build out potential for the housing target forecast of 36 housing units. Land areas are identified on the City of Laurel Comprehensive Plan's Future Land Use Map. **Currently, the City is in the process of annexing 110 acres of land for residential development in the southeast portion of the City.**

**Goal 4 – Workforce Housing.** Implement a **Workforce Housing Initiative** to encourage major employers and/or a **CHPS** comprised of two or more major employers in the Laurel area to become directly involved with assisting their employees in securing appropriate and affordable housing, with the eventual goal of becoming a homeowner in Laurel. **The Community of Laurel will need to target up to 22 housing units for both existing and future local employees by 2030.**

- **Action Step 1:** Encourage housing developers to pursue securing any and all available tools of financing assistance in the development of new housing projects in the Community, including Tax Increment Financing.
- **Action Step 2:** Implement a housing development plan with local major employers to ensure the provision of safe, decent and affordable owner and rental housing options for the local workforce. Encourage buy-in from major employers in Laurel to financially contribute to workforce housing development projects.



- **Action Step 3:** Major employers in Laurel should become active in providing financial assistance for existing and new employees that are actively seeking housing in Laurel. Assistance could include, but not be limited to, down payment assistance, developing and providing “transitional” housing for new employees and locating and negotiating the rent and/or purchase price of a housing unit and providing funding assistance.
- **Action Step 4:** Financing the creation of a **Limited Liability Partnership (LLP)**, comprised of two or more major employers (possible mix of both public and private) to become directly involved with the development of a designated “workforce” housing project/subdivision.



**Goal 5 – Senior/Elderly Housing.** Develop a **Senior/Elderly Housing & Continuum of Care Initiative** in the City of Laurel directed at persons and families 55+ years of age. By 2030, the Community of Laurel will need to target up to **10 additional owner and rental housing products** for the local elderly population. This should include an estimated six owner and four rental housing units.

- **Action Step 1:** Create a **CHPS** to address all facets of elderly housing in Laurel, including additional affordable housing, both owner and rental, for elderly persons. A **CHPS** comprised of the Laurel Chamber Community Club, Laurel Economic Development, Northeast Nebraska Area Agency on Aging and local contractors and housing developers will be critical in advancing specialized housing for Laurel’s senior population.
- **Action Step 2:** Establish a **CHPS** with local entities that could or currently provide needed supportive services including, but not limited to transportation to local businesses, shopping centers, hospitals and medical clinics, and entertainment venues from existing and new senior/elderly housing facilities.
- **Action Step 3:** Secure developable land, via a coordinated Land Trust/Land Bank program, especially lots in close proximity to existing senior/elderly housing facilities.



- **Action Step 4:** Educate the public about the benefits of senior living. Develop a messaging platform and communications plan to highlight benefits and resident experiences. Promote programs and services designed to enhance emotional, physical and cognitive well-being, along with the benefits of recreation and leisure opportunities.
- **Action Step 5:** Educate the senior population about legal, financial, insurance, advocacy and policy procedures in obtaining senior/elderly housing.

**Goal 6 – Downtown Housing.** Plan and implement a **Housing Initiative** for Downtown Laurel. An estimated **four to six rental housing units** should be developed/added, via rehabilitation and new construction, to the housing supply in the **Laurel Downtown**, by 2030.

- **Action Step 1:** Develop and maintain **CHPS** with Downtown advisory/development groups, including the Laurel Chamber Community Club, Laurel Community Development Association, Laurel Economic Development and additional, Downtown-associated committees and organizations. Engage local developers and contractors to develop new and rehabilitate existing properties in Downtown.



- **Action Step 2:** Encourage business owners to rehabilitate, if necessary, and “rent out” upper floors of existing commercial buildings to increase housing availability in Downtown Laurel.
- **Action Step 3:** Encourage the use of grant dollars for commercial and residential building rehabilitation. This could include establishing Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) target areas exist within and in close proximity to Downtown Laurel where revitalization and reinvestment are most needed.
- **Action Step 4:** Utilize Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to revitalize buildings in Downtown Laurel for public infrastructure, residential and commercial purposes.

**Goal 7 – Special Needs Housing.** Implement a **Special Needs Supportive Housing Initiative**, including but not limited to housing for homeless and near-homeless persons and families, persons with chronic cognitive and/or physical disabilities, chronic illnesses and developmental disabilities. An estimated **two owner and two rental housing units** should be planned and developed for **persons of special needs** in Laurel, by 2030. Include emergency shelters, transitional housing and group homes that encourage resident safety and/or handicap accessibility as part of this Goal.

- **Action Step 1:** A **CHPS**, comprised of local groups such as Hillcrest Care Center, Northeast Nebraska Area Agency on Aging and Northeast Nebraska Community Action Partnership needs to plan and develop solutions to providing housing for Laurel’s most vulnerable population groups.
- **Action Step 2:** Create and implement a community-wide **supportive housing services plan** for the City of Laurel to encourage and support the provision of housing for persons with special needs, including mobility and cognitive disabilities. Owner and rental housing developed for special needs populations should meet all ADA requirements and be accessible for all persons experiencing a disability.

**Goal 8: - Housing Redevelopment, Rehabilitation & Preservation.** Implement and promote housing rehabilitation and preservation programs for Laurel, including the demolition and replacement of dilapidated housing units. An estimated **66 housing units**, both owner and rental, in Laurel, should receive **moderate rehabilitation**, while an **additional 38 housing units will need substantial rehabilitation**. An estimated additional **17 housing units** are, or over time, could deteriorate into a condition that would **warrant removal and replacement**.

- **Action Step 1:** **CHPS** should develop and implement a **Housing Redevelopment, Rehabilitation & Preservation Initiative** to promote the systemic development of new housing units on existing vacant lots and the rehabilitation of existing housing stock, of both moderate and substantial rehab to preserve and protect existing housing units that are of high age or historical significance and are affordable. Reinvestment in distressed neighborhoods will boost the Community’s property value base and provide additional housing choices for prospective buyers.





- **Action Step 2:** Identify housing units that are in need of moderate rehabilitation in Laurel. This includes homes needing “cosmetic” and minor “structural” improvements such as new siding, windows, paint, roof surface, doors, etc.
- **Action Step 3:** Identify housing units that are in need of substantial rehabilitation in Laurel. This includes homes needing the improvements identified in Action Step 2, but also includes repairs to structural and infrastructure elements of the house, such as foundation, baring walls and roof lines/ structural repairs and plumbing/electrical upgrades.
- **Action Step 4:** Identify housing units that should be demolished and replaced in Laurel, with an emphasis on units that are currently occupied. Housing that is not cost effective for rehabilitation should be demolished and, eventually, replaced with sound, safe and affordable housing to take advantage of existing infrastructure.
- **Action Step 5:** A systematic code inspection of all housing structures, 60+ years of age, combined with a rental housing licensing program would prove beneficial to the overall condition/status of the housing stock in Laurel.



**Goal 9: - Housing & Alternative Energy.** Encourage housing developers to take advantage of **“tools of alternative energy implementation,”** such as unit specific wind energy conversion systems, solar panels and geothermal technology to make housing more energy efficient and reduce utility costs for the unit occupant.

- **Action Step 1:** Promote the use of energy conservation methods. Reduce consumption of energy in residential sectors.
- **Action Step 2:** Require compliance with a “Conditional” or “Special Use Permit” for any and all alternative energy projects. Small-scale and personal alternative energy projects could be permitted outright, as per consent of the Laurel City Council.
- **Action Step 3:** Promote the development of vocational **education opportunities** at local Public and Private Schools in the City of Laurel to educate the current and future workforce in alternative energy design, fabrication of equipment and maintenance.
- **Action Step 4:** Promote the expanded use of solar and geothermal exchange energy systems for applications throughout the Community’s extra-territorial jurisdiction.
- **Action Step 5:** Promote the **rehabilitation of residential buildings utilizing weatherization methods and energy efficient or “green building” materials** in Laurel in conformance to the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certified building techniques.
- **Action Step 6:** Utilize Laurel zoning ordinances and development and building codes to control the placement and operation of alternative energy systems. Local zoning ordinances should be able to control the placement of individual energy systems to limit their impact on adjacent property and the visual character of residential, commercial and industrial areas.
- **Action Step 7:** Implement a **“pilot” alternative energy program** at a developing residential subdivision. An alternative energy source(s) could generate 100 percent of the energy needs for heating and cooling, as an example, promoting affordable development.
- **Action Step 8:** Expand awareness of available incentives that could assist in replacing old lighting fixtures, or heating and cooling systems with new energy efficient systems that reduce consumption and energy costs.



**Goal 10: - Emergency Housing and Natural Disaster Preparedness.** Prepare an emergency housing “plan of action” in an effort to assist the Community of Laurel in providing temporary, short-term shelter to those affected by natural disaster, including post-disaster housing repair, reconstruction and/or household relocation plans. Utilize recommendations set forth in the *Nebraska Housing Impact Analysis*.

- **Action Step 1:** Local, State, Federal “disaster housing partners” will play a critical role in ensuring the provision of housing for persons and families affected by catastrophic natural disaster. Partners should include local governments, Cedar County Emergency Management, Nebraska Investment Finance Authority, Nebraska Department of Economic Development, Nebraska Emergency Management Agency, Federal Emergency Management Agency, U.S. Department of Housing and urban Development and United States Department of Agriculture-Rural Development.
- **Action Step 2:** Develop a City of Laurel “**Emergency Operations Plan**” that includes initiatives for providing temporary housing for persons and families affected by natural disaster.
- **Action Step 3:** Encourage local landlords to allow persons and families displaced by natural disaster to temporarily reside in vacant, non-occupied housing units. **NIFA has prepared a State-wide list of low-income housing tax credit properties that provide emergency housing to displaced persons and families due to natural disaster.**
- **Action Step 4:** Encourage local governments to review and revise comprehensive planning, land use, zoning and subdivision regulation documents as a means of limiting or eliminating housing development in areas where a natural disaster, such as flooding, could frequently occur.

### **COMMUNITY HEALTH & WELLNESS.**

**Goal 1: Create accessible and visible health and wellness opportunities** in Laurel that enhance the Community quality of life. Promote the Community as a place to live, work, raise a family and retire. Continuing a “**sense of community**” image in Laurel, through the local public education system and close-knit neighborhoods, is important to the long-term viability of the Community.

- **Action Step 1:** Create a sustainable, healthy Community for residents currently living in, or families planning to move to Laurel. **Citizen Survey participants strongly agreed with improved streets, sidewalks and alleys; business retention, recruitment and expansion; nuisance enforcement/property clean-up and infrastructure improvements as methods to improve the sustainability of the Community.** Local banks, grocery store, schools, churches, fire protection and the medical clinic, among other entries, were identified as high-quality community services/facilities in Laurel.
- **Action Step 2:** Incorporate **beautification projects** that improve the appearance of Laurel. Target areas should include, but not be limited to, the Downtown, highway corridors, City parks and historically significant residential neighborhoods. **Citizen Survey participants agreed with improving the appearance of the Community with Nuisance Enforcement/Property Clean-Up, Housing Development/Rehabilitation and Restoration/Preservation of Historic Buildings/Housing.**
- **Action Step 3:** Encourage and promote **Community volunteer programs** to clean up and beautify local park and recreation facilities, as well as personal properties. This could include building façade improvements, housing rehabilitation, junk vehicle removal and aesthetic improvements along major corridors (benches, street trees, street lighting, curb cuts, etc.). This will improve the overall quality of life of local citizens and enhance Community sustainability.

*Tax Increment Financing should be considered, in the designated **Redevelopment Areas**, for public infrastructure improvements, including sidewalks, streets and public utility replacement.*

**Goal 2: Enhance and expand park and recreation facilities** in Laurel and be proactive in the protection of local natural resources.

- **Action Step 1:** Monitor the condition of existing park and recreation facilities, including shelters, playground equipment and athletic courts. Secure local and State grant funding, as needed, for any local improvements.

- **Action Step 2:** Create and expand trails/accessibility to parks and points of interest around the Community of Laurel. Top responses to recreational amenity needs in Laurel, as per the Citizen Survey, included the addition and expansion of local hiking and biking trails, as well as improved baseball and softball fields.
- **Action Step 3:** Protect and manage local natural resources within the Corporate Limits and One-Mile Planning Jurisdiction of Laurel. This includes waterways, sensitive soil areas and wildlife management areas.

**Goal 3:** Provide **accessible health care** to all Laurel residents.

- **Action Step 1:** Maintain current and support new medical facilities and senior housing facilities, while supporting the creation of new health-related programs and facilities in Laurel for persons and families of all ages.
- **Action Step 2:** Support the utilization of in-home care services to Laurel's senior population. The Northeast Nebraska Area Agency on Aging office maintains a variety of services for seniors desiring to remain independent in their current home, including light housekeeping services, personal care tasks, home-delivered meals and health promotion activities.
- **Action Step 3:** Provide access to specific medical needs for seniors. A senior transportation program could potentially assist the local elderly population in accessing necessary medical and wellness needs both within and beyond the Community of Laurel.



***EDUCATION & COMMUNITY/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.***

**Goal 1: Educational Quality.** Continue to provide a **high quality of public and private elementary, junior, senior and college-level education** for the residents of Laurel. Maintain an excellence in education by expanding facilities, amenities, and employment opportunities, as needed, while creating new and expanding existing educational programs and activities to support a growing student and faculty population for Laurel-Concord-Coleridge Public Schools. **Approximately 19 percent of Citizen Survey participants identified Laurel-Concord-Coleridge Public Schools as a “key” factor in their decision to live in Laurel. Additionally, an estimated 78 percent of Survey participants would recommend Laurel-Concord-Coleridge Public Schools to parents.**

- **Action Step 1:** Support both internal and community-wide efforts that would gradually **increase enrollment** at Laurel-Concord-Coleridge Public Schools. In the event of a substantial increase in enrollment, educational facilities should be prepared with appropriate amenities, facilities and necessary staff to meet increased demands.
- **Action Step 2: Extra-Curricular Activities,** such as homework assistance, athletics and student clubs, should continue to be an important role in the development of education in all school children.
- **Action Step 3: Support student leadership programs.** Programs of this nature will provide school children of all ages with the necessary knowledge and potential to be successful, post-graduation.
- **Action Step 4:** Reinforce and develop **continuing education programs** to address current and future needs of youths, new families, adults and senior citizens.
- **Action Step 5:** Support the efforts of the **Laurel-Concord-Coleridge Public Schools Foundation** in providing scholarships and grant opportunities to current students and alumni.



**Goal 2: Economic Development.** Utilize the **Laurel Comprehensive Plan** as an **economic development resource and guide** to maximize economic opportunities for all residents. Foster an increase in diversified employment and business types in Laurel.

- **Action Step 1:** Create **up to 30 new jobs in Laurel by 2030**, as a component of an **Economic Development “Boost”** for the Community. This should be achieved by expanding existing and adding commercial businesses, as well as creating a “business incubator program” for in-home businesses to grow and expand their services in the central business district of Laurel. Industrial companies that are “light manufacturing” in nature should locate facilities in the industrial park south of Laurel.
- **Action Step 2:** Focus efforts of **diversified businesses and employment opportunities** to expand existing and attract new companies. Expand the availability of retail commerce development sites and available storefronts for rent or purchase to attract non-local businesses. Maintain and improve both public and private services, businesses and industries in Laurel, to increase and diversify employment opportunities.
- **Action Step 3:** Consider the implementation of a Community & Economic Development Program, utilizing all funding opportunities of LB840 to maximize use of local tax dollars for economic development on an annual basis.
- **Action Step 4:** Continue to support **business retention and expansion programs** offered by local economic development entities, to ensure the continuation of well established businesses. Business transition services should be offered to support the transfer of businesses to new generation owners, as current owners retire. These Programs could assist in recruiting both High School and College students/graduates to train in selective career paths to become business owners. The Community should create and maintain a listing of “Home-Based Businesses,” as well as support the creation of a **Business Incubator Program**, so that as businesses outgrow a home (or farm) location, appropriate space in commercial or industrial areas of the Community can be occupied with a local base, home-grown businesses.
- **Action Step 5:** **Housing initiatives** in Laurel should be paired with **job creation activities**. A high percentage of persons employed in Laurel live in other Communities. This is primarily due to the lack of available or suitable housing. Programs supported by the Northeast Housing Initiative, Laurel Community Development Association, Planning Commission and City Council, through the provision of housing development partners, should focus on addressing the need for housing development and redevelopment in older neighborhoods, combined with promoting new housing development in new residential subdivisions.



- **Action Step 6:** Expand efforts to utilize **Federal, State and Local Governmental Incentives** for promoting economic development in Laurel and recruit and retain job/business opportunities. Continue strong relationships with Local and State agencies such as the Nebraska Department of Economic Development.
- **Action Step 7: Community residents want more entertainment, employment and retail opportunities in Laurel**, in an effort to be more economically competitive with surrounding Communities. The City needs to consider the development of new, and rehabilitation of existing commercial structures, including those located in the Downtown, for expanded commercial retail and professional office utilization.



**Goal 3: Community Development.** Community Development practices should strive to both **stabilize and improve the local Laurel economy and quality of life**. Proper renovation, adaptive reuse and additions of existing buildings, as well as new construction activities should be components of locally available incentives to attract residents, businesses, and industries.

- **Action Step 1:** Encourage local reinvestment in Laurel by both the public and private sectors. Provide infrastructure and needed amenities to support future growth of commercial, industrial and residential areas. Remove dilapidated buildings and promote building rehabilitation on structures that are considered cost-effective for such activity.
- **Action Step 2:** Enhance the attractiveness of the business and industrial areas in Laurel, including a **building repair and modification program** for deteriorating structures, such as commercial buildings with upper-story housing and homes adjacent Downtown Laurel.
- **Action Step 3:** Continue the promotion of the development and redevelopment of professional-oriented commercial businesses, especially in Downtown Laurel, utilizing the priorities identified in the ***Laurel, Nebraska Downtown Revitalization Project-Phase I Plan***.

- **Action Step 4:** Utilize all available **public programs of financing** in funding development and redevelopment programs. These programs include, but are not limited to HOME Funds, Community Development Block Grants, SAFETEA-LU (Transportation Enhancement Act), The Nebraska Transportation Innovation Act, Nebraska Affordable Housing Trust Fund, State and Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credits and locally based **TIF**.
- **Action Step 5:** Provide **public improvements** to older residential neighborhoods, as well as Downtown Laurel, in need of street and sidewalk resurfacing, landscaping and street trees. Downtown facade improvements, a public gathering/festival space and additional public parking are all needed to support the development of additional specialty retail businesses.
- **Action Step 6:** Utilize **TIF** as a financial incentive for redevelopment projects in Downtown Laurel. Identified improvements include, but are not limited to, structurally securing Downtown buildings, façade and landscaping improvements and public parking improvements.
- **Action Step 7:** Enhance the potential of **Community agency connections**, including Laurel Economic Development, Northeast Housing Initiative, Laurel City Council and Planning Commission, Laurel Community Development Association, NENCAP, NENEDD, Nebraska Public Power District and other existing organizations or special committees for technical and financial assistance for securing new community and economic development activities. Utilize Local, State, and Federal funding sources to strengthen existing and assist in the creation of new business/industry.

**Goal 4: Community Redevelopment Planning and Implementation.** Focus on improving structures, utility mains and public facilities throughout Laurel. Utilize various local, State and Federal funding sources to achieve various redevelopment goals in Laurel.

- **Action Step 1:** Utilize **TIF** in designated “**Redevelopment Areas**” as a method of funding structural rehabilitation activities for commercial buildings. These activities could include façade renovation, utility and street improvements and mixed use developments. One “**Redevelopment Area**” has been established in Laurel and generally includes the Downtown and surrounding residential areas, as well as the Laurel Industrial Park.

- **Action Step 2:** Laurel will need to consider the use of **TIF** for Community development activities involving the improvement of neighborhood and public utilities, facilities, public utilities, streets, sidewalks and trails.
- **Action Step 3:** Continue to support the efforts of the **Laurel Community Development Association** to arrange and manage a variety of funding sources and development/redevelopment activities, along with the implementation of improvements within the City's current and future "**Redevelopment Areas.**"

### ***PUBLIC FACILITIES. ENERGY & TRANSPORTATION.***

**Goal 1: Public Facilities & Utilities.** Maintain and improve the existing public facilities and utilities in Laurel. Develop, as needed, new facilities and services to reflect the Community's needs and demands during the 10-year planning period. Provide modern water and sewage treatment mains, public utility facilities, flood control and similar environmental control processes.

- **Action Step 1: Upgrade and expand public services** to keep pace with population changes and associated commercial, industrial and residential developments. Provide public services in an efficient and economic manner to protect and enhance the safety and welfare of Laurel residents. Provide modern sewage treatment facilities, refuse collection and disposal, street cleaning, flood control and similar environmental control processes.



- **Action Step 2:** Continue to provide **adequate law enforcement, fire and ambulance protection/services**, with increased emphasis on community relations, as well as adequate civil defense and emergency services. Ensure that facilities necessary to support such services are available throughout the Community. Promote the coordination of these services among the various governmental and quasi-governmental entities.

- **Action Step 3:** Maintain an **adequate supply of potable water** and an **expanded distribution system** suitable for both present and future consumption and fire protection in Laurel. Continue to maintain the water distribution system to supply a sufficient quantity and quality of water for residents. **The City of Laurel Fire Services was ranked as one of the best Public Services in the Community by the residents that completed the Citizen Survey.**
- **Action Step 4:** Continue efforts to upgrade and expand segments of the **Laurel municipal sanitary sewer collection system** within the 10-year planning period. The collection and treatment systems may require minor modification and rehabilitation in order to properly serve a growing population.

**Goal 2: Energy.** Access available programs and funding sources to reduce energy consumptions and promote the use of alternative energy systems in Laurel.

- **Action Step 1:** Promote the use of **alternate energy systems** within Laurel and the One-Mile Planning Jurisdiction, available through the provisions of the Nebraska Net Metering, State Statutes §70-2001. A variety of wind, solar, geothermal, biomass and methane energy sources are available in association with “green building” methods to significantly reduce energy costs for heating and cooling.

*Net Metering is also encouraged to be supplemented with “green building” techniques to enhance energy efficiency by all sectors of the City of Laurel. **Tax Increment Financing**, in combination with low-interest or no-interest loans through programs available from the United States Department of Agriculture and Nebraska Public Power District, can greatly reduce the cost of implementing these alternative energy systems.*

- **Action Step 2:** Assist public and private property owners in Laurel to access available funding sources through utility districts such as Nebraska Public Power District and the Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy for modern heating, cooling and lighting systems to reduce consumption rates by commercial, industrial, residential and public/quasi-public building owners.
- **Action Step 3:** Strive to establish a pilot project in Laurel that utilizes alternative energy systems to provide electric energy to multiple stores within a strip-mail setting or within Downtown Laurel at a reduced rate or “no cost.” This would reduce overhead costs and achieve profitability.

- **Action Step 4:** Promote the development of vocational **education opportunities** at Laurel-Concord-Coleridge Public Schools to educate the current and future workforce in alternative energy design, fabrication of equipment and maintenance.
- **Action Step 3:** Promote the **rehabilitation of residential and commercial buildings utilizing weatherization methods and energy efficient or “green building” materials** in Laurel.
- **Action Step 4:** Utilize Laurel zoning ordinances and development and building codes to control the placement and operation of alternative energy systems. Local zoning ordinances should be able to control the placement of individual energy systems to limit their impact on adjacent property and the visual character of residential, commercial and industrial areas.
- **Action Step 5:** Implement a “**pilot**” **alternative energy program** at a developing residential subdivision. An alternative energy source(s) could generate 100 percent of the energy needs for heating and cooling, as an example, promoting affordable development.
- **Action Step 6:** Expand awareness of available incentives that could assist in replacing old lighting fixtures, or heating and cooling systems with new energy efficient systems that reduce consumption and energy costs.

**Goal 3: Transportation.** Provide an **efficient transportation system** throughout Laurel for the safe and efficient movement of people, goods and services.

- **Action Step 1:** Continue to annually update the coordinated **One- and Six-Year Road Plan** for maintenance and improvement of existing and future streets, roads, and highways in the Community. This includes paving, curbs, gutters, street lighting and curb cuts, all in an effort to reduce excessive travel delays.
- **Action Step 2:** Maintain design standards and policies for various classes of streets, roads and highways to enhance the function and safety of the street system in Laurel.
- **Action Step 3:** Coordinate the **Laurel Land Use Plan** and the **One- and Six- Year Road Plan** to prepare the City for future growth and development. Emphasis should be given to seeking cost effective methods to reduce/calm traffic along the Highway 15 and 20 Corridors.



- **Action Step 4:** New residential, commercial and industrial developments in Laurel should have appropriate and adequate streets, curbs, gutters and sidewalks.
- **Action Step 5:** Plan and Implement a “**Safe Routes to School**” initiative in Laurel. Create a collaborative partnership including, but not limited to, educators, parents, students, community leaders, health officials and administrators to encourage school-age children to walk or bike to school through the construction of bike lanes and pedestrian walkways. **Additional safety measures on routes to school, as well as crossing guards along the Highway Corridors were identifies by participants of the “Laurel Citizen Survey” as greatly needed improvements for students of Laurel-Concord-Coleridge Public Schools.**
- **Action Step 6:** Address transportation issues identified in the **Laurel Citizen Survey**. These include, but are not limited to **improved pedestrian and trails connections, Highway Corridor enhancements and the repair and replacement of street surfaces in poor condition.**

### ***PLAN IMPLEMENTATION & REVIEW.***

**Goal 1:** Maintain and regularly review this **Comprehensive Plan**, in an effort to continue efficient, sustainable community development.

- **Action Step 1:** The City of Laurel elected leadership, Laurel Economic Development and Laurel Chamber Community Club should collaboratively establish an **annual review process of the Comprehensive Plan**. The **Housing Partnership**, local elected officials, governmental volunteers, community and economic development groups and local housing stakeholders and funders should be involved in this review.
- **Action Step 2:** The **Comprehensive Plan** review should coincide with an annual review of the recently completed **Laurel, Nebraska Community Housing Study**. Both documents are imperative to future development and qualities of life offered in the City of Laurel.
- **Action Step 3:** The **Comprehensive Plan** should be made available to allow for public and private sector review and input. Encourage public participation and involvement in the review process.

# SECTION 3



**LAUREL COMMUNITY PROFILE.**

## ***SECTION 3 LAUREL COMMUNITY PROFILE.***

### ***INTRODUCTION.***

Population, income and economic trends in Laurel, Nebraska, and the City's One-Mile Planning Jurisdiction serve as valuable indicators for future development needs and patterns for the Community by providing a basis for the realistic projection of future population, income and economics. The population trends and projections for the years 2000 through 2030 were studied and forecasted for Laurel, Nebraska, utilizing a process of both trend analysis and popular consent.

Laurel is projected to remain stable in population during the next 10 years with the potential to experience a population increase with the creation of full-time employment opportunities. To maintain a stable population base, the City will need to develop existing land within the Corporate Limits, while developing suitable land adjacent the City for future annexation. This population will also require the creation of additional housing units and related public facilities and utilities for the City.

A **Community Housing Study** was completed as part of a Comprehensive Planning Program for the City of Laurel, which included housing data and highlighted population, income, economic and housing trends and projections, as well as determined a **10-year housing target demand for the Community**. The **Study** also identified important housing development projects to serve several different income levels in the Community. **A target demand for up to 36 new housing units by 2030 should be implemented.** A **"10-Year Housing Action Plan"** identifies specific housing projects most needed by the local citizens of Laurel.

**The most critical housing issues in Laurel are to promote the rehabilitation of existing housing in a state of moderate or significant deterioration, as well as the development of mid-range affordable housing, both owner and rental, for the local and prospective population.** Other priority housing needs in Laurel include providing opportunities for low- and middle-income persons and families, single-parent households, first time homebuyers, general rental housing and the elderly. Housing units of various types and styles, having three+-bedrooms are recommended.

## **POPULATION TRENDS & PROJECTIONS.**

The analysis and projection of local demographics are at the center of all planning decisions. This process assists in the understanding of important changes which have and will occur throughout the 10-year planning period.

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

Various population decline and growth scenarios are presented in this Section of the Laurel, Nebraska Comprehensive Plan and are defined below:

**Low:** minimal engagement from City leadership, housing stakeholders and major employers; ultimately, letting the “free market” dictate community growth and development.

**Medium:** continued regular activity from City leadership, housing stakeholders and major employers, including standard annexation procedures, following typical job creation and in-migration trends. This projection closely represents the current trend of development and growth in Laurel and is utilized in the projections documented in this Comprehensive Plan.

**High:** increased activity from City leadership and local/State housing stakeholders and developers, including standard annexation procedures, the creation of 15 additional Full-Time Employment (FTE) opportunities. This also includes collaboration with local, state and federal funding sources and existing major employers in implementing community, economic and housing development activities.

**Economic Development (ED) Boost:** high activity from City leadership and local/State housing stakeholders and developers, including aggressive annexation procedures and the creation of 30 new jobs. This also includes collaboration with funding sources and major employers, as well as the establishment of new employers with a significant number of employment opportunities for residents of the community and surrounding area.



## POPULATION.

- **Table 3.1, Page 3.3, identifies population trends and projections for the City of Laurel, Nebraska. The current (2020) estimated population for Laurel is 955,** which represents a slight decrease from the 2010 Census population of 964. Population estimates for the City range from 921, as per the U.S. Census 2018 Annual Population Estimate, to 1,047, as per the 2014-2018 American Community Survey Estimate.
- **The City of Laurel is projected to experience a population increase by 2030 with a “medium” population projection of 977, an increase of 22 persons or 2.3 percent. The City has the potential to experience a “high” population of 1,001 and an “ED Boost” population of 1,023, by 2030. This can be achieved by increasing housing development and economic/ community development activities including the creation of between 15 and 30 additional FTE opportunities.**
- **Table 3.2, Page 3.4, highlights the U.S. Census annual population estimates, from 2011 to 2018. The City of Laurel has experienced slight population declines, annually, since 2011, and had an estimated 2018 population of 921.**

**TABLE 3.1  
POPULATION TRENDS & PROJECTIONS  
LAUREL, NEBRASKA  
2000-2030**

	<u>Year</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Total</u>		<u>Annual</u>	
			<u>Change</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Change</u>	<u>Percent</u>
	2000	986	--	--	--	--
	2010	964	-22	-2.2%	-2.2	-0.2%
	<b>2020</b>	<b>955</b>	<b>-9</b>	<b>-0.9%</b>	<b>-0.9</b>	<b>-0.1%</b>
<b>Low</b>	<b>2030</b>	<b>938</b>	<b>-17</b>	<b>-1.8%</b>	<b>-1.7</b>	<b>-0.2%</b>
<b>Medium</b>	<b>2030</b>	<b>977</b>	<b>+22</b>	<b>+2.3%</b>	<b>+2.2</b>	<b>+0.2%</b>
<b>High</b>	<b>2030</b>	<b>1,001</b>	<b>+46</b>	<b>4.8%</b>	<b>+4.6</b>	<b>+0.5%</b>
<b>ED Boost*</b>	<b>2030</b>	<b>1,023</b>	<b>+68</b>	<b>+7.1%</b>	<b>+6.8</b>	<b>+0.7%</b>

Note 1: 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Population Estimate: 1,047.

Note 2: 2018 U.S. Census Annual Population Estimate: 921.

\*Population estimated due to an **Economic Development (ED) Boost** via increased job creation and housing development. “High 2030 = 15 Additional Full Time Employment (FTE) Positions in the next 10 years. “ED Boost” 2030 = 30 Additional FTE positions in the next 10 years.

Source: 2000, 2010 Census; 2011-2018 Census Estimates.  
Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C., 2020.



**TABLE 3.2**  
**POPULATION ESTIMATES**  
**STATE OF NEBRASKA / CITY OF LAUREL, NEBRASKA**  
**2010-2018**

	<u>Nebraska</u>	<u>% Change Since 2010</u>	<u>Laurel</u>	<u>% Change Since 2010</u>
<b>2010 Census</b>	<b>1,826,341</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>964</b>	<b>--</b>
July 2011 Est.	1,840,538	+0.8%	952	-1.2%
July 2012 Est.	1,853,323	+1.5%	946	-1.9%
July 2013 Est.	1,865,414	+2.1%	946	-1.9%
July 2014 Est.	1,879,522	+2.9%	932	-3.3%
July 2015 Est.	1,891,507	+3.6%	927	-3.8%
July 2016 Est.	1,905,924	+4.4%	939	-2.6%
July 2017 Est.	1,917,575	+5.0%	926	-3.9%
July 2018 Est.	1,929,268	+5.6%	921	-4.5%

Source: 2010 Census, 2011-2018 Census Population Estimates.  
Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C., 2020.

### **AGE DISTRIBUTION.**

For planning purposes, the various cohorts of population are important indicators of the special needs of a community. The cohorts of age, sex and family structure can assist in determining potential labor force and the need for housing, public facilities and other important local services. An analysis of age characteristics can be used to identify the potential need for public school, recreational areas and short- and long-term health care facilities.

- **Table 3.3, Page 3.6, provides age distribution for the City of Laurel, from 2000 to 2030. The “20-34” and “55-64” age groups experienced increases in population from 2000 to 2010. The “20-34” age group increased by 24 persons, from 125 to 149 from 2000 to 2010, while the “55-64” age group increased by 48 persons, from 67 to 115. These two age groups are projected to continue experiencing increases in population by 2030.**
- **Population groups of persons 55+ years of age, are projected to increase by 2030. This includes elderly and frail elderly populations. This is due, primarily, to an “aging in place” population consisting of persons and families whom are long-time residents of the Community. Elderly-related housing facilities, including assisted living facilities and independent living retirement campuses should be continued in an effort to provide local elderly citizens the opportunity to continue residing in Laurel.**
- The current median age in Laurel is an estimated 44.2 years. By 2030, the median age is projected to remain stable, at 44.1 years.

**TABLE 3.3**  
**POPULATION AGE DISTRIBUTION – TRENDS & PROJECTIONS**  
**LAUREL, NEBRASKA**  
**2000-2030**

			2000-2010			2020-2030
<u>Age Group</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>Change</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2030</u>	<u>Change</u>
19 and Under	252	240	-12	230	221	-9
20-34	125	149	+24	159	167	+8
35-54	244	222	-22	216	220	+4
55-64	67	115	+48	128	138	+10
65-74	108	72	-36	95	106	+11
75-84	113	106	-7	71	83	+12
85+	77	60	-17	56	42	-14
<b>Totals</b>	<b>986</b>	<b>964</b>	<b>-22</b>	<b>955</b>	<b>977</b>	<b>+22</b>
 <b>Median Age</b>	 <b>45.0</b>	 <b>44.7</b>	 <b>-0.3</b>	 <b>44.2</b>	 <b>44.1</b>	 <b>-0.1</b>

Source: 2000, 2010 Census.

Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C., 2020.

### **HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS & TENURE.**

- **Table 3.4 and 2.5, Page 3.7, identifies specific household characteristics and tenure by household** in the City of Laurel, from 2000 to 2030. The overall number of households in Laurel increased, slightly between 2000 and 2010, from 414 to 415 total households. **Currently, Laurel consists of an estimated 417 households, including 324 owner and 93 renter households.**
- **An estimated 432 households are projected to exist in Laurel by 2030. This will equal an estimated 331 owner and 101 renter households. The ED Boost scenario identifies a potential for 446 total households in Laurel by 2030, including an estimated 339 owner and 107 renter households.**
- The current number of **persons per household** in Laurel is approximately 2.23 and is projected to decrease, slightly, to 2.21 by 2030. Persons per household, as per the “ED Boost” scenario, would result in a stable persons per household ratio of 2.23 by 2030.
- Currently (2020), an estimated 25 persons reside in **group quarters**. Group quarters consist of dormitories, correctional facilities and nursing/care centers and are not considered a household. By 2030, an estimated 22 persons will receive services in a group quarter facility.

**TABLE 3.4**  
**SPECIFIC HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS**  
**LAUREL, NEBRASKA**  
**2000-2030**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Group Quarters</u>	<u>Persons in Households</u>	<u>Households</u>	<u>Persons Per Household</u>
2000	986	42	944	414	2.28
2010	964	28	936	415	2.26
<b>2020</b>	<b>955</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>930</b>	<b>417</b>	<b>2.23</b>
<b>2030</b>	<b>977</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>955</b>	<b>432</b>	<b>2.21</b>
<b>2030*</b>	<b>1,023</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>996</b>	<b>446</b>	<b>2.23</b>

\*ED Boost.

Source: 2000, 2010 Census.

Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C., 2020.

**TABLE 3.5**  
**TENURE BY HOUSEHOLD**  
**LAUREL, NEBRASKA**  
**2000-2030**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total Households</u>	<u>Owner</u>		<u>Renter</u>	
		<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
2000	414	330	79.7%	84	20.3%
2010	415	326	78.6%	89	21.4%
<b>2020</b>	<b>417</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>77.7%</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>22.3%</b>
<b>2030</b>	<b>432</b>	<b>331</b>	<b>76.7%</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>23.3%</b>
<b>2030*</b>	<b>446</b>	<b>339</b>	<b>76.0%</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>24.0%</b>

\*ED Boost.

Source: 2000, 2010 Census.

Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C., 2020.



## ***INCOME TRENDS & PROJECTIONS.***

### **HOUSEHOLD INCOME GROUPS**

- **Table 3.6, Page 3.10, identifies household income trends and projections** for Laurel, Nebraska, from 2000 to 2030. Household incomes in Laurel have increased in recent years and are projected to continue this trend through 2030. The **median income** for all households in Laurel, in 2020, is estimated to be \$48,060. The Community's household median income is projected to increase to \$56,038, or 3.4 percent by 2030. A majority of all households in Laurel currently have and are projected to have incomes at or above \$50,000.
- **For renter households, the median income in 2020 is estimated to be \$36,725. By 2030, this median income is expected to increase to \$39,860, or 8.5 percent.**
- **The ED Boost scenario for Laurel identifies an increase in the total number of households, especially those of moderate to upper income. The 2020 median income, under the ED Boost, would be an estimated \$57,950 for all households in Laurel and an estimated \$40,500 specifically for renter households.**

### **PER-CAPITA INCOME**

- **Table 3.7, Page 3.10, identifies per capita income trends & projections** in Cedar County and the State of Nebraska, from 2012 to 2030. Per capita income is presented for Cedar County, Nebraska, which is reflective of the per capita income situation in Laurel.
- **In 2020, per capita income in Cedar County is an estimated \$54,000, an increase of 36.5 percent from 2010, which recorded a County per capita income of \$39,559. By 2030, per capita income in Cedar County is projected to increase an estimated 22.8 percent, to \$66,312.**

**TABLE 3.6**  
**HOUSEHOLD INCOME TRENDS & PROJECTIONS**  
**LAUREL, NEBRASKA**  
**2000-2030**

<u>Income Group</u>	<u>2000*</u>	<u>2018 Est.*</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2030</u>	<u>2030*</u> <u>ED Boost</u>	<u>% Change</u> <u>2020-2030</u>
<b>All Households</b>						
Less than \$10,000	48	28	27	16	16	-40.7%
\$10,000-\$19,999	76	64	63	47	47	-25.4%
\$20,000-\$34,999	126	80	61	52	54	-14.8%
\$35,000-\$49,999	76	70	78	86	88	+2.3%
\$50,000 or More	80	196	188	231	241	+4.3%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>406</b>	<b>438</b>	<b>417</b>	<b>432</b>	<b>446</b>	<b>+3.2%</b>
<b>Median Income</b>	<b>\$29,519</b>	<b>\$47,700</b>	<b>\$48,060</b>	<b>\$56,038</b>	<b>\$57,950</b>	<b>+3.4%</b>
<b>Renter Households</b>						
Less than \$10,000	28	11	7	6	6	-14.3%
\$10,000-\$19,999	10	20	16	14	14	-12.5%
\$20,000-\$34,999	40	33	22	20	22	-9.1%
\$35,000-\$49,999	16	35	31	35	37	+12.9%
\$50,000 or More	0	27	17	26	28	+7.6%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>+5.9%</b>
<b>Median Income</b>	<b>\$23,250</b>	<b>\$35,000</b>	<b>\$36,725</b>	<b>\$39,860</b>	<b>\$40,500</b>	<b>+8.5%</b>

\* Specified Data Used. 2018 Estimate subject to Margin of Error (+/- 60 households).

Source: 2000 Census, 2014-2018 American Community Survey.

Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C., 2020.

**TABLE 3.7**  
**PER CAPITA PERSONAL INCOME**  
**TRENDS & PROJECTIONS**  
**CEDAR COUNTY / STATE OF NEBRASKA**  
**2010-2030**

	<u>Cedar County</u>		<u>State of Nebraska</u>	
<u>Year</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>% Change</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>% Change</u>
<b>2010</b>	\$39,559	--	\$40,920	--
<b>2011</b>	\$51,880	+31.2%	\$45,429	+11.0%
<b>2012</b>	\$46,022	-11.3%	\$46,562	+2.5%
<b>2013</b>	\$57,466	+24.9%	\$46,592	+0.1%
<b>2014</b>	\$55,188	-4.0%	\$48,948	+5.1%
<b>2015</b>	\$55,541	+0.6%	\$50,588	+3.4%
<b>2016</b>	\$52,010	-6.4%	\$49,703	-1.8%
<b>2017</b>	\$49,736	-4.4%	\$50,663	+1.9%
<b>2018</b>	\$52,839	+6.2%	\$53,263	+5.1%
<b>2020</b>	<b>\$54,000</b>	<b>+2.2%</b>	<b>\$54,450</b>	<b>+2.2%</b>
<b>2010-2020</b>	<b>\$39,559-\$54,000</b>	<b>+36.5%</b>	<b>\$40,920-\$54,450</b>	<b>+33.1%</b>
<b>2020-2030</b>	<b>\$54,000-\$66,312</b>	<b>+22.8%</b>	<b>\$54,450-\$66,974</b>	<b>+23.0%</b>

Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis – FRED, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, 2019.  
Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C., 2020.

## **COST BURDENED HOUSEHOLDS**

- **Tables 2.8 and 2.9 (Page 3.13), identify households with housing problems/cost burdened** in the City of Laurel, from 2000 to 2030. Cost burdened households are those that spend 30 percent or more of their income on housing costs. Housing costs include any cost directly attributable to the cost of living and may include rent, mortgage, insurance, taxes, and utilities. Housing problems may include a lack of plumbing facilities or overcrowded housing conditions. Overcrowded housing conditions exist when more than 1.01 persons per room exist in a housing unit.
- **An estimated 41 owner households and 40 renter households are determined to be cost burdened and/or experiencing housing problems.** Based upon the current rise in home construction and sales costs, the number of cost burdened households in Laurel is projected to increase. An estimated 45 owner and 44 renter cost burdened households are expected to reside in Laurel.

**TABLE 3.8**  
**ESTIMATED OWNER HOUSEHOLDS BY INCOME**  
**COST BURDENED WITH HOUSING PROBLEMS**  
**LAUREL, NEBRASKA**  
**2000-2030**

<b>Income Range</b>	<b>2000 # / #CB-HP</b>	<b>2016* # / #CB-HP</b>	<b>2020 # / #CB-HP</b>	<b>2030 # / #CB-HP</b>
0%-30% AMI	20 / 20	35 / 20	39 / 23	40 / 27
31%-50% AMI	52 / 20	35 / 4	33 / 4	30 / 5
51%-80% AMI	75 / 16	50 / 4	60 / 5	59 / 5
81%+ AMI	206 / 8	205 / 10	192 / 9	202 / 8
<b>Totals</b>	<b>353 / 64</b>	<b>325 / 38</b>	<b>324 / 41</b>	<b>331 / 45</b>

\*Specified Data Used; 2016 estimate subject to margin of error.

# = Total Households. **#CB-HP** = Households with Cost Burden – Housing Problems.

Source: 2000 CHAS Tables, Huduser.org.

Hanna;Keelan Associates, P.C., 2020.

**TABLE 3.9**  
**ESTIMATED RENTER HOUSEHOLDS BY INCOME**  
**COST BURDENED WITH HOUSING PROBLEMS**  
**LAUREL, NEBRASKA**  
**2000-2030**

<b>Income Range</b>	<b>2000</b> <b># / #CB-HP</b>	<b>2016*</b> <b># / #CB-HP</b>	<b>2020</b> <b># / #CB-HP</b>	<b>2030</b> <b># / #CB-HP</b>
0%-30% AMI	36 / 24	50 / 35	28 / 22	29 / 25
31%-50% AMI	16 / 8	15 / 10	9 / 7	9 / 7
51%-80% AMI	18 / 0	45 / 10	25 / 6	28 / 7
81%+ AMI	46 / 4	55 / 10	31 / 5	35 / 5
<b>Totals</b>	<b>116 / 36</b>	<b>165 / 65</b>	<b>93 / 40</b>	<b>101 / 44</b>

\*Specified Data Used; 2016 estimate subject to margin of error.

# = Total Households. **#CB-HP** = Households with Cost Burden – Housing Problems.

Source: 2000 CHAS Tables, Huduser.org.

Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C., 2020.



## ***EMPLOYMENT & ECONOMIC TRENDS & PROJECTIONS.***

The most recent and comprehensive employment data available for Cedar County was obtained from the Nebraska Department of Labor. Since some of these figures are only available County-Wide, a review and analysis of Cedar County labor force statistics is also highlighted to provide a general understanding of the economic activity occurring in and around the City of Laurel.

### **EMPLOYMENT TRENDS**

- **Tables 2.10, Page 3.15, identifies civilian labor force and employment data trends and projections** in Cedar County, Nebraska. Between 2000 and 2018, the unemployment rate in Laurel ranged from a high of 3.6 percent to a low of 2.2 percent. During this period, the total number of employed persons decreased by 581.
- Currently, an estimated 4,513 persons are in the labor force in Cedar County, an increase from the 2018 number of 4,459 labor force persons. Employment in the County also declined, from 4,915 in 2000 to 4,355 in 2018. By 2030, an estimated 4,304 persons are projected to be employed in the County, with an estimated unemployment rate of 2.6 percent.
- **Table 3.11, Page 3.16, identifies workforce employment by type** in Cedar County, Nebraska, for 2020. Currently, an estimated 1,751 persons are employed in a non-farm establishment. The largest employment sectors in Cedar County are the Local Government, Retail Trade and Health Care & Social Assistance sectors.
- **The Community of Laurel has been active in attracting new, and retaining existing employers.** Major employers in Laurel include Laurel-Concord-Coleridge Public Schools, Security Bank, Hillcrest Care Center and Hansen Brothers Parts & Service. These and other employers could form a partnership to create various owner and rental housing types, including single room occupancy/transitional housing for their current or future employees. Additionally, the laurel Industrial Park (pictured right) has undeveloped parcels available for new industrial development opportunities.

**TABLE 3.10**  
**LABOR FORCE STATISTICS**  
**CEDAR COUNTY, NEBRASKA**  
**2000-2030**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Labor Force</u>	<u>Employment</u>	<u>Unemployment</u>	<u>Unemployment Rate</u>
2000	5,040	4,915	125	2.5%
2001	5,016	4,890	126	2.5%
2002	5,070	4,939	131	2.6%
2003	5,032	4,875	157	3.1%
2004	5,078	4,933	145	2.9%
2005	4,989	4,853	136	2.7%
2006	4,908	4,794	114	2.3%
2007	4,776	4,660	116	2.4%
2008	4,829	4,707	122	2.5%
2009	4,844	4,668	176	3.6%
2010	4,627	4,462	165	3.6%
2011	4,709	4,554	155	3.3%
2012	4,741	4,603	138	2.9%
2013	4,733	4,593	140	3.0%
2014	4,661	4,553	108	2.3%
2015	4,640	4,530	110	2.4%
2016	4,565	4,449	116	2.5%
2017	4,463	4,365	98	2.2%
2018	4,459	4,355	104	2.3%
<b>2020</b>	<b>4,513</b>	<b>4,393</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>2.7%</b>
<b>2030</b>	<b>4,419</b>	<b>4,304</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>2.6%</b>

Source: Nebraska Department of Labor, Labor Market Information, 2020.  
Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C., 2020.

**TABLE 3.11**  
**WORKFORCE EMPLOYMENT BY TYPE**  
**CEDAR COUNTY, NEBRASKA**  
**2020**

**Workforce**

<b>Non-Farm Employment</b>	
<b>(Wage and Salary)</b>	<b>2,522</b>
Agriculture Forestry, Fishing & Hunting.	0
Mining, Quarrying and Oil/Gas Extraction.	*
Utilities.	*
Construction.	150
Manufacturing.	211
Wholesale Trade.	207
Retail Trade.	311
Transportation & Warehousing.	112
Information.	35
Finance & Insurance.	160
Real Estate & Rental/Leasing.	13
Professional, Scientific & Technical Services.	69
Management of Companies & Enterprises.	0
Administrative/Support/Waste.	29
Educational Services.	*
Health Care & Social Assistance.	256
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation.	11
Accommodation & Food Service.	71
Other Services (except Public Administration).	121
Federal Government.	87
State Government.	27
Local Government.	557

N/A=Data not available because of disclosure suppression.

Source: Nebraska Department of Labor, Labor Market Information, 2020.

# **SECTION 4**



**LAND USE PLAN & DEVELOPMENT.**

## ***SECTION 4 LAND USE PLAN & DEVELOPMENT.***

### ***INTRODUCTION.***

The **Land Use Plan and Development** section of this **Comprehensive Plan** identifies the current and future land use development patterns in Laurel, Nebraska. The land use component examines **development opportunities and requirements and future utilization of land** in and around the City. A discussion of the **environmental** and **physical characteristics** of Laurel precedes a description and analyses of **existing** and **future land use** conditions in the City.

### ***PROPER LAND USE PRACTICES.***

Proper land use practices can protect the natural resources of a community and be a complement to the built environment. The natural environment of the City of Laurel provides both opportunities and constraints for existing and future developments. As humans strive to create a sustainable living environment, they must work and live in harmony with their natural surroundings. This can occur by designing with nature, conserving unique features, protecting watersheds and using sensitive development practices.

In Laurel, the primary development constraints are associated with flooding and drainage associated with Logan Creek, which travels along the northern Corporate Limits of Laurel. Portions of the Logan Creek 100-year floodplain comprise the northern and eastern portions of the City.

The proposed **Land Use Plan** concentrates on the use of land in the City of Laurel and the Community's respective One-Mile Planning Jurisdiction during the 10-year planning period. Special attention is given to the identification of future residential, public/quasi-public, parks and recreational, commercial and industrial growth areas. The identification of undeveloped land in the Corporate Limits and One-Mile Planning Jurisdiction is imperative to support growth and development opportunities during the next 10 years.



## ***HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT.***

*(Source: City of Laurel Website).*

The land containing the present site of Laurel was surveyed between 1856 and 1858 but the prairie sod remained unbroken for many years. The arrival of Louis C. Tolles and other pioneers in the early 1870s marked the beginning of settlement, but it was not until 1883 – when the Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis and Omaha Railroad opened a branch line from Wakefield to what is now Hartington – that the southern end of Cedar County was seen as a desirable place to live.

In order to serve the flood of homeseekers brought by the new railroad, a post office was established at Claramont in 1884. A few years later, plans were announced to build a transcontinental railroad from Sioux City to San Francisco. When the first leg of what was called the “Pacific Short Line” opened for business in the summer of 1890, its tracks intersected the branch line southeast of Claramont.

Recognizing that a town with two railroads might possess certain economic advantages, William M. Martin and a small number of investors drew up plans to start a new town at the crossing. A map of a small village bearing the name “Claramont Junction” was filed at the Cedar County Courthouse on October 31, 1890. But the Pacific Short Line soon experienced financial difficulties and Claramont Junction remained a jumble of rapidly-decaying survey stakes.

The Short Line was back in business by the Fall of 1891 and plans to develop Claramont Junction were revived. But since the name “Claramont Junction” too closely resembled “Claramont,” a different name had to be selected before a post office could be established. Martin suggested “Laurel” after his eldest daughter Laura.

The Pacific Short Line opened a temporary depot in February 1892. This was Laurel’s first building. Another significant development came a few weeks later when Fremont Everett and Oliver Waite announced they would move their lumberyard and general store from Claramont to the new town at the crossing. The opening of Everett and Waite’s store on April 1, 1892, marked a turning point in the battle between the two settlements. Laurel then began to develop rapidly while Claramont became a ghost town.

The exodus of buildings from Claramont was augmented by a building boom in Laurel. Many of Laurel's first homes were built either in the 200 block of Elm Street or in the same block of Oak. One of these early dwellings has been moved to the City Park where it will be restored by the Tuesday Club. It was built in 1892 by pioneer resident Angus Maun.

Although the railroad was located at the north end of Cedar Street, the 100 block of Oak became Laurel's first "Main Street." Everett & Waite's store, Hotel Laurel, and the Farmers State Bank were among the first to locate there. By the time Laurel was incorporated in May 1893, the population stood at more than two hundred.

With Oak Street nearly filled to capacity, buildings began spreading along Second Street. One of the first was Everett & Waite's new store at 124 E. Second. Completed in July 1894, this was Laurel's first brick building. The second floor featured a large meeting room that was sometimes called the "opera house." By this time the two-year-old town boasted of two railroad depots, two grain elevators, three carpenter shops, two general stores, one grocery store, one candy store, two hardware stores, one drug store, one furniture store, one harness shop, one millinery store, two lumber yards, two barber shops, two hotels, three livery stables, two blacksmith shops, two implement dealers, one meat market, one law office, one flour mill, one saloon, two real estate dealers, one doctor, one newspaper, and a population of more than three hundred.

When the first automobile appeared on the street in 1908, it was seen as a curiosity. Few realized that its arrival heralded the end of an era. The two railroads which had brought Laurel into existence rapidly declined in importance as trucks, buses and automobiles began moving passengers and freight. Laurel soon found itself at another important "crossing" when the Grant Highway (U.S. 20) intersected the Sunshine Highway (Nebraska 15) at the edge of town. By this time the horse and buggy was seen as a curiosity.



## **HISTORICAL POPULATION TRENDS**

**Table 4.1** highlights **historical population trends** for the Community of Laurel. The population of Laurel was first documented during the 1900 Census, which recorded a population of 514 residents. This rural Community flourished throughout its early existence, experiencing significant population increases through the 1920 Census and reaching a peak population of 1,031 during the 1980 Census. The Population has declined, slightly, but remained stable since.

**TABLE 4.1**  
**HISTORICAL POPULATION TRENDS**  
**LAUREL, NEBRASKA**  
**1900-2020**

<u>Census Year</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Change</u>
1900	514	--
1910	514	+0.0%
1920	830	+61.5%
1930	864	+4.1%
1940	861	-0.3%
1950	944	+9.6%
1960	922	-2.3%
1970	1,009	+9.4%
1980	1,031	+2.2%
1990	981	-4.8%
2000	986	+0.5%
2010	964	-2.2%
2020 Est.	955	-0.9%

Source: U.S. Census.

Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C., 2020.

## ***THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT.***

### **SOIL ASSOCIATIONS.**

The soils in and around Laurel are classified into four soil groups, or Associations, each with a broad range of characteristics. **Illustration 3.1, Page 3.7**, graphically displays the **General Soil Associations** for the City of Laurel and the One-Mile Planning Jurisdiction. The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service conducted the soil survey and developed the boundaries of the soil types found on **Illustration 4.1**.

The four Soil Association depicted in **Illustration 3.1** are the Nora-Crofton-Moody, Moody-Nora, Aowa-Shell-Hobbs and Lamo-Baltic Soil Associations. These Associations are closely related to the gently rolling hills with nearly level and moderately steep variations, as well as land associated with Logan Creek and associated tributaries characteristic to southeastern Cedar County.

#### **❖ NORA-CROFTON-MOODY ASSOCIATION.**

*Deep, nearly level to moderate steep, well-drained, silty soils that formed in loess; on uplands.*

Soils of this Association are described as a well-drained to excessively drained, gently sloping to steep, silty soils on upper elevations. These soils must be carefully managed to prevent water erosion and to maintain fertility. Farms located on these soils are primarily used for growing grain and raising livestock. All soils have moderate to severe limitations for septic tank and filter fields and sewage lagoons, due to slow permeability. These soils have fair to poor bearing capacity for foundations of buildings.

#### **❖ MOODY-NORA ASSOCIATION.**

*Deep, nearly level to strongly sloping, well-drained, silty soils that formed in loess; on uplands.*

This Association consists mainly of alternating divides on uplands that are dissected by narrow drainages. Nearly level areas are on the broad divides. The narrow divides and colluvial foot slopes are gently sloping, and the side slopes are strongly sloping.

❖ **AOWA-SHELL-HOBBS ASSOCIATION.**

*Deep, nearly level, well-drained, silty soils that formed in alluvium; on bottom lands.*

This Association consists of soils on flood plains of intermittent and perennial streams. Aowa soils are typically associated with flood plains of small drainageways. Shell soils are located on more broad flood plains. Hobbs soils are adjacent intermittent and perennial streams. Underlying material of this association is stratified of dark grayish and brown , friable silt loam about nine inches thick.

❖ **LAMO-BALTIC ASSOCIATION.**

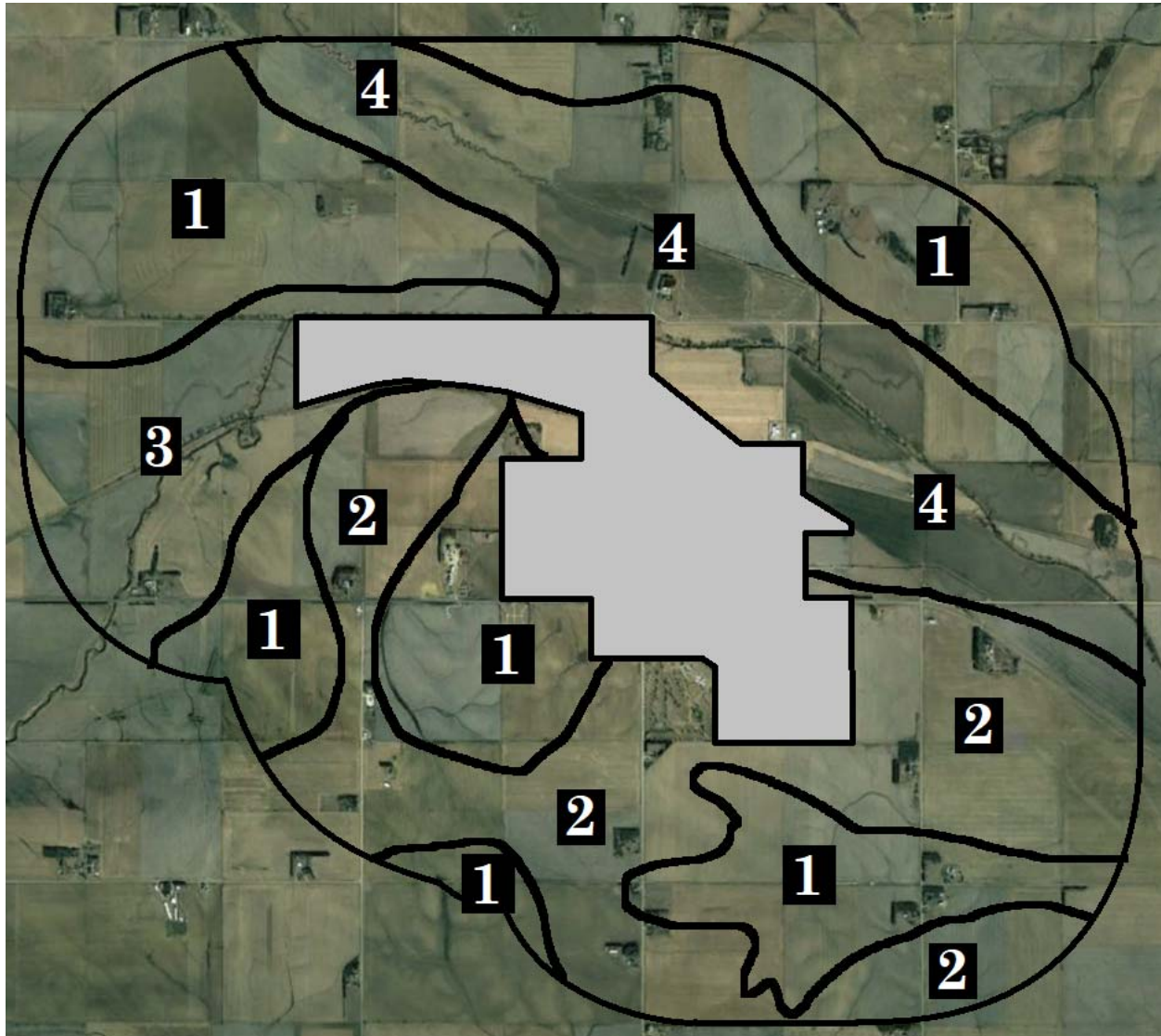
*Deep, nearly level, somewhat poorly drained and poorly drained, silty soils that formed in alluvium; on bottom lands.*

This Association consists of nearly level soils on bottom lands. Lamo soils are somewhat poorly drained with a surface layer of a very dark gray, friable silty clay loam about seven inches thick. Baltic soils are poorly drained with a very dark gray surface layer and an underlying gray silty clay.





**GENERAL SOIL ASSOCIATIONS MAP**  
ONE-MILE PLANNING JURISDICTION  
LAUREL, NEBRASKA  
2020



**LEGEND**

- 1 - NORA-CROFTON-MOODY ASSOCIATION.
- 2 - MOODY-NORA ASSOCIATION.
- 3 - AOWA-SHELL-HOBBS ASSOCIATION.
- 4 - LAMO-BALTIC ASSOCIATION.

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**ILLUSTRATION 4.1**

## **WATERSHEDS**

The topography and terrain of Laurel and its associated One-Mile Planning Jurisdiction are varied. The natural landscape has been formed by wind and water erosion and deposits creating areas of nearly level lands on stream terraces. The natural topography of the Community ranges from level in the north, to gently sloping in the south.

Groundwater and groundwater-fed surface streams account for a large percentage of the water resources in the Laurel One-Mile Planning Jurisdiction. The City of Laurel relies upon the groundwater reserves and surface water run-off to recharge the underground water supply of the wells, located within the Corporate Limits of Laurel.

The underground water supply is vital to the region and is the source of water for numerous rural private drinking and irrigation wells. Any endangerment to the supply threatens public health, as well as the local farm economy. This natural resource must be protected. Securing the quality of drinking water from private wells in the rural areas within the Laurel One-Mile Planning Jurisdiction is very important.

Rural dwellings typically have septic tanks and/or leach fields. If located too close to each other, contamination could occur. Adequate residential lot sizes help ensure residents' health, safety and welfare into the future.

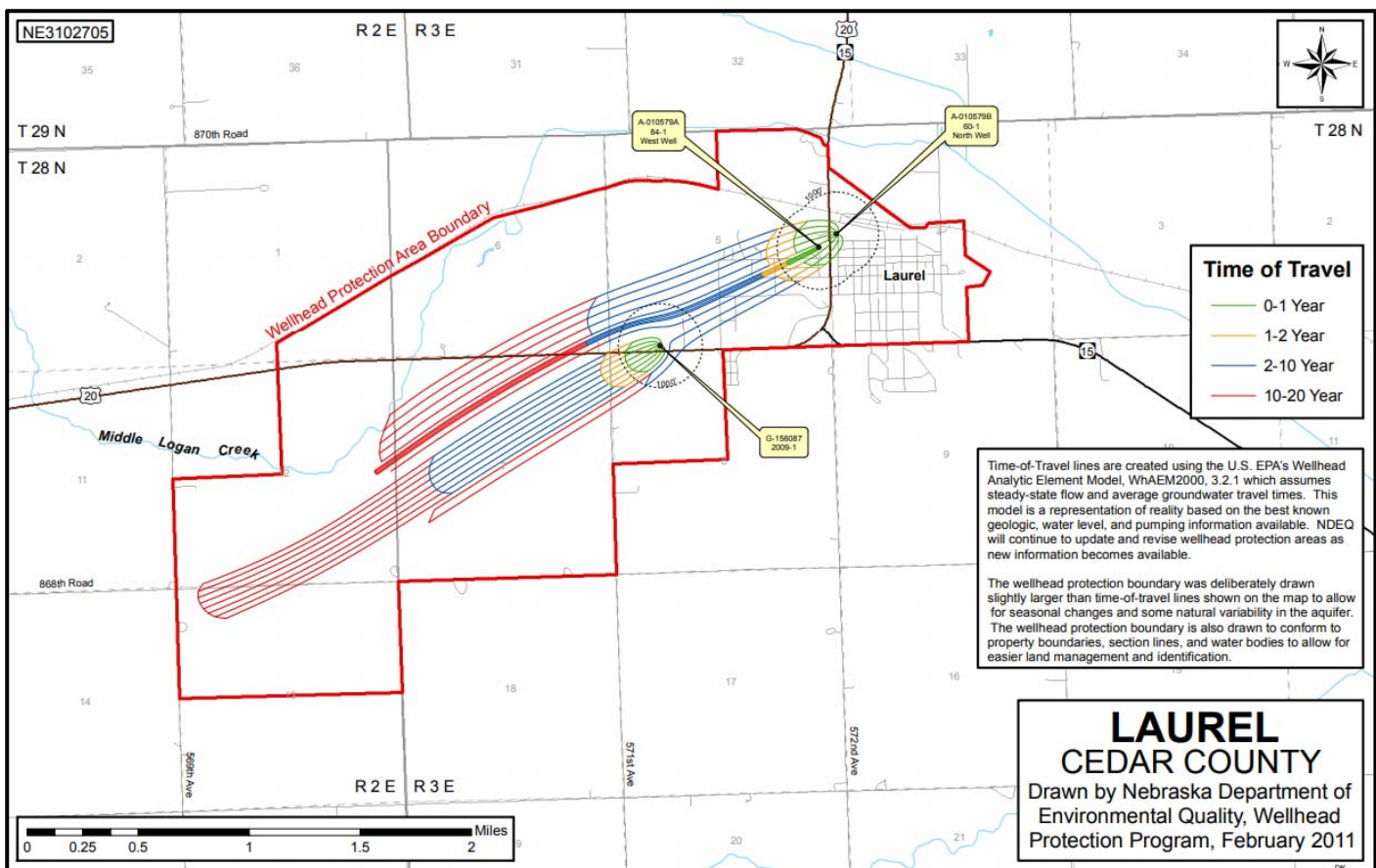
## **WELLHEAD PROTECTION PROGRAM**

The Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy (NDEE) regulates ground water quality and quantity. To assist local municipalities with protecting their municipal drinking water supply, NDEE has developed the **Nebraska Wellhead Protection (WHP) Program**. The voluntary program intends to prevent the contamination of ground water used by public water supply wells.

The **WHP Program** provides the following in accordance with the federal laws: 1) duties of the governmental entities and utility districts, 2) determines protection area, 3) identify contamination sources, 4) develop a contaminant source management program, 5) develop an alternate drinking water plan, 6) review contaminated sources in future wellhead areas and 7) involve the public.

The purpose of **Nebraska's Wellhead Protection Program** is to prevent the location of any new contaminant sources in wellhead protection areas through planning, minimize the hazard of existing sources through management and provide early warning of existing contamination through ground water monitoring. The **Wellhead Protection Area (WHPA)** is a region with restrictive regulations on land use to prevent potential contaminants from uses located in the sensitive area. The boundaries are delineated by a time-of-travel cylindrical displacement calculation. The boundary is then mapped by NDEE so Communities can apply zoning regulations to the floating district. **Two Municipal Wells are located within the Corporate Limits and, thus, are within the jurisdiction of the City of Laurel. A third well is planned for a 110 acre tract in southeastern Laurel that will soon be annexed into the Community.**

WELLHEAD PROTECTION MAP  
ILLUSTRATION 3.2



### THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT/EXISTING LAND USE PROFILE.

The built environment of Laurel is characterized by its districts, paths, edges, nodes and landmarks. The combination of these physical features creates a sense of place for the citizens and patrons of Laurel. The natural terrain enhances the built environment by providing an aesthetic base for urban development. The districts and neighborhoods are defined by their edges or boundaries. The major transportation corridors and the physical barriers of the terrain generally create the edge of each district, giving the neighborhoods distinct boundaries.

**Table 4.2** identifies the existing land use in Laurel as of 2020, per land use type and acres per 100 people. As a reference, the planning standard for acres per 100 people per land use category is also shown. **The total area within the City of Laurel is currently estimated to be 872 acres.** Existing land use within the Laurel Corporate Limits and One-Mile Planning Jurisdiction are also identified in **Illustrations 4.3 and 4.4**, respectively.

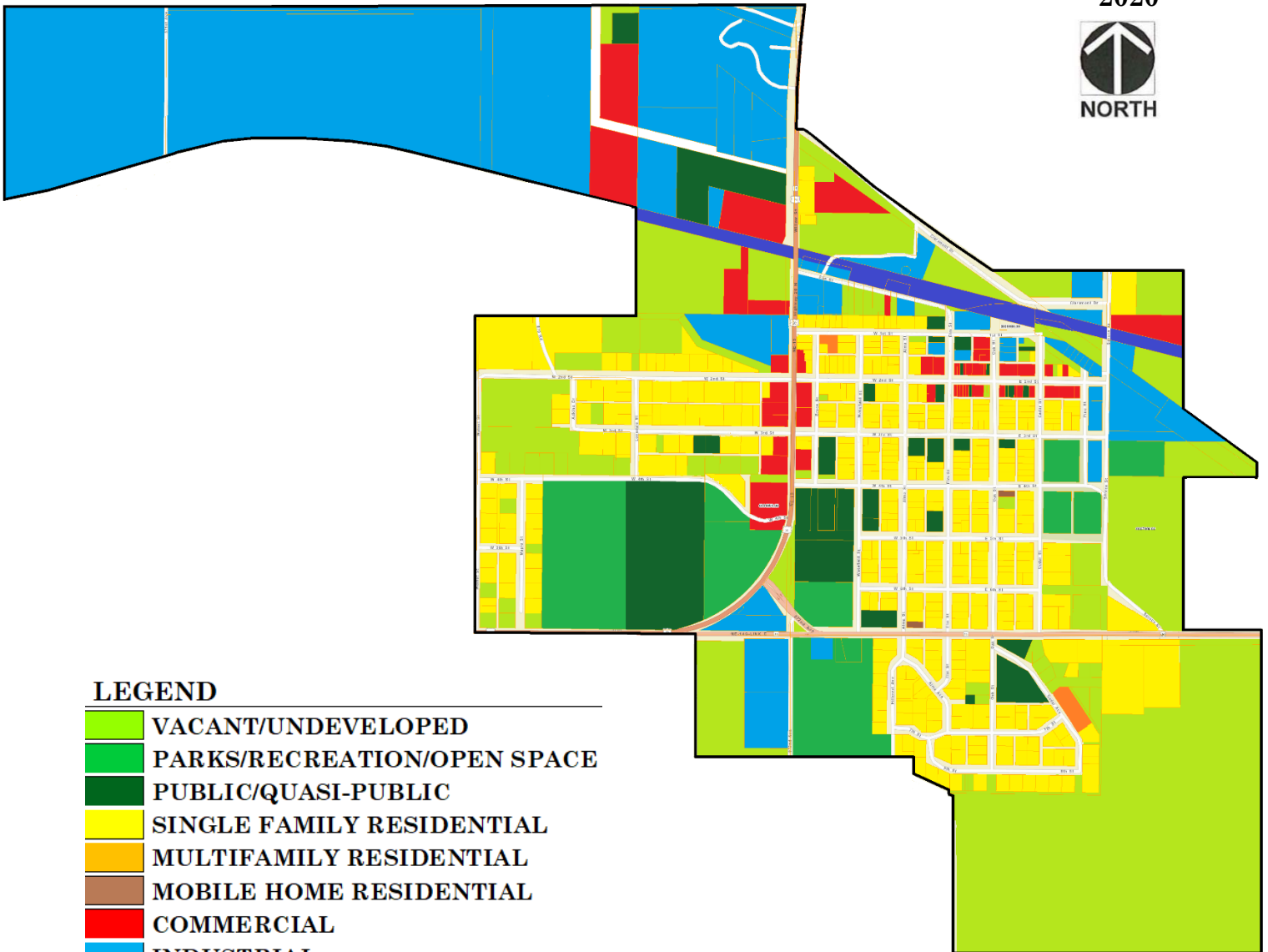
TABLE 4.2 EXISTING LAND USE CAPACITY MATRIX LAUREL NEBRASKA						
2020 ESTIMATED POPULATION - 955						
2030 PROJECTED (MEDIUM) POPULATION - 977						
2030 PROJECTED (BOOST) POPULATION - 1,023						
	2020			LAUREL PLANNING STANDARD	NATIONAL PLANNING STANDARD	TOTAL ACRES NEEDED (Laurel / National) 2020
	ACRES	PERCENT				
Parks & Rec./Open Space	58.5	6.7 %		6.1	2.0	58.5 / 19.1
Public/Quasi-Public	47.0	5.4 %		4.9	2.8	47.0 / 26.7
Residential	146.5	16.8 %		15.3	10.0	146.5 / 95.5
Single & Two-Family	144.7	16.6 %		15.1	7.5	144.7 / 71.6
Multifamily	1.6	0.2 %		0.2	2.0	1.6 / 19.1
Mobile Home	0.2	0.0 %		0.0	0.5	0.2 / 4.8
Commercial	37.7	4.3 %		3.9	2.4	37.7 / 22.9
Industrial	230.3	26.4 %		24.1	2.3	230.3 / 22.0
Streets/Alleys	125.5	14.4 %		13.1	9.0	125.5 / 86.0
<b>Total Developed</b>	<b>645.5</b>	<b>74.1 %</b>		<b>67.4</b>	<b>28.5</b>	<b>645.5 / 272.2</b>
<b>Total Vacant</b>	<b>226.1</b>	<b>25.9 %</b>		<b>23.6</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>226.1 / 62.1</b>
Developable*	192.1	85.0 %		20.1	6.5	192.1 / 62.1
Not Developable	33.9	15.0 %		3.5	NA	33.9 / NA
<b>Total Acreage</b>	<b>871.6</b>	<b>100.0 %</b>		<b>91.0</b>	<b>35.0</b>	<b>871.6 / 334.3</b>
^Based on Net Area Acreage.						
Note 1: Laurel and National Planning Standards identify number of acres per 100 persons.						
*Vacant Land Capable of Development.						
Source: Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C., 2020.						



## EXISTING LAND USE MAP

CORPORATE LIMITS  
LAUREL, NEBRASKA

2020



### LEGEND

VACANT/UNDEVELOPED
PARKS/RECREATION/OPEN SPACE
PUBLIC/QUASI-PUBLIC
SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL
MOBILE HOME RESIDENTIAL
COMMERCIAL
INDUSTRIAL
RAILROAD CORRIDOR

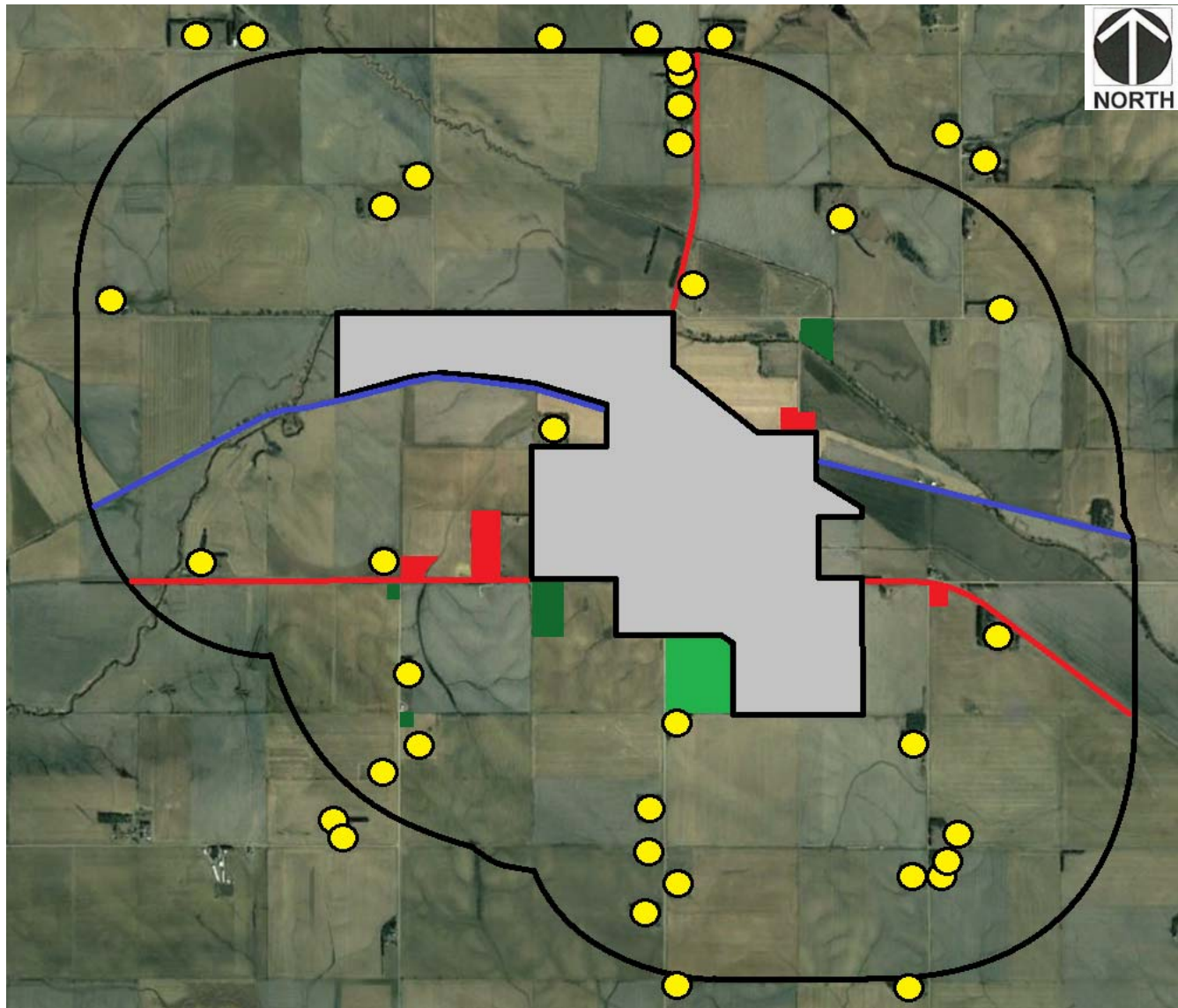
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ILLUSTRATION 4.3



**EXISTING LAND USE MAP**  
**ONE-MILE PLANNING JURISDICTION**  
**LAUREL, NEBRASKA**  
**2020**



**LEGEND**

- PARK/RECREATION
- PUBLIC/QUASI-PUBLIC
- SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL/FARMSTEAD
- COMMERCIAL
- HIGHWAY CORRIDOR
- RAILROAD CORRIDOR
- CITY OF LAUREL CORPORATE LIMITS/  
PLANNING JURISDICTION

**HANNA:KEELAN ASSOCIATES, P.C.**  
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**ILLUSTRATION 4.4**

The following **existing land use** discussion focuses on each of the land use types in Laurel, utilizing **Table 4.2** in comparison to National Planning Standards.

### **PARKS/RECREATIONAL**

Park facilities in the City of Laurel include several Community and neighborhood parks, as well as athletic fields and a portion of the Cedar View Country Club. Land attributed to parks and recreational use accounts for approximately 6.7 percent of the total developed land in Laurel. The 58.5 acres of park land equates to 6.1 acres per 100 people, which is approximately 205 percent more than the planning standard of two acres per 100 people.

### **PUBLIC/QUASI-PUBLIC**

**Public/Quasi-Public** land acreage in Laurel totals an estimated 47 acres, or 5.4 percent of the total platted City area. This land classification includes Laurel-Concord-Coleridge Public Schools, Laurel City Hall/Senior Center, churches, city and county buildings and various other public buildings. This land use classification equals an estimated 4.9 acres per 100 people, approximately 75 percent more than the recommended planning standard.

### **RESIDENTIAL**

Single, multifamily and mobile home residential uses are the primary housing types in the Community. Residential uses occupy an estimated 146.5 acres of land, or 16.8 percent of the City's total area. The 15.3 acres of residential land per 100 persons in Laurel is approximately 53 percent more than the planning standard of 10 acres.

- ❖ **Single Family** land usage calculates to approximately 144.7 acres, or an estimated 16.6 percent of the total City land area. The 15.1 acres of single family residential land per 100 persons is approximately 101.3 percent more than the planning standard of 7.5 acres per 100 people.
- ❖ **Multifamily** land usage in Laurel is approximately 1.6 acres, or an estimated 0.2 percent of the Community's total land area. This calculates to 0.2 acres of multifamily land per 100 persons, which is 90 percent less than the recommended two acres per 100 people.
- ❖ **Mobile Homes** comprise approximately 0.2 acres. The recommended planning standard of 0.5 acres per 100 persons. Only two mobile homes exist in the Community of Laurel, with no designated mobile home park.

## **COMMERCIAL**

A comparison of land use ratios from the National Planning Standards indicates that Laurel has approximately 62 percent more **commercial** land uses than the recommended Standard of 2.4 acres per 100 persons. Commercial land uses account for 4.3 percent, or 37.7 acres of land in Laurel. Two commercial districts exist in Laurel, including the Downtown and Highway 15/20 (Willow Street) Corridor.

**A Downtown Revitalization-Phase I Plan has been prepared for Downtown Laurel, which identifies priority projects to be undertaken in the Downtown to develop a strong commercial and entertainment core for the Community via building rehabilitation, business retention and beautification. A pavement and sidewalk rehabilitation project is currently in progress.**



## **INDUSTRIAL**

The total acreage of classified **industrial** land use in Laurel is approximately 230.3 acres. Industrial acreage per 100 people is 24.1, or about 947.8 percent more than the planning standard of 2.3 acres per 100 persons. Most industrial land uses are located in the Laurel Industrial Park, located in northern Laurel along and west of the Highway 15/20 Corridor.

**A significant portion of industrially-developed land involves the Central Valley Ag facility (Formerly Agrex), which includes a shuttle loader and loop track for up to 110 railcars, vertical concrete grain storage bins and bunker storage for up to one Million bushels of corn. This facility encompasses an estimated 147 acres, or nearly 64 percent of the total 230.3 acres of industrial land use in Laurel.**

### ***FUTURE LAND USE.***

The City of Laurel should propose a goal of implementing appropriate community and economic development initiatives to increase the population base and provide additional wealth to the Community. Since its founding, the City has reached a historic peak of 1,031, as per the 1980 Census. A declining but stable population has been experienced in Laurel since this population peak. **The potential for an Economic Development “Boost” through the creation of 30 additional full-time employment opportunities, would result in an estimated 2030 population of 1,023, an increase of 68 persons, or 7.1 percent.**

Achieving community growth through 2030 will require the development of land within the current Corporate Limits that is supported by local public infrastructure and meets the desires of local developers and citizenry alike. Additionally, the annexation of undeveloped land and the expansion of infrastructure and utilities to support residential, commercial, and industrial development will be critical. The identification of future growth areas for all land use types adjacent and beyond the City of Laurel Corporate Limits is necessary to support growth opportunities. **Table 4.3 (Page 4.16), Future Land Use Capacity Matrix, identifies a sufficient amount of vacated/undeveloped land within the Laurel Corporate Limits for development.**

**Illustration 4.5 (Page 4.17), Future Land Use Map,** highlights the future land use development recommendations for areas within the Corporate Limits of Laurel. **Future Land Use Map, Illustration 4.6 (Page 4.18),** identifies potential residential, commercial and industrial growth areas adjacent but beyond the Laurel Corporate Limits and within the One-Mile Planning Jurisdiction.

**TABLE 4.3**  
**FUTURE LAND USE CAPACITY MATRIX**  
**LAUREL NEBRASKA**

2020 ESTIMATED POPULATION - 955

2030 PROJECTED (MEDIUM) POPULATION - 977

2030 PROJECTED (BOOST) POPULATION - 1,023

	TOTAL ACRES NEEDED (Laurel / National)			Future Land Use Map Laurel Adjusted (Per Note 2)
	2020	2030**	2030***	
<b>Parks &amp; Rec./Open Space</b>	<b>58.5 / 19.1</b>	<b>59.2 / 19.4</b>	<b>62.2 / 20.4</b>	<b>69.6 Acres</b>
<b>Public/Quasi-Public</b>	<b>47.0 / 26.7</b>	<b>47.5 / 27.2</b>	<b>50.0 / 28.6</b>	<b>56.0 Acres</b>
<b>Residential</b>	<b>146.5 / 95.5</b>	<b>148.6 / 97.1</b>	<b>156.3 / 102.0</b>	<b>175.9 Acres</b>
<i>Single &amp; Two-Family</i>	<i>144.7 / 71.6</i>	<i>146.5 / 72.8</i>	<i>154.0 / 76.5</i>	<i>172.6 Acres</i>
<i>Multifamily</i>	<i>1.6 / 19.1</i>	<i>1.9 / 19.4</i>	<i>2.0 / 20.4</i>	<i>2.8 Acres</i>
<i>Mobile Home</i>	<i>0.2 / 4.8</i>	<i>0.2 / 4.9</i>	<i>0.3 / 5.1</i>	<i>0.5 Acres</i>
<b>Commercial</b>	<b>37.7 / 22.9</b>	<b>37.8 / 23.3</b>	<b>39.8 / 24.5</b>	<b>44.0 Acres</b>
<b>Industrial</b>	<b>230.3 / 22.0</b>	<b>233.8 / 22.3</b>	<b>245.8 / 23.5</b>	<b>276.8 Acres</b>
<b>Streets/Alleys</b>	<b>125.5 / 86.0</b>	<b>127.1 / 87.3</b>	<b>133.6 / 91.8</b>	<b>149.8 Acres</b>
<b>Total Developed</b>	<b>645.5 / 272.2</b>	<b>654.0 / 276.6</b>	<b>687.7 / 290.8</b>	<b>772.1 Acres</b>
<b>Total Vacant</b>	<b>226.1 / 62.1</b>	<b>229.0 / 63.1</b>	<b>240.7 / 66.3</b>	<b>99.5 Acres</b>
<i>Developable*</i>	<i>192.1 / 62.1</i>	<i>195.0 / 63.1</i>	<i>205.0 / 66.3</i>	<i>65.6 Acres</i>
<i>Not Developable</i>	<i>33.9 / NA</i>	<i>34.0 / NA</i>	<i>35.7 / NA</i>	<i>33.9 Acres</i>
<b>Total Acreage</b>	<b>871.6 / 334.3</b>	<b>883.0 / 339.7</b>	<b>928.4 / 357.1</b>	<b>871.6 Acres</b>

^Based on Net Area Acreage.

Note 1: Laurel and National Planning Standards identify number of acres per 100 persons.

Note 2: Designated Land Requirements (Future Needs) should include 3x 2020 to 2030 Boost Estimates presented on the Future Land Use

\*Vacant Land Capable of Development.

\*\*Based on Medium Population Projection.

\*\*\*Based on Population Projection for Economic Development Boost.

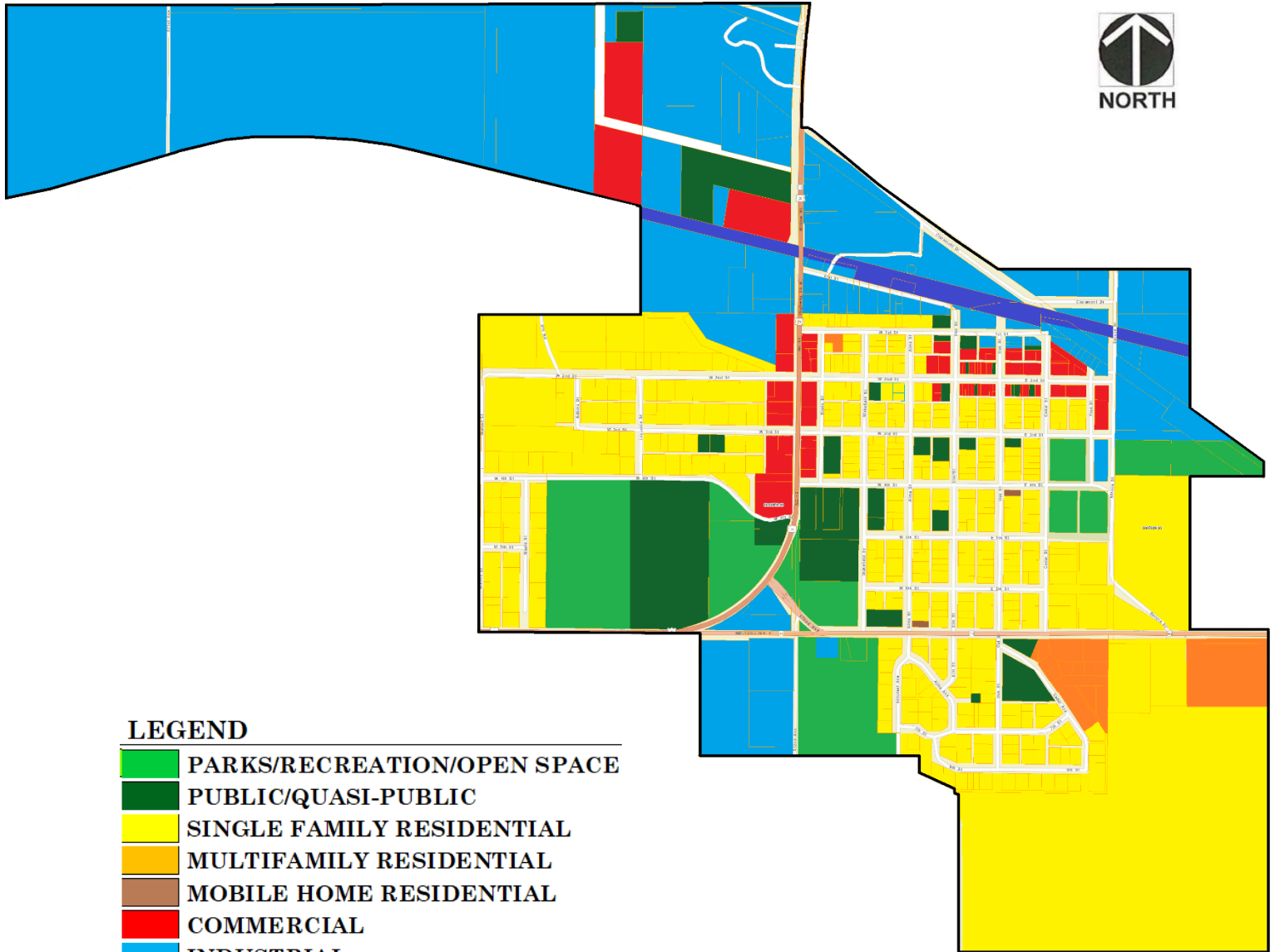
Source: Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C., 2020.











# FUTURE LAND USE MAP

**CORPORATE LIMITS  
LAUREL, NEBRASKA**

2020



## LEGEND

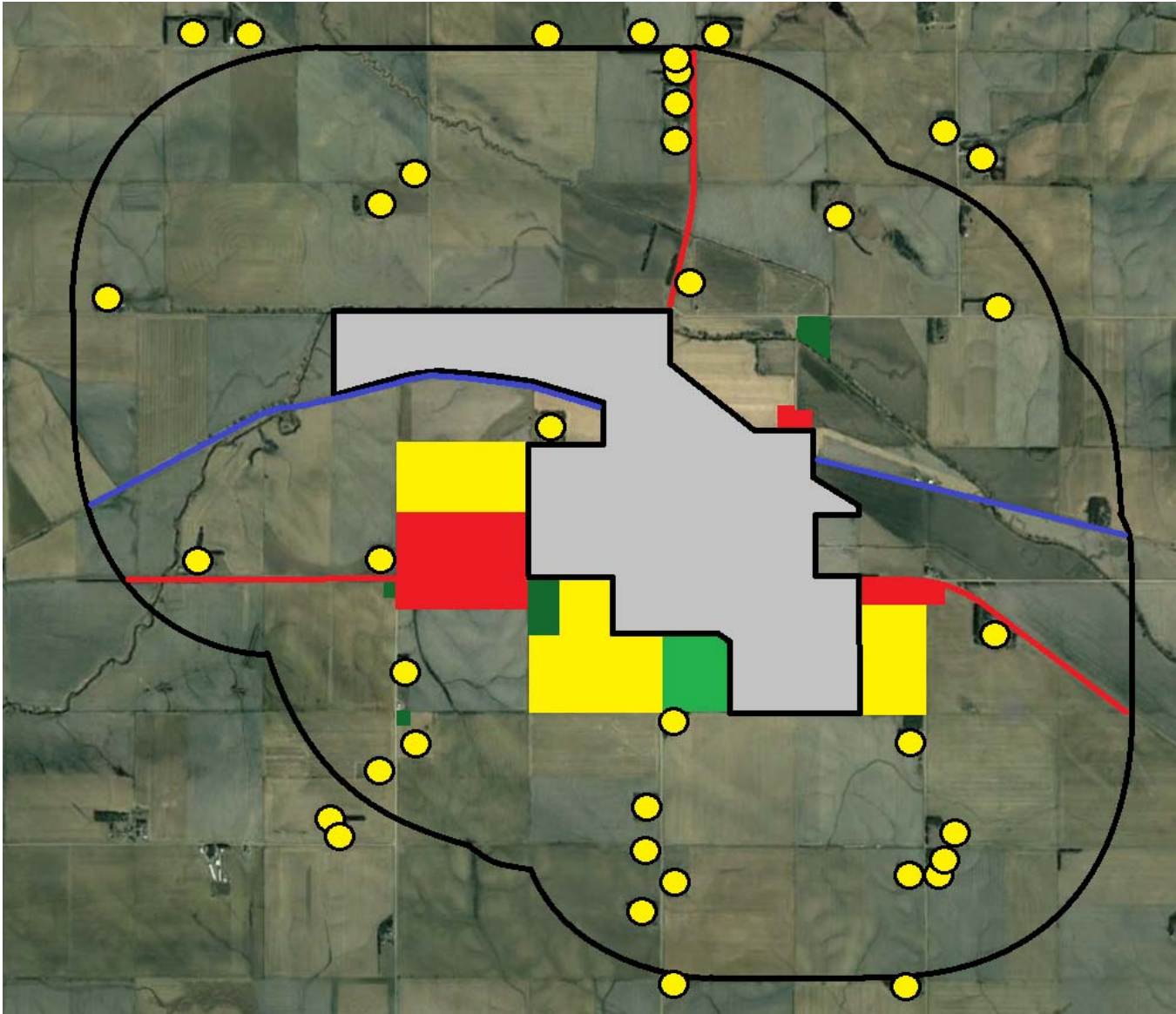
- |   |                             |
|---|-----------------------------|
|  | PARKS/RECREATION/OPEN SPACE |
|  | PUBLIC/QUASI-PUBLIC         |
|  | SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL   |
|  | MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL     |
|  | MOBILE HOME RESIDENTIAL     |
|  | COMMERCIAL                  |
|  | INDUSTRIAL                  |
|  | RAILROAD CORRIDOR           |

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### ILLUSTRATION 4.5

**FUTURE LAND USE MAP**  
**ONE-MILE PLANNING JURISDICTION**  
**LAUREL, NEBRASKA**  
**2020**



**LEGEND**

- PARK/RECREATION
- PUBLIC/QUASI-PUBLIC
- SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL/FARMSTEAD
- COMMERCIAL
- HIGHWAY CORRIDOR
- RAILROAD CORRIDOR
- CITY OF LAUREL CORPORATE LIMITS/  
PLANNING JURISDICTION

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**ILLUSTRATION 4.6**

## **PARKS & RECREATION**

**An estimated 58.5 acres of park and recreation land currently exists in Laurel. This acreage represents more than three times the amount recommended by current National Planning Standards. The City maintains the Laurel City Park and the Municipal Pool, along with a flood control dry dam and frisbee golf course. The City should designate between an estimated 59.2 and 62.2 total park and recreation acres in Laurel by 2030 to meet population growth projections and maintain local Planning Standards. At a maximum, up to 69.6 acres of park and recreation uses should be designated by 2030.**

An increased effort to modernize and expand park equipment needs to be a focus during the 10-year planning period, specifically continuing to upgrade and expand the existing public trails network so as to better connect schools, parks, residential neighborhoods throughout the City, as well as the Downtown. The City should also consider additional “residential neighborhood parks” and recreational facilities as subdivision proposals are presented to the City.

New park and recreation activities should be focused on improving City park amenities and increasing Laurel residents’ accessibility to wellness and fitness activities. **Laurel Citizen Survey participants identified walking trails and a wellness/fitness facility as top needs in Laurel.**



## **PUBLIC/QUASI-PUBLIC**

Future public/quasi-public land uses in Laurel will primarily accommodate any expansions of existing public services. **The City of Laurel is in the planning stages to develop a new Community and Senior Center that will house the Laurel city offices and provide an event space to accommodate 400+ people. This facility will be located in the Downtown. Additionally, the Laurel Fire Department will be constructing a new facility at the southwest intersection of West 4<sup>th</sup> Street and Highway 15/20 (Willow Street).** The remaining, existing facilities and land use configurations are expected to be sufficient to occupy their present land area to meet the service requirements of Laurel through 2030.



## **RESIDENTIAL AREAS**

Future residential development in and around the City of Laurel should be a high priority during the 10-year planning period. Based upon Laurel's projected 2030 population and targeted housing demand, the City will require an estimated **148.6 acres** of land for residential uses during the next 10 years, including both developed and undeveloped but planned residential land uses. As highlighted in the **2020 Laurel Community Housing Study**, the City of Laurel should strive to provide additional housing options, both owner and rental, to all income sectors, age groups and family types/sizes in the Community.

An ***"Economic Development Boost,"*** in Laurel, during the next 10 years, would require, at least, a minimum of 10 acres of land be developed for residential purposes. The City should designate or reserve approximately 30 acres for future planned residential subdivisions, totaling approximately 176 acres for both developed and planned residential uses.

**Single family housing** development should, first, occur within the Corporate Limits of Laurel. Vacant parcels within established neighborhoods on lots created with the demolition of dilapidated houses, as well as in planned residential areas in the western and southeastern (new annexation) portions of the City should be targeted priority areas for new residential development. These areas would have either reasonable access to, or the ability to install water and sewer utility systems. Vacated housing structures in Laurel could be a primary component of a purchase-rehab-resale or re-rent program, which would be aimed at acquiring deteriorated properties with moderate to substantial rehabilitation potential, rehabilitated to local development codes and placed back on the market as a ready-to-occupy housing unit.

**Multifamily housing** development must be pursued during the 10-year planning period, for both elderly and family households. The existing land use analysis concluded that multifamily acreage in Laurel is significantly less than recommended by National Planning Standards. The **Future Land Use Maps, Illustrations 4.5 and 4.6**, identify a multifamily growth/development area within the Corporate Limits along and south of the Highway 15 Corridor.

**To further expand affordable housing options for single adults, families, retirees, the elderly and, especially, workforce households, the City should establish a priority for the development of upper-story housing in Downtown commercial buildings.**



## **COMMERCIAL**

Future commercial land uses in Laurel, along the Highway 15/20 (Willow Street) Corridor, are anticipated to include infilling vacant lots and replacing existing deteriorated and/or abandoned buildings. Automotive oriented commercial uses and retail outlets should be developed along the Highway 15/20 (Willow Street) Corridor in the central portions of the City. Future highway commercial development should proceed with caution as to not diminish the role of Downtown Laurel as the primary center of commerce, entertainment and professional services.

The City should designate, or reserve, at least one additional acre for both developed and planned commercial land uses. Specialty retail, cafes/restaurants and professional offices are encouraged to locate in Downtown Laurel to further diversify commercial uses.



## **INDUSTRIAL**

The City of Laurel has sufficient vacant land in the Laurel industrial park to accommodate new and/or expanded industries during the next 10 years. An estimated 230 acres of industrial land currently exists within the Corporate Limits of Laurel, with approximately 147 being utilized by Central Valley Ag (formerly Agrex) in northwestern Laurel. The current industrial tracts within the City, in a state of transition or possessing vacant parcels in close proximity to residential development, are encouraged to become "light" industry. The reason is twofold: one, it creates a more compatible land use with adjacent commercial and residential properties; and two, it satisfies a need in the Community.

The City could designate, or reserve, an additional 46 acres for future/planned industrial developments, totaling 276.8 acres of both developed and planned industrial uses.



To provide jobs and enhance a stable population base, and to continue to attract additional business and industry to Laurel, it is recommended that vacant lands within these industrial parks are prepared and accessible to support new industrial uses. The City must maintain enough industrial land for growth and development. Local economic development groups, organizations and property owners are encouraged to promote and continue their support for additional industrial land development.

Desirable transportation corridors are adjacent the majority of present and future industrial land areas. Those areas outside the Corporate Limits (currently on vacant lands) would require an extension of appropriate infrastructure to facilitate future developments.

The City of Laurel will need to consider the implementation of advertisement and infrastructure incentives to attract medium and large scale industrial operations to the Community. Doing so will enhance the Community's capability of tax base enhancements and the ability to attract additional industrial, as well as commercial and residential developments.



### **INFILL DEVELOPMENTS**

The strategic development of infill lots and other undeveloped land areas within the Corporate Limits of Laurel would allow for managed growth and the utilization of the existing infrastructure, including streets, electrical, gas, water and sewer systems. These land areas should be designated for new residential, commercial and industrial developments, depending on the zoning district classification and adjacent land uses.

### **INTENSIVE AGRICULTURAL USES**

The Laurel Planning Commission recognizes the importance of agricultural practices to the economy of the Community, including livestock facilities. The expansion of existing livestock confinement operations within the One-Mile Planning Jurisdiction of the City should only be permitted in unique circumstances. The development of new livestock confinement operations should be prohibited in the Planning Jurisdiction of the City. Floodplains and topography do hinder, to a slight extent, the ability of the Community to designate developable land within the One-Mile Planning Jurisdiction. Therefore, the remaining portions of the One-Mile Planning Jurisdiction of the City are vital to the continued growth and development of Laurel. **Livestock confinement operations are best suited for locations within rural Cedar County, outside the One-Mile Planning Jurisdiction of the City of Laurel.**

### **LAND USE PLAN / IMPLEMENTATION**

Various funding sources exist for the preparation and implementation of a capital improvement budget designed to meet the funding needs of proposed development activities. These include Local, State and Federal funds commonly utilized to finance street improvement funds, i.e. Community Development Block Grants, Special Assessments, General Obligation Bonds and Tax Increment Financing (TIF). The use of TIF for redevelopment projects in the areas such as the Downtown and adjacent older residential neighborhoods is deemed to be an essential and integral element of development and redevelopment planning.

**One Redevelopment Area currently exists in Laurel. This include the entirety of Downtown Laurel, as well as residential areas to the south of the Downtown and the entire Laurel Industrial Park.**

### ***PLACE-BASED DEVELOPMENT COMPONENTS.***

Future development efforts within identified growth areas are encouraged to incorporate **“Place-Based” development components**, whereby development supports the Community’s quality of life and availability of resources including, but not limited to: public safety, community health, education, and cultural elements. The four general concepts of place-based development include the following:

#### **ACCESS AND LINKAGES:**

**Access & Linkages** refers to a development’s connection to its surroundings, both visual and physical. The successful implementation of this component results in one that is easy to navigate and convenient for public transit. Questions to consider in analyzing this component include:

- Does the development area have adequate accessibility and walkability to other neighborhoods and centers in the Community?
- What are the programs proximity to local services and amenities?
- Can people utilize a variety of transportation modes, such as sidewalks, streets, automobiles, bicycles and public transit, to travel to and from the development area?
- Is the development program visible from other neighborhoods or parts of the City?
- Is public parking available for visitors to the development site?

#### **COMFORT AND IMAGE:**

**Comfort & Image** describes whether a development is comfortable and presents itself well, and includes perceptions about safety and cleanliness. Maintenance of the housing development/program is crucial to keeping up its image and as such is an important factor in a development having this key quality. Questions to consider in analyzing this component include:

- Is the proposed development located in a safe neighborhood?
- Are there historic attributes to consider for the proposed development?
- Is the neighborhood of the proposed development located safe, attractive and well maintained for all residents?
- Are there any environmental impacts that could hinder the development of the proposed facility?

### **USES AND ACTIVITIES:**

The **Uses & Activities** component of place-based development considers the engagement and use of a proposed housing development/program by new and existing community members. An important consideration of this component is the longevity of the project; its ability to retain existing and attract new residents over time. Questions to consider in analyzing this component include:

- How will the proposed development be used? By young families and local workforce? By elderly or special needs populations?
- Are there amenities proposed, or existing and nearby the development that will keep residents active, including parks and recreation opportunities?
- Does the development program include a central gathering space for workers, residents and/or visitors?
- Does the housing program include a central gathering space for residents, workers and visitors to the site, as well as Community residents?

### **SOCIABILITY:**

**Sociability** can be the most difficult component to achieve, but is achieved through a housing development/project that offers residents a strong sense of place or attachment to their community. Questions to consider in analyzing this component include:

- Will the development program be developed in a way the will allow residents to socialize and interact with one another?
- Will people take pride in living at the proposed development site?
- Are diverse population encouraged to reside at the development site?
- Does the housing program present a welcoming environment for both current and future residents?

### ***VOLUNTARY & INVOLUNTARY ANNEXATION.***

Future annexation activities in the City of Laurel, both **voluntary and involuntary**, should occur in the non-agricultural land use areas identified in **Illustration 3.6, Future Land Use Map**. Land could be annexed at a point in time when in conformance with and meeting the criteria of Nebraska State Statutes, (Neb.Rev. Stat.§16-117). Specifically, if such land, lots, tracts, streets, or highways are contiguous or adjacent and are urban or suburban in character. Agricultural lands that are “rural in character” are not included under such authority. The terms “adjacent” or “contiguous” under §16-118, states that “*contiguous may be present even though a stream, embankment, strip, or parcel of land not more than 200 feet wide lies between the targeted land and the corporate limits of the city.*”

When necessary, future annexation activities in the City of Laurel, both voluntary and involuntary, should occur in the non-agricultural land use areas identified in **Illustration 4.6, Future Land Use Map**. Several tracts of land could be annexed at a point in time when in conformance with and meeting the criteria of Nebraska State Statutes. A certain amount of vacant land will also be needed in each area to provide an overall functional land use system. To develop the Community in the most efficient and orderly manner possible, the focus should be placed, first, on the development of suitable vacant land within the Corporate Limits of Laurel.

**There currently exists an estimated 226.1 acres of vacant land within the Corporate Limits.** An estimated 192.1 acres, or 85 percent of the vacant land is developable. The remaining 15 percent of vacant land can be considered “not developable” due to its location within a floodplain, floodway or upon steep topography.

**The largest tracts of undeveloped land are located in western Laurel. Additionally, a 110 acre tract of land southeast of the current Corporate Limits is slated to be annexed and developed with varying densities of residential uses. These two areas should be prime areas for new development throughout the 10-year planning period. These areas are, or will be, capable of being served by extensions of municipal infrastructure and utility systems adjacent the current incorporated areas of the City. These areas are also identified on the Future Land Use Maps, Illustrations 4.5 and 4.6.**



# SECTION 5



**PUBLIC FACILITIES, UTILITIES &  
TRANSPORTATION.**

## SECTION 5 PUBLIC FACILITIES, UTILITIES & TRANSPORTATION.

### INTRODUCTION.

Section 4 of the **Laurel, Nebraska Comprehensive Plan** discusses the existing conditions and planned improvements to the public facility and utility systems in the Community. Quality public facilities, services, and parks & recreation systems are provided to ensure a high quality of life for all residents of Laurel. All improvements to these Community components are aimed at maintaining or improving the quality of life in the City of Laurel.

**Public Facilities** identify existing facilities in Laurel and determine future needs and desires during the 10-year planning period. Public Facilities provide citizens with social, cultural and educational opportunities. Facilities in Laurel include, but are not limited to, city government, health care, law enforcement, education, police/fire protection and recreational facilities such as parks and athletic fields. **Unless otherwise identified, general maintenance is planned for all public facilities in Laurel, which also implies that the identified facility is adequate and meets the needs of the Community through the 10-year planning period.** The locations of these public facilities are identified in the **Public Facilities Map, Illustration 5.1.**

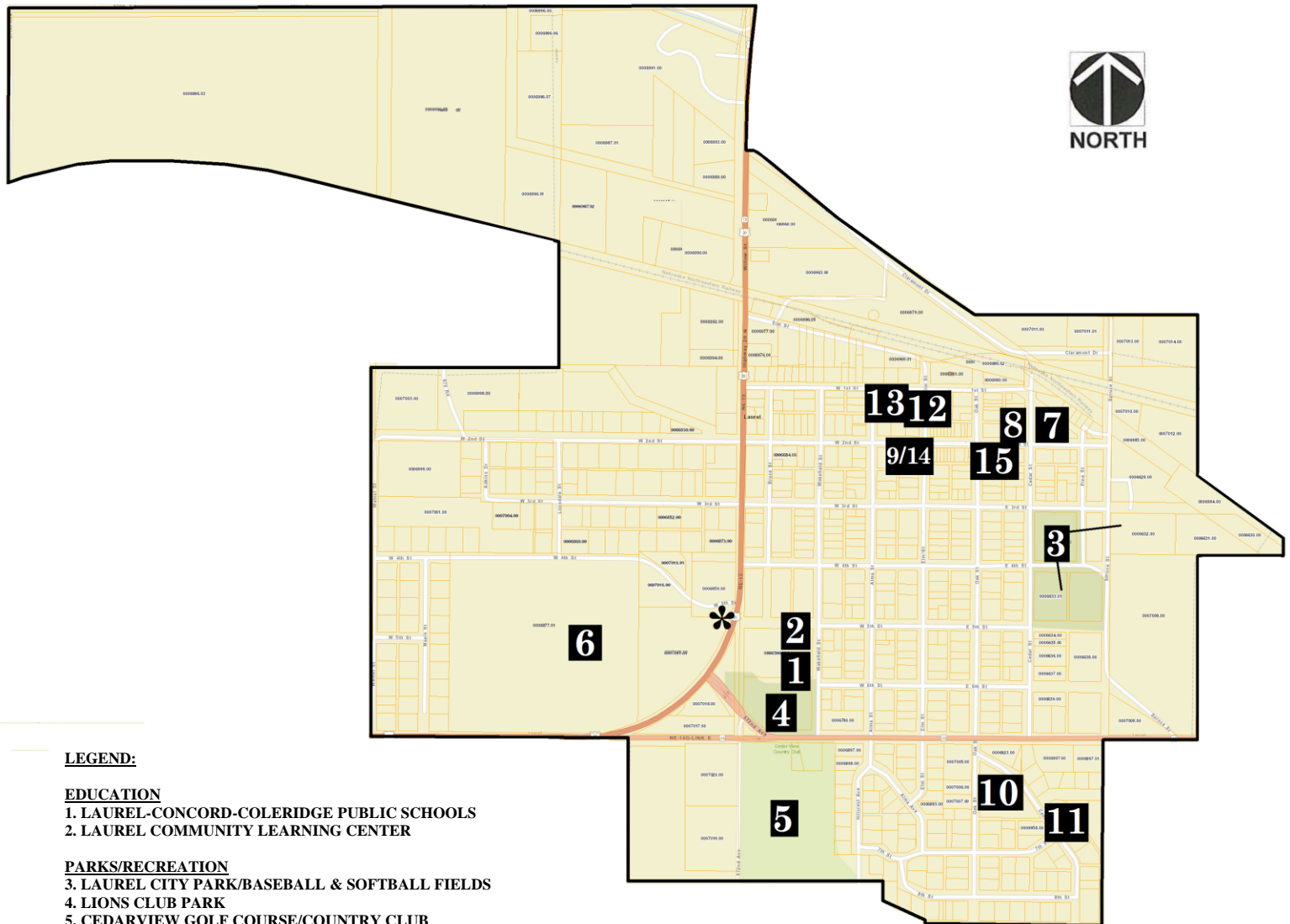
**Public Utilities** address the water and wastewater utility systems in the Community, including current condition and capacity. It is the responsibility of any community to provide a sound public infrastructure for its citizens, as well as to provide for anticipated growth. Therefore, it is important that the expansion and maintenance of these systems be coordinated with the growth of Laurel. Analysis of these infrastructure systems, via conversations with City maintenance and utility personnel, confirmed that the City must continue to maintain and improve these utility systems.

**Transportation** examines the systems that provide for safe travel of pedestrians and automobiles. Quality public facilities, utilities and transportation systems are provided to ensure a high quality of life for all residents of Laurel. An adequate transportation system is required to transport goods and services to and from major travel routes and market centers outside the City, as well as provide for the circulation needs within the Community. The overall purpose of the transportation plan is to provide the necessary guidelines for the safe movement of people and vehicles throughout the Community and One-Mile Planning Jurisdiction.

## PUBLIC FACILITIES MAP

### CORPORATE LIMITS

### LAUREL, NEBRASKA



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**ILLUSTRATION 5.1**

## ***EDUCATION.***

Education is becoming increasingly important as the need for a broader-based education with emphasis on technical and human relation skills increases in today's society. Standards developed by educators and planners can provide guidance in the creation of, and addition to, the School District's educational facilities. **Laurel-Concord-Coleridge Public Schools** is a major contributor to the quality of life and well-being in the Community of Laurel and surrounding area. During the 10-year planning period, it will be important for the facilities maintained by Laurel-Concord-Coleridge Public Schools to have the ability to support a growing population, specifically youth populations.

### **DISTRICT FACILITIES**

- ❖ **Laurel-Concord-Coleridge Public School District** – Elementary (Pre-K-4) and High School (9-12) grade levels of students attend classes at Laurel-Concord-Coleridge Public School facilities in Laurel, located at 502 Wakefield Street, south of Downtown Laurel at the intersection of Highways 15 and 20. Junior High grade level students (5-8) attend classes at a facility in the nearby Community of Coleridge. According to the Nebraska Department of Education, Laurel-Concord-Coleridge Public Schools is a Class D-1 district with a total student enrollment of 447 and employing 42 certified teachers. The District covers a total of 275 square miles throughout southeast Cedar and portions of Dixon and Wayne Counties.

The existing facility, in Laurel, was built in 1922, with expansions constructed in 1944 and 1965. The Elementary School and High School Gymnasium were constructed in 1978. A School/Community Fitness Center was constructed in 1996. The athletic complex, including the football field and track, were constructed in 2001. The most recent facility improvements occurred in 2017 with security upgrades to the main entrance.

Amenities at the Laurel-Concord-Coleridge Public School facility in Laurel includes classrooms and computer labs and a public fitness center available to the public through affordable membership with access before, during and after school hours, as well as on weekends, holidays and summer months. The local Youth Rec Program utilizes school facilities (gyms and fields) for various youth athletics (football, volleyball, basketball, soccer).



LCC School is presenting a significant facility improvement project to district stakeholders in form of a bond election scheduled for November 3, 2020. The proposed project represents demolition, new construction and renovation of the High School and Elementary School facilities at a total cost not to exceed \$23,000,000.



- ❖ **Educational Service Unit (ESU) #1** – ESU #1 has its main offices located in Fremont, Nebraska and serves an area of northeast Nebraska, including the Counties of Cedar, Dakota, Dixon, Knox, Thurston and Wayne. Created by the Nebraska Unicameral in 1965, “Educational Service Units” were intended to fill educational service gaps in local School District budget that did not provide for audio/visual aids, special education, school nurse services and other specialized personnel, equipment or diagnostic needs.
- ❖ **Other Area Education Facilities** – Several Colleges and Universities are located within a short distance of Laurel, many of which accept high school credits from Laurel Public Schools. These Colleges and Universities include the following:
  - ◆ **Midland Lutheran College** – Fremont, NE
  - ◆ **Nebraska Indian Community College** – Macy and Santee, NE
  - ◆ **University of Nebraska-Omaha** – Omaha, NE
  - ◆ **Nebraska Methodist College** – Omaha, NE
  - ◆ **College of Saint Mary** – Omaha, NE
  - ◆ **Clarkson College** – Omaha, NE
  - ◆ **Western Iowa Tech Community College** – Sioux City, IA
  - ◆ **Morningside College** – Sioux City, IA
  - ◆ **Briar Cliff University** – Sioux City, IA
  - ◆ **Wayne State College** – Wayne, NE
  - ◆ **Northeast Community College-Main Campus** – Norfolk, NE



## **LIBRARY**

- ◆ **Laurel Community Learning Center** – The Laurel Community Learning Center provides modern public library services and is located within the Laurel-Concord-Coleridge Public Schools facility. The current building was constructed in 1991 with a renovation completed in 2016. Two activity rooms are located within the facility. The Learning Center contains 17,365 public volumes with an average annual circulation estimated at 3,900.

## **PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS**

*Schools in Laurel should meet the following standards and guidelines:*

- ◆ Schools should be centrally located;
- ◆ Schools should not be located near high traffic or heavily concentrated areas with high noise levels;
- ◆ Land acquisition with future expansion in mind;
- ◆ Adequate open space should be available to students; and
- ◆ Provide safe routes to schools from all neighborhoods of the Community, including sidewalks, pedestrian crossings and traffic signals.

The Community and Laurel-Concord-Coleridge Public Schools should support and provide a **high quality of elementary, junior and senior-level education** for residents of Laurel and surrounding area. The District should strive to maintain an excellence in education by expanding facilities, amenities and employment opportunities, as needed, while creating new and expanding existing educational programs and activities to support a growing student and faculty population within the Public School system.

## ***PARKS & RECREATION.***

The City of Laurel provides a wide variety of park sites and amenities to residents and visitors. Laurel also provides a variety of pocket parks, Community gardens, hiker/biker trails, and playground sites in non-designated park areas, including schools. The following highlights the four largest parks in the City:

### **CITY PARKS**

**City Park** – This 2.75 acre Park is located along Oak Street, between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Street, south of Downtown Laurel. Amenities at the Park include covered shelter with picnic tables; restrooms, five camping pads with electricity hook-ups; play equipment and a free-standing stage for entertainment.

**Baseball and softball fields, for use by the public and local leagues, are located to the south (south of 4<sup>th</sup> Street) and east (3<sup>rd</sup> and Spruce Streets) of City Park.**

**Laurel Lions Club Park** – The Laurel Lions Club Park is located at the intersection of Highway 15 and Wakefield Street, adjacent and south of the Laurel-Concord-Coleridge Public School facility. Amenities include three covered shelters, basketball court and play equipment. A wooded play area and “stand and spin” playground equipment were added to the Park in 2019. The Park is also home to the Laurel Municipal Swimming Pool.



## **GOLF COURSE**

**Cedarview Country Club** – The local golf course and country club are located at 101 Calcavecchia Drive, south of Highway 15 in southern Laurel. This nine-hole, semi-private golf course features a driving range, cart storage buildings and a clubhouse with a bar/restaurant, reception hall and pro shop.

## **OTHER RECREATION/PUBLIC FACILITIES**

A large recreation area, including a walking trail, disc golf course and the football field for Laurel-Concord-Coleridge Public Schools, is located in west central portion of Laurel, north of the Highway 20 Corridor.

## **FUTURE PARK & RECREATION RECOMMENDATIONS**

Laurel residents expressed interest in a Community-wide public trails network, one that ultimately extends throughout and around the City, in order to better connect all Community parks, schools, neighborhoods and the Downtown. Maintaining quality public trails provides citizens safer, healthier alternative modes of transportation, and can help attract and retain both new and current residents to the Community. A trails system could be partially funded by the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission's **Recreational Trails Program (RTP) Grant**. Eligible projects for this grant include trail development, trail related support facilities, renovation and repair of trails, trail support facilities and acquisition of land for trails.



## ***SENIOR/ELDERLY & MEDICAL FACILITIES.***

A full range of medical and elderly services are available to residents of Laurel, all within a reasonable distance of the Community. The nearby Cities of Blair, Fremont and Norfolk also have all the necessary modern health and hospital services, including full service hospitals, nursing care facilities, clinics, and private medical offices.

- ♦ **Laurel Community Center** – Construction is slated to begin in 2021 on the new Laurel Community Center. This facility will be located at the northeast corner of Second and Cedar Streets, east of the Downtown. A Community and Civic Center Financing Fund Grant, provided by the Nebraska Department of Economic Development, is supporting the development of the new Community Center. The new facility will consist of 20,500 square feet of space for large events. The Laurel Senior Center, meeting rooms, kitchen space and secured storage rooms will be included within the new facility.

- ◆ **Laurel Senior Center** – The former facility for the Laurel Senior Center was located in the Laurel City Auditorium, at 101 West Second Street, in Downtown Laurel. In partnership with the Northeast Nebraska Area Agency on Aging, the facility was opened Monday through Friday, 8:00am to 4:00pm. Weekly activities included pool, dominoes, cards and fellowship as well as fitness classes. Information seminars, lunches, fundraisers and movie days are just some of the activities offered.

**The Senior Center is currently closed due to COVID-19 restrictions, as well as moving forward with a move to the new Laurel Community Center, when construction is complete.**

- ◆ **Medical Clinic** – Laurel Family Medicine is the primary provider of local medical needs among Laurel residents. Their facility is located in Downtown laurel, at 218 East Second Street. Providence Medical Center, based in Wayne, Nebraska, owns the current facility and leases the space for family physicians employed with Faith Regional Health Services of Norfolk, Nebraska, to provide family medicine to Laurel residents.
- ◆ **Hillcrest Care Center/Assisted Living** – This facility supporting elderly continuum of care in Laurel is located along Cedar Avenue, south of Highway 15 in southern laurel. The Care Center contains a 36-bed skilled nursing facility providing 24-hour professional nursing care. Additionally, an assisted living facility with seven rooms is also located within the Hillcrest Care Center. The Assisted Living portion is Medicaid certified and supports meal and medication assistance and nursing supervision.
- ◆ **Hillcrest Manor** – This elderly, multifamily housing facility is located along Cedar Avenue. Southeast of the Hillcrest Care Center/Assisted Living facility. A total of 16 apartment style units are available for low-income elderly persons and families in the Laurel area.

## ***PUBLIC SAFETY & GOVERNMENT.***

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

### **PUBLIC SAFETY**

- ◆ **Police** – The Laurel Police Department headquarters is located at 101 West Second Street, just north of Downtown Laurel. The Police Department employs one full-time police chief and two part-time support staff.

- ◆ **Laurel Volunteer Fire Department/Rescue** – The facility housing the Laurel Volunteer Fire Department is located at 101 West First Street, North of Downtown Laurel. The Fire Department consists of 25 volunteer firefighters, eight EMT personnel and nine first responders.

The Fire Hall was constructed in the 1960s and features six doors, conference room and kitchen area. Vehicles owned and maintained by the Volunteer Fire Department/Rescue include six rigs, two pumper fire engines, two tankers, a grass rig and equipment truck. The EMT's and first responders utilize two ambulances.

**A new Fire Hall is slated for construction on the southwest corner of Fourth Street and Highway 20, in south central Laurel. The new facility will consist of 12,600 square feet, six fire stalls/doors and three ambulance stalls. Amenities will include 12x16 fire chief and EMT offices, meeting room with an 80 person capacity, 20x20 kitchen space and men's and women's bathrooms that will also serve as reinforced storm shelters.**

- ◆ **Civil Defense** – The present services in Laurel are provided through the Laurel Fire Department and Cedar County Emergency Management. The planning and preparation for natural disaster and man-made emergencies consist of the following: Mitigation, Preparation, Response, and Recovery. Examples of natural and man-made disasters include floods, tornadoes, winter storms, chemical spills, explosions, plane crashes, etc. Other services include weather alert of severe weather, tornado awareness week education, winter time road services, etc.

## **GOVERNMENT**

- ◆ **City Offices** – Offices for the City of Laurel are located within the Laurel City Auditorium, at 101 West Second Street in Downtown Laurel. The current facility is comprised of the City Administrator, Clerk and Economic Development offices, as well as the City Council chambers. A large auditorium space for community functions and family events is also located within this facility.

**The City offices will be relocated to the new Laurel Community Center, once construction on that facility is complete.**

- ◆ **Post Office** – The U.S. Post Office of Laurel is located at 205 East Second Street in Downtown Laurel. The Post Office facility was constructed in 1947 and contains 600 post office boxes, of which 276 are currently rented. A new furnace and air conditioning unit was recently installed. The facility meets ADA compliance.



## ***PUBLIC UTILITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE.***

It is the responsibility of any community to provide sound public infrastructure for its citizens, as well as to provide for anticipated growth. Therefore, it is important that the expansion of these systems be coordinated with the growth of the City. **The following information was provided by the City of Laurel for this Comprehensive Plan** to reflect the most up-to-date conditions of the City's public utilities.

### **WATER SYSTEM**

The City of Laurel's water system consists of 20 total miles of water mains ranging from 4" to 8" in diameter, with two production wells having a firm capacity of 600 gallons per minute. Normal operating pressure ranges from 30 to 75 pounds per square inch. Additionally, the City's water storage capacity is an estimated 200,000 gallons and includes an elevated water tower, which is located along Oak Street, in southern Laurel.

The average daily water demand in Laurel is an estimated 84,000 gallons per day. Historic peak demand for the City was 313,000 gallons per day. Future water demand requirements will increase, should the City experience an increase in population or development.

Several activities are currently underway in the Community regarding the overall water system. A **"Water System Master Plan"** is currently being developed by the City with a professional engineering firm, to prepare the City for future water system needs. Additionally, a third water well is planned for the recently-annexed 110 acre tract in southeastern Laurel. A test hole is being planned for drilling within the new annexation to confirm the location of the new well. This new well will replace well #841, which is no longer compliant.

### **SANITARY SEWER/WASTEWATER SYSTEM**

The sanitary sewer/wastewater system in Laurel consists of two lift stations with a third in the planning stages to support land annexation southeast of the Community of Laurel. Current daily capacity is an estimate 300,000 gallons and is maintained by an activated sludge plant. All new parts were added to the clarifier in 2015-2016 and a new lift station was added in 2019. Planned improvements at the treatment plant will include oxidation ditch repairs.

### **NATURAL GAS**

Natural Gas is provided to the City of Laurel by Black Hills Energy.

## ***TRANSPORTATION.***

The transportation network of a city includes its streets, sidewalks, and trails. Streets are only one component of a city transportation plan. Thus, non-vehicular modes of transportation for pedestrians and bicycles need to be evaluated and discussed as well.

### **ROAD CLASSIFICATIONS**

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

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

local, collector, or arterial roads, or (b) roads which are the principal access roads to agricultural lands for farm machinery and which are not primarily used by passenger or commercial vehicles.

9. The **Rural Highways Classified**, under subdivisions (1) thru (3) of this section should, combined, serve every incorporated municipality having minimum population of 100 inhabitants or sufficient commerce, a part of which will be served by stubs or spurs, and along with rural highways classified under subsection (4) of this section, should serve the major recreational areas of the State. Sufficient commerce shall mean a minimum of \$200,000 of gross receipts under the Nebraska Revenue Act of 1967.

### **EXISTING TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM**

**Illustration 5.2, Page 5.13, State Functional Classifications, Laurel, Nebraska**, depicts the transportation system in the City of Laurel. The streets are primarily in a grid network, especially in older subdivisions of the City, with lower functioning streets connecting to the higher volume streets. The transportation system is comprised of U.S. Highway 20 and Nebraska State Highway 15.

**Highways 15 and 20 serve as “Major Arterial” roads. Willow Street/Avenue 572 South of Laurel and Road 869 east of Laurel serve as “Other Arterial” roads.**

All other streets within the Corporate Limits of Laurel are classified as local streets. Local streets provide transportation throughout the City, while the State Highways and County roads provide transportation into the County, adjacent communities and areas beyond.

### **PUBLIC TRANSIT**

The City of Laurel is serviced by **Cedar County Transit**. Based in the nearby Community of Hartington, this service provides transportation for all residents of Cedar County, within a 200 mile radius of Hartington. This includes transportation to and from the City of Laurel to a variety of destinations. Transportation requests are made by calling the Cedar County Transit office. Rates for transportation to and from Laurel are provided.

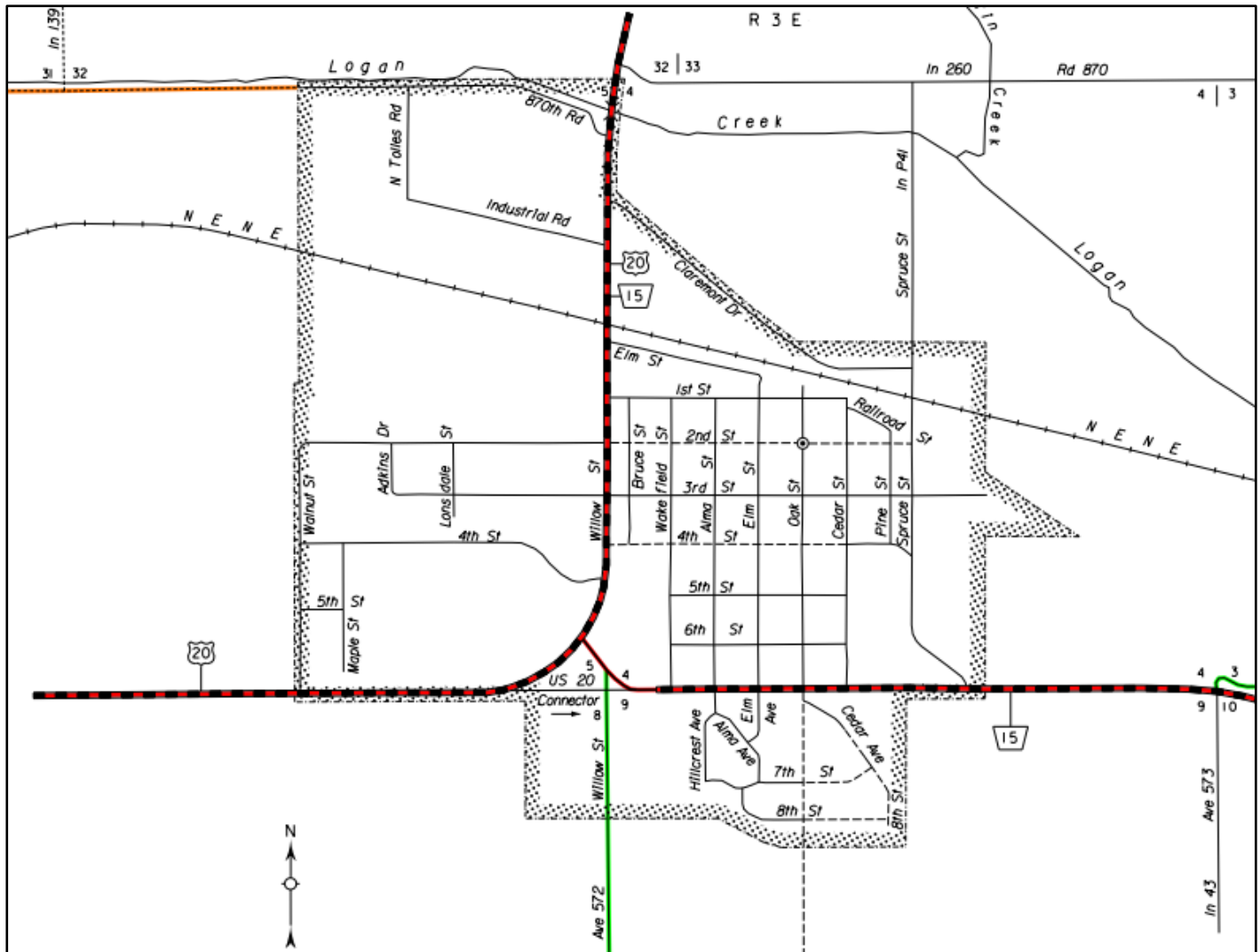
### **TRAFFIC VOLUME**

The Nebraska Department of Transportation monitors traffic volume throughout the Laurel area, including County roads and State and Federal highways. This tabulation process is done to identify appropriate existing road classification and engineering standards.

**Illustration 5.3, Page 5.14**, identifies the **average annual daily traffic counts** for State and Federal transportation routes around Laurel.

# STATE FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATIONS

LAUREL, NEBRASKA



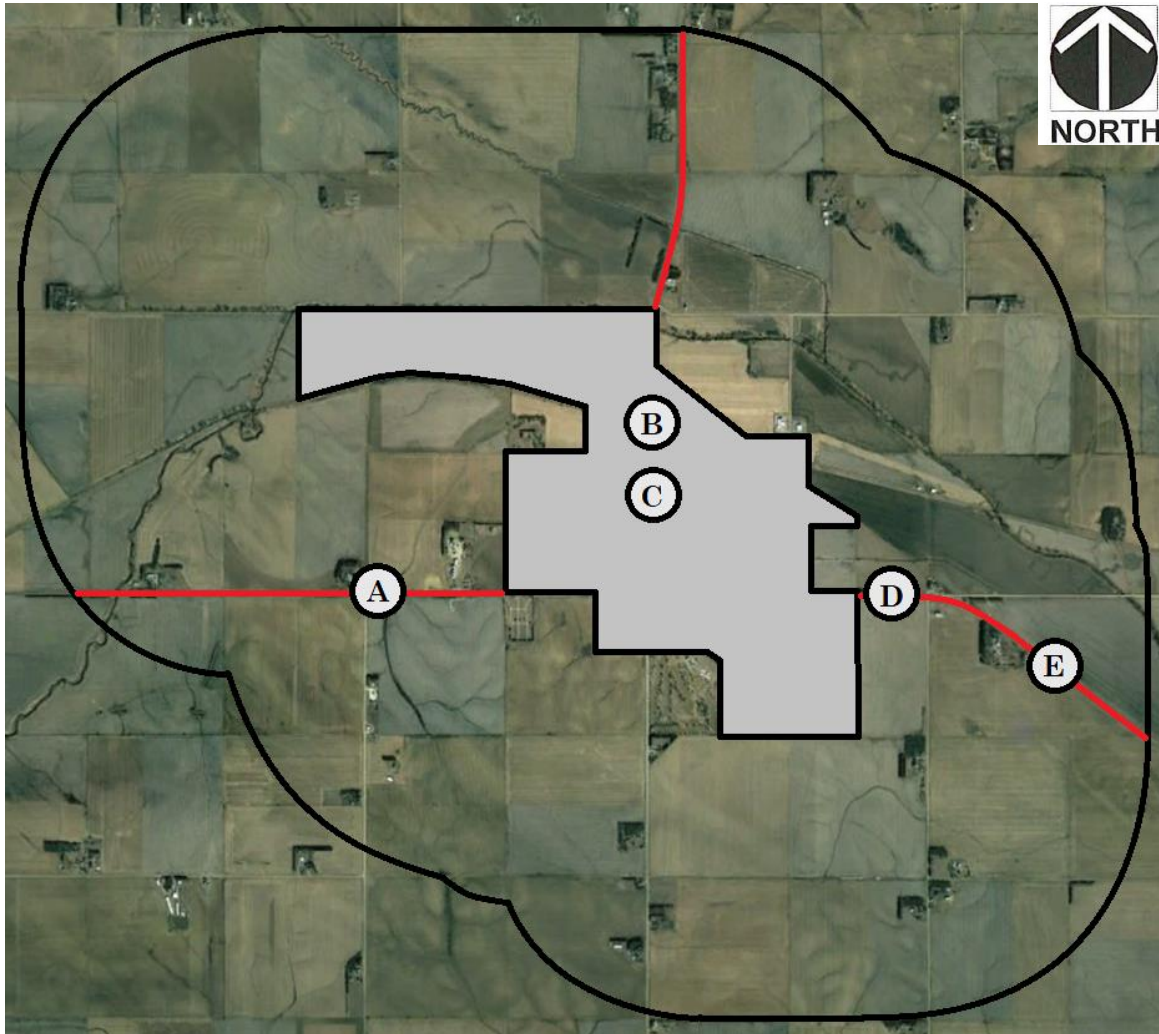
LEGEND	
STATE FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION	
INTERSTATE .....	
EXPRESSWAY .....	
MAJOR ARTERIAL .....	
OTHER ARTERIAL .....	
COLLECTOR .....	
REMOTE RESIDENTIAL (Rural Only) .....	
MINIMUM MAINTENANCE (Rural Only) .....	
SCENIC RECREATION (Rural Only) .....	
URBANIZED BOUNDARY .....	

All Roads Not Otherwise Indicated Are Classified As Local

ILLUSTRATION 5.2



## AVERAGE ANNUAL 24-HOUR TRAFFIC LAUREL, NEBRASKA



Segment "B" includes Highway Corridor north of West 2<sup>nd</sup> Street. Segment "C" includes Highway Corridor south of West 2<sup>nd</sup> Street.

	2018	2016	2014
<b>SEGMENT A</b>			
TOTAL	1,840	1,875	1,875
HCV	430	435	465
<b>SEGMENT B</b>			
TOTAL	4,295	3,970	2,205
HCV	435	400	345
<b>SEGMENT C</b>			
TOTAL	4,350	4,040	N/A
HCV	425	395	
<b>SEGMENT D</b>			
TOTAL	2,305	2,020	N/A
HCV	245	215	
<b>SEGMENT E</b>			
TOTAL	1,815	1,855	1,695
HCV	205	210	190

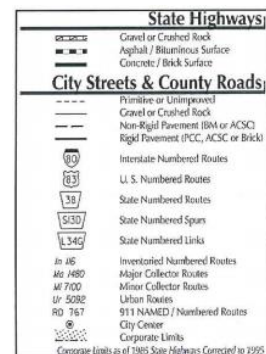


ILLUSTRATION 5.3

# SECTION 6



**ENERGY ELEMENT.**

## **SECTION 6 ENERGY ELEMENT.**

### **INTRODUCTION.**

This **Section** of the **Laurel Comprehensive Plan** complies with a July, 2010 amendment to Nebraska State Statutes 23-114.02, requiring an “**Energy Element**” with a Community Comprehensive Plan. This component of the **Plan** assesses the energy infrastructure and energy use in Laurel. This **Section** is also intended to evaluate the utilization of renewable energy sources and promote energy conservation measures.

### **PUBLIC POWER DISTRIBUTION.**

The City of Laurel is a wholesale member of the **Cedar Knox Public Power District (CNPPD)**.

### **NPPD – RENEWABLE ENERGY STRATEGIC PLAN.**

As the largest electric generating utility in the State of Nebraska, NPPD provides electricity to all or parts of 86 of the State’s 93 Counties, including 46 individual municipalities and 25 public power districts, cooperatives and their member communities. The source of NPPD’s generating facilities includes coal, oil, natural gas and nuclear energy. Additionally, NPPD also purchases electricity from the **Western Area Power Administration (WAPA)**, which markets and transmits electricity for federally owned hydropower facilities.

*“NPPD will further diversify its mix of generating resources (nuclear, coal, gas, hydro and renewable including wind, energy efficiency, and demand response) and energy storage, capitalizing on the competitive strengths of Nebraska (available water, proximity to coal, wind) with a goal of achieving 10% of our energy for NPPD’s native load from renewable resources by 2020.*”

As of 2016, NPPD had a total of 312 megawatts (MWs) generated from renewable resources, primarily wind, from eight separate facilities in the State. Energy from renewable resources is at just over 9 percent of the total energy generation, putting NPPD on track to achieve its goal of 10% energy generation from renewable resources by 2020.



- ◆ NPPD was formed in 1970 through the merger of two public power districts and the assets of the former Nebraska Public Power System.
- ◆ More than 5,200 miles of overhead and underground power lines make up NPPD's electric system.
- ◆ NPPD revenue is derived from wholesale power supply agreements with 46 municipalities and 25 public power districts and cooperatives. NPPD also serves 80 Nebraska communities at retail, consisting of more than 89,000 customers.

### **GENERATING RESOURCES**

The source of NPPD's generating facilities includes Fossil fuels – coal, oil or natural gas, Nuclear, Hydroelectric, Wind and Methane. Additionally, NPPD purchases electricity from the **Western Area Power Administration (WAPA)**, which markets and transmits electricity for federally owned hydropower facilities.

**Preliminary 2019 data regarding NPPD's energy generation for Nebraska customers included the following:**

- ◆ 19.1 percent of NPPD's energy generation was from coal.
- ◆ 51.9 percent was from nuclear.
- ◆ 5.0 percent generation from oil & natural gas.
- ◆ 8.1 percent from renewable wind generation.
- ◆ 7.9 percent from renewable Hydro generation.
- ◆ 0.1 percent from renewable Solar generation.
- ◆ The remaining 8.0 percent of NPPD's energy was supplied through wholesale purchases.

### ***SOURCES OF NPPD ENERGY PRODUCTION.***

#### **NPPD RENEWABLE ENERGY CAPABILITIES:**

##### **1.) Western Area Power Administration –**

In 2017, NPPD purchased electrical energy, produced primarily from Hydropower, in the amount of 447.6 MWs of “firm” power.

**2.) Hydropower Facilities –**

NPPD owns and operates two hydroelectric generating facilities, at North Platte and Kearney on the Platte River and purchases 100 percent of the energy output from facilities owned by Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District and Loup Public Power District. Combined these facilities produce 28 megawatts and serve approximately 9,500 homes.

**3.) Wind Energy Facilities –**

NPPD constructed Nebraska's first wind-energy generation facility in 1998 west of Springview. Currently NPPD owns 32 MW of the Ainsworth Wind Energy Facility, while Omaha Public Power District (OPPD) and JEA of Jacksonville, Florida each own 10 MWs of the facility, the Municipal Energy Agency of Nebraska purchases 7 MWs, and the City of Grand Island purchases one MW.

NPPD has power purchase agreements with six additional wind generating facilities in Nebraska. NPPD purchases a total of 435 MWs, of which NPPD utilizes 281 MWs and has purchase agreements for the remaining 154 MWs to other utility districts.

**4.) Solar Energy –**

Under NPPD's 2017 wholesale power contract, customers have the ability to invest in their own, local renewable energy sources by installing qualifying local generation, including solar, and offset its purchases of demand and energy from NPPD by up to two megawatts or 10 percent of their demand, whichever is greater.

Central City installed a 200 KW facility and became Nebraska's first "Community Solar Garden." This 100-panel system was installed in an industrial park and is owned by the City. Plans include installing an additional 500 KW system later this year. A new solar project near Callaway, Nebraska, in Custer County is a 600 KW solar facility owned by a private company. As of June 2016, it is the largest solar facility in the State. Custer Public Power District purchases power generated from the system.

NPPD also developed a "Community Solar Program" in 2017 and now operates three solar energy facilities in Kearney, Scottsbluff and Venango. The Program allows community members to purchase solar energy without having to install solar panels on individual rooftops. Solar subscribers can purchase different amounts of solar energy based on their annual electricity usage.



## **NPPD TRADITIONAL PRODUCTION FACILITIES:**

### **Coal-Fired Generators –**

NPPD owns the Gerald Gentleman and Sheldon Stations, which are both coal-fired generating stations. Together, these facilities produce 1,590 MWs. The Gerald Gentleman Station produces enough power to supply electricity to 600,000 Nebraskans. Additionally, NPPD has a coal power purchase agreement with the Nebraska City #2, owned by Omaha Public Power District, for 162 MWs.

### **Natural Gas & Oil-Fired Generators –**

Gas and Oil fired generators are utilized only during peak loads or as replacement power if another facility is down. NPPD owns two natural gas-fired generation facilities, the Beatrice Power Station and the Canaday Station that produce a combined total of 365 MW.

Three oil-fired generation facilities located in Hallam, McCook and Hebron, Nebraska produce 162 MW. NPPD also have capacity purchases agreements with 12 municipal systems in Nebraska for an additional 93 MWs.

## **NPPD EMISSION FREE ELECTRICITY**

### **Nuclear Facilities –**

**Cooper Nuclear Station** operates as the largest single unit electrical generator in Nebraska, by generating 810 MW of electricity. This facility is capable of supplying power to more than 310,000 customers during peak summer usage. In November of 2010, NPPD received an additional 20 years beyond its initial 40-year license to provide power through at least January, 2034.

### **“NET METERING”**

In 2009, the State of Nebraska Legislature approved and signed into law, LB 439 (**Nebraska State Statute §70-2001 to 2005**), which is also referred to as “**Net Metering**.” This law allows individual residences and businesses to supplement their standard electric service with one, or combinations of, five alternate energy systems, including Solar, Methane, Wind, Biomass, Hydropower and Geothermal.

By implementing these types of alternative energy systems, individuals will reduce their reliance on public utility systems, potentially generating more electricity than they use and profit by the public utility districts purchasing their excess energy. The Laurel Planning Commission can choose to allow usage control of Net Metering by allowing residential and businesses property owners to seek a **Conditional Use Permit**, if the applicant can document they are in conformance with the provisions of the **Small Wind Energy Conversion System** provisions in the **Zoning Regulations**.

***ELECTRICAL ENERGY CONSUMPTION.***

The City of Laurel provided the electric consumption data within the City of Laurel, highlighted in **Table 6.1**. Total charges increased in Laurel, for 2020 to date, are an estimated \$6.5 Million. Total quantity of kilowatt hours billed is an estimated 57 Million.

<b>TABLE 6.1</b>		
<b>ELECTRIC ENERGY CONSUMPTION AND REVENUE</b>		
<b>LAUREL, NEBRASKA</b>		
<b>2020</b>		
<u><b>Land Use</b></u>	<u><b>Total Revenue</b></u>	<u><b>KW/h Quantity Billed</b></u>
Residential	\$2,825,622.05	25,906,465
Commercial	\$2,106,005.27	21,296,129
Industrial	\$1,499,718.10	7,158,125
<u>Municipal/Public</u>	<u>\$139,979.24</u>	<u>2,731,455</u>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$6,551,324.57</b>	<b>57,092,264</b>

Source: City of Laurel, 2020.

## **STATE-WIDE TRENDS IN ENERGY CONSUMPTION**

During the last 40+ years, the State of Nebraska, as a whole, has vastly increased energy consumption. However, percentage share of personal income has remained constant, although it has declined in recent years. In 1970, 11.5 percent of the percentage share of personal income was spent on energy. As of 2015, 8.9 percent was spent on energy usage. The peak percentage occurred in 1980 at 16.6 percent.

Trends in the Total Energy Consumption for the State of Nebraska, published in the *“2019 Annual State Energy Report” of the Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy*, is mirrored in each of the individual energy categories, coal, natural gas, gasoline and distillate fuel oil (primarily diesel fuel), nuclear power, and hydroelectric production. Each energy type is detailed between 1960 and 2016, as follows:

- ◆ **Coal** consumption has increased from 20 trillion British Thermal Units (BTUs) in 1960 to 233.8 trillion BTUs in 2017. Peak use of coal was reached in 2013, surpassing the previous high set in 2011. The increase through 2013 was attributable to coal energy used to generate electricity.
- ◆ **Natural Gas** consumption has risen and fallen during the 56-year period between 1960 and 2016, beginning at 140.4 trillion BTUs, peaking in 1973 at 230.8 trillion BTUs and, by 2017, declining to 175.6 trillion BTUs.
- ◆ **Gasoline and Diesel Fuel** consumption nearly doubled in Nebraska between 1960 and 2017. Gasoline consumption increased nearly 29 percent, from 78.8 to 101.6 trillion BTUs, as of 2017, and peaked in 1978 at 116 trillion BTUs. Diesel fuel consumption more than quadrupled from 24.2 trillion BTUs to 111.4 trillion BTUs, primarily due to an increase in trucking and agricultural use. Petroleum consumption, overall, peaked in 1978 at 246.7 trillion BTUs.
- ◆ **Nuclear** power generation began in Nebraska in 1973 at 6.5 trillion BTUs. Usage has since increased to 72.3 trillion BTUs as of 2017. The peak use of nuclear power was in 2007 at 115.8 trillion BTUs.
- ◆ **Renewable energy** consumption has fluctuated, beginning in 1960 at 13.4, and peaking in 2017 at 185.6 trillion BTUs. Hydropower was the primary renewable energy source from 1960 to 1994. Biofuels, or ethanol production, began equaling hydropower in 1995. As of 2016, 64.4 percent of all renewable energy produced came from biofuels, 7.4 percent from hydroelectric, 25.2 percent from wind, and 2.1 percent from wood products. Minor amounts came from geothermal and solar energy.

### ***NEBRASKA ENERGY CONSUMPTION BY SECTOR.***

- ◆ **Commercial Sector:** The commercial sector includes non-manufacturing business establishments, including energy use by local, state and federal governments. Energy use in the commercial sector closely parallels consumer energy use and economic activity in the State of Nebraska. More than 90 percent of all fuel used in the commercial sector was supplied by natural gas and electricity. Although natural gas has historically been the dominant fuel type, recent trends suggest a period of near parity between the two fuel types is likely into the near future. In 2017, a total of 135.2 trillion BTUs were consumed in the commercial sector, up 0.5 percent from 2016.
- ◆ **Residential Sector:** The residential sector consumed 17 percent, or 146.2 trillion BTUs, of the State's total energy demand in 2017. Demand decreased 1.5 percent from 148.3 trillion BTUs in 2016. Natural gas and electricity accounted for 90.3 percent of the total energy use in the residential sector.
- ◆ **Industrial Sector:** The industrial sector includes manufacturing, construction, mining, forestry and agricultural operations. Energy use in the industrial is more diverse, with natural gas, renewable energy, electricity, coal and a variety of petroleum products all being utilized. The industrial sector consumes more energy than any other sector in the State. In 2017, it accounted for 45 percent, or 392.4 trillion BTUs, of the State's total energy consumption. This was a 4.5 percent increase in energy use from 2016.
- ◆ **Transportation Sector:** Public and private vehicles, railroads, aircraft and boats are all included in the transportation sector. Petroleum products accounted for 93 percent of the energy use in the transportation sector in 2017. Approximately 23 percent of the State's total energy consumption (202.3 trillion BTUs) was used in the transportation sector in 2017.
- ◆ **Electric Power Sector:** The electric power sector consists of facilities which generate electricity primarily for use by the public. About 60 percent of energy usage in this sector comes from coal, while nuclear energy accounted for approximately 27 percent in 2017. Demand in the State's electric power sector totaled 353.3 trillion BTUs in 2017, a 4.1 percent decrease, or 15.1 trillion BTUs, from 2016.

- ♦ **Agricultural Sector:** As per the U.S. Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service, there were 47,400 farms and ranches on 45.2 million acres in Nebraska in 2017, encompassing 91 percent of the State's total land area. Energy demand information in this sector is not available on a consistent or annual basis.

### ***INCREASED ENERGY COSTS & CONSERVATION.***

A comparison of “**Total Energy Expenditures Per Capita**” between the United States and the State of Nebraska indicated that between 1970 and 1994, Nebraska and the Nation's per capita energy consumption were very close to one another. But, after 1994, Nebraska's consumption began to be drastically higher than that of the Nation. The industrial sector, which includes agriculture, was the one sector that was surging in energy consumption in Nebraska.

Ethanol production in Nebraska in 1994 was 78.9 million gallons, by 2016 production had increased to 2.1 billion gallons. Considering ethanol production uses high volumes of both electricity and natural gas, the State's energy expenditures per capita increased as well. **Additionally, in 2016, 43 percent of the State's total corn harvested, or 727 million of the total 1.692 billion bushels of corn, was consumed by ethanol production.**

High fuel costs or limited availability of a particular energy type increases the desire for energy efficiency practices. For example, historic peak prices for natural gas in 2008 motivated farmers to convert natural gas and propane fueled irrigation equipment to electric power; to limit frequency and amount of applications of anhydrous ammonia fertilizer (a natural gas product); and to increase the use of conservation tillage practices to reduce crop cultivation. Access to low-cost financing through the Nebraska Energy Office and locally available low-interest loans to modernize agricultural equipment have led to conservation increases in the Agricultural Sector.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture issued a report in 2008 which concluded that farmers have increased conservation practices. **Since the 1970s, total farm energy consumption had fallen by 26 percent, while farm production increased by 63 percent, due to the adoption of energy conservation practices.** This figure is even more significant when the consolidation of farms is considered.

**In 1966, just 3.1 million acres of Nebraska crop lands were irrigated, but as of 2017, 8.6 million acres were irrigated. Thus, approximately 38.6 percent of the total cropland in Nebraska was irrigated.**



### ***ENERGY CONSERVATION POLICIES.***

The most effective means for the City of Laurel to reduce its total energy consumption in each of the Energy Sectors (and by energy type) is by conservation practices and by continuing to promote the conversion to alternative energy systems when appropriate.

The following is a list of policies to guide energy practices throughout the City:

- ◆ **Promote the use of “Net Metering” or the use of one or more combinations of the five alternative energy sources to reduce residential, commercial and industrial facilities consumption of energy.**
  - Utilize the Laurel Zoning Regulations to control the placement and operation of alternative energy systems.
  - Require compliance with the Conditional Use permit process so that established conditions are met by the applicant.
  - Utilize the NPPD net metering service it established to assist the City in complying with Nebraska’s Net Metering Law.
  - Promote the development of vocational education opportunities in the Laurel Public/Private Schools, trade schools, Community and State Colleges, and universities to educate the current and future workforce in alternative energy design, fabrication of equipment, and maintenance.
- ◆ **Assist Cedar County in providing for the use and placement of large scale Commercial Wind Energy Conversion Systems, commonly referred to as “Wind Farms” in defining appropriate locations in the County.**
  - The placement of large scale wind towers is not compatible with uses in the limited development areas of the One-Mile Planning Jurisdiction of the City of Laurel.
- ◆ **As other sources of Alternative Energy Systems are developed or become cost-effective for use in Nebraska, amend planning documents of the City to locate and control their operation.**

- ◆ **Promote the use of conservation methods to reduce the consumption of energy usage in each of the individual sectors including residential, commercial, and industrial (which includes agricultural and public uses).**
  - Promote the expanded use of solar and geothermal exchange energy systems for applications throughout the City of Laurel One-Mile Planning Jurisdiction. Subareas of the Community, such as the Downtown, a residential neighborhood, or individual subdivisions, are encouraged to collectively pursue an alternate energy source or combination of sources to lower energy consumption and to make energy more affordable.
  - Promote the rehabilitation of agricultural, residential, commercial, industrial, and public/quasi-public buildings utilizing weatherization methods and energy efficient or “green building” materials in conformance to the “LEED” Certified Building techniques.
  - Implement conservation programs supported by NPPD for its member communities. For example, the ENERGYSMART Commercial Lighting Program provides cash incentives to businesses that replace old lighting fixtures with high-efficient light fixtures such as LED to reduce energy costs.
  - The City of Laurel could also access grant and loan programs to replace street light fixtures with LED fixtures that reduce consumption and are more energy efficient.
- ◆ **Increase Building Efficiency.**
  - Lighting — transition city street lighting to a Light Emitting Diode (LED) system.
  - Retrofit Residential Buildings — provide incentives and construction advice to the public to expand the restoration of homes including windows, doors, attic ventilation, insulation, and alternative energy systems such as solar panels.
  - Retrofit Old Public and Commercial Buildings — provide incentives and construction advice to the public for Restoration Best Management Practices for windows, doors, attic ventilation, insulation, solar panels, lighting.

- New Construction Codes Implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) to city codes and educate homeowners and realtors.
- Include financial incentives within the annual City Budget to encourage residents of Laurel to plant new trees and replace damaged trees to maintain and expand the urban forest. Shade from trees reduce peak electric demands during the summer and provide wind breaks during the winter.

◆ **Increase Transportation Efficiency.**

- Seek out funding sources to establish an “Electric / Natural Gas” City Fleet of Vehicles.
- Promote Pedestrian Uses — sidewalks, crossing guards.
- Increase and encourage bicycling; carpooling.
- Increase residential development density- with parking requirements.
- Redevelop older existing neighborhoods by establishing architectural design standards as an overlay district within residential districts of the Laurel Zoning Regulations.

◆ **Support Low Impact Development (LID) and Green Infrastructure Programs.**

- Specify LID design options in engineering services contracts for subdivision development, storm water and parking lot improvements.
- Provide continuous education to the City Planning/Zoning Staff, City and Public Works Staff in the new LID designs and BMPs (Best Management Practices) for operation and maintenance of LID projects.
- Calculate and track the public and private construction and life cycle cost savings for LID projects.
- Promote Water Conservation through use of low impact lawn care, rain barrels, alternatives to paved driveways, gray water & potable water systems and xeriscaping.

- Require LID and Green Infrastructure Storm Water Detention and urban forestry practices in Subdivision Agreements.
- Provide incentives to the public and developers to expand energy efficiency, LID and Green Infrastructure, within the annual City Budget.

◆ **Plant Urban Forests.**

- Trees / Urban Forests — provide incentives for city rebate programs to replant new trees.
- Compost brush and trimmings — utilize the Best Management Practices utilized by other communities to provide a public deposit site to compost brush and trimmings.
- Create a waste wood recycling/composting/energy generation program.
- Establish and maintain a dead-tree wood recovery and re-use program.

◆ **Create a Zero Waste Community.**

- Reduce waste disposal with a 10-year Zero Waste strategy in support of achieving 90% resource recovery (recycling, reuse, repair, composting, redesign).
- Provide universal access to curbside recycling services for all residential dwellings and businesses.
- Establish financial incentives to increase recycling by charging for trash service based on volume.
- Gather annual data on waste disposal and resource recovery by volume.
- Provide access to recycling in public areas and major Community events, such as the Cedar County Fair.
- Establish designated public drop-off sites and promote the benefits of recycling facilities and develop the most efficient collection and transport of recycled materials possible.

- Investigate “regional hub and spoke system” promoting efficient transportation of recycled materials.
- Support creation of publicly owned Zero Waste facilities, including contracting approaches for private operations, or explore public-private partnership opportunities for Zero Waste infrastructure and services.
- Upcycle goods for other uses.
- Provide Community Gardens & Composting — divert organic compost to a local compost operation.
- Establish education and awareness campaigns promoting the benefits of Zero Waste for the local economy, the environment, and public health.



# APPENDIX



LAUREL CITIZEN SURVEY RESULTS.

## Constant Contact Survey Results

**Survey Name:** Laurel Citizen Survey

**Response Status:** Partial & Completed

**Filter:** None

4/3/2020 9:44 AM CDT

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### TextBlock:

The City of Laurel Planning Commission and Laurel Economic Development Office are currently conducting a Comprehensive Planning Program, to determine both the present and future needs of the Community for the next 10 years. The Program is funded by the Nebraska Investment Finance Authority-Housing Study Grant Program, with matching funds from the City. An important activity of this Planning Program is to ask you about the needs and wants of the Community. Please take a few minutes to complete the following Citizen Survey. Completed Surveys will be eligible for a Laurel Chamber Bucks Drawing!!! Please fill out the necessary contact information at the end of this Survey. SURVEYS MUST BE COMPLETED BY FRIDAY, MARCH 27th, 2020.








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### TextBlock:

POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

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How long have you lived in Laurel?

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Less Than 1 Year			5	2.6 %
1 to 5 Years			30	16.0 %
6 to 10 Years			15	8.0 %
11 to 20 Years			20	10.6 %
21+ Years			94	50.2 %
I do not live in Laurel			17	9.0 %
No Response(s)			6	3.2 %
Totals			187	100%

Including yourself, how many persons are there in your family/household?

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
One	<div><div></div></div>		34	18.1 %
Two	<div><div></div></div>		89	47.5 %
Three	<div><div></div></div>		12	6.4 %
Four	<div><div></div></div>		19	10.1 %
Five	<div><div></div></div>		14	7.4 %
Six or More	<div><div></div></div>		13	6.9 %
No Response(s)	<div><div></div></div>		6	3.2 %
Totals			187	100%

How many persons in your family are in each of the following age groups?

1 = 1, 2 = 2, 3 = 3, 4 = 4, 5 = 5+

Answer	1	2	3	4	5	Number of Response(s)	Rating Score*
Less Than 18 Years	<div><div></div></div>					52	2.4
18 to 24 Years	<div><div></div></div>					18	1.2
25 to 34 Years	<div><div></div></div>					33	1.7
35 to 44 Years	<div><div></div></div>					35	1.7
45 to 54 Years	<div><div></div></div>					29	1.4
55 to 64 Years	<div><div></div></div>					52	1.4
65 to 74 Years	<div><div></div></div>					38	1.3
75 to 81 Years	<div><div></div></div>					19	1.3
82+ Years	<div><div></div></div>					18	1.1

\*The Rating Score is the weighted average calculated by dividing the sum of all weighted ratings by the number of total responses.

**TextBlock:**

EDUCATION

Check all that apply.

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
I am a graduate of LCC (Laurel) Public Schools.	<div><div></div></div>		90	72.5 %
I have children attending LCC (Laurel) Public Schools.	<div><div></div></div>		48	38.7 %
Public Schools were a factor in my decision to locate in Laurel.	<div><div></div></div>		24	19.3 %
Totals			124	100%

Are there sufficient and safe routes to School for children?

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes	<div><div></div></div>		107	57.2 %
No	<div><div></div></div>		40	21.3 %
No Response(s)	<div><div></div></div>		40	21.3 %
Totals			187	100%

If No to Question #5, what could be done to improve the safety of children commuting to and from school?

46 Response(s)

Top responses: highway crossing guards, sidewalks from Hillcrest Neighborhood, slower traffic speeds.

Would you recommend LCC (Laurel) Public Schools to parents?

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes	<div><div></div></div>		145	77.5 %
No	<div><div></div></div>		11	5.8 %
No Response(s)	<div><div></div></div>		31	16.5 %
Totals			187	100%

**TextBlock:**

PUBLIC FACILITIES & COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

What new public recreational opportunities should be considered for Laurel?

80 Response(s)

Top responses: walking/hiking trails, fitness/wellness center, improved city parks & improved baseball/softball fields.

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### What three new businesses would you like to see in Laurel?

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115 Response(s)

Top responses: restaurants (fast food, breakfast cafe), bowling alley, theater, clothing store, Casey's store.

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### What three services would you like to see offered in the City of Laurel that are currently not available?

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61 Response(s)

Top responses: community center, curbside recycling, street improvements, manufacturing employment & new city hall/senior center.

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### Please rate the quality of the following Community Services and Public Facilities in or around your Town.

1 = Excellent, 2 = Good, 3 = Fair, 4 = Poor

Answer	1	2	3	4	Number of Response(s)	Rating Score*
Churches					158	1.3
Grocery Store					167	1.6
Pharmacy					167	1.4
Fire Protection					162	1.5
City Hall & Offices					157	1.8
Parks/Recreation					156	2.2
Wellness/Fitness Center					147	2.4
Garbage Collection					155	1.6
Local Government					141	1.9
Cable TV					133	2.5

\*The Rating Score is the weighted average calculated by dividing the sum of all weighted ratings by the number of total responses.

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### CONTINUED: Please rate the quality of the following Community Services and Public Facilities in or around your Town.

1 = Excellent, 2 = Good, 3 = Fair, 4 = Poor

Answer	1	2	3	4	Number of Response(s)	Rating Score*
Public Transit					125	3.1
Discount/Variety Store					147	2.3
Downtown Businesses					155	2.0
Senior Center					147	2.4
Post Office					165	1.7
Restaurants/Cafes					156	2.6
Convenience Stores					151	2.2
Streets/Sidewalks					158	3.3
Utilities					149	2.1
Retail Goods/Services					132	2.4

\*The Rating Score is the weighted average calculated by dividing the sum of all weighted ratings by the number of total responses.



CONTINUED: Please rate the quality of the following Community Services and Public Facilities in or around your Town.

1 = Excellent, 2 = Good, 3 = Fair, 4 = Poor

Answer	1	2	3	4	Number of Response(s)	Rating Score*
Employment Opportunities					147	3.0
Recycling/Garbage Service					158	1.8
Repair Services					156	1.8
Entertainment/Theater					129	3.7
Library					151	2.2

\*The Rating Score is the weighted average calculated by dividing the sum of all weighted ratings by the number of total responses.

CONTINUED: Please rate the quality of the following Community Services and Public Facilities in or around your Town.

1 = Excellent, 2 = Good, 3 = Fair, 4 = Poor

Answer	1	2	3	4	Number of Response(s)	Rating Score*
Medical Clinic					163	1.5
Police Protection					156	2.0
Banks					163	1.5
Schools					153	1.6
Child Care opportunities					132	2.6
Internet/ Telecommunications					144	2.5
Other (Please Identify)					4	2.2

\*The Rating Score is the weighted average calculated by dividing the sum of all weighted ratings by the number of total responses.

Please select the top three (3) most important business/industry sectors to the City of Laurel.







Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Farming/Agriculture	<div><div></div></div>		140	84.3 %
Food Processing	<div><div></div></div>		4	2.4 %
Utilities	<div><div></div></div>		20	12.0 %
Information	<div><div></div></div>		0	0.0 %
Health	<div><div></div></div>		25	15.0 %
Leisure/Hospitality/ Tourism	<div><div></div></div>		3	1.8 %
Government	<div><div></div></div>		1	<1 %
Medical/Emergency	<div><div></div></div>		46	27.7 %
Automotive	<div><div></div></div>		23	13.8 %
Retail	<div><div></div></div>		30	18.0 %
Entertainment	<div><div></div></div>		5	3.0 %
Financial Activities	<div><div></div></div>		18	10.8 %
Professional & Business	<div><div></div></div>		38	22.8 %
Education	<div><div></div></div>		79	47.5 %
Home-Based Businesses	<div><div></div></div>		7	4.2 %
Law Enforcement/ Protection	<div><div></div></div>		16	9.6 %
Fire Protection	<div><div></div></div>		27	16.2 %
Other	<div><div></div></div>		5	3.0 %
Totals			166	100%

#### TextBlock:

TRANSPORTATION

Which transportation items need to be addressed in Laurel?

1 = Greatly Needed, 2 = Somewhat Needed, 3 = Not Needed

Answer	1	2	3	Number of Response(s)	Rating Score*
Traffic Safety Improvements				136	2.2
Railroad Crossing Improvements				133	2.5
Pedestrian/Trails Connections				133	2.1
School Traffic Circulation				132	2.0
Improved Traffic Control				129	2.5
Improved Truck Routes				134	2.0

\*The Rating Score is the weighted average calculated by dividing the sum of all weighted ratings by the number of total responses.

## CONTINUED: Which transportation items need to be addressed in Laurel?

1 = Greatly Needed, 2 = Somewhat Needed, 3 = Not Needed

Answer	1	2	3	Number of Response(s)	Rating Score*
Highway Corridor Enhancements				128	2.2
Access Management/ Frontage Roads				126	2.4
More Parking				133	2.2
Congestion Reduction				124	2.7
Public Transit				133	2.2

\*The Rating Score is the weighted average calculated by dividing the sum of all weighted ratings by the number of total responses.

## TextBlock:

COMMUNITY GROWTH, LAND USE & ZONING

## The Appearance of the City of Laurel can be improved with...

1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = No Opinion, 4 = Disagree, 5 = Strongly Disagree

Answer	1	2	3	4	5	Number of Response(s)	Rating Score*
Street & Pedestrian Lighting						150	2.1
Special Sales, Events and Welcome Banners						147	2.5
Crosswalk Enhancements						145	2.2
Street Trees, Benches and Landscaping						147	2.3
Pedestrian Seating Areas and Sidewalk Cafes						147	2.5
Vehicular Traffic Safety						141	2.7
Coordinated Traffic Control Lighting.						143	2.9

\*The Rating Score is the weighted average calculated by dividing the sum of all weighted ratings by the number of total responses.

**CONTINUED: The Appearance of the City of Laurel can be improved with...**

1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = No Opinion, 4 = Disagree, 5 = Strongly Disagree

Answer	1	2	3	4	5	Number of Response(s)	Rating Score*
Directional Signage						141	2.7
Restoration/Preservation of Historic Buildings/Housing						148	2.4
Gateway Entrance Signage and Advertising						142	2.6
Design Guidelines for Facades, Awnings, etc.						141	2.9
Nuisance Enforcement/Property Clean-Up						147	1.7
Housing Development/ Rehabilitation						140	1.9
Other (Specify):						4	2.2

\*The Rating Score is the weighted average calculated by dividing the sum of all weighted ratings by the number of total responses.

**The Sustainability of the City of Laurel can be improved with...**

1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = No Opinion, 4 = Disagree, 5 = Strongly Disagree

Answer	1	2	3	4	5	Number of Response(s)	Rating Score*
Water, Sewer & Utility Replacement						143	2.3
Improved Streets, Sidewalks & Alleys						155	1.4
Additional Pedestrian Safety Measures						146	2.3
Additional Parking for Businesses/ in Downtown						145	2.5
Burying Overhead Utility Lines						144	2.4
Business Retention, Recruitment & Expansion						143	1.7
Marketing of Sales & Festivals						142	2.3

\*The Rating Score is the weighted average calculated by dividing the sum of all weighted ratings by the number of total responses.

**CONTINUED: The sustainability of the City of Laurel can be improved with...**

1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = No Opinion, 4 = Disagree, 5 = Strongly Disagree

Answer	1	2	3	4	5	Number of Response(s)	Rating Score*
Coordinated Business Hours						142	2.5
Designation of a "Historic District"						139	2.8
Increased Marketing of Vacant Buildings						144	2.1
Development of an Incubator Business Program						137	2.5
Reducing Utility Costs with Alternative Energy Sources						145	2.3
New/Improved Parks/Rec/Trails						140	2.2
Nuisance Enforcement/Property clean-up						147	1.6
Update of City Equipment and Vehicles						141	2.5
Infrastructure Improvements (Hydrants, Water Meters, Water Wells, Sewer Scoping, Street Replacement, etc.)						139	1.8
Other (Specify):						5	1.8

\*The Rating Score is the weighted average calculated by dividing the sum of all weighted ratings by the number of total responses.

**Where should future residential growth in Laurel take place? Check all that apply.**

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
North			22	15.8 %
South			75	53.9 %
East			35	25.1 %
West			66	47.4 %
<b>Totals</b>			<b>139</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Should the Community of Laurel expand to include new commercial and entertainment facilities?**

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes			123	65.7 %
No			26	13.9 %
No Response(s)			38	20.3 %
<b>Totals</b>			<b>187</b>	<b>100%</b>



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If Yes, where should future commercial and entertainment facilities be developed?

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56 Response(s)

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Do you support stricter enforcement of City ordinances regarding parking, junk vehicles and property maintenance?

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes	<div><div></div></div>		139	74.3 %
No	<div><div></div></div>		13	6.9 %
No Response(s)	<div><div></div></div>		35	18.7 %
Totals			187	100%

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**TextBlock:**

HOUSING & RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

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Do you rent or own your place of residence?

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Own	<div><div></div></div>		139	74.3 %
Rent	<div><div></div></div>		23	12.2 %
No Response(s)	<div><div></div></div>		25	13.3 %
Totals			187	100%

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Describe the type of housing you currently reside in.

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
House	<div><div></div></div>		155	82.8 %
Mobile Home	<div><div></div></div>		0	0.0 %
Apartment	<div><div></div></div>		6	3.2 %
Town Home/Duplex	<div><div></div></div>		0	0.0 %
No Response(s)	<div><div></div></div>		26	13.9 %
Totals			187	100%

Are you satisfied with your current place of residence? If No, why not?











Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes	<div><div></div></div>		147	78.6 %
No	<div><div></div></div>		13	6.9 %
No Response(s)	<div><div></div></div>		27	14.4 %
Totals			187	100%

How would you rate the condition of your home or place of residence? If minor or major repair is needed to your home, please describe the type of repair needed.

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Excellent	<div><div></div></div>		58	31.0 %
Good	<div><div></div></div>		74	39.5 %
Fair - Needs Minor Rehabilitation	<div><div></div></div>		25	13.3 %
Poor - Needs Major Rehabilitation	<div><div></div></div>		3	1.6 %
No Response(s)	<div><div></div></div>		27	14.4 %
Totals			187	100%

Which of the following housing types are needed in Laurel? \*Family Income: 2.5 persons per household income.

1 = Greatly Needed, 2 = Somewhat Needed, 3 = Not Needed

Answer	1	2	3	Number of Response(s)	Rating Score*
Housing for Low-Income Families 0%-60% Area Median Income (\$0-\$31,950)*				124	1.8
Housing for Middle-Income Families 61%-100% Area Median Income (\$32,000-\$53,250)*				132	1.8
Housing for Upper-Income Families 101%+ Area Median Income (\$53,251+)*				121	2.1
Housing for Single Parent Families				119	1.7
Housing for Existing/New Employees				118	1.8
Single Family Housing				122	1.7
General Rental Housing				130	1.8
Manufactured Homes				119	2.3
Mobile Homes				120	2.7
Condominiums and/or Townhomes				129	2.0

\*The Rating Score is the weighted average calculated by dividing the sum of all weighted ratings by the number of total responses.

**CONTINUED: Which of the following housing types are needed in Laurel?**

1 = Greatly Needed, 2 = Somewhat Needed, 3 = Not Needed

<b>Answer</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Number of Response(s)</b>	<b>Rating Score*</b>
Duplex Housing				127	1.9
Apartment Complex (3 to 12 Units)				129	2.1
Rehabilitation of Owner-Occupied Housing				123	1.8
Rehabilitation of Renter-Occupied Housing				125	1.8
Housing Choices for First-Time Homebuyers				122	1.6
Short-Term Single Family Rent-To-Own (3 to 5 Years)				112	2.0
Long-Term Single Family Rent-To-Own (6 to 15 Years)				120	1.9
Short-Term Duplex/Townhouse Rent-To-Own (3 to 5 Years)				112	2.1
Long-Term Duplex/Townhouse Rent-To-Own (6 to 15 Years)				117	2.1

\*The Rating Score is the weighted average calculated by dividing the sum of all weighted ratings by the number of total responses.

**CONTINUED: Which of the following housing types are needed in Laurel?**










1 = Greatly Needed, 2 = Somewhat Needed, 3 = Not Needed

<b>Answer</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Number of Response(s)</b>	<b>Rating Score*</b>
One Bedroom Apartment or House				119	2.0
Two Bedroom Apartment or House				124	1.7
Three Bedroom Apartment or House				120	1.8
Independent Living Housing for persons with a Mental/Physical Disability				120	1.9
Group Home Housing for persons with a Mental/Physical Disability				112	2.2
Retirement Housing (Rental)				130	1.7
Retirement Housing (Owner)				129	1.7

\*The Rating Score is the weighted average calculated by dividing the sum of all weighted ratings by the number of total responses.



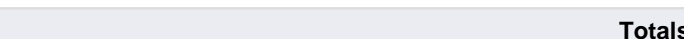
CONTINUED: Which of the following housing types are needed in Laurel?

1 = Greatly Needed, 2 = Somewhat Needed, 3 = Not Needed



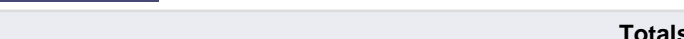
Answer	1	2	3	Number of Response(s)	Rating Score*
Retirement Housing for Low-Income Elderly Persons				136	1.6
Retirement Housing for Middle-Income Elderly Persons				135	1.7
Retirement Housing for Upper-Income Elderly Persons				127	1.9
Licensed Assisted Living Facility with Specialized Services				121	1.8
Single Room Occupancy Housing (Boarding Homes)				117	2.5
Short-Term Emergency Shelters (30 Days or Less)				117	2.4
Long-Term Shelters (30-90 Days)				115	2.5
Transitional/ Temporary Housing				116	2.5
Other (Specify):				4	2.5

\*The Rating Score is the weighted average calculated by dividing the sum of all weighted ratings by the number of total responses.

Would you support the City of Laurel using State or Federal grant funds to conduct an Owner Housing Rehabilitation Program?

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes			122	65.2 %
No			31	16.5 %
No Response(s)			34	18.1 %
<b>Totals</b>			<b>187</b>	<b>100%</b>

Would you support the City of Laurel using State or Federal grant funds to conduct a Renter Housing Rehabilitation Program?

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes			102	54.5 %
No			41	21.9 %
No Response(s)			44	23.5 %
<b>Totals</b>			<b>187</b>	<b>100%</b>

Would you support the City of Laurel establishing a local program that would purchase dilapidated houses, tear down the houses and make the lots available for a family or individual to build a house?

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes	<div><div></div></div>		147	78.6 %
No	<div><div></div></div>		13	6.9 %
No Response(s)	<div><div></div></div>		27	14.4 %
Totals			187	100%

Would you support the City of Laurel using grant dollars to purchase, rehabilitate and resell vacant housing in the Community?

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes	<div><div></div></div>		132	70.5 %
No	<div><div></div></div>		25	13.3 %
No Response(s)	<div><div></div></div>		30	16.0 %
Totals			187	100%

Would you support the City of Laurel using State or Federal grant dollars to provide down payment assistance to first-time home buyers?

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes	<div><div></div></div>		129	68.9 %
No	<div><div></div></div>		31	16.5 %
No Response(s)	<div><div></div></div>		27	14.4 %
Totals			187	100%

As a Laurel resident, would you be willing to contribute or donate money to support a local Community, Economic or Housing development activity?

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes	<div><div></div></div>		68	36.3 %
No	<div><div></div></div>		82	43.8 %
No Response(s)	<div><div></div></div>		37	19.7 %
Totals			187	100%