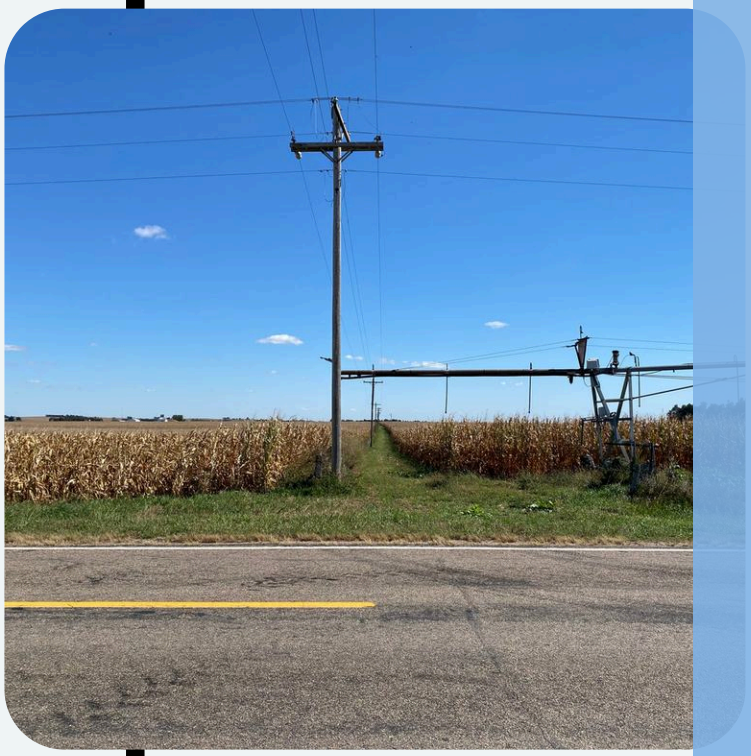


COLFAX COUNTY

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2026 DRAFT



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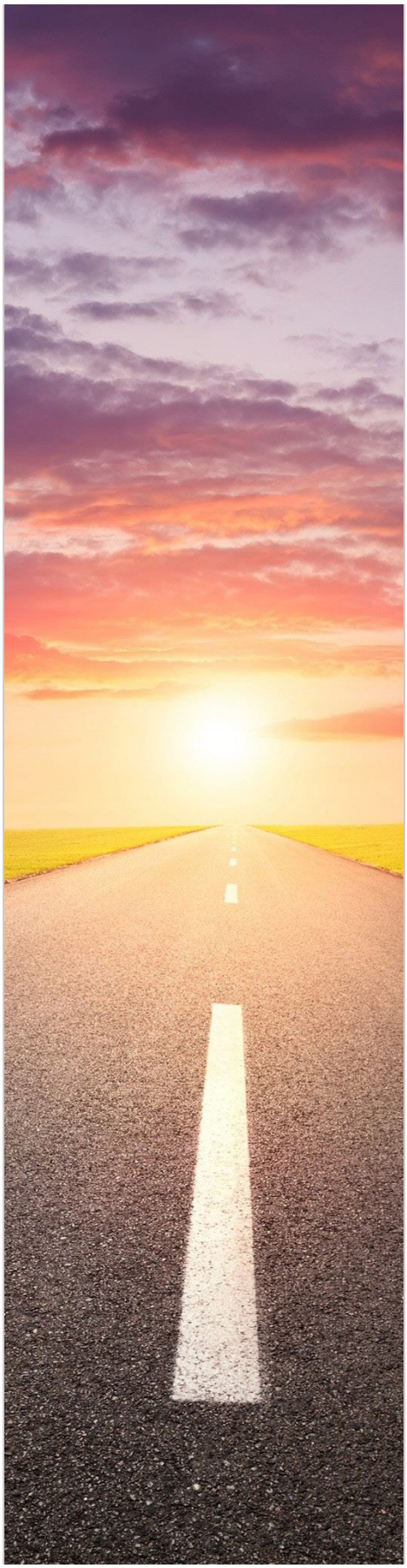
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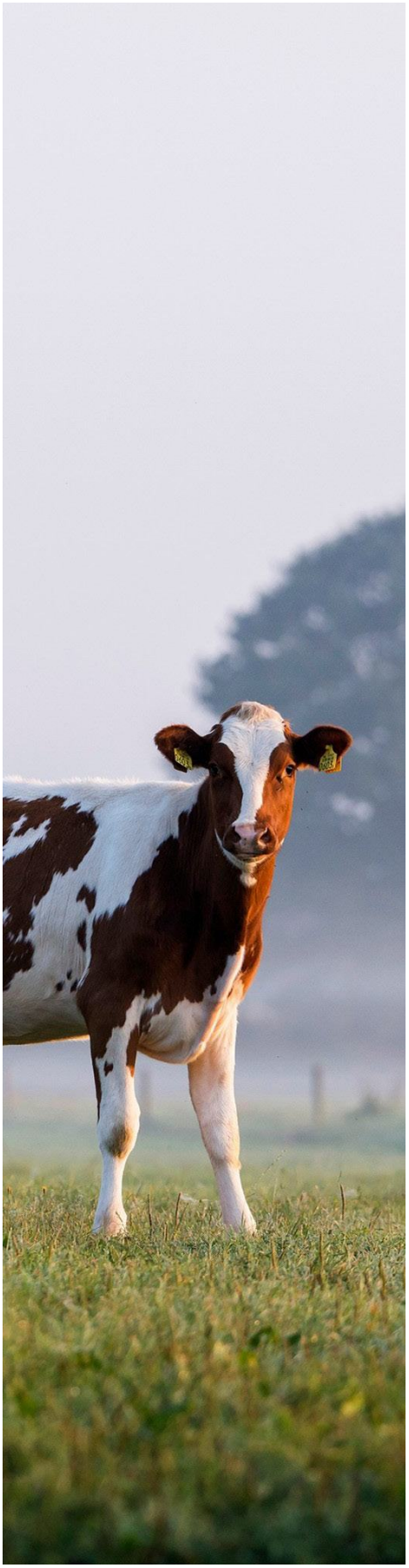
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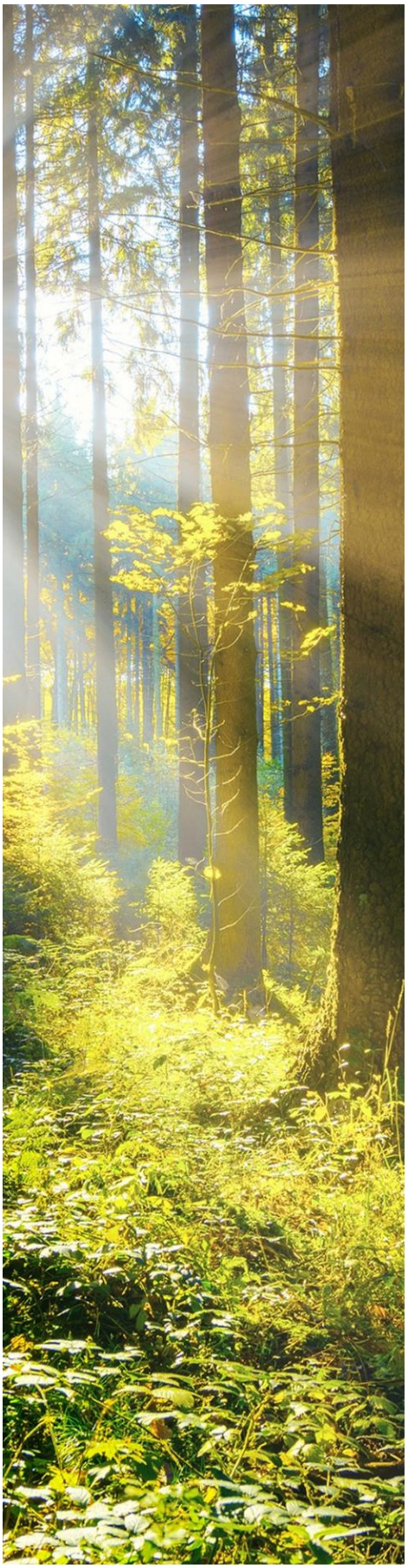
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CHAPTER 1 Introduction

Colfax County is located in east-central Nebraska and encompasses approximately 412 square miles of gently rolling plains, productive agricultural land, and the Platte River Valley. According to the 2024 U.S. Census Bureau population estimates, the county has a population of 10,641 residents and includes six incorporated communities that contribute to its strong agricultural heritage and diverse local economy.

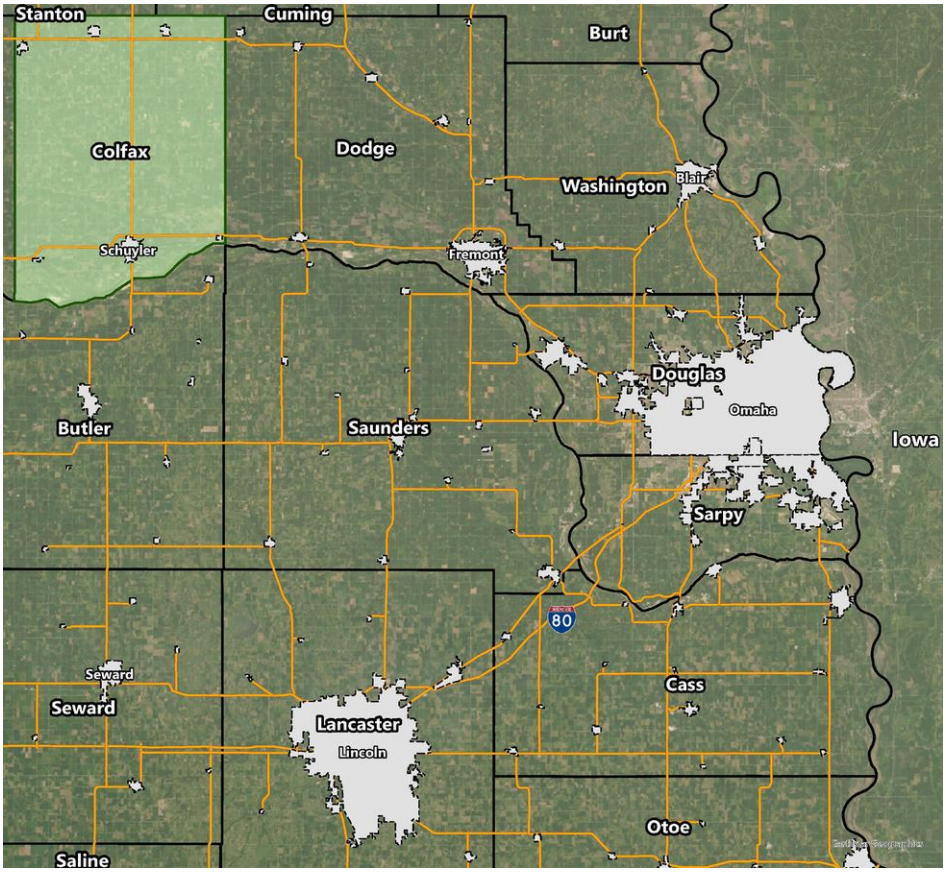
There are six incorporated communities in the county:

- City of Schuyler (county seat)
- City of Clarkson
- Village of Howells
- Village of Leigh
- Village of Richland
- Village of Rogers

Colfax County includes two unincorporated communities, Heun and Olean.

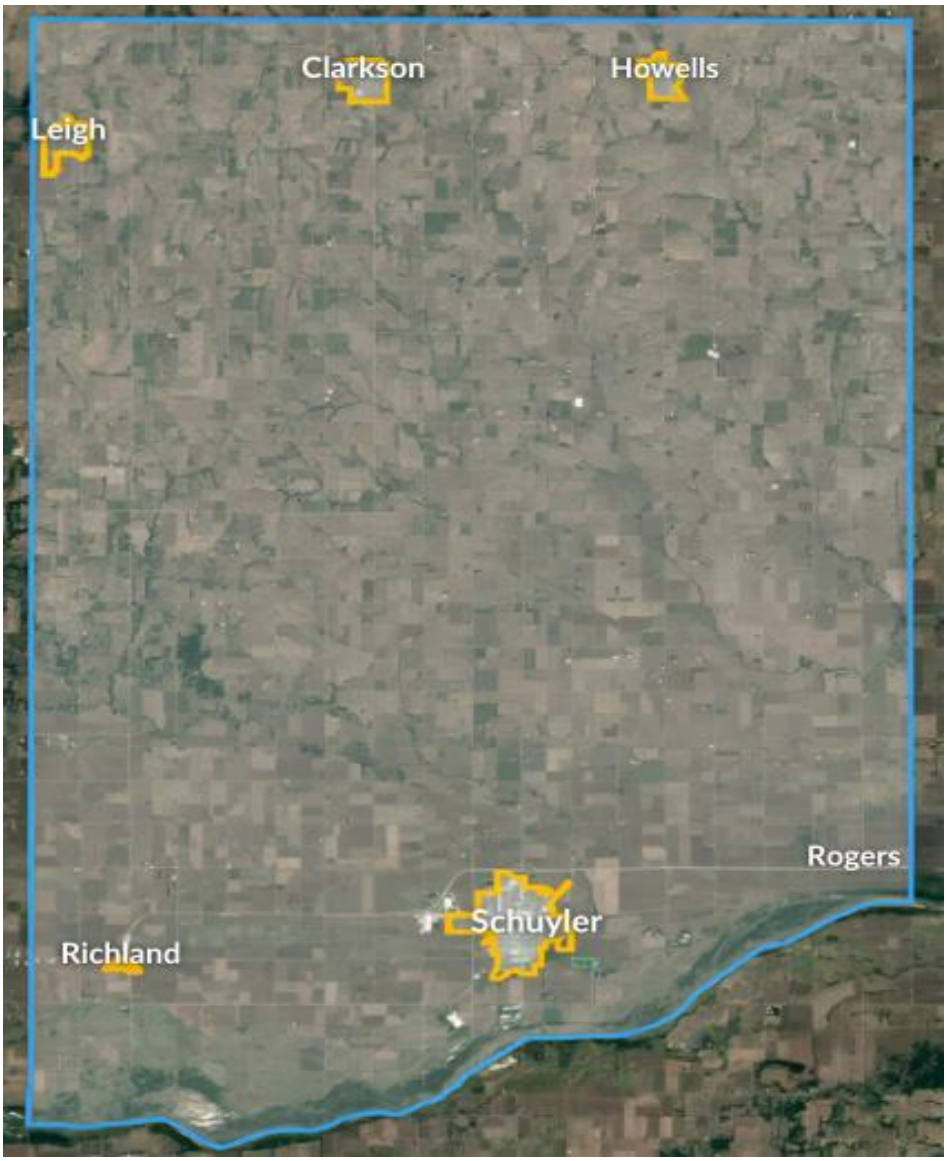
Colfax County encompasses approximately 412 square miles in east-central Nebraska. The county is bordered by Stanton County to

Figure 1.1 – Colfax County and Eastern Nebraska



SOURCE: ARCGIS, MARVIN PLANNING CONSULTANTS

Figure 1.2 – Colfax County & Communities



SOURCE: GOOGLE EARTH

the north, Cuming County to the northeast, Dodge County to the east, Butler County to the south, and to the west.

Colfax County is traversed by a network of transportation corridors that support regional connectivity and economic activity. U.S. Highway 30 serves as the county's primary east-west route, while Nebraska Highway 15 provides the major north-south connection through Schuyler. Nebraska Highway 91 crosses the northern portion of the county in an east-west direction, connecting communities such as Leigh and Clarkson, while Nebraska Highway 57 provides an important north-south route serving the western part of the county. The Union Pacific Railroad parallels U.S. Highway 30 through the southern portion of the county, providing an important freight transportation corridor. The Platte River forms the county's southern boundary and is a defining natural feature that supports agriculture, wildlife habitat, and recreation while contributing to the county's scenic landscape and rural character.

HISTORY

Colfax County was established by the Nebraska Legislature in 1869 after being separated from Platte County. The county and its county seat, Schuyler, were named in honor of Vice President Schuyler Colfax. Although Colfax had previously opposed the organization of the Nebraska Territory while serving in Congress, his national prominence led to the selection of both names.

Long before Euro-American settlement, the region was home to the Pawnee and Omaha Tribes, who utilized the Platte River Valley for hunting, farming, and travel. During the early nineteenth century, explorers, fur traders, missionaries, and emigrants traveling west along routes such as the Mormon Trail and California Trail passed through the area, establishing the Platte River Valley as an important transportation corridor.

Permanent settlement began in the 1860s, encouraged by the Homestead Act of 1862 and the westward expansion of the Union Pacific Railroad. Daniel Hashberger is recognized as one of the area's earliest settlers, establishing a homestead near the future site of Schuyler in 1864. Two years later, the Union Pacific Railroad established Shell Creek Station, which soon developed into the community of Schuyler. Following the creation of Colfax County in 1869, Schuyler was selected as the county seat and was incorporated the following year.

The arrival of the railroad stimulated rapid growth throughout the county by providing transportation for settlers, agricultural products, and commercial goods. During the late nineteenth century, large numbers of Czech and German immigrants settled throughout Colfax County, establishing farms, churches,

schools, and businesses that continue to shape the county's cultural heritage today.

As the population expanded, county government facilities were constructed to serve residents. The first courthouse, a two-story brick and stone building completed in 1872, housed county offices, courtrooms, and even living quarters for county officials. This building served the county for approximately fifty years before being replaced in 1922 by the present courthouse, which remains one of Colfax County's most recognizable historic landmarks.

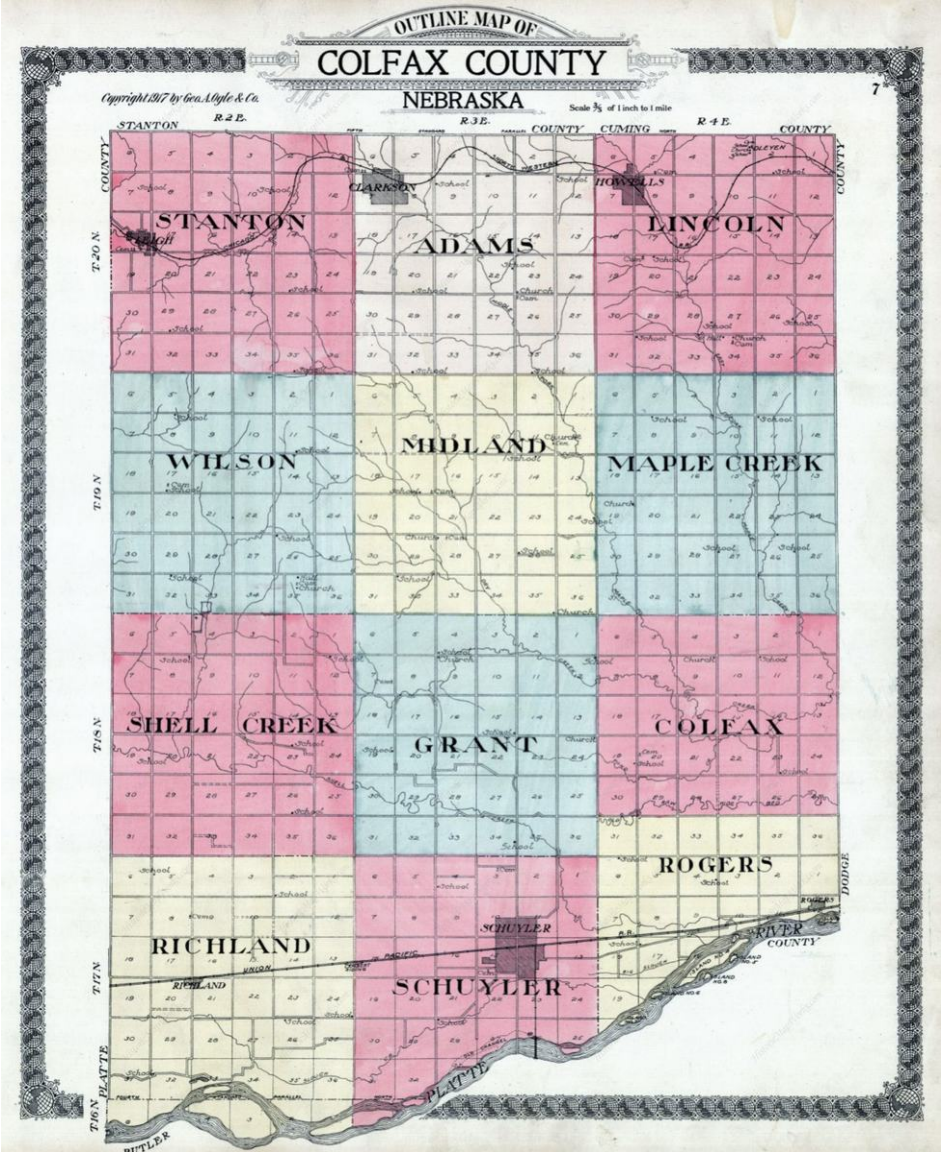
Agriculture has remained the cornerstone of Colfax County's economy since its earliest years. Improvements in transportation including the railroad, the Lincoln Highway (now U.S. Highway 30), and the state highway system supported continued economic growth and connected the county's communities with regional and national markets. Today, Colfax County continues to build upon this rich agricultural, transportation, and cultural heritage while planning for future growth and development.

Schuyler

Originally established as Shell Creek Station following the arrival of the Union Pacific Railroad in 1866, the town was later renamed Schuyler in honor of Vice President Schuyler Colfax. It became the county seat when Colfax County was carved out of Platte County in 1869.

In its earliest years, Schuyler was a massive livestock shipping hub; in 1870 alone, Texas cattlemen brought 40,000 cattle to the local stockyards. Though the cattle boom moved westward by 1871 due to local quarantine regulations and increased homesteading, agricultural processing remained the economic backbone. The arrival of the Wells, Abbott & Nieman milling plant in 1870 further anchored its industrial presence. During the Great Depression, the Works Progress Administration (WPA) backed significant civic infrastructure, notably constructing the historic, native-oak Oak Ballroom between 1935 and 1937. The city experienced another massive economic catalyst in 1968 when the Spencer Foods Company built a large beef packing plant (now operated by Cargill Meat Solutions), which remains the county's largest employer.

Figure 1.3 – Geo. A. Ogle Outline Map of Colfax County, Nebraska, 1917



SOURCE: HISTORIC MAP

Clarkson

Located in north-central Colfax County within the Maple Creek Valley, the village began as "Old Clarkson" in the early 1880s when it was settled by roughly 20 European pioneers. The village relocated two miles north in 1886 after the Fremont, Elkhorn, & Missouri Valley Railroad was built through the area. Platted by the Western Town Lot Company, the newly moved town boomed and drew a large influx of Czech immigrants.

The Czech heritage heavily molded the community's cultural landscape, highlighted by the construction of the Z.C.B.J. Opera House in 1888, which served as a focal point for community entertainment and cultural preservation. Commercial growth centered heavily along Pine Street, featuring hotels, general stores, banks, and the landmark Clarkson Mill. The community remains heavily celebratory of its historic Czech roots.

Howells

Situated in the northeast corner of the county along Maple Creek, the community originally formed under the name Buschville. Platted north of the intended railroad right-of-way, it grew significantly throughout the 1870s. However, in 1886, the Fremont, Elkhorn, & Missouri Valley Railroad bypassed the original townsite, platting the village of Howells south of the tracks instead. This prompt realignment caused Buschville's businesses to systematically relocate to the new site for rail access.

Howells quickly grew into a bustling trade center populated heavily by German and Czech families, establishing early institutions like Saints Peter and Paul's Catholic Church. Social life was defined by active civic groups, local brass bands, and sports. In 1930, the town expanded its municipal park infrastructure and later built the well-known Howells Ballroom, keeping an active local dance tradition alive through the mid-twentieth century.

Leigh

First settled in 1872 in the northwest corner of the county, the community was initially named Millersburg. It was renamed Leigh in 1874 to honor the town's early inhabitant and postmistress, Leigh Walling. Like its northern neighbors, the town adjusted rapidly when the Fremont, Elkhorn, & Missouri Valley Railroad arrived in 1886, moving several buildings closer to Main Street to secure immediate transit access.

Leigh was incorporated in 1887 and experienced steady growth into the early 1900s, implementing a public water works system and a formal fire department. Settled heavily by German and Czech immigrants, the community supported numerous churches (such as Zion Lutheran) and built a prominent public school around 1920. The town has remained a stable agricultural community ever since.

Richland

Located in the southwestern section of the county, Richland initially developed as a strategic early shipping point along the Union Pacific Railroad line. The original townsite was platted in 1878 under the name Spitley. Following the addition of the Price Addition in 1885, the town officially organized as Richland and eventually incorporated in 1908.

Richland's commercial heyday occurred during the first two decades of the twentieth century, bringing brick banks, lumber yards, hardware businesses, and a blacksmith near Tilden and Front Streets. A prominent c. 1955 grain elevator still speaks to its long history as a rail-based agricultural collection hub.

Rogers

Rogers sits just north of the Platte River in southeastern Colfax County. Before the town formalised, the area hosted a massive sheep-feeding ranch and hay-trading operation owned by early settler Patrick Murphy. When the Union Pacific line moved through in 1866, Rogers established itself as a vital shipping hub.

The town incorporated in 1894 and saw significant growth between 1900 and 1927. Because it sat directly on the transcontinental Lincoln Highway alignment (later U.S. Highway 30), it catered heavily to early automotive travelers, notably hosting the Kracl & Son Auto Garage built around 1925. In 1990, Rogers suffered a catastrophic regional flood that completely enveloped the town and necessitated the demolition of many historic structures, though rebuilding efforts helped the small community rebound.

SOURCE: NEBRASKA HISTORIC BUILDINGS SURVEY OF COLFAX COUNTY, 2017

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Colfax County Comprehensive Plan is Colfax County's primary policy guide concerning the location, character, and type of growth and development anticipated over the next 20 years. The Comprehensive Plan is a local initiative intended to:

I. Promote orderly growth and development in the county;
II. Provide policy guidance to enable citizens and elected officials to make better informed decisions about the future of the county;
III. Provide a guideline for the location of future development and uses within the planning jurisdiction of Colfax County;
IV. Provide a vision and direction for the future planning period of the county, and;
V. Act as an information and management tool for County leaders to use in their decision-making process when considering future developments.

The comprehensive plan is developed, reviewed, and implemented by the residents and property owners of Colfax County, Nebraska. A strong local planning effort gives local

The Comprehensive Plan is a vision presented in text, graphics, and tables representing the desires of the county and its residents for the future.



GOLDEN WEST GRAIN COMPANY IN SCHUYLER, NE
SOURCE: NEBRASKA STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

leaders the tools to address national issues such as economic restructuring or renewable energy policy. The Comprehensive Plan is not an initiative of the Federal government. It is a local effort based in the laws of the State of Nebraska.

The Colfax County Comprehensive Plan is not a static document; it should evolve as changes in the land use, population, or local economy occur during the planning period (2026-2036).

THE PLANNING PROCESS

The Comprehensive Plan process results in locally-important general goals and policies, based upon current and future issues faced by the County and its residents. These are intended to be practical guidelines for addressing existing conditions and guiding future growth.

In conjunction with the development of general goals and policies, the planning team performed data collection phase, with information providing a snapshot of the past and present conditions within the county. Analysis of data provides a basis for developing forecasts of future land use demands, as well as future needs regarding housing and facilities.

The Colfax County Comprehensive Plan is a blueprint designed to identify, assess, and develop actions and policies in the areas of population, land use, transportation, housing, economic development, community facilities, communications, and utilities. The comprehensive plan contains recommendations to help the County and its residents improve their property and quality of life. Tools, programs, and methods necessary to carry out the recommendations are identified through the planning process.

This plan is not intended to sit idly on a shelf collecting dust. Implementation of development policies contained within the comprehensive plan is dependent upon adoption of the plan by the governing body and the leadership exercised by the present and future elected and appointed officials of Colfax County.

PLAN PREPARATION

This plan was prepared under the direction of Colfax County Planning Commission, with the assistance and participation of the Colfax County Board of Commissioners, County staff, and citizens of Colfax County.

The Colfax County Comprehensive Plan is intended to guide decision making over the next 20 years. The goals and action items are intended to be achieved over the long term. However, County decision-makers should review the plan annually and update the document at least every 10 years (2036), or when major, unanticipated opportunity arises. Completing updates every ten years or so will allow the County to incorporate new ideas and trends not apparent at this time.

The Plan is only one of several tools within the toolbox which helps guide the community into the future.

PLAN COMPONENTS

Nebraska State Statutes require the inclusion of certain elements in a Comprehensive Plan. A County "Comprehensive Development Plan," as defined in Neb. Rev. Stat. §23-114.02, "shall consist of both graphic and textual material and shall be designed to accommodate anticipated long-range future growth."

The Comprehensive Plan is comprised of the following chapters:

1. Introduction
2. Community Engagement
3. Population
4. Housing
5. Economic Development
6. County Facilities
7. Parks and Recreation
8. Public Safety
9. Public Health
10. Communications, Utilities, and Energy
11. Natural Resources and Environment
12. Hazard Mitigation
13. Land Use
14. Transportation
15. Implementation

Analyzing past and existing demographic, housing, economic, and social trends permit the projection of likely conditions in the future. Projections and forecasts are useful tools in planning for the future; however, these tools are not always accurate and may change due to unforeseen factors. Also, past trends may be skewed, or the data may be inaccurate, creating a distorted picture of past conditions. Therefore, it is important for the County Planning Commission and other County leaders to closely monitor population, housing, and economic conditions impacting the region.

The Comprehensive Plan records where Colfax County has been, where it is now, and where it will likely be in the future. The Comprehensive Plan is an information and management tool for County leaders to use in their decision-making process when

The regulations and restrictions authorized by sections 19-901 to 19-915 shall be in accordance with a comprehensive development plan which shall consist of both graphic and textual material and shall be designed to accommodate anticipated long-range future growth which shall be based upon documented population and economic projections. The comprehensive development plan shall, among other possible elements, include:

(1) A land-use element which designates the proposed general distributions, general location, and extent of the uses of land for agriculture, housing, commerce, industry, recreation, education, public buildings and lands, and other categories of public and private use of land;

(2) The general location, character, and extent of existing and proposed major roads, streets, and highways, and air and other transportation routes and facilities;

(3) The general location, type, capacity, and area served of present and projected or needed community facilities including recreation facilities, schools, libraries, other public buildings, and public utilities and services; and

(4) (a) When next amended after January 1, 1995, an identification of sanitary and improvement districts, subdivisions, industrial tracts, commercial tracts, and other discrete developed areas which are or in the future may be appropriate subjects for annexation and (b) a general review of the standards and qualifications that should be met to enable the municipality to undertake annexation of such areas. Failure of the plan to identify subjects for annexation or to set out standards or qualifications for annexation shall not serve as the basis for any challenge to the validity of an annexation ordinance.

Regulations shall be designed to lessen congestion in the streets; to secure safety from fire, panic, and other dangers; to promote health and the general welfare; to provide adequate light and air; to prevent the overcrowding of land; to secure safety from flood; to avoid undue concentration of population; to facilitate the adequate provision of transportation, water, sewerage, schools, parks and other public requirements; to protect property against blight and depreciation; to protect the tax base; to secure economy in governmental expenditures; and to preserve, protect, and enhance historic buildings, places, and districts.

Such regulations shall be made with reasonable consideration, among other things, for the character of the district and its peculiar suitability for particular uses and with a view to conserving the value of buildings and encouraging the most appropriate use of land throughout such municipality.

considering future developments. The Comprehensive Plan is not a static document; it should evolve as changes in the land-use, population, or local economy occur during the planning period.

COUNTY JURISDICTION

The County Board of Commissioners, which is a board of elected officials, performs the governmental functions for the County. Each incorporated community in the county also has elected officials and officers overseeing how their community is governed.

The planning and zoning jurisdiction of Colfax County, pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. §23-114, includes all of the unincorporated portions of the county, excluding the established extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) of any incorporated city or village (Neb. Rev. Stat. §17-1001).

Every effort has been made to involve the incorporated municipalities of Colfax County in preparation of this plan, and to coordinate plans and policies with those local jurisdictions.

PROCESS FOR ADOPTION

When it is time to adopt this Comprehensive Plan, the Board of Commissioners adopts the plan by Resolution. Adoption of the Comprehensive Plan requires both the Planning Commission and County Board to hold separate Public Hearings. After the Planning Commission Public Hearing, the Planning Commission makes a recommendation to the Board of Commissioners, who then holds their Public Hearing. Notice of both public hearings is required to be published in the newspaper of general circulation a minimum of ten days prior to each hearing, and as specified in Neb. Rev. Stat. §23-164.

Planned growth will make the County more effective in serving residents, more efficient in using resources, and able to meet the standard of living and quality of life every individual desires.

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CHAPTER 2 Community Engagement

Community engagement is vital to a successful planning effort. Public participation makes it possible to have a clearer understanding of how the residents feel regarding their communities. During every planning process, there are a limited number of individuals concerned about the effort either because things are going in a good direction or specific issues do not impact them. Regardless, this does not minimize the importance of community engagement. Knowing, recording, and then acknowledging what residents think of their communities makes the comprehensive plan truly belong to a community.

PARTICIPATION METHODS

Transparent and frequent public participation was designed as a major component of this plan. The process consisted of multiple approaches. It was structured to allow stakeholder involvement in numerous ways throughout the process—if stakeholders missed a meeting, they were still able to provide their thoughts and input through other means.

The key elements of public participation for this project included:

- Project website;
- Postcards and flyers;
- Town hall meetings;
- Focus groups;
- Interviews; and
- Countywide survey.

PROJECT WEBSITE

A special project website (https://tinyurl.com/colfaxcountycompplan) was established at the onset of the planning process. The project website served as a means to notify residents about upcoming meetings, inform them on the purpose and importance of comprehensive planning, and serve as a vehicle for community input on the project.

POSTCARDS AND FLYERS

In order to get the most public participation possible, the planning team developed informational postcards and flyers. Both were delivered to post offices, city offices, village halls, libraries, and other high traffic areas in the county, and were also left at town hall meetings for participants to take and spread around the county.

The postcards and flyers led readers to the project website and survey. The postcards also provided information on tall hall meeting dates and locations.

TOWN HALL MEETINGS

Two town hall meetings were held as part of the Colfax County Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Update. The first was held March 24, 2026, at the Schuyler Library, followed by a second meeting on March 25, 2026, at the Clarkson Fire Hall. All were an integral part of the planning process. At these meetings, attendees were asked five questions about the present and potential future of the county. Meeting attendees provided their answers to five broad questions

over the course of the town hall meeting. The questions and answers were as follows:

WHAT DO YOU LOVE ABOUT COLFAX COUNTY?

- Small-town and rural atmosphere
- Friendly people and neighbors helping neighbors
- Strong sense of community and family
- Local schools and community involvement
- Fire, EMS, law enforcement, and medical services
- Parks, camping, hunting, fishing, golf, and other recreation
- Good roads and highway access
- Central location near larger communities
- Local events and social activities
- Variety of landscapes and farmland
- Community traditions and values
- Feeling safe and knowing the people around you

WHY DO YOU CHOOSE TO LIVE OR HAVE A BUSINESS IN COLFAX COUNTY?

- Family roots and multiple generations living in the county
- Family farms and family-owned businesses
- Employment opportunities
- Ability to own land and farm
- Quiet, rural lifestyle
- Good place to raise a family
- Reasonable cost of living
- Low crime and a safe community
- Strong agricultural base
- Small schools and communities
- Close to family
- Central location with reasonable access to Omaha, Lincoln, and Norfolk

WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST OPPORTUNITIES COLFAX COUNTY HAS RIGHT NOW?

- Getting young people involved and encouraging them to stay or return
- New housing and room for communities to grow
- Job creation and workforce growth
- Small manufacturing and agricultural-based industries
- Value-added agriculture and livestock production
- Rail and highway access
- Highway frontage and the county's location
- Better internet and opportunities to work from home
- Technology-related jobs and services
- Supporting small businesses and new businesses
- Strong schools and technical education
- Expanding professional and satellite services

WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES COLFAX COUNTY HAS RIGHT NOW?

- Affordable and available housing
- Child care and daycare
- Retaining young people and attracting young professionals
- Keeping businesses in smaller communities
- Shortages of professional services
- Recruiting and retaining fire, rescue, and law enforcement personnel
- Aging infrastructure
- Access to grants and affordable financing for businesses
- Floodplain restrictions
- Language and cultural barriers
- Lack of lodging, restaurants, retail, and other amenities
- Providing opportunities for young farmers
- Water and utility concerns
- Encouraging more community involvement

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE IDEAL COLFAX COUNTY 20 YEARS FROM NOW?

- Steady population and business growth
- More industry and higher-paying jobs
- More housing
- Updated roads, utilities, and community infrastructure
- Thriving downtowns and local businesses
- Young people returning, volunteering, and serving in the community
- Strong family farms and a successful agricultural economy
- Lower taxes and a stronger tax base
- Elder care and retirement options
- More recreation and entertainment opportunities
- Improved technology, internet, and cell service
- Communities working together
- A safe community with access to everyday needs
- Continued community traditions and values

COUNTYWIDE SURVEY

The Colfax County, Nebraska Comprehensive Plan Survey was developed in support of this planning effort, to encourage community engagement. SurveyMonkey, a web-based survey tool, allowed individuals to provide input while remaining totally anonymous. Paper copies of the survey were also made available across the county alongside the postcards and flyers.

Results of the survey, as well as all aspects of community engagement, inform each element of this plan. A full summary of the survey results can be found in Appendix A.

Summary of Results

The results of the survey were summarized using Copilot AI. A general overview is included below, and more detailed information is provided in Appendix A.

Areas of Focus

The Colfax County Comprehensive Plan Survey received 50 responses and showed strong support for preserving the county's rural character, agricultural land, and natural resources. Agriculture was a common theme throughout the survey, with respondents supporting farmland protection, value-added agriculture, and continued opportunities for local producers. Water quality and water availability were also identified as important concerns for the future.

Housing, economic development, infrastructure, and community services were common themes in the survey. Respondents identified a need for more affordable housing for young families, additional senior housing, and more apartments, townhomes, and duplexes. There was also support for attracting new businesses, helping existing businesses grow, creating more jobs, improving broadband, and giving young people more reasons to stay in or return to Colfax County. Roads and bridges were another concern, especially rural and gravel roads. Fire and EMS services received strong ratings, while childcare, senior services, recreation, and access to some goods and services were areas where respondents saw room for improvement.

Overall, respondents valued Colfax County's small-town atmosphere, safety, agriculture, and sense of community, while also wanting steady growth and improvements that help keep families and businesses in the county.

AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Agriculture remains one of the strongest priorities for Colfax County. Survey respondents supported protecting productive farmland, expanding value-added agriculture, and keeping agriculture an important part of the local economy. Water quality and water availability were also viewed as important resources to protect.

HOUSING

Housing was a common concern throughout the survey. Respondents identified a need for more affordable housing for young families, additional senior housing and assisted living, and more apartments, townhomes, and duplexes. There was also support for repairing older homes and cleaning up deteriorated properties.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND WORKFORCE

Respondents supported retaining and expanding existing businesses while also attracting new businesses and jobs. Agriculture, affordable housing, broadband, manufacturing, and technology were identified as areas that could support future economic growth. Keeping young people in the county and creating opportunities for them to return after school were also recurring themes.

TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Road and bridge conditions were identified as an area needing continued attention. Survey responses showed concern about County road conditions, and several written comments specifically called for improvements to rural and gravel roads and bridges. Maintaining infrastructure will continue to be important for residents, agriculture, and local businesses.

COMMUNITY SERVICES AND QUALITY OF LIFE

Residents value Colfax County's small-town atmosphere, safety, friendly communities, and local services. Fire and EMS services received strong ratings, while child care, senior services, recreation, and access to some goods and services were areas where respondents saw room for improvement. Maintaining these services while providing more opportunities for families and older residents will be important moving forward.

Top Priorities

Colfax County's overall priority is to support steady growth while protecting its agricultural land, rural character, and quality of life. Colfax County's top priorities include:

- Protect agricultural land and support the long-term strength of agriculture.
- Increase the supply of affordable housing, senior housing, and other housing options.
- Retain existing businesses, attract new businesses, and create more job opportunities.
- Improve County roads, bridges, and other infrastructure.
- Keep young people and families in the county and create opportunities for them to return.
- Maintain public safety, child care, senior services, recreation, and other community services.
- Protect water quality, groundwater, and other natural resources.

Community Sentiments

Residents generally see Colfax County as a safe, friendly place with a strong small-town feel and deep agricultural roots. People value knowing their neighbors, the slower pace of life, family connections, and the sense that communities come together when help is needed. At the same time, residents want to see improvements in housing, roads, local businesses, recreation, and services, while keeping the rural character and community values that make the county a good place to live.

Future Visions

Residents generally picture Colfax County growing steadily while keeping its rural and agricultural character. The future they described includes more housing, stronger local businesses and industry, better roads and infrastructure, thriving downtowns, and more opportunities for young people to stay or return. They also want to see family farms remain

strong, communities work together, and Colfax County continue to be a safe place with good services, recreation, and a strong sense of community.

Key Strategies

1. Support housing and community growth.

   a) Encourage more affordable housing for young families and the local workforce.
   b) Support senior housing, assisted living, apartments, townhomes, and duplexes.
   c) Encourage housing rehabilitation and cleanup of older properties.

Outcome: More housing choices for current residents, young families, and older adults.

2. Strengthen the local economy and workforce.

   a) Support existing businesses and recruit new businesses and employers.
   b) Encourage value-added agriculture, manufacturing, technology, and broadband improvements.
   c) Create more opportunities for young people to stay in or return to Colfax County.

Outcome: More jobs, stronger local businesses, and a more stable workforce.

3. Maintain infrastructure and community services.

   a) Continue improving County roads, bridges, and other public infrastructure.
   b) Maintain strong fire, EMS, law enforcement, and emergency services.
   c) Support child care, senior services, recreation, and other basic community needs.

Outcome: Safe, well-served communities that remain good places to live, work, and raise a family.

GOALS, POLICIES & ACTIONS

Planning for future land use is an ongoing process of goal setting and problem solving aimed at creating the conditions for a better quality of life. Planning focuses upon ways of solving existing problems within the county and providing a management tool for Colfax County leaders and residents to achieve their vision for the future.

The goals and policies of the Colfax County Comprehensive Plan are intended to address existing conditions and trends, to address issues and concerns of citizens as expressed through community engagement.

The goals and policies for the Comprehensive Plan are presented throughout the plan. Each chapter contains goals and policies to address the elements in each chapter.

- Goals are statements of community desires, necessities, and issues to be attained. A goal should be stated in a manner which allows it to be accomplished. Goals in this plan may include specific objectives as a definable, measurable step to achieving a goal. Goals and objectives also inform public policies.
- Policies are more specific statements in support of goals and objectives. Well-stated plan policies are useful for review of development proposals for compatibility with this plan. Most plan policies are implemented by specific, measurable action items.
- Actions specifically support the community's goals. Action items are future-focused measures, projects, plans, or activities proposed to implement the comprehensive plan.

It is important to establish goals, objectives and policies for short-term as well as long-term accomplishments. Goals, policies, and action items should be evaluated, reviewed, and updated regularly as conditions and resources change.

TOOLS & STRATEGIES

There are a variety of tools and strategies which lend further support to achieving the County's goals and policies, beyond specific action items identified in the Comprehensive Plan. These activities should be reviewed during regular plan maintenance and included in the plan if and when appropriate.

PLAN MAINTENANCE & REVIEW

As stated in the introductory chapter, the Comprehensive Plan is intended to address growth and development anticipated over the next 20 years. Goals and policies are focused on the next 10 years, with more specific action items identified for short-term and long-term implementation. As noted in the final chapter, implementation and regular review are essential in bringing this plan to life.



TOWN HALL MEETING
SOURCE: MARVIN PLANNING CONSULTANTS



CHAPTER 3 Population

Population affects every aspect of a county from jobs and income, housing, infrastructure, public services, and fiscal stability. Population grows and contracts as people are born and die, or as they move in and move out of the county. It is critical to understand what impacts population trends may have on the local area and the region. Understanding where the county has been and where it is currently, helps understand where it is likely to go moving forward.

Understanding historic population trends aids in identifying where the population may grow in the future and in determining potential impacts on demand for goods, services, public safety, education, and other needs. Projections provide guidance for Colfax County to base future land use and development decisions. However, population projections are only estimates and unforeseen factors will likely affect projections.

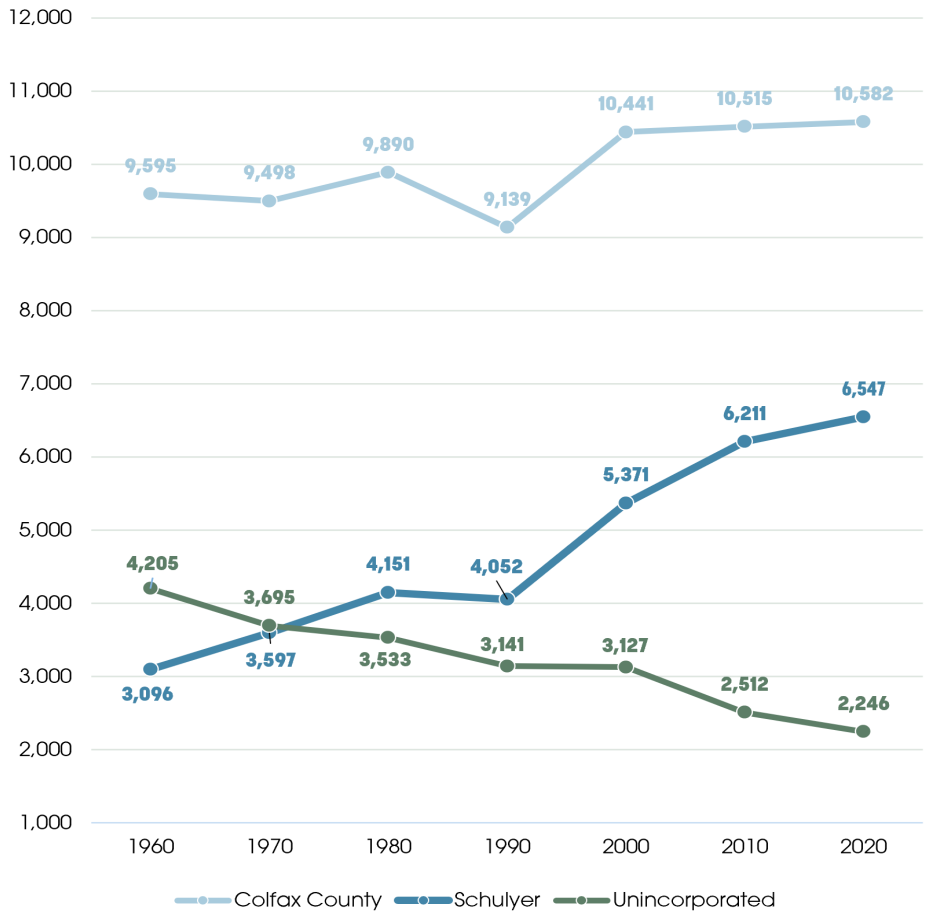
The analysis in this section relies mostly on American Community Survey (ACS) data which are estimates based on the US Census Bureau's five-year running survey of all Americans. The primary data sets are the 2010-2014 data series for 2014, and the 2020-2024 data series for 2024.

TRENDS ANALYSIS

The US Census Bureau's latest estimate of Colfax County's population is 10,641 residents for 2024. The Census Bureau's official decennial population counts for 1960 through 2020 for Colfax County and its municipalities are shown in Figures 3.1 and 3.2. These

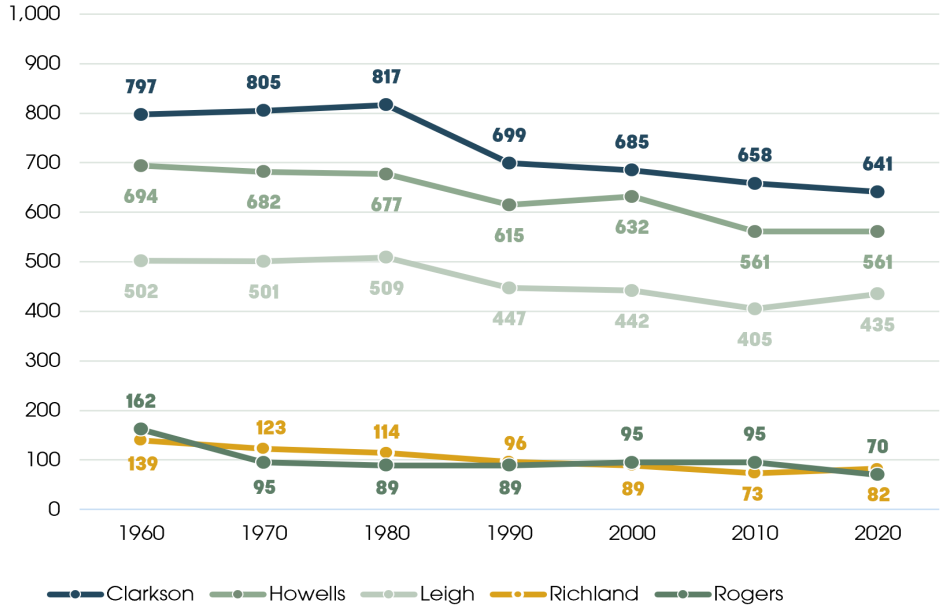
The United States Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) is the primary source of data for this chapter. The most current, publicly available data is presented as appropriate. While the US Census Bureau's decennial census, which has taken place every 10 years since 1790, is well known, difficulties with Census collection in 2020 delayed the release of more detailed information. Also, many demographic and economic indicators are not available at the local level, and the Census Bureau is disclosing less data with new "differential privacy" initiatives. If not otherwise specified, references are to Colfax County overall.

Figure 3.1 – County and City Population Trends



SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU, 1960-2020

Figure 3.2 – Village Population Trends



SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU, 1960-2020

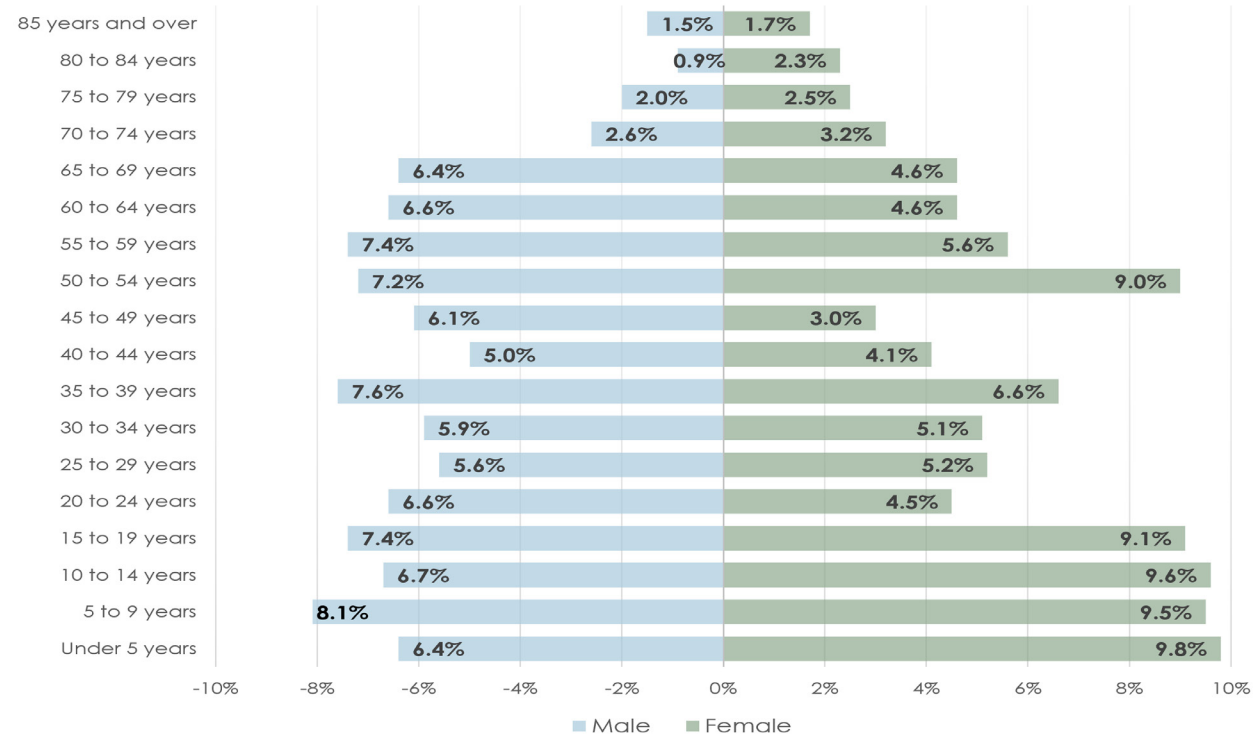
data provide a look at where the county has been and informs the projection of future population later in this chapter.

Colfax County's population has remained relatively stable over the past six decades, despite some fluctuations. After declining from 9,890 residents in 1980 to 9,139 in 1990, the county grew to 10,582 residents by 2020. Population growth has been concentrated within the City of Schuyler, which increased from 3,096 residents in 1960 to 6,547 in 2020. Meanwhile, the combined population of the county's smaller communities and unincorporated rural areas declined from 4,205 to 2,246 residents during the same period, reflecting a continued shift toward the county seat (Figure 3.1).

Among Colfax County's incorporated communities, Schuyler is the largest, with a population of 6,547 in 2020. Clarkson is the second largest community with 641 residents, followed by Howells (561), Leigh (435), Richland (82), and Rogers (70), making Rogers the county's smallest incorporated community (Figure 3.2).

Population trends among Colfax County's incorporated communities have varied over the past six decades. Schuyler experienced substantial growth, more than doubling in population between 1960 and 2020, while Clarkson, Howells, Leigh, Richland, and Rogers all experienced overall population declines. Although some communities saw brief periods of stability or modest growth, the long-term trend indicates that population growth has become increasingly concentrated in Schuyler, while the county's smaller communities have gradually declined in population (Figure 3.2).

Figure 3.3 – County Population Pyramid

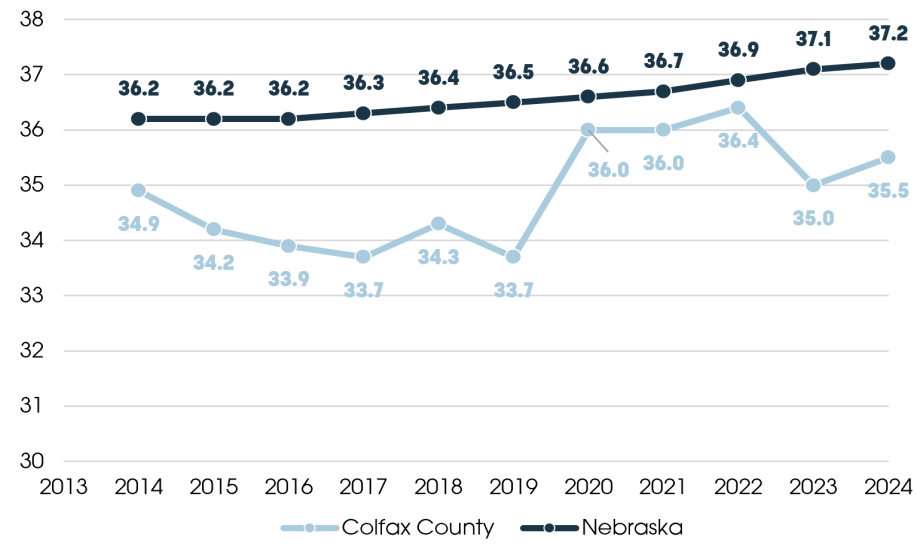


SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU, AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 2020-2024.

Figure 3.3 shows a population pyramid of the current age structure of Colfax County, as reported by the American Community Survey for 2020-2024. The largest male age cohort in Colfax County is 5 to 9 years (8.1%), followed by 35 to 39 years (7.6%) and 15 to 19 years and 55 to 59 years (7.4% each). Among females, the largest age cohort is under 5 years (9.8%), followed closely by 10 to 14 years (9.6%), 5 to 9 years (9.5%), 15 to 19 years (9.1%), and 50 to 54 years (9.0%). Overall, the population pyramid indicates a relatively young population with strong representation among children and working-age adults. There were more women (6.5%) than men (4.4%) age 80 and over. Service providers for senior citizens should take this gender discrepancy into account during program planning.

Among the working-age population (20 to 64 years), the largest male cohort is 35 to 39 years(7.6%), while the largest female cohort is 50 to 54 years (9.0%). The smallest working-age cohort for males is 40 to 44 years (5.0%), while 45 to 49 years is the smallest for females (3.0%).

Figure 3.4 – Median Age



SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU, AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 2010-2014 THROUGH 2020-2024.

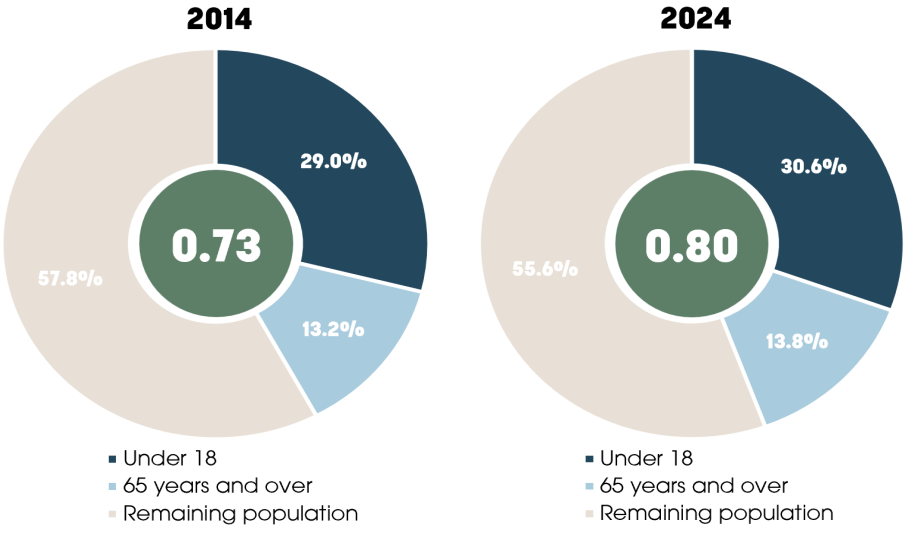
MEDIAN AGE

Colfax County's median age has generally remained below the statewide median over the past decade. In 2024, the county's median age was 35.5 years, compared to 37.2 years statewide. While the county's median age has increased overall since 2014, it continues to reflect a younger population than Nebraska as a whole (Figure 3.4).

DEPENDENCY RATIO

Dependency ratios examine the portion of Colfax County's population supporting the age groups historically dependent upon others, including those under 18 years and those 65 years and older. (See the inset panel for details on calculating this ratio.) The dependency ratio highlights the proportion of employed persons in the county who support themselves as well as older and younger dependents.

Figure 3.5 – Dependency Ratio



SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU, AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 2010-2014 THROUGH 2020-2024.

Figure 3.5 presents dependency ratios for 2014 and 2024 in Colfax County. Between 2014 and 2024, Colfax County's age distribution

DEPENDENCY RATIO

The dependency ratio examines the portion of a community's population in the workforce, who can support age groups typically and historically dependent on the incomes of others.

one Independent resident is able to support more than one Dependent resident	< 1
one Independent resident is able to support one Dependent resident	= 1
one Independent resident is able to support less than one Dependent resident	> 1

To calculate the dependency ratio, take the sum of the share 18 years and younger plus the share 65 years and older, divided by share of remaining population.

Table 3.1 – Ethncity & Race

	2014		2024		Change	
Race	#	%	#	%	#	%
White Alone	9,558	90.9%	5,393	50.7%	(4,165)	-43.6%
Black Alone	239	2.3%	478	4.5%	239	100.0%
American Indian Alone	123	1.2%	486	4.6%	363	295.1%
Asian Alone	5	0.0%	21	0.2%	16	320.0%
Some Other Race Alone	329	3.1%	1,708	16.1%	1,379	419.1%
Two or More Races	249	2.4%	2,555	24.0%	2,306	926.1%
Hispanic Origin (Any Race)	4,459	42.4%	5,091	47.8%	632	14.2%
Total Population	10,512	-	10,641	-	129	1%

SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU, AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 2010-2014 AND 2020-2024.

Table 3.2 – Veterans

Period of Service	#	%
Gulf War (9/2001 or later) veterans	200	43.4%
Gulf War (8/1990 to 8/2001) veterans	261	56.6%
Vietnam era veterans	99	21.5%
Korean War veterans	62	13.4%
World War II veterans	-	0.0%
Total Veterans	461	-

SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU, AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 2020-2024.

changed only slightly. The share of residents under age 18 increased from 29.0% to 30.6%, while the population age 65 and over increased from 13.2% to 13.8%. As a result, the working-age population (ages 18 to 64) declined from 57.8% to 55.6%. The county's dependency ratio also increased from 0.73 to 0.80, indicating a slightly higher proportion of residents who are typically dependent on the working-age population.

Colfax County's dependency ratio increased from 0.73 in 2014 to 0.80 in 2024, indicating that there are now approximately 80 dependents for every 100 working-age residents, compared to 73 a decade earlier. This increase reflects growth in both the youth and older adult populations and suggests a greater demand for schools, healthcare, childcare, senior services, and other community resources supported by the working-age population.

ETHNICITY

During the past decade, Colfax County has seen a shift in the race and ethnicity of residents like many other Nebraska communities. Race and ethnicity are self-identification terms in which residents choose how they identify themselves.

Colfax County has become increasingly diverse over the past decade. Between 2014 and 2024, the share of residents identifying as White alone declined from 90.9% to 50.7%, while the Hispanic or Latino population grew from 42.4% to 47.8%. The county also experienced increases in residents identifying as Black alone, American Indian alone, Asian alone, Some Other Race alone, and Two or More Races. These trends reflect Colfax County's growing diversity and changing demographic composition, influenced in part by employment opportunities in the county's agricultural and food processing industries (Table 3.1).

VETERANS

According to the 2024 American Community Survey, Colfax County is home to an estimated 461 veterans, representing approximately 4.3% of the adult population. Most veterans served during the Gulf War era, with 56.6% serving between 1990 and 2001 and 43.4% serving after September 2001. Veterans of the Vietnam War account for 21.5%, while 13.4% served during the Korean War. Approximately 3.3% of veterans are women (15 veterans), compared to 10.1% statewide.

Colfax County's veteran population is generally older, with 33.0% age 75 and over, 47.7% between ages 35 and 54, 12.4% between ages 55 and 64, 6.7% between ages 65 and 74, and just 0.2% between ages 18 and 34. Additionally, 77 veterans (16.7%) have a disability, compared to 29.2% of veterans statewide. Overall, the county's veteran population is concentrated in older age groups, reflecting the aging of those who served in earlier conflicts.

COMPONENTS OF CHANGE

Population change includes both natural increase or decline (the difference between births and deaths) and migration (the difference between people moving in and out of the county). For example, many places experience natural increase (more births than deaths) yet face a declining population due to out-migration.

AGE STRUCTURE ANALYSIS

Age structure of the county affects population change. For example, when there are larger populations aged 20 to 44 years, there is typically a greater ability to sustain future population growth, since this age group tends to have

Table 3.3 – Age and Sex

2014		2024		2014-2024	
Age	#	Age	#	Change	%
		Under 5	851	-	-
		5 to 9	931	-	-
Under 5	904	10 to 14	856	(48)	-5.3%
5 to 9	936	15 to 19	870	(66)	-7.0%
10 to 14	736	20 to 24	598	(138)	-18.7%
15 to 19	746	25 to 29	574	(172)	-23.1%
20 to 24	610	30 to 34	588	(22)	-3.6%
25 to 29	652	35 to 39	758	106	16.3%
30 to 34	683	40 to 44	488	(195)	-28.6%
35 to 39	620	45 to 49	496	(124)	-20.0%
40 to 44	599	50 to 54	858	259	43.2%
45 to 49	641	55 to 59	700	59	9.2%
50 to 54	767	60 to 64	604	(163)	-21.3%
55 to 59	641	65 to 69	593	(48)	-7.5%
60 to 64	568	70 to 74	308	(260)	-45.7%
65 to 69	368	75 to 79	235	(133)	-36.1%
70 to 74	294	80 to 84	166	(128)	-43.6%
75 & Over	725	85 & Over	167	(558)	-77.0%
Total	10,512		10,641		

SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU, AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 2010-2014 TO 2020-2024.

children as well as participate in the workforce.

Table 3.2 presents the age group structure for Colfax County in 2014 and 2024. Age structure provides an understanding of where some of the population shifts are occurring. Reviewing population in this manner also informs a more detailed analysis of which specific groups are moving in and out of the county. Negative changes in a group indicate out-migration or a combination of out-migration and deaths.

Between 2014 and 2024, only a few age groups experienced population growth. The 35 to 39, 45 to 49, and 50 to 54 age groups increased during the period, with the 50 to 54 age group experiencing the largest increase, adding 259 residents (43.2%). All other age groups declined, with the largest decreases occurring among residents 85 years and over, 70 to 74, and 80 to 84, reflecting shifts in the county's age distribution over the decade.

Most age groups in Colfax County declined between 2014 and 2024. The largest decreases occurred among residents 85 years and over (-558 residents, -77.0%), 70 to 74 years (-260 residents, -45.7%), 80 to 84 years (-128 residents, -43.6%), 25 to 29 years (-172 residents, -23.1%), and 60 to 64 years (-163 residents, -21.3%). Overall, the 85 years and over age group experienced the largest decline during the decade.

NATURAL CHANGE AND NET MIGRATION

Population shifts have two key components: migration and natural change (the difference between births and deaths). The components of change for Colfax County are shown in Figure 3.6, based on US Census Bureau annual population estimates.

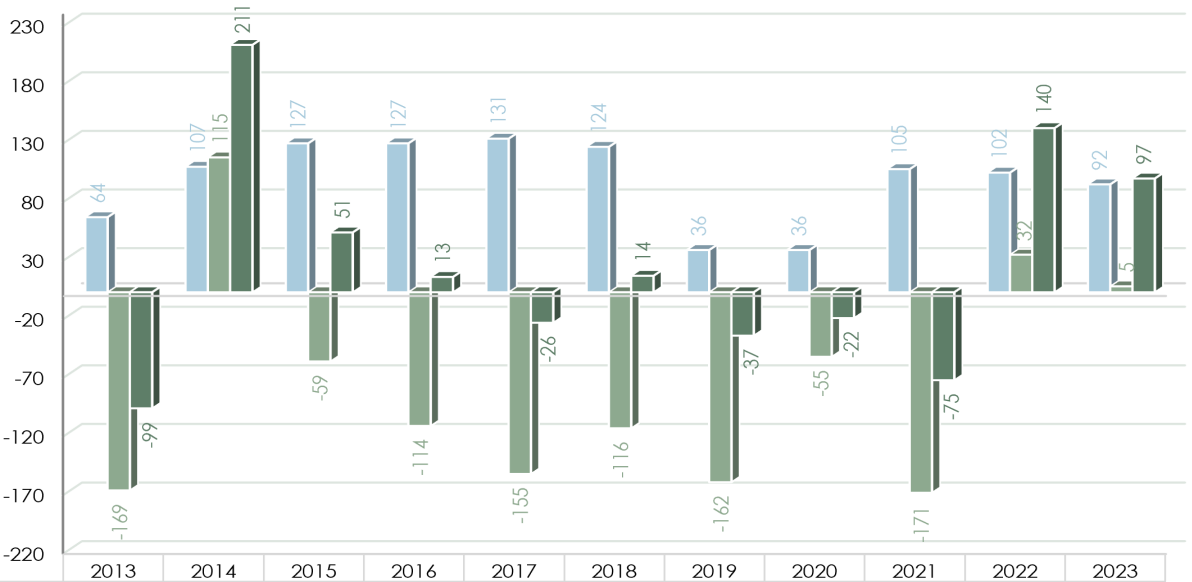
Between 2013 and 2023, Colfax County consistently experienced positive natural change, meaning births exceeded deaths each year. However, the county also recorded net out-migration during most years, indicating more people moved out than into the county. Net in-migration contributed to overall population growth in 2014, 2022, and 2023, when more people moved into the county than left. These years, combined with positive natural change, resulted in the county's largest population gains during the period.

POPULATION PROJECTIONS

Population projections are future estimates based upon past and present circumstances. There are different methods commonly used to project future population, with advantages and disadvantages for smaller and larger communities. Several factors (demographics, economics, social, etc.) also affect the relationship between projections and ultimate population levels, positively or negatively.

Historical population trends in Colfax County have been influenced by both natural change (births minus deaths) and migration. Although natural change remained positive throughout the latter half of the twentieth century, it declined substantially from a gain of 1,125 residents during the 1950s to gains ranging from 125 to 357 residents during the 1970s through the 1990s. Despite this slower natural increase, Colfax County experienced net in-migration during the 1970s and, more significantly, during the 1990s. These migration gains helped offset the reduced rate of natural increase and contributed to the county's population growth between 1970 and 2000. In contrast, substantial net

Figure 3.6 – Components of Change



	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Natural Change	64	107	127	127	131	124	36	36	105	102	92
Net Migration	-169	115	-59	-114	-155	-116	-162	-55	-171	32	5
Total Change	-99	211	51	13	-26	14	-37	-22	-75	140	97

SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU, AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 2009-2013 TO 2019-2023.

outmigration during the 1950s, 1960s, 1980s, 2000s, and 2010s tempered population growth and contributed to periods of decline or stagnation.

The University of Nebraska-Omaha Center for Public Affairs Research (the State Data Center) develops official population projections for Nebraska counties, based on trends with both natural change and migration rates. The most recent report, composed after the release of the US Census 2020 complete count, projects Colfax County's population will continue to increase, to:

- 10,368 by 2030,
- 10,344 by 2040,
- 10,410 by 2050.

Trend Line Analysis

Trend Line Analysis is a process of projecting future population based upon the rate of change during a specified period of time. For this analysis, several different local population trend lines were reviewed, including 2010 to 2020, 2000 to 2020, 1990 to 2020, and 1970 to 2020. Results for Colfax County are shown in the side bar.

For the purposes of this plan, three population projections were selected to illustrate growth scenarios (Figure 3.7).

LOW: The State Data Center was selected for the Low Series and may be considered a worst-case scenario, serving as a baseline for planning purposes.

MEDIUM: The 20-year trend serves as the Medium Series.

HIGH: The 30-year trend was selected as the High Series. This is an optimistic scenario which can also serve as a goal—to continue recent trends moderating historical contraction of population.

TREND LINE ANALYSIS

10-Year Trend

Year	Population
2020	10,582
2030	10,649
2040	10,717
2050	10,786

20-Year Trend

Year	Population
2020	10,582
2030	10,653
2040	10,725
2050	10,797

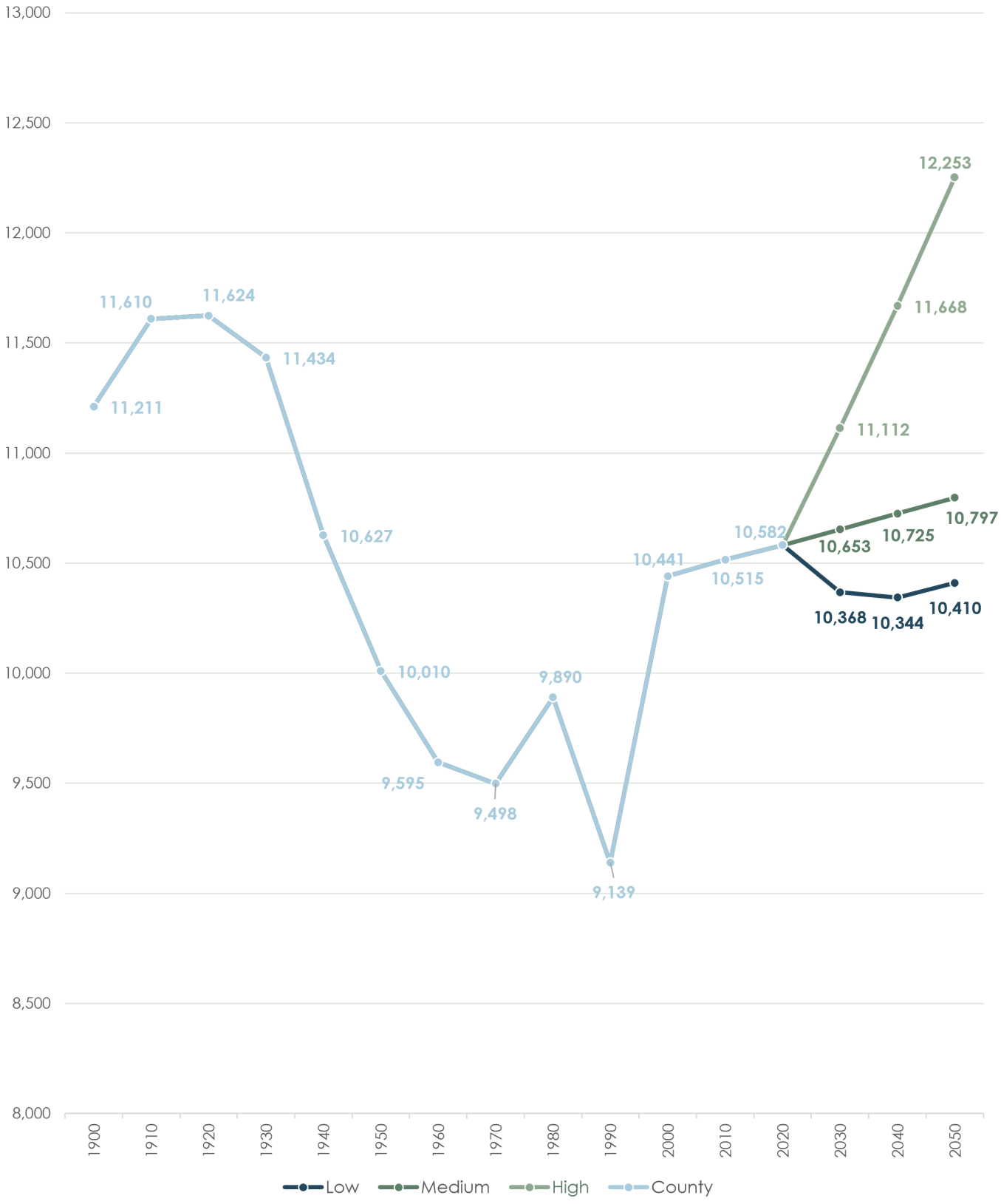
30-Year Trend

Year	Population
2020	10,582
2030	11,112
2040	11,668
2050	12,253

50-Year Trend

Year	Population
2020	10,582
2030	10,813
2040	11,049
2050	11,291

Figure 3.7 – Population and Projections



SOURCES: NEBRASKA STATE DATA CENTER, CENTER FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS RESEARCH, UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA, US CENSUS BUREAU , 1900 - 2020, MARVIN PLANNING CONSULTANTS



CHAPTER 4 Housing

INTRODUCTION

The housing profile presents data about current and historic housing conditions, while identifying potential needs including safe, decent, sanitary, and affordable housing for every family and individual residing within the county. Community members continually remark on the importance of affordable housing in keeping and attracting residents, in particular young families with school age children.

Projecting future housing needs requires consideration of factors such as population change, household income, employment rates, land use patterns, and residents' expectations. Although most housing is provided in municipalities, this information helps decisionmakers develop policies designed to ensure housing needs are met for Colfax County residents.

HOUSEHOLD CHARACTER

The US Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) reported the total number of households in Colfax County increased by approximately 1.0% between the surveys of 2010-2014 and 2020-2024 (Table 4.1). This includes all the municipalities and the unincorporated areas of the county. It should be noted the ACS is a rolling survey used to estimate totals and is subject to margins of error which are more pronounced for smaller communities.

Between 2014 and 2024, Colfax County's population increased by 129 residents (1.2%), while the number of households increased by 37 households (1.0%). The similar rates of growth indicate that household formation generally kept pace with overall population growth during the decade.

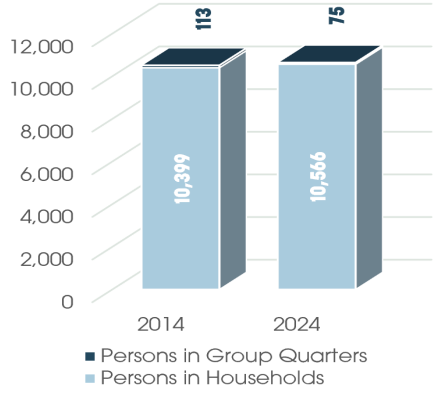
Between 2014 and 2024, the share of Colfax County residents under age 18 increased from 29.0% to 30.6%, while the share of residents 65 years and over increased slightly from 13.2% to 13.8%. These changes indicate modest growth in both the county's youth and

Table 4.1 – County Households

	2014	2024	% Change
Average Household Size	2.8	2.9	0.7%
Married-Couple Household	2,065	1,918	-7.1%
Householder Living Alone	890	700	-21.3%
Households with One or More Under 18 Years	1,514	1,555	2.7%
Households with One or More 65 Years & Over	950	1,068	12.4%
Householder Living Alone, 65 Years & Over	457	461	0.9%
Total Households	3,670	3,707	1.0%

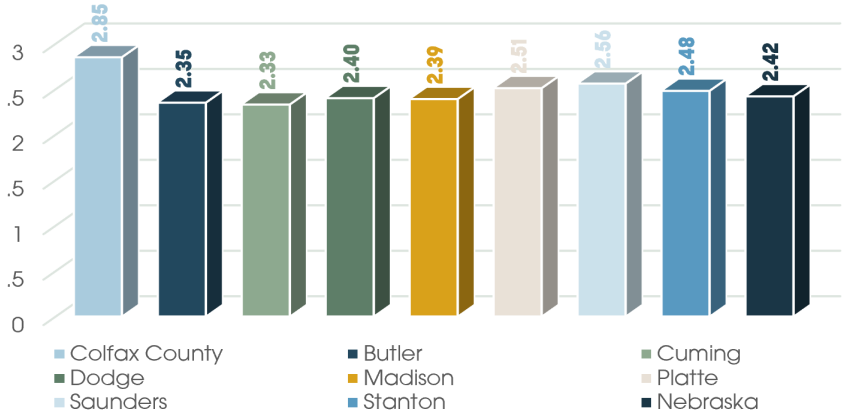
SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU, AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 2010-2014 TO 2020-2024.

Figure 4.1 – Household Populations



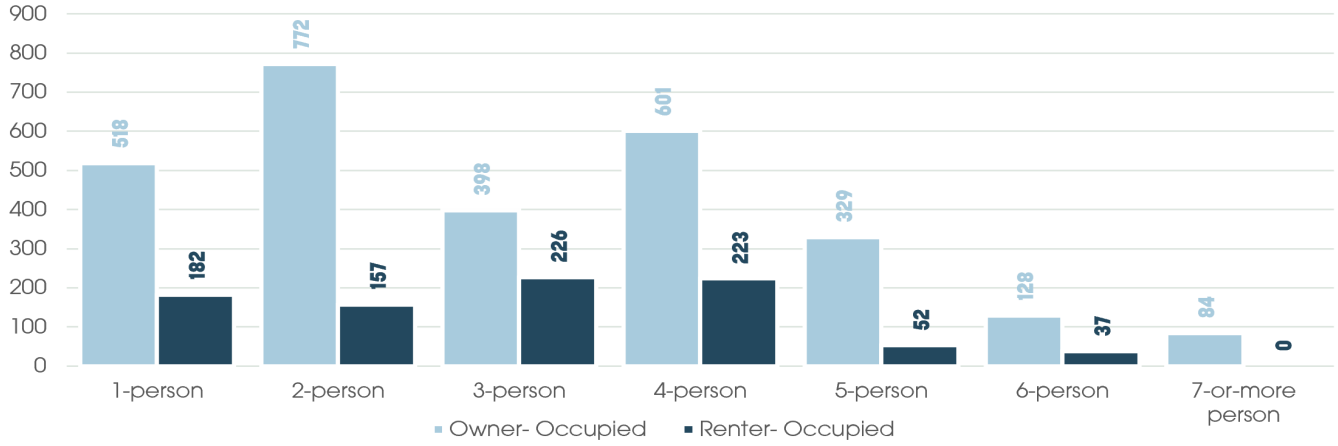
SOURCE: ACS, 2010-2014 AND 2020-2024.

Figure 4.2 – Average Household Size



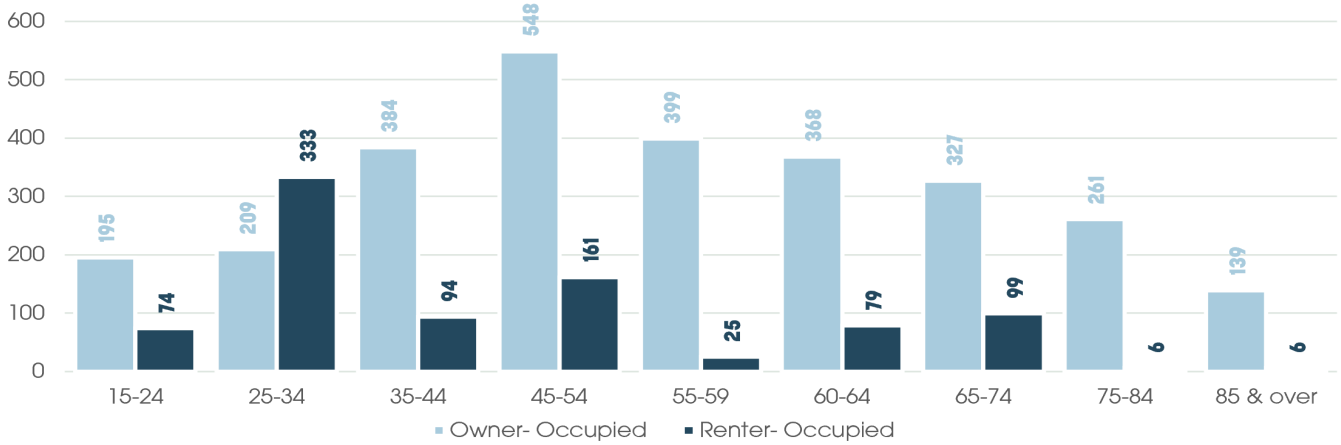
SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU, AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 2020-2024.

Figure 4.3 – Households by Household Size



SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU, AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 2020-2024.

Figure 4.4 – Households by Householder Age



SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU, AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 2020-2024.

Table 4.2 – Housing Units

	2010	2020	% Change
Clarkson	342	309	-9.6%
Howells	290	273	-5.9%
Leigh	216	206	-4.6%
Richland	43	41	-4.7%
Rogers	40	34	-15.0%
Schulyer	1,972	2,032	3.0%
Cities and Villages	2,903	2,895	-0.3%
Unincorporated Area	1,194	1,081	-9.5%
County	4,097	3,976	-3.0%

SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU, DECENNIAL CENSUS, 2010 AND 2020.

senior populations, contributing to a higher dependency ratio and increased demand for services that support children, families, and older adults.

HOUSEHOLDS

The vast majority of Colfax County residents live in traditional households rather than group quarters. In 2014, 10,399 residents lived in households compared to 113 in group quarters. By 2024, 10,566 residents lived in households while the group quarters population declined to 75 residents, indicating that nearly all population growth occurred within households (Figure 4.1). Group quarters include such places as residential treatment centers, skilled nursing facilities, or group homes, among other places.

Figure 4.2 shows the average household size in the region. The trend nationally has been towards a declining household size. In 2024, Colfax County averaged 2.85 persons per household, compared to 2.42 persons per household statewide. The county's average household size is substantially higher than Nebraska's and is the largest among surrounding counties, reflecting a greater prevalence of larger households and families.

The most common owner-occupied household type in Colfax County is two-person households (772), followed by four-person households (601) and one-person households (518). In contrast, three-person renter-occupied households are the most common (226), followed closely by four-person households (223) and one-person households (182). Overall, owner-occupied households tend to have more two-person households, while renter-occupied households are more evenly distributed among one-, three-, and four-person households (Figure 4.3).

The largest cohort of homeowners in Colfax County is 45 to 54 years of age, with 548 owner-occupied households. In contrast, the largest cohort of renters is 25 to 34 years of age, with 333 renter-occupied households. Overall, homeownership is more common among middle-aged residents, while renting is most prevalent among younger adults (Figure 4.4).

HOUSING STOCK

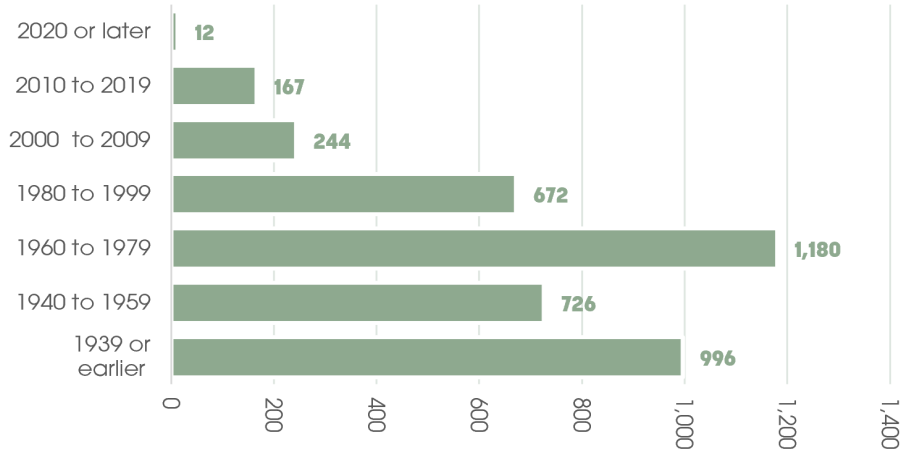
An analysis of the housing stock can reveal details about trends in population and economic conditions. Examining the housing stock is also important to understand the overall quality of housing in the county.

Between 2010 and 2020, Colfax County's total housing inventory declined from 4,097 to 3,976 units, a decrease of 121 units (3.0%). Overall, incorporated communities remained relatively stable, with the combined number of housing units in the county's cities and villages declining by just eight units (0.3%). Schuyler was the only municipality to experience growth, adding 60 housing units (3.0%), while Clarkson (-9.6%), Howells (-5.9%), Leigh (-4.6%), Richland (-4.7%), and Rogers (-15.0%) all experienced modest declines. The most significant reduction occurred in the unincorporated area, where the housing inventory decreased from 1,194 to 1,081 units, a loss of 113 units (9.5%). These trends indicate that nearly all of the county's housing growth during the decade occurred in Schuyler, while rural areas and the smaller communities experienced little growth or gradual declines in housing stock (Table 4.2).

It should be noted the ACS surveys for 2010-2014 reported 4,114 housing units in Colfax County compared to 4,097 in the 2010 decennial Census, and the ACS surveys for 2020-2024 reported there were 3,976 housing units compared to 4,224 in the 2020 decennial Census. The difference in data sets is that the decennial count is conducted at a single point in time (April 1), while ACS calculates a rolling five-year average which remains up to date between decennial census counts. The potential discrepancy emphasizes the importance of working with the Census Bureau to identify every habitable dwelling unit in Colfax County in preparation for the next decennial count.

The ACS also reports on types of housing units. Single-unit detached homes remain the dominant housing type in Colfax County, accounting for 82.0% of all housing units in 2024, despite a slight decline since 2014. The county experienced notable increases in two-unit structures, 10- to 19-unit buildings, and mobile homes, while most other multifamily housing

Figure 4.5 – Age of Existing Housing Stock



SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU, AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 2020-2024.

types declined. Mobile homes now account for 10.9% of the county's housing stock, reflecting their continued importance in providing affordable housing options.

Age of Housing Units

Colfax County's housing stock is aging. According to the 2024 American Community Survey, 996 housing units in Colfax County were constructed prior to 1940, representing a significant portion of the county's older housing stock and reflecting the area's long history of settlement and development (Figure 4.5). This statistic is countywide, including each community, and counts older well-kept homes as well as homes likely in need of repair or rehabilitation.

Most housing in Colfax County was constructed between 1960 and 1979, accounting for 1,180 housing units, followed by 996 units built prior to 1940. Construction activity declined after 1980, with relatively few homes built since 2000, including just 12 housing units constructed in or after 2020. This pattern indicates that much of the county's housing stock is several decades old, with limited recent residential development.

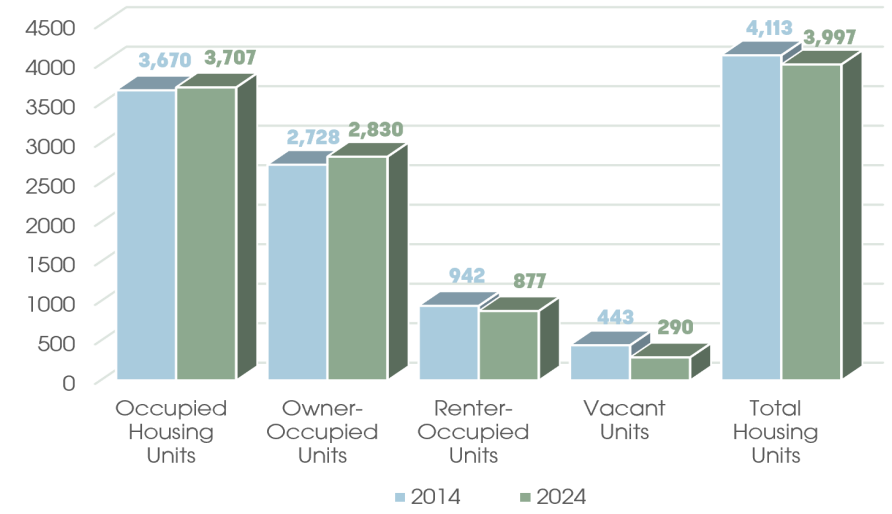
Due to the age of homes in the county, there may be a need for home improvement assistance. An example would be a weatherization program to bring older homes up to current energy efficiency standards.

Occupied vs. Vacant Units

Between 2014 and 2024, the number of owner-occupied housing units increased from 2,728 to 2,830, while renter-occupied units declined from 942 to 877. Although the total number of housing units decreased slightly, the number of occupied housing units increased and vacant units declined from 443 to 290, indicating improved occupancy and a shift toward homeownership (Figure 4.6).

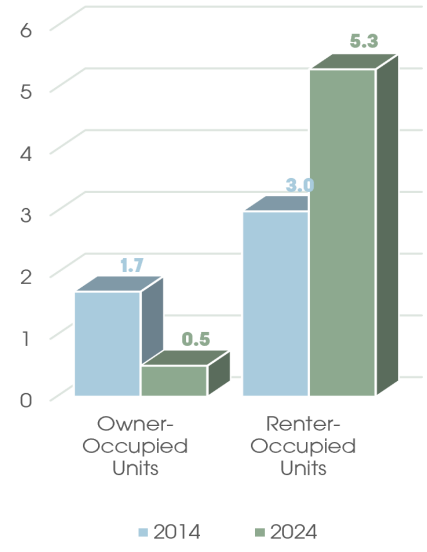
Vacancy rates for both owner-occupied and renter-occupied housing changed between 2013 and 2023. The owner-occupied vacancy rate declined from 1.7% to 0.5%, indicating a tighter homeownership market. In contrast, the renter-occupied vacancy rate increased from

Figure 4.6 – Occupied vs. Vacant Housing Units



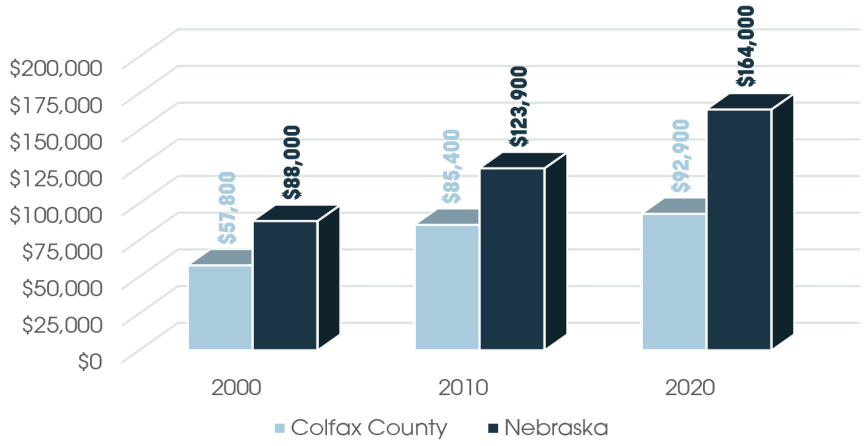
SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU, AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 2010-2014 AND 2020-2024.

Figure 4.7 – Vacancy Rates



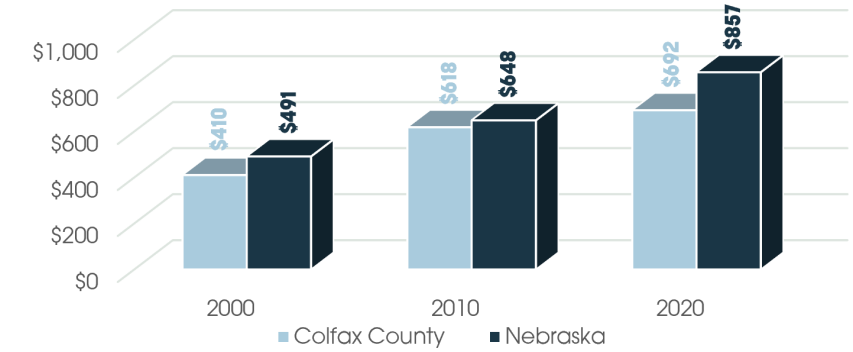
SOURCE: ACS 2010-2014 AND 2020-2024.

Figure 4.8 – Median Home Value



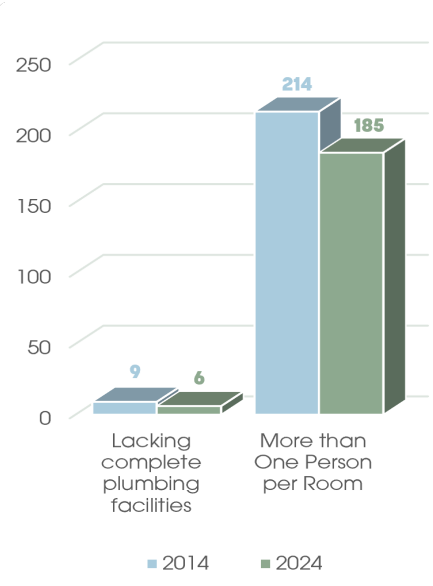
SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU, DECENNIAL CENSUS, 2000, 2010 AND 2020.

Figure 4.9 – Median Gross Rent



SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU, DECENNIAL CENSUS, 2000, 2010 AND 2020.

Figure 4.10 – Substandard Units



SOURCE: ACS 2010-2014 AND 2020-2024.

3.0% to 5.3%, suggesting greater availability of rental housing over the same period (Figure 4.7). The reasons reported to ACS for why housing was vacant included for seasonal/occasional use, for rent, sold (not occupied), for sale, or "other vacant" for which no reason could be determined by survey takers.

Median Value of Owner-Occupied Units

Colfax County's median home value increased from $57,800 in 2000 to $92,900 in 2020, reflecting steady appreciation over the two-decade period. Despite this growth, the county's median home value remained well below the Nebraska median, which increased from $88,000 in 2000 to $164,000 in 2020, indicating that housing in Colfax County continues to be more affordable than the statewide average (Figure 4.8).

Median Gross Rent

Colfax County's median gross rent increased from $410 in 2000 to $691 in 2020, reflecting a 68.5% increase over the two-decade period. Although rents increased steadily, they remained below the Nebraska median, which rose from $491 to $857 during the same period. Median gross rent also increased at a slower rate than inflation, as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI), indicating that rental housing in Colfax County has remained relatively affordable compared to statewide trends (Figure 4.9).

Substandard Housing

According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) guidelines, housing units lacking complete plumbing or experiencing overcrowding are considered substandard housing units. HUD defines a complete plumbing facility as hot and cold-piped water, a bathtub or shower, and a flush toilet; overcrowding is more than one person per room. In addition, anytime there is more than one person per room, the housing unit is considered overcrowded, thus substandard.

Between 2014 and 2024, the number of substandard housing units in Colfax County declined. Housing units lacking complete plumbing facilities decreased from 9 to 6, while overcrowded housing units with more than one person per room declined from 214 to 185. These trends indicate modest improvements in overall housing quality and living conditions across the county (Figure 4.10). These data fail to consider housing units which met both criteria and may be counted twice. Even so, it should not be assumed the number of substandard housing units are overestimated. Housing units containing major

defects requiring rehabilitation or upgrades to meet building, electrical, or plumbing codes should also be included in an analysis of substandard housing.

A comprehensive assessment of the entire housing stock should be completed every five years to determine and identify the housing units which would benefit from rehabilitation or modernization work. This process will help ensure a county maintains a high quality of life for its residents through protecting the quality and quantity of its housing stock.

HOUSING CONCERNS

HOUSING TYPES

Zoning and subdivision regulations should be reviewed to ensure county homeowners have a variety of housing options available in appropriate locations. While most housing is located in municipalities with urban services, it is important for local leaders to work county-wide to facilitate safe and attainable housing for all residents.

Missing Middle Housing

"Missing middle" housing types provide diverse housing options, such as duplexes, fourplexes, cottage courts, and multiplexes. These house-scale buildings fit seamlessly into existing residential neighborhoods. They provide solutions along a spectrum of affordability to address the mismatch between the available US housing stock and shifting demographics.

Many "missing middle" housing types are more suited to cities and villages, as they support walkability, locally-serving retail, and public transportation options. Some missing middle housing types, in particular duplex or single-family attached housing units, would help meet needs on many family farms, and ease provision of community water and sewer treatment in unincorporated areas.

SOURCE: MISSINGMIDDLEHOUSING.COM

Manufactured & Modular Homes

Prefabricated or manufactured homes are built off-site, typically in an enclosed factory, and transported as single or multiple units to the home site. The term "manufactured home" is defined by federal law (24 CFR 3280) as built under the federal building code administered by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development—the HUD Code—which went into effect in 1976. The term "mobile home" refers to older homes, built prior to 1976 which do not meet the HUD Code. "Modular homes" are also built off-site, typically to meet the International Residential Code (IRC) the same as a site-built home.

As noted in APA's Zoning Practice (April 2024):

> Despite the dramatic improvement in quality of construction after National Manufactured Housing Construction and Safety Standards Act of 1974 and the Manufactured Housing Improvement Act of 2000, and the more recent implementation of state energy codes mandating increased energy efficiency, the "mobile" home continues to be treated as inferior housing at best, and too often undesirable housing, to be heavily restricted if not completely zoned out of communities.

Prefabricated housing is often more affordable than site-built housing, and factory conditions may result in higher-quality as construction is sheltered from bad weather. Manufactured and modular homes are often placed on a basement or permanent foundation and should be treated similarly to standard site-built construction in zoning and subdivision regulations.

SOURCE: HUD.GOV/OMHP

Long-Term Care Facilities

As our residents get older, their needs for housing and health care change. The range of housing options and varying levels of care offered within senior communities help ensure residents are not forced to leave the community. (See also CHAPTER 6.)

SOURCE: URMC.ROCHESTER.EDU/SENIOR-HEALTH/LONG-TERM-CARE

HOUSING RESOURCES

SCHUYLER HOUSING STUDY

The City of Schuyler completed a Housing Study in January 2018, prepared by JEO Consulting Group, Inc. with funding assistance from the Nebraska Investment Finance Authority. The study concluded that Schuyler's population growth had outpaced residential construction, resulting in a need for additional housing across multiple price points and housing types. It also found that much of the existing housing stock was built before 1940, making rehabilitation and reinvestment in older neighborhoods an important strategy for maintaining affordable housing. Recommendations included encouraging multi-family and higher-density residential development, using incentives such as Tax Increment Financing (TIF), updating zoning regulations to support a wider variety of housing, promoting housing rehabilitation, reducing floodplain-related barriers to investment, and periodically updating the housing study to reflect changing market conditions.

SOURCE: SCHUYLERNEBRASKA.NET

SCHUYLER HOUSING AUTHORITY

The Schuyler Housing Authority provides affordable housing opportunities for eligible low-income residents in Schuyler. The Housing Authority manages public housing and administers housing assistance programs that support seniors, families, and individuals with disabilities by providing access to safe, decent, and affordable housing within the community.

SOURCE: SCHUYLERHA.COM

CLARKSON HOUSING AUTHORITY

The Clarkson Housing Authority provides affordable public housing for eligible low-income residents in the City of Clarkson. The Housing Authority manages rental housing and administers housing assistance programs to help provide safe, decent, and affordable housing for qualifying households, including seniors, families, and individuals with disabilities.

SOURCE: CLARKSONHA.COM

LAND TRUSTS

A community land trust (CLT) is a nonprofit corporation that owns land on behalf of a community. CLTs use public and private investment funds to acquire land. They hold land for the benefit of the community. In some places, CLTs have developed and maintained ownership of agricultural sites or commercial spaces for needed community services; in others, CLTs have created affordable residential properties.

In general, land banks are public authorities or non-profit organizations created to acquire, hold, manage, and sometimes redevelop property in order to return these properties to productive use to meet community goals, such as increasing affordable housing or stabilizing property values.

SOURCE: NHC.ORG/POLICY-GUIDE/LAND-BASED-SOLUTIONS/LAND-BANKS-AND-COMMUNITY-LAND-TRUSTS

CENTRAL NEBRASKA COMMUNITY ACTION PARTNERSHIP

Central Nebraska Community Action Partnership (CNCAP) serves Colfax County as part of a 21-county service area across central Nebraska. CNCAP's mission is to partner with individuals and families to gain economic stability and encourage independence through community-based solutions, providing programs and services that improve housing, education, employment, and overall quality of life for residents.

CNCAP is governed by a board of directors, which is a requirement for all Community Action Agencies nationwide. The organization's tripartite structure consists of one third of the board representing the low-income community (consumer sector), one third representing local elected officials (public sector), and one third representing the general community (private sector). Central Nebraska Community Action Partnership receives funding through the federal Community Services Block Grant to serve twenty-one Nebraska counties.

The main office is located at 626 N Street, Loup City, Nebraska 68853. They offer a variety of housing services in Colfax County, including:

- Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) Program
- Weatherization Assistance
- Owner-Occupied Housing Rehabilitation
- Emergency Housing Assistance
- Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing
- Stability Assistance
- Affordable Rental Housing
- Housing Counseling and Resource Referrals

CNCAP owns and operates affordable rental housing throughout its service area, including single-family homes, duplexes, triplexes, and apartment buildings. Properties include six three-bedroom homes in Loup City, five three-bedroom homes in Central City, a triplex in Ainsworth with one three-bedroom, one two-bedroom, and one studio unit, a duplex in Greeley with two three-bedroom units, four three-bedroom homes in O'Neill, three three-bedroom homes in Cairo, and an eight-unit apartment building in Alda consisting of four three-bedroom and four two-bedroom rental units.

SOURCE: CENTRALNEBRASKACAP.COM



MODULAR/MANUFACTURED HOUSING EXAMPLE
SOURCE: US CENCUS BUREAU, 1960-2020

NORTHEAST NEBRASKA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Northeast Nebraska Economic Development District (NENEDD) serves Colfax County by promoting economic growth and improving the quality of life throughout northeast Nebraska. NENEDD provides a variety of services, including economic and community development planning, grant writing and administration, revolving loan funds for businesses, housing rehabilitation programs, technical assistance, and support for infrastructure, downtown revitalization, and workforce development projects (see CHAPTER 5.)

SOURCE: NENEDD.ORG

HOUSING GOALS & ACTIONS

GOAL 4.1

A variety of housing is available throughout the county.

Actions

4.1.1 Development projects shall follow the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

4.1.2 Target redevelopment strategies toward vacant and abandoned properties.

4.1.3 Consider participation in an area-wide code enforcement program.

4.1.4 Promote the private renovation of vacant homes.

4.1.5 Support all municipalities in accommodating new housing.

4.1.6 Direct residential development away from prime farmland and environmentally sensitive areas.

4.1.7 Regularly review zoning codes to accommodate changing housing needs.

4.1.8 Support the development and expansion of senior housing options, assisted living, and elder care facilities to allow residents to age in place within their communities.

GOAL 4.2

Colfax County residents in need have access to affordable and attainable housing.

Actions

4.2.1 Colfax County supports affirmatively furthering fair housing throughout the county.

4.2.2 Prioritize public funding for projects incorporating affordable, missing middle and/or workforce housing.

4.2.3 Work with affordable housing developers to create additional rental housing for very-low income families.

4.2.4 Investigate ways the County could partner with non-profits or public agencies to better support workforce housing.

4.2.5 Explore creating local Community Land Trusts.

4.2.6 Work with housing advocates to track data required for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding and other programs for elimination of slum and blight and other community development needs.

4.2.7 Explore financial incentives, low-cost financing partnerships, or local grant programs to assist young families and first-time homebuyers with housing costs.



CHAPTER 5 Economic Development

ECONOMIC PROFILE

Economic Development is a process setting the groundwork for future prosperity. It is more than a jobs program; it is an investment in growing the economy and enhancing the prosperity and quality of life for all residents. Economic development is a process to assist in the retention and expansion of existing businesses, to encourage new entrepreneurs, and to prepare to attract new employers.

In this section, income and employment data and trends were reviewed for Colfax County and Nebraska statewide. Data sources include the US Census Bureau, US Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), and US Bureau of Labor Statistics.

INCOME STATISTICS

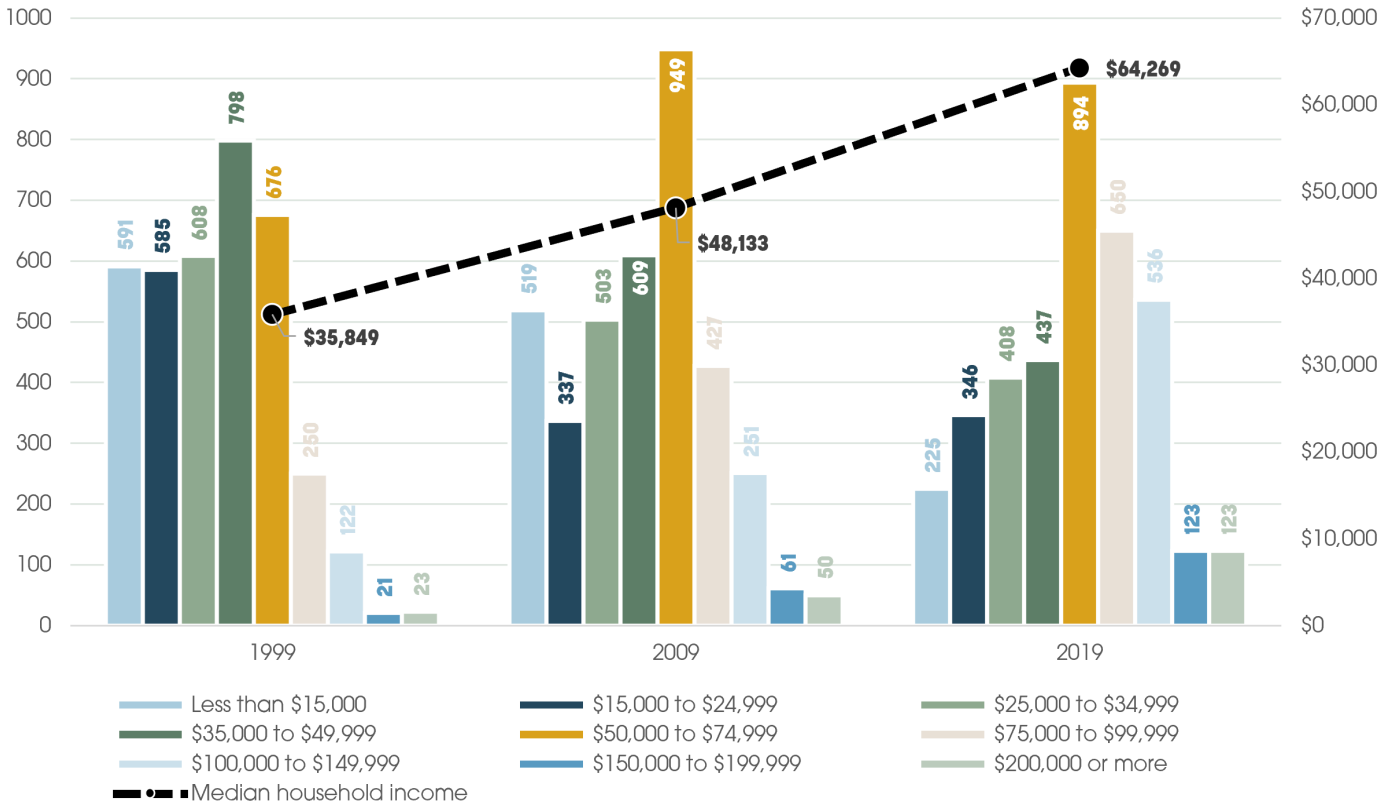
Income statistics indicate the earning power of residents. The data below show personal and household income levels for Colfax County in comparison to the state. These data were reviewed to determine whether households experienced increases in income at a rate comparable to the state of Nebraska and the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

Figure 5.1 shows the number of Colfax County households in different income ranges in 1999, 2009, and 2019, according to US Census surveys. The most common household income range in Colfax County has increased over time, reflecting rising incomes and inflation. In 1999, the largest share of households earned $35,000 to $49,999. By 2009 and 2019, the most common income range shifted to $50,000 to $74,999, while the county's median household income increased from $35,849 in 1999 to $64,269 in 2019. This trend suggests that household incomes have generally increased over time, although part of this growth reflects inflation and rising wages.

Colfax County's median household income has remained below the Nebraska median over the past two decades but has steadily increased. The county's median household income rose from $35,849 in 1999 to $48,133 in 2009 and $64,269 in 2019. During the same period, Nebraska's median household income increased from $39,250 to $49,342 and $63,015, respectively. By 2019, Colfax County's median household income had slightly surpassed the statewide median, reflecting strong income growth within the county.

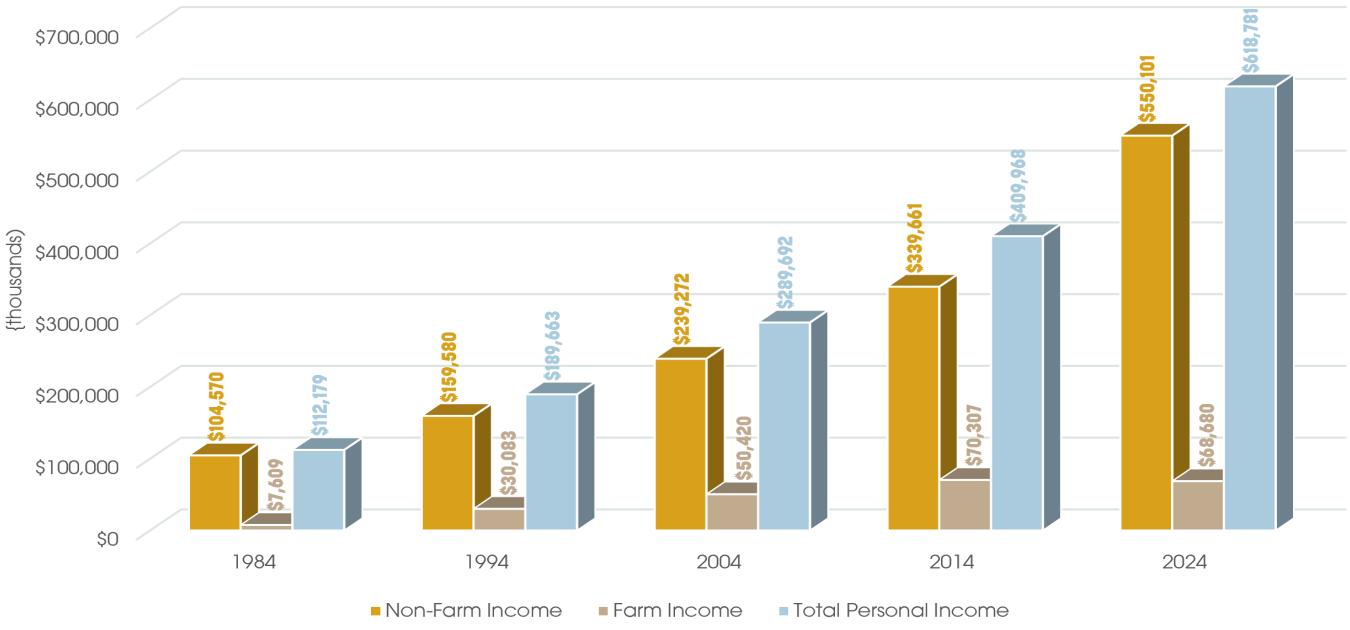
Colfax County's median household income increased from $35,849 in 1999 to $64,269 in 2019, an increase of approximately 79% over the 20-year period. While part of this increase reflects inflation, median household income grew at a rate that generally kept pace with or slightly exceeded the increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI), indicating modest gains in purchasing power for many households.

Figure 5.1 – Household Income



SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU, 2000, AND AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY 2006-2010 AND 2016-2020.

Figure 5.2 – Income by Source



SOURCE: BEA, REGIONAL ECONOMIC INFORMATION SYSTEM, 1984 TO 2024.

INCOME BY SOURCE

There are different primary sources of personal income, with the two primary categories being farm and non-farm income (Figure 5.2). Changes in these statistics can be compared to the CPI, to determine if increases are keeping pace with inflation. Between 1980 and 2020, the CPI increased by 214%.

According to the US Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), Total Personal Income in Colfax County increased from $112,179 in 1984 to $618,781 in 2024 (Figure 5.2). This was an increase of approximately 451.6%.

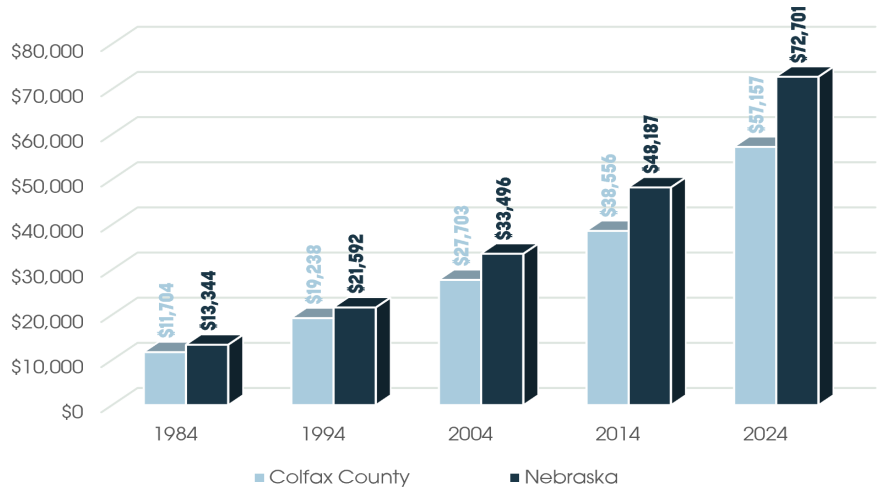
Non-farm and Farm Income

Colfax County's personal income has increased substantially over the past four decades. Between 1984 and 2024, non-farm income grew from $104.6 million to $550.1 million (426.1%), while farm income increased from $7.6 million to $68.7 million (802.6%). Although farm income experienced the largest percentage increase, non-farm income continues to account for the vast majority of personal income in the county. Both income sources increased at a rate well above inflation, as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI), indicating significant long-term growth in the county's economy.

Per Capita Income

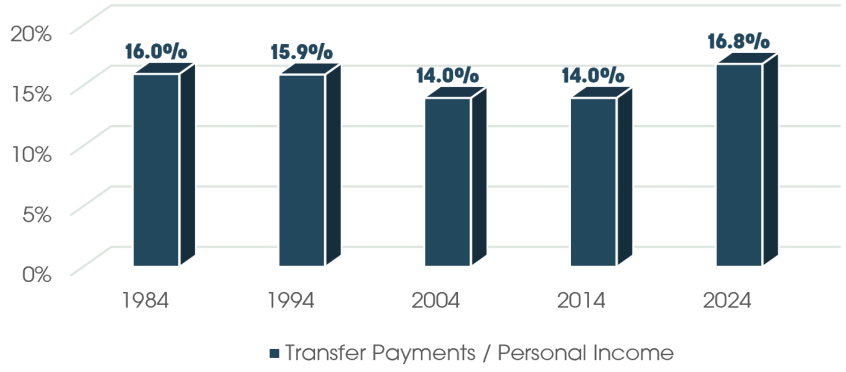
Per Capita Income is determined by dividing total personal income, earned by all residents in an area, by the total number of residents in that area. Colfax County's per capita income increased from $11,704 in 1984 to $57,157 in 2024, a 388.4% increase over the 40-year period. Although per capita income remained below the Nebraska average of $72,701 in 2024, it increased at a rate well above inflation, as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI), indicating substantial long-term growth in individual earnings.

Figure 5.3 – Per Capita Income



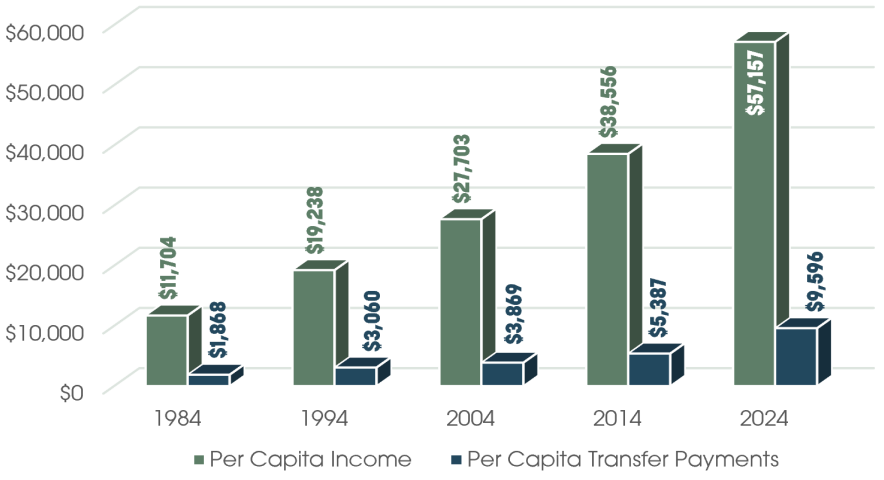
SOURCE: BEA, REGIONAL ECONOMIC INFORMATION SYSTEM, 1984 TO 2024.

Figure 5.4 – Tranfer Payments Share of Income



SOURCE: BEA, REGIONAL ECONOMIC INFORMATION SYSTEM, 1984 TO 2024.

Figure 5.5 – Personal Income and Transfer Payments



SOURCE: BEA, REGIONAL ECONOMIC INFORMATION SYSTEM, 1984 TO 2024.

TRANSFER PAYMENTS

Government transfer payments span a wide range of uses and organizations. The funds for these payments also come from many different sources. However, the most common form of transfer payment is retirement and disability insurance benefits. These payments are made to those who qualify for OASDI benefits, railroad retirement and disability benefits, workers compensation programs and others.

Medical benefits are the second most common form of transfer payments. These types of benefits are government payments made through intermediaries to beneficiaries of medical care. Specifically, medical benefits come from either public assistance medical care or military medical insurance benefits. Public assistance is received by low-income individuals and payments come through the federally assisted, state-run Medicaid program and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). Military insurance is provided to military personnel through the TriCare Management Program.

Unemployment insurance is perhaps the third most common type of government transfer payments. This insurance includes state unemployment, federal unemployment and other organizations of unemployment compensation. Veterans' benefits are also a fairly common form of transfer payment. Transfer payments which surround these types of benefits are made up of veterans' pension and disability benefits, veterans' life insurance benefits and other types of veterans assistance.

Finally, education and training assistance is considered a type of government transfer payment. This government assistance consists of higher education student assistance, interest payments on student loans and state educational assistance. The combination of these benefits help individuals at all levels of education afford school. They also help people from all types of backgrounds. From Individuals who may only need a loan to people who need more assistance, all people can be helped with these transfer payments.

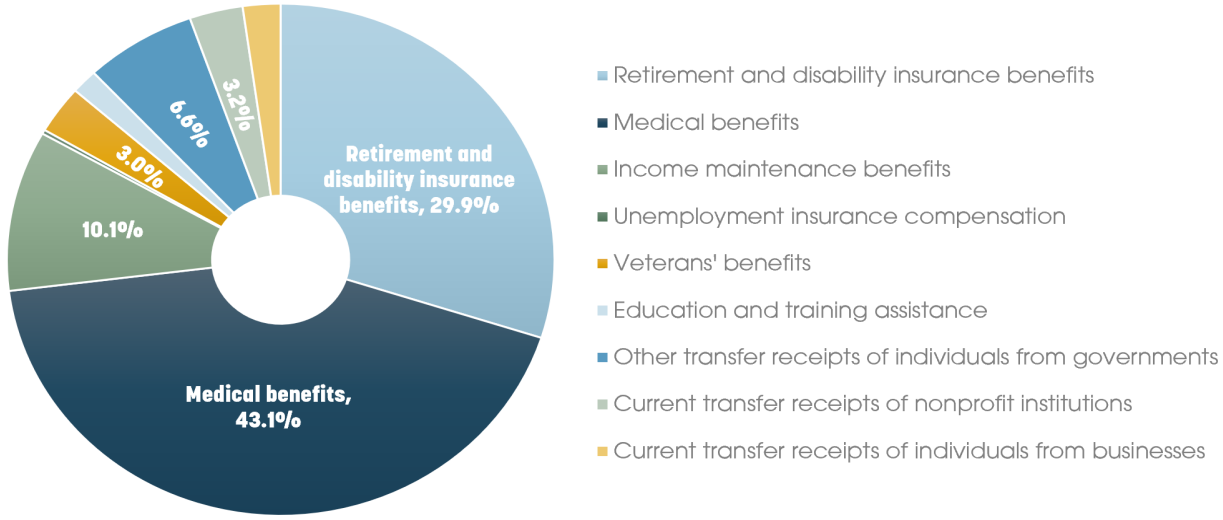
TRANSFER PAYMENTS

Another income source is transfer payments, which are a component of non-farm income. Transfer payments as a share of personal income in Colfax County remained relatively stable over the past four decades. The share declined from 16.0% in 1984 to 14.0% in both 2004 and 2014 before increasing to 16.8% in 2024. This indicates that transfer payments include programs such as Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid (Figure 5.4). Per capita transfer payments in Colfax County increased from $1,868 in 1984 to $9,596 in 2024, reflecting steady growth over the past four decades. This increase is largely attributable to inflation, population aging, and increased participation in programs such as Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, and other government assistance programs. Despite this growth, transfer payments continue to represent a relatively consistent share of total personal income in the county (Figure 5.5).

As seen in Figure 5.6, the majority of transfer payments are identified as "Retirement and other" benefits, which include retirement and disability insurance benefits, medical benefits, veterans' benefits, education and training assistance, and other transfer receipts of individuals and nonprofit institutions. This indicates a major impact on the aging population, providing an opportunity for economic development efforts which promote amenities for retiree retention and attraction. Efforts should also be balanced with youth retention and in-migration.

The category "Income Maintenance Benefits" consists largely of Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits, Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), Additional Child Tax Credit, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, family

Figure 5.6 – Transfer Payments by Source



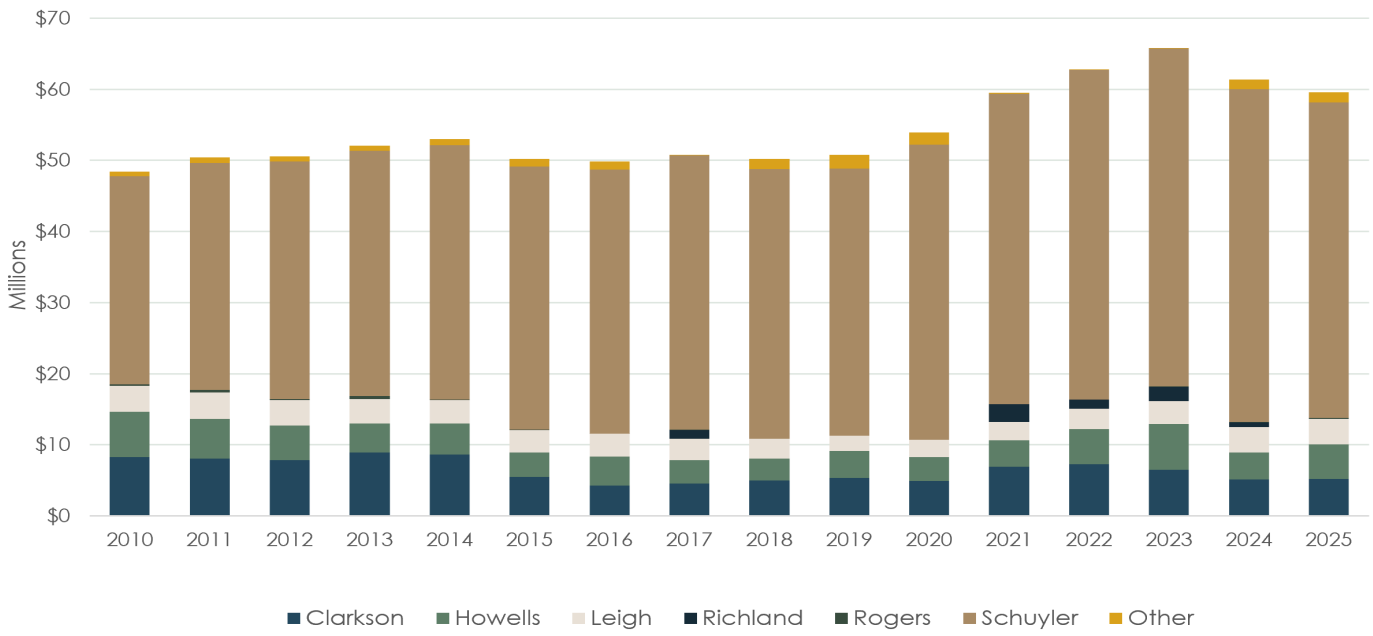
SOURCE: BEA, REGIONAL ECONOMIC INFORMATION SYSTEM, 2022.

Table 5.1 – Transfer Payments

	1982	1992	2002	2012	2022	% Change	Change per Year
Personal Current Transfer Receipts	$15,399	$25,985	$41,235	$55,865	$94,755	515.3%	12.9%
Current Transfer Receipts of Individuals from Governments	$14,652	$25,057	$39,391	$53,716	$89,659	511.9%	12.8%
Retirement and Disability Insurance Benefits	$9,769	$14,878	$16,833	$19,384	$28,369	190.4%	4.8%
Social Security Benefits	$9,466	$14,605	$16,580	$19,191	$28,112	197.0%	4.9%
Excluding Social Security Benefits	$303	$273	$253	$193	$257	-15.2%	-0.4%
Medical Benefits	$3,185	$7,808	$17,666	$24,780	$40,850	1182.6%	29.6%
Medicare Benefits	$2,538	$6,057	$12,059	$16,138	$24,145	851.3%	21.3%
Public Assistance Medical Care Benefits	$622	$1,715	$5,578	$8,558	$16,623	2572.5%	64.3%
Military Medical Insurance Benefits	$25	$36	$29	$84	$82	228.0%	5.7%
Income Maintenance Benefits	$585	$1,237	$3,028	$6,199	$9,617	1543.9%	38.6%
Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Benefits	$159	$224	$368	$402	$531	234.0%	5.8%
Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)	$81	$442	$971	$1,971	$1,934	2287.7%	57.2%
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)	$89	$207	$225	$1,191	$1,555	1647.2%	41.2%
Other Income Maintenance Benefits	$256	$364	$1,464	$2,635	$5,597	2086.3%	52.2%
Unemployment Insurance Compensation	$335	$164	$708	$1,114	$247	-26.3%	-0.7%
State Unemployment Insurance Compensation	$324	$164	$706	$1,085	$247	-24.8%	-0.6%
Excluding State Employment Insurance Compensation	$11	$0	$2	$29	$0	-100.0%	-2.5%
Veterans' Benefits	$560	$700	$683	$1,037	$2,872	412.9%	10.3%
Education and Training Assistance	$217	$257	$459	$814	$1,463	574.2%	14.4%
Other Transfer Receipts of Individuals from Governments	$1	$13	$14	$388	$6,241	624000.0%	15600.0%
Current Transfer Receipts of Nonprofit Institutions	$337	$403	$961	$1,324	$2,987	786.4%	19.7%
Current Transfer Receipts of Individuals from Businesses	$410	$442	$883	$825	$2,109	414.4%	10.4%

SOURCE: BEA, REGIONAL ECONOMIC INFORMATION SYSTEM, 1982 TO 2022.

Figure 5.7 – County and Municipal Net Taxable Sales



SOURCE: NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE, NON-MOTOR VEHICLE SALES TAX COLLECTIONS, 2010 TO 2025.

assistance, and other income maintenance benefits, including general assistance. Income maintenance benefits in Colfax County increased substantially over the past five decades, rising from $73,000 in 1969 to $9.6 million in 2022. Much of this long-term increase reflects inflation, population growth, and expanded public assistance programs. Unemployment insurance compensation generally remained a relatively small component of transfer payments but increased sharply during periods of economic downturn, peaking at $4.2 million in 2021 due to federal pandemic-related unemployment assistance before declining to $247,000 in 2022 as the economy recovered and temporary assistance programs ended. Public expenditures during the COVID pandemic likely influenced these transfer payments in 2020 and the following years.

SALES TAX

Increasing income tends to result in increasing retail sales, providing a base for employment and

Table 5.2 – County Employment

Industry	2012	2022	% Change
Farm Employment	685	704	2.8%
Non-Farm Employment	5,830	6,200	6.3%
Forestry and Fishing	(D)	(D)	-
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil & Gas Extraction	(D)	(D)	-
Utilities	1	(D)	-
Construction	(D)	(D)	-
Manufacturing	(D)	(D)	-
Wholesale Trade	370	411	11.1%
Retail Trade	424	428	0.9%
Transportation and Warehousing	354	(D)	-
Information	19	14	-26.3%
Finance and Insurance	194	249	28.4%
Real Estate	113	189	67.3%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	120	(D)	-
Management of Companies	9	(D)	-
Administrative/Support/Waste Management	96	188	95.8%
Educational Services	(D)	(D)	-
Health Care and Social Assistance	(D)	(D)	-
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	36	61	69.4%
Accommodation and Food Services	130	153	17.7%
Other Services (Except Government)	376	259	-31.1%
Government	737	778	5.6%
Total Employment	6,515	6,904	6.0%

SOURCE: BEA, REGIONAL ECONOMIC INFORMATION SYSTEM, 2012 TO 2022.

income for local residents. Retail sales also drive local sales and use tax receipts for municipalities and the State of Nebraska.

According to the Nebraska Department of Revenue, Net Taxable Sales in Colfax County have Net taxable sales in Colfax County generally increased between 2010 and 2025, despite year-to-year fluctuations. Countywide taxable sales grew from $48.4 million in 2010 to $59.6 million in 2025, an increase of 23.1% (Figure 5.7).

Net taxable sales trends varied among Colfax County's municipalities between 2010 and 2025. Schuyler, the county's primary commercial center, experienced strong long-term growth in taxable sales and continued to account for the majority of retail activity. Leigh remained relatively stable over the period, while Rogers experienced an overall decline. Unlike many communities across Nebraska that experienced a sharp decline in retail sales during the COVID-19 pandemic, Colfax County's municipalities generally maintained stable or increasing taxable sales, with Schuyler continuing to demonstrate strong retail performance throughout and following the pandemic period.

EMPLOYMENT

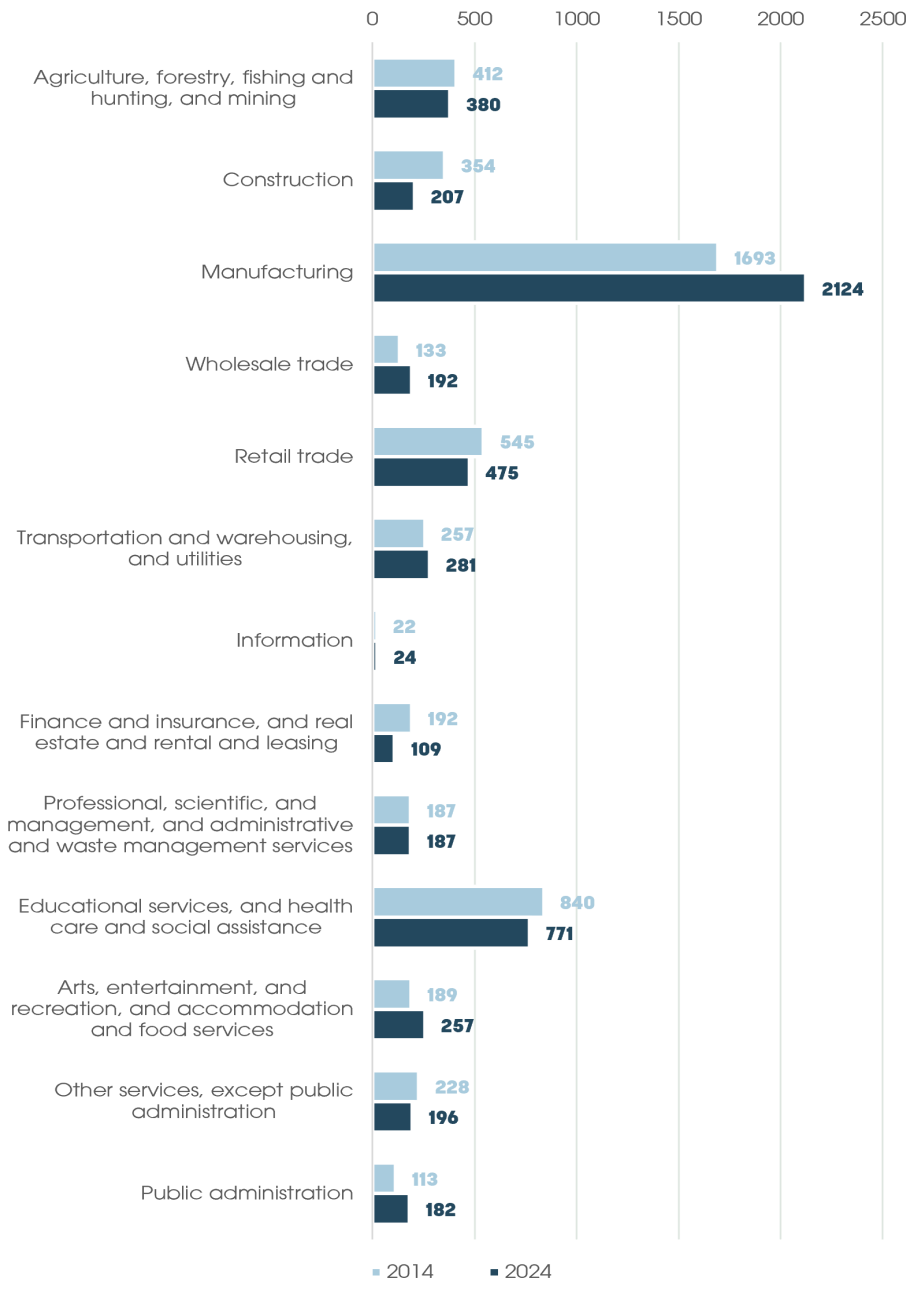
Employment data assists in understanding the key generators of income. This section provides data on the types of jobs in Colfax County and the type of employment and occupations of residents. Unfortunately, data for many employment sectors is not disclosed for small towns and rural areas.

INDUSTRY EMPLOYMENT

As shown in Table 5.2, total employment in Colfax County increased from 6,515 jobs in 2012 to 6,904 jobs in 2022, representing an increase of 389 jobs (6.0%), according to the US Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA). Non-farm employment accounts for the vast majority of jobs in Colfax County, while farm employment represents a relatively small share of the local workforce. Between 2012 and 2022, non-farm employment increased from 5,830 to 6,200 jobs (6.3%), compared to a modest increase in farm employment from 685 to 704 jobs (2.8%). Similar to Nebraska as a whole, Colfax County's economy is primarily supported by non-farm industries, although agriculture remains an important contributor to the county's economy and employment base.

Manufacturing remained the largest private-sector employer

Figure 5.8 – Residents' Employment by Industry



SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU, AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 2010-2014 AND 2020-2024.

in Colfax County in 2022, with 2,763 jobs, followed by Wholesale Trade (411 jobs) and Retail Trade (428 jobs). Over the 2012–2022 period, wholesale trade experienced moderate growth (11.1%), while retail trade remained relatively stable (0.9%). Other private industries showing notable growth included Real Estate (67.3%), Administrative and Support Services (95.8%), Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation (69.4%), and Finance and Insurance (28.4%), reflecting a gradually diversifying local economy.

Public sector employment in Colfax County remained relatively stable over the 2012–2022 period. Government employment declined slightly from 737 jobs in 2012 to 716 jobs in 2022, a decrease of 2.8%. Despite this modest decline, government continues to be one of the county's largest employment sectors, providing jobs in local government, public education, public safety, and other essential public services.

Outside of the county's largest employment sectors, several industries experienced notable changes between 2012 and 2022. Real Estate and Rental and Leasing employment increased 67.3%, while Finance and Insurance grew 28.4% and Wholesale Trade increased 11.1%. In contrast, Other Services (except Public Administration) declined 31.1%, Information decreased 26.3%, and Government employment declined 2.8%. These trends indicate modest diversification of the local economy while employment in several traditional service sectors declined.

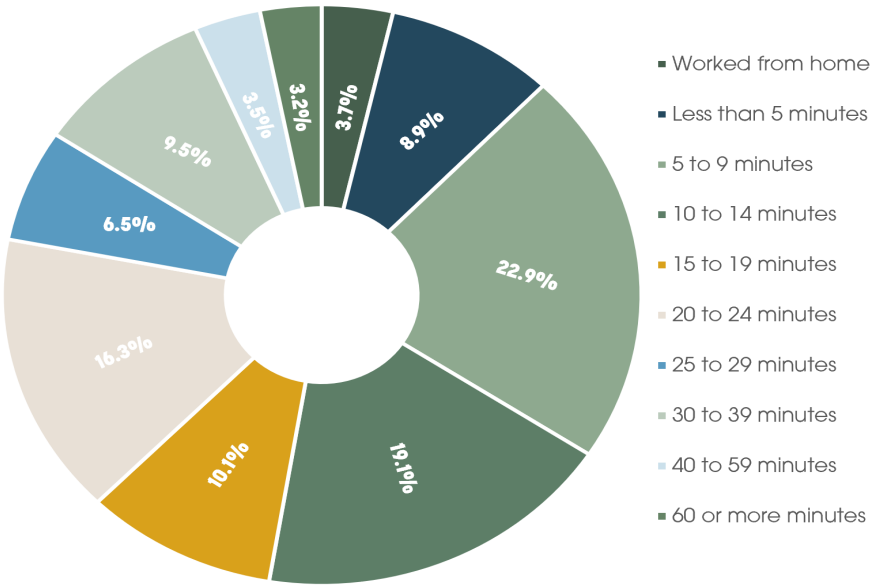
Building on a strong economic base, sectors of Service Occupations, Natural Resources, Construction, Maintenance and Production, Transportation, and Material Moving Occupations.

Table 5.3 – Labor Force and Unemployment Rate

	2014		2024	
COUNTY	LABOR FORCE	UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	LABOR FORCE	UNEMPLOYMENT RATE
Colfax County	5,411	3.0%	5,411	2.6%
Butler	4,849	2.9%	4,559	2.3%
Cuming	4,971	2.6%	5,118	2.1%
Dodge	19,304	3.6%	19,712	2.8%
Madison	19,572	2.9%	18,877	2.5%
Platte	17,391	2.9%	18,625	2.3%
Saunders	11,067	3.4%	12,634	2.2%
Stanton	3,591	2.8%	3,127	2.4%
Nebraska	1,016,558	3.2%	1,069,325	2.8%

SOURCE: BEA, REGIONAL ECONOMIC INFORMATION SYSTEM, 2014 TO 2024.

Figure 5.9 – Travel Time to Work



SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU, AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 2020-2024.

represented a greater share of local employment than would be expected in Nebraska. Large Location Quotients—comparing local to statewide employment in each industry—reflect local strength in these sectors.

Management, Business, Science, and Arts occupations represented the largest share of employment in both Nebraska and Colfax County. In Nebraska, these occupations accounted for 41.2% of total employment, compared to 32.3% in Colfax County. Conversely, Colfax County had a much higher concentration of Production, Transportation, and Material Moving occupations (24.3%) than the statewide average (14.2%), reflecting the county's strong manufacturing and agricultural processing industries.

Table 5.4 – Basic/Non-Basic Employment

COUNTY	MANAGEMENT, BUSINESS, SCIENCE & ARTS	SERVICE	SALES & OFFICE	NATURAL RESOURCES, CONSTRUCTION & MAINTENANCE	PRODUCTION, TRANSPORTATION & MATERIAL MOVING	BASE MULTIPLIER
Colfax County	32.3%	16.2%	15.8%	11.4%	24.3%	7.9
Butler	32.3%	16.2%	15.8%	11.4%	24.3%	7.9
Cuming	39.9%	14.6%	16.5%	11.8%	17.3%	19.6
Dodge	30.4%	15.8%	20.0%	12.2%	21.6%	9.3
Madison	31.9%	18.0%	18.5%	11.3%	20.3%	9.7
Platte	35.5%	12.7%	14.7%	12.4%	25.6%	7.1
Saunders	40.6%	15.2%	20.0%	12.0%	12.2%	38.5
Stanton	41.9%	8.9%	15.3%	13.1%	0.0%	25.0
Nebraska	41.2%	15.3%	19.6%	9.8%	14.2%	

SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU, AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 2020-2024.

The ACS estimates employment statistics for the people who live in an area. Employment estimates from the American Community Survey (ACS) and the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) show similar overall industry patterns, although the reported employment totals differ because each dataset uses a different methodology. Both sources identify manufacturing as Colfax County's largest employment sector, followed by educational services, health care, and social assistance, and retail trade. While employment counts vary between the ACS and BEA, both datasets indicate that Colfax County's economy is heavily influenced by manufacturing and other goods-producing industries (Figure 5.8).

LABOR FORCE

According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Colfax County's labor force remained stable between 2014 and 2024 at 5,411 workers, while the unemployment rate declined from 3.0% to 2.6%. Compared to neighboring counties, Colfax County maintained a relatively consistent labor force, whereas Butler, Dodge, Madison, and Stanton counties experienced declines and Cuming, Platte, and Saunders counties saw increases (Table 5.3).

Colfax County's unemployment rate declined from 3.0% in 2014 to 2.6% in 2024, reflecting continued strength in the local labor market. In 2024, the county's unemployment rate was lower than Nebraska's rate of 2.8% and was comparable to most neighboring counties. Only Cuming County (2.1%), Saunders County (2.2%), Butler County (2.3%), and Stanton County (2.4%) reported lower unemployment rates, while Madison County (2.5%), Platte County (2.3%), and Dodge County (2.8%) had similar or slightly higher rates. Overall, Colfax County maintained relatively low unemployment throughout the period, indicating a healthy and stable workforce.

While a lower unemployment rate may imply more people are working, there are fewer people participating in Colfax County's labor force than there were previously, shrinking the pool of labor available for new and expanded businesses. In many rural counties this is at least partly due to housing issues.

COMMUTER TRENDS

Colfax County is part of a regional job market, with local residents commuting outside the county to work, while others commute into the county to work. In 2024, the

BASIC EMPLOYMENT

Basic employment is business activity providing services primarily outside the area through the sale of goods and services, the revenues of which are directed to the local area in the form of wages and payments to local suppliers.

Non-Basic employment is business activity providing services primarily within the local area through the sale of goods and services, and the revenues of such sales re-circulate within the community in the form of wages and expenditures by local citizens.

SMALL-SCALE MANUFACTURING

Manufacturing and exported services provide primary sector jobs and create new wealth in a community. Small scale manufacturing, light industry, and professional services operate with a small number of employees and utilize local materials.

Colfax County has a diverse manufacturing base, and many residents are skilled in agricultural production and related machinery. Small scale manufacturers and exported services can operate from rural Nebraska and sell their products across the world.

The comprehensive plan can guide decisionmakers in evaluating the need for manufacturing sites outside city limits and mitigating impacts on existing residents.

ACS estimates 43.8% of residents left the county for work each day, and an additional 1.5% left the state.

Travel time to work is a factor used to gauge if Colfax County's workforce may want to find employment closer to home. Colfax County's mean travel time to work was 17.4 minutes, shorter than the Nebraska average of 19.2 minutes, indicating that residents generally have relatively short commutes. Approximately 35.7% of workers either worked from home or commuted 10 minutes or less, while 35.8% traveled 20 minutes or more to work. A relatively small share of workers had long commutes, with about 6.7% traveling 45 minutes or more. Overall, the county's commuting patterns reflect the availability of local employment opportunities while also accommodating workers who commute to surrounding communities (Figure 5.9).

OCCUPATIONS

Industry is the type of activity at a person's place of work. Occupation is the kind of work a person does to earn a living. The following data examine five occupational areas established by the US Census Bureau to evaluate trends in employment and the area economy. The five occupational categories used in the analysis are:

- Management, business, science, and arts occupations
- Service occupations
- Sales and office occupations
- Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations
- Production, transportation, and material moving occupations

Management, Business, Science, and Arts occupations represented the largest employment category in Colfax County, accounting for 32.3% of all workers. Although this was the county's largest occupational group, it was well below the Nebraska average of 41.2%. In contrast, Production, Transportation, and Material Moving occupations comprised 24.3% of Colfax County's workforce, compared to 14.2% statewide, reflecting the county's strong manufacturing and agricultural economy (Table 5.4).

ECONOMIC BASE

A community's economic base is made up of "basic sector" employers. Non-Basic employment relies on revenue brought into the area by basic sector firms. In order to estimate the number of basic jobs in a local area, a comparative area must be selected. For purposes of this analysis, Colfax County is compared to the state of Nebraska, as well as adjacent counties.

Basic Employment

Occupation categories are compared to the same categories for the state to determine "basic" employment. Where the percentage of county residents in a certain occupation exceeds the state's percentage, those jobs are considered "basic" employment with exports of goods or services bringing new income into the county. Table 5.4 indicates Colfax County has exports in three occupational categories:

- Service; Natural Resources, Construction
- Maintenance; and Production, Transportation
- Material Moving

With the largest base employment in Production, Transportation, and Material Moving, it would be advantageous for local schools to support workforce training in these occupations.

Basic occupation data can be compared to basic industry data for additional economic insight. Colfax County has a strong balance of basic and non-basic employment, with an estimated

Table 5.5 – Farms & Land in Farms

Agricultural Characteristics	2002	2007	2012	2017	2022	% Change
Number of Farms	589	519	554	516	456	-22.6%
Land in Farms (Acres)	244,361	213,220	257,628	262,384	212,605	-13.0%
Average Size of Farms (Acres)	415	411	435	452	466	12.3%
Total Area of County (Acres)	263,360	263,360	263,360	263,360	263,360	-
Percentage of Land in Farms	92.8%	81.0%	97.8%	99.6%	80.7%	-13.0%
Total Cropland (Acres)	214,487	187,650	224,946	240,401	191,468	-10.7%
Harvested Cropland (Acres)	198,445	178,697	217,326	228,429	184,044	-7.3%
Irrigated Cropland (Acres)	59,064	62,481	66,796	80,968	64,476	9.2%
Estimated Market Value of Land & Buildings (Avg/Farm)	$627,679	$1,007,713	$2,460,460	$3,149,351	$3,851,598	513.6%
Estimated Market Value of Machinery & Equipment (Avg/Farm)	$121,938	$169,620	$266,197	$354,881	$345,999	183.7%

SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU, USDA CENSUS OF AGRRICULTURE, 2002 TO 2022.

Table 5.6 – Number of Farms by Size

Farm Size (Acres)	2002	2007	2012	2017	2022	% Change
1 to 9	38	30	47	37	50	31.6%
10 to 49	87	95	78	79	96	10.3%
50 to 179	140	118	132	109	77	-45.0%
180 to 499	141	122	129	117	106	-24.8%
500 to 999	120	9	88	88	60	-50.0%
1,000 or More	63	61	80	86	67	6.3%

SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU, USDA CENSUS OF AGRRICULTURE, 2002 TO 2022.

base multiplier of 7.9. The County should continually work on existing business retention and expansion assistance to help employers stay and grow in Colfax County.

Base Multiplier

A concept directly related to the basic/non-basic analysis is the base multiplier. The base multiplier is a number which represents how many non-basic jobs are supported by each basic job. A high base multiplier means the loss of one basic job will have a potentially large impact on the local economy. When basic jobs bring new money into a local economy, that money translates to wages for other workers in the economy. Therefore, when more money is brought in by basic jobs, more non-basic jobs are created.

The information in Table 5.4 shows Colfax County has a base multiplier of 7.9, which means for every job considered to be basic, 7.9 other jobs in the county are supported and/or impacted. This indicates for every job tied to exportation of goods or services, there are about 8 jobs created/supported by the dollars coming into the community. Therefore, if Colfax County lost just one of the jobs tied to exports, then there is the potential to lose approximately 8 jobs from the non-basic employment side.

There is no magical multiplier a county should aim to achieve. Every county is different, and the dynamics involved are different. The unique and ever-changing dynamics are what make a particular county's economy unique and attractive to different employers.

It is critical to determine a future vision for business and industry and work towards this end. It is also critical to diligently work towards a successful business retention and expansion program to support those employers already located in the county. Some places become too focused on attracting the next big thing and forget about opportunities existing employers can offer through expansion of their operations.

AGRICULTURAL PROFILE

Agriculture has provided an economic base for Colfax County since the first settlers arrived. Tables 5.5 through 5.8 examine the agricultural profile of Colfax County. Table 5.5 examines the number of farms and their high-level characteristics for these farms. The data are from the US Census of Agriculture series 2002 through 2022.

Farms

The number of farms in Colfax County declined by 22.6%, from 589 farms in 2002 to 456 farms in 2022 (Table 5.5). A falling number of farms has been normal throughout the Great Plains region.

Each farm may have multiple owners and producers. The Census

Table 5.7 – Farms & Livestock by Type

TYPE OF LIVESTOCK	2002	2007	2012	2017	2022	% CHANGE
Cattle & Calves						
Farms	285	231	228	196	149	-48%
Animals	79,667	75,589	86,446	76,662	83,930	5%
Average per Farm	280	327	379	391	563	-
Beef Cows						
Farms	186	158	167	154	117	-37%
Animals	8,554	6,825	10,771	10,928	11,269	32%
Average per Farm	46	43	64	71	96	-
Milk Cows						
Farms	3	5	6	8	(D)	-
Animals	377	497	795	492	(D)	-
Average per Farm	126	99	133	62	-	-
Hogs & Pigs						
Farms	100	70	32	37	26	-74%
Animals	123,473	147,220	142,801	151,662	77,934	-37%
Average per Farm	1,235	2,103	4,463	4,099	2,997	-
Sheep & Lambs						
Farms	16	13	12	18	15	-6%
Animals	697	773	354	739	562	-19%
Average per Farm	44	59	30	41	37	-
Chickens (Layers & Pullets)						
Farms	16	20	15	13	15	-6%
Animals	(D)	1,282	686	325	532	-
Average per Farm	-	64	46	25	35	-
Chickens (Broilers)						
Farms	11	13	2	(D)	1	-91%
Animals	4,154	5,480	(D)	(D)	(D)	-
Average per Farm	378	422	-	-	-	-

SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU, USDA CENSUS OF AGRRICULTURE, 2002 TO 2022.
NOTE: THIS DATA IS SELF REPORTED AND MAY REFLECT OPERATIONS IN MORE THAN ONE COUNTY.

of Agriculture defines "producer" as "a person who is involved in making decisions for the farm operation…The producer may be the owner, a member of the owner's household, a hired manager, a tenant, a renter, or a sharecropper."

Most farms in Colfax County were operated as full-owner farms (217), followed by part-owner farms (176) and tenant farms (63). The county had 763 agricultural producers operating 456 farms, with 234 farms having a single producer and 178 farms having two producers. Farming was the primary occupation for 427 producers, while 327 producers reported another primary occupation. Additionally, 399 producers lived on the farm they operated, compared with 355 who lived elsewhere, indicating that most agricultural producers continue to reside on their farming operations.

The amount of land in farms in Colfax County fluctuated between 2002 and 2022 but declined overall from 244,361 acres to 212,605 acres, a decrease of 13.0%. Over the same period, the average farm size increased from 415 acres to 466 acres (12.3%), while the number of farms declined by 22.6%. The trend across Nebraska and the United States has been toward an increasing farm size; however, a contraction in total farmland may offset that trend, potentially indicating that land in Colfax County is being farmed by operations headquartered outside the county, which would in turn be excluded from Census of Agriculture counts for Colfax County.

Total cropland in Colfax County declined from 214,487 acres in 2002 to 191,468 acres in 2022, a decrease of 10.7%. Similarly, harvested cropland decreased from 198,445 acres to 184,044 acres (7.3%), although harvested acreage peaked at 228,429 acres in 2017 before declining. In contrast, irrigated cropland remained relatively stable over the 20-year period, increasing slightly from 59,064 acres to 64,476 acres (9.2%). Despite declines in total and harvested cropland, the continued use of irrigation reflects the importance of irrigated agriculture in maintaining crop productivity within Colfax County.

Land and Buildings

Table 5.5 also shows the estimated market value of land and buildings, and market value of machinery and equipment. The

average estimated market value of agricultural land and buildings per farm increased dramatically from $627,679 in 2002 to $3,851,598 in 2022, an increase of 513.6%. This growth far exceeded the rate of inflation over the same period, reflecting substantial appreciation in agricultural land values and continued demand for productive farmland. Rising land values have strengthened farm asset values but have also increased the cost of purchasing or expanding farming operations, creating additional challenges for new and beginning farmers.

Farms by Size

The distribution of farm sizes in Colfax County shifted between 2002 and 2022, reflecting continued consolidation of agricultural operations. The greatest growth occurred among 1 to 9-acre farms, which increased from 38 to 50 farms (31.6%), followed by 10 to 49-acre farms, which increased 10.3%. In contrast, the largest declines occurred among 500 to 999-acre farms, which fell by 50.0%, and 50 to 179-acre farms, which declined 45.0%. Farms between 180 and 499 acres also decreased by 24.8%, while farms of 1,000 acres or more remained relatively stable, increasing 6.3%. Overall, the trend suggests a decline in many mid-sized farming operations, accompanied by growth in the smallest farms and relative stability among the largest operations (Table 5.6).

Ag Products

In 2022, Colfax County farms sold approximately $431.4 million in agricultural products, averaging about $946,000 in sales per farm. The county's agricultural sector includes both small and large operations, with 71 farms reporting annual sales of less than $2,500, while 233 farms reported $1 million or more in annual agricultural sales. The number of Colfax County farms receiving government payments remained

Table 5.8 – Farms & Crops by Type

TYPE OF CROP	2002	2007	2012	2017	2022	% CHANGE
Corn for Grain						
Farms	397	321	354	344	275	-30.7%
Acres	96,470	96,208	107,498	115,822	95,407	-1.1%
Average per Farm	243	300	304	337	347	-
Corn for Silage						
Farms	100	51	103	34	31	-69.0%
Acres	8,028	4,062	11,382	3,502	4,691	-41.6%
Average per Farm	80	80	111	103	151	-
Wheat						
Farms	9	29	7	9	5	-44.4%
Acres	135	1,608	273	556	299	121.5%
Average per Farm	15	55	39	62	60	-
Oats						
Farms	37	22	8	10	1	-97.3%
Acres	955	598	121	158	(D)	-
Average per Farm	26	27	15	16	-	-
Sorghum for Grain						
Farms	3	1	1	7	(D)	-
Acres	(D)	(D)	(D)	315	(D)	-
Average per Farm	-	-	-	45	-	-
Sorghum for Silage						
Farms	1	1	2	1	1	0.0%
Acres	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	-
Average per Farm	-	-	-	-	-	-
Soybeans						
Farms	368	288	350	326	266	-27.7%
Acres	73,803	62,871	82,677	93,604	74,197	0.5%
Average per Farm	201	218	236	287	279	-
Hay/Forage						
Farms	320	270	239	221	155	-51.6%
Acres	21,264	15,415	15,213	14,416	9,084	-57.3%
Average per Farm	66	57	64	65	59	-
Sunflower Seeds						
Farms	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	-
Acres	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	-
Average per Farm	-	-	-	-	-	-
Vegetables Harvested for Sale						
Farms	1	1	(D)	(D)	1	0.0%
Acres	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	-
Average per Farm	-	-	-	-	-	-
Land in Orchards						
Farms	2	2	3	2	(D)	-
Acres	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	-
Average per Farm	-	-	-	-	-	-

SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU, USDA CENSUS OF AGRRICULTURE, 2002 TO 2022.
NOTE: THIS DATA IS SELF REPORTED AND MAY REFLECT OPERATIONS IN MORE THAN ONE COUNTY.

relatively stable between 2002 and 2017, increasing slightly from 388 farms in 2002 to a peak of 420 farms in 2012 before declining to 393 farms in 2017. Government payments generally increased over the same period, rising from approximately $3.36 million in 2002 to $3.30 million in 2007, $5.06 million in 2012, and peaking at $7.55 million in 2017. By 2022, both the number of participating farms and total government payments had declined sharply to 128 farms receiving approximately $2.73 million, reflecting changes in federal farm programs, commodity conditions, and the availability of agricultural assistance.

Livestock inventories in Colfax County changed considerably between 2002 and 2022. The number of cattle and calves increased slightly by 5.4% despite a 47.7% decline in the number of farms raising them, indicating larger average herd sizes. Beef cow inventories increased 31.7% while the number of beef cow operations declined 37.1%, further reflecting consolidation among producers. In contrast, hog and pig inventories decreased 36.9%, accompanied by a 74.0% decline in the number of hog operations. Sheep and lamb inventories also declined 19.4%, while the number of farms raising sheep and lambs decreased 6.3% (Table 5.7). Some data is not disclosed to avoid identifying individual producers, shown as "(D)" in the table.

Table 5.8 reports on specific crops. Crop production trends in Colfax County reflect continued consolidation of agricultural operations and shifts in cropping patterns between 2002 and 2022. The number of farms growing corn for grain declined 30.7%, while corn acreage decreased 6.1%, indicating that fewer farms are producing corn on larger acreages. Soybean production remained relatively stable, with the number of farms declining 27.7% but planted acreage increasing slightly by 0.5%. Hay production experienced a notable decline, with farms decreasing 51.6% and harvested acres falling 57.3%. Corn silage acreage also declined 41.6%, while the number of farms producing corn silage decreased 69.0%. Wheat experienced a 44.4% decline in the number of farms, although wheat acreage more than doubled, increasing 121.5%, suggesting production became concentrated among fewer, larger operations.

Agriculture has historically been a major part of the Colfax County and Nebraska economy. Future land use policies will have a major impact on the animal and crop agriculture industry. As well, regional and national trends in agricultural production will continue to affect wholesale and value-added ag processing into the foreseeable future.

Value-Added Agriculture

While much of Colfax County's agricultural production is sold at wholesale and exported around the world, local products can be processed locally so value is added closer to home (generally within a 400-mile radius of the home farm). Value-added enterprises today may be large scale, such as the ethanol and bio-diesel plants which have sprung up across central Nebraska. This may be small-scale—Nebraska has been able to support vineyards and winemaking, as well as other agri-tourism enterprises.

Farm-to-home operations can be as diverse as farmer's markets and community-supported agriculture. Direct food and fiber sales not only diversify on-farm income, but provide the benefit of healthy produce to area residents.

Future regional land use policies will have impacts on animal and crop agriculture. Also, regional and national trends in agricultural production will continue to affect wholesale and value-added ag processing into the foreseeable future.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES

LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Colfax County relies on local communities to take the lead on local economic development. Some counties in the region have a formal local economic development office or non-profit organization dedicated to improving the quality of life of their residents.

Local schools (profiled in Chapter 6) also have a large impact on workforce training, as well as college prep.

SCHUYLER ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Schuyler Economic Development District (SCD) is a voluntary association of counties and municipalities formed under the Nebraska Interlocal Cooperation Act to identify common problems, their solutions, and to provide continuing support for efficient and effective government among its members.

SCD promotes responsible and sustainable economic development by supporting business expansion, redevelopment, workforce development, housing initiatives, and business recruitment. The organization works closely with local, county, regional, and state partners to attract investment, strengthen the local workforce, expand housing opportunities, and improve the community's overall economic vitality. SCD

also provides access to financial resources, government advocacy, building and site inventories, labor training resources, and housing assistance for businesses, residents, and prospective employers.

SOURCE: SCHUYLERDEVELOPMENT.NET

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Nebraska Department of Economic Development (DED) is focused on growing and diversifying the state's economic base, bringing new dollars, new businesses, and new people into the state. DED functions to:

- Support communities with development efforts.
- Assist with starting, retaining, and expanding businesses.
- Promote the state for business locations and expansions.

DED efforts supporting community development include the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, Civic and Community Center Financing Fund (CCFF), Economic Development Certified Community (EDCC), Leadership Certified Community (LCC), Local Option Municipal Economic Development Act (LB840), Nebraska Capital Projects fund, Nebraska Rural Projects fund, Site and Building Development found, and others. DED also provides resources for grant management and technical assistance with Enterprise Zones and Opportunity Zones.

SOURCE: OPPORTUNITY.NEBRASKA.GOV

LB840

The Local Option Municipal Economic Development Act (LB840, 1991) authorized incorporated cities and villages—if approved by local voters—to collect and appropriate local tax dollars, including sales and/or property tax, for economic development purposes.

To implement an LB840 program, communities formulate a written economic development plan which, if voter-approved, becomes the foundation for the collection and expenditure of local tax revenues for economic development under which the municipality's LB840 program operates.

Schuyler is the only municipality in Colfax County that has authorized an LB840 Local Option Municipal Economic Development Program.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND ACTIONS

GOAL 5.1

Colfax County supports balanced local and regional economic development services.

Actions

5.1.1 Establish a county-wide public-private economic development working group.

5.1.2 Support local entrepreneurship, and small business retention and expansion.

5.1.3 Regularly review and update land use regulations for commercial plan review.

5.1.4 Review and improve the County's online presence.

5.1.5 Continue to utilize the County website with regular updates to meeting agendas and minutes, regulations and permit forms, and community profile information.

5.1.6 Investigate and promote local "low-cost loan" programs, micro-grants, or revolving loan funds to lower financial barriers for small business startups and transitioning young farmers.

GOAL 5.2

There are sites available for commercial and industrial development.

Actions

5.2.1 Continue implementation of a clear and consistent development review process to ensure timely permit review.

5.2.2 Support local Tax Increment Financing (TIF) where appropriate.

5.2.3 Support municipalities extending public utilities to reduce the costs of development and encourage development in appropriate areas.

5.2.4 Work closely with Name Economic Development District (acronym) to access EDA and other funding sources for local economic development.

5.2.5 Buffer commercial and industrial sites from incompatible uses.

GOAL 5.3

There is an accessible system in place for workforce development.

Actions

5.3.1 Continue support of K-12 education to include skills-based training and creative partnerships with local businesses.

5.3.2 Encourage community college workforce training in Colfax County.

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CHAPTER 6 County Facilities

Government provides services to the people through public facilities. It is important for all levels of government to anticipate the future demand for their services if they are to remain strong and vital. This chapter reviews facilities plans, resources, goals, and action items.

Some public services are provided by non-governmental, private, or non-profit organizations and institutions for the community as a whole. These are important service providers and are an integral part of the community.

FACILITIES PLAN

This element of the comprehensive plan, in conjunction with other chapters, is intended to meet requirements of Neb. Rev. Stat. §23-114.02, to address community facilities, including schools, libraries, and other public buildings.

This chapter groups these facilities into the following categories:

- Public buildings
- Historic sites and places
- Education
- Health care

PUBLIC BUILDINGS

County Courthouse

The Colfax County Courthouse is located at 411 East 11th Street in Schuyler, the county seat. The courthouse houses the principal county government offices, including the County Board of Commissioners, County Clerk, Clerk of the District Court, County Court, County Attorney, Register of Deeds, Treasurer, Assessor, Election Commissioner, Veterans Service Office, Public Defender, and other administrative offices. Colfax County is part of Nebraska's 5th Judicial District. The current courthouse was constructed in 1921–1922, replacing the county's original 1871–1872 courthouse. Designed by prominent Lincoln architect George A. Berlinghof in the Renaissance Revival style, the four-story building features a limestone exterior and was dedicated following a Masonic cornerstone-laying ceremony. The courthouse was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1981 in recognition of its architectural and historical significance.

Law Enforcement

The Colfax County Sheriff's Office is located at 411 East 11th Street in Schuyler, within the Colfax County Courthouse. See CHAPTER 8 for more information.

Emergency Management

Colfax County Emergency Management is located at 411 East 11th Street, Schuyler, Nebraska, within the Colfax County Courthouse. See CHAPTER 8 for more information.

Libraries

Colfax County is served by four public libraries, located in the communities of Schuyler, Clarkson, Howells, and Leigh.

- Schuyler Public Library (108 E. 18th Street, Schuyler)
- Clarkson Public Library (316 Pine Street, Clarkson)
- Howells Public Library (128 S. 3rd Street, Howells)
- Leigh Public Library (153 Main Street, Leigh)

Northeast Nebraska Area Agency on Aging

The Northeast Nebraska Area Agency (AAA) is a local resource for seniors age 60 and over. Its mission is to assist older adults in remaining independent through a variety of programs and services that promote health, well-being, and quality of life.

Northeast Nebraska Area Agency AAA serves a 22-county area from their main office in Norfolk. NENAAA provides a wide range of services, including information and assistance, the Aging and Disability Resource Center, care management, the Aged and Disabled Medicaid Waiver Program, family caregiver support, homemaker and personal care grants, legal assistance, health promotion activities, emergency response systems, ombudsman services, Medicare counseling (SHIP/SMP), supportive services, and congregate and home-delivered meal programs. In Colfax County, nutrition services are available through Colfax County Senior Citizens Services in Schuyler (124 E. 12th Street), the Brass Rail in Clarkson (247 Pine Street), and the Owl Café in Howells (226 Center Street).

SOURCE: NENAAA.COM



COLFAX COUNTY COURTHOUSE
SOURCE: MARVIN PLANNING CONSULTANTS



SCHUYLER PUBLIC LIBRARY
SOURCE: MARVIN PLANNING CONSULTANTS

USDA

The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) Service Center serving Colfax County is located at 120 West 16th Street, Suite B, Schuyler, Nebraska 68661. The service center provides agricultural producers with access to farm loans, commodity and conservation programs, disaster assistance, and other USDA services.

US Postal Service

Post office services are available in the municipalities of Schuyler, Clarkson, Howells, and Leigh. Post office facilities in some smaller communities remain open with limited retail hours.

HISTORIC SITES & PLACES

As noted in Chapter 1 of this plan, Colfax County, Nebraska, has a rich history.

In 2016, the Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey (NeHBS) documented historic buildings and places across Colfax County. At the time of the project, 459 properties were surveyed in municipalities and rural Colfax



USDA FARM SERVICE AGENCY
SOURCE: MARVIN PLANNING CONSULTANTS

County. The project identified 82 individual properties as potentially eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

Colfax County Historical Society

The Colfax County Historical Society is a nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving and passing on the history and culture of Colfax County. Colfax County does not currently have an active countywide historical society. Historical preservation and interpretation are provided through the Schuyler/Colfax County Museum, located at 309 E. 11th Street in Schuyler, which preserves the county's history through exhibits featuring local artifacts, photographs, agricultural heritage, military memorabilia, and cultural displays.

Unincorporated Communities

There are several communities in Colfax County which are not incorporated municipalities. Some have faded into history, while others remain as rural settlements. These include:

- Heun – Located in central Colfax County between Schuyler and Howells, Heun developed as a rural Czech Catholic community in the late nineteenth century. The community was centered on Holy Trinity Catholic Church and Cemetery and once included a post office, general store, blacksmith shop, and social hall. Today, the church and cemetery remain as reminders of the community's historic heritage.
- Olean – Located northeast of Howells, Olean was established in the late nineteenth century as a small rural settlement. The community maintained a post office from 1895 to 1904 and included a German Catholic church, cemetery, blacksmith shop, and two schools. Like many small rural communities not located along a railroad, Olean gradually declined and never developed into a major commercial or population center.

National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of districts, sites, buildings, and structures deemed worthy of preservation for their historical significance. Private property listed in the National Register or located within a National Register Historic District, may qualify for tax credits for eligible rehabilitation costs. The Schuyler Carnegie Library, which was formerly listed on the National Register of Historic Places, was demolished in 2022. As a result, it is no longer included among the historic properties identified in this plan.

12 locations in Colfax County have been listed in the National Register since it was established in 1966. These include:

- Oak Ballroom – 175 Higgins Drive in Schuyler
- Colfax County Courthouse – 411 E. 11th Street in Schuyler
- Schuyler City Hall – 1103 B Street in Schuyler
- John Janecek House – 805 E. 8th Street in Schuyler
- Schuyler United States Post Office – 119 E. 11th Street in Schuyler
- Z.C.B.J. Opera House – 340 Pine Street in Clarkson
- Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church and Cemetery – Rural Schuyler
- Zion Presbyterian Church – Rural Clarkson
- Schuyler Downtown Historic District – Downtown Schuyler, generally bounded by 11th Street, 12th Street, B Street, and C Street.
- Schyler Site (Archeological) – Rural Schuyler
- Wolfe Archeological Site – Rural Colfax County
- Merchant Park – Corner of Higgins Drive and Adams Street

Oak Ballroom

The Oak Ballroom is one of Schuyler's most recognizable historic landmarks and serves as a focal point for community events. Listed in the National Register of Historic Places, the building was constructed by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and completed in 1937. Its name is derived from the large native oak timbers and beams used in its construction. A mural depicting a covered wagon traveling the Mormon Trail is featured above the fireplace, reflecting the region's pioneer heritage. Today, the Oak Ballroom functions as a community gathering place, hosting weddings, receptions, dances, cultural events, meetings, and other public celebrations.

Colfax County Courthouse

Constructed between 1921 and 1922, the Colfax County Courthouse is a prominent Second Renaissance Revival style building and an important architectural landmark in both the City of Schuyler and Colfax County. The courthouse was designed by George A. Berlinghof, one of Nebraska's most prolific architects of public buildings during the early twentieth century. Recognized for its architectural significance and role in the county's history, the courthouse was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1981. Today, it continues to serve as the center of county government and judicial services.



OAK BALLROOM
SOURCE: MARVIN PLANNING CONSULTANTS

Old Schuyler City Hall

Schuyler City Hall is a historic landmark located in downtown Schuyler. Planning for the building began in 1907, when the City Council approved a design by architect Joseph Guth, and construction was completed in 1909 at a cost of $11,000. The two-story masonry building features a distinctive clock and bell tower, with the original fire station located on the first floor and the City Council chambers on the second floor. Influenced by Guth's German heritage, the building reflects the architectural style of traditional medieval town halls found throughout Germany and Italy. Today, it remains an important symbol of Schuyler's civic history and architectural heritage.

John Janecek House

The John Janecek House is a historic residence in Schuyler associated with one of the community's early civic and business leaders. John Janecek immigrated to the United States from Bohemia in 1870 and settled in Colfax County in 1873. He was best known as the builder and proprietor of the Janecek Opera House, which served as the center of social and cultural activity in Colfax County around the turn of the twentieth century. The house was designed by Henry Voss, a German-born architect from Omaha, and constructed between 1885 and 1886. Originally built as a frame house, the exterior was stuccoed in 1927. Today, the home is recognized for its historical significance and its association with one of Schuyler's most influential early residents.

Schuyler United States Postal Office

The Schuyler United States Post Office is a historic federal building that reflects the expansion of postal services and civic development during the early twentieth century. Constructed as part of the federal government's investment in public infrastructure, the building has served the community for decades and remains an important civic landmark within downtown Schuyler. The Schuyler United States Post Office was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1992 for its historical and architectural significance.

Z.C.B.J. Opera House

Located in Clarkson, the Z.C.B.J. Opera House was constructed by the Czech fraternal organization and became an important social and cultural center for the area's large Czech immigrant population. The building hosted theatrical performances, dances, concerts, community meetings, and other social events that helped preserve Czech traditions and strengthen community ties. The Z.C.B.J. Opera House remains one of the county's most significant reminders of its Czech heritage and was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1988 for its cultural and historical significance.



ZION PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
SOURCE: MARVIN PLANNING CONSULTANTS

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church and Cemetery

Located in rural Colfax County near Schuyler, Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church and Cemetery was constructed in 1883 during the county's large influx of Czech immigrants. The church is representative of the rural parishes established by Czech settlers during the 1870s and 1880s and reflects the significant role Czech immigration played in the county's early settlement and development. The church and cemetery were listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1982.

Zion Presbyterian Church

Located northwest of Clarkson, Zion Presbyterian Church was established by Czech immigrants who settled throughout Colfax County during the late nineteenth century. The congregation organized Nebraska's first Czech Presbyterian church and became an important center for religious worship and the preservation of Czech culture and traditions. The present church and adjoining cemetery reflect the county's rich Czech heritage and the important role immigrant communities played in the county's settlement and development. Zion Presbyterian Church was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1988.



SCHUYLER POSTAL OFFICE
SOURCE: MARVIN PLANNING CONSULTANTS



Z.C.B.J OPERA HOUSE
SOURCE: MARVIN PLANNING CONSULTANTS

Schuyler Downtown Historic District

Located in the heart of Schuyler, the Schuyler Downtown Historic District encompasses the city's historic commercial core centered along B Street and 11th and 12th Streets. Developed during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the district contains numerous one- and two-story brick commercial buildings that reflect Schuyler's growth as the county seat and a regional center for commerce, business, and community activity. The district was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2016 in recognition of its historical and architectural significance.

Wolfe Archeological Site

The Wolfe Archeological Site, located near Schuyler, was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1974. The site is significant for its prehistoric archaeological resources and is associated with the Late Ceramic Period, including the Pahuk Aspect of the Lower Loup culture. As a prehistoric village site, it provides valuable information about Native American settlement and lifeways in eastern Nebraska prior to European contact, making it an important resource for archaeological research and preservation.

Merchant Park

Merchant Park, located in Schuyler, was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2022. The park is recognized for its significance in the areas of Architecture and Social History and is included as part of the New Deal Work Relief Projects in Nebraska Multiple Property Submission (MPS). Constructed during the New Deal era, Merchant Park reflects the federal investment in community recreation and public infrastructure during the Great Depression and continues to serve as an important historic and recreational asset for the community.



MERCHANT PARK
SOURCE: MARVIN PLANNING CONSULTANTS

EDUCATION

Primary and secondary education, as well as post-secondary opportunities—have a large impact on a community's attractiveness to families and employers.

Schuyler Community Schools

The Schuyler Community Public Schools serve about 1,977 students. Schuyler Community Schools (SCS) is a Class III public school district serving Schuyler and the surrounding area of Colfax County. The district operates six educational facilities, including North Ward Prekindergarten, Schuyler Head Start, Schuyler Elementary School, Schuyler Elementary–Fisher's, Schuyler Middle School, and Schuyler Central High School.

In the district, approximately 51% of students are in the free/reduced lunch program, compared to 50% statewide; and 13% are in special education, compared to 17% statewide.

The Schuyler Central High School is classified by the Nebraska State Activities Association. For the 2025–2026 sports seasons, Schuyler Community Schools competes in Class B for girls basketball and Class B for boys basketball, while entering the 2026–2027 season in Class C2 for football.

SOURCE: SCHUYLERCOMMUNITYSCHOOLS.ORG



SCHUYLER CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL
SOURCE: MARVIN PLANNING CONSULTANTS

Clarkson Public Schools

The Clarkson Public Schools serve about 212 students. The district operates Clarkson Elementary School and Clarkson Jr.-Sr. High School.

In the district, approximately 33% of students are in the free/reduced lunch program, compared to 50% statewide; and 18% are in special education, compared to 17% statewide.

The Clarkson High School is classified by the Nebraska State Activities Association. For the 2025–2026 sports seasons, Clarkson Public Schools competes in Class C1 for girls basketball and Class C2 for boys basketball as the Clarkson-Leigh Patriots, while entering the 2026–2027 season in Class D3 for football.

SOURCE: CLARKSONPUBLICSCHOOLS.ORG



HOWELLS-DODGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SOURCE: HOWELLS, NEBRASKA

Howells-Dodge Consolidated Schools

The Howells-Dodge Public Schools serve about 292 students. Howells-Dodge Consolidated Schools operates two school buildings, with students in grades 7–12 attending the Howells school and students in kindergarten through grade 6 attending the Dodge school.

In the district, approximately 28% of students are in the free/reduced lunch program, compared to 50% statewide; and 17% are in special education, compared to 17% statewide.

The Howells-Dodge High School is classified by the Nebraska State Activities Association. For the 2025–2026 athletic seasons, Howells-Dodge Consolidated Schools competed in Class D1 for both girls basketball and boys basketball while entering the 2026–2027 classification cycle in Class D2 for football.

SOURCE: HOWELLSDODGESCHOOLS.ORG

Leigh Community Schools

The Leigh Public Schools serve about 296 students. Leigh Community Schools operates a single school building at 222 W. 4th Street in Leigh, housing both Leigh Elementary School and Leigh High School.

In the district, approximately 21% of students are in the free/reduced lunch program, compared to 50% statewide; and 15% are in special education, compared to 17% statewide.

The Leigh High School is classified by the Nebraska State Activities Association. For the 2025–2026 sports seasons, Leigh Community Schools competes in Class C1 for girls basketball and Class C2 for boys basketball as part of the Clarkson-Leigh Patriots co-op, while entering the 2026–2027 season in Class D3 for football.

SOURCE: LEIGHCOMMUNITYSCHOOLS.ORG

Nebraska Community College System

Colfax County is served by Central Community College, with campus locations in Columbus, Grand Island, and Hastings and educational centers in Holdrege, Kearney, Lexington, and Ord. Additionally, Central Community College uses a variety of distance learning techniques to provide educational services to additional communities in its service area.

The college offers 37 career and technical education programs with a focus on degree, diploma, and certificate programs requiring two years or less to complete.

SOURCE: CCCNEB.EDU

Child Care

There are 17 licensed child day care providers located throughout Colfax County. In Nebraska, anyone who provides child care to four or more children from different families must be licensed as a child care provider, by the Department of Health and Human Services.

There are five license types:

- Child Care Center: This type of program is licensed for 13 or more children while following the staff to child ratio per the state regulations.
- Family Child Care Home I: This type of program is in the home of the provider. The maximum capacity is eight children of mixed ages and two additional school age children during non-school hours.
- Family Child Care Home II: This type of program is in the home of the provider or at another site. The maximum capacity is twelve children with two providers.
- Preschool: This type of program provides educational services where children do not nap and are fed a meal.
- School Age Only Center: This type of program is licensed for 13 or more children who are attending or have attended school.
- License Exempt: Home care provided outside the client's home to a maximum of six children from one family or three or fewer children from more than one family.



CHI HEALTH SCHUYLER
SOURCE: CHI HEALTH

HEALTH CARE

Public health addresses both maintaining the health of residents and the provision of health care. According to research sponsored by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Colfax County ranks # 58 (of 79 counties evaluated) in Nebraska for Health Factors, and # 46 for Health Outcomes.

The Rankings consider health factors based on physical environment (air and water quality, housing and transit), social and economic factors (community safety, family and social support, income, employment, education), clinical care (access to care, quality of care), and health behaviors (alcohol and drug use, sexual activity, diet and exercise, tobacco use). Health outcomes are measured by length of life (50%) and quality of life (50%) indicators such as share of people reporting poor or fair health, number of unhealthy days, and share of low birthweight newborns. The measurements are, of course, only as good as the publicly available data sets which may have large margins of error for smaller population communities.

SOURCE: COUNTYHEALTHRANKINGS.ORG

Public Health

The East Central District Health Department (ECDHD) is a state-approved district health department that provides public health services to Boone, Colfax, Nance, and Platte Counties, serving approximately 53,000 residents. The Mission of East Central District Health Department is to complement community health services in order to make a positive difference in the quality of life to all individuals and families.

The East Central District Health Department conducts a Community Health Assessment (CHA) and Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) every five years. The CHA is a process

of gathering and interpreting information from multiple and diverse sources in order to develop a deep understanding of the health and wellbeing of a community/jurisdiction. The CHIP—a five-year community-wide plan that outlines the priority health factors realized in the CHA—is developed based upon the CHA. The CHIP includes community wide goals and objectives for addressing CHA priorities and applies evidence-based public health programs and strategies to address health priorities in the CHA.

SOURCE: ECDHD.NE.GOV

CHI Health Schuyler

CHI Health Schuyler, located at 104 W. 17th Street in Schuyler, is a 25-bed Critical Access Hospital serving Schuyler, Clarkson, Howells, Leigh, rural Colfax County, and surrounding communities. Originally opened in 1953, the hospital converted to a Critical Access Hospital in 2000 to help ensure continued access to rural health care. CHI Health Schuyler provides 24-hour emergency services, inpatient medical and surgical care, outpatient surgery and observation, laboratory services, diagnostic imaging, rehabilitation services, 3D mammography, cardiology, gastroenterology, general surgery, specialty clinics, and other outpatient diagnostic and therapeutic services.

CHI Health Schuyler serves the communities of Schuyler, Clarkson, Howells, Leigh, and the residents of rural Colfax County by providing primary, emergency, inpatient, outpatient, and specialty healthcare services close to home. Primary care services are available through affiliated CHI Health clinics located in Schuyler, Clarkson, and Howells, ensuring residents throughout the county have convenient access to routine medical care.

SOURCE: CHIHEALTH.COM/LOCATIONS/CHI-HEALTH-SCHUYLER

Regional Medical Facilities

The statewide trauma program ensures Nebraska hospitals meet the standards to be designated as a trauma center. Trauma designation is based on the resources a hospital has available and by successfully meeting regulatory requirements.

The nearest Level IV Trauma Center is CHI Health Schuyler in Schuyler. The nearest Level III Trauma Center is Columbus Community Hospital in Columbus, with additional Level III trauma services available at CHI Health St. Francis in Grand Island and Faith Regional Health Services in Norfolk. Level I and Level II trauma centers are located in Lincoln and Omaha.

FACILITIES GOALS AND ACTIONS

GOAL 6.1

Colfax County provides accessible public buildings and facilities required to provide public services to the citizens of the county.

Actions

6.1.1 Continue maintenance and repair of the Colfax County Courthouse and other county-owned facilities.

6.1.2 Coordinate facility needs with municipalities and look for opportunities for shared cost-savings.

6.1.3 Development projects shall mitigate impacts on public facilities.

6.1.4 Partner with local senior nutrition providers, including the Colfax County Senior Citizens Services in Schuyler, the Brass Rail in Clarkson, and the Owl Café in Howells, to ensure adequate facilities remain available for senior congregate and home-delivered meal programs.

6.1.5 Evaluate technological upgrades and interior accessibility needs at the Colfax County Courthouse to better support the operations of the Sheriff's Office, Emergency Management, and the 5th Judicial District.

GOAL 6.2
Historic sites and places are protected and maintained in Colfax County.

Actions
6.2.1 Support efforts to designate and preserve historic buildings.

6.2.2 Continue support of the Schuyler/Colfax County Museum to sustain its role as the primary repository for local artifacts, photographs, and agricultural heritage.

6.2.3 Encourage historical interpretation and educational programming at the museum to preserve and pass on rural settlement history from unincorporated communities like Heun and Olean.

GOAL 6.3
Colfax County's education system serves the needs of all residents.

Actions
6.3.1 Continue support of K-12 education and coordination with public and parochial schools.

6.3.2 Include public school districts in review of large development projects, to ensure accommodation of future students.

6.3.3 Encourage community college workforce training in Colfax County.

6.3.4 Coordinate with the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services to help local entrepreneurs navigate licensing types to expand family childcare homes and child care centers.

GOAL 6.4
Colfax County has a modern, efficient healthcare system.

Actions
6.4.1 Continue support of CHI Health Schuyler in meeting health care needs of residents.

6.4.2 Support the continued operation of rural primary care clinics in Schuyler, Clarkson, and Howells to ensure residents maintain local access to routine clinical care and critical Level IV trauma services.

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Stanton
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R03E
R03E
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Leigh
T20N
Leigh
10
5
Main St
1st St
Microsoft, Vantor
Clarkson
3
8
Pine St
W 4th St
Microsoft, Vantor
Howells
4
9
N 3rd St
Center St
Microsoft, Vantor
Platte
T18N
T17N
Richland
30
Schuyler
Butler
Schuyler
2
6
7
1
15
Vantor
Earthstar Geographics

LEGEND

- Railroads
- Highways
- County Boundaries
- Municipal Limits
- 2-Mile Planning Area (Schuyler)
- 1-Mile Planning Area (With Zoning)
- 1-Mile Planning Area (No Zoning)
- Township and Range
- Parcels
- Public Buildings

1: County Courthouse, Law Enforcement, Emergency Management
2: Schuyler Public Library
3: Clarkson Public Library
4: Howells Public Library
5: Leigh Public Library
6: USDA
7: Schuyler USPS
8: Clarkson USPS
9: Howells USPS
10: Leigh Public Library

COLFAX COUNTY NEBRASKA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

FIG 6.1: PUBLIC BUILDINGS

N

MARVIN PLANNING CONSULTANTS
Specializing in Municipal, County and Neighborhood Planning

PROJECTION: NE State Plane (Ft.)
DATUM: NAD 83
DATE: 9.24.26

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R03E
R03E
Clarkson
Howells
Leigh
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Clarkson
Pine St
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Microsoft, Vantor
8
7
T19N
Dodge
Platte
T18N
Schuyler
Richland
30
T17N
Butler
Schuyler
6
4
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3
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2
Vantor
Earthstar Geographics

LEGEND

- Railroads
- Highways
- County Boundaries
- Municipal Limits
- 2-Mile Planning Area (Schuyler)
- 1-Mile Planning Area (With Zoning)
- 1-Mile Planning Area (No Zoning)
- Township and Range
- Parcels
- Historic Sites and Places

1: Schuyler/Colfax County Museum
2: Oak Ballroom
3: Colfax County Courthouse
4: Schuyler City Hall
5: John Janacek House
6: Schuyler United States Post Office
7: Z.C.B.J. Opera House
8: Zion Presbyterian Church
9: Merchant Park

Not included: Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church and Cemetery (demolished in 2020), Schuyler Downtown Historic District, Wolfe Archeological Site

N

COLFAX COUNTY NEBRASKA

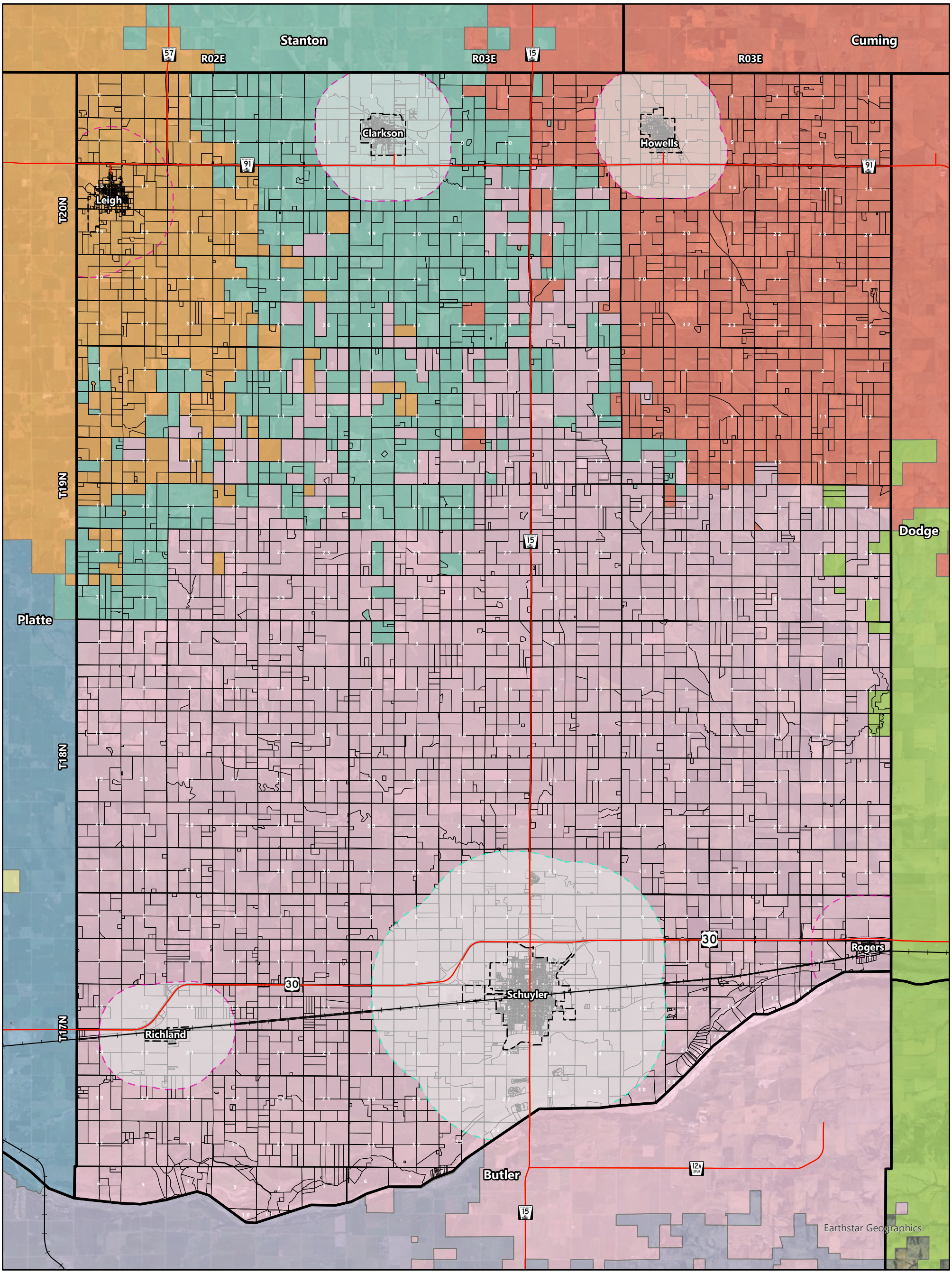
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

FIG 6.2: HISTORIC SITES AND PLACES

MARVIN PLANNING CONSULTANTS
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PROJECTION: NE State Plane (Ft.)
DATUM: NAD 83
DATE: 9.24.26

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LEGEND

- Railroads
- Highways
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- Municipal Limits
- 2-Mile Planning Area (Schuyler)
- 1-Mile Planning Area (With Zoning)
- 1-Mile Planning Area (No Zoning)
- Township and Range
- Parcels

School District

- Clarkson Public Schools
- Columbus Public Schools
- David City Public Schools
- Howells-Dodge Consolidated Schools
- Lakeview Community Schools
- Leigh Community Schools
- North Bend Central Public Schools
- Schuyler Community Schools

COLFAX COUNTY NEBRASKA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

FIGURE 6.3 SCHOOL DISTRICTS

MARVIN PLANNING CONSULTANTS
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PROJECTION: NE State Plane (Ft.)
DATUM: NAD 83
DATE: 9.24.26

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CHAPTER 7 Parks & Recreation

Parks and recreation facilities include both public and semi-public places, all of which are used by both urban and rural residents and families. The parks and recreation element includes a brief description of the facilities located in Colfax County, including the incorporated communities. Recreational opportunities tend to arise along the Platte River, Shell Creek, Dry Creek, Lost Creek, and Maple Creek, as well as at community parks, golf courses, ballfields, campgrounds, and wildlife areas throughout the county, including Schuyler Community Park, Schuyler Golf Club, Clarkson City Park, Howells City Park, and Leigh City Park, which should be considered in future land use decisions.

Although parks are typically located within municipalities, they also serve the needs of residents residing outside of town. Parks and recreation provide residents with a variety of social, cultural, and recreational opportunities to lead to an improved quality of life.

This chapter reviews the County Fairgrounds, community parks and recreation facilities, and other attractions, as well as goals and action items.

COUNTY FAIR

The Colfax County Fair is held annually in Leigh each July. The fair features 4-H and FFA livestock shows and exhibits, farm machinery displays, arts and crafts exhibits, horse shows and rodeo events, team roping, antique tractor and small engine shows, truck and tractor pulls, carnival rides, live musical entertainment, food vendors, church concession stands, a community parade, commercial vendors, and family-oriented activities.

SOURCE: EXTENSION.UNL.EDU/STATEWIDE/COLFAX/COLFAX-COUNTY-FAIR

CITY PARKS

Many county residents are active participants in entertainment, indoor exercise, and swimming in one or more nearby communities. The county's quality of life depends on amenities in its cities and in unincorporated areas.

CLARKSON
City Park and Memorial Park
Clarkson's park system consists of City Park and Memorial Park, located near the fire department on Bryan Street. Together, the parks encompass approximately 26 acres and include a swimming pool and bathhouse, two ball diamonds, football fields, lighted basketball and tennis courts, volleyball and sand volleyball courts, playground equipment, picnic areas, shelters, restrooms, and open green space.



COLFAX COUNTY FAIR
SOURCE: COLFAX COUNTY, NE

HOWELLS
Community Park and Memorial Park
Howells' park system consists of two parks located along Main Street, together covering approximately 27 acres. The parks feature a swimming pool, tennis courts, horseshoe pits, ball diamonds, a horse arena, a multi-purpose field, two sand volleyball courts, five playgrounds, three picnic shelters, and open green space. Organized baseball and softball programs for boys and girls through age 12 are also offered, providing a variety of recreational opportunities for residents of all ages.

LEIGH
Centennial Park
Centennial Park, located near Church Street across from the Leigh Golf Course in southwest Leigh, encompasses approximately 18 acres and serves as the community's primary recreational facility. Amenities include a swimming pool, two sand volleyball courts, a regulation horseshoe complex with 16 pits, a three-acre stocked fishing lake, a lighted ballfield, playground equipment, restrooms with showers, camping sites with utility hookups and a dump station, and an ISTEA-funded walking trail. The park also hosts youth baseball and softball programs, while the community maintains a mini-park along Main Street and a lighted tennis court with basketball goals in partnership with Leigh Community Schools.


CLARKSON CITY POOL
SOURCE: GOOGLE MAPS

SCHUYLER
City Lake
Schuyler City Lake, located just west of Nebraska Highway 15 along the southern edge of Schuyler, is an 18-acre recreational lake that provides opportunities for fishing and other outdoor recreation. The lake is stocked with bluegill, channel catfish, flathead catfish, and walleye, making it a popular destination for anglers and residents seeking outdoor activities.

Schuyler Campground
The municipality maintains an approximately 34-acre seasonal campground facility located east of South Highway 15, positioned directly across from the City Lake park complex to maximize recreational synergy. Operating annually from April 1 through October 1, the park serves as a key municipal recreational asset. Infrastructure at the site supports both short- and long-term seasonal stays, featuring integrated utility hookups, potable water access, permanent restroom and shower facilities, and fire grates. The facility directly enhances the community's outdoor recreation portfolio by providing localized public access to fishing and swimming amenities.

Schuyler Community Park

Schuyler Community Park encompasses approximately 16 acres of municipally managed parkland located directly north and west of the City Lakes. As a centralized hub for community identity and recreation, the park accommodates a diverse mix of civic, athletic, and historic assets. Key facilities include the municipal swimming pool, the American Legion Ball Field, and significant unprogrammed open space for passive use. Notably, the park anchors local historic preservation efforts as the home of the Historic Oak Ballroom, a vital civic venue that supports community gatherings and cultural heritage.



SCHUYLER CAMPGROUND
SOURCE: MARVIN PLANNING CONSULTANTS

Schuyler North Park

Schuyler North Park encompasses approximately 7.4 acres within the residential grid, bounded by B and D Streets and 20th and 22nd Streets. The park is highly programmed for active community recreation, featuring four multi-purpose playing fields, four outdoor basketball courts, and a dedicated youth playground area. To support daily use and passive neighborhood gatherings, the facility is equipped with essential public infrastructure, including a permanent restroom facility and a covered picnic shelter.

Schuyler Railside Green

Railside Green is a vibrant, two-acre downtown pocket park that offers a scenic retreat for shoppers, visitors, and workers in Schuyler's business district. Situated at the corner of 12th Street and B Street, the park is designed for passive recreation, featuring a winding walking path, a perennial garden, open grassy areas, benches, and a historic railroad caboose on display. Directly adjacent to the local Senior Center, the park provides crucial, accessible intergenerational open space. Developed in partnership with the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum, the park's diverse tree canopy features a robust mix of native and ornamental species. This collection includes several varieties of Oak, along with Sycamore, Catalpa, Pecan, Shellbark Hickory, Ponderosa Pine, and Dragon Spruce. Together, these trees establish valuable urban shade and enhance biodiversity right in the heart of downtown.



RAILSIDE GREEN IN SCHUYLER
SOURCE: MARVIN PLANNING CONSULTANTS

Schuyler Soccer Fields

Located on East 9th Street, the Schuyler Soccer Fields cover about 4 acres of land. The park features six active soccer fields, making it a heavily used hub for local youth and community sports leagues.

Schuyler City Pool

The Schuyler Swimming Pool is a public, seasonal aquatics facility located within Schuyler Community Park at 1103 B Street. It stands as a central recreational hub for local families, providing open public swimming hours and structured swimming lessons throughout the summer months.

RECREATION & ATTRACTIONS

HISTORIC SITES

Oak Ballroom

Serving as the indoor centerpiece of Schuyler Community Park, the Historic Oak Ballroom is a premier municipal venue that anchors the city's recreational and cultural programming. Originally completed

in 1937 as a WPA project and listed in the National Register of Historic Places, this unique facility utilizes large native oak timbers and rustic stone architecture to blend seamlessly into its park surroundings. Rather than just a historical monument, the ballroom functions as an active, high-use recreational asset that expands the city's capacity for year-round community gatherings, public dances, regional cultural events, weddings, and private celebrations. Its lakeside location creates a powerful synergy between indoor event spaces and outdoor park amenities, making it a critical anchor for community socialization and quality of life.

Z.C.B.J. Opera House

Located in the community of Clarkson, the historic Z.C.B.J. Opera House serves as a vital cultural and recreational anchor for northern Colfax County. Constructed in 1913 by the Western Bohemian Fraternal Association, the facility was officially listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1988 (see Chapter 6). Beyond its historical and architectural significance, the Opera House functions as an active community center. It provides essential indoor recreational and event space for the region, hosting theatrical performances, public dances, concerts, and community meetings. By facilitating these ongoing social events, the facility actively preserves the area's rich Czech heritage while strengthening modern community ties.

WILDLIFE, HUNTING & FISHING

Maple Creek Recreation Area

Opened in 2011, the Maple Creek Recreation Area is a major 557-acre regional park operated by the Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District (LENRD). Located just northwest of Leigh on the edge of the Colfax County Fairgrounds, the park features a 160-acre reservoir that is bisected by Highway 91. Nebraska's Natural Resources



MAPLE CREEK RECREATION AREA
SOURCE: MARVIN PLANNING CONSULTANTS

Districts (NRDs) offer numerous opportunities to enjoy and appreciate nature while serving other needs like flood control, wildlife habitat enhancement, soil erosion, and sediment control, or wetland renovation.

The park is a major destination for county-wide outdoor recreation, offering fifty 50-amp RV sites, 10 primitive tent sites, and a public swimming beach. The reservoir provides exceptional public fishing opportunities and is actively stocked with largemouth bass, channel catfish, walleye, bluegill, crappie, and northern pike. Additional amenities supporting both active and passive use include two no-wake boat ramps, playground areas, picnic shelters, a 2.36-mile continuous hiking/biking trail that passes under the highway and dedicated equestrian trails.

Whitetail Wildlife Management Area

Whitetail WMA is a 216-acre tract of state-owned land managed by the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission. Located roughly 3½ miles southwest of Schuyler along County Road 10, it represents the only state-managed regional recreation area in Colfax County. The property consists of 93 acres of heavily wooded Platte River bottomland and 123 acres of dynamic river channels and islands. The WMA is preserved primarily for primitive outdoor activities, offering public access for seasonal hunting, trapping, birdwatching, and wildlife viewing. Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) are managed by the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission's Wildlife Division for the enhancement of wildlife habitat and for public hunting, trapping, and fishing. However, they also provide opportunities for many other activities, including hiking, bird watching, nature study and primitive camping. Motorized vehicles are restricted to roadways, parking areas, or trails designated for such use.

SOURCE: OUTDOORNEBRASKA.GOV

TRAILS

Trails offer something for everyone—hiking, biking, horseback riding, snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, and more activities. Nebraska's state parks and recreation areas offer hundreds of miles of trails.

Several different types of trails are popular across the state and region, including:

- Hiking and Biking Trails
- Water Trails
- Equestrian Trails
- Snowmobile Trails
- Water Trails

Platte River Water Trail

Bordering southern Colfax County, the Platte River Water Trail is a regional paddling and boating corridor accessible just southwest of Schuyler. Characterized by wide, shallow channels and scenic sandbars, the river supports active recreation like kayaking, canoeing, airboating, and tubing. The natural corridor also serves as a key area for seasonal birdwatching and ecotourism. See CHAPTER 13 for more information.

SOURCE: OUTDOORNEBRASKA.GOV/PARKS/EXPLORE-TRAILS

ATTRACTIONS

Leigh Club 91 Golf

Situated in the southwest corner of the Village of Leigh, Club 91 Golf Course is an executive 18-hole course spanning 3,163 yards of grass greens. The facility operates under a unique, multi-jurisdictional model, owned jointly by the communities of Leigh, Clarkson, Howells, and Creston to provide shared regional recreation. The course features a driving range, a practice putting green, and an active clubhouse. Serving multiple towns across northern Colfax and neighboring Platte counties, this regional asset plays a key role in supporting local sports leagues, community socialization, and outdoor recreation.

SOURCE: CLUB91GOLF.NET



LEIGH CLUB 91 GOLF
SOURCE: VILLAGE OF LEIGH

Schuyler/Colfax County Museum

Located at the corner of 11th and B Streets in the heart of downtown Schuyler, the Schuyler/Colfax County Museum stands as the county's primary repository for indoor cultural recreation and heritage tourism. The museum chronicles over a century of regional development, preserving artifacts and curated exhibits that detail the area's rich agricultural, pioneer, and railroad roots. Notable displays highlight the early history of the region, including the paths of Mormon Trail pioneers who traveled along the edge of the county corridor decades before towns were officially established. The museum acts as a critical indoor educational asset, offering local school groups, residents, and visiting historical researchers a direct connection to the county's identity.

SOURCE: SCHUYLERNEBRASKA.NET/RECREATION/PAGE/MUSEUM

Saint Benedict Center and Retreat Grounds

Located at 1126 Road I, just north of the Schuyler city limits, the Saint Benedict Center offers a peaceful, regional destination for passive recreation and mental well-being. Founded by the Missionary Benedictines, this sprawling nonprofit facility features beautifully landscaped acreage that is open to the public. The scenic grounds are anchored by a large reflective pond, open green lawns, outdoor walking paths, and quiet prayer gardens. By providing a serene environment for walking, nature photography, and quiet contemplation, the retreat grounds serve as a highly valued county asset for passive outdoor relaxation and community wellness.

SOURCE: CHRISTTHEKINGPRIORY.COM

Camp Luther of Nebraska

Situated on 160 acres at 1050 Road 4 (northwest of Schuyler), Camp Luther of Nebraska is a premier regional, faith-based outdoor recreation and retreat center. The expansive property encompasses a diverse landscape of rolling hills, prairies, wetlands, and a private lake. As a highly active special-use facility, the camp offers a robust array of amenities including nature hiking trails, archery, watercraft boating, a bouldering wall, disc golf, and a team-building challenge course. With capacity for day trips and overnight lodge retreats, the facility expands Colfax County's capacity for youth programs, outdoor school field trips, and specialized inclusive recreation, most notably its signature "His Kids" retreats designed specifically for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

SOURCE: CAMPLUTHER.ORG

Prairie Winds Wildlife Sanctuary

Located at 120 1st Street on the municipal park grounds in Howells, the Prairie Winds Wildlife Sanctuary serves as a dedicated local nature preserve. Maintained as a passive recreation area within the larger Howells Community Park system, the sanctuary provides a natural landscape buffer focused on habitat preservation. It offers residents and visitors a quiet environment for birdwatching, nature photography, and walking.

SOURCE: HOWELLSNEBRASKA.COM



HOWELLS BALLROOM
SOURCE: VILLAGE OF HOWELLS

Howells Ballroom
Situated at 515 North Street in the village of Howells, the historic Howells Ballroom is a sprawling 10,000-square-foot indoor entertainment and civic facility. Managed by the non-profit Howells Ballroom Foundation, the venue holds a deep-rooted cultural legacy in Colfax County. Originally constructed as a dance hall by the volunteer fire department in 1934, it famously hosted legendary national touring acts like Lawrence Welk. Rebuilt into its current steel structure in 1964, the ballroom boasts a massive 50' x 100' dance floor and can comfortably accommodate seating for up to 800 guests. Complemented by a full commercial kitchen and two large bar service areas, the facility functions as an invaluable regional indoor recreational asset, hosting large-scale wedding receptions, agricultural banquets, holiday festivals, and multi-town civic fundraisers that draw significant visitor spending into the county.

SOURCE: HOWELLSBALLROOM.COM

PARKS & RECREATION GOALS & ACTIONS

GOAL 7.1
Colfax County residents have access to a variety of parks and recreation facilities close to home.

Actions
7.1.1 Discuss drafting a county-wide parks and recreation master plan with municipalities.

7.1.2 Support municipalities in maintaining city and village parks.

7.1.3 Support municipalities in development and/or extension of pedestrian, bike, and equestrian trail systems.

7.1.4 Partner with municipalities to modernize existing local parks by upgrading public restrooms, replacing aging playground equipment, and adding inclusive park features.

7.1.5 Support community efforts to develop contemporary, family-friendly outdoor assets such as community splash pads, pickleball courts, and updated summer swimming pools.

GOAL 7.2
The Colfax County Fairgrounds remains a safe and active facility for county residents.

Actions
7.2.1 Work with the Village of Leigh to ensure the Fairgrounds meet the needs of users while minimizing impacts on neighbors.

GOAL 7.3
Area attractions are well-promoted to local residents and regional visitors.

Actions
7.3.1 Support local and regional marketing of Colfax County attractions.

7.3.2 Partner with regional tourism boards and the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission to actively promote regional outdoor assets, including the Platte River Water Trail and local hunting or fishing opportunities.

GOAL 7.4
Public Lands are maintained for the enjoyment of local residents.

Actions
7.4.1 Work with the State of Nebraska on local access to and maintenance of State Recreation and Wildlife areas.

7.4.2 Maintain a strong partnership with the Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District (LENRD) to support ongoing maintenance, trail connectivity, and fish-stocking programs at the Maple Creek Recreation Area.

7.4.3 Build local administrative capacity or pursue grant-writing resources to actively target state, federal, and non-profit outdoor recreation grants for public land improvements.



SCHUYLER WATER TOWER
SOURCE: MARVIN PLANNING CONSULTANTS

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CHAPTER 8 Public Safety

Public safety is a primary responsibility of local government and key to residents' quality of life. The pattern of future growth and development can make the delivery of public safety services more efficient, or can stretch resources even more than in the past.

This chapter describes current Colfax County law enforcement, fire protection, emergency medical services, and emergency management services.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

The Colfax County Sheriff provides law enforcement across Colfax County, including the municipalities. The Sheriff's Office is located at 411 E 11th Street in Schuyler.

In 2024, the Sheriff's Office had 11 sworn officers on staff, unchanged from 2023 and up from 10 officers in 2022. Colfax County had a rate of 2.5 full-time officers per 1,000 population covered, as calculated by the Nebraska Crime Commission. Colfax County's 2024 rate of 2.5 officers per 1,000 population covered was the highest among surrounding counties. Dodge County had a rate of 2.4, Platte County 2.2, Stanton County 1.5, Cuming County 0.9, and Butler County 0.8.

FIRE PROTECTION

Colfax County is covered by a number of fire departments and districts providing fire protection and response to each community and nearby rural areas.

These first responders include:

- Schuyler Volunteer Fire Department – Provides service to Schuyler and a large portion of central and southern Colfax County.
- Leigh Volunteer Fire Department – Serves Leigh and surrounding rural areas in northwestern Colfax County.
- Clarkson Volunteer Fire Department – Serves Clarkson and rural areas in northern Colfax County.
- Howells Volunteer Fire Department – Covers Howells and rural areas in northeastern Colfax County.
- Dodge County Volunteer Fire Department – Portions of eastern Colfax County fall within its response area near the Dodge County line.

Each department operates within a defined rural fire district, with some districts extending to or slightly across the county line to ensure full emergency coverage for residents and agricultural areas



COLFAX COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
SOURCE: COLFAX COUNTY WEBSITE

STATE FIRE MARSHAL

The State Fire Marshal's office conducts fire safety inspections on most properties open to the public. The State Fire Code used in these inspections is outlined in Title 153, Chapter 1 of the Administrative Code. The fee structure used for these inspections is explained in Title 153, Chapter 20. The annual registration fees for Grain Elevators and Feed Mills and Underground Storage Tanks are explained in Titles 161 and 159 respectively.

With a few exceptions, the deputy will leave a fee card after doing an inspection. The owner/operator sends the card to the Lincoln office, with a check or money order for the indicated amount. If any deficiencies are found during the inspection process, written orders will be mailed to the facility. A follow-up inspection may be scheduled to ensure the deficiencies are corrected. If it is necessary to do a third inspection, an additional fee is charged. Once payment is received and any deficiencies are corrected a Certificate of Occupancy is issued.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

FIRE DISTRICTS

Several local fire districts also provide Emergency Medical Services (EMS). EMS response areas may be the same as the fire response areas or may cover a larger area. These include:

- Schuyler Fire & Rescue / Schuyler Fire Protection District
- Clarkson Rescue Squad
- Howells Rescue Squad
- Leigh Rescue Unit
- Dodge Rescue Squad, which serves part of eastern Colfax County.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Emergency management involves the coordination and integration of activities necessary to build, sustain, and improve the capabilities to prepare for, respond to, recover from, or mitigate against threatened or actual disasters or emergencies, regardless of cause. This includes man-made and natural disasters. The discipline and profession of emergency management applies science, technology, planning, and management to deal with extreme events which can injure or kill large numbers of people, do extensive damage to property, and disrupt community life.

Emergency management is integrated at the local, state, and federal levels. All disasters start at the local level. When a local disaster declaration is made because local resources have been overwhelmed, a request may be made for assistance from the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA). When state resources become overwhelmed, a state disaster may be declared and the governor can request assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Emergency response operates within the principles of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the Incident Command Systems (ICS).

Colfax County's Emergency Management office operates within a statewide framework within which communities work to reduce vulnerability to hazards and cope with disasters:

- Mitigation: identify hazards and activities to prevent/ lessen the impact of a disaster on lives and property
- Preparedness: assist individuals and communities take steps to be ready for a disaster
- Response: support and coordinate local agency emergency response activities
- Recovery: work to restore public services and return the community to normal.

For more information on the Mitigation element of emergency management in Colfax County, see Chapter 12.

HOWELLS VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT
SOURCE: VILLAGE OF HOWELLS

PUBLIC SAFETY GOALS AND ACTIONS

GOAL 8.1

Law Enforcement services are provided throughout the Colfax County.

Actions

8.1.1 Carefully review new development projects for potential impacts on public safety.

8.1.2 Support working cooperatively between municipalities and the Colfax County Sheriff for law enforcement.

8.1.3 Continue to regulate and mitigate nuisance and code enforcement cases.

GOAL 8.2

Fire Protection services are provided throughout Colfax County.

Actions

8.2.1 Carefully review new development projects for potential impacts on fire protection and response.

8.2.2 Continue to support volunteer fire departments.

8.2.3 Encourage creation of local jobs where first responders can be available for response.

GOAL 8.3

Emergency Medical Services (EMS) are provided throughout Colfax County.

Actions

8.3.1 Carefully review new development projects for potential impacts on emergency medical response.

8.3.2 Continue support for Emergency Medical Services.

GOAL 8.4

Emergency Management services are provided throughout Colfax County.

Actions

8.4.1 Review new development projects for potential emergency management impacts.

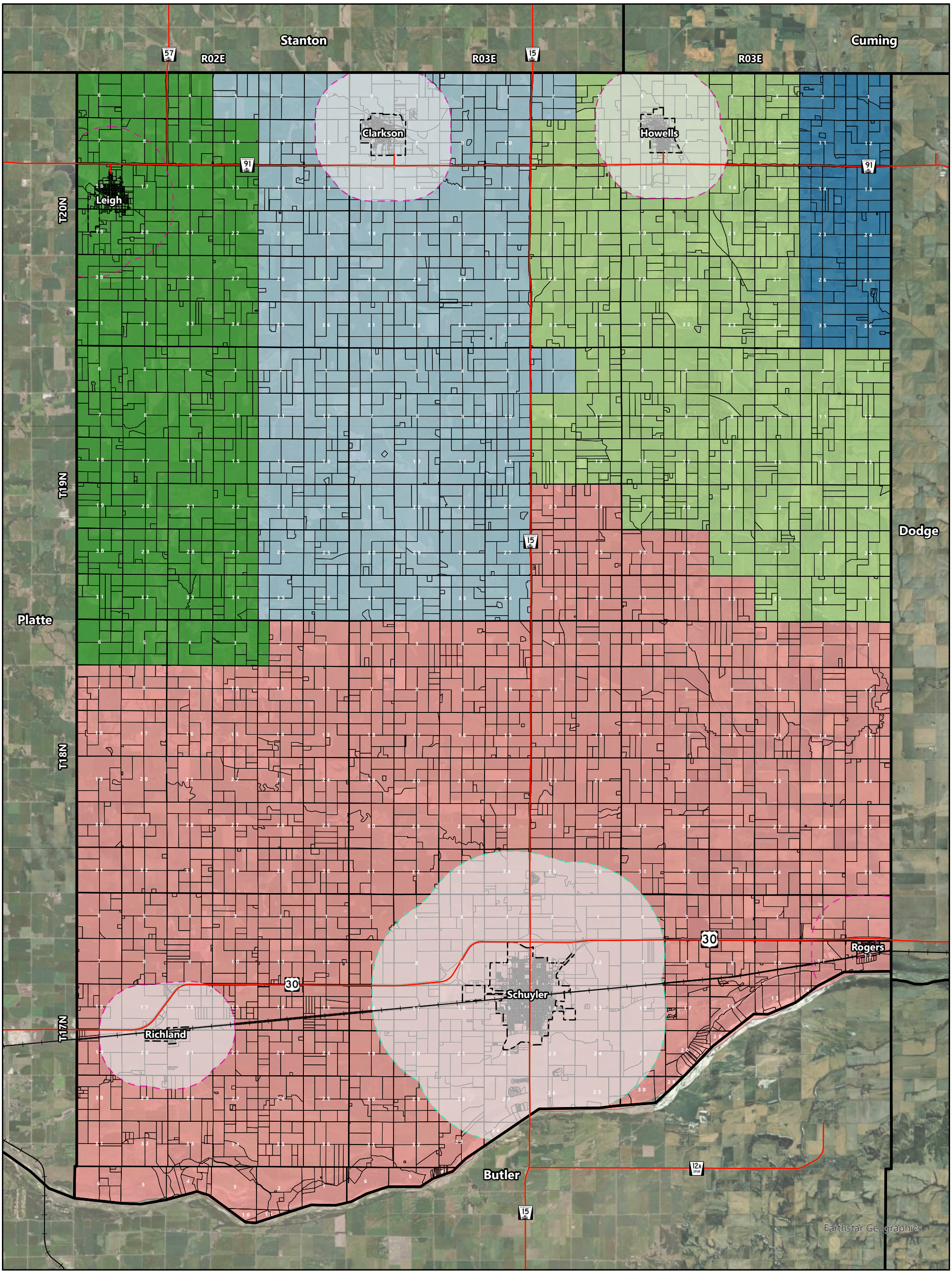
8.4.2 Continue support for Emergency Management Director to provide services countywide.

8.4.3 Continue to participate in emergency management programs and exercises.



CLARKSON VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT
SOURCE: CITY OF CLARKSON

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LEGEND

- Railroads
- Highways
- County Boundaries
- Municipal Limits
- 2-Mile Planning Area (Schuyler)
- 1-Mile Planning Area (With Zoning)
- 1-Mile Planning Area (No Zoning)
- Township and Range
- Parcels

Fire District

- Clarkson FD
- Dodge County FD
- Howells FD
- Leigh FD
- Schuyler FD

COLFAX COUNTY NEBRASKA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

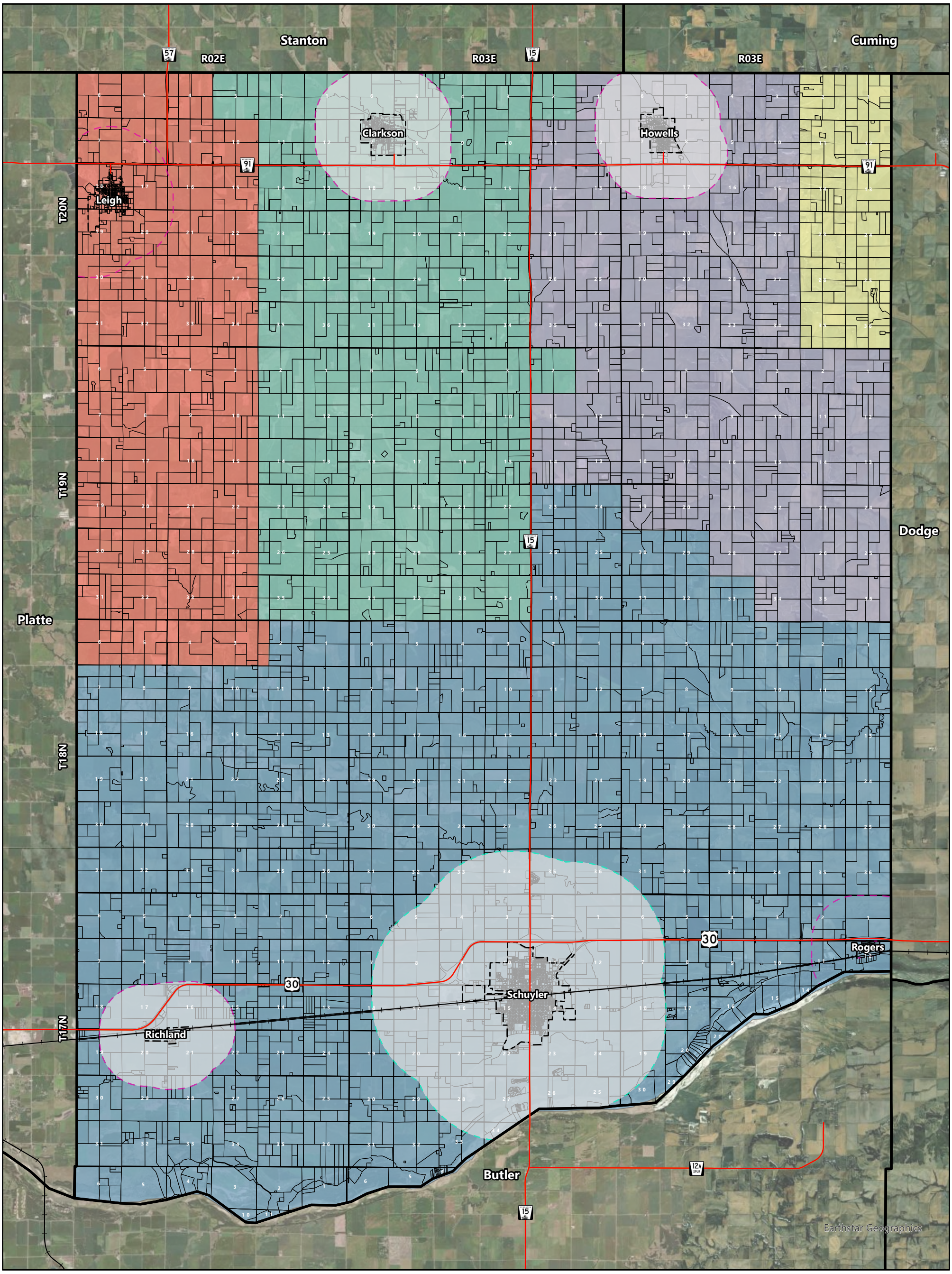
FIGURE 8.1: FIRE DISTRICTS

MARVIN PLANNING CONSULTANTS
Specializing in Municipal, County and Neighborhood Planning

PROJECTION: NE State Plane (Ft.)
DATUM: NAD 83
DATE: 9.24.26

N

0 0.02 0.04 0.09 Miles



LEGEND

- Railroads
- Highways
- County Boundaries
- Municipal Limits
- 2-Mile Planning Area (Schuyler)
- 1-Mile Planning Area (With Zoning)
- 1-Mile Planning Area (No Zoning)
- Township and Range
- Parcels

EMS District

- Clarkson Ambulance
- Dodge County Ambulance
- Howells Ambulance
- Leigh Ambulance
- Schuyler Ambulance

COLFAX COUNTY NEBRASKA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

FIGURE 8.2: EMS DISTRICTS

MARVIN PLANNING CONSULTANTS
Specializing in Municipal, County and Neighborhood Planning

PROJECTION: NE State Plane (Ft.)
DATUM: NAD 83
DATE: 5.13.26

N

0 0.02 0.04 0.09 Miles



CHAPTER 9 Public Health

Public health addresses both maintaining the health of residents and the provision of health care. According to research sponsored by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Colfax County is rated in two areas:

- Population Health and Well-being: Population health and well-being is something we create as a society, not something an individual can attain in a clinic or be responsible for alone. Health is more than being free from disease and pain; health is the ability to thrive. Well-being covers both quality of life and the ability of people and communities to contribute to the world. Population health involves optimal physical, mental, spiritual, and social well-being.
- Community Conditions: Community conditions include the social and economic factors, physical environment, and health infrastructure in which people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age. Community conditions are also referred to as the social determinants of health.

Population Health and Well-being

LENGTH OF LIFE

Colfax County has a lower premature death rate (4,600 per 100,000) than the Nebraska average (6,900), and the national rate (8,100). Life expectancy in the county is 82.6 years, above the state average of 78.4 and above the national average of 77.6 Premature age-adjusted mortality is also lower in Colfax County, at 230 per 100,000, compared to 340 statewide and 390 nationally. Child and infant mortality rates were not disclosed for Colfax County.

QUALITY OF LIFE

Colfax County's quality of life indicators are generally similar to or better than state and national averages. Residents report 3.7 poor physical health days per month, the same as Nebraska and below the national average of 4.5 days, while poor mental health days average 3.9 per month compared to 4.6 statewide and 5.7 nationally. Low birth weight is 5%, below the 8% rate for both Nebraska and the United States. About 20% of residents report being in poor or fair health, compared to 16% statewide and 20% nationally. Frequent physical distress affects 13% of residents and frequent mental distress affects 14%, while adult obesity is 39%. Feelings of loneliness are reported by 32% of residents, close to the Nebraska rate of 31% and below the national rate of 34%.

Community Conditions

HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE

Colfax County's health infrastructure shows both strengths and areas of concern. The county has a food environment index of 8.1, higher than Nebraska at 7.7 and the national score of 7.6. Preventable hospital stays are also lower in Colfax County, at 1,086 compared to 2,494 statewide and 2,769 nationally. Access to exercise opportunities is available to 77% of residents, below Nebraska at 85% and the US at 84%. Access to some healthcare providers remains limited, with one mental health provider for every 5,410 residents

and one dentist for every 5,280 residents, both well above state and national ratios. About 42% of residents receive a flu vaccination, compared to 47% statewide and 44% nationally, while 14% of residents are uninsured, compared to 7% in Nebraska and 9% nationally.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The physical environment in Colfax County is generally favorable. Severe housing problems affect 9% of residents, below Nebraska at 12% and the national rate of 17%. Air pollution levels are 6.8, compared to 6.0 statewide and 7.3 nationally, while broadband access reaches 89% of residents. The county has six libraries, and no drinking water violations were reported. About 29% of residents have access to parks, below Nebraska at 53% and the US at 51%. Around 79% of workers drive alone to work, slightly above the state rate of 77%, while 19% have a long commute, the same as Nebraska and well below the national rate of 37%. Homeownership is also relatively high at 76%, compared to 67% statewide and 65% nationally.

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS

Social and economic conditions in Colfax County are mixed. About 77% of residents have completed high school, below Nebraska at 92% and the national rate of 89%, while 51% have attended some college, compared to 72% statewide and 68% nationally. Unemployment remains low at 2.6%, below both the state and national rates. Income inequality is also lower in Colfax County, at 3.1 compared to 4.2 in Nebraska and 4.9 nationally. About 12% of children live in poverty, slightly above the state rate of 11% but below the national rate of 16%. The county has 14.2 social associations per 10,000 residents, higher than both Nebraska and the US, while the child care cost burden is 27%, slightly below state and national levels.

SOURCE: COUNTYHEALTHRANKINGS.ORG

Public Health

The East Central District Health Department (ECDHD) serves Boone, Colfax, Nance, and Platte Counties. The department provides immunizations, health education, disease monitoring, environmental health services, and emergency preparedness programs. ECDHD also works with local communities and healthcare providers on public health needs throughout the four-county area. The department is located at 4321 41st Avenue in Columbus.

ECDHD conducts a Community Health Assessment (CHA) and Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) every two years. The CHA is a process of gathering and interpreting information from multiple and diverse sources in order to develop a deep understanding of the health and wellbeing of a community/jurisdiction. The CHIP—a community-wide plan that outlines the priority health factors realized in the CHA—is developed based upon the CHA. The CHIP includes community wide goals and objectives for addressing CHA priorities and applies evidence-based public health programs and strategies to address health priorities in the CHA.

Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA)

The 2024 East Central District Comprehensive Community Health Needs Assessment reviewed health conditions and needs across Boone, Colfax, Nance, and Platte Counties. The assessment used existing health data, key informant interviews, focus groups, and a community survey to identify concerns and priorities across the district. The survey received 727 responses, with about 27% coming from Colfax County.

Community health concerns that emerged consistently across multiple data sources include:

ACCESS TO CHILDCARE

Access to childcare was the highest-ranked concern among Colfax County survey respondents. An estimated 56% of children in need of childcare in Colfax County did not have access, one of the highest rates in the district. Interviews also pointed to a shortage of childcare for families working second and third shifts, sometimes requiring parents to work opposite schedules so one parent can stay home with their children.

MENTAL HEALTH AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Mental health was the second-highest priority in Colfax County. The assessment found that Colfax County has limited access to mental health professionals, and Colfax and Platte County respondents were more likely than residents of other counties to rate their access to mental health services as very low. Interviews also noted a lack of local counseling and family therapy, particularly services available in languages other than English.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL USE

Drug and alcohol use ranked third among Colfax County respondents and was also the third-highest concern across the East Central District. The assessment included a districtwide focus group with people who use substances or are in recovery and identified substance use as an ongoing health concern for the region.

ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE

Access to healthcare ranked fourth in Colfax County. The assessment identifies all of Colfax County as a primary care and dental Health Professional Shortage Area. About 30% of Colfax County adults had not received a routine checkup during the previous year, and 59% had visited a dentist, below the district and state rates. The assessment also reported lower health insurance coverage in Colfax County and noted that access to dental providers is particularly limited.

HOUSING

Housing and homelessness tied for fifth among Colfax County respondents. Although Colfax County had a lower share of cost-burdened households than the district overall, interviews described a shortage of available housing and concerns about affordability and housing quality. Some residents reported that limited options have resulted in families sharing homes or renting individual rooms.

PHYSICAL HEALTH

The assessment also identified physical health and chronic disease as concerns. Colfax County had the highest obesity rate among the four counties included in the assessment at the time, and interviews cited work schedules, lack of energy, cost, and motivation as barriers to physical activity. The assessment also found higher rates of several chronic conditions in Colfax County, including heart disease, hypertension, diabetes, stroke, kidney disease, and COPD, compared with the rest of the district.

CHI Health Schuyler

CHI Health Schuyler is a 25-bed Critical Access Hospital located at 104 West 17th Street in Schuyler. The hospital opened in 1953 and serves Schuyler, Clarkson, Howells, Leigh, and the surrounding rural area. It became a Critical Access Hospital in 2000. The hospital offers the following services:

- 24-Hour Emergency Care
- Inpatient Medical and Surgical Care
- Outpatient Surgery and Observation
- Laboratory and Diagnostic Services
- Rehabilitation Services
- Mammography
- Specialty Clinics

Specialty providers also visit the hospital for services such as podiatry, pulmonology, endocrinology, ear, nose and throat care, psychiatry, and vascular care. CHI Health also operates family medicine clinics in Schuyler, Clarkson, and Howells.

SOURCE: CHIHEALTH.COM/LOCATIONS/CHI-HEALTH-SCHUYLER

Regional Medical Facilities

The statewide trauma program ensures Nebraska hospitals meet the standards to be designated as a trauma center. Trauma designation is based on the resources a hospital has available and by successfully meeting regulatory requirements.

The nearest Level III trauma center is Columbus Community Hospital in Columbus, with another Level III trauma center at Faith Regional Health Services in Norfolk. Level I trauma centers are available in Omaha at Nebraska Medicine and CHI Health Creighton University Medical Center–Bergan Mercy.

COMMUNITY HEALTH AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Behavioral Health Services

CHI Health Schuyler provides behavioral health services in Colfax County, including tele-psychiatry by appointment. The hospital also works with the Colfax County Behavioral Health Coalition on mental health awareness, substance use prevention, Mental Health First Aid, and referrals to behavioral health services.

SOURCE: BVBH.NET

Clarkson Community Care Center

Clarkson Community Care Center is located at 212 Sunrise Drive in Clarkson. The facility provides skilled nursing, assisted living, and rehabilitation services for residents of Clarkson and the surrounding area.

SOURCE: HEALTH.USNEWS.COM

Colfax County Senior Center

Colfax County Senior Center is located at 124 East 12th Street in Schuyler. The Center provides congregate and home-delivered meals, health clinics, community programs, social activities, and other services for older residents.

SOURCE: SCHUYLERNEBRASKA.NET/ABOUT-US/PAGE/SENIOR-CENTER

LEVERS OF CHANGE

Social determinants of health are the conditions where people live, work, learn, and play. These account for 75-80% of what determines how healthy we are. These factors include:

- Economic Stablity
- Education access and quality
- Health care access and quality
- Neighborhood and built environment
- Social and community context

Levers of change are the specific policies, investments, and practices that shift the social, economic, and physical conditions in which people live.

SMART GROWTH FOR PUBLIC HEALTH

"Smart Growth" is a simple term but a complex idea. It refers to a set of development principles outlined since the mid-1990s, to support walkable neighborhoods, a range of housing choices, a mix of land uses, participatory planning, and revitalization of neighborhoods. These ideas apply across the entire Comprehensive Plan—this section emphasizes the relationship of Smart Growth principles to public health.

Design for Health

On a local scale, Smart Growth advocates for higher density. More people can afford homes when local leaders allow a mix of housing types and size, facilitate conservation development, or direct growth away from prime farmland and environmentally sensitive lands to developed cities and villages with municipal services.

In addition to affordability, a more diverse mix of lot sizes and a more connected grid street and block network make it easier to construct a complete sidewalk system, increasing walkability. Connectivity also improves bicycling and public transit efforts. (See Chapter 14 Transportation for more discussion of multimodal networks.)

Development Regulations

While the official state building code is the State Legislature's domain, implementation and enforcement of building codes has a significant impact on public health. Zoning regulations have a great impact as well, from an individual building site to the overall functionality of Colfax County. Zoning began in the early 18th century as an effort to protect public health, safety, and welfare. While zoning separates noxious uses, poorly written regulations can raise significant barriers to building thriving downtowns and close-knit neighborhoods.

Land use regulations – zoning and subdivision codes – should be carefully evaluated and modernized to allow traditional neighborhood development patterns. Narrow lots on a grid of streets, alleys, and sidewalks should be a default choice for new development. Traditional as well as innovative mixed-use development should be an option, especially as property developed in the 1950s and on becomes ready for redevelopment.

Land Conservation

Farmland, forests, and wildlife areas serve many important purposes, from watershed and species protection to enhancing the long-term future of production agriculture. Directing growth into existing urban areas allows these conservation lands to continue adding value to the area. Also, new areas will be needed for parks and recreation along with new growth. (See more information in the Parks and Recreation section of Chapter 7.)

Infrastructure and Financing

Smart Growth encourages a shift in policy for infrastructure and public finance. Investments should focus on existing built up areas, rather than subsidizing sprawl. Aging streets, water and sewer lines, and sidewalks, should have priority for capital improvements as well as regular maintenance. At the same time, increased traffic on gravel roads, and further spread of individual wells and onsite wastewater treatment (septic) systems, should not be encouraged. Shifting policy in this manner helps not only protect public health, but encourage healthy living for all residents.

Transportation Policy

Multimodal transportation looks at all aspects of moving people and goods. This includes walking and biking, as well as roads, rail, and air travel, through more compact development, creating complete streets, and easing healthier forms of travel. City leadership may also want to consider promoting less-polluting motor vehicles. (See also Chapter 14 Transportation.)

SOURCE: INTEGRATING PLANNING AND PUBLIC HEALTH: TOOLS AND STRATEGIES TO CREATE HEALTHY PLACES, APA PAS 539/540, 2006; FRUMKIN, FRANK, JACKSON, URBAN SPRAWL AND PUBLIC HEALTH: DESIGNING, PLANNING, AND BUILDING FOR HEALTHY COMMUNITIES, ISLAND PRESS, 2004, AND EPA.GOV/SMARTGROWTH.

ACTIVE LIVING

Active living is about incorporating physical activity and movement into everyday activities. For example, taking the stairs instead of the elevator or biking to work are part of an active lifestyle. Increasing daily physical activity can prevent obesity and promote health for people of all ages.

Careful planning for transportation and infrastructure promotes active lifestyles and creates vibrant and attractive communities. Activity living is about making the healthy choice the easy choice.

Recreation

As the National Recreation and Park Association notes, "The nation's public parks and recreation are leaders in improving the overall health and wellness of the nation. They are essential partners in combating some of

the most complicated challenges our country faces – poor nutrition, hunger, obesity, and physical inactivity. Park and recreation agencies effectively improve health outcomes and thus should be supported through national and community level funding and policies that enable them to continue to expand their efforts in making a positive change in the health and wellness of our nation."

SOURCE: NRPA.ORG/OUR-WORK/THREE-PILLARS/ROLE-OF-PARKS-AND-RECREATION-ON-HEALTH-AND-WELLNESS

Walkability

Americans are putting an increasing value on walkability. In 2023, the National Association of Realtors released a survey revealing Americans living in walkable communities report a higher quality of life. Sidewalks and multi-use trails not only help residents improve quality of life but also help improve quality of public health.

Walk Score data is a tool to measure walkability of a community. Schuyler has a walkable score of 58 out of 100 and a bike score of 50 out of 100. The walk score is considered Somewhat Walkable, meaning some errands can be accomplished on foot.

Complete Streets policies, a robust sidewalk program, enhancements to development requirements, shared use agreements for school recreation facilities, and support for transit programs all can add incentives for making the healthy choice the easy choice.

SOURCE: WALKSCORE.COM

LOCAL FOOD

Developing and promoting sustainable local food systems builds on long-standing Public Health nutrition goals and programs. Food systems comprise the processes involved in getting food from farm to table to disposal, including production, processing, distributing, preparing, marketing, accessing, consuming, and disposing. Food systems also involve people, farms, businesses, communities, public health interventions, and public policies.

Although large discount supermarkets may offer food and retail goods at lower prices, consolidation may also lead to reduced physical access to healthy food, especially in low-income and minority neighborhoods. It may be more difficult for older adults to drive across town and navigate a large parking lot, than to visit the smaller neighborhood grocery. Too often, the only neighborhood shopping options become dollar stores, drug stores, or convenience stores. Extending support for small, corner-type stores and farmers markets can give consumers expanded choices for grocery shopping.

Food Deserts

Food deserts are geographic areas where residents have few or no convenient options to secure affordable and healthy foods—especially fresh fruits and vegetables. Everyday hurdles can make it harder for children, families, and communities to grow healthy and strong. In general, food deserts are more common in areas where residents have lower income levels and higher rates of unemployment.

The USDA Economic Research Service has studied areas across the country with low income and low access to supermarkets, supercenters, grocery stores, and other sources of healthy and affordable food.

SOURCE: ERS.USDA.GOV/DATA-PRODUCTS/FOOD-ACCESS-RESEARCH-ATLAS

Direct-To-Consumer Food

Direct-to-consumer marketing, including farmers' markets and community-supported agriculture, is growing rapidly in the United States.

Community Supported Agriculture (CSAs)

Community supported agriculture is a farming model that connects consumers with producers. CSA is a way for consumers to invest in a farm by purchasing produce shares at the beginning of the year. In return, typically consumers receive a weekly box of produce during the season.

The CSA model is built on fairness and transparency for both the farmer and the consumer. The model allows smaller farms to support themselves without directly competing with large-scale crop cultivation. Many CSA farms prioritize organic produce and do not use large-scale agricultural machinery or pesticides and herbicides.

A CSA provides financial security for the farmer, as well as mutual support between growers and consumers. Farmers can also connect with consumers looking to support environmentally friendly practices or who are particularly interested in supporting their local community.

SOURCE: NAL.USDA.GOV/FARMS-AND-AGRICULTURAL-PRODUCTION-SYSTEMS/COMMUNITY-SUPPORTED-AGRICULTURE

Farmers Markets

Farmers markets are great places to discover fresh, nutritious, locally grown foods — and for connecting with the people who grow them. The USDA defines a farmers market as "a multi-stall market at which farmer-producers sell agricultural products directly to the general public at a central or fixed location, particularly fresh fruits and vegetables." Today, there is a growing interest in "local" foods, not only as a healthy option but also to know where one's food comes from and support neighbors who produce fresh foods. In Colfax County, Schuyler hosts a farmers market on Thursday evenings.

Zoning and other local regulations should be regularly reviewed to assure that Farmers Markets and farms stands can operate, while protecting health and safety.

SOURCE: FNS.USDA.GOV/FARMERSMARKET

TELEHEALTH

New innovations in health care have the potential to improve and save lives. Telehealth is one such innovation that has grown over the last few years. It is essential to improve access to quality health care and services, especially in rural communities and especially for individuals with limited mobility.

Telehealth practices can enhance efficiency and convenience while reducing travel times for both patients and practitioners. Telehealth also builds on a seamless health care experience, allowing doctors to monitor patient progress remotely.

While telehealth may produce cost reductions in providing health service, the practice is highly dependent on availability of universal affordable broadband service.

LIVABILITY

Livable communities are welcoming for people of all ages. A livable community provides safe, walkable streets, age-friendly housing, access to services, and opportunities for residents of all ages to participate in community live. The AARP Livable Communities initiative supports the efforts of neighborhoods, towns, cities, and rural areas to be great places for people of all ages.

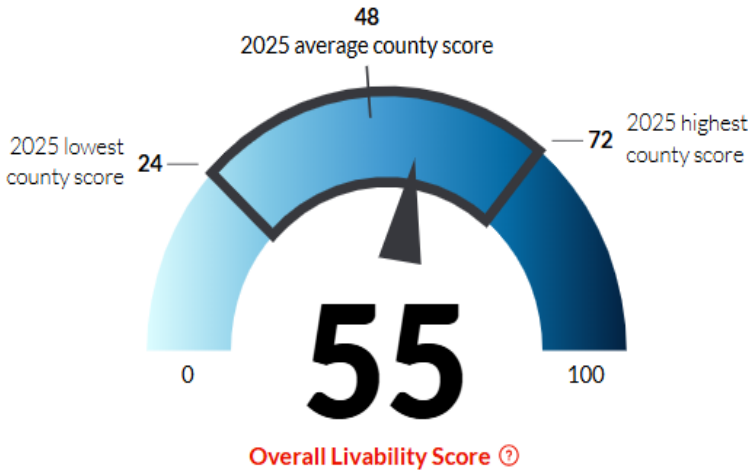
LIVABILITY INDEX

Colfax County earns an Overall Livability Score of 55 out of 100 on the 2025 AARP Livability Index. This is above the 2025 average county score of 48 and places Colfax County in the top half of communities in the United States (Figure 9.1).

The AARP Livability Index looks at seven areas that affect quality of life: housing, neighborhood, transportation, environment, health, engagement, and opportunity. Together, these measures provide a broad look at how well a community supports residents of different ages and stages of life. Leigh had the highest score among the communities shown at 57, followed by Clarkson at 56, Richland Township at 52, and Howells at 51. All four were listed in the top half of communities in the United States. Rogers received a score of 46, slightly below the 2025 average city score of 48. Overall, most of the communities shown scored at or above the average for their community type.

SOURCE: AARP.ORG/LIVABLE-COMMUNITIES/

FIGURE 9.1 – AARP Livability Index



The overall Livability Index™ score for **Colfax County, Nebraska** is **55**.

This is in the **top half** of **communities** in the U.S.

SOURCE: AARP LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

PUBLIC HEALTH GOALS AND ACTIONS

GOAL 9.1

Colfax County supports access to healthcare and mental health services.

Actions

9.1.1 Support CHI Health Schuyler, the East Central District Health Department, local clinics, and regional healthcare providers serving Colfax County.

9.1.2 Support efforts to recruit and retain healthcare and mental health professionals.

9.1.3 Encourage better access to mental health and substance abuse services.

9.1.4 Support telehealth and other options that help residents reach specialty care.

GOAL 9.2

Colfax County supports opportunities for healthy and active living.

Actions

9.2.1 Maintain and improve parks, trails, and recreation facilities.

9.2.2 Look for opportunities to expand indoor and year-round recreation.

9.2.3 Improve walking and biking connections throughout the community.

9.2.4 Work with schools, healthcare providers, and local organizations on recreation and wellness programs.

GOAL 9.3

Colfax County supports services that help residents meet everyday health and community needs.

Actions

9.3.1 Encourage more childcare options for local families.

9.3.2 Work with local and regional partners to improve transportation for healthcare and other essential needs.

9.3.3 Consider accessibility and community health when planning future public facilities and improvements.

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CHAPTER 10 Communications, Utilities & Energy

Communications, utilities, and energy are essential local infrastructure. This chapter describes each of these service industries as they apply to Colfax County.

Communications include traditional media such as newspapers, television and radio, and telephone services, as well as new media including broadband internet. Utilities include public and private services including electricity and natural gas, water, and wastewater services. Energy includes both traditional carbon-based fuels and renewable energy sources such as wind, solar, and biofuels.

COMMUNICATIONS

Dynamic communities rely on ever-evolving communication services, including print, over-the-air, and tele-communications.

NEWSPAPERS

There are currently 16 newspapers publishing daily or semi-daily print editions in Nebraska. Local newspapers continue to serve an important role in providing community news, public notices, school activities, local government updates, and event information throughout Colfax County. Newspapers serving the county include the Colfax County Press in Clarkson, the Howells Journal in Howells, the Leigh World in Leigh, and the Schuyler Sun in Schuyler. These publications generally operate on weekly publication schedules and provide coverage for their respective communities and surrounding rural areas.

SOURCE: NEBPRESS.COM

In addition to local newspapers published within Colfax County, residents also receive and access regional newspapers published outside the county. These publications provide broader regional, state, national, agricultural, and business coverage. Commonly circulated newspapers may include publications from nearby communities such as Columbus, Norfolk, Omaha, and Lincoln, depending on distribution areas and subscription demand.

TELEVISION & RADIO

For broadcast marketing purposes, Colfax County is assigned to the eastern Nebraska internal state region, Omaha designated market area (Nielsen). These areas include a large portion of western Iowa and eastern Nebraska.

Residents of Colfax County are served by several local and regional radio stations originating from nearby communities throughout eastern and central Nebraska. Stations from Columbus, Norfolk, Fremont, Omaha, Lincoln, and surrounding communities provide coverage to the county.

TELEPHONE & INTERNET

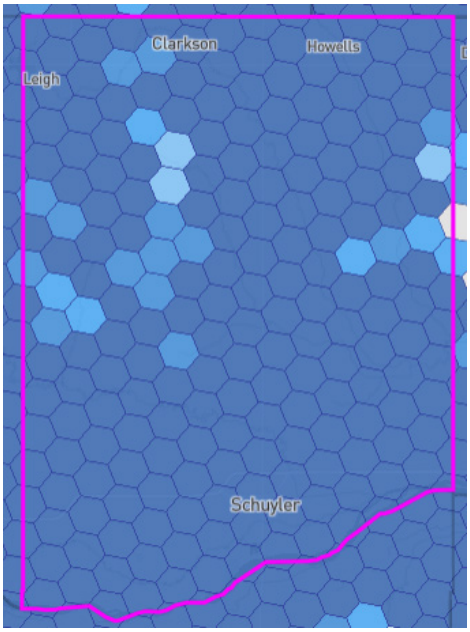
According to the US Census Bureau's ACS estimates, in 2024, there were 6 housing units in Colfax County with no access to a telephone.

The ACS reported 3,307 households in the county have an internet subscription, including 3,108 with a cellular data plan, 2,134 with cable, fiber optic, or DSL hardwire, and 728 with satellite internet service (2024).

Qwest-Centurylink is the Incumbent Local Exchange Carrier (ILEC) for telephone service in Colfax County, including the Schuyler area.

Other telephone exchanges serving portions of Colfax County include the Clarkson, Leigh, Howells, and Schuyler exchange areas. The northwestern portion of the county is served by Frontier Communications, while other areas are served by additional regional telecommunications providers depending on exchange boundaries and infrastructure availability.

Figure 10.1 – BROADBAND AVAILABILITY



SOURCE: FCC NATIONAL BROADBAND MAP

BROADBAND

Broadband is essential to local development. The Nebraska Broadband Availability Map indicates about 89% of households in Colfax County are served by broadband, with some areas of much lower availability (Figure 10.1).

The Schuyler area and portions of central Colfax County are primarily served by Qwest / CenturyLink infrastructure, while the northwestern portion of the county, including areas near Clarkson and Leigh, is served by Frontier Communications. Wireless and cellular internet services are also available throughout much of the county through major mobile carriers. Satellite and Starlink services continue to provide additional internet access options in rural areas where wired broadband infrastructure may be limited.

Additional communication and utility services within Colfax County continue to evolve as providers expand broadband infrastructure, wireless coverage, and fiber optic networks throughout rural Nebraska. Ongoing improvements to internet speeds and service reliability remain important for agriculture, education, healthcare, business operations, remote work opportunities, and emergency communications. Future infrastructure investments may include additional fiber expansion, upgraded wireless infrastructure, improved rural broadband access, and expanded cellular coverage in underserved areas. Emerging technologies such as low-earth orbit satellite internet systems, including Starlink, may also continue to improve internet accessibility for rural households and agricultural operations throughout the county.

CELL TOWERS

Wireless cellular service is established in the area. New technologies, such as 5G cellular service, generally require a larger number of shorter wireless towers. Colfax County and its communities will likely be faced with an increasing number of requests to approve cellular and broadband antennae and towers. These requests must be reviewed in accordance with Federal Communications Commissions (FCC) rules and regulations, as well as the laws of the State of Nebraska. The Federal Communications Act also preempts local decisions premised directly or indirectly on the environmental effects of radio frequency (RF) emissions, assuming the provider is in compliance with the Commission's RF rules.

Towers meeting certain height and location criteria must also pass Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) review. This ensures safe aircraft operations.

The FCC sets a "shot clock" as a reasonable period of time within which a wireless infrastructure siting application must be acted upon. As of 2018, the FCC adopted 60 days for review of collocation of small wireless facilities and 90 days for review of attachment of small wireless facilities to a new structure. A 150-day shot clock applies for review of other new wireless facility construction.

While local zoning regulations may apply standards similar to other similar structures, including aesthetics, zoning may not "materially inhibit" provision of services. Some jurisdictions even require "stealth" cell towers, which are designed to better match trees or structures such as silos, to reduce environmental impacts. Applications may be reviewed in a similar process as other projects,

so long as the shot clock is maintained. Any adverse decision, however, must be accompanied by a substantial written record.

UTILITIES

Public and private utilities provide power, heat, and water to homes, businesses, and public places. They also treat wastewater, solid waste, and recyclables.

POWER AND NATURAL GAS

Natural Gas

According to the US Census Bureau's ACS estimates, approximately 37.4% of housing units in Colfax County are heated by utility gas, compared to 58% statewide. Approximately 18.2% use LP gas (propane), compared to 8% statewide. About 40.2% use electric heat, compared to 32% statewide.

Natural gas and utility services within Colfax County are provided by a combination of regional utility providers serving both incorporated communities and rural areas. Black Hills Energy provides natural gas service to portions of the county, including Schuyler and surrounding areas where utility gas infrastructure is available. Rural portions of the county outside of municipal utility service areas commonly rely on LP gas (propane) systems for residential and agricultural heating needs.

SOURCE: NEBRASKAMAP.GOV

Electric

Cornhusker Public Power District operates an electric transmission and distribution system serving portions of Colfax County and surrounding areas. The system includes transmission lines, substations, and distribution infrastructure designed to provide reliable electric service to residential, agricultural, commercial, and industrial customers throughout the region. The interconnected transmission system supports reliability, operational flexibility, and continued electric service throughout the district's service area.

SOURCE: CORNHUSKER-POWER.COM

Other electric providers serving portions of Colfax County include Omaha Public Power District (OPPD), which serves portions of the eastern county area, along with several municipal electric systems operated by incorporated communities throughout the county. These local municipal systems provide electric service within their respective community boundaries and supplement rural electric service provided by Cornhusker Public Power District.

Commercial propane suppliers serving Colfax County and the surrounding area include the Schuyler Cooperative Association, which provides propane and agricultural energy services within the region, Bomgaars in Schuyler, which offers LP propane exchange and related fuel products, and Ag 91 Energy in Clarkson, which provides propane and fuel services throughout portions of eastern and central Nebraska. Propane remains an important energy source for rural residential, agricultural, and commercial uses throughout the county, particularly in areas outside of municipal natural gas service boundaries.

Propane

Propane is an important energy source for many homes, farms, and businesses throughout Colfax County, particularly in rural areas where natural gas service is not available. Local and regional propane suppliers provide fuel for residential heating, agricultural operations, grain drying, and commercial uses. Propane providers serving Colfax County include:

- Schuyler COOP – Fuel Mart – Provides fuel and energy services in the Schuyler area and surrounding rural portions of Colfax County.
- Schuyler Cooperative Association – Serves agricultural producers and rural customers in the Schuyler and Colfax County area with fuel and related agricultural services.
- AG 91 Energy, LLC – Based in Clarkson and provides propane and fuel delivery to residential, agricultural, and commercial customers throughout the surrounding area.
- Cooperative Supply, Inc. – Provides propane and other energy products to agricultural, residential, and commercial customers in northeastern Nebraska, including portions of Colfax County.
- Regional propane suppliers and independent fuel dealers – Additional regional companies provide propane delivery throughout Colfax County, particularly to rural residences, farms, and agricultural operations.

EV CHARGING

As the number of Electric Vehicles (EVs) on the road increases, annual demands for electricity to charge them will grow as well. There will be increasing demands on electrical infrastructure as home and public chargers are added to existing loads.

Additional information on traditional and renewable energy generation is presented later in this chapter. Additional information on EVs is presented in Chapter 13 Transportation.

DOMESTIC WATER

Drinking water and irrigation water in rural Colfax County is typically supplied by groundwater using individual or shared wells. Nebraska state laws have provided for protection of groundwater supply under a permitting system for public water

suppliers and industrial water users, along with a centralized repository of information about groundwater wells. The Nebraska Department of Water, Energy, and Environment's Registered Groundwater Wells Database listed 2,498 records for wells entered since 1969 in Colfax County (as of 2026) aside from public water supply wells regulated by the US Environmental Protection Agency.

SOURCE: DNR.NEBRASKA.GOV/GROUNDWATER

Each of the incorporated municipalities in Colfax County provide domestic drinking water with groundwater from public water supply wells.

According to the State of Nebraska, there are several non-community water systems active in Colfax County:

- Camp Luther of Nebraska Inc.
- Centennial Park
- Colfax County District 24 – Fisher's
- Didier's Grocery 129
- St. Benedict Center
- The Scalehouse Inc.
- Cargill Meat Solutions & Corp
- Colfax County District 1 – Richland
- Colfax County District 1-R
- Colfax County District 5-R
- Husker Coop Fertilizer
- Papa Mike's
- Spencer Foods Inc.

SOURCE: EPA.GOV/GROUND-WATER-AND-DRINKING-WATER AND DRINKINGWATER.NE.GOV

WASTEWATER

Homes and businesses outside municipalities treat wastewater with individual septic systems. Onsite wastewater treatment systems (OWTS) include septic tanks, holding tanks, small lagoons, and other decentralized wastewater treatment systems.

The State of Nebraska requires any building which generates wastewater to have an OWTS system, installed by a certified professional. Prior to construction of a development area where an OWTS is proposed on any lot less than three acres in size, the owner of the property must submit an application for subdivision review to the Nebraska Department of Water, Energy, and Environment (DWEE). Standards for the size of treatment systems and required setbacks are set by Title 124 of the Nebraska Administrative Code.

Most OWTS in Nebraska are constructed under "Authorization by Rule". However, some systems do require a construction and/or operations permit as a result of the quantity or quality of wastewater generated or side conditions not meeting "Authorization by Rule" requirements.

In new development, the use of environmentally sensitive methods of wastewater treatment should be encouraged. Water conservation helps reduce impacts on surface and groundwater. Also, conservation of common open space provides greater buffers between water sources and wastewater infiltration.

Sanitary waste within communities is typically addressed via community-wide collection and treatment systems. Construction permits for municipal, industrial, and commercial wastewater works are issued after DWEE engineers review and approve construction plans and specifications for the project. New development should connect to municipal sewers whenever possible.

CONSTRUCTED WETLANDS

Artificial wetlands are gaining growing acceptance for treatment of wastewater. This technique supplements rather than replaces septic treatment. The constructed wetlands provide further treatment for effluent and have been combined with aerobic treatment units (ATUs) before effluent is conducted to drainage areas.

SANITARY & IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS (SIDS)

Sanitary and Improvement Districts in Nebraska are a special authority which allows a development group and/or property owners' association to establish a special taxing district for purposes of installing or improving infrastructure such as a water system and/or a sanitary sewer collection and treatment system. SIDs may also construct and/or maintain streets within such a district. The creation of an SID is controlled by the District Courts of Nebraska.

SOLID WASTE

Municipal solid waste disposal services for Colfax County are primarily provided through regional landfill facilities and local waste collection providers. The county does not appear to contain a permitted municipal solid waste landfill facility within its boundaries. Residents, businesses, and local communities generally utilize regional solid waste disposal facilities located in nearby counties and surrounding communities. Local municipalities and private waste haulers provide garbage collection, recycling, transfer, and disposal services throughout the county.

The Land Management Division of the Nebraska Department Water, Energy, and Environment has responsibility for waste management and remediation programs. The Division also administers the Waste Tire Management Program and provides Waste Planning and Recycling programs.

ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE

This section is intended to meet the requirements for an energy element in Neb. Rev. Stat. §23-114.02, which "assesses energy infrastructure and energy use by sector, including residential, commercial, and industrial sectors; evaluates utilization of renewable energy sources; and promotes energy conservation measures that benefit the community".

ENERGY USE BY SECTOR

According to Nebraska Energy Statistics, electricity use in Nebraska rose to 33,844 million kilowatthours (kWh) in 2022, an increase of 4.7 percent from 32,341 million kWh in 2021. The industrial sector used 39 percent, the residential sector used 33 percent, and the commercial sector used 28 percent. The use of electricity produced off-site is ultimately constrained by transmission capacity. Distributed generation of electricity (from wind farms or solar farms) is also constrained by capacity of the regional transmission grid.

In 2022, Nebraska used 198.7 billion cubic feet of natural gas, an increase of 4.0 percent from 2021. The industrial sector consumed 52.17 percent of total natural consumption in Nebraska in 2022. The residential sector consumed 20.93 percent, and the commercial sector consumed 17.37 percent. The electric power and transportation sectors accounted for the remainder of gas consumption.

SOURCE: DEE.NEBRASKA.GOV

Residential Energy Use

Energy is consumed in the residential sector primarily for space heating, water heating, air conditioning, refrigeration, cooking, clothes drying, and lighting. Fuel used for motor vehicles by household members is included in the transportation sector—electricity use will increase with increased use of electric vehicles (EVs) requiring home charging stations. Natural gas met almost one-half (47%) of residential energy needs in Nebraska in 2022, followed by electricity (43%).

As previously noted, Colfax County residents primarily utilize natural gas and electricity for heating. The source of residential heating fuel varies by location. More rural residents reported using propane or LP gas.

Statewide, there were 545,680 residential natural gas customers in Nebraska in 2023, according to the Energy Information Administration.

Commercial Energy Use

Commercial uses include buildings such as retail stores, nonmanufacturing businesses, motels, health and education institutions for energy use reporting. Government uses are included in this sector for these reports. Common uses of energy in the commercial sector include space heating, water heating, refrigeration, air conditioning, and cooking. Natural gas met almost one-half (47%) of commercial energy needs in Nebraska in 2022, followed by electricity (45%).

Statewide, there were 60,242 commercial natural gas customers in Nebraska in 2023, according to the Energy Information Administration.

Industrial Energy Use

Energy use in the industrial sector covers fuels for manufacturing, construction, mining, agriculture, and forestry. Energy to transport products is included in the transportation sector. Natural gas met 1/3 (32%) of industrial energy needs in Nebraska in 2022, followed by biofuels (33%), and electricity (14%).

Statewide, there were 5,412 industrial natural gas customers in Nebraska in 2023, according to the Energy Information Administration.

ENERGY GENERATION

According to the Energy Information Administration, in 2023, Nebraska obtained 45% of its total in-state electricity net generation from coal, 30% from wind, and 17% from nuclear power.

Nebraska Public Power District, provides local PPD customers with wholesale power generated by a diverse mix of sources, including coal, nuclear, gas and oil (for peak demand), wind, hydropower, and solar. NPPD is also a member of the Southwest Power Pool (SPP), a non-profit regional transmission organization in the central part of the United States.

New Nuclear Generation

Nuclear energy has played a vital role in safely and reliably powering Nebraska for more than 50 years. New technologies are in development for the next generation of nuclear, including advanced small modular reactors (SMR).

According to the US Office of Nuclear Energy, SMRs represent a variety of sizes, technology options, capabilities, and deployment scenarios. "Advanced SMRs offer many advantages, such as relatively small physical footprints, reduced capital investment, ability to be sited in locations not possible for larger nuclear plants, and provisions for incremental power additions. SMRs also offer distinct safeguards, security and nonproliferation advantages."

SOURCE: ENERGY.GOV/NE/ADVANCED-SMALL-MODULAR-REACTORS-SMRS

Renewable Energy

Renewable energy is energy from naturally replenishing sources; virtually inexhaustible in duration but limited in the amount of energy available in the short-term. Statewide, Nebraska is moving towards renewable and away from legacy fuel sources. For example, while almost 75% of the state's electricity was generated by coal in 2011, only 50% came from coal in 2021.

The major types of renewable energy sources are:

- Biomass
- Hydropower
- Geothermal
- Solar
- Wind

Capacity of long-range power transmission lines can be a limiting factor for renewable energy production, since the electricity generated must be transferred into the regional or national power grid. Local, distributed power generation may be more practical in areas with limited access to the transmission grid.

Biomass

Biomass is renewable organic material coming from plants and animals. Biomass was the largest source of total annual U.S. energy consumption until the mid-1800s. The use of biomass fuels for transportation and for electricity generation is increasing.

The Biomass category of renewable energy sources includes biofuels, such as ethanal and biodiesel, along with wood waste, landfill gas, and similar fuels. Most biofuels are used as transportation fuels, but they may also be used for heating and electricity generation. In 2021, there were eight units in Nebraska producing electricity from biomass, and 11 from landfill gas.

Ethanol

Nebraska is the second largest producer of ethanol for fuel in the United States, after Iowa. There are several ethanol plants in Nebraska.

There are no major ethanol production facilities located within Colfax County. However, ethanol production facilities located in nearby communities throughout eastern and central Nebraska continue to support the regional agricultural economy and local corn markets serving producers within the county.

Biodiesel

Nebraska's first biodiesel plant recently broke ground in Adams County at Hastings. Cargill and Loves Family are pursuing a joint project to construct a biodiesel plant at Hastings. The Heartwell Renewables plant broke ground in late 2022 with planned completion in 2024.

Carbon Sequestration

Efforts are under way to capture and store carbon dioxide generated by Nebraska ethanol facilities. Carbon capture equipment will extract CO_2 from the ethanol production process and transfer the gas via a carbon dioxide pipeline to an underground geologic sequestration site near the plant.

It is likely carbon capture and storage (CSS) systems will continue to expand in scope and size. Most carbon pipelines are used in oil fields for enhanced oil recovery. As noted by the Congressional Research Service (June 2022), "Transporting CO_2 in pipelines is similar to transporting fuels such as natural gas and oil; it requires attention to pipeline design, protection against corrosion, monitoring for leaks, and safeguards against overpressure… (the Pipelines and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA)) applies safety requirements to CO_2 pipelines similar to those for pipelines carrying hazardous liquids such as crude oil and anhydrous ammonia."

The US Department of Transportation and the State of Nebraska regulate interstate gas pipelines and hazardous liquid pipelines. As noted by the Center for Rural Affairs:

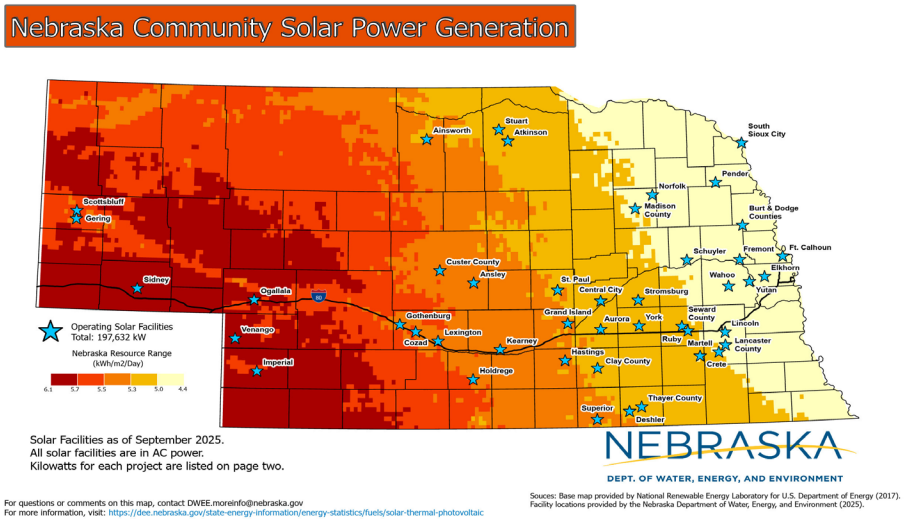
> No legislation has been enacted that provides a permitting process at a state level in Nebraska. This leaves the responsibility of permitting to individual counties. Permits can cover everything that is not outlined in federal law, including the routing, construction mitigation, and abandoned pipelines. While there is no regulation for the permitting of carbon pipelines, companies are still able to secure eminent domain power for their projects.

Biogas & Anaerobic Digestion

On-farm biogas production has a long history with recent technological innovation. A digester is a sealed vessel in which anaerobic digestion of organic matter occurs. The bacteria feed off manure and, in the process, release biogas (methane) as a by-product. Farmers can use digesters to improve the quality of manure and reduce odors, with the energy content of the methane being a by-product. Biogas generated from anaerobic digestion processes is a clean and environmentally friendly renewable fuel. There are many uses for this fuel, including use in engines, generation of electricity, heat and hot water systems, and even refrigeration.

SOURCE: EIA.GOV/ENERGYEXPLAINED/BIOMASS

Figure 10.2 – SOLAR IRRADIANCE IN NEBRASKA



SOURCE: GEOSPATIAL DATA SCIENCE (2026). NATIONAL LABORATORY OF THE ROCKIES.

Hydropower

Hydropower was one of the first sources of energy used for electricity generation. Until 2019, hydropower was the largest source of total annual US renewable electricity generation.

Nebraska has a long history of generating electricity with hydropower, which until recently was the largest source of renewable energy in the United States. In 2021, there were 20 units in Nebraska producing electricity with hydropower. Hydroelectric accounted for about 3% of Nebraska's annual electricity generation in 2021.

A regional hydropower facility serving eastern Nebraska is located near Columbus at the Loup Power District Loup River Hydroelectric Project. While the facility is not located directly within Colfax County, it is located nearby in Platte County and contributes renewable hydroelectric power to the regional public power system. The hydroelectric system is owned and operated by Loup Power District and utilizes water flows from the Loup River system to generate electricity serving portions of central and eastern Nebraska.

SOURCE: EIA.GOV/ENERGYEXPLAINED/HYDROPOWER AND NPPD.COM/POWERING-NEBRASKA/ENERGY-RESOURCES/HYDROPOWER

Geothermal

Geothermal energy is heat within the earth. Geothermal energy is a renewable energy source because heat is continuously produced inside the earth. Wells, ranging from a few feet to several miles deep, can be drilled into underground reservoirs to tap steam and very hot water that can be brought to the surface for use in a variety of applications.

People use geothermal heat for bathing, for heating buildings, and for generating electricity. Geothermal electricity generation requires water or steam at high temperatures (300° to 700°F). According to the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), geothermal heat pumps are the most energy-efficient, environmentally clean, and cost-effective systems for heating and cooling buildings.

SOURCE: EIA.GOV/ENERGYEXPLAINED/GEOTHERMAL

Solar

A photovoltaic (PV) cell, commonly called a solar cell, is a non-mechanical device which converts sunlight directly into electricity. Some PV cells can convert artificial light into electricity.

The efficiency at which PV cells convert sunlight to electricity varies by the type of semiconductor material and PV cell technology. The efficiency of commercially available PV modules averaged less than 10% in the mid-1980s, increased to around 15% by 2015, and is now approaching 20% for state-of-the art modules. Experimental PV cells and PV cells for niche markets, such as space satellites, have achieved nearly 50% efficiency.

Rooftop solar has increasingly become an option for many homeowners and small businesses. The direction and pitch of the roof affect the amount of energy produced, as to nearby trees or other structures.

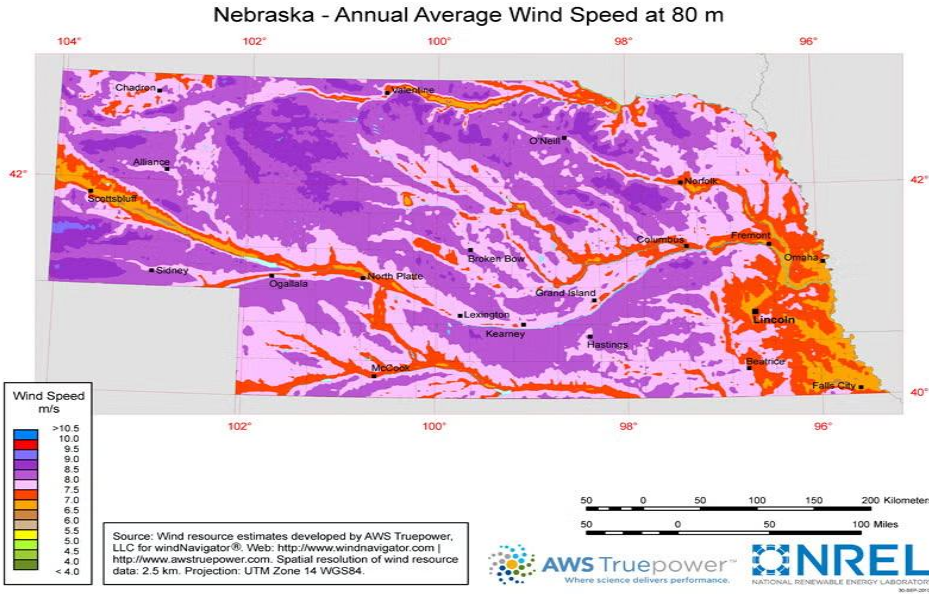
As of mid-2024, there were 24 projects in Nebraska producing electricity with utility-scale solar facilities. Only 0.2% of Nebraska's electricity was generated by solar in 2021, but the capacity doubled over just two years.

In general there is greater solar resource range in western Nebraska (Figure 10.2). However, solar is also being used to firm modulation in wind power generation and evening power flows on the electric transmission grids, as well as diversifying generation portfolios.

The American Farmland Trust has developed general principles for siting solar development on active farm land:

10.3.1 Prioritize solar siting on buildings and land not well suited for farming;

Figure 10.3 – ANNUAL AVERAGE WIND SPEED AT 80 M



SOURCE: NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF WATER, ENERGY, AND ENVIRONMENT

10.3.2 Safeguard the ability for land to be used for agriculture;

10.3.3 Grow agrivoltaics for agricultural production and solar energy;

10.3.4 Promote equity and farm viability.

Several small-scale solar energy facilities are located within Colfax County, including municipal solar projects operated by the Schuyler Department of Utilities. The community's solar facilities have a combined generating capacity of approximately 1,420 kilowatts (kW)

SOURCE: EIA.GOV/ENERGYEXPLAINED/SOLAR, FARMLAND.ORG, AND NPPD.COM/POWERING-NEBRASKA/ENERGY-RESOURCES/SOLAR-ENERGY-FACILITIES

Wind

The wind blows in Nebraska and an increasing share of Nebraska's energy comes from renewable wind energy. In 2021, there were 1,333 utility-scale wind turbines producing electricity in Nebraska. The state's wind generation grew from 3% of electricity generated in 2011 to 25% in 2021.

According to the US Department of Energy's Office of Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy, "Areas with annual average wind speeds around 6.5 meters per second and greater at 80-m height are generally considered to have a resource suitable for wind development. Utility-scale, land-based wind turbines are typically installed between 80- and 100-m high although tower heights for new installations are increasing—up to 140 m—to gain access to better wind resources higher aloft." Figure 10.3 shows mapped windspeeds of approximately 6.0-7.5 m/s in Colfax County.

Individual sites may be powered by Small Wind Energy Systems, a type of wind energy conversion system (WECS) with a rated capacity of 100 kilowatts or less. Technological advancements are driving growth of the small wind power market by making turbines more efficient and cost-effective. Small wind turbines can operate efficiently with wind speeds of just 9 miles per hour.

The location of large commercial utility-scale wind farms must be carefully planned. According to the Nebraska Department of Water, Energy, and Environment, Colfax County does not currently contain any major utility-scale wind energy generation facilities. While the county has moderate wind energy potential, no commercial wind farms with large turbine arrays or utility-scale generating capacity have been identified within the county. Future wind energy development may occur as renewable energy infrastructure and regional energy demand continue to expand throughout Nebraska.

The nearest operating wind facilities include:

- Broken Bow Wind Farm – Custer County
  Operator: NextEra Energy Resources
  Approximately 50 turbines
  Capacity: Approximately 80 MW
  Operational since 2019
- Elkhorn Ridge Wind Facility – Madison County
  Operator: EDF Renewables
  Approximately 80 turbines
  Capacity: Approximately 80 MW
  Operational since 2009
- Crofton Bluffs Wind Farm – Knox County
  Operator: Omaha Public Power District
  22 turbines
  Capacity: Approximately 42 MW
  Operational since 1999

SOURCE: DEE.NEBRASKA.GOV/STATE-ENERGY-INFORMATION/ENERGY-STATISTICS/FUELS/WIND/WIND-ENERGY-GENERATION-NEBRASKA

Renewable Energy Concerns

Concerns have been raised about land use conflicts between wind energy facilities and agricultural operations. For example, wind turbines limit the use of aerial application by fixed wing or helicopter operators. Concerns have also been raised about impacts on viewsheds and wildlife.

The Sierra Club estimates up to a million or more birds a year are killed by wind turbines each

year, although many more are killed by power lines and other artificial causes. The American Bird Conservancy and wind energy experts are working to reduce the rate with alternatives such as "No-blade" wind turbines.

The University of Nebraska's Wind Energy and Wildlife Project recommends collaboration among stakeholders to reduce impacts on wildlife and habitat. "Guidelines for Avoiding, Minimizing, and Mitigating Impacts of Wind Energy on Biodiversity in Nebraska" have been developed by the Nebraska Wind and Wildlife Working Group.

SOURCE: EIA.GOV/ENERGYEXPLAINED/WIND; WIND-ENERGY-WILDLIFE.UNL.EDU

Battery Energy Systems

Experimental energy storage technologies, particularly battery energy storage systems (BESS), are growing rapidly and already play a role in enhancing the electrical grid by supporting deployment and integration of renewable energy sources—increasing reliability, controlling costs, and building a more resilient grid.

As technology changes rapidly, zoning, environmental review, and sound level considerations are needed for the effective integration of energy storage systems in various locations and applications. The International Fire Code, NFPA fire codes, and other standards have been developed to ensure safety in manufacturing, construction, installation, and operations.

SOURCE: CLEANPOWER.ORG

Net Metering

Small-scale wind and solar generation facilities are typically front-of-the meter applications, intended to provide direct power to a home, farm, or business. These facilities tend to range from 20 kW or less up to 100 kW in size, although some manufacturers may be able to use larger generators on site.

Since 2009, private electricity generating facilities with capacity at or below 25 kilowatts may operate under Nebraska's net–metering statutes. Any excess generation produced by the system will be credited at the utility's avoided cost rate and carried forward to the next billing period. Any excess remaining at the end of an annualized billing period is to be paid out to the customer.

Solar/Wind Easements

Nebraska's solar and wind easement provisions allow property owners to create binding solar and wind easements for the purpose of protecting and maintaining proper access to sunlight and wind. Originally designed only to apply to solar, the laws were revised in March 1997 (LB 140, codified in Neb. Rev. Stat. §66-913 et seq.) to include wind. Counties and municipalities are permitted to develop regulations or development plans protecting access to solar and wind energy resources if they choose to do so. Local governing bodies may also grant zoning exceptions to solar and wind energy systems which would be restricted under existing regulations, so long as the exception is not substantially detrimental to the public good.

LB 568, enacted in May 2009, made some revisions to the law and added additional provisions to govern the establishment and termination of wind agreements. Specifically, the bill provides the initial term of a wind agreement may not exceed forty years. Additionally, a wind agreement will terminate if development has not commenced within ten years of the effective date of the wind agreement. If all parties involved agree to extend this period, however, the agreement may be extended.

Micro Nuclear

In 2022, the Nebraska Legislature allocated $1 million to the DED to fund the feasibility study. DED subsequently awarded the funds to NPPD, which operates Cooper Nuclear Station near Brownville.

Sixteen sites were identified to proceed to the second phase of the feasibility study. The final four sites chosen were Beatrice, Brownville, Norfolk, and Sutherland.

In 2023, nuclear energy provided almost 19% of U.S. utility-scale energy generation and about 47% of carbon-free generation in the U.S. There are 94 reactors licensed to operate in the U.S., and Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD) is one of 21 utilities licensed to operate a nuclear plant.

DATA CENTERS

Types of Data Centers

Data centers are establishments engaging in the storage, management, processing, and/or transmission of digital data, and housing computer and/or network equipment, systems, servers, appliances, and other associated components related to digital data operations.

Data center facilities may also include air handlers, power generators, water cooling and storage facilities, utility substations, and other associated utility infrastructure to support sustained operations at said center. There are six types of data centers commonly in use in the United States:

- Data Center, Ancillary: (or micro centers) smaller, localized server rooms (occupying less than 25% of a building's gross floor area) permitted as an ancillary use to primary commercial or office functions. Ancillary uses or structures secondary and incidental to a data center include, but are not limited to: administrative, logistical, fiber optic, storage, and security buildings or structures. Typically

consume under 1 megawatt (MW) of power.
- Data Center, Campus: Two or more data center structures located on one or more contiguous parcels under common ownership or control.
- Data Center, Colocation: (or "colo") is a shared facility where businesses rent physical space like racks, cabinets, or private cages to house their own servers and computing hardware. Colocation capacity ranges from a few kilowatts for single racks to 100+ MW for hyperscale deployments.
- Data Center, Edge: is a decentralized, smaller computing facility located closer to end users or devices. By minimizing the physical distance data travels, edge data centers bypass the backhaul delays of centralized regional hubs, dramatically reducing latency and saving bandwidth. Typically operate in the 1 MW to 10 MW range.
- Data Center, Hyperscale: is a massive, highly scalable computing facility designed to efficiently handle enormous data, storage, and networking demands. Typically housing tens of thousands of servers across at least 10,000 square feet, they are engineered for maximum energy efficiency, automation, and rapid horizontal scaling. Typically require 50 to 100 megawatts (MW) or more to operate.
- Data Center, On-Site: (or on premises) is a private facility where an organization houses, manages, and operates its own IT infrastructure including servers, storage, and networking equipment directly on its own property.

Siting Considerations

Regulating the location, design, construction, and operation of data centers within Colfax County should be done so in order to promote efficient and responsible development, ensure compatibility with surrounding land uses, protect the environment, and safeguard public health, safety, and welfare

The siting of a data center should depend on the presence of adequate infrastructure, including but not limited to reliable power supply, access to fiber-optic networks, and appropriate road capacity.

A data center's appearance should also be harmonious and compatible with the surrounding area. Ideally, they will appear like a commercial building. Adequate buffering and setbacks should also be provided so as to not impact the public health, safety, and welfare. The noise emitted from a data center should also be kept below a dBA level established within the Colfax County Zoning Regulations.

Water Impact

As data centers can use vast amounts of water, a center's water cooling system, and other uses, must use a closed loop or recycled water system. Data Centers should not be approved if there is not an adequate supply of water for the proposed use and that proposed water withdrawals and discharges will not endanger or adversely affect the quantity or quality of groundwater supplies or surface waters in the vicinity.

Figure 10.4 – DATA CENTER TYPES

Data Center Type	Typical Power Demand	Typical Land Requirement	Typical Ownership
Ancillary	<1 MW	Inside existing building; no additional land	Business, office, hospital, school, government entity
Enterprise (On-Site)	0.5–10 MW	Building pad or small standalone facility; 1–10 acres	Single corporation, university, hospital, government agency
Edge	1–10 MW	Small standalone building; 1–5 acres	Telecom company, cloud provider, network operator
Colocation	5–100+ MW	Medium to large facility; 5–30 acres	Data center operator leasing space to multiple tenants
Hyperscale	50–500+ MW	Large campus-like complexes; 50–1,000+ acres	Microsoft, Google, Amazon, Meta, Oracle, etc.
Campus	20–1,000+ MW	Multiple buildings; 50–2,000+ acres	Any combination of hyperscale, colocation, or enterprise operators

KEY DISTINCTIONS

- Ancillary, Enterprise, and Edge facilities are typically smaller and serve specific organizations or localized network needs.
- Colocation facilities lease space and infrastructure to multiple customers.
- Hyperscale facilities are massive cloud-computing operations operated by major technology companies.
- Campus developments consist of multiple data center buildings and can include combinations of hyperscale, colocation, and enterprise operations.

SOURCE: MARVIN PLANNING CONSULTANTS, GENERATED USING MICROSOFT COPILOT

Electrical Impact

Data Centers have the potential to create and use a vast amount of energy. A data center should have the capacity to maintain its own dedicated electrical generation, energy storage, renewable generation, or a combination thereof sufficient to offset one hundred percent (100%) of the facility's projected electrical demand.

Data centers should also be able to demonstrate that they will not materially impair electrical reliability for existing customers.

Data Center Concerns

Nebraska is experiencing significant data center development activity alongside mounting concerns about zoning, environmental impact, and community oversight. Changes in technology over the past decade have escalated development of data centers and server farms, including crypto-mining operations nationwide.

Of particular concern in Colfax County is the potential impact of data centers on water resources. Water availability and protection are important priorities due to the county's reliance on groundwater, the Platte River, and various creeks and tributaries for agricultural production, municipal water supplies, wildlife habitat, recreation, and overall environmental quality. Because of these factors, a data center's projected water demand, cooling technology, source of water, and potential impacts on groundwater and surface water resources should be carefully evaluated during the review and approval process to ensure the long-term sustainability of the county's water resources.

New technology can reduce data center energy consumption through advanced cooling, AI driven power management, and more efficient hardware. Technologies like heat recycling, server virtualization, and smaller AI models help lower power usage effectiveness, sometimes offering up to 40% higher efficiency. Due to these factors as well, the impact of a data center on the electrical grid in the county should be a major criteria for approval as well.

Conservation Measures

There are different strategies which can be undertaken to improve energy efficiency and usage. These strategies range from simple (often less costly) to complex (often more costly). Unfortunately, not all of the solutions will have an immediate return on investment. Individual property owners and tenants will need to find strategies fitting their budgets to harvest long-term savings.

Some common ways to make a structure more energy efficient include:

- Converting incandescent light bulbs to Light Emitting Diodes (LED).
- Installing additional insulation.
- Replacing windows.
- Changing out older, less-efficient air conditioners and furnaces to newer high-efficiency units.
- Changing out older appliances with new EnergyStar rated appliances.
- Adding solar panels
- Adding individual-scale wind energy conversion systems (WECS).
- Installing a geothermal heating and cooling system.

RESOURCES

BROWNFIELDS ASSISTANCE

A brownfield is a property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant.

The State of Nebraska offers assistance with redeveloping brownfield sites. For example, Section 128(a) Assessments are Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs) providing preliminary environmental information to determine if there is contamination on a property. The NDEE offers these assessments to communities at no cost.

These assessments are performed in accordance with the "all appropriate inquiry" requirements but may include additional activities such as nearby drinking water well sampling and testing building materials for asbestos, lead-based paint and/or mold. The first part of the assessment examines the background, setting and past uses of a property. It includes a records review, site reconnaissance, interviews, and, as a final product, a report documenting the environmental conditions at the property.

The second part of the assessment examines and evaluates the environmental conditions identified in the initial assessment. Soil and groundwater sampling and analyses are conducted to determine whether contamination associated with any environmental conditions has occurred on the site. The results of the sampling and analyses are evaluated in the Assessment Report.

SOURCE: DEE.NE.GOV

COMMUNICATIONS, UTILITIES & ENERGY (CUE) GOALS & ACTIONS

GOAL 10.1

Residents and businesses have access to reliable, high-speed internet to support education, remote work, and economic development.

Actions

10.1.1 Continue to support local news outlets—print, radio, and online—as vital communication channels.

10.1.2 Support improvements in high-speed wired and wireless broadband infrastructure.

10.1.3 Periodically review zoning regulations to align with broadband technological advances and FCC mandates.

GOAL 10.2

Utility infrastructure is sufficient to meet the needs of the county residents and employers.

Actions

10.2.1 Carefully review new development projects for potential impacts on utility systems.

10.2.2 Coordinate with municipalities to maintain and extend power lines and utility services.

10.2.3 Work with water providers to ensure the quantity and quality of domestic water supply.

10.2.4 Support property owners in maintaining private utility systems, including wells and septic systems.

10.2.5 Assist property owners in conforming with State regulations for onsite wastewater treatment systems (OWTS).

GOAL 10.3

Energy Infrastructure is sufficient to meet the needs of Colfax County residents and employers.

Actions

10.3.1 Identify suitable areas for renewable energy development that avoid prime farmland and sensitive habitats.

10.3.2 Consider community input on wind and solar projects, especially regarding visual impact and land use.

10.3.3 Encourage energy efficiency upgrades in homes and businesses.

10.3.4 Explore compact nuclear and battery energy storage systems (BESS) as future options.

GOAL 10.4

Data centers, battery energy storage systems, and renewable energy facilities - biomass, geothermal, wind, solar - are carefully planned.

Actions

10.4.1 Provide for individual property owners utilizing small-scale, distributed renewable energy generation, eligible for net metering.

10.4.2 Limit utility-scale renewable energy facilities to minimize impacts on existing residents and property-owners.

10.4.3 Energy projects shall mitigate impacts on neighbors and the environment.

10.4.4 Periodically review zoning regulations for conformance with technological advances in renewable energy generation.

GOAL 10.5

Critical infrastructure ensures residents are protected during power outages and extreme weather events.

Actions

10.5.1 Evaluate and upgrade emergency warning systems, including sirens and weather radios.

10.5.2 Support utility back-up and peaking generation facilities.

10.5.3 Promote consumer energy conservation measures, in partnership with utility providers.

Stanton
Cuming
R02E
R03E
R03E
Clarkson
Howells
Leigh
T20N
T19N
Platte
Dodge
T18N
T17N
Richland
Schuyler
Rogers
Butler
Earthstar Geographics

LEGEND

- Railroads
- Highways
- County Boundaries
- Municipal Limits
- 2-Mile Planning Area (Schuyler)
- 1-Mile Planning Area (With Zoning)
- 1-Mile Planning Area (No Zoning)
- Township and Range
- Parcels

District

- Burt Co. PPD
- Butler PPD
- Clarkson (Loup)
- Cornhusker PPD
- Cuming Co. PPD
- Howells (Loup)
- Leigh
- Loup River PPD
- OPPD
- Richland (Loup)
- Schuyler
- Stanton Co.

COLFAX COUNTY NEBRASKA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

FIG 10.5: PUBLIC POWER DISTRICTS

MARVIN PLANNING CONSULTANTS
Specializing in Municipal, County and Neighborhood Planning

PROJECTION: NE State Plane (Ft.)
DATUM: NAD 83
DATE: 9.24.26

0 0.02 0.04 0.09 Miles

N



CHAPTER 11 Natural Resources & Environment

Natural resources and the environment provide a foundation for land use and the local agricultural economy. They are also the foundation of residents' local quality of life. Local residents and property owners are the primary stewards of Colfax County's land, natural resources, and the natural environment.

This chapter describes natural conditions of the county, water, wetlands, soils, and other factors. Much of this information is taken from the USDA Soil Conservation Service (SCS) Soil Survey of Colfax County, Nebraska, published in 1982, and the online Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Web Soil Survey (Soil Survey Geographic Database—SSURGO at WEBSOILSURVEY.NRCS.USDA.GOV), with additional updated data where available.

NATURAL CONDITIONS

PHYSIOGRAPHY & GEOLOGY

The ground under our feet and structures is divided into layers. The topsoil is a mix of mineral and organic elements. Then comes the soil, which is largely mineral. Below this is the fractured and weathered parent material, which has little or no biological activity and lies directly over bedrock.

Soil is not static. Soil is formed by the action of processes on parent material. The characteristics of soil are determined by:

- The physical and mineralogical composition of the parent material;
- The climate under which the soil material has accumulated;
- The plant and animal life on and in the soil;
- The relief, or lay of the land;
- The length of time these forces have been active.

Colfax County has a mix of rolling uplands and flatter river valley land. The northern and western parts of the county are mostly rolling hills covered by loess soils, while the land becomes flatter toward the Platte River along the southern edge of the county. Several creeks cut through the uplands and drain toward the Platte River.

The county's surface geology is made up mainly of loess, glacial till, and alluvial deposits. Loess covers much of the upland areas, while sand, gravel, silt, and clay are common in the Platte River Valley and along other stream corridors. These sand and gravel deposits also help support groundwater supplies in the county.

Surface drainage in Colfax County generally follows the natural slope of the land toward the Platte River and the Elkhorn River basin. The Platte River drains the southern part of the county and flows east to northeast. Shell

Creek and Lost Creek flow from the west and northwest toward the Platte River, while Maple Creek drains southeast toward the Elkhorn River and Rawhide Creek flows east.

Runoff moves more quickly through the rolling uplands and creek valleys in the northern and western parts of the county, while the flatter Platte River Valley has slower drainage and a greater potential for ponding and flooding. Areas along Shell Creek, Lost Creek, and the Platte River are the county's main flood-prone areas.

Groundwater is the main source of water in Colfax County for homes, communities, livestock, and irrigation. The depth to groundwater varies from near the surface in the Platte River Valley to more than 200 feet below ground in some upland areas. Much of the county has groundwater at a depth of about 50 to 100 feet.

The principal aquifer is generally about 100 to 200 feet thick, with the greatest thickness in northwestern Colfax County. Rural homes and livestock operations commonly use private wells, while all incorporated communities in the county use public water systems.

More information on soils and suitability for development is provided later in this chapter.

CLIMATE

Colfax County, like much of Nebraska, has a continental climate. Thunder showers occur in the warm summers and are followed by brief spells of cooler weather. Winters are generally cold and dry. Temperature and rainfall vary greatly from day to day and from season to season. Generally, over three-fourths of annual precipitation occurs from April to September, when prevailing winds are from a southerly direction.

Slow steady rains or rain mixed with snow characterize early spring. Snow is common during the first part of March—by April snow seldom remains on the ground for more than a day. Severe dust storms occur occasionally in the spring when strong, dry winds blow across unprotected soils. By mid-May, most precipitation is from thundershowers, becoming more severe in mid-summer. Hail damage is in scattered, small areas. June has the most precipitation of any month of the year.

The average daily maximum temperature in July is 86.9°F, while the average daily minimum temperature in January is 13.8°F. Average annual precipitation is 28.67 inches, and average annual snowfall is 25.6 inches. The figures are based on the 1991–2020 climate normal period, which is the current 30-year period used by the National Weather Service.

SOURCE: NOAA

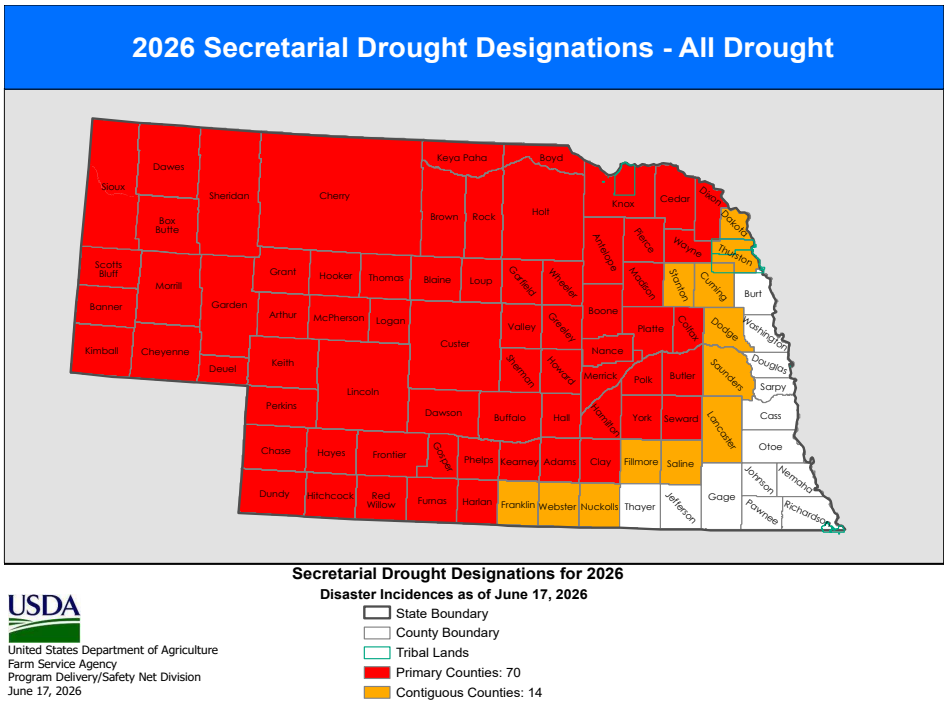
DROUGHT

Drought remains a concern in Colfax County because of the county's agricultural economy and reliance on groundwater. In June 2025, USDA designated Platte County as a primary natural disaster area because of drought, making neighboring Colfax County eligible as a contiguous county. In April 2026, Colfax County itself was designated as a primary natural disaster area for drought. USDA drought designations are triggered when an area experiences severe drought (D2) for at least eight consecutive weeks or reaches extreme (D3) or exceptional (D4) drought conditions during the growing season.

WATER

Colfax County is divided between the Lower Platte-Shell Basin and the Lower Elkhorn Basin. The Lower Platte-Shell Basin covers about 3,030 square miles and includes the Platte River, Shell Creek, Lost Creek, and smaller tributaries. The Platte River begins near North Platte where the North Platte and

Figure 11.1 – NEBRASKA DROUGHT DESIGNATIONS



SOURCE: USDA FARM SERVICE AGENCY

South Platte Rivers meet and flows east across Nebraska. Shell Creek drains about 467 square miles near Schuyler.

The Lower Elkhorn Basin covers about 2,180 square miles. In Colfax County, Maple Creek and Rawhide Creek generally flow east toward the Elkhorn River. The Maple Creek watershed covers about 368 square miles.

Several creeks carry surface water through Colfax County. Shell Creek, Lost Creek, and Taylor Creek begin in the northern and western parts of the county and flow generally southeast toward the Platte River. Shell Creek joins the Platte east of Schuyler.

In northern and eastern Colfax County, Maple Creek and Dry Creek drain toward the Elkhorn River. The West Fork and East Fork of Maple Creek flow south and southeast before joining near the Colfax-Dodge County line. Maple Creek then continues east through Dodge County and eventually reaches the Elkhorn River.

SURFACE WATER

The Platte River is the largest surface water feature in Colfax County and forms part of the county's southern boundary. Other waterways include Shell Creek, Lost Creek, and Maple Creek. These rivers and streams are important for irrigation, recreation, and wildlife habitat. The Platte River is generally too shallow for commercial navigation, but it is used for fishing, canoeing, kayaking, and other recreation. Surface water also supports agricultural uses and provides habitat for fish, waterfowl, and other wildlife. There are no major hydroelectric facilities in Colfax County, although the Platte River is connected to hydropower facilities in the Columbus area.

There is a USGS stream gauge on the Platte River near North Bend, with approximately 77 years of recorded streamflow data. Minor flood stage is 8 feet, moderate flood stage is 10 feet, and major flood stage is 11.5 feet. During the March 2019 flood, the river gauge crested at 11.96 feet on March 15, with peak flows reaching approximately 165,000 cubic feet per second (cfs).

SOURCE: WATERWATCH.USGS.GOV

Natural Resources Districts

There are twenty-three Natural Resources Districts (NRDs) in Nebraska. NRDs are a local unit of government charged with the management, development, and protection of soil and water resources within district boundaries.

NRDs work on a range of conservation works and programs such as:

- Soil conservation and erosion control;
- Flood prevention, control, and channel rectification;
- Drainage;
- Groundwater, surface water, and water supply;
- Water quality, pollution control, solid waste disposal, and sanitary drainage;
- Fish and wildlife habitat;
- Forestry and range management; and
- Recreation and parks.

Lower Platte North NRD

The Lower Platte North NRD is located in the Lower Platte River Basin and covers portions of Boone, Butler, Southern Colfax, Dodge, Madison, Platte, and Saunders Counties.

The LPNNRD consists of 1,031,000 acres and extends approximately 72 miles of the Platte River flow through or along the district. Major tributaries include Bone Creek, Clear Creek, Duck Creek, Elm Creek, Loseke Creek, Rawhide Creek, Sand Creek, Shell Creek, Silver Creek, Skull Creek, Taylor Creek, and Wahoo Creek.

The FY 2025 Long Range Plan includes projections through 2030 is intended to meet the requirements of state law, while providing the NRD's Board with an outline of District activities. It provides projections for financial, manpower, and land rights needs over the next five years.

The Lower Platte North NRD Voluntary Integrated Management Plan was completed in cooperation with the Nebraska Department of Water, Energy, and Environment (2018).

The plan includes goals, objectives, and action items for the district including:

- **Goal 1:** Develop and maintain a District-wide water supply inventory.
- **Goal 2:** Develop and maintain a District-wide water demand inventory.
- **Goal 3:** Develop and implement water use policies and practices to maintain a balance between water uses and supplies.
- **Goal 4:** Communicate the importance of continuing to properly manage Nebraska's water supply.
- **Goal 5:** Coordinate with other Lower Platte River Basin NRDs and agencies to maintain a balance between current and future water supplies and demands.

SOURCE: LPNNRD.ORG

Lower Elkhorn NRD

The Lower Elkhorn NRD is located in northeastern Nebraska within the Elkhorn River Basin and covers portions of Knox, Cedar, Dixon, Pierce, Wayne, Thurston, Madison, Stanton, Cuming, Burt, Platte, Northern Colfax, and Dodge Counties.

The LENRD consists of approximately 2,560,000 acres and covers all or portions of 15 counties in northeastern Nebraska. The Elkhorn River is the predominant surface water feature in the District. Major tributaries include

the North Fork Elkhorn River, Logan Creek, and the Maple Creek system.

The NRD's Long Range Implementation Plan (FY2026-2031) is intended to meet the requirements of state law, while providing the NRD's Board with an outline of District activities. It provides projections for financial, manpower, and land rights needs over the next five years.

The Lower Elkhorn NRD Voluntary Integrated Management Plan was completed in cooperation with the Nebraska Department of Water, Energy, and Environment (2018).

The plan includes goals, objectives, and action items for the district including:

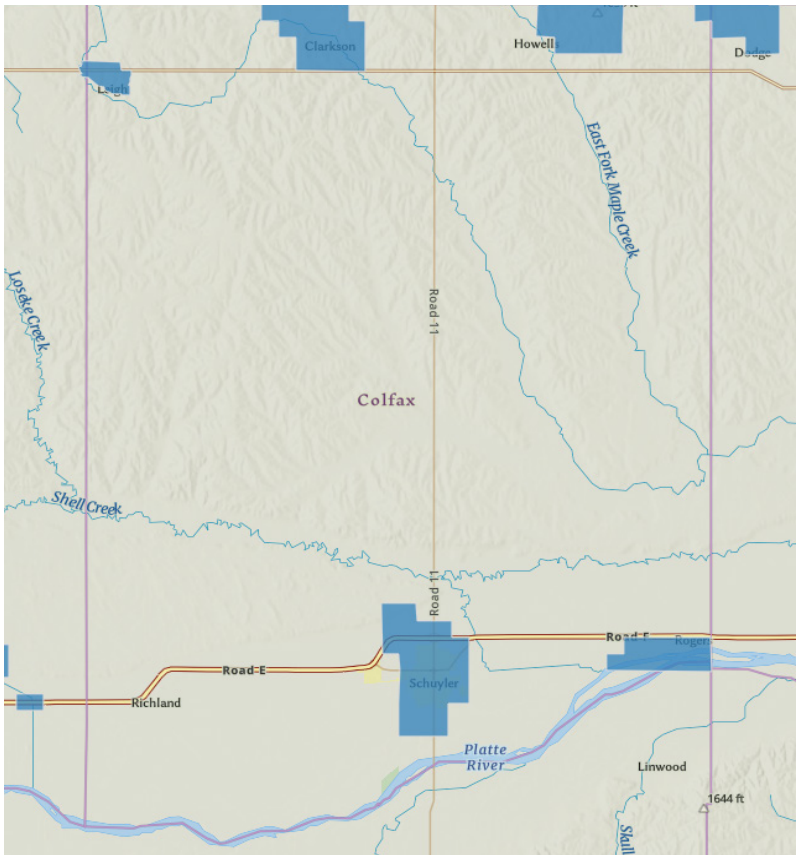
- **Goal 1:** Conserve Soil
- **Goal 2:** Flood Control and Prevention of Damage from Flood Water and Sediment
- **Goal 3:** Stormwater Drainage Improvements
- **Goal 4:** Conserve Groundwater Quantity and Quality
- **Goal 5:** Develop and Manage Surface Water
- **Goal 6:** Establish and Preserve Fish and Wildlife Habitat
- **Goal 7:** Provide Adequate Outdoor Recreation Opportunities within the District
- **Goal 8:** Promote the Planting and Conservation of Trees
- **Goal 9:** Information and Education

SOURCE: LENRD.ORG

Impaired Waters

The Platte River, Shell Creek, Maple Creek, Dry Creek, West Fork Maple Creek, and Maple Creek Recreation Area Lake have been identified as impaired water under Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act. Identified impairments include E. coli, arsenic, mercury in fish tissue, and impaired aquatic communities. Some segments have approved TMDLs, while others remain subject to additional water quality actions. Primary contact recreation, aquatic life, and public drinking water supply were identified by the Nebraska Department of Water, Energy, and Environment as beneficial uses which are impaired due to E. coli, arsenic, mercury in fish tissue, and impaired aquatic communities of unknown cause.

Figure 11.2 – WELLHEAD PROTECTION AREAS



SOURCE: NEBRASKA MAP STATE DATABASE

GROUNDWATER

Colfax County's groundwater is abundantly supplied by the Ogallala Aquifer which underlies most of Nebraska. Groundwater throughout Colfax County is generally adequate for domestic, municipal, livestock, and irrigation uses, although nitrate contamination is a concern in some areas. The depth to groundwater varies across the county, from relatively shallow levels in the Platte River Valley to more than 100 feet in upland areas. Well water in Colfax County is generally drawn from sand and gravel aquifers, with shallow groundwater most common near the Platte River Valley. Nitrate is the main groundwater quality concern in the county, particularly in the Schuyler–Richland area.

Ground water can be contaminated by drainage from feedlots and waste disposal facilities and by the leaching of chemicals applied on the soil surface. When a domestic well is installed, the water should be tested for contamination before the well is connected to the water system. Existing domestic wells should be tested for contamination occasionally. Shallow wells tend to have more problems with contamination than the deeper wells.

SOURCE: WEBSOILSURVEY.NRCS.USDA.GOV

Wellhead Protection

Nebraska's Wellhead Protection Program (WHP) is a voluntary program which assists communities and other public water suppliers in preventing contamination of their water supplies. The Wellhead Protection Area Act sets up a process for public water supply systems to use if they choose to implement a local Wellhead Protection plan. The Nebraska Department of Water, Energy, and Environment (DWEE) is the lead agency for Wellhead Protection Plan (WHP) approval.

The goal of Nebraska's Wellhead Protection Program is to protect the land and groundwater surrounding public drinking water supply wells from contamination. Since approximately 85% of Nebraskans receive their drinking water from groundwater, preventing groundwater contamination is vital. The Wellhead Protection planning process includes identifying the land surrounding the public water supply wells to be protected, identifying potential sources of groundwater contamination within this area, and managing the potential contaminant sources.

According to DWEE, six communities in Colfax County have Wellhead Protection Areas:

- City of Schuyler
- Village of Rogers
- Village of Leigh
- City of Clarkson
- Village of Howells
- Village of Dodge (Wellhead Protection Area extending into northeastern Colfax County)

Each responsible jurisdiction should take action to implement their WHP, including:

1. Establish and maintain performance standards to protect groundwater sources.
2. Participate in emergency, contingency, and long-term planning for replacement sources of drinking water.
3. Work with state agencies to inform the public about the Wellhead Protection Plan.

SOURCE: DWEE.NEBRASKA.GOV

When a wellhead protection area is designated, Colfax County should update this comprehensive plan and work with the NRD to ensure safety of groundwater in that area.

FLOODPLAINS AND FLOODWAYS

A flood is a general and temporary condition of partial or complete inundation of normally dry land from flowing water, such as streams and rivers overflowing their banks, runoff from adjacent or surrounding slopes, or a combination of sources.

The floodplain, in general, contains three areas:

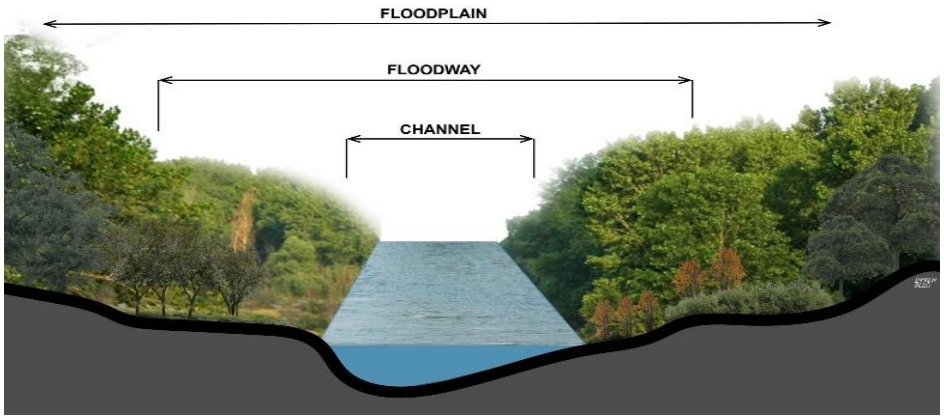
- Floodway, the channel of a watercourse and those portions of the adjoining floodplains which are required to carry and discharge a flood of 1-percent chance with no significant increase in the base flood elevation.
- Regulatory Floodplain, the low land near a watercourse which has been or may be covered by water from a flood event having a 1-percent chance in any given year. The 1-percent annual chance flood is also referred to as the base flood or 100-year flood. The regulatory floodplains is identified on Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) as the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA).
- Flood Fringe, the portion of a floodplain which can be inundated by floodwaters but is not within the regulated floodway. The flood fringe serves as temporary storage for slow-moving or standing floodwaters.

The floodplain includes both the floodway and the flood fringe (Figure 11.3).

The floodplain area of greatest significance in terms of state and federal regulation is the 1% or 100-year floodplain. This area is defined by the ground elevation in relation to the water elevation experienced during a base flood event. The 1% or 100-year floodplain is calculated to be the elevation level of flood water expected to be equaled or exceeded every 100 years on average. In other words, the 100-year flood is a 1% flood, meaning it defines a flood having a 1% chance of being equaled or exceeded in any single year.

Preserving the floodway and flood fringe are critical to limiting the level of property damage which can occur as well as the risk to life of the occupants of the area. These lands when not flooded

Figure 11.3 – FLOOD PLAIN CROSS SECTION



SOURCE: NATIONAL WETLANDS INVENTORY

may seem to be harmless, but it is those rare times threatening life and property which need to be anticipated.

See Chapter 12 Hazard Mitigation for more information on flood hazard mitigation and floodplain administration.

WETLANDS

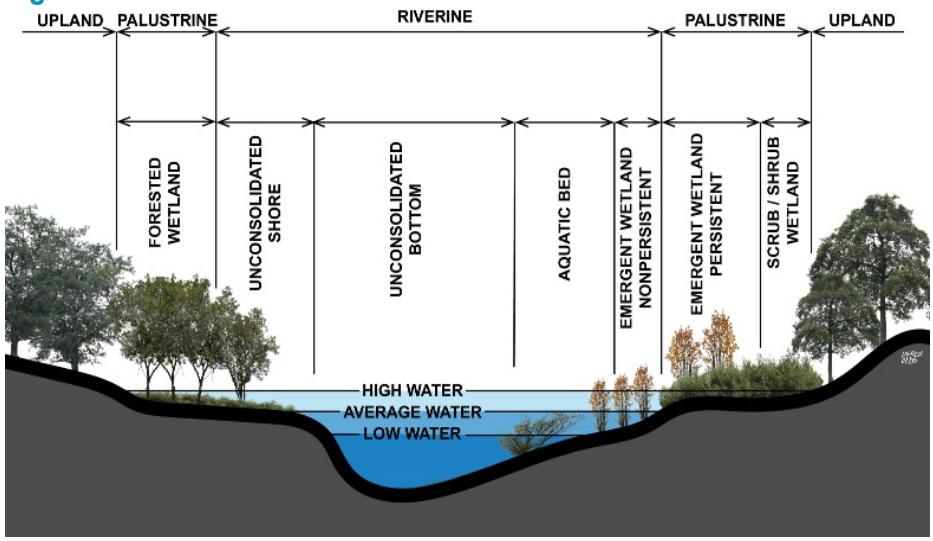
Wetlands are areas where water covers the soil, or is present either at or near the surface of the soil all year or for varying periods during the year, including during the growing season. Water saturation (hydrology) largely determines the soil development and the types of plant and animal communities living in and on the soil.

Wetlands may support both aquatic and terrestrial species. The prolonged presence of water creates conditions favoring the growth of specially adapted plants (hydrophytes) and promote the development of characteristic wetland (hydric) soils. Wetlands vary widely because of regional and local differences in soils, topography, climate, hydrology, water chemistry, vegetation, and other factors, including human disturbance. Two general categories of wetlands are recognized: coastal or tidal wetlands and inland or non-tidal wetlands.

Many wetlands are seasonal (dry one or more seasons every year). The quantity of water present and the timing of its presence in part determine the functions of a wetland and its role in the environment. Wetlands can appear dry, at times, for significant parts of the year—such as vernal pools—and still provide habitat for wildlife adapted to breeding exclusively in these areas.

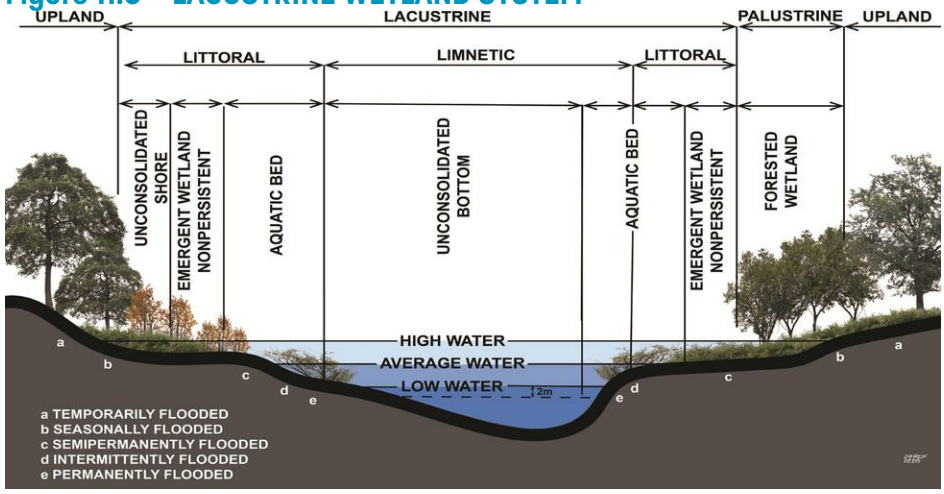
The federal government regulates certain types of wetlands under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, depending on how

Figure 11.4 – RIVERINE WETLAND SYSTEM



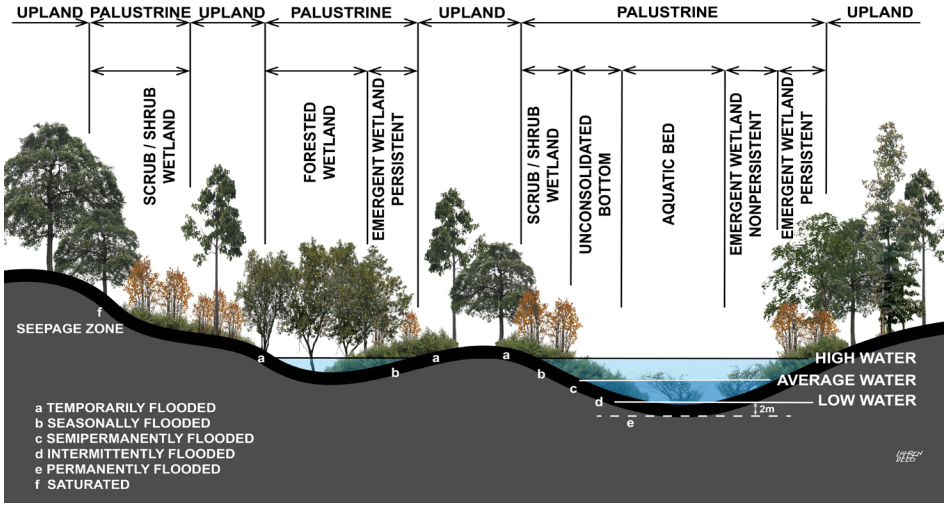
SOURCE: NATIONAL WETLANDS INVENTORY

Figure 11.5 – LACUSTRINE WETLAND SYSTEM



SOURCE: NATIONAL WETLANDS INVENTORY

Figure 11.6 – PALUSTRINE WETLAND SYSTEM



SOURCE: NATIONAL WETLANDS INVENTORY

"navigable waters" and "Waters of the United States" are defined. The US Supreme Court's 2023 decision in Sackett et ux v. EPA et al narrowed the definition in practice of the Waters of the United States.

The federal government offers incentives and disincentives, cooperative programs, and property acquisition programs to mitigate actual and potential harm to wetland resources.

Wetlands are home to many species of wildlife. Wetlands also provide an important service to nearby areas by holding and retaining floodwaters. These waters are then slowly released as surface water, or are used to recharge groundwater supplies. Wetlands also help regulate stream flows during dry periods.

National Wetlands Inventory

The US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) compiles data on the characteristics, extent, and status of the Nation's wetlands and deep-water habitats. This information is compiled and organized in the National Wetlands Inventory (NWI).

Inland wetlands found in Colfax County are most common on floodplains along rivers and streams (riparian wetlands), in isolated depressions surrounded by dry land (for example, playas, basins, and "potholes"), along the margins of lakes and ponds, and in other low-lying areas where the groundwater intercepts the soil surface or where precipitation sufficiently saturates the soil (vernal pools and bogs). Inland wetlands include marshes and wet meadows dominated by herbaceous plants, swamps dominated by shrubs, and wooded swamps dominated by trees.

Wetlands are categorized in several classifications, each more detailed and specific than the previous. The NWI uses five systems; marine, estuarine, riverine, lacustrine, and palustrine. Within each system, there are subsystems, classes, subclasses, and dominance types to describe different wetland characteristics. The system classification refers to wetlands sharing similar hydrologic, geomorphologic, chemical, or biological factors. The following are definitions and examples of three of the five systems used to describe wetlands. The Marine and Estuarine wetland systems are located in and near the open ocean; therefore, they do not occur in Nebraska. Further information, through NWI, on specific classifications is available.

Figures 11.4, 11.5, and 11.6 depict common examples of the riverine, lacustrine, and palustrine wetlands, respectively. These figures were produced by the US Fish and Wildlife Service, and are taken from their 1979 publication entitled "Classification of Wetlands and Deepwater Habitats of the United States".

Riverine Wetlands

Figure 11.4 shows the riverine system including all wetlands occurring in channels, with two exceptions: (1) wetlands dominated by trees, shrubs, persistent emergent, emergent mosses, or lichens, and (2) habitats with water containing ocean derived salts in excess of 0.5%. A channel is an open conduit either naturally or artificially created which periodically or continuously contains moving water, or which forms a connecting link between two bodies of standing water. Therefore, water is usually, but not always, flowing in the riverine system.

Springs discharging into a channel are also part of the riverine system. Uplands and palustrine wetlands may occur in the channel, but are not included in the riverine system. Palustrine Moss-Lichen Wetlands, Emergent Wetlands, Scrub-Shrub Wetlands, and Forested Wetlands may occur adjacent to the riverine system, often in a floodplain.

Lacustrine Wetlands

The Lacustrine System includes wetlands with all of the following characteristics: (1) situated in a topographic depression or a dammed river channel; (2) lacking trees, shrubs, persistent emergents, emergent moss or lichens with greater than 30% area coverage; and (3) total area exceeds 20 acres. Similar wetland areas totaling less than 20 acres are also included in the Lacustrine System if an active wave-formed or bedrock shoreline feature makes up all or part of the boundary, or if the water depth in the deepest part of the basin exceeds 6.6 feet (2 meters) at low water.

The Lacustrine System includes permanently flooded lakes and reservoirs (e.g. Lake Superior, Michigan), intermittent lakes (e.g. playa lakes), and tidal lakes with ocean-derived salinities below 0.5% (e.g. Grand lake, Louisiana). Typically, there are extensive considerable wave action. Islands of Palustrine wetlands may lie within the boundaries of the Lacustrine System.

Palustrine Wetlands

The Palustrine System includes all non-tidal wetlands dominated by trees, shrubs, persistent emergent, emergent mosses or lichens, and all such wetlands occur in tidal areas where salinity due to ocean-derived salts is below 0.5%. It also includes wetlands lacking such vegetation, but with all of the following four characteristics: (1) area is less than 20 acres; (2) lacking active wave-formed or bedrock shoreline features; (3) water depth in the deepest part of basin is less than 6.6 feet (2 meters) at low water; and (4) salinity due to ocean-derived salts is less than 0.5%.

The Palustrine System was developed to group the vegetated wetlands traditionally called by such names as marsh, swamp, bog, fen, and prairie, which are found throughout the United States. It also includes the small, shallow, permanent, or intermittent water bodies often called ponds. These wetlands may be situated shoreward of lakes, river channels, or estuaries; on river floodplains; in isolated catchments; or on slopes. They may also occur as islands in lakes or rivers.

USFW Classification System

Stewart & Kantrud developed a wetland classification system, published by USFW in the 1971. This system classifies wetland communities into several types, including:

- Type I: Ephemeral wetlands
- Type II: Temporary
- Type III: Seasonal
- Type IV: Semipermanent
- Type V: Permanent

This system is similar to, but different than, the "Circular 39" system first published in 1956. Stewart & Kantrud's Types III, IV, and V have been considered generally as "public waters wetlands" for the purpose of land use regulation.

SOILS

The general soil map developed by the USDA SCS (now Natural Resources Conservation Service, NRCS) shows broad areas having a distinctive pattern of soils, relief, and drainage. Each map unit, or soil association, on the general soil map is a unique natural landscape. Typically, an association consists of one or more major soils and minor soils.

The soil series is the lowest category of the national soil classification system. The associations are named for the major soils—each series has an identifying place name (where it was first found) and is divided by texture of the surface soil. The soils making up one association can occur in other associations but in a different series pattern.

Soil surveys can be used for general farm and site planning. Onsite investigation is typically needed, such as soil quality assessments and conservation and engineering applications. While the engineering classification is based on exact composition of a particular soil, soil survey is an essential basis for development site planning.

SOURCE: WEBSOILSURVEY.NRCS.USDA.GOV

SOIL FORMATIONS

Colfax County has many different soil types. Some of these soils are similar; however, many are completely different from one another. The Colfax County Soil Survey identifies key aspects of each soil.

A summary of soil series units and limitations on structures is included in Appendix B. In general, these include:

- Nora
- Crofton
- Moody
- Alcester
- Fillmore
- Belfore
- Blendon
- Alda
- Ord
- Platte
- Inavale

Appendix B also includes summaries of soil suitability and limitations as described by NRCS, including for dwellings (with and without basements), septic tank and absorption fields, sewage lagoons, sanitary landfills, and small commercial businesses. Most soil series in Colfax County present limitations on buildings, including susceptibility to flooding and saturation, shrink-swell, slopes, ponding, filtering, seepage, slow water movement, or dust. Soil permeability by soil type is also described in Appendix B.

The text, graphics, tables, and maps included in Appendix B to this Comprehensive Plan are made part of this Comprehensive Plan by reference. A true and correct copy of said Appendix is on file in the Office of the County Clerk along with the true and correct copy of the Comprehensive Plan and all are available for public inspection during normal business hours.

OTHER FACTORS IMPACTING LAND USE

Certain uses of land are specifically impacted by natural resources and environmental factors. These uses also affect multiple elements of the comprehensive plan, from economic development to transportation.

PRIME FARMLAND

Prime farmland is directly tied to specific soils and their composition. According to the USDA, "prime farmland" is:

> …Land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops. It must also be available for these uses. It has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce economically sustained high yields of crops when treated and managed according to acceptable farming methods, including water management. In general, prime farmlands have an adequate and dependable water supply from precipitation or irrigation, a favorable temperature and growing season, acceptable acidity or alkalinity, acceptable salt and sodium content, and few or no rocks. They are permeable to water and air. Prime farmlands are not excessively erodible or saturated with water for a long period of time, and they either do not flood frequently or are protected from flooding.

Prime farmland is generally the highest and best use of land meeting the nation's short- and long-range needs for food and fiber. The acreage of high-quality farmland is limited. The USDA recognizes government at local, state, and federal levels must encourage and facilitate the wise use of the nation's prime farmland, and recognize individual efforts to this end.

Prime farmland soils, as defined by the US Department of Agriculture, are soils best suited to producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops. Such soils have properties which are favorable for the economic production of sustained high yields of crops. The soils need only to be treated and managed using acceptable farming methods. The moisture supply, of course, must be adequate, and the growing season has to be sufficiently long. Prime farmland soils produce the highest yields with minimal inputs of energy and economic resources, and farming these soils results in the least damage to the environment.

Prime farmland soils may presently be in use as cropland, pasture, or woodland, or they may be in other uses. They either are used for producing food or fiber or are available for these uses. Urban or built-up land and water areas cannot be considered prime farmland.

Prime farmland soils usually get an adequate and dependable supply of moisture from precipitation or irrigation. The temperature and growing season are favorable. The acidity or alkalinity level of the soils is acceptable. The soils have few or no rocks and are permeable to water and air. They are not excessively erodible or saturated with water for long periods and are not subject to frequent flooding during the growing season. The slope ranges mainly from 0 to 6 percent.

Soils which have a high water table, are subject to flooding, or are droughty may qualify as prime farmland soils if the limitations or hazards are overcome by drainage, flood control, or irrigation. Onsite evaluation is necessary to determine the effectiveness of corrective measures. More information on the criteria for prime farmland can be obtained at the local office of the NRCS.

Conversion of prime farmland to urban and industrial uses has been a trend in land use in parts of the county. The loss of prime farmland to other uses tends to put pressure on marginal lands, which generally are wet, more erodible, droughty, or difficult to cultivate and less productive than prime farmland.

CAFOS

Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) are agricultural operations where animals are kept and raised in confined situations. The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulates CAFOs, defined by the Clean Water Act, through the NPDES permitting program as point sources of potential pollution. The State of Nebraska's manure regulations are spelled out in Title 130 of the Nebraska Administrative Code for Livestock Waste Control. The Department of Water, Energy, and Environment (DWEE) is the primary regulatory authority in Nebraska.

Livestock operations (AFOs) are typically categorized by the number of animals as small, medium, or large when determining which rules apply. The need to obtain a State permit is based on the potential for contamination of the waters of the State. A nutrient management plan may be required or recommended depending on the situation.

ZONING REGULATIONS

Currently, the Colfax County Zoning Regulations allow Class I Livestock Feeding Operations (301–1,000 animal units) as a permitted use in the A-1 Agricultural Preservation District, provided applicable separation requirements are met. Livestock feeding operations with more than 1,000 animal units require a Conditional Use Permit, subject to review by the Planning Commission and approval by the County Board. The County may impose conditions necessary to address compatibility with neighboring properties and protect public health, safety, and the environment.

The regulations establish minimum separation distances for livestock feeding operations based on the number of animal units. Separation from non-farm residences and other livestock feeding operations ranges from one-quarter mile to three-quarters mile, with additional separation required for operations over 10,000 animal units. Larger operations must also maintain required distances from residential areas, parks, churches, schools, cemeteries, and other sensitive uses.

Special regulations also address livestock waste. Larger operations are required to submit Operation and Maintenance Plans and Manure Management Plans and provide the County with applicable state-approved plans and permits.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

CONSERVATION EASEMENTS

Conservation easements have become a popular incentive-based strategy for land conservation. As the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy has noted, "Beyond tax credits, tax deductions, and other public subsidies that provide financial incentive for landowners to enter into conservation partnerships, this phenomenon is fueled by the perception that conservation easements are a win-win strategy in land protection, benefiting both landowners and the environment."

Agricultural easements are a valuable tool for farmers and ranchers, allowing them to exercise private property rights while keeping land in agricultural production. Yet the governing laws and conventions can be problematic. Easements can conserve sensitive lands, yet wildlife and land or water easements can also take productive farmland out of production.

Easements can also have impacts on tax revenues if the market value of land is reduced. Local school districts and units of government rely on these tax revenues to provide essential services. However, local service providers would face even greater impacts if these sensitive lands were converted to dispersed housing sites demanding the full range of public services. It should be kept in mind that the property could even be turned over fee simple to public entities such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, in which case all tax revenue would be lost.

Review Process

Nebraska Revised Statutes §76-2,111 *et seq.* (Reissue 1997) sets out a process for review of conservation easements under the Conservation and Preservation Easements Act.

- "Conservation Easement" is defined as "an easement, restriction, covenant, or condition...in real property" protecting "natural, scenic, or open condition, assuring its availability for agricultural, horticultural, forest, recreational, wildlife habitat, or open space use, protecting air quality, water quality, or other natural resources..."
- "Preservation Easement" is defined similarly, to protect "historical, architectural, archaeological, or cultural aspects of real property…"

§76-2,112(3) requires "each conservation or preservation easement shall be approved by the appropriate governing body." If the property in question is partially or entirely within a city or village ETJ, then the city or village is the governing body for this review.

The process outlined is:

1. The governing body refers the proposed easement to the local planning commission with jurisdiction over the property.
2. The planning commission has 60 days to provide comments regarding the conformity of the easement to the comprehensive plan.
3. The governing body shall receive the comments of the local planning commission.

Approval of a proposed easement may only be denied upon a finding of fact the acquisition is "not in the public interest" when:

1. A comprehensive plan for the area which had been officially adopted and was in force at the time of the conveyance, or
4. Any national, state, regional, or local program furthering conservation or preservation, or
5. any known proposal by a governmental body for use of the land.

Any state agency can accept a conservation or preservation easement after soliciting comments from the local planning commission, without approval by the local governing body.

These issues require careful consideration of future land use impacts. For the purposes of this comprehensive plan, the following review criteria may be considered:

1. Agricultural easements protect and enhance farming and ranching operations and property rights as they currently exist. These activities are generally by-right under the zoning ordinance, and these easements should be considered conforming to the County Comprehensive Plan.
2. Wildlife and land or water easements generally restrict use of land. While the property owner is voluntarily separating their bundle of private property rights, taking land out of production also impacts the agricultural economy and property values. Potential impacts of these easements on adjacent property should be reviewed for the public record.
3. The alternative to an easement may be fee simple acquisition by a private non-profit entity or a governmental body, or development of the property. A conservation or preservation easement may have lesser community impacts than fee simple acquisition.

Review of a conservation easement must be based in a substantial evidentiary record. The Planning Commission comments must be made in writing—statute specifies comments, not necessarily a recommendation. As well, the governing body's decision should be supported by evidence received. In the case of a decision to deny acquisition of an easement, there must be a clear statement of reasoning citing the criteria in statute, and how the proposed easement fails to meet the criteria.

Conservation Reserve Program

The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is a federal program overseen by the United States Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency (FSA) paying a yearly rental payment in exchange for farmers removing environmentally sensitive land from agricultural production and planting species which will improve environmental quality.

Landowners can learn how CRP can increase their income with flexible programs fitting their land and operations by visiting their local USDA Field Office or talking with a Nebraska Game and Parks Commission or Pheasants Forever biologist. Biologists provide free one-on-one technical assistance.

SOURCE: OUTDOORNEBRASKA.GOV/CRP

LOW-IMPACT DEVELOPMENT

Low-impact development (LID) is a land planning and engineering design approach to manage stormwater runoff as part of green infrastructure. LID techniques emphasis conservation and use of on-site natural features to prevent soil erosion and protect water quality. With LID, stormwater is managed as a resource rather than a liability.

LID techniques can help to protect water quality, reduce stormwater runoff, maintain natural stream channel functions and habitat, and improve groundwater recharge. LID practices for site planning include:

- Rain gardens;
- Bioretention gardens;
- Trees and shrubs;
- Storm water reuse;
- Rainwater harvesting;
- Green roofs;
- Permeable pavement;
- Ribbon curbs, and;
- Open space development

As the University of Nebraska Extension explains, LID is effective, economic, flexible, and a balanced approach to land development.

SOURCE: LOWIMPACTDEVELOPMENT.ORG AND WATER.UNL.EDU/ARTICLE/STORMWATER-MANAGEMENT/LOW-IMPACT-DEVELOPMENT

USDA NRCS

The USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides resources for rural land use and environmental conservation. It is in the best interest of the county as well as the property owner to avoid any expected degradation of the soil, water, air, plant, or animal resource base to an extent the sustainability or intended use of the resource is impaired.

Some of these areas of concern include:

- Soil;
- Water;
- Plants;
- Animals;
- Land;
- Air;
- Energy;
- Climate;
- Wildlife Habitat;
- Invasive Species and Pests, and;
- Watersheds

SOURCE: NRCS.USDA.GOV/CONSERVATION-BASICS/NATURAL-RESOURCE-CONCERNS

NATURAL RESOURCES GOALS AND ACTIONS

GOAL 11.1
Colfax County continues to protect groundwater quantity and quality.

Actions
11.1.1 Development projects should demonstrate availability of domestic water supply.

11.1.2 Work with water providers to ensure the quantity and quality of domestic water supply.

11.1.3 Assist property owners in conforming with State regulations for onsite wastewater treatment systems.

11.1.4 Work with DWEE and municipalities on implementation of Wellhead Protection Plans.

GOAL 11.2
Colfax County's watersheds are properly managed.

Actions
11.2.1 Work with the Lower Platte North NRD, Lower Elkhorn NRD, and other appropriate agencies on watershed management and conservation efforts.

11.2.2 Encourage best management practices (BMPs) for stormwater and agricultural runoff.

GOAL 11.3
Impacts of impaired waters are minimized.

Actions
11.3.1 Work with DWEE and other agencies to implement applicable TMDLs and other water quality improvement efforts.

GOAL 11.4
Wetlands are protected to the extent required by Federal law.

Actions
11.4.1 Work with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, DWEE, and other applicable agencies to maintain conformance with wetland regulations.

11.4.2 Carefully review new development projects for potential impacts on wetlands, and require mitigation where necessary.

GOAL 11.5
Soils are protected from degradation and erosion.

Actions
11.5.1 Work with NRCS on soil conservation and erosion prevention programs.

11.5.2 Carefully review new development projects for potential impacts on soils.

GOAL 11.6
Commercial crop and animal agriculture remains a viable, long-range land use.

Actions
11.6.1 Carefully review new development projects for potential impacts on agriculture and prime farmland.

11.6.2 Consider impacts of conservation easements on long-term agricultural operations and land availability.

11.6.3 Regularly review impacts of local regulations on agricultural operations and structures.

11.6.4 Encourage value-added agriculture and diversification to strengthen farm viability.

Stanton
Cuming
R02E
R03E
R03E
Clarkson
Howells
Leigh
T20N
T19N
T18N
T17N
Platte
Dodge
Schuyler
Rogers
Richland
Butler
Earthstar Geographics

LEGEND

- Railroads
- Highways
- County Boundaries
- Municipal Limits
- 2-Mile Planning Area (Schuyler)
- 1-Mile Planning Area (With Zoning)
- 1-Mile Planning Area (No Zoning)
- Township and Range
- Parcels
- Wellhead Protection Areas

COLFAX COUNTY NEBRASKA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

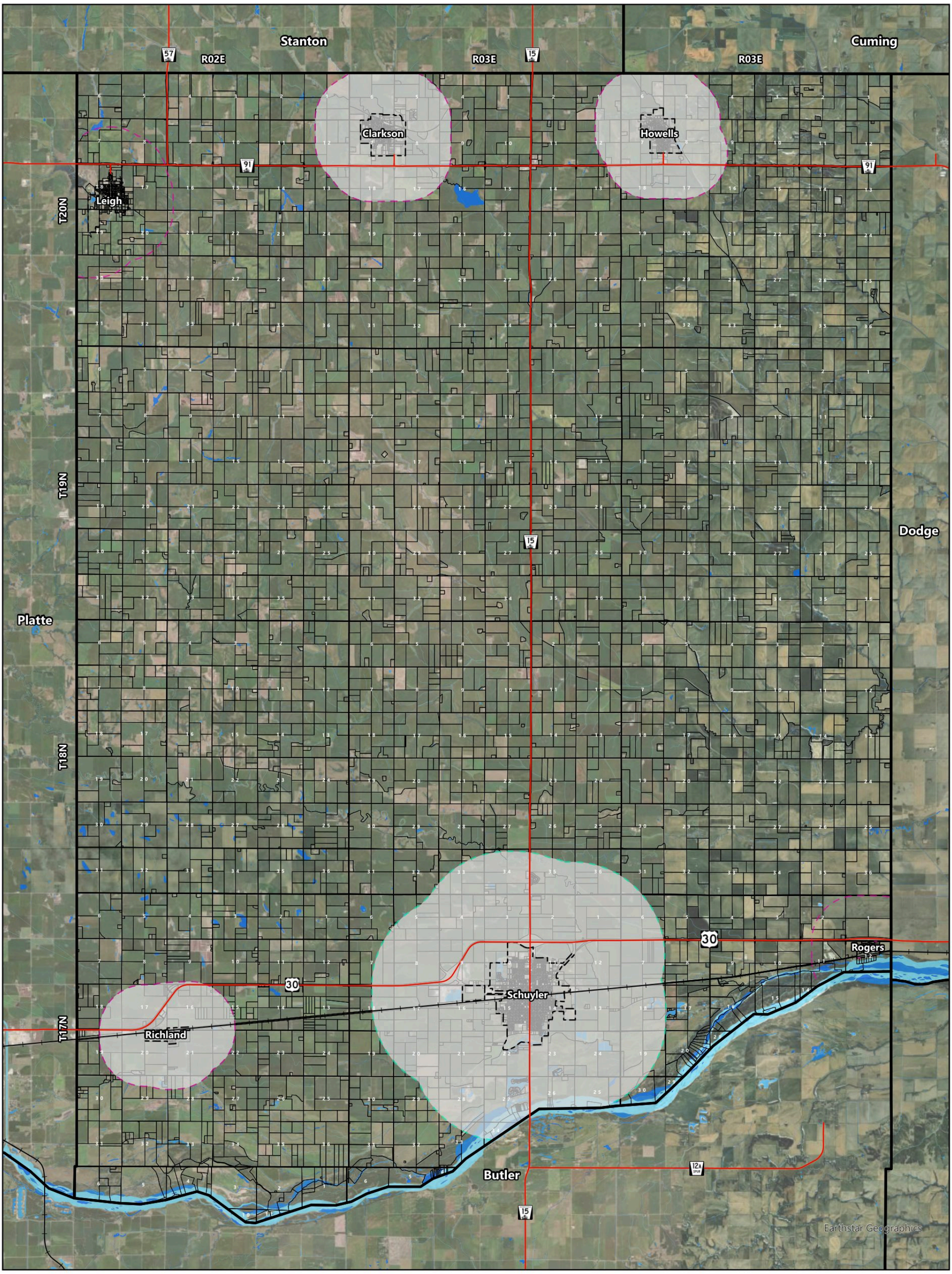
FIG 11.7: WELLHEAD PROTECTION AREAS

MARVIN PLANNING CONSULTANTS
Specializing in Municipal, County and Neighborhood Planning

PROJECTION: NE State Plane (Ft.)
DATUM: NAD 83
DATE: 9.24.26

0 0.02 0.04 0.09 Miles

N



LEGEND

- Railroads
- Highways
- County Boundaries
- Municipal Limits
- 2-Mile Planning Area (Schuyler)
- 1-Mile Planning Area (With Zoning)
- 1-Mile Planning Area (No Zoning)
- Township and Range
- Parcels

Wetland Type

- Freshwater Emergent Wetland
- Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland
- Freshwater Pond
- Lake
- Other
- Riverine

COLFAX COUNTY NEBRASKA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FIG

11.8: WETLANDS

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MARVIN PLANNING CONSULTANTS
Specializing in Municipal, County and Neighborhood Planning

PROJECTION: NE State Plane (Ft.)
DATUM: NAD 83
DATE: 9.24.26

0 0.02 0.04 0.09 Miles

Stanton
Cuming
R02E
R03E
R03E
57
15
Clarkson
Howells
91
91
Leigh
T20N
T19N
Dodge
Platte
15
T18N
30
Rogers
Schuyler
T17N
Richland
Butler
12A
15

LEGEND

- Railroads
- Highways
- County Boundaries
- Municipal Limits
- 2-Mile Planning Area (Schuyler)
- 1-Mile Planning Area (With Zoning)
- 1-Mile Planning Area (No Zoning)
- Sections
- Township and Range
- Parcels

See next page for General Soils Legend.

Source: USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

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COLFAX COUNTY NEBRASKA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FIG

11.9: GENERAL SOILS

MARVIN PLANNING CONSULTANTS
Specializing in Municipal, County and Neighborhood Planning

PROJECTION: NE State Plane (Ft.)
DATUM: NAD 83
DATE: 9.24.26

0 0.02 0.04 0.09 Miles

LEGEND

Silty Clay Loam

- Moody silty clay loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes, eroded
- Moody silty clay loam, 6 to 11 percent slopes
- Moody silty clay loam, 6 to 11 percent slopes, eroded
- Alcester silty clay loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes
- Belfore silty clay loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes
- Belfore silty clay loam, terrace, 0 to 2 percent slopes
- Coleridge silty clay loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes, occasionally flooded
- Gayville variant silty clay loam, rarely flooded
- Geary silty clay loam, 7 to 11 percent slopes, eroded
- Geary silty clay loam, 11 to 17 percent slopes, eroded
- Geary silty clay loam, 11 to 30 percent slopes
- Geary variant silty clay loam, 11 to 30 percent slopes, eroded
- Hall silty clay loam, sandy substratum, 0 to 1 percent slopes
- Lawet silty clay loam, occasionally flooded
- Moody silty clay loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes
- Moody silty clay loam, terrace, 0 to 2 percent slopes
- Nora silty clay loam, 6 to 11 percent slopes
- Nora silty clay loam, 11 to 17 percent slopes
- Zook silty clay loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes, occasionally flooded

Fine Sandy Loam

- Alda fine sandy loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes, occasionally flooded
- Blendon fine sandy loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes
- Boel fine sandy loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes, occasionally flooded
- Ord fine sandy loam, occasionally flooded

Loam

- Alda loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes, occasionally flooded
- Barney loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes, frequently flooded
- Blendon loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes
- Eudora loam, rarely flooded
- Platte loam, occasionally flooded
- Wann loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes, occasionally flooded

Loamy Fine Sand

- Boel loamy fine sand, occasionally flooded
- Inavale loamy fine sand, 0 to 3 percent slopes, occasionally flooded
- Inavale loamy fine sand, 2 to 9 percent slopes, rarely flooded

Silt Loam

- Crofton silt loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes, eroded
- Crofton silt loam, 6 to 11 percent slopes, eroded
- Crofton silt loam, 8 to 17 percent slopes, eroded
- Crofton silt loam, 17 to 30 percent slopes, eroded
- Fillmore silt loam, frequently ponded
- Fillmore silt loam, occasionally ponded
- Hobbs silt loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes, occasionally flooded, cool
- Hobbs silt loam, channeled, 0 to 2 percent slopes, frequently flooded
- Kezan silt loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes, frequently flooded
- Lawet silt loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes, occasionally flooded
- Lawet silt loam, rarely flooded
- Nora silt loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes
- Nora silt loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes, eroded
- Shell silt loam, clayey substratum, occasionally flooded
- Shell silt loam, occasionally flooded

Complex

- Crofton-Nora complex, 2 to 6 percent slopes, eroded
- Crofton-Nora complex, 11 to 17 percent slopes, eroded
- Moody-Thurman complex, 2 to 6 percent slopes, eroded
- Napa-Luton complex, occasionally flooded
- Nora-Crofton complex, 2 to 6 percent slopes, eroded
- Nora-Crofton complex, 6 to 11 percent slopes, eroded
- Nora-Crofton complex, 11 to 17 percent slopes, eroded
- Platte-Inavale complex, channeled, frequently flooded
- Thurman-Moody complex, 2 to 6 percent slopes, eroded
- Thurman-Moody complex, 6 to 11 percent slopes, eroded

Gothenburg Soils

- Gothenburg soils, frequently flooded

Other

- Gravel pit
- Sanitary landfill

Fine Sand

- Inavale fine sand, 0 to 3 percent slopes, rarely flooded

Silty Clay

- Luton silty clay, occasionally flooded

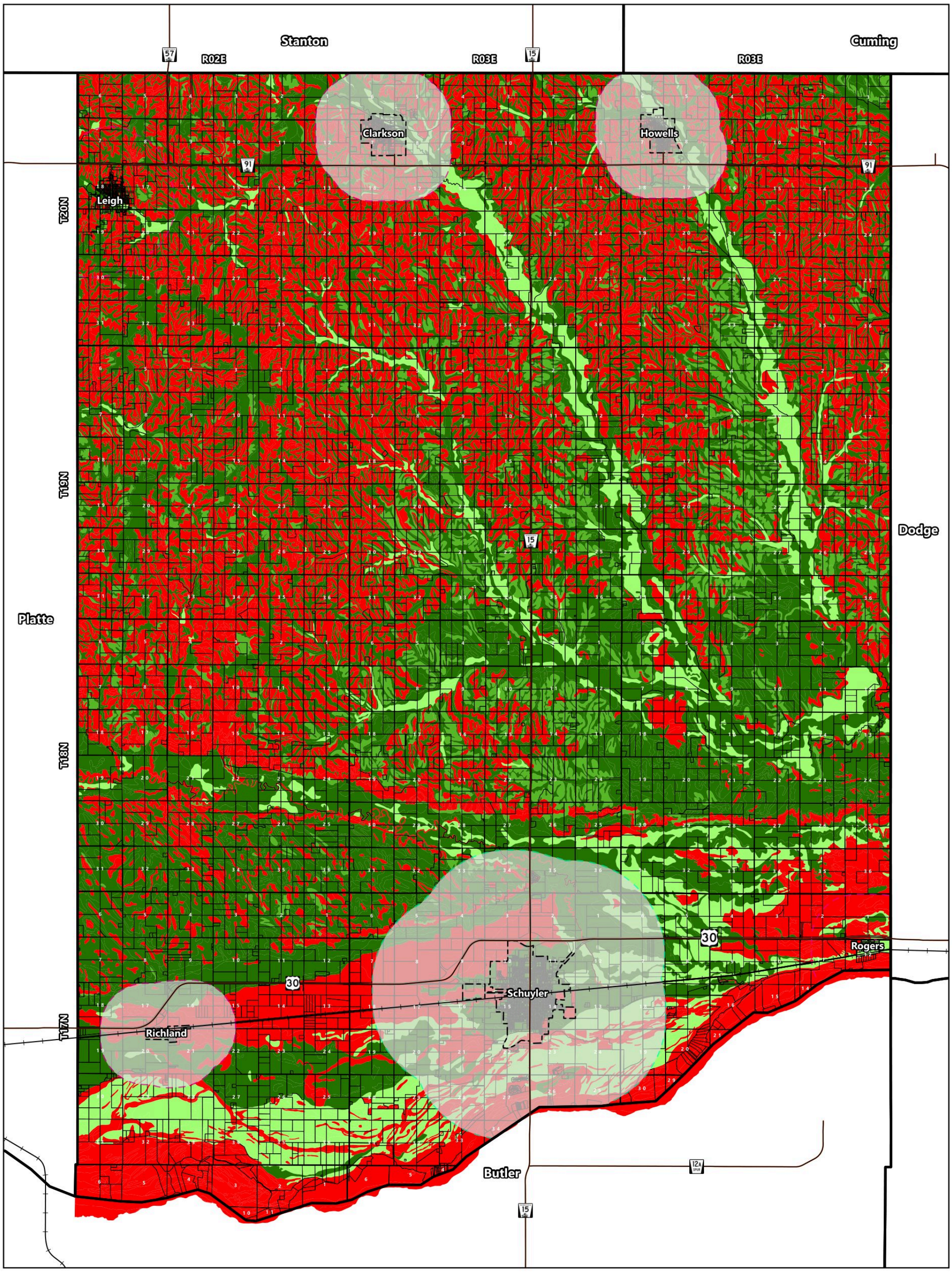
Clay Loam

- Steinauer clay loam, 6 to 11 percent slopes, eroded
- Steinauer clay loam, 11 to 30 percent slopes, eroded

Water

Water

- Miscellaneous water, sewage lagoon



LEGEND

- Railroads
- Highways
- County Boundaries
- Municipal Limits
- 2-Mile Planning Area (Schuyler)
- 1-Mile Planning Area (With Zoning)
- 1-Mile Planning Area (No Zoning)
- Sections
- Township and Range
- Parcels

Rating

- Prime farmland if drained
- Farmland of statewide importance
- All areas are prime farmland
- Not prime farmland

Source: USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

COLFAX COUNTY NEBRASKA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FIG

11.10: PRIME FARMLAND

MARVIN PLANNING CONSULTANTS
Specializing in Municipal, County and Neighborhood Planning

PROJECTION: NE State Plane (Ft.)
DATUM: NAD 83
DATE: 9.24.26

0 0.02 0.04 0.09 Miles

N



CHAPTER 12 Hazard Mitigation

Hazard mitigation encompasses strategies and methods aimed at reducing both immediate and long-term risks associated with natural and human-induced hazards and disasters. Effective hazard mitigation plans establish a structured approach for decision-making within the community.

By implementing careful land use and development practices, the occurrence of hazards and the potential for damage can be prevented or significantly minimized. Hazard mitigation informs the entire emergency management cycle (see Chapter 8 Public Safety).

Colfax County participates in regional hazard mitigation planning through the Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District and Lower Platte North Natural Resources District. This chapter summarizes the hazards affecting the county and the mitigation actions identified through those planning efforts.

REGIONAL HAZARD MITIGATION PLANS

Colfax County is included in two regional hazard mitigation planning areas. Approximately the northern two-thirds of the county is within the Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District (LENRD), while the southern third is within the Lower Platte North Natural Resources District (LPNNRD).

The 2025 Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District and Lewis and Clark Natural Resources District Hazard Mitigation Plan is an update to the 2020 plan and was prepared with assistance from Integrated Solutions Consulting. The update was developed in accordance with the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000. Colfax County participated in the update along with the City of Clarkson and the Villages of Howells and Leigh.

The southern portion of Colfax County is within the 2025 Lower Platte North NRD Hazard Mitigation Plan, prepared with assistance from JEO Consulting Group. Participating Colfax County communities include the City of Schuyler and the Villages of Richland and Rogers. Colfax County Emergency Management also participated on the Regional Planning Team.

The hazard mitigation plan includes goals, objectives, and action items, including:

- Goal 1: Protect the Health and Safety of Residents
- Goal 2: Reduce Future Losses from Hazard Events
- Goal 3: Increase Public Awareness and Educate on the Vulnerability to Hazards
- Goal 4: Improve Emergency Management Capabilities
- Goal 5: Pursue Multi-Objective Opportunities, whenever possible
- Goal 6: Enhance Overall Resilience and Promote Sustainability

HAZARD RISK ASSESSMENT

The hazard mitigation plan identified historical incidents of different hazards in a risk assessment by county. From 1996 to 2026, Colfax County experienced the following hazard events, as documented by the NCEI Storm Events Database:

- Drought: 15 monthly drought records
- Extreme Heat: 17 Heat/Excessive Heat events, covering about 52 event-days
- Flooding: 13 flash flood events and 14 general flood events
- Severe Thunderstorms: 110 hail events, 60 thunderstorm wind events, and 1 heavy rain event
- Severe Winter Storms: 7 blizzards, 48 cold/wind chill events, 5 heavy snow events, 4 ice storms, 45 winter storms, and 8 winter weather events
- Tornadoes and High Winds: 20 tornado events and 26 high wind events
- Deaths/Injuries: no direct or indirect deaths or injuries are recorded in this export
- Damage: approximately $6.93 million in property damage and $816,000 in crop damage

PRIORITY HAZARDS

Each participating jurisdiction evaluated hazards based on local conditions, past events, vulnerabilities, and existing capabilities. The 2025 Hazard Mitigation Plan identified the following hazards of concern for Colfax County, ranked from highest to lowest priority:

Colfax County

1. Drought
2. Severe Weather
3. Extreme Temperature
4. Agricultural Disease
5. Fire
6. Flooding
7. Landslide
8. Earthquake

The following sections summarize information from the hazard mitigation plan's Colfax County Community Profile:

Agricultural Disease

Agriculture is an important part of the Colfax County economy, making crop and livestock disease a concern for producers and related businesses. The Hazard Mitigation Plan notes that the largest documented animal disease outbreak occurred in 2014, when Porcine Reproductive and Respiratory Syndrome affected 401 animals. A 2012 mycotoxin event caused approximately $113,787 in corn crop damage. The County identified increased public awareness as an important way to prepare for agricultural disease events.

Dam Failure

Colfax County contains 11 dams, including two classified as high-hazard dams: Maple Creek Recreation Area Dam and Pokorny Dam. Failure of a dam could result in downstream flooding, damage to property and agricultural land, erosion, and impacts to water quality and habitat.

Flooding

Flooding is a recurring hazard in Colfax County. The Hazard Mitigation Plan identifies 20 flood events since 1996. One of the most damaging occurred near Leigh in June 2010, causing an estimated $1.5 million in property damage to homes, businesses, county roads, and bridges. Widespread flooding also affected the county during the March 2019 flood event. Potential mitigation measures include property acquisition, streambank stabilization, drainage improvements, and flood-control improvements along Maple Creek.

Severe Weather

Severe thunderstorms, strong winds, hail, and tornadoes regularly affect Colfax County. The Hazard Mitigation Plan identifies 39 severe thunderstorm events and 12 tornado events since 1996. An April 1999 tornado near Schuyler caused approximately $540,000 in damage to 10 farmsteads and a historic church. County mitigation efforts include backup generators, improved emergency communications, warning systems, weather radios, and safe rooms or storm shelters.

Other Hazards

Extreme Temperatures and Winter Weather

Extreme heat and cold can affect residents, transportation, utilities, and other critical infrastructure. The plan identifies 57 severe winter storm events since 1996. A winter storm in April 2009 caused property damage, power outages, and difficult travel conditions throughout the county. Colfax County uses designated snow routes, snow-removal equipment, and snow fences to help maintain transportation during winter weather.

MITIGATION STRATEGY

The primary focus of the mitigation strategy is to identify action items to reduce the effects and impacts from the identified top hazards of concern per community. These action items should help reduce impacts on existing infrastructure and property in a cost effective and technically feasible manner. A series of mitigation actions were considered in the mitigation plan development process. These range from adding additional personnel for emergency response and new alert sirens to zoning ordinance updates.

Actions to implement the Hazard Mitigation Strategy for Colfax County are presented in Table 12.1. Each municipality which participated in the 2025 update to the hazard mitigation plan has its own mitigation strategy spelled out in the Colfax County Appendix to the Hazard Mitigation Plan.

PLAN MAINTENANCE

The hazard mitigation plan should be reviewed and updated after major disaster events, and after no longer than five years from adoption. The local planning team is responsible for reviewing and updating the hazard mitigation plan's community profile as changes occur or after a major event.

This Comprehensive Plan should also be reviewed regularly and updated when the hazard mitigation plan is revised.

FLOODPLAIN ADMINISTRATION

Mark L. Arps serves as Floodplain Administrator for Colfax County. The Floodplain Administrator works to review and update floodplain regulations to ensure continued compliance with NFIP requirements and good planning process.

NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM

Colfax County has met the minimum requirements of the National Flood Insurance Program with several options in the regulations to better ensure safety of life and property in the floodplain. The Initial Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) for Colfax County became effective February 1st 1987. The currently effective map is dated March 21st 2019 subject to map amendments.

Of particular concern are Repetitive Loss Structures, a structure covered by flood insurance which has incurred flood-related damage on two occasions during a 10-year period, each resulting in at least $1,000 claim payment.

Of the municipalities in the county, Schuyler, Clarkson, Howells, Leigh, Richland and Rogers participate in the NFIP. In Nebraska, responsibility for floodplain management is mapped for the municipality's zoning extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ), yet may not change when the planning area and zoning ETJ change.

When a community has been identified by FEMA as an area with special flood hazards, and the community is not participating in the National Flood Insurance Program, the community may be sanctioned. In addition, financial assistance for acquisition or construction purposes, including, in some cases, federal disaster assistance, may not be available in those areas. The NFIP can provide flood insurance coverage only in those communities which adopt and enforce floodplain management measures meeting the minimum NFIP requirements set by Federal law.

Flood hazard impacts in Colfax County include:

- **Schuyler:** Floodplain areas are located along Shell Creek, Lost Creek, and the Platte River, with some extending outside the city limits into surrounding areas of the ETJ.
- **Rogers:** Much of Rogers and the surrounding area is within the Platte River and Shell Creek floodplain. Floodplain areas also extend into nearby unincorporated land.
- **Richland:** Floodplain impacts within Richland are limited, but larger floodplain areas are located south of the village toward the Platte River and may affect nearby rural areas.
- **Howells:** Floodplain areas are mainly associated with the East Fork of Maple Creek and nearby drainageways. These areas extend beyond the village limits into surrounding rural land.
- **Leigh:** Floodplain areas are associated with the West Fork of Maple Creek and other drainageways near the village, including areas outside the village limits.
- **Clarkson:** Clarkson has relatively limited floodplain within the community, although drainageways and mapped floodplain areas affect portions of the surrounding rural area.

RESOURCES

FEMA and the American Planning Association work together to provide resources to communities for hazard mitigation planning. Their report *Hazard Mitigation: Integrating Best Practices into Planning* (2010), identifies effective multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation strategies and tools based on a series of case studies for large and small towns and rural jurisdictions across the United States.

In 2020, the APA adopted a Hazard Mitigation Policy Guide, which includes thirteen Guiding Policies on hazard mitigation. The guide supplements and updates APA's earlier report, with a focus on recent severe hazard occurrences. Plans need to consider not only mitigation, but adaptation to changing conditions and situations.

SOURCE: PLANNING.ORG/NATIONALCENTERS/HAZARDS

FIGURE 12.1 – NEW HAZARD MITIGATION ACTIONS, COLFAX COUNTY

Action	Implement IPAWS system.
Description	Implement IPAWS system across the county.
Hazard(s) Addressed	All Hazards
Estimated Cost	$7,500 annually
Potential Funding	Local Funds, State Funds, NGWSGP, EMPG,
Timeline	Unknown
Priority	High
Lead Agency	County E.M., Fire, Police, Elected Officials
Status	Ongoing. Initiated 2024.

Action	Update Siren System
Description	Updating County-wide siren system
Hazard(s) Addressed	All Hazards
Estimated Cost	Unknown
Potential Funding	HMGP, FMA, BRIC, PDM, Local Funds, State Funds
Timeline	Long term
Priority	High
Lead Agency	County Emergency Management, & Elected Officials.
Status	Initiated 2025.

Action	Replace EOC
Description	Replace outdated E.O.C. with new E.O.C.
Hazard(s) Addressed	All Hazards
Estimated Cost	Unknown
Potential Funding	PDM, 404/406 HMGP, BRIC, Local Funds, State Funds
Timeline	Long term
Priority	Medium
Lead Agency	Colfax County Commissioners & County E. M., Colfax county
Status	Initiated 2025.

SOURCE: LOWER ELKHORN NRD HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN- 2025

FIGURE 12.2 – ONGOING HAZARD MITIGATION ACTIONS, COLFAX COUNTY

Action	Alert Sirens
Description	Perform an evaluation of existing alert sirens in order to determine sires which should be replaced or upgraded. Install new sirens where lacking.
Hazard(s) Addressed	All Hazards
Estimated Cost	$15,000+
Potential Funding	HMGP, FMA, BRIC, PDM, Local Funds, State Funds
Timeline	2-5 Years
Priority	Medium
Lead Agency	County Emergency Management, County Commissioners
Status	Not started due to shift in priorities.

Action	Backup Generator
Description	Provide a portable or stationary source of backup power to redundant power supplies, municipal wells, lift stations, and other critical facilities and shelters.
Hazard(s) Addressed	Tornadoes, High Winds, Severe Winter Storms, Severe Thunderstorms
Estimated Cost	$15,000-$30,000 per generator
Potential Funding	General Fund, PDM, BRIC
Timeline	1 Year
Priority	High
Lead Agency	County Emergency Management, Fire, Police, County Commissioners
Status	Not Started due to funding constraints.

Action	Emergency Communications
Description	Establish an action plan to improve communication between agencies to better assist residents and businesses during and following emergencies. Establish inter-operable communications.
Hazard(s) Addressed	All Hazards
Estimated Cost	$10,000+
Potential Funding	General Fund, EMPG, HSGP, IECGP
Timeline	2-5 Years
Priority	Low
Lead Agency	Emergency Management, Police, Fire
Status	Not started due to shift in priorities and resource constraints.

Action	Maple Creek Recreation Area at Leigh
Description	Investigate possible alternatives to address flooding on Maple Creek and design and construct the best solution. This mitigation project is for the design and construction of a flood control project on Maple Creek to reduce flooding and erosion in and around Leigh.
Hazard(s) Addressed	Flooding
Estimated Cost	$100,000+
Potential Funding	General Fund, HHPD
Timeline	2-5 Years
Priority	High
Lead Agency	County Board, Lower Elkhorn NRD
Status	Not started due to resurce and funding constraints.

Action	Property Acquisition
Description	Encourage flood-prone property owners to voluntarily relinquish/sell that property to the city/village/county.
Hazard(s) Addressed	Flooding, Dam Failure, Levee Failure
Estimated Cost	Varies
Potential Funding	General Fund, 404/406 HMGP, PDM, FMA
Timeline	2-5 Years
Priority	Low
Lead Agency	County Board, Local Governments, Planning and Zoning
Status	Not started due to shift in priorities.

SOURCE: LOWER ELKHORN NRD HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN- 2025

FIGURE 12.3 – ONGOING HAZARD MITIGATION ACTIONS, COLFAX COUNTY

Action	Public Awareness
Description	Through activities such as outreach projects, distribution of maps, and environmental education increase public awareness of natural hazards to both public and private property owners, renters, businesses, and local officials. Also, educate citizens on water conservation methods, evacuation plans, etc. and purchase equipment such as overhead projectors and laptops.
Hazard(s) Addressed	All Hazards
Estimated Cost	$0-$5,000+
Potential Funding	General Fund, EMPG
Timeline	5+ Years
Priority	Low
Lead Agency	Emergency Management, County Board, Police, Fire, Water Commissioner
Status	Not Started due to shift in priorities.

Action	River/Stream Bank Stabilization
Description	Bank degradation is occurring along many rivers and creeks. Stabilization improvements include rock rip rap, vegetative cover, j-hooks, boulder vanes, etc. to reestablish the channel banks.
Hazard(s) Addressed	Flooding
Estimated Cost	Varies greatly with size and length of channel requiring bank stabilization
Potential Funding	General Fund, PDM, 404/406 HMGP
Timeline	2-5 Years
Priority	High
Lead Agency	Local Government
Status	Not Started due to funding constraints.

Action	Safe Room / Storm Shelter
Description	Design and construct storm shelters and safe rooms in highly vulnerable areas such as mobile home parks, campgrounds, school, and other areas.
Hazard(s) Addressed	Tornadoes, High Winds, Severe Thunderstorms
Estimated Cost	$200-$300/sf stand alone; $150-200/sf addition/retrofit
Potential Funding	General Fund, BRIC, PDM, HSGP
Timeline	1 Year
Priority	High
Lead Agency	Emergency Management, Local Government
Status	Not Started due to funding constraints.

Action	Stormwater System and Drainage Improvements
Description	Undersized systems can contribute to localized flooding. Stormwater system improvements may include pipe upsizing and additional inlets. Retention and detention facilities may also be implemented to decrease runoff rates while also decreasing the need for other stormwater system improvements.
Hazard(s) Addressed	Flooding
Estimated Cost	$100,00+
Potential Funding	General Fund, PDM, BRIC, 404/406 HMGP
Timeline	2-5 Years
Priority	High
Lead Agency	Highway Superintendent, Local Government, Utility Superintendent
Status	Not Started due to funding constraints.

Action	Warning Systems
Description	Improve cable TV interrupt warning system and implement telephone interrupt system such as Reverse 911, emergency text messaging warning system, etc.
Hazard(s) Addressed	Tornadoes, High Winds, Severe Winter Storms, Severe Thunderstorms
Estimated Cost	$5,000+
Potential Funding	General Fund, EMPG, HSGP, IECGP
Timeline	5+ Years
Priority	Low
Lead Agency	Emergency Management, County Commissioners
Status	Not Started due to funding constraints.

Action	Weather Radios
Description	Conduct an inventory of weather radios at schools and other critical facilities and provide new radios as needed.
Hazard(s) Addressed	All Hazards
Estimated Cost	$50 per radio
Potential Funding	General Fund
Timeline	2-5 Years
Priority	Low
Lead Agency	Emergency Management
Status	Not started due to technology of mobile phones and shift in priorities.

FIGURE 12.4 – REMOVED HAZARD MITIGATION ACTIONS, COLFAX COUNTY

Action	Continue Participation in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)
Description	Maintain good standing with National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)
Hazard(s) Addressed	Flooding
Status	Removed. This action was removed because it is not a true mitigation action. The county will continue to participate in NFIP.

Action	Floodplain Regulation Enforcements/Updates
Description	Continue to enforce local floodplain regulations for structures located in the 100-year floodplain. Strict enforcement of the type of development and elevations of structures should be considered through issuance of building permits by any community or county. Continue education of building inspectors or Certified Floodplain Managers.
Hazard(s) Addressed	Flooding
Status	Removed. This action was removed because it is not a true mitigation action. The county will continue to enforce local floodplain regulations.

SOURCE: LOWER ELKHORN NRD HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN- 2025

HAZARD MITIGATION GOALS AND ACTIONS

GOAL 12.1

Colfax County reduces the impacts of natural hazards on residents, property, and infrastructure.

Actions

12.1.1 Implement the mitigation actions identified in Table 12.1 as funding and resources are available.

12.1.2 Coordinate with municipalities, NRDs, emergency responders, and state and federal agencies on hazard mitigation projects.

12.1.3 Consider hazard risks when reviewing development proposals and updating County plans and regulations.

GOAL 12.2

Colfax County and its communities maintain (or come into) conformance with the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).

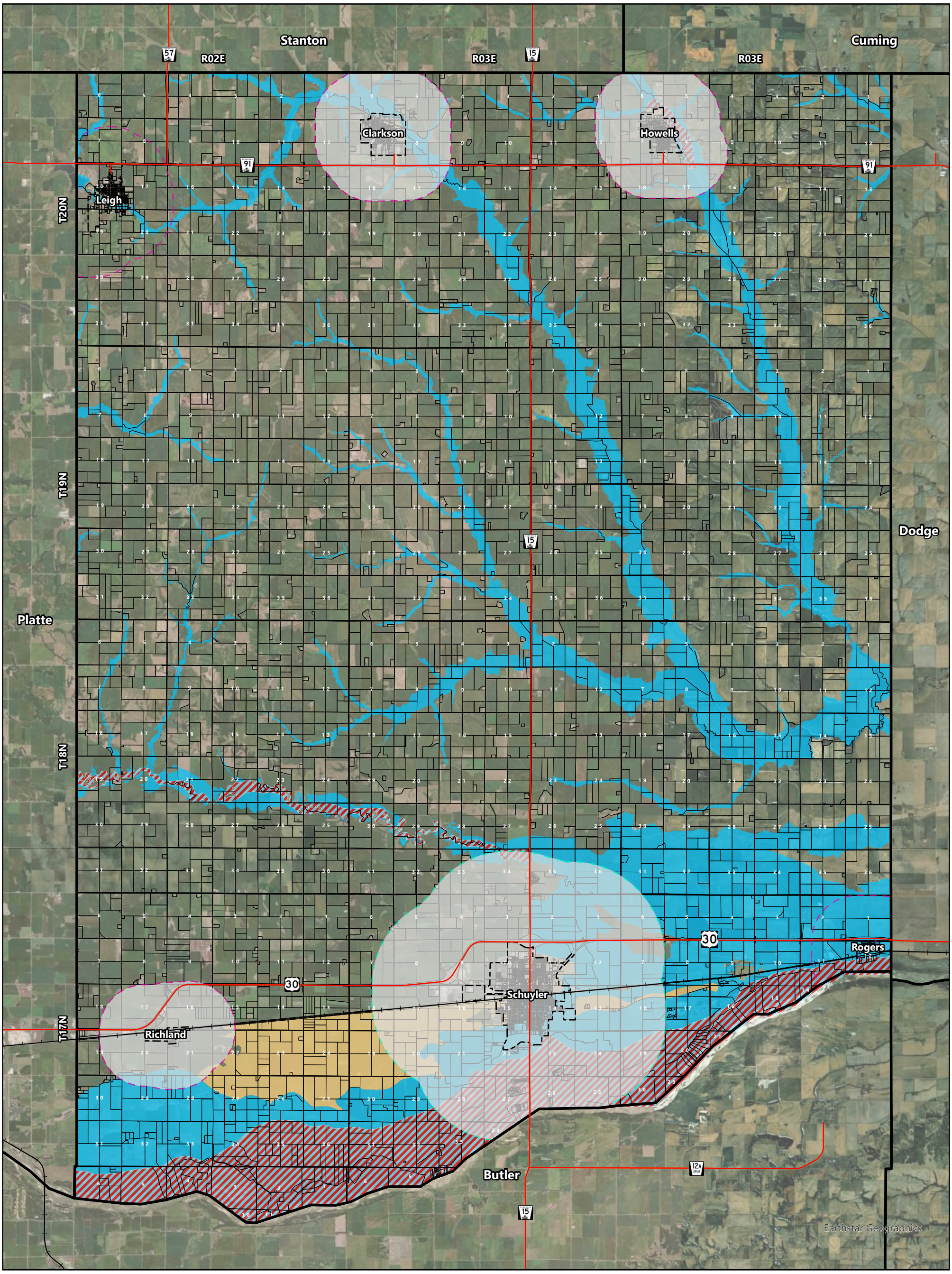
Actions

12.2.1 Work with municipalities to provide consistent floodplain administration.

12.2.2 The Floodplain Administrator should pursue floodplain mapping with FEMA and the State of Nebraska for the county and municipalities.

12.2.3 Support continued training for the Floodplain Administrator and other staff involved in floodplain management.

12.2.4 Encourage development to avoid floodways and other areas with significant flood risk when possible.



LEGEND

- Railroads
- Highways
- County Boundaries
- Municipal Limits
- 2-Mile Planning Area (Schuyler)
- 1-Mile Planning Area (With Zoning)
- 1-Mile Planning Area (No Zoning)
- Township and Range
- Parcels

Special Flood Hazard Area

- 100-year flood, or 1% Annual Chance Flood Hazard
- 0.2% Annual Chance Flood Hazard
- Area With Reduced Flood Risk Due to Levee
- Floodway

COLFAX COUNTY NEBRASKA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

FIG 12.5 FLOODPLAIN

MARVIN PLANNING CONSULTANTS
Specializing in Municipal, County and Neighborhood Planning

PROJECTION: NE State Plane (Ft.)
DATUM: NAD 83
DATE: 9.24.26

N

0 0.02 0.04 0.09 Miles



CHAPTER 13 Land Use

This chapter serves as a broad framework for guiding future decisions. While the Comprehensive Plan itself is not a regulatory document, it embodies the community's aspirations for the future. It serves as a crucial foundation for the regulations that put the plan into action, including zoning, subdivision, and floodplain management.

It is vital that the Land Use element accurately represents the needs and desires of Colfax County's residents and property owners, while also clearly outlining the constraints on the land. This chapter addresses the statutory requirements of the land use element, describes existing land use, and presents the future land use plan.

LAND USE ELEMENT

This chapter is intended to meet the requirements for a land-use element in Neb. Rev. Stat. §23-114.02, "which designates the proposed general distribution, general location, and extent of the uses of land for agriculture, housing, commerce, industry, recreation, education, public buildings and lands, and other categories of public and private use of land."

The Land Use element is based on an understanding of the distribution, location, and extent of different types of existing land use. The other elements presented so far in this plan, from demographics to natural resources, inform the analysis of existing land use to determine recommendations for the future land use plan.

EXISTING LAND USE

Land in Colfax County is used for many different purposes. Existing land use includes both the use of buildings and parcels of land. The use of land is constantly changing—this plan presents a snapshot in time of existing land use. Despite change, it is essential to have a solid understanding of existing land use at a point in time to carefully consider future land use plans.

Agriculture is the predominant land use in Colfax County. Most of the county consists of agricultural land used for crop production, livestock operations, and farmsteads, with more intensive residential, commercial, and industrial development concentrated around the incorporated communities and major transportation corridors. The County's zoning regulations reflect this rural character through the A-1 Agricultural Preservation District, along with Transitional Agricultural, Platte River Corridor, residential,

commercial, flex, and industrial districts. In 2024, Colfax County had approximately 25.9 residents per square mile.

Housing in Colfax County is found in both the incorporated communities and rural areas. Most housing is located in the cities and villages, especially Schuyler, while rural housing includes farm homes, acreages, and scattered single-family residences. Single-family detached homes make up most of the county's housing stock, while manufactured and mobile homes also provide an important housing option. Housing on active farms remains common as well, with many agricultural producers living on the farms they operate.

The Marvin Planning Consultants team analyzed data provided by Colfax County Assessor's Office to produce base maps of every parcel of land in the county. After consulting satellite aerial mapping online, the team conducted windshield surveys in the county, and spot-checked locations in rural areas. Draft maps were provided to the County Zoning Administrator to spot check and verify. Every attempt was made to ensure the Existing Land Use Map is as accurate as possible as of Fall 2026.

Overall, development patterns in Colfax County are influenced by topography, soils, water, and infrastructure including roads, power, water, and suitability for wastewater treatment. Therefore, all previous elements of the Comprehensive Plan contribute to the land use policy.

EXISTING LAND USE CATEGORIES

The most common land use patterns fall into several general categories. Some parcels may include multiple uses, in which case the primary use or use of the majority of the property is mapped. Some parcels are mixed use, in which case also the primary use is mapped. The use of land is constantly changing. As such, the short-and long-term success of the county is directly contingent upon maintaining flexibility while avoiding undue impacts on property rights and property values.

The utilization of land is best described in specific categories providing broad descriptions where numerous businesses, institutions, and structures can be grouped. For the purposes of the Comprehensive Plan, the following land use classifications are used:

- Agricultural/Vacant
- Residential
- Manufactured Housing
- Commercial/Industrial
- Public/Institutional
- Transportation/Right-of-Way

Agricultural

Agricultural land use covers the wide variety of farming and ranching operations and farmsteads. This includes row crops, alfalfa, and pastureland, as well as small and large animal feeding operations. As discussed in Chapter 11, prime farmland is best suited to producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops—Agriculture should be considered the highest and best use for prime farmland in most cases.

Some areas of vacant land without structures or other uses are included in this category although they may not be actively farmed. These parcels are more common closer to municipalities, typically being held in anticipation of future development. Every effort was made to distinguish the most current use of property on the existing land use map.

Residential

Residential land use in the county is mapped for small parcels used primarily for housing. This includes small parcels separated from an agricultural operation, since they could be sold separately. These parcels may be acreage tracts or rural residential subdivision developments.

The countywide land use map presents single-family and multi-family dwellings in one residential category. Land use maps for the individual municipalities show a greater level of detail between single-family and multi-family units.

Commercial/industrial

Commercial land use includes local retail and services facilities. This includes, for example, convenience stores or retail stores contained completely inside a structure. Commercial uses tend to be located near urban areas or in proximity to major roads for accessibility.

Industrial land use includes both light and heavy industry, ranging from manufacturing to outdoor storage, grain elevators, and salvage yards. Industrial uses tend to have external effects on neighbors, including sight impacts, smells, and other noxious effects. These uses require careful siting to mitigate impacts on infrastructure and adjacent residents and property owners.

Parks/Recreation

Parks and Recreation land uses cover public parks, dedicated open space, and state wildlife management areas. Most park property is located within the municipalities.

Public/Institutional

Public and Institutional land use accounts for public property (other than parks and recreation or rights-of-way). Public land use includes city/village property, as well as county, state, and federal facilities. Institutional land use includes property typically exempt from taxation, such as churches, as well as non-profit organizations which may or may not be taxed.

Right-of-Way
The right-of-way existing land use category accounts for highway, road, and railroad rights-of-way.

Manufactured Housing
Manufactured Housing land use includes mobile and manufactured homes located on leased or individually owned property, including within manufactured home parks. These areas provide an alternative to conventional site-built housing and can provide more affordable housing options. Manufactured housing should be located where adequate access, utilities, and other services can be provided and where the use is compatible with surrounding development.

PHYSICAL CHARACTER OF COLFAX COUNTY
The topography, hydrology, and soil types, as modified by infrastructure—roads, bridges, utilities—make up the physical character of Colfax County. This provides a foundation for the use of the land, now and into the future.

Defining characteristics of the county include:
- Prime farmland, both irrigated and dryland
- Floodplains along the Platte River, Shell Creek, Maple Creek, and other drainageways
- Highway corridor(s), including U.S. Highway 30 and Nebraska Highways 15, 57, and 91
- Parks, recreation areas, wildlife habitat, and open space located throughout the county and within its communities
- Potential impacts of industrial-scale renewable energy facilities

See CHAPTER 14 TRANSPORTATION for more information on roads and highways.

FUTURE LAND USE PLAN
The Future Land Use Plan is the foundation of land use policy and regulations in the county. The Future Land Use Plan implements the goals and objectives of the residents and property owners of Colfax County, as expressed in the Comprehensive Plan.

The Future Land Use Plan is based upon existing conditions and projected future conditions of the county. It both reflects those trends as well as assisting decision makers in determining the type, direction, and timing of future growth and development.

The Future Land Use Map illustrates the plan. Several factors contribute to this map:
- Current use of land within County jurisdiction, as well as Municipal jurisdictions (Extraterritorial Jurisdictions or ETJs)
- Desired characteristics of growth
- Future development patterns
- Physical character and constraints of the land as well as infrastructure
- Population and economic trends affecting the county.

EXTRATERRITORIAL JURISDICTION
Colfax County includes one first-class city, Schuyler; one second-class city, Clarkson; and the villages of Howells, Leigh, Richland, and Rogers. Under Nebraska law, Schuyler may exercise planning and zoning authority within two miles of its corporate limits, while cities of the second class and villages may exercise authority within one mile of their corporate limits (see Neb. Rev. Stat. §§ 16-901 et seq. and 17-1001 et seq.). While municipalities have jurisdiction over unincorporated property within their extraterritorial jurisdictions (ETJs), this plan is intended to work cooperatively toward the mutual goals and objectives of Colfax County and its cities and villages.

FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORIES
The Future Land Use Plan identifies broad areas for different types of future development and conservation. These categories provide policy direction for future land use decisions and are intended to guide, rather than regulate, individual properties.

Future land use categories include:
- Agriculture Primary
- Agriculture Transitional
- Rural Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Flex
- Airport Hazard Overlay
- Flood Hazard Overlay
- Wellhead Protection Overlay
- Platte River Corridor

The Future Land Use Plan is intended to be a general guide to future land uses balancing private sector development with the public interest, so the county can effectively and efficiently deliver public services to all citizens of Colfax County.

Agricultural Primary



General Purpose

This land use provides for all agricultural practices. In this "agriculture first" land use, agricultural activities are given primary consideration where conditions are favorable. This is the land use category in Colfax County where livestock production and feeding operations are permitted and non-farm residential development is discouraged.

To discourage scattered non-farm residential development, minimum lot sizes and residential density should be used to preserve agricultural land and reduce conflicts with farming operations

Compatible Uses

1. Crop production, including grazing lands
2. Livestock operations for all types of animals
3. Private grain storage
4. Commercial grain storage
5. Manure and fertilizer applications
6. Public recreational, wildlife, and historical areas
7. Agri-tourism activities, such as hunting preserves, fishing, vineyards, and similar uses
8. Religious uses and structures
9. Educational uses and structures
10. Community and recreational facilities
11. Agricultural-related commercial uses, where appropriate
12. Public utility facilities and infrastructure
13. Kennels, within applicable performance standards
14. Commercial sand and gravel mining
15. Renewable energy facilities, including biomass, geothermal, solar, and wind, within applicable performance standards
16. Adult entertainment, where appropriate

Incompatible Uses

1. Non-farm residential development that may conflict with agricultural operations
2. Large commercial development not related to agriculture
3. Uses that may limit or interfere with existing agricultural operations

Issues

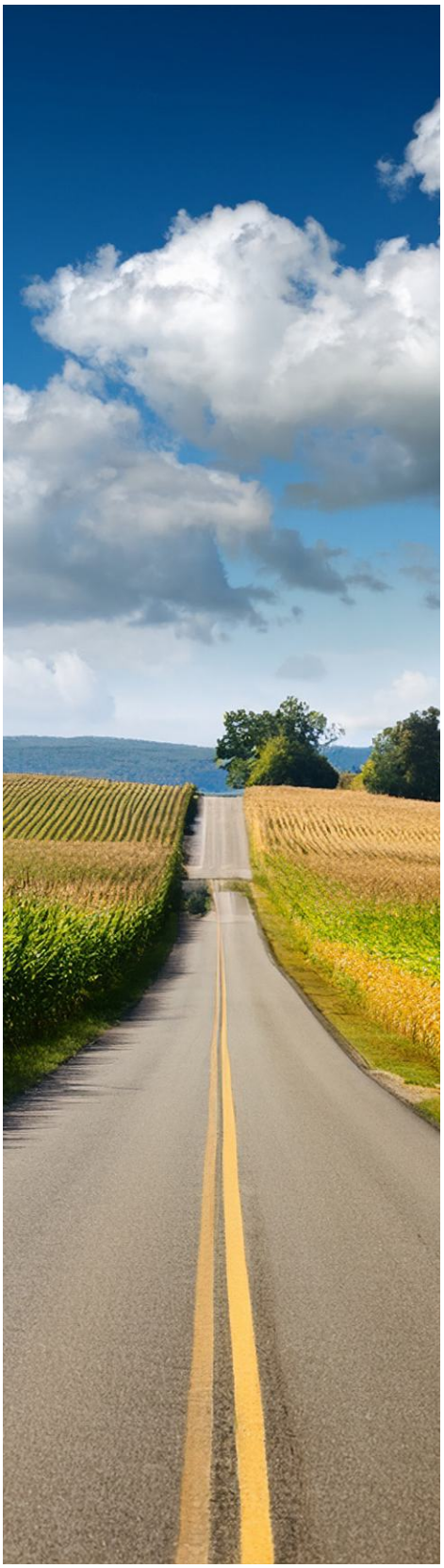
1. Slopes
2. Topography
3. Natural features, including trees, ponds, and streams
4. Site drainage
5. Flood hazard areas
6. Groundwater availability and quality
7. Minimum lot sizes and residential densities
8. Wetlands
9. Suitability for onsite wastewater treatment systems
10. Potable well locations
11. Wellhead protection areas
12. Conservation easements
13. Proximity to conflicting uses, including livestock operations, rural residences, mining, and renewable energy facilities
14. Site access and condition of public roads

Special Policies

1. Minimum residential lot sizes should be kept at the lowest possible size that will accommodate both private water and onsite wastewater treatment systems
2. Residential densities within this land use category should be no more than two dwelling units per quarter section
3. Cluster development should be considered where soils, topography, or natural amenities warrant

Agricultural Transition

General Purpose
The Agricultural Transition category represents the area where agriculture is protected, but may be limited due to proximity to cities and villages. This land use district is intended to allow development of non-ag uses while minimizing conflicts with agriculture.



Compatible Uses
1. By-right Agricultural use, including
    - Accessory ag buildings, and crop and grazing lands
    - Non-commercial grain, hay, and produce storage
    - Irrigation facilities
    - Wholesale tree farms, plant nurseries, and vineyards
    - Land application of manure within DWEE requirements
2. Livestock operations (smaller scale) within necessary setbacks
3. Commercial uses related to agriculture (such as grain storage and elevators, veterinary clinics, farm machinery repair, fertilizer plants, etc.) when odors and hazards are mitigated
4. Agri-Tourism activities (such as game farms, farmstands, vineyards and wineries, etc.), and public and private recreational, wildlife, and historical uses
5. Single acreage development, including home occupations
6. Public facilities (such as road maintenance storage, fire stations, public utility substations, wildlife areas, etc.)
7. Religious and educational facilities
8. Kennels, within performance standards
9. Commercial sand and gravel mining
10. Renewable Energy facilities, within performance standards
11. Adult entertainment where appropriate

Incompatible Uses
1. Large scale residential development
2. Larger livestock operations which cannot mitigate odor impacts
3. Large commercial development

Issues
1. Groundwater / Rural Water / Municipal water availability
2. Suitability for onsite wastewater treatment systems (septic)
3. Proximity to existing livestock confinements, mining, renewable energy facilities, etc.
4. Natural amenities such as trees, ponds, and streams
5. Conservation Easements
6. Site drainage
7. Wetlands
8. Flood hazard areas
9. Wellhead protection areas
10. Site access (public roads)
11. Slopes and topography
12. Soil conditions
13. Groundwater quality and contamination
14. Potable well locations

Special Policies
1. Lot sizes may vary depending upon the source of potable water and OWTS/sewer service.
2. Residential densities no more than four dwelling units per 1/4 section.
3. Dwellings shall be adjacent to improved all-weather roads (above minimum maintenance road).
4. Cluster developments should be considered and used whenever soils, topography, natural amenities warrant.
5. Separation distances should be applied to rural acreages and uses with off-site impacts.

Rural Residential



General Purpose

The Rural Residential land use category represents areas in the county where small lot residential development may be appropriate, especially in proximity to cities and villages. There may also be areas which are, for demonstrable reasons, not well-suited to agriculture which are also not constrained by soils or floodplains. These areas should be designed as clustered developments to conserve agricultural land and open space.

Compatible Uses

1. Residential development
2. Mixed-use developments incorporating:
   - Residential as predominate use
   - Small-scale commercial in support of residential use
3. Public amenities such as parks, community centers, etc.
4. Ag production (smaller scale)
5. Agri-Tourism activities (such as farmstands, wineries, etc.)
6. Public facilities (such as road maintenance storage, fire stations, public utility substations, etc.)
7. Religious and educational facilities
8. Home occupations
9. On-Site Renewable Energy facilities, within performance standards

Incompatible Uses

1. Major agricultural operations
2. Livestock operations
3. Large commercial development
4. Industrial development

Issues

1. Groundwater / Municipal water availability
2. Suitability for onsite wastewater treatment systems (septic)
3. Proximity to existing livestock facilities and/or industrial sites
4. Natural amenities such as trees, ponds, and streams
5. Conservation easements
6. Site drainage
7. Wetlands
8. Flood hazard areas
9. Wellhead protection areas
10. Site access (public roads)

Special Policies

1. Lot size will vary depending upon the source of drinking water and OWTS/sewer service. Lots should be no smaller than 3.0 acres on well or septic.
2. Residential densities within this land use category should be maximized when community water/sewer service is provided.
3. Dwellings shall be adjacent to improved all-weather roads (above minimum maintenance road).
4. Cluster development should be considered whenever soils, topography, natural amenities warrant.

Commercial

General Purpose
The Commercial land use provides for larger commercial development where transportation routes and other conditions prove favorable. This land use is to promote the agricultural industry of Colfax County and to provide services and development opportunities at key locations within the County.

Compatible Uses
1. General commercial uses providing goods and services to local communities
2. Agricultural-commercial uses, including implement dealers, agricultural supply businesses, and similar uses
3. Commercial grain storage and related services
4. Uses serving the motoring public, such as truck stops, convenience stores, auto sales, and repair businesses
5. Public facilities, such as road maintenance facilities, fire stations, public utility substations, and community centers
6. Religious and educational uses and structures
7. On-site renewable energy facilities, within performance standards
8. Continuation of pre-existing agricultural uses
9. Adult entertainment, where appropriate

Incompatible Uses
1. Livestock operations
2. Single-family residential development
3. Heavy industrial uses

Issues
1. Groundwater and municipal water availability.
2. Depth to groundwater.
3. Suitability for onsite wastewater treatment systems.
4. Slopes and topography.
5. Soil conditions and erosion.
6. Natural features, including trees, ponds, and streams.
7. Site drainage.
8. Wetlands.
9. Flood hazard areas.
10. Potable well locations.
11. Wellhead protection areas.
12. Site access and public road conditions.
13. Buffering of incompatible uses to reduce noise, traffic, lighting, odors, and visual impacts.
14. Off-site commercial advertising and potential visual blight

Special Policies
1. No minimum other than adequate space for vehicular movement, parking and septic and water systems.
2. Developments of 1 acre or more may be required to meet the standards of NPDES permitting.
3. Developments which create more than a 5% increase in runoff may be required to construct a detention basin to control runoff.











Industrial



General Purpose

This land use provides for industrial development where transportation routes and other conditions prove favorable, including rail access. These industrial areas are intended to support the agricultural industry of Colfax County and provide services and development opportunities at key locations within the County.

Compatible Uses

1. Light manufacturing and assembly
2. Meat packing and agricultural processing
3. Storage and warehousing
4. Trucking terminals
5. Commercial grain facilities
6. Secondary educational uses and structures
7. Renewable energy facilities, including ethanol and biodiesel
8. Adult entertainment, where appropriate

Incompatible Uses

1. Residential development

Issues

1. Flood hazard areas
2. Slopes
3. Erosion control
4. Wetlands
5. Depth to groundwater
6. Topography
7. Natural features, including trees, ponds, and streams
8. Site drainage
9. Existing or proposed wastewater systems
10. Potable well locations
11. Wellhead protection areas

Special Policies

1. No minimum other than adequate space for vehicular movement, parking and septic and water systems.
2. Developments of 1 acre or more may be required to meet the standards of NPDES permitting.
3. Developments which create more than a 5% increase in runoff may be required to construct a detention basin to control runoff.

Flex











General Purpose

This land use is intended to allow a mixture of commercial and lighter industrial uses. The specific type of use depends on access to transportation routes, including the railroad, and other site conditions. These areas are intended to support the agricultural industry of Colfax County and provide services and development opportunities at key locations within the County.

Compatible Uses

1. Agricultural-commercial uses, including implement stores
2. Commercial grain facilities
3. Uses serving the motoring public, such as truck stops and convenience stores
4. Religious uses and structures
5. Community and recreational facilities
6. Light manufacturing and assembly
7. Storage and warehousing
8. Trucking terminals
9. Post-secondary educational uses and structures
10. Renewable energy facilities, including ethanol and biodiesel
11. Adult entertainment

Issues

1. Flood hazard areas
2. Slopes
3. Erosion control
4. Wetlands
5. Depth to groundwater
6. Topography
7. Natural features, including trees, ponds, and streams
8. Site drainage
9. Existing or proposed wastewater systems
10. Potable well locations
11. Wellhead protection areas

Special Policies

1. No minimum other than adequate space for vehicular movement, parking and septic and water systems.
2. Developments of 1 acre or more may be required to meet the standards of NPDES permitting.
3. Developments which create more than a 5% increase in runoff may be required to construct a detention basin to control runoff.

Platte River Corridor



General Purpose

This land use area follows the Platte River and has the environmental objective of protecting water supplies through a limited number of permitted uses. Preserving water quality and minimizing flood hazards are the leading priorities in considering any type of land use.

Residential development, limited agricultural uses, mining operations, and recreation will be the primary uses in this land use category. It is suggested that if these areas are further developed, trails and designated open spaces should be considered to provide for increased recreational opportunities in the County. Open spaces should be provided to protect major recreational and natural areas and historic sites from adverse effects of major development activity. However, no new construction will be allowed in the designated floodway unless a Letter of Map Amendment (LOMA) can be obtained from FEMA.

Compatible Uses

1. Crop production, including grazing lands
2. Private grain storage
3. Manure/fertilizer applications
4. Public recreational, wildlife, and historical areas
5. Tourism activities such as hunting preserves, fishing, etc.
6. Religious uses and structures
7. Educational uses and structures
8. Community/Recreational Center
9. Sandpit developments (residential) when above the base flood elevation or outside the floodplain

Incompatible Uses

1. Livestock operations
2. Large commercial developments
3. Mobile homes as a single-family dwelling unless located within a mobile home park

Issues

1. Floodway
2. Floodplain and flooding hazard
3. Proximity to existing livestock facilities
4. Wetlands
5. Depth to groundwater
6. Topography
7. Natural amenities such as trees, ponds, and streams
8. Site drainage
9. Groundwater contamination
10. Existing and/or proposed sanitary system
11. Potable well locations
12. Wellhead protection areas

Flood Hazard Areas (Overlay)





General Purpose

Flood Hazard Areas represent the regulatory floodplain as designated on FEMA's Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs), discussed in CHAPTER 12 HAZARD MITIGATION. Developers and residents should be aware flooding can (and does) occur outside of the mapped flood hazard area.

Compatible Uses

1. Determined by underlying zoning, in accordance with the adopted floodplain management ordinance
2. Passive parks, recreation, and open space
3. Drainage and stormwater impoundments

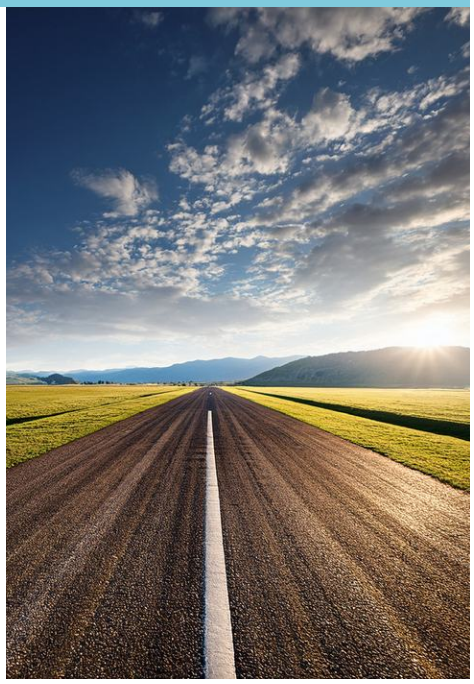
Incompatible Uses

1. Damage-prone development susceptible to damage by flooding or flood-related hazards.
2. Storage and use of hazardous materials, such as gasoline, pesticides, and chemicals.
3. Development which would impede water flow in the effective floodway.

Issues

1. New construction and substantial improvement requires structures to be brought into conformance with FEMA standards, as specified in the floodplain management ordinance.
2. Agricultural structures may be treated differently than residential and commercial structures.

Airport Hazard Area (Overlay)



General Purpose

Airport hazard areas recognize the need to protect aircraft and land use in airport approach paths. This area is identified to inform zoning and land use development decisions. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) establishes requirements for construction near airports.

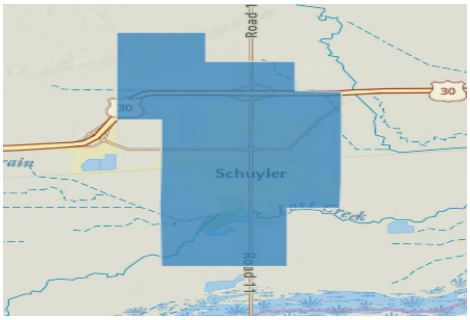
Compatible Uses

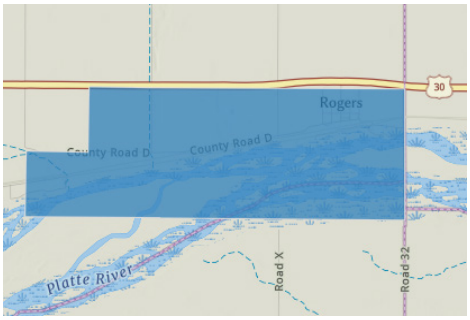
1. Determined by underlying zoning
2. Uses which can coexist with aviation noise and navigation airspace (14 CFR Part 77 "imaginary surfaces")

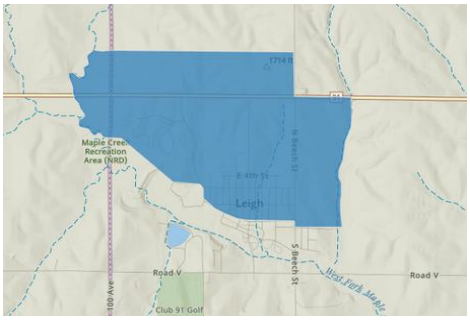
Incompatible Uses

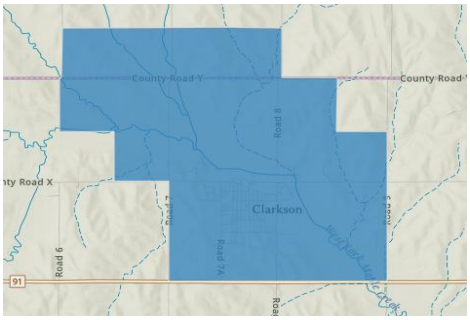
1. Towers and other large structures with the potential to create hazards to aircraft.
2. Visual obstructions such as open mining which produce dust, or uses creating glare and light emissions (including LED-illuminated billboards)
3. Wildlife and bird attractants
4. Residential development
5. Dense commercial development

Wellhead Protection Areas (Overlay)









General Purpose

Wellhead Protection Areas are established for the protection of public water supplies. These areas are identified to inform zoning and land use development decisions.

As noted in CHAPTER 11, Wellhead Protection Areas associated with five Colfax County municipalities and the Village of Dodge extend into Colfax County. Three of these public water systems have state-approved Wellhead Protection Plans:

- City of Clarkson – approved May 30, 2003
- Village of Howells – approved December 16, 2004
- Village of Dodge – approved April 15, 2002; Wellhead Protection Area extends into northeastern Colfax County
- City of Schuyler – Wellhead Protection Area; no approved plan listed
- Village of Leigh – Wellhead Protection Area; no approved plan listed
- Village of Rogers – Wellhead Protection Area; no approved plan listed

Each municipality or other publicly-owned water supply system shall execute an interlocal agreement with Colfax County for administration of regulations within the Wellhead Protection Overlay District, incorporated into the zoning ordinance.

Compatible Uses

1. Determined by underlying zoning, with certain exceptions

Incompatible Uses

1. Common potential groundwater contaminant sources (agricultural, commercial, industrial)
2. Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs)
3. Landfills and refuse recycling centers

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

CONSERVATION DEVELOPMENT

Conservation development is a customized approach to residential or commercial subdivision of land, where parcels are clustered into a smaller area to conserve agricultural or natural areas. Conserved areas may be prime farmland, wetlands and floodplains, or areas with steep slopes or soils unsuitable for building. The smaller developed area reduces costs for infrastructure such as roads and provides a variety of lot options for home builders and buyers.

Implementation of Conservation Development is often accomplished through a specific stand-alone or overlay zoning district, or adoption of Planned Unit Development (PUD) zoning and subdivision ordinance provisions.

LAND USE AND ZONING

Colfax County and several of the municipalities in the county have adopted zoning regulations. Some of the municipalities have also established an extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) for zoning.

- City of Schuyler – zoning regulations and a two-mile ETJ
- City of Clarkson – zoning regulations and a one-mile ETJ
- Village of Howells – zoning regulations and a one-mile ETJ
- Village of Richland – zoning regulations and a one-mile ETJ
- Village of Leigh – no municipal ETJ shown; surrounding unincorporated land is under County zoning jurisdiction
- Village of Rogers – no municipal ETJ shown; surrounding unincorporated land is under County zoning jurisdiction

County zoning applies up to the municipal limits where villages have chosen not to assert jurisdiction over an ETJ.

Zoning regulations require zoning permits for new development. The first implementation action of the Comprehensive Plan will be to review and update the County zoning regulations.

The Zoning Administrator should work with the municipalities in the county to update their comprehensive plans and zoning regulations, as an advocate for residents and property owners in the ETJs and to foster multi-jurisdictional cooperation. The Zoning Administrator should also monitor annexations and updates to municipal boundaries for effects on extra-territorial jurisdiction, as well as zoning in the County and to keep the Official Zoning Map up to date.

LAND USE RESOURCES

SMALL AREA PLANNING

Small area plans are often used to guide changes for a particular area in a county or community. Small area plans are generally prepared for places which would benefit from a closer look—through focused attention, community dialogue, or technical assistance.

Targeted efforts may be useful in the U.S. Highway 30 corridor, growth areas surrounding Schuyler and other incorporated communities, and the Platte River Corridor.

USDA NRCS

As discussed in CHAPTER 11 NATURAL RESOURCES, the USDA NRCS provides resources for rural land use planning and land conservation. NRCS's intended role is to provide national leadership and technical assistance for the conservation of natural resources to ensure the continued production of food and fiber.

NRCS has—at least currently—specific resources for land use planning. These include, for example, the National Resources Inventory (NRI)—a statistical survey of land use conditions and trends—as well as the Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) system. NRCS also works with the Farmland Protection Policy Act, which is intended to minimize the impacts of Federal Programs on premature conversion of farmland to non-agricultural uses.

SOURCE: NRCS.USDA.GOV/CONSERVATION-BASICS/NATURAL-RESOURCE-CONCERNS

LAND USE GOALS AND ACTIONS

GOAL 13.1

Adequate land is available for future growth and development while land use conflicts and incompatible impacts are minimized.

Actions

13.1.1 Review development proposals for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Map.

13.1.2 Require new development to provide or finance necessary infrastructure and site improvements.

13.1.3 Regularly review zoning and subdivision regulations to address changing development needs.

13.1.4 Maintain clear planning, zoning, and development information on the County website.

13.1.5 Encourage the cleanup and reuse of deteriorated, vacant, and underutilized properties.

GOAL 13.2

Agriculture remains the predominant land use in rural Colfax County.

Actions

13.2.1 Protect productive agricultural land from unnecessary conversion to non-agricultural uses.

13.2.2 Direct non-farm residential development away from areas where it may interfere with agricultural operations.

13.2.3 Maintain appropriate setbacks and separation distances between agricultural and non-agricultural uses.

13.2.4 Support livestock production, crop production, and value-added agricultural businesses in appropriate locations.

13.2.5 Avoid regulations that unnecessarily interfere with normal agricultural practices.

GOAL 13.3

Growth areas near communities provide a transition between agricultural and more intensive development.

Actions

13.3.1 Encourage development near existing communities where roads, utilities, and other services can support growth.

13.3.2 Coordinate with municipalities on development, annexation, utility extensions, and changes to extraterritorial jurisdiction.

13.3.3 Review development in transitional areas for impacts on nearby agricultural operations.

13.3.4 Avoid development patterns that may restrict the continued use of surrounding agricultural land.

GOAL 13.4

Commercial and industrial development is located where adequate infrastructure is available and impacts on surrounding properties can be minimized.

Actions

13.4.1 Encourage commercial development near major transportation corridors and intersections.

13.4.2 Work with municipalities and utility providers to identify suitable locations for commercial and industrial growth.

13.4.3 Consider transportation access, water demand, wastewater needs, utilities, and surrounding land uses when reviewing commercial and industrial projects.

13.4.4 Regularly review zoning standards to address emerging commercial, industrial, energy, and technology-related uses.

13.4.5 Provide appropriate setbacks, screening, or buffers between commercial and industrial development and incompatible surrounding uses.

GOAL 13.5

The Platte River Corridor and other environmentally sensitive areas are protected while allowing appropriate use and recreation.

Actions

13.5.1 Direct development away from floodways, wetlands, and other environmentally sensitive areas where practicable.

13.5.2 Consider flood risk, groundwater, wellhead protection areas, soils, and drainage when reviewing development.

13.5.3 Continue participation in the National Flood Insurance Program.

13.5.4 Coordinate with municipalities, NRDs, and state and federal agencies on natural resource protection.

GOAL 13.6

Public, institutional, park, and recreational uses continue to meet community needs.

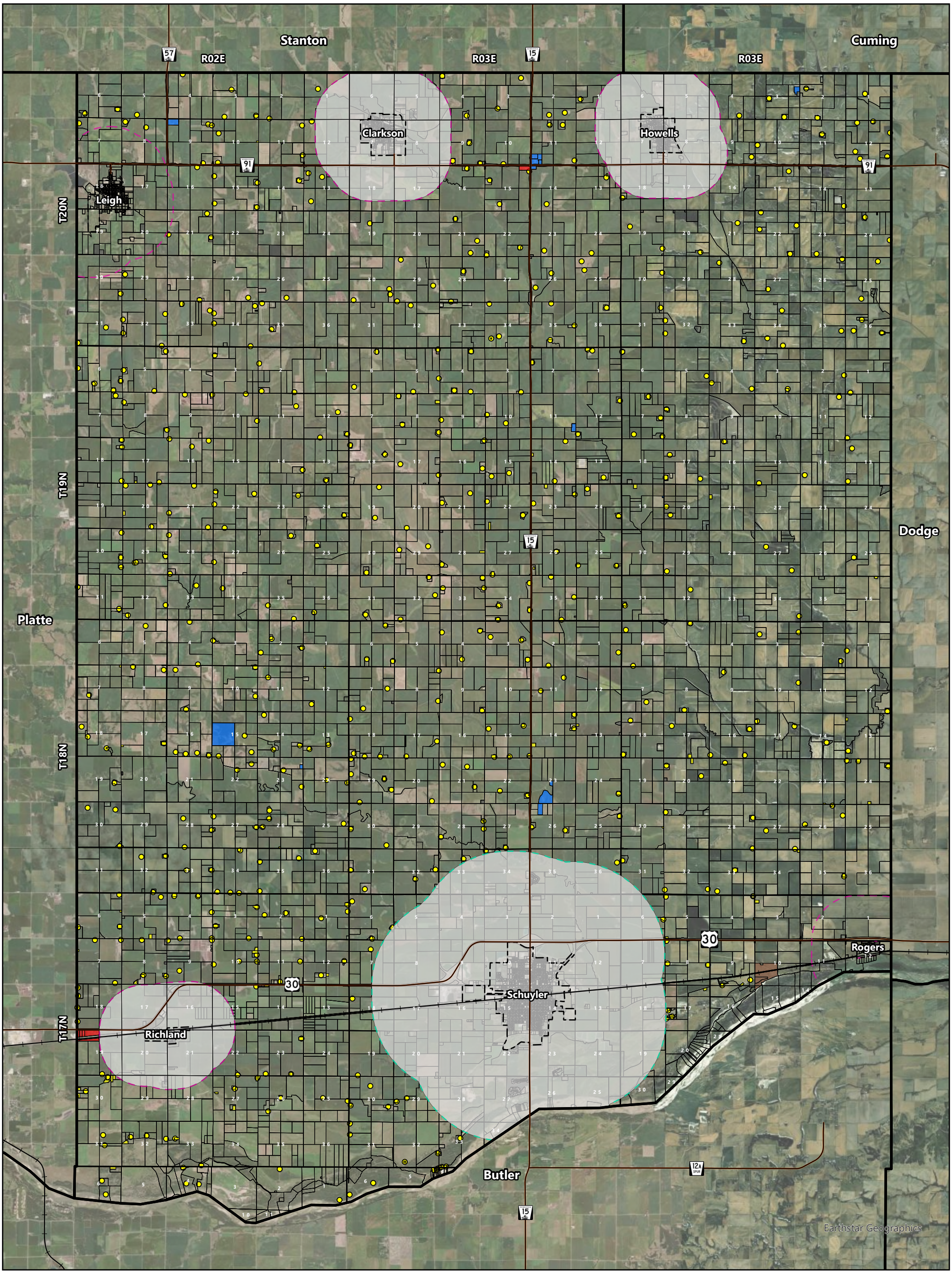
Actions

13.6.1 Support municipalities and other public agencies in maintaining and improving parks and recreational facilities.

13.6.2 Support trail and recreation connections where opportunities exist.

13.6.3 Coordinate with school districts and other public agencies on long-term facility needs and site selection.

13.6.4 Locate new public and institutional uses where adequate access and infrastructure are available.



LEGEND

- Railroads
- Highways
- County Boundaries
- Municipal Limits
- 2-Mile Planning Area (Schuyler)
- Sections
- 1-Mile Planning Area (With Zoning)
- 1-Mile Planning Area (No Zoning)
- Township and Range
- Parcels

District

- Agricultural/ Vacant (Ag/V)
- Residential (R)
- Manufactured Housing (MFH)
- Commercial/ Industrial (C/I)
- Public/ Institutional (P/I)
- Transportation/ Rights-of-Way (T/ ROW)
- Residences

COLFAX COUNTY NEBRASKA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

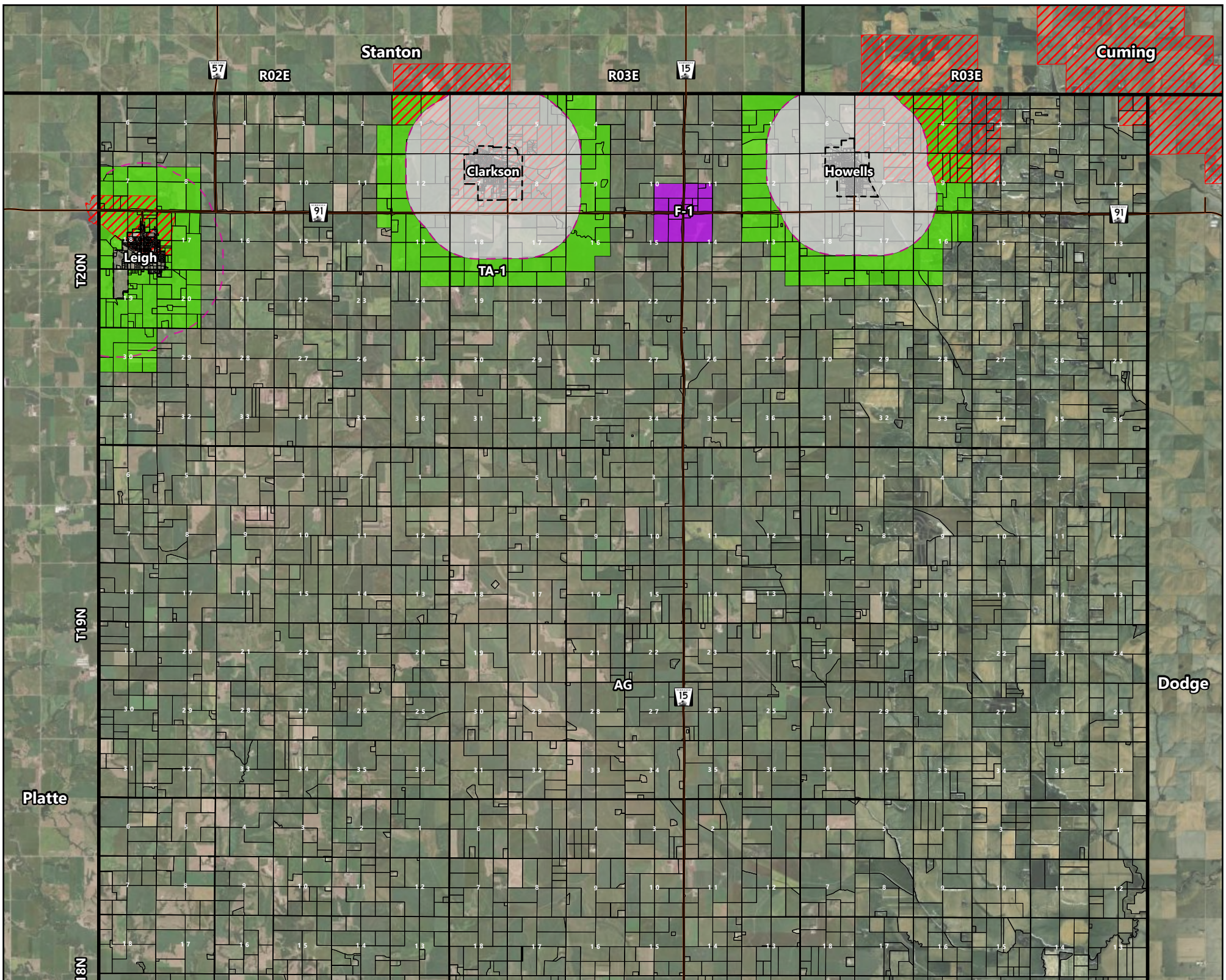
FIG .13.1: EXISTING LAND USE

N

MARVIN PLANNING CONSULTANTS
Specializing in Municipal, County and Neighborhood Planning

PROJECTION: NE State Plane (Ft.)
DATUM: NAD 83
DATE: 9.24.26

0 0.02 0.04 0.09 Miles



LEGEND

- Railroads
- Highways
- County Boundaries
- Municipal Limits
- 2-Mile Planning Area (Schuyler)
- Sections
- 1-Mile Planning Area (With Zoning)
- 1-Mile Planning Area (No Zoning)
- Township and Range
- Parcels
- Wellhead Protection Areas

District

- General Agriculture (AG)
- Transitional Agriculture (TA-1)
- River Protection Corridor (RPC)
- Flex (F-1)
- Industrial (I-1)

COLFAX COUNTY NEBRASKA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

FIG 13.2: FUTURE LAND USE

MARVIN PLANNING CONSULTANTS
Specializing in Municipal, County and Neighborhood Planning

PROJECTION: NE State Plane (Ft.)
DATUM: NAD 83
DATE: 9.24.26

N

0 0.02 0.04 0.09 Miles



CHAPTER 14 Transportation

Transportation plays a crucial role in shaping land use, more than most components of a comprehensive plan. It is often stated that the worth of land hinges on "Location, location, location!" In rural Nebraska, the transportation infrastructure encompasses highways, multi-modal, railroads, and air transport systems.

The relationship between land use and transportation establishes a framework for future development, with both elements being mutually dependent. For instance, improved roadways can lead to increased land use intensity in areas which may lack essential infrastructure or may not align with current land uses.

This chapter is intended to meet the requirements for a Transportation element in Neb. Rev. Stat. §23-114.02, including "the general location, character, and extent of existing and proposed major streets, roads, and highways, and air and other transportation routes and facilities."

Streets, roads, and highways are classified by function:

- Freeway—major roadway for state or regional access
- Arterial—major road with high volumes of traffic, primarily connecting places to each other
- Collector—street with less traffic, connecting local traffic to arterial roads
- Local—street with low traffic volumes and slow design speeds, primarily uses for direct access to property.

HIGHWAYS

Colfax County's primary road network is listed below (Figure 14.1).

Principal Arterial Highways

- **U.S. Highway 30** – Runs east-west through southern Colfax County. The highway serves Richland, Schuyler, and Rogers and provides connections west to Columbus and east toward North Bend and Fremont. U.S. 30 is classified as an Expressway.
- **Nebraska Highway 15** – Runs north-south through the central part of the county. It passes through Schuyler and Clarkson and connects with U.S. Highway 30 and Nebraska Highway 91. Highway 15 is classified as a Major Arterial.
- **Nebraska Highway 91** – Runs east-west through northern Colfax County and connects Leigh, Clarkson, and Howells. It also connects with Highway 15 and continues into neighboring counties. Highway 91 is classified as a Major Arterial.

Minor Arterial Highways

- **Nebraska Highway 57** – Runs north-south through eastern Colfax County and is classified as an Other Arterial on the State Functional Classification map. The highway serves the Howells area, connects with Nebraska Highway 91, continues north toward Stanton, and south toward Snyder in Dodge County.

Major Collector Roads

Major collector roads in Colfax County provide connections between rural areas, incorporated communities, and the state

highway system. Key collector routes include Roads 14, R, O, J, H, D, and 18, which connect agricultural areas and rural residences with U.S. Highway 30 and Nebraska Highways 15, 57, and 91

COUNTY ROADS

Several County Roads are functionally classified as major or minor collector roads. As documented in the *Name NRD Hazard Mitigation Plan* (2025), Colfax County's major transportation corridors—including U.S. Highway 30, Nebraska Highway 15, and Nebraska Highway 91—would likely serve as evacuation routes in case of a natural or man-made disaster.

Frontage on a Public Road

New homes should have access to an existing public road, other than a roadway designated by the Colfax County Board of Commissioners as a minimum maintenance road or other unimproved roadway.

Billboards

Off-site commercial advertising, commonly referred to as "billboards" advertise goods or services which are not sold or produced on the premises where the sign is located. The Federal Highway Beautification Act (HBA) of 1965 regulated the location of billboards on federal-aid highways. The "Kerr Amendment" allowed outdoor advertising in commercial and industrial zones. Many communities do not allow billboards, due to concerns with distracted driving and visual blight as a form of visual pollution. The National Association of Realtors has reported nearby billboards hurt residential property values.

In 2022, the US Supreme Court ruled in the case of City of Austin v. Reagan National Advertising local sign codes may continue to strictly regulate off-premise advertising. Colfax County may want to revisit current zoning for signage to offer greater protection to adjacent property values.

ONE- AND SIX-YEAR PLANS

Long-range transportation planning allows decisionmakers to proactively address future transportation needs by anticipating population growth, economic shifts, and infrastructure changes.

Colfax County

Colfax County develops the *One- and Six-Year Road Plan* for the county, which is adopted by the County Board. The most recent plan includes a combination of road and bridge projects across the county.

As a type of Capital Improvements Plan (CIP), the Planning Commission should review the Colfax County One-and-Six plan for conformance with the Comprehensive Plan.

NDOT

NDOT's Surface Transportation Program Book for Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 specifies how the Department plans to preserve and modernize existing assets, increase safety of the transportation system, and expand capacity of the network. Colfax County is located in NDOT District 3, based in Norfolk.

The FY 2026 Construction Program does not list a construction project located in Colfax County. The March 2026 District 3 construction update also shows the nearest projects around Columbus, with no project identified in Colfax County.

NDOT also proposes one asset preservation project over the five-year planning program:

- Nebraska Highway 15 – Platte River Bridge South of Schuyler – Bridge replacement and associated work, approximately $15.7 million. The project is located about 1.8 miles south of Schuyler

TRANSIT

Schuyler Public Transit provides demand-response service in Schuyler and surrounding areas of Colfax County. Rides must be scheduled in advance through the City Office. Service is available Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

SOURCE: SCHUYLERNEBRASKA.NET

MULTI-MODAL

Multi-modal transportation planning creates communities where it is possible to get around by walking, bicycling and public transport. Many State and county roads are designed to favor high-speed motorized traffic, without considering those walking and bicycling. As the community ages, building streets for multiple modes of transportation becomes all the more important.

Young people need to be able to get around town without relying on drivers. As well, many older people may prefer not to drive or may become unable to drive. Trail development is becoming an economic development attraction as young families consider options for where to live. It is said that designing transportation systems for those 8 years old and those 80 years old ensures safe options for all a community's residents.

TRAILS

Many communities have invested in good places to walk or ride a bicycle. A complete network creates safe, comfortable, and accessible multimodal routes for people walking and bicycling.

Most of the county's municipalities have a basic sidewalk network. However, many of these sidewalks are aging and segments are often missing, forcing people to walk in the streets. Also, too few intersections have accessible curb ramps, creating an obstacle for users with strollers and wheelchairs, or who simply find curbs difficult to maneuver.

Multi-user trails are becoming a popular piece of infrastructure for everyday transportation as well as exercise and recreation. Maple Creek Recreation Area northwest of Leigh includes a two-mile hiking and biking trail, along with horseback riding trails around the recreation area. In Schuyler, the Railside Green Arboretum includes a walking path through the nearly three-acre site. Whitetail Wildlife Management Area southwest of Schuyler also provides opportunities for hiking along the Platte River.

SOURCE: HTTPS://COLFAXCOUNTYNE.GOV/

See also Chapter 7 Parks & Recreation.

ACCESSIBILITY

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was signed by President George H.W. Bush in 1990. The ADA is intended to make sure people with disabilities have the same rights and opportunities as everyone else.

The NDOT Roadway Design Manual (May 2022) provides guidance for design of pedestrian and bicycle facilities in conformance with ADA. This includes having a transition plan when structural modifications are required to provide accessibility, including curb ramps.

Sidewalks on rights-of-way and bridges must be at least four feet wide, provided there are larger passing spaces every 200 feet. (Driveways may be considered as passing spaces.) A shared-use path must be a minimum 10 feet wide, with 11 to 14 feet preferred in certain situations.

RAILROADS

UNION PACIFIC

The Union Pacific (UP) Railroad, headquartered in Omaha, Nebraska, operates the rail line through Colfax County, passing through the communities of Richland, Schuyler, and Rogers.

The Union Pacific rail line through Colfax County is part of the Columbus Subdivision, which runs between Fremont and Omaha and west towards Columbus and Grand Island, with additional rail connections available through the Union Pacific system.

UP provides a number of community-oriented programs in their service area. This includes the UP Foundation, economic development, and sustainability programs. UP also provides a comprehensive public safety program.

SOURCE: UP.COM

RAILROAD CROSSINGS

There is one grade-separated railroad crossing in Colfax County, where Nebraska Highway 15 passes over the Union Pacific Railroad in Schuyler. Schuyler also has three at-grade railroad crossings within the city limits. Additional at-grade crossings are located in Richland, Rogers, and rural areas along the rail line.

AIR TRAVEL

The Federal Aviation Administration regulates air travel and provides funding for airport improvements. Through federal grant assurances, airport sponsors and owners are obligated to pursue all reasonable and appropriate actions to secure and promote compatible land use and development within their local areas.

Careful land use planning benefits air travel by preservation of aircraft operations, protection of airport approaches, reduced potential for litigation, and avoidance of hazardous wildlife attractants.

AIRPORTS

There are no public-use airports located in Colfax County, although several private airstrips are located throughout the county. Nearby airports with instrument procedures include:

- Columbus Municipal Airport – approximately 13 nautical miles west of Schuyler.
- David City Municipal Airport – approximately 14 nautical miles south of Schuyler.
- Fremont Municipal Airport – approximately 24 nautical miles east of Schuyler.

The nearest scheduled passenger air service is available at Lincoln Airport and Eppley Airfield in Omaha.

RESOURCES

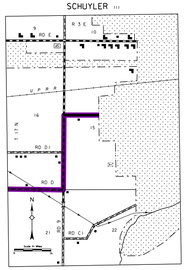
ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATIONS

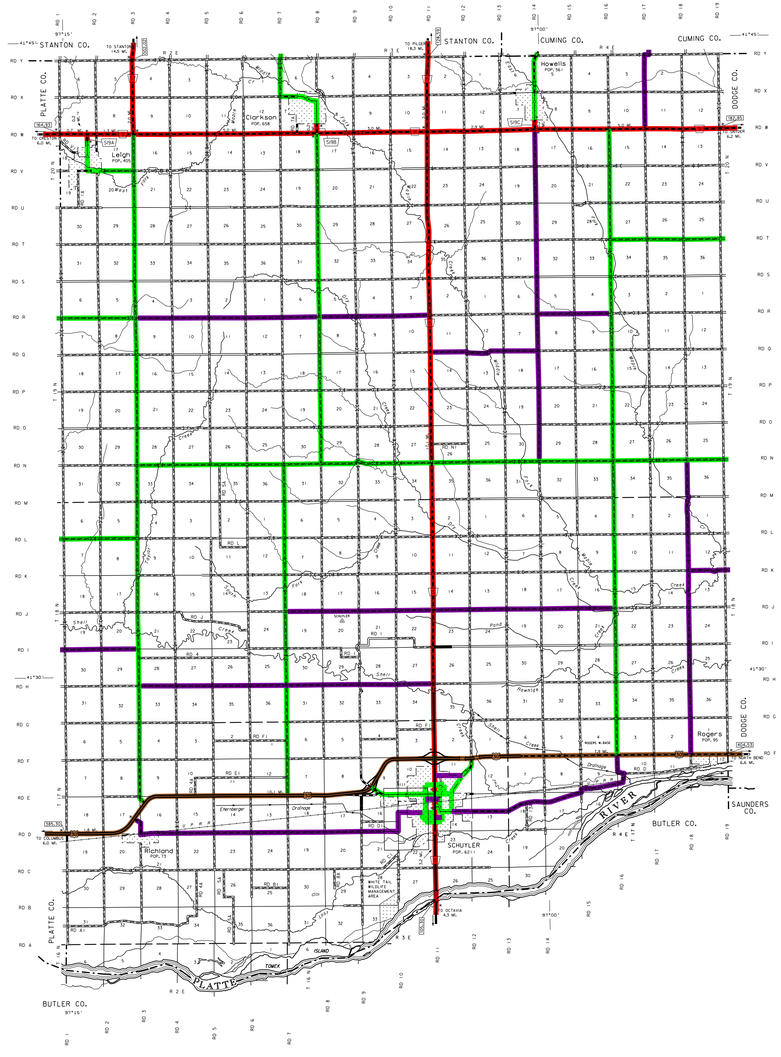
Electric vehicles (EVs, also known as battery-electric vehicles) require off-board electric charging stations. Although the majority of EV owners charge at home, public charging and workplace charging stations are necessary for trips away from home.

There are currently three types of EV charging stations:

- Level 1 chargers use typical electric outlets (120V);
- Level 2 chargers are typically freestanding or hanging, and require a higher level of service (240V);
- Level 3 or DC fast chargers are freestanding stations. They can take around 30 minutes to charge a vehicle but require a very high level of service (480V).

General public charging uses Level 2 or DC fast charging, while Level 1 stations are typically located in a home garage or place of business. Charging





GENERAL HIGHWAY MAP

COLFAX COUNTY

NEBRASKA

PREPARED BY THE

DEPARTMENT OF ROADS

GIS/MAPPING SECTION

IN COOPERATION WITH THE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

SCALE 0 1 2 3 4 5 MILES; 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 KILOMETERS

INVENTORY DATE:

2011

REVISION HISTORY

DATE	REVISION
FEBRUARY 2011	COUNTY SUFT.
JULY 2013	SCHUYLER CORP. LIMITS

LEGEND

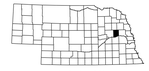
Primitive Road
Unimproved Road
Gravel or Crushed Rock
Asphalt/Bituminous Surface
Multiple Lane Undivided Highway, Asphalt/Bituminous Surface
Concrete/Brick Surface
Multiple Lane Undivided Highway, Concrete/Brick Surface
Divided Highway
Interstate Highway with Full Control of Access
Side Roads and Streets
911 NAMED/Numbered Roads
Interstate-Numbered Highway
US-Numbered Highway
State-Numbered Highway
State-Numbered Highway Spur
State-Numbered Highway Link
Highway Reference Post Number
Interstate Exit Number
Wide Stream
Narrow Stream
Irrigation Ditch
Reservoir, Pond or Lake
Reservoir, With Dam
Highway Bridge-Any Type (over 20' span)
Small Bridges-Closely Spaced (abutments indicate lanes when known)
General Bridge
Arch Bridge
Truss Bridge
Pedestrian Underpass
Pedestrian Overpass
Railroad Overpass
Railroad Underpass
Railroad
Dam with Road on Top
Cattle Guard
Dwelling
Row of Dwellings
Cemetery
Church or Other Religious Institution
Church with Cemetery Adjacent
Hospital
Business
Industrial Plant
Filling Station
Grain Elevator
Aggregate Pit
Agricultural Experimental Station
Educational Institutions
Public Use Area (parks, state parks, grounds, swimming pools, etc.)
Recreational Facilities (campsite, golf, country club, fairground, etc.)
Rest Area
Ranger Station
Fish Hatchery
Community Hall
Correctional Institution
Tourist Court or Motel
Monument-Small
Museum
Firestation
Courthouse
Armory
Post Office
Highway Maintenance Yard
Dump Area
Sewage Disposal Plant
Water Supply Stand Pipe
Radio or TV Station
Weight Station or Port of Entry
Commercial or Municipal Airport
Airport with Paved Runways
State Boundary
County Boundary
Township Line
Section Line
Corporate Limit Lines
Parks and Other Reservations
Boundary Limits of Area Shown in Enlargements (see enlargements for outline)
State Capital
County Seat
Other Cities and Villages
Incorporated City or Village
Triangulation Station
Points Between Which Distances Are Measured Indicated Thus
Latitude and Longitude (100°15' / 41°45')

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

LAMBERT CONFORMAL CONIC PROJECTION
1983 NORTH AMERICAN DATUM
NEBRASKA COORDINATE SYSTEM



KEY TO COUNTIES

This map is to be used for information only and is not intended to show ownership or to be definitive on which roads are public under Nebraska Law. The Nebraska Department of Roads makes no warranty, guarantee or representation as to the accuracy of this information and assumes no liability for errors or omissions. Any inconsistencies should be reported to NDOR.

Nebraska Department of Roads

POPULATION AS OF 2010 CENSUS
STATE HIGHWAYS CORRECTED TO 2011
DIGITAL AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY 2009

www.transportationnebraska.gov

stations should typically be located where vehicle owners are highly concentrated and parked for long periods of time. Public charging stations should also be located along highway corridors. A Level 2 charging station typically provides approximately 25 miles of range per hour of charging, while DC charging stations provide 100 to 200 miles range for 30 minutes of charging.

According to the US Department of Energy and Nebraska DOT, there are 1 public EV charging station locations in Colfax County. This location includes:

- Reinecke Motor Company, Level 2 Charger located at 204 E 11th Street, Schuyler

Currently, NDOT is focusing electric charging infrastructure funding on the designated Alternative Fuel Corridor (AFC) along I-80 and in the Omaha area. Additional state and federal funding programs may be available in the future.

SOURCE: AFDC.ENERGY.GOV/FUELS/ELECTRICITY-BASICS

TRANSPORTATION GOALS & ACTIONS

GOAL 14.1

Colfax County's highway network continues to meet the needs of local users and those passing through the county.

Actions

14.1.1 Annually review the County's One- and Six-Year Plan for conformance with the Comprehensive Plan.

14.1.2 Continue regular maintenance of roads countywide.

14.1.3 Prioritize paving and drainage improvements in growth areas

14.1.4 Work with Nebraska DOT on improving State roads and highways.

14.1.5 New development should be located on existing improved roads, while limiting direct access on arterial routes

14.1.6 Continue to restrict development on designated Minimum Maintenance roads.

14.1.7 As the industry evolves, review zoning requirements of EV charging stations.

GOAL 14.2

Multi-modal transportation infrastructure is provided for walking, bicycling, and public transportation where appropriate.

Actions

14.2.1 Support municipal investments in sidewalks and trails countywide.

14.2.2 Support Schuyler Public Transit and other transportation services serving Colfax County.

14.2.3 Ensure County facilities meet ADA accessibility requirements.

GOAL 14.3

Commercial rail service continues to be available to Colfax County agriculture and industry.

Actions

14.3.1 Support efforts to work with Union Pacific to ensure service continues in the county.

14.3.2 Work with Union Pacific to improve railroad crossing safety.



CHAPTER 15 Implementation

Successful community plans have the same key ingredients—"2% inspiration and 98% perspiration." This section of the plan contains the inspiration of the many county officials and residents who have participated in the planning process. However, the ultimate success of this plan remains in the dedication offered by each and every resident.

There are numerous goals and actions in this plan. These items should inform annual workplans and budget setting to ensure progress continues in bringing the plan to life.

ACTION PLAN

The Comprehensive Plan is not intended to sit on a shelf. The plan is intended to be put into action.

The action plan for Colfax County implementation is a combination of goals and action Items, with provisions to bring the plan to life while evaluating development proposals. Goals and action items specific to each plan element are included in the relevant chapter.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM (CIP)

A Capital Improvements Program (CIP) is an annual plan assessing capital needs and prioritizing tasks to meet these needs in the County's budget. Programming in the CIP should cover facilities (county courthouse, Sheriff's office, highway shop, etc.), capital equipment, parks and recreation, utilities, trails, transit, and other capital facilities. The process should be coordinated with the One- and Six-Year Plan for roads.

EVALUATION OF DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

Development proposal applications should be carefully reviewed against the goals and policies of the Colfax County Comprehensive Plan, as well as the specific requirements of the development regulations. This plan is not regulatory; however, the underlying regulations are based on compatibility with this plan.

Each development application should address how the specific proposal meets the policies of the comprehensive plan.

In cases in which a proposal is counter to the policies of this plan, the developer should be encouraged to bring the proposal into conformance. On the other hand, approval of a proposal which is not in conformance would point to the need to review and update the plan to better serve the county.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MAINTENANCE

Annual Review of the Plan

A relevant, up to date plan is critical to the on-going planning success. To maintain both public and private sector confidence; evaluate the effectiveness of planning activities; and, most importantly, make mid-plan corrections on the use of county resources, the plan must remain current. The annual review should be performed each January to

begin the calendar year. This review should result in a report from the Planning Commission and Staff to the County Board and the citizens of Colfax County.

Unanticipated Opportunities

If major new, innovative development and/or redevelopment opportunities arise which impact any number of elements of the plan and which are determined to be of importance, a plan amendment may by proposed and considered separate from the Annual Review and other proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments. The Comprehensive Plan amendment process should adhere to the adoption process specified by Nebraska law and provide for the organized participation and involvement of citizens.

Ten Year Review

As discussed in Chapter 1, the Colfax County Comprehensive Plan is a 20-year plan. However, the County should review the plan annually and update the document at least every 10 years (2036), or when major, unanticipated opportunity arises. Completing updates every ten years or so will allow the County to incorporate ideas and developments not known at the time of the comprehensive planning process.

IMPLEMENTATION GOALS AND ACTIONS

GOAL 15.1

Development regulations are updated and maintained.

GOAL 15.2

The Planning Commission reviews this plan regularly.

Action Items

This plan recommends several immediate tasks as implementation action items. These include:

1. Zoning Regulations
2. Subdivision Regulations
3. Floodplain Regulations & Mapping
4. Capital Improvements Program
5. Plan Maintenance

The County Board will have a critical role in implementation of this plan through the annual budgeting process. County elected officials, staff, and volunteers take the primary role in implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.

Other action items are referenced in support of activities by other entities supporting implementation of this plan.

APPENDIX A Countywide Survey

COMMUNITY SURVEY

Please answer the following general questions as indicated below.

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION / NOT SURE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL
County government officials are responsive to community needs.	8.16%	32.65%	36.75%	20.41%	2.04%	49
Local government officials are responsive to community needs.	4.00%	34.00%	42.00%	10.00%	10.00%	50
I would support a program to strengthen community pride and appearance.	42.86%	38.78%	16.33%	0.00%	2.04%	49
Colfax County's history and architecture should be preserved.	57.14%	36.73%	4.08%	2.04%	0.00%	49
Overall, Colfax County is a good place to live.	20.41%	67.35%	8.16%	4.08%	0.00%	49
Colfax County has a likable rural and small-town atmosphere.	24.49%	63.27%	4.08%	8.16%	0.00%	49
It is important to preserve and share Colfax County history.	46.94%	46.94%	4.08%	2.04%	0.00%	49

Please answer the following Economic Development questions as indicated below.

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION / NOT SURE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL
If I had the means, I would start or invest in a small, local business.	16.00%	44.00%	32.00%	6.00%	2.00%	50
New business should be along highway corridors instead of the downtowns.	2.00%	22.00%	36.00%	38.00%	2.00%	50
The county should keep new business development within city limits.	4.00%	24.00%	34.00%	32.00%	6.00%	50
New or expanded manufacturing plants will bring the kind of jobs we need.	16.00%	52.00%	16.00%	12.00%	4.00%	50
There are enough part-time jobs for high school students.	2.00%	18.00%	46.00%	32.00%	2.00%	50
Recruiting new business should be a priority for the county.	40.00%	52.00%	8.00%	0.00%	0.00%	50
We should partner with neighboring counties for the future of our region.	32.00%	40.00%	22.00%	4.00%	2.00%	50
The County should be more proactive in supporting existing business.	28.00%	56.00%	16.00%	0.00%	0.00%	50
There is a strong, available workforce in Colfax County.	2.00%	46.00%	38.00%	14.00%	0.00%	50
Retention and expansion of current business is key to Colfax County's economic survival.	28.00%	62.00%	8.00%	2.00%	0.00%	50

Please answer the following Development/Housing questions as indicated below.

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION / NOT SURE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL
Old buildings/houses should be cleaned up or torn down.	44.90%	44.90%	8.16%	2.04%	0.00%	49
Real estate and rental rates are less expensive than for surrounding counties.	0.00%	16.00%	48.00%	26.00%	10.00%	50
New housing should be built within city limits or within close proximity.	14.00%	48.00%	22.00%	14.00%	2.00%	50
More affordable housing is needed for young families.	38.00%	44.00%	14.00%	4.00%	0.00%	50
The elderly need more housing and assisted living facilities.	42.00%	52.00%	6.00%	0.00%	0.00%	50
There needs to be more apartments, townhomes, or duplexes.	16.33%	36.73%	26.53%	16.33%	4.08%	49
New housing developments should be spread throughout the county.	14.00%	48.00%	22.00%	10.00%	6.00%	50
Farmers should be allowed to sell and subdivide their land however they want.	44.00%	22.00%	14.00%	16.00%	4.00%	50
Developers should pay for new water lines and other infrastructure.	32.00%	42.00%	22.00%	4.00%	0.00%	50
Developers should be required to improve roads.	22.00%	42.00%	18.00%	16.00%	2.00%	50
Growth and development should be carefully managed.	30.00%	54.00%	12.00%	4.00%	0.00%	50
Developers should be allowed to build residential subdivisions in rural areas.	10.00%	32.00%	20.00%	26.00%	12.00%	50
Developers should be required to locate in existing communities.	12.00%	36.00%	36.00%	14.00%	2.00%	50
I would support a program to repair/clean-up homes and lawns.	30.00%	38.00%	16.00%	12.00%	4.00%	50
Commerical real estate is over-priced in Colfax County.	26.00%	18.00%	46.00%	10.00%	0.00%	50
Colfax County has a variety of housing options.	4.00%	44.00%	26.00%	26.00%	0.00%	50
Public housing is adequate for Colfax County's needs.	0.00%	12.00%	42.00%	40.00%	6.00%	50
Most homes in Colfax County appear to be in good condition.	2.00%	52.00%	28.00%	16.00%	2.00%	50
There is enough rental property in Colfax County.	0.00%	8.00%	50.00%	32.00%	10.00%	50

Please answer the following Agricultural questions as indicated below

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION / NOT SURE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL
Protecting farmland should be the County's top priority.	50.00%	32.00%	12.00%	6.00%	0.00%	50
Local farmers need employees, but they are unavailable.	10.00%	30.00%	46.00%	14.00%	0.00%	50
Value-added strategies are needed to enhance agriculture.	36.00%	40.00%	20.00%	2.00%	2.00%	50
Small-Scale solar and wind energy should be allowed as a means to generate electricity for an agricultural operation.	14.00%	36.00%	14.00%	12.00%	24.00%	50
Agricultural producers should be allowed to have commerical-scale renewable energy systems (solar and wind) as a means to generate additional revenue on the farm.	12.00%	14.00%	14.00%	28.00%	32.00%	50
New technologies in manure management should be encouraged and allowed.	26.00%	42.00%	26.00%	4.00%	2.00%	50

Please answer the following Recreation questions as indicated below.

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION / NOT SURE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL
There should be more places where kids can hang out with their friends.	32.00%	40.00%	22.00%	4.00%	2.00%	50
There are plenty of extracurricular activities and events for kids.	2.00%	22.00%	30.00%	40.00%	6.00%	50
There are adequate adult and senior citizens activities.	2.00%	22.00%	30.00%	40.00%	6.00%	50
I often use community centers and/or walk-n-bike paths, tracks, or trails	6.00%	30.00%	30.00%	22.00%	12.00%	50
There are not enough places to exercise, or they are too far away.	8.00%	28.00%	26.00%	34.00%	4.00%	50
Outdoor recreation options are limited in Colfax County	16.00%	40.00%	22.00%	20.00%	2.00%	50
There are adequate cultural opportunities, events and activities.	16.00%	32.00%	38.00%	12.00%	2.00%	50

Please answer the following Transportation questions as indicated below.

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION / NOT SURE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL
County roads are in good condition.	6.00%	24.00%	16.00%	36.00%	18.00%	50
I would be willing to pay additional taxes for road improvements.	2.00%	24.00%	26.00%	24.00%	24.00%	50
County Highways are in good condition.	4.00%	58.00%	24.00%	10.00%	4.00%	50

Please answer the following Public Safety/Health questions as indicated below.

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION / NOT SURE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL
I receive good health care locally.	10.00%	36.00%	20.00%	26.00%	8.00%	50
I feel that adequate child care is available.	0.00%	6.00%	38.00%	34.00%	22.00%	50
I feel that adequate senior services are available.	6.00%	24.00%	24.00%	36.00%	10.00%	50
The county has quailty fire protection.	48.00%	46.00%	6.00%	0.00%	0.00%	50
The county has quality EMS protection.	40.82%	48.98%	8.16%	0.00%	2.04%	49
The county has quality law enforcement protection.	28.00%	54.00%	10.00%	8.00%	0.00%	50

Please answer the following Environment questions as indicated below.

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION / NOT SURE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL
The lakes, reservoir, and streambeds are important assests.	48.00%	38.00%	12.00%	2.00%	0.00%	50
The aquifer (ground water) is an important asset and should be conserved.	58.00%	32.00%	6.00%	4.00%	0.00%	50
Prairies are an important resource for the future of Colfax County.	44.00%	16.00%	26.00%	8.00%	6.00%	50

The following value-added strategies for the agricultural economy of Colfax County should be undertaken

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION / NOT SURE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL
More livestock for feeding grain.	24.49%	51.02%	20.41%	4.08%	0.00%	49
New industries using grain in manufacturing process (such as bio-plastics, etc.)	28.57%	48.98%	16.33%	6.12%	0.00%	49
Greater effort towards exporting local grain	30.61%	51.02%	16.33%	2.04%	0.00%	49
Crop diversity (such as hemp, etc.)	22.45%	32.65%	22.45%	14.29%	8.16%	49
Diversification of livestock types	28.57%	30.61%	36.73%	4.08%	0.00%	49
Create farm to home operations (such as farmer's markets, Community-supported agriculture, On-farm stores)	44.90%	32.65%	20.41%	2.04%	0.00%	49
Vineyards and wine making	24.49%	32.65%	32.65%	10.20%	0.00%	49
Commerical-grade renewable energy (solar and wind) are acceptable value-added techniques in Colfax County.	14.29%	10.20%	18.37%	16.33%	40.82%	49
New Producers of Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations.	8.16%	44.90%	34.69%	10.20%	2.04%	49

Other:

No wind towers!

This is some of the best farm ground in the country and solar and wind farms would damage and take over quailty farm ground.

The following are a threat to agriculture in Colfax County.

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION / NOT SURE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL
Drought	59.18%	34.69%	4.08%	2.04%	0.00%	49
Commodity prices	61.22%	30.61%	6.12%	2.04%	0.00%	49
Large corporate ag. becoming more vertically integrated (such as owning the land, and commodity all the way to the final product)	44.90%	28.57%	20.41%	6.12%	0.00%	49
Foreign producers (such as Brazil, Mexico, China, etc.)	57.14%	18.37%	16.33%	6.12%	2.04%	49
Political policies and actions	42.86%	28.57%	24.49%	2.04%	2.04%	49
Eating practices changing (such as vegetarian, organic, etc.)	12.24%	20.41%	36.73%	26.53%	4.08%	49
Conversion of farmland to residential development	46.94%	14.29%	16.33%	20.41%	2.04%	49
Conversion of productive farmland into conservation land	14.29%	24.49%	36.73%	20.41%	4.08%	49

If you can't find what you want/need in Colfax County, where do you go?

	COLUMBUS	FREMONT	NORFOLK	LINCOLN	OMAHA	ONLINE / INTERNET	OTHER	TOTAL RESPONDENTS
Entertainment (such as movies, miniature golf, etc.)	60.87%	19.57%	30.43%	13.04%	34.78%	10.87%	10.87%	83
Outdoor recreation (such ashiking, boating, camping,etc.)	43.18%	27.27%	13.64%	13.64%	25.00%	18.18%	52.27%	85
To play sports (such asbasketball, tennis, golf, etc.)	70.27%	13.51%	10.81%	8.11%	21.62%	2.70%	24.32%	56
Indoor exercise (such aswalking, aerobics, weights,etc.)	69.70%	12.12%	12.12%	0.00%	3.03%	3.03%	18.18%	39
Swimming (outdoor or indoor)	77.78%	8.33%	11.11%	2.78%	2.78%	0.00%	22.22%	45
Entertainment (such as movies, etc.)	60.87%	19.57%	30.43%	13.04%	34.78%	10.87%	10.87%	83
Furniture	19.15%	14.89%	19.15%	6.38%	68.09%	10.64%	14.89%	72
Clothes	43.75%	18.75%	16.67%	14.58%	45.83%	41.67%	10.42%	92
Vehicles (car/truck)	44.44%	48.89%	22.22%	8.89%	26.67%	8.89%	15.56%	79
Farm equipment	24.24%	21.21%	18.18%	3.03%	6.06%	12.12%	57.58%	47
Gas / Convenience items	70.27%	18.92%	16.22%	5.41%	16.22%	2.70%	27.03%	58
Hardware / Lumber	85.42%	22.92%	22.92%	4.17%	10.42%	2.08%	12.50%	77
Other shopping	60.00%	15.56%	22.22%	8.89%	40.00%	22.22%	17.78%	84
Dining out (fast food)	73.33%	31.11%	26.67%	8.89%	35.56%	2.22%	15.56%	87
Dining out (with sit-down service)	62.50%	31.25%	25.00%	14.58%	50.00%	2.08%	20.83%	99
Bar/Entertainment	56.10%	24.39%	17.07%	9.76%	24.39%	0.00%	29.27%	66
Groceries	73.91%	28.26%	21.74%	8.70%	15.22%	15.22%	8.70%	79

Access to quality goods and services is important. How available are these to you?

	AVAILABLE	NEUTRAL	LESS AVAILABLE	NOT AVAILABLE	TOTAL
Grocery store	79.17%	4.17%	8.33%	8.33%	48
Child care/Day care	13.64%	50.00%	15.91%	20.45%	44
Adult care - in home	15.56%	42.22%	28.89%	13.33%	45
Banking	97.92%	2.08%	0.00%	0.00%	48
Tech support computers	12.77%	23.40%	29.79%	34.04%	47
Tourism	6.38%	34.04%	25.53%	34.04%	47
Nursing home & assisted living facilties	14.89%	21.28%	10.64%	53.19%	47
Senior services	22.92%	33.33%	29.17%	14.58%	48
Main street retail	19.57%	21.74%	43.48%	15.22%	46
Restaurants	38.30%	21.28%	38.30%	2.13%	47
Healthcare facilities	33.33%	39.58%	25.00%	2.08%	48
Recreational facilities	16.67%	31.25%	31.25%	20.83%	48
Agricultural support (such as dealerships, parts, repair)	29.17%	27.08%	25.00%	18.75%	48

What is / will be your plan for retirement?

	PERCENTAGE	TOTAL
None of the above	4.17%	2
Already retired	12.50%	6
Stay in Colfax County	43.75%	21
Seek a nearby location	10.42%	5
Stay in Nebraska	25.00%	12
Move to another state	4.17%	2

The most pressing environmental concern for the county now and in the future is:

	IMPORTANT	NEUTRAL	LESS IMPORTANT	NOT IMPORTANT	TOTAL
Agricultural land	81.25%	14.58%	4.17%	0.00%	48
Soils	81.25%	16.67%	2.08%	0.00%	48
Native vegetation	39.58%	39.58%	18.75%	2.08%	48
Water quaiity	89.36%	10.64%	0.00%	0.00%	47
Energy production	39.58%	27.08%	14.58%	18.75%	48
Water availability	89.58%	10.42%	0.00%	0.00%	48
Wildlife	56.25%	29.17%	12.50%	2.08%	48
Renewable energy systems similar to commerical-grade solar and wind.	18.75%	12.50%	20.83%	47.92%	48
Renewable energy systems similar to small-scale (individual) solar and wind.	22.92%	25.00%	14.58%	37.50%	48

In regard to economic development, the county should concentrate efforts in which area? (1) Lowest to (5) Highest preference.

	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL
Manufacturing / Assembly	10.42%	14.58%	27.08%	29.17%	18.75%	48
Technology	8.51%	19.15%	34.04%	25.53%	12.77%	47
Energy	27.66%	14.89%	21.28%	17.02%	19.15%	47
Agriculture	15.22%	0.00%	15.22%	15.22%	54.35%	46
Other	14.29%	0.00%	57.14%	14.29%	14.29%	7
Retail and Wholesale Trade	16.67%	6.25%	22.92%	27.08%	27.08%	48
More affordable/livable housing county-wide	10.64%	10.64%	14.89%	21.28%	42.55%	47
Broadband telecommuncation systems	14.58	16.67%	25.00%	20.83%	22.92%	48

Please rate the following governmental entities.

	EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE	IMPROVEMENT NEEDED	NO OPINION	TOTAL
County Assessor's office	8.51%	42.55%	27.66%	14.89%	6.38%	47
County Treasurer's office	19.57%	52.17%	13.04%	8.70%	6.52%	46
County Attorney's office	12.77%	44.68%	17.02%	2.13%	23.40%	47
Emergency Management	17.02%	44.68%	23.40%	8.51%	6.38%	47
County Sheriff	28.26%	52.17%	10.87%	6.52%	2.17%	46
Public transportation	2.13%	34.04%	23.40%	23.40%	17.02%	47
Senior services	4.26%	27.66%	27.66%	23.40%	17.02%	47
Local Fire Department	57.45%	36.17%	4.26%	0.00%	2.13%	47
Veterans Services	2.13%	31.91%	29.79%	19.15%	17.02%	47
Clerk/Register of Deeds	21.28%	46.81%	17.02%	2.13%	12.77%	47
County Board of Commissioners	4.26%	36.17%	19.15%	27.66%	12.77%	47
County Road & Bridge	4.26%	27.66%	31.91%	31.91%	4.26%	47
Local EMS Service	48.94%	40.43%	6.38%	0.00%	4.26%	47
East Central District Health Department	2.13%	31.91%	31.91%	10.64%	23.40%	47

Where in Colfax County do you live?

	PERCENTAGE	TOTAL
Clarkson (city limits)	10.00%	5
Howells (village limits)	6.00%	3
Leigh (village limits)	2.00%	1
Richland (village limits)	0.00%	0
Rogers (village limits)	2.00%	1
Schuyler (city limits)	30.00%	15
Rural Colfax County	46.00%	23
Outside Colfax County	4.00%	2

How long have you lived in Colfax County?

	PERCENTAGE	TOTAL
Less than 1 year	0.00%	0
1 to 5 years	2.08%	1
6 to 10 years	4.17%	2
11 to 15 years	2.08%	1
16 to 20 years	2.08%	1
21 to 30 years	14.58%	7
31 to 40 years	20.83%	10
41 to 50 years	16.67%	8
50+ years	37.50%	18

Please tell us your age range.

	PERCENTAGE	TOTAL
Under 18 yrs old	0.00%	0
18 to 24 yrs old	0.00%	0
25 to 29 yrs old	2.13%	1
30 to 34 yrs old	6.38%	3
35 to 39 yrs old	12.77%	6
40 to 44 yrs old	10.64%	5
45 to 54 yrs old	19.15%	9
55 to 64 yrs old	19.15%	9
65 to 74 yrs old	23.40%	11
75 and over	6.38%	3

How many children do you have/had in your family?

	PERCENTAGE	TOTAL
0	6.25%	3
1	6.25%	3
2	27.08%	13
3	41.67%	20
4	6.25%	3
5+	12.50%	6

What age/grade level are your children?

	PERCENTAGE	TOTAL
Daycare/Preschool	11.11%	5
K-5	8.89%	4
6-8	17.78%	8
9-12	26.67%	12
College	17.78%	8
Grown (adult)	66.67%	30

My children live:

	PERCENTAGE	TOTAL
At home	42.22%	19
Away at college	15.56%	7
Grown - Living in Colfax County	24.44%	11
Grown - Living in Nebraska	48.89%	22
Grown - Living out-of-state	24.44%	11

Education style for my children:

	PERCENTAGE	TOTAL
Public	100.00%	45
Private	6.67%	3
At-home	4.44%	2
Daycare	2.22%	1

Employment:

	PERCENTAGE	TOTAL
Employed Full-Time	45.83%	22
Employed Part-Time	4.17%	2
Self-Employed	33.33%	16
Home Maker	2.08%	1
Unemployed	2.08%	1
Retired	12.50%	6

I am confident in Colfax County's future:

	%	TOTAL
Yes	73.47%	36
No	12.24%	6
Not Sure	14.29%	7

Which of the following industries is your primary income?

	%	TOTAL
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting, and Mining	39.13%	18
Construction	4.35%	2
Manufacturing	2.17%	1
Wholesale Trade	0.00%	0
Retail Trade	8.70%	4
Transportation and warehousing and utilities	4.35%	2
Information	0.00%	0
Finance, Insurance, real estate, and rental/leasing	6.52%	3
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management	4.35%	2
Educational, health, and social services	2.17%	1
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services	0.00%	0
Other services (except public administration)	4.35%	2
Public administration	4.35%	2
Retired	17.39%	8
Disabled	0.00%	0
Other (USPS)	2.17%	1

How far is your commute to work?

	%	TOTAL
Work at/from Home	28.26%	13
Less than 10 minutes	32.61%	15
10 to 14 minutes	2.17%	1
15 to 29 minutes	15.22%	7
30 to 44 minutes	2.17%	1
45 to 59 minutes	0.00%	0
60 minutes or more	0.00%	0
Retired	19.57%	9
Other	0.00%	0

Highest Level of Education

	%	TOTAL
Grade/Middle School	2.08%	1
High School	22.92%	11
GED	4.17%	2
Community/Technical/ Vocational	35.42%	17
4-year College/University	27.08%	13
Graduate/Advanced Degree	12.50%	6

Business/Employer Location

	%	TOTAL
At Home/Online	21.95%	9
Clarkson	14.63%	6
Howells	2.44%	1
Leigh	9.76%	4
Richland	0.00%	0
Rogers	0.00%	0
Schuyler	41.46%	17
Columbus/Platte County	9.76%	4
David City/Butler County	2.44%	1
Other (North Bend)	4.88%	2

List the one most important quality of Colfax County that must be preserved.

- Agriculture

- Agriculture

- Vibrant place to raise children and to retain graduates to return back for job opportunities after college degrees.

- Floodplain areas

- Rural farmland

- Trust

- No wind energy.

- Stop trying to make Colfax County something it's not.

All of us have different experinces with where we live. We want to know how you feel about Colfax County. Is Colfax County a quality place to live?

	%	TOTAL
Very High Quality	8.33%	4
High Quality	41.67%	20
Neither High nor Low Quality	41.67%	20
Low Quality	6.25%	3
Very Low Quality	2.08%	1
Other	0.00%	0

We don't need tourism. We absolutely do NOT need wind farms - they never pay for their carbon footprint if that's what you're running with. It will never be what it was 100 years ago. Things change.

- Small towns

- The view and the beautiful country

- Its history in agriculture

- Clarkson Czech Days

- Agriculture

- Good people

- Neighbors

- None. Change marches on.

- Agriculture

- Unsure

- Veterans should have returned back to the community need a spot in this survey. It's part of the education system that the military has teaching lots of discipline and electronics.

- The parks and river access

- Colfax County's economy and people are nearly all tied to agriculture, and continuing to maintain our agricultural roots is essential.

- Environment

- History and local farmers. Too much focus on immigrants, their food and lifestyles.

- Agriculture

- Agriculture and the quietness of the land

- Young farmers and ranchers

- Agricultural land

- No solar or wind farms

- Roads

- Friendliness of the community workers and staff.

- The safety feeling of the area

- Safety

- Affordable housing

- Small towns, safe communities

- Small town atmosphere

- Integrity

List the one thing that most needs to be changed about Colfax County.

- Affordable, quality housing

- Better city/community collaboration among services to promote each other and what they offer instead of seeing on FB what already happened in their community that could have been enjoyed by more in Colfax County or had they known sooner

- Language barrier

- Schools

- No solar. No wind. Preserve farmland.

- School system

- Stop trying to reinvent the wheel. We are not a tourist town, we don't need more recreational anything, and the more you want to "conserve" water and land is a big excuse to tax and expand the already inflated government powers.

- Rural roads and bridges

- Rural road improvements

- Perhaps affordable housing for young families

- Gravel road motor grader operators, Mike can't see

- Government

- More recreation

- The City Administrator and Mayor for the City of Schuyler

- Schuyler's downtown

- Better healthcare and exercise opportunities

- The amount of taxes we pay for the amount of services we get back

- The way things look within city limits

- Variety of shops and restaurants

- Depends on if you are speaking of northern or southern Colfax County. Speaking of southern Colfax County, we need renewed community pride, involvement, and volunteerism.

- More outdoor activities

- Not all businesses are included in being allowed and left out of the chamber of commerce. It's obvious that certain businesses not in the downtown area are shut off.

- Keeping kids here

- Gravel road quality

- Land taxes being used for paying for our schools. Everyone needs to pay equally.

- County unity. Too any of these towns are against one another.

- Get new business to county and not just to Schuyler. Treat the smaller town to new business.

- Like wind power, don't be afraid to try new things.

- The amount of money the schools wasn't being stupidly spent.

- Providing a way for new/younger ideas to be heard and communities to attract young families from other counties.

- Less taxes on property

- Consolidate schools

- Maple Creek bridge in Clarkson

- Improve county gravel roads

- Stop wasting county money on a cable car that provides NO benefit to the county.

- More options, no grocery store in Clarkson

- Need to view immigrant society as good.

- Lower taxes

What makes Colfax County a comfortable place to live?

- Low crime

- Good protective services through sheriff dept and city police officers. A small but mighty group of people in each town promoting their community to survive rather than dwindle.

- Wide open space, one stop light

- It's home and rural and people work hard in the area

- Low crime, neighborhood/ community is friendly

- It's home. It's where I farm and where my family has farmed.

- I have good highways to get where I'm going.

- The small town country vibe

- The people

- Slow pace

- People

- Small town feeling

- Zoning. Not allowing junk cars and vehicles to pile up on junk properties.

- Knowing I can lay my head down at night in a safe neighborhood.

- Unsure

- Proximity to Omaha.

- Strong agricultural roots, strong morals and family values.

- The community, knowing that people come together in time of need.

- It's not

- It's safe

- The rural people and communities

- The rural hospitality

- Small population

- Low crime

- It's pretty quiet most of the time

- It feels safe.

- Friendly atmosphere

- Friendly people

- Rural but close enough to bigger city

- Safe, friendly

- Central location

- Small towns, I know everyone in town

- Small town atmosphere

- Good people

What type(s) of outdoor recreation are most important to you?

- Walking trails, camping, fishing, tractor pulls at the fair

- Fishing, golfing, baseball, up to date camping and picnic areas for opportunities

- Golf

- Golf, hunting, and fishing

- River life

- Tractor pulling, community celebrations, camping/fishing

- We have enough here now. Everyone owns 1-3 vehicles, people are able to be mobile and travel to enjoy the recreation of their closing. Colfax County doesn't need more recreation.

- Idk

- Hunting

- Biking and hiking trails

- Sitting on the porch

- No option

- Camping, boating, walking

- Something more than we have. Schuyler has nothing. Kids needs things as well.

- Biking and fishing

- Hunting, sports like basketball, golfing

- Camping, hiking trails, walking trails, fishing

- Water based hiking, walking.

- Mountain biking, hiking, ATV's

- Fishing, bike/hiking trails

- Biking

- Hunting

- Camping

- More public hunting ground also lakes and water environment. The river should be made for the public, not the people who own the banks

- Camping and boating

- Fishing and hunting

- None

- Walking trails, quality swimming pools with access for handicapped. Fishing piers on lakes for elderly.

- Safe quality walking paths and parks for young families.

- Fishing, hunting, camping

- Walking

- Shooting

- Trails, track and fields, and different sports

- Golf, gardening

- Watching high school football

APPENDIX B Soil Survey

Much of the information in this Appendix is taken from the Soil Survey of , Nebraska (year) and online sources as summarized in Chapter 10 Natural Resources and Environment.

SOIL CHARACTERISTICS

Soil properties are based on field examination of soils and by laboratory index testing of benchmarks. The National Cooperative Soil Survey system of soil classification has six categories, leading from broad associations to more specific series. (See Table B1 Soil Types)

BOEL SERIES

Boel soils are very deep, somewhat poorly drained soils formed from sandy and loamy material deposited along floodplains. These soils are generally nearly level and may be subject to flooding.

Finer-textured areas may be cultivated for corn, sorghum, alfalfa, and small grains, while sandier areas are more commonly used for grass or grazing. Flooding and wetness can limit cultivation.

INAVALE SERIES

Inavale soils are very deep, sandy soils found on floodplains. They are excessively drained and allow water to move through the soil quickly.

These soils are used mostly for grazing, although some areas are used for hay or crops where the surface soil is finer or irrigation is available. Their sandy texture can limit water-holding capacity.

WANN SERIES

Wann soils are very deep, somewhat poorly drained soils formed from sandy and loamy deposits on floodplains. They are generally level and may have a seasonal high water table.

Most areas are cultivated, with corn, soybeans, grain sorghum, and alfalfa among the common crops. Flooding and seasonal wetness can affect planting and field operations.

HOBBS SERIES

Hobbs soils are very deep, well-drained silty soils found on floodplains, foot slopes, and alluvial areas. They generally have low to moderate runoff but may experience occasional flooding.

Where flooding is not severe, these soils are commonly cultivated for corn, soybeans, grain sorghum, and alfalfa.

GEARY SERIES

Geary soils are very deep, well-drained soils formed in loess on upland hills and slopes. Runoff and erosion potential increase as slopes become steeper.

Most Geary soils are cultivated. Agricultural use is best on the gentler slopes, while erosion control becomes more important on steeper ground.

FILLMORE SERIES

Fillmore soils are very deep, somewhat poorly drained soils found in nearly level depressions and low areas of loess uplands. These soils can hold water and may experience seasonal ponding.

Most areas are cultivated for corn, soybeans, sorghum, and wheat. Wet soil conditions and ponding can limit planting and other field work.

COLERIDGE SERIES

Coleridge soils are very deep, somewhat poorly drained silty soils found on bottomlands. They may have a seasonal high water table and can be subject to occasional flooding.

These soils are commonly cropped with corn and soybeans, with some small grains and sorghum also grown. Drainage and flooding are the main limitations to cultivation.

MOODY SERIES

Moody soils are very deep, well-drained silty clay loam soils formed in loess on uplands. They occur on both nearly level and sloping ground.

These soils are widely used for corn, soybeans, small grains, and alfalfa. Cultivation is generally favorable, although erosion becomes a greater concern as slopes increase.

CROFTON SERIES

Crofton soils are very deep, well-drained soils formed in loess on uplands and ridges. They commonly occur on sloping ground and can have a higher risk of erosion.

Gentler slopes are commonly cultivated for corn, soybeans, oats, and alfalfa. Steeper areas are more often maintained in grass because of erosion concerns.

NORA SERIES

Nora soils are very deep, well-drained soils formed in loess on uplands. They occur on a wide range of slopes, with runoff increasing on steeper areas.

Gentler areas are commonly cultivated for corn, soybeans, oats, grain sorghum, and alfalfa. Steeper areas require greater erosion protection and may be better suited for grass or pasture.

Source: SOIL SURVEY OF COLFAX COUNTY NEBRASKA, USDA 1982.

SOIL SUITABILITY AND LIMITATIONS

The characteristics of soils play a major role in determining the potential compatibility of certain uses on the land. Soil limitations do not generally prohibit certain uses of land; however, they indicate the need for site-specific study and often special engineering solutions to overcome those limitations.

USDA NRCS' Web Soil Survey (based on county-level soil surveys) includes data on suitability and limitations of use. The ratings are identical to these shown by the Soil Data Viewer tool. A selection of data is shown here for categories most relevant to land use and development. Additional information is available at the NRCS website.

Soil limitations for distinct soil types in COUNTY NAME are shown in Table B2. These interpretations by NRCS are based on the engineering properties of soils, on test data for soils in the survey area and others nearby or adjoining, and on the experience of engineers and soil scientists. Soil limitations are indicated by the ratings Not Limited, Somewhat Limited, and Very Limited.

- Not Limited means soil properties are generally favorable for the stated use, or in other words, which limitations are minor and easily overcome (green).
- Somewhat Limited means some soil properties are unfavorable but can be overcome or modified by special planning and design (yellow).
- Very Limited means soil properties may be so unfavorable and difficult to correct or overcome as to require various degrees of soil reclamation, special designs, or intensive maintenance (red).

DWELLINGS WITHOUT BASEMENTS

Soil limitations for dwellings without basements are shown in the first column of Table B2 and Figure B1 at the end of this Appendix. The table provides the suitability and conditions by soil types.

Very Limited Conditions

About number% of soil types in COUNTY NAME are considered Very Limited for a Dwelling Unit without a Basement, with red shading in Table B2. There are number major conditions impacting the soils (not all are present in any one soil type).

Conditions present in the different soils include:
- List conditions

These conditions may or may not eliminate the ability of a land owner to build a slab-on-grade dwelling, but specific conditions will need to be engineered to overcome potential problems in the future. As well, all structures must comply with floodplain requirements.

Somewhat Limited Conditions

Besides the Severe soils, there are number soil series considered Somewhat Limited, with yellow shading in Table B2. These conditions which are contributing to the Somewhat Limited classification, which are less of a concern for development, include:
- List conditions

Not Limited Conditions

About number% of soil types only present general limits to construction of dwellings without basements, with green shading in Table B2.

DWELLINGS WITH BASEMENTS

Soil limitations for dwellings with basements are shown in Table B2 and Figure B2 at this end of this Appendix. Suitability and conditions for basements are similar to dwellings without basements.

Very Limited Conditions

number of the soil types in COUNTY NAME are Very Limited for a Dwelling Unit with a Basement. There are number major conditions impacting the soils (not all are present in any one soil type), similar to Dwellings without Basements yet to less of a degree.

Conditions present in the different soils are the same as without basements, including:
- List conditions

These conditions may or may not eliminate the ability of a land owner to build a dwelling subgrade, but specific conditions will need to be engineered to overcome potential problems in the future. All structures must comply with floodplain requirements.

Somewhat Limited Conditions

number soils are considered Somewhat Limited which is less of an issue for development. The conditions contributing to the Somewhat Limited classification also include:
- List conditions

If applicable, list specific soil variety(ies) are somewhat limited for basements where they are very limited for slab construction (without basements).

Not Limited Conditions

About number of soils present only general limits to construction of dwellings without basements. If applicable, list specific soil variety(ies) is not limited for slab construction (without basements) where it is somewhat limited with basements.

SEPTIC TANK AND ABSORPTION FIELDS

Soil limitations for dwellings with basements are shown in Table B2 and Figure B3 at the end of this Appendix.

Very Limited Conditions

Over number% of soil types in COUNTY NAME are considered Very Limited for septic tanks and absorption fields. There are number major conditions impacting the soils (not all are present in any one soil type).

Conditions present in the different soils include:
- List conditions

These conditions may or may not eliminate the ability of a land owner to use a septic tank and absorption field, but specific conditions will need to be engineered to overcome potential problems. All structures must comply with floodplain requirements.

Somewhat Limited Conditions

About number of soil types are considered Somewhat Limited which is less of an issue. The conditions contributing to the Somewhat Limited classification include:
- List conditions

Copy text from other sections if applicable, otherwise: No soil type presented not-limited conditions.

SEWAGE LAGOONS

Soil limitations for sewage lagoons are shown in Table B2 and Figure B4 at the end of this Appendix.

Very Limited Conditions

About number of soil types in COUNTY NAME are considered Very Limited for sewage lagoons. There are number major conditions impacting soils (not all are present in any one soil type).

Conditions present in the different soils include:
- List conditions

These conditions may or may not eliminate the ability of a land owner to use a sewage lagoon, but specific conditions will need to be engineered to overcome potential problems. All structures must comply with floodplain requirements.

Somewhat Limited Conditions

Besides the Severe soils, the other number of soils are considered Somewhat Limited which is less of an issue. The conditions contributing to the Somewhat Limited classification include:

- List conditions

Copy text from other sections if applicable, otherwise: No soil type presented not-limited conditions.

SANITARY LANDFILL

Soil limitations for sanitary landfills are shown in Table B2. and Figure B5 at the end of this Appendix.

Very Limited Conditions

number of soil types in COUNTY NAME are considered Very Limited for a sanitary landfill. While these include fewer soil types than for other infrastructure, there are many major conditions impacting soils (not all are present in any one soil type).

Conditions present in the different soils include:

- List conditions

These conditions may or may not eliminate the ability to construct a sanitary landfill, but specific conditions would need to be engineered.

Somewhat Limited Conditions

The other number of soils are considered Somewhat Limited for a Sanitary Landfill. The conditions contributing to the Somewhat Limited classification include:

- List conditions

Copy text from other sections if applicable, otherwise: No soil type presented not-limited conditions.

SMALL COMMERCIAL BUSINESSES

Soil limitations for small commercial businesses are shown in Table B2 and Figure B6 at the end of this Appendix.

Very Limited Conditions

About number of soil types in COUNTY NAME are considered Very Limited for a Small Commercial Business. There are number major conditions impacting the soils (not all are present in any one soil type).

Conditions present in the different soils include:

- List conditions

These conditions may or may not constrain the ability of a land owner to construct small commercial structures, but specific conditions will need to be engineered to overcome potential problems. All structures must comply with floodplain requirements.

Somewhat Limited Conditions

number soils are considered Somewhat Limited which is less of a concern for development. The conditions contributing to the Somewhat Limited classification include:

- List conditions

Not Limited Conditions

number soil type presents non-limited conditions to construction of small commercial structures.

SHALLOW EXCAVATIONS

Shallow excavations are trenches or holes dug to a maximum depth of 5 or 6 feet for graves, utility lines, open ditches, or other purposes. The ratings are based on the soil properties that influence the ease of digging and the resistance to sloughing. Depth to bedrock or a cemented pan, hardness of bedrock or a cemented pan, the amount of large stones, and dense layers influence the ease of digging, filling, and compacting. Depth to the seasonal high water table, flooding, and ponding may restrict the period when excavations can be made. Slope influences the ease of using machinery. Soil texture, depth to the water table, and linear extensibility (shrink-swell potential) influence the resistance to sloughing.

The ratings are both verbal and numerical. Rating class terms indicate the extent to which the soils are limited by all of the soil features that affect the specified use. "Not limited" indicates that the soil has features that are very favorable for the specified use. Good performance and very low maintenance can be expected. "Somewhat limited" indicates that the soil has features that are moderately favorable for the specified use. The limitations can be overcome or minimized by special planning, design, or installation. Fair performance and moderate maintenance can be expected. "Very limited" indicates that the soil has one or more features that are unfavorable for the specified use. The limitations generally cannot be overcome without major soil reclamation, special design, or expensive installation procedures. Poor performance and high maintenance can be expected.

Table B2 and Figure B7 (at the end of this Appendix) classify COUNTY NAME soils according to their limitations for shallow excavations.

SOLAR ARRAYS

Ground-based solar arrays consist of photovoltaic panels mounted on the ground using racking systems and foundations. Two primary anchoring methods are commonly used depending on site conditions and cost considerations.

- Soil-penetrating anchor systems use driven piles, screw augers, or concrete piers that extend into the soil to provide structural support. Suitability depends on soil depth, rock fragment content, soil strength, drainage, shrink-swell potential, and soil corrosivity.
- Ballasted anchor systems use precast concrete footings or trays placed on the soil surface to provide stability without soil penetration. These systems may be appropriate in areas with shallow or restrictive soils or where ground disturbance is limited.

Table B2 and Figures B8 and B9 (at the end of this Appendix) classify COUNTY NAME soils according to their limitations for ground-based solar array development, including anchoring considerations.

Site factors affecting both anchoring methods include slope, slope orientation, wind exposure, land surface shape, flooding potential, and ponding. Additional considerations include access

for construction equipment, soil bearing capacity, and potential shading from vegetation or structures.

SOIL PERMEABILITY

USDA NRCS divides soils into hydrologic soil groups (HSGs), based on low to high runoff potential. Each official soil series description includes drainage and saturated hydraulic conductivity (permeability) based on the characteristics of water movement through soil.

Shrink-swell potential is a related factor, based on the volume change occurring as a result of changes in moisture content of the soil. The ability of soil to drastically change volume can cause damage to existing structures, such as cracks in foundations.

Table B3 presents the NRCS permeability ratings and shrink-swell potential by soil type. High shrink-swell potential is highlighted by red text. These include types of soil such as:

- List soil types

It should be noted, some soil types exhibit the full ranges of low-medium-high shrink-swell potential at different depths and soil characteristics. Provide example specific to county such as: For example, Butler silt loam, 0 to 1 percent slopes, presents low shrink-swell potential at 9" to 13" depth and high to very high potential between 13" and 41" depth.

CORROSION OF CONCRETE

"Risk of corrosion" refers to the potential for soil-induced electrochemical or chemical action that may corrode or weaken concrete. The rate of corrosion is influenced primarily by sulfate and sodium content, soil texture, moisture conditions, and soil acidity. Where these factors combine to create a severe corrosion hazard, special site evaluation and engineering design may be required. Table B3 and Figure B10 (at the end of this Appendix) classify COUNTY NAME soils according to their risk of corrosion to concrete.

WIND ERODIBILITY INDEX

The wind erodibility index is a numerical value indicating a soil's susceptibility to wind erosion, expressed as the potential tons per acre per year that may be lost. Wind erosion is closely related to surface soil texture, clod size and stability, rock fragment content, organic matter, and calcareous soil reactions. Soil moisture conditions and frozen soil layers also influence erosion potential. Figure B11 (at the end of this Appendix) classifies COUNTY NAME soils according to their wind erodibility index.

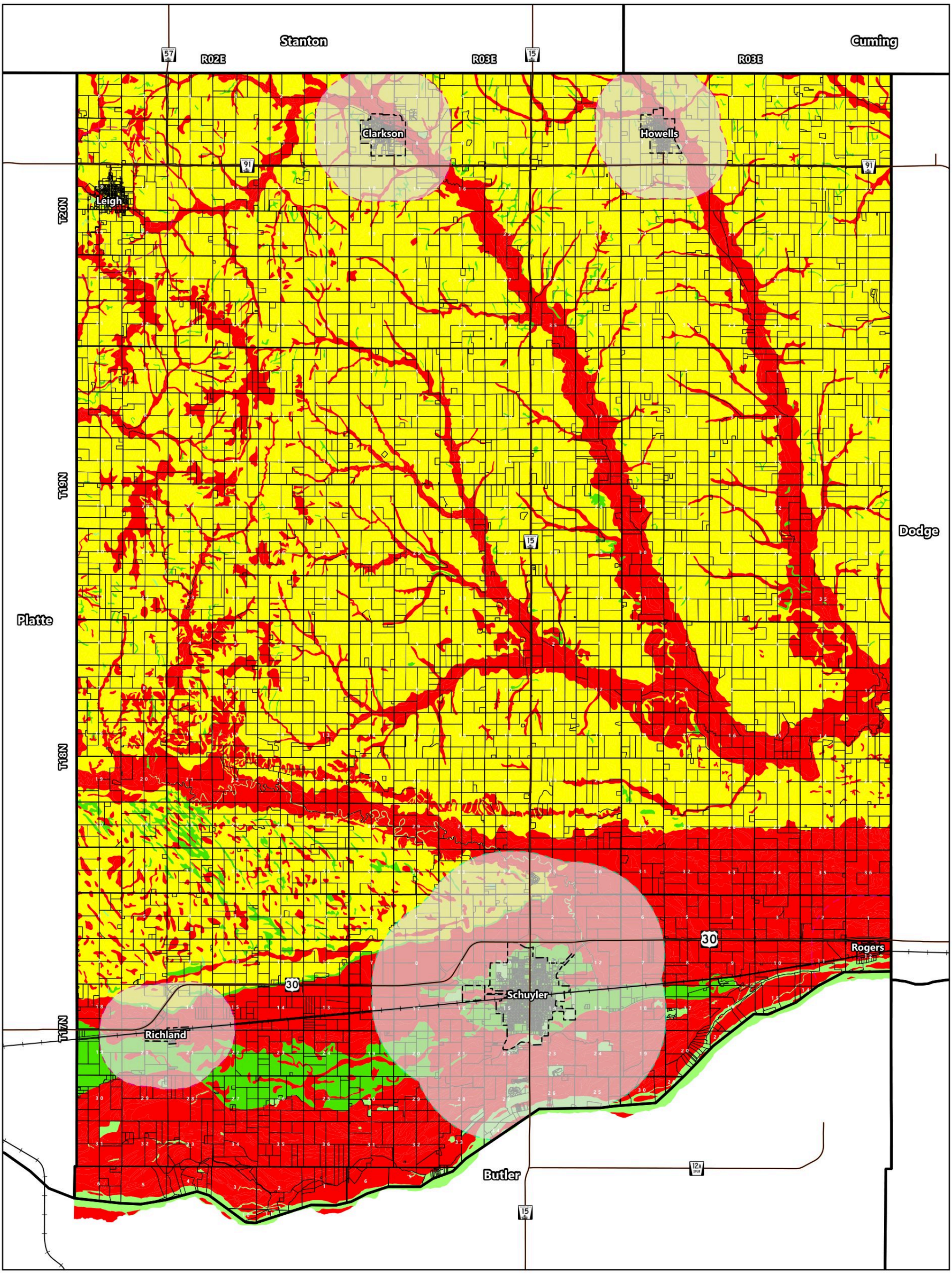
ECOLOGICAL SITES

An "ecological site" is the product of all the environmental factors responsible for its development. It has characteristic soils that have developed over time; a characteristic hydrology, particularly infiltration and runoff, that has developed over time; and a characteristic plant community (kind and amount of vegetation). The vegetation, soils, and hydrology are all interrelated. Each is influenced by the others and influences the development of the others. For example, the hydrology of the site is influenced by development of the soil and plant community. The plant community on an ecological site is typified by an association of species that differs from that of other ecological sites in the kind and/or proportion of species or in total production. Descriptions of ecological sites are provided in the Field Office Technical Guide, which is available in local offices of the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Figure B12 (at the end of this Appendix) classifies COUNTY NAME soils according to their ecological site.

Soil Symbol/Soil Name	Dwellings with Basements		Dwellings without Basements		Small Commercial Buildings		Sanitary Landfill		Septic Tank Ab Fields	
	Suitability	Conditions	Suitability	Conditions	Suitability	Conditions	Suitability	Conditions	Suitability	C
2100- Boel fine loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes, occasionally flooded	2	1,2	2	1,2	2	1,2	2	1,2,8,10	2	
2110- Inavale loamy fine sand, 0 to 3 percent slopes, occasionally flooded	2	1,2	2	1,2	2	1,2	2	1,2,8,10	2	
2288- Wann loam, 0 to 2 percent sloeps, occasionally flooded	2	1,2	2	1,2	2	1,2,4	2	1,2,8,10	2	
2330- Inavale fine sand 0 to 3 percent slopes, rarely flooded	2	1,2	2	1,2	2	1,2	2	1,2,8,10	2	
2340- Inavale loamy fine sand, 2 to 9 percent slopes, occasionally flooded	2	1,2	2	1,2	2	1,2,4	2	1,2,8,10	2	
3545- Hobbs silt loam, channeled, 0 to 2 percent slopes, frequently flooded	2	1,2	2	1,2,3	2	1,2,3	2	1,2,10	2	
3561- Hobbs silt loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes, occasionally flooded, cool	2	1,2	2	1,2,3	2	1,2,3	2	1,2,10	2	
3640- Kezan silt loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes, frequently flooded	2	1,2,3	2	1,2,3	2	1,2,3	2	1,2,10	2	
3837- Geary silty clay loam, 11 to 17 percent slopes, eroded	1	3,4	1	3,4	2	3,4	1	4,10	1	
3839- Geary silty clay loam, 11 to 30 percent slopes	2	3,4	2	3,4	2	3,4	2	4,10	2	
3840- Geary silty clay loam, 7 to 11 percent slopes, eroded	1	3,4	1	3,4	2	3,4	1	4,10	1	
3951- Fillmore silt loam, occasionally ponded	2	2,3,5	2	2,3,5	2	2,3,5	2	2,5,10	2	
3952- Fillmore silt loam, frequently ponded	2	2,3,5	2	2,3,5	2	2,3,5	2	2,5,10	2	
4106- Geary variant silty clay loam, 11 to 30 percen slopes, eroded	2	3,4	2	3,5	2	3,4	2	4,10	2	
4241- Ord fine sandy loam, occasionally flooded	2	1,2	2	1,2	2	1,2	2	1,2,8,10	2	
6312- Barney loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes, frequently flooded	2	1,2	2	1,2	2	1,2	2	1,2,8,10	2	
6324- Coleridge silty clay loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes, occasionally flooded	2	1,2,3	2	1,2,3	2	1,2,3	2	1,2,10	2	
6335- Lawet silt loam, rarely flooded	2	1,2	2	1,2,3	2	1,2,3	2	1,2,8,10	2	
6336- Lawet silt loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes, occasionally flooded	2	1,2,3	2	1,2,3	2	1,2,3	2	1,2,8,10	2	
6341- Lawet silty clay loam, occasionally flooded	2	1,2,3	2	1,2,3	2	1,2,3	2	1,2,10	2	
6385- Shell silt loam, occasionally flooded	2	1,2	2	1,2	2	1,2	2	1,2,10	2	
6386- Shell silt loam, clayey substratum, occasionally flooded	2	1,2,3	2	1	2	1	2	1,2,10	2	
6405- Napa- Luton complex, occasionally flooded	2	1,2,3,6	2	1,2,3,6	2	1,2,3,6	2	1,2,10	2	
6505- Belfore silty clay loam, terrace, 0 to 2 percent slopes	1	3	2	2,3,5	2	2,3,5	1	10	2	
6508- Blendon fine sandy loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes	0	-	0	-	0	-	2	2,8,10	2	
6515- Blendon loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	0	-	0	-	1	4	2	8,10	2	
6545- Moody silty clay loam, terrace, 0 to 2 percant slopes	1	3	1	3	1	3	1	10	2	
6603- Alcester silty clay loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	1	3,4	1	3,4	1	3,4	1	4,10	2	1
6628- Belfore silty clay loa, 0 to 2 percent slopes	1	3	2	2,3,5	2	2,3,5	1	10	2	
6681- Crofton silt loam, 17 to 30 percent slopes, eroded	2	4	2	3,4	2	3,4	2	4,8,10	2	
6685- Crofton silt loam, 6 to 11 percent slopes, eroded	0	-	1	3	1	3,4	1	10	1	
6687- Crofton silt loam, 6 to 11 percent slopes, eroded	1	4	1	3,4	2	3,4	1	4,10	1	
6693- Crofton-Nora complex, 2 to 6 percent slopes, eroded	0	-	0	-	1	3,4	1	10	1	
6740- Thurman-Moody complex, 2 to 6 percent slopes, eroded	0	-	0	-	1	3,4	2	8	2	
6742- Thurman-Moody complex, 6 to 11 percent slopes, eroded	1	3,4	1	3,4	2	3,4	2	4,8	2	
6753- Nora silt loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	0	-	0	-	1	3,4	1	10	1	
6754- Nora silt loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes, eroded	0	-	0	-	1	4	1	10	1	
6758- Nora silty clay loam, 11 to 17 percent slopes	1	3,4	1	3,4	2	3,4	1	4,10	2	
6767- Nora silty clay loam, 6 to 11 percet slopes	1	3,4	1	3,4	2	3,4	1	4,10	2	

bsorbtion	Sewage Lagoons		Shallow Excuvation		Solar Arrays, Soil Based Anchor Systems		Solar Array, Ballast Anchor Systems	
Conditions	Suitability	Conditions	Suitability	Conditions	Suitability	Conditions	Suitability	Conditions
1,2,7,8,9	2	1,2,8	2	1,2,10,11	2	1,2,14,15,16	2	1,2,15,16
1,2,7,8	2	1,2,8	2	1,2,10,11,12	2	1,2,14,15	2	1,2,15
1,2,7,8,9	2	1,2,4,8	2	1,2,10,11	2	1,2,14,15,16	2	1,2,15,16
1,2,7,8	2	1,2,8	2	2,10,11	1	1,2,14	1	1,2
1,2,7,8	2	1,2,4,8	2	2,10,11	1	1,2,14	1	1,2
1,2,9	2	1,2,8	1	1,10,11	2	1,2,14,15,16	2	1,2,15,16
1,2,9	2	1,2,8	1	1,10,11	2	1,2,14,15,16	2	1,2,15,16
1,2,9	2	1,2,8	2	1,2,10,11	2	1,2,3,14,15,16	2	1,2,4,15,16
4,9	2	4,8	1	4,10,11	1	3,4,14,15,16,17	1	4,15,16,17
4,9	2	4,8	2	4,10,11	2	3,4,14,15,16,17	2	4,15,16,17
4,9	2	4,8	1	4,10,11	1	3,4,14,15,16,17	1	4,15,16,17
2,5,9	2	2,5,8	2	2,5,10,11,13	2	2,3,5,14,15,16	2	2,4,5,15,16
2,5,9	2	2,5,8	2	2,5,10,11,13	2	2,3,5,15,16	2	2,4,5,15,16
4,9	2	4	2	4,10,11	2	2,4,14,15,16	2	4,15,16
1,2,7,8,9	2	1,2,8	2	1,2,10,11	2	1,2,14,15,16	2	1,2,15,16
1,2,7,8	2	1,2,8	2	1,2,10,11	2	1,2,14,15,16	2	1,2,15
1,2,8,9	2	1,2,8	1	1,2,10,11	2	1,2,3,14,15,16	2	1,2,15,16
1,2,8,9	2	1,2,8	2	2,10,11	2	1,2,3,14,15	2	1,2,15
1,2,7,8,9	2	1,2,8	2	1,2,10,11	2	1,2,3,14,15,16	2	1,2,15,16
1,2,8,9	2	1,2,8	2	2,10,11	2	1,2,3,14,15	2	1,2,15,16
1,2,9	2	1,2,8	1	1,10,11	2	1,2,14,15,16	2	1,2,15,16
1,2,9	2	1,2,8	1	1,2,10,11,13	2	1,14,15,16	2	1,15,16
1,2,9	2	1,2	2	1,2,10,11,13	2	1,2,3,14,15,16	2	1,2,15,16
2,5,9	0	-	1	10,11,13	2	2,3,5,14,15,16	1	16
2,7,8,9	2	2,4,8	1	10,11	1	2,3,5,14,15,16	1	15,16
8	2	4,8	1	10,11	1	14,15	1	15
1,2,5,9	1	8	1	1,10,11	1	3,14,15,16	1	15,16
,2,4,7,8,9	1	4	1	4,10,11	1	3,4,14,15,16	1	4,15,16
2,5,9	0	-	1	10,11,13	2	2,3,14,15,16,17	1	4,15,16,17
4,7,8,9	2	4,8	2	4,10,11	2	4,14,15,16	2	4,15,16,17
9	1	4,8	1	10,11	1	3,4,14,15,16,17	1	4,15,16,17
4,9	2	4,8	1	4,10,11	1	3,4,14,15,16,17	1	4,15,16,17
9	1	4,8	1	10,11	1	3,4,14,15,16,17	1	4,15,16,17
7,8	2	4,8	2	11	0	-	0	-
4,7,8,9	2	4,8	1	4,10,11	1	3,4,14,15,16	1	4,15,16,17
9	1	4,8	1	10,11	1	15,16,17	1	15,16,17
9	1	4,8	1	10,11	1	14,15,16,17	1	15,16,17
4,8	2	4,8	1	4,10,11	1	3,4,14,15,16,17	1	4,15,16,17
4,7,8,9	2	4,8	1	4,10,11	1	3,4,14,15,16	1	4,15,16,17



LEGEND

- Railroads
- Highways
- County Boundaries
- Municipal Limits
- 2-Mile Planning Area (Schuyler)
- 1-Mile Planning Area (With Zoning)
- 1-Mile Planning Area (No Zoning)
- Sections
- Township and Range
- Parcels

Rating

- Not rated
- Not limited
- Somewhat limited
- Very limited

Source: USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

COLFAX COUNTY NEBRASKA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

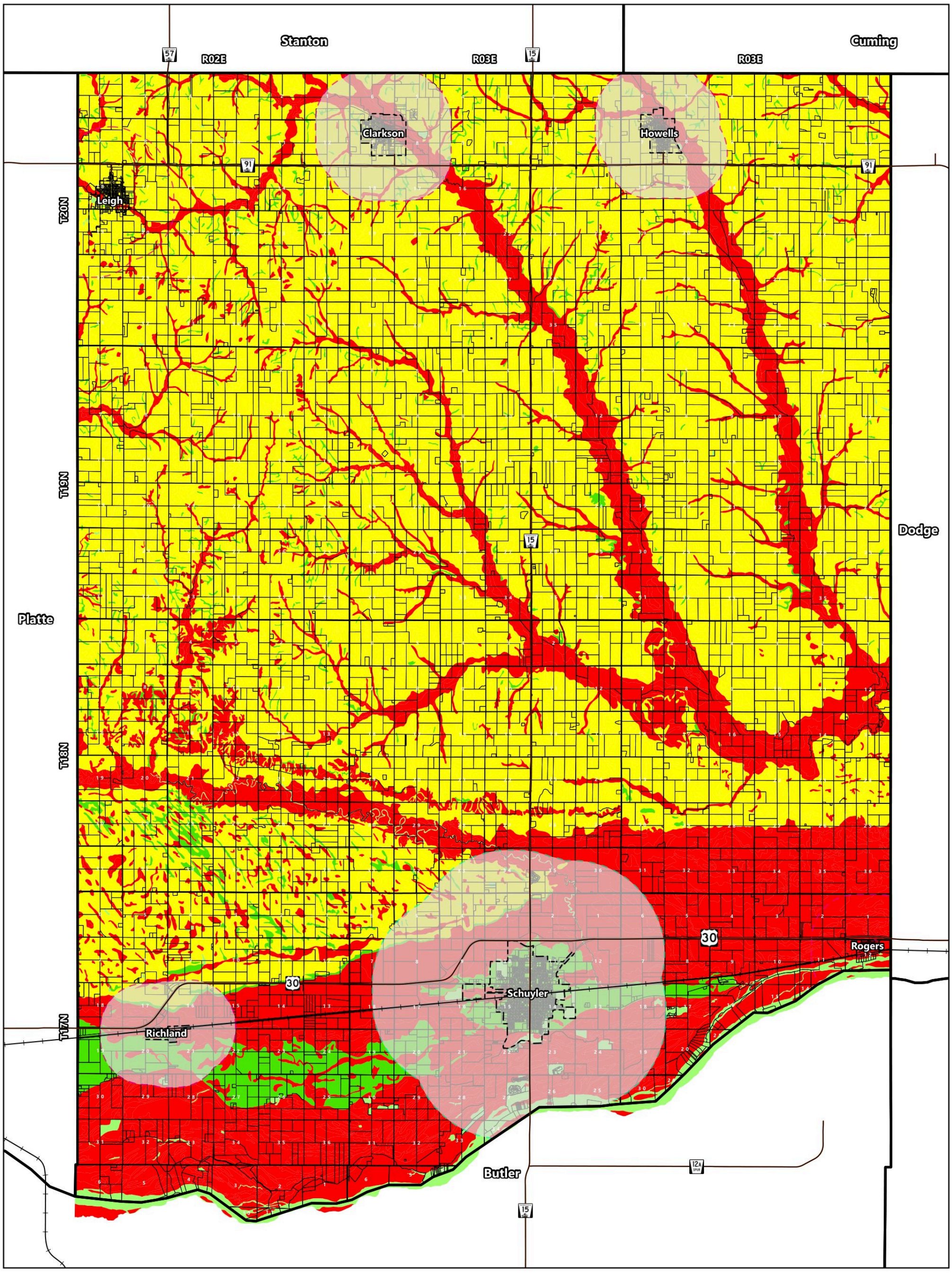
DWELLINGS WITHOUT BASEMENTS

MARVIN PLANNING CONSULTANTS
Specializing in Municipal, County and Neighborhood Planning

PROJECTION: NE State Plane (Ft.)
DATUM: NAD 83
DATE: 10.8.26

0 0.02 0.04 0.09 Miles

N



LEGEND

- Railroads
- Highways
- County Boundaries
- Municipal Limits
- 2-Mile Planning Area (Schuyler)
- 1-Mile Planning Area (With Zoning)
- 1-Mile Planning Area (No Zoning)
- Sections
- Township and Range
- Parcels

Rating

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- Very limited

Source: USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

COLFAX COUNTY NEBRASKA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

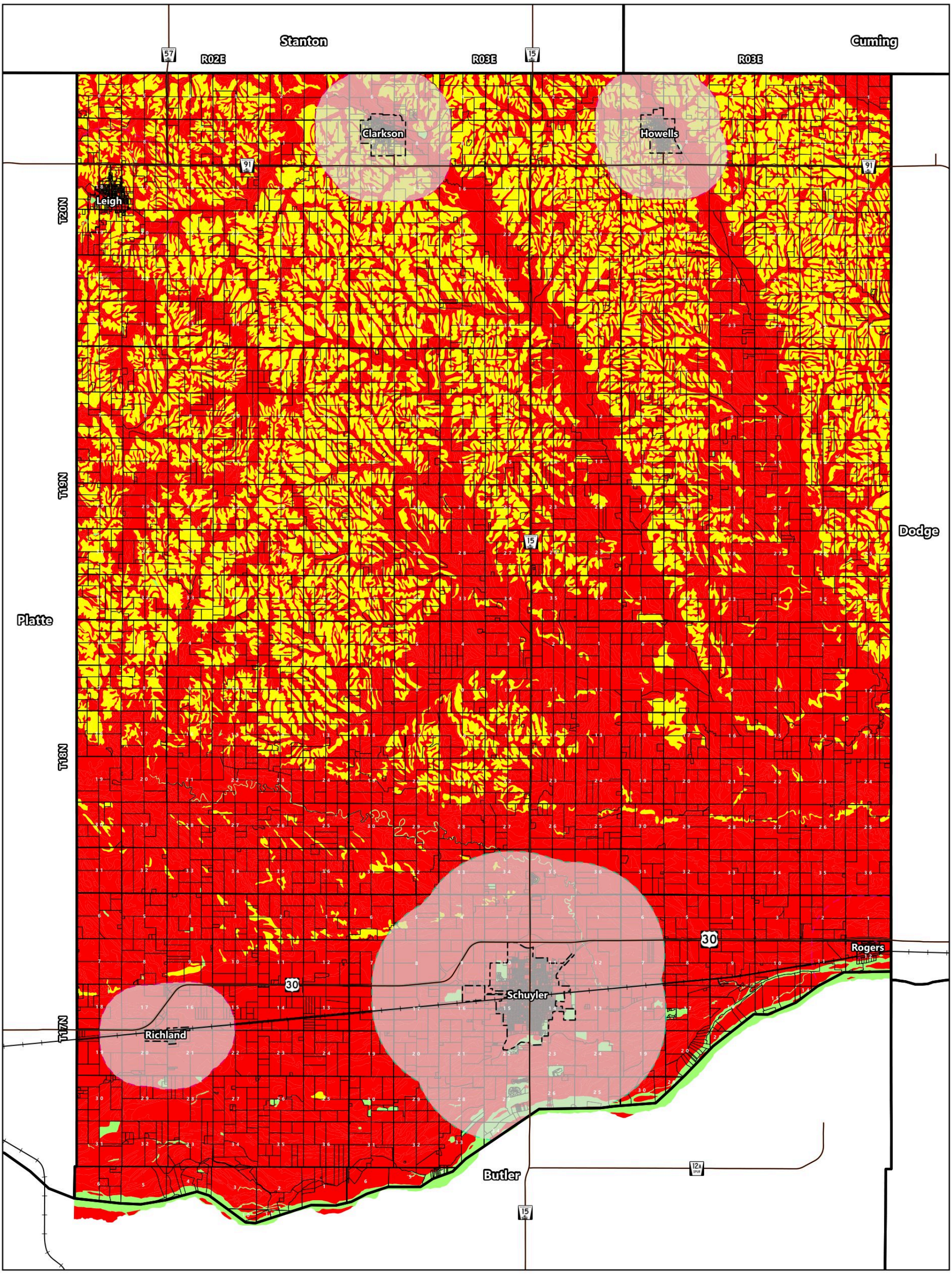
DWELLINGS WITH BASEMENTS

MARVIN PLANNING CONSULTANTS
Specializing in Municipal, County and Neighborhood Planning

PROJECTION: NE State Plane (Ft.)
DATUM: NAD 83
DATE: 10.8.26

0 0.02 0.04 0.09 Miles

N



LEGEND

- Railroads
- Highways
- County Boundaries
- Municipal Limits
- 2-Mile Planning Area (Schuyler)
- 1-Mile Planning Area (With Zoning)
- 1-Mile Planning Area (No Zoning)
- Sections
- Township and Range
- Parcels

Rating

- Not rated
- Somewhat limited
- Very limited

Source: USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

COLFAX COUNTY NEBRASKA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

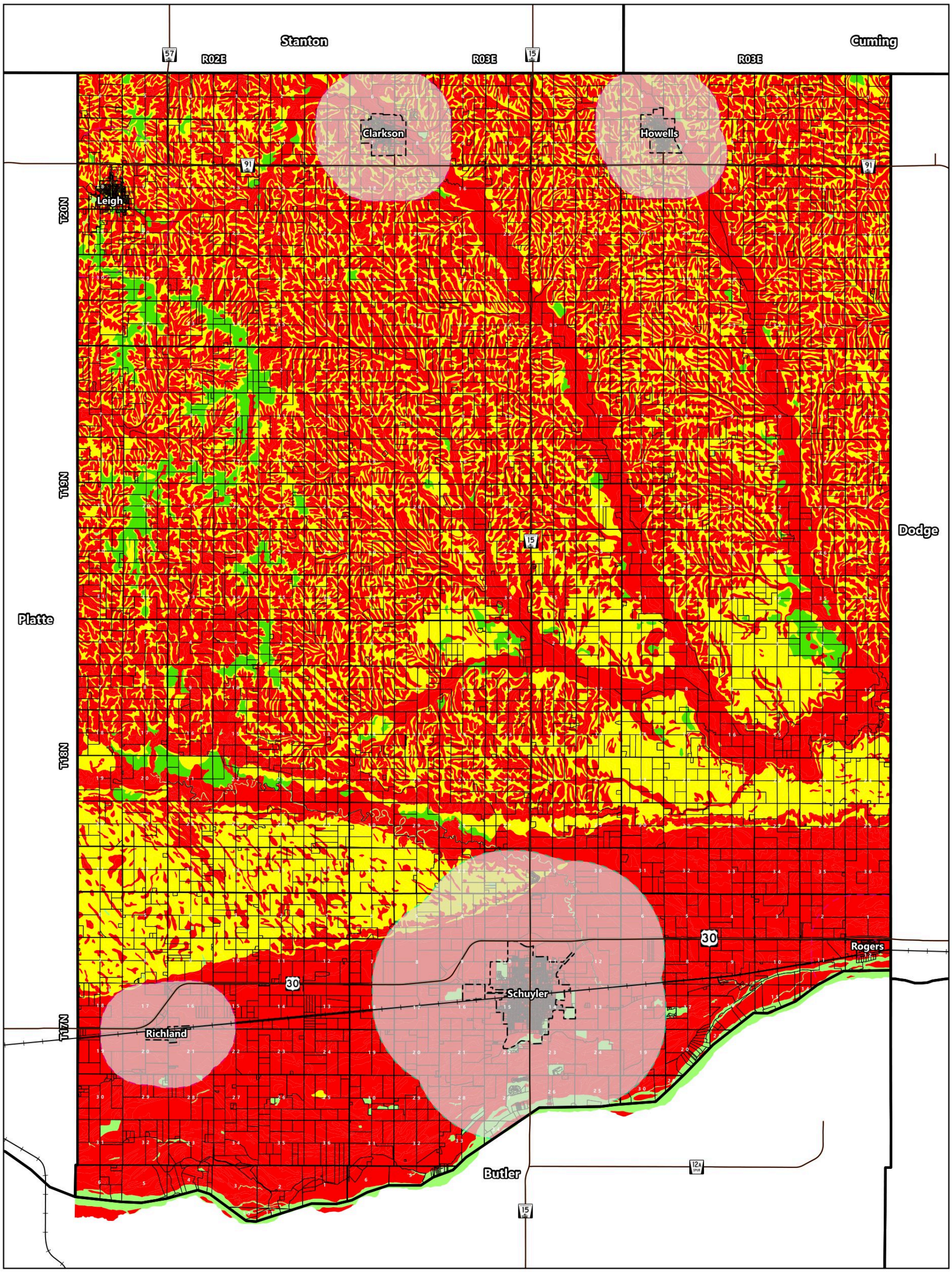
SEPTIC TANK ABSORPTION FIELDS

MARVIN PLANNING CONSULTANTS
Specializing in Municipal, County and Neighborhood Planning

PROJECTION: NE State Plane (Ft.)
DATUM: NAD 83
DATE: 10.8.26

N

0 0.02 0.04 0.09 Miles



LEGEND

- Railroads
- Highways
- County Boundaries
- Municipal Limits
- 2-Mile Planning Area (Schuyler)
- 1-Mile Planning Area (With Zoning)
- 1-Mile Planning Area (No Zoning)
- Sections
- Township and Range
- Parcels

Rating

- Not rated
- Not limited
- Somewhat limited
- Very limited

Source: USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

COLFAX COUNTY NEBRASKA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

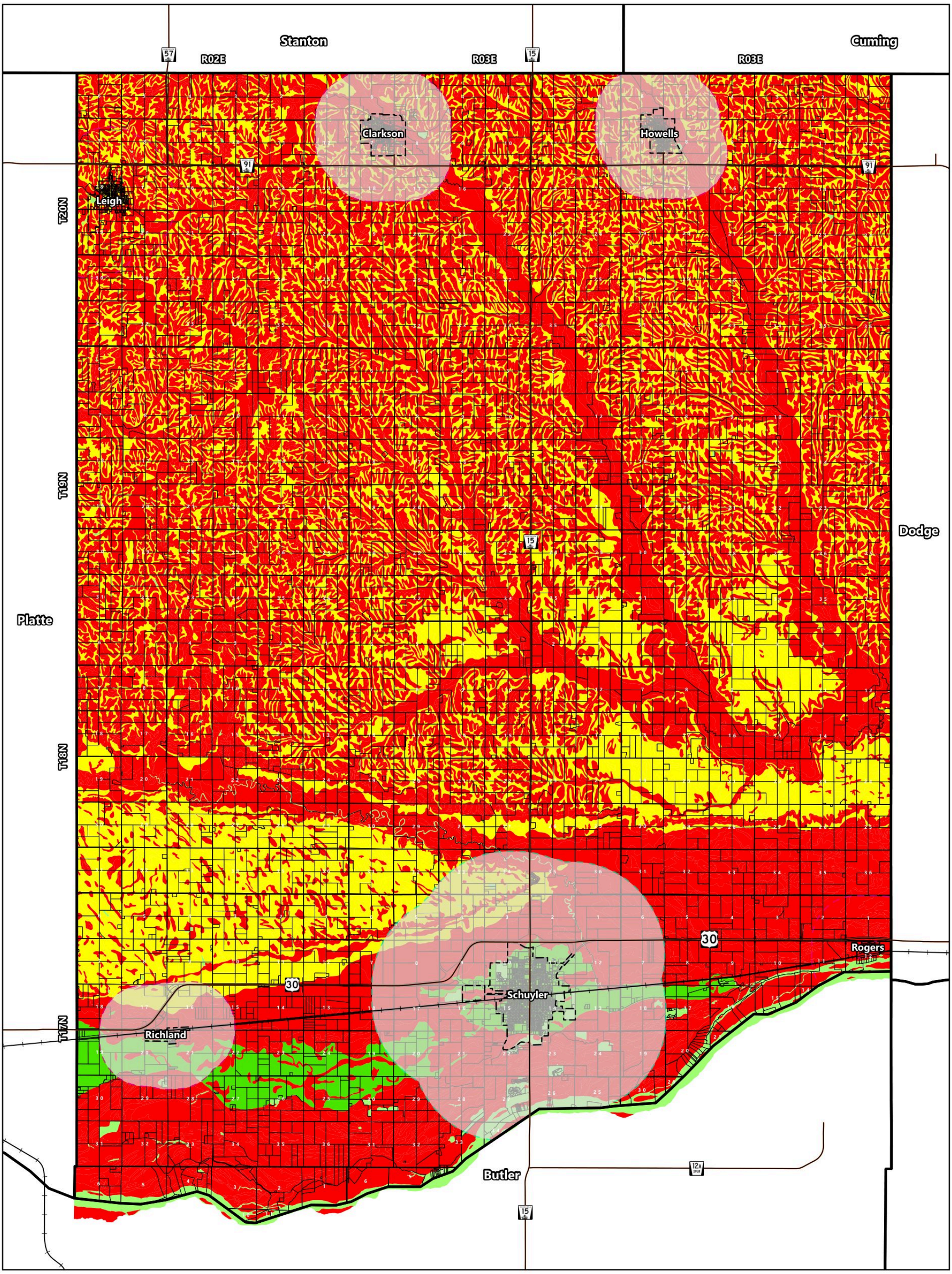
SEWAGE LAGOONS

N

MARVIN PLANNING CONSULTANTS
Specializing in Municipal, County and Neighborhood Planning

PROJECTION: NE State Plane (Ft.)
DATUM: NAD 83
DATE: 10.8.26

0 0.02 0.04 0.09 Miles



LEGEND

- Railroads
- Highways
- County Boundaries
- Municipal Limits
- 2-Mile Planning Area (Schuyler)
- 1-Mile Planning Area (With Zoning)
- 1-Mile Planning Area (No Zoning)
- Sections
- Township and Range
- Parcels

Rating

- Not rated
- Not limited
- Somewhat limited
- Very limited

Source: USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

COLFAX COUNTY NEBRASKA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

SMALL COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS

MARVIN PLANNING CONSULTANTS
Specializing in Municipal, County and Neighborhood Planning

PROJECTION: NE State Plane (Ft.)
DATUM: NAD 83
DATE: 10.8.26

0 0.02 0.04 0.09 Miles

N

Stanton
Cuming
R02E
R03E
R03E
57
15
91
91
Clarkson
Howells
Leigh
T20N
T19N
T18N
T17N
Platte
Dodge
15
30
30
Schuyler
Rogers
Richland
Butler
12A
15

LEGEND

- Railroads
- Highways
- County Boundaries
- Municipal Limits
- 2-Mile Planning Area (Schuyler)
- 1-Mile Planning Area (With Zoning)
- 1-Mile Planning Area (No Zoning)
- Sections
- Township and Range
- Parcels

Rating

- Not Rated
- Low
- Moderate
- High

Source: USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

N

COLFAX COUNTY NEBRASKA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

CORROSION OF CONCRETE

MARVIN PLANNING CONSULTANTS
Specializing in Municipal, County and Neighborhood Planning

PROJECTION: NE State Plane (Ft.)
DATUM: NAD 83
DATE: 9.24.26

0 0.02 0.04 0.09 Miles

Stanton
Cuming
R02E
R03E
R03E
57
15
91
91
Clarkson
Howells
Leigh
T20N
T19N
T18N
T17N
Platte
Dodge
15
30
30
Schuyler
Rogers
Richland
Butler
12A
15

LEGEND

- Railroads
- Highways
- County Boundaries
- Municipal Limits
- 2-Mile Planning Area (Schuyler)
- 1-Mile Planning Area (With Zoning)
- 1-Mile Planning Area (No Zoning)
- Sections
- Township and Range
- Parcels

See next page for Ecological Sites Legend.

Source: USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

COLFAX COUNTY NEBRASKA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FIG

ECOLOGICAL SITES

MARVIN PLANNING CONSULTANTS
Specializing in Municipal, County and Neighborhood Planning

PROJECTION: NE State Plane (Ft.)
DATUM: NAD 83
DATE: 9.24.26

0 0.02 0.04 0.09 Miles

N

LEGEND
Ecological Site

- Not Rated
- R066XY044NE — Wet Land
- R075XY046NE — Subirrigated
- R075XY049NE — Closed Upland Depression
- R102CY045NE — Wet Subirrigated
- R102CY046NE — Subirrigated
- R102CY047NE — Saline Subirrigated
- R102CY048NE — Loamy Overflow
- R102CY049NE — Clayey Overflow
- R102CY050NE — Loamy Lowland
- R102CY051NE — Sandy Lowland
- R102CY054NE — Sandy
- R102CY058NE — Loamy Upland
- R102CY059NE — Limy Upland
- R106XY076NE — Limy Upland

Stanton
Cuming
R02E
R03E
R03E
T20N
T19N
T18N
T17N
Clarkson
Howells
Leigh
Platte
Dodge
Schuyler
Rogers
Richland
Butler
57
15
91
30
12A SPUR

LEGEND

- Railroads
- Highways
- County Boundaries
- Municipal Limits
- 2-Mile Planning Area (Schuyler)
- 1-Mile Planning Area (With Zoning)
- 1-Mile Planning Area (No Zoning)
- Sections
- Township and Range
- Parcels

Rating

- Not rated
- Somewhat limited
- Very limited

Source: USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

N

COLFAX COUNTY NEBRASKA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

SHALLOW EXCAVATIONS

MARVIN PLANNING CONSULTANTS
Specializing in Municipal, County and Neighborhood Planning

PROJECTION: NE State Plane (Ft.)
DATUM: NAD 83
DATE: 9.24.26

0 0.02 0.04 0.09 Miles

Stanton
Cuming
R02E
R03E
R03E
57
15
91
91
Clarkson
Howells
Leigh
T20N
T19N
T18N
T17N
Platte
Dodge
15
30
30
Rogers
Schuyler
Richland
Butler
12A
15

LEGEND

- Railroads
- Highways
- County Boundaries
- Municipal Limits
- 2-Mile Planning Area (Schuyler)
- 1-Mile Planning Area (With Zoning)
- 1-Mile Planning Area (No Zoning)
- Sections
- Township and Range
- Parcels

Rating

- Not rated
- Not limited
- Somewhat limited
- Very limited

Source: USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

N

COLFAX COUNTY NEBRASKA

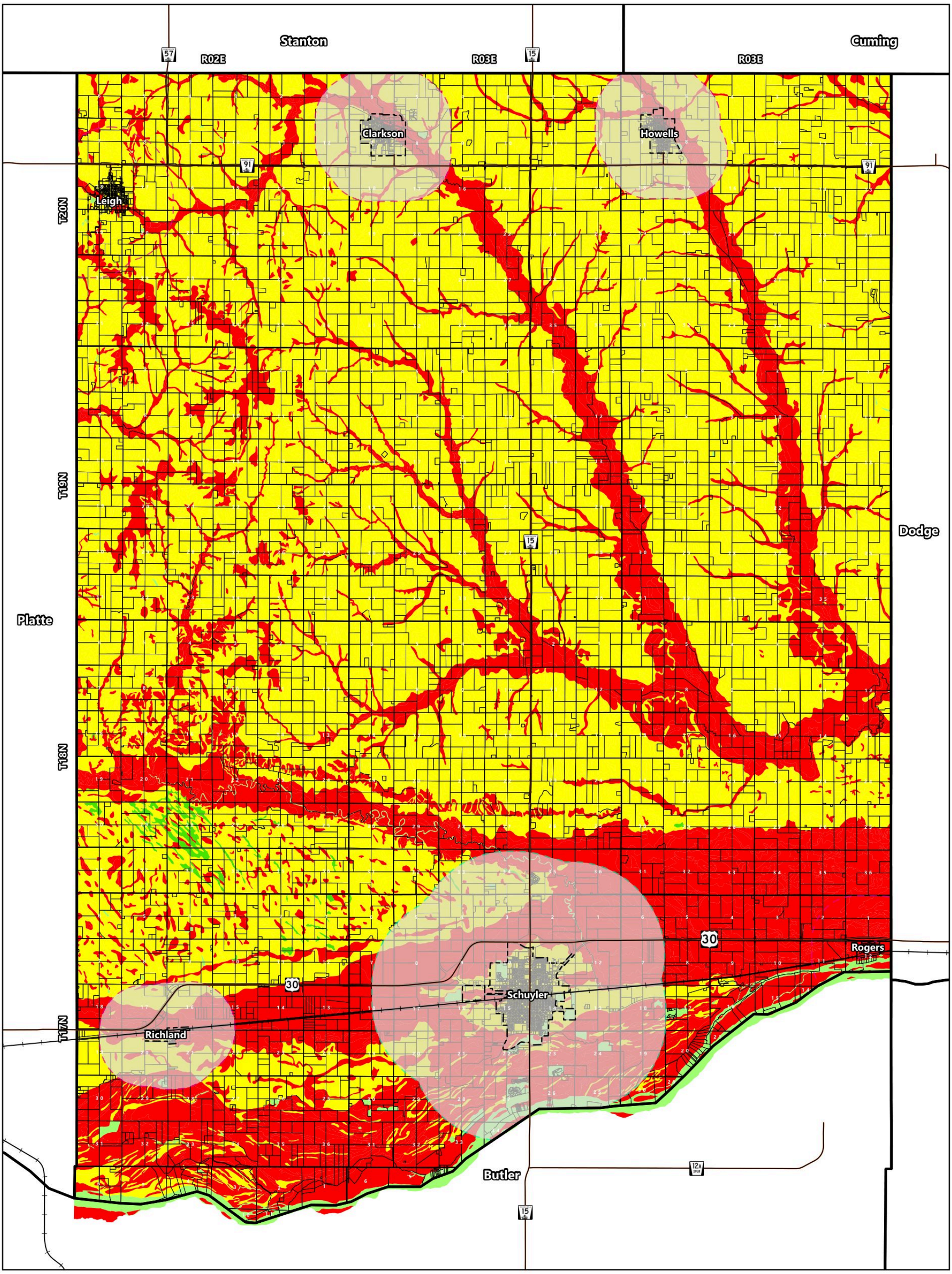
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

SOLAR ARRAYS, BALLAST ANCHOR SYSTEMS

MARVIN PLANNING CONSULTANTS
Specializing in Municipal, County and Neighborhood Planning

PROJECTION: NE State Plane (Ft.)
DATUM: NAD 83
DATE: 10.8.26

0 0.02 0.04 0.09 Miles



LEGEND

- Railroads
- Highways
- County Boundaries
- Municipal Limits
- 2-Mile Planning Area (Schuyler)
- 1-Mile Planning Area (With Zoning)
- 1-Mile Planning Area (No Zoning)
- Sections
- Township and Range
- Parcels

Rating

- Not rated
- Not limited
- Somewhat limited
- Very limited

Source: USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

N

COLFAX COUNTY NEBRASKA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

SOLAR ARRAYS, SOIL-BASED ANCHOR SYSTEMS

MARVIN PLANNING CONSULTANTS
Specializing in Municipal, County and Neighborhood Planning

PROJECTION: NE State Plane (Ft.)
DATUM: NAD 83
DATE: 10.8.26

0 0.02 0.04 0.09 Miles