



PROJECT
NO

112-G1-011

Minden

NEBRASKA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
and Connectivity Master Plan
2023-2033

PRODUCED BY:



MA Miller & Associates
CONSULTING ENGINEERS, P.C.

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The City of Minden would like to thank all of the residents, property owners, and business owners who participated in updating Minden's Comprehensive Plan! Minden's residents and business owners are the backbone of the community and their participation was essential to this planning process.

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INTRODUCTION

The Comprehensive Plan is a toolkit for Minden’s future development. It provides long-range guidance on where and how the City will invest and change over the next ten years. The body of the Plan contains maps, visions, and goals for the future as well as policies to address topics ranging from land use and demographics to transportation and community services. This Comprehensive Plan will help the City thoughtfully address future needs for economic development, transportation, housing, services, parks and open space, and other community benefits. It will encourage a sustainable and fiscally responsible future by setting the desired direction for future development regulations, policy decisions, and community programs.

COMPLIANCE WITH STATE & LOCAL REQUIREMENTS

The governmental functions of Minden, Nebraska are provided and coordinated by the City Council, comprised of five elected officials. The City’s planning and zoning jurisdiction includes an area within one mile of the City’s corporate limits, pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 17-1002. The planning and zoning jurisdiction of the City of Minden is governed by Neb. Rev. Stat. §17-1004. As Minden continues to grow and annex land, the extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) may extend further into Kearney County.

NEBRASKA REVISED STATUTE § 17-1002

Designation of jurisdiction; suburban development; subdivision; platting; consent required; review by County planning commission; when required.

(1) Except as provided in section 13-327, any city of the second class or Village may designate by ordinance the portion of the territory located within one mile of the corporate limits of such city or Village and outside of any other organized city or Village within which the designating city or Village will exercise the powers and duties granted by this section and section 17-1003 or section 19-2402.

(2) No owner of any real property located within the area designated by a city or Village pursuant to subsection (1) of this section may subdivide, plat, or lay out such real property in building lots, streets, or other portions of the same intended to be dedicated for public use or for the use of the purchasers or owner of lots fronting thereon or adjacent thereto without first having obtained the approval of the city council or board of trustees of such municipality or its agent designated pursuant to section 19-916 and, when applicable, having complied with sections 39-1311 to 39-1311.05. The fact that such real property is located in a different County or counties than some or all portions of the municipality shall not be construed.

(3) No plat of such real property shall be recorded or have any force or effect unless approved by the city council or board of trustees of such municipality or its designated agent.

(4) In counties that have adopted a comprehensive development plan which meets the requirements of section 23-114.02 and are enforcing subdivision regulations, the County planning commission shall be provided with all available materials on any proposed subdivision plat, contemplating public streets or improvements, which is

filed with a municipality in that County, when such proposed plat lies partially or totally within the extraterritorial subdivision jurisdiction being exercised by that municipality in such County. The commission shall be given four weeks to officially comment on the appropriateness of the design and improvements proposed in the plat. The review period for the commission shall run concurrently with subdivision review activities of the municipality after the commission receives all available material for a proposed subdivision plat.

NEBRASKA REVISED STATUTE §17-1004

An ordinance of a City of the second class or Village designating its jurisdiction over territory outside of the corporate limits of the City or Village under section 17-1001 or 17-1002 shall describe such territory by metes and bounds or by reference to an official map.

The Plan has been prepared in accordance with state statutes and requirements. It is the duty of the City Council to make and adopt a master plan for the physical development of the municipality. The master plan of a community shall be an advisory document to guide land development decisions. The Planning Commission, after a public hearing, shall make its recommendation to the City Council. The City Council, after a public hearing, shall adopt and approve the Comprehensive Plan by Resolution.

NEBRASKA REVISED STATUTE §19-903

Comprehensive development plan; requirements; regulations and restrictions made in accordance with plan; considerations.

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;

(4) When a new Comprehensive Plan or a full update to an existing Comprehensive Plan is developed on or after July 15, 2010, but not later than January 1, 2015, an energy element 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. This subdivision shall not apply to Villages; and

(5)(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.

DATA SOURCES

The following paragraphs outline the key data sources utilized during the data gathering and analysis process. Additional data and local sources were also used during the development of this Plan. A portion of the data was accessed through mySidewalk, an online data platform that brings information together from several data sources into a common analysis tool, allowing for data comparisons and strategic analysis. To normalize the data from multiple sources, mySidewalk harmonizes or recalculates historic data to fit 2020 Census Bureau boundaries. Additional data and local sources were also used during the development of this Plan.



DECENNIAL CENSUS

Every ten years since 1790 the US Census has counted each resident of the country and where they live on April 1 during years ending in zero. This mandatory survey determines the number of seats each state has in the House of Representatives. The decennial census reports basic gender, age, and race data. There is not enough data collected to elaborate on a community's demographic and economic condition. This Plan uses a combination of 2020 data and historic data.

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AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY (ACS)

Conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau, the ACS supplements the decennial census. This ongoing survey supplies data about the nation and its people on a yearly basis. In contrast to the decennial census, the ACS is only sent to a sample of addresses, about 3.5 million in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico every year. For the 2020 5-Year Estimates, Nebraska's response rate was reported as 90.6 percent. Reasons for non-response included Refusal (3.5 percent), No One Home (1.4 percent), Maximum Contact Attempts Reached (0.6 percent), Insufficient Data (0.4 percent), Language Problem (0.3 percent), Unable to Locate (0.2 percent), Temporarily Absent (0.1 percent), and Other (3.2 percent). The ACS asks about additional topics to those included in the decennial census. These topics include but are not limited to, education, employment, internet access, and transportation. The survey compiles data and reports in 5-year estimates (2016-2020) with a margin of error. The estimates produced through this survey help determine the annual distribution of more than \$675 billion in federal and state funds.

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ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS RESEARCH INSTITUTE, INC. (ESRI)

ESRI reports data like the U.S. Census Bureau, but also allows each community to enter additional information regarding commercial properties, including vacant lots and buildings. This helps each community and the State of Nebraska market and promote economic development opportunities. ESRI data is reported as estimates utilizing the most recent Census data and marketing forecasts for the associated year.

VISION FOR *Minden*

Minden residents and business owners are invaluable assets to the community. Their participation was, and is, essential to the planning process. This Plan presents a vision of the future created by the community. The planning process for the Minden Comprehensive Plan update included public participation meetings, stakeholder meetings, and workshops which gave community members the opportunity to frame the goals and directions of the plan.

The vision for Minden is to promote and grow a diverse economic base while emphasizing overall community growth and development. This requires a proactive approach for attracting new residents and gathering input from existing residents. Over the last decade, the community has achieved great strides including population growth, housing market improvements, infrastructure maintenance, and commercial development.

Housing is an ongoing issue that will be addressed to attract and maintain residents. Gateway corridors into town and the Downtown Square were major discussion points during public input sessions. Residents would enjoy seeing these areas developed with better aesthetics to give a grand “first impression” to visitors. Other goals for Minden are to create a variety of job options, agricultural and non-agricultural, while also maintaining infrastructure such as roads, water, and public buildings/services. The creation of this plan and continual reference back to this and any other plans will benefit the City on its path to reaching the goals laid out in this plan.

While this Plan embodies many ideas, goals, and policies that are parallel with other communities’ goals in this region, there are some noteworthy new directions and slight changes in the course presented in this Plan. These new directions resulted from community feedback, reaction to current trends and conditions, and policy direction from elected and appointed officials.



- IMPROVE THE EXISTING HOUSING MARKET**
- PROMOTE COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT**
- ENHANCE DOWNTOWN SQUARE BEAUTIFICATION**
- ENHANCE AMENITIES**
- PROMOTE TOURISM**
- ENHANCE GATEWAY ENTRANCES BEAUTIFICATION**
- IMPROVE PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE**

PREVIOUS PLANNING EFFORTS

The City of Minden has a solid record of community participation and planning. This Comprehensive Plan builds on previous planning efforts. The Plan update included a review of these previous efforts and documents. Many of the goals, policies, and ideas for the future represented in previous plans are still relevant and are carried forth in this plan. Some new ideas for development were also discussed during public input sessions. Some examples of overarching themes in this plan that are carried forth from previous planning efforts include:

PREVIOUS COMPREHENSIVE PLANS

Goals from Minden’s 2013-2023 Comprehensive Plan focus on Community Image, Public Infrastructure, and Commercial and Housing Improvements.

- Improve Public Infrastructure
- Create Gateway Entrances
- Promote Commercial Development
- New Swimming Pool
- Become a Leadership Community
- Support Minden Public School District

This Comprehensive Plan for 2033 includes both minor and major changes to the vision for the City as developed in the 2013 Comprehensive Plan. Revisions include statistical updates, a reduction of outdated content, and a graphic redesign to make the document more readable and user-friendly. An energy component was added, as required by state statutes.

BLIGHT AND SUBSTANDARD STUDIES

The following is a list of Blight and Substandard Studies and associated Redevelopment Areas that was completed for the City of Minden.

- Redevelopment Area #10

STRATEGIC PLAN

After the completion of Minden’s 2013 Comprehensive Plan, City leaders felt the need to develop a Strategic Plan which serves as a guide for the next five years. The City took the goals outlined in the 2013 Comprehensive Plan as long-range goals and objectives and encompassed many of those same goals in a shorter term. The goals laid out in the 2015 Strategic Plan are split into two different timelines. The first set of goals are projects City Staff would like to see accomplished within years one or two and the other set of goals are projects City Staff would like to see accomplished within the next three to five years.

- Infrastructure & Public Services/Amenities
- Recreation
- Housing
- Economic Development

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION PLAN

The City of Minden was awarded a Downtown Revitalization Plan, as part of a two-phase process funded by the Nebraska Department of Economic Development (NDED) through a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). Phase I: Planning, establishes short- and long-term goals and objectives for future downtown improvements and development. Phase II: provides funding for the goals and recommendations as outlined in the Downtown Revitalization Plan. The goals outlined in the DTR plan include:

- Visual Design Guidelines
- Branding/Marketing
- Facades
- Commercial Rehabilitation/Energy Efficiency
- Sidewalks/Crosswalks/ADA Ramps
- Complementary Businesses
- Wayfinding and Pedestrian Signage
- Historic Preservation
- Accessibility
- Event Space
- Flowers/Green Spaces
- Public Art

RECREATIONAL MASTER PLAN & POOL STUDY

In 2015, the City of Minden contracted Miller & Associates to complete a Park and Recreational Master Plan as well as a Pool Study. The Park and Recreational Master Plan provides a long-term vision for park and recreation improvements in Minden. Residents had several opportunities to provide public input into their needs and wants. These goals were prioritized and put into phased implementation strategies to help City Leaders accomplish the outlined goals.

PHASE I

- Construct a new restroom facility (Jaycee Park)
- Build Labyrinth (West Park)
- Add signage (West Park)

PHASE II

- Construct a Hike/Bike Trail loop (by the Outdoor Classroom)
- Renovate band shell (Chautauqua Park)
- Enhance the “band shell area” to make it attractive for events (Chautauqua Park)
- Add underground sprinklers (Chautauqua Park)
- Install splash pad (Chautauqua Park)

PHASE III

- Relocate the disc golf course (American Legion Park)
- Replace wooden playground equipment (American Legion Park)

PHASE IV

- Develop a 4-plex and swimming pool complex (New Complex Site)
 - Shared concessions/restroom/bathhouse facility
 - Playground equipment/shade structures/pedestrian paths
- Close Sarah's Field and move the memorial (to New Complex Site)
- Move Augie Nelson ball field (to New Complex Site)

PHASE V

- Construct additional soccer fields (Augie Nelson Optimist Park)
- Pave/locate additional parking for fields (Augie Nelson Optimist Park)
- Demolish the existing pool (American Legion Park)
- Add Dog Park (American Legion Park)

PHASE VI

- Resurface tennis courts (American Legion Park)
- Build a new restroom facility (Chautauqua Park)

2020 HOUSING STUDY

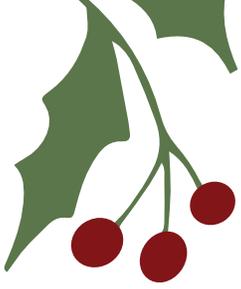
Goals from Minden's 2020 Housing Study (South Central Economic Development District) focus on the number of homes needed to support projected population increases, workforce housing, aging housing stock, and supply and demand.

PLANNING PERIOD

The planning period for Minden's Comprehensive Plan is 2023-2033. This Plan should be reviewed regularly to ensure its relevance to the community it serves. A formal review process should be undertaken in 2025 and 2028. Establishing a review process of the Comprehensive Plan will be important to the success of this Plan and to the City of Minden. This process should include public hearings to discuss whether the Plan remains valid or if updates are needed.

In 2033, City officials will evaluate Minden's accomplishments and changes over the previous decade to determine the need for a new Comprehensive Plan. If substantial changes occurred in the community, the Comprehensive Plan should be updated to reflect the changes. This will keep goals relevant to the community and help the City continue moving forward.

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Chapter 01

COMMUNITY PROFILE

The Community Profile Chapter provides a snapshot of current conditions in Minden. This forms the foundation for planning in Minden for the next ten years. This profile compiles information derived from outside research, conversations with stakeholders, on-site assessments, and data analysis. The Community Profile Chapter consists of the following components:

- DESCRIPTION
- HISTORY
- POPULATION
- HOUSING
- ECONOMY & CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT

DESCRIPTION

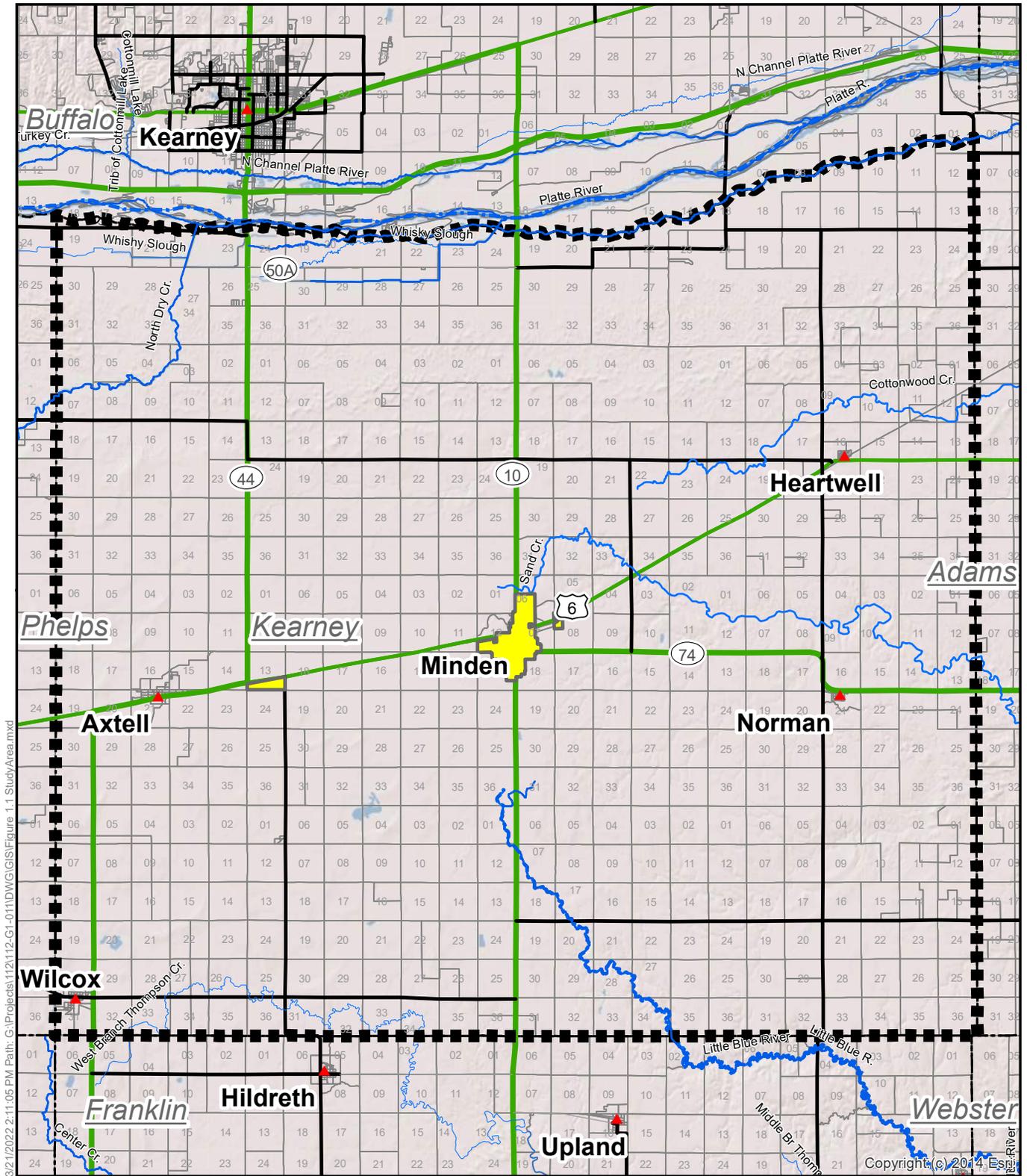
The 2020 Decennial Census reported the City of Minden’s population as 3,118 total residents. This is an increase from the 2,923 residents reported in the 2010 Census. Minden’s corporate limits cover approximately 2.2 square miles in south-central Nebraska. The City serves as the county seat for Kearney County, which covers 516 square miles. Other communities in Kearney County include Axtell, Heartwell, Norman, and Wilcox. Kearney County is surrounded by Buffalo and Hall Counties to the north, Phelps and Harlan Counties to the west, Franklin County to the south, and Adams and Webster Counties to the east.

As shown in “Table 1.1: State Population Classification,” Minden is located twelve miles south of Interstate 80 on a juncture of U.S. Highways 34 and 6, running east to west, and Nebraska Highway 10, running north to south. Nebraska Highway 74 runs east from Minden, connecting Nebraska Highway 10 to Nebraska Highway 15. The City of Minden is located approximately 20 miles southeast of the City of Kearney and 30 miles southwest of the City of Hastings. The proximity to these larger communities provides access to additional jobs, retail, and amenities, but also makes it harder to retain community dollars in Minden. There are no larger metropolitan areas in the community’s immediate vicinity. Nebraska’s capital city, Lincoln, is approximately 134 miles east of Minden. Denver, Colorado is approximately 356 miles west of Minden.

**TABLE 1.1: STATE POPULATION CLASSIFICATION
NEBRASKA, 2022**

CLASSIFICATION	POPULATION	NUMBER OF MUNICIPALITIES
Metropolitan Class	More than 300,000	Omaha Only
Primary Class	More than 100,000, less than 300,000	Lincoln Only
First Class	More than 5,000; less than 100,000	30
Second Class	More than 800; less than 5,000	115
Village	More than 100; less than 800	385
Total number of municipalities in Nebraska: 532		
Source: Nebraska State Statute §14-101, §15-101, §16-101, §17-101, §17-201.		

COMMUNITY PROFILE - Chapter 01



3/21/2022 2:11:05 PM Path: G:\Projects\112112-G1-011DWG\GIS\Figure 1.1 Study Area.mxd

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Legend

Minden Corporate Boundary

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Figure 1.1 Study Area Map
 Kearney County, Nebraska

HISTORY

Land use and development decisions must account for historical and cultural artifacts. Certain locations in the community should be preserved and promoted. This creates opportunities for tourism and ensures the story of Minden is passed on to future generations.

The following historical account is quoted from the City's website:

[https://www.minden-nebraska.org/120/History-of-Minden.](https://www.minden-nebraska.org/120/History-of-Minden)

Some called it foresight, but others considered the establishment of Minden as the county seat to be stealing, pure and simple. The town was only a stretch of open prairie in 1876, without a single inhabitant or building, when settlers voted 165 to 67 to remove the courthouse from Lowell to the more centrally located "Minden."

Early settlement had concentrated in the northern part of Kearney County, where the Oregon Trail met the Platte River. Fort Kearny was established in 1848 to protect travelers along the route. By 1872 Lowell, in the northeast corner of the county, claimed both a railroad and a brick courthouse.

Yet because much of the good land in the vicinity was already owned by the railroads, homesteading shifted to land south across the "divide" around Fredricksburg. The brothers Jens L. and Jens H. Jensen were operating a store there in 1875.

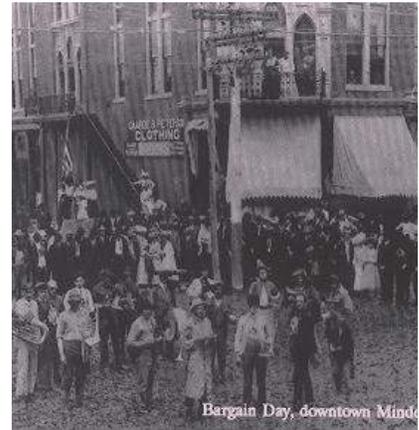
Following the election authorizing relocation, a large number of settlers from the divide area went to Lowell to get the county records. When they arrived they found, tied with a red ribbon to the door of the county clerk's office, a note saying that his wife was ill with a very contagious disease so it was dangerous to enter the office. "Besides," the note continued, "there is no suitable place in Minden where the records can be kept."

The warning was ignored. The records were loaded into waiting wagons and carried off to Minden. By then the new town consisted of a schoolhouse, a courthouse building, a post office, and a general store.

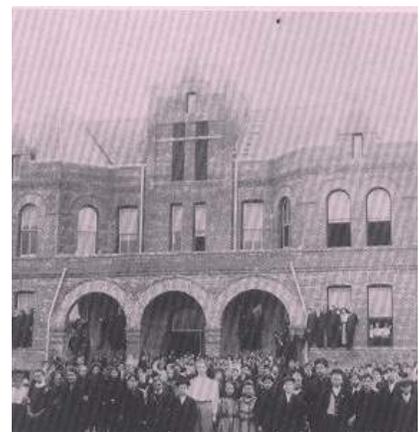
With the courthouse issue thus unceremoniously resolved, Minden grew



Aerial Photo of Minden, 1955-Nebraska State Historical Society



Bargain Day, Downtown Minden, 1896



Downtown Minden

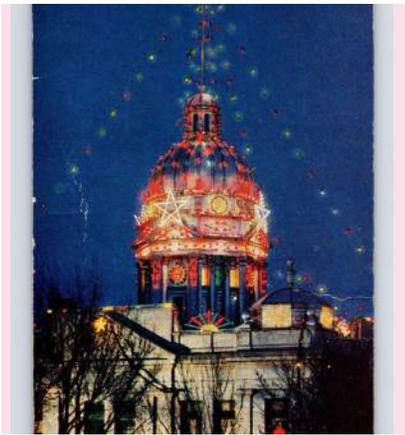
COMMUNITY PROFILE - Chapter 01



Minden Presbyterian

rapidly. By 1882 the population was nearly 300. In addition to the usual stores for general merchandise, grocery, and such, the town boasted five physicians, and six lawyers. The Burlington & Missouri River Railroad came through in 1883 and the Kansas City & Omaha line in 1887.

The idea of a great canal and irrigation system was conceived by Joel Hull in 1889. The Kearney County Canal, constructed to produce both electrical energy and water for irrigation, ultimately grew into the Central Nebraska Irrigation and Public Power District's Tri-County system. Minden community leaders promoted the project tirelessly for nearly half a century until it was finally completed in 1941. Kingsley Dam, the project's primary component, is named for Minden banker George P. Kingsley, Sr.



Christmas City

The foresight, with perhaps a touch of willfulness, that characterized Minden's early history persists in the community, tempered today by a warm appreciation of the town's pioneer past.

Minden's economic base, still primarily agricultural, is diversified by several manufacturing businesses: Burgess Well, Grayson Tool, Minden Machine Shop, KAAPA Ethanol, and Royal Engineered Composites.

Since 1915 Minden has illuminated its courthouse each December with over 10,000 lights, giving the community its title as "Christmas City." In 1946 Reverend Arthur Johnson and Clayton Morey produced the Minden Christmas Pageant, which is still performed annually on the courthouse lawn the first Saturday after Thanksgiving and the first two Sundays in December.



Pioneer Village

Minden's sense of tradition is nowhere more evident than at the Harold Warp "Pioneer Village." Established in 1952 by the son of Kearney County pioneers, the Warp Foundation has grown into a large museum, displaying historic buildings and artifacts of everyday life from the pioneer era to present. The Village plays a leading role in Minden's burgeoning tourist industry. Several organizations meet in Minden annually. In recent years Minden, with a population of about 3,000, has developed an active program of entertainment in its renovated state of the art Opera House. Life in the community is further enhanced by the Jensen Memorial Library and the atmosphere stemming from the stately presence of the domed courthouse in the center of the downtown square.

POPULATION

The people who live, work, and visit Minden every day are what makes the community tick. Understanding the population’s composition helps delineate wants and needs for community development. Demographics become the basis for prioritizing future goals. All other plan elements depend on an assessment of existing and changing population characteristics and the needs of the future population. Analysis of Minden’s historic, current, and projected populations creates a vision for the next five, ten, and fifteen years. This will help decision-makers plan for social, economic, and physical infrastructure to meet the community’s future needs and demands.

POPULATION CHANGE

The 2020 Decennial Census reports Minden’s total population as 3,118 residents. This is the largest recorded decennial census population for the City of Minden in its history. “Table 1.2: Population History” shows the decennial census counts for Minden’s total population since 1930. The community has primarily increased each decade, with only two recorded decreases in population. There are many possible reasons for these fluctuations including new businesses moving to town or industrial sites closing in the area. There have also been changes in how the U.S. Census Bureau records the population.

The 2010 Decennial Census reported a total population of 2,923 people, which was a slight decrease from the 2000 Decennial Census population of 2,964 people. However, the U.S. Census Bureau altered the way college students were counted during this period. Prior to 2010, college students were counted at their permanent, home address. In 2010, college students started being recorded as part of the community population in which they attended college. This change could account for the slight decrease in population from 2000 to 2010.

Overall, Minden’s population has grown by 81.7 percent in a lifetime of 90 years. The average annual population growth rate since 1940 is 0.66 percent. This is comparable with the average annual population growth rate from 2010 to 2020 which was 0.65 percent annually. These population trends can be used to forecast the future population total for the City of Minden. Projecting Minden’s population is an important step in understanding the future demographic character of the community. It also helps determine the City’s future land use and community service needs and policies.

TABLE 1.2: POPULATION HISTORY
NEBRASKA, 2022

YEAR	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020
Population	1,716	1,848	2,120	2,383	2,669	2,939	2,749	2,964	2,923	3,118

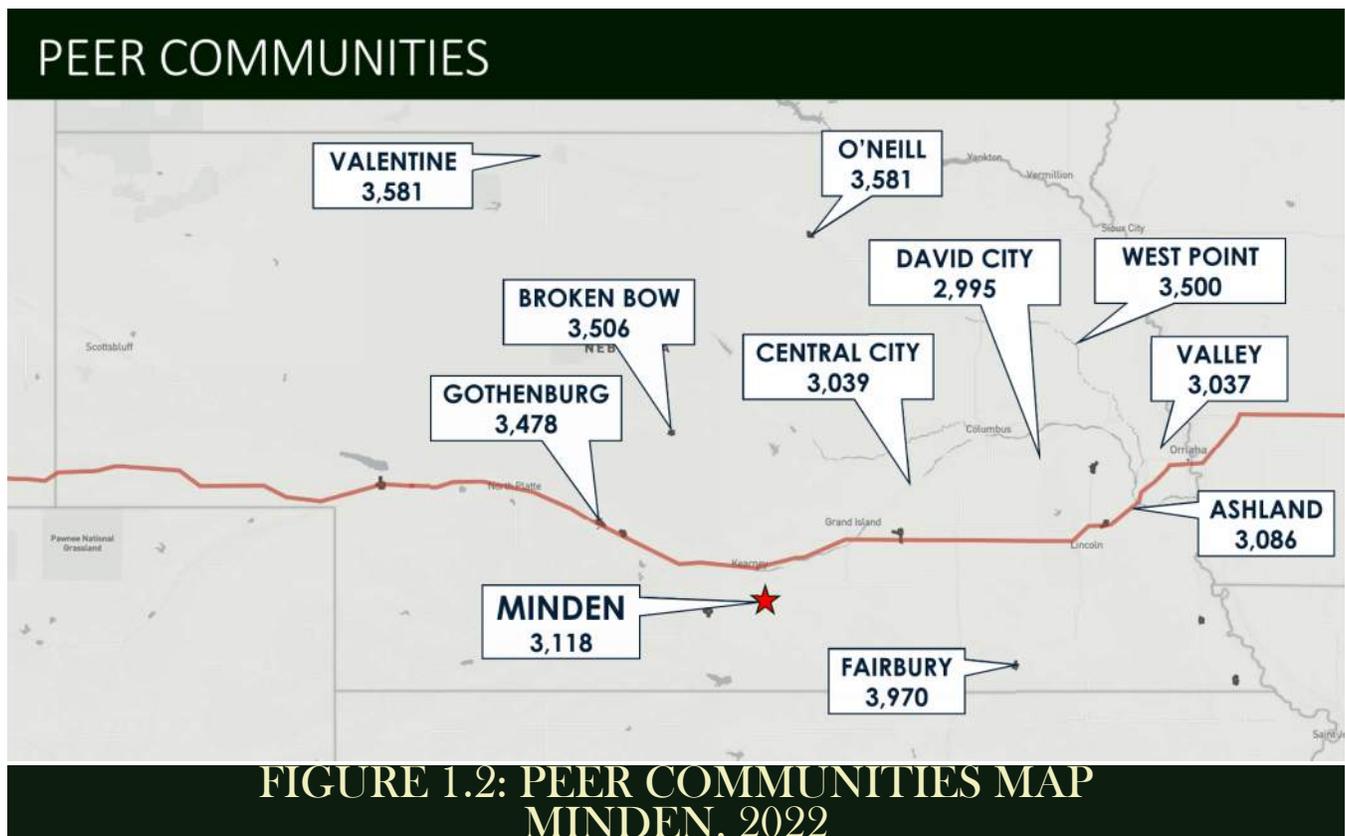
Sources: Nebraska Department of Economic Development, Places-Populations 1930-1980, and Populations of Nebraska Places 1990 to 2019, Retrieved from opportunity.nebraska.gov, 2022. US Census Bureau, Decennial Census, Table P1, 2020, Retrieved from data.census.gov, 2022.

PEER COMMUNITIES

Communities with similar geographies and population counts can be compared to help understand regional trends and how Minden fits within those trends. “Table 1.3: Peer Communities” shows a comparison of population trends for Minden and other Nebraska communities of similar size. Peer communities were selected based on their ranking by 2020 population. These communities face many of the same challenges as Minden regarding growth, development, and attracting residents. Total population counts from the 2000, 2010, and 2020 Decennial Censuses were utilized for this comparison.

Five of the eleven communities have experienced an overall population decline. The largest community listed, Fairbury has experienced the greatest population decline of 7.0 percent. This means Fairbury lost the highest percentage and number of residents in the past two decades. Two communities—Broken Bow and West Point—show relatively stable populations since 2000. Communities must continually work to retain the existing population and attract new residents. In fact, rural communities must work even harder than larger cities to maintain a sustainable population base.

The City of Valley has experienced the most substantial population growth since 2000. Valley’s 70.9 percent increase in total population calculates to an average compound annual growth rate of 2.7 percent. Many factors affect these changes in population including location in the State, nearby amenities, and annexation to name a few. Minden has experienced impressive growth over the past 20 years, especially considering the slight decline from the City’s 2000 to 2010 population counts. Overall, Minden has grown by 4.7 percent, which places it in the top half of its peer group.



**TABLE 1.3: PEER COMMUNITIES
NEBRASKA, 2022**

COMMUNITY	TOTAL POPULATION			% CHANGE IN TOTAL POPULATION	MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME	AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE	MEDIAN AGE
	2000 CENSUS	2010 CENSUS	2020 CENSUS	2000-2020 CENSUS	2020 ACS	2020 ACS	2020 ACS
Valley	1,777	1,875	3,037	70.9%	\$62,181	2.17	46.3
Ashland	2,261	2,453	3,086	36.5%	\$65,861	2.43	38.0
David City	2,638	2,906	2,995	13.5%	\$51,090	2.14	40.7
Minden	2,977	2,923	3,118	4.7%	\$50,739	2.31	39.2
Central City	2,975	2,934	3,039	2.2%	\$49,297	2.44	37.5
West Point	3,461	3,364	3,500	1.1%	\$52,788	2.34	40.8
Broken Bow	3,530	3,559	3,506	-0.7%	\$44,000	2.13	41.8
O'Neill	3,640	3,705	3,581	-1.6%	\$60,863	2.18	44.0
Gothenburg	3,628	3,574	3,478	-4.1%	\$66,096	2.62	35.5
Valentine	2,781	2,737	2,633	-5.3%	\$47,609	2.32	31.7
Fairbury	4,271	3,942	3,970	-7.0%	\$42,134	2.19	41.1

Sources: US Census Bureau, Decennial Censuses 2000, 2010, 2020, Retrieved from data.census.gov, 2022. US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2020, Retrieved from mysidewalk.com, 2022.

POPULATION COHORTS

Demographics such as age, sex, race, and ethnicity all help decision-makers prioritize community goals. This data can be used in several different ways, for example, a community could have its City Council members voting to either financially support an expansion of a local nursing home or an expansion of a local elementary school. Analyzing population trends based on age groups helps decision-makers determine what is best for the community. If population trends show there is an aging population, then supporting the nursing home would benefit those citizens. If there is an influx of families with young children, then supporting the elementary school expansion would be more beneficial for these residents. Understanding population composition helps decision-makers reach informed conclusions about community needs and priorities.

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The Census Bureau breaks the population into five-year age groups called cohorts. A cohort is a set of individuals who are grouped together based on experiencing the same event within the same time interval. Each decennial census presents population data in cohorts. These cohorts range from under five years to the last cohort which is 85 years and over. "Table 1.4: Population Composition History" shows all eighteen cohorts, from the 2010 Decennial Census and the 2020 ACS Estimates, and the corresponding percentages of the total population for each cohort.

There are notable changes in population between 2010 and 2020. Overall, 9 cohorts experienced In-Migration and 9 cohorts experienced Out-Migration. The percentage of growth in the cohorts reporting In-Migration was much higher than the decline in those reporting Out-Migration. The number of residents 19 years and younger grew. However, the two youngest cohorts, Under 5 years and 5 to 9 years, experienced out-migration. These two cohorts showed a population decline of 23.0 percent and 10.9 percent respectively. 10 to 14 years and 15 to 19 years both reported substantial increases in population. This shows the youngest cohorts in 2010 most likely remained in the community, but there were not as many young children added to the population base.

2020 ACS Estimates report approximately 27.6 percent of the population is nineteen years old or younger and 25.2 percent is 65 years of age or older. This is an important age because sixty-five is commonly the retirement age, although recent trends show the retirement age is rising. Most people in this cohort are also empty nesters and tend to lead a different lifestyle than when they had children at home. Empty nesters like to go out to eat or go for walks. They enjoy the freedom of being on their own schedule again. The Downtown Square, Minden Opera House, and the existing recreational facilities are all great amenities for empty nesters and retirees to take advantage of in the community. Community services such as an active Senior Center can promote a healthy quality of life for this cohort.

Persons under nineteen years of age are considered minors in Nebraska. This means most of the residents who are nineteen years or younger still live with a family or legal guardian. This is another cohort that enjoys being active. Community members of all ages seem to be large supporters of the Whippets and this age group in general. Providing amenities for this age group is essential to providing a high quality of life for families. Things such as summer sports leagues and recreational facilities are a great place for the nineteen and under crowd to congregate. The population nineteen years old or younger is slightly higher than the percentage of the population who is 65+ years of age. This typically implies population growth in a community.

**TABLE 1.4: POPULATION COMPOSITION HISTORY
MINDEN, 2022**

COHORT	2010 DECENNIAL CENSUS				2020 ACS ESTIMATES			
	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	% OF TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	% OF TOTAL
Under 5 years	99	101	200	8.5%	124	30	154	5.3%
5 to 9 years	88	86	174	7.4%	75	80	155	5.3%
10 to 14 years	90	88	178	7.6%	182	169	351	12.1%
15 to 19 years	53	65	118	5.0%	71	71	142	4.9%
20 to 24 years	29	36	65	2.8%	53	112	165	5.7%
25 to 29 years	18	12	30	1.3%	113	55	168	5.8%
30 to 34 years	8	12	20	0.9%	47	101	148	5.1%
35 to 39 years	35	44	79	3.4%	130	115	245	8.4%
40 to 44 years	75	85	160	6.8%	14	32	46	1.6%
45 to 49 years	85	95	180	7.7%	48	40	88	3.0%
50 to 54 years	78	73	151	6.4%	41	82	123	4.2%
55 to 59 years	85	91	176	7.5%	59	130	189	6.5%
60 to 64 years	101	101	202	8.6%	104	96	200	6.9%
65 to 69 years	110	98	208	8.9%	41	60	101	3.5%
70 to 74 years	73	95	168	7.2%	32	105	137	4.7%
75 to 79 years	36	31	67	2.9%	66	83	149	5.1%
80 to 84 years	51	49	100	4.3%	50	48	98	3.4%
85 years or over	34	34	68	2.9%	89	158	247	8.5%
Total Population	1,148	1,196	2,344	100%	1,339	1,567	2,906	100.0%

Sources: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, Table S0101, 2016-2020, Retrieved from data.census.gov, 2022.

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The median age in Minden is 39.2 years old. This is similar to Kearney County's median age of 39.1 years and Nebraska's median age is slightly lower at 36.6 years. This is consistent with the "graying" of rural America. The decennial census data provides historical data to utilize but the American Community Survey shows more recent data on an annual basis. The ACS 5-Year Estimates from 2010 to 2020 are shown in "Table 1.6: Median Age History." The median age in Minden has experienced fluctuations with the highest age being 47.1 in 2010 and the lowest age in 2014, 35.7 years. Recently, Minden's median age has remained consistently in the upper 30s.

**TABLE 1.5: MEDIAN AGE
NEBRASKA, 2022**

GEOGRAPHY	MEDIAN AGE IN YEARS
Minden	39.2
Kearney County	39.1
Nebraska	36.6

Sources: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2020, Retrieved from mysidewalk.com, 2022.

**TABLE 1.6: MEDIAN AGE HISTORY
MINDEN, 2022**

YEAR	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	10 YEAR AVERAGE
Median Age	47.1	45.9	41.8	44.2	35.7	36.3	39.3	39.4	39.2	39.3	39.2	40.7

Sources: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, Table S0101, 2010-2020, Retrieved from data.census.gov, 2022.

Age and gender differences affect the housing, recreational opportunities, community services, and businesses desired in a community. This is due to the different wants and expectations between different age groups and genders regarding necessities and amenities in life. Therefore, it is important to monitor and understand changes in the community and how they affect the overall needs of Minden's future. The American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) has created a Livability Index using seven broad categories to calculate the overall livability of a community as its population ages.

AARP LIVABILITY INDEX



HOUSING

The need for people of various levels of physical ability and income to find appropriate housing.

NEIGHBORHOOD

Access and convenience to essential amenities.

TRANSPORTATION

Accessible options for convenient, healthy, and low-cost alternatives to driving.

ENVIRONMENT

Air and water quality, and steps to improve energy efficiency and prepare resilience plans in the event of emergencies and natural disasters.

HEALTH

Easy access to exercise opportunities and high-quality health care.

ENGAGEMENT

Residents' individual opportunities to connect and feel welcomed through social engagement, civic action, and Internet access.

OPPORTUNITY

The degree to which a community embraces diversity and offers opportunities to residents of all ages, incomes, and backgrounds.

Engaging in these factors will create a vibrant and welcoming community. Not just to the aging population either, but to everyone.

POPULATION PYRAMID

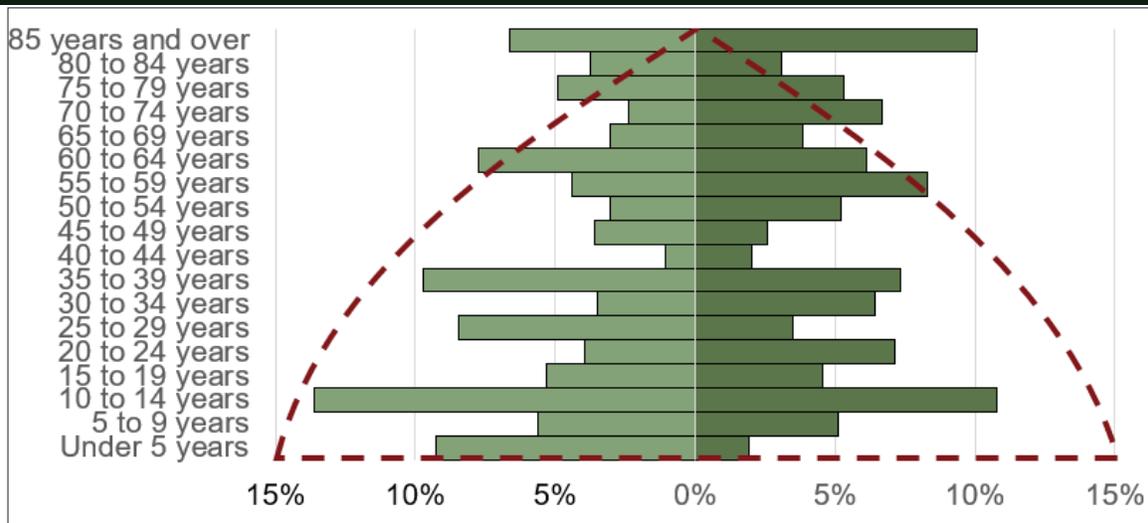
“Figure 1.2: Population Pyramid” shows a population pyramid for Minden based on age and gender data from the 2020 ACS Estimates. A population pyramid is a series of bar charts set on a vertical axis. The eighteen bars represent each of the eighteen cohorts with the male population represented on the left side of the chart and the female population numbers represented on the right side of the chart. Most rural towns in Nebraska have an aging community with a columnar population pyramid, showing a stationary population, or an inverse pyramid showing a decline in population.

A population pyramid showing a healthy, viable and expanding population will have a large base of children and young adults and in addition to a much smaller number of elderly people, creating the shape of a pyramid or a Hershey’s Kiss. These shapes indicate a self-sustaining population base for the community. A population pyramid uses two assumptions:

- The community exists to meet the needs of its residents.
- People’s needs and expectations change with age.

The population pyramid for Minden shows an almost equal split between men and women. Approximately 54.0 percent of Minden’s population is female and 46.0 percent of the population is male. Both Kearney County and the State of Nebraska reported a 50-50 gender split. As Figure 1.2 indicates, there is a much higher number of female retirees within the community than male retirees

FIGURE 1.3: POPULATION PYRAMID

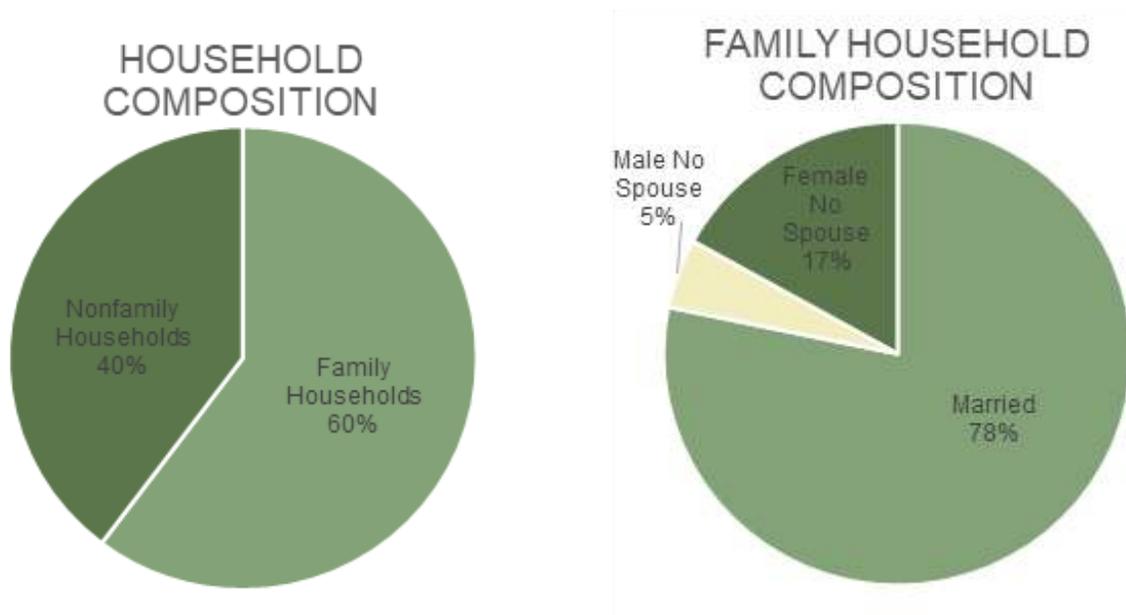


Overall, Minden’s population pyramid shows a stationary population leaning toward self-sustaining because it is relatively even through the entire pyramid, but the pyramid’s base (youth) is larger than most of the other cohorts. To grow into a self-sustaining community, Minden will most likely need to rely on in-migration and attract new families.

FAMILY DYNAMICS

Families are an important part of the viability of any community, including Minden. A family, whether it be a one- or two-parent household, adds at least one worker to the workforce, children into the school system, an occupied home, more people to buy groceries in town, another vehicle to fill with fuel, and more. It adds another group of people with a vested interest in the welfare of the community. Though Minden will need to promote in-migration to continue growing the population, the City should also focus efforts on maintaining the existing population to deter out-migration.

A household is considered a “family household” when at least one member of the household is related to the householder by birth, marriage, or adoption. Family households make up about 60.3 percent of all occupied households in Minden. “Non-family households,” those consisting of people living alone and households which do not have any members related to the householder, make up 39.7 percent of all occupied housing units in Minden. The City’s ratio of household type is similar to Kearney County and Nebraska. In Kearney County, approximately 67.3 percent of households are family households and 32.7 percent are non-family households. In Nebraska, 63.8 percent are family households and 36.2 percent are non-family households.



A majority of the 744 family households in Minden, 78.2 percent, are comprised of a married couple. Approximately 16.9 percent of family households have a female head-of-household with no male present and 4.8 percent of family households report a male head-of-household with no female present. The average family size in Minden is 2.98 people while the average household size is 2.31 people. This means the average household size of non-family households is much lower than the average family household size. All non-family households in Minden were reported as 1-Person or 2-Person households.

RACE/ETHNICITY

Racial/Ethnicity breakdowns can also shape the types of community amenities needed. Different cultures may celebrate events in different ways or enjoy different types of entertainment. Minden is predominately White (Not Hispanic or Latino) at 86.1 percent of the total population. The remaining 13.9 percent is comprised of Hispanic or Latino and Black (not Hispanic or Latino). There are two reported languages spoken at home. Approximately 88.2 percent of households speak English Only and 6.5 percent of homes speak Spanish. This could affect the accessibility of existing and new amenities for some residents in Minden.

The nation continues to become more diverse. Though slower in rural communities, this is also a reflected trend for the State of Nebraska. The City of Minden reports 14 percent of the population is comprised of People of Color. This is higher than Kearney County at 9 percent but lower than the State at 22 percent of the population. The needs of these minority groups should be taken into consideration when planning for future development of community amenities.

TABLE 1.7: RACE/ETHNICITY
MINDEN, 2022

RACE/ETHNICITY	PEOPLE	% OF TOTAL POPULATION
White (Not Hispanic or Latino)	2,501	86.1%
Black (Not Hispanic or Latino)	1	0.0%
Hispanic or Latino	402	13.8%
American Indian (Not Hispanic or Latino)	2	0.1%
Asian (Not Hispanic or Latino)	0	0.0%
Hawaiian (Not Hispanic or Latino)	0	0.0%
Single Race Other (Not Hispanic or Latino)	0	0.0%
Two Or More Races Other (Not Hispanic or Latino)	0	0.0%

Sources: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2020, Retrieved from mysidewalk.com, 2022.

TABLE 1.8: LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME
MINDEN, 2022

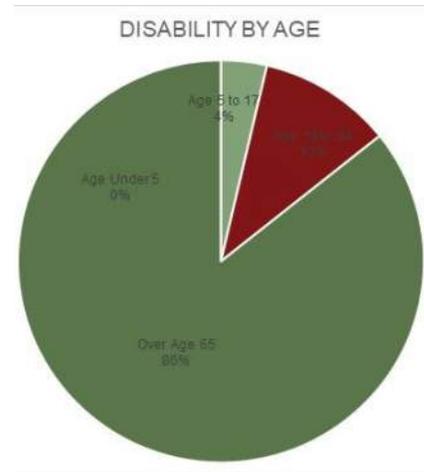
LANGUAGE	PEOPLE	% OF TOTAL POPULATION
English Only	2,563	88.2%
Spanish	189	6.5%
Other Indo-European	0	0.0%
Asian-Pacific Islander	0	0.0%
Other	0	0.0%

Sources: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2020, Retrieved from mysidewalk.com, 2022.

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

In addition to programming, accessibility concerns should also be considered for all age groups. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) 56.7 million adults in the United States live with a disability, this accounts for 19 percent of the population. These disabilities have far-reaching impacts on the design, development, and maintenance of community amenities. An estimated 329 of Minden’s residents currently live with a disability and over 85 percent of these individuals are over 65 years of age.

Nearly half of the residents living with a disability report ambulatory difficulty. This can seriously affect a person’s ability to walk or climb stairs. Over 63 percent of residents with a disability report Hearing Difficulty. Other reported disabilities include Vision Difficulty (9.7 percent), Cognitive Difficulty (13.1 percent), and Self-Care Disability (9.1 percent). Public spaces, community amenities, and events in the community should accommodate persons with disabilities whenever possible. This includes building ADA-compliant ramps and amenities wherever possible.



**TABLE 1.9: RESIDENTS LIVING WITH DISABILITIES
MINDEN, 2022**

DISABILITY TYPE	PEOPLE	% OF TOTAL POPULATION
Population Living with a Disability	329	100.0%
Disability - Hearing Difficulty	208	63.2%
Disability - Vision Difficulty	32	9.7%
Disability - Ambulatory Difficulty	162	49.2%
Disability - Cognitive Difficulty	43	13.1%
Disability - Self-Care Disability	30	9.1%

Sources: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2020, Retrieved from mysidewalk.com, 2022.

POPULATION PROJECTIONS

Population composition and historic trends are important to consider when making projections for the community's future population. Projecting the population is key to understanding the future demographic character of the community. These projections help determine the City's future land use and community service needs and policies. Population projections are meant to help decision-makers understand where the community is headed. The scenarios presented in this Comprehensive Plan each show a steady growth or a slight decline. These numbers guide decision-makers on what to plan for and what types of facilities will be needed.

To prepare for future population changes, leaders must track population changes. Every year leaders should analyze school attendance data, talk with local professionals, and be aware of building permits and home sales. Regularly revisiting the Comprehensive Plan and other community plans rather than waiting for ten years will encourage leaders to stay active and current on the community's needs.

"Table 1.10: Population Projections" shows the different population growth scenarios for Minden until 2040. The first two trends are representative of historic growth rates in Minden, using decennial census data. The first trend shows an annual growth rate of 0.66 percent. This is the average growth rate of Minden's decennial census population from 1940 to 2020, which is considered a lifespan by planning standards.

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Trend 2 looks at more recent population trends in the community. The most recent decade—2010 to 2020—had a similar average annual growth rate of 0.65 percent and is therefore not depicted in the population projections. Trend 2 utilizes the average annual rate of change between the 2000 and 2010 decennial censuses, a mere 0.14 percent decrease in population.

Trends 3 and 4 show standard annual growth rates of 0.5 percent and 1.0 percent. These rates are in line with Minden’s population trends over the last century. Trend 3 would lead to an increase of approximately 327 residents by 2040. Trend 4 shows the largest growth scenario of 687 residents by 2040. Several initiatives outlined in this Comprehensive Plan provide community stakeholders with strategies to attract new residents and retain the existing population base.

Of course, populations do not change at a constant rate every year. These simple population projection figures provide an example of how the population could look at the three different projected time intervals. Table 1.13 highlights the differences in the four population projection trends. This table helps leaders understand how Minden’s population could look in 2040. There is always the possibility of major events which could completely change the City’s trajectory, both positively and negatively. A major local industry or employer closing its doors, for example, or a new manufacturing business moving into town would drastically change these projections.

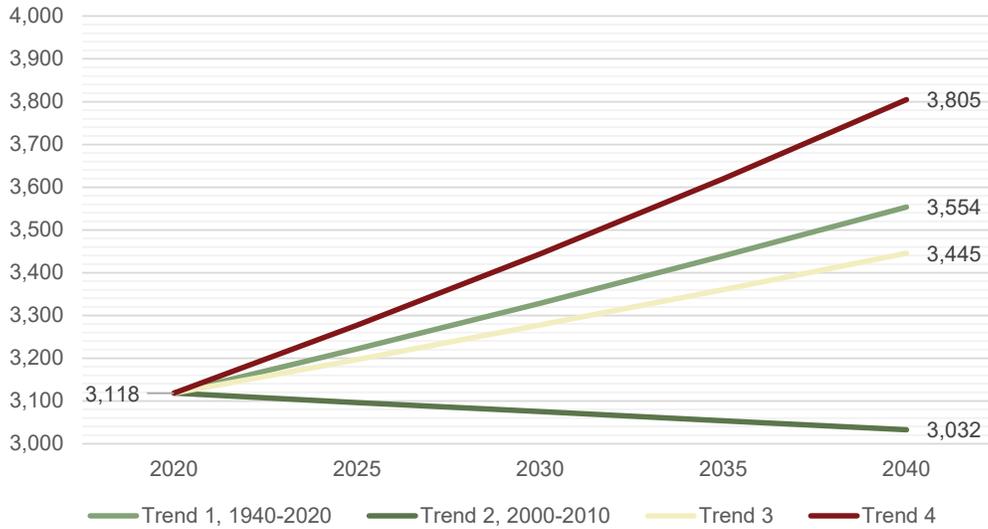
TABLE 1.10: POPULATION PROJECTIONS
MINDEN, 2022

GROWTH TREND	ANNUAL GROWTH TREND	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
Trend 1, 1940-2020	0.66%	3,118	3,222	3,329	3,439	3,554
Trend 2, 2000-2010	-0.14%	3,118	3,096	3,075	3,054	3,032
Trend 3	0.50%	3,118	3,197	3,277	3,360	3,445
Trend 4	1.00%	3,118	3,277	3,444	3,620	3,805

Sources: Nebraska Department of Economic Development, Places-Populations 1930-1980, and Populations of Nebraska Places 1990 to 2019, Retrieved from opportunity.nebraska.gov, 2022. US Census Bureau, Decennial Census, Table P1, 2020, Retrieved from data.census.gov, 2022.

While Minden has primarily experienced population growth in the last century, it is important to remember population decline has been seen in many small rural communities across the country and is always a threat. Though this trend seems to be lessening, it is important for City leaders to prepare for a multitude of scenarios and understand the necessity of continually working to improve the community. Leaders need to stay vigilant in the growth, success, and sustainability of the community to progress. Making land available for both residential and commercial/ industrial growth, incentivizing development, establishing a successful business retention program, and having the willingness to make public investments which create opportunities for private investment are a few ways for leaders to encourage growth.

POPULATION PROJECTIONS



CONCLUSION

Population analysis helps decision-makers understand where the community is headed. The projection scenarios presented in this Comprehensive Plan are provided as a guide to better understand what the future may hold for Minden. Population projection figures help leaders determine what types of public facilities, services, and amenities will be needed in the future. To prepare for future population changes, leaders need to continually gather and analyze population data. The community must also continue attracting new residents, especially young professionals, and families, to strengthen the population base.

Attracting young professionals and families is challenging in a smaller community. The Great Plains region, however, has recently been experiencing a legacy migration trend that could positively affect Minden in the coming years. This trend is termed “legacy migration” because it involves many citizens moving back to the places where they grew up, returning to their legacy. Many people hope to raise their children in a familiar location, which has created a trend of people looking for employment opportunities in their hometown. Once a home is established, these residents are most likely to stay in a community, plant roots, and grow their family – all added benefits to the community.

Job creation is the main pull factor for people moving into a community. If the City of Minden and its businesses can create new jobs, people will come to fill those jobs. It is also important to provide amenities for these new workers. Attracting and keeping the young “creative class” generation is imperative. The “creative class” is a socioeconomic class of workers who brings new ideas, art, science, and technology together. Being able to draw these people in and retain them as residents is critical in growing Minden.

Creating activities or social groups to help new community members get involved with current residents is a way for the community to reach out to new residents. Another way to encourage young people to stay in the community or move back after furthering their education is to create a program for high school students or recent high school graduates which provides job training opportunities specifically relating to businesses located in the community.

HOUSING

Housing is a crucial piece to Minden’s prosperity. The City must constantly assess and improve the existing housing market by identifying needs for new market-rate housing or ways to encourage the development of quality, affordable housing options. A supply of well-maintained, available, and affordable housing will help attract potential residents to the community. Projecting for future demand is an important, but sometimes difficult task when trying to promote growth in any community. Addressing the issues of an aging housing stock, which does not meet the needs of today’s renters and buyers is another challenge facing leaders. Community growth and revitalization is possible through the identification of housing needs. When considered in conjunction with demographics, housing data will enable the City to identify the most appropriate market improvements for community success.

OCCUPANCY CHARACTERISTICS

Table 1.11 shows the total housing units in Minden, Kearney County, and Nebraska as reported by the 2020 Decennial Census and the 2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates. The 2020 Decennial Census reports 1,366 total housing units in Minden. The ACS reported a similar number of 1,353 housing units, with 1,234 total occupied housing units. This includes all types of housing – single-family homes, duplexes, and apartments.

GEOGRAPHY	2020 DECENNIAL CENSUS TOTAL HOUSING UNITS	2020 ACS ESTIMATES TOTAL HOUSING UNITS
Minden	1,366	1,353
Kearney County	2,966	2,976
Nebraska	844,278	844,248

Sources: US Census Bureau, DEC Redistricting Data, Table H1, 2020, Retrieved from data.census.gov, 2022. US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2020, Retrieved from mysidewalk.com, 2022.

Of the 1,234 total occupied housing units in 2020, 72.4 percent were owner-occupied. The other 27.6 percent of occupied housing units were renter occupied. This accounts for 893 owner-occupied and 341 renter-occupied units. As shown in “Table 1.12: Occupancy Type,” the percentage of owner-occupied units was lower than Kearney County’s percentage but higher than Nebraska’s. There are often more apartments and multi-family structures in urban areas than in rural areas. This type of structure is often comprised of renter-occupied units. More multi-family structures allow for a higher concentration of renter-occupied units, affecting the owner to renter ratio.

**TABLE 1.12: OCCUPANY TYPE
MINDEN, 2022**

GEOGRAPHY	OWNER OCCUPIED		RENTER OCCUPIED	
	HOUSING UNITS	% OF TOTAL	HOUSING UNITS	% OF TOTAL
Minden	893	72.4%	341	27.6%
Kearney County	1,969	73.2%	722	26.8%
Nebraska	507,291	66.2%	259,372	33.8%

Sources: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2020, Retrieved from mysidewalk.com, 2022.

Table 1.13 shows the average household size projections for Minden, Kearney County, and Nebraska. All three sets of data show a decrease in the number of people per household over time. This follows national trends. The average number of people per household is getting smaller. Not only are family sizes shrinking overall on average, but young adults are also waiting longer to start a family. A large portion of the population is also aging beyond typical child rearing years. As the number of people per household continues to shrink, more units will be needed to house the same number of people.



**TABLE 1.13: AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE PROJECTIONS
MINDEN, 2022**

GEOGRAPHY	1990	2000	2010	2018	2019	2021	2023	2025	2027
Minden	2.33	2.39	2.28	2.31	2.30	2.29	2.28	2.28	2.27
Kearney County	2.55	2.51	2.40	2.43	2.42	2.40	2.39	2.38	2.37
Nebraska	2.54	2.49	2.46	2.44	2.44	2.40	2.39	2.37	2.35

Sources: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2020, Retrieved from mysidewalk.com, 2022.

The percentage of total occupied housing units with a specific number of people per household is compared in “Table 1.14: People Per Household.” In Minden, 15.6 percent of residents live alone while 15.4 percent belong to a two-person household. The next largest portion of total households is comprised of four-person households. Then households with three people (3.2 percent), five people (1.5 percent), six people (1.0 percent), and seven or more people (0.6 percent) comprise the remaining households in descending order. With one-third of households being comprised of one or two people, community leaders may examine the feasibility of condominiums or apartments for elderly residents and empty-nesters to rent or purchase. Another attractive housing amenity, especially for elderly residents or persons living alone, would be the presence of a home maintenance association. For a fee, the group would take care of general maintenance tasks like mowing the lawn and scooping the snow off sidewalks, to lessen the burden of homeownership.

**TABLE 1.14: PEOPLE PER HOUSEHOLD
MINDEN, 2022**

GEOGRAPHY	1 PERSON	2 PEOPLE	3 PEOPLE	4 PEOPLE	5 PEOPLE	6 PEOPLE	7 OR MORE PEOPLE
Minden	15.6%	15.4%	3.2%	5.2%	1.5%	1.0%	0.6%
Kearney County	12.0%	15.6%	5.2%	4.4%	2.4%	0.8%	0.5%
Nebraska	11.7%	14.0%	5.4%	4.6%	2.5%	1.0%	0.6%

Sources: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2020, Retrieved from mysidewalk.com, 2022.

When analyzing the number of persons per household and the large number of residents living alone, it is important to note these residents do not all live in single-bedroom housing units. Local realtors commented on the need for larger homes for families which would typically include housing units with at least three or four bedrooms. Some of the people who live on their own or with one other person most likely still live in three- or four-bedroom homes. These individuals may be willing to move to a smaller, up-to-date, and lower maintenance home if there are any available. This would then increase the availability of larger homes in the housing market for families.

INSTITUTIONALIZED LIVING

Residents who live in group quarters are not counted as part of the population who live in occupied households because the Census separates group quarters and housing units. The ACS estimates 67 of Minden’s residents live in group quarters. The two types of group quarters are institutionalized and non-institutionalized. Non-institutionalized facilities include college/university student housing and military quarters. All 67 residents live in institutionalized facilities. A majority—65 residents—live in a nursing facility while the remaining 2 residents live in adult correctional facilities.



TABLE 1.15: TOTAL HOUSING UNITS
MINDEN, 2022

GEOGRAPHY	2020 DECENNIAL CENSUS TOTAL HOUSING UNITS	2020 ACS ESTIMATES TOTAL HOUSING UNITS
Minden	1,366	1,353
Kearney County	2,966	2,976
Nebraska	844,278	844,248

Sources: US Census Bureau, DEC Redistricting Data, Table H1, 2020, Retrieved from data.census.gov, 2022. US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2020, Retrieved from mysidewalk.com, 2022.

VACANCY RATES

Adequate housing is essential to supporting economic growth. There should always be a small percentage of housing units on the market to attract new residents and create an atmosphere for a healthy housing market. It is important to have homes for rent or for sale but there must be a balance. Many businesses explore the local housing market when researching potential communities for new locations because the housing market is directly tied to the available and potentially available employee base.

Generally, a homeowner vacancy rate of less than 3 percent and a rental vacancy rate of less than 5 percent signifies tight housing market conditions. Anything over 7 percent for homeowner vacancy and 10 percent for renters creates a loose market. A tight housing market can raise housing prices making it challenging for people to purchase or rent a home in the community. A loose market can create market stagnation leading to deterioration. These ranges indicate Minden’s homeowner housing market is close to a tight housing market and the rental market is also tight in the community.

A review of real estate listings in February 2023 corroborates these findings. There were eight properties listed for sale on the Realtor.com website. Of these listings, one was an undeveloped lot. Two housing units were marked pending and one home was new construction. If no homes are available or are too expensive when a family is looking to move to the community then they will be forced to look in surrounding towns where homes are available. The main goal is to ensure available homes also fit the needs and wants of buyers and renters.

**TABLE 1.16: VACANCY STATUS
MINDEN, 2022**

VACANCY TYPE	HOUSING UNITS	% OF VACANT HOUSING UNITS
For Seasonal, Recreational, or Occasional Use	0	0.0%
For Sale	34	28.6%
Sold, Not Occupied	31	26.1%
For Rent	10	8.4%
Rented, Not Occupied	0	0.0%
For Migrant Workers	0	0.0%
Other	44	37.0%

Sources: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2020, Retrieved from mysidewalk.com, 2022.

“Other” vacant homes may be uninhabitable, stuck in litigation, being remodeled, or several other possibilities a Census investigator may quantify. Most of these housing units are considered uninhabitable. The “Other” vacant category is approximately 37 percent of all vacancies in Minden. This is much lower than Kearney County’s “Other” vacant percentage of approximately 49.5 percent. In the State of Nebraska, approximately 45.4 percent of all vacant housing units are counted in the “Other” vacant category. Dealing with vacancy rates requires a holistic approach to maintaining existing stock, removing dilapidated housing, and encouraging the development of empty lots.



AGE OF HOUSING STOCK

The development of housing stock in Minden has reflected the City's population growth. Like many rural communities in Nebraska, the City has an aging housing stock. This has the potential to create several issues for the community including outdated, undersized, and unkempt homes which do not meet the needs of today's buyers and renters. Table 1.17 shows Minden's housing units by the year they were built. The values depict the number of units built during specific periods of time, which often dictates the style and quality of housing units. Approximately 31.3 percent of the existing homes in Minden were built prior to 1940. While some 80 percent of homes were constructed prior to 1980. Table 1.18 depicts the median year built for housing units in Minden, Kearney County, and Nebraska. The median year built for housing units in Minden is 1969.

**TABLE 1.17: HOUSING UNIT AGE
MINDEN, 2022**

YEAR BUILT	HOUSING UNITS	% OF TOTAL HOUSING UNITS
Built 1939 or Earlier	423	31.3%
Built 1940 to 1949	35	2.6%
Built 1950 to 1959	131	9.7%
Built 1960 to 1969	100	7.4%
Built 1970 to 1979	393	29.0%
Built 1980 to 1989	52	3.8%
Built 1990 to 1999	111	8.2%
Built 2000 to 2009	49	3.6%
Built 2010 to 2013	36	2.7%
Built 2014 or Later	23	1.7%

Sources: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2020, Retrieved from mysidewalk.com, 2022.

**TABLE 1.18: MEDIAN HOUSING UNIT AGE
MINDEN, 2022**

GEOGRAPHY	MEDIAN YEAR BUILT
Minden	1969
Kearney County	1965
Nebraska	1973

Sources: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2020, Retrieved from mysidewalk.com, 2022.

Homes constructed more than forty years ago were typically constructed on fifty-foot-wide lots platted throughout the community. They also have smaller bedrooms than today’s typical buyers are demanding. Today’s typical home buyers are looking for amenities like a two-car attached garage, three-to-four bedrooms, and two bathrooms set on a large lot. Fifty-foot-wide lots do not fit the mold for what many buyers want in today’s market. Because of this, aging housing stock can lead to a stagnant market and deterioration of current homes.



HOUSING VALUE

Table 1.19 shows the 2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates for home value in Minden. The median value for owner-occupied units in Minden is \$149,700. This is lower than the median value in Kearney County and in Nebraska. The median monthly rent in Minden is also lower than the median monthly rent in Kearney County and in Nebraska. These numbers are estimates from the last five years of ACS data. Recent housing trends have shown a rise in housing costs. Housing availability has also become more limited, which will continue to affect the median housing costs.

**TABLE 1.19: MEDIAN HOUSING UNIT VALUE
MINDEN, 2022**

GEOGRAPHY	MEDIAN OWNER-OCCUPIED UNIT VALUE	MEDIAN MONTHLY RENT
Minden	\$149,700	\$639
Kearney County	\$162,200	\$692
Nebraska	\$164,000	\$857

Sources: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2020, Retrieved from mysidewalk.com, 2022.

**TABLE 1.20: MEDIAN HOUSING UNIT VALUE PROJECTIONS
MINDEN, 2022**

GEOGRAPHY	1990	2000	2010	2018	2019	2021	2023	2025	2027
Minden	\$42,073	\$76,911	\$87,947	\$149,700	\$167,034	\$177,037	\$187,039	\$197,042	\$207,045
Kearney County	\$43,765	\$79,797	\$102,838	\$162,200	\$182,455	\$193,733	\$205,011	\$216,288	\$227,566
Nebraska	\$50,000	\$88,000	\$125,400	\$164,000	\$172,700	\$187,379	\$197,369	\$207,361	\$217,359

Sources: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2020, Retrieved from mysidewalk.com, 2022.

Owner-occupied housing units are listed by value ranges in Table 1.21. The highest percentage of owner-occupied housing units (28.7 percent) in Minden is in the \$100,000 to \$149,000 category. This is closely followed by 24.3 percent of housing units in the \$150,000 to \$199,999 range and 23.7 percent of housing units in the \$200,000 to \$299,999 range. Approximately 21.6 percent of owner-occupied housing units are valued below \$100,000. Only 1.7 percent of owner-occupied housing units in Minden are valued at more than \$300,000 according to the 5-Year Estimates.

**TABLE 1.21: OWNER-OCCUPIED HOUSING UNIT VALUE
MINDEN, 2022**

VALUE RANGE	HOUSING UNITS	% OF OWNER OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS
\$50,000 or Less	52	5.8%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	141	15.8%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	256	28.7%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	217	24.3%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	212	23.7%
\$300,000 to \$499,999	15	1.7%
\$500,000 to \$999,999	0	0.0%
\$1,000,000 or More	0	0.0%

Sources: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2020, Retrieved from mysidewalk.com, 2022.

In the past two years, 2021 and 2022, Minden has seen 14 new building permits. Five of those permits were for homes, and the other nine were commercial. Housing development has declined over the last couple of decades, however, there is still some development happening. If more jobs are created in Minden, new housing development or more housing sales would likely follow the increase in jobs.

Public input participants and the community input survey discussed the current rental market in Minden. There were consistent comments regarding the shortage of rental units available in the community, with 41 percent of respondents

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indicating that they were unsatisfied with rental options. Most people are looking for two bedrooms and are not particular about the type of structure, ranging from single-family detached homes to duplexes and apartments. The City should continue to find ways to improve the rental market in Minden.



Most people are looking for larger homes with multiple bedrooms and some updates have already been completed. New home construction for single-family homes is crucial. Decision-makers need to continually engage in conversations with local professionals to determine what people are looking for when they are interested in moving to Minden.

SUBSTANDARD HOUSING CONDITIONS

When analyzing vacant housing units in the community it is important to determine whether the units are still habitable. Uninhabitable structures should be removed to provide vacant lots for new construction and infill development, as well as to rid the neighborhoods of fire and safety hazards. According to U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) guidelines, a housing unit is considered substandard if it lacks complete plumbing or if it qualifies as overcrowded. HUD defines complete plumbing as a facility with hot and cold-piped water, a bathtub or shower, and a flush toilet. Overcrowding is defined as more than one person per room.

According to the 2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates, Minden has 44 housing units without complete plumbing facilities. A total of 42 housing units were estimated to have more than one person per room. The ACS is a self-reporting device and not everyone answers every question. Housing units could still have defects in need of rehabilitation to meet building, electrical, or plumbing codes. Every five years, the City should commission a complete housing survey to identify units that require updates and encourage property owners to undertake improvements.

**TABLE 1.22: HOUSING CONDITIONS
MINDEN, 2022**

HOUSING CHARACTERISTIC	HOUSING UNITS
Total Housing Units (2000 Decennial)	1,269.70
Total Housing Units (2010 Decennial)	1,330.90
Total Housing Units (2020 Decennial)	1,366.00
Total Housing Units (2020 ACS)	1,353
Housing Units Without Complete Plumbing	44
Housing Units Without Complete Kitchen Facilities	134
Housing Units With More Than 1.0 Persons per Room	42
Housing Units (USDA)	1,237.10
Total Units in LIHTC Properties	6
Sources: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2020, Retrieved from mysidewalk.com, 2022.	
Note: Historic data has been normalized to fit current boundaries from the US Census Bureau.	

AFFORDABLE HOUSING OPTIONS

East View Court in Minden is owned and operated by the Kearney Housing Agency. The facility has 28 Public Housing apartments. Residents are responsible for the apartment’s interior and encouraged to plant and maintain flower gardens. Maintenance, lawn care, and snow removal are completed by the Minden Housing Agency. There are social events planned throughout the year to build a sense of community. Rent is either a flat rate or 30 percent of the adjusted gross income, whichever is lower. Flat rents are based on apartment size. All utilities are paid for by the Minden Housing Agency.

The duplexes at Minden West Estates are designated for citizens who are 55 and older. They are a good example of housing designed to serve the needs of a particular subset of Minden’s population. As of the beginning of 2023, those duplexes were 100 percent occupied and there is a waiting list for interested residents.



HOUSING AFFORDABILITY ANALYSIS

The 28/36 Rule states a person should not spend more than 28 percent of their gross monthly income on housing-related costs and less than 36 percent should be spent on total debts. For owner-occupied households, approximately 20.5 percent of households spend 30 percent or more of their income on housing-related costs. This percentage drops to 18.4 percent for Kearney County and 16.9 percent for Nebraska. This means over one-fifth of Minden’s households living in owner-occupied units spend more on housing than what is considered healthy. Approximately 44.5 percent of renter-occupied units spend 30 percent or more on housing-related costs.

**TABLE 1.23: EXCESSIVE HOUSING COSTS
(30% OR MORE OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME)
MINDEN, 2022**

GEOGRAPHY	% OF OWNER OCCUPIED UNITS	% OF RENTER OCCUPIED UNITS
Kearney County	18.4%	24.7%
Minden	20.5%	45.5%
Nebraska	16.9%	38.3%

Sources: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2020, Retrieved from mysidewalk.com, 2022.



Households, whether owner- or renter-occupied, spending more than 30 percent of their income on household costs are considered house-poor since the balance of their income and necessities is strapped because of the large housing costs.

Of the 893 owner-occupied housing units, 470 units are without a mortgage, which equates to 52.6 percent of the owner-occupied housing units. The mortgage payment is often the largest housing expense for an owner-occupied housing unit. It is highly probable that most of the owner-occupied units paying more than 30 percent of their monthly income on housing costs are making mortgage payments. This implies more than 40 percent of owner-occupied housing units with a mortgage payment over 30 percent of their monthly income on housing-related costs.

TABLE 1.24: MORTGAGE STATUS
MINDEN, 2022

STATUS	HOUSING UNITS	% OF OWNER OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS
With Mortgage	423	47.4%
Without a Mortgage	470	52.6%

Sources: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2020, Retrieved from mysidewalk.com, 2022.

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Table 1.25 shows a housing affordability analysis based on ACS estimates. This table shows the comparison of the household income range and the current value of housing units in Minden. Housing values are only presented for owner-occupied units while the household income data is presented for all housing units. Therefore, all household income values in “Table 1.32: Household Income” on page 53 are adjusted to represent the 72.4 percent of housing units in Minden that are owner-occupied. A rule-of-thumb when purchasing a home is to multiply the annual household income by two – homes in this price range are typically what can be afforded by the buyers. Using this assumption, the table shows where there are gaps and where there is a surplus of housing units present in Minden based on value. The following is a breakdown of the process:

Column 1 - Household income range for residents in Minden

Column 2 - Household income data from Table 1.32 (modified to relate to owner-occupied housing)

Column 3 - Column 1 multiplied by 2 (\$25,000 x 2 = \$50,000)

Column 4 - Number of existing owner-occupied units, based on the value from Table 1.21

Column 5 - The difference between Column 4 and Column 2 (52 - 142 = -90)

**TABLE 1.25: HOUSING AFFORDABILITY
MINDEN, 2022**

HOUSEHOLD INCOME RANGE	NUMBER OF HOUSING UNITS NEEDED	AFFORDABLE RANGE FOR HOUSING UNITS	NUMBER OF OWNER OCCUPIED UNITS	GAP/SURPLUS OF HOUSING UNITS
Less than \$25,000	142	Less than \$50,000	52	-90
\$25,000-\$34,999	149	\$50,000-\$70,000	141	147
\$35,000-\$49,999	147	\$70,000-\$100,000		
\$50,000-\$74,999	148	\$100,000-\$150,000	256	108
\$75,000-\$99,999	99	\$150,000-\$200,000	217	118
\$100,000-\$149,999	131	\$200,000-\$300,000	212	81
\$150,000-\$199,999	16	\$300,000 or Greater	15	66
\$200,000 or Greater	65			

Sources: Sources: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2020, Retrieved from mysidewalk.com, 2022.



The Housing Affordability Analysis shows gaps in Minden's housing market for homes valued at less than \$50,000. This analysis is based solely on numbers for owner-occupied units in Minden. Therefore, it does not consider people who live above or below their means, units available for rent, the market-rate price of homes, and the fact that several people live in their home until they are retired which would significantly lower the annual household income. As a note, because of the way housing values are reported, the \$25,000-\$34,999 and \$35,000-\$49,999, and the \$150,000-\$199,999 and \$200,000 or greater household income ranges are consolidated to correctly correspond with the housing value ranges reported by the ACS.

Community leaders can use this formula, as new data is reported, to determine the shortfalls in Minden's housing supply. Quality and availability of decent housing is a major factor for individuals and families when they are considering moving to a community. The City should take steps to improve their current housing situation including the development of affordable housing for low-income families. With a homeowner vacancy rate of 3.7 percent, a supply of affordable housing needs to be created, which can only happen with the construction of new housing units. A shortage of up-to-date, sizable rentals exists. To maintain as well as diversify the population base, leaders must investigate feasible options for housing development in the community. It may be important for leaders to consider what other communities are successfully implementing to help with housing development as well as programs that have been created to help raze uninhabitable homes to allow for infill development.

SUPPLY AND DEMAND

Comparing existing housing units, dilapidated units, household size, and units needed based on population growth scenarios can help project the future housing unit need. Table 1.26 shows the market supply/demand analysis completed for Minden. In 2020, the average household size was 2.3 individuals. Using historic and projected trends, the average household size can be adjusted to 2.25 person per household by 2040. The 0.066 percent growth rate scenario in "Table 1.10: Population Projections" on page 29 results in a projected population of 3,554 residents in 2040. Dividing the projected total population by the projected household size gives an estimated total of 1,659 occupied housing units in 2040. The desired vacancy rate of 5 percent must then be added to the total projected occupied units to find the projected housing unit demand in 2040

TABLE 1.26: HOUSING MARKET SUPPLY / DEMAND ANALYSIS
MINDEN, 2022

PROJECTED POPULATION IN 2040	3,554
Average Household Size in 2040	2.25
Occupied Households in 2040	1,580
Vacant Units Needed in 2040 (5% Vacancy Rate)	79
Estimated Need by Projected Population in 2040	1,659
Total Housing Units in 2020	1,353
Housing Units Lacking Complete Plumbing in 2020	44
Estimate Units to “Fall of Market” by 2040 (1% Annual Rate)	246
Estimated Market Ready Housing Units in 2040 from Existing Housing Stock	1,063
Estimated Minimum New Housing Units Needed by 2040	596
Sources: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2020, Retrieved from mysidewalk.com, 2022.	

According to 2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates, there are 1,353 total housing units in Minden. A portion of these existing units are considered substandard or uninhabitable. Another 1 percent of the total housing units is expected to fall off the market each year due to condition and maintenance. If no additional housing stock was built, the total existing housing stock by 2040 is expected to be 1,063 housing units. The minimum number of new housing units is well below what would be required in 2040.

While many other factors can influence the housing market and needs in a community, this analysis gives an idea of what to expect over the next two decades. Based on this data analysis 596 housing units need to be built in Minden by 2040 to accommodate an average annual population growth rate of 0.66 percent. This equates to 30 housing units per year for 20 years. Not all these units should be single-family homes. The City should continue to promote balanced development for both owner- and renter-occupied housing units in a variety of housing types.

CONCLUSION

In summary, Minden has an active housing market but there is still room for improvement. There are many areas in Minden that have good potential for infill development as well as new lots available. Minden has done an excellent job of minimizing fringe and sprawling development and should continue to encourage infill development. However, more housing is still needed for Minden's residential and potential residents; this should include both owner-occupied structures and units available for rent. People looking for homes in Minden are interested in homes in the \$100,000-\$200,000 range. To keep residents interested in the community, they need to have choices that fit their needs and wants.

Minden has a relatively large elderly population living within its corporate limits. Providing new housing units that would best suit their needs would inevitably open homes for other people to move into Minden. Condominiums, apartments, and/or duplexes would all be a great addition to Minden, and it would help provide housing for residents who are looking for something different than a single-family detached home. These options could still give people the freedom of living on their own in their own space, with the potential to not have to worry about yard maintenance and snow removal.

As stated earlier in this section, there are vacant housing units in Minden. Some of these units are uninhabitable and will continue to get worse with lack of maintenance. Clearing the community of these uninhabitable and deteriorated homes will not only help improve the aesthetics of Minden but would open lots for potential new home construction. The positive side of using infill development for new home construction is the fact that the infrastructure is already in place, instead of having to pay for the extension of infrastructure to a new location.

Minden is in a good place, with room to grow, but City leaders need to be mindful of market trends. City leaders need to continue to work to improve the existing house stock while also adding new.

ECONOMY

The ability to predict development needs and future land uses relies heavily on economic trends. A description and analysis of local economic factors is a crucial component of the Comprehensive Plan. Economic development is a major goal for community planning efforts, it is a continual process requiring ongoing efforts to make advancements. Communities differ greatly and no one economic development strategy fits all communities. In fact, economic development in rural communities is community development focusing on improving all areas of the community. It requires the active engagement of the community, its leadership, its organizations, its institutions, and its businesses.

The keys to greater productivity are innovation, creativity, new technologies, and public and private investment. The private sector is the primary source of economic activity, but the public sector plays an important, and ideally, complementary role. Therefore, analysis of both the public and private sectors is essential when determining goals and strategies for economic development.

LABOR FORCE

A strong labor force is extremely important to a community of any size. It is vital for communities to create jobs to attract new residents and grow the tax base. Analyzing the labor force requires employment figures, income levels, and an understanding of the economic base. Residents sixteen and older are of working age. Therefore, to study the workforce population, we only consider those individuals who are sixteen and older.

The 2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates reported 2,198 people are sixteen or older and 1,351 people are in the civilian labor force. The remaining 847 people who are 16 years and over are not considered to be a part of the labor force because they are neither employed nor officially classified as unemployed. This classification is due to a variety of reasons such as full-time students, retired persons, volunteers, stay-at-home parents, or persons unable to work due to a disability.

2020 ACS reported the labor force participation rate as 61.5 percent in Minden. According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, the labor force participation rate is “the percentage of the civilian noninstitutional population 16 years and older that is working or actively looking for work.” Kearney County had a labor force participation rate of 68.0 percent and Nebraska’s rate was 69.3 percent in 2020. The national labor force participation rate was reported at 63.4 percent in 2020.

All the 1,351 people reported in the labor force were reported as employed, therefore Minden’s unemployment rate is 0.0 percent. The unemployment rate may be a little higher due to the margin of error associated with ACS estimates. In May 2022, the US Bureau of Labor Statistics reported an unemployment rate of 1.5 percent in Kearney County and 1.9 percent in Nebraska. Unemployment data is not readily available for smaller communities which means we must follow larger trends and rely on national data services.

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The Natural Unemployment Rate is projected around 5 percent for the United States. This refers to a phase in the economy when there is flexibility for employees to quit jobs and search for new employment. It also allows employers to staff businesses with qualified applicants. When actual unemployment rates are less than the Natural Unemployment Rate, the condition is described as Negative Cyclical Unemployment. This brings the economy to a phase where the real GDP is valued higher than the potential GDP. This also leads to a more stagnant labor market with less flexibility for employees and employers. With such a low unemployment rate in Minden, it is challenging for businesses to find qualified employees.

While Minden’s population has recently increased, the number of jobs in the community has remained steady and even slightly decreased over the last decade. One consideration is the number of Minden residents who are retired. Minden has an aging population and according to the census, 717 Minden residents are 65+ years and older. Another factor is commuting patterns. Again, according to recent census data 99.6 percent of Minden’s employed population works in Nebraska. Of that number, 58.2 percent work in Kearney County, and the remaining 41.4 percent work outside of the county. With excellent highways and an abundance of employment opportunities in nearby surrounding communities (Hastings, Holdrege, and Kearney, for instance), many Minden residents are seeking and finding employment in these other locations yet live in Minden to enjoy what the community has to offer.



**TABLE 1.27: JOB HISTORY
MINDEN, 2022**

YEAR	NUMBER OF JOBS
2002	1,138
2003	1,185
2004	1,183
2005	1,123
2006	1,083
2007	1,142
2008	1,197
2009	1,161
2010	1,191
2011	1,156
2012	1,223
2013	1,223
2014	1,188
2015	1,191
2016	1,135
2017	1,194
2018	1,218
2019	1,144

Sources: US Census Bureau, LODES Version 7.5, 2019, Retrieved from mysidewalk.com, 2022.

Note: Historic data has been normalized to fit current boundaries from the US Census Bureau.



ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT

Where people live and where they work can greatly impact daily life. OnTheMap is a web-based mapping and reporting application available through the US Census Bureau. It provides information about where workers live and work. According to 2019 reports from OnTheMap, there are approximately 1,042 employed people in Minden, Nebraska. This included 446 people who live and work in Minden. The remaining 596 people are employed in Minden but live outside corporate limits. Another 979 people are reported as living in Minden but working outside of the corporate limits. This accounts for 1,425 employed people living in Minden.

This data aligns with work location data reported by the 2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates and shown in Table 1.28. Approximately 52.2 percent of Minden’s employed residents work in Kearney County. Another 47.4 percent of employed residents work outside of Kearney County, but in Nebraska. Only 0.5 percent reported working in a different state. This means almost half of the employed population living in Minden works outside of Kearney County.

**TABLE 1.28: WORK LOCATION
MINDEN, 2022**

WORK LOCATION RELATIVE TO RESIDENCE	PEOPLE
Same State and County	692
Same State, Different County	628
Different State	6

Sources: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2020, Retrieved from mysidewalk.com, 2022.

Minden’s location on multiple highways gives residents easy access to multiple communities in surrounding areas. Most of Minden’s residents have an average commute time of 30 to 34 minutes (20.4 percent) or 5 to 9 minutes (19.5 percent). Most complete their commute by driving alone. Table 1.29 shows the means of transportation used by Minden’s residents for their commute to work.

TABLE 1.29: COMMUTE TYPE
MINDEN, 2022

TRANSPORTATION MODE	PEOPLE	% OF TOTAL EMPLOYED
Drive Alone	1,086	80.4%
Drive Carpool	111	8.2%
Walk	71	5.3%
Work From Home	47	3.5%
Other Transit	11	0.8%
Bicycle	0	0.0%
Motorcycle	0	0.0%
Public Transit	0	0.0%
Taxicab	0	0.0%

Sources: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2020, Retrieved from mysidewalk.com, 2022.

The mean travel time to work is 17.9 minutes, which is lower than Kearney County's 19.6 minutes and Nebraska's 18.9 minutes.

TABLE 1.30: COMMUTE TIME
MINDEN, 2022

TYPICAL TIME FROM HOME TO WORK (ONE-WAY)	PEOPLE	% OF COMMUTERS AGE 16 AND OVER
More than 90 minutes	0	0.0%
60 to 89 minutes	35	2.7%
45 to 59 minutes	14	1.1%
40 to 44 minutes	15	1.2%
35 to 39 minutes	62	4.8%
30 to 34 minutes	261	20.0%
25 to 29 minutes	106	8.1%
20 to 24 minutes	128	9.8%
15 to 19 minutes	57	4.4%
10 to 14 minutes	165	12.7%
5 to 9 minutes	250	19.2%
Less than 5 minutes	186	14.3%

Sources: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2020, Retrieved from mysidewalk.com, 2022.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

In a rapidly changing economy, the skill requirements of employers are constantly evolving. Workforce training and education programs must keep pace with the changing requirements to prepare students and workers for jobs in the short term and careers in the long term. Community leaders often look for ways to close skill gaps and address mismatches which exist between the supply of and demand for workers.

Obtaining higher education typically, though not always, provides the ability to earn a higher income throughout a person’s life. As seen in Table 1.31, 2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates reported 1,939 residents who are 25 years old or older in Minden. Of this population, 32.1 percent have obtained a high school degree or the equivalent. The second largest portion of this population (27.1 percent) have attended some college but have not earned a degree. Approximately 15.5 percent have earned a bachelor’s degree and 10.3 percent earned an associate degree.

**TABLE 1.31: EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT
MINDEN, 2022**

HIGHEST EDUCATION LEVEL ATTAINED	PEOPLE 25 YEARS AND OVER	% OF POPULATION 25 YEARS AND OVER
Graduate or Professional Degree	81	4.2%
Bachelor’s Degree	301	15.5%
Associate’s Degree	199	10.3%
Some College No Degree	526	27.1%
High School Degree	623	32.1%
9th to 12th Grade, No Diploma	28	1.4%
Less than 9th Grade	181	9.3%

Sources: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2020, Retrieved from mysidewalk.com, 2022.

Nearly one-fifth (19.7 percent) of Minden’s population age 25 years or older has earned a bachelor’s degree or higher. This is an increase from the 2000 ACS Estimates of 17.4 percent, but a decrease from the 23.0 percent reported in the 2010 ACS 5-Year Estimates. These percentages are consistent with the societal changes in America over the past decades. In the early 2000s, there was a growing demand for a college education. Now, however with the growing cost of college education, more young people have reexamined their options for postsecondary education. More students have chosen trade schools, vocational schools, or apprenticeships for specific career paths.

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HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Table 1.32 shows the household income ranges for Minden’s residents in 2020. Household income is defined by the Census Bureau as the following:

“Any sum of money income received in the calendar year by all household members 15 years old and over, including household members not related to the householder, people living alone, and other nonfamily household members. Included in the total are amounts reported separately for wage or salary income; net self-employment income; interest, dividends, or net rental or royalty income or income from estates and trusts; Social Security or Railroad Retirement income; Supplemental Security Income (SSI); public assistance or welfare payments; retirement, survivor, or disability pensions; and all other income.”

**TABLE 1.32: HOUSEHOLD INCOME
MINDEN, 2022**

ANNUAL INCOME RANGE	ACS 2020		ESRI 2022	
	HOUSEHOLDS	% OF TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS	HOUSEHOLDS	% OF TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS
\$10,000 or Less	78	6.3%	93	7.3%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	87	7.1%		
\$15,000 to \$24,999	31	2.5%	61	4.8%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	205	16.6%	189	14.9%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	203	16.5%	186	14.7%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	204	16.5%	178	14.0%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	136	11.0%	208	16.4%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	180	14.6%	291	22.9%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	21	1.7%	36	2.8%
\$200,000 or More	89	7.2%	27	2.1%
Total Households	1234	100%	1269	99.9%

Sources: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2020, Retrieved from mysidewalk.com, 2022.

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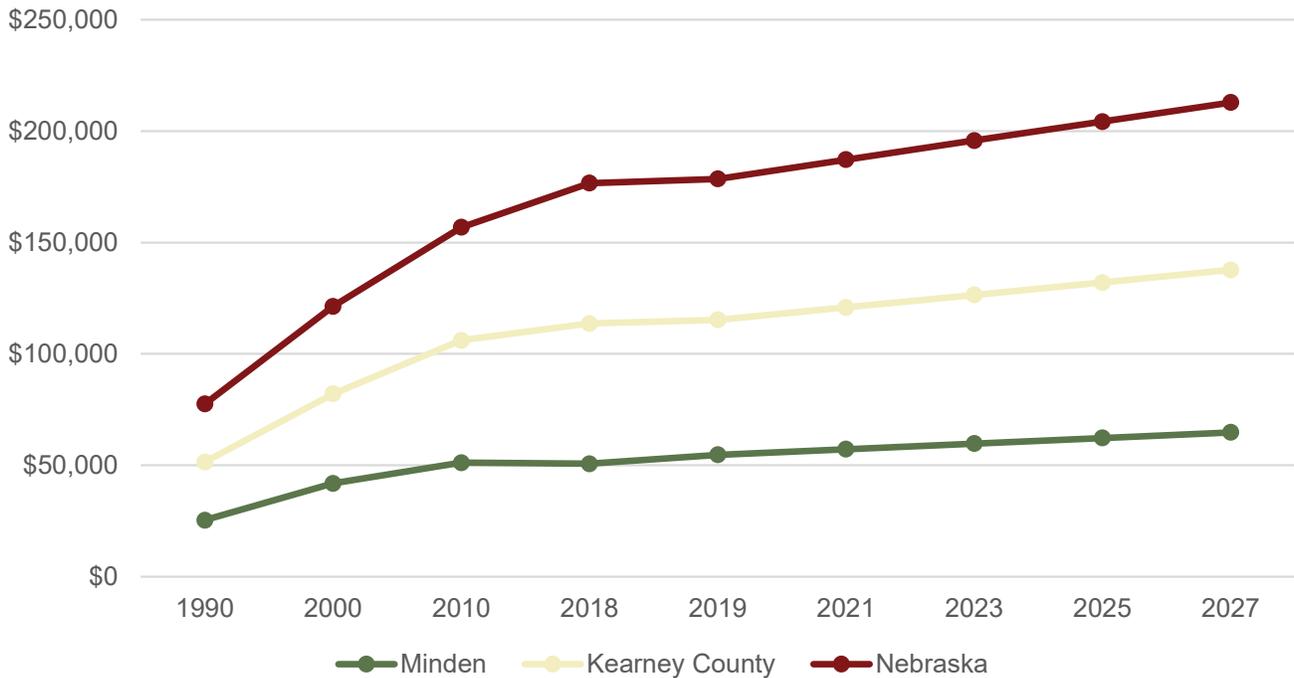
Household income data is displayed in ranges based on dollar amounts and the related number of households with an annual income in the associated range. Most households in Minden reported a \$25,000 to \$74,999 annual household income in 2020. The ACS reports Minden’s median household income as \$50,739. This is much lower than Kearney County’s median household income of \$62,899 and Nebraska’s at \$63,015. Table 1.33 shows the median household income for different age groups in Minden. The age group with the highest median household income in Minden is adults between 45 and 64 years of age. This is the age group directly before retirement age with the longest amount of time spent in the workforce.

TABLE 1.33: INCOME BY AGE	
MINDEN, 2022	
HOUSEHOLDER AGE	MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME
25 Years and Under	\$51,750
25 to 44 Years	\$43,333
45 to 64 Years	\$90,357
65 Years and Over	\$41,786
Sources: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2020, Retrieved from mysidewalk.com, 2022.	

It is expected for the median household income to increase over time due to inflation. “Table 1.34: Median Household Income Projections” on page 55 shows a projection created in MySidewalk for Minden, Kearney County, and Nebraska. The projection uses historic census data normalized to current political boundaries. The data shown as 2018 marks the 2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates. Minden’s median household income is projected to increase at a faster rate than Kearney County’s or Nebraska’s. Minden’s projected increase from 2018 to 2027 is approximately 27.7 percent.

TABLE 1.34: MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME PROJECTIONS									
MINDEN, 2022									
GEOGRAPHY	1990	2000	2010	2018	2019	2021	2023	2025	2027
Minden	\$25,402	\$41,891	\$51,215	\$50,739	\$54,749	\$57,265	\$59,780	\$62,295	\$64,811
Kearney County	\$26,136	\$40,185	\$54,863	\$62,899	\$60,535	\$63,616	\$66,697	\$69,778	\$72,859
Nebraska	\$26,016	\$39,250	\$50,695	\$63,015	\$63,229	\$66,301	\$69,240	\$72,179	\$75,119
Sources: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2020, Retrieved from mysidewalk.com, 2022.									

Median Household Income Projections



The US Bureau of Labor Statistics reports the average national costs for select necessities over time. From May 2009 to May 2018, the average national cost for a gallon of milk increased by 36.8 percent, a pound of white bread increased by 14.2 percent, and a gallon of gas increased by 102.6 percent. The ACS 5-Year Estimates for the same period show an increase in Minden’s median household income of 4.0 percent. This indicates the increases in the median household have not kept up with the inflation of the cost of common items. It is possible Minden’s median household income was estimated as lower than the actual 2020 value due to the margin of error associated with ACS data. Minden’s median household income reported by ESRI in 2022 is \$62,720, which is significantly higher than the ACS estimates. Decisionmakers should continue to compare and assess this information as new data is released.

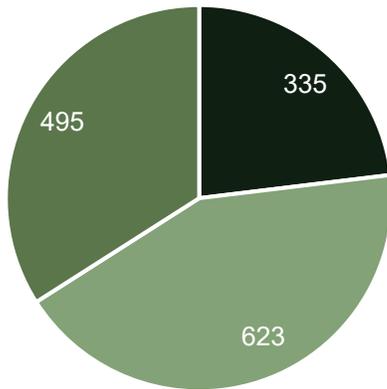
POVERTY LEVELS

As reported by the ACS, 13.6 percent of Minden’s total population lives below the poverty level based on annual income. Approximately 8.1 percent of households receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. SNAP is an income based, governmental food stamp program. The website [benefits.gov](https://www.benefits.gov) provides the following explanation of the program:

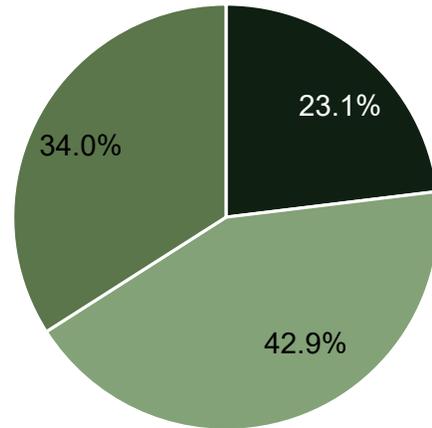
The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) offers nutrition assistance to millions of eligible, low-income individuals and families and provides economic benefits to communities. SNAP is the largest program in the domestic hunger safety net. The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) works with state agencies, nutrition educators, and neighborhood and faith-based organizations to ensure that those eligible for nutrition assistance can make informed decisions about applying for the program and can access benefits. FNS also works with State partners and the retail community to improve program administration and ensure program integrity.

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Wage Range



Wages



- Low Wage \$1,250 or Less
- Medium Wage \$1,250 - \$3,333
- High Wage \$3,333 or More

- Low Wage
- Medium Wage
- High Wage

Minden’s low-to-moderate income (LMI) share of the population is 40.6 percent. This means more than 40 percent of the residents fall into the low-to-moderate income category as outlined by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). This included 580 persons who were considered low-income and 650 persons with moderate income.

Table 1.35 shows the wage levels in Minden which were published by the US Environmental Protection Agency in 2021. The US Census Bureau classifies a low wage as \$1,250 or less per month, a medium wage as \$1,250 to \$3,333 per month, and a high wage as \$3,333 or more per month. Approximately 42.9 percent of reported workers in Minden fall into the medium wage classification. High wage is the next largest grouping at 34.0 percent and low wage workers comprised 23.1 percent of the reported wages. Lower income levels affect residents’ amount of extra spending money and reduce their ability to save money for large expenses or emergencies.

TABLE 1.35: WAGES MINDEN, 2022

CENSUS CLASSIFICATION	PAY PER MONTH	PEOPLE	% OF REPORTED WORKERS
Low Wage	\$1,250 or Less	335	23.1%
Medium Wage	\$1,250 - \$3,333	623	42.9%
High Wage	\$3,333 or More	495	34.0%

Sources: US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Smart Location Database (SLD), Version 2.0 and Version 3.0, Data are for 2010 and 2019, Published on June 22, 2021, Retrieved from mysidewalk.com, 2022.

CONSUMER SPENDING

Based on data and analysis completed by ESRI in 2021 for Minden, Table 1.36 shows the Market Potential Index (MPI) for consumer behavior patterns in Minden in comparison to national averages. The MPI comparison is shown for retail and service/entertainment businesses. An MPI measures the relative likelihood of the adults or households in the specified trade area exhibiting certain consumer behavior or purchasing patterns compared to the United States. An MPI of 100 represents the U.S. average. Purchasing women’s apparel, fine jewelry, convenience stores, and dining out are the highest MPI ratings for Minden’s consumer behavior patterns. They are lowest in spending, as compared to the national average, in theater spending, and spending at a bar nightclub, they are relatively close to the national average in spending for men’s apparel and footwear.

PRODUCT/CONSUMER BEHAVIOR	MPI
RETAIL TRADE	
Men’s Apparel	97
Women’s Apparel	101
Footwear	99
Fine Jewelry	101
SERVICES/ENTERTAINMENT	
Convenience Stores	107
Movie Theatre	84
Live Theatre	65
Bar/Night Club	84
Dining Out	101
Sources: ESRI Retail Marketplace Potential, 2022	

This table shows that residents have the potential to spend on these products or behaviors, but it does not necessarily mean that the money is going to stay in Minden, benefiting local businesses.

There are many businesses that are not only meeting the needs of Minden’s residents, they are also attracting customers from outside of Minden. Some of the retail sectors that are helping to draw in residents from outside of Minden are the nursery and garden centers, grocery store, retail stores, gas stations, and automotive parts, accessories, and tire stores. Having an established retail base is difficult to achieve, but Minden has it. The fact that people are already traveling to Minden to purchase gas and groceries will be beneficial when trying to promote other

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economic ventures. It is challenging for small communities to attract consumers. However, Minden has already been drawing in some visitors, but there is always room for improvement. Adding new or growing existing economic sectors may not seem as daunting knowing Minden is already attracting consumers from other communities.

Quite a few retail sectors do not have businesses located in Minden. It is important to realize the City would not be able to viably support all retail sectors due to its size, the total population of the region, low demand, and proximity to larger markets like Kearney and Hastings. Competing with larger cities that can easily support a variety of big box stores such as Wal-Mart, Target, and Menards is not easy for any community. These big box stores attract many shoppers making it challenging for smaller communities to retain local shoppers.

This analysis does not mean the existing retail operations in Minden are lacking. It simply means there are opportunities to improve the retail market in Minden. Expanding existing businesses and adding new inventory are a few ways existing retail stores could progress to meet more consumers needs.

An economic base analysis is a great technique to use when describing any local economy. Basic sectors are companies that produce goods/services for export, which in turn brings money into the community from outside sources. These industries rely heavily on external factors, and they usually export their goods. Non-basic sectors are companies that directly serve a community's residents. There are many non-basic sector companies, but they are not viewed to be as important to the local economy because they do not bring in as many outside dollars. Non-basic sectors are important for communities because they support residents' needs and they help to improve the quality of life in Minden.

Some of the non-basic sector industries include construction, retail trade, finance and real estate, educational services and health/social care assistance, and arts, entertainment, recreation, and accommodation and food services. These industries serve the local economy and local residents, although they will help to bring people to Minden from surrounding communities. There are a few industries that are always considered to be non-basic sectors regardless of the comparison calculations. A few of these sectors are construction, retail trade, and educational services because the purpose of these industries is to serve the local economy.

To establish which industries are base sectors of the local economy a simple comparison calculation is done to determine an industry's impact on the local economy versus that same industry's impact in the regional area. The calculations were computed based on ACS data for Minden and the state of Nebraska. The industries that are considered basic sectors for Minden are as follows:

- Agriculture
- Manufacturing
- Transportation & Warehousing
- Information

Ultimately, Royal Engineered Composites' employment is a major factor in the number of businesses and personal services offered in the area. If Royal Engineered Composites, or any other large company in Minden, were to cut its workforce, the local economy will likely lose a far greater number of jobs.

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COMMERCIAL HUBS

It is important to take advantage of Minden's location on multiple highway routes. This results in impressive average daily traffic volumes, which provide many commercial opportunities for the community. Having shovel-ready sites to market to potential businesses along the highway is important for large scale economic development opportunities. But the community cannot forget to encourage entrepreneurship and provide incentives and areas for small business growth, which is typically best suited in the Downtown Square. The Downtown Square is the main hub for retail and service sector businesses in Minden. The main highway corridors, along Highway 10 and Highway 6/34, are also extremely important to the community's tax base. There are major differences in the way land is used between the Downtown Square and the Highway corridors.

To keep the Downtown Square's distinct appeal, the City must focus on pedestrian-friendly updates and improvements to maintain the essential historic neighborhood feel. The Downtown Square's defining characteristics include the unique two-way traffic, divided by landscaped medians, around all sides of the Courthouse. The Kearney County Courthouse itself is a defining characteristic of Minden; this building is on the State's list of historical buildings. This building stands as a focal point in the Square. The Downtown District is best suited for retail, entertainment, and personal service-type businesses. These businesses encourage busy sidewalks which promote safety and accessibility as well as window shopping and higher foot traffic for retail stores. Minden's Square is surrounded by active businesses including a great mix of retail shops, services, entertainment, and general merchandise stores. These businesses play an important role in the sustainability of the community.

The Highway 6/34 corridor runs parallel to the railroad and is best suited for businesses requiring large areas of land, high visibility, and easy access. This is also true for the Highway 10 corridor, north of 6th Street of south of Holland Street. Land availability is essential for economic growth. Each company has specific location needs before they can consider developing a new business. Businesses with large traffic volumes, a need for space, and agricultural or manufacturing in nature are best suited along the highway corridors. There are vacant or underdeveloped areas of land available along the highway corridors. These areas should be developed before the community considers expanding its corporate limits.

Businesses along the highway corridor should have off-street parking, larger setbacks, more green space, larger buildings, and even more signage than what is necessary for Downtown businesses. The Downtown Square should focus on aesthetic continuity, pedestrian crosswalks, sidewalks, zero off-street parking requirements, smaller lot sizes, and zero setbacks to promote downtown development which is seamless with existing businesses and further enhances the neighborhood appeal. City leaders must understand the difference between the two commercial areas and encourage economic development to fit the unique identity of each area.

LOCAL INDUSTRY

The ACS reports employment data by industry type. Table 1.37 shows 14 different industries and the associated number of Minden’s labor force employed in each industry. The top three occupation categories are “Office and Administrative Support” (170 people), “Healthcare Support” (133 people), and “Education, Training, and Library” (113 people). These three sectors employ over 30 percent of the labor force in Minden. These three categories align well with the top bachelor’s degrees earned by Minden’s residents. As shown in Table 1.38 the top three degrees earned are “Education” (152 degrees), “Business” (84 degrees), and “Science and Engineering” (80 degrees).

**TABLE 1.37: EMPLOYMENT BY OCCUPATION
MINDEN, 2022**

OCCUPATION CATEGORY	PEOPLE	% OF EMPLOYED POPULATION
Architecture and Engineering	32	2.4%
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports and Media	24	1.8%
Building, Grounds Cleaning, and Maintenance	58	4.3%
Business and Finance	73	5.4%
Community and Social Service	0	0.0%
Computer and Mathematical	0	0.0%
Construction and Extraction	40	3.0%
Education, Training and Library	113	8.4%
Farming, Fishing and Forestry	76	5.6%
Fire Fighting and Prevention	0	0.0%
Food Preparation and Serving	94	7.0%
Health Diagnosis and Treating Practitioners	43	3.2%
Health Technologist and Technicians	17	1.3%
Healthcare Support	133	9.8%
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	78	5.8%
Law Enforcement	8	0.6%
Legal	15	1.1%
Life, Physical, and Social Science	0	0.0%
Management	102	7.5%
Material Moving	59	4.4%
Office and Administrative Support	170	12.6%
Personal Care and Service	29	2.1%
Production	102	7.5%
Sales	74	5.5%
Transportation	11	0.8%

Sources: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2020, Retrieved from mysidewalk.com, 2022.

**TABLE 1.38: EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND
MINDEN, 2022**

DEGREE FOCUS	BACHELOR'S DEGREES RECEIVED
Biology/ Agriculture/ Environmental Science	22
Business	84
Communications	0
Computers/ Math/ Statistics	0
Education	152
Engineering	0
Liberal Arts and History	8
Literature and Language	10
Physical and Related Science	0
Psychology	9
Science and Engineering	80
Social Science	8
Visual Performing Arts	0
Multidisciplinary	0
Other	60

Sources: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2020, Retrieved from mysidewalk.com, 2022.

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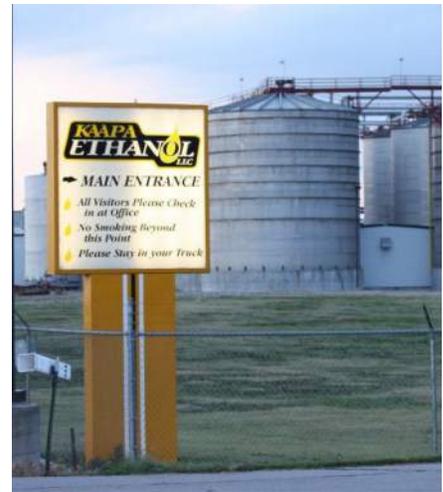


Table 1.39 shows Minden’s largest employers. If any of these companies were to downsize or leave, it would greatly affect the community and its economic status. The community’s largest employers include Royal Engineered Composites, Inc., Kearney County Health Services, and Minden Public Schools. There are other businesses in Minden that also influence the local economy. Communities need all types of businesses to be successful. Although not all businesses can staff many employees, every business is important to the betterment of the community. The City should also find ways to promote a good environment for entrepreneurship.

**TABLE 1.39: LARGEST EMPLOYERS
MINDEN, 2022**

BUSINESS NAME	PRODUCT/SERVICE	NUMBER EMPLOYED
Royal Engineered Composites	Manufacturing Parts for Aerospace Industry	247
Minden Public Schools	Education	134
Kearney County Health Service	Health Care	105
Bethany Home	Assisted Living	96
Kearney County Government	Government	62
Patriot Equipment	Fabricators - Farm and Ranch Equipment	51
Wardcraft Homes	Modular Homes	51
Landmark Implement, Inc.	Implement Dealer and Repairs	39
KAAPA Ethanol	Ethanol and Grain By-Products	34
Grayson Tool Company	Tool Equipment Manufacturer	27

Sources: ESRI Estimates, 2022

SHOP LOCAL INITIATIVES

Minden is home to many local companies who provide needs for residents, improving their quality of life. While these local businesses hold a vital role, it is also important for the community to host businesses who bring in money from outside of the local economy. Business industries like manufacturing and transportation add money to the local economy from different sources, which helps the community grow and prosper. An increased number of employees in non-local businesses will also increase the demand for basic services in the community. Local businesses, in turn, can expand to fulfill these needs, further increasing the quality of life for residents. A balance of local and non-local enterprise will help Minden grow sustainably by relying on both local residents and outside resources to reach economic stability.

Having an established retail base is difficult, but Minden and its entrepreneurs and business owners have been working hard to maintain and expand the retail base in the community. The “Shop IN Minden” campaign was a local effort encouraging residents to shop locally. The need for this campaign was realized through a presentation associated with the “Main Street Community” program. As a member of this program, the City has access to several training opportunities and economic resources.

The Minden Chamber of Commerce provided members with marketing materials to support the campaign including digital logos, shopping bag stuffers, and window signs. The Chamber also offered a “Deal of the Week” through multiple social media platforms. Residents were given the opportunity to sign up for notifications via text or email. The creators of this campaign understand residents are not able to buy everything they need in Minden. Reestablishing the “Shop IN Minden” campaign would encourage keeping tax dollars in the community when possible.

The City should continue to align branding and marketing efforts for the community. As the community moves forward with development, it will be important to present a unified image of Minden. While logos do not need to specifically match, they should all have a similar design inspiration. Each marketing effort made by the City should represent the community’s identity. The City could use “The Christmas City” as inspiration or incorporate items like the branding from the Downtown Revitalization Plan for “The Square” to communicate Minden’s overall brand.



PARTNERSHIPS

The City of Minden is in the process of creating an Economic Development Advisory Board. The Board will promote opportunities for local businesses, help develop additional housing options, and manage reuse funds when available. The City also continues to nurture quality relationships with State and Regional resources for economic development, including South Central Economic Development District (SCEDD) and South Platte United Chambers of Commerce (SPUCC). The City also maintains strong relationships with the Minden Chamber of Commerce and the Kearney County Economic Development Agency (KCDEA). These resources allow the City to offer incentives which help attract new businesses to the area. The City's website highlights several options for local and state business incentives.

Economic growth is a challenging task, but it is crucial to maintaining the vitality of Minden. The community is taking the right steps forward by reestablishing the Economic Development Advisory Board. The City of Minden also recently completed its recertification as a Leadership Community. Being a Leadership Community affords Minden additional incentives to help with growth and economic development. Minden's Economic Development Department works to assist existing and potential businesses in the community. Kearney County Economic Development Agency (KCEDA) is also a great local resource for businesses in Minden. Between the two Economic Development offices, there are many resources available to businesses in Minden. The following is a list of the current programs available through the State and local sources:

STATE INCENTIVES

NEBRASKA RURAL ADVANTAGE

Nebraska Advantage was designed to create a business climate that makes Nebraska the preferred location for starting and growing a business. Nebraska Rural Advantage offers Levels One and Two. With your investment, receive refundable credits for your investment and wage credits. View the Nebraska Economic Development Department website for more information on the Nebraska Rural Advantage.

NEBRASKA ADVANTAGE MICROENTERPRISE TAX CREDIT ACT

Nebraska Advantage Microenterprise Tax Credit Act provides a 20% refundable investment tax credit to micro businesses on new investment in targeted communities. The credit is geared to companies with five or fewer employees, including start-ups. View the Nebraska Department of Revenue website for more information on the Microenterprise Tax Credit Act.

LOCAL BUSINESS INCENTIVES

KCEDA SMALL BUSINESS FUNDS

The KCEDA funding source is available to anyone with a business or beginning a business in Kearney County. Funds can be used for a variety of options such as business start-up, building improvements, façade remodeling, equipment, expansion, and other items needed for your business.

FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT FUND (FIFUND)

The purpose of the Façade Improvement Fund (FIFund) is to restore, improve or create historic architectural features to facades of commercial buildings anywhere within county's, cities, or villages. Applicants may be awarded up to \$3,000 for facades, storefronts, and awnings with a 20% matching dollar expenditure by the owner/tenant.

CITY AND COUNTY REUSE LOAN FUNDS

The City and County's Revolving Loan Funds (RLF) are used to assist businesses and developers by providing low interest loans for business start-ups, business expansion, building rehabilitation and other designated uses. The Reuse Loan program carries the same requirements that current Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) loans do. Interest, length, etc. are variable with each loan. View the Regional Reuse Loan Fund Application.

REAP BUSINESS LOANS

Rural Enterprise Assistance Microenterprise Program provides counseling, technical assistance, and training for small business owners as well as low interest loans to small businesses with five employees or less. View the REAP Business Loan Application. Contact Craig Eberle at (402) 736-4417.

TAX INCREMENT FINANCING (TIF)

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is primarily designed to finance the public costs associated with a private development project. Property tax increases resulting from a new development are targeted to repay the public investment required by a project. TIF projects may be commercial, residential, industrial, or mixed use. Generally, TIF funds can be used for land acquisition, public improvements and amenities, infrastructure, and utilities. View the Nebraska's Department of Economic Development website for more information or contact the City of Minden office at 308.832.1820.

[Information from the City of Minden's website.](#)

These programs should continually be supported by the City and its residents as a great way to support local businesses while trying to expand the economy. It is also important to maintain Region-County-City relationships to help local businesses access additional resources while strengthening the region's economy. Relationships and education will nurture economic development in Minden. It will be crucial for community leaders and Economic Development personnel to stay current with the ever-changing economic world. Minden shows true support for the local economy through retention efforts and new business incentives.

CONCLUSION

Economic growth is a challenging task, but it is extremely important for maintaining the vitality of Minden. The City should continue utilizing State and local resources to help address business retention and expansion, workforce training and development, succession planning for many of the existing businesses, and youth retention. These are all important economic development efforts for the community.

Minden is already home to several businesses, both large and small, which provide the community with basic needs and services. A variety of other businesses also provide a mixture of job opportunities for residents. Job variety is important for attracting new residents and maintaining existing residents. A succession plan will help owners arrange for the longevity of their businesses and ensure residents maintain the quality of life to which they have become accustomed. Leaders must help change the culture of traditional economic development and re-focus efforts and energy on new ways to develop and grow. Business retention and expansion allows the existing business owners to know the City and its partnership groups are there for guidance and assistance when needed. It is also a way for the City to be made aware of issues or needs of the existing businesses so they can find solutions to assist the businesses.

City leaders should focus on attracting businesses which can co-exist and/or support existing businesses and industries to promote a self-sustaining economy. There should be an ongoing effort to develop local talent, retain jobs, and foster an environment which supports job creation, local businesses, and entrepreneurs. Economic growth should be sustainable over time and provide young people with an opportunity to stay and work in the community or return after college and find a quality job. These goals will require career options, affordable housing, a supportive community, and public services. Public services include access to healthcare, continuing education and training, and cultural and recreational possibilities.

Rural communities must be able to provide for all aspects of a person or family's needs to retain them as long-term residents of the community. This includes the analysis and development of other community needs like housing and recreational amenities. Focusing efforts on education and involvement for community and economic development for the community's youth will help pave the way for the future by ensuring the community's youth is aware of the opportunities available. Workforce development and training are important to providing unilateral opportunities for growth and improvement of the region's employees. This is beneficial for the employees themselves, but also for the local employers. As job requirements continue to change, training and education is key to a strong workforce. Communities must now focus their economic development efforts on self-help and self-promotion, local business creation and expansion, and strategic planning. Economic development is necessary for community growth and for the City to maintain its quality of life.

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Chapter 02

FACILITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE

The Facilities & Infrastructure section acts as an inventory of current amenities available to the public. This section should be reviewed and updated with growing facilities and a growing population. This section is also helpful to show others what the community has to offer. This Facilities & Infrastructure section will cover the following components:

- EDUCATION SYSTEM
- TRANSPORTATION
- COMMUNITY AMENITIES
- PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES
- UTILITIES

EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

A great school system is a leading amenity for communities of any size and Minden has a strong educational system. Community members seem to continually support their school district and leaders should continue to promote a strong relationship between the community and the school. Great school districts are one of the leading factors when looking at population growth. New families with young children want to live near a quality school where their children can attend. The following section explores Minden Public Schools and their existing presence in the community.

SCHOOL CLASSIFICATION

Many rural Nebraska communities and counties put a high value on maintaining and protecting their local schools because they are vital in preserving community pride as well as supporting residents and businesses. The following section compares Minden Public Schools to other Nebraska school districts in surrounding counties as well as historic school enrollment data for the District.

Nebraska State Statutes group schools into six different classifications. These classifications are defined by the following law:

2009 NEBRASKA CODE, CHAPTER 79 SCHOOLS - §79-102.

- (1) Class I includes any school district that maintains only elementary grades under the direction of a single school board;
- (2) Class II includes any school district embracing territory having a population of one thousand inhabitants or less that maintains both elementary and high school grades under the direction of a single school board;
- (3) Class III includes any school district embracing territory having a population of more than one thousand and less than one hundred fifty thousand inhabitants that maintains both elementary and high school grades under the direction of a single school board;
- (4) Class IV includes any school district embracing territory having a population of one hundred thousand or more inhabitants with a city of the primary class within the territory of the district that maintains both elementary and high school grades under the direction of a single school board;
- (5) Class V includes any school district whose employees participate in a retirement system established pursuant to the Class V School Employees Retirement Act and which embraces territory having a city of the metropolitan class within the territory of the district that maintains both elementary grades and high school grades under the direction of a single school board and any school district with territory in a city of the metropolitan class created pursuant to the Learning Community Reorganization Act and designated as a Class V school district in the reorganization plan; and
- (6) Class VI includes any school district in this state that maintains only a high school, or a high school and grades seven and eight or six through eight as provided in section 79-411, under the direction of a single school board.

Minden Public School District (50-0503-00) is classified as a Class III School because it maintains both elementary and high school grades, and because the City of Minden's population is more than 1,000 but less than 100,000. Figure 2.1 shows Minden Public Schools' District Boundary.

FACILITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE - Chapter 02

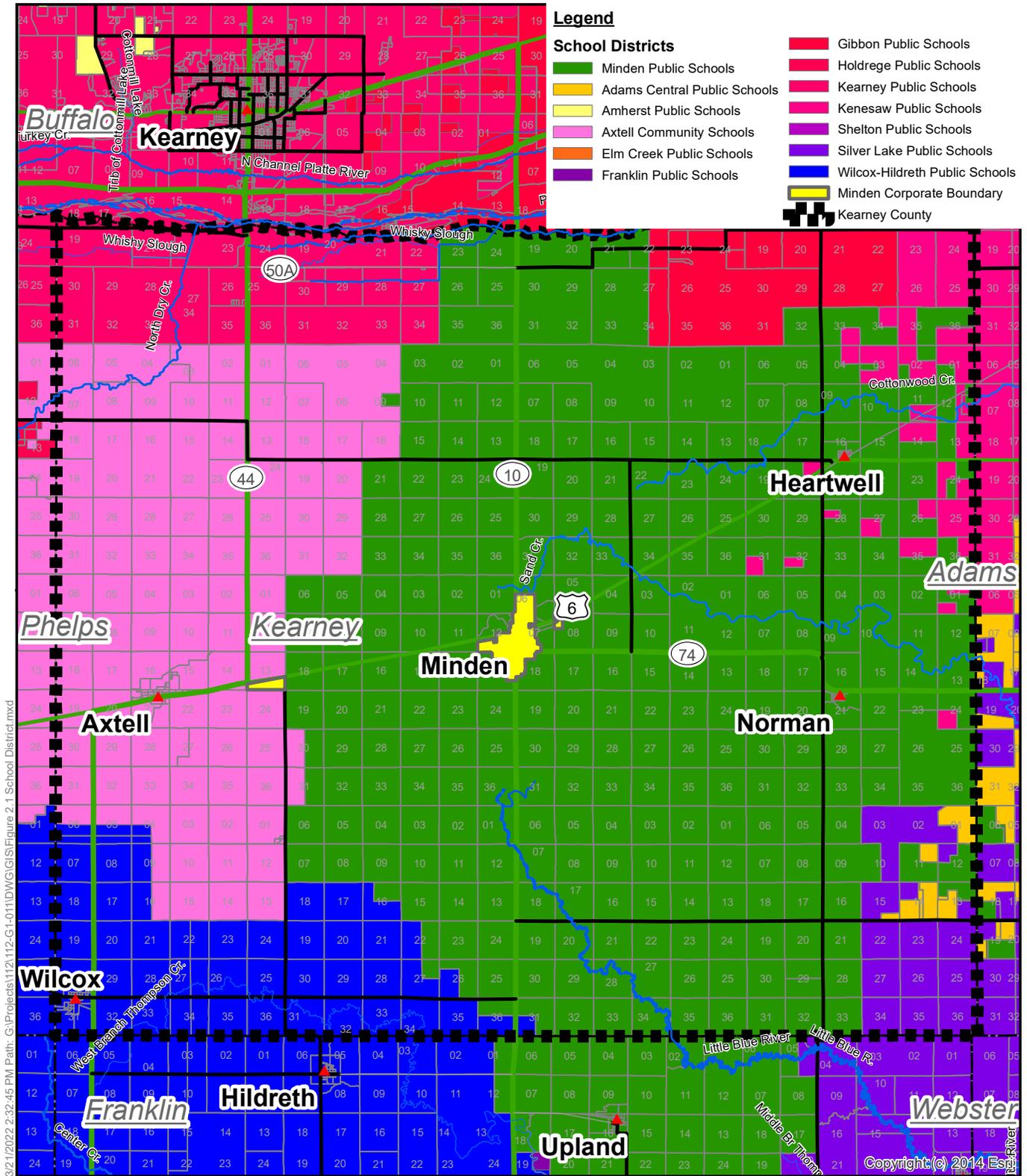
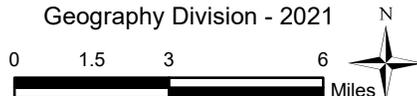


Figure 2.1
Unified School Districts
Boundary
 Kearney County, Nebraska

Prepared By:

Miller & Associates
 CONSULTING ENGINEERS, P.C.
 Kearney, NE - (308) 234-6456

Source:
 US Census Bureau,
 Geography Division - 2021



MINDEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS



Many children who live in Minden attend Minden Public School District. This District consists of three different schools, Minden East Elementary School for students in Kindergarten through Third Grade, CL Jones Middle School for students in Fourth through Eighth Grade, and the Minden High School for students in Ninth through Twelfth Grade. According to the District's website, "Minden Public Schools, with the community, strives to develop productive and responsible citizens through an environment that empowers them to seek, understand, and appreciate learning."



Minden Public Schools has pride in the schools' academic excellence and student performance. In addition to academics, the School also provides many options for extracurricular activities. Options available to students include many sports teams, musical options, and special interest clubs. The Minden Whippets are classified as a C1 school for athletics. They offer the following sports: football, basketball, cheer/dance, cross country, golf, track/field, volleyball, softball, and wrestling. The Whippets have long traditions of successful athletics and community residents and businesses are proud supporters of the Whippets.

These extracurricular activities strengthen the community by encouraging students to stay involved, developing strong relationships with one another as well as learning to be an active participant and contributor to a community. Not only do these activities provide students with a way to become involved, but they also provide events outside of school-time for community members to attend and show support for the school system.



The community proved its support for Minden Public Schools beyond attending these events. In 2014, residents approved a \$23 million school bond to construct a new high school facility. Students began attending the new high school in August 2017. The completed facility proves the value Minden's residents place on the community's youth population. Public investment efforts like the new high school help leave a lasting impression on the youth and may encourage a stronger "legacy migration" in the future.

ENROLLMENT

Table 2.1 shows school enrollment for Minden Public Schools. The table shows enrollment by grade, from Pre-Kindergarten to twelfth, since the 2010-2011 school year. The 2021-2022 school year had the largest enrollment numbers in the past 12 school years with a total enrollment of 848 students. The 2010-2011 Kindergarten class was the largest Kindergarten class reported in this table. The 2012-2013 senior class was the smallest of all senior classes shown in this table, although, it is typical for class sizes to vary from year to year. Overall, the enrollment numbers for Minden Public Schools continue to increase.



**TABLE 2.1: SCHOOL ENROLLMENT
MINDEN, 2022**

SCHOOL YEAR	PK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	TOTAL ENROLLMENT
2010-2011	26	70	51	45	49	50	50	69	44	64	60	65	58	79	780
2011-2012	26	60	64	64	46	52	51	52	48	68	54	63	56	67	771
2012-2013	28	67	56	66	65	47	55	50	50	53	62	52	57	62	770
2013-2014	29	61	70	56	68	64	52	56	49	48	48	63	51	63	778
2014-2015	33	52	58	66	58	66	71	55	53	54	53	54	62	53	788
2015-2016	25	68	57	57	72	53	70	78	51	51	53	50	54	63	802
2016-2017	29	54	68	59	54	71	52	69	81	54	52	60	50	59	812
2017-2018	33	61	56	70	58	55	77	55	70	77	51	51	58	51	823
2018-2019	31	65	60	58	67	56	53	79	57	66	79	52	50	61	834
2019-2020	35	44	66	60	53	72	61	58	82	56	66	76	44	46	819
2020-2021	28	58	43	67	62	54	70	59	57	79	61	67	69	47	821
2021-2022	38	54	56	41	68	66	56	74	63	58	76	62	67	69	848

Sources: Nebraska Department of Education, Statistics & Facts About Nebraska Schools, 2010-2022, Retrieved from education.ne.gov, 2022.

OPERATION COSTS

Education is the largest public expense in local communities. Because the local School Board controls the budget, coordinating plans between the School Board and City Council is essential for effective management of growth, annual budgets, and delivery of educational services. Active participation from both sides of the relationship will foster a sustainable education system in Minden, which is vital to the community’s success. School districts provide many immeasurable qualities in a community. It is important to understand school districts are evaluated on several different levels including test scores, graduation rates, and how their formula student population affects the resources received by the district as well as the operating expenditures per formula student.

Table 2.2 depicts the adjusted general funding operating expenditures per formula student. Formula students are based on the 2021-2022 average daily attendance and the 2021-2022 contracted students. The table highlights Minden Public Schools and other districts in surrounding counties. Minden Public Schools formula students totaled 808.74 for the 2021-2022 school year. The total expenditure cost per student was \$12,335.62 for the same year. As seen in the table, Minden Public Schools is in the lower half for Adjusted General Fund Operating Expenditure per Formula Student but is still higher than the statewide average.

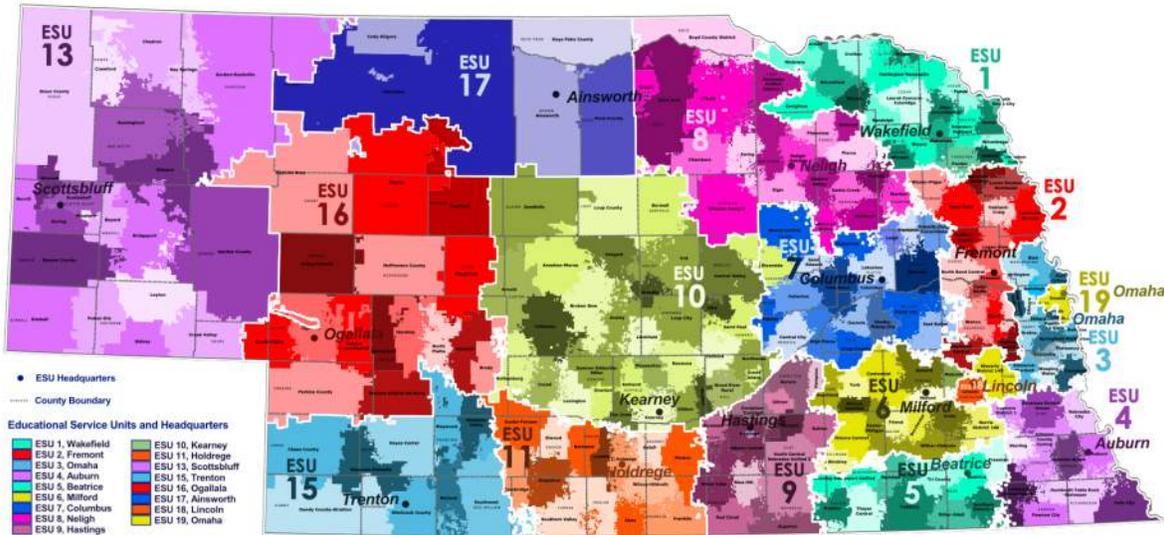
**TABLE 2.2: COST PER PUPIL
NEBRASKA PUBLIC SCHOOLS 2021/22**

DISTRICT NUMBER	DISTRICT NAME	FORMULA STUDENTS	ADJUSTED GENERAL FUND OPERATING EXPENDITURES	ADJUSTED GENERAL FUND OPERATING EXPENDITURES PER FORMULA STUDENT
	STATEWIDE TOTALS	310960.86	\$3,346,003,491.00	\$10,760.21
50-0001-000	Wilcox-Hildreth Public Schools	211.44	\$4,426,766.00	\$20,936.59
31-0506-000	Franklin Public Schools	237.61	\$4,766,642.00	\$20,060.52
10-0019-000	Shelton Public Schools	239.52	\$3,926,880.00	\$16,394.71
01-0003-000	Kenesaw Public Schools	257.72	\$4,111,476.00	\$15,953.06
50-0501-000	Axtell Community Schools	278.58	\$4,317,328.00	\$15,497.87
01-0090-000	Adams Central Public Schools	931.98	\$12,641,177.00	\$13,563.82
50-0503-000	Minden Public Schools	808.74	\$9,976,297.00	\$12,335.62
69-0044-000	Holdrege Public Schools	976.49	\$11,283,843.00	\$11,555.54
10-0002-000	Gibbon Public Schools	531.78	\$6,005,118.00	\$11,292.56
10-0119-000	Amherst Public Schools	368.48	\$4,048,579.00	\$10,987.16
10-0007-000	Kearney Public Schools	5710.83	\$51,036,301.00	\$8,936.76

Sources: Nebraska Department of Education, TEEOSA Formula Students in Ascending Order, 2022, Retrieved from education.ne.gov, 2022.

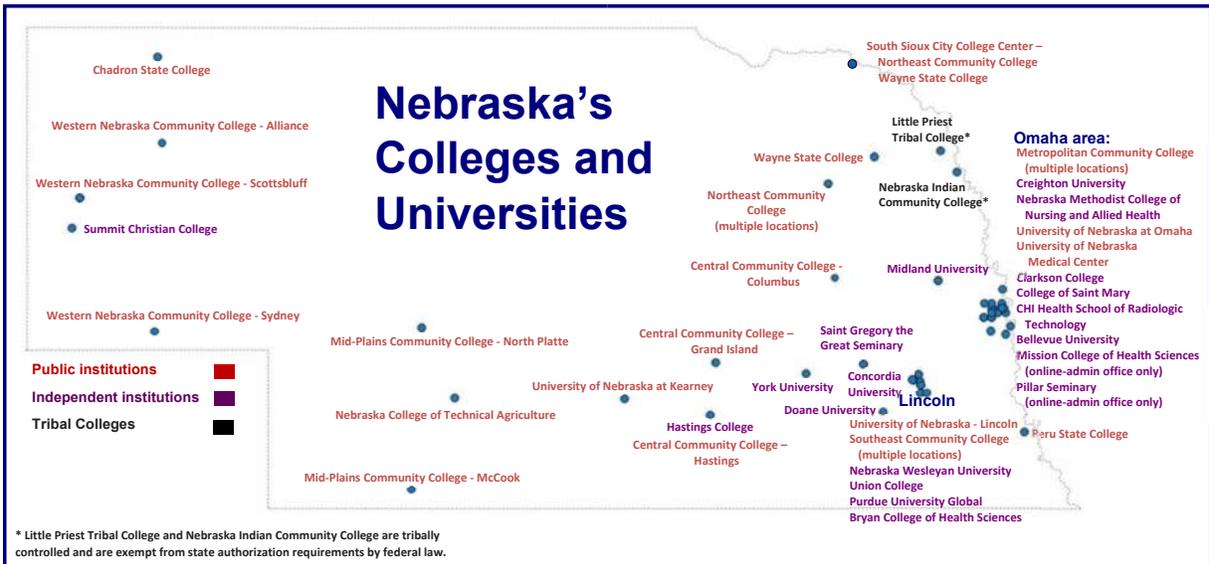
EDUCATIONAL SERVICE UNIT

Nebraska is divided into 19 Educational Service Units (ESU), which provide school districts across the State with localized support and training. The map below shows the coverage areas for each ESU. Minden Public Schools is part of Educational Service Unit 11. ESU 11 contains school districts in Franklin, Furnas, Gosper, Harlan, Kearney, and Phelps Counties. Their headquarters are in Holdrege. ESU 11’s mission is “to provide visionary leadership and quality services that support excellence in education.”



POST-SECONDARY

Minden’s residents are offered a variety of post-secondary education paths a short distance from home. The University of Nebraska-Kearney and Hastings College are both within a short drive of Minden. Additionally, there are several other post-secondary education options in Nebraska as well. The institutions authorized by Nebraska’s Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education are shown in the image above.



CONCLUSION

It is important to support local and regional education services. One method is to ensure a healthy connection between the community and the schools while promoting the community itself to attract new families to Minden. With the addition of new families to the community, there is potential of adding students to the total enrollment. Increasing community population and student enrollment will work together. This relationship inevitably ties back to employment and job availability as well as the local housing market in the community. Families are attracted to communities with quality school systems which will attract new residents.

Supporting the local school system is investing in Minden's future population. It shows the community's youngest residents they are valued. If residents feel valued at a young age, they will develop a stronger connection with the community. This will encourage them to either stay in the community or return to the community to raise their family. A strong school system is key to attracting and keeping families in Minden.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation systems control interactions, or lack of interactions, between two places. Local roads, streets, and sidewalks should provide safe, reliable access to work, schools, shopping, parks, and back home. Transportation networks with access outside of the community provide access to markets, goods, and services not found in the community. These networks allow employees to commute to work and increase export opportunities for businesses. An adequate system of rail, streets, roads, and sidewalks provides a variety of options for accessibility to all parts of the community and beyond.

ROADS

Minden's proximity and connectivity to the larger transportation network creates many opportunities for growth. Three highways connect Minden to surrounding communities and to Interstate 80 which is located approximately 10 miles north of Minden. US Highway 6/34 runs east to west, following the railroad tracks through the community. Nebraska Highway 10 travels north-south through the center of Minden. Nebraska Highway 74 runs east from Nebraska Highway 10 in the southern portion of the community.

Transportation systems are vital to the sustainability of the community, especially in today's automobile-dependent society. Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) classifies roads based on density and character. The State Functional Classifications for Minden are shown in "Figure 2.2: NDOT Road Classification" and outlined below:

MAJOR ARTERIAL

These streets are extensions of rural major arterials which provide continuous service through municipalities for long-distance rural travel. They are used to transport products into and out of municipalities.

OTHER ARTERIAL

This classification includes municipal extensions of rural other arterials and arterial movements peculiar to a municipality's own transportation system. Other Arterial streets interconnect major areas of activity within a municipality, such as shopping centers, the central business district, manufacturing centers, and industrial parks.

COLLECTOR

These streets collect traffic from residential streets and move it to smaller commercial centers or to higher arterial systems.

LOCAL

This classification is primarily comprised of residential access service streets and local business streets. They are characterized by very short trip lengths, almost exclusively limited to vehicles desiring to go to or from adjacent property.

Source: Nebraska Department of Transportation, "Roadway Design Manual," 2005.



FACILITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE - *Chapter 02*

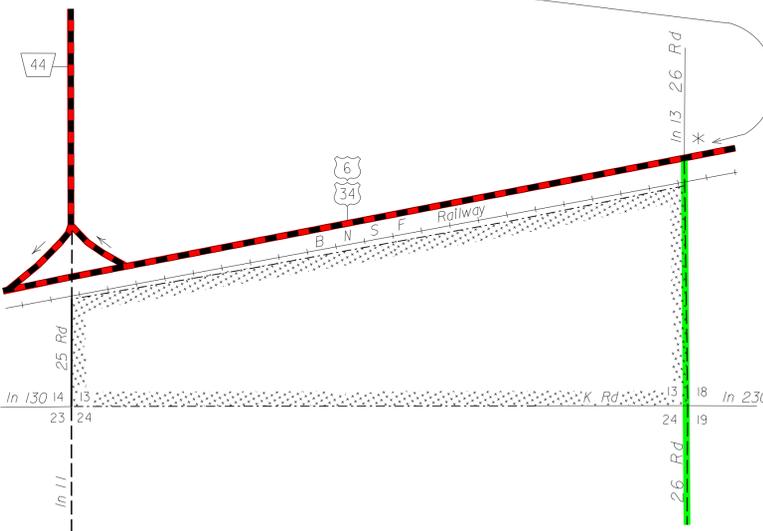
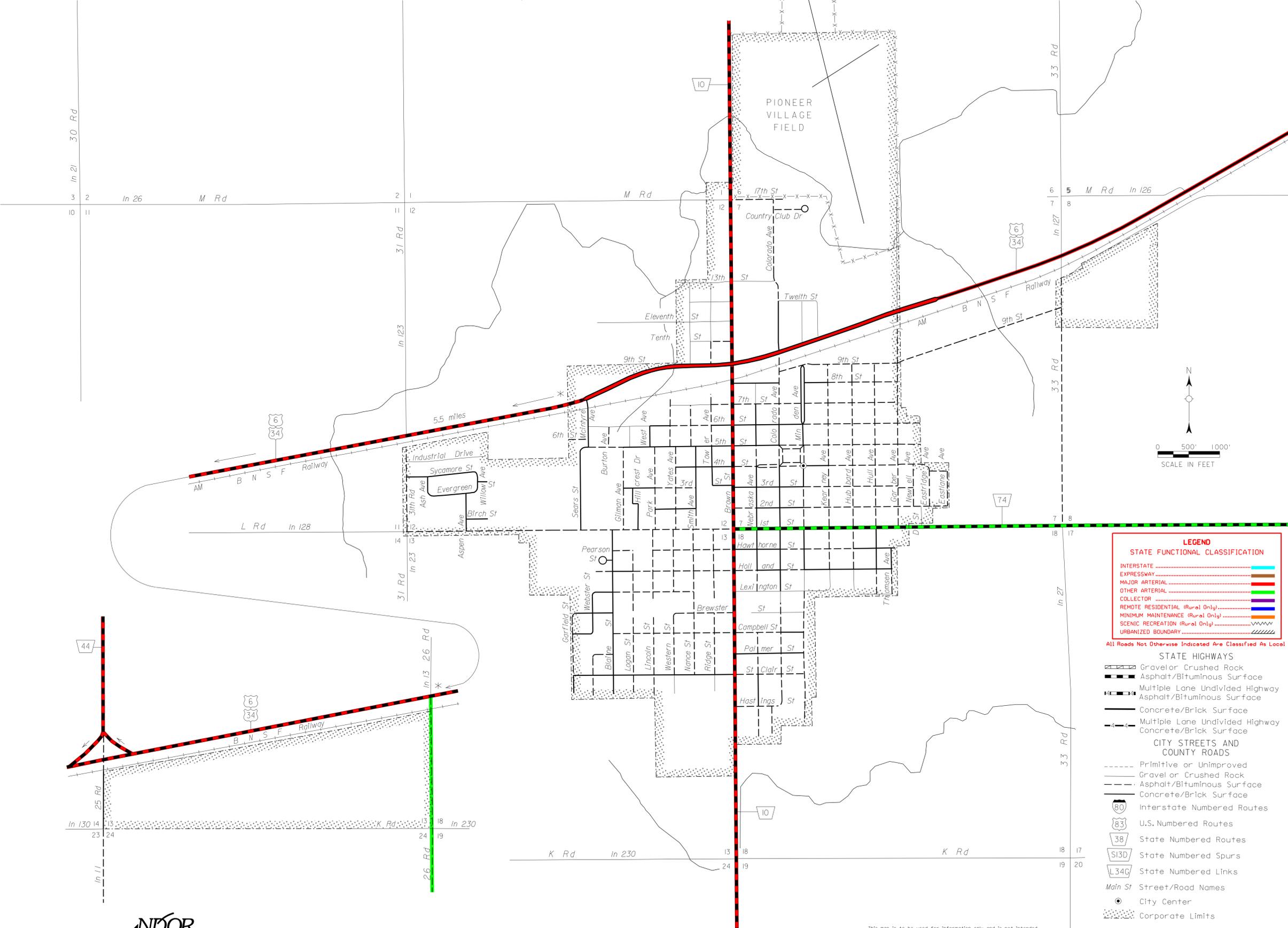
MINDEN

KEARNEY COUNTY
NEBRASKA
POPULATION 2,923 (2010 CENSUS)
2014

R 15 W

R 14 W

T 6 N



LEGEND
STATE FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION

- INTERSTATE [Red/White Dashed Line]
- EXPRESSWAY [Red/White Dashed Line]
- MAJOR ARTERIAL [Red/White Dashed Line]
- OTHER ARTERIAL [Red/White Dashed Line]
- COLLECTOR [Red/White Dashed Line]
- REMOTE RESIDENTIAL (Rural Only) [Green/White Dashed Line]
- MINIMUM MAINTENANCE (Rural Only) [Blue/White Dashed Line]
- SCENIC RECREATION (Rural Only) [Blue/White Dashed Line]
- URBANIZED BOUNDARY [Red/White Dashed Line]

All Roads Not Otherwise Indicated Are Classified As Local

STATE HIGHWAYS

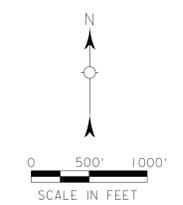
- [Red/White Dashed Line] Gravel or Crushed Rock
- [Black/White Dashed Line] Asphalt/Bituminous Surface
- [Black/White Dashed Line] Multiple Lane Undivided Highway
- [Black/White Dashed Line] Asphalt/Bituminous Surface
- [Black/White Dashed Line] Concrete/Brick Surface
- [Black/White Dashed Line] Multiple Lane Undivided Highway
- [Black/White Dashed Line] Concrete/Brick Surface

CITY STREETS AND COUNTY ROADS

- [Dotted Line] Primitive or Unimproved
- [Dotted Line] Gravel or Crushed Rock
- [Dotted Line] Asphalt/Bituminous Surface
- [Dotted Line] Concrete/Brick Surface

Other Symbols:

- [Shield 80] Interstate Numbered Routes
- [Shield 83] U.S. Numbered Routes
- [Shield 38] State Numbered Routes
- [Shield S130] State Numbered Spurs
- [Shield L340] State Numbered Links
- [Text] Main St Street/Road Names
- [Circle with Dot] City Center
- [Dotted Area] Corporate Limits



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 warranties, guarantees or representations for the accuracy of this information and assumes no liability for errors or omissions. Any inconsistencies should be reported to NDOR.

CORPORATE LIMITS AS OF 2014
STATE HIGHWAYS CORRECTED TO 2014

US Highway 6/34 and Nebraska Highway 10 are both major arterial streets, carrying traffic in and out of the community. Development along arterial roads influences the perception of drivers to the overall appearance and priorities of the community. During public input sessions, residents discussed the desire to improve the highway corridors to enhance the general appearance of Minden. Other arterial streets in Minden include Nebraska Highway 74 and 26 Road.

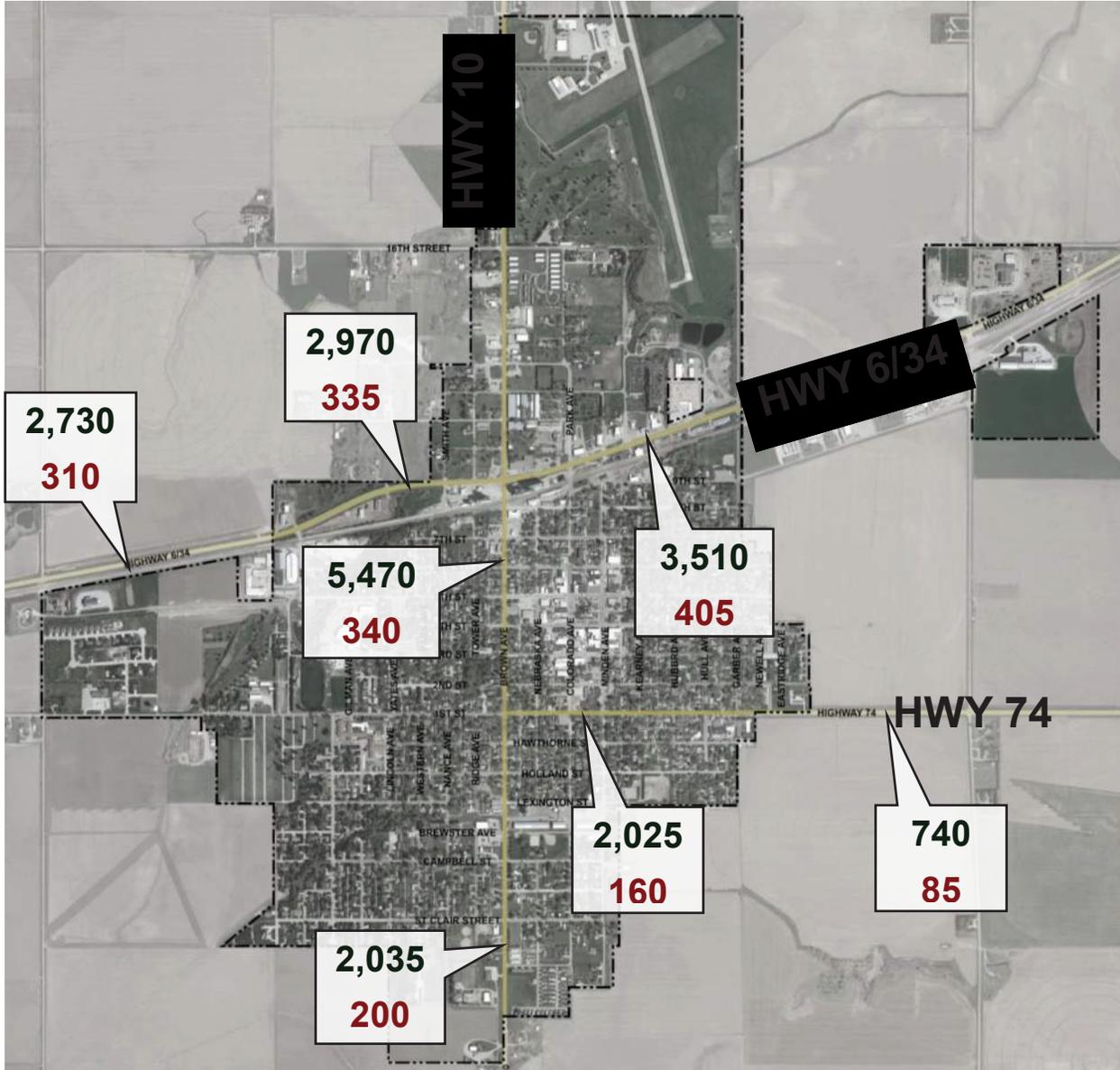
As the main access points to the community, the highway corridors provide gateways into Minden. Gateway entrances act as a “first impression” for visitors and should communicate a sense of community pride. When talking about community corridors and connections, it is important to understand the value of highway corridors. Gateway entrance development is discussed in the Future Land Use section of this Comprehensive Plan.

TRAFFIC COUNTS

Figure 2.3 shows traffic counts for the highway corridors through Minden. The counts were recorded by Nebraska Department of Transportation in 2020. The top number is the Annual Average Daily Traffic Flow for all vehicles and the bottom number is for heavy commercial vehicles. These traffic counts represent traffic traveling in both directions. In 2021, the area with the most recorded use was Highway 10 from 5th Street to Highway 6/34. Traffic counts were not reported north of Highway 6/34 on Highway 10 in 2021.

NDOT did report average counts for this area in 2018. The 2018 numbers show the highest vehicular traffic on Highway 10 from 5th Street to Highway 6/34. The second highest average for all vehicles and highest average for heavy commercial vehicles was also on Highway 10, between Highway 6/34 and 16th Street. This corridor connects travelers from Interstate 80 to Minden and vice versa, which is an economic asset. Commercial businesses examine traffic counts when looking for new locations because they want space with high visibility, good connectivity, and access to the larger transportation network.

Figure 2.3: 2021 Annual Average Daily Traffic Flow and Annual Average Daily Truck Traffic Flow



Legend

Annual Average Daily Traffic Flow

Annual Average Daily Truck Flow

Source: Nebraska Department of Transportation, 2021 (Traffic Counts)

Note: Reformatted by Miller & Associates for this Document, 2022

STREET IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) annually reports surface aggregates for all the roads in Minden. Road types include concrete, asphalt, bituminous, gravel, and earth surfaces. The Lane Mile Report, Table 2.3, details the road composition in Minden. The City has 33.5 miles of road with 94.4 total lane miles in the community. Approximately 54.6 percent of lane miles in Minden are asphalt, 32.0 percent are concrete, 11.5 percent are gravel, 1.3 percent are bituminous, and 0.6 percent are brick. A significant portion of the community’s roads are paved. The City of Minden is working to pave additional streets in the community.

**TABLE 2.3: LANE MILE REPORT
MINDEN, 2022**

	LANE MILEAGE	% OF TOTAL LANE MILEAGE
Asphalt	51.5	54.6%
Bituminous	1.25	1.3%
Brick	0.6	0.6%
Concrete	30.22	32.0%
Gravel	10.83	11.5%
TOTAL	94.4	100.0%

Figure 2.4 is Minden’s 2022 One Year Plan and Figure 2.5 is the City’s Six Year Plan for street improvements. The plans are in place to help guide achievable transportation development for the first year and goals for the remaining five years. Minden’s One Year Plan shows five different improvement projects. Three of the projects involve replacing gravel with a concrete street with curbs and gutters. The other two projects are construction of a new road and drainage improvements on an existing road. The Six Year Plan highlights another 37 projects for the next six years. The main type of project listed on the Six Year Plan is continuing to replace gravel streets with concrete streets with curbs and gutters.

Installing concrete roads with curbs and gutters can be an expensive process. Although concrete is not the only street surfacing option, it has the longest lifespan and requires less maintenance in comparison to other road surfacing types. It is a quality investment in Minden’s future. Successful street networks are dependent on the availability and condition of the roads throughout the community. Minden has a safe, efficient transportation system. However, this type of public infrastructure, like all others, requires continual maintenance and updates to maintain its condition. Continually improving existing transportation infrastructure is important to the success of Minden. Continually analyzing the conditions of roads is important to the safety of Minden’s residents. It is also important when considering access throughout the community and where new development should be encouraged.

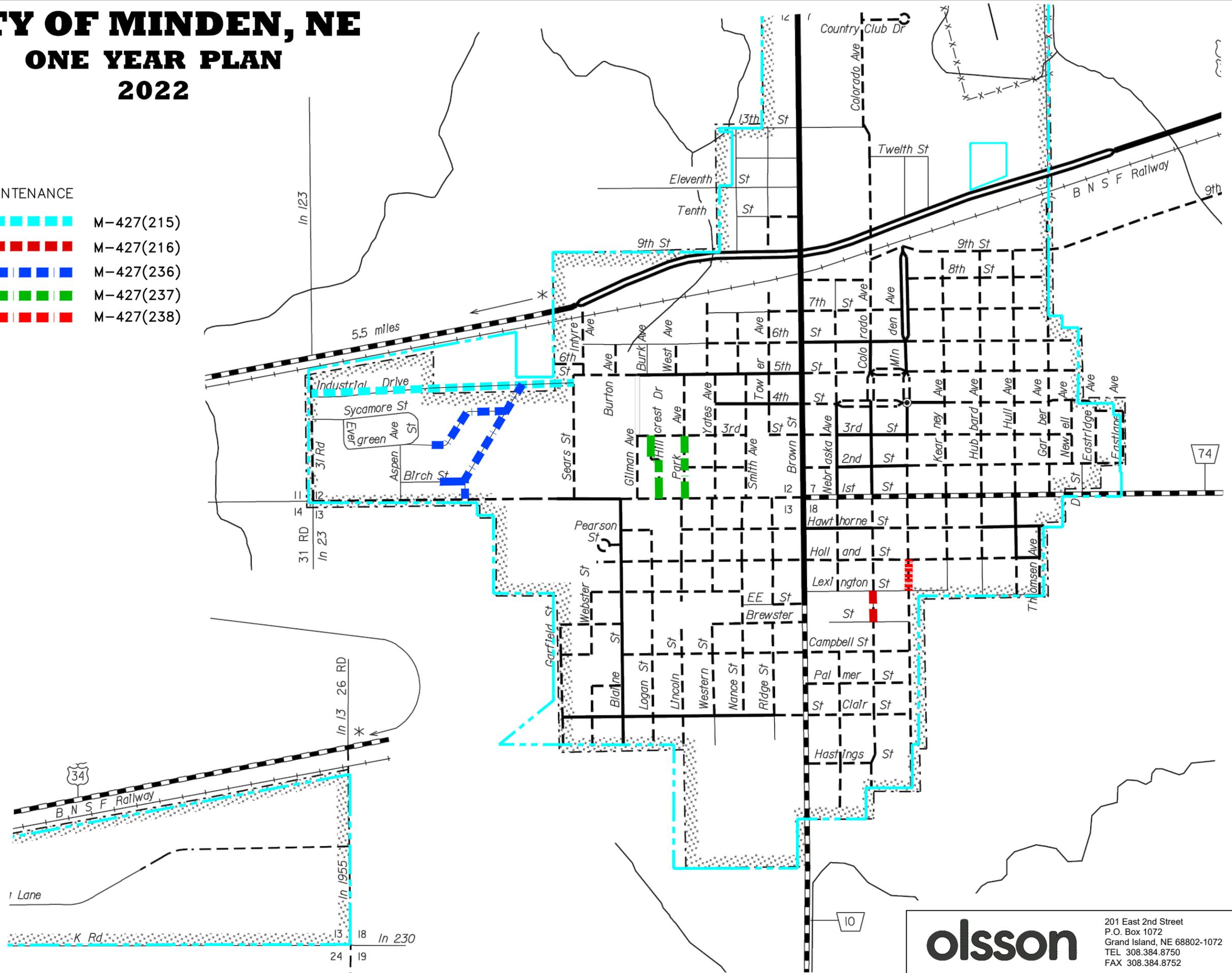
CITY OF MINDEN, NE

ONE YEAR PLAN

2022

MAINTENANCE

-  M-427(215)
-  M-427(216)
-  M-427(236)
-  M-427(237)
-  M-427(238)



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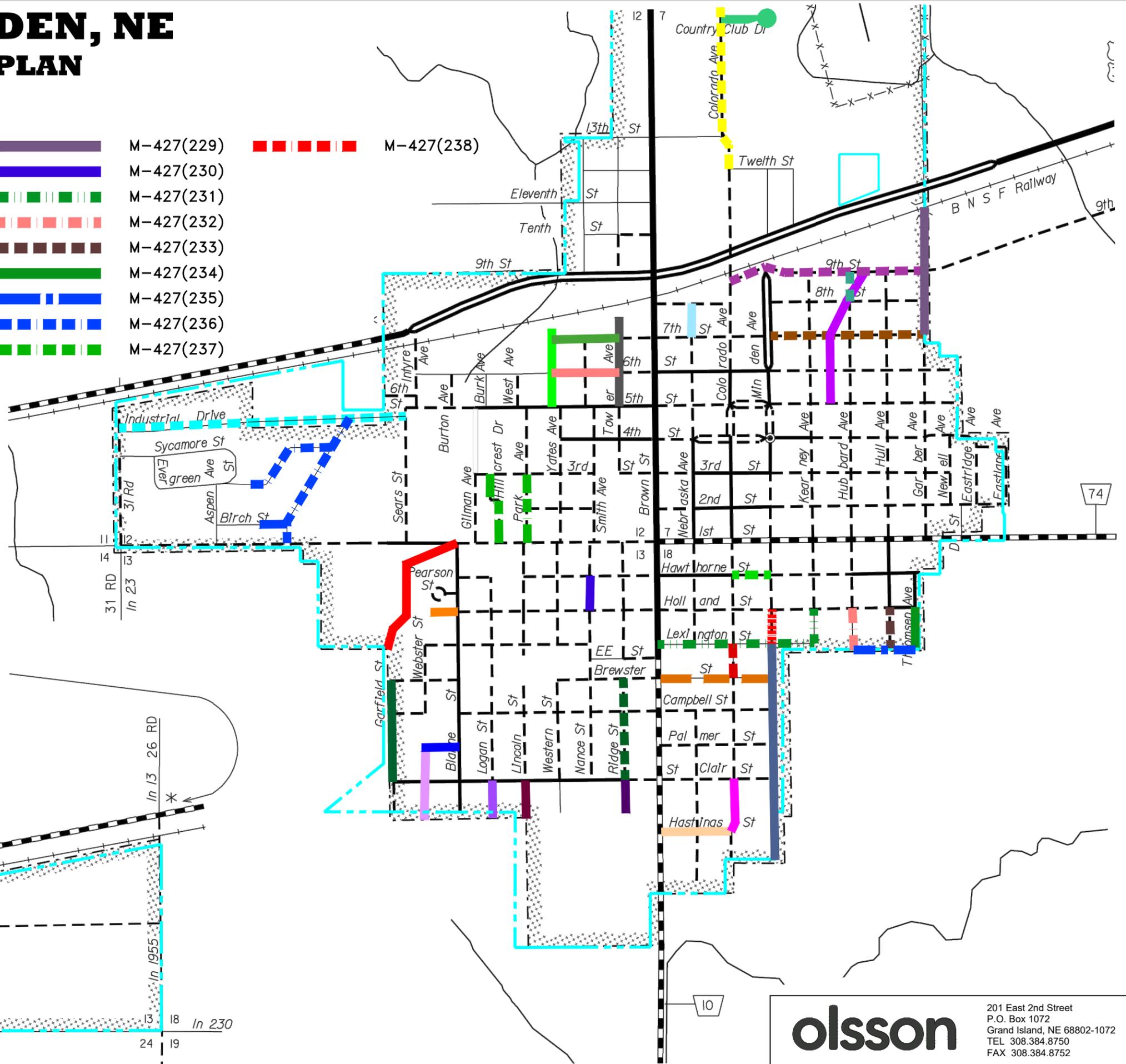
201 East 2nd Street
 P.O. Box 1072
 Grand Island, NE 68802-1072
 TEL 308.384.8750
 FAX 308.384.8752

CITY OF MINDEN, NE

SIX YEAR PLAN

2022

- | | | | | | |
|---|------------|---|------------|---|------------|
|  | M-427(159) |  | M-427(229) |  | M-427(238) |
|  | M-427(161) |  | M-427(230) |  | M-427(231) |
|  | M-427(163) |  | M-427(231) |  | M-427(232) |
|  | M-427(174) |  | M-427(233) |  | M-427(234) |
|  | M-427(195) |  | M-427(235) |  | M-427(236) |
|  | M-427(196) |  | M-427(237) | | |
|  | M-427(197) | | | | |
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SIDEWALKS

Sidewalks promote foot traffic and provide a safe place for all residents to travel. Busy sidewalks often lead to safer communities because they inherently deter crime and lower the opportunity for criminal activity. With a chance of being seen by someone walking their dog or shopping downtown, most criminals are discouraged from attempting an unlawful activity. Sidewalks significantly enhance the lives of two vulnerable populations in every community – young children and elderly adults. They provide a safe way to walk to the neighbor’s house, ride bikes, walk to school, and enjoy the outdoors.

Minden is linked by sidewalks to provide pedestrian safety and access. Approximately half of the community has existing sidewalk infrastructure. However, several of the existing sidewalks need repair and/or replacement. Much of the sidewalk infrastructure is in the center portion of the community. Sidewalk presence and continuity both decrease dramatically on the periphery of Minden’s corporate limits. This hinders a pedestrian’s ability to safely walk from place to place. Improving existing sidewalk conditions and creating a more continuous sidewalk network is important to creating a connected community.

Although sidewalks are an essential amenity in communities, they are also public infrastructure and require maintenance, ADA compliance updates, and sometimes complete replacement. Areas of broken or cracked sidewalks, coupled with incomplete connections, make sidewalks challenging to use. Completing a comprehensive sidewalk inventory and conditions analysis, including ADA-compliance review, would assist City leaders with planning for sidewalk improvements.

A sidewalk inventory map depicting where sidewalks exist and do not exist, if sidewalks are in poor condition and need repaired, and whether there are existing ADA ramps is an important visual tool for the City to utilize when determining improvement needs. The map may also help stakeholders visualize specific areas in need, determine practical pedestrian traffic patterns, and decide where sidewalks need to be constructed to best serve the community. Figure 2.6 was created using Google Earth imagery from 2017 to show overall sidewalk presence and trends. An on-site existing conditions analysis would provide more complete and accurate information for decision-makers.

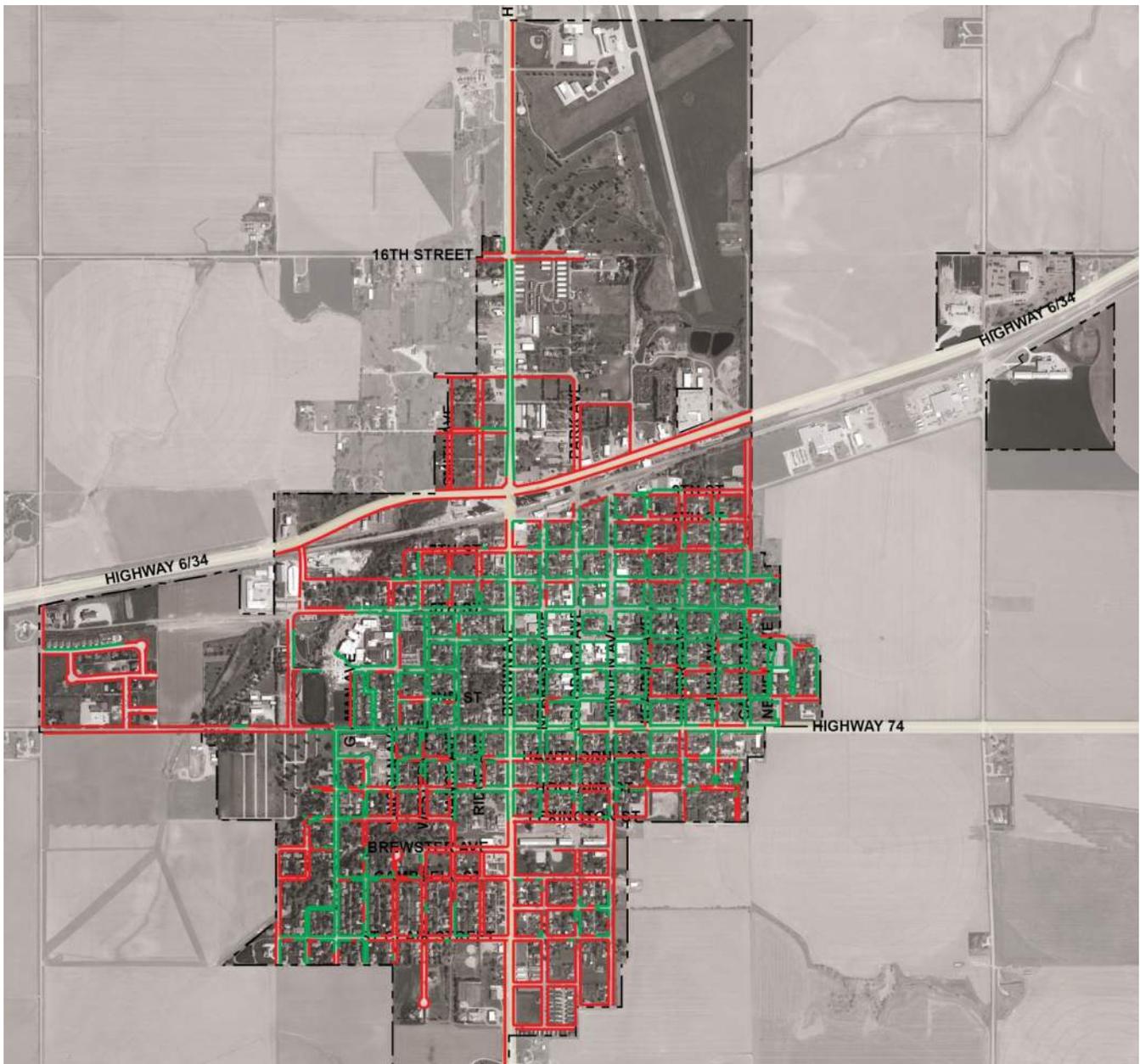


FIGURE 2.6: 2017 SIDEWALK INVENTORY MAP

According to 2017 aerial imagery, approximately 52 percent of the platted community is lacking sidewalk infrastructure of any kind. Much of the inconsistent sidewalk network exists outside the core of the community. Improving existing sidewalks is important, but it is also important for decision-makers to determine if new sidewalks are needed to improve pedestrian transportation, safety, and connectivity. A matching program, established by the City, could encourage residents to construct new sidewalks and/or repair existing sidewalks, improving accessibility throughout the community. The most recent ADA design guidelines should be followed when any new sidewalk project is undertaken.

OTHER FORMS OF TRANSPORTATION

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Reach Your Destination Easily (RYDE) Transit operates buses in Buffalo, Adams, Dawson, Franklin, Hamilton, Kearney, and Gosper counties as well as the City of Minden. As a public transportation system, RYDE helps individuals and families access education, health, housing, nutrition, and transportation. The company provides service with 28 small buses (lift equipped), 10 minivans, 3 12-passenger vans, and six lower floor minivans. RYDE is managed by Community Action Partnership of Mid-Nebraska.

AIRPORT

The Pioneer Village Field Airport is located approximately one mile north of Minden. The airport has a 3,900-foot lighted, concrete runway and a 2,175-foot turf runway. Facilities include a beacon, free parking lots, fuel pumps, hangars, maintenance facility, and tie-downs. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) records show that there are 14 aircraft based at the field. Of the 14 aircraft, 13 of them are single-engine airplanes, one is a helicopter. There was an average of 134 weekly aircraft operations for the 12-month period ending July 21, 2020. The flight types consisted of 67 percent local general aviation and 33 percent transient general aviation.

The nearest airport for scheduled air service is the Kearney Municipal Airport, located 23 miles north of Minden. Regional air service is also provided at Central Nebraska Regional Airport 55 miles northeast of Minden, near Grand Island. The Lincoln Municipal Airport and Eppley Airfield are in Lincoln and Omaha, respectively. These airports are both less than a three-hour drive and offer more options for flight times and destinations.

FREIGHT TRAINS

The Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railroad runs parallel to Highway 6/34 through Minden. BNSF operates 32,500 miles of track in 28 states and three Canadian provinces. The company employs approximately 34,000 people. This railway carries almost everything from automotive parts to solid waste and refuse.

There are two at-grade crossings in Minden. One is along Highway 10 and the other is on Colorado Avenue. On Garber Avenue there is an underpass that passes under the railroad. Having these three options allows for easier access through town from the north side to the south side, and vice versa. The railroad offers great commerce opportunities to Minden which would not be available without the presence of a railroad.

PASSENGER TRAIN

Nebraska has a single Amtrak service, the California Zephyr, linking Chicago to San Francisco. The route travels through the southern portion of the State. It provides daily access to Chicago, Omaha, Lincoln, Denver, Salt Lake City, Reno, and the San Francisco Bay Area. The company reported 17,350 Nebraska-based members of the Amtrak Guest Rewards program at the end of Fiscal Year 2019. There are two Amtrak stations near Minden. The closest station is 22 miles west of Minden, in Holdrege, Nebraska. The second closest station is 30 miles east of Minden in Hastings, Nebraska. Both stations are accessed via Highway 6/34.



COMMUNITY AMENITIES

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Minden holds many community events throughout the year. These events are important to the City itself as well as residents and visitors of Minden. These festivals, carnivals, and fairs are a great way to attract people to Minden. They also encourage community members to come together and celebrate living in Minden. These events help community spirit as well as boosting local business. Minden is known for some special events such as the Christmas Pageant on the Downtown Square which has led to Minden being proclaimed the “Christmas City” by former Governor E. Benjamin Nelson. Below is a list of Minden’s annual community events. A more detailed list can be found on the City’s website.

MARCHCRANEFEST

JUNEPIONEER VILLAGE DAYS

.MINDEN SPRINT TRIATHLON

.FACES RALLY

.CITY WIDE GARAGE SALES

JULYECHOES OF INDEPENDENCE

.KEARNEY COUNTY FAIR

AUGUSTANTIQUE AIRPLANE FLY IN

SEPTEMBERHOMECOMING PARADE

OCT.BANDFEST AND CHILDREN’S HALLOWEEN PARADE

NOVCHRISTMAS TRADITIONS

DECLIGHT OF THE WORLD PAGEANT AND CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Minden provides several services and amenities for its residents. These services are essential to the quality-of-life residents have come to know and enjoy while living in the community. The following list outlines the amenities and services available:



CEMETERY

The Minden Cemetery is in the southwest corner of town adjacent to West First Street. The address for the Cemetery is 801 W. First Street. Flower and decoration regulations are available on the City's website along with fee schedules related to the cemetery.

CITY OFFICES

The City Offices are located at 325 N. Colorado Avenue and hold the following departments:

CODE ENFORCEMENT

The Code Enforcement is responsible for conducting inspections of area construction sites, informing citizens of city codes, and enforcing them as necessary, and issuing building permits for signs, decks, garages/sheds, fences, concrete, curbs/sidewalks, additions, and new homes. The Code Enforcement office's hours of operation are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

PARKS AND RECREATION

The Parks and Recreation Department oversees area parks, youth programs and activities, and the public swimming pool. The swimming pool is open every day from 1:00 to 7:30 p.m. between Memorial Day and mid-to-late August (weather permitting). The swimming pool is also home to the Minden Swim Team and American Red Cross swimming lessons.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Minden's Public Works Department consists of the following divisions: recycling, sanitation, and streets. Their offices are open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Recycling services are provided to Minden's residents free of charge. All residents and businesses are required by Resolution to have garbage collection unless they qualify for an exception. Public Works is responsible for all the alleys, stormwater drainage systems, bridges, culverts, public rights-of-way, streets, and the city dump.

UTILITIES

This Utilities Department operates the electrical distribution, sanitary sewer, solid waste collection, and water distribution systems in Minden. The hours of operation are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Resources regarding Minden's utility systems are available on the City website (mindennebraska.org).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Economic Development Office is located at 325 N. Colorado Avenue. Office hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Services offered by the Economic Development Office include business assistance geared to serve new start-up companies, corporate relocations, and business incentives and support for existing companies. To have someone fully supporting and promoting the community is a tremendous asset.

HEALTHCARE

KEARNEY COUNTY HEALTH SERVICES

Kearney County Health Services is located at 727 E. First Street. This recently remodeled facility provides the following healthcare services to the Minden community:



The Minden Medical Clinic is open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday and 8 a.m. to noon on Saturdays. Minden Medical Clinic provides comprehensive healthcare services to Minden residents. They also provide on-site diagnostic laboratory and radiology services. They can also perform many minor surgical procedures.

Kearney County Community Hospital is located at 727 E. First Street. The 10-bed inpatient Critical Access Hospital has spacious rooms and low patient to nurse ratios to aid patient recovery. The ratio patient to nurse ratio is often 2:1. The Kearney County Community Hospital provides a 24/7 Emergency Room, an array of medical services, and visiting medical specialists.

SPECIALTY DOCTORS

Minden is home to many specialty clinics beyond family practice, such as dentistry, chiropractic, physical therapy, optometry, and pharmacy. Most of their offices are located near the Downtown Square. Contact information for these specialty healthcare providers is found on the City's website.

HOUSING SERVICES

LONG-TERM CARE

Bethany Home is located at 515 W. First Street. This facility has 53 beds for skilled-licensed nurses and 95 assisted living beds. Many of the assisted living units have double occupancy. Bethany Home provides an array of care options including skilled nursing care, assisted living, memory care, rehabilitation therapy, adult day care, and respite care. The facility also provides many activities and amenities to promote a sense of community for its residents. Services are available 24 hours a day.



PUBLIC HOUSING AGENCY

Kearney Housing Agency manages 28 Public Housing apartments, known as East View Court. The facility is in Minden at 849 E. 2nd Street, Suite 2. The Housing Agency participates in the Section 8 Housing Voucher Program through the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). This is the federal government's major program for helping low-income families, the elderly, and the disabled afford decent, safe, and sanitary housing. Residents are responsible for their apartment. The Housing Agency does maintenance, lawn care, and snow removal.

KEARNEY COUNTY - UNL EXTENSION OFFICE

The University of Nebraska at Lincoln (UNL) Extension Office for Kearney County is in Minden at 424 North Colorado Avenue. This office brings reliable, research-based information in agriculture and natural resources, consumer and family economic, community and economic development, and 4-H/youth development.

LIBRARY

Jensen Memorial Library is located at 443 N. Minden Avenue. The Library is open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Wednesday and Friday 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The Library is closed on Sundays and Holidays. Jensen Memorial Library offers Summer Reading Programs and E-books for check-out among many other amenities. The Library was built in 1953 by the Andrew Jensen family and it was remodeled and expanded in 1989. In 2011, the Library was given a facelift including new furniture, a more efficient layout, and a splash of color.



NEWSPAPER

The Minden Courier is published every Wednesday. Their offices are located at 429 N. Colorado Avenue. This local newspaper is a great resource and amenity for residents. The newspaper publishes job opportunities, available housing, garage sales, local events, and happenings including high school sports. The Minden Courier is available online at themindencourier.com.

POST OFFICE

The Minden United States Post Office is a historic building located at 410 N. Minden Avenue. The building was built in 1937 and designed by William E. L. Bunn. It was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1992. The Post Office is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. On the weekends, the Post Office is open on Saturdays from 8:30 to 10 a.m. and closed on Sundays. The lobby is open 24 hours a day and provides access to PO Boxes.

PLACES OF WORSHIP

BETHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH

437 E. Fourth Street

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH

444 N. Brown Avenue

FREDERICKSBURG LUTHERAN CHURCH

616 33 Road

MINDEN EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH

1310 W. First Street

ST. JOHN'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

624 N. Garber Avenue

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH

206 N. Colorado Avenue

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

340 N. Newell Avenue

WESTMINSTER UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

109 N. Colorado Avenue



PUBLIC SAFETY



FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Minden Volunteer Fire Department is located at 325 N. Colorado Avenue. The Fire Department responds to a coverage area of 360 square miles, including the Villages of Heartwell and Norman. The Department consists of 30 volunteer firefighters, 18 of which are also emergency medical technicians (EMTs). The Department provides ambulance services, firefighting, hazardous materials response, search and rescue, and vehicle extrication. The firefighters host an annual pancake feed every spring.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Minden Police Department is located at 246 N. Colorado Avenue. The Department consists of a Police Chief, Assistant Police Chief and four police officers. The Police Department's primary function is deterring crime, stopping crimes in progress, investigating crimes, and serving as first responders for emergencies and situations that threaten public safety. They provide 24-hour emergency response service.

SHERIFF'S OFFICE

The Kearney County Sheriff's Office is located at 246 N. Colorado Avenue. The Sheriff's Office consists of the County Sheriff, four deputies, and two staff members. Their primary functions include maintaining law and order, patrols, emergency response, issuing warrants, questioning suspects. Additional responsibilities include tax delinquencies, subpoenas, and repossessions.

COUNTY JAIL

The Kearney County Jail is located at 246 N. Colorado Avenue. This medium security jail is available to house adult inmates. Most inmates at the facility serve a one-year sentence for crimes such as robbery, theft, assault, drug-related incidents, and breaking traffic rules. Inmates are offered schooling and job opportunities once they show good behavior.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Reach Your Destination Easily (RYDE) Transit is located at 403 N. Colorado Avenue. The public transit system is open to everyone. RYDE Transit operates 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. More information about RYDE can be found in the Transportation section of this document or on the Community Action Partnership of Mid-Nebraska's website (communityactionmidne.com).



SENIOR CENTER

The Minden Senior Center is located at 403 N. Colorado Avenue. The hours of operation are 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. Noon meals are provided on weekdays. A salad bar is also offered twice per week. The Center provides educational programs and social activities. Different entertainment includes TV, travelogues, music events, cards, pool, quilting, puzzles, and special events. Hearing and foot care sessions as well as blood pressure clinics are also offered by the Senior Center.

MUSEUMS/HISTORICAL MARKERS

KEARNEY COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM

The Kearney County Historical Museum is located at 530 N. Nebraska Avenue. The museum houses over 7,000 items in four buildings. Its collection contains historic artifacts and articles from around Kearney County dating back to the Civil War. The buildings include the first school in Minden, the first store and post office in Kearney County, and one of the first train depots in the County. The Kearney County Historical Museum is open daily, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., from Memorial Day to Labor Day.



PIONEER VILLAGE

Pioneer Village is located at 138 E. Highway 6. The museum tells the Story of America and how it grew. It holds one of the most comprehensive collections of Americana in the nation and covers the period from 1830 to the present. The museum houses more than 50,000 objects in twenty-six buildings. According to Pioneer Village's website, Harold Warp started Pioneer Village in 1953 to help generations of children "understand the sacrifices that our forebears made in establishing and expanding our country." In 2021, the museum board announced a relaunch and new direction for Pioneer Village, asking the community to help restore this local landmark. The museum's summer hours are 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. seven days per week.



PARKS & RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

PARKS



AMERICAN LEGION BALL FIELD

This ball field hosts Legion ball games and is located on the north edge of town next to the Kearney County Fairgrounds. There is also a batting cage, a concession stand, and restroom facilities.



AMERICAN LEGION PARK

The American Legion Park is in the northeast part of Minden. It is home to the municipal swimming pool, horseshoe pits, a picnic shelter, a playground area, tennis courts, and restroom facilities. The Minden Municipal Swimming Pool opens every year on Memorial Day. Patrons can purchase season passes or pay a daily admission for the Olympic-sized swimming pool. The American Red Cross offers swimming lessons during the summer. Private swimming lessons are also available.



AUGIE NELSON OPTIMIST PARK

The Augie Nelson Optimist Park is in the northeast part of Minden. It lies adjacent to the American Legion Park which hosts the municipal swimming pool. The Augie Nelson Optimist Park has several recreational amenities including a ball field, concession stand, restroom facilities, and a soccer field.

CHAUTAUQUA PARK

Chautauqua Park is located two blocks north of the downtown square and Kearney County Courthouse. It sports a rose garden, playground equipment, picnic tables, open air amphitheater, and restroom facilities. Summer plays and concerts are held in the Chautauqua Band Shell.

JAYCEE PARK

Jaycee Park is in the south part of Minden, adjacent to Highway 10. The park is home to a ballfield which hosts many youth ballgames. It also has a large cement court with four basketball hoops. Other amenities include picnic tables, a picnic shelter, playground equipment, and restroom facilities.

OUTDOOR CLASSROOM

The Outdoor Classroom is located just west of CL Jones Middle School on the west side of town. The amenities include a pond encircled by a hike/bike trail, a lookout deck, several picnic tables and benches, a Frisbee golf course, fishing areas, and garden beds.

SARAH'S FIELD

Sarah's Field is located on the south side of town. Sarah's Field is named in memory of a late Minden youth, Sarah Kovacs. The site consists of two ball fields where many T-ball and baseball games are played.

GOLF

The Minden Country Club is a nine-hole golf course located in northern Minden. The Country Club House also has a banquet room which seats up to 120 people. The Minden Country Club operates under seasonal hours.



CAMPING/OUTDOOR RECREATION

PIONEER VILLAGE

There are camping opportunities available in Minden at the Pioneer Village RV Park as well as outside of Minden at Fort Kearny State Recreation Area. The Pioneer Village RV Park is located directly behind Heritage Hall on Highway 6. The park provides electrical hookups as well as a camping area without hookups.

FORT KEARNY STATE RECREATION AREA

Fort Kearny State Recreation Area is located three-fourths of a mile east and one mile north of Fort Kearny State Historical Park. It is less than 15 miles from the City of Minden. This 186-acre State Recreation Area features 94 camping pads with electrical hookups and 26 non-electric sites. There are also several picnic shelters, picnic tables, grills, restroom facilities with showers, a dump station, a visitor center, and an office on site. A wheel-chair accessible fishing pier and hike/bike trail also exist onsite. Boating and fishing are allowed at the park and there is river access. A state park permit is required and can be purchased at the campsite.



HARLAN COUNTY RESERVOIR

Harlan County Reservoir is located southwest of Minden between Republican City and Alma. This U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' project covers over 31,000 acres with 13,250 acres of water surface. It is Nebraska's second largest lake and boasts several outdoor activities such as water sports, fishing, hunting, camping, picnicking, horseback riding, four-wheeling, and tubing below the dam. There are six boat ramps around Harlan County Lake. There are seven established campgrounds with 542 designated camping pads. Public access is permitted on federal property, including hunting and some primitive camping areas. Fishing tournaments are held all summer long and the Corps Facilities, except the restrooms, are open year-round.



BOWLING

The Auto Way Bowl is a bowling alley located on Highway 6 in Minden. It has eight wood bowling lanes and has been in operation since 1956. The bowling alley offers youth bowling programs, bowling parties, tournaments, and leagues. This bowling alley serves food and has a game room, pool table, air hockey table, and video games.

HIKE/BIKE TRAIL

People of all ages can enjoy a hike/bike trail. Depending on where the trail runs, it can provide safe routes for to schools and other community amenities. Trails are best utilized when they link together important parts in town such as the school, library, and parks. It is also important to choose routes that will minimize the need to cross a street because of the safety hazard. There are funding opportunities available for the design and construction of hike/bike trails. Trails could be added to connect all the city's parks. As well as creating a loop for people to use when exercising and for ease of use because it would be a continuous loop.



URBAN REFORESTATION

A strong tree canopy enhances community aesthetics, reduces energy costs, and provides environmental benefits. Trees in residential areas should be planted in the right-of-way between the street and sidewalk to help protect pedestrians. Communities designated as a Tree City USA community provide energy efficiency and conservation options by planting trees. Minden has been a Tree City USA community for over 30 years.



UTILITIES

LIQUID PROPANE GAS & OIL

Liquid propane gas and oil is available for residential, commercial, and industrial uses in Minden from Cooperative Producers, Inc.

NATURAL GAS

Natural gas is supplied to Minden by Black Hills Energy, through two feeds coming off a 12-inch Kinder Morgan transmission pipeline with an operating pressure of approximately 500-800 pounds per square inch. One feed to Minden is a four-inch line and the second feed is a one and one-quarter-inch line. Natural gas is available for residential and commercial uses. The availability of natural gas for industrial use is subject to individual situations.

SANITARY SEWER

The Utilities Department implemented a sewer jetting program to identify problem areas in the sewer system. Every three to four years, all sewer mains are professionally jetted, then inspected using closed circuit television. Problem areas are addressed following the inspection. Tree roots are removed and cracked or broken mains are repaired. This ongoing maintenance effort is funded through the Annual Maintenance Fee established by the City's CIP. This helps the City assess the current condition of the sanitary system and plan for future improvements.

The City has made improvements to manholes with a complete rehab to one; completed two sewer line extensions; rebuilt lift station #4; and installed additional lift stations. The sewer extension project on Country Club Drive gives homes access to the City's sewer system. These projects have improved service to community residents and businesses. They have also made additional economic and housing development possible for the community.

STORMWATER DRAINAGE

The City continues to budget annually to maintain and improve existing stormwater drainage throughout Minden. As the City plans any future paving projects, they need to also consider improvements to drainage.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Telephone services, in Minden, are provided by Allo Communications, Charter Communications, and Qwest Communications. Local internet service is provided by Charter Communications, Glenwood Telecommunications, KDSI Internet, and RCom LLC. A new technology that the City of Minden is working on bringing to its residents and businesses is Fiber-to-the-Home (FTTH). This technology is a fiber optic cable connection right to individual homes. These cable connections deliver a multitude of digital information including telephone, video, internet, and data. FTTH provides faster connection speeds and carrying capacity than traditional cables, and it requires a single fiber pair cable instead of individual cables for each TV, phone, and computer. Experts call FTTH "future-safe" because of the virtually unlimited bandwidth and the long reach of the technology. FTTH has quick operating speeds which, in turn, would offer more opportunities for businesses in Minden including the ability to "telecommute" to work because of the presence of FTTH.



FACILITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE - Chapter 02

This technology would allow people to move to Minden and enjoy the low cost of living while being able to work for companies outside of the City or even the State. The City is interested in bringing FTTH to its residents and commercial businesses because of the wide-ranging benefits can provide. Currently, fiber runs through the community along the north side of the railroad tracks. Minden officials are researching ways to bring fiber to the whole community. It is possible for the City to bore under the railroad and there would be a few options for them to consider bringing it across the industrial sites that are situated along the south side of the railroad. This would be an asset for Minden to promote because many other communities, especially larger cities, do not have FTTH available to them. FTTH could open many doors for potential businesses, including in-home work, that would benefit new or existing residents.

TRASH & RECYCLING

Municipally owned waste removal services are available in Minden. The disposal site, 26 miles west of Minden, is owned by the City of Holdrege. The City of Minden also operates a curbside recycling program for residential customers. The recycling center expanded to a new 10,500-square-foot building in 2004 and has one horizontal and two vertical balers. A portion of this project was funded by a Waste Reduction Grant from the Department of Environmental Quality.

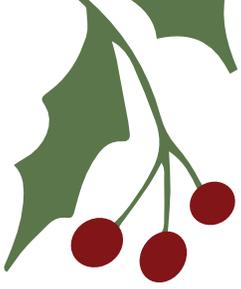
WATER



Work for the Water Treatment Improvements project consisted of three parts. The \$2.9 million bond passed by residents funded Phase I of the Water Project. The Water System Improvement project included the replacement of 55 blocks of water mains, increasing the size of several 4-inch water mains throughout the community, replacement of several fire hydrants, installation of curb stops for new customers and replacement of hydrants and valves scattered throughout Minden.

A sales tax increase from 1 percent to 2 percent was proposed to fund both phase I and the remaining phases outlined in the Water Study. City representatives presented their sales tax plan to the Chamber of Commerce and eight other community groups to gain support. The increase was passed with staggering results and the funds gained from the increase have exceeded the City's expectations.

The City also replaced seven blocks of water mains during the 2019 Street Paving project, on Holland and Campbell Streets and Hull Avenue. Additionally, the City has completed water main improvements by updating and replacing existing water mains and other related infrastructure, along with performing ongoing maintenance of the water mains.



Chapter 03

ENERGY & NATURAL RESOURCES

Looking at land, soil, and water specifications will assist decision-makers when planning for future development and infrastructure. For any type of built environment to be developed, there must be an understanding of the natural resources existing and available in the area, how the development will impact the natural environment, and the development constraints existing on the site because of the natural environment. This Energy & Natural Resources section has the following components:

- ENERGY
- LAND
- SOILS
- WATER

ENERGY

Nebraska legislators passed LB 997 in 2010, which requires Nebraska cities and counties to adopt an energy element into their comprehensive plans. The energy element is required to include energy infrastructure and energy use by sector, utilization of renewable energy sources, and energy conservation measures that are beneficial to the community.

NEBRASKA ENERGY USE BY SECTOR

The Nebraska Energy Office compiles statistics on energy consumption in the State by sector. In 2019, Nebraska's total energy consumption was 901 trillion British thermal units (Btu). Total energy consumption is considered the consumption of primary resources and end-use energy. According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, Nebraska had the seventh-highest total energy consumption per capita in 2019. The following paragraphs outline Nebraska's Energy Consumption by Fuel Type for the residential, commercial, and industrial sectors:

RESIDENTIAL

In 2019, the total energy consumption attributed to Nebraska's residential sector was 169.2 trillion Btu, which was an increase of less than one percent from the 2018 totals. Two fuel types met most of the energy needs in the residential sector. Approximately 48.8 percent of the residential sector's energy usage was from natural gas and 38.5 percent from electricity. For this data, the residential sector consists of private households. Energy is primarily used for space heating, water heating, refrigeration, cooking, clothes drying, and lighting.

Source: Nebraska Energy Office, "Energy Consumption in Nebraska's Residential Sector," <https://neo.ne.gov/>.

COMMERCIAL

In 2019, the total energy consumption attributed to Nebraska's commercial sector was 76.8 trillion Btu, which was an increase of less than one percent from the 2018 totals. Two fuel types met most of the energy needs in the commercial sector. Approximately 49.4 percent of energy usage was from natural gas and 42.1 percent was from electricity. For this data, the commercial sector consists of non-manufacturing business establishments. Energy is primarily used for space heating, water heating, refrigeration, air conditioning, and cooking.

Source: Nebraska Energy Office, "Energy Consumption in Nebraska's Commercial Sector," <https://neo.ne.gov/>.

INDUSTRIAL

In 2019, the total energy consumption attributed to Nebraska's industrial sector was 376.1 trillion Btu, which was a decrease of 1.1 percent from the 2018 totals. Two fuel types met much of the energy needs in the commercial sector. Approximately 36.0 percent of energy usage was from biofuels and 32.5 percent was from natural gas. For this data, the industrial sector consists of manufacturing, construction, mining, agriculture, and forestry organizations.

Source: Nebraska Energy Office, "Energy Consumption in Nebraska's Commercial Sector," <https://neo.ne.gov/>.

**TABLE 3.1: ELECTRICAL POWER CONSUMPTION
MINDEN, 2022**

	2020	2021	2022
Residential	15,315,407	14,801,117	15,196,940
Commercial	7,071,667	7,287,965	7,298,250
Residential	3,518,320	3,565,440	3,454,160
Total	25,905,394	25,654,522	25,949,350

Sources: Nebraska Public Power District, 2023

MINDEN ENERGY USE BY SECTOR

The City of Minden purchases electricity from Nebraska Public Power District and then distributes it to customers. Table 3.1 shows the electric power consumption for the residential, commercial, and industrial sectors in Minden. This data was provided by the City of Minden for 2019, 2020, and 2021. Overall, Minden’s energy consumption has increased over the past three years. Electricity use in Nebraska has also significantly increased since 1960. This is due to the increased use of electronic devices, the modern twenty-four-hour lifestyle, the increase in modern building sizes, and urban sprawl.

UTILIZATION OF RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES

In 2019, the Nebraska Energy Office reported 20.9 percent of Nebraska’s energy needs were met by renewable resources. The renewable energy sources consumed in 2019 were biofuels (11.9 percent), wind (6.8 percent), hydropower (1.3 percent), and wood and waste (0.6 percent). The other sources of energy consumption in Nebraska were coal (25 percent), petroleum (25 percent), natural gas (21 percent), and nuclear electric power (8 percent). (Source: Nebraska Energy Office, “Nebraska’s Renewable Energy Consumption,” <https://neo.ne.gov/>.)

Nebraska used a higher percentage of renewable energy than the United States. The United States renewable energy consumption was 11 percent of the total energy consumed in 2019. Renewable energy source statistics were not available for Minden. Figure 3.1 shows the 50-meter wind power potential for the State of Nebraska. A majority of Kearney County, including the area surrounding Minden, has large areas with “fair” or “good” wind potential.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROGRAMS

The City will work with the utility companies supplying energy to Minden’s residents and businesses to promote and implement energy efficiency programs. Residents and businesses are encouraged to work with utility companies and take advantage of the companies’ energy efficiency programs to improve the conservation and usage of electricity, natural gas, and other energy sources.

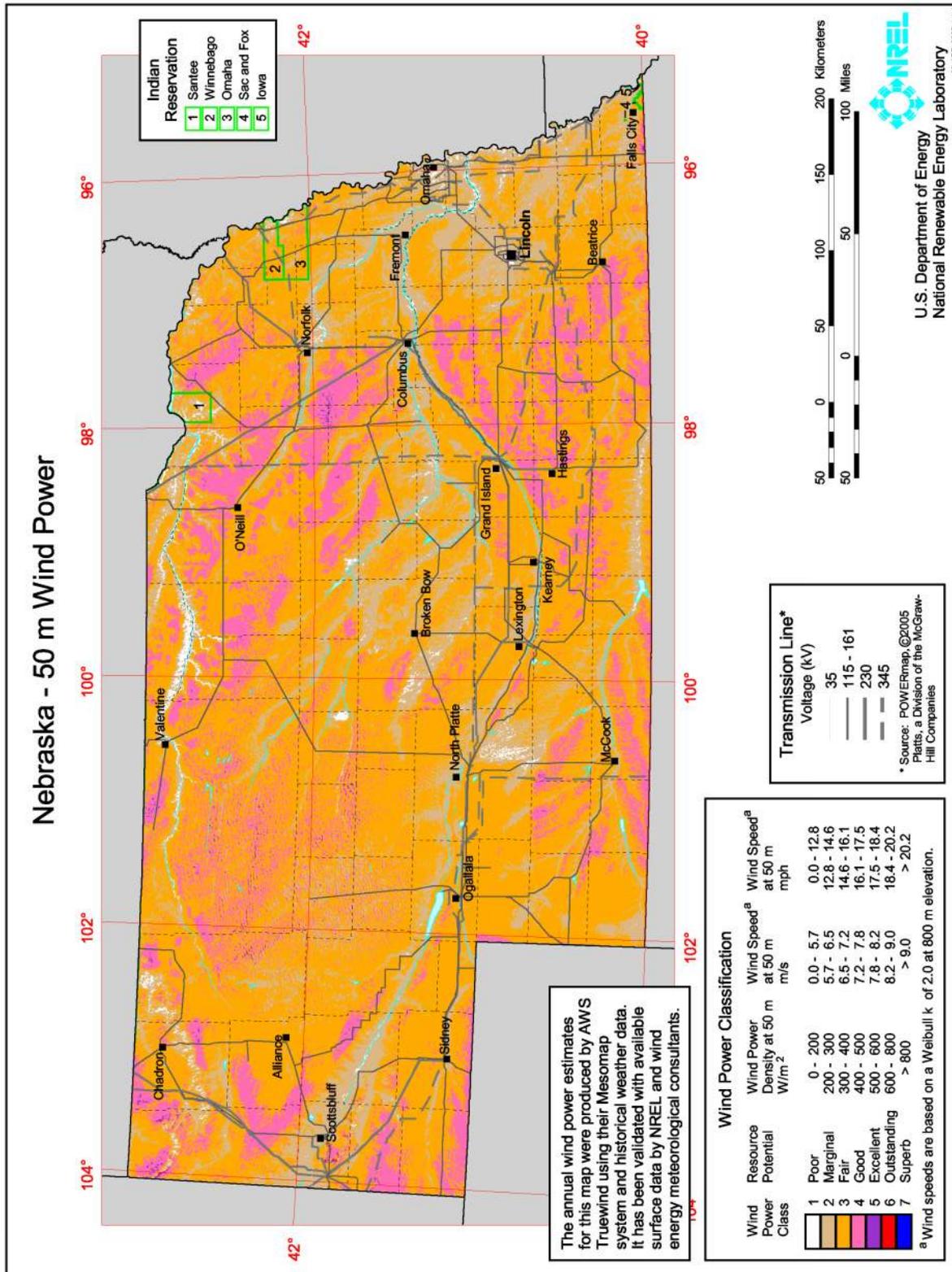


FIGURE 3.1: 50M WIND POWER MAP

“ENERGY SAVING TIPS”

The Nebraska Energy Office has listed ways to save money on energy bills for the home, farm, business, or vehicle. Options for energy savings are listed on the Office’s website at <http://www.neo.ne.gov/tips/tips.htm>. The City and its residents and businesses are encouraged to take advantage of conservation measures.

ENERGY CONSERVATION MEASURES

The State of Nebraska has adopted the International Energy Conservation Code as the Nebraska Energy Code under §81-1608 to §81-1616. Any City may adopt and enforce the Nebraska Energy Code or an equivalent energy code. If a City does not adopt an energy code, the Nebraska Energy Office will enforce the Nebraska Energy Code in the jurisdiction.

The purpose of the code, under §81-1608, is to ensure newly constructed houses or buildings meet uniform energy efficiency standards. The statute finds:

That there is a need to adopt the...International Energy Conservation Code in order (1) to ensure that a minimum energy efficiency standard is maintained throughout the state, (2) to harmonize and clarify energy building code statutory references, (3) to ensure compliance with the National Energy Policy Act of 1992, (4) to increase energy savings for all Nebraska consumers, especially low-income Nebraskans, (5) to reduce the cost of the state programs that provide assistance to low-income Nebraskans, (6) to reduce the amount of money expended to import energy, (7) to reduce the growth of energy consumption, (8) to lessen the need for new power plants, and (9) to provide training for local code officials and residential and commercial builders who implement the...International Energy Conservation Code.

The Code applies to all new buildings or renovations/additions to any existing buildings. Only renovations totaling more than 50 percent of the replacement cost of the building must comply with the code.

The City of Minden has not adopted an energy code. If a City or County does not adopt an energy code, the Nebraska Energy Office will enforce the Nebraska Energy Code in the jurisdiction.



LAND

Minden is in Kearney County, Nebraska. Kearney County is in the Central Plains section of the Great Plains physiographic province. The Platte Valley and terrace extend west to east across the northernmost part of the county. A band of low sandhills extends west to east south of the river valley and terrace. Most of the county is part of a large, gently undulating, generally east-sloping loess plain.

Minden is in the loess plain, which occupies approximately the southern two-thirds of Kearney County. It is drained by Sand Creek and its tributaries, which is part of the larger Little Blue River watershed.

Topographic elevations for Minden and the vicinity range from 2,140 to 2,175 feet above Mean Sea Level (MSL). The climate of the City of Minden is typical for Nebraska, which is characterized by cold winters, warm summers, high winds, and frequent changes in weather conditions. This results in average daily maximum temperatures with a high of 87° in July to the lowest average daily minimum temperature of 16° in January. Temperature extremes range from a record low of -21° to a record high of 112° for Kearney County. Rainfall is typical of a continental, subhumid climate. The average annual precipitation is approximately 24 inches, mostly occurring from April through September. Snowfall averages 25 inches annually.

Proper land use practices can protect an area's natural resources while complementing the built environment, therefore, understanding the topography of Minden and Kearney County is important to determining the community's best areas for potential development. The natural topography of the community provides both opportunities and constraints for existing and future development. In Minden, like most communities, the major development constraints and opportunities are associated with the existing soils, the condition of these soils, and the topography.

SOIL

The soils in Minden and the surrounding area are classified into soil groups, or associations, and have a broad range of characteristics. The United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA – NRCS) conducted the Field Soils Survey and determined the boundaries of the soil types found in the region. The study area, including Minden's corporate limits and one-mile ETJ, is comprised of the Holdrege association and the Coly-Uly-Holdrege association. The Holdrege association comprises 77 percent of the soil; the Coly-Uly-Holdrege association 23 percent.

Table 3.2 describes the Holdrege association in more detail. The soil is deep and nearly level to gently sloping well drained, silty soils formed in loess on uplands. The detailed soil map units that make up this association are also listed in Table 3.2 by decreasing prevalence. The approximate percentage of each soil map unit in the study area is indicated in parentheses.

Information and knowledge on soils are important factors when discussing future development options. The built environment is dependent upon the natural environment and proper development practices must be followed to protect the natural environment. There are 22 detailed soil map units in the study area. These have been broken down into classifications based on slope, percentage of soil type, major and minor types of soil, and degree of drainage. In order to make land use recommendations, decision-makers need to understand how different soil types and slopes can affect future land uses, the environment, current residents, and farming practices. The following maps in this section depict slope, soil suitability, and dryland or irrigated capability by soil associations for the planning jurisdiction of this Comprehensive Plan. Soil data and classifications were gathered by the NRCS.

- Slope by Soil Association Map (Figure 3.2)
- Soil Suitability for Septic Tanks (Figure 3.3)
- Soil Suitability for Sewage Lagoons (Figure 3.4)
- Dryland Capability Classification (Figure 3.5)
- Soil Suitability for Prime Farmland (Figure 3.6)

**TABLE 3.2: SOIL SUTABILITY FOR SEPTIC TANKS
MINDEN, 2022**

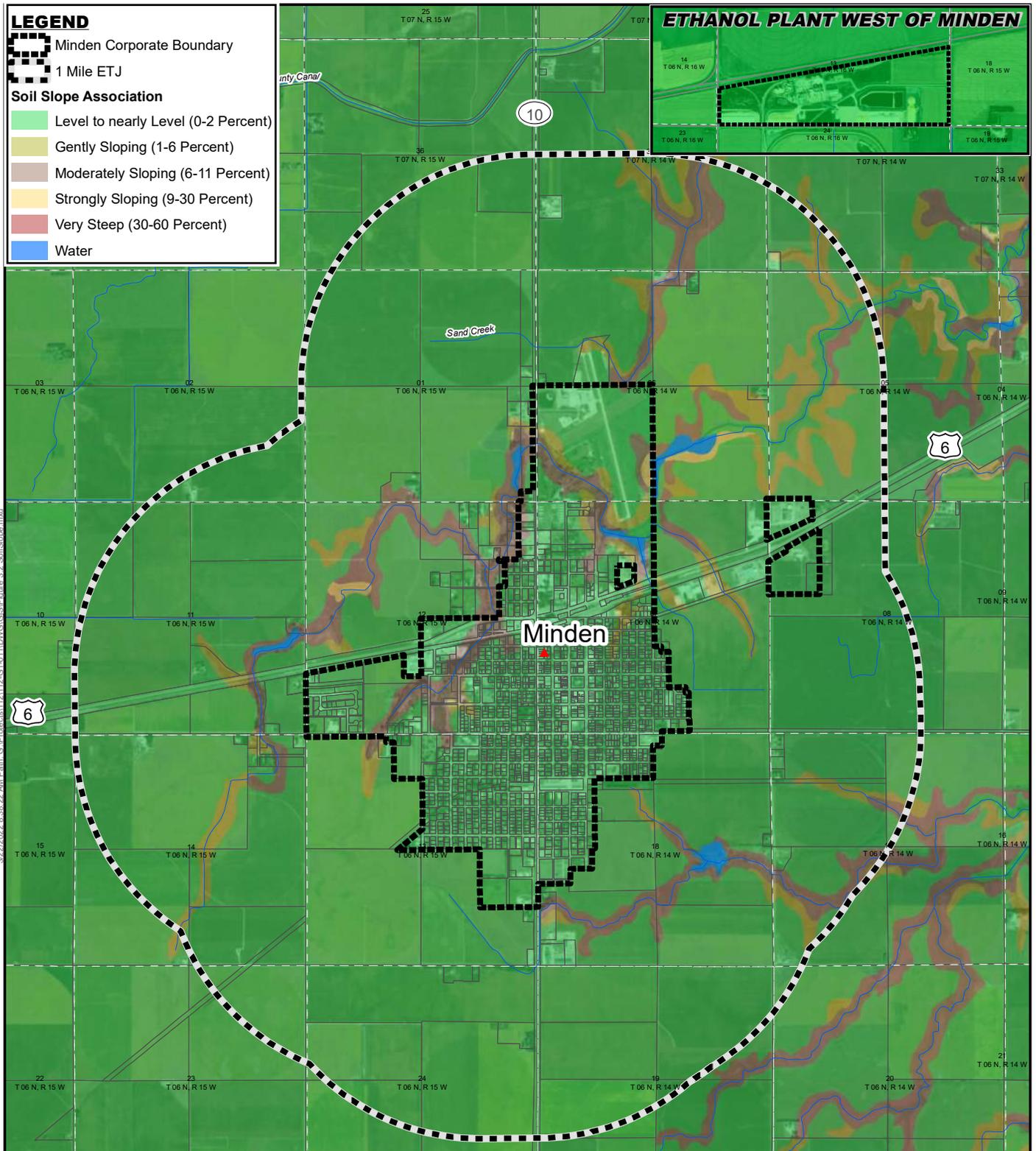
DETAILED SOIL COMPOSITION UNITS	CHARACTERISTICS	USE AND VEGETATION
Holdrege Silt Loam, 0 to 1% Slopes (2667) (59.3%)	This composition unit consists of deep, well-drained soils on hillslopes. This soil is nearly level and formed in loess. Prime farmland.	Generally suited to septic tank absorption fields. Sewage lagoons should be lined. Building foundations should be strengthened and backfilled with coarse materials. Roads and streets should be designed to be thick enough to compensate for the low strength of soil material. Well suited for center-pivot irrigated and dryland crops. Some of the best soils for cropland.
Detroit Silt Loam, 0 to 1% Slopes (3726) (14.6%)	This composition unit consists of deep, moderately well-drained soils on interfluves. This soil is nearly level and formed in loess. Prime farmland.	Not suited to septic tank absorption fields. Generally suited to sewage lagoons. Building foundations should be strengthened and backfilled with coarse materials. Roads and streets should be designed to be thick enough to compensate for the low strength of soil material. Well suited for center-pivot irrigated and dryland crops.
Butler silt loam, 0 to 1% slopes (3820) (1.9%)	This composition unit consists of deep, somewhat poorly drained soils in swales. This soil is nearly level and formed in loess. Prime farmland if drained.	Not suited to septic tank absorption fields. Sewage lagoons should be constructed on fill material to sufficiently elevate above the seasonal high-water table. Building foundations should be strengthened and backfilled with coarse materials. Roads and streets should be designed to be thick enough to compensate for the low strength of soil material. Construct roads on suitable, well-compacted fill material. Provide adequate side ditches and culverts. Well suited for center-pivot irrigated and dryland crops.

TABLE CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

**TABLE 3.2: SOIL SUTABILITY FOR SEPTIC TANKS
CONTINUED**

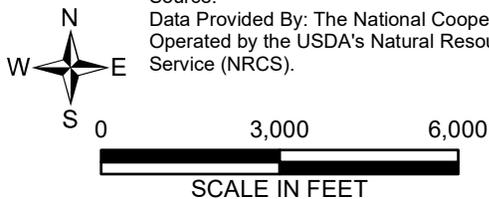
DETAILED SOIL COMPOSITION UNITS	CHARACTERISTICS	USE AND VEGETATION
Hord silt loam, 0 to 1% slopes, warm (8866) (0.7%)	This composition unit consists of deep, well-drained soils on stream terraces. This soil is nearly level and formed in loess. Prime farmland.	Generally suited to septic tank absorption fields, dwellings, small commercial buildings, and roads. Sewage lagoons should be lined. Well suited for center-pivot irrigated and dryland crops.
Scott silt loam, frequently ponded (3910) (0.2%)	This composition unit consists of deep, somewhat poorly drained soils in swales. This soil is nearly level and formed in loess. Prime farmland if drained.	Not suited to septic tank absorption fields and building sites. Sewage lagoons need to be diked for protection from ponding. Roads and streets should be designed to be thick enough to compensate for the low strength of soil material. Construct roads on suitable, well-compacted fill material above the ponding level. Provide crowning, adequate side ditches, and culverts. Poorly suited to cultivated crops.
Fillmore Silt Loam, Frequently Ponded (3952) (<0.1%)	This composition unit consists of deep, somewhat poorly-drained, in playas. This soil is nearly level and formed in loess.	Not suited to septic tank absorption fields, sewage lagoons, or building sites. Roads and streets should be designed to be thick enough to compensate for the low strength of soil material. Construct roads on suitable, well-compacted fill material above the ponding level. Provide crowning, adequate side ditches, and culverts. Suitable for center-pivot irrigation crops. Dryland crop production is limited.

Source: Soil Survey of Kearney County, Nebraska, USDA-NRCS. September 1984.



3/22/2022 8:38:22 AM Path: G:\Projects\12112-G-0111\DWG\GIS\Figure 3.2_SoilSlope.mxd

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Source:
 Data Provided By: The National Cooperative Soil Survey
 Operated by the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation
 Service (NRCS).

Figure 3.2
Slope By
Soil Association Map
Minden, Nebraska

ENERGY & NATURAL RESOURCES - Chapter 03

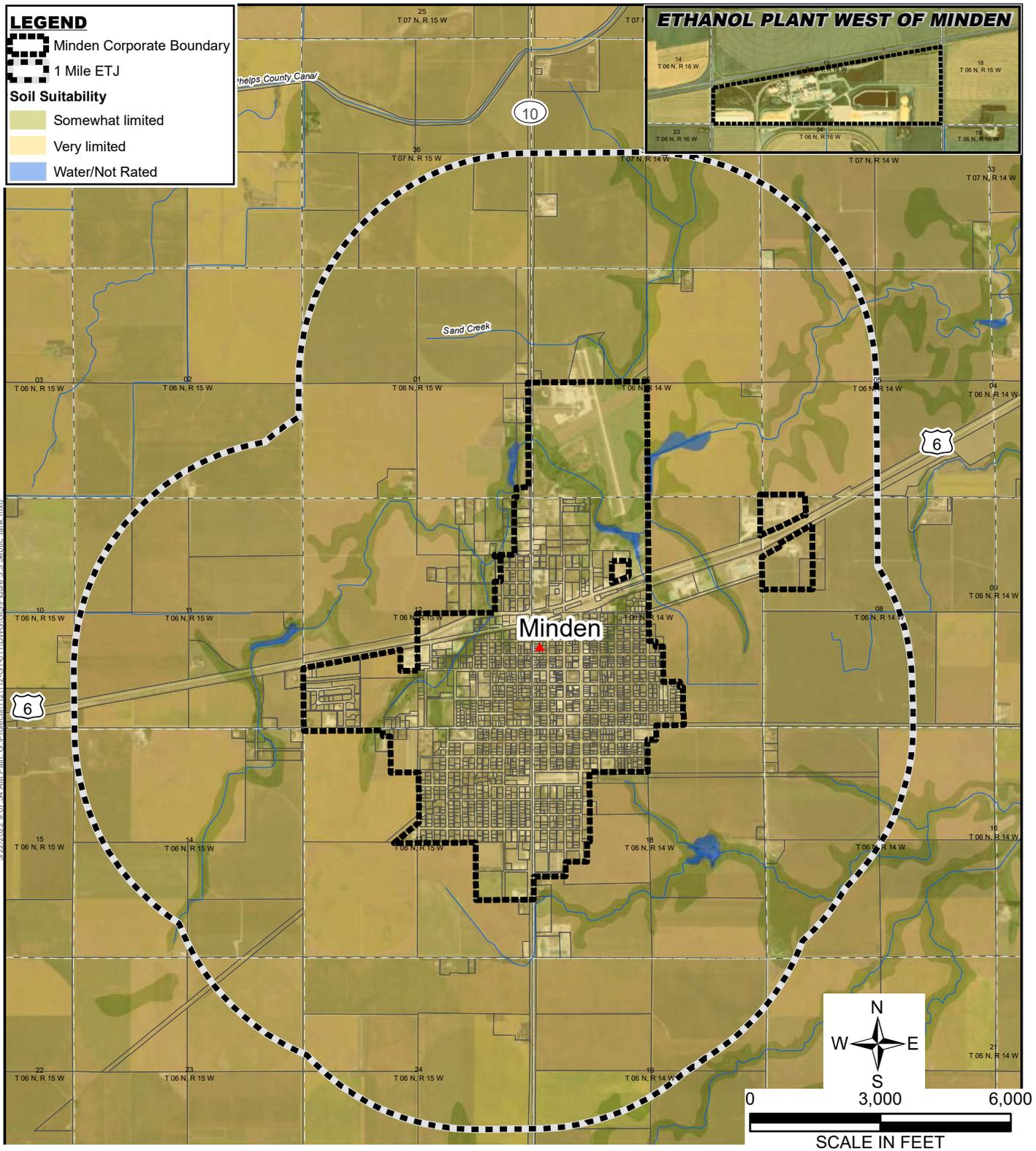
Table 3.3 describes the Coly-Uly-Holdrege association in more detail. The soil is deep and nearly level to moderately steep, well drained, and somewhat excessively drained, silty soils formed in loess, on uplands.

TABLE 3.3: SOIL SUITABILITY FOR SEWAGE LAGOONS MINDEN, 2022		
DETAILED SOIL COMPOSITION UNITS	CHARACTERISTICS	USE AND VEGETATION
Holdrege Silt Loam, 1 to 3 percent slopes (2668) (10.7%)	This composition unit consists of deep, well-drained soils on hillslopes. This soil is very gently sloping and formed in loess. Prime farmland.	Generally suited to septic tank absorption fields. Sewage lagoons should be lined. Building foundations should be strengthened and backfilled with coarse materials. Roads and streets should be designed to be thick enough to compensate for the low strength of soil material. Well suited for center-pivot irrigated and dryland crops.
Coly-Uly Silt Loams, 6 to 11 percent slopes, eroded (2558) (6.4%)	This composition unit consists of deep, well drained soils hillslopes. This soil is strongly sloping and formed in loess.	Generally suited to septic tank absorption fields, sewage lagoons, dwellings, small commercial buildings, roads, and streets. Grading is required (cutting and filling for roads) to accommodate the slope. For roads, adequate ditches and crowning are needed. Suited to range.
Holdrege silt loam, 3 to 7 percent slopes, eroded, plains and breaks (2676) (3.8%)	This composition unit consists of deep, well-drained soils on hillslopes. This soil is gently sloping and formed in loess. Prime farmland.	Generally suited to septic tank absorption fields. Sewage lagoons should be lined and graded to modify the slope. Building foundations should be strengthened and backfilled with coarse materials. Roads and streets should be designed to be thick enough to compensate for the low strength of soil material. Suited for center-pivot irrigated and dryland crops. Suited for range.
Holdrege silt loam, 3 to 7 percent slopes, plains, and breaks (2675) (0.8%)	This composition unit consists of deep, well-drained soils on hillslopes. This soil is gently sloping and formed in loess. Prime farmland.	Generally suited to septic tank absorption fields. Sewage lagoons should be lined and graded to modify the slope. Building foundations should be strengthened and backfilled with coarse materials. Roads and streets should be designed to be thick enough to compensate for the low strength of soil material. Suited for center-pivot irrigated and dryland crops. Suited for range.

**TABLE 3.3: SOIL SUITABILITY FOR SEWAGE LAGOONS
CONTINUED...**

DETAILED SOIL COMPOSITION UNITS	CHARACTERISTICS	USE AND VEGETATION
Hobbs Silt Loam, Occasionally Flooded (3561) (0.6%)	This composition unit consists of deep well-drained, nearly level soils formed on drainageways. Prime farmland.	<p>Not suited to septic tank absorption fields. Sewage lagoons should be diked to prevent flooding. Not suitable for building sites. Build roads on suitable, well-compacted fill material above flood level. Provide adequate side ditches and culverts. Roads and streets should be designed to be thick enough to compensate for the low strength of soil material.</p> <p>Suited for center-pivot irrigated and dryland crops. Suited for range and native hay.</p>
Hobbs Silt Loam, channeled, Frequently Flooded (3545) (0.5%)	This composition unit consists of deep well-drained, very gently sloping soils formed on drainageways.	<p>Not suited to septic tank absorption fields, sewage lagoons, or building sites. Build roads on suitable, well-compacted fill material above flood level. Provide adequate side ditches and culverts. Roads and streets should be designed to be thick enough to compensate for the low strength of soil material. Unsuited to crops. Suited to range and native hay.</p>
Uly-Coly Silt Loams, 11 to 30 percent slopes (2830) (0.2%)	This composition unit consists of deep well-drained, moderately steep slopes formed on hillslopes.	<p>Most areas are not suitable for septic tank absorption fields or sewage lagoons. Septic tank absorption fields can be installed on slopes of less than 15 percent with shaping and installing on the contour. Dwellings and small commercial buildings should be designed to the natural slope or graded. Roads and streets should be designed to be thick enough to compensate for the low strength of soil material. Cutting and filling are needed for roads.</p>

Source: Soil Survey of Kearney County, Nebraska. September 1984.



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Source:
 Data Provided By: The National Cooperative Soil Survey
 Operated by the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation
 Service (NRCS).

Figure 3.3
Soil Suitability For Septic Tank
By Soil Association Map
 Minden, Nebraska

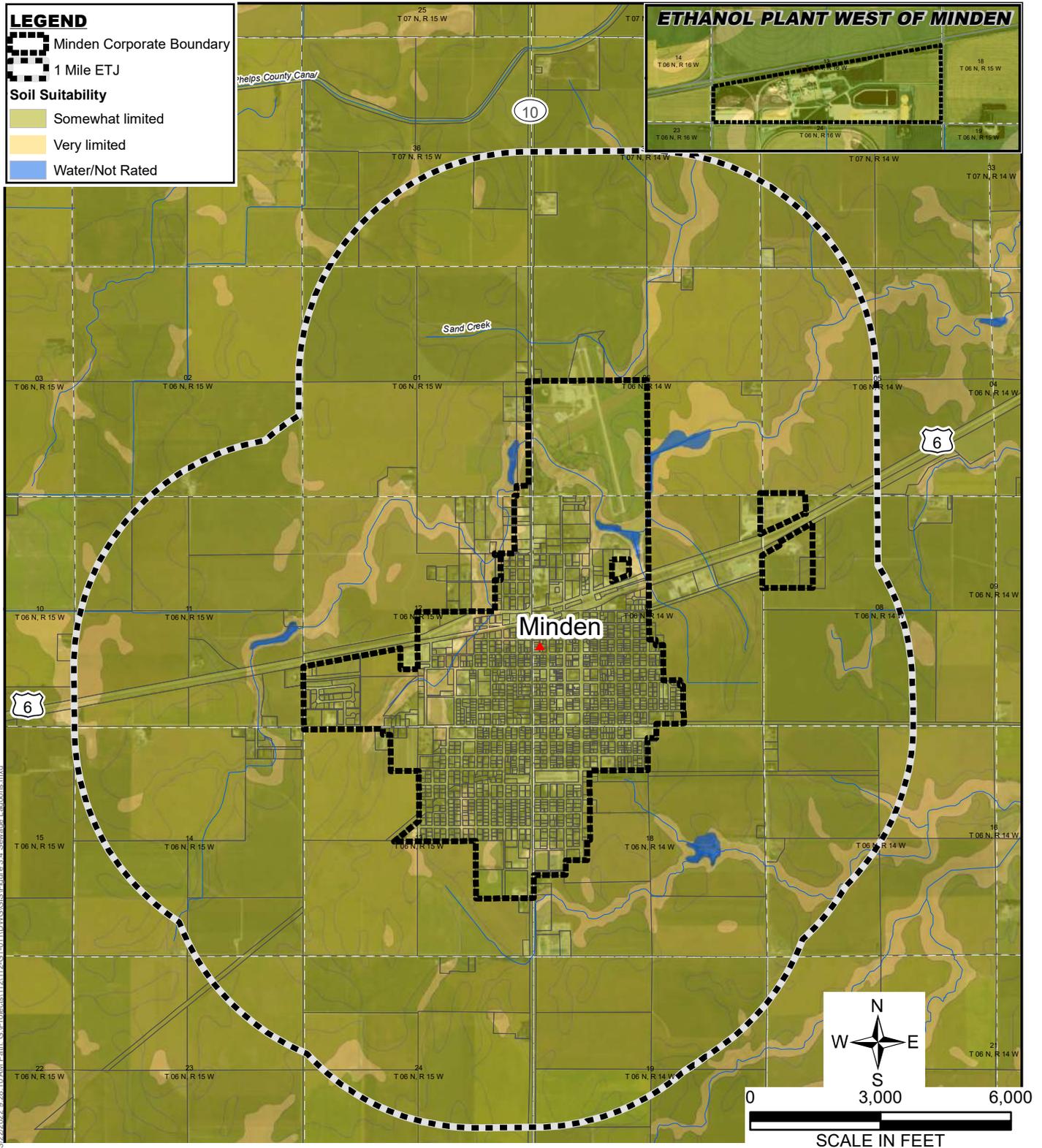


Figure 3.4

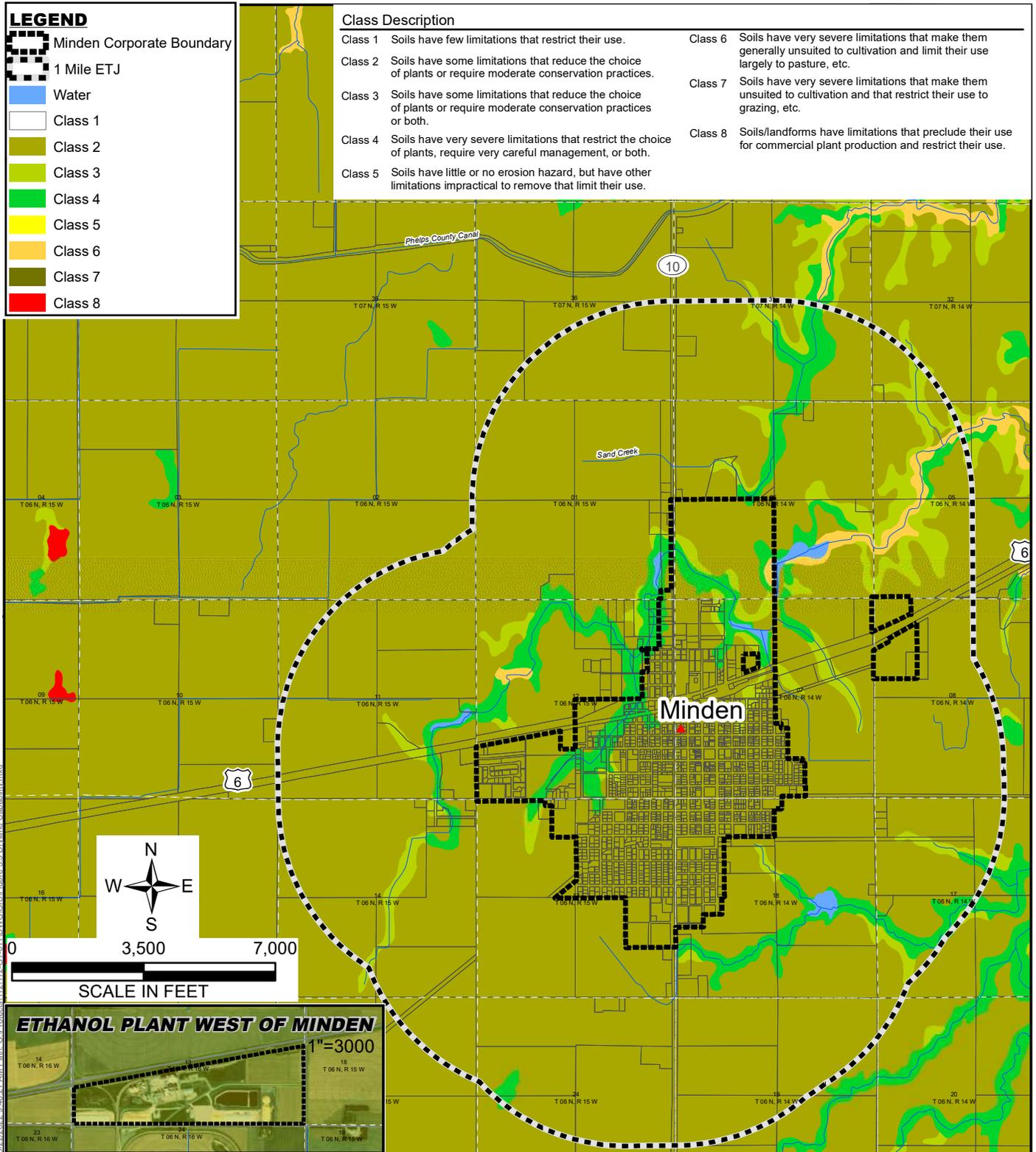
**Soil Suitability For Sewage Lagoons
By Soil Association Map**

Minden, Nebraska

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Source:
 Data Provided by: The National Cooperative Soil Survey
 Operated by the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation
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Source:
Data Provided by: The National Cooperative Soil Survey
Operated by the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation
Service (NRCS).

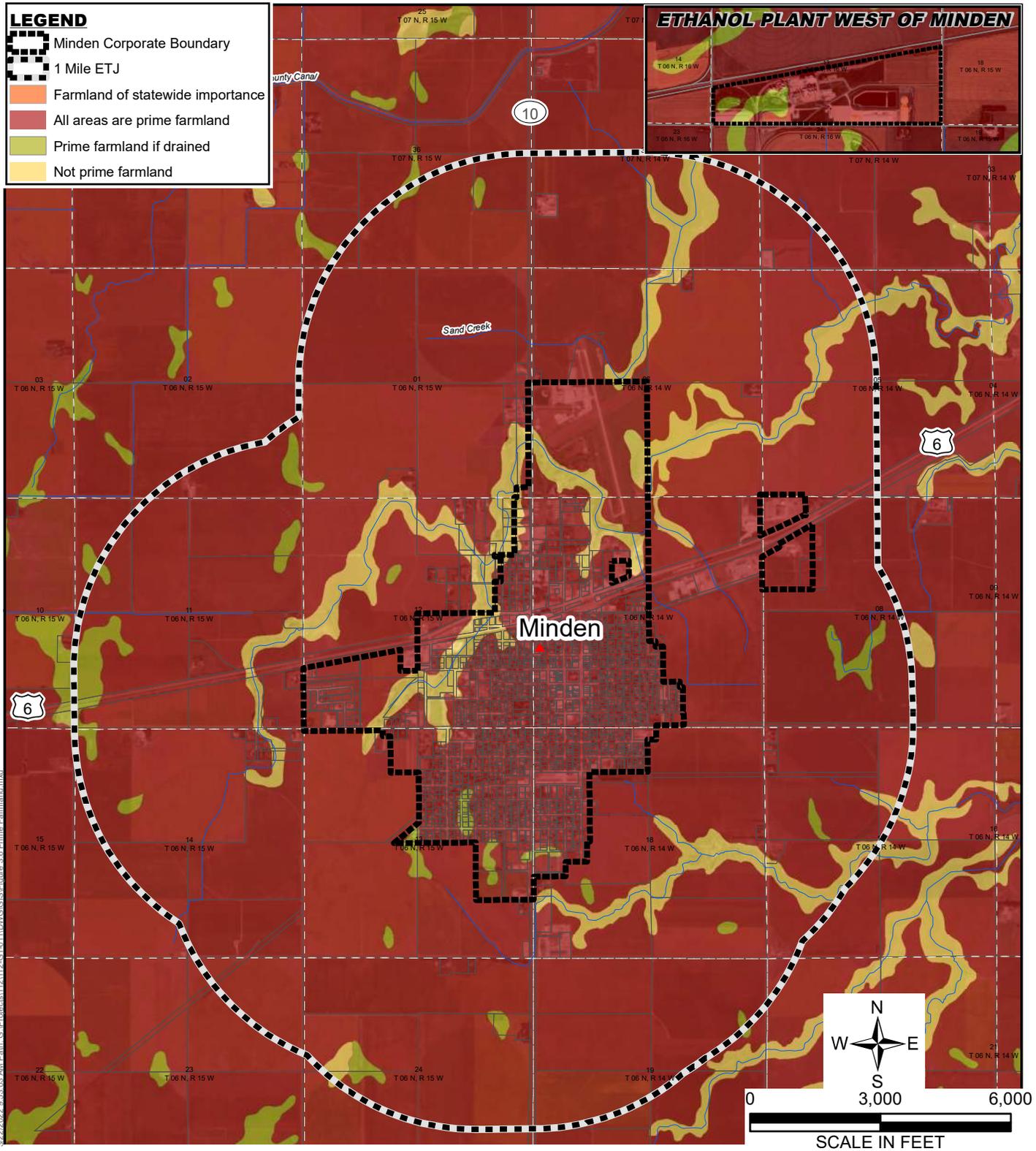


Figure 3.6
Soil Suitability For Prime Farmland
By Soil Association Map
Minden, Nebraska

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Source:
 Data Provided by: The National Cooperative Soil Survey
 Operated by the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation
 Service (NRCS).

WATER

Nebraska has an abundance of groundwater supply from the Ogallala Aquifer. Residents within Kearney County get their drinking and agricultural water from wells utilizing the aquifer's bed of porous rocks. Conservation and potential contamination need to be constantly analyzed to protect this natural resource.

Figure 3.7 shows the registered wells within the City's jurisdiction. The Ogallala Aquifer is the water source for many irrigation systems and registered wells around Minden, supplying water to residents, cropland, pastureland, and livestock. The State of Nebraska receives about 80 percent of its public drinking water and nearly 100 percent of its private water supply from groundwater sources. The agriculture economy, upon which most of Nebraska's communities are dependent, is directly tied to these water sources, proving the cost of contamination runs high. The State of Nebraska understands the vital importance of the groundwater supply and therefore utilizes Natural Resources Districts (NRDs). The Tri-Basin NRD protects this natural resource for Minden and the surrounding area.

All sources of water can create challenges for development due to the possibility of a high-water table or floodways and floodplains present with surface water. The City of Minden and ETJ are not characterized by a high-water table. Well registrations indicate an average static water level of approximately 60 feet below the surface. A sampling of sixteen (16) wells in the ETJ indicated a range of 34 to 108 feet below the surface. There are no major surface waterbodies in Minden's vicinity, only unnamed tributaries of Sand Creek.

It is also part of Minden's responsibility to protect the quality and availability of drinking water for the region. Groundwater quantity and quality are regulated by the Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy (NDEE). In 1998, the Nebraska Legislature passed LB 1161 (Neb. Rev. Stat. § 46-01501 to 16-1509) which authorized the Wellhead Protection Area Act and tasked NDEE to work with communities to protect land and groundwater surrounding public drinking water supply wells from contamination. The Wellhead Protection Area is an area with restrictive land-use regulations to help prevent potential contaminants from locating in the sensitive area. Their boundaries are determined by a time of travel cylindrical displacement calculation. These boundaries enable communities to enforce zoning regulations in the district.

Minden's Wellhead Protection Area, shown in Figure 3.7, covers Minden's corporate limits north of US Highway 6 and the northwest portion of the City's Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ). The goal of the Wellhead Protection Area is to protect the land and groundwater surrounding the public drinking water supply wells from contamination. Any endangerment to the supply threatens public health as well as the region's vital farming economy.

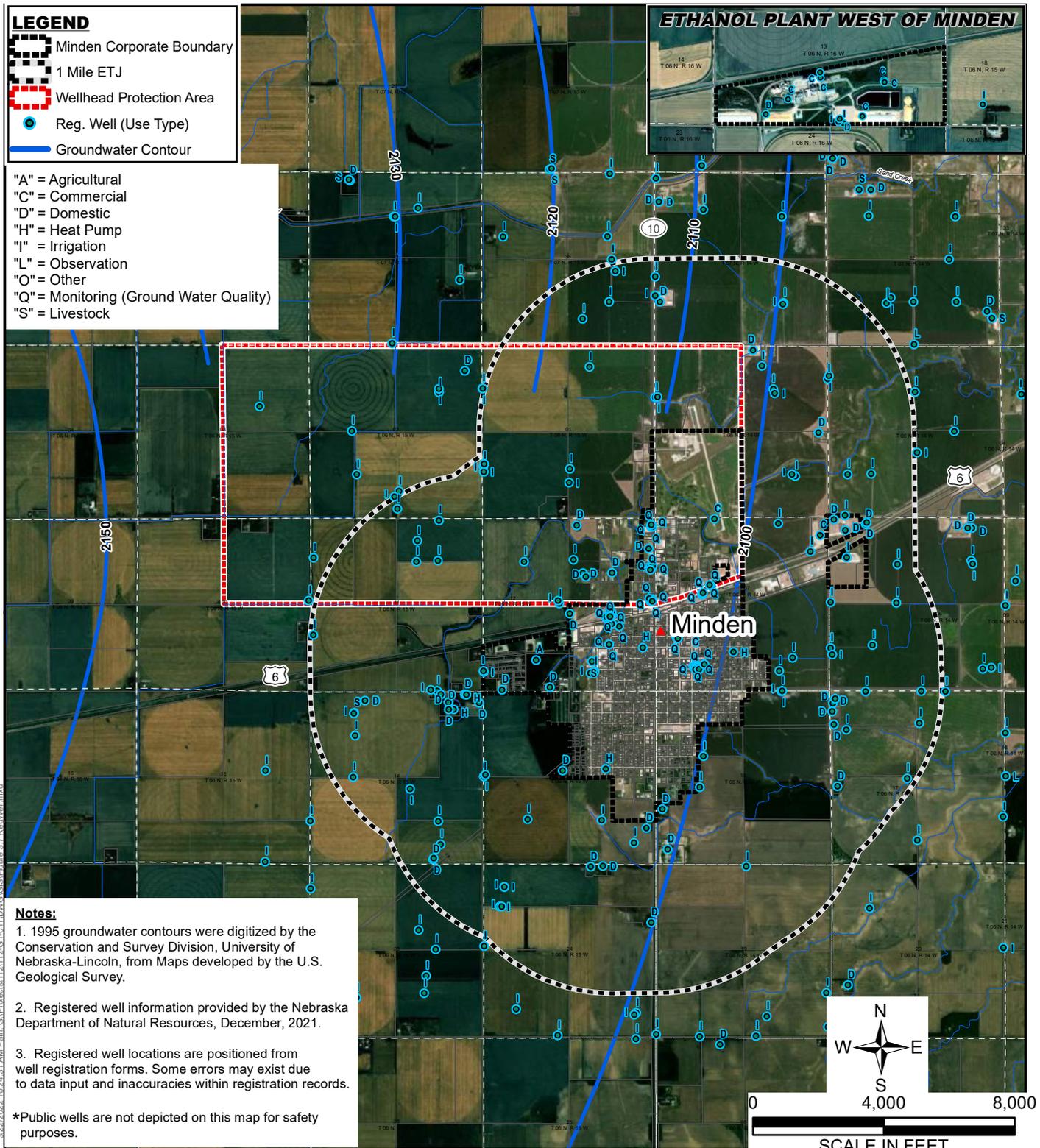


Figure 3.7
Registered Well & Wellhead Protection Area Map
 Minden, Nebraska

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Source:
 Data Provided By: The National Cooperative Soil Survey
 Operated by the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation
 Service (NRCS).

*The Wellhead Protection Program provides the following information
on Federal regulation compliance:*

OUTLINES DUTIES OF THE GOVERNMENTAL ENTITIES AND UTILITY DISTRICTS.

DETERMINES PROTECTION AREA.

IDENTIFIES CONTAMINATION SOURCES.

DEVELOPS A CONTAINMENT SOURCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM.

DEVELOPS AN ALTERNATIVE DRINKING WATER PLAN.

REVIEWS CONTAMINATED SOURCES IN FUTURE WELLHEAD AREAS.

ENCOURAGES PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND INVOLVEMENT.



The Nebraska Wellhead Protection Program aims to:

**PREVENT NEW CONTAMINATION SOURCES IN
WELLHEAD PROTECTION AREAS THROUGH PLANNING.**

**MINIMIZE THE HAZARD OF EXISTING CONTAMINATION
SOURCES THROUGH MANAGEMENT.**

**PROVIDE EARLY WARNING OF EXISTING CONTAMINATION
THROUGH GROUNDWATER MONITORING.**



FLOODPLAIN

Floodplains are designated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Figure 3.8 is the floodplain map for Minden's corporate limits and ETJ as reported by FEMA. This map shows the 1.0 percent annual flood chance or the 100-year flood. The mapped 100-year floodplains of unnamed tributaries of Sand Creek overlap parts of the northern half of Minden, primarily north of U.S. Highway 6, and portions of the ETJ. Development will be impacted in the areas mapped as the 100-year floodplain in the ETJ.

FLOODWAY

FEMA defines a floodway as not only the existing water channel but any other watercourse and the adjacent land areas which must be reserved to discharge the base flood without cumulatively increasing the water surface elevations more than a designated height. Communities must regulate development in these floodways to ensure there are no increases in upstream flood elevations. Floodways were not delineated in the study.

1% ANNUAL CHANCE OF FLOODING

Commonly known as the 100-year floodplain, the 1 percent chance of annual flooding describes an area where there is a 1 percent chance for flooding to occur annually within the boundary.

0.2% ANNUAL CHANCE OF FLOODING

The 0.2 percent chance of annual flooding is commonly known as the 500-year floodplain. There is a 0.2 percent chance of annual flooding in these areas but was not mapped by FEMA.

HISTORY OF FLOODING

There are unnamed tributaries of Sand Creek located within the Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ) of Minden and within City limits. Flood records for Minden are not readily available.

Figure 3.8 remains the best available information on the extent of flooding in Minden and the ETJ. The floodplain map shows only a small proportion of the City and ETJ that would be impacted by the 1 percent annual chance of flooding. However, intensive rain events could exceed the capacity of the stormwater collection system, resulting in water in basements and sewer backups.

AREA OF COMMUNITY IN EXISTING PRESERVED OPEN SPACE

The floodplain within the City and ETJ is currently cropland or undeveloped land within the City that is primarily open space or recreational (i.e., golf course). The total length is approximately 1.2 miles within the city limits. It is not known if the City has zoning ordinances specifically addressed to preserve open space. The City is enrolled in FEMA's floodplain program and development within the 1 percent chance floodplain is regulated by the City of Minden's floodplain administrator.

LEGEND

Flood Zone

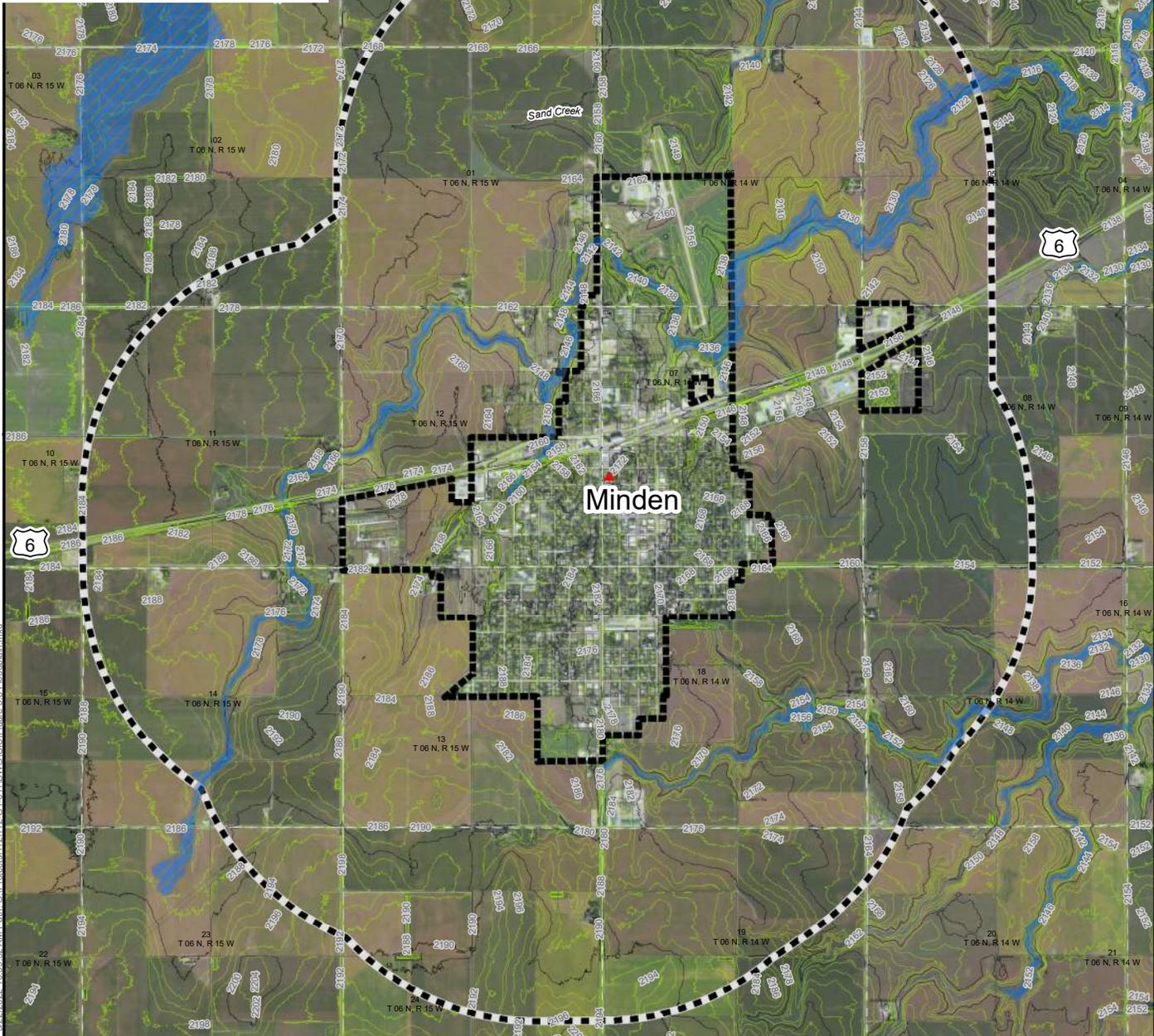
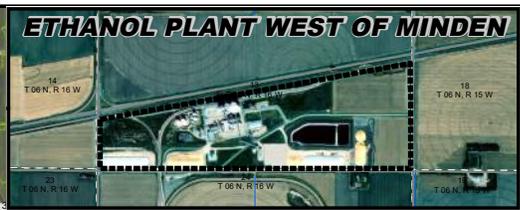
- 1.0% annual flood chance (100-year)
- 0.2% annual flood chance (500-year)

Minden Corporate Boundary

1 Mile ETJ

CONTOUR

- 2 FT. Contour
- 10 FT. Contour



3/22/2022, 10:59:02 AM Path: G:\Projects\112112-G1011DW\GIS\Figure 3.8 Floodplain.mxd

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Source:
 Data Provided by: FEMA

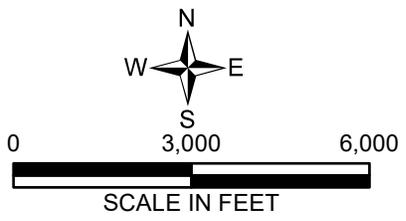


Figure 3.8
Floodplain Map
 Minden, Nebraska

NUMBER OF POPULATION AT RISK FROM FLOODING

None of the population appears to be at risk from over-the-bank flooding of the tributaries. The best available information is the FEMA 1 percent chance floodplain, as shown in Figure 3.8. The flooding impacts would likely occur in existing preserved open space. The entire population is at risk of flooding if the stormwater collection system is overwhelmed by an intense rain event, accompanied by sewer backup and flooding of basements.

NUMBER OF CRITICAL FACILITIES AT RISK FROM FLOODING

Typical critical facilities include hospitals, fire stations, police stations, storage of critical records, and similar facilities. The following critical facilities are present in Minden: the City building, Kearney County Courthouse, City police department, Kearney County Health Services, City fire department, and U.S. Post Office. The primary risk from flooding appears to be sewer backups or basement flooding resulting from intensive rain events. The primary functions of all these facilities appear to be located on ground level. The type of flooding most likely to occur would result in minor disruptions, but the functions of any of these facilities would not be seriously compromised.

NUMBER AND VALUE OF PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE AT RISK FROM FLOODING

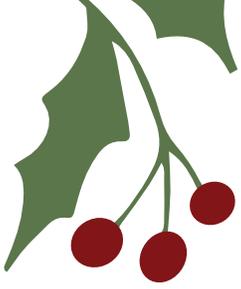
Detailed information is not readily available. Due to the nature of flooding as already described, the duration would likely be short, and any damage to public infrastructure would be minor. The City's water supply and wastewater treatment facility would still be expected to function.

NUMBER AND VALUE OF PRIVATE STRUCTURES AT RISK FROM FLOODING

The best available information is the FEMA 1 percent chance floodplain as shown in Figure 3.8. The flooding impacts would likely occur in existing preserved open space. If the stormwater collection system is overwhelmed by an intense rain event, then all private structures with basements would be at risk of flooding and all residences may be at risk of a sewer backup.

NUMBER OF FUTURE POPULATIONS AT RISK FROM FLOODING

Until the community expands into the mapped floodplains, the risk of flooding to future populations is not expected to increase. As the community continues to grow, future development within the floodplain should only be allowed through the supervision of local, state, and federal regulations.



Chapter 04

LAND USE & ANNEXATION

The Land Use and Annexation section analyzes the current land uses within Minden and provides a vision with possibilities and options for future land use development and growth. During an evaluation of existing and future land use potential, discussions were held to determine the physical, economic, and social efficiency; health; and well-being of the community. This section also analyzes potential areas for annexation adjacent to Minden's corporate limits. This Land Use and Annexation section has the following two components:

- EXISTING AND FUTURE LAND USE
- ANNEXATION PLAN

LAND USE

Land use is an important aspect of the Comprehensive Plan allowing community members to visualize existing land uses to stimulate discussion and direction for how and where the community could and should grow. How the land is being used creates relationships between the physical, built environment, and the social world. Land use planning is an important process because it involves the systematic assessment of physical, social, and economic factors to mitigate potential conflicts. This section gives decision-makers options on how the community can grow, by looking at the existing land use and transitioning to future land use.

EXISTING LAND USE

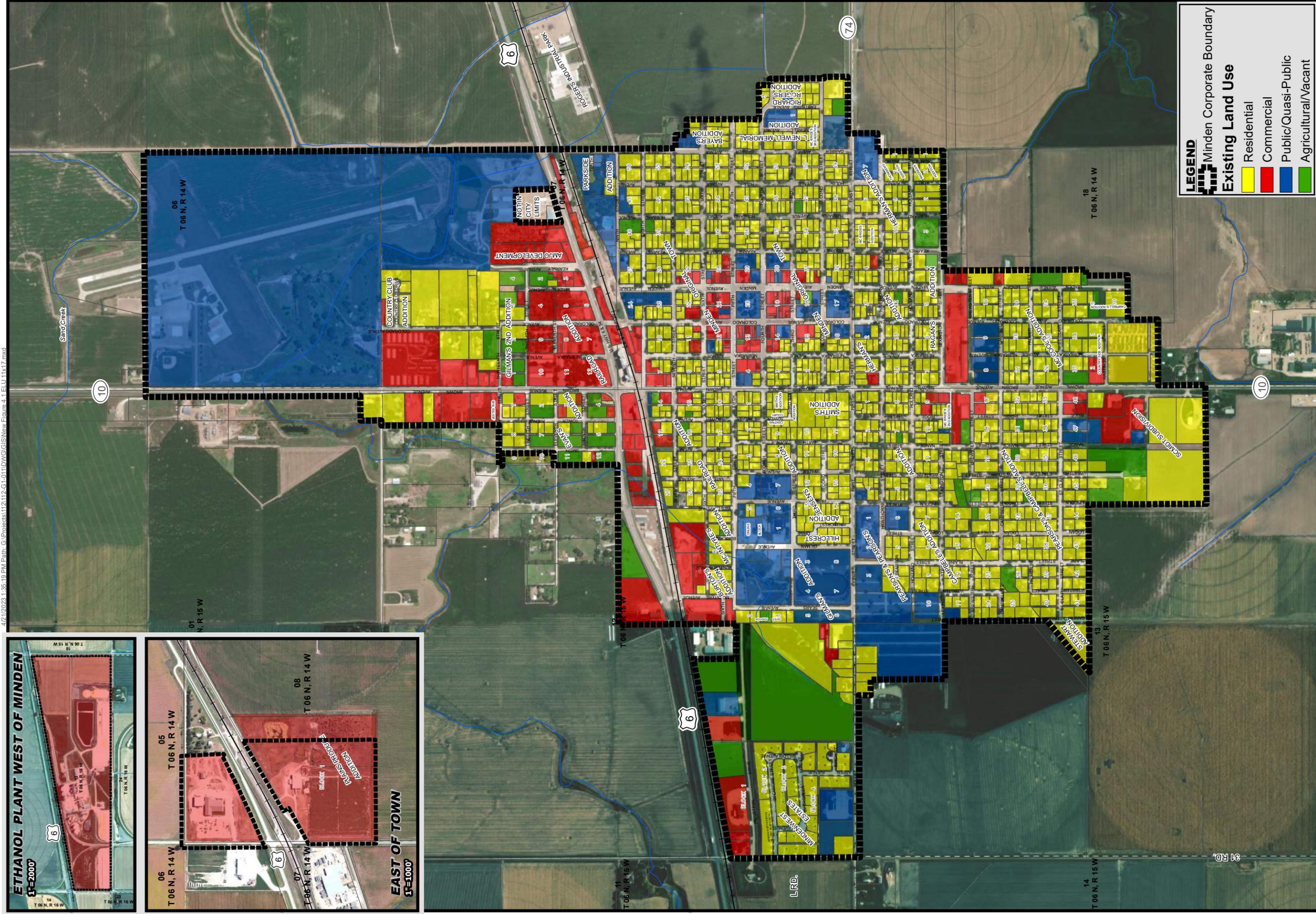
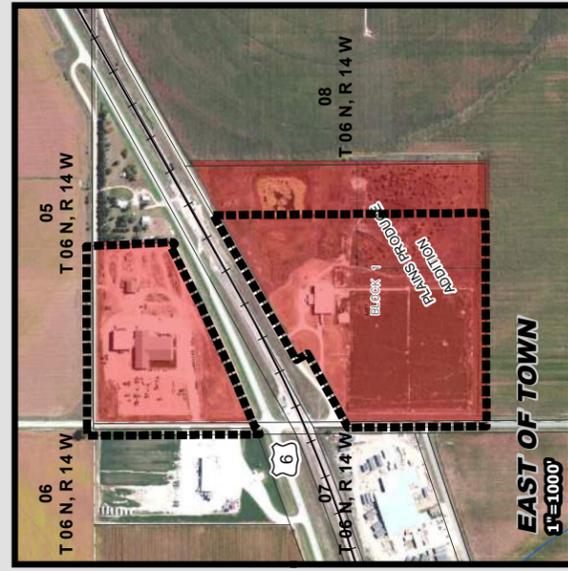
The land use section of the Comprehensive Plan consists of two separate but related sections. The existing land use section studies and evaluates the pros and cons of Minden's existing mix of land uses and development patterns. Figure 4.1a: Existing Land Use Map and Figure 4.1b: Existing Land Use with ETJ Map show the current land uses in and around Minden. This allows the City to see how the community's land uses fit together and how the land use patterns should change in the future. Minden has four primary different land uses which are residential, commercial, public/quasi-public, and agricultural/vacant. A majority of Minden's commercial land uses are in the Downtown Square or along the highway and railroad corridors. Commercial properties are commonly located in these two areas in any sized community due to the visibility and access it provides for each business. Companies located along the highway corridors typically require easier access, more parking, or larger space/square footage. Larger economic ventures such as manufacturing, bulk storage, or distribution facilities typically fall into the light industry category and should be located on the outskirts of the community. The makeup of the commercial areas tends to attract different types of businesses, while also tending to have a different look and feel drastically different.

Historically, communities have separate zoning regulations for the Highway Corridor Commercial District than the Central Commercial District. Minden, like many communities, currently has these as two separate districts within the City's current zoning regulations. The reason for separate districts is because of the different setbacks, height restrictions, parking needs, and aesthetic desires for each distinct area. Downtown economic development should be catered toward retail, service, and/or hospitality businesses. It is important to protect the look and feel of the Downtown District because it is the heart of the community.

Larger economic ventures are important to the economy because of the revenue and job opportunities they present to the City. These developments should take place along the outskirts of Minden along the highway corridors. Zoning Regulations are important to steer commercial development into proper zoning districts, ensuring the mix of adjacent land uses is conducive to new businesses.

The primary land use in Minden is residential and structures of this nature can be found throughout the community. It is vital when planning for future development to maintain or enhance the existing feel of the neighborhood. This is especially important in residential areas; any new structures should be residential and complimentary in nature. The existing residential land uses are comprised of multi-family, with the majority being single-family homes. In the past, other residential development has taken place beyond the corporate limits but within the City's one-mile extraterritorial jurisdiction. These homes can be classified as rural residential homes including farm homes or single-family homes on large lots. This type of residential development is enticing and attractive as it allows for large spacious yards, maintains privacy, and provides proximity to Minden's amenities.

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LEGEND

Minden Corporate Boundary

Existing Land Use

- Residential
- Commercial
- Public/Quasi-Public
- Agricultural/Vacant

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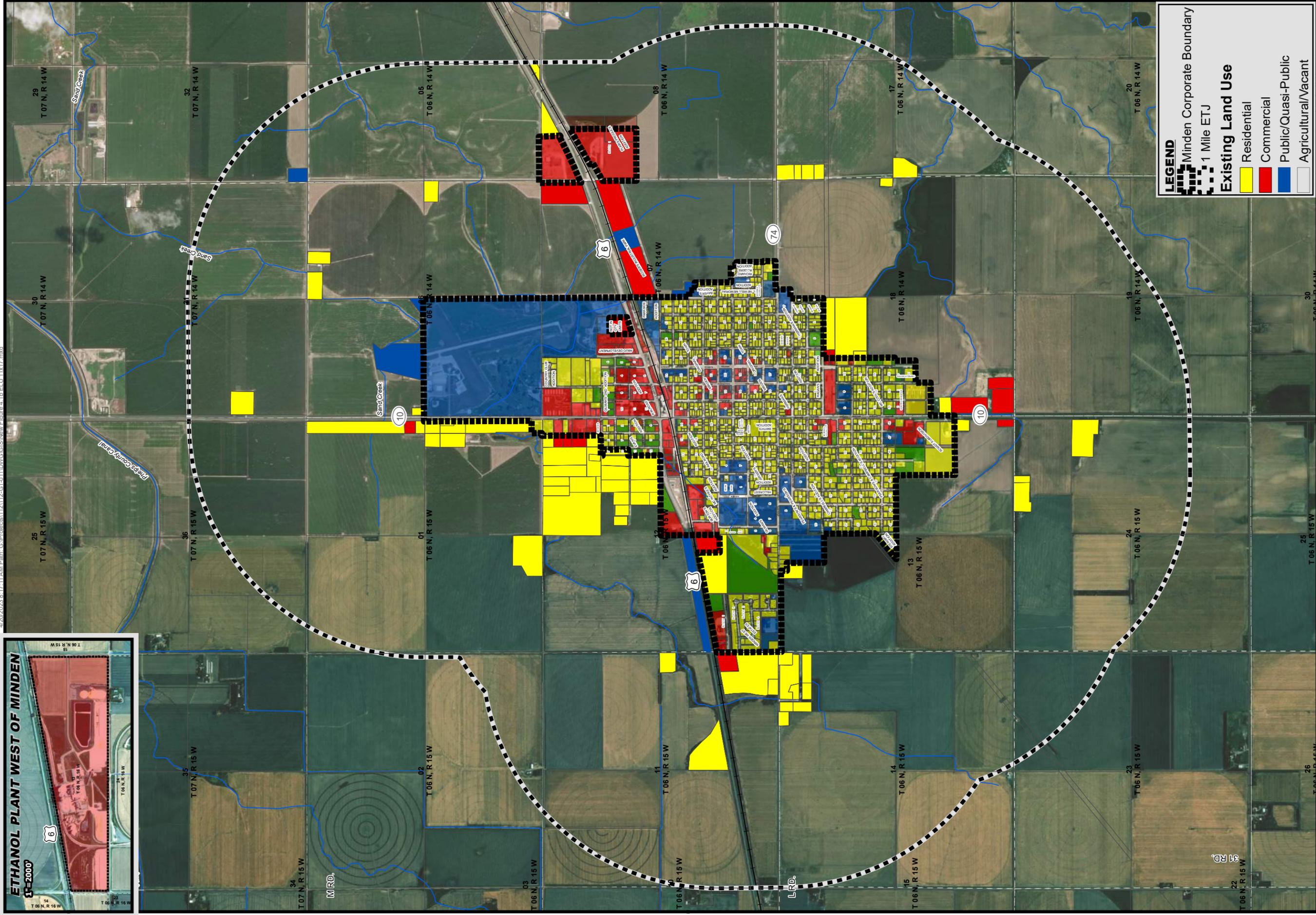


0 500 1,000 Feet

Source: Property Data for Land Use Delineation was provided by gWork 2012. Discrepancies may exist since boundary data is dated 2012.

Figure 4.1
Existing Land Use
Minden, Nebraska

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LEGEND

- Minden Corporate Boundary
- 1 Mile ETJ

Existing Land Use

- Residential
- Commercial
- Public/Quasi-Public
- Agricultural/Vacant

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Source: Property Data for Land Use Delineation was provided by gWork 2012. Discrepancies may exist since boundary data is dated 2012.

Figure 4.1b
Existing Land Use
Minden, Nebraska

The recreational space in Minden includes the municipal swimming pool, ball fields, basketball and tennis courts, playground equipment, and picnic shelters. Recreational opportunities provide amenities for a wide age range of residents in a community. Availability and diversity of recreational services and parks are important to maintain a high quality of life for all residents in Minden, not just children. Currently, Minden has eight established parks that are scattered throughout the community. Some parks offer the same amenities, while a handful of parks have specific amenities and activities. Currently, four of the parks have baseball fields, but only one park has a T-ball field, while another park has two full basketball courts, with the swimming pool located at a third park. As the community grows, changes, or further develops it will be important to assess the need for improved and additional recreational amenities.

Public/Quasi-Public land uses include churches, municipal properties, school buildings, healthcare facilities, museums, community buildings, and more. These existing land uses are spread throughout Minden, and rightfully so. Public land uses need to be available and accessible to every resident in Minden, not just concentrated in specific areas, which could segregate neighborhoods based on available amenities. Having a healthy disbursement of public/quasi-public land helps to ensure equity among residents. Public/Quasi-Public uses are typically considered amenities for residents because they add to the quality of life. With several of these public/quasi-public land uses, it is important to analyze the need and availability of vacant land for any potential expansion. Vacant land near Public/Quasi-Public uses should be considered a positive attribute for any potential future expansion or future development land uses.

Minden has areas considered Agricultural/Vacant along the fringe of the corporate limits. Some of this land is farmed and should continue to be farmed until it is necessary to subdivide and develop for the benefit of the community. Other areas considered to be Agricultural/Vacant may not be farmed, but topographic challenges hinder development, or the lots are in undesirable locations. Even though these areas may have development challenges they lend themselves to additional greenspace and/or buffers between the heart of the community and what lies outside of the corporate limits. This land use is also an important buffer between different land uses such as light industrial or some commercial and residential land uses.

There are a handful of vacant parcels of land dispersed throughout the community; these platted parcels may or may not have ever had a structure built on them. Some of the smaller vacant lots spread throughout Minden have the potential to be used for infill development because of their vicinity to the existing public infrastructure. However, the current lot sizes and conditions may not be conducive to attracting potential builders. When developing vacant, infill parcels, it is important to maintain the balance of existing land uses surrounding the potential development. Most of the vacant lots are within residential neighborhoods. Multiple adjacent lots may be necessary to build a home based on today's standards to utilize vacant lots for infill development.

CONCLUSION

As the Existing Land Uses have been analyzed it is important to note that the City is strategically growing – expanding along the fringe of the corporate limits and minimizing vacant lots within the corporate boundaries. In their 2012-2023 Comprehensive Plan, City leaders were tasked with several goals that had been developed through public input sessions. As City leaders began to work towards achieving these goals, they undertook other planning processes which aided in taking these long-term goals developed in their comprehensive plan and turning them into short-term goals.

FUTURE LAND USE

FUTURE PLANNING PROCESS

Planning and preparing for future land use options is a crucial part of the Minden Comprehensive Plan. Whether the community is growing or shrinking, there will be changes in land use patterns. The purpose of this section is to provide a general guide for future changes in development patterns. The idea is to avoid or minimize conflicts between land uses and the environment. The Future Land Use Plan must reflect existing land uses and community changes while being flexible in nature to adapt as the community changes. Importantly, this plan should be molded to fit the needs, wants, and limitations of Minden and its residents.

As a component of building the Comprehensive Plan, a series of Public Input meetings were held, and a public input community survey was shared with residents. The input from these meetings and the survey were vital to planning for future land uses. Understanding what residents want and need within the community is important for gaining their support and assistance in helping Minden prosper. The Future Land Use Plan incorporates information gathered at the public input sessions and the public input survey, as well as existing land use and data from primary and secondary sources.

A Future Land Use Plan should be a vision of how residents want the community to look and a development of goals with different land uses to encourage 'smart' growth throughout the community. This vision should be a model, providing guidance and continually evolving over the next ten years. To prepare and plan for the future of Minden, decision-makers need to have realistic ambitions and goals. The focus of this plan should be to keep strong community ties and progressive drive while diversifying amenities and the tax base to provide a high quality of life for residents. The types of land use should vary within the community incorporating a balance of single and multi-family homes, commercial ventures of varying sizes, public areas including recreational amenities, and some vacant land and greenspace for aesthetics and screening and/or buffering purposes.

Homes should also vary, based on location, size, and price to attract a variety of residents. Having compatible housing is important when trying to appeal to new residents in the community. Comparing the housing stock versus income ranges is an important way to find what types of stock should be available to best suit the needs and desires of residents. Improving the commercial sector should involve diversifying what is available to residents. Commercial development should be encouraged and should be developed depending on the available resources. Commercial ventures not only add to the tax base, but they also create job opportunities for residents or potential residents. Envisioning community goals as a reality is important for the continued success of Minden, allowing those ideas to become actions to make them into reality. Minden leaders are ultimately responsible for making the final decisions for the betterment of the community. However, it is up to the residents to hold these leaders and decision-makers accountable, ensuring the goals of the community are being met.

During the third public input meeting, future development ideas were discussed. Attendees were encouraged to ignore their knowledge of current property owners; to think outside the box and to believe that anything was possible. By doing so, they were able to explore possible options during the planning phase. This is important to prepare and ensure community growth is following the goals outlined in this Comprehensive Plan or other plans the City has created. During the Public Input meeting, ideas were brought forward, presented, and discussed. It is important to examine every option possible during the planning phases to be prepared and to ensure that growth and development are happening where the City sees as the best fit. Figure 4.2 shows potential areas of new development in and around Minden. These areas will be discussed in detail throughout this section.

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Residential uses make up the largest percentage of the existing land used in Minden. Single- and multi-family residential construction is necessary for the community to prosper. This section will provide guidance for City leaders on infill development, single-family residential areas, and multi-family residential areas.

Quite a few of the existing housing units are aging and may need updates, some dilapidated houses need to be demolished, and new home construction is needed to provide options for existing and potential residents. In order to replace the aging and dilapidated housing structures, new structures will need to be built. The resulting housing market will help attract potential residents to the community.

There are a few vacant lots available throughout the corporate limits and these lots are best suited for infill residential development. The location and size of the lot will need to be assessed before construction to ensure both attributes are achieved and enticing to current homebuyers. Infill development can help Minden keep costs down because the existing public infrastructure is already available. Infill development should be promoted first before the development of a new residential subdivision that would require infrastructure extensions. Over the years, City Leaders have done an adequate job encouraging and executing infill development to alleviate the potential for fringe and sprawling development around Minden. The potential for infill development is shown in the Future Land Use Maps.

Single-family residential areas, shown in yellow in Figure 4.2, Future Land Use Map, include vacant infill lots as well as potential areas for residential subdivisions in Minden. These areas were presented to residents during the third public input session. An idea brought forward in the third public input session was the development of subdivisions being built along the fringe of the City's corporate limits, within the City's one-mile extraterritorial jurisdiction. The development of any planned subdivision, such as the ones outlined in this comprehensive plan, works better in planned phases. City leaders should remember that the entire subdivision should be planned in full; however, it should be constructed in phases. The benefits and reasoning behind this approach are to have future goals in mind and to help aid in understanding what the big picture looks like. This is the most effective and efficient method when planning for anything in a community. The advantages of expanding into these areas include their proximity to amenities, their ability to connect with the existing infrastructure, and the ability to tie in with existing streets to provide ingress and egress for the proposed developments. The three main areas shown for future residential subdivision development have the potential to include multiple lot sizes, providing varying options for residents. However, the City should encourage infill development, before the extra money is spent extending water, sewer, and paving into a new subdivision.

Along with single-family development, comes the desire for multi-family development throughout Minden. As identified in the Future Land Use Map, areas with several vacant lots adjacent to one another may be best suited for multi-family developments. Multi-family developments shown in olive green on the Future Land Use Map can include a variety of options such as duplexes, four-plexes, townhomes, and apartments. Multi-family housing is typically renter-occupied

LAND USE & ANNEXATION - *Chapter 04*

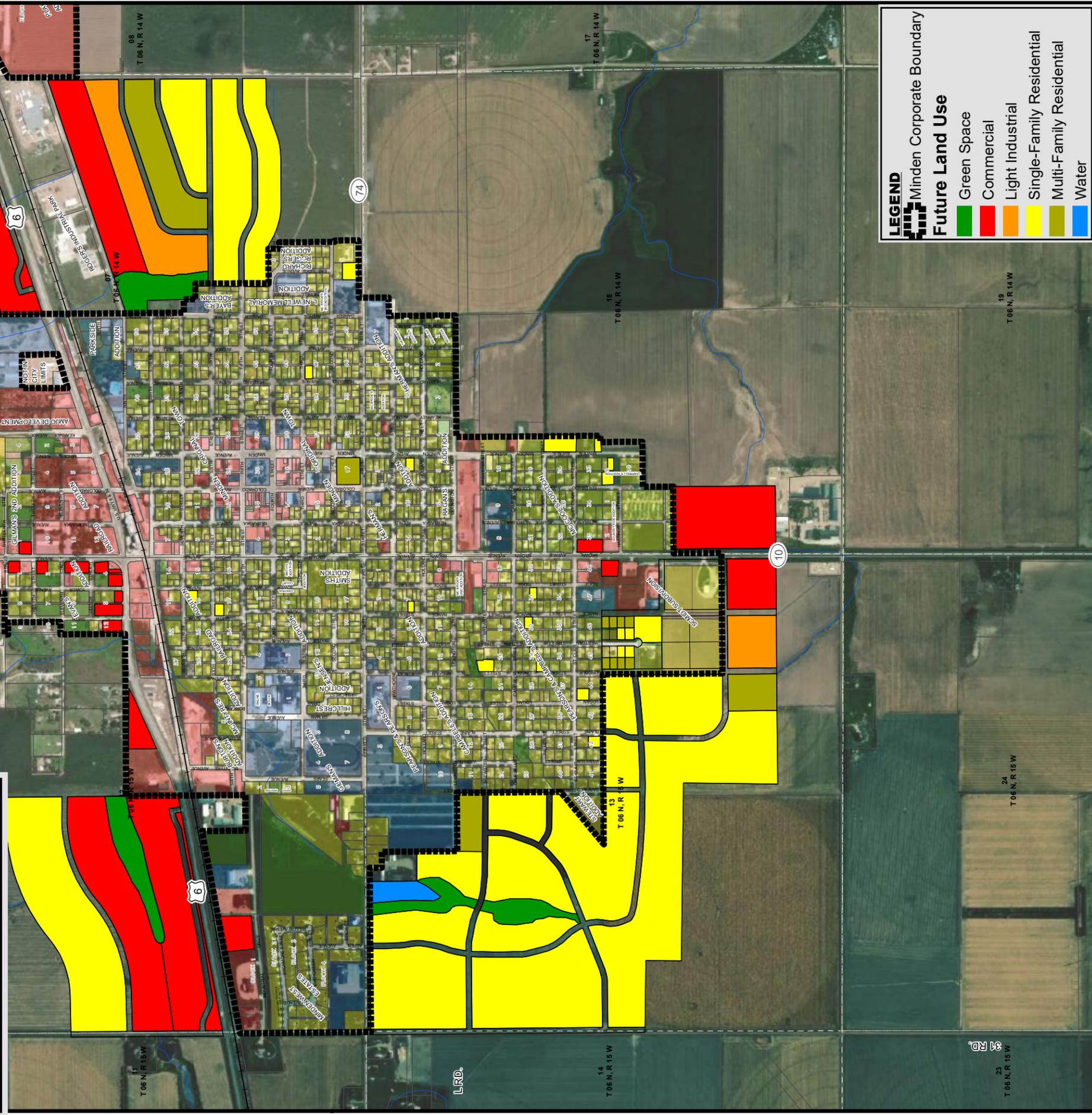
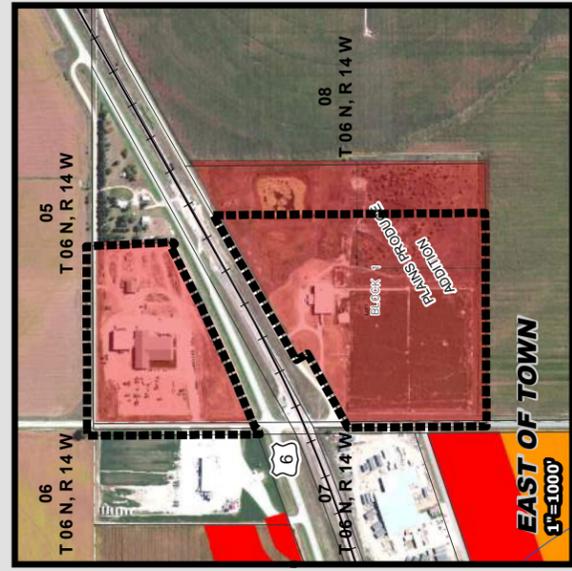
which fulfills another housing need in small communities. Development of this type of housing would fill a large need in the community catering to young families, single persons, senior citizens, and empty nesters.

Another area that could become an infill residential development is in the current Elementary School location. The concept of having one Kindergarten through 12th-grade campus has been previously discussed in Minden and was discussed during the third public input meeting. If this were to come to fruition, the Elementary School building on the east edge of the lot, could be rehabilitated into an apartment complex. The existing playground could be kept intact and would be beneficial for families who live in the apartment complex as well as to other residents in Minden, serving as another green space within Minden. The northwest corner of the block could be kept as the parking lot for the apartment complex, or the lot could be reconfigured to satisfy further needs of the development.

Multi-family development can also mean medium-density development which would have more homes per square acre than a typical single-family residential development. Mobile home parks are typically platted for medium-density development. There is already an existing mobile home area, shown as multi-family development, in a good location because of the amount of vacant development and availability for expansion and its proximity to public infrastructure. The southeastern corner, a pocket on the southwestern corner, and a large portion of land on the eastern boundary of Minden are also conducive to multi-family development because of the amount of vacant land adjacent to existing infrastructure.

Ideas to keep in mind when planning for future residential development are finding ways to maintain a neighborhood feel and identity when connecting new subdivisions to the existing community to promote accessibility. It is also crucial to incorporate green space into development plans and provide a small mixture of lot sizes for different residential development types in larger subdivisions.

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LEGEND

Minden Corporate Boundary

Future Land Use

- Green Space
- Commercial
- Light Industrial
- Single-Family Residential
- Multi-Family Residential
- Water

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Source: Property Data for Land Use Delineation was provided by gWork 2012. Discrepancies may exist since boundary data is dated 2012.

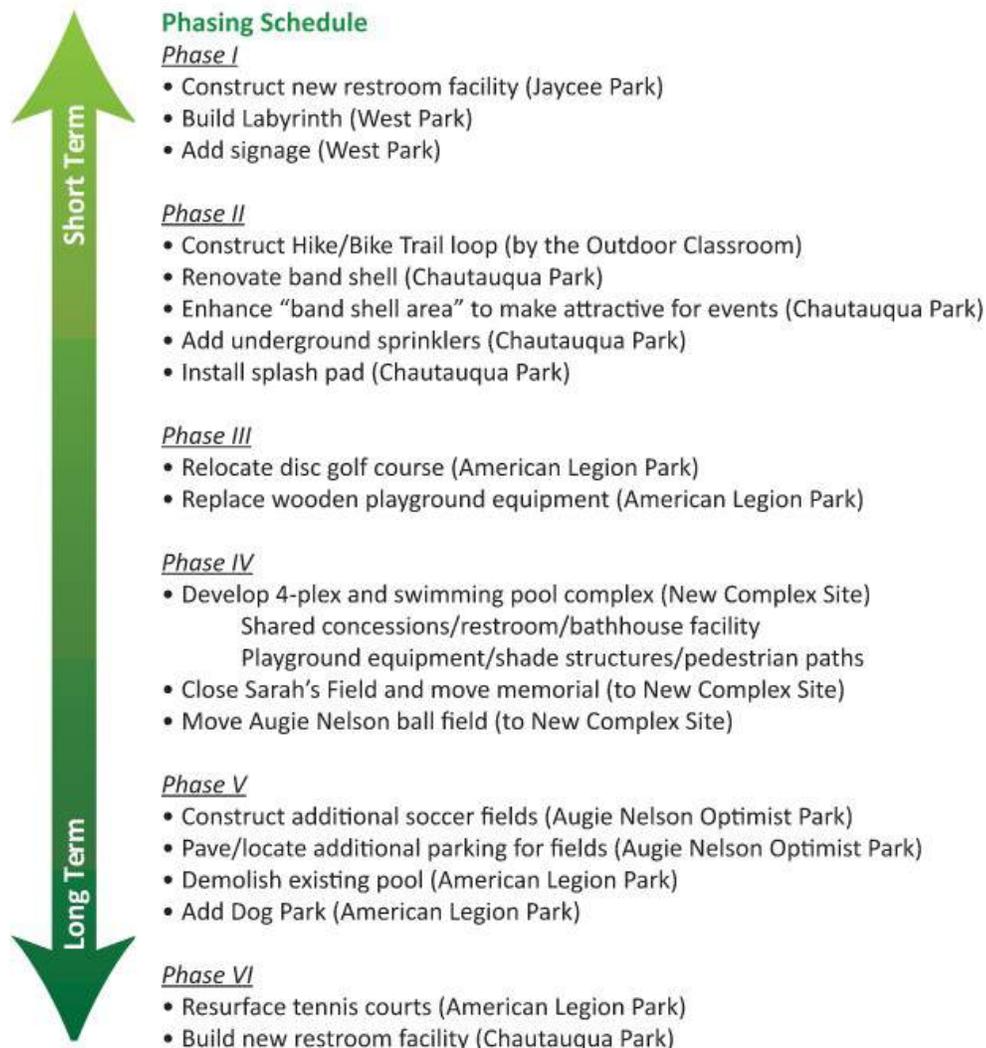
Figure 4.2
Future Land Use
Minden, Nebraska

GREENSPACE

Parks and recreation are major community assets. Parks provide open spaces for residents and visitors and generally enhance a community’s appearance. There are eight existing park facilities in Minden, each serving various purposes, such as tennis courts, softball fields, T-ball fields, and more. Future development of any recreational facilities space should occur throughout the community to balance access for all residents. A planned hike and bike trail system should be completed to connect the community, encouraging physical fitness and healthy lifestyles, while creating new opportunities for outdoor recreation, and strengthening the local economy.

In 2016, the City of Minden completed a Recreational Master Plan & Pool Study, which included a long-term vision for park and recreation improvements in Minden, broken into future goals for each recreational facility. The proposed future land use for green space has been developed from the City’s previous planning efforts, public input, and the recent community survey.

Following the 2021 Review of the 2014 Strategic Plan, the main recreational goals were divided into six phases for implementation. Several of the short-term goals, listed below have been successfully completed by the City. Throughout these plans and during the third public input session, there was continued support for a proposed sports complex and swimming pool facility in the southeast section of Minden, a hike/bike trail throughout Minden, and a Splash Pad at Chautauqua Park.



The City should continue to develop the West Park at Minden West Estates, on the western edge of Minden. Some trees have been planted throughout the park, while the rest of the park is currently an undeveloped greenspace available for free play. The City has started to develop a walking path throughout the park and should continue to expand the walking path throughout the entire park.

COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Much of the ideal land for commercial and/or light industrial development within the corporate limits is currently undeveloped. There are several areas where commercial and/or light industrial development could thrive, as delineated by red and orange on Figure 4.2 - Future Land Use Map. These lots border the highway corridor because most businesses are looking for land availability, easy access to the transportation network, and high visibility. Land along Highway 10 and Highway 6/34 provides all these things to potential businesses.

This land could be used for commercial and/or light industrial development, including land that could be developed into office space. Because this land is near existing single-family homes, recreational amenities, and proposed recreational amenities, it is suggested that there is a large buffer between those existing land uses and any new commercial or light industrial distribution development. The suggested buffer for this area would be new recreational amenities coupled with greenspace.

The commercial and light industrial areas shown on the future land use maps were discussed during the third public input session. Residents were asked to consider their thoughts on having additional space available for commercial development. Residents discussed the positives and negatives of this, including added amenities and jobs for the community, while ensuring the potential locations were near existing businesses, corporate limits, and public infrastructure. Having this commercial development within the City's one-mile extraterritorial jurisdiction allows the City to maintain control over what type of commercial or light industrial businesses may develop in these areas. Developing along a highway does come with a few constraints including obtaining permits from the Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) to gain highway access. NDOT limits the number of access points for safety purposes because of the high rates of speed people travel on highways. Frontage roads and cul-de-sacs may need to be constructed to best utilize land available while limiting the number of access points onto Highway 6/34.

If commercial or light industrial development requires sites located outside of the existing corporate limits, the City should conduct a cost-benefit analysis to determine if it would be beneficial to annex the land. Through annexation, the City could capture sales and property taxes from potential businesses along the Highway corridor and would be able to provide development incentives to potential businesses through the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) process. This can only happen, based on State Statutes, if the development is located within the corporate limits. As the community grows, Minden should consider annexation of prime commercial or light industrial real estate to target future development. This process would require the City to develop an infrastructure expansion plan and could include the development or expansion of new infrastructure to serve the annexed areas. This would require a site survey and engineering design before the full Cost-Benefit Analysis could be completed. All these proposed new developments should be annexed into Minden's corporate limits before any construction. This will allow the City to expand its physical size, population, and tax base.

The area shown on Figure 4.2 - Future Land Use maps highlights a large amount of land that could be developed for newly planned development, light industrial business, commercial purposes, or possible expansion of existing businesses. Most industrial or commercial parks range between twenty and fifty acres, sometimes even larger. Along the Northwest Highway 6/34 corridor, shown in red and orange on the Future Land Use Map, would offer an ideal

location for future commercial development, particularly an industrial or commercial park. This area is planned on the outskirts of the community to reduce nuisances associated with light industrial businesses that may create concerns for nearby residents. The City of Minden should determine the potential impacts a new business may have on the surrounding land uses before approving any development permits. This will ensure all concerns are thoroughly analyzed before construction.

When there are any conflicting land uses proposed adjacent to each other, a buffer should be encouraged to provide a visual and physical break in the land uses. Some buffers include trees, shrubs, and greenspace while other buffers consist of transitional zoning allowing transitions from higher-density land uses to lower-density land uses. These land use transitions help protect each land use. Careful consideration should be taken when planning for areas of mixed land uses to protect the least dense use (single-family residential) while also allowing the densest use to operate without hassle or complaints from the least dense land use.

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT

Desires for downtown improvements were discussed by several residents during the public input sessions to develop this Comprehensive Plan. Completing a Downtown Revitalization Plan helps residents and decision-makers envision an overall look and feel to help stimulate the Downtown District. Through developing a downtown revitalization plan, residents and downtown stakeholders are allowed to dream, discuss, and brainstorm ideas for improving the Downtown District. This process provides imagination and ideas for aesthetic improvements including facades, awnings, signage, and streetscapes as well as ideas for improving the economic climate in the Downtown District.

The City of Minden completed a Downtown Revitalization Plan in 2016. Several public input sessions were held and walking tours of the Downtown Square were done with business and property owners, City Staff, City Council members, and community members. The plan analyzed and provided recommendations for sidewalks, ADA accessibility, parking supply/demand, vehicular and pedestrian accessibility, and exterior conditions of buildings in and around the Downtown Square. The vision for Minden's Downtown Square is to enhance the downtown experience by updating facades, adding signage, increasing opportunities for new businesses, developing a space for local events, preserving the history of the buildings and the community, and developing unique characteristics that will enrich the Downtown Square. The Square is the heart of the community and provides opportunities for residents and visitors to shop, dine, and experience arts and entertainment. The goals within the Downtown Revitalization Plan included multiple implementation phases that included the development of visual design guidelines, branding/marketing, façade improvement program, commercial rehabilitation, energy efficiencies, ADA improvements, complementary businesses, wayfinding, and pedestrian signage, historic preservation, accessibility, event space, flowers and greenspace, and public art.

Upon completion of the City's Downtown Revitalization Plan, the City has undertaken steps to accomplish the goals set out in the Downtown Revitalization Plan as funded by the Nebraska Department of Economic Development, Community Development Block Grant program. The façade improvement program was developed as a revolving loan fund to aid more improvements projects with the same initial investment from the City. This project was administered through a Downtown Steering Committee to help ensure quality workmanship and the repayment of funds. The sidewalk improvement project consisted of new ADA-compliant curb cuts at all four intersections surrounding the Courthouse Square as well as new sidewalks on the block face located along Colorado Avenue, from 4th Street to 5th Street. Complete sidewalk reconstruction required several new ramps at building entries due to differing finish floor heights. These ramps also increased ADA compliance and therefore, accessibility to the businesses on the west side of the Square.

There is only limited real estate space available in the Downtown District; planning for future commercial development will ensure space is used wisely to further encourage downtown business growth. Businesses in the Downtown District should be centered on retail, service, and entertainment such as restaurants, bars, and theaters. Ongoing revitalization efforts will continue to enhance the pedestrian zone in Minden's Downtown District. As this environment is further developed, the City can use public investment to encourage private development and attract new businesses to the Downtown District.

GATEWAY DEVELOPMENT

Other future development options include enhancing the wayfinding, branding, and beautification throughout the community. Gateway entrances can make a statement to travelers passing by on the highways which is why it is important to beautify these entrances and corridors. Wayfinding signage serves a dual purpose: it directs and informs people while also being aesthetically pleasing and attention-grabbing.

Based on the Nebraska Department of Transportation, 2020 Traffic counts, roughly 5,595 vehicles enter Minden traveling on Highway 10, roughly 5,660 vehicles enter Minden on Highway 6/34, and roughly 2,035 enter Minden on Highway 74. Some of these travelers are residents of Minden commuting to and from work, however, others are visitors to the community. Therefore, it is important to provide a warm and welcoming gateway entrance showing all that the City of Minden has to offer. Dilapidated, worn-down, and unkept properties along the gateway entrances should be addressed to help showcase the City.

Highway 10 can help advertise what the City has to offer. Banners, landscaping, beautification, and wayfinding signage highlighting amenities are ways to take advantage of the Highway and promote the City to travelers. The gateway entrance and Highway corridor provide an opportunity to grab people's attention and make a good impression. Having gateway entrances into Minden helps make a memorable statement to visitors and gives the community an identity. Having beautified entrances will help promote cohesiveness throughout the community ensuring that it's the entire community's responsibility to keep all of Minden beautiful. Landscaping can be used for aesthetics and screening purposes, serving as a barrier between land uses. Land along highway corridors tends to be unsightly in many communities, therefore screening these land uses from highway travelers can make a big impact. Wayfinding signage could act as directional signage to local parks and points of interest, the Library, Minden's Downtown Square, school, or anything else the City would like to highlight.

CONCLUSION

All the proposed new developments are currently within or adjacent to Minden's corporate limits. The City should not consider annexation until they have utilized all the developable land within its boundary. The following section discusses Minden's annexation plan in more detail. All the ideas discussed in the Future Land Use Plan are goals to work towards over the next ten years. This plan is to be used as a guide to help prioritize and steer ideas for future development. When planning for future growth it is important to consider any potential issues to protect the City and its current residents. The goal for any community should be to continually move forward with population growth and development while mitigating the impact on existing residents and property owners. It is important to have ideas and plans in place to steer growth in the right direction.

ANNEXATION PLAN

An annexation plan should create opportunities for new development and help facilitate the future land use plan outlined in this document. To create opportunities for new development, there needs to be a plan in place to reserve the land necessary to accomplish the goals of the community. The City may need to consider annexing adjacent territory and expanding its jurisdiction, including its extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ), as seen in Figure 4.1b Existing Land Use with One-Mile Extraterritorial Jurisdiction. This annexation plan, like the Future Land Use Plan, is a guide or tool the City can utilize when discussing future growth and development opportunities. This annexation plan is not law; annexation should follow State Statutes and what is best suited for the City's development needs and goals.

BENEFITS OF AN ANNEXATION PLAN

PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE CITY'S TAX BASE

Annexation allows each community to protect and enhance the City's tax base for several reasons. Land along the Highway corridor is prime real estate for commercial and light industrial development. Companies need to be located within the corporate limits for the City to capture property and sales taxes. Many new business developments also look for incentives before building a new facility in a community. Communities can offer Tax Increment Financing as an incentive to potential businesses, but the development must be located within the community's corporate limits.

Another facet of annexation includes the benefits citizens receive from the City, although they may not own property within the corporate limits. The residents and businesses located in the fringe of the community still benefit from the City's parks, streets, amenities, other facilities, and programs, and sometimes even public utilities without having to contribute to the tax base directly supporting these amenities. By annexing these properties into the corporate limits, property owners would then be paying taxes for multiple amenities and services they most likely already utilize.

INCREASE THE POPULATION AND SIZE

By increasing the City's physical size and population, Minden could also increase its level of political influence and attractiveness to commercial and light industrial developments. Annexation has a way of encouraging new development, which, in turn, can help the tax base and create more job opportunities.

AVOID JURISDICTIONAL CONFUSION

Having a plan in place will ease the confusion of jurisdiction between the City and the County. It will also help Minden plan for future services by establishing an orderly and logical boundary and understanding of how growth will affect public infrastructure needs. This process would be beneficial for both the City and Kearney County, especially because changing boundaries between two different jurisdictions can be cumbersome if plans are not well communicated.

CONTROL FRINGE DEVELOPMENT

Planning for growth is important for the community as well as the land adjacent to the corporate limits. Finding a balance between development and existing land use requires time and planning. Infill development should be promoted until larger parcels of land are needed for growth. This will help avoid sprawling development and protect the agricultural land around the community. Any newly annexed land should be for the benefit of residential and commercial development. Public service needs should be assessed as the population continues to change. Through annexation, Minden can extend its zoning jurisdiction to adjacent areas and guide development to provide a safe and healthy environment for all residents and businesses throughout the community.

ANNEXATION PHASES

Annexation should follow the guidelines set forth through Nebraska State Statutes § 19-3052. As seen in Figure 4.3 - Annexation Plan Map, the proposed areas for the annexation plan are the following:

1. Area 1: Is located in southwest Minden. This land would be an appropriate area for a new residential subdivision. This land fits with the Future Land Use Plan and most of this proposed annexation would be used for single-family with some transitional zoning used to create multi-family developments. This section is ideal for phased developments, yet it allows decision-makers to plan for the entire residential development.

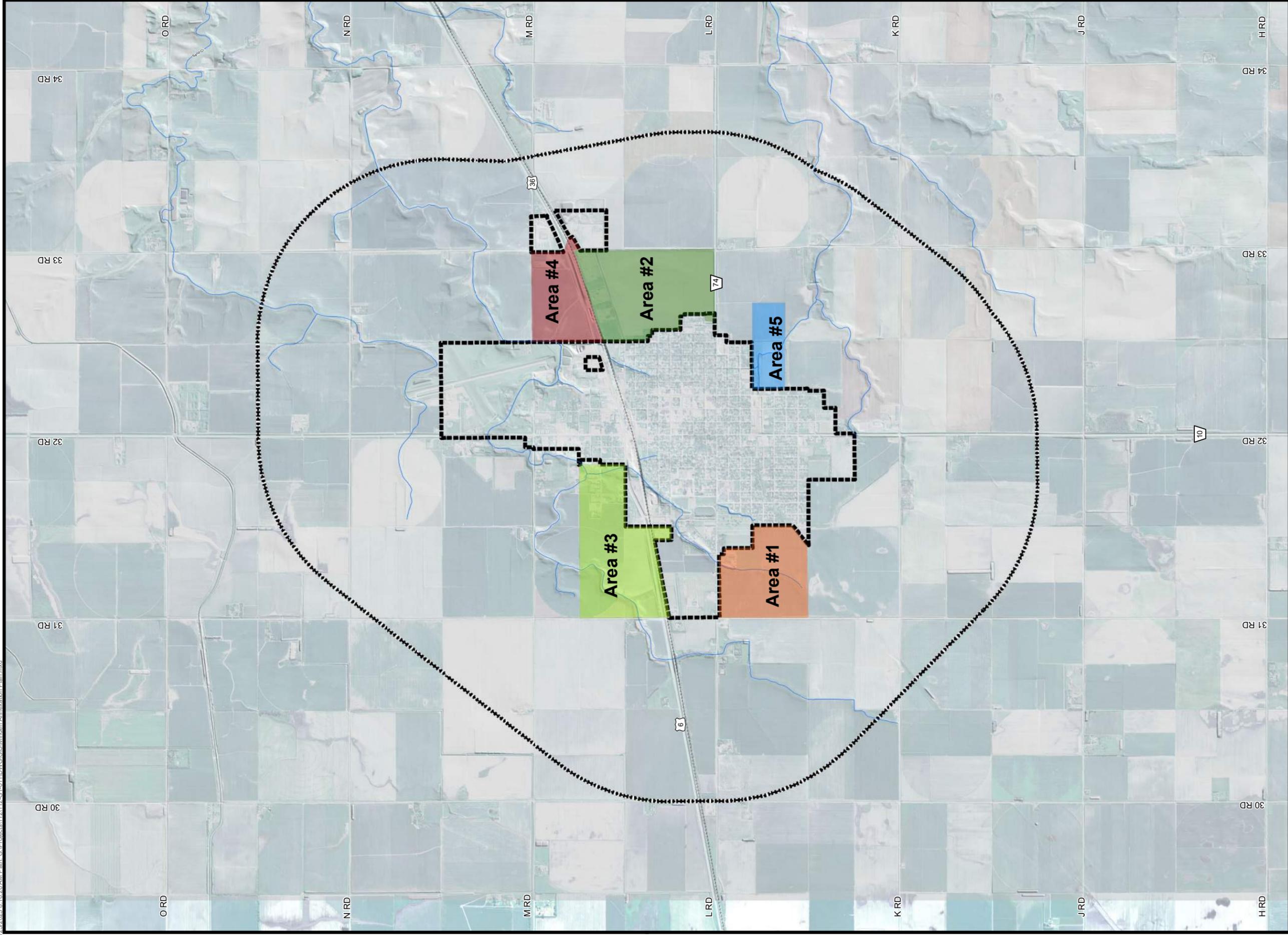
2. Area 2: Is located on the east side of Minden, sandwiched between Nebraska Highway 6/34 on the northern boundary and Nebraska Highway 74 on the southern boundary. This land could be used for commercial or light industrial developments, along the northern edge. It is situated near the BNSF Railroad and south of Highway 6/34 which provides many opportunities for land development. On the west side of this proposed annexation would be space for recreational amenities and greenspace. On the south side of the proposed annexation, along Fifth Street, offices or smaller commercial ventures could be placed to act as a buffer for the residential homes that are on the east side of town and any future residential developments, including single-family and multi-family developments in this area.

3. Area 3: Is located on the west side of Minden, located north of Nebraska Highway 6/34. This parcel of land lends itself to commercial development that would require Highway access and site visibility. This location of Minden would be excellent for commercial development because of its proximity and relationship to existing infrastructure. This land could be subdivided into smaller parcels or it could be sold as one large lot for a commercial endeavor that would need a lot of space to develop. Located on the north end of this proposed annexation, would make an ideal location for large-lot single-family homes. These lots would be ideal for families who would like acreage-like feel lots, yet they are close enough to the city and the amenities that Minden offers to its residents.

4. Area 4: Is located on the east side of Minden, north of Highway 6/34. This proposed annexation includes vacant land, as well as existing commercial businesses that are located along the Highway corridor. Like Area 2 and Area 3 this land has the same positive aspects of potential commercial development that can be used to promote the area.

5. Area 5: Is in southeast Minden, south of Nebraska Highway 74. This area was purchased by the CRA. This area is considered for Recreational Amenity Improvements and Additions, including a potential Ballfield and Swimming Pool Facility. The Ballfield and Swimming Complex would be home to four ballfields and possibly, a new Minden Swimming Pool.

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Legend

- Annexation Area 1
- Annexation Area 2
- Annexation Area 3
- Annexation Area 4
- Annexation Area 5

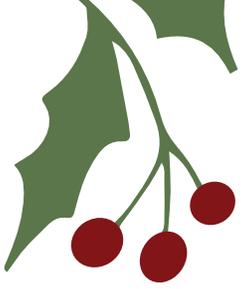
--- BNSF Rail Road

— Streams

ETJ

Minden Corporate Boundary

Figure 4.3
Annexation Plan Map
 Minden, Nebraska



Chapter 05

PUBLIC INPUT AND GOALS

This is the action section of Minden's Comprehensive Plan. It helps plan the goals, guidelines, regulations, and future practices. The purpose of this section is to help decision-makers implement the visions and actions presented by this plan through a realistic process that aligns with the community's resources. This section will cover the following components:

- PUBLIC INPUT
- GOALS

PUBLIC INPUT AND GOALS

Public input is the backbone of any successful comprehensive plan. It provides residents and stakeholders with the opportunity to voice their hopes and concerns for the community and shape future policy and development.

FIRST PUBLIC INPUT SESSION - COMPREHENSIVE PLAN KICK-OFF MEETING

Minden hosted their Kick-Off Meeting for the Comprehensive Plan on March 16th, 2022. The Kick-Off Meeting introduced the planning team and project to the community and was well attended. The Kick-Off meeting covered projects that have been completed within the last decade, including projects at the Water Treatment Plant, Sidewalk and ADA Compliance Improvements, Recreation Improvements, and the purchase of 30 acres of land east of the City corporate limits. Community members were asked to discuss a handful of topics, including nuisance properties at gateway entrances, progression for the community, and how the community needs to work together to plan for future generations and move beyond what has happened in the past. Many residents identified the need for the community to be “family orientated.” To achieve this the community needs to offer safe access to amenities; it needs to have a good restaurant, preferably a sit-down restaurant, and more recreational activities for all ages. During this meeting, there was a strong emphasis on retail and restaurant businesses that are going out of business and trying to determine how they can support those types of businesses so that they can start and stay in Minden.

SECOND PUBLIC INPUT SESSION - DEMOGRAPHICS & CONNECTIVITY MASTER PLAN

The second public input session was held on May 19th, 2022. This meeting also saw high attendance from residents. The meeting commenced with a discussion on the demographics of Minden, particularly compared to Peer Communities throughout Nebraska. The population in Minden’s average annual rate of change from 1940 to 2020 was approximately the same as the average annual rate of change from 2010 to 2020. Existing conditions, such as gateway entries, amenities and points of interest, educational institutions, civic buildings, religious assemblies, and tourist attractions, were also discussed at this session. The primary discussion at this input session was focused on connectivity for pedestrians and vehicles, including hiking and biking trails; sidewalk issues; and safety concerns. Another point of discussion during this meeting was recreational improvements and a proposal submitted to the City Council regarding spending a portion of the City’s American Rescue Plan Act dollars. Residents were encouraged to speak with their City Council representatives about improvements they would like to see throughout the community.

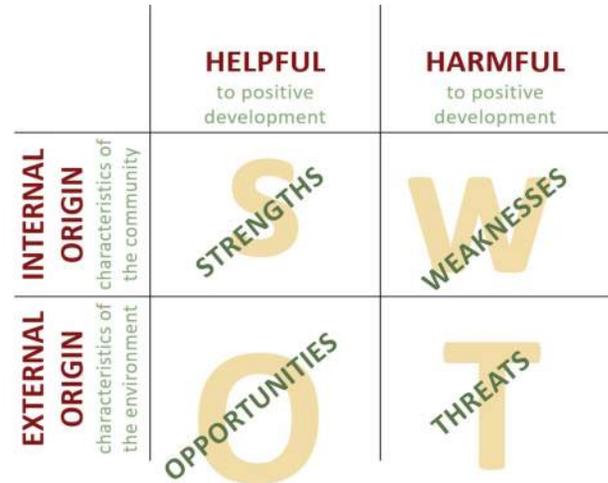
COMMUNITY INPUT SURVEY

Following the second public input session, an online, anonymous, survey was created to gather feedback from residents to help the City prioritize goals for the next ten years. A newspaper flyer was created and published in the Minden Courier. The newspaper flyer contained a QR code and URL link to the online survey, published through Kwik Survey. The flyer was posted at the Jensen Memorial Library, City Hall, Minden Post Office, Minden Exchange Bank & Trust, and First Bank & Trust Co. The City of Minden also published the flyer on the City of Minden’s Facebook page and the flyer was emailed with City of Minden Utility bills.

PUBLIC INPUT AND GOALS - Chapter 05

Hard copies of the survey were printed and provided to City Hall for residents to complete if they preferred that over an online survey. Residents were asked to complete the survey by July 22nd, 2022. The survey contained different ways for residents to share their feedback, including rating or selecting their responses and room for written responses. The responses from residents, both through the online survey and by completed hard copies was 359.

The online and hard copy results of the survey were compiled to analyze residents' opinions on important community factors. From the results, a SWOT analysis was developed. Strengths are viewed as assets to the community and areas the community members want to retain and continue to improve. Weaknesses are seen as areas that need improvement in the community. Opportunities are viewed as potential areas of gain for the future of the community and Threats are seen as aspects that may hinder the growth and development of Minden.



STRENGTHS - POSITIVE ASPECTS FOR MINDEN

- Minden Public Schools - Excellent Education
- Jensen Memorial Library
- Civil Services, including Fire Protection and EMS Services
- Excellent healthcare
- **DESTINATIONS**
 - Downtown Square
 - Pioneer Village
 - Minden Opera House
 - Kearney County Fair
 - Minden Country Club
- Employment, employment opportunities, room for advancement
- Minden West Estates – new houses for residents
- **MINDEN CHRISTMAS CITY FESTIVITIES**
 - The Light Parade
 - The Light of the World Pageant
- **EVENTS**
 - Dawg Days
 - Fourth of July Festivities
 - Bandfest Parade

PUBLIC INPUT AND GOALS - Chapter 05
WEAKNESSES - AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT FOR MINDEN

• **PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE**

- Lack of sidewalks or quality of sidewalks in all neighborhoods
- Street quality, including unpaved dirt roads.
- Water quality

• **AMENITIES**

- Lack of food places to eat, fast food/drive-thru and sit-down restaurants.
- Need a coffee shop.
- Lack of pool or splash pad
- Lack of public gym facilities
- Lack of hotels, motels, or Airbnb's

• **HOUSING**

- Lack of good, affordable housing
- Lack of good, affordable rental units

• **APPEARANCES**

- Buildings and lots in need of repair
- Pioneer Village
- Main entrance off Highway 10 needs to be cleaned up.

• **COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

- Need more participation from all community members.
- Need more participation.
- The City Council needs to be more progressive to get the important things done.
- It's hard to know what is going on with Minden Public Schools if you don't have a child that attends there or a member of your household that works there.

OPPORTUNITIES - AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY & GROWTH FOR MINDEN

- **AMENITIES**
 - Park Improvements, including a new pool or splash pad.
 - Hike & Bike trail
 - Pickleball courts
- **LOCATION**
 - Near Kearney, Grand Island, and Hastings
 - Serves as a Bedroom Community for these larger communities.
- Senior Citizen Programs
- Tourism Opportunities
 - Including the Christmas Festivities, Fourth of July Festivities, Dawg Days, and BandFest Parade
 - Pioneer Village – Free Admission Day/Weekend for residents of Minden
- All Class Reunion
- Minden Opera House
- Downtown Square

THREATS - OBSTACLES TO MINDEN'S GROWTH

- Infrastructure – poor water quality
- **HOUSING AND PROPERTIES**
 - The lack of houses to purchase, housing to rent, housing for disabled residents, housing for older adults, homeownership assistance, and housing rehabilitation assistance.
 - Residents with property along the main roads won't do anything to improve their property.
- **COMMUNITY SUPPORT**
 - Entrepreneurship Support
 - Businesses closing
 - Youth Retention
- **OUTWARD MIGRATION**
 - Job Opportunities and residents wanting to be closer to their jobs, moving from Minden.
 - Loss of business to outside communities, including restaurants, retail, and entertainment
 - Loss of tax dollars to surrounding communities due to a lack of lodging, restaurants, and other amenities
 - Variety of Grocery Shopping
 - Loss of school children coming to visit the Pioneer Village, compared to other local tourist attractions in Kearney, Hastings, and Grand Island
 - Support for our tourist attractions such as Minden Opera House and Pioneer Village

FINAL PUBLIC INPUT SESSION - HOUSING, LAND USE, ANNEXATION, PRIORITIES, AND GOALS

The final public input session was held on December 12th, 2022 and was well attended by community members. The meeting commenced with an overview of the City's S.W.O.T. analysis and demographic overview from the previous meetings. Residents were applauded for completing the Community Input Survey, with 359 completed. From the S.W.O.T. analysis, a handful of priorities and goals were presented to the attendees.

During the final public input session, Existing Land Use and Future Land Use was discussed. Existing land use patterns were presented and discussed. Participants were then asked to take "never" out of their vocabulary and imagine everything they wanted for their community as possible, including who may own property that was being discussed. Residents discussed possible infill development, where growth should occur, and what services are needed the most in Minden. One area that was discussed intensively was the Northwest Quadrant on Highway 6/34. This area is one that was discussed over ten years ago in the last comprehensive plan and is still being discussed. This area has the greatest amount of average annual daily traffic and serves as the gateway to the community.

Residents and City Leaders were encouraged to look at gateway entrances as the front door to the community, it gives visitors the first views of the City and should be guarded. If needed to ensure that there is a high standard of development, City Leaders should consider something along the lines of an overlay district, that creates a vision and protects what the entrance looks like. The benefit of comprehensive plans gives residents and City Leaders ideas and tools to talk about zoning regulations, consider what certain areas may look like, and ensure that if a disaster happens, how the City can make sure the area is built back to the City standard. City leaders were excited to present improvements to recreational facilities such as pickleball courts, splash pad, and hike/bike trails because of funding through the American Rescue Plan Act.

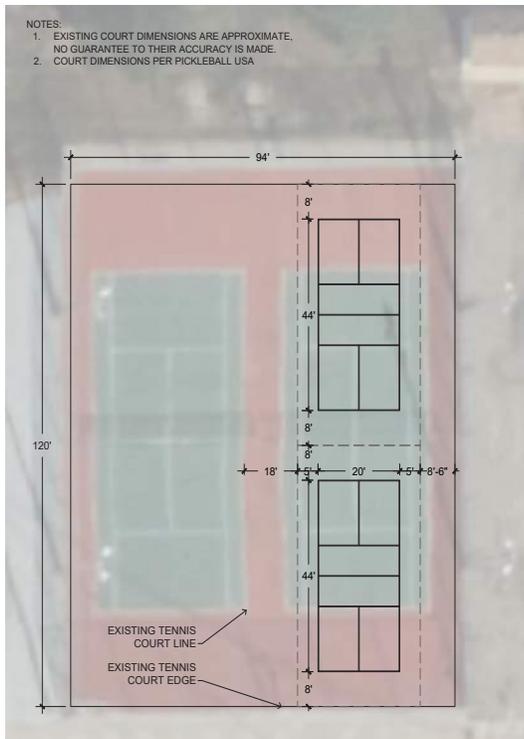
PRIORITIES, GOALS, AND ACTION STEPS

This section is in place to give ideas, summaries, and guidelines for development and growth in Minden over the next ten years. These goals are a combination of information gathered from the public input sessions and data analysis. These goals are realistic in nature but allow the community to continually have something to strive toward.

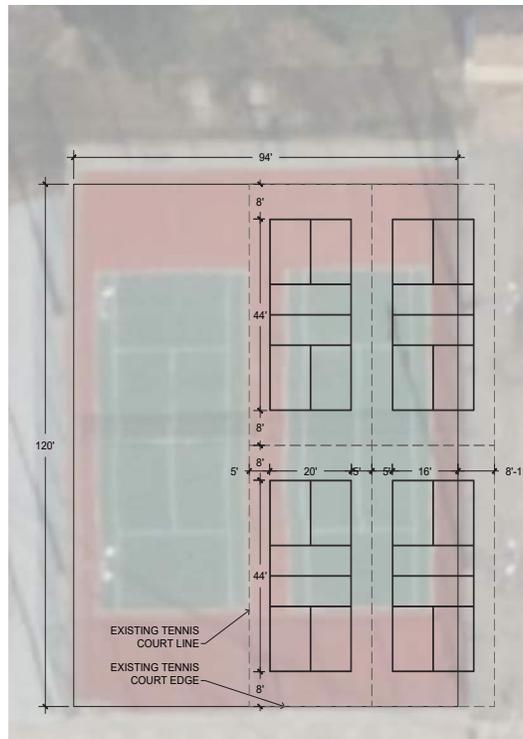
AMENITIES

PICKLEBALL COURTS

As discussed earlier in this plan and at the last two public input sessions, City Leaders have plans in place to build pickleball courts in Minden, with funding available from the American Rescue Plan Act. Following the City's review of its 2014 Strategic Plan, in 2021, community leaders were approached by several residents requesting an outdoor pickleball facility. The pickleball community utilizes an indoor facility to practice and play but has requested a designated outdoor space. In 2022, City leaders completed a Pickleball Court Study with Design Studio. The conceptual court layout, shown below, identified two options for the City of Minden to proceed with resurfacing a tennis court at the American Legion Park to accommodate pickleball courts. This short-term goal will require one tennis court to remain a tennis court and be resurfaced while constructing two pickleball courts, replacing the second tennis court. The option selected does not require the City to make drastic changes to the layout of the facility. This park renovation will offer the Pickleball Club and the City of Minden the ability to attract visitors to this facility. The City plans to accomplish this renovation in the next three years by obligating funds by December 31, 2024 and expending the funds by December 31, 2026.



1 COURT OPTION 1
 L-01 1"=20'-0"



2 COURT OPTION 2
 L-01 1"=20'-0"



Design Studio
by DSI



PICKLEBALL COURT STUDY
MINDEN, NE

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REVISIONS:		
REV #	DATE	DESCRIPTION

INFORMATION ONLY

PROJECT NO: -

DATE: AUG. 02, 2022

SHEET NAME:
CONCEPTUAL COURT LAYOUT

SHEET #:
L-01

SPLASH PAD

In the 2016 Recreational Master Plan and Pool Study, the City identified future projects for Chautauqua Park. These projects included renovating the bandshell to enhance the overall space to attract visitors to events and special gatherings and adding a splash pad. A splash pad has been a requested amenity by many residents and after further discussion the City is proceeding with installing a splash pad at Chautauqua Park. The Chautauqua Park Splash Pad is seen below in conceptual computer renderings. The planned splash pad will be ADA-accessible and will be partially funded through the Nebraska Game & Parks Commission. The City plans to accomplish this renovation in the next three years.



Chautauqua Park Splashpad - NE
Version F - 3/10/39

View 1

NEW POOL

The existing pool facility was examined along with the feasibility of building a new facility during the 2016 Recreational Master Plan. This is a carryover goal from the 2013-2023 Minden Comprehensive Plan and one that City Leaders should continue to place as a priority. City Leaders should consider requesting updated probable construction costs to improve the bathhouse and swimming pool versus the probable construction costs to replace the bathhouse and swimming pool with a new swimming pool of equal size and a bathhouse with a capacity for 200 patrons.

DEVELOPED HIKE/BIKE TRAIL

The City of Minden has already been working on developing portions of a Hike/Bike Trail connecting various areas. As seen throughout the community input survey, there is a strong community desire for a more developed Hike/Bike Trail. Hike/Bike trails have the ability to provide new opportunities for residents and visitors, while preserving and creating open and safe routes. City Leaders should consider developing a route that provides a safe route to schools and other community amenities, such as recreation and leisure. These trails are best utilized when they link together important areas of town, while minimizing the need to cross streets, especially highly traversed streets in Minden.

The proposed Hike/Bike trail, shown in Figure 5.1, could be constructed along the corporate limits of Minden within the City's extraterritorial jurisdiction. The Hike/Bike trail could connect the American Legion Park/Augie Nelson Optimist Park to the proposed sports complex to the Outdoor Classroom located near the Minden High School and continue north, crossing Highway 6/34 along the Pioneer Village corridor connecting to the American Legion Ballfield and the Kearney County Fairgrounds. This trail should not be constructed at the same time, but rather, it should be constructed in phases. Flashing signal lights should be utilized to provide a safe way to cross Highway 10.

When proceeding with the development of the Hike/Bike Trail, it is crucial to remember the big picture during the planning and implementation phases. City Leaders could gather further community input on what sections of trails, they would like to see, and then prioritize those.

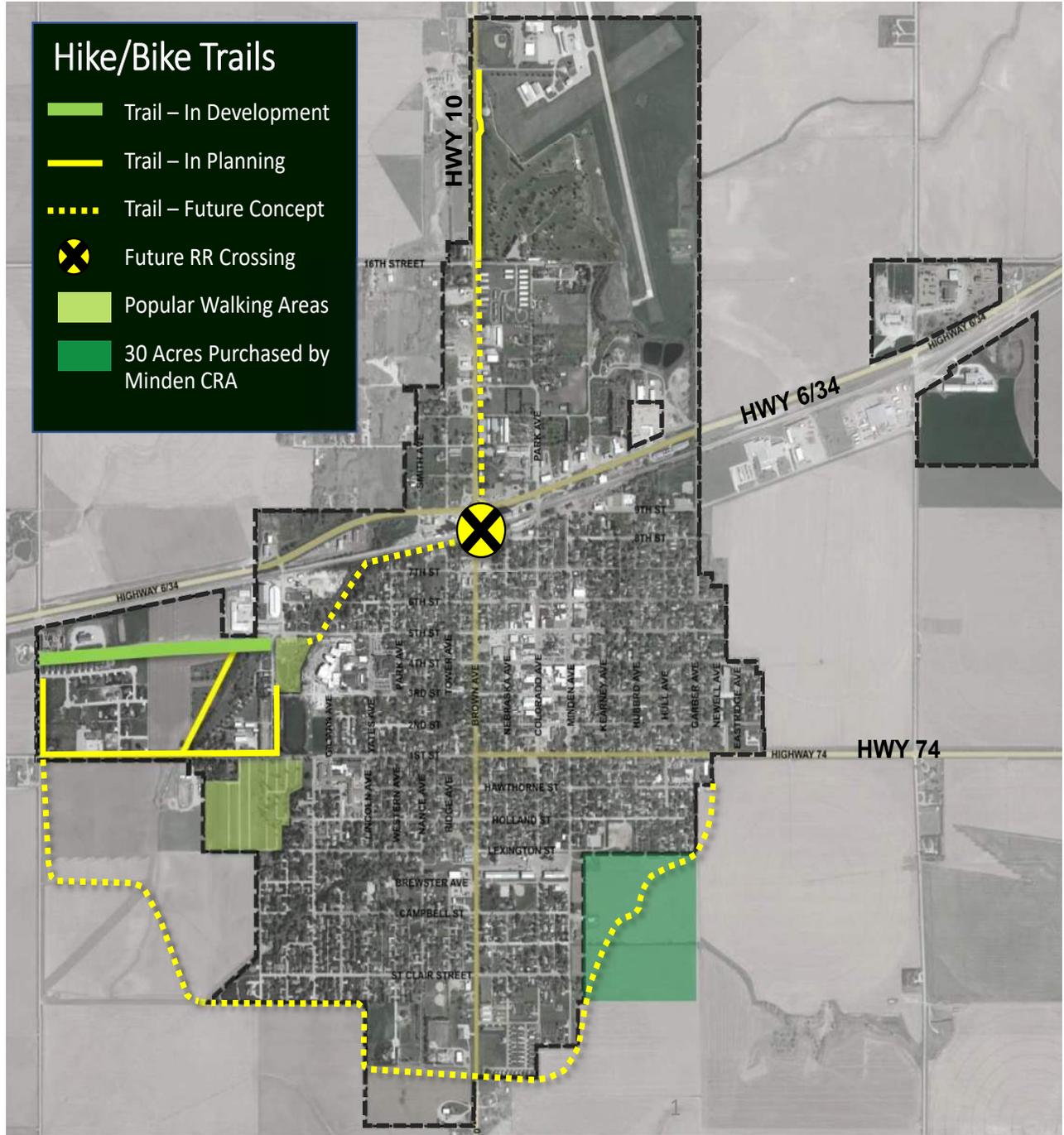


FIGURE 5.1: HIKE/BIKE TRAILS

IMPROVE THE EXISTING HOUSING MARKET

As discussed earlier in this plan, there is a housing shortage for both rental and owner-occupied units. The obvious answer is to develop more housing but to accomplish this, private developers or local investors must be willing to participate. Otherwise, residential development will only happen when someone constructs their own private residence. Within Minden, there are a few options for developable lots, including infill lots, spread throughout the community. Having options available for interested parties is crucial for improving the existing housing market in the community.

Developing new housing will help attract new residents to Minden, creating a chain reaction – with new homes available, families could move to town and enroll their children in Minden Public Schools, keeping Minden a viable community with a high quality of life for all residents. More families in the community may also create more jobs. If more jobs are available, it is likely employees will want to live in the community. Decent, attractive, and affordable homes, as well as shovel-ready lots, need to be available to ensure new employees will live in Minden instead of nearby communities. With such a close correlation between the housing market and the economic climate for businesses, it is even more crucial for housing market improvements to be taken seriously and made a top priority.

High-priority projects discussed by Minden’s residents and City leaders were constructing new homes, improving existing homes, and creating a demolition program for vacant, substandard homes. Housing has become a major challenge for many communities in Nebraska, big and small and Minden is no exception. There are a few homes in need of demolition and yet there is a need for more quality, affordable homes, and rental units. The City must encourage new home construction as well as find feasible ways to demolish vacant, unsafe structures throughout the community.

Housing needs in Minden include the demand for additional affordable rental units, mid-level housing for purchase and rent, and incentives for new construction and home improvements. Residents understand the need for additional housing and realize the importance the housing market plays on the overall viability of the community.

The housing affordability analysis also indicated a need for homes valued at less than \$25,000, fitting what residents said during public input sessions. It would be challenging to construct a home for under \$180,000 therefore this mid-level housing should come from existing structures in the community. Updates need to be made to modernize and increase the value of homes to fit the desired price range and attract buyers desiring move-in-ready homes.

Another option is the construction of plain stock housing. This would allow for more affordable housing construction and could then in turn allow homeowners to customize and make updates when they can afford them. Basements do not need to be finished and garages do not need to be built if there is space and the potential ability to make improvements in the future. The public-private partnerships will be key as the City tries to accomplish housing market improvements. If private developers are not able to relieve the pressure on the housing market, local investors or committees may need to implement a plan for home development.

PUBLIC INPUT AND GOALS - Chapter 05

To make housing market improvements the City should work to meet the following objectives:

INVENTORY INFILL LOTS AND PROMOTE INFILL DEVELOPMENT

Infill development, by its nature, is less expensive because there is no need to extend public utility services. Infill development utilizes existing public infrastructure, filling in vacant properties with residences. The City can save funds by avoiding sprawl and the need to expand public infrastructure to new developments on the outskirts of the community. A few potential infill areas in Minden would be ideal locations for multi-family development. These areas should be considered for a duplex to four-plex development because the multiple vacant lots adjacent to one another provide enough land for multi-family development.

There is a large need for rental housing and constructing these units on infill lots will help keep development costs down. The City and/or Economic Development Office should create a database or inventory of lots available for residential construction. Flyers and maps could also be created to help with marketing efforts. Location, current zoning, dimensions, costs, and ownership should all be included within the flyers and maps to market the lots for new home construction.

Another area that could become an infill residential development is in the current Elementary School location. The concept of having one Kindergarten through a 12th-grade campus has been previously discussed in Minden. If this were to come to fruition, the Elementary School building on the east edge of the lot could be rehabilitated into an apartment complex. The existing playground could be kept intact and would be beneficial for families who live in the apartment complex as well as to other residents in Minden, serving as another green space within Minden. The northwest corner of the block could be kept as the parking lot for the apartment complex or the lot could be reconfigured to satisfy further needs of the development.

DETERMINE EMPLOYEE HOUSING NEEDS

By working with local employers, the City may gain a further understanding of real-time and projected housing needs in the community. Having these discussions with employers is beneficial: it shows support for the local businesses and opens the line of communication between the City and employers. Local businesses may also be willing to help with improving housing market conditions. Examples from other communities of business involvement in the housing market include businesses providing down-payment assistance for their employees, businesses purchasing homes to rent to their employees, and businesses building spec houses or affordable workforce housing to offer to new or existing employees. There are many ways businesses may want to get involved to benefit the community and their company as well, but conversations must be had between City leaders and employers to determine if they are willing or able to assist with housing market improvements.

LOCATE AREAS FOR FUTURE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

The City should use the Future Land Use Plan Map to establish target areas for all types of residential development including large lots, single-family homes, transitional housing, and other types of medium-density rental housing to fill all the needs within the community. Although the City may not need to develop additional residential subdivisions at this time, it is important to target areas that are attractive for residential development to successfully plan for growth and development.

CLEAN-UP VACANT OUT LOTS AND UNINHABITABLE PROPERTIES

All vacant lots and vacant uninhabitable homes could be potential properties for infill residential development. The City should access different avenues available to them to assist with the clean-up of vacant lots and uninhabitable properties. Infill development is important, efforts should be made to create more availability of lots. Also, by renovating vacant lots and uninhabitable homes the City will rid the community of unnecessary eye sores and safety and health hazards. Nuisance abatement, TIF, grant programs, and City dollars are a few ways that Minden can demolish substandard properties and revitalize lots.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) can be used for the demolition of structures in a redevelopment area that the City determines to be unsafe or unfit for human occupancy. This is new to the Community Development Law with LB 729; Minden should investigate this option to see how it could benefit the community.

ENFORCE PROPERTY UPKEEP THROUGH A NUISANCE ABATEMENT PROGRAM

All vacant lots and vacant uninhabitable homes are potential properties for infill residential development. A strong nuisance abatement program, whether completed by the City and legal counsel or by a third-party source, is important to encourage property upkeep and provide ways to appropriately encourage renovations or property demolition of non-compliant, unsafe structures. Nuisance abatement is the enforcement of nuisance codes ensuring all properties comply with City codes and abating properties out of compliance. The process includes the City Council approval and authority, code review, letters mailed to non-compliant property owners, time to allow property owners to cure any nuisances, and further legal action, if necessary when working with non-compliant property owners.

INCENTIVIZE PROPERTY UPKEEP

The City should work to incentivize as well as continually follow through with nuisance abatement throughout the community to encourage residents to maintain their properties. A clean community is attractive to visitors, potential residents, and potential businesses. A “Yard of the Month” program or some type of incentive could be created to encourage residents to maintain their properties and take pride in the way the community looks. Property upkeep is essential as the community works to encourage new development.

CREATE AN INVESTMENT GROUP TO DEVELOP SPEC OR STOCK HOMES

Stakeholder citizens should be encouraged to create an Investment Group of some type to build spec housing in Minden. Often, people are afraid to construct a new home on their own. If a group of residents takes this on, it will limit individual liability, while providing some relief for the housing market. If the home can be marketed and sold before completing construction, it is more desirable for the contractor, investor, and homebuyer. The homebuyer is then able to personalize the home to fit their needs, the investor can get their return, and the contractor can work with the homebuyer to finalize the home based on their needs and wants. Therefore, it is encouraged to market the home before and/or during construction so the home does not sit uninhabited because finishing decisions do not fit what buyers currently desire. This may also be an opportunity to develop “plain stock housing” to create a more affordable construction option which would then allow homeowners to personalize and complete updates when it best suits them.

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Improvements to the commercial sector and providing opportunities for increased commercial development is another goal prioritized by Minden's stakeholders. Several services and businesses greatly attribute to the quality of life in Minden. Commercial goals, determined by Minden's stakeholders, include developing additional and marketing existing shovel-ready sites for new commercial development, creating an incubator space to promote entrepreneurship and business start-ups, and making improvements to the overall Downtown District.

To promote commercial development, the City should work to meet the following objectives:

TARGET AREAS FOR PRIME COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The City should target areas of land for prime commercial development. This land has access to the larger transportation network including Highways 10 and 6/34. Visibility and land availability are important aspects of commercial business ventures and should be considered when locating prime commercial and light industrial real estate. This land should be located within, or close to, the existing corporate limits and public infrastructure and adjacent to existing commercial and/or light industrial businesses. Once areas have been targeted for commercial development, the pros and cons of allowing other types of development on the property should be heavily weighed to prevent unnecessary urban sprawl. Creating an engineering site design will assist leaders in understanding if the area can be served with utilities and how those utilities will access each property. It is also important to leave some of the land development flexible to best fit the needs of a business or developer.



PROMOTE BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION PROGRAM

An effective way to retain existing businesses is by focusing efforts on an ongoing Business Retention and Expansion (BR&E) program. This will help maintain relationships with business owners through open lines of communication between the City, the Chamber of Commerce, and businesses. It will help the City and the Chamber of Commerce understand and prioritize employers' needs. This is a job the Chamber can continue to focus on and work towards meeting with business owners on an annual basis. Each of those interviews or conversations should be recorded and formatted so the Chamber can keep a database to ensure that the Chamber and the City know business owners' needs, can help recruit employees when needed, can help with any expansion needs, can search for possible grant funding or other development resources, and can assist with succession planning.

JOB AND EMPLOYEE RECRUITMENT

The City of Minden and the Chamber of Commerce should market the community to potential business developers as well as determine current business recruitment needs. By working together, it will be easier to market and recruit for a variety of positions which will help fulfill the needs of employers in the community as well as recruit potential businesses. This collaboration would show a strong support system within the community. This level of support and a growing economy would be an attractive quality when a business owner is looking to relocate or open a new location.

STRIVE TOWARDS DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

Residents and City leaders alike wish to see revitalization efforts continue to be focused on Minden's Downtown Square. Because of the limited space available within the Downtown Square, vacancies should be filled by retail and/or basic service sector businesses. To have a distinct Downtown Square draw, the sidewalks need to be filled, storefronts need to be decorated, and businesses need to be open. Some businesses, even in the service sector, do not fulfill all these needs for Minden's Downtown Square. The selective retail space should be left to retail and entertainment-oriented businesses which encourage pedestrian traffic throughout the day, evenings, and weekends. During public input sessions, residents discussed their desires for additional retail, entertainment, and service businesses in Minden's Downtown Square. Residents need to support existing and new businesses to keep storefronts occupied and open.

COMPLETE SUBSTANDARD & BLIGHT STUDY FOR PRIME COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE

Because commercial development is heavily hinged on attracting private investors and business owners, Minden should find ways to incentivize new businesses and grow the tax base. Completing a Substandard & Blight analysis is necessary before offering Tax Increment Financing as an incentive tool for new commercial development. It is imperative to complete the Substandard & Blight Study before any commercial development takes place. TIF can be used to encourage business. The City should consider meeting this objective before marketing prime commercial real estate.

MARKET PRIME COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE

The City has shovel-ready commercial sites along Highway 6/34. These sites vary in size and are ideal for new businesses wanting to locate in Minden. Shovel-ready lots, along with other identified areas for prime commercial real estate should be marketed to potential businesses and developers. It is important to utilize all marketing sources available, especially online sources. The City should not only market each individual site but also what the City can offer businesses including any local, regional, or state development incentives. Location, lot dimensions, current zoning, ownership, availability of infrastructure, connection to the transportation network, and potential costs along with development incentives should all be marketed to potential businesses.

PUBLIC INPUT AND GOALS - Chapter 05

A database of existing commercial and light industrial sites should be created to attract new commercial ventures. One statewide resource the City should utilize to share land and building availability information, as well as a community profile, to help attract new businesses is Location One Information Systems (LOIS). This online database is utilized by the State of Nebraska, as well as many other states, to share current information with potential businesses. For example, an owner wanting to expand his/her manufacturing business could visit the LOIS website and search for the specific requirements necessary for his/her business including location, land availability based on size, and availability for public utilities. The site would then highlight available land logged into LOIS.

DEVELOP ANNEXATION PLAN OF PRIME COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE

Any land targeted for prime commercial development that does not fall within the existing corporate limits boundary should be analyzed for possible annexation. Having commercial property within the corporate limits is important to expand the tax base as well as offer certain development incentives such as TIF to potential businesses. Also, if a new business wants to utilize public infrastructure it needs to be located within the corporate limits.

ALIGN DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES

Aligning development incentives for all local, regional, and state sources could help attract potential business. When marketing any real estate, the City should also show what development incentives are offered in the area. When developers are looking to locate a new commercial business venture, they also consider how development incentives can entice them to select a certain location. Having all development incentives labeled and readily available for businesses to utilize will be helpful when encouraging development.

FURTHER ENHANCE AMENITIES/PROMOTE TOURISM

Minden has many amenities to offer its residents and visitors. Residents and community stakeholders also realize the value-added amenities can add to the quality of life in the community. Below is a list of potential amenity enhancements to improve the quality of life, recreational opportunities, and tourism. Community amenities are crucial to the quality of life for every person within the community and many community amenities help draw visitors to the community. These goals were discussed by residents during the public input sessions for this Comprehensive Plan and do not cover all possible improvements that may be needed or desired in the future:



To expand community amenities and promote tourism, the City should work to meet the following objectives:

ESTABLISH LOCATIONS FOR EACH AMENITY

With a long list of goals for additional amenities, residents and community leaders should devise a plan, locations, and timelines for each amenity. Proximity to other community amenities, the public, and access/visibility for visitors should all be taken into consideration when planning for these amenities. Once each goal has a proposed location and timeline, it will be simpler to establish a development plan.

PRIORITIZE PROJECTS

The City should create a prioritized list for future amenities. Once priorities have been set, the City can work with community groups to establish an implementation plan. It is important to identify priority projects when implementing the goals outlined in this plan.

SELECT GROUPS TO SPEARHEAD EACH PROJECT

Responsibility for implementing these goals should not fall entirely on the City. The City should promote and work with community groups to determine who will be in charge of which projects. Once groups have been assigned to their projects, they can implement them based on the timeline determined by the City and community groups.

ENGAGE IN MARKETING EFFORTS

The City and Chamber of Commerce, as well as other determined community groups, should market all amenities and attractions in the community to draw people to Minden. This also helps remind residents about the wonderful benefits of living in Minden. Marketing objectives are outlined on the following pages. These should be completed to help educate and inform existing and potential residents and visitors about all the things Minden has to offer.

FORMULATE TIMELINE/FUNDING OPTIONS

Because so many groups will be involved in the development of community amenities, a timeline should be created based on priority projects and funding availability. This timeline should be followed by the City and all community groups involved. Funding options, including grant opportunities, should also be determined. Typically grant applications can only be submitted by a community for one project. Therefore, it is necessary to determine which goals best meet the grant application requirements and determine how each goal will be funded. Currently, there are grant opportunities available for different community amenities. However, these grants are highly competitive and are not available for all types of projects. The City needs to have other sources of funding for amenity development because grant funds may require a monetary match or may not be available or accessible at all.

ENHANCE GATEWAY ENTRANCES AND COMMUNITY BEAUTIFICATION

Gateway entrances and overall community beautification were discussed during the public input sessions held for the Comprehensive Plan. Not only were the issues discussed, but ideas were developed to improve the aesthetics of the area. Unappealing gateway entrances can provide visitors with a bad reflection of what the community is and what it has to offer. After an individual has lived in the community for several years, one starts to overlook the negative aspects or the visually unappealing areas. All residents have the ability to partake in community beautification and holding not only residents, but City leaders accountable for ensuring the goals of the community are maintained.

However, an enhanced gateway entrance along the U.S. Highway 10 and along Highway 6/34 corridor are Minden's first impression and an opportunity to market to visitors. To improve the corridor through town, adjacent property owners will need to be supportive and understand the overall goal that Minden is trying to achieve. Shown below are some potential or existing locations for gateway entrance signage welcoming visitors to Minden, the Christmas City.



There are many ways to create beautiful and welcoming corridors. To enhance the highway corridors and develop community beautification, the City should work to meet the following objectives:

CREATE A GATEWAY ENTRANCE AND COMMUNITY BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE

A Gateway Entrance Beautification Committee should be created, or an existing community group should be empowered, to help drive these projects. Typically landscaping, lighting, signage, and screening are the main projects involved. It will be important to achieve aesthetic continuity for all improvements. It's important to have a diverse committee willing to devote their time to beautifying the community. Having a plan or visuals in place before making any changes will be important to stimulate public support and develop a cohesive look to match the City's brand. There is no right or wrong answer to how this process will unfold, and it will be up to the community to determine the best method. Before any changes are implemented, it's recommended that the Committee present the City Council with their proposed changes for approval, to ensure that the changes are in line with the City's Comprehensive Plan.

CREATE A BEAUTIFICATION VISION AND BRAND

This vision should encompass the entire community for all beautification projects as opposed to having a mixture of several different “looks” or products used. A beautification vision and brand is important throughout the entire community not just the highway corridor or the gateway entrance, so any ideas or themes should be carried into the Downtown District, public parks, or any residential neighborhoods. As with any marketing campaign, it’s important for the City of Minden to have a cohesive beautification brand and vision. The City can easily expand on their current branding of the Christmas City when establishing their beautification brand.



CONSTRUCT GATEWAY ENTRANCE SIGNAGE

Gateway entrance signage should be considered for highway corridors or gateway entrances. An example of gateway entrance signage along North U.S. Highway 10 at the Minden Corporate Limits, would be a sign near the Minden Airport pointing and directing traffic towards the Downtown Square. Signage should not only be informational, but also attractive.



ESTABLISH WAYFINDING SIGNAGE

Wayfinding signage should also be considered for highway corridors or gateway entrance improvements. One example of wayfinding signage would be along U.S. Highway 10 or Brown Avenue, informing drivers of the location of the Downtown Square. Other wayfinding locations could include, Minden Public Schools location, Jensen Memorial Library, Pioneer Village, or recreational facilities, such as the new Splash Pad, Pickleball Courts, Baseball fields, or swimming pool. A computer rendering shown below, shows the potential wayfinding signage directing visitors to the Downtown Minden Square.



ENCOURAGE SCREENING OPTIONS

Screening will make the most noticeable improvement due to some unattractive land uses located on both sides of the highway corridors. Screening could also be beneficial for property owners because the screening can act as a sound buffer from highway traffic. These screens should be complementary to other efforts being established along the corridor. A cohesive look starting from one entrance sign and carrying through the community to the opposite end creates a distinct appeal and enhances the community brand.

CREATE AN OVERLAY DISTRICT

To protect particular areas within Minden, City leaders should continue to analyze the potential of an overlay zoning district. An overlay zone would be an additional zoning district that is laid over the top of two or more zoning districts – usually to introduce an additional standard(s) or regulation(s) along some feature. The overlay district could be used along a road or highway, requiring aesthetic regulations, along a commercial corridor, requiring driveway access or landscaping standards, or in a historic district, requiring historic integrity or preservation regulations.

IMPROVE PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

Minden's officials are taking the necessary steps to resolve some of the ongoing issues with public infrastructure. Improving and expanding public infrastructure is an ongoing task. The most important step is to prioritize the tasks required for updating and improving public infrastructure. Once priorities have been set, the City can begin to plan and budget for necessary repairs, updates, and improvements as well as evaluate all of the potential funding sources. Public infrastructure needs and improvements are listed below according to each infrastructure system. Infrastructure needs and projects must be continually assessed and adjusted by the City as issues or concerns arise. At this time, the City has completed some recent improvements to public infrastructure and will need to continue to assess needs on an annual basis.

The City must continually prioritize project needs and evaluate funding sources for public infrastructure improvements:

WATER

The City has been working with Engineers to continually assess the City's water, coming up with and making improvements to the City's water system. The City is continually analyzing multiple funding resources to help offset the costs of these much-needed improvements. The City's water was not only discussed during the public input sessions but throughout the Community Input Survey. When asked about their level of satisfaction with the following infrastructure categories, 68 percent of respondents cited they were very unsatisfied with the City's Water Quality. City Leaders should continue to place priority on the City's water, focusing on water quality and water pressure to ensure that any new developments, residential, or commercial have access to adequate supplies. Other improvements include the need to extend the water main to areas of new development or potential development and provide City services to marketable areas for commercial and residential development.

PAVING/STORMWATER DRAINAGE

The City's 1- & 6-Year Road Plan can be found in the Transportation section of Chapter Two of this plan. These maps show road improvements planned for 2022/23 by the City as well as road improvement goals for the next five years. Because of the aging street infrastructure and several streets with gravel surfacing the City needs to continue its work on street improvements. To extend the life of the concrete pavement, the City will need to continually monitor the streets and fix large cracks and potholes. Other future projects include paving and stormwater drainage extension projects necessary for future growth.

SIDEWALKS/ADA COMPLIANCE

Minden's residents discussed their issues and concerns with the condition and lack of sidewalks in the community. Improving the sidewalks and following ADA compliance guidelines are important goals for the community. An updated comprehensive sidewalk inventory should be used to analyze areas in need of sidewalks and existing sidewalks in need of repair. Approximately 52 percent of the platted community is lacking sidewalk infrastructure.

The condition of existing sidewalks and the presence of ADA ramps have not been evaluated. A sidewalk inventory is an important step in understanding the overall need for pedestrian accessibility improvement. A sidewalk inventory analyzes the condition and presence of each sidewalk and ramp to determine the overall needs of the community. This would help the City formulate a plan for improving existing and constructing new sidewalks.

Sidewalk improvements require funding and resident support to turn into actual results. For example, creating a cost-share program between the City and property owners to split improvement costs could be a feasible way for the City to address sidewalk improvements. Some financial assistance may entice residents to put forth funds toward the development of ADA-accessible sidewalks. The City could set a budget each year and residents could apply for funds to assist with making accessibility improvements throughout the City.

Pedestrian accessibility throughout the community is important for residents, especially between key features in the City such as the swimming pool, the schools, the Downtown Square, medical facilities, City-owned parks, and the Jensen Memorial Library. To improve accessibility for all pedestrians the City must prioritize these improvements. Federal ADA compliance regulations were updated in 2010 and City leaders are aware of the related goals. They are working toward making Minden an ADA-compliant community, but it requires time, funding, and community support. The City will continually work to resolve this matter making it a goal to accomplish accessibility for all residents and visitors.

TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE

City residents and leaders would like to see technology infrastructure improved in Minden to provide more opportunities for businesses and employees. Increased bandwidth and other technological advances for providing a solid, progressive infrastructure in Minden would advance many opportunities to work from home as well as increase abilities for existing and new businesses. It is a goal of City leaders to make these upgrades and improvements to provide progressive technology infrastructure. This will help support a strong economic base in Minden and provide a high quality of life for residents who rely on and enjoy technology.

DEVELOP MARKETING CAMPAIGN

Creating and marketing a community brand to existing and potential residents and visitors is important when developing an image. The City needs to create a marketing campaign to promote existing businesses and capitalize on the community's ability to grow.

City leaders, along with the Minden Chamber of Commerce realized the importance of creating a "Shop in Minden" campaign. Residents have the world at their fingertips, with so many options to cater to their shopping needs, therefore the City and the Chamber of Commerce wanted to focus on helping the City's small business owners keep their sales in the community. In the first phase of the "Shop IN Minden" campaign, the Chamber of Commerce provided all current members with various marketing materials, such as digital logos, shopping bag stuffers, and window signs to use in their stores, on their websites, and on social media. The Chamber features a "Deal of the Week" on its Facebook and Twitter pages to help promote local businesses. The City, along with the Chamber of Commerce, needs to continue its marketing campaign to promote existing businesses and capitalize on the City's ability to grow.

To develop any new marketing campaign, or update any current marketing campaign, the City should work to meet the following objectives:

DEVELOP A BRAND

The City needs an easily identifiable image to market to residents and non-residents alike. Branding and marketing a community is becoming more and more important. The brand needs to be instantly recognizable and representative of the entire community. A brand could include a logo, slogan, color scheme, and theme which represents the community.

ESTABLISH ROLES FOR MARKETING

As with community amenity development, not all marketing should be left to the City. Other community groups such as a Chamber or Economic Development Office should also be instrumental in marketing Minden. These groups, along with the City, should work to establish roles for marketing.

CREATE MARKETING PIECES

Marketing pieces should be created, utilizing the City's brand, then distributed through posters, online sources, videos, brochures, and more. Thinking comprehensively to hit all target audiences is important when creating marketing pieces. Information on all marketing must be current and presented in an easy-to-read, well-designed format.

MAINTAIN UPDATED SOCIAL MEDIA AND ONLINE MATERIALS

Social media is a way to get information to many people in a short amount of time. Social media sources, such as Facebook and Twitter, are free marketing resources that are already used in some form by many community residents. Other online marketing tools should also be considered to effectively show potential developers or business owners what the City has to offer.

MARKET WITHIN MINDEN

The City and/or Chamber of Commerce should also focus on marketing to its residents. A "shop local" campaign could involve many different marketing strategies, like yard signs, and placemats at restaurants, or events, to reach various community members. For example, "Thankful Thursdays" encourages residents to show their support for local business owners. Wayfinding signage, like a shopping mall directory, could also be placed at key points of interest in the community to display other amenities or businesses.