

CITY OF ST. ANSGAR



# Comprehensive Development Plan

---

2024



PREPARED BY NORTH IOWA AREA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

## PLAN PURPOSE

The 2024 City of St. Ansgar’s Comprehensive Development Plan (Plan) is designed to guide the City’s actions in shaping the future of the community. It is also known as a general plan, master plan, or land use plan. Comprehensive development plans can be a single document or umbrella document that cross-reference more detailed sub-plans. This Plan is intended to be a standalone document; however, opportunities exist for the City and other organizations to develop detailed sub-plans for further future implementation.

This guidance primarily assists the City in conducting the following:

- Providing the City’s future elected officials and staff a framework for addressing land uses
- Balancing competing interests
- Protecting and directing public investment decisions
- Protecting natural resources
- Shaping appearance of the overall community
- Promoting economic development
- Providing justification for decisions
- Fostering a collective vision

In general, the goal of planning is to maximize the health, safety, and economic well-being of residents in ways that reflect the unique needs, desires, and culture of those who live and work within the community. This document is intended to be the most important planning tool for the City of St. Ansgar.

## AUTHORITY TO PLAN

The Code of Iowa provides the basis for city planning in Chapter 414. This chapter is referred to as enabling legislation by the State of Iowa because it empowers cities to plan and regulate their physical development. Although the code subsection pertaining to comprehensive development plans is brief, it specifically states that zoning regulations must be made in accordance with a local comprehensive plan. This chapter of the Iowa Code also states that the comprehensive plan “shall be made with consideration of the smart planning principles.” In addition, the code requires the platting and subdivision of land and urban renewal activities to be consistent with a comprehensive development plan.

## **IOWA SMART PLANNING PRINCIPLES**

The Plan's development was assisted by the Smart Growth and Sustainable Principles found in Iowa Code 18B.1 and the development guidelines found in Iowa Code 18B.2.2. The City may consider and apply the principles during deliberation of all appropriate planning, zoning, development, and resource management decisions. The principles considered during this document's planning process are the following:

- 1. Collaboration:** Governmental, community, and individual stakeholders, including those outside the jurisdiction of the entity, are encouraged to be involved and provide comment during deliberation of planning, zoning, development, and resource management decisions and during implementation of such decisions. The state agency, local government, or other public entity is encouraged to develop and implement a strategy to facilitate such participation.
- 2. Efficiency, Transparency, and Consistency:** Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should be undertaken to provide efficient, transparent, and consistent outcomes. Individuals, communities, regions, and governmental entities should share in the responsibility to promote the equitable distribution of development benefits and costs.
- 3. Clean, Renewable, and Efficient Energy:** Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should be undertaken to promote clean and renewable energy use and increased energy efficiency.
- 4. Occupational Diversity:** Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should promote increased diversity of employment and businesses opportunities, promote access to education and training, expand entrepreneurial opportunities, and promote the establishment of businesses in locations near existing housing, infrastructure, and transportation.
- 5. Revitalization:** Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should facilitate the revitalization of established town centers and neighborhoods by promoting development that conserves land, protects historic resources, promotes pedestrian accessibility, and integrates different uses of property. Remediation and reuse of existing sites, structures, and infrastructure is preferred over new construction in undeveloped areas.
- 6. Housing Diversity:** Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should encourage diversity in the types of available housing, support the rehabilitation of existing housing, and promote the location of housing near public transportation and employment centers.
- 7. Community Character:** Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should promote activities and development that are consistent with the character and architectural style of the community and should respond to local values regarding the physical character of the community.

8. **Natural Resource and Agricultural Protection:** Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should emphasize protection, preservation, and restoration of natural resources, agricultural land, and cultural and historic landscapes and should increase the availability of open spaces and recreational facilities.
9. **Sustainable Design:** Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should promote developments, buildings, and infrastructure that utilize sustainable design and construction standards and conserve natural resources by reducing waste and pollution through efficient use of land, energy, water, air, and materials.
10. **Transportation Diversity:** Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should promote expanded transportation options for residents of the community. Consideration should be given to transportation options that maximize mobility, reduce congestion, conserve fuel, and improve air quality.

## **IOWA SMART PLANNING ELEMENTS**

Iowa Code (18B.2.2) states that a city “may include” the elements listed below, if applicable, when developing or amending a comprehensive plan or when developing or amending other local land development regulations. The smart planning elements utilized are:

1. **Public Participation:** Information relating to public participation during the creation of the comprehensive plan or land development regulations, including documentation of the public participation process, a compilation of objectives, policies, and goals identified in the public comments received, and identification of the groups or individuals comprising any work groups or committees that were created to assist the planning and zoning commission or other appropriate decision-making body of the municipality.
2. **Issues and Opportunities:** Information relating to the primary characteristics of the municipality and a description of how each of those characteristics impacts future development of the municipality. Such information may include historical information about the municipality, the municipality’s geography, natural resources, natural hazards, population, demographics, types of employers and industry, labor force, political and community institutions, housing, transportation, educational resources, and cultural and recreational resources. The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may also identify characteristics and community aesthetics that are important to future development of the municipality.

- 3. Land Use:** Objectives, information, and programs that identify current land uses within the municipality and that guide the future development and redevelopment of property, consistent with the municipality’s characteristics identified under the Issues and Opportunities Element. The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may include information on the amount, type, intensity, and density of existing land use, trends in the market price of land used for specific purposes, and plans for future land use throughout the municipality. The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may identify and include information on property that has the possibility for redevelopment, a map of existing and potential land use and land use conflicts, information and maps relating to the current and future provision of utilities within the municipality, information and maps that identify the current and future boundaries for areas reserved for soil conservation, water supply conservation, flood control, and surface water drainage and removal. Information provided under this paragraph may also include an analysis of the current and potential impacts on local watersheds and air quality.
- 4. Housing:** Objectives, policies, and programs to further the vitality and character of established residential neighborhoods and new residential neighborhoods and plans to ensure an adequate housing supply that meets both the existing and forecasted housing demand. The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may include an inventory and analysis of the local housing stock and may include specific information such as age, condition, type, market value, occupancy, and historical characteristics of all the housing within the municipality. The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may identify specific policies and programs that promote the development of new housing and maintenance or rehabilitation of existing housing and that provide a range of housing choices that meet the needs of the residents of the municipality.
- 5. Public Infrastructure and Utilities:** Objectives, policies, and programs to guide future development of sanitary sewer service, storm water management, water supply, solid waste disposal, wastewater treatment technologies, recycling facilities, and telecommunications facilities. The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may include estimates regarding future demand for such utility services.
- 6. Transportation:** Objectives, policies, and programs to guide the future development of a safe, convenient, efficient, and economical transportation system. Plans for such a transportation system may be coordinated with state and regional transportation plans and take into consideration the need for diverse modes of transportation, accessibility, improved air quality, and interconnectivity of the various modes of transportation.

7. **Economic Development:** Objectives, policies, and programs to promote the stabilization, retention, or expansion of economic development and employment opportunities. The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may include an analysis of current industries and economic activity and identify economic growth goals for the municipality. The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may also identify locations for future brownfield or grayfield development.
8. **Community Facilities:** Objectives, policies, and programs to assist future development of educational facilities, cemeteries, health care facilities, child care facilities, law enforcement and fire protection facilities, libraries, and other governmental facilities that are necessary or desirable to meet the projected needs of the municipality.
9. **Agricultural and Natural Resources:** Objectives, policies, and programs addressing preservation and protection of agricultural and natural resources.
10. **Community Character:** Objectives, policies, and programs to identify characteristics and qualities that make the municipality unique and that are important to the municipality's heritage and quality of life.
11. **Hazards:** Objectives, policies, and programs that identify the natural and other hazards that have the greatest likelihood of impacting the municipality or that pose a risk of catastrophic damage as such hazards relate to land use and development decisions, as well as the steps necessary to mitigate risk after considering the local hazard mitigation plan approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.
12. **Intergovernmental Collaboration Element:** Objectives, policies, and programs for joint planning and joint decision-making with other municipalities or governmental entities, including school districts and drainage districts, for siting and constructing public facilities and sharing public services. The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may identify existing or potential conflicts between the municipality and other local governments related to future development of the municipality and may include recommendations for resolving such conflicts. The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may also identify opportunities to collaborate and partner with neighboring jurisdictions and other entities in the region for projects of mutual interest.
13. **Implementation:** A compilation of programs and specific actions necessary to implement any provision of the comprehensive plan, including changes to any applicable land development regulations, official maps, or subdivision ordinances. A municipality's comprehensive plan developed using the guidelines under this section shall address prevention and mitigation of, response to, and recovery from a catastrophic flood.



## **PLAN ADOPTION AND IMPLEMENTATION**

The process for adopting a Comprehensive Plan update for a city is set forth in Section 414.3 of the Code of Iowa. The City of St. Ansgar's Planning & Zoning Commission (Commission) is required to hold a properly noticed public hearing where the proposed Plan is presented and discussed with any interested parties. Following discussion, the Commission must make a recommendation to the City Council.

The City Council is also required to hold a properly noticed public hearing on the proposed Plan and then act to approve, modify, or deny the proposed Plan draft. The Council also has the option to refer it back to the Commission for further study and a new recommendation. An action to approve the Plan by the City Council is made by a Resolution of Adoption.

Following its adoption, copies of the Comprehensive Plan will be sent or made available to the county in which the city is located, neighboring counties and cities, the council of governments or regional planning commission where the city is located, and public libraries within the city. In order for the Plan to provide value to the City and its community, its goals and objectives should be known and considered by the public, city staff, and elected officials. When deemed necessary by elected officials, implementation of the Plan's objectives will occur.

## **PLAN REVIEW AND AMENDMENT**

Following its adoption, a comprehensive plan may be amended by the City Council at any time. After reviewing the Plan, the City Council can amend it for any of the following reasons:

- Land use changes to allow a proposed development.
- Changes resulting from community development activities.
- Routine updates to incorporate new information or update a public facilities element
- Text changes to revise a goal, objective, or land use category

Similar to the Plan's original adoption, the City Council is require to hold a properly noticed public hearing on the Plan amendment before voting on the amendment approval. The Council can also refer to the Planning and Zoning Commission for recommendation of potential amendments.

## CHAPTER 2: PUBLIC INPUT & VISION

### COMMUNITY SURVEY

NIACOG prepared the community survey derived from feedback provided by the steering committee appointed by the City Council. The survey form and results are included in [Appendix B](#) and [Appendix C](#). The survey process provided an efficient and inclusive opportunity to incorporate community input into the Plan. A total of 265 responses were received from citizens following community-wide promotion of the survey via electronic and printed format.

### VISION & GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Vision and Guiding Principles provide a framework for connecting this Plan’s goals and strategies together. Simply put, they act as the “glue” for this Plan. The Vision defines concisely what St. Ansgar is now and in the future. This Plan in its entirety is a blueprint to achieve the Vision. Guiding Principles, which are lasting values shared by residents within the community, illustrate the Vision. As action-oriented values, the principles direct the City and community in all circumstances, regardless of changes in the City’s goals and objectives within this Plan. In effect, they remain unchanged overtime.

The Vision and Guiding Principles, as set by the City Council after reviewing the values and critical issues shared by residents in the community survey, are the following:

#### **VISION:**

*Invest in community services, planning, and projects to improve the opportunities, safety, and wellbeing of all residents.*

#### **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

- *Emphasize stable but controlled growth while preserving our rural character.*
- *Support the development of local businesses and industry and targeted recruitment.*
- *Find common ground and utilize the City’s volunteerism culture.*
- *Plan and coordinate City services to enhance quality of life.*
- *Pursue realistic and achievable goals and strategies.*

# CHAPTER 3: COMMUNITY PROFILE

## LOCATION AND REGIONAL CONTEXT

St Ansgar is located in western Mitchell County, Iowa. Mitchell County is located in north central Iowa. Saint Ansgar is approximately 16 miles west of Interstate 35 (I-35). Des Moines, Iowa’s capital, is located approximately 152 miles south of Saint Ansgar along I-35. Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota is approximately 160 miles to the north.

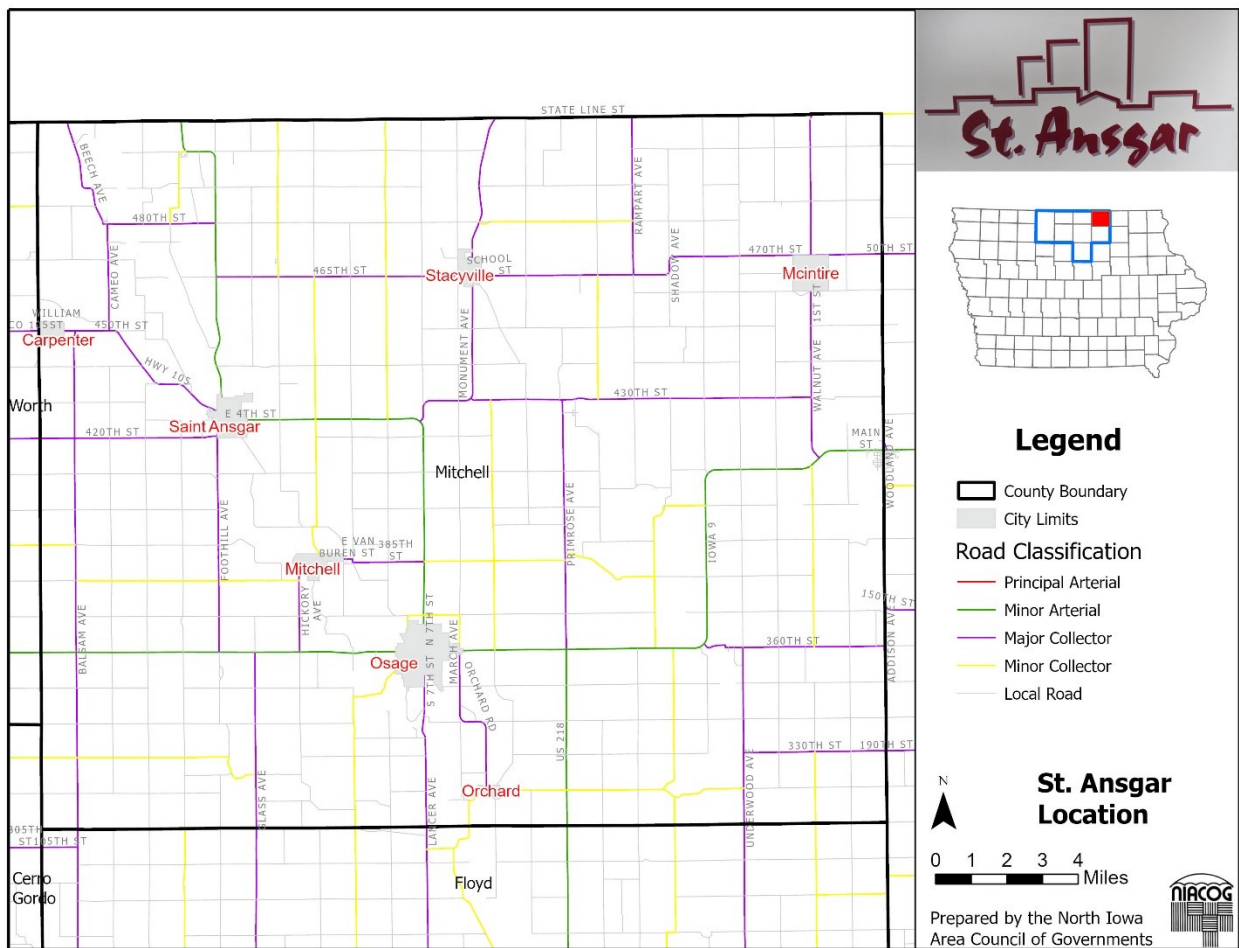


Figure 1: Location Map

The City of St. Ansgar is a member of the North Iowa Area Council of Governments (NIACOG) eight-county region, which is a voluntary association of local governments established for the purpose of promoting intergovernmental cooperation and strengthening local units of government. NIACOG is Region 2 of the Iowa Association of Regional Councils, and consists of eight counties and 67 cities in north central Iowa, illustrated in Figure 2. The region's service hub, where the NIACOG office is located, is Mason City in Cerro Gordo County. Mason City is approximately 30 miles southwest of St. Ansgar.

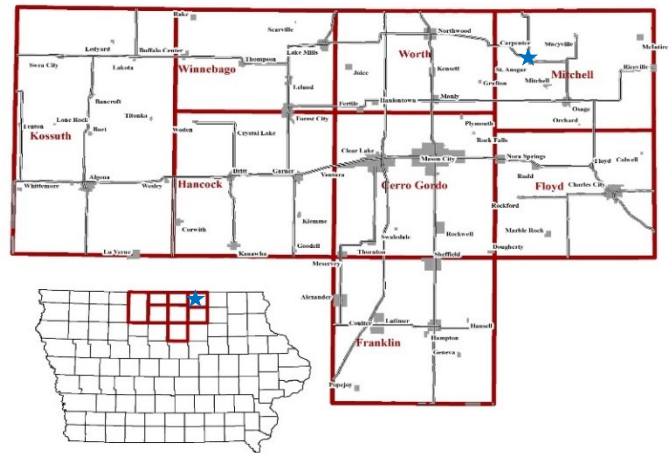
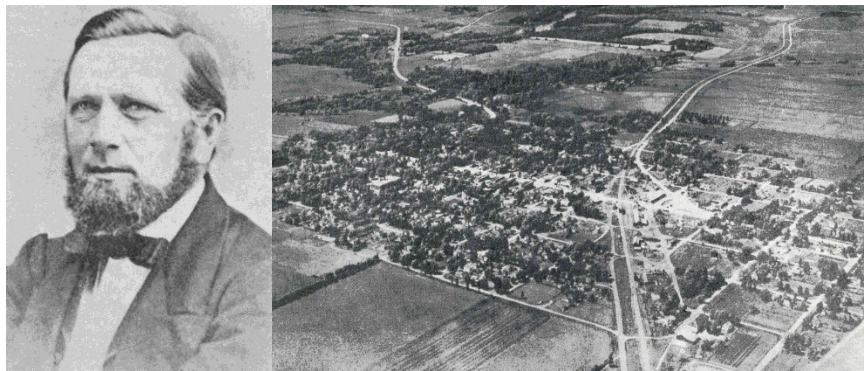


Figure 2: North Iowa Region

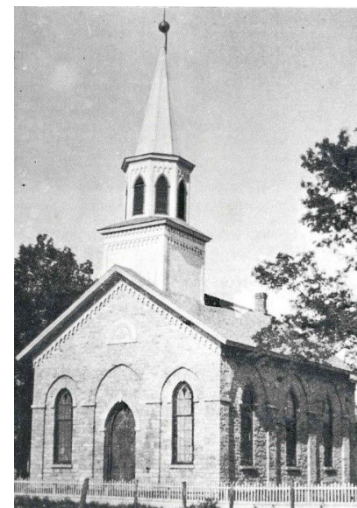
## HISTORY

A group of Norwegian immigrant farmers led by Reverend Claus L. Clausen, a Danish Minister, founded St. Ansgar in 1853. The group searched for suitable land for settlement in Southern Minnesota, Southwestern Wisconsin, and Northern Iowa before ultimately choosing the present day location of the City. They ultimately named the new city after a French monk and bishop, who in the 9<sup>th</sup> century, was a missionary to the Scandinavian countries and made the patron saint of Norway. The City was first incorporated in 1876 with the first City Council meeting taking place in March of that year. All historical photos and materials were provided courtesy of the St. Ansgar Heritage Museum.



Left: Founder, Claus L. Clausen/Right: Aerial photo of St. Ansgar ~1953

Reverend Clausen organized the St. Ansgar First Lutheran Church. Originally, meeting in members home and then a schoolhouse from 1856. The original church was constructed in 1864. The original church still sits in its original location and is on the National Registry of Historic Places.



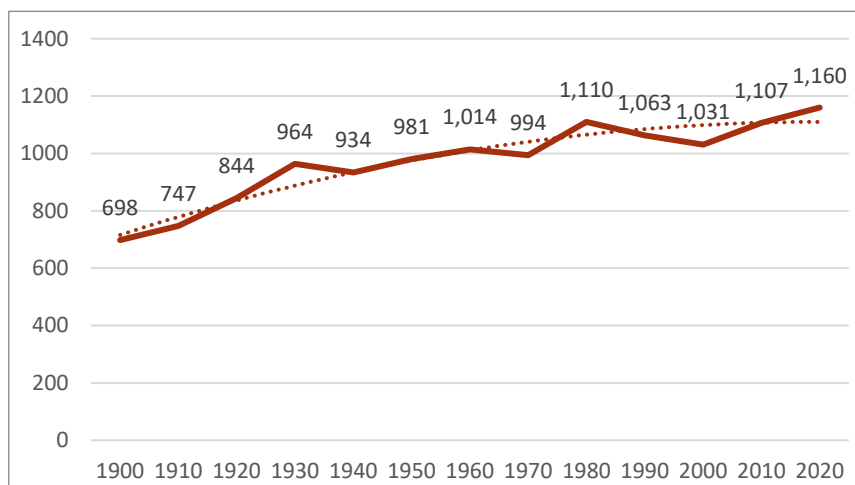
First Lutheran Church 1874

The first school in Mitchell County was a private religious school located in St. Ansgar with Reverend Clausen as the first teacher. As St. Ansgar grew in population, the first public school began as St. Ansgar High School, also known as the St. Ansgar Academy and Seminary. It was in operation for 30 years and closed its doors in 1910.

The present-day South Square, constructed in 1928, was the original St. Ansgar Elementary School (not to be confused with the aforementioned St. Ansgar Academy) and formerly housed all grades. By 1969, the school district served a 148.1 square mile area and consolidated with the Grafton, Carpenter, and Stacyville communities, and officially became known as the St. Ansgar Community School District.

## **POPULATION PROFILE**

St. Ansgar has experienced a general trend of steady population growth in its history with some up and down periods. Figure 3 shows the general population trend over the past century and applies a trend line. Growth rates have gradually slowed over time, which is likely due to the City's role as a small economic hub for northwest Mitchell County.



**Figure 3:** St. Ansgar Population, 1900-2020

**Source:** US Census Bureau

St Ansgar has seen a 9.1 percent growth rate between 1990 and 2020 while Mitchell County has slightly declined in population during the same period. The City has benefitted from rural to urban migration trends and has been able to maintain growth compared to the surrounding area that has generally seen declines in population. However, the City is growing at a slower rate compared to Iowa as a whole, which is bolstered by the overall rapid growth of the State's urban centers.

	1990	2000	2010	2020	% Change 1990-2020
<b>St. Ansgar</b>	1,063	1,031	1,107	1,160	+9.1%
<b>Mitchell County</b>	10,928	10,874	10,776	10,565	-3.3%
<b>State of Iowa</b>	2,776,755	2,926,324	3,046,355	3,190,369	+14.9%

Table 1: Population Change Comparisons, 1990-2020

Source: US Census Bureau

To illustrate St. Ansgar’s potential future population, a trend line calculation was generated based on historical Decennial US Census data. Based on historical patterns, the City’s population is expected to see slight declines over the next 25-30 years. Lower fertility rates, an aging population, and continued rural-to-urban migrations patterns are potential influences affecting the projection.

2020 Population	2030 Projection	2040 Projection	2050 Projection
1,160	1,108	1,100	1,087

Table 2: Population Projections through 2050

Source: Calculated by NIACOG from US Census Data

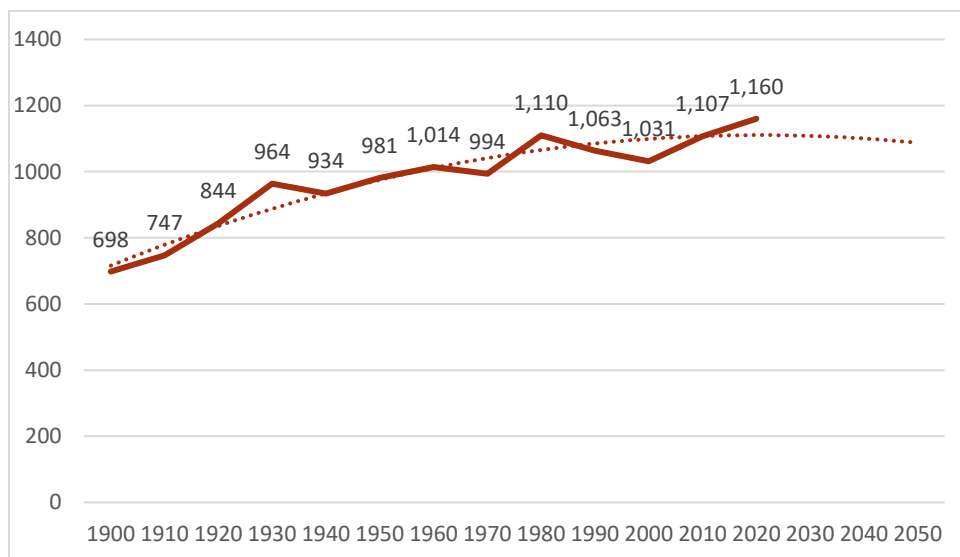


Figure 4: Population Projection through 2050



Source: Calculated by NIACOG from US Census Data

Figure 5 below illustrates the age distribution of the St. Ansgar’s population in 5-year increments. The city appears to maintain about an average rate or “mixed bag” of working age adults in comparison to the state as a whole. On average, St. Ansgar has higher rates of older retired age persons, and it remains on par with children under the age of 18, though 5-9 years cohort is a bit of an outlier in comparison. The population of the 20-24 has a notably lower rate for the population as a whole, which can be explained by college attendance as students graduate from school. There is also a noticeable outlier of the population rate in the 0-4 year cohort. The COVID-19 pandemic saw increased fertility rates in some areas that normalized after the economy opened back up, which St. Ansgar also experienced.

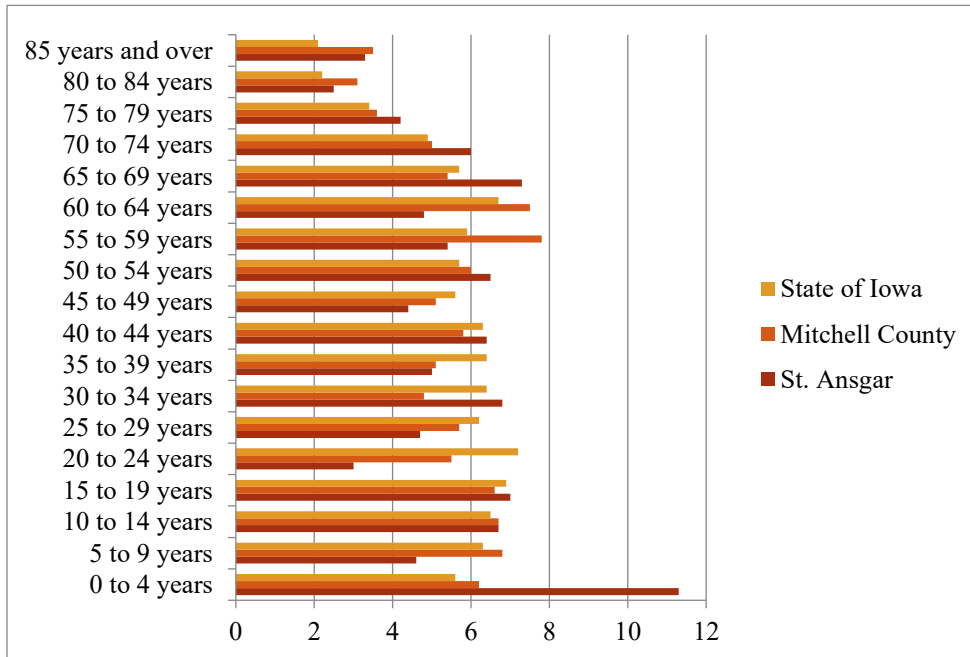


Figure 5: St. Ansgar 5-Year Age Distribution

Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey



## EDUCATION

The St. Ansgar Community School District serves students in St Ansgar. The school district's office, junior/senior high, and elementary are all located within town. The Merri-Land Preschool is also located within city limits.

Additionally, parents of students in St. Ansgar have the opportunity to open enroll students to neighboring school districts, such as Northwood-Kensett Community School District, Osage Community School District, or Central Springs Community School District. Recent legislation in the State of Iowa also allows families to use public funding toward Educational Savings Accounts to use for tuition at area private schools or for expenses going toward homeschooling or other educational purposes.



*St. Ansgar High School front entrance*

The completion of high school is essential for maintaining a quality labor force. An increase in the percentage of individuals completing two or more years of a college is also beneficial for growing local businesses and industries within St. Ansgar. Currently, residents must seek higher education outside of Mitchell County. Institutions located in Mason City, such as North Iowa Area Community College (NIACC) and La James College, are within driving distance for city residents. Waldorf University, in Forest City, is also within driving distance from the city. Advances in communication technologies, like the ICN network and online education, has also increased opportunities for residents of the city seeking to obtain higher education. South Square, located in the former St. Ansgar Elementary School and discussed further below, offers STEM after-school programs, health and wellness classes, home school programs, art classes, among other programming, and the Mitchell County Extension offers some classes at the location.

Table 3 shows the education level of residents in St. Ansgar compared to individuals in the rest of Mitchell County and State of Iowa. Local educational attainment is generally at similar levels as Mitchell County as a whole, except St. Ansgar has a higher percentage of people that have a graduate or professional degree and less people without a high school diploma.

<b>Educational Attainment</b>	<b>St. Ansgar %</b>	<b>Mitchell County %</b>	<b>State of Iowa %</b>
<b>Less than 9<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>	3.6	3.6	2.8
<b>9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> Grade, no diploma</b>	2.0	3.7	4.4
<b>High School Graduate (includes equivalency)</b>	37.6	34.8	30.6
<b>Some College, no degree</b>	18.9	20.2	20.5
<b>Associate Degree</b>	14.0	16.2	12.0
<b>Bachelor's Degree</b>	15.3	15.9	20.0
<b>Graduate or Professional Degree</b>	8.6	5.6	9.7

*Table 3: Educational Attainment (25 years and over)*

**Source:** 2018-2022 American Community Survey

## CHAPTER 4: LAND USE

An essential purpose of this Plan is to develop a framework for land use strategies going forward and is a land use plan first and foremost, including the various facets that impact land use as a whole. It is important to assess current land use conditions and understand what the community's ongoing priorities are currently and will be. From there, the City can plan for its vision for future development. The purpose is to arrive at productive and efficient land use that most effectively accomplishes the City's intentions for growth and development while ensuring compatible land uses for the next 20 years.

### CURRENT LAND USE

Figure 6 shows the status of current land uses within St Ansgar. Existing land uses are classified into six general categories: agriculture, civic, institutional, and utility uses, commercial, industrial, low density residential, and high density residential. Properties that are currently in residential neighborhoods with no house are classified as “undeveloped” where potential infill development could occur. Existing land uses were identified using aerial imagery, input from city staff and elected officials, and Mitchell County Assessors property classes.

The vast majority of the land footprint in St. Ansgar consists of low density residential land use composed of single-family or two-family homes. There are several undeveloped residential properties scattered around town that have development potential if the opportunity arises in the future. The Rock Ridge Subdivision located at the south side of town has seen the most recent residential building activity.

The primary commercial and industrial land is at the north side of St. Ansgar and in and around downtown. Civic, institutional, and utility uses include St. Ansgar schools, community and governmental properties, churches, and utility facilities.

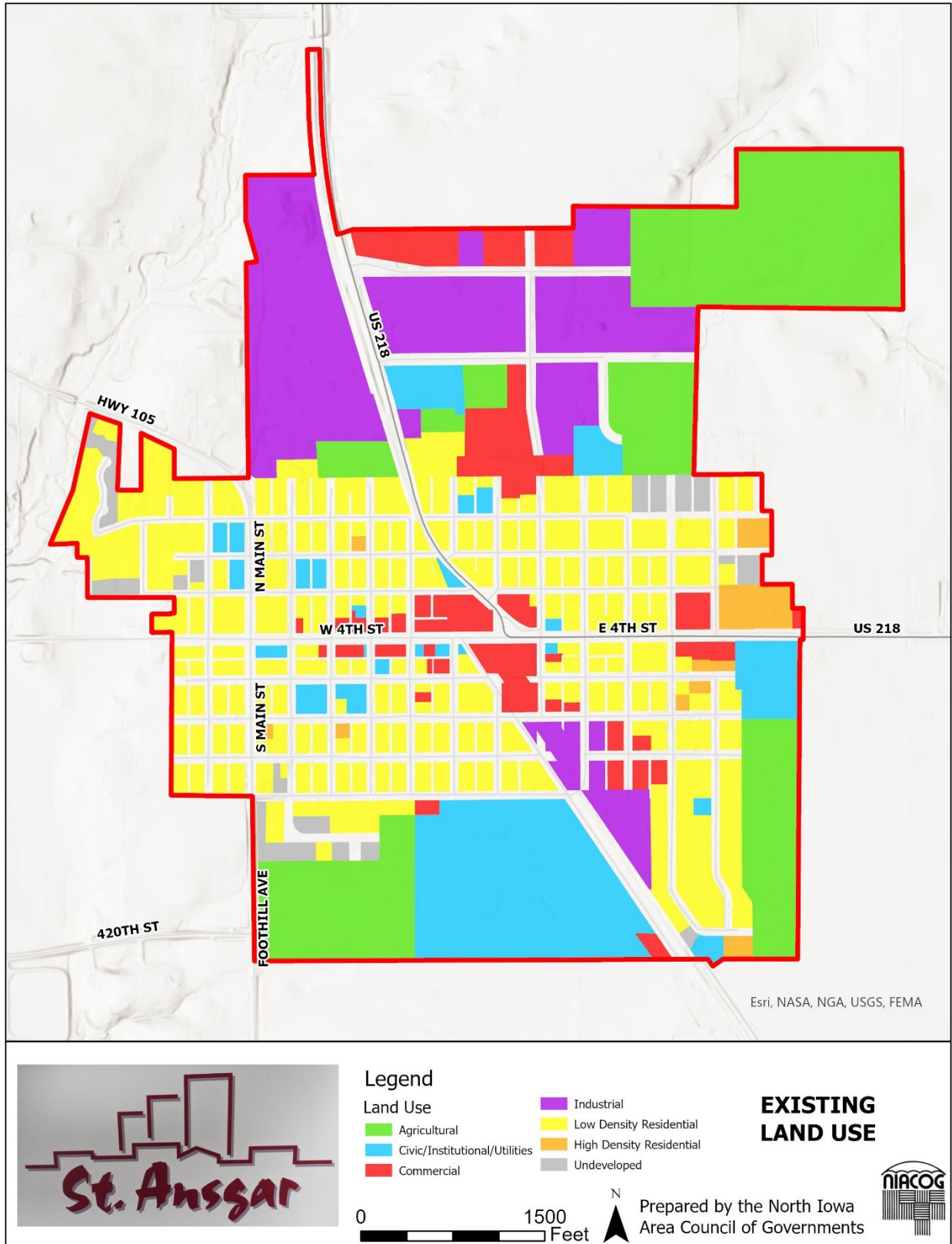


Figure 6: Existing Land Use Map

## **FUTURE LAND USE**

The Future Land Use Map in Figure 7 is the basis of planning for future land use in St. Ansgar in the context of the entire Plan. The map is a guide for where development activities should occur to maximize the City's resources and encourage desired land use patterns, growth, and quality of life. Moreover, the Future Land Use Map is the principal reference to justify land use decisions by the City.

The map depicts expected land uses over time and sets a direction. It should be interpreted generally and not at the specificity of an engineering document. Implementation will occur over time with market demands as property owners voluntarily sell, develop, or change the use of their land. The City should base its decisions on the map using an informed prediction and planning process, using tools such as zoning, considering development proposals, and intentional planning.

The primary theme of this plan is to identify and promote the most productive use of land throughout the City of St. Ansgar, while assuring a high compatibility with adjacent land uses.

Various types of land uses must be permitted for productive use of the land, but specific uses may need to be reasonably regulated and controlled in order to properly safeguard the rights of adjacent property owners and the overall benefit of the general public.

The Goals and Objectives identified in this Plan should give guidance to all major decisions made by city officials in the future. These major considerations may include road improvements, recreational areas, and new residential, commercial and industrial developments. Additionally, future potential annexation of land should also consider the orderly transition of land uses, impacts to current uses (particularly residential uses), and consider the overall Plan vision and guidelines. Future land use decisions should conform to the Goals and Strategies established in the 2024 St. Ansgar Comprehensive Development Plan to derive the maximum benefit of the Plan.

The land uses in this map have been determined by the City of St. Ansgar to be most appropriate for the City in the future. The determination is based on anticipated development, demographics, topography and terrain, and market conditions. Based on unforeseen circumstances during the development of this Plan, the St. Ansgar City Council can change the Future Land Use Map through an amendment. The City's Zoning Ordinance will be the primary tool to implement the Future Land Use Map.

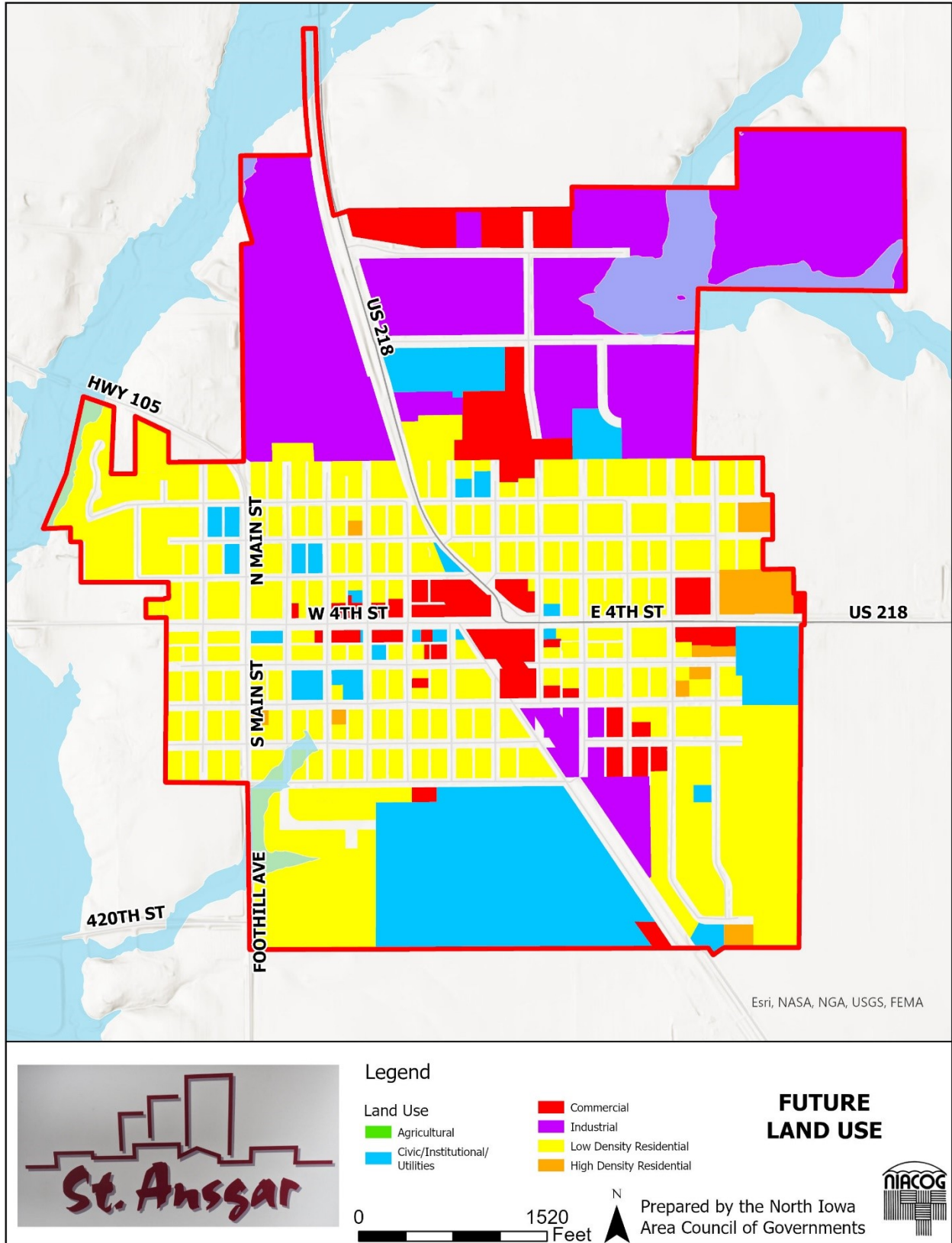


Figure 7: Future Land Use Map



## **GOALS AND STRATEGIES**

- 1. GOAL: Comprehensive Plan Adopted** - Adopt the Comprehensive Development Plan goals and objectives by City Council resolution
  - a. STRATEGY:** Adopt an updated Zoning Ordinance and other ordinances, such as subdivision, floodplain, and health regulations, as needed to fully implement the Goals and Objectives in this plan
  - b. STRATEGY:** Implement an annual strategy session at the beginning of each calendar year to identify that year's specific priorities and action items and use the goals and strategies in the Plan as guidance
  
- 2. GOAL: Plan Used to Guide Development** - Establish an organized pattern of future development in the City of St. Ansgar using the approved Comprehensive Development Plan
  - a. STRATEGY:** Utilize the Plan when making decisions that affect development, environment, health, safety, and the general welfare of the City and its citizens
  - b. STRATEGY:** Provide opportunities for citizen input in all pertinent land use decisions or other decisions which follow the Goals and Objectives in this Plan
  - c. STRATEGY:** Review, evaluate and amend the Comprehensive Development Plan as needed to maintain and improve its relevancy and effectiveness as the City's planning guide for the present and the future
  
- 3. GOAL: Balanced Land Uses** - Guide the basic land use patterns and the incremental land use decisions made for the city
  - a. STRATEGY:** Encourage a balance of land uses from land preservation and environmental protection to residential, commercial, and industrial which generate revenue for essential services and natural resource protection
  - b. STRATEGY:** In all land use decisions, consider the overall impact of development proposals to the health, safety, and general welfare and character of the neighborhood
  
- 4. GOAL: Protect Property Rights** - Protect individual property rights that don't abridge other property owner rights, are detrimental to the City as a whole, or conflict with the City's policies
  - a. STRATEGY:** Encourage citizens to develop and utilize appropriate implementation strategies and work with property owners in advance of making application to find appropriate solutions to accomplish their land use goals as appropriate
  - b. STRATEGY:** Employ strict enforcement of local ordinances to mitigate nuisances and negative externalities
  
- 5. GOAL: Land Put to Highest & Best Use** - Protect, promote, and enhance the use of land in the highest and best manner and preserve its continued use for future generations.
  - a. STRATEGY:** Encourage local officials to establish mutual agreements to plan, facilitate, coordinate, and resolve possible conflicts of proposed development within the municipal fringe areas

6. **GOAL: Consider Fiscal Impact On City** - Provide that all land use considerations are made with the long term fiscal health of the City in mind
  - a. **STRATEGY:** Encourage city officials to include only those lands within the corporate boundary, which they are capable of serving with municipal utilities and necessary for the orderly growth of the community
  - b. **STRATEGY:** Consider the cost and benefit in all land use decisions
  
7. **GOAL: Extraterritorial Growth** - Systematically consider the impact of extraterritorial growth and any needed action to enhance its impact on the city
  - a. **STRATEGY:** Conduct a cost-benefit analysis for annexation
  - b. **STRATEGY:** Consider whether the fees paid for city utilities outside of the city are adequate to cover current and future supply and maintenance costs, including all costs associated with supplying and maintaining lines for the specific development and a fair share of overall utility system costs
  - c. **STRATEGY:** Encourage annexation where sufficient provisions are made for community infrastructure utilities (sewer and water) and such development is adjacent or near the existing the incorporated city limits or existing infrastructure
  
8. **GOAL: Future Land Use Map** – Use the Future Land Use Map as a guide.
  - a. **STRATEGY:** Use the Future Land Use Map to assist with making decisions about future zoning map changes.
  - b. **STRATEGY:** Use the Future Land Use Map to assist with making decisions about potential growth areas



# CHAPTER 5: AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

## ENVIRONMENT

Rivers, wetlands, forest, and lakes cater to various recreational interests, while rich soil provides the foundation for local agriculture. With these resources come constraints on developable areas to protect these features and mitigate future hazards on the built environment.

Watersheds are where water drains in an area, and sub-watersheds are compartmentalized sections of the watershed, usually divided by local creeks and waterbodies. St. Ansgar is a part of the Upper Cedar Watershed. The sub-watersheds of Deer Creek, Sugar Creek-Cedar River, and Turtle Creek converge north and west of the incorporated city limits.

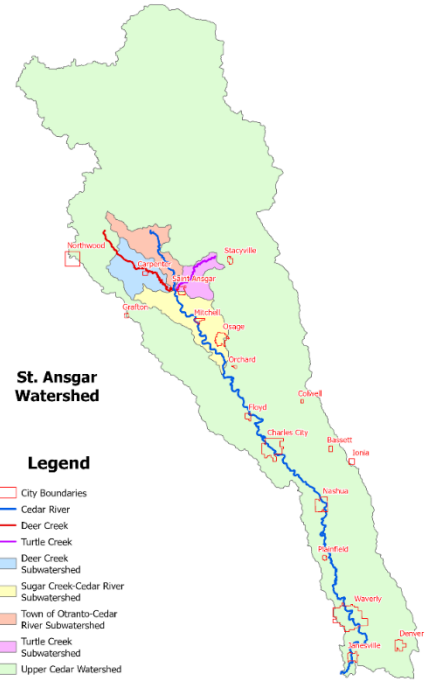


Figure 8: St. Ansgar Watershed  
 Figure 9: Corn Suitability Rating

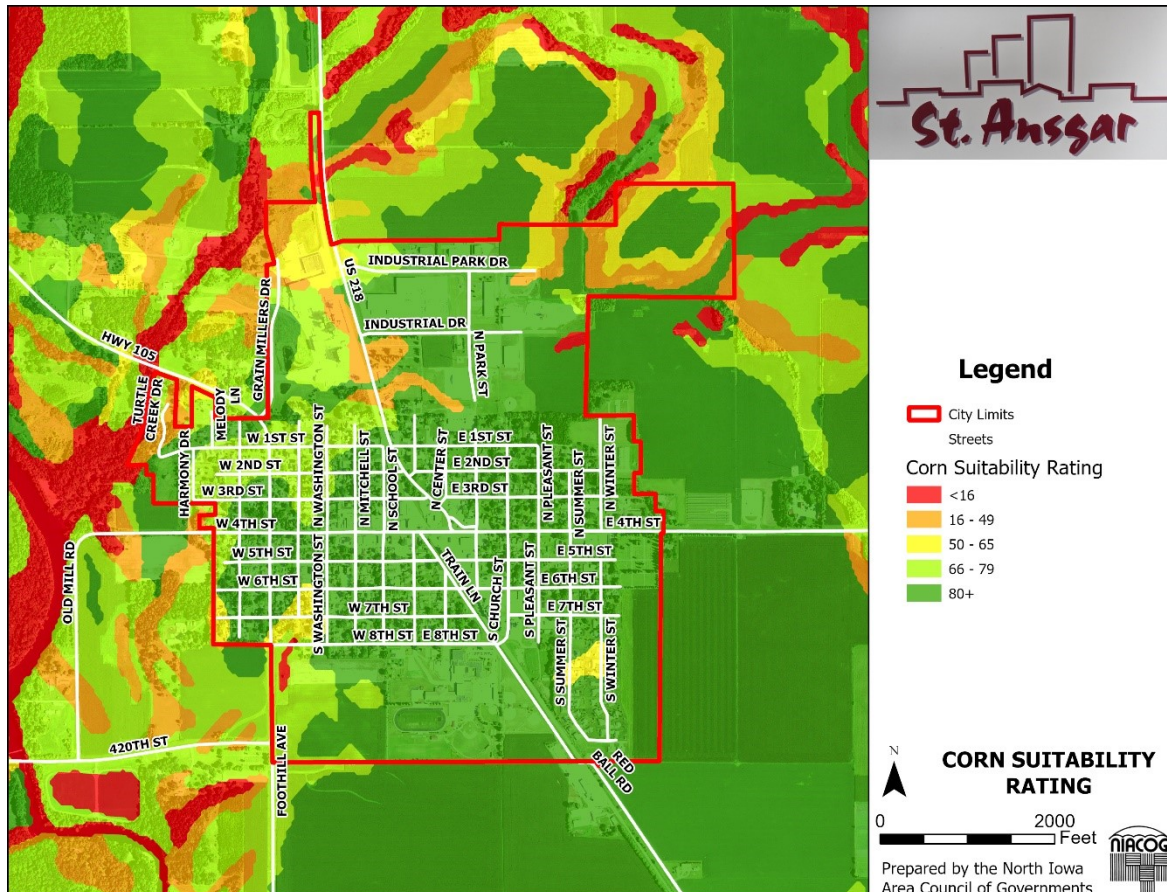


Figure 9 above illustrates the corn suitability rating of soils within and around St. Ansgar. A score above a CSR of 65 is generally considered highly productive soil. Ideally, the City should attempt to avoid development on the most productive soils as possible while balancing other limiting factors and meeting its development needs. The least productive soils are located to the west and north of the city limits along the Cedar River and nearby creek wetlands.

Wetlands are essential to the hydrological ecosystem because of their water-cleansing properties. Individual site assessment is important to preserve natural resources and water quality or mitigate impact to new construction. Vegetation and land cover are resources that provide natural water filtration to surface waters and storm water management, help to prevent erosion, and can strategically offer recreational opportunities. Encroaching development must take care to preserve these resources. Development should also minimize locating on extreme slopes to mitigate and stabilize stream corridors.

St. Ansgar is generally flat throughout city limits. Land gets steeper closer to the creeks north, west, and south of town, particularly closer to FEMA regulated floodplains or “special flood hazard areas.” Development is not permitted in areas with a 1% chance of flooding in a given year (commonly referred to as the 100-year floodplain). While limited, construction in areas with a 0.2% chance of flooding in a given year (commonly referred to as the 500-year floodplain) can usually be mitigated with little-to-no significant impact.

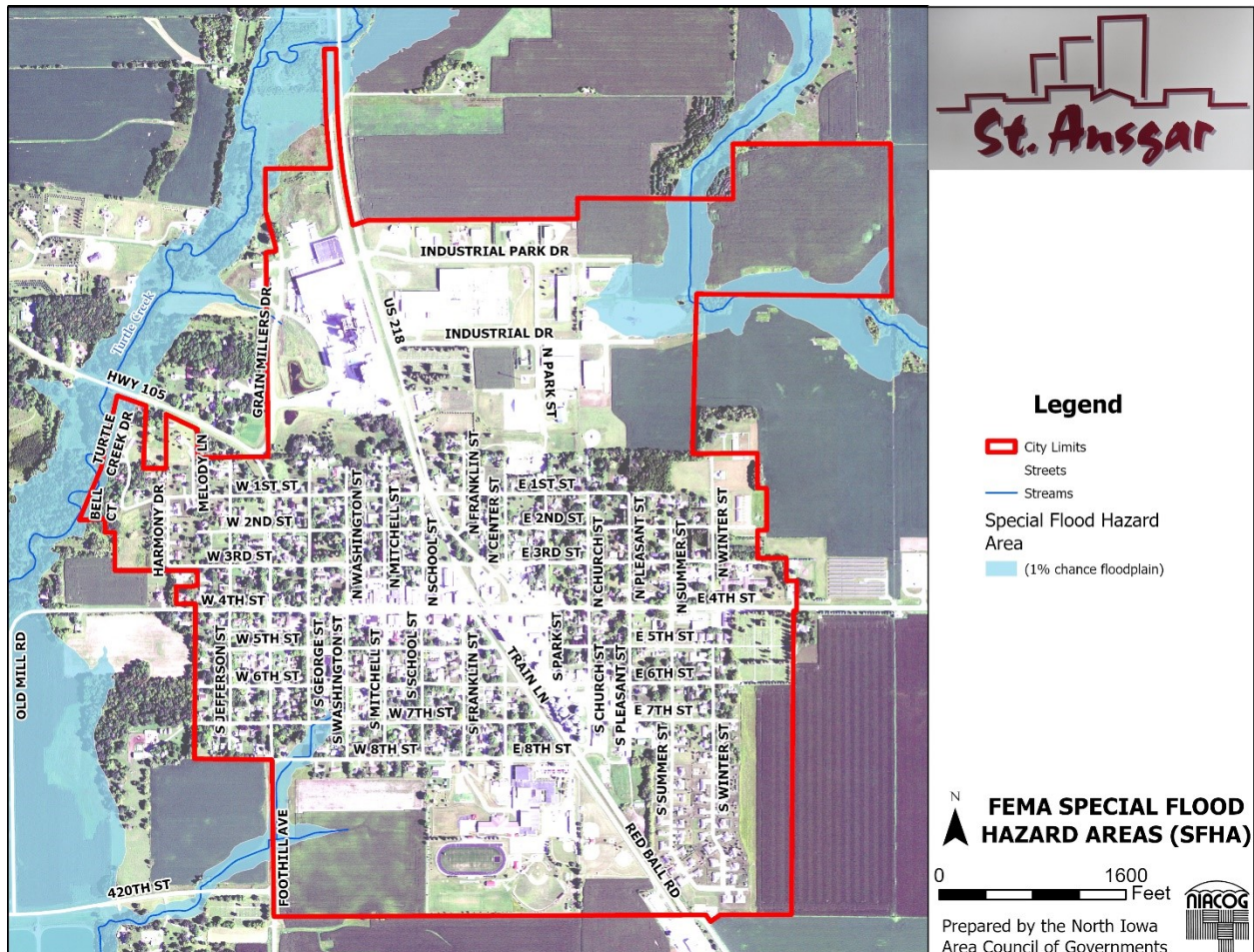


Figure 10: Special Flood Hazard Areas (1% Floodplain)



## **GOALS AND STRATEGIES**

1. **GOAL:** Avoid development in environmentally sensitive areas
  - a. **STRATEGY:** Encourage developers to conduct proper site assessments for soils and other environmental aspects early on in the site planning process
  - b. **STRATEGY:** Strictly enforce St. Ansgar’s floodplain ordinance and require an official determination from the Iowa DNR for any development or excavation close to a FEMA-mapped special flood hazard area/floodplain
  - c. **STRATEGY:** Locate “green infrastructure” (e.g. parks, trails, etc.) and low risk land uses along streams, other waterbodies, and environmentally sensitive areas
  
2. **GOAL:** Limit taking prime farmland out of production
  - a. **STRATEGY:** Encourage development of unused or underutilized lots within the existing incorporated city limits to the extent feasible
  - b. **STRATEGY:** Discourage unplanned sprawl or leapfrog development far away from the incorporated city limits
  - c. **STRATEGY:** Consider ag-land preservation balanced with local development needs in the subdivision process, especially in extra-territorial review within two miles of town
  
3. **GOAL:** Promote affordable clean and renewable energy resources when making choices
  - a. **STRATEGY:** Modernize local ordinances to make ownership of privately owned renewable energy and battery storage options easy
  - b. **STRATEGY:** Explore feasibility of renewable energy and battery storage use for City facilities and building needs, particularly as a cost saving measure

## CHAPTER 6: HOUSING

### HOUSING PROFILE

Over three quarters of the housing in St. Ansgar was constructed before 1980, similar to Mitchell County as a whole. Since that time, home construction slowed with less, but consistent numbers. Since 2020, less home construction occurred locally and statewide. However, these numbers do not reflect recent homes built in the couple years in the Rock Ridge Subdivision.

Year Built	% in St. Ansgar	% in Mitchell Co.	% in Iowa
Built 2020 or later	0.0	0.2	0.5
Built 2010 to 2019	7.6	3.4	8.2
Built 2000 to 2009	5.6	7.4	10.6
Built 1990 to 1999	5.8	9.0	10.3
Built 1980 to 1989	4.9	7.5	7.2
Built 1970 to 1979	8.2	11.7	14.2
Built 1960 to 1969	10.5	8.2	9.8
Built 1950 to 1959	5.4	9.5	9.9
Built 1940 to 1949	5.2	3.4	4.8
Built 1939 or earlier	46.8	39.7	24.5

Table 4: Age of Housing Source: 2018 - 2022 American Community Survey

An older housing stock generally indicates long-term maintenance and housing quality may need to be a continued focus. Housing availability could also be a future concern, as average US household size has steadily decreased in recent decades to 2.51 persons in 2023. Housing construction has also slowed in the last five years in St. Ansgar and could be a limiting factor for potential future growth.

Value of Owner-occupied housing unit	% in St. Ansgar	% in Mitchell Co.	% in Iowa
Less than \$50,000	8.5	6.4	7.2
\$50,000 to \$99,999	19.6	22.3	14.1
\$100,000 to \$149,999	24.8	21.7	17.2
\$150,000 to \$199,999	13.3	13.4	17.0
\$200,000 to \$299,999	21.5	16.2	22.3
\$300,000 to \$499,999	8.8	12.9	16.5
\$500,000 to \$999,999	1.2	6.1	4.8
\$1,000,000 or more	2.4	1.2	0.8
Median (dollars)	\$141,200	\$149,200	\$181,600

Table 5: Owner-Occupied Housing Values Source: 2018 - 2022 American Community Survey

An older housing stock helps with affordable housing. Over 50 percent of housing in St. Ansgar is estimated to have a value of less than \$150,000. Two-thirds of housing is assessed at less than \$200,000. Compared to the Mitchell County and statewide, there are less houses above that threshold. Recent inflation has dramatically affected prices.

Table 6 below provides data on housing occupancy. St. Ansgar has similar housing occupancy rates as Mitchell County and the State of Iowa. The city has more renter-occupied housing units per capita than the county but less than the state as a whole.

	St. Ansgar	Mitchell County	State of Iowa
<b>Total Units</b>	485	4,885	1,417,064
<b>Occupied Units</b>	90.1%	92.2%	91.0%
<b>Vacant Units</b>	9.9%	7.8%	9.0%
<b>Owner-Occupied</b>	75.7%	79.6%	71.5%
<b>Renter Occupied</b>	24.3%	20.4%	28.5%

Table 6: Housing Occupancy

Source: 2018 - 2022 American Community Survey

Projected Population Scenarios HH Size 2.32	Total Housing Units Needed	Housing Units Available in 2023	Minus Projected Vacancy Rate @ 7%	Minus Projected Annual Demolitions	Adjusted Total Housing Units Available	New Units Needed/Excess Units
2020	4,472	4,987	(349)	(5)	4,633	161
# (-2)	4,470	4,987			4,633	163
2010-2020 actual decrease						
2024		4,987		(5)	4,628	
2025		4,987		(5)	4,623	
2026		4,987		(5)	4,618	
2027		4,987		(5)	4,613	
2028		4,987		(5)	4,608	
2029		4,987		(5)	4,498	
2030		4,987		(5)	4,593	
1% projected growth by 2030	10,694/2.32 = 4,609	4,987			4,593	16
Projected Population 2030 @ 1% population loss/HH Size 2.32	10,482 needing 4,518 units of housing total	4,987				75

Source: Iowa State University Extension & Outreach, 2022

Figure 11: 2022 Mitchell County Housing Needs Study Projections

In 2022, Iowa State Extension and Outreach conducted a housing needs study for Mitchell County countywide. The study projected the number of excess or needed housing units under two growth scenarios—a 1% decline in population for one scenario and a 1% population growth for the other. Under the population decline scenario, the county would have an excess of 75 housing units while the growth scenario projects a shortage of 16 dwelling units countywide. The projections also factor in loss of units due to events such as fire and storm damage.

Considering the earlier population projection, St. Ansgar will likely continue to experience the population decline pressures that most rural areas in Iowa face. The older housing stock of the community make housing maintenance and rehabilitation a larger need. Additionally, the increasing housing cost realities experienced since the COVID-19 pandemic are not likely to reverse. Other trends such as reductions in the average household size could also push demand for additional housing in which the City should be cognizant. Strategies that incentive additional housing units or alternative housing options could be pursued that would apply price competition and available options for residents.

## **GOALS AND STRATEGIES**

1. **GOAL: Housing Rehabilitation** - Prioritize rehabilitation and maintenance of the existing housing stock
  - a. **STRATEGY:** Actively promote outside funding opportunities that can assist with home improvements and maintenance for landowners
  - b. **STRATEGY:** Pursue outside funding sources where it is sensible for the City to be involved in housing rehabilitation
  - c. **STRATEGY:** Seek opportunities that would fund both multi-family and scattered site rental rehabilitation programs
  - d. **STRATEGY:** Consider closure and demolition activities on abandoned residences, where the owner fails to carry out the conditions of nuisance abatement orders, under Iowa Code Section 657A.10, as a last resort
  - e. **STRATEGY:** Consider supplying residential exterior paint to property owners to improve neighborhood attractiveness through a paint voucher program.
  
2. **GOAL: Encourage Infill Development** – Seek opportunities to construct housing on undeveloped lots and promote a more efficient use of land that is in line with the character of existing neighborhoods
  - a. **STRATEGY:** Ease regulations that make construction of infill housing difficult
  - b. **STRATEGY:** Create allowances for denser development on a limited basis, considering potential impacts for drainage and capacity of City services
  
3. **GOAL: Housing affordability/attainability** – Pursue strategies that encourage more affordable housing availability and help to keep housing costs low
  - a. **STRATEGY:** Revise ordinances as appropriate that encourage an increase in housing stock and make housing less costly, such as smaller lots sizes, allowing for accessory dwelling units, or denser development
  - b. **STRATEGY:** Encourage the allowance of a wide variety of housing options
  - c. **STRATEGY:** Discourage the development of non-residential uses in residential neighborhoods that reduce housing stock or accessory buildings on undeveloped lots, particularly workshops or accessory garages, before the construction of a residence
  - d. **STRATEGY:** Actively promote homeowner assistance programs
  - e. **STRATEGY:** Ensure new housing developments are located near existing infrastructure with sufficient capacity
  - f. **STRATEGY:** Assemble a homebuyer education program to educate prospective homebuyers on the steps for home buying (build credit, talk to a banker about loan and payment limits, connect with a Realtor to search for a home, and closing and maintenance needs)
  - g. **STRATEGY:** Redevelop vacant downtown upper stories and/or vacant building into rental housing or condominium housing
  - h. **STRATEGY:** Pursue public/private partnerships, which would create incentives for new housing options and result in the availability of moderately priced lots

4. **GOAL: Enhanced Availability of Senior Housing** – Promote the construction and offering of senior housing alternatives
  - a. **STRATEGY:** Consider use of public/private partnerships to develop additional housing options
  - b. **STRATEGY:** Promote benefits available under the Iowa Department on Aging Programs
  - c. **STRATEGY:** Promote benefits available under the Elderbridge Agency Services  
Annually meet with the agency’s staff
  - d. **STRATEGY:** Enable allowing alternative housing options that can be beneficial to increase senior housing options, including for independent, active living (e.g. ADU’s, communal neighborhood configurations, etc.)



## CHAPTER 7: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS

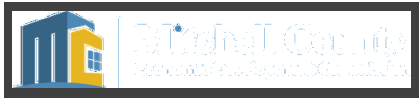
#### ST. ANSGAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION



The St. Ansgar Economic Development Corporation (EDC) is a local economic development group founded in the early 1980s with the goal of expanding tax base and recruiting new business at a time of transition in rural economies. Since that

time, the group has worked closely with the City to facilitate new development, including commercial, industrial, and residential. The EDC has assisted the City over the years in securing, for example, the St. Ansgar Industrial Park, the Seasons housing development, Wee Saints Child Care expansion, and Grain Millers site development and retention.

#### MITCHELL COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION



The Mitchell County Economic Development Commission is an alliance, formed via a 28E agreement, between Mitchell County and the Cities of St. Ansgar, Riceville, and St. Ansgar.

Its Board consists of two representatives from each city and one from the County. The Commission assists each jurisdiction with the efficient use of their power to encourage and promote the establishment, development, and retention of businesses in the Mitchell County area. Its director and staff serve as a key resource for each city.

#### NORTH CENTRAL IOWA ALLIANCE



The North Central Iowa Alliance (NCIA) is a seven county consortium of development professionals with deep experience. NCIA's multi-county marketing partnership features participation from economic development groups in Cerro Gordo, Floyd, Franklin, Hancock, Mitchell, Winnebago, and Worth Counties. The NCIA remains an important force for

regional economic development today, serving as a local, regional, state, and federal resource pool that markets greater North Central Iowa to prospects throughout the country.

### NIACC ENTREPRENEURIAL CENTER

Founded in 1997 and located in Mason City, The NIACC Pappajohn Center assists with business creation. The NIACC Center and four other similar centers across the State of Iowa have helped create and launch over 1,000 companies. The Center provides the following in North Iowa:

- Entrepreneurial education for communities and students
- Business coaching resources
- Community economic development tools
- Growth and owner transitions.
- One-on-one business counseling
- Business start-up and expansion services
- Innovation and acceleration services
- Technical assistance
- Financial advice and access to capital
- Creation of entrepreneurial communities and regions
- Entrepreneurial education



## **EMPLOYMENT**

St. Ansgar acts as a micro-hub for employment in northwest Mitchell County, principally in the industrial sector with major employers that support the agricultural industry such as Grain Miller’s, Inc. and Wolds Rim and Wheel and significant employment in education, healthcare, and retail.

	<b>St. Ansgar %</b>	<b>Mitchell County %</b>	<b>State of Iowa %</b>
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	0.0%	3.0%	1.3%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	10.9%	2.2%	0.1%
Utilities	1.1%	0.7%	0.5%
Construction	4.0%	10.1%	5.0%
Manufacturing	40.0%	27.0%	14.7%
Wholesale Trade	2.4%	5.1%	4.3%
Retail Trade	7.1%	7.8%	11.7%
Transportation and Warehousing	0.0%	2.1%	4.3%
Information	0.5%	0.7%	1.3%
Finance and Insurance	4.3%	3.1%	6.2%
Real Estate and Rental Leasing	0.0%	0.1%	1.0%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	1.4%	1.7%	3.7%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	0.0%	0.0%	1.6%
Administration and Support, Waste Management, and Remediation	0.0%	0.8%	4.4%
Educational Services	12.8%	7.7%	10.2%
Health Care and Social Assistance	10.2%	15.1%	15.0%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	0.0%	2.0%	1.1%
Accommodations and Food Services	1.5%	3.5%	7.0%
Other Services (excluding Public Administration)	1.4%	2.7%	2.6%
Public Administration	2.4%	4.7%	4.0%

**Table 7:** Employment within Jurisdiction

**Source:** 2021 American Community Survey via US Census OnTheMap

Residents of St. Ansgar also feature a more diversified set of professionals that commute outside of town for work as shown in Table 8.

	<b>St. Ansgar %</b>	<b>Mitchell County %</b>	<b>State of Iowa %</b>
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	2.1%	2.9%	1.3%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	1.5%	0.9%	0.1%
Utilities	0.0%	0.7%	0.5%
Construction	4.2%	6.2%	5.1%
Manufacturing	18.7%	20.8%	14.3%
Wholesale Trade	6.7%	5.4%	4.4%
Retail Trade	11.3%	10.7%	11.5%
Transportation and Warehousing	3.8%	3.1%	4.1%
Information	1.2%	1.0%	1.3%
Finance and Insurance	4.0%	3.8%	6.3%
Real Estate and Rental Leasing	0.4%	0.5%	1.0%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	1.3%	2.3%	3.9%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	1.3%	1.3%	1.8%
Administration and Support, Waste Management, and Remediation	2.5%	2.4%	4.4%
Educational Services	11.0%	8.3%	10.2%
Health Care and Social Assistance	18.3%	16.3%	15.0%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	1.2%	1.6%	1.1%
Accommodations and Food Services	4.4%	4.5%	6.9%
Other Services (excluding Public Administration)	3.5%	3.1%	2.6%
Public Administration	2.5%	4.2%	4.1%

**Table 8:** Employment of Residents

**Source:** 2021 American Community Survey via US Census OnTheMap

Figure 12 illustrates the inflow and outflow of workers/commuters to and from their place of work. The number is an estimate and not an actual count according to the 2021 U.S. Census American Community Survey. Estimates show that more workers come to St. Ansgar than leave town from their place of work. Less residents live and work inside city limits generally

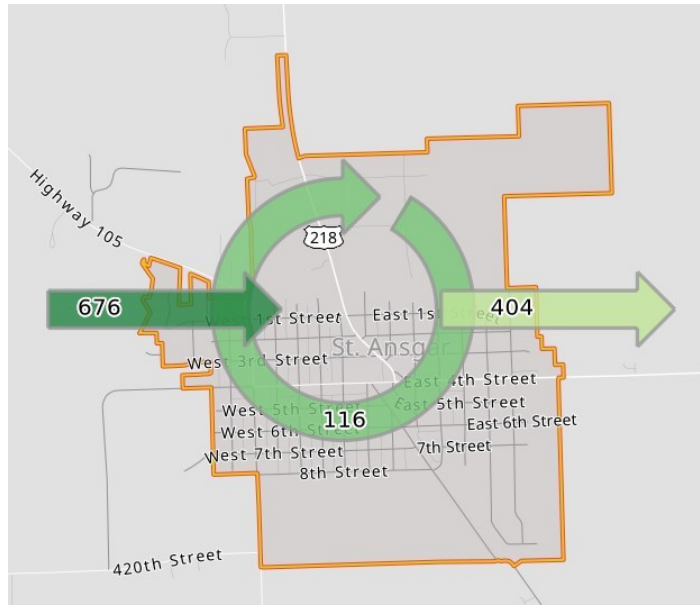


Figure 12: Inflow/Outflow Map of Workers:  
Source: 2021 American Community Survey via US Census OnTheMap

Table 9 shows that two-thirds of St. Ansgar residents commute less than 25 miles to work, and Figure 9 illustrates that commuters travel southeast of town to Mitchell, Osage, and the Cedar Falls/Waterloo area. Mason City and Austin, MN are other areas of employment for residents.

Distance	% Share
Less than 10 miles	46.7%
10 to 24 miles	23.3%
25 to 50 miles	8.1%
Greater than 50 miles	21.9%

Table 9: Work Commute Distance of Residents

Source: 2021 American Community Survey via US Census OnTheMap

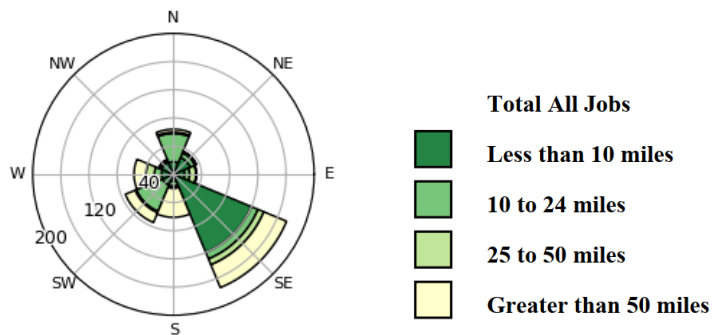
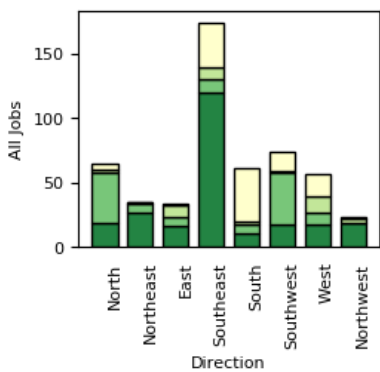


Figure 13: Worker Commuter Distance by Direction

Source: 2021 American Community Survey via US Census OnTheMap

This data demonstrates that the city has a healthy employment base.

Table 10 provides the composition of St. Ansgar’s household income compared to the Mitchell County and the State of Iowa overall. St. Ansgar has a significantly higher median household income versus the county or the state, particularly in the \$75,000-\$150,000 range. There are also less residents with incomes less than \$25,000.

	St. Ansgar %	Mitchell Co. %	State of Iowa %
Less than \$10,000	3.7	3.4	4.3
\$10,000 to \$15,999	4.3	4.8	3.6
\$15,000 to \$24,999	6.6	7.5	7.5
\$25,000 to \$34,999	12.4	7.8	7.4
\$35,000 to \$49,999	8.7	13.4	12.2
\$50,000 to \$74,999	13.7	19.9	18.4
\$75,000 to \$99,999	17.2	12.7	14.2
\$100,000 to \$149,999	23.1	18.4	17.3
\$150,000 to \$199,999	5.9	7.4	7.8
\$200,000 or more	4.3	4.7	7.3
<b>Median Household Income</b>	<b>\$76,042</b>	<b>\$66,056</b>	<b>\$69,588</b>

Table 10: Household Income

Source: 2018 - 2022 American Community Survey

## GOALS & STRATEGIES

1. **GOAL: Support local economic development organizations:** Grow the business and employment sector to provide a stable economy, good paying jobs, quality industrial based, and stable tax base
  - a. **STRATEGY:** Focus recruitment on new and expanding businesses and industry that have high paying jobs and value added industry that grow the local economy. Offer incentives tied to increased taxable valuation and increasing quality, high-paying jobs (use median wages, not average skewed by highly paid executives). Adopt a threshold for new industry incentives that the median wage must be at least \$1 above currently average median wage for St. Ansgar
  - b. **STRATEGY:** Promote entrepreneurial business in the schools
  - c. **STRATEGY:** Encourage on-line business development through education and awareness
  - d. **STRATEGY:** Consider development of a “shovel ready site” on the north side or southeast side of town along the railroad line for the purpose of industry and business recruitment. Seek outside funding to assist with costs and utility extensions. Possibly consider participation in the IEDA Industrial Site Certification program.

- e. **STRATEGY:** Actively promote participation in NIACC’s Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center to prospective business owners
2. **GOAL: Brand identity:** Further develop a community identity to accentuate the strengths of St. Ansgar:
- a. **STRATEGY:** Create a highly identifiable brand for St. Ansgar
  - b. **STRATEGY:** Install wayfinding signs throughout town that direct visitors to downtown and other local amenities
  - c. **STRATEGY:** Conduct a market analysis to determine the need for different types of local restaurants, retail, and housing
  - d. **STRATEGY:** Develop strategies for shopping locally and further promoting St. Ansgar’s collection of specialty shops
  - e. **STRATEGY:** Promote Mitchell County, including St. Ansgar, to visitors and prospective new residents with welcome packets and local information
  - f. **STRATEGY:** Update or improve community gateways to be consistent with branding and to draw visitors as necessary
3. **GOAL: Invest in the health and viability of Downtown**
- a. **STRATEGY:** Install streetscape improvements and amenities along 4<sup>th</sup> Street in downtown, including lighting, street trees, benches, landscaping, and signage.
  - b. **STRATEGY:** Aggressively work to fill vacant downtown storefronts as needed
  - c. **STRATEGY:** Pursue redevelopment or rehabilitation of any buildings in disrepair. Collaborate with local developers to seek outside funding as necessary.
  - d. **STRATEGY:** Consider a “road diet” for 4<sup>th</sup> Street to make downtown more amenable to pedestrians and local activity and improve safety (i.e. two lanes w/ center turn lane, bike lane, and parking improvements. See Transportation Goals and Strategies.)
  - e. **STRATEGY:** Promote funding sources for downtown start-up and existing businesses as needed, such as the Revolving Loan Fund through NIACOG and other low-interest lending programs
  - f. **STRATEGY:** Consider event-based strategies that bring Downtown activity, (e.g. monthly music night during the Summer hosted in the City Hall parking lot w/ street closure)
4. **General Policies for Commercial Development**
- a. **STRATEGY:** Provide commercial development that is necessary to support the economy
    - i. Encourage commercial development where infrastructure and city services can be provided
    - ii. Continue to identify, develop, and maintain buildings and sites for commercial growth
    - iii. Encourage utilizing existing abandoned sites and brownfields rather than prime agricultural land and undeveloped land within city limits as feasible



- b. **STRATEGY:** Allow commercial development on sites adequately served by road systems or on existing railways
  - i. Allow commercial development at intersections of highways and railroad right-of-ways as long as they satisfy the following requirements:
    - Protect the character of the area
    - Assured visual compatibility of development with the surrounding area
    - Reduce the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low-density development
    - Protect critical areas of surface water and groundwater resources
    - Protect against conflicts with the use of agricultural lands

## 5. General Policies for Industrial Development

- a. **STRATEGY:** Identify railroad corridors as a likely area for industrial development
  - i. Ensure that proposed industrial development is appropriate for and will be compatible with its surroundings, and will have access to appropriate transportation by targeting railroad corridors and high traffic roadways
- b. **STRATEGY:** Utilize existing abandoned sites and brown fields rather than prime agricultural land.
  - i. Support the efforts of local economic development organizations in developing the industrial park and guiding new industry to these locations
  - ii. Encourage and support the development and expansion of industry that does not create nuisance issues and does not interfere with the existing quality of life for surrounding neighbors and property owners, but for which municipal utilities can be made in a safe and proper manner
  - iii. Provide for industrial uses that serve the needs of residents and are consistent with maintaining St. Ansgar's character

## CHAPTER 8: COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Parks and recreation programs, community facilities, and services are vital components to a community's quality of life. The programs and services a community provides its citizens are essential to a city's basic functionality. Outdoor recreation and integration of physical activity into daily life is becoming increasingly popular. Providing facilities that support active living can provide improved quality of life, health, and environmental benefits to the community. Likewise, steady maintenance of existing facilities and the sustainable provision of services is essential to daily life and the balance of the City's fiscal situation.

### PARKS AND RECREATION

The City has a Parks and Recreation Department governed by the local Park, Beautification, and Recreation Board. The City has three public parks and operates several recreational programs, and other recreational opportunities and cultural resources hosted by the St. Ansgar Community School District and local non-profit organizations are available in town.



*Clausen Park gazebo*

#### CLAUSEN PARK

Clausen Park is located a couple blocks northwest of downtown between N George Street and N Washington Street and W 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and W 4<sup>th</sup> Street. The City installed new playground equipment in the summer of 2023 after a major fundraising effort. The park also features a large gazebo, two picnic shelters, and plenty of green space.

#### ANGEL PARK

This small park is located along US Highway 218, just north of downtown and Casey's General Store. There is a small picnic shelter and open space provided for the community to enjoy.

#### WHITE DEER PARK

A white albino deer roamed the area from 1980-1988. Upon her death, she was preserved, mounted, and is now encased at this park located at the southwest corner of S Mitchell Street and W 4<sup>th</sup> Street. The parklet serves the downtown area and has a small garden, bench, and picnic table.



**ST. ANSGAR VETERANS MEMORIAL**

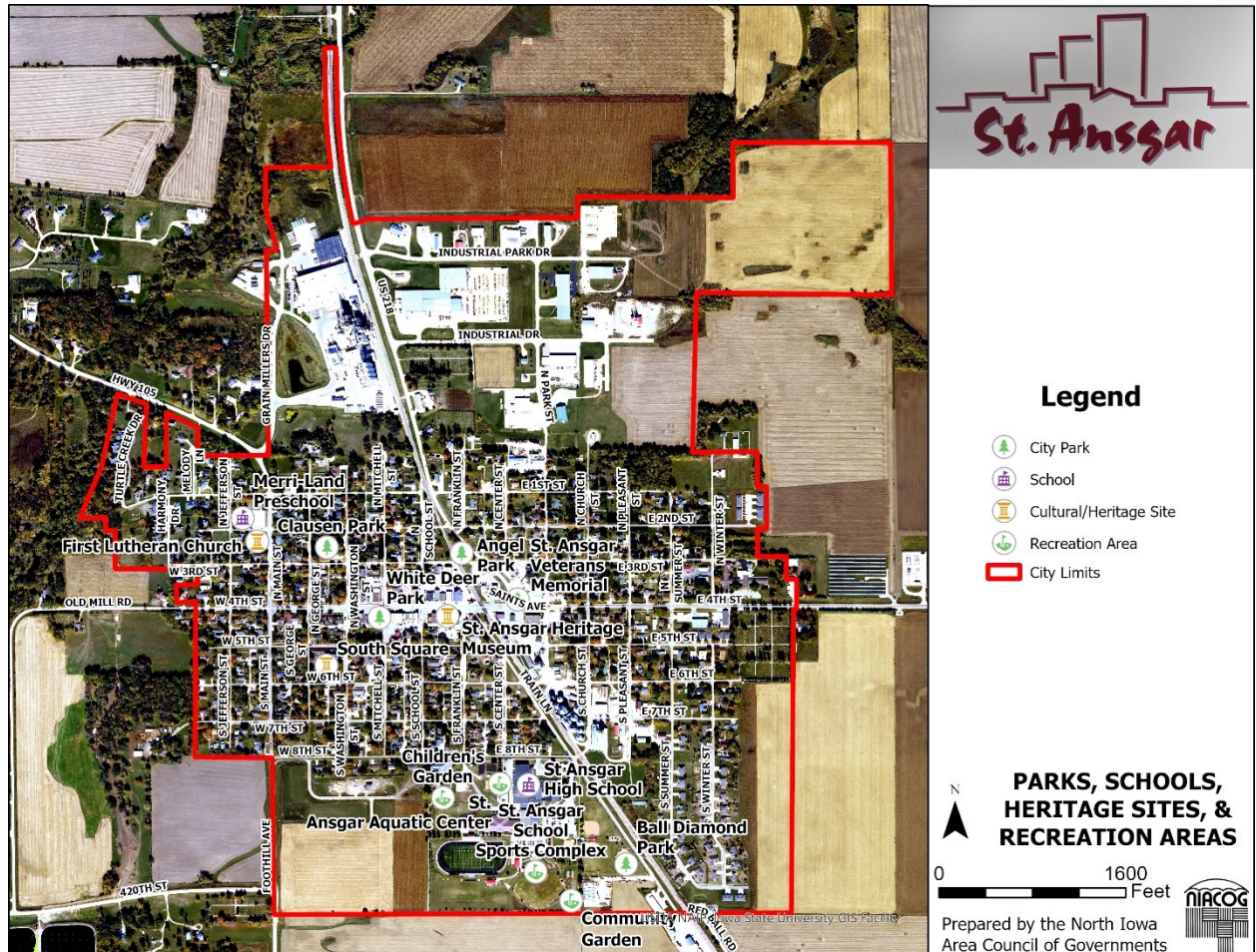
Located at the corner of US Highway 218 and 4<sup>th</sup> Street, the St. Ansgar Veterans Memorial honors those local heroes that have served in the US armed forces. The American Legion Post #358 put together the project. The memorial features the Freedom Rock, painted by Iowa’s-own Freedom Rock Painter, “Bubba” Sorenson.



*St. Ansgar Veterans Memorial*

**BALL DIAMOND PARK & SCHOOL SPORTS COMPLEX**

The St. Ansgar Community School District’s sport facilities, just south of the school buildings, and the City’s Ball Diamond Park, co-located just east of the school sports complex, are available for use by the community. The Community Garden, located south of the Ball Diamond and operated by the local garden club, features a variety of vegetables that are available for the public to use. The City also supports a Children’s Garden west of the school and south of Wee Saints Daycare. The St. Ansgar recreational trail (START trail) encircles the school complex.



**Figure 14: Parks and Cultural Sites**





St. Ansgar Aquatic Center

### AQUATIC CENTER

The St. Ansgar Aquatic Center is located next door to the west of the school grounds on 8<sup>th</sup> Street. The pool features a zero depth entry, a large pool deck with chairs, diving board, concession stand, and two plunge slides. Available activities include public swimming times and pool rentals, swimming lessons, lap swimming, and water aerobics.

### ACORN PARK GOLF COURSE

The golf course is located west of the city limits along Iowa Highway 105. The 9-hole, private golf course is open to the public. The clubhouse features a bar and restaurant and rentable space for special events.

### RECREATION PROGRAMS

Program	Description
Youth baseball and softball	Youth baseball and softball league, youth t-ball through 7 <sup>th</sup> grade
Youth football	Youth flag football league for younger children, drills and skills training for 5 <sup>th</sup> -7 <sup>th</sup> grade youth

Table 11: Recreation Programs

## COMMUNITY BUILDINGS

Like any city, St. Ansgar provides fundamental City functions and maintains facilities to carry out its operations, including basic governance, public works, and public safety. Several cultural facilities are also run by local nonprofits that provide a source of additional quality of life features and community education.



Nissen Library & City Hall

### NISSEN LIBRARY AND CITY HALL

Originally constructed in 1930, the Nissen Library provides a selection of reading materials, media, and services to the citizens of St. Ansgar. The building is still used for library services to this day. At first, the City Hall was located in the basement; but in 1988, an addition to the original building provided further space for City Hall operations, a large meeting room, and new restroom facilities. The City employs one full-time police officer for law enforcement, whose office is also located in City Hall. The Mitchel County Sheriff’s Department assists with law enforcement.



*"Our Little Fireman"*

### FIRE DEPARTMENT

The St. Ansgar Fire Department is located at the southwest corner of W 4<sup>th</sup> Street and S Franklin Street. Built in 1978, the building features four vehicle bays to store the truck fleet. The volunteer department provides emergency response services in town and the surrounding area. The building is undersized to accommodate modern firefighting trucks, so the City has identified a new fire department building as a major need in the coming years, especially as replacement vehicles come into service to replace the aging fleet.



### PUBLIC WORKS BUILDINGS

The St. Ansgar public works building is located at 305 E 6<sup>th</sup> Street. The building serves as the hub for the City's public works department.

## CULTURAL FACILITIES

### SOUTH SQUARE

Operated by a local non-profit, South Square is the original St. Ansgar Elementary School, located at 202 S Washington Street. The facility hosts a variety of community events, classes, and services. Events include everything from tae kwon do to art classes, dance practices, community plays, and weekly bingo to luncheons. It also includes a small coffee shop and health spa.



*South Square*

### ST. ANSGAR HERITAGE MUSEUM

The St. Ansgar Heritage Society operates a local museum in downtown S. Ansgar at 126 W 4<sup>th</sup> Street, next door to the fire station. The museum features educational displays about the City's origins and history.

## GOALS & STRATEGIES

1. **GOAL:** Provide the citizens with choices for the types and amount of recreational activities.
  - a. **STRATEGY:** Consider phased additions (e.g. tennis courts, basketball courts, pickleball courts, etc.) to local amenities to improve recreational opportunities over time
  - b. **STRATEGY:** Provide recreational facilities which meet the needs of all citizens and ensure that future demands are met through development of new facilities and services along with the upgrading and reconstruction of existing facilities
  - c. **STRATEGY:** Coordinate with non-profit, County, State, and Federal programs to utilize both public and private funds within City limits
  - d. **STRATEGY:** Develop connectivity between local parks and amenities (See Transportation Goals and Strategies)
2. **GOAL:** Maintenance of public buildings
  - c. **STRATEGY:** Continue to provide routine maintenance of public buildings
3. **GOAL:** Development of a local recreation center to the west of the school grounds
  - a. **STRATEGY:** Create partnership with St. Ansgar Schools to develop project and operations plan to share costs
  - b. **STRATEGY:** Aggressively fundraise locally and seek outside funding opportunities to make project a reality
4. **GOAL:** Prepare for the replacement of the undersized fire department building
  - a. **STRATEGY:** Identify an appropriate site for a new location that is as centrally located and has easy access to primary roadways as possible
  - b. **STRATEGY:** Prepare future borrowing capacity and city budget to fund new facilities
  - c. **STRATEGY:** Aggressively seek outside funding to assist with cost, if available
  - d. **STRATEGY:** Create reserve fund to help fund in the coming years
5. **GOAL:** Foster St. Ansgar's local volunteer culture to help achieve the community's goals
  - a. **STRATEGY:** Consider the development of a local volunteer commission or further utilize the Parks, Recreation, and Beautification Board appointed by the City Council to help with local fundraising, identify local strategies, work on projects with the City, and provide input to guide decision-making
  - b. **STRATEGY:** Actively engage the schools to provide students and young people an opportunity for local volunteerism and building civic engagement (e.g. providing the local student government body with opportunities for community input, student leadership program with the City, student-led project with the City, etc.)



# CHAPTER 9: COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE & SERVICES

The infrastructure and services a community provides are essential to maintain a high quality of life and business environment. Basic services provide for a healthy environment for residents and enable the community to prepare for development. It is essential that the City focuses on continued maintenance and invests in itself to foster potential growth opportunities.

## COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

### WATER DISTRIBUTION

The City provides water distribution citywide from two deep-water wells located on North Church Street and at 103 S Franklin Street. In the most recent water quality report available in 2022, water quality was well within compliance of water quality standards and all contaminants below permitted levels. Maintenance is conducted on an as needed basis.

### WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT

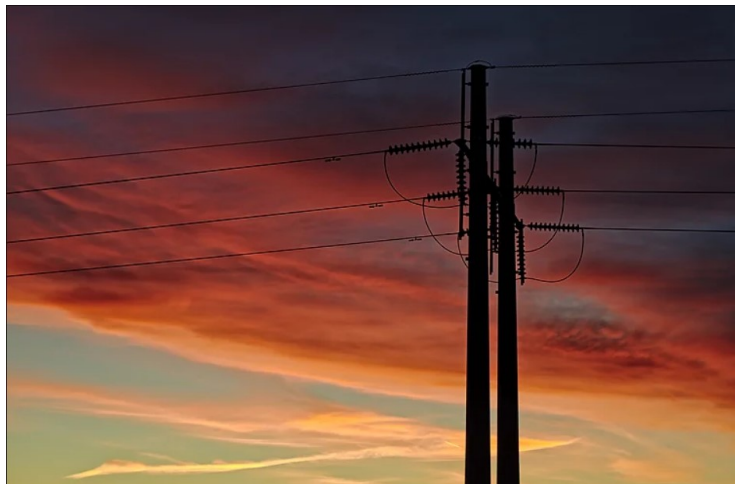
The City has public sanitary sewer provided citywide. Wastewater is directed to two sewage lagoons located at 1450 420<sup>th</sup> Street just southwest of town. The capacity has been increased recently with a new larger main to the lagoons and a new influence structure installed in 2024.

### STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

St. Ansgar has limited storm sewer infrastructure with a single line that runs along 4<sup>th</sup> Street through the downtown area. Otherwise, stormwater management is via natural drainage and drainage ditch facilities along the local roads. Drainage ditch improvements to increase storage capacity on some blocks have been completed in recent years.

### GAS & ELECTRIC UTILITIES

Alliant Energy is the local utility provider for both electric and home heating. Home heating is provided via natural gas. Alliant Energy provides services to communities throughout Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin to over 1.4 million customers and employs over 4,000 people.



## COMMUNICATIONS

Omnitel and Windstream provide internet and hardline telephone services for residents and businesses. Windstream provides high-speed broadband internet at speeds up to 200 megabytes per second. Omnitel has underground fiber facilities with current available plans at 150 megabytes per second and capabilities for speeds up to one gigabyte per second.

## COMMUNITY SERVICES

### SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT & RECYCLING

St. Ansgar provides solid waste and recycling collection through agreement with Jendro Sanitation. Trash and recycling materials are taken to the landfill operated by the Floyd Mitchell Chickasaw Solid Waste Management Agency located just outside of Elma for proper disposal and processing.

### HEALTHCARE AND HUMAN SERVICES

The St. Ansgar Clinic provides general medical care with three practitioners of family medicine. Additionally, there are other local health services, including a dental office, pharmacy, chiropractic office, and physical therapy center. There is one local nursing home operated by the Good Samaritan Society.

Mitchell County Home Health Care and Public Health provides a variety of health services countywide, including residents of St. Ansgar. Services include home health care aides for those in need and offer immunization, health screening, and other health service. The department has a variety of agreements to be able to provide a variety of specialty care services.

## GOALS & STRATEGIES

### 1. GOAL – Maintain City infrastructure

- a. **STRATEGY:** Create 5-year capital improvement program and update and revise annually to reflect changing conditions (See also: Transportation Goals and Strategies)
- b. **STRATEGY:** Inventory the City’s existing water and wastewater lines and drainage ditches status and conditions, including identifying any lead lines that should be replaced
- c. **STRATEGY:** Continue operation and preventative and routine maintenance of municipal utilities
- d. **STRATEGY:** Dedicate a portion of the City budget for water and wastewater lines and drainage ditch rehabilitation and replacement projects every 2-3 years
- e. **STRATEGY:** Seek outside funding options where possible for maintenance projects, including replacing lead pipes as may be applicable

## 2. General Policies

- a. **STRATEGY:** Do not extend city utilities outside of the incorporated city limits, unless it is for a land use not suitable for close proximity to others and it offers substantial benefit to the community, such as job creation or a rate structure that is higher than in-town residents
- b. **STRATEGY:** Consider long term maintenance and replacement cost when making construction design/materials decisions related to utilities
- c. **STRATEGY:** Generally, have new developments pay the full costs of public improvements required to serve them according to the benefit derived

## 3. GOAL: Consider partnership, shared use, and energy-saving strategies that create cost efficiencies

- a. **STRATEGY:** Consider leasing or allowing fee for permit use of public land, facilities, or vendor opportunities to generate funds and offer amenities in public spaces such as the library (coffee/gift shop), parks (food/souvenirs), etc.
- b. **STRATEGY:** Participate in the Iowa Public Buildings Benchmarking program to identify buildings that are above average for energy consumption and target them for energy saving modifications. The Iowa Energy Center is the coordinating agency for this program.
- c. **STRATEGY:** Utilize energy efficient technologies to minimize future costs

## 4. GOAL: Provide public facilities and services to develop a desirable quality of life for current and future residents and taxpayers.

- a. **STRATEGY:** Restrict placement of energy fuel storage facilities provided sufficient precautions are taken to protect the environment and nearby residents
- b. **STRATEGY:** Encourage environmentally safe disposal of all wastes
- c. **STRATEGY:** Encourage the development and use of clean and renewable energy use and increased energy efficiency
- d. **STRATEGY:** Evaluate the solid waste, sewer, water service needs of the city as development occurs
- e. **STRATEGY:** When constructing new public facilities or structures, choose a design that adds to the character of the city

## 5. GOAL: Make available facilities and services that are necessary for the public wellbeing.

- a. **STRATEGY:** Prohibit the disposal of hazardous wastes, unless taken to an approved disposal location
- b. **STRATEGY:** Encourage recycling efforts and allow facilities to locate and operate whose business is recycling, provided adequate precautions are taken to insure the operation will not be detrimental or injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the immediate area
- c. **STRATEGY:** Actively monitor for water quality issues and leaky wastewater lines to avoid contamination that may affect the health of residents. Participate in the Iowa DNR's PFAS Action Plan to maintain high water quality if an opportunity presents itself, as Mitchell County has been identified as having a high susceptibility to PFAS in groundwater.

# CHAPTER 10: TRANSPORTATION

The transportation system is directly linked to the land use patterns and the character of a community. Mobility includes all forms of transportation, including driving, walking, bicycling, aviation, and the transit system. The emphasis of various modes of interconnection influences land use and daily life.

## ROAD SYSTEM

Roads provide transportation routes for people and goods via motorized vehicles and bicycles in some places. The street system is the principal form of mobility infrastructure in St. Ansgar. The Federal Functional Classification System is used for general planning efforts and are references for construction standards and transportation eligibility. Types include:

**Interstate:** A divided, limited access road with no direct land access and no at-grade crossings or intersections.

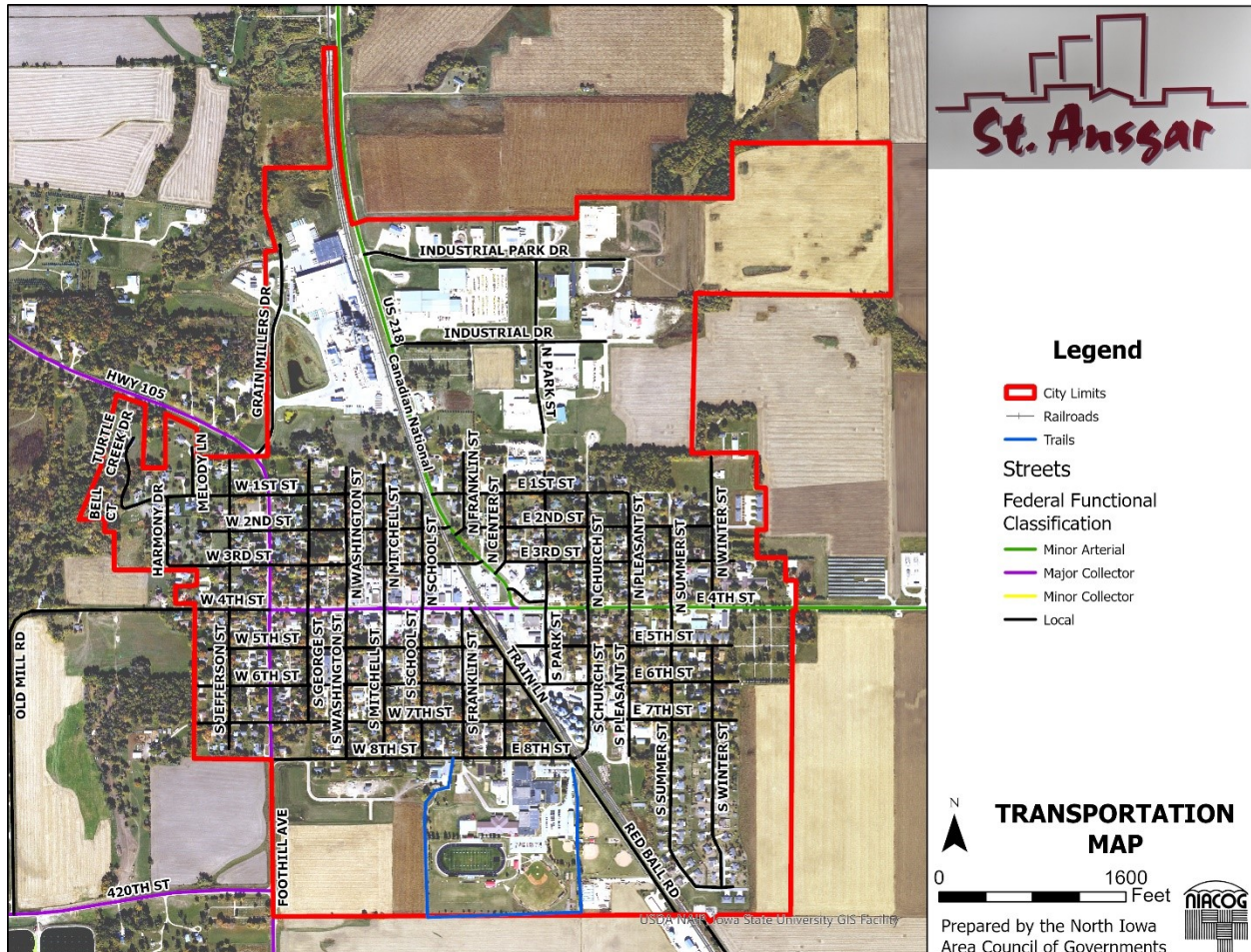


Figure 15: Transportation System



**Principal Arterial:** Allow traffic flow through the urban area and between major destinations. They carry a high proportion of urban travel since movement, not access, is the primary function.

**Minor Arterial:** Collect and distribute traffic from principal arterials and interstates to streets of lower classification and, in some cases, allow traffic to directly access destinations.

**Major and Minor Collectors:** Provide land access and traffic circulation within and between residential neighborhoods and commercial and industrial areas and distributes traffic movements from these areas to the arterial streets.

**Local:** Offer the lowest level of mobility but the highest level of local property access. Local roads comprise the largest percentage of street mileage and provide direct access to adjacent land uses, including private property and low-volume public facilities.

**ROAD MAINTENANCE**

Figure 16 shows the average annual daily traffic (AADT) for each block within St. Ansgar. AADT is used for transportation planning purposes to assist with how to prioritize road maintenance. The Iowa DOT collects data for each county every four years. The data for St. Ansgar was last collected in 2021. It provides a useful guide for understanding traffic patterns within city limits. Used with pavement condition data, it can inform efficient decision-making.

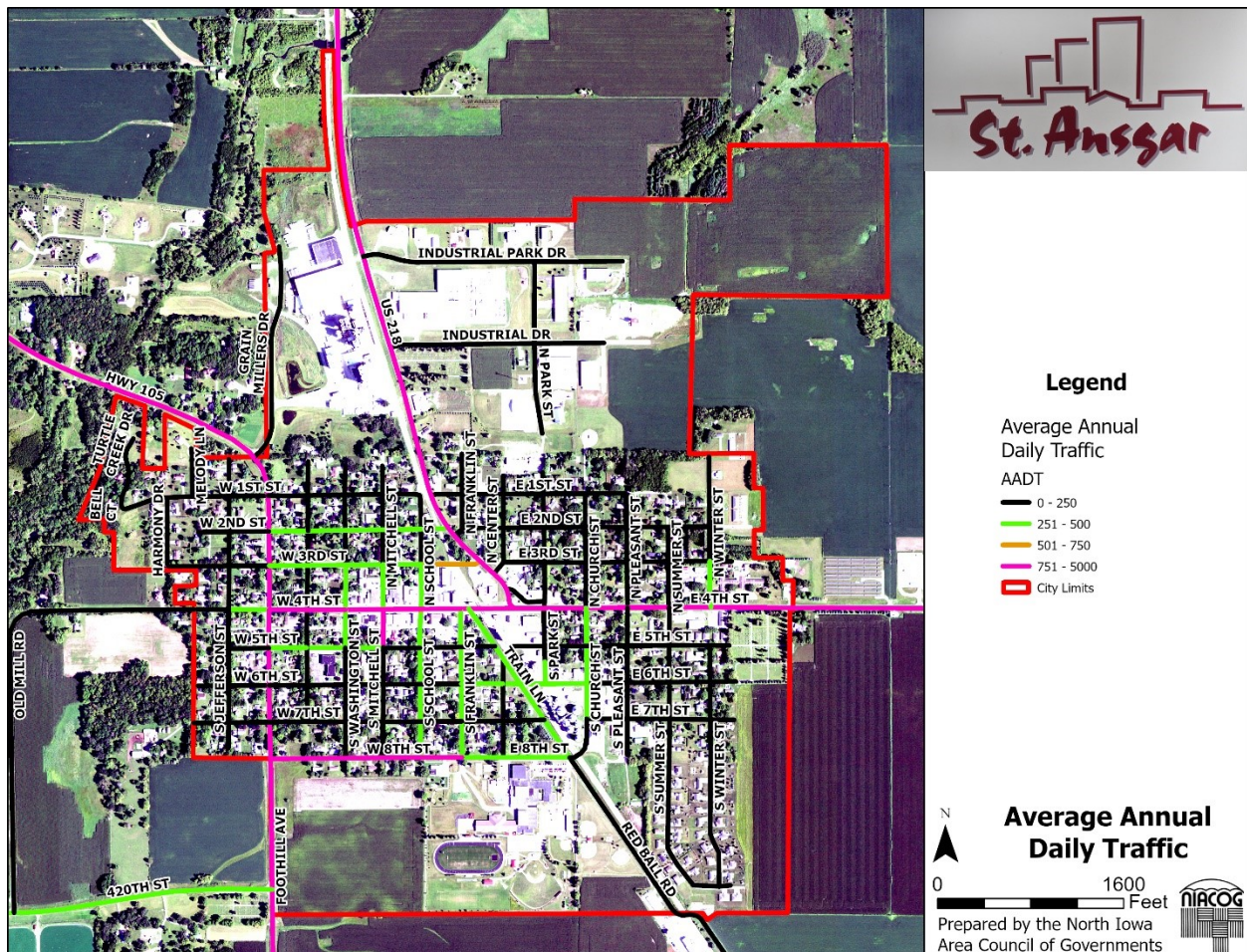


Figure 16: Average Annual Daily Traffic



Figure 17 illustrates the pavement condition in St. Ansgar. The Pavement Condition Index (PCI) assesses the pavement quality for roads. PCI rates the pavement condition on a scale from 0-100, where 0 is very poor and 100 is excellent. More than half of the roads in St. Ansgar are considered in fair to poor condition. The PCI data can be used in combination with traffic data to determine maintenance priorities.

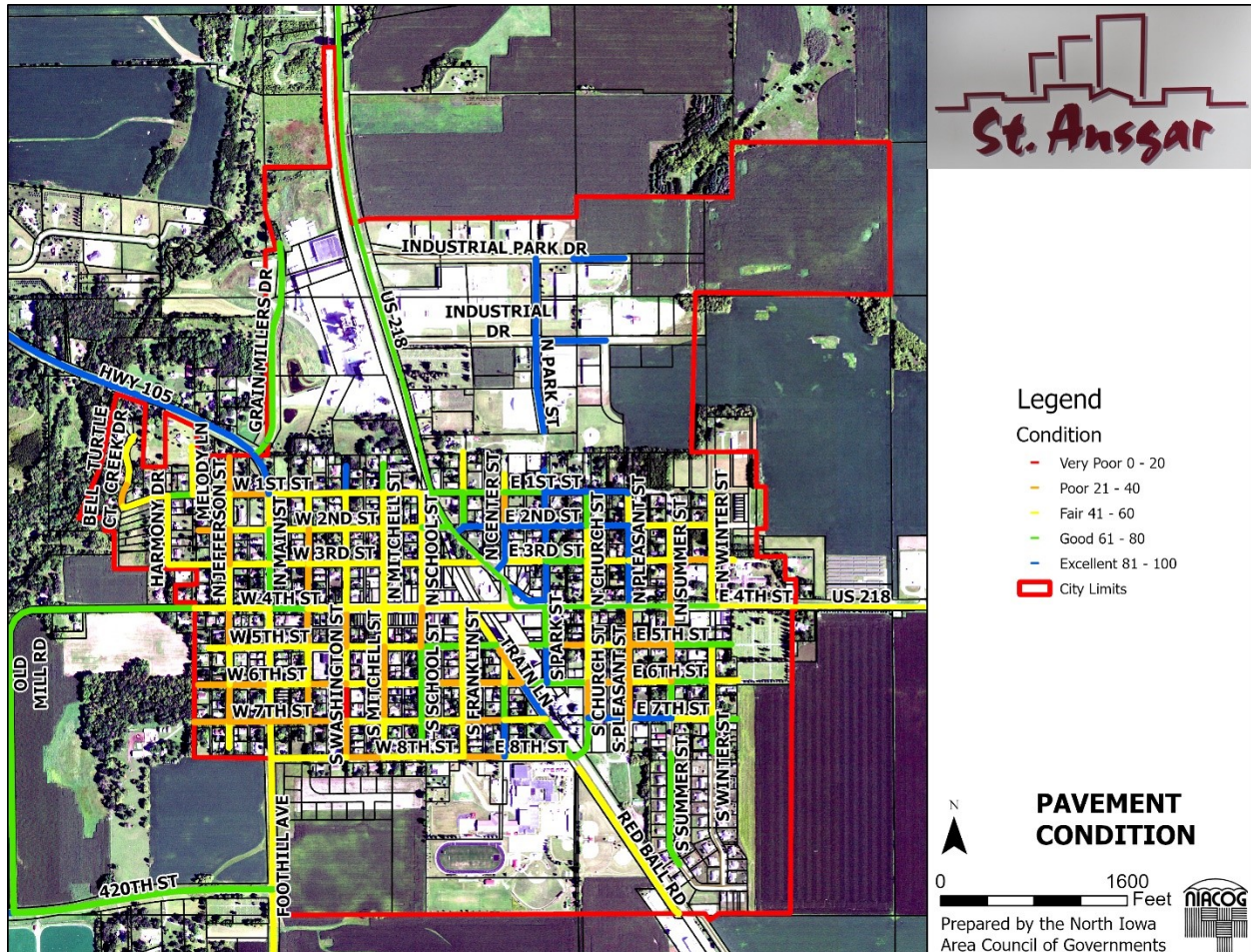


Figure 17: Pavement Condition Index

## TRANSIT SYSTEM

The Region 2 Planning Affiliation (RPA2) provides transportation planning and programming throughout the NIACOG planning region, as designated by the Iowa DOT. RPA2 operates the regional transit system throughout the eight county region, including for residents of St. Ansgar. Public transit services are available on an appointment basis.



## PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE SYSTEM

Walking and biking facilities are an important element of a multi-modal transportation system. Infrastructure such as sidewalks, trails, bike lanes, and signage encourages an active lifestyle and can be beneficial to the local quality of life, especially as an option for those that cannot afford regular motorized transportation.



*St. Ansgar Recreational Trail*

Sidewalks provide connections and cue safe routes for pedestrians. St. Ansgar has sidewalks scattered around town inconsistently. These are located primarily along primary roadways and downtown. Further additional sidewalk development in existing neighborhoods and ongoing maintenance of existing sidewalk over time would encourage walking and enhance safety for walkers.

Bicycle facilities can be separated from roadways along the right-of-way or dedicated multi-purpose trails or shared with automobiles with bike lanes or as shared roadways. St. Ansgar has limited biking infrastructure. The City and local volunteers developed the St. Ansgar Recreational Trail around the school grounds in 2015. Local volunteers and the City are planning and fundraising for an expansion to the trail located around the new Rock Ridge Subdivision at the south entrance to town. Further development of the trail system would go a long way to encourage active transportation option.

## RAIL SYSTEM AND FREIGHT

The railway freight system is essential for local economic development and connecting local industry to the larger economy. The Cedar River Railroad, operated by the Canadian National Railway Company, runs north to south through St. Ansgar. The Canadian National Railway Company is one of seven Class I railroads in the country. Class I railroads are the industry leaders and have access to the most up-to-date technology and resources.

## GOALS & STRATEGIES

1. **GOAL – Maintain streets** – Develop a regular street maintenance program
  - a. **STRATEGY:** Create 5-year capital improvement program and update and revise annually to reflect changing conditions (See also: Community Infrastructure and Services Goals and Strategies)
  - b. **STRATEGY:** Dedicate a portion of the City budget for street re-surfacing and reconstruction projects as able with available funds
  - c. **STRATEGY:** Seek outside funding options where possible for maintenance projects

2. **GOAL:** Maintain sidewalk network where feasible and improve pedestrian safety
  - a. **STRATEGY:** Inventory existing sidewalk network and monitor sidewalk conditions
  - b. **STRATEGY:** Maintain sidewalks along main transportation corridors (e.g. 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Main Street, etc.)
  - c. **STRATEGY:** Seek outside funding options where possible for maintenance projects
  - d. **STRATEGY:** Prioritize pedestrian safety improvement features, such as street markings on shared-roadway, where feasible. Include sidewalk improvements and installation with road maintenance where feasible.
  - e. **STRATEGY:** Ensure new and replaced sidewalks are ADA compliant
  - f. **STRATEGY:** Encourage property owners to install and maintain sidewalks
3. **GOAL: Develop a trail network** - Develop a community-wide network of multi-use trails and bike mobility
  - a. **STRATEGY:** Complete fundraising and finish the START trail expansion project
  - b. **STRATEGY:** Select various roads as shared-use routes with bicycle markings to identify as bicycle routes.
  - c. **STRATEGY:** Develop separated trail facilities or bike lanes where road right-of-way widths permit (e.g. 4<sup>th</sup> Street through downtown, US Highway 218, Red Ball Road, etc.)
  - d. **STRATEGY:** Prioritize developing connectivity between major community nodes and amenities (e.g. Downtown, school grounds, industrial park, city parks, etc.).
4. **GOAL: Regional Trail Network** – Participate in the building of a regional trail network
  - a. **STRATEGY:** Partner with Mitchell County as feasible to participate in developing a county trail network
  - b. **STRATEGY:** Take advantage of opportunities to create connections between the City and nearby parks and amenities (e.g. Acorn Park Golf Course, Halverson Park, Cedar Rivers Sportsmans Campground, Otranto Park, etc.)
5. **General Policies**
  - a. **STRATEGY:** Provide transportation systems that are safe, efficient, and meet the needs of the residential population, businesses, industries, and community
    - i. Consider projects and opportunities to improve safety (e.g. 4-way stop at the intersection of 4<sup>th</sup> Street and Main Street, reducing 4<sup>th</sup> Street to two lanes and a center turn lane to slow down traffic speeds, sidewalk installation around town, etc.)
  - b. **STRATEGY:** Support and promote the proper maintenance of all transportation routes
    - i. Support multiple modes of transportation that allow for mobility of all populations, regardless of income or status
    - ii. Encourage off-street parking, but allow street parking when sufficient street widths permit
  - c. **STRATEGY:** Consider aesthetics when upgrading streets
    - i. Consider the urban context of arterial streets when upgrading functionality and consider aesthetic treatments, such as street trees
    - ii. Integrate wayfinding signage, visual design improvements, and enhancements into arterial street or highway projects

# CHAPTER 11: HAZARD MITIGATION

A major component of the effective and efficient use of land is ensuring development is protected and resilient to natural disasters and other hazards. All land use decisions and policy should factor in likely impacts from hazards to the extent feasible. Hazard prevention both reduces damage and keeps overall long-term costs down.

## EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT



Mitchell County's Emergency Management Office is located at 211 S 6<sup>th</sup> Street in Osage. The Office implements programs pertaining to preparedness, response, recovery, and hazard mitigation. In effect, the Office has the following duties within St. Ansgar and the other jurisdictions in Mitchell County:

- Maintains and administers countywide Emergency Management Office, Emergency Operations Center, and equipment and programs.
- Prepares detailed response strategies and plans, including preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery for a wide variety of catastrophic scenarios.
- Serves as liaison (coordinator between federal, state, county, and city CEO's; and emergency response agencies) in day-to-day operations and in emergency and disaster scenarios.
- Plans, coordinates, conducts, and participates in emergency exercises as required by federal and state standards.

## HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

The Mitchell County Multi-Jurisdictional Plan Update, which incorporates participation from the City of St. Ansgar, was finalized on March 29, 2023 and expires on March 28, 2028. The plan prioritizes mitigation efforts against various hazards, including animal/plant/crop disease, drought, extreme heat, structure fire, grass or wildland fire, hailstorm, hazardous materials, human diseases, infrastructure failure, levee failure, flooding, severe winter storms/cold, terrorism, thunderstorms and lightning, tornado, transportation incidents, and windstorms. The Federal Emergency Management Agency and Iowa Homeland Security recommend all jurisdictions, including St. Ansgar, review the plan each year for relevancy. The plan's goals are to protect critical infrastructure, educate the public on hazards, strengthen communication between agencies and the public, and minimize the vulnerability of residents and their property.

The FEMA-approved plan allows St. Ansgar to be eligible for federal hazard mitigation funding through available programs:

### **Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)**

- Acquisition of hazard prone homes and businesses which enable owners to relocate to safer areas (acquisition)
- Protecting homes and businesses with permanent barriers to prevent floodwater from entering (levees, floodwalls, flood proofing)
- Elevating structures above known flood levels to prevent and reduce losses (elevation)
- Reconstructing a damaged dwelling on an elevated foundation to prevent and reduce future flood losses
- Structural retrofits to make a building more resistant to floods, earthquakes, wind, wildfire, and other natural hazards
- Retrofits to utilities and other infrastructure to enhance resistance to natural hazards (utility retrofits)
- Construction of safe rooms for both communities and individual residences in areas prone to tornado activity
- Slope stabilization projects to prevent and reduce losses to structures
- Drainage improvement projects to reduce flooding (flood risk reduction projects)
- Post-disaster code enforcement

### **Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Post Fire**

- Soil stabilization
- Flood diversion
- Reforestation projects

### **Flood Mitigation Assistance (compatible with Watershed Management Planning)**

- Localized flood control
- Floodwater storage and diversion
- Floodplain and stream restoration
- Storm water management
- Wetland restoration/creation

### **Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC)**

- Evaluate which code adoption and enforcement activities are best suited for the jurisdiction. Evaluation activities include staff time or external labor consultants necessary for evaluations and expenses for code review committees. BRIC may also allow a community the option to decide to enter a Memorandum of Agreement or Intergovernmental Agreement with an adjacent jurisdiction or third-party provider to permit and enforce appropriate building codes.

- Adopt building codes or develop building code requirements, including publication of those requirements, related to land use, zoning, floodplain management, infrastructure, urban-wildland defensible space (e.g., building, storm water management regulations), or other area, that help make the community more resilient.
- Improve or modify current or existing building code requirements to reflect the latest code edition, exceed the latest code edition, or develop or modify building code—coordinated requirements, including publication of those requirements, related to land use, zoning, floodplain management, infrastructure, urban-wildland defensible space (e.g., storm water management regulations), or other area, that help make the community more resilient.
- Enhance existing adopted codes and enforcement to incorporate updated requirements, higher standards, electronic permitting, online model code access, virtual inspection technology, and remote building codes administration.
- Provide or pursue training, including individual certification courses (inspector, plan reviewer, certified floodplain manager, etc.) and training for both the public and private sectors.
- Develop planning, training, and exercises for post-disaster building code enforcement through the International Code Council’s When Disaster Strike’s Institute training course.
- Develop activities related to improving code enforcement (evaluate processes, implement an inspection program, improve Building Code Effectiveness Grading Schedule (BCEGS) score, improve Community Rating System (CRS) rating, etc.).
- Develop or acquire software, hardware, and associated training to assist with plan reviews, permitting, inspections, and records retention.
- Purchase publications, or obtain digital license or printing permissions of publications, to support building code activities.
- Engage consulting services to support activities related to building codes.
- Cover costs associated with building department accreditation.
- Conduct public awareness outreach activities (related to new requirements).

The primary focus of hazard mitigation is on addressing and prioritizing mitigation efforts toward both natural and manmade hazards. Overall, the goal of hazard mitigation is to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk to life and property from hazard events.

## **GOALS & STRATEGIES**

1. **GOAL – Improve St. Ansgar’s resilience to hazards** – Consider hazard mitigation in all decisions and projects to reduce likelihood of major catastrophe from natural disasters and other hazards
  - a. **STRATEGY:** Maintain proper ordinances that factor in hazards and increase resilience over time
  - b. **STRATEGY:** Use the Mitchell County Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan as a guide for hazard mitigation strategies
  - c. **STRATEGY:** Identify local vulnerabilities and work to address issues that arise

# CHAPTER 12: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The St. Ansgar Comprehensive Plan is a guide to inform the direction the City will take over the course of the next 20 years. The implementation of the vision, goals, and strategies of the Plan should follow a realistic direction aligned with available resources. Ideally, the City will track progress for implementation, which should stay relevant over time. The Plan should be reviewed periodically to ensure it continues to be pertinent to St. Ansgar’s direction and amended as needed.

## IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

Goals and strategies have been identified from the inputs during the planning process. The strategies should be considered action steps to be completed over the timeframe of the plan. Strategies will vary from short to long term plans while others will be ongoing and require consistent dedication. The table below outlines the implementation schedule.

IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE		
Strategy	Timeframe	Responsible Parties*
<b>Land Use</b>		
Adopt Comprehensive Plan	>1 year	CC
Update Zoning Ordinance and other ordinances to implement plan	>1 year	PZ/CC
Implement annual strategy session	>1 year	All
Plan used to guide development	-	-
Use plan when making decisions	Ongoing	CC
Provide opportunities for citizen input	Ongoing	CC
Review, evaluate and amend Plan as needed to keep relevant	Ongoing	All
Balanced land uses	-	-
Encourage a balance of land uses	Ongoing	All
Consider impact of development on health, safety, and general welfare and character of neighborhood	Ongoing	All

\*CC = City Council; PZ = Planning and Zoning; PW = Public Works; CA = City Administration; BoA = Board of Adjustment; EDC = St. Ansgar Economic Development Corporation; SD = School District; PRB = Park, Recreation, & Beautification Comm; STC = START St. Ansgar Recreational Trails Comm.; FD = St. Ansgar Fire Department; Mitchell County Dept of Public Health



Strategy	Timeframe	Responsible Parties
Protect property rights	-	-
Work with property owners in advance to achieve land use goals	Ongoing	CA/PZ/PW/CC
Strictly enforce local ordinances	Ongoing	CA/PZ/PW/CC
Land put to highest and best use	-	-
Establish mutual agreements as needed	Ongoing	All
Consider fiscal impact on city	-	-
Include land in city limits able to be served by utilities and and necessary for orderly growth	Ongoing	CC
Cost/benefit analysis in all land use decisions	Ongoing	All
Extraterritorial Growth	-	-
Conduct cost/benefit analysis for annexation	Ongoing	CC/CA
Consider whether fees paid will cover cost of supply and maintenance	Ongoing	CC/CA
Encourage annexation near existing infrastructure	Ongoing	CC/CA
Future Land Use Map	-	-
Use Future Land Use Map to guide zoning map changes	Ongoing	CC/PZ
Use Future Land Use Map to guide decisions for growth areas	Ongoing	CC/PZ
<b>Agriculture &amp; Environment</b>		
Avoid development in environmentally sensitive areas	-	-
Encourage developers to conduct proper site assessments	Ongoing	All
Strictly enforce floodplain ordinance and require Iowa DNR review	Ongoing	PZ
Locate “green infrastructure” along streams and environmentally sensitive areas	Ongoing	All
Limit taking prime farmland out of production	-	-
Encourage development of unused or underutilized lots in town	Ongoing	All
Discourage unplanned sprawl or leapfrog develop far away from city limits	Ongoing	All
Consider ag-land preservation in subdivision 2-mile review	Ongoing	PZ/CC

Strategy	Timeframe	Responsible Parties
Promote affordable clean and renewable energy	-	-
Modernize local ordinances to encourage private ownership	>1 year	PZ/CC
Explore feasibility of including w/ local facilities & buildings	1-5 years	CA/PW/CC
<b>Housing</b>		
Prioritize housing rehabilitation	-	-
Promote outside funding sources that can assist landowners	Ongoing	All
Pursue outside funding sources where sensible for City to be involved with housing rehabilitation	Ongoing	CA/CC
Seek funding opportunities for multi-family & scattered site rental rehabilitation programs	Ongoing	CA/CC
Consider enforcement of nuisance abatements orders	Ongoing	CA/CC
Consider starting a paint voucher program	1-5 years	CA/CC
Encourage infill development	-	-
Ease regulations to make infill development easier	>1 year	PZ/CC
Create allowance for denser development on a limited basis	>1 year	PZ/CC
Housing affordability/attainability	-	-
Revise ordinances to increase housing stock and affordability	>1 year	PZ/CC
Encourage the allowance of a wide variety of housing options	>1 year	PZ/CC
Discourage non-residential uses in residential neighborhoods & accessory buildings on undeveloped lots	Ongoing	PZ/BoA/CC
Actively promote home ownership programs	Ongoing	All
Locate new housing developments near existing infrastructure	Ongoing	PZ/PW/CC
Assemble a homebuyer education program	Ongoing	CA/CC/EDC
Redevelop vacant downtown upper stories/buildings into housing	Ongoing	CA/CC/EDC
Pursue public/private partnerships	Ongoing	CA/CC/EDC
Enhanced availability of senior housing	-	-
Consider public/private partnerships to develop housing	Ongoing	CA/CC/EDC
Promote benefits of Iowa Dept of Aging/Elderbridge Agency Ser.	Ongoing	All
Enable allowance of alternative housing options	>1 year	PZ/CC

Strategy	Timeframe	Responsible Parties
<b>Economic Development</b>		
Support local economic development organizations	-	-
Focus business recruitment on value-added industries/high paying jobs/Tie incentives to increased property valuation/adding jobs	Ongoing	CC/EDC
Promote entrepreneurial business in schools	Ongoing	SD/EDC
Encourage online businesses thru education/awareness	Ongoing	EDC
Consider development of shovel-ready site	Ongoing	CC/PZ/PW/CA/EDC
Promote NIACC’s Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center	Ongoing	CA/EDC
<b>Brand identity</b>		
Create a highly identifiable brand for St. Ansgar	1-5 years	CA/CC/EDC
Install wayfinding signs to local amenities	1-5 years	CA/PW
Conduct market analysis for retail/restaurants/housing	1-2 years	EDC
Develop strategies to encourage shopping locally	Ongoing	CA/EDC
Provide welcome packets/local information to new residents	Ongoing	CA/EDC
<b>Invest in health and viability of Downtown</b>	-	-
Install streetscape improvements along 4 <sup>th</sup> St Downtown	1-5 years	PW/CC
Aggressively work to fill vacant Downtown buildings	Ongoing	CA/CC/EDC
Pursue redevelopment/Rehab of building in disrepair	Ongoing	CA/CC/EDC
Consider a “road diet” along 4 <sup>th</sup> St	1-5 years	PW/CC
Promote funding sources for Downtown business owners	Ongoing	CA/CC/EDC
Consider event-based strategies to bring activity Downtown	Ongoing	CA/PRB/CC/EDC
General Policies for Commercial Development	Ongoing	See pages 33-34
General Policies for Industrial Development	Ongoing	See page 34
<b>Community Facilities</b>		
Provide citizens with choices for recreational activities		
Consider phased additions to recreational amenities over time	Ongoing	PRB/PW/CC
Provide and maintain recreational facilities that meet local needs	Ongoing	PRB/PW/CC
Coordinate with various programs to utilize available funds	Ongoing	PRB/CA/PW/CC
Develop connectivity between local parks and amenities	Ongoing	PRB/CA/PW/CC

Strategy	Timeframe	Responsible Parties
Maintenance of public buildings	-	-
Continue routine maintenance of public buildings	Ongoing	CA/PW/CC
Development of local recreation center to the west of school grounds	-	-
Create partnership with St. Ansgar Schools to develop project operations plan to share costs	10-20 years	CA/PRB/PW/CC/SD
Aggressively fundraise locally & pursue outside funding sources	10-20 years	CA/PRB/PW/CC/SD
Prepare for the replacement of the fire department building	5-10 years	CA/CC/FD
Identify appropriate site for new location	1-5 years	CA/CC/PW/FD
Prepare future borrowing capacity and City budget	5-10 years	CA/CC/FD
Aggressively seek outside funding sources, if available	5-10 years	CA/CC/FD
Create reserve fund to save	5-10 years	CA/CC/FD
Utilize local volunteer culture to achieve community goals	-	-
Consider creation of volunteer commission or use PRB	1-2 years	CA/CC/PRB
Engage the schools to provide students with opportunity	1-2 years	CA/CC/PRB/SD
<b>Community Infrastructure &amp; Service</b>		
Maintain City infrastructure	-	-
Create 5-year Capital Improvement Program	1-2 years	PW/CA/CC
Inventory existing water/wastewater lines & drainage ditches	>1 year	PW
Continue operation and routine/preventative maintenance	Ongoing	PW
Dedicate a portion of City budget for projects every 2-3 years	Ongoing	PW/CA/CC
Seek outside funding options where possible	Ongoing	PW/CA/CC
General Policies	Ongoing	See page 42
Consider strategies that create cost efficiencies	-	-
Consider leasing/fee for permit on public land to generate funds	Ongoing	CA/CC
Participate in the Iowa Public Building Benchmarking program	1-3 years	CA/PW/CC
Utilize energy efficient technologies to minimize future costs	Ongoing	CA/PW/CC
Provide public facilities & services to improve quality of life	-	-
Restrict placement of fuel storage facilities	Ongoing	PZ
Encourage environmentally safe disposal of all wastes	Ongoing	PZ/PH

Strategy	Timeframe	Responsible Parties
Encourage development of renewable energy	Ongoing	All
Evaluate solid waste, sewer, and water needs for new development.	Ongoing	PW/CC
Design new public facilities, consider that adds character	Ongoing	CA/PW/CC
Make public facilities and services available need for public wellbeing	-	-
Prohibit disposal in locations other than approved locations	Ongoing	PW/CC/PH
Encourage recycling efforts & business not harmful to the public	Ongoing	PZ/CC
Monitor water quality/wastewater leaks & participate in Iowa DNR's PFAS Action Plan where possible	Ongoing	PW/CC
<b>Transportation</b>		
Maintain streets		
Create 5-year Capital Improvement Program	1-2 years	PW/CA/CC
Dedicate a portion of City budget for projects	Ongoing	PW/CA/CC
Seek outside funding options where possible	Ongoing	PW/CA/CC
Maintain sidewalks where feasible & improve pedestrian safety	-	-
Inventory existing sidewalk network and conditions	1-3 years	PW/CC
Maintain sidewalks along main transportation corridors	Ongoing	PW
Seek outside funding options where feasible	Ongoing	PW/CA/CC
Prioritize pedestrian safety features where feasible	Ongoing	PW/CC
Ensure new and replace sidewalks are ADA compliant	Ongoing	PW
Develop trail network	-	-
Complete fundraising and finish START trail expansion	1-2 years	STC/CA/CC
Select various roads as shared-use routes with bicycle markings	1-5 years	PW/PRB/STC/CC
Develop separated trail facilities or bike lanes where feasible	Ongoing	PW/PRB/STC/CC
Prioritize connectivity between community nodes/amenities	Ongoing	PW/PRB/STC/CC
General Policies	Ongoing	See page 47
<b>Hazard Mitigation</b>	Ongoing	See page 50



## **PLAN MAINTENANCE**

This Plan is a dynamic tool intended as a blue print for the next 20 years. While a long-term plan, it should be considered a living document that addresses the changing realities of St. Ansgar’s evolving condition. To be effective, the Plan should be evaluated for relevance annually. Changes in land use, implementation progress, and the ongoing community vision should be reviewed and reported to elected officials, and if appropriate, the Plan may be amended to reflect changing circumstances and priorities.

## **POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES**

Many of the goals and strategies will require outside funding sources to make them reality. While not exhaustive, the table below contains a list of potential funding sources from which to draw.

<b>POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES</b>			
<b>Source</b>	<b>Administrator</b>	<b>Local Match</b>	<b>Description</b>
Community Catalyst	Iowa Economic Development Authority	No minimum, but City must contribute	Up to \$100,000 in funding for redevelopment of vacant buildings
Enhance Iowa (CAT): Community Attraction & Tourism Grant Program	Iowa Economic Development Authority	65%	Projects that promote recreational, cultural, educational, or entertainment attractions
Community Attraction and Tourism Program Marketing	Iowa Economic Development Authority	50%	Up to \$15,000 for marking of vision Iowa CAT or RECAT project
Enhance Iowa (RECAT) River Enhancement Community Attraction & Tourism Grant Program	Iowa Economic Development Authority	50%	Help with projects that create recreational and entertainment attractions that connect with and enhance a river, lake, or river corridor
Community Development Block Grant (CBDG)	Iowa Economic Development Authority	Encouraged	Public facilities, housing, and community facilities projects
Revitalize Iowa’s Sound Economy (RISE) Program	Iowa Department of Transportation	20%/50% Determined by Project Type	Funds road and street infrastructure needed for economic development for value-added economic activities
Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TAP)	RPA-2 Planning Affiliation (NIACOG)	20%	Repair, rehabilitation, reconstruction, replacement, and maintenance of existing transportation infrastructure, especially the for safety ,accessibility, multi-modal, and resilience features, usually trails

Source	Administrator	Local Match	Description
Safe Routes to School	Iowa Department of Transportation	Encouraged	Education or construction projects that help promote walking or biking to school
Highway Bridge Program	Iowa Department of Transportation	20%	Replacement or rehabilitation of structurally deficient or functionally obsolete bridges
Federal Recreational Trails Program	Iowa Department of Transportation	20%	Provides funding for recreational trails
Highway Safety Improvement Program – Local (HSIP-Local)	Iowa Department of Transportation	Varies	Provides funding for low-cost to medium cost systemic safety improvements
State Recreational Trails Program	Iowa Department of Transportation	25%	Provides funding for recreational trails
Sign Replacement Program for Cities & Counties	Iowa Department of Transportation	N/A	Provides funding of up to \$5,000/year for street sign replacements
Pedestrian Curb Ramp Construction Grant Program	Iowa Department of Transportation	N/A	Provides funding to install ADA-compliant pedestrian curb ramps along a primary road
Iowa Traffic Engineering Assistance Program (TEAP)	Iowa Department of Transportation	N/A	Provides up to 150 hours of free traffic engineering expertise to local governments for traffic study work
Traffic Safety Improvement Program	Iowa Department of Transportation	N/A	Funds traffic safety projects or studies at specific sites or corridors with a crash history
State Historic Preservation Tax Credit	Iowa Economic Development Authority	N/A	Provides up to 25% state tax credit for qualifying historic preservation projects
Redevelopment Tax Credit Program	Iowa Economic Development Authority	N/A	Provides varying rates of state tax credit of the percentage of qualifying project costs up to \$15 million/year

Source	Administrator	Local Match	Description
Destination Iowa Fund Grant Program	Iowa Economic Development Authority	65%	Funds major projects for rural projects of at least \$1.5 million for vertical infrastructure that create or expand existing primary destinations that increase Iowa tourism
Energy Infrastructure Revolving Loan Program	Iowa Economic Development Authority	Varies	Provides low interest loans for energy infrastructure projects
Rural Innovation Grant Program	Iowa Economic Development Authority	50%	Funds creative ideas that address current issues and challenges faced by rural communities that emphasize community investment, growth, and connection
Workforce Housing Tax Credit Program	Iowa Economic Development Authority	N/A	Provides 20% state tax credit of project costs up to \$150,000/year for qualifying workforce housing projects
Downtown Loan Guarantee Program	Iowa Economic Development Authority	Varies	Provides a low interest loan to downtown businesses that also qualify for the Community Catalyst Building Remediation Grant Program
Resource Enhancement & Protection (REAP)	Iowa Department of Natural Resources	Varies	Enhancement and protection of the state's natural and cultural resources
Derelict Building Program	Iowa Department of Natural Resources	Varies	Landfill diversion program that provides funding for asbestos inspections & removal, structural engineering analysis, environmental assessment, & building deconstruction & removal for neglected commercial or public buildings
Tax Increment Financing	City	N/A	Captures property tax dollars on increased value of new developments. Available for commercial, industrial, or residential developments
HOME Loan Program	Iowa Finance Authority	N/A	Low interest loans for housing projects benefitting LMI residents
Homes for Iowans	Iowa Finance Authority	All	Provides manufactured built by Iowa Prison Industries at an affordable rate

Source	Administrator	Local Match	Description
NIACOG Housing Trust Fund	NIACOG	N/A	Funds home projects that benefit disabled/elderly LMI residents, such as furnace, electrical roof repair/replacement, accessibility improvements, stairs, plumbing, window siding, etc.
NIACOG Revolving Loan Fund	NIACOG	66%	Provides 0% interest business loan for costs such as equipment, operating funds, real estate, or working capital for value-added businesses
Federal Historic Tax Credit	Iowa Economic Development Authority	N/A	Provides a tax credit of up to 20% of qualifying historic preservation project cost
Iowa Community Cultural Grant	Iowa Economic Development Authority	N/A	Funds projects that provide jobs and promote cultural, ethnic, & historical heritages through festivals, music, drama, cultural programs, and tourism projects
Creative Catalyst Project Grant	Iowa Economic Development Authority	50%	Provides funding support for arts and cultural projects or careers
Art Project Grant	Iowa Economic Development Authority	N/A	Provides funding for arts projects
Iowa Great Places Program	Iowa Economic Development Authority	50%	Provides funding and support for 10 years to develop “creative place-making” to cultivate the local character and authentic qualities of Iowa neighborhoods, district, communities, & regions
Strengthening Communities Grant	Iowa Economic Development Authority	33%	Funds rural non-profits that are committed to strengthening communities through youth development, healthy live, and social responsibility
State Revolving Loan	Iowa Finance Authority	N/A	Provides low interest loans for clean drinking water infrastructure planning, design, and projects
Drinking Water System Infrastructure Resilience & Sustainability Program	Environmental Protection Agency	N/A	Provides funding for safe drinking water system projects
T-Mobile Hometown Grant	T-Mobile	N/A	Provides funding of up to \$50,000 for shovel-ready community projects fostering local connections for cities of under 50,000

# APPENDIX A: ADOPTION RESOLUTION



# APPENDIX B: SURVEY FORM

**What new projects would you like to see initiated in St. Ansgar?**



## **CITY OF ST. ANSGAR COMMUNITY SURVEY**

**You are invited to provide input!**

You are invited to provide input by completing a 10-15 minute survey that will be used by the City of St. Ansgar to develop strategies for City's future growth and development.

To complete the survey, go directly to the survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Y7S387J> or scan the QR code on this flyer. Hard copies are also available at City Hall and Public Library.



Hard Copies  
Available at City Hall and Library



SCAN ME



### CITY OF ST ANSGAR Community Survey

A **comprehensive plan** is a long-range plan for determining a community's vision and goals and can guide development, growth, services, and preservation. The purpose of this survey is to explore the ideas, perceptions, and input from the many local stakeholder groups. This plan will help develop policies, strategies, and guidelines for future efforts. As such, it is important to note trends across distinct groups including students, age groups, and income ranges. This survey is **completely voluntary** and is an important factor to inform the final document. This survey is one way for you to help influence the future of St. Ansgar. (Expected time to complete: 10-15 minutes)

All responses are **completely anonymous** and will not be shared publicly in an identifiable manner.

\* 1. Do you live within the city limits of St. Ansgar?

- Yes  
 No

2. Do you currently work inside or outside of the community city limits?

- I work outside of the community  
 I work inside of the community  
 I currently am not employed  
 I am retired  
 I am a student

3. How old are you?

- Under 18  
 18-24  
 25-34  
 35-44  
 45-54  
 55-64  
 65+

4. What is your sex?

- Male  
 Female

5. What is your race (Select all that apply)?

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> White                     | <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaska Native          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black or African American | <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic or Latino        | <input type="checkbox"/> Another race                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Asian American   | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to answer                      |

6. What is your occupation?

- |  |                                     |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Farming  | <input type="radio"/> Healthcare    |
| <input type="radio"/> Government/Non-Profit                                  | <input type="radio"/> Manufacturing |
| <input type="radio"/> School   | <input type="radio"/> Office        |
| <input type="radio"/> Construction/Trades (e.g. plumbing, electrician, etc.) | <input type="radio"/> Retail        |
| <input type="radio"/> Other (please specify)                                 |                                     |

7. What is the total annual income of all residents living in your household?

- Under \$25,000
- Between \$25,000 and \$49,999
- Between \$50,000 and \$74,999
- Between \$75,000 and \$99,999
- Between \$100,000 and \$199,999
- Between \$200,000 and \$499,999
- Over \$500,000

8. Do you rent or own your place of residence?

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Rent                   | <input type="radio"/> Live with parents (for rent or free)        |
| <input type="radio"/> Own                    | <input type="radio"/> Live with grown children (for rent or free) |
| <input type="radio"/> Rent-to-Own            |   |
| <input type="radio"/> Other (please specify) |   |

9. How many people live in your home?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4+

10. How many children under 18 years old live in your home?

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3+

11. POTENTIAL HOUSING IMPROVEMENT AREAS: How important is it to dedicate new or additional resources to address the following in the community? (Please provide comments at the end for any items that you feel strongly about.)

	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important	No Opinion
Rehabilitate existing housing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Construct new housing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Emergency home repair assistance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Address housing affordability/attainability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increase availability of owner-occupied housing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increase availability of renter-occupied housing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comments:

12. POTENTIAL LIVABILITY IMPROVEMENT AREAS: How important is it to dedicate new or additional resources to address the following in the community ?

	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important	No Opinion
Availability of Retail	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Law Enforcement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Parks and Natural Areas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Removing Junk and Junk Vehicles	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sidewalks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Communication (Phone/TV/Internet)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Underutilized and vacant buildings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improving downtown vitality/Increasing downtown activity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improving/Increasing amenities for youth and families	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improving/Increasing amenities for seniors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comments:



13. POTENTIAL INFRASTRUCTURE & AMENITIES IMPROVEMENT: How important is it to dedicate new or additional resources to address the following in the community (Please provide comments at the end for any items that you feel strongly about.)

	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important	No Opinion
Develop bike trails	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Entrance signage/Gateway beautification into town	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improve current streets	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
City services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Library	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lighting for parks, trails, and sidewalks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4th Street rehabilitation/Downtown improvements including lighting, street trees, facade improvements, etc.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
New community rec center	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comments:

14. RETAIL: In your opinion, what type of new or additional retail does the community need (Select all that apply)

- Small Discount
- Drugstore
- Clothing Store
- Grocery Store
- Boutique/Gift Store
- Farm Supply
- Restaurant
- Hardware store
- Brewhouse/Distillery
- Additional retail stores are not needed

Please add here comments and any "Other" type of new retail you would most likely frequent regularly.

15. How important are the following economic development goals?

	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important	No Opinion
Students learning trades (e.g. electrician)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Add new jobs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop/Improve small business skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improve internet speeds	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fill vacant storefronts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Retiring business owners transferring ownership	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Additional daycare service providers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Encouraging new commercial/industrial development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comments:

16. OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH CITY SERVICES: Please rate your overall satisfaction with City Services for each item.

	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Quality of police services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quality of fire services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quality of water services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quality of sewer services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quality of library services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quality of city hall services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quality of parks and recreation opportunities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Condition of city streets	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Condition of city sidewalks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Enforcement of city nuisance ordinances	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Enforcement of city zoning ordinance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If you ranked any of the above "very dissatisfied" or "very satisfied", please explain why:

17. What are two (2) things you like about the community?

1.

2.

18. If you could change two (2) things about the community, what would they be?

1:

2:

19. What is one investment that the community and residents should focus on in the next 12 months?

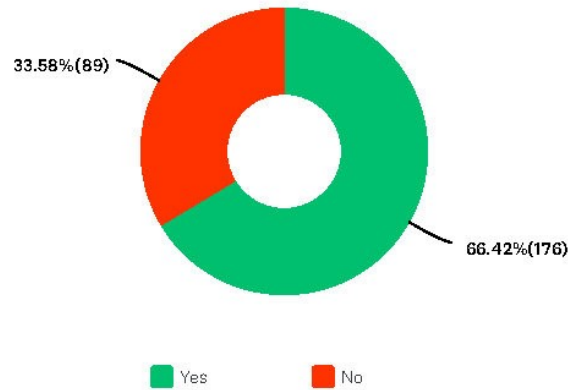
20. If you do not live in the city limits of St. Ansgar, why do you visit town?

21. Please provide any additional comments that you might have in regards to the future of the community.

# APPENDIX C: SURVEY RESULTS

## Q1 Do you live within the city limits of St. Ansgar?

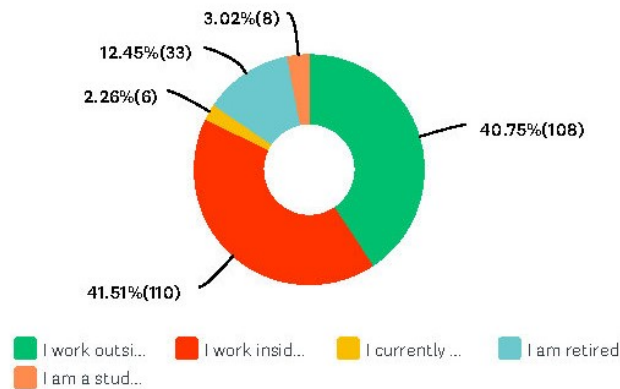
Answered: 265 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	66.42%	176
No	33.58%	89
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>265</b>

## Q2 Do you currently work inside or outside of the community city limits?

Answered: 265 Skipped: 0

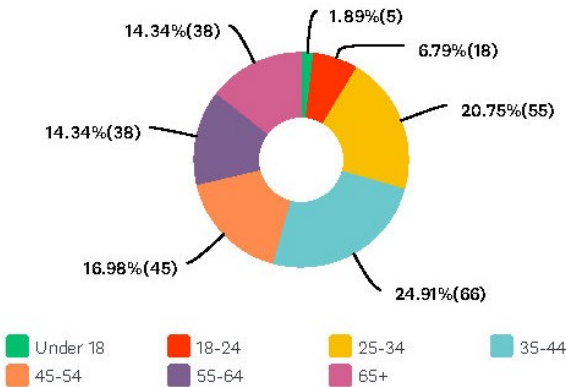


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I work outside of the community	40.75%	108
I work inside of the community	41.51%	110
I currently am not employed	2.26%	6
I am retired	12.45%	33
I am a student	3.02%	8
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>265</b>



### Q3 How old are you?

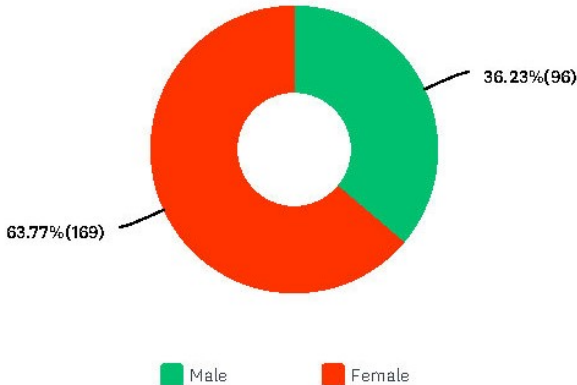
Answered: 265 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Under 18	1.89%	5
18-24	6.79%	18
25-34	20.75%	55
35-44	24.91%	66
45-54	16.98%	45
55-64	14.34%	38
65+	14.34%	38
TOTAL		265

### Q4 What is your sex?

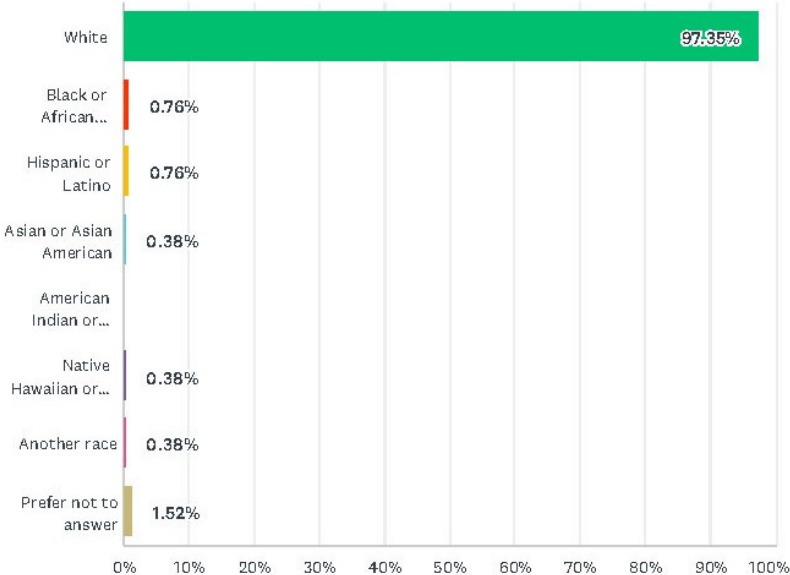
Answered: 265 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Male	36.23%	96
Female	63.77%	169
TOTAL		265

Q5 What is your race (Select all that apply)?

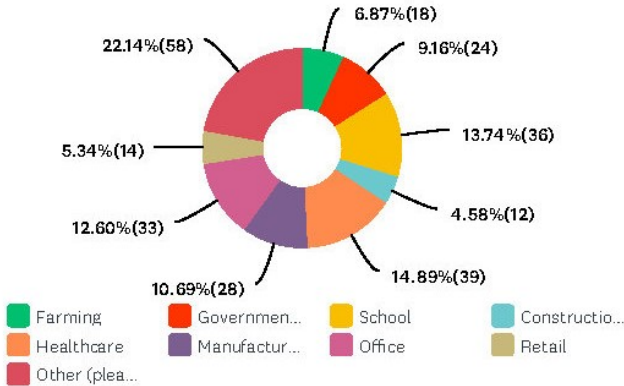
Answered: 264 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
White	97.35%	257
Black or African American	0.76%	2
Hispanic or Latino	0.76%	2
Asian or Asian American	0.38%	1
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.00%	0
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0.38%	1
Another race	0.38%	1
Prefer not to answer	1.52%	4
Total Respondents: 264		

### Q6 What is your occupation?

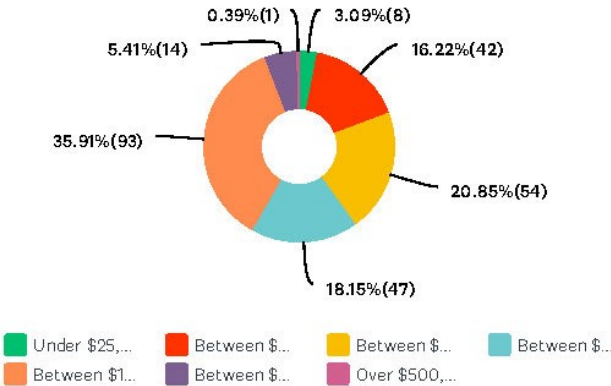
Answered: 262 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Farming	6.87%	18
Government/Non-Profit	9.16%	24
School	13.74%	36
Construction/Trades (e.g. plumbing, electrician, etc.)	4.58%	12
Healthcare	14.89%	39
Manufacturing	10.69%	28
Office	12.60%	33
Retail	5.34%	14
Other (please specify)	22.14%	58
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>262</b>

### Q7 What is the total annual income of all residents living in your household?

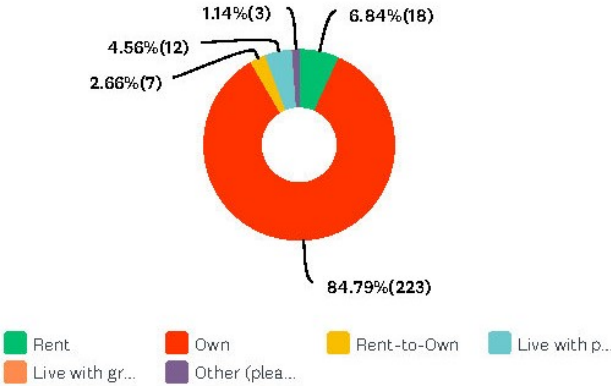
Answered: 259 Skipped: 6



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Under \$25,000	3.09%	8
Between \$25,000 and \$49,999	16.22%	42
Between \$50,000 and \$74,999	20.85%	54
Between \$75,000 and \$99,999	18.15%	47
Between \$100,000 and \$199,999	35.91%	93
Between \$200,000 and \$499,999	5.41%	14
Over \$500,000	0.39%	1
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>259</b>

### Q8 Do you rent or own your place of residence?

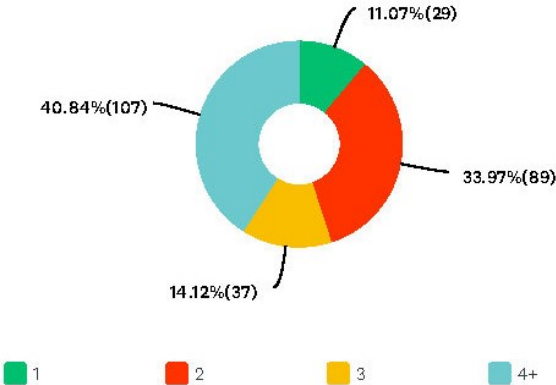
Answered: 263 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Rent	6.84%	18
Own	84.79%	223
Rent-to-Own	2.66%	7
Live with parents (for rent or free)	4.56%	12
Live with grown children (for rent or free)	0.00%	0
Other (please specify)	1.14%	3
TOTAL		263

### Q9 How many people live in your home?

Answered: 262 Skipped: 3

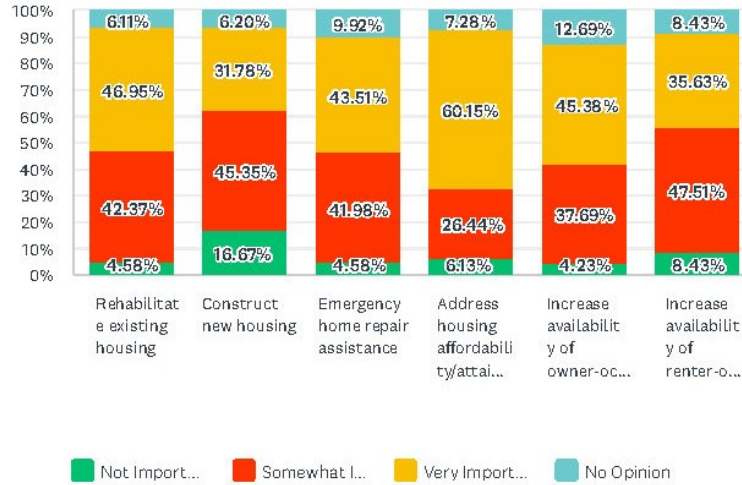


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1	11.07%	29
2	33.97%	89
3	14.12%	37
4+	40.84%	107
TOTAL		262



**Q11 POTENTIAL HOUSING IMPROVEMENT AREAS: How important is it to dedicate new or additional resources to address the following in the community? (Please provide comments at the end for any items that you feel strongly about.)**

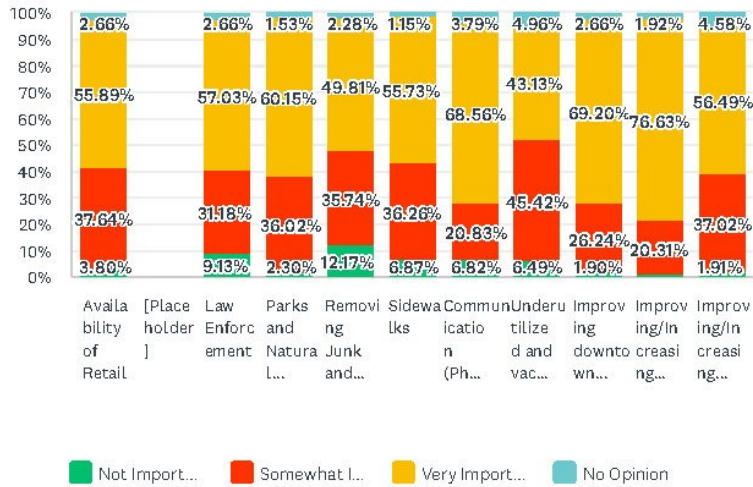
Answered: 264 Skipped: 1



	NOT IMPORTANT	SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	NO OPINION	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Rehabilitate existing housing	4.58% 12	42.37% 111	46.95% 123	6.11% 16	262	2.30
Construct new housing	16.67% 43	45.35% 117	31.78% 82	6.20% 16	258	2.03
Emergency home repair assistance	4.58% 12	41.98% 110	43.51% 114	9.92% 26	262	2.19
Address housing affordability/attainability	6.13% 16	26.44% 69	60.15% 157	7.28% 19	261	2.39
Increase availability of owner-occupied housing	4.23% 11	37.69% 98	45.38% 118	12.69% 33	260	2.16
Increase availability of renter-occupied housing	8.43% 22	47.51% 124	35.63% 93	8.43% 22	261	2.10

### Q12 POTENTIAL LIVABILITY IMPROVEMENT AREAS: How important is it to dedicate new or additional resources to address the following in the community ?

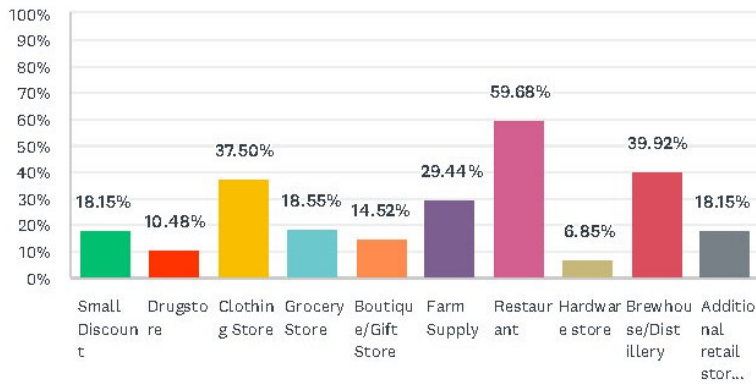
Answered: 264 Skipped: 1



	NOT IMPORTANT	SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	NO OPINION	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Availability of Retail	3.80% 10	37.64% 99	55.89% 147	2.66% 7	263	2.47
Law Enforcement	9.13% 24	31.18% 82	57.03% 150	2.66% 7	263	2.43
Parks and Natural Areas	2.30% 6	36.02% 94	60.15% 157	1.53% 4	261	2.55
Removing Junk and Junk Vehicles	12.17% 32	35.74% 94	49.81% 131	2.28% 6	263	2.33
Sidewalks	6.87% 18	36.26% 95	55.73% 146	1.15% 3	262	2.47
Communication (Phone/TV/Internet)	6.82% 18	20.83% 55	68.56% 181	3.79% 10	264	2.54
Underutilized and vacant buildings	6.49% 17	45.42% 119	43.13% 113	4.96% 13	262	2.27
Improving downtown vitality/Increasing downtown activity	1.90% 5	26.24% 69	69.20% 182	2.66% 7	263	2.62
Improving/Increasing amenities for youth and families	1.15% 3	20.31% 53	76.63% 200	1.92% 5	261	2.72
Improving/Increasing amenities for seniors	1.91% 5	37.02% 97	56.49% 148	4.58% 12	262	2.45

### Q14 RETAIL: In your opinion, what type of new or additional retail does the community need (Select all that apply)

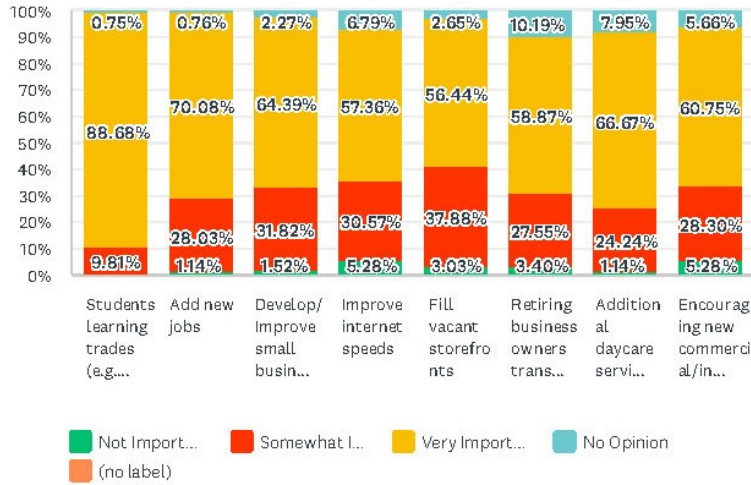
Answered: 248 Skipped: 17



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Small Discount	18.15%	45
Drugstore	10.48%	26
Clothing Store	37.50%	93
Grocery Store	18.55%	46
Boutique/Gift Store	14.52%	36
Farm Supply	29.44%	73
Restaurant	59.68%	148
Hardware store	6.85%	17
Brewhouse/Distillery	39.92%	99
Additional retail stores are not needed	18.15%	45
Total Respondents: 248		

### Q15 How important are the following economic development goals?

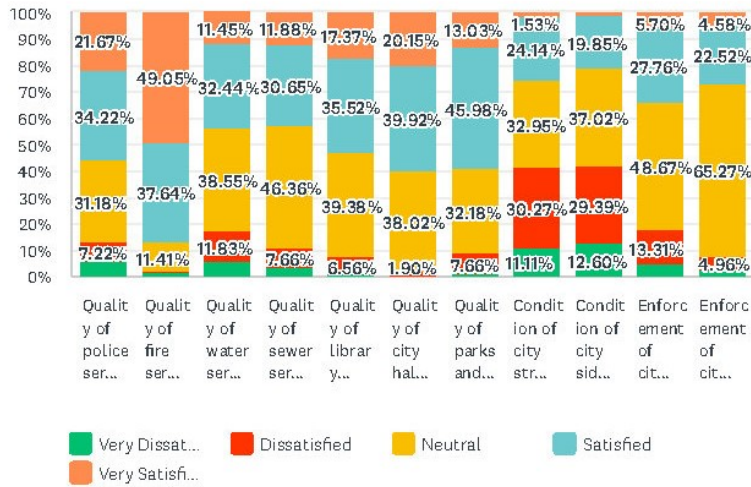
Answered: 265 Skipped: 0



	NOT IMPORTANT	SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	NO OPINION	(NO LABEL)	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Students learning trades (e.g. electrician)	0.75% 2	9.81% 26	88.68% 235	0.75% 2	0.00% 0	265	2.86
Add new jobs	1.14% 3	28.03% 74	70.08% 185	0.76% 2	0.00% 0	264	2.67
Develop/Improve small business skills	1.52% 4	31.82% 84	64.39% 170	2.27% 6	0.00% 0	264	2.58
Improve internet speeds	5.28% 14	30.57% 81	57.36% 152	6.79% 18	0.00% 0	265	2.38
Fill vacant storefronts	3.03% 8	37.88% 100	56.44% 149	2.65% 7	0.00% 0	264	2.48
Retiring business owners transferring ownership	3.40% 9	27.55% 73	58.87% 156	10.19% 27	0.00% 0	265	2.35
Additional daycare service providers	1.14% 3	24.24% 64	66.67% 176	7.95% 21	0.00% 0	264	2.50
Encouraging new commercial/industrial development	5.28% 14	28.30% 75	60.75% 161	5.66% 15	0.00% 0	265	2.44

### Q16 OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH CITY SERVICES: Please rate your overall satisfaction with City Services for each item.

Answered: 264 Skipped: 1



	VERY DISSATISFIED	DISSATISFIED	NEUTRAL	SATISFIED	VERY SATISFIED	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Quality of police services	5.70% 15	7.22% 19	31.18% 82	34.22% 90	21.67% 57	263	3.59
Quality of fire services	1.52% 4	0.38% 1	11.41% 30	37.64% 99	49.05% 129	263	4.32
Quality of water services	5.73% 15	11.83% 31	38.55% 101	32.44% 85	11.45% 30	262	3.32
Quality of sewer services	3.45% 9	7.66% 20	46.36% 121	30.65% 80	11.88% 31	261	3.40
Quality of library services	1.16% 3	6.56% 17	39.38% 102	35.52% 92	17.37% 45	259	3.61
Quality of city hall services	0.00% 0	1.90% 5	38.02% 100	39.92% 105	20.15% 53	263	3.78
Quality of parks and recreation opportunities	1.15% 3	7.66% 20	32.18% 84	45.98% 120	13.03% 34	261	3.62
Condition of city streets	11.11% 29	30.27% 79	32.95% 86	24.14% 63	1.53% 4	261	2.75
Condition of city sidewalks	12.60% 33	29.39% 77	37.02% 97	19.85% 52	1.15% 3	262	2.68
Enforcement of city nuisance ordinances	4.56% 12	13.31% 35	48.67% 128	27.76% 73	5.70% 15	263	3.17
Enforcement of city zoning ordinance	2.67% 7	4.96% 13	65.27% 171	22.52% 59	4.58% 12	262	3.21



Q17 What are two (2) things you like about the community?



Q18 If you could change two (2) things about the community, what would they be?



Q19 What is one investment that the community and residents should focus on in the next 12 months?

Adding Affordable housing new center buildings living park Supporting  
 city assisted living Community Activities  
 businesses Bike trail housing downtown  
 streets water Rec center Daycare Roads  
 business town sidewalks Keeping trail Bringing town  
 Fixing roads Infrastructure city park school Better

Q20 If you do not live in the city limits of St. Ansgar, why do you visit town?

banking mile outside town gas Live outside town groceries friends live town  
 St Ansgar Na events school kids town etc work daycare  
 live live country shopping businesses N attend school  
 kids go school live mile outside STA city limits

Q21 Please provide any additional comments that you might have in regards to the future of the community.

nice need keep Na new housing grow really home ways small town provide housing  
 new school younger area quality better many people place  
 St Ansgar work need elderly community improve  
 town city great things make small live None keep attract  
 businesses think see services Continue projects support continue grow help  
 focus