



COMMUNITY CHARACTER

INTRODUCTION

Community character is comprised of the elements distinguishing a place from other communities. In a broad sense, it is those features that make Ankeny unique. Community character reflects the physical and cultural environment a City creates and presents to residents and visitors. In a fast-growing community such as Ankeny, maintaining character can be especially challenging. As the community works to accommodate the surging demand for city services, maintaining the character of the community can become an added challenge. Having a solid, unified vision for the desired community character can assist with this process. This chapter attempts to identify the community character of Ankeny and outlines processes and steps necessary to maintain this vision in the face of significant growth.

The purpose of Chapter 9: Community Character is to define the existing and future character of Ankeny, explore development types and techniques, and to identify specific redevelopment areas with strong potential for future growth. This chapter seeks to identify

a framework for growth and development in Ankeny by discussing urban design guidelines and best practices for new growth. Ankeny is a fast-growing community and to maintain a strong sense of community character, standards and guidelines must be put in place to ensure growth and development occurs in such a way that preserves the family-friendly and safe character of Ankeny, continues to allow for an active lifestyle, and provides convenient access to a variety of amenities and the greater metro region.

Community character is one of ten Iowa Smart Planning Principles as outlined by Iowa State Code Chapter 18B: Land Use—Smart Planning. These principles are meant to “produce greater economic opportunity, enhance environmental integrity, improve public health outcomes, and safeguard Iowa’s quality of life.” The community character principle states the following:

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.

The guidelines, policies, and best practices explored in this chapter are echoed throughout the entire *The Ankeny Plan 2040*. Creating and maintaining a strong community character relies on other areas such as transportation, land use, and the environment. Transportation goals and policies such as requiring sidewalks and safe routes for bicycles. Land use principles such as creating a series of interconnected neighborhoods and commercial hubs throughout the community, avoiding development in the floodplain, and requiring minimum architectural standards. Protection of sensitive environmental features such as floodplain, mature trees, and steep slope areas all help shape the future identity and character of Ankeny. A community with a strong character can help continue to attract and keep residents, promote economic development, and keep Ankeny the high-quality place to live and work that it is today.



DEFINING COMMUNITY

The image to the left is a Word Cloud generated based on feedback to the survey question, "What three words describe Ankeny?" The larger the word the more popular of a response that phrase or word was in the survey responses. This helps visualize how Ankeny residents view the character of the community.

ANKENY'S CHARACTER

There are many ways to try and define the community character of Ankeny. One way is to review the stated desired characteristics from the community. This approach best captures the character a community is trying to produce to maintain current and attract future residents. Over the past few decades, Ankeny has undergone a concerted effort to define a series of mission and vision statements to guide growth and development in the community. Most recently, the City Councilmembers identified a vision statement as part of their Strategic Plan 2016-2031. It reads as follows:

Ankeny 2031 has a hometown feel and great community spirit and identity. Ankeny residents enjoy a safe, community, active lifestyle, easy movement, and access to the area. Ankeny is a successful business center.

This vision statement is consistent with the many other mission and vision statements drafted by the City staff and elected officials in recent years. These aspirational goals for

Ankeny are of having a sense of community and identity, providing safety, promoting an active lifestyle, and allowing for easy movement. Community character guidelines should seek to exemplify these aspirations.

Another method of defining the community character of an area is to review input and responses from residents and community members. In *The Ankeny 2040 Plan* community survey, survey respondents were asked to identify the most important reasons they live in Ankeny. The attributes of Ankeny that help attract residents reflect the perceived community character. There were many answers to choose from, but some common reasons emerged. The most common responses and the percent they were chosen include:

- Quality of Schools (54%)
- Quality of Housing / Neighborhoods (41%)
- Proximity to Work (40%)
- Family-Friendly (40%)

Again, these are principles and features of Ankeny that should be maintained and encouraged within the community character

concepts. They are also congruous with the vision statement put forth by City Council. These complementary shared visions suggest the City currently has a firm understanding of the character of Ankeny.

Survey-takers were also asked to provide three words to describe Ankeny. The image above is a word cloud showing responses sized by their popularity. Many residents currently describe Ankeny in terms of the high growth rates the City is experiencing. While the concept of growth can be interpreted as either a positive or a negative attribute, supplemental words featured in the graphic such as busy, fast, crowded, and congested may indicate that residents are concerned with the long-term impact of this high growth, especially as it relates quality of life in Ankeny. However, most other words used to describe Ankeny were markedly positive with words such as family, safe, friendly, and clean. In general, these words have a positive connotation which is further supported by the overall high quality of life most survey takers listed as having. The survey questions on quality of life indicated 47% describe the quality of life in Ankeny as excellent and 51% as good. These

What would improve Ankeny's quality of life?

IMPROVING THE COMMUNITY

The Ankeny Plan 2040 community survey, residents were asked what could be done to improve the quality of life in Ankeny. The responses to this question can help identify how the character or perception of Ankeny can be changed for the better. The four most popular responses are highlighted to the right.



are high quality of life numbers and suggest many community members like their city and its character. When asked what would improve the quality of life in Ankeny, the following were the most common responses:

- Expand retail shopping options (44%)
- Increase employment opportunities (31%)
- Offer more community events, things to do (28%)
- Improve bike and pedestrian facilities (27%)

To keep residents happy and invested in the community, Ankeny should work to maintain the features residents do like and incorporate those desired features into the community character and layout of the City. The challenges will be on how to bring in more retail and employment opportunities in a way that blends into the community without significantly altering the character. A priority should be made to provide improved bike and pedestrian facilities throughout the community to set a baseline for future design layout standards. In the face of significant growth, Ankeny must work to preserve its character and high quality of life to ensure that new residents continue to move to and stay in Ankeny. Currently, Ankeny residents

seem to view their community favorably and one key to Ankeny's long-term success will be sustaining this quality of life.

COMMUNITY DESIRES

While the large majority of Ankeny residents are content with the quality of life they experience in Ankeny, there are some areas of improvement. As mentioned previously, the community survey indicated people want expanded retail/shopping options, increased employment opportunities, more community events, and improved bike and pedestrian facilities. While less a part of Ankeny's character, the City can work to attract new retail businesses to the community through economic and community development initiatives. It can also work to be the type of community that attracts high-quality retailers by maintaining a residential base with significant disposable income, providing attractive and conveniently located streetscapes, and expanding availability of development opportunities. Further, Ankeny can work to assess the type and quality of the existing community events offered by the community to ensure right type and amount of community events are being offered. Pedestrian and bicycle facilities can

be improved to enhance the community character. The streetscapes in a community have a large impact on both the character and the pedestrian/bicycle experience. Streetscapes with pedestrian friendly features such as tree canopies, attractive landscaping, and safe crossings all enhance the character of a community and should be a long-term goal of Ankeny.

The community survey presented a snapshot of the perceived community character in Ankeny as well as the amenities and features desired by community residents. The needs of Ankeny residents will likely not remain static over time. Young families living in Ankeny today will mature into families with teenagers, become empty-nesters, and someday enter retirement. Different life stages call for different priorities and services and Ankeny will need to be able to monitor and adapt to these changes as they occur. Community surveying and reviewing the demographics over time can help in identifying the current community needs and desires. The character of the community, however, is an element that may change over time.

SENSE OF COMMUNITY

A strong sense of community in a City can help attract and retain residents and businesses. There are many ways in which a sense of community can be attained. A strong social fabric should be sought in which residents feel connected to one another and the community. Allowing for opportunities to engage the public in civic organizations and programs can help ensure the decisions being made in the community reflect the desires and will of community members. These sorts of opportunities to be involved can also help connect members of the community that might not otherwise engage with each other. Civic engagement can also work to retain residents long-term, adding stability to the housing and employment market in Ankeny.

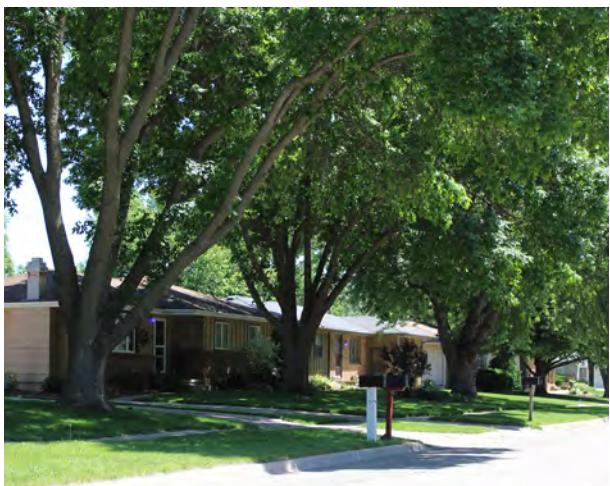
Multifunctional and attractive public gathering spaces are another way in which community members can come together and feel connected to their community and each other. Community gathering spaces currently in Ankeny such as the Ankeny Market Pavilion is an excellent example of how a space can bring residents together and create a sense of community. The installation of features such as public art can also serve to further the sense of community in an area. These sorts of amenities help create a sense of identity because they are unique to that community. Areas with public gathering space, parks, and public art make for useful locations for community events such as fairs, markets, or celebrations. It is these sort of community events that help residents feel connected to their community. These public gathering spaces should also come in a variety of sizes to be able to accommodate for a wide variety of event types. Efforts should be made to ensure that as Ankeny grows, so do the locations of community gathering spaces so new neighborhoods and areas of Ankeny feel part of a cohesive community and not just an appendage.





NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION

In reviewing the single-family residential growth patterns in Ankeny, several distinct phases of growth are revealed. The historic core of Ankeny's residential growth is in the areas around the current City Hall, in the neighborhoods along central First Street and Ankeny Boulevard. These homes range in year built from 1862-2006 with the majority built in the late 1950s to late 1970s with a mean year built of around 1969. In the subsequent decades, growth occurred in a ring-like fashion around this central area with the most recent growth occurring in the northern edges of Ankeny, the Prairie Trail development, and some subdivisions across Interstate 35 near 102nd Avenue.



Nearly 54% of all single-family homes in Ankeny were built between 2000 and 2016. These homes are in the newest neighborhoods in Ankeny. There remain, however, significant pockets of housing that is in the historic, older neighborhoods in Ankeny's core. There were several comments made during the public participation section of the Comprehensive Plan about maintaining the older neighborhoods in Ankeny so they do not get left behind the newer neighborhoods. There is worry among some that the historic core of housing in Ankeny will fall behind and Ankeny has an interest in preventing this from occurring.

Slightly over half of all the single-family homes in Ankeny have been built since 2000. Just over 21% of all homes have been built between 2010-2016. While this residential development has been at the root of Ankeny's significant growth, it also presents a possible dual problem. On one hand, there is so much new housing a sense of neighborhood identity may be hard to create in such a short time period. Conversely, the older housing stock built before 1990-2000 can have a risk of falling behind. As discussed in Chapter 5: Housing, efforts should be explored to thoroughly assess the existing housing stock in Ankeny's older neighborhoods. This includes areas around the historic central core of Ankeny near First Street and Ankeny Boulevard. This is the location of most of homes in Ankeny built before 2000. These homes are generally more modest in size and amenities compared to some of the larger, more expensive, amenity-rich homes in the newer neighborhoods in Ankeny.

There are several factors to consider in neighborhood preservation. Upkeep of neighborhood physical features such as sidewalks, signage, streets, and parks in the area will help keep these older neighborhoods attractive to incoming residents. Access to mixed use and commercial areas nearby will also help maintain these neighborhood's appeal. By keeping and working to transform the retail corridors surrounding these neighborhoods more towards a neighborhood-friendly design, rather than highway commercial-like design will help increase the attractiveness of close access to these amenities. Façade improvements in these areas can help the perception of these businesses. A façade improvement program for retail business along older retail corridors should be explored.

Home Improvement

Another issue with older homes is their ability to attract buyers when competing against newer homes offering features such as two or more bathrooms. Features like multiple bathrooms, two-car garages, and updated kitchens are commonly standard features in new residential housing, but may be less common in older homes. Financial programs to help provide funding for limited home value improvement projects should be considered. This sort of initiative is outlined and discussed further in Chapter 5: Housing.

NEIGHBORHOOD CREATION

Ensuring new residential developments feel as if they are a part of the community is equally important. Again, over half of all single-family homes in Ankeny have been built since 2000 with over 20% of all single-family homes have been built between 2010-2016 alone. This is a significant amount of new housing that may

not have a true sense of neighborhood identity or connection to other areas of the community.

Historically, areas of a community are split into neighborhoods based on geographic proximity, demographic characteristics, or trends in the built environment of an area. Other times, neighborhoods are associated with specific streets or neighborhood commercial areas. In newer residential developments, however, large residential subdivisions are responsible for creating most neighborhood layouts. For this reason, it is important to have standards and guidelines for these developments to ensure they create cohesive neighborhoods that are also connected and integrated into the larger community framework. This helps provide an identity to the community and create a sense of place. Given the timing of Ankeny's high growth rates, the typical form and layout of neighborhood development rests in the hands of the developers of large residential subdivisions. By having a comprehensive design review process, the City can help ensure large-scale developments are designed to easily integrate into the existing community character.

One part of this is making sure the neighborhoods physically connect to the rest of the community. This can be achieved by planning subdivisions and new streets to provide seamless connectivity and decrease the presence of cul-de-sacs that create barriers to connectivity. Neighborhoods can feel more a part of the community by physical proximity to existing neighborhoods. Therefore, residential development ought to occur in a sequential fashion while avoiding leap frog development of residential neighborhoods. When possible, new developments should be focused around neighborhood parks, schools, and some retail centers. The creation of open space should be built into the approval process for developments with large impacts on the community or region such as multi-family residential, commercial, and mixed-use. These development types are good opportunities for public amenities such as public space, pedestrian amenities and more.

Attractive and high-quality design can be important to the community-wide acceptance of growth and the long-term prosperity of the development. Poorly constructed or unattractive developments can be met with resistance from existing residents and businesses. Long-term, these developments may not age well and will create an eye-sore in the community. Buildings that are well-designed and have the potential to serve multiple functions throughout its lifespan should be promoted to create a sustainable built environment. Design standards for higher density residential developments can help ensure more widespread community acceptance for a use that often faces criticism.

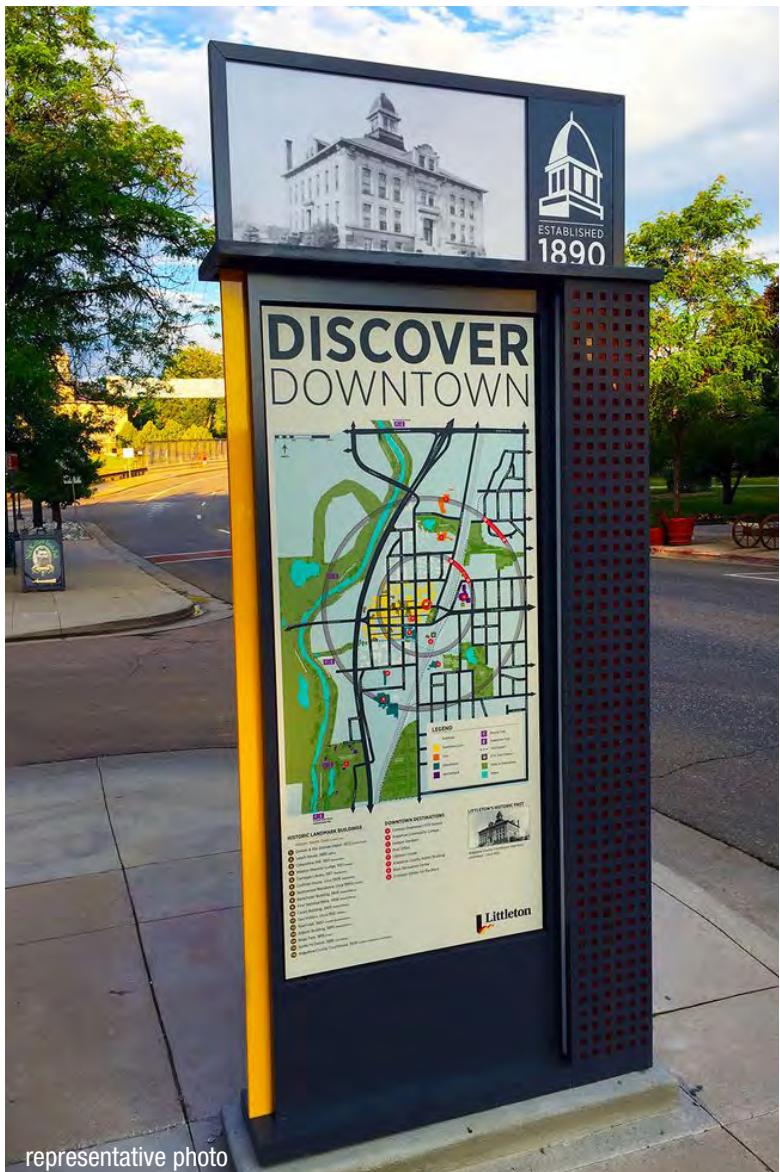
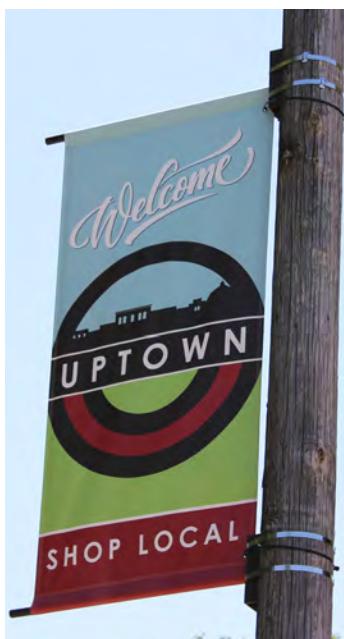
Site planning in Ankeny is currently required for all multi-family, commercial, and industrial projects. Developers must submit plans including the specific layout of buildings, driveways, parking areas, open spaces, landscaping, signage, and drainage. Each site plan is assessed on its conformity with the prescribed zoning district, municipal code, and building regulations. Upon review, the planning and building staff submit a recommendation to the Plan and Zoning Commission who then reviews and decides by a motion to approve or deny the application.

Streets and sidewalks with lighting, seating, landscaping, and other amenities help create a sense of place and add to the community character. When utilized across the community, it can additionally create a sense of cohesiveness and unity within the community. Most, if not all, visitors to Ankeny will use streets as their primary access points. Attractive and well-maintained streets can make a significant impact on visitors who may be considering a new living or work arrangement. Overlay areas with landscaping requirements to improve the aesthetic of certain corridors. These corridors are often the first impressions visitors get of a community.



SIGNAGE

The two images below are current signage used in Ankeny. The picture to the right is an example of a city signage that could be utilized by a community like Ankeny.



representative photo

SIGNAGE

Welcoming and attractive signage can have a significant impact on the aesthetics and sense of community experienced by residents and visitors in Ankeny. In addition, signs can help orient visitors to the different neighborhoods that make up Ankeny.

Ankeny currently utilizes a variety of enhanced signage throughout the community. A series of high-quality banner signs can be found along First Street marketing the Uptown Neighborhood and community events such as Yoga in the Park, concert series, and other special community events. Another area with enhanced signage is the Parks and Recreation Department and the park entryway signage present at many community parks. Images of both examples can be viewed above. These signs are welcoming, have a cohesive theme and messaging, and help let people know they are in Ankeny and there are things to do here. Expanding the use of these sort of signs can help reinforce a sense of place for Ankeny and its different neighborhoods.

Ankeny should continue this effort by installing additional signage and wayfinding such as gateway monuments, roadway directional signs, pedestrian directional signs, and bicycle directional signs. These amenities help provide a sense of place, orientate residents and visitors, and enhance the aesthetic appeal of a community.

Signage and wayfinding can be designed to suit the needs of the community. Given Ankeny's currently used signage, there is already a strong template to move forward with the design and installation of these signs.

In addition to the installation of high-quality and attractive signage, efforts should be made to ensure existing signage in the community does not overly take away from the aesthetics of key corridors in the community. The City should consider updates to the sign code to promote the consolidation of signage within the commercial areas in the corridors of Oralabor Drive, Ankeny Boulevard, and First Street to ensure that signage does not clutter the streetscape and negatively impact the image of the corridor. Signs in commercial areas should also be sized appropriately for the building and roadway to avoid inappropriate signage that takes away from the views of the area.



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VEGETATION AND LANDSCAPING

The vegetation and landscaping of a community can have a significant impact on the character of a community. Physically, it can impact the overall look and feel of a community. The built environment can also impact the human experience of an area as it relates to safety, comfort, and the intangible benefits an attractive landscape provides. Efforts should be made to use landscaping and vegetation to enhance the aesthetics of the community. The use of existing vegetation such as significant trees or tree stands as well as mature, attractive vegetation should be preserved in developing areas. Invasive species can be harmful to the existing vegetation and biodiversity of an area and the City should work to prohibit the planting of invasive species within existing and new developments. The use of native species vegetation should be encouraged within the development guidelines.

The installation of street trees and well-landscaped medians can be a useful way to enhance the aesthetics of the gateways into a community. Street trees and landscaped medians can provide an enhanced beauty of a corridor. Landscaped medians are often used in the gateway areas of a community to welcome visitors and residents. Given the number of out-of-town visitors Ankeny gains through sports and recreation alone, improved landscaping can help enhance the natural beauty of Ankeny. Increasing the corridor landscaping of locations may visitors will traverse when visiting for popular attractions such as youth sports and recreation, will help Ankeny put its best face forward.

There are benefits and tradeoffs involved in roadside landscaping including installation and maintenance costs and conflicts with utilities. The City should evaluate the pros and cons of public landscaping and develop a city landscape improvements plan and policies.

CULTURAL RESOURCES + HISTORIC PRESERVATION

While Ankeny's high growth rates are relatively recent, Ankeny is over one-hundred years old. Long before the city was a suburb within the Greater Des Moines metro, it was a community with a strong coal mining presence. As recently as 1940, Ankeny was still a small community of less than 1,000 people. While recent decades have significantly changed the small-town roots and nature of Ankeny, the community still prides itself on having a strong home-town feel. Preservation of those historic resources should be encouraged and reference to Ankeny's small-town history should be included when possible in new community endeavors. The City should continue its support of the Ankeny Historical Society and look for partnering opportunities to promote Ankeny's heritage.



COMMUNITY EVENTS

Community events bring the community together and help mold the character of a community. These seasonal, annual, monthly, or weekly events can create a sense of pride, identity, and community in a City. Ideally, a mixture of frequency of events should occur so that residents have something to look forward to all year long, not just in the summer months or on holidays. In the community survey for *The Ankeny 2040 Plan*, a lack of community events and entertainment options was listed as a way Ankeny could improve the quality of life. Currently, a community events calendar available on the City's website provides date and time details of all community sponsored events including the listing of board and councilmember meetings.

Example of currently offered community events:

- Ankeny SummerFest
- Yoga in the Park
- Movies Under the Stars
- Various library events
- Summer Sounds Concert Series
- Sport Activities

The City of Ankeny should continue to provide and expand the community events offered by the community. A community survey specifically about community events should be considered to assess the awareness of existing community events and identify the community events most desired by the community.





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OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

The Ankeny Plan 2040 planning area includes a wide variety of natural areas, such as wetlands, stream greenbelts, and prime farm land. As Ankeny expands, decisions over the development of these areas including Four Mile Creek, will define the long-term relationship with the natural environment in Ankeny. Given the former prairie and agricultural nature of much of Ankeny's growth area in the planning boundary, efforts to protect areas of wetland or tree cover should be made to promote Ankeny as a place that values the natural environment. As discussed in Chapter 4: Environment, stream buffers and floodplain protection should be enforced in all new areas along the Four Mile Creek in the eastern portion of Ankeny. The preservation of tree stands and the purchasing of easements along specific streams in the future areas of Ankeny's growth will help create a healthy environmental ecosystem in Ankeny.

UTILITY PLACEMENT

The placement of utility lines can have an impact on the perception of a community. A street with above-ground utilities can be visually unappealing.

Some large utility structures cannot be avoided in certain areas. However, the City should work with the utility service providers to locate future structures in areas away from residential areas where the disruption might be more acutely felt.

Another concern might be the placement and prominence of items such as telecommunication towers. Generally, these sorts of features should be placed to be sensitive to the viewshed of an area.

NOISE EXPOSURE

There are many sources of noise in a community that can negatively impact the quality of life. Noise resulting from highway and industrial sites may disrupt the quality of life of residents. Construction noise may be especially worrisome in a fast-growing community such as Ankeny. A community like Ankeny, with a strong single-family residential land use presence, should work to achieve a certain degree of tranquility in the community by working to limit the source and intensity of noises in the community.

Another potential source of noise is the Ankeny Regional Airport. The creation of the Airport Business Park land use category, as discussed in Chapter 12: Land Use, aims to create a buffer land use category in and immediately surrounding the Ankeny Regional Airport. Residential land use immediately adjacent to the airport is not the most harmonious land use pairing and should be discouraged in the future.

Increases in traffic associated with growth in population, retail, and employment centers can also be a concern for nearby residential units. Medium and high-density residential areas are better suited for areas adjacent to commercial areas and major arterial roads. These higher density residential uses can act as a buffer between the noises and the single-family residential areas.

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

There are several areas of Ankeny that should be provided with extra focus for development and redevelopment as each has a strong potential to shape the future character of the community. They are Uptown Ankeny and the surrounding neighborhoods, NE 36th Street immediately east of Interstate 35, and the proposed Northeast Beltway corridor along the eastern edge of the Ankeny planning area.

UPTOWN

Uptown Ankeny is a historic commercial district in Ankeny in the general area of 3rd Street roughly between SW Scott Street and SW Pleasant Street. It is home to a variety of specialty retail shops, small-businesses, restaurants, and a brewery. The area has a main-street style streetscape with on-street parking and a mixture of one and two-story buildings, with both single and multi-tenant occupancy. A significant portion of the main street is lined with trees and is pedestrian friendly. As is often typical for a historic commercial area, there is no one defined building architectural style in Uptown.

Intersecting Uptown is a local connection to the High Trestle Trail that cuts through the core of Ankeny to Oralabor Drive in southern Ankeny. The trailhead for the High Trestle Trail is located within the northern extent of the neighborhood at the Ankeny Market & Pavilion. The Ankeny Market & Pavilion also hosts the weekly Ankeny's Farmer's Market. The Uptown Ankeny Association represent the collective interests of the area and continues to market and coordinate activities in Uptown. The area surrounding Uptown is mainly low-density, single-family residential.

Uptown represents an enormous opportunity for the City. Many suburban communities do not have a historic retail center or a public gathering space as unique and significant as Uptown. Rather, they are having to invest time and money into creating such a community gathering space and central retail core. Ankeny already has one that will allow it to continue to grow and thrive.

The Ankeny Market & Pavilion has been a positive step forward in creating renewed identity and interest in Uptown. With the trail intersecting the neighborhood, there is significant potential to continue to expand the presence of Uptown in Ankeny and preserve the surrounding residential neighborhood. Uptown has benefited from past streetscape and signage improvement plans and investments and this regular planning and reinvestment should continue.

Future planning and infrastructure investments for Uptown should focus on the following key components:

- **Trailhead**

Capitalize on Uptown's significance as a major trailhead site by seeking trail-centric retailers and services and continuing to invest in bike facilities and furnishings as well as trail wayfinding signage.

- **Specialty Retail**

Support the occupancy of single-story and first-floor spaces with specialty retail uses and restaurants to attract visitors and shoppers to Uptown. Office, residential, and other non-retail uses should be directed towards upper floors and non-frontage spaces to maintain a 'window-shopping' flow typically found in thriving main streets and small-town type retail centers.

- **Upper Flood Residential**

Promote the adaptive reuse of existing upper floors for residential use and encourage new construction to include upper story residences.

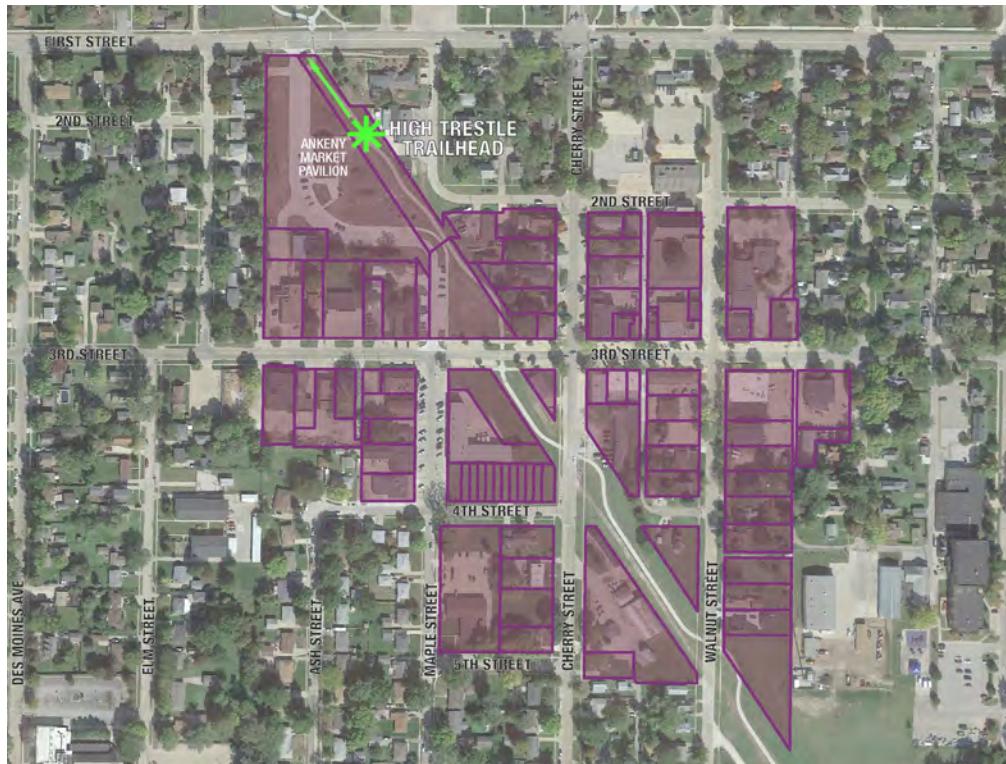
- **Pedestrian-Scale Architecture**

Continue to require new construction, additions, and building façade improvements to be appropriate for Uptown with pedestrian scale elements including large, clear glass windows on the street-facing first floor, entry canopies, and defined areas for outdoor seating and retail sales. A specific set of design guidelines for renovation, redevelopment, and new construction should be developed for Uptown. This may be accomplished via a new specialized zoning district or zoning overlay.

- **Streetscape**

Continue to plan for and make regular re-investments in streetscape improvements including landscaping, lighting, furniture, and uniform wayfinding signage.

FIGURE 9.1 Uptown Ankeny Boundary



INTERSTATE 35 AND NE 36TH STREET

As Ankeny continues to grow to the north and to the east, the area surrounding the existing NE 36th Street interchange with Interstate 35 will become a desired destination for new large-scale retail, office, and residential development due to its prime location. This area should be preserved and promoted as a future employment and retail center for the community. As identified in Chapter 10: Economic Development, the City should actively market new office users to locate in Ankeny to take advantage of the large number of current residents employed outside of the City in the finance, insurance, and medical sectors. The NE 36th Street and Interstate 35 area is an ideal location for these office uses.

The Ankeny Plan 2040 future land use map identifies specific areas for mixed-use, office, retail, and residential development. Any immediate development plans should be accompanied with detailed master plans that identify how the larger area can be served by street and utility infrastructure and transition between various land uses. Land that is visible from the interstate should be placed in reserve for future office and business parks. Road networks and adjoining land uses should be aligned and geared towards supporting and enhancing office development. To further market this area as a premier development location, it may be desirable to enact specific design guidelines and unique architectural standards as well as make specific investments in public infrastructure improvements including streets, sewers, and regional stormwater management facilities.

NORTHEAST BELTWAY

As identified in both Chapter 12: Land Use and Chapter 13: Transportation, the proposed Northeast Beltway will serve as a vital transportation link along the eastern edge of the Ankeny planning area and will provide tremendous opportunities for new growth and development. Due to the long-term significance of this roadway, *The Ankeny Plan 2040* future land use map has identified several locations for future development along the corridor. Most of these development areas along the northeast beltway are well beyond the 2040 horizon year of this plan; however, it is critical that these future development areas be identified today so that infrastructure investments made during the life of this plan can accommodate the proposed Northeast Beltway growth areas.

The timing and funding of this road corridor is undetermined and it will need a local champion to push for its construction. Furthermore, as the corridor begins to experience growth pressures, especially from rural subdivisions, both the City and Polk County will need to push for the reservation of a future right-of-way corridor for the proposed Northeast Beltway. Due to the long-term economic impact and value of the proposed Northeast Beltway, the effort and resources necessary to preserve and promote this future roadway will be a solid investment in Ankeny's future.

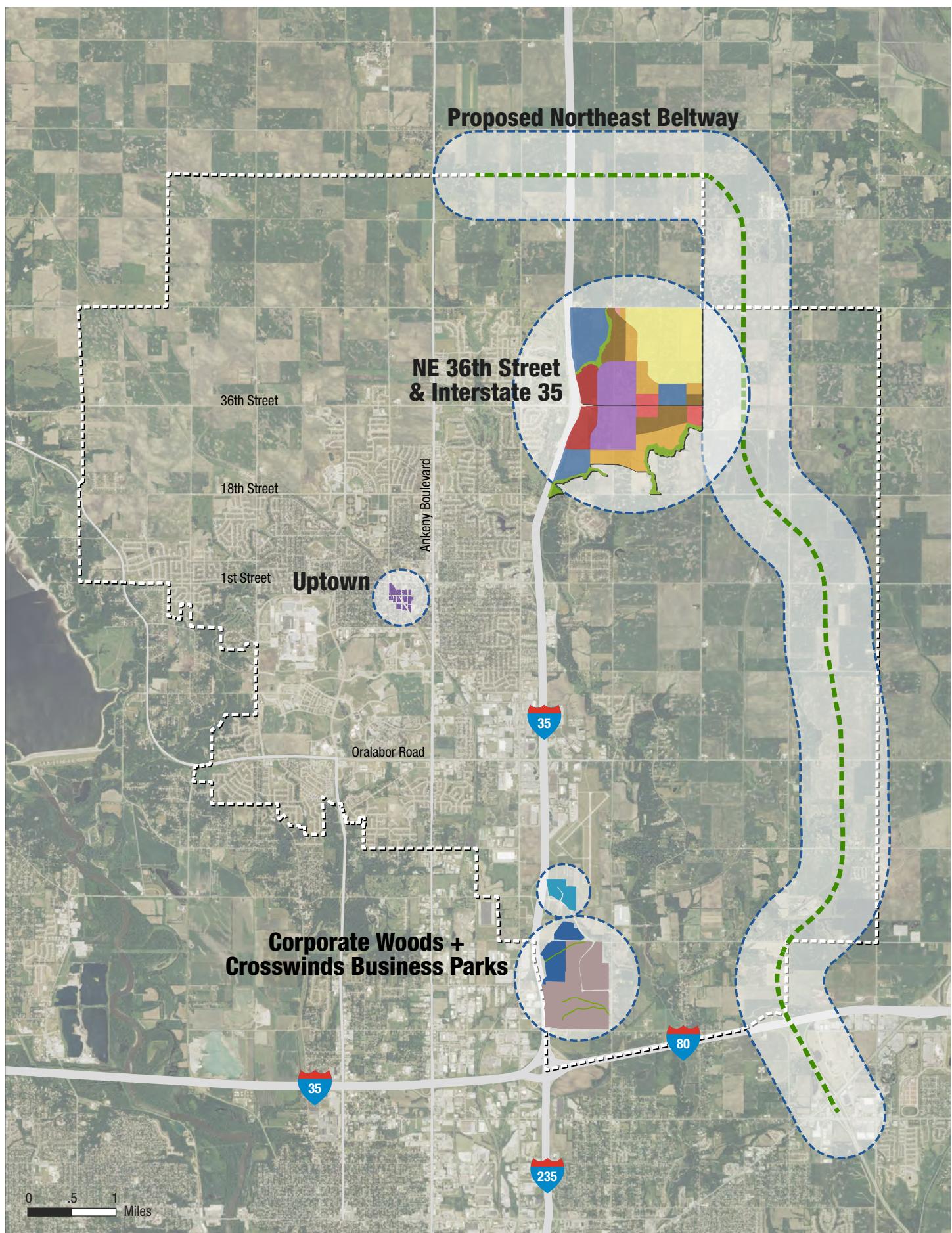
CORPORATE WOODS + CROSSWINDS BUSINESS PARK

The Corporate Woods Business Park and the Crosswinds Business Park are both strategically located at the intersection of Interstate 35 and SE Corporate Woods Drive offering direct access to the interstate and close proximity to multiple freight companies and the Ankeny Regional Airport. Support retail services and hotels are also in close proximity. Due in part to the prime location, these high-visibility sites are ripe for development with a variety of professional office and industrial users.

The City of Ankeny and the property owners have made strategic infrastructure investments in this area and focus should continue on marketing and evaluating the relative strengths of these sites. Over time, modification to the development requirements and site infrastructure may be necessary to attract desirable users.

Figure 9.2 shows the location of these development opportunities within Ankeny and the planning boundary.

FIGURE 9.2 Ankeny Community Character Development Areas



COMMUNITY CHARACTER GOALS AND POLICIES

Goal 1: Continue to monitor and respond to the needs and desires of Ankeny residents and businesses through the Biennial Citizen Survey and other programs

Action 1.1 - Continue conducting community preference surveys to identify areas of concern and preferences in which to focus City attention and investments

Action 1.2 - Update the City's zoning and subdivision regulations to include design and layout requirements that will help create a sense of neighborhood and discourage cookie-cutter developments

Goal 2: Continue to brand Ankeny with streetscaping and unified entryway and wayfinding signage and monumentation

Action 2.1 - Create a uniform public signage plan and policy

Action 2.2 - Develop a streetscape plan with a hierarchy of standards based on street classifications and locations

Policy 2.3 - Continue to push for utility service lines to be located underground with aboveground utility boxes and facilities being located to the rear of properties and not along street right-of-way

Goal 3: Continue efforts to improve and revitalize Uptown

Action 3.1 - Consider creating an updated revitalization plan and design guidelines for Uptown including refreshed strategies for building facade, streetscape, and signage improvements

Goal 4: Support the long-term planning and construction of Northeast Beltway

Policy 4.1 - Preserve the Northeast Beltway corridor and protect it from encroachment from development