



**Kalona**  
IOWA

# **SOUTH TOWN Master Plan**

City of Kalona  
Washington County, IA



# Acknowledgments

## Mayor and City Council

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Jenelle Bender - City Council

Craig Spitzer - City Council

Greg Schmidt - City Council

Joe Schmidt - City Council

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# 01 | INTRODUCTION

# Background

Kalona is a historic and welcoming community in a strategic location for future growth. Located within Kalona City Limits, the SouthTown Area provides design standards and the amenities of living in town while being immersed in nature. The area is unique in that it provides a scenic opportunity to live amongst nature, recreation, and conservation. The City of Kalona and Washington County Conservation have partnered to provide a development design concept that allows for a seamless transition between residential living and nature at its best. Washington County Conservation brings over 2,300 acres of conservation management experience and expertise to the Southtown Area. Conservation's mission will be to protect, preserve, and educate the public about the natural features located within the Southtown Area. Collaboration efforts are underway to expand community recreation opportunities and conservation projects. Residents and visitors will be able to enjoy public access to projects throughout the 80 acre public park such as:

- Rock surfaced and natural trails
- Dog park
- Naturescape playground
- Fishing ponds
- Disc golf
- Native prairie restoration

## Why Plan?

It is difficult to know what the future may bring for the SouthTown area, or for any community. As residents and businesses come and go, and economic trends rise and fall, changes will occur. The purpose of this plan is to establish a shared vision for the area within its regional context. This guidance provides predictability and consistency over time, which encourages investment. We plan so that we can act and react in a changing world with a confident understanding of our common values and goals.

## History

The City of Kalona, like many others of its time in Iowa, began out of necessity as a railroad depot and filling station for steam locomotives. The land for the Plat of Kalona was purchased by the English River Township Railroad System from John G. Myers, who was allowed to name the town and did so after his prizewinning short-horned bull named Kalona. The young community grew, survived two major fires in 1899 and 1906, and had the nickname of 'Bulltown' for a short time, signifying both strength and endurance. These qualities, though fortunately not the nickname, have continued to characterize a community that has grown and prospered to this day. Kalona reached a population high of 2,363 in 2010, a 3.05% growth in population from 2000. Kalona, as part of the rapidly growing Cedar Rapids/Iowa City Creative Corridor, will continue to see growth over coming years.

# Project Introduction

When people talk about the places they love in a community, parks are typically at the top of the list. Parks are essential to the physical, economic, environmental and social health of cities and residents. Parks, trails, open space and recreation programs provide communities with many benefits. The purpose of the Master Plan is to guide the City of Kalona in maintaining and enhancing the community's parks, trails and recreational opportunities. This document provides current insight in the existing conditions and potential opportunities for enhancements. The planning process included reaching out to the community for their thoughts on the existing conditions of Kalona's parks and trails as well as what they would like to see in the future. This document is also intended as a guidebook for new recreational development in the City as the community grows.

The information in this plan represents the results of an interactive and engaging public outreach program with Kalona community members. Prior to inventory and data collection, the project team met with City Staff and key individuals to establish objectives and expectations for the project.

One overarching goal of the Plan and process is to communicate the importance of parks and recreation as a community-wide benefit to people's quality of life. Another goal is to help ensure that future investment in Kalona's parks and trails system meets the needs of the community. The City of Kalona requested the assistance of MSA Professional Services Inc. to complete a Master Plan.

The process of developing the plan includes addressing additions and improvements of amenities, and connectivity of the community to the river front. The planning process represents input gathered from the community, stakeholders, and City staff. Guidance on plan preparation was provided by City Staff and the Parks and Trails Planning Project Team. Over the project duration the Project Team and MSA provided input for the process and document content throughout the project.

## Project Goals

✓ **Provide opportunities to broaden the diversity of park users geographically, and being inclusive to all.**

✓ **Provide a framework for short, mid, and long-term improvements and growth opportunities for existing and future parks, and trails.**

✓ **Promote and improve safety and accessibility within the parks and trails.**

✓ **Provide a living usable document that can be easily amended and is implementable.**

# The Importance of Recreation

Parks are often the most important and highly prized components of any community. They are sources of civic pride and are essential to the physical, economic, environmental, and social health of communities and their residents. Good planning is essential to a community's recreation system as it provides a means to meet the needs and wants of the community. As a plan is developed it is important to keep in mind the variety of benefits that parks and recreation add to the community.

## Health



When residents and visitors have access to parks, trails, and recreation facilities, they exercise more and are generally healthier and happier. Additionally, increased exposure to natural areas that parks and open space provide has been linked to improved physical and mental health. Parks and trails encourage healthy, happy, active lifestyles and improve overall quality of life throughout a community.

## Cultural & Social



Parks have important social benefits. In a time when social media defines the interactions of many people, parks and recreational centers are places to meet, catch up with family members and friends, and feel like part of the larger community. As a focal point of neighborhoods, parks help develop connections between residents by providing a venue for community building gatherings, like school trips, festivals, and celebrations. Significant natural features, and social gathering areas, have facilities and events for the enjoyment of all community members.



## Natural Resources



Parks and open space provide environmental benefits. Natural and planned vegetative landscapes found in parks, preserves and open spaces improve air quality and water quality. These areas may also play a role in stormwater management and protecting the quality and vitality of natural areas.

## Property Values



Numerous studies have shown that close proximity and access to parks, trails, and open space has a positive impact on residential property values. Commercial property values can also be increased with proximity to recreational amenities, creating potential for these sites to act as catalysts for future growth and development. Access to recreational amenities helps fuel growth and investment in local economies.

## Beautification



Parks contribute to aesthetics of a community. Parkways, tree-lined streets, gardens, views of water bodies, public art, trails, and landscaped areas around town are all things that contribute to creating beautiful places to live, work, and play. Visitors often remember a place by its access to beautiful natural areas, contributing to a positive community image. Improved linkages should also connect community parks to other community nodes. Attractive, safe and well marked linkages make essential contributions to a community's livability and viability.

# Parks and Open Space Standards

The definitions used in this plan are modified definitions used by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). They are used to classify the existing recreation system and to guide plans for the future. They begin with the smallest and most intensely used and then proceed to largest and least used. Neighborhood and community parks are normally provided by municipalities. Larger recreation areas are normally provided by larger units of government or private enterprise.

## NRPA Classifications

### Mini - Parks

Typically on a small lot (1/4 acre), located within a residential neighborhood. Usually have one facility and benches.

- Desirable size - 2 acres or less
- Acres/1,000 population: .25 to .5
- Service Area: 1/8 to 1/4 mile radius

### Neighborhood Playgrounds

Serves the needs of children 5-15 years old. It provides open fields, courts, shelter facilities, and play area. It should be within walking distance.

- Desirable size - 2-4 acres
- Acres/1,000 population: 0.5 - 1.5 acres
- Service Area: 1/4 to 1/3 mile radius

### Neighborhood Parks

This provides open space for all ages and enhances the overall environment. A natural location is ideal for this type, and it usually has tables, benches, paths, lights, and is walkable.

- Desirable size - 3-7 acres
- Acres/1,000 population: 5.0 -8.0 acres
- Service Area: 1 to 2 mile radius

### Community Play-fields

Serves the active needs of several neighborhoods. Includes more than a park such as a pool, community center, and fields for sporting events.

- Desirable size - 5 or more acres (15-40)
- Acres/1,000 population: 5.0 -8.0 acres
- Service Area: 1 to 2 mile radius

# NRPA Classifications Continued

## Community Parks

Intended to serve many neighborhoods. Tends to have woods, water features, trails, and picnic areas. Should be determined by the size of the population.

- Desirable size - 3-7 acres
- Acres/1,000 population: 5.0 -8.0 acres
- Service Area: 1 to 2 mile radius

## Special Purpose Parks

Created to take advantage of a natural or unusual feature, or to preserve areas and provide recreation. Golf course, marinas and boat ramps could be considered this.

- Desirable size - varies on function
- Acres/1,000 population: varies on function
- Service Area: varies on function

## Reservation and Preserves

Usually located outside of the urban area and include large tracts of land that have limited development. Usually provided by state, federal or county governments.

- Desirable size - varies on function
- Acres/1,000 population: varies on function
- Service Area: varies on function

## Greenbelts

Almost the same characteristics as the reservation or preserve; however it may be used to shape urban development. It could connect parks within an urban area.

- Desirable size - varies on function
- Acres/1,000 population: varies on function
- Service Area: varies on function

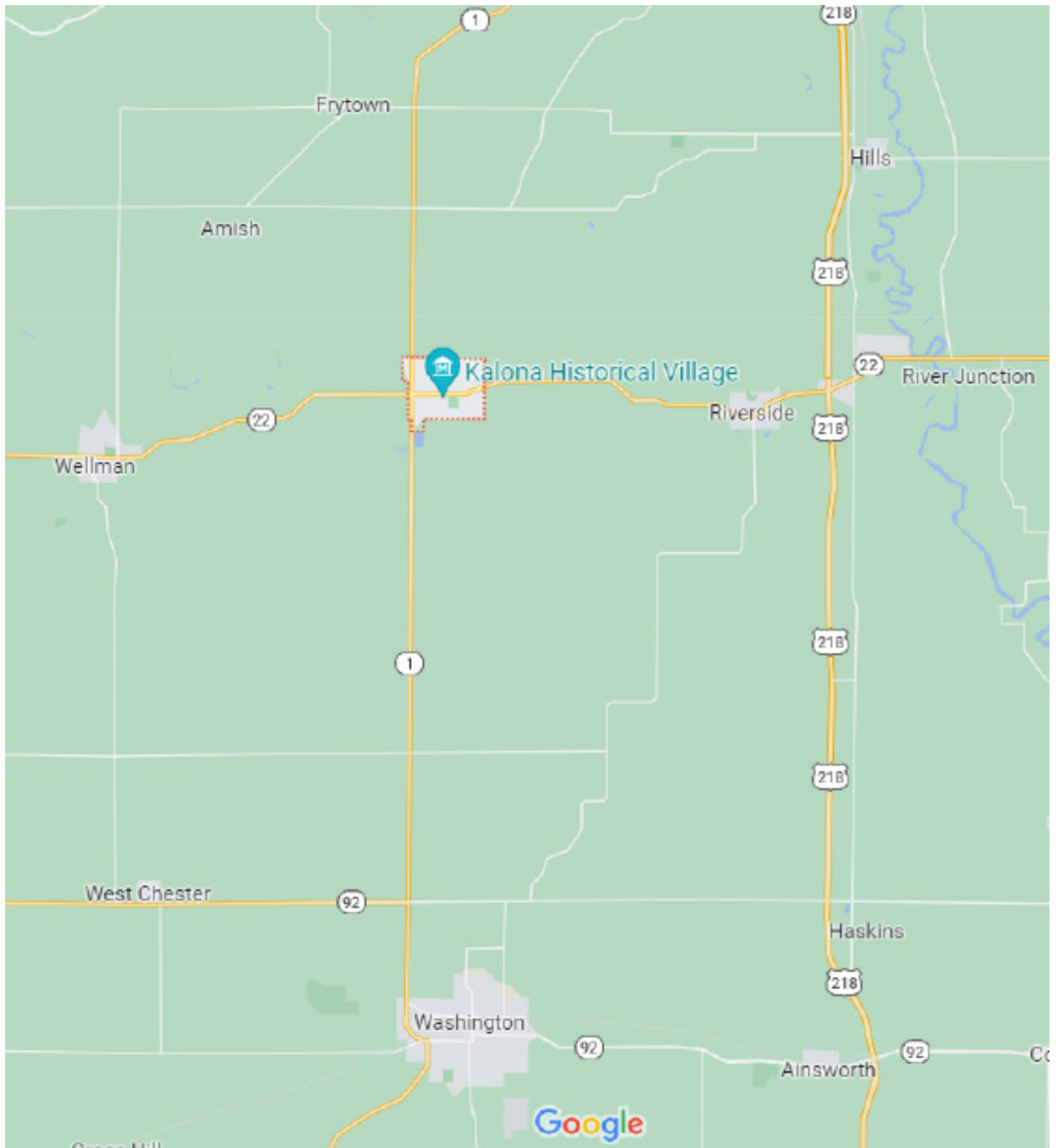
## Waysides, Welcome Centers, Historic Markers

Special purpose parks designed to serve motorists. They are important to a tourist industry. Size and location depends on natural features.

- Desirable size - varies on function
- Acres/1,000 population: varies on function
- Service Area: varies on function

# Context Map

Kalona is a city in Washington County, Iowa. It is part of the Iowa City metropolitan area. The population was 2,630 at the time of the 2020 census. Kalona is the second-largest city in Washington County.



# Existing Plans

The existing Comprehensive Plan for Kalona was updated in 2017 by RDG Planning and Design. Prior to that a draft was developed in October of 2007. Both documents are shown to the right and work to illuminate future plans and growth for the community.

Key components include:

**A Profile of Kalona**

**Strategic Planning Process**

**Growth and Land Use**

**Access for the Community**

**A Recreational Lifestyle**

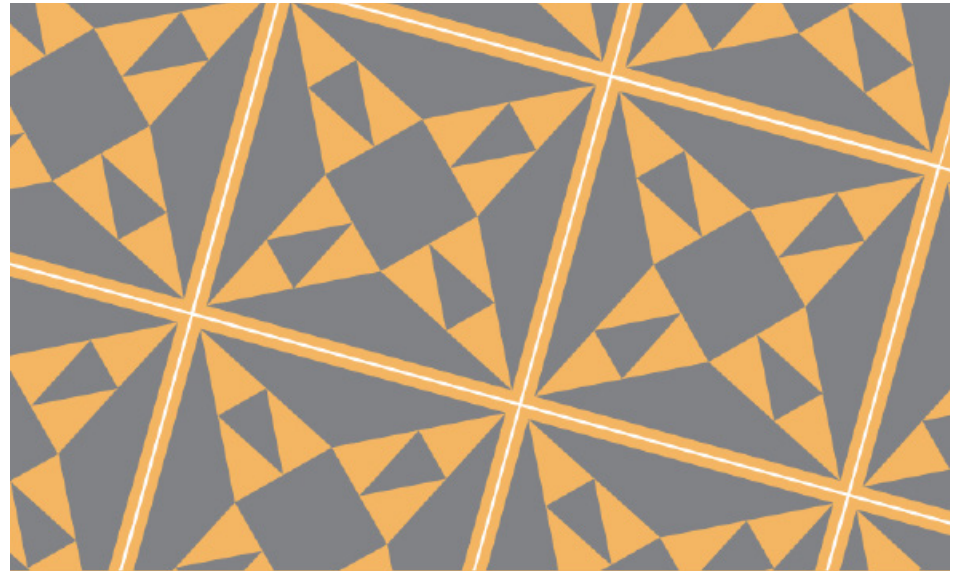
**Quality Public Services**

**Downtown Kalona**

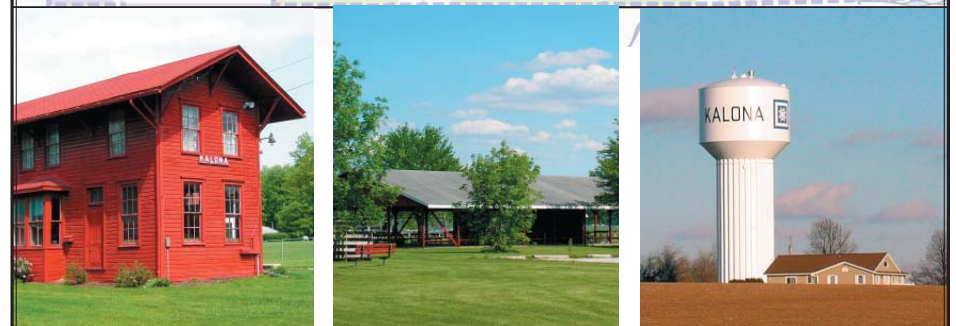
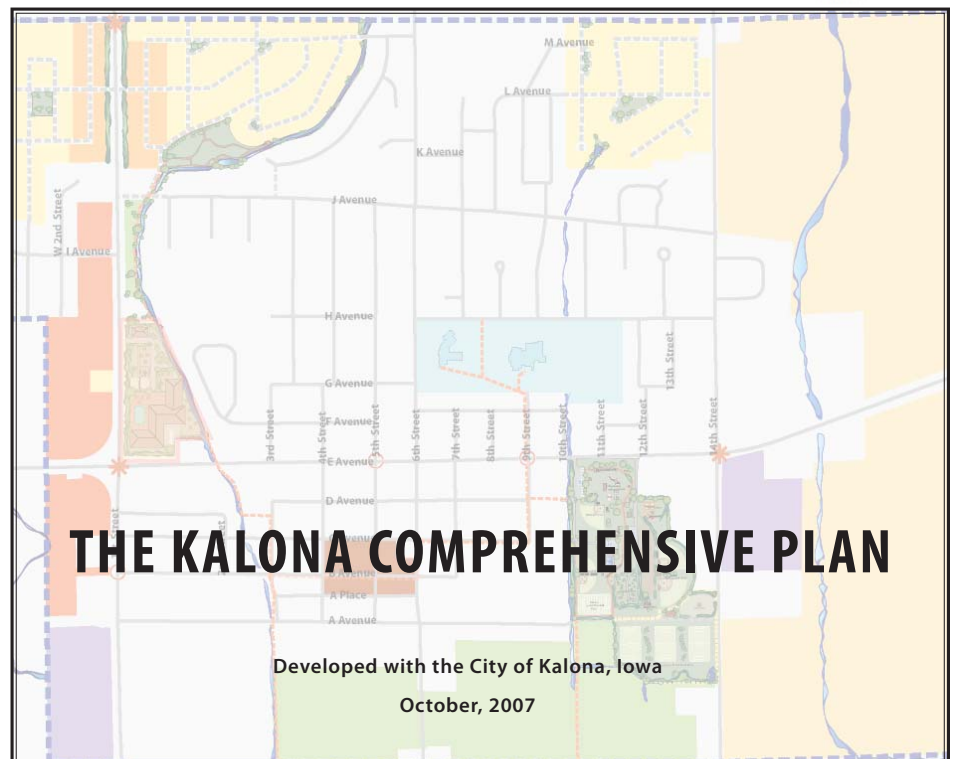
**Implementing the Kalona Plan**

The policies set forth by the Kalona Comprehensive Plan are largely based on a planning process in which community members defined the city's primary objectives for the next 20 years beginning in 2007.

The 2017 update of the Comprehensive Plan keeps focus on the original vision and goals developed from community participation in 2007 and additional visioning processes in 2016.



## KALONA | A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2017



Prepared By:  
RDG Planning and Design

# Existing Plans

The vision of the Washington County Regional Trails and Recreation Plan aims to provide and maintain a recreational network that will continue to grow to serve more users in more ways for more of the residents and visitor's lives.

## Mission Statements:

- To acquire, develop, maintain, and make available to the inhabitants of Washington County the public parks, preserves, parkways, playgrounds, recreation centers, county forests, wildlife and other conservation areas
- To promote and preserve the health and general welfare of the people of Washington County
- To encourage the orderly development and conservation of natural resources
- To cultivate good citizenship by providing programs of public recreation

## Regional Goals:

- Continue proper maintenance and funding of existing trails
- Expand the use of the existing regional trail system and create linkages or loops
- Maintain and expand recreational opportunities for County residents and regional visitors
- Prepare a master plan for a new trail from Brighton to Lake Darling
- Prepare a master plan for Kewash Trail
- Encourage and support the establishment of connections to regional trails from residential and commercial areas wherever possible
- As it becomes available, acquire land for trail alignment in an opportunistic manner



## WASHINGTON COUNTY REGIONAL TRAILS AND RECREATION PLAN

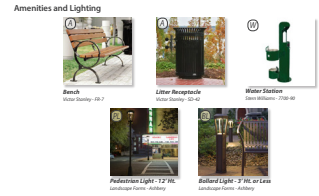


# Existing Plans

Kalona's 2016 Community Visioning plan call for many improvements to Kalona's Trails and Recreation. First, the plan discusses new pedestrian connection in the community and discusses a trail along Salvesen Creek.

The plan also calls for a park along the creek with a concept plan. As shown to the right it also proposes a veterans and volunteers memorial plaza, which has come to fruition.

Lastly the plan also provides a concept for a park in a vacant lot owned by RCTC.



**Community Pedestrian Connections**

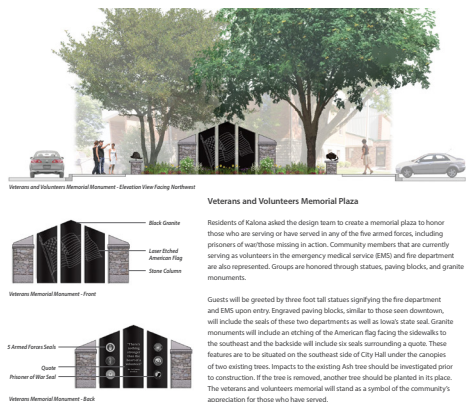
Salvesen Creek impacts the design of the perimeter trail because it is both a guide and a barrier for pedestrians to cross the water. A new bridge near Pleasantview Home provides a crossing over the creek as well as access to the new development and retail offerings west of Highway 1. The trail continues to follow the creek south to the English River.

From the English River, the trail loops north toward the Kalona City Park. Once in the park, pedestrians have the option to travel west toward the Historical Village and downtown or continue north toward the elementary school and J Avenue. J Avenue's trail runs parallel to the road until it reaches the cemetery where the path moves from the south side of the road to the north side. From the cemetery the path continues east until it reaches Salvesen Creek where a second bridge gives the option to continue on the perimeter trail or enter into future development areas.

With connections being made to all areas of town, trail amenities will match those seen downtown, including along the river will be benches, litter receptacles, and water stations. The water stations accommodate dogs and their owners. Other amenities include pedestrian scale lighting (12 ft ht) along the perimeter trail and bollard lighting (3 ft ht) through City Park to enhance wayfinding for evening walkers and overall ambiance.

## Kalona Pedestrian Connections

Landscape Architect: Dylan Jones, PLA, LEED GA - Bolton & Menk  
 LA Intern: Hannah Schmitz - Bolton & Menk  
 Iowa Department of Transportation | Trees Forever | ISU Landscape Architecture Extension | ISU Extension Community and Economic Development | Summer 2016



- Station - Five Degr. Helmet
- Granite Bench (Typ.)
- Perennial Plantings
- Power Art - Five Degr. Seal
- Colored Concrete Paving
- Power Art - State of IA Seal
- Station - EMS Medical Bay
- Power Art - EMS Seal
- Perennial Plantings

- Black Granite
- Lower Relief American Flag
- Stone Columns
- 3 Armed Fountains Sinks
- Queue
- Power of Blue Seal

## Kalona Veterans and Volunteers Memorial Plaza

Landscape Architect: Dylan Jones, PLA, LEED GA - Bolton & Menk  
 LA Intern: Hannah Schmitz - Bolton & Menk  
 Iowa Department of Transportation | Trees Forever | ISU Landscape Architecture Extension | ISU Extension Community and Economic Development | Summer 2016



- Power Block (Typ.)
- Statue
- Picnic Table (Typ.)
- Limestone Seat Wall (Typ.)
- Overhead Structure / Stage Area
- Bollard Lighting (Typ.)
- Perennial Plantings (Typ.)
- Propagated Ornamental Trees
- Seating Area
- Color Slat Screen Wall - 6' Height

**KCTC Park**

Kalona Cooperative Technology Company (KCTC) owns a vacant lot located east of downtown on B Avenue. Community members saw potential to transform this space into a public park valued for large gatherings. KCTC Park is not only a canvas for an endless amount of activities, but it also creates a delightful terminus to Kalona's charming downtown. The park includes an open lawn which allows for a wide range of activities, from hosting a ribbon to playing in the shade. Near the open lawn is a picnic area situated beneath shade trees. This area may be utilized in the case of a farmers market or to provide a nice place to sit during one's lunch hour. On the east end of the park is the stage and seating area large enough for over 175 people. This space features trees and planting beds. A staggered, double row of shade trees is proposed to provide comfort to those viewing a performance and for the performer in the event of a sunset performance. Additionally, the stage structure will feature a lowered overhang to also aid in keeping the setting sun out of performer's eyes. Other amenities in the park include three foot tall bollard lighting, limestone seat walls, a statue at the center of the park, and screen walls/vegetative screens situated on the eastern and southern sides of the park.

## Kalona KCTC Park

Landscape Architect: Dylan Jones, PLA, LEED GA - Bolton & Menk  
 LA Intern: Hannah Schmitz - Bolton & Menk  
 Iowa Department of Transportation | Trees Forever | ISU Landscape Architecture Extension | ISU Extension Community and Economic Development | Summer 2016

# Project Schedule

Month(s)	Tasks and Meetings
	<b>Phase 1: Project Kickoff, Existing Conditions Review and Analysis</b>
22-Apr	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Kickoff Meeting</li> </ul>
1-Jul	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review Relevant Studies/Plans</li> </ul>
1-Jul	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing Conditions Review/Analysis</li> </ul>
9-Jun	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Steering Committee Meeting #1</li> </ul>
	<b>Phase 2: Preliminary Trail Engineering</b>
22-Jun	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Site Walkthrough</li> </ul>
9-Aug	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Survey</li> </ul>
1-Jul	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Preliminary Design and Plans</li> </ul>
28-Jul	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Steering Committee Meeting #2</li> </ul>
	<b>Phase 3: Public Engagement</b>
5-Jul	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Crowdsource Map</li> </ul>
25-Sep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kalona Fall Fest Popup Booth</li> </ul>
19-Aug	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fundraising Brochure</li> </ul>
	<b>Phase 4: Master Plan Development</b>
6-Jul	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concept Plan</li> </ul>
tbd oct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan Revision</li> </ul>
tbd oct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Steering Committee Meeting #3</li> </ul>
31-Oct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Final Plan</li> </ul>
	<b>Phase 5: Project Completion and Deliverables</b>
nov	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Preliminary Design, Plans and Cost Estimate</li> </ul>
nov-dec	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan Adopted at City Council Meeting</li> </ul>
nov-dec	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan Adopted at County Board Meeting</li> </ul>
Final	Deliver Final Plan Document and Associated Data







02 | COMMUNITY INPUT

# Community Input

A transparent public engagement process was the foundation in the creation of this plan, and will remain essential for its implementation. Elements of public engagement for the planning process included:

- Plan Steering Committee Meetings
- SWOT Analysis Sessions
- Pop-Up Meetings

## Incorporating Input into the Plan

The input outlined in this chapter allows for the identification of underlying themes for the plan, and provides information on what specific issues and ideas are the most important to the community. This foundation ensures that the plan is a guide for the future decisions in the region that are inline with ideals. From this foundation, opportunities will continue to grow and thrive.

## Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, & Threats (SWOT) Analysis

This Plan is grounded in a set of issues about which the residents and city are concerned, and opportunities for positive change. The Plan seeks to address perceived deficiencies and capitalize on opportunities. This section is a compilation of key issues and opportunities. A SWOT analysis exercise was used to gather this information from the Planning and Zoning Commission, Project Team, Steering Committee as well as from the general public at each community engagement and visioning session.

Strengths - characteristics that give the community an advantage over others.

Weaknesses - characteristics that place the community at a disadvantage relative to others.

Opportunities - elements the community could exploit to advantage the community.

Threats - elements in the environment that could cause trouble for the community in the future.

	<i>helpful</i>	<i>harmful</i>
<i>internal</i>	<b>STRENGTHS</b>	<b>WEAKNESSES</b>
<i>external</i>	<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>THREATS</b>

# What We Heard - Engagement Overview

## Summary of comments relating to BEAUTIFICATION

### Strengths / Opportunities

- Landscaping for the entry
- Planted native grasses
- Scenic hillside
- Oaks and Hickory trees
- Signage
- Boulders for naturescape
- Trails
- Main pond
- Hillside
- Sports fields
- Open air amphitheater
- Rentable space indoors
- Natural Beauty
- Views
- Peaceful/Quiet
- Church Property
- Recreation
- Connectivity
- Diversity of ground
- Fishing, hiking, dog park
- Volume of land/beach
- Family Friendly
- Hidden Gem

### Weaknesses / Threats

- Funding/money
- Sequencing of project needs
- Archaeological studies - historic site just off of the property
- Floodplain
- Connectivity - Trail links needed
- Private/Public use
- Balance
- Access to Emergency (Fire)
- Secluded
- Size
- Needs to grow organically
- Ideas vs Implementation
- Preservation

# What We Heard - Engagement Overview

## Summary of comments relating to DEVELOPMENT

### Strengths / Opportunities

- Desire for commercial
- Residential lots selling
- Public access - assets that home ownership might take on
- Beach with designated hours
- Access to fishing - some public
- Trout stocking
- Green fees
- Tee times
- Strong Vision
- Recreation elements
- Railroad
- Solid Infrastructure
- Water System and Fiber
- Great Neighbors
- Trust in Developer
- Demand
- School District
- Diversity/Types of lots
- Price points
- Uniqueness of the project
- Added Value
- Regional Draw
- New Market

### Weaknesses / Threats

- Competition
- Housing assessment
- Slow growth
- Need partners
- Aesthetic standards/design standards for commercial
- Timeless looks
- Awareness
- City of Kalona competition
- Connectivity
- The River
- Private/Public
- Growth Rate
- Challenge to be 1st
- Housing Market
- Builders to Build
- Economic Uncertainty
- Cost of Materials
- Design Standards
- Funding

# What We Heard - Engagement Overview

## Summary of comments relating to MOBILITY

### Strengths / Opportunities

- Trail/trailhead
- Snowmobile
- Golf cart/ ATV
- Hybrid
- Endless opportunities for types of trails
- Terrain
- Close to the University
- Different User Types
- Opportunity to work with the County
- Easy in and Easy out
- Resources to pave

### Weaknesses / Threats

- Where the red tape goes/ stopping mobility
- Right sizing parking
- Education on what a trail is
- Safety
- Feeling of comfort on trails
- ADA Compliance for trails
- Access
- Road System
- Visibility
- Floodplain
- Funding

# Kalona Fall Fest



A booth for the project was set up at Kalona's Fall Festival for residents and visitors to learn more about the plan and provide their input. Key takeaways from the event included:

- Desire for the trails to be paved
- Interest in a splash pad
- Desire to use the lake
- Positive comments about the dog park
- Interest in the naturescape play equipment
- Desire to keep most of the large trees
- Questions about a potential future campground/RV Park
- Interest in purchasing a lot in the area
- Preference for a modern appeal vs Kalona's historic/Amish appeal
- Interest in more press about the project and planning process
- Currently not clear that the space is intended for public use and that the trails can be used
- Generally positive feedback on the concepts and plans thus far

# Project Flyer

Contact  
Washington  
County  
Conservation or  
City of Kalona to  
Donate.

(319) 657-2400

[zachwccb@gmail.com](mailto:zachwccb@gmail.com)

[www.washingtoncounty.iowa.gov](http://www.washingtoncounty.iowa.gov)

(319) 656-2310

[rschlabaugh@cityofkalona.org](mailto:rschlabaugh@cityofkalona.org)

[www.cityofkalona.org](http://www.cityofkalona.org)



## Park Bench \$3,000

Benches are made from recycled plastic. This material is built to withstand midwestern elements and diverts post consumer plastics from entering the landfill.



## Trash Receptacle \$1,000

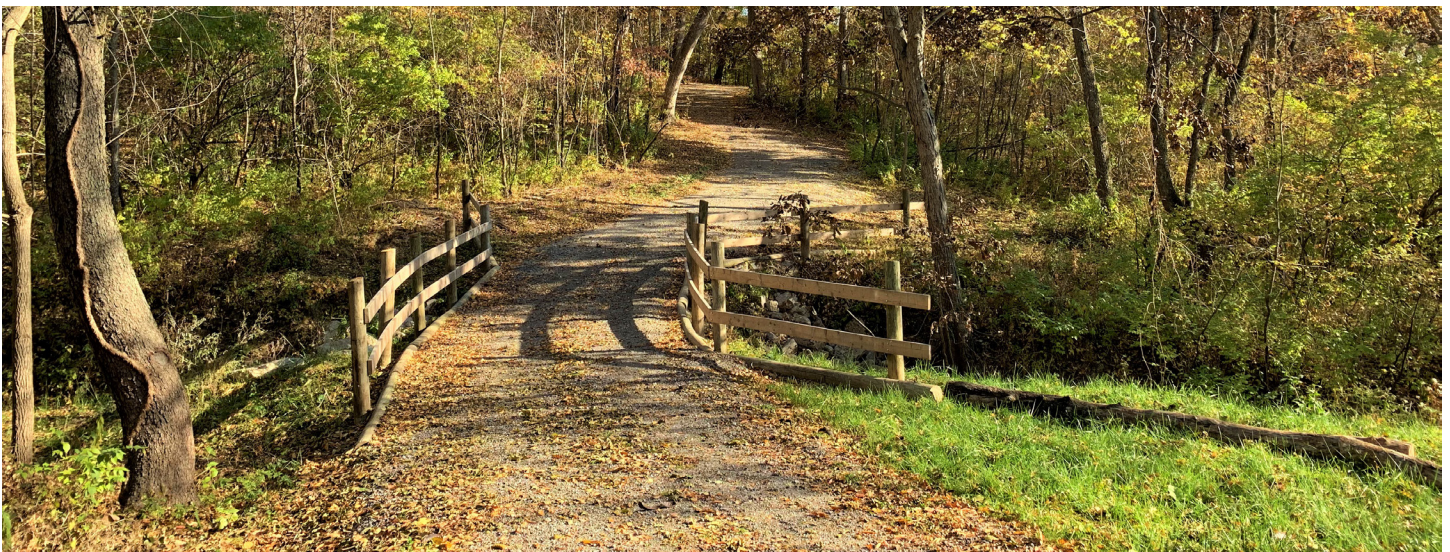
Trash Receptacles are made from recycled plastic. This material is built to withstand midwestern elements and diverts post consumer plastics from entering the landfill.



Note: The bench and trash receptacle locations will be provided through a Donation Amenity Map with pre-existing locations for the donation party to choose from.

## Interested in a Larger Donation?

A group, individual or organization interested in larger gifts for structures, matching funds etc, please contact the City of Kalona or Washington County Conservation with the contact information above.



# Desired Outcomes

**A**

Anticipate and shape changes for the benefit of the community.

**B**

Design a planned area that is attractive, has adequate public services, and is a good place to live and play.

**C**

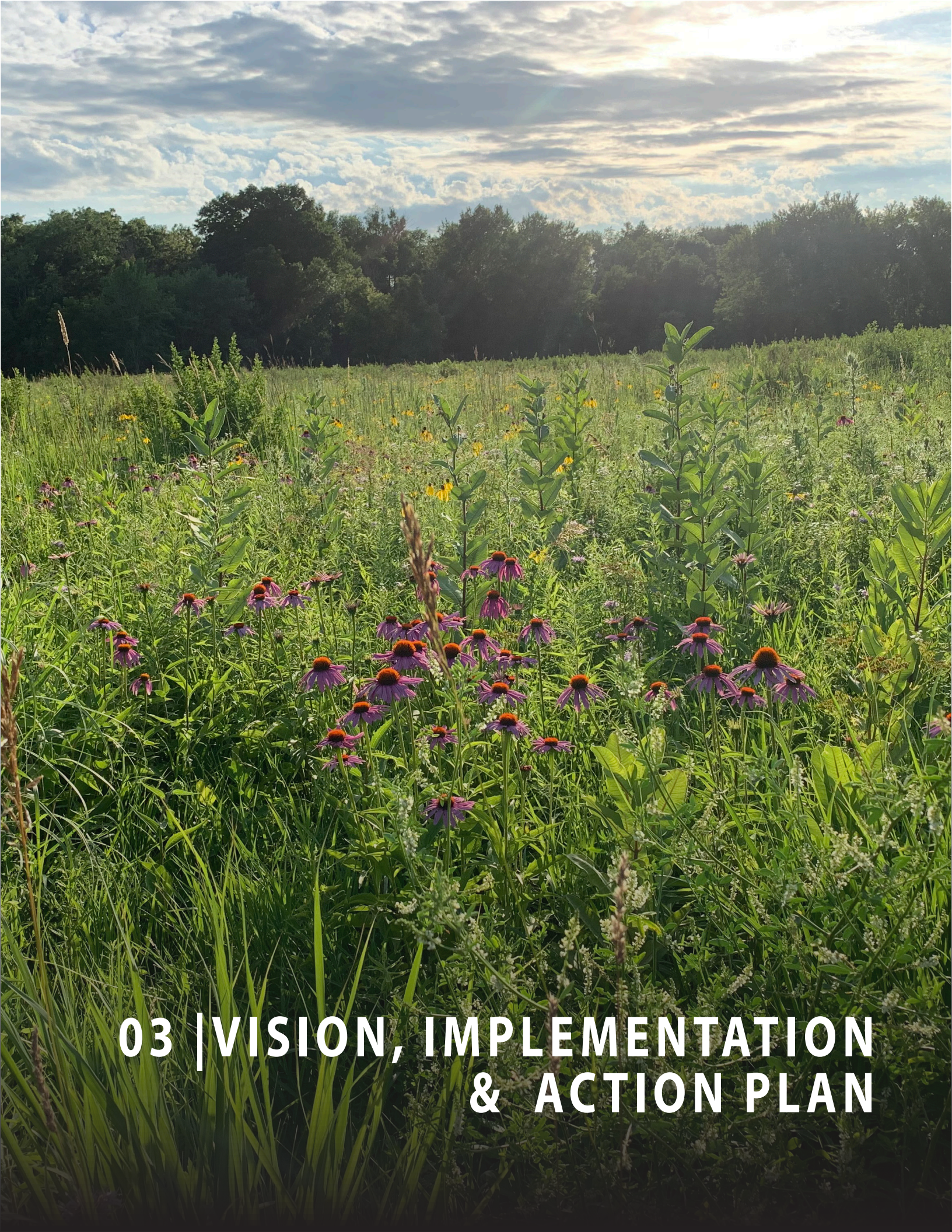
Improve the overall Quality of Life for the surrounding area.

**D**

To form a good basis for plan implementation – design guidelines, funding and capital improvements programming.







**03 | VISION, IMPLEMENTATION  
& ACTION PLAN**

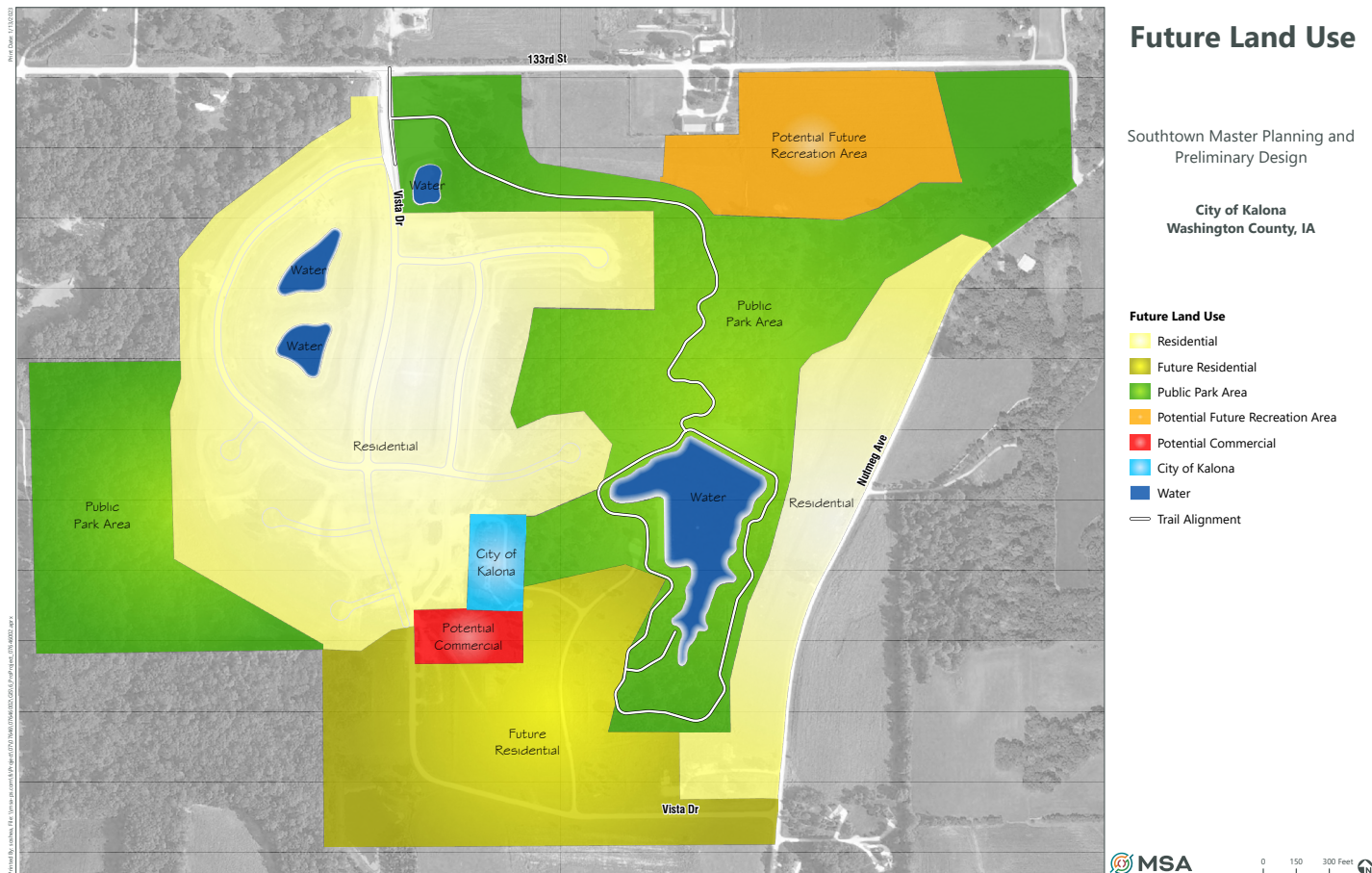
# Visioning

Planning and visioning help identify community-wide needs and help guide a community towards making efficient improvements. The planning process and plans are intended to allow the City to better understand and serve the needs of the public. Inclusive, innovative and engaging community outreach was a foundation of this planning process. The Project Team incorporated different opportunities for engaging community members, with flexible options for engagement.

Busy schedules make it sometimes difficult to set-aside time to attend traditional meetings. Additionally, sometimes passionate individuals are not comfortable voicing their opinion in front of others in a public setting. Providing different strategies and tools for receiving input allows everyone a chance to become actively involved in the discussion of how to improve their community.

The primary objectives of the plan is to create a readable document that provides a plan of current conditions and includes reasonable recommendations for improvement. Through this analysis, and implementation of recommendations, SouthTown will be able to host a better parks and trails system for all residents. This plan was completed with the intent of analyzing the existing conditions of the area to better develop an equitable and usable concept for visitors and current and future residents.

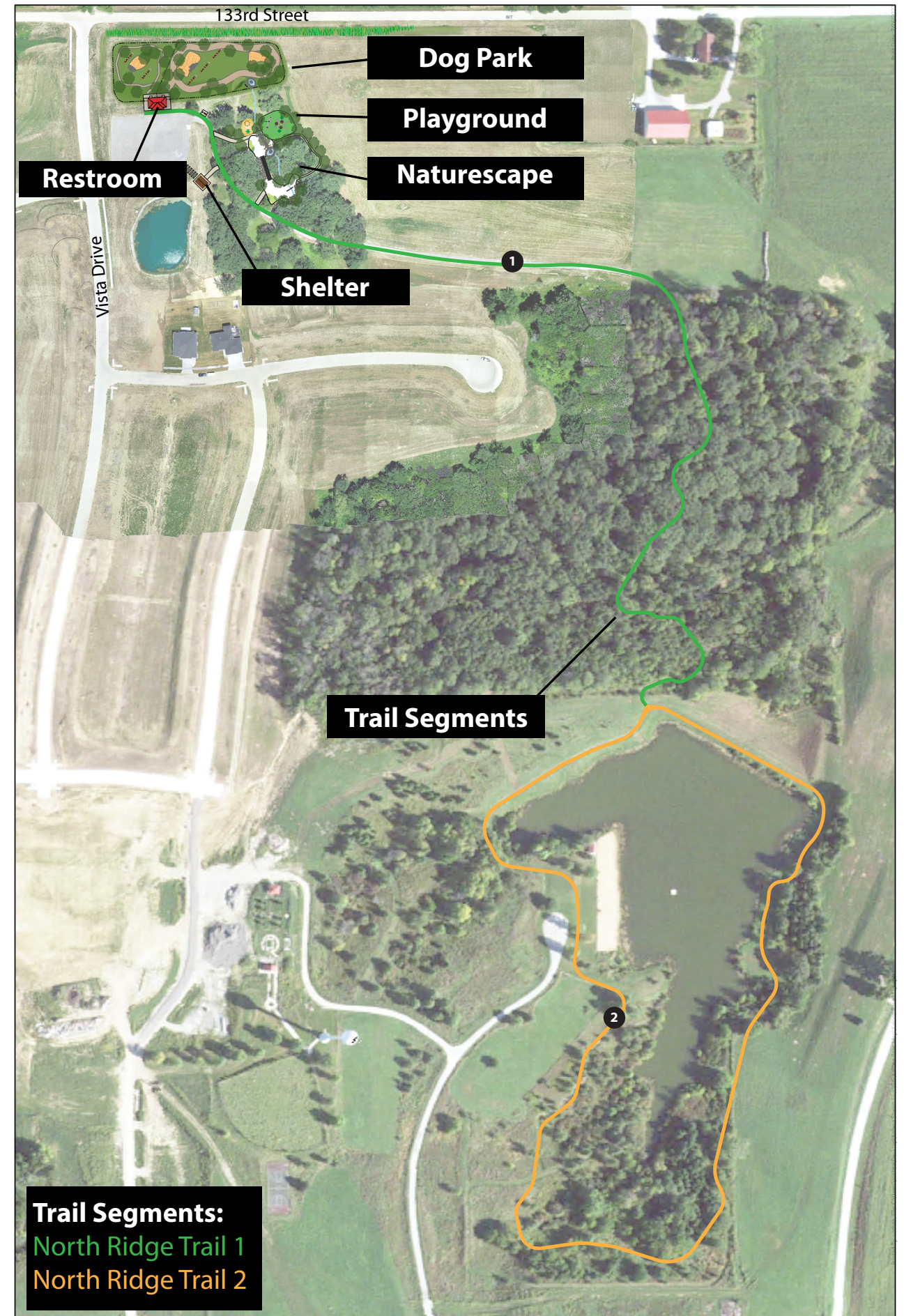
Key components include the proposed land use map illustrated below, a dog park and naturescape concept, overall entry design, and trail alignment which are shown on the following pages.



# DOG PARK



# NATURESCAPE



**Trail Segments:**  
 North Ridge Trail 1  
 North Ridge Trail 2



**Kalona, IA SouthTown Entry and Trail**



133rd Street

Prairie Grass on Berm

Gravel Trail

Mulch

Mulch

Mulch

Large Dog Area

Tunnels/Obstacles

Small Dog Area

Dog Washing Stations

Dog Water Play

Bike Station/Bike Rack

Splash Pad

10' Concrete Multi-use Path

Public Restroom

Parking

Playground

Lower Naturescape

Prairie

Water Play

Dry Creek Bed

Hillside Rock Climb

Hill Slope

Log Bridges

Upper Naturescape

Butterfly Garden  
Outdoor Classroom

Stone Stairs

Picnic Shelter

Future Phase: Amphitheater

Future Phase: Sports Complex

Future Phase: Hillside Seating

# Park and Recreation Goals

Proposed recommendations are a key component of the Master Plan. Based on all of the research, analysis, visioning, evaluation and community input that was completed, recommendations have been formulated that provide direction for implementation.



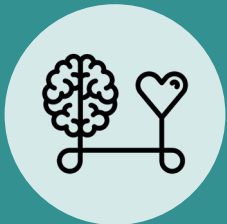
## INCREASE ACCESS TO QUALITY PARKS

Ensure all residents have access to quality parks and programs regardless of location, ability, age, interests or socioeconomic barriers.



## DEVELOP, MAINTAIN & INNOVATE PARKS & OPEN SPACES

Set a standard for excellence by constantly improving the quality, variety, safety, and recreation options, and seeking new additions and updates.



## IMPROVE HEALTH & WELLNESS

Provide safe and engaging spaces and opportunities for residents to connect, build relationships, improve health and make memories.



## PRESERVE NATURAL SPACES

Protect ecologically sensitive areas through land preservation and environmentally conscious construction and maintenance practices.



## PROMOTE COMMUNITY PRIDE

Provide parks, programs and events that foster pride, generate positive attention and encourage tourism and economic growth.

# Implementation

## *Guiding Daily Decisions*

### City Roles and Responsibilities

Responsibility for implementing this plan lies primarily with the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Staff.

#### City Council

City Council sets priorities, approves budgets and tax rates, and often has the final say on key aspects of public and private development projects. The value and legitimacy of this plan is directly related to the degree to which Council members are aware of the plan and expect City actions to be consistent with this plan. Each Board member should have a copy of this plan and be familiar with the major goals and objectives described herein. The City Council should expect and require that staff recommendations and actions both reference and remain consistent with this plan, or that the plan is amended as needed to fit changing conditions.

#### Planning and Zoning Commission

Land use and development recommendations are a core component of this plan, and the Planning and Zoning Commission has a major role in guiding those decisions. Planning and Zoning Commission members shall each have a copy of this plan and shall be familiar with the content. It is generally the responsibility of the Planning and Zoning Commission to determine whether proposed projects are consistent with this plan, and to make decisions and recommendations that are consistent with this plan. In cases where actions that are inconsistent with this plan are deemed to be in the best interest of the City, the Planning and Zoning Commission should initiate efforts to amend the plan to better reflect City interests. This will help to reinforce the legitimacy of the plan as an important tool in guiding City decision making.

#### City Staff

City staff have a significant influence on the selection and completion of all kinds of capital and operational projects. It is imperative that City staff know about, support, and actively work to implement the various strategies and actions in this plan.

Specifically, the following people should consult and reference the comprehensive plan during goal-setting processes, annual budgeting, planning for major public projects, and in the review of private development projects:

- City Manager
- City Clerk
- Community Development Staff
- Economic Development Staff
- Public Works Staff

These key staff members are expected to know and track the various goals, strategies, and vision laid out in this plan, and to reference that content as appropriate in communications with residents, business owners, and elected and appointed officials. All other staff members should be aware of the plan and the connections between the plan and City projects. The purpose of this extra effort is to strengthen staff recommendations and reinforce the plan as a relevant tool integral to City functions and decision making.

## Education and Advocacy

Implementation of this plan also depends on the actions and decisions of entities other than City government. Some responsible, non-municipal parties that the City collaborates with include:

- Kalona Community School District
- Washington County
- Iowa Department of Transportation
- Iowa Department of Natural Resources
- Area Metropolitan Planning Organization

It is necessary to persuade these entities to be active partners in the implementation of the vision, goals, strategies of this plan.

The following City activities can support this effort:

- Share this plan with each organization, including a memo highlighting sections of the plan that anticipate collaboration between the City and the organization.
- Take the lead role in establishing a collaboration for key or crucial initiatives of the City that require regional collaboration
- Know and communicate the intent of relevant objectives and strategies—partner organizations need to understand and buy into the rationale before they will act.
- Utilize the goals and vision from the plan to support requests for monetary support for City efforts.

## Utilizing Existing Tools

Many of the strategies identified in this plan presume the use of existing City ordinances, regulations, and programs. The City's key implementation tools include:

### Operational Tools

- Annual Goal-Setting Process
- Annual Budget Process
- Capital Improvement Plan

### Regulatory Tools

- Building and Housing Codes
- Zoning Ordinance
- Subdivision Regulations
- Washington County Ordinances
- State Regulations
- Federal Regulations

### Funding Tools

- User Fees
- Tax Abatement
- Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Districts
- Development Fees
- State, Federal, and Private Grant Programs

### Surrounding Area Comprehensive Plans

- Washington County
- Cedar Rapids Metropolitan Area



## Guiding Annual Decisions

### Annual Report

To provide lasting value and influence, this plan must be used and referenced regularly, especially during budgeting and goal setting processes. To inform the annual processes, City staff will prepare a concise Comprehensive Plan Annual Report for the City Council with input from the Planning and Zoning Commission, including the following information.

- Action items in progress or completed during the prior 12 months (celebrate successes!)
- Staff recommendations for action items to pursue during the next 12 months, including removing or adding items.
- City actions and decisions during the past 12 months not consistent with the plan (if any).
- Staff recommendations for any amendments to the adopted plan.

### Link to Annual Goals and Budget

The most important opportunity for this plan to influence the growth and improvement of the City is through the annual goal-setting, budgeting and capital planning processes. These existing annual efforts determine what projects will and will not be pursued by the City, so it is very important to integrate this plan into those processes every year.

The compilation of actions in the next section is a resource to support decisions about how and where to invest the City's limited resources. The Annual Report should draw from these actions and decisions.

The Planning Commission should make formal recommendations for the Council's consideration, identifying those choices and commitments most likely to further the goals and objectives identified in this plan.

The following process and schedule is recommended.

**Step 1** - Staff completes the Comprehensive Plan Annual Report.

**Step 2** - Planning Commission considers Annual Report and makes formal recommendation to Council regarding action items to pursue and comprehensive plan amendments.

**Step 3** - Department Directors consider Annual Report and Planning Commission recommendations, complete goal setting exercises. Council holds a public hearing and considers adoption of any comprehensive plan amendments.

**Step 4** - City Council Goal Setting

**Step 5** - Budget preparation process

**Step 6** - Budget Adopted



# Action Plan

The Action Plan detailed on the following pages is designed as a guide to help City officials, community leaders, and private investors prioritize opportunities and address issues with the City and the surrounding area. The desired vision for the City cannot be created over night. However, by incrementally implementing the recommendations within this plan, the City can achieve the desired outcomes set forth in this comprehensive plan.

## Potential Funding Sources

Below are several of the broad funding sources available to help offset costs to complete the projects listed in this plan.

### **General City Funding**

It is assumed that some general funds and/or general obligation bonds will be required to assist with the completion of projects or as a matching sources for state or federal grants.

### **Special Assessments**

Particular projects that benefit individual properties (e.g. water, sewer, or sidewalk installations) could be funded through special assessments whereby the City recoups initial design and construction costs through increased property tax assessments on those properties for a set period of time.

### **Revenues**

Projects related to drinking water, sanitary sewer, and storm water could be funded using system revenues, bonds, or fees collected from system users across the community.

### **Private**

Donations, Grants - Some of the wayfinding projects could be partially or fully funded through private donations or public fund raising. Funding for other infrastructure projects can also be offset by using funds from impact fees the City collects as part of the approval of new development.

### **State and Federal Grants and Programs**

There are many different state or federal grants and programs that many be able to offset the costs of some of the identified projects. Only those programs most likely to award funding to are listed.

### **Tax Increment Financing (TIF)**

Tax increment financing is a program where the additional taxes generated from a development in a TIF district would go towards specified public improvements in a community. This program helps + the impacts of new development on a community while improving the attractiveness of the City.

# Action Plan

The City understands the need to maintain and improve this area for current and future residents. Successful implementation of this plan is more likely when the recommendations included are attainable and align with the capacity of the City of Kalona. This is to be a collaborative process involving Elected Officials, City Staff, regional partners, stakeholders, and community members.

Target Completion Year	Recommendation
2023	Construct Dog Park
	Establish Park Names for Trailhead Park and Swim Pond Park
	Rebrand Signage to City of Kalona
	Land Dedication
	Develop Mowing/Maintenance Agreement
	Public Unveiling of Southtown Park areas
	Entry Signage for both Parks – with hours posted
	Trail Wayfinding Signage
	Park and Trail Map Display at Entry Area
	HWY 1 & 133rd St signage for Park areas at SouthTown
	Design of the Swim Pond Trail Loop
	Construction of Aggregate Swim Pond Trail Loop
	Install Disc Golf Course
	Dog Park, Naturescape, Trailhead Design
Establish Conceptual route for Trail from SouthTown to City Park	
2024	Construct Improvements to beach area at Swim Pond
	Construct ADA Improvements to Trailhead Parking Lot
	Construct ADA Fishing Pier and Trail at Family Fishing Pond
	Construct Naturescape Play area
	Final Design for Paving Trailhead Park to Swim Pond and Loop Trail
2025	Splashpad
	Install Park Shelter
	Install Playground at Trailhead Park with solid surface
	Permanent Restroom Design and Construction
	Construction of Paved Trailhead Park to Swim Pond and Loop Trails
Design SouthTown to City Park Trail	
2026	Construct SouthTown to City Park Trail

Responsible Parties	Potential Funding Sources	Date Complete
City, WCC, SouthTown		
City		
City		
City, SouthTown		
City/WCCB		
City, WCC, SouthTown		
City		
City		
City		
City		
City		
City, SouthTown		
City, SouthTown		
City, WCC, SouthTown	REAP	
City, WCC		
City, WCC, SouthTown		
City, WCC, SouthTown		
City, WCC, SouthTown	REAP, WCRF	
City, WCC, SouthTown	REAP, WCRF	
City, WCC, SouthTown		
City, WCC, SouthTown	WCRF	
City, WCC, SouthTown		
City, WCC, SouthTown		
City, WCC, SouthTown	Washington County Riverboat Foundation	
City, WCC, SouthTown	Washington County Riverboat Foundation	
City, WCC		
City, WCC, SouthTown	Washington County Riverboat Foundation	

