
City of Mitchellville Comprehensive Development Plan 2006



Iowa State University, Ames Iowa

Prepared by the class of Community and Regional Planning Comprehensive
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What is a Comprehensive Plan? Why is it Necessary?

A comprehensive Plan, also known as a master or general plan, is a collection of information and materials designed to guide the future development of a city or county. The plan is general in nature and is all-encompassing. It is long range, and does not call for specific action or encourage any particular legislative strategy. Rather, the plan provides a framework and policy context within which to make all decisions relating to land use and future development, points the way toward goals and objectives, and acts as a reminder of the general policies that the city should consider when making development decisions.

As communities across Iowa experience growth and change, local resources can be strained, the ecological environment can be damaged, and homeowners and other residents can be inconvenienced. A comprehensive plan that addresses where and how future development should take place can help communities avoid these types of problems and make sure that sound decisions about growth are made. The plan provides a community with a firm foundation for policy and action that will allow it to function more efficiently and effectively, and can promote a more certain future.

Goals and Vision

1. Embrace the expanding Des Moines Metropolitan Area by creating areas for growth and redevelopment.
2. Effectively market the community to new business venues to assist in the effort of continued growth.
3. Create growth that is environmentally conscious.
4. Expand and effectively maintain the road network.
5. Protect the character and integrity of the established community by meeting the demands of existing and potential residents.

Introduction

Location

Mitchellville is located in central Iowa on the eastern border of Polk County; surrounded by agricultural land. Mitchellville is south of Interstate 80 and seventeen miles east of the center of Des Moines. (Fig. 1)

Brief History

Thomas Mitchell, who came to Iowa from New Hampshire in 1840, founded Mitchellville.¹ In the following decade the first of two railroad tracks was built through the town and after construction was complete, the town was officially named Mitchellville. The Iowa Correctional Institute for Women located here was originally a seminary school that Thomas Mitchell founded. He also helped build the first church in the town named the Universalist Church.

Assets

Mitchellville's location relative to Des Moines and Interstate 80 provide economic potential and growth. The town is also accessible by two railroads. Although it is close to the state capital and Interstate, its small town character has been preserved. Many of the first houses built in the town have been well cared for and the downtown area's unique character is still vibrant. It has an elementary school, a farmer's cooperative, three city parks, three churches, and a library.

¹ Thomas Mitchell Historical Society brochure

Figure 1: Aerial of Mitchellville in relation to Des Moines



Figure 2: Universalist Church



Population

Introduction

The population section of a comprehensive plan is an important and useful part where an assessment of trends in population growth or decline in a community are developed. Planners and social scientists rely on population elements and projections in drafting and creating a plan for a community. This section of the Comprehensive Plan shows how population has changed over time in the City of Mitchellville and it further projects population for the next 20 to 30 years.

Population Trends and Analysis

Table 1 shows that Mitchellville's population has increased steadily over the last 30 years compared to surrounding communities in Polk County. It is important to note that the population of Mitchellville has gradually increased less rapidly over the last 30 years. Mitchellville had experienced the fastest population growth in the decade between 1970 and 1980. Table 2 shows that the population of Mitchellville as a percentage of the population of Polk County has remained constant over the last 30 years in the range of 0.45% to 0.58%.

The population of Mitchellville has increased steadily in respect to the population of Polk County over the last 30 years. It is important to note that the population of Mitchellville increased rapidly between 2000 and 2005. Population had increased by more than 300 people and there was a 34 percent increase over the period of five years between 2000 and 2005.

Table 1: Population Trends: Mitchellville, Polk County and Other Comparable Communities, 1970-2000

City	1970	% Changed 1970 to 1980	1980	% Changed 1980 to 1990	1990	% Changed 1990 to 2000	2000
Ankeny	9,151	68.6%	15,429	19.8%	18,482	46.7%	27,117
Bondurant	462	177.7%	1,283	23.5%	1,584	16.5%	1,846
Carlise	2,246	36.8%	3,073	5.5%	3,241	7.9%	3,497
Des Moines	201,404	-5.2%	191,003	1.1%	193,189	2.8%	198,682
Mitchellville	1,341	14.1%	1,530	9.2%	1,670	2.7%	1,715
Pleasant Hill	1,535	127.6%	3,493	5.1%	3,671	38.1%	5,070
Polk County	286,130	6.0%	303,170	7.9%	327,140	14.5%	374,601

Table 2: Population of Mitchellville as a percentage of Polk County Population

City/ County	1970	1980	1990	2000	2005 (Estimation)
Mitchellville	1,341	1,530	1,670	1,715	2,302
Polk County	286,130	303,170	327,140	374,601	401,006
% of Polk County	0.469%	0.505%	0.510%	0.458%	0.574%

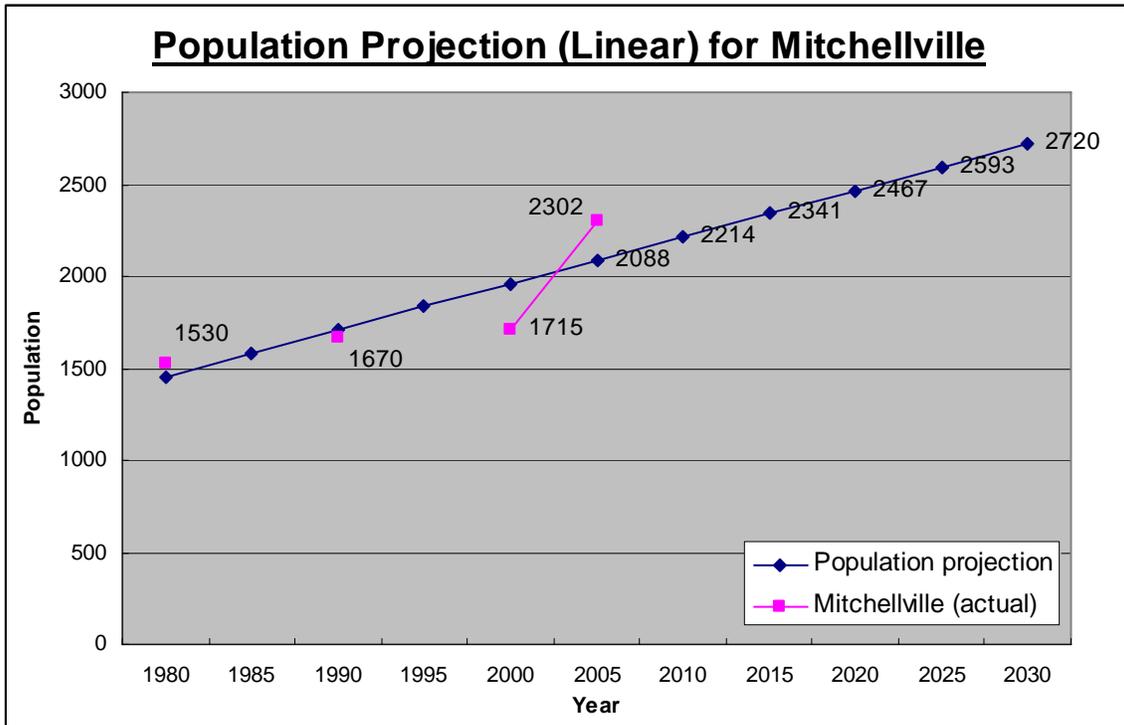
Population Projections

Population projections use statistical elements and sciences to determine population trends in the future. Population projections are important tools for planners and other social scientists of a community to get a better understanding about how the population is going to change in the community. Hence, population projections allow planners and other social scientists to make decisions more accurately and thoughtfully. However, it is important to note that population projections are solely based on statistical sciences therefore changes that are difficult to predict e.g. natural disasters and changes in settlement behavior are unlikely to be addressed.

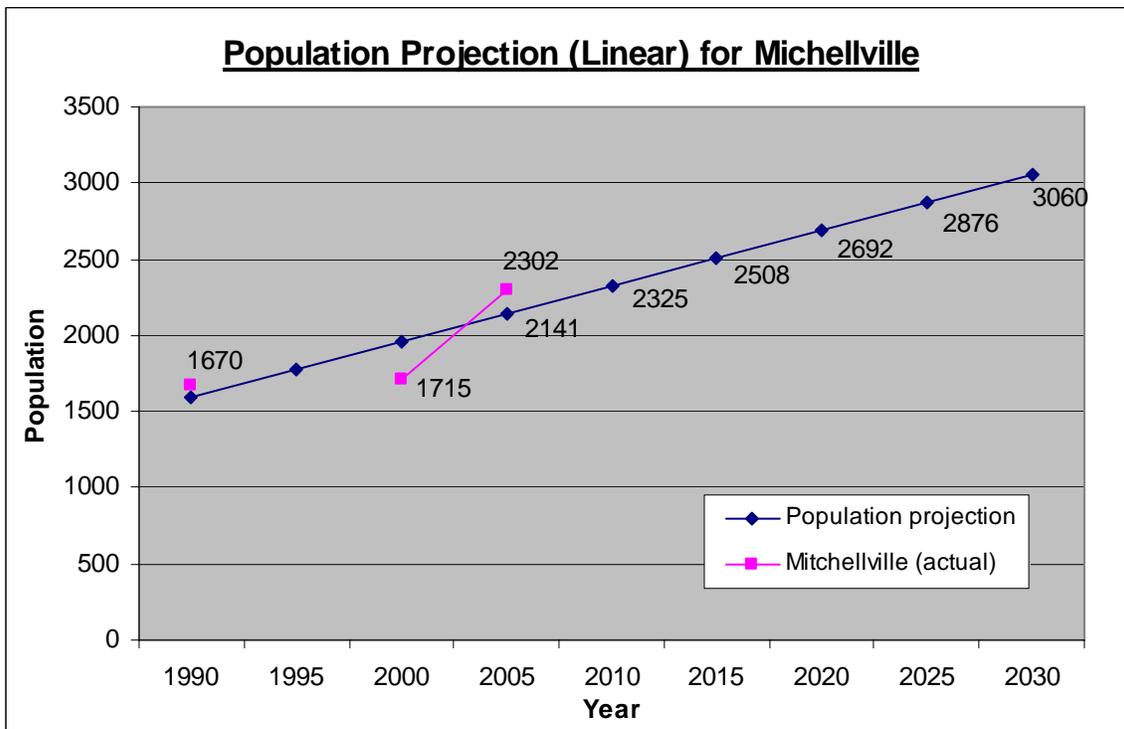
The population projection in Graph 1 predicts that the population will reach 2,467 by 2020 and 2,720 by 2030 respectively. As indicated in Table 1, the population of Mitchellville has increased at a steady pace over the last 30 years and it is reasonable to assume this population trend will continue. The linear model addresses a linear trend in population growth based on fitting the best linear line from the existing data. Since the projection is based on the population data over the last 25 years, it does not address the rapid population growth between 2000 and 2005 properly.

The population projection in Graph 2 predicts that the population will reach 2,692 by 2020 and 3,060 by 2030 respectively. Similar to Graph 1, the linear population projection in Graph 2 addresses a linear trend in population growth based on fitting the best linear line from the existing data. In this case, the population projection is based on the population data over the last 15 years i.e. from 1990 to 2005. As a result, this specific population projection does a better job in taking into account the rapid population growth between 2000 and 2005 than does the population projection in Graph 1, which is based on data from last 25 years.

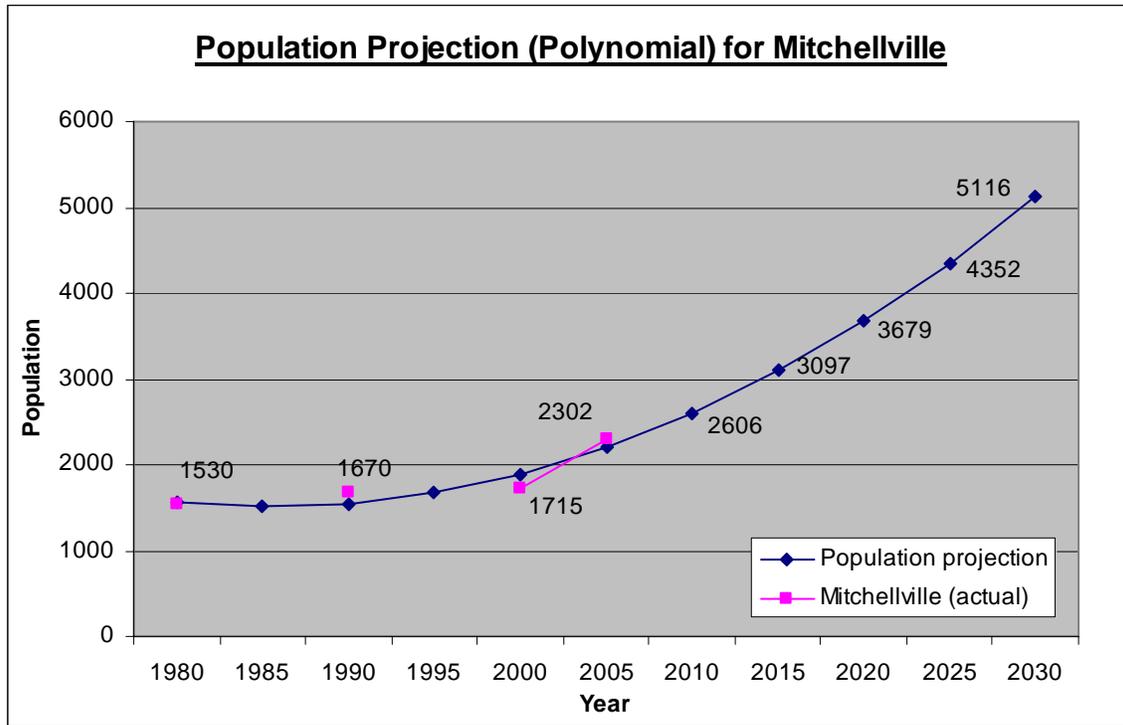
Graph 1: Linear Population Projection for Mitchellville from 1980



Graph 2: Linear Population Projection for Mitchellville from 1990



Graph 3: Polynomial Population Projection for Mitchellville using past 25 year data



The Des Moines Metropolitan Area has continued to grow at a rapid rate in terms of population and economic activity over the last 10 to 20 years, and much of the growth has been going on in the Northern and Western part of the metro area. It is possible that the growth will spread eastward toward the Mitchellville area, which would promote balanced growth within the county. This particular projection is based on the fact that population growth will continue in Mitchellville at an increasing rate. As shown in Table 3, the population projection predicts that the population of Mitchellville will reach 3,679 by 2020 and 5,116 by 2030.

Based on the general population trend over the last few decades and recent changes in the last few years, projection 2 will be the most logical and reliable estimation of future population. However, as stated, population projections are entirely based on statistical techniques, therefore human and unexpected events will not be able to be addressed.

Table 3: Summary of the projections discussed above

	2020	2030
Projection 1	2,467	2,720
Projection 2	2,692	3,060
Projection 3	2,267	2,481
Projection 4	3,679	5,116

Age Distribution

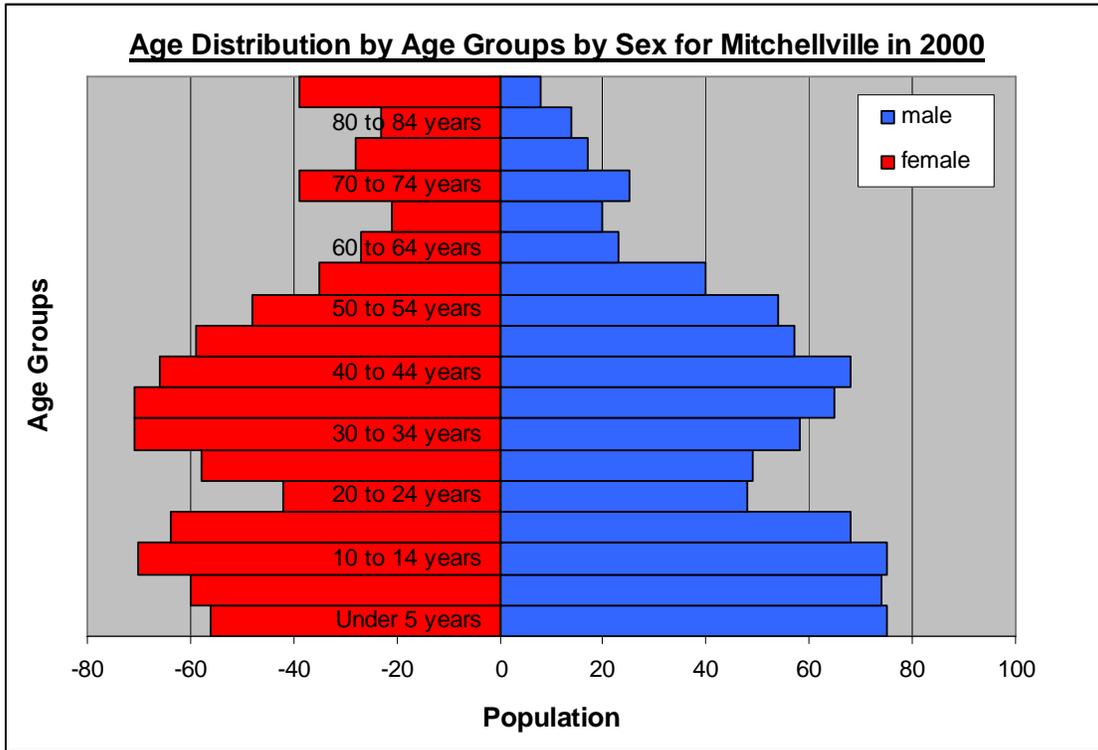
Age structure helps to identify population characteristics and trends (i.e. aging population). Population pyramids are good indicators to show the population composition in terms of age and sex, which can provide understanding about the demographics of a specific area or community.

Graph 4 shows that the age groups that have high population in Mitchellville in 2000 were 10 to 14 years, 35 to 39 years and 40 to 44 years.

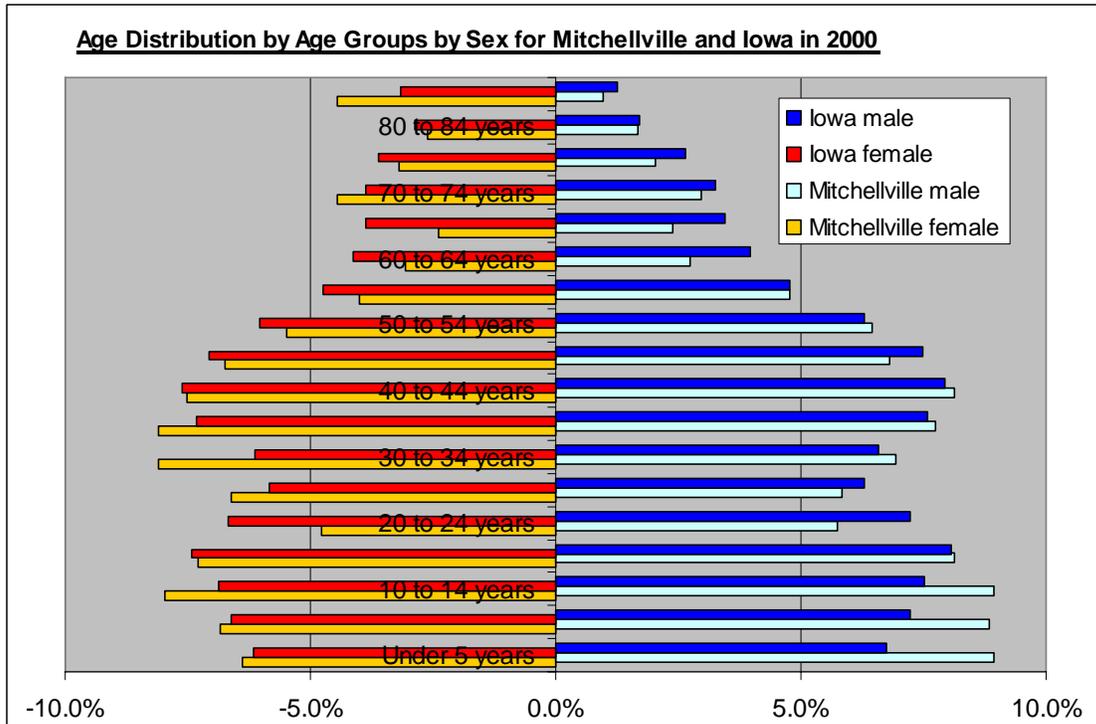
Figure 5 provides an overview of age and sex structure in Mitchellville and the State of Iowa. There are two important patterns. As shown in Figure 5, Mitchellville had more children proportionally than the state in 2000. Age groups under 5 years, 5 to 9 years and 10 to 14 years in Mitchellville are proportionally larger in Mitchellville than the state average in 2000. Furthermore, Mitchellville had larger age groups of 30 to 34 years and 35 to 40 years when they are compared to the state average. Therefore, it can be concluded that Mitchellville has a lot of young families with children.

It is important to note that Mitchellville had a relatively small group of a senior population when compared to the state average in 2000. Mitchellville had smaller age groups of 60 to 64 years, 65 to 69 years, 75 to 79 years and 80 to 84 years.

Graph 4: Age Distribution by Age Groups by Sex for Mitchellville in 2000



Graph 5: Age Distribution by Age Groups by Sex for Mitchellville and Iowa in 2000



Environmental Quality

Environment

Mitchellville is located in the rural agricultural environment of central Iowa. The city has upheld a high level of environmental quality over the years, but a population increase and continued city growth have the potential to destroy the land's natural topography, decrease the amount of wildlife, fill in precious waterways, and increase pollution. Mitchellville has some environmentally sensitive areas that should be preserved for the future, especially the forest in the northern part of the city and the soils around Mitchellville which are well suited for row crops. The forest should not be destroyed by growth; the aesthetic and environmental value of these trees should be realized and the area should be utilized for recreational purposes. The soils around Mitchellville are highly ranked in the Corn Suitability Rate (CSR) and should be utilized for agricultural purposes as opposed to residential and commercial properties.

Goals

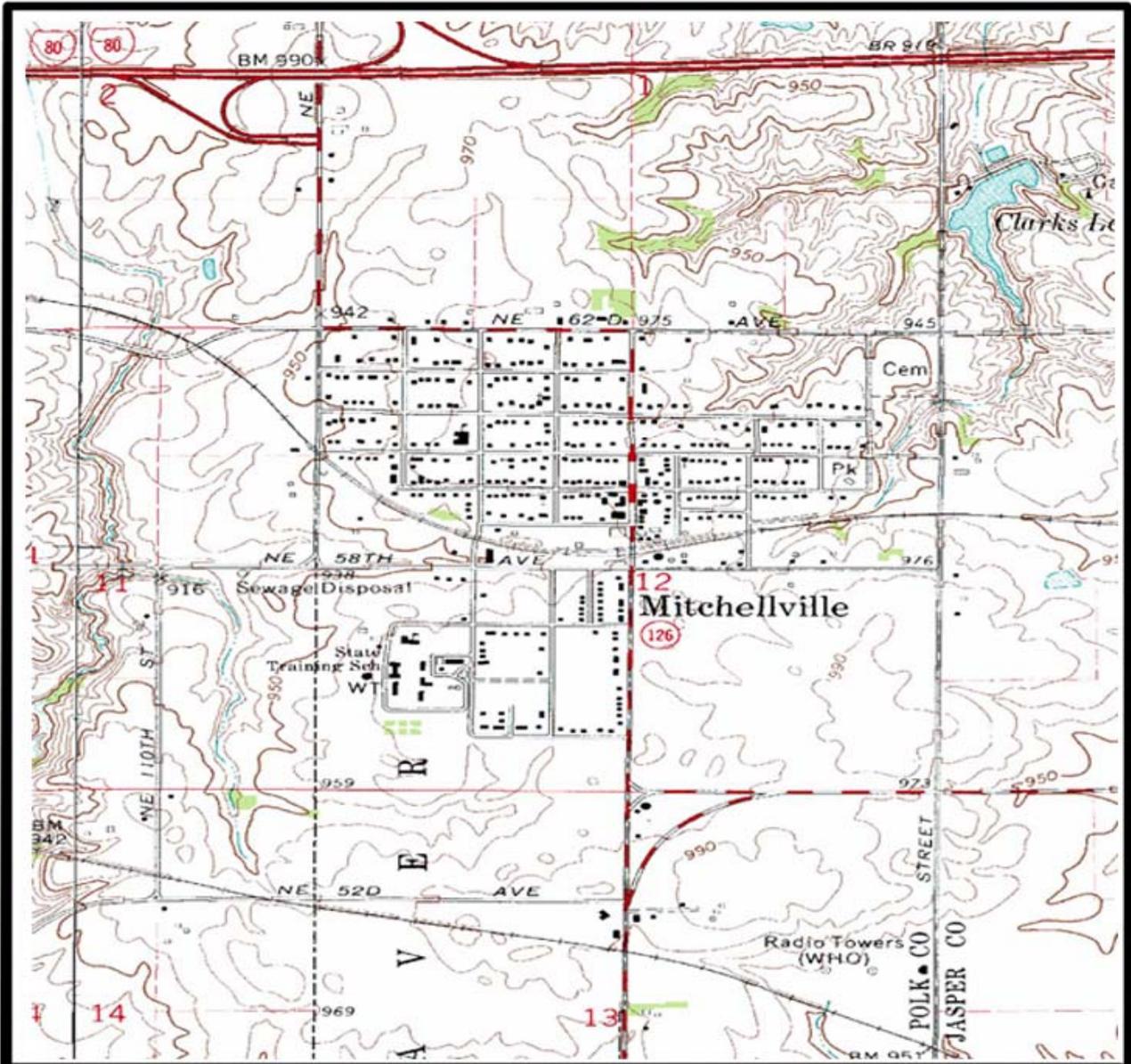
Mitchellville needs to guide its growth and development in ways that conserve and protect its natural environment. Future growth should not only promote compatible land uses, it should strive for the creation of compact development to provide sustainability for the community's, environments, and economy's well-being.

Recommendations

To achieve the goals stated above it is recommended that Mitchellville should discourage growth and development in environmentally sensitive areas, continue water quality testing of ground water and maintain below acceptable levels of contaminants. In addition to these, Mitchellville should create more open spaces and recreational spaces to improve the overall quality of life for its residents.

Topography and Elevation

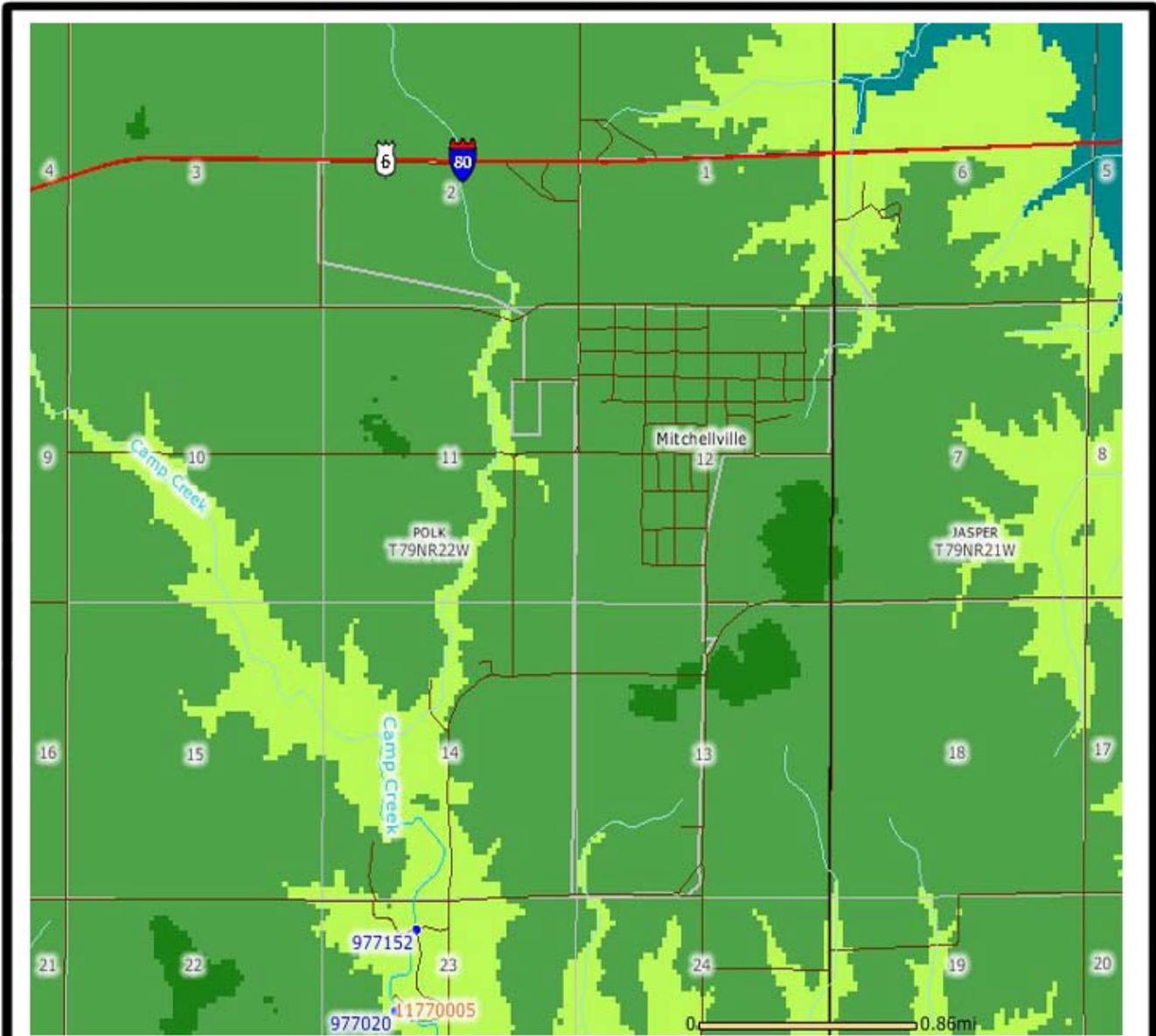
The general topography of Mitchellville is of gentle rolling slopes especially in the northeastern corner of the city. The highest point in the city is in the southeastern corner of the city with an elevation of approximately 990 feet above sea level. The lowest point of Mitchellville is in the southwestern corner of the city with an elevation of approximately 940 feet above sea level.



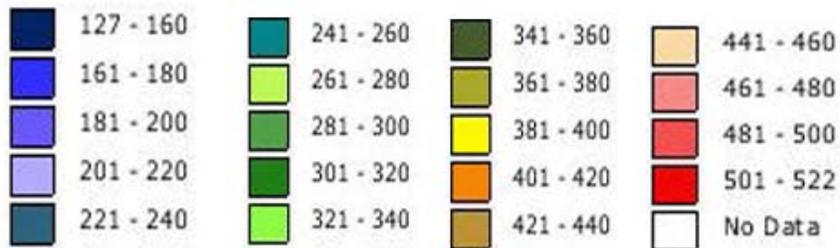
Topography



Source: Iowa DNR



Elevation



Source: Iowa DNR

Soils

The Soil Conservation Service (SCS) took an inventory of soils in Polk County and discovered that much of the soil was formed in loess, glacial till, alluvium, shale and sandstone, and eolian sand. Glacial till is the most common soil type in Polk County.

Combinations of soil types from patterns are known as associations. Soil associations include two or more soil types. Soil type combinations with other factors such as topography, drainage, vegetation, and erosion identify the characteristics of each soil type. Soil classifications generally apply to a depth of approximately five feet.²

The primary soil type in and around the City of Mitchellville is Clarion loam. Other types are Webster silty clay loam, Lester loam, Tama silt loam, Nicollet loam, and Muscatine silt loam.

Clarion and Lester loam soils are well-drained soils and Clarion soil is located extensively throughout the entire region of Mitchellville.

Corn Suitability Rate (CSR)

CSRs provide a relative ranking of all soils mapped in the state of Iowa based on their potential to be utilized for row-crop production. The CSR is an index that can be used to rate one soil's potential yield production against another over a period of time. The CSR considers average weather conditions as well as frequency of use of the soil for row-crop production. Ratings range from 100 for soils that have no physical limitations, occur on minimal slopes, and can be continuously row-cropped to as low as 5 for soils with severe limitations for row crops.³

The CSR rating for the City of Mitchellville has a strong rating around the inner core of the city. The CSR gets poor or has no information in the northeastern corner of the city. The north central part of the city has strong rating and has pockets of poor soil in the northwestern section. The southern section of the city has a strong CSR and then gets to poor or no information on soil in the west around Camp Creek.

² Soil Conservation Service

³ Gerald A. Miller, Iowa State University



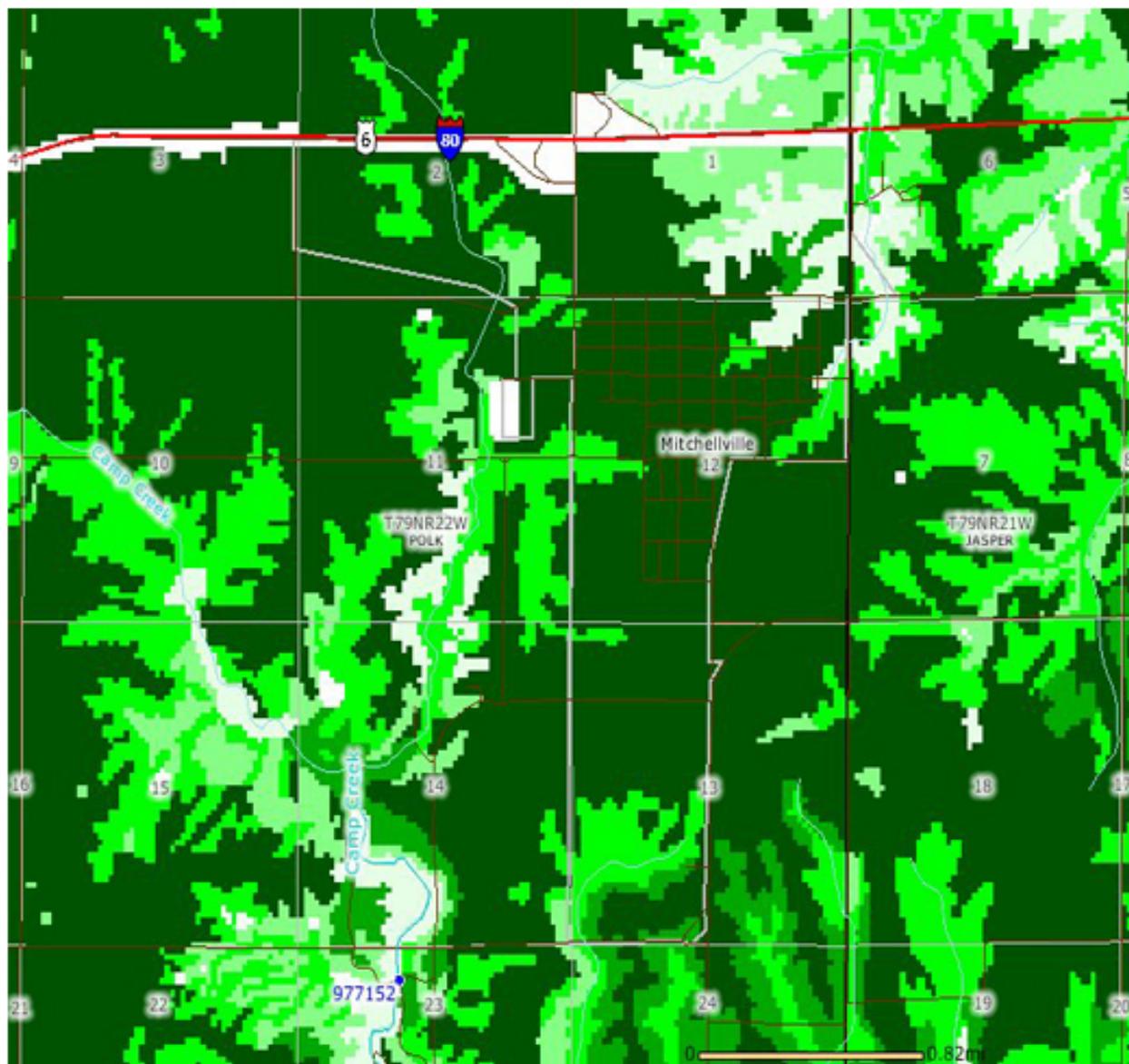
Soils

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture

WF Webster Silty Clay Loam	LeB Lester Loam 2-5% slope
NaA Nicollet Loam	LeC2 Lester Loam 5-9% slope
CsA Colo- Terril Complex	MeA Muscatine Silt Loam 1-3% slope
ClC2 Clarion Loam 5-9% slope	TAB Tama Silt Loam 0-2% slope
ClB Clarion Loam 2-5% slope	TAC Tama Silt Loam 5-9% slope
ClF2 Clarion Loam 20-30% slope	ClE2 Clarion Loam 14-20% slope



* Complete list of soils available at U.S. Department of Agriculture



Corn Suitability Rate



Source: Iowa DNR

Economic Development

Goals and Vision

Mitchellville's goal should be to expand economic development by creating incentives for new and existing commercial and industrial developments.

Current Conditions

In 2000, the per capita retail sales for Mitchellville, Iowa amounted to \$2,010. Since this time, Mitchellville has reported a steady loss of per capita retail sales. In 2003, retail suffered a large drop when sales fell from \$2,010 in 2000 to \$1,224 in 2003 and this trend is continuing. Coinciding with this drop, the amount of firms in the area has decreased from 46 firms in 2000 to 43 firms in 2004. These trends do not reflect what is going on at a regional level; surrounding towns have achieved large retail gains. For example, nearby Altoona's per capita retail was \$9,233 in 2000 and jumped to \$17,394 in 2003.

Mitchellville is losing much of its economic values to the surrounding metropolitan areas. Considering the location of Mitchellville in relation to the metropolitan area, it is obvious that the town is losing retail to surrounding areas where retailers can achieve higher economic gains.

The economic picture for Mitchellville looks bleaker because the city has a very small population. There is still hope for the future economy of Mitchellville because surrounding towns are experiencing economic growth, and the town may attract more of this growth because it has open spaces next to a railway line, an interstate interchange near the city center, and land available for economic growth east of the interchange.

Recommendations

To combat economic decline and improve the economic gains in Mitchellville, the city needs to focus on the development of the area around the interstate interchange and Center Avenue's commercial district.

The interchange has been chosen for development because its location creates easy access to Interstate 80, has no existing development, and the site is only a twenty-minute drive from the new Iowa Speedway in Newton. When developed, this site will draw in people with its businesses and will keep them there with its

small town charm that takes people away from all the hustle and bustle of the metropolitan area.

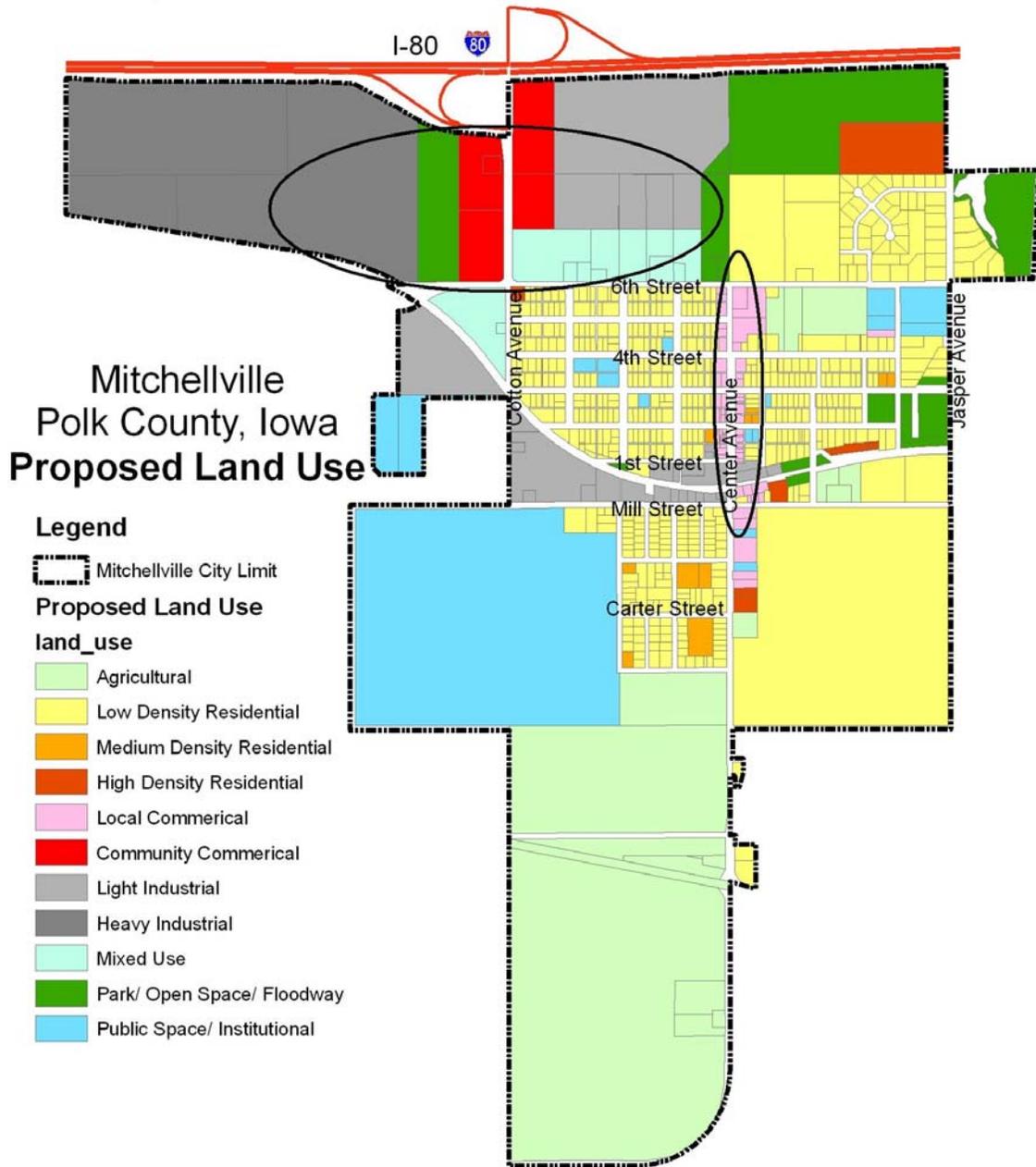
To encourage develop in the interchange area the city should create a tax abatement program by making the area into an economic revitalization area. Providing tax abatement will give incentives to businesses that would like to locate in this area by not requiring the owners to pay property taxes on any new improvement for the extent of the abatement. After the abatement period is over the business owners will not have to pay back taxes for the abatement period, but will have to start paying property taxes on the full assessed value of the improved and updated business. The idea behind this planning tool is to give businesses a head start on establishing their business. The city will not receive any property taxes on the new development in the area for the time frame of the abatement, but the loss suffered is minimal when compared to the gains that businesses will bring to the area.

There are many different ways to set up a tax abatement area, but in this case the city should make 100% abatement for a three year period. The reasoning behind this is based upon the growth that is occurring around Mitchellville. If the tax abatement is too long, the city may lose too much tax base to keep up with the costs of improving infrastructure and public facilities in the area. For more information, look to the Appendix for a statement from the Fort Wayne area discussing the advantages of the Tax Abatement.

The second area of focus is the commercial development along Center Street in Mitchellville. This area has a mix of public (park, library, and civic facilities) and private uses (retail shops and restaurants) most of which are locally owned. It is recommended to keep the small town feel that exists to preserve the identity of Mitchellville and provide areas for public interaction. The character can be preserved and economic growth can be created by providing tax incentives for development and remodeling to existing and new businesses, and changing the zoning of the area. This can be achieved by creating a Tax Increment Financing district. This can only be achieved as an overlay zone so it is necessary to create another economic revitalization area to be the base zone. A TIF (Tax Increment Financing) is the use of taxes resulting from the increase in taxable valuation caused by the construction of new industrial or commercial facilities to provide economic development incentives to a business or industry. TIF may be used to offset the cost of public improvements and utilities that will serve the new private development, to finance direct grants or loans to a company, or to provide the local match for federal or state economic development assistance programs.

TIF is a method of facilitating development or redevelopment of defined areas of property by utilizing future tax revenues to pay for some of the necessary improvements. TIF allows local officials to designate an area ("TIF District") for improvement and then earmark any future growth in property tax revenues in that District to pay for the predetermined development expenditures in that district. This information is provided by incentisgroup.com.

By using TIF, Mitchellville would provide incentives to businesses that wish to locate on Center Avenue. This will in turn attract more businesses and help the city fund road and infrastructure improvements.



Land Use

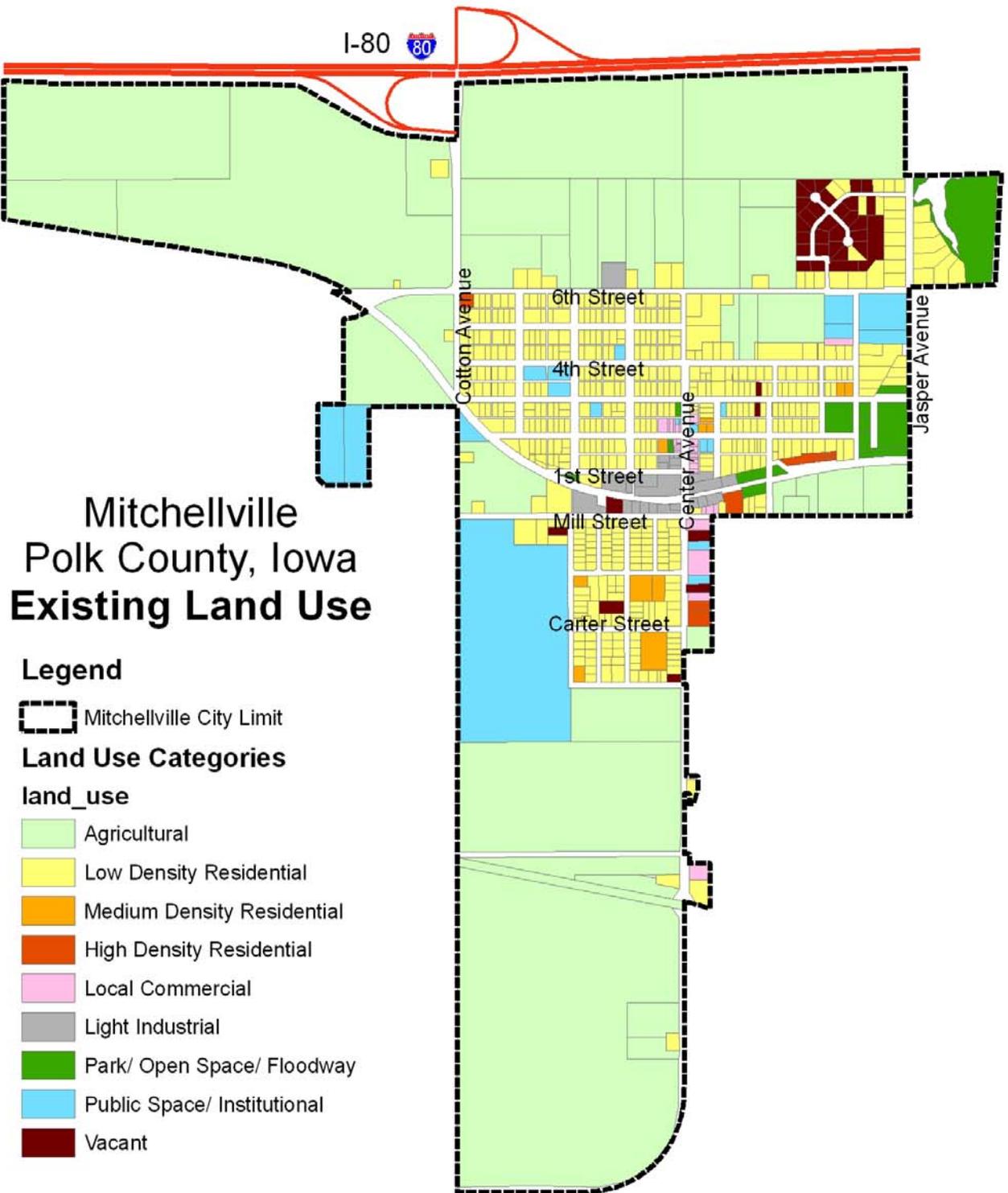
Goals and Vision

Mitchellville's goal of land use is to cater to the new venues created in Mitchellville and the encroaching Des Moines Metropolitan area through the establishment of more residential development. Mitchellville will also seek to create areas of growth and redevelopment according to the growing and changing needs of the community through increased industrial, commercial, or mixed-use developments. Mitchellville will accomplish this goal by:

- Increasing residential development in the southeastern portion of the city and the area in the northern section of the city between the established community and the interstate.
- Creating an area for increased commercial and industrial development in the northwestern section of the city.
- Maintaining a zoning plan that caters to the changing demographics of the city while protecting the interests of residents and established employers of the community.
- Working to increase the interaction of the city with the Iowa Correctional Institute for Women in order to accomplish the needs and desires of both Mitchellville and the correctional institute.

Existing Land Use

The city of Mitchellville is centered on a commercial district and radiates out into a mix of single-family and multi-family housing, churches, a few parks, green spaces, and various light industrial sites.



Land Use Issues

There are many areas of Mitchellville that have uses within parcels that do not comply with the specific zoning of the parcels. This leads to a problem with community and district's identity and cohesion; the city needs to solve these problems in order to market their specified districts to new markets/venues, which will allow the city to grow and expand in a manner pleasing and welcomed by the city.

The area around the central business district that is zoned as such has parcels zoned to be included in the central business district, but they are currently being used as single-family and/or multi-family parcels. The same can be said for the area zoned to be heavy industrial. The majority of uses in the area specified as "heavy industrial" is only used by a few heavy industrial businesses and is primarily used for single-family units and a mobile residence park.

Land Use Categories

- Estate /Single Family Residential (SFR)
 - 1 unit per acre [Estate]
 - 1 – 6 units per acre [Single-Family]
- Medium Density Residential (MDR)
 - 6 – 10 units per acre
- High Density Residential (HDR)
 - 10 – 16 units per acre
- Very High residential (VHDR)
 - 16+ units per acre
- Public Space/Institutional (PSI)
 - City offices, libraries, and fire stations
- Park/ Open Space (POS)
 - Parks, green space, trails, recreational areas, and areas protected for environmental reasons.
- Commercial:
 - Local (LC)
 - Businesses that are more compact in use and are used from day-to-day by residents or employees of the area.
 - Community (CC)
 - Businesses that draw people into the area from outside the community. Typically accessible by car. Examples include: hotels and motels, large retailers, malls, office and business parks, etc.

- Industrial:
 - Light (LI)
 - Light manufacturing and assembly, contractor facilities, and warehouse type uses.
 - Heavy (HI)
 - Mines, industrial plants, quarries or other intensive industrial uses.
- Mixed Use (MU)
 - Developments that combine two or more uses into one site including at least two of the following: residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, etc.

Proposed Land Use

The proposed land use map provides Mitchellville with future land uses that will allow the city to be competitive with the surrounding markets and meet the basic needs of the community according to the population projection.

New land should be allocated to the Iowa Correctional Institute for Women in order to allow the city to acquire land that is currently owned by the facility, with the intention of expanding Oak Avenue further south. This will strengthen Mitchellville's infrastructure network and will give the city more control of the development imposed by the Iowa Correctional Institute for Women as it increases its capacity to meet the growing needs of the state. This swap should also provide the city with a necessary connection with the facility to increase the exchange and collaboration between the city and the facility.

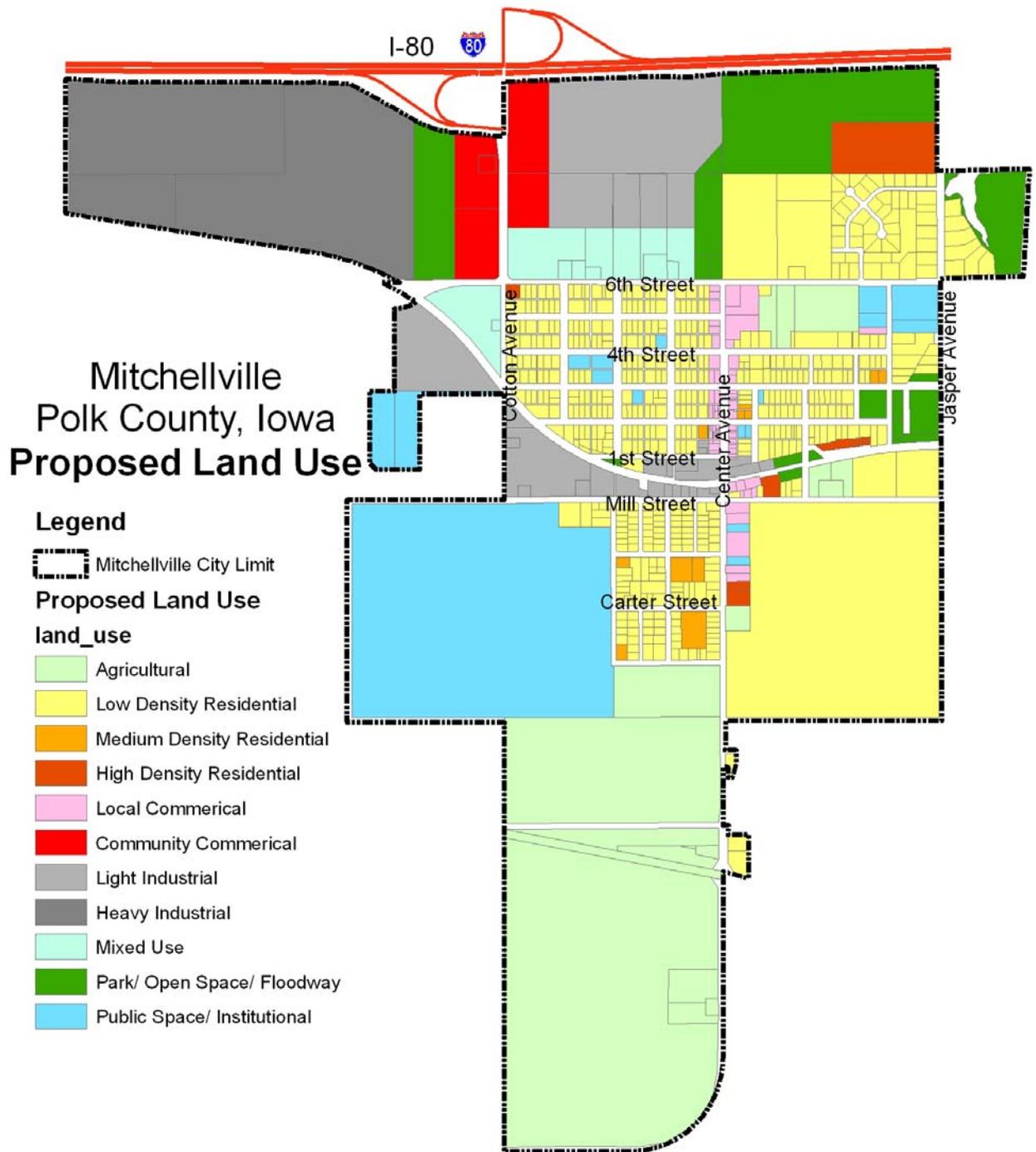
The area along the railroad should be zoned and marketed to provide light industrial venues that need interstate and rail access. This increase in light industrial use will increase the city's tax base and provide a much needed increase to the local employer base.

Land along the interstate is best marketed for use as heavy industrial and community commercial because it is an area where high exposure to an interstate network is a high demand for large employers including manufacturing companies, hotels, motels, and distributing companies. The direct access to the railroad is another positive feature to cater to businesses that may need or want this already existing commodity.

A mixed-use area should be created in conjunction with and extended central business district to make the highly traveled Center Avenue a unified business corridor linking and expanding upon the existing business corridor. The mixed-use area can provide a necessary buffer between the proposed area for increased light industrial and community commercial use with the existing residential community. The intent of the mixed-use area is to provide multi-family housing above commercial units.

A new high-density residential area is proposed to the south of the new park/ open space in the northeast corner of the city. This area can be used to provide a more densely populated residential area as well as provide a space for a potential retirement home or assisted living community. This is based off its location with the established residential community and also its location relative to parks and open space.

The proposed land use should provide current and future residents with a land use layout that improves upon an already solid recreational, residential, commercial, and industrial base.



Transportation

Goals and Vision

A community's character and the way people move in the community is heavily influenced by the quality of street systems. Like many small towns, most of Mitchellville's street network is laid out in a traditional grid pattern with straight streets intersecting at right angles. This kind of pattern provides definition and predictability to the city as well as allows for excellent accessibility to other streets. In addition, blocks are short and offer drivers and pedestrians frequent turning opportunities, allowing them to move easily through neighborhoods, varying routes to include several stops or to avoid any traffic congestion. The city of Mitchellville's goals include maintaining the transportation system (which provides connections within the community for citizens and visitors) and developing an efficient street system that serves current and future needs.

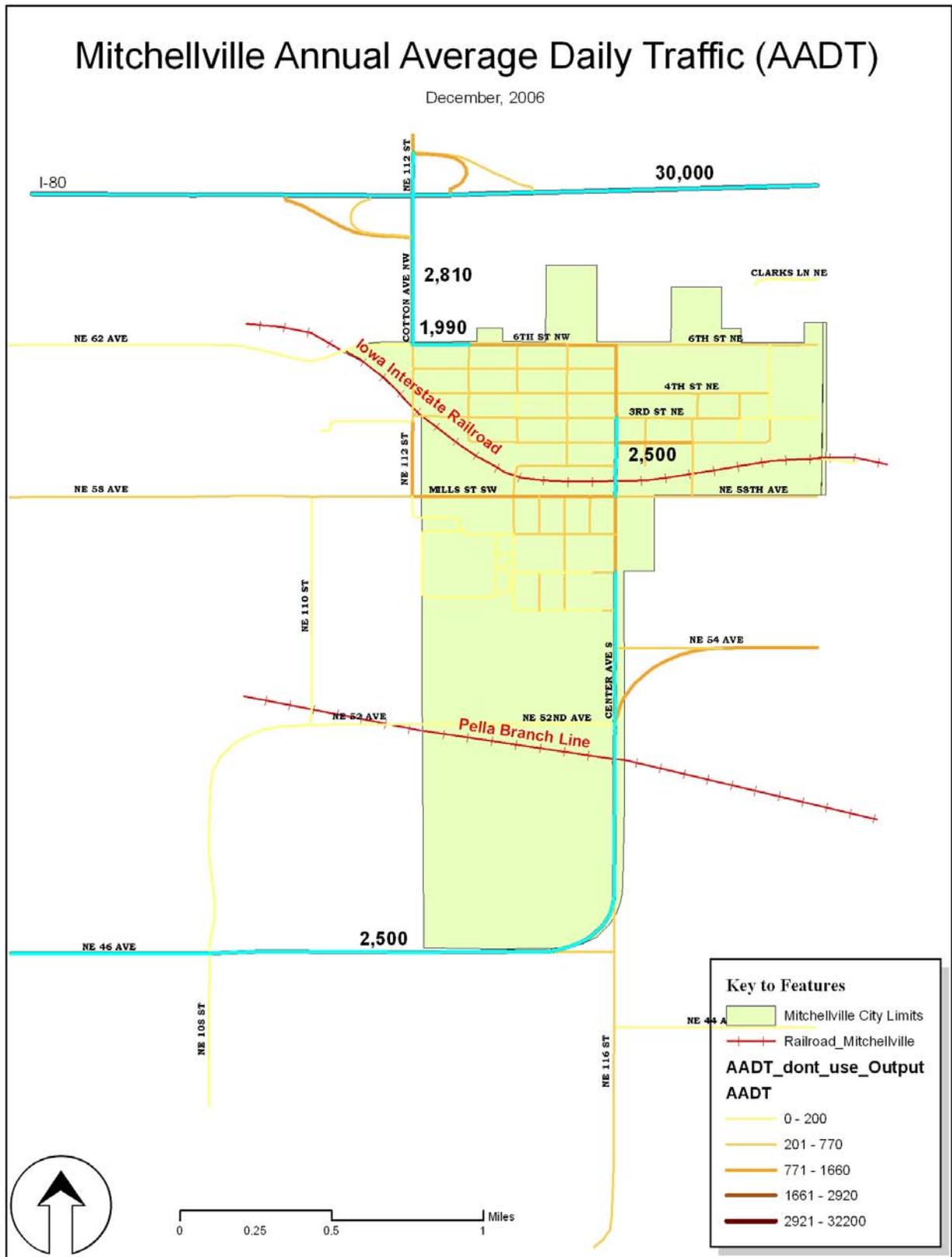
Current Conditions

The city of Mitchellville has a street system with a total of 15 miles of road, made up by thirty five streets. These streets are listed by name in the Appendix with the information on the speed limits, available parking, types of surface, federal function classification, traffic volume, the need for new surface, and the need for new foundation for each street.

- The speed limits on Mitchellville's roads range from 15 miles per hour to 55 miles per hour.
- The roads are surfaced with a variety of surface types, which include gravel, bituminous asphalt, and concrete.
- The roads provide different types of parking throughout the city, which consist of combinations of parallel and diagonal.
- The roads are classified into two Federal Function Classifications based on their traffic purpose and function:
 - Major Collectors – Streets which collect and distribute traffic from local roadways and urban centers; and
 - Local Streets – A Street that is primarily used to gain access to the property bordering it.

The Appendix also includes the traffic volumes for Mitchellville's roads. The Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) varies through the city; the busiest roads are the roads on the north side of the city that lead into Mitchellville are I-80, Cotton Ave, and 6th Street, Center Street, and on the south side of the city NE 46

and NE 116th streets that all lead into Mitchellville, as shown in the map below.



Future Needs

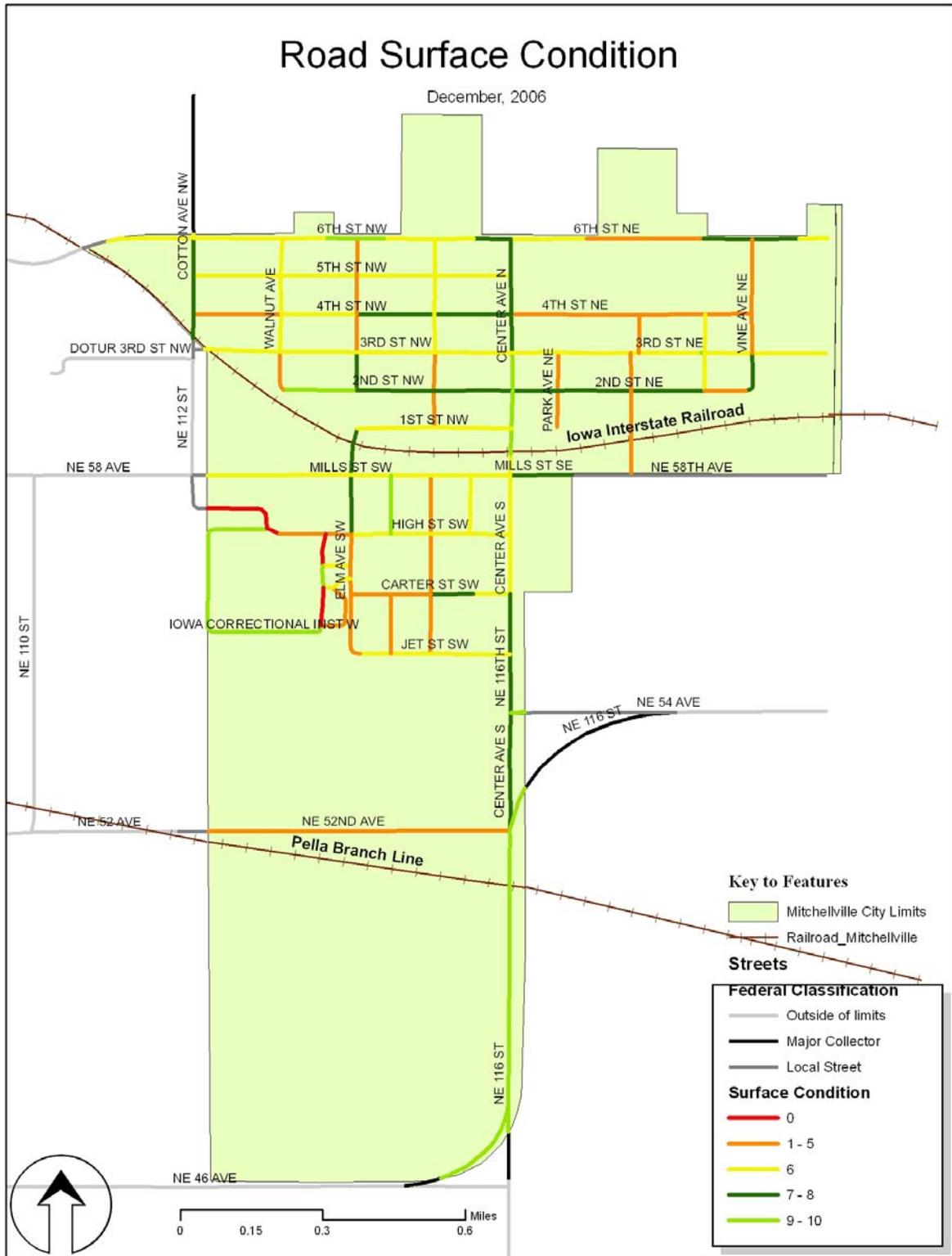
According to the Iowa Department of Transportation's 2005 data, the roads in Mitchellville will need improvements such as new foundation and resurfacing. The table in the Appendix summarizes the foundation condition, and surface conditions for each road. The condition of the roads' surface and foundation was ranked on a scale of 0 through 10, with 0 as the worst, and 10 the best.

The following streets were ranked as having the worst surface condition:

- 6th St. N.W.
- Center Ave. N.
- N.E. 116th St.
- Walnut Ave.

Most of the streets were ranked as having the worst foundation condition. The four roads that are an exception and have a rank of higher than 0 include:

- N.E. 116th St scored 8
- N.E. 46th St scored 8
- N.E. 54th St scored 9



Railroad

The Iowa Interstate Railroad runs through the state of Iowa and passes through the northern part of Mitchellville. The Pella Branch Line runs through the southern part of Mitchellville and extends from Altoona to Prairie City. The railroad operates a daily eastbound and westbound train through the city, and past the one grain elevator sporadically (in 2006 there were less than 100 carloads of grain).

Safe Routes to School Program

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recommends that children should get at least sixty minutes of physical activity each day. Many children could achieve this recommendation simply by walking, biking or using other active ways to travel to school. A physically active commute to and from school can be a fun social time for children. It is a chance for them to spend time with their families, neighbors and peers, while learning about their community.

The Safe Routes to School Program is an effort to increase safety and promote walking and bicycling to school. The City of Mitchellville has a sparse sidewalk system; this program would benefit the health and safety of the children and create a greater sense of community.

Limited funds are available to schools and communities interested in participating in the SRTS program. Projects eligible for funding must be within two miles of an elementary and/or middle school (K-8 Grade). The following projects are eligible for SRTS funding:

- Planning, design and construction of projects that will improve the ability of students to walk and bicycle to school;
- Sidewalk improvements;
- Traffic calming and speed reduction improvements;
- On-street bicycle and pedestrian facilities;
- Traffic diversion improvements within two miles of the school;
- Public awareness campaigns and educational materials;
- Traffic education and enforcement in the vicinity of a school;
- Student sessions on bicycle and pedestrian safety, health and environment; or
- Training, including SRTS training workshops that target school and community audiences.

Applications for SRTS funding are available at www.dot.ia.us/saferoutes

Recommendations

The City of Mitchellville's current budget of \$60,000 for the transportation network improvements should be utilized to improve the sidewalk system, rehabilitate and maintain the roads with the worst surface conditions, and repair the roads with the worst foundation condition that have the highest AADT volumes.

The current budget of \$60,000 for transportation network improvements may be increased if the city is eligible for Federal Aid grants. The funding opportunities need to be researched and applied for by the City. The following links are common sources for transportation related projects:

- Grants dot Gove – www.grants.gov
- SRTS - www.dot.ia.us/saferoutes
- Iowa Department of Economic Development – www.iowalifechanging.com
- IDOT – www.prof-tech-consultant.dot.state.ia.us/asp/openREP/openREP.asp

Utilities

Goals and Vision

It is the goal of Mitchellville to provide all citizens with adequate utility services needed for urban living.

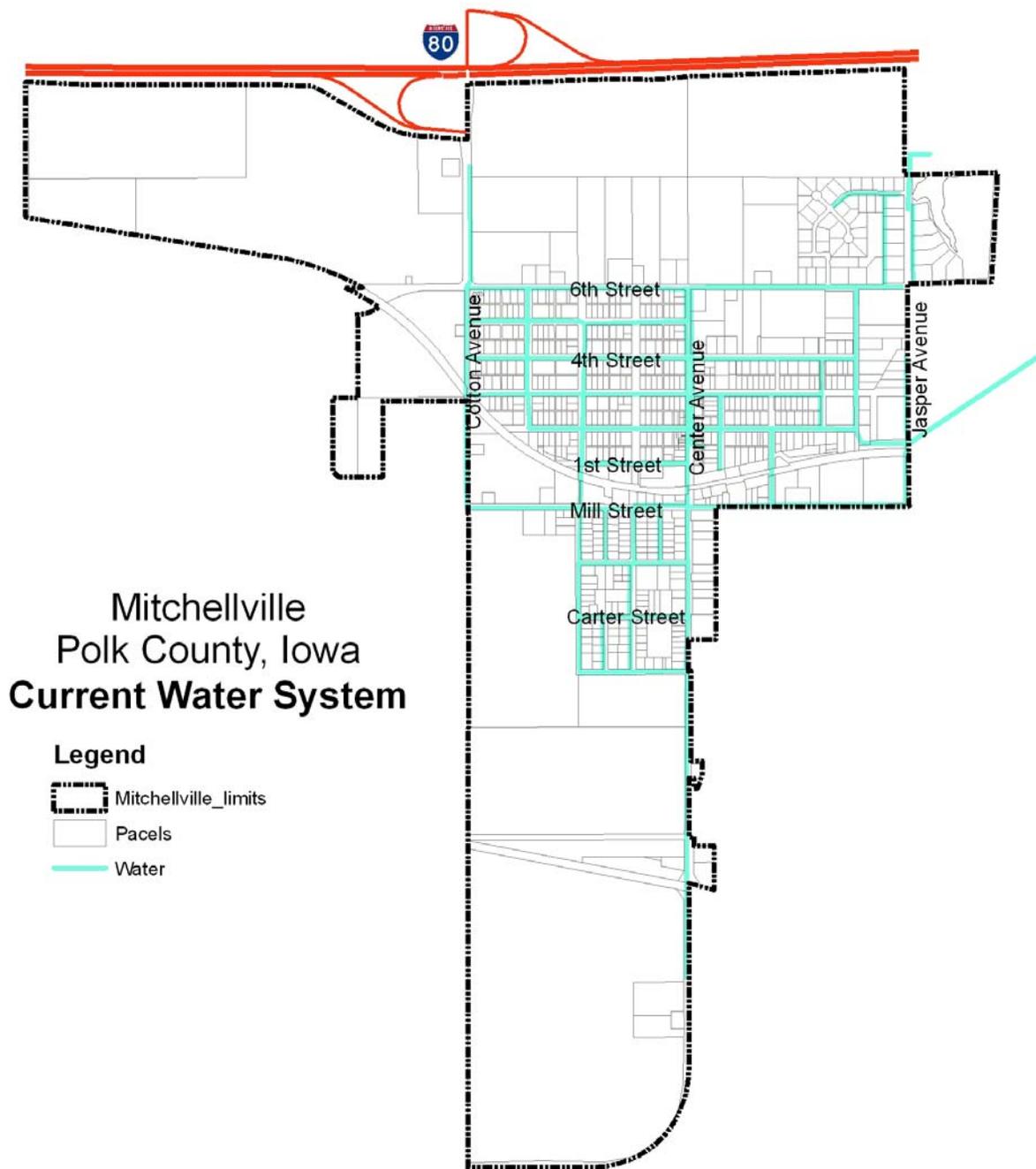
Water

Current Conditions

The existing water system in Mitchellville is composed of a range of sizes of galvanized cast iron lines. The largest line, 10" in diameter, comes from the wells in the alluvial aquifer into Mitchellville's new water treatment plant located on the eastern side of the city. This new facility was built in 2005 and came into operation on September 1st, 2006. It typically treats approximately 210,000 to 250,000 gallons of water a day with a capacity of 1.2 million gallons per day. This facility is not yet at maximum output capacity; it has the potential to treat 1.5 million gallons of water if another filter is added. The treated water goes to a 300,000 gallon elevated storage tank. The Iowa Correctional Institute for Women is connected to Mitchellville's water system, but has its own 50,000 gallon elevated storage tank and a 40 GPM well. A two-way valve permits the two systems to serve each other.

Recommendations

In the future, Mitchellville is going to experience more residential, industrial, and commercial development, so it is important that the city add additional water storage facilities; as seen currently, the north east residential development. Mitchellville should plan to add another filter to the new water treatment facility when there is need for a larger capacity of output. Another elevated water storage tank that is appropriately sized based on the population growth is recommended to accommodate future needs.



Sewer

Current Conditions

The sanitary sewer system has a combination of gravity and forced main lines. The sewage treatment plant collects around 300,000 gallons of sewage per day, which is below the actual capacity of the plant of 1.5 million gallons per day. The Iowa Correctional Facility for Women is treated by Mitchellville's sewage treatment facility. The new residential development in the northeast corner of Mitchellville has a sewer system set up that each home has its own forced main that pumps into a gravity line. From there the sewage is force-pumped beneath Jasper Street and then into gravity feed line.

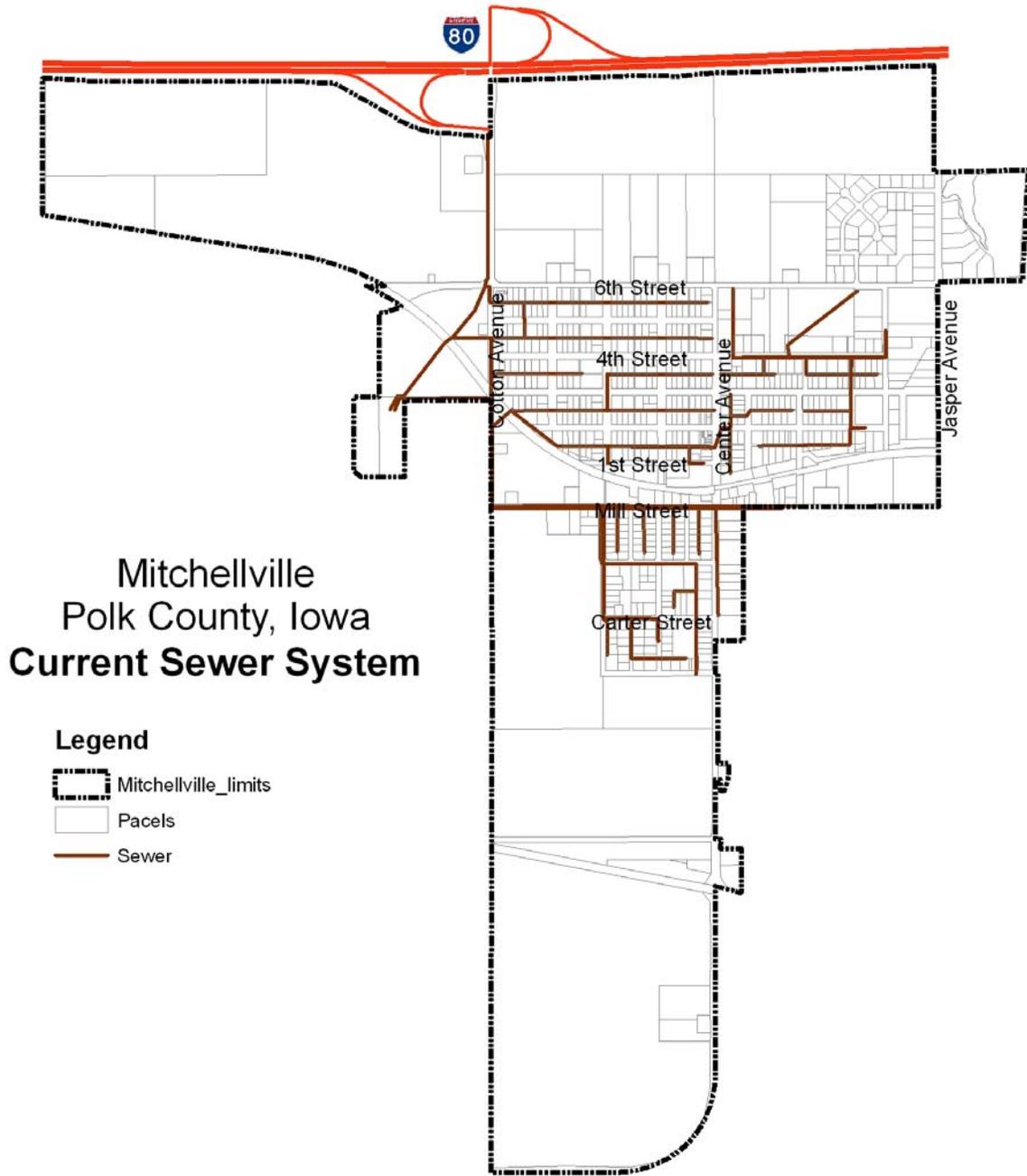
Storm Sewer

Current Conditions

There is one storm sewage system located on the south end of Mitchellville; which means that the site was developed differently due to its marshy landscape. The 15" storm sewer pipe begins along Carter Street and runs to Mill Street before the drainage is discharged into Camp Creek out of a 54" pipe.

Recommendations

Mitchellville should make adequate accommodations for the population based on the population projections. We recommend that Mitchellville put a 15" gravity main under 7th street that would run from NE 120th to Cotton Avenue to assure that the new development in the northeast corner of Mitchellville is adequately connected to the city's sewage facility and would promote future development along 7th Street. We also recommend that Mitchellville implement a citywide storm sewer system.



Mitchellville
 Polk County, Iowa
Current Sewer System

- Legend**
-  Mitchellville_limits
 -  Parcels
 -  Sewer

Housing

Goals and Vision

The goal that has been stressed by the current Mayor and City Council are to increase the amount of residential development in Mitchellville. These developments should include a housing subdivision on the south side of town and the construction of apartment buildings along 7th Street, keeping in mind that when residential developments take place, it is important that the city requires the developers to include town homes and condominiums to draw in first time homeowners.

Current Conditions

Currently, twenty eight percent of the housing stock in Mitchellville is made up of homes built before 1939. Since then, some of these homes have seen additions and renovations. The city should promote the continuance of upgrading throughout the town so that all homes built before 1939 are renovated to insure the stability and safety of the physical structures. To help this process, financial incentives could be offered by the city through The Energy Policy Act of 2005. That act provides homeowners with tax breaks for upgrades that promote energy efficiency, and after a certain deadline, allows them to receive tax breaks from the county or local government.

Another way to improve the conditions of the current housing stock is to encourage curb appeal with design guidelines. Doing this will improve the overall aesthetic appeal of Mitchellville especially because the exterior of the home gives the first impression to passersby. Mitchellville has already started in this direction by creating the Tree Board, an entity that makes sure that trees are planted in neighborhoods.

Mitchellville Polk County, Iowa Proposed Land Use

Legend

 Mitchellville City Limit

Proposed Land Use

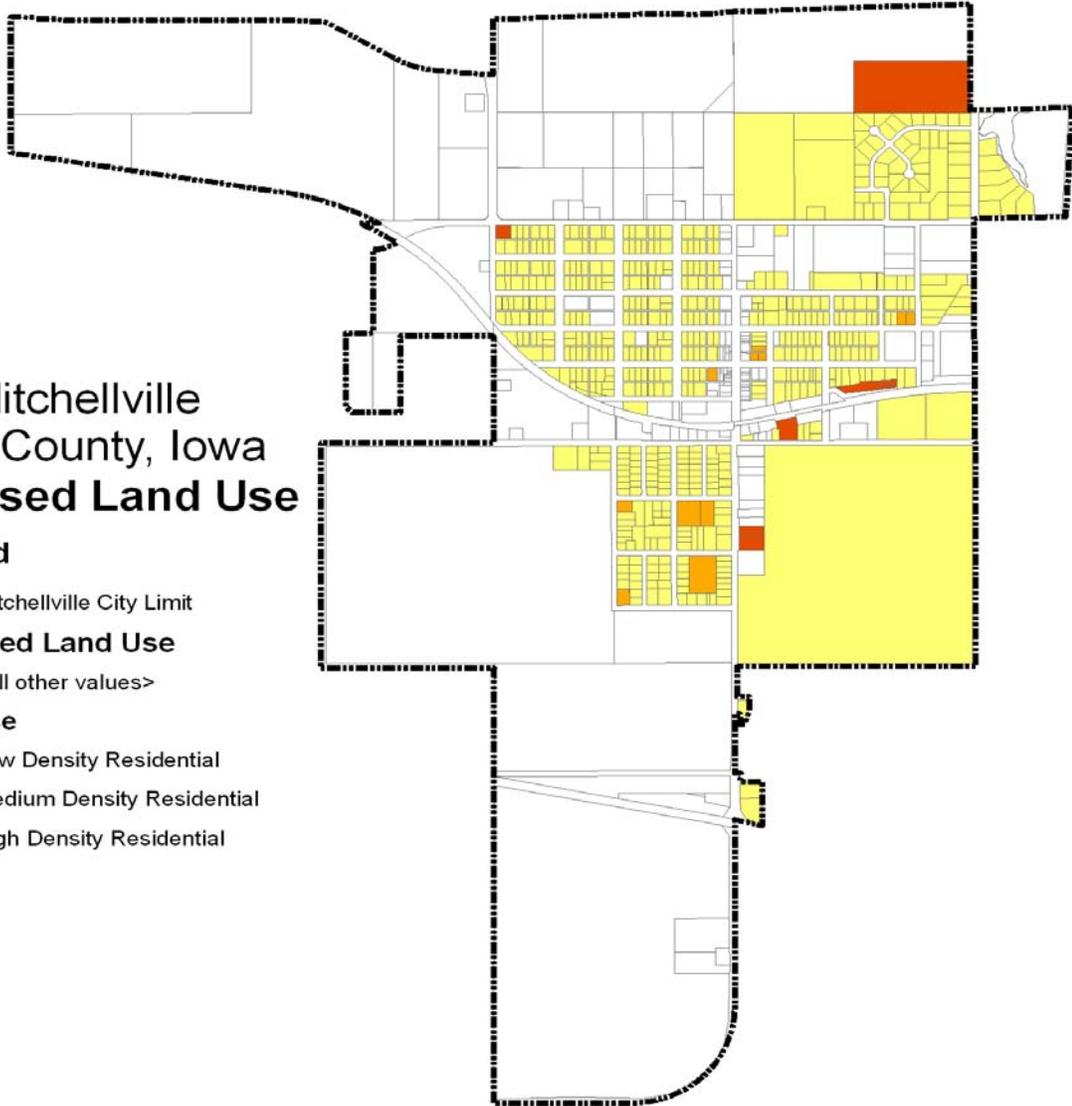
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land_use

 Low Density Residential

 Medium Density Residential

 High Density Residential



Civic Facilities

Goals and Vision

Mitchellville should strive to provide their citizens with adequate civil services and to do this the city should keep updating their civil facilities and services to accommodate the population growth and overall the standard of living for its citizens.

Current Conditions

The public library is currently raising money in order to move across Center Avenue where it will have a new, more spacious facility. The Police and Fire departments will also need more room in the near future, but for now they are located in the City Hall. To make room, City Hall could move into the old library building and the Police and Fire departments would have more room in the city hall building. It is especially important for the fire department to acquire more space because if the city sees the construction of an ethanol or manufacturing plant, it will need a ladder truck.

School

Mitchellville has one elementary school that is part of the Southeast Polk Community School District. The grades that are offered at this school are Kindergarten through sixth grade; junior high and high school students go to the Southeast Polk Jr. and Sr. High in Pleasant Hill. The elementary school has a total of 187 students, and half are female. There are fifteen teachers making it a school with a student to teacher ratio of 12:1, which compares to the state average of 14:1. The student population is made up of 96% Caucasian, 3% African American and 1% Native American. The following charts show the math and reading proficiency scores for 4th grade students in the Southeast Polk District. We compared the scores to the North Polk district and to the state average. The Southeast Polk schools seem to be on the right track in teaching math and science courses to its students. The district seems to be placing its emphasis on teaching these courses in order for its students to be prepared for the high tech jobs of the future. The city should use this information to entice parents with school age children to move in and take advantage of the good educational system Mitchellville offers.

This chart shows the curriculum taught by core course during the 2003-2004 school year and it shows that Southeast Polk schools are teaching more math and science units compared to the state averages.

Parks and Trails

Goals and Vision

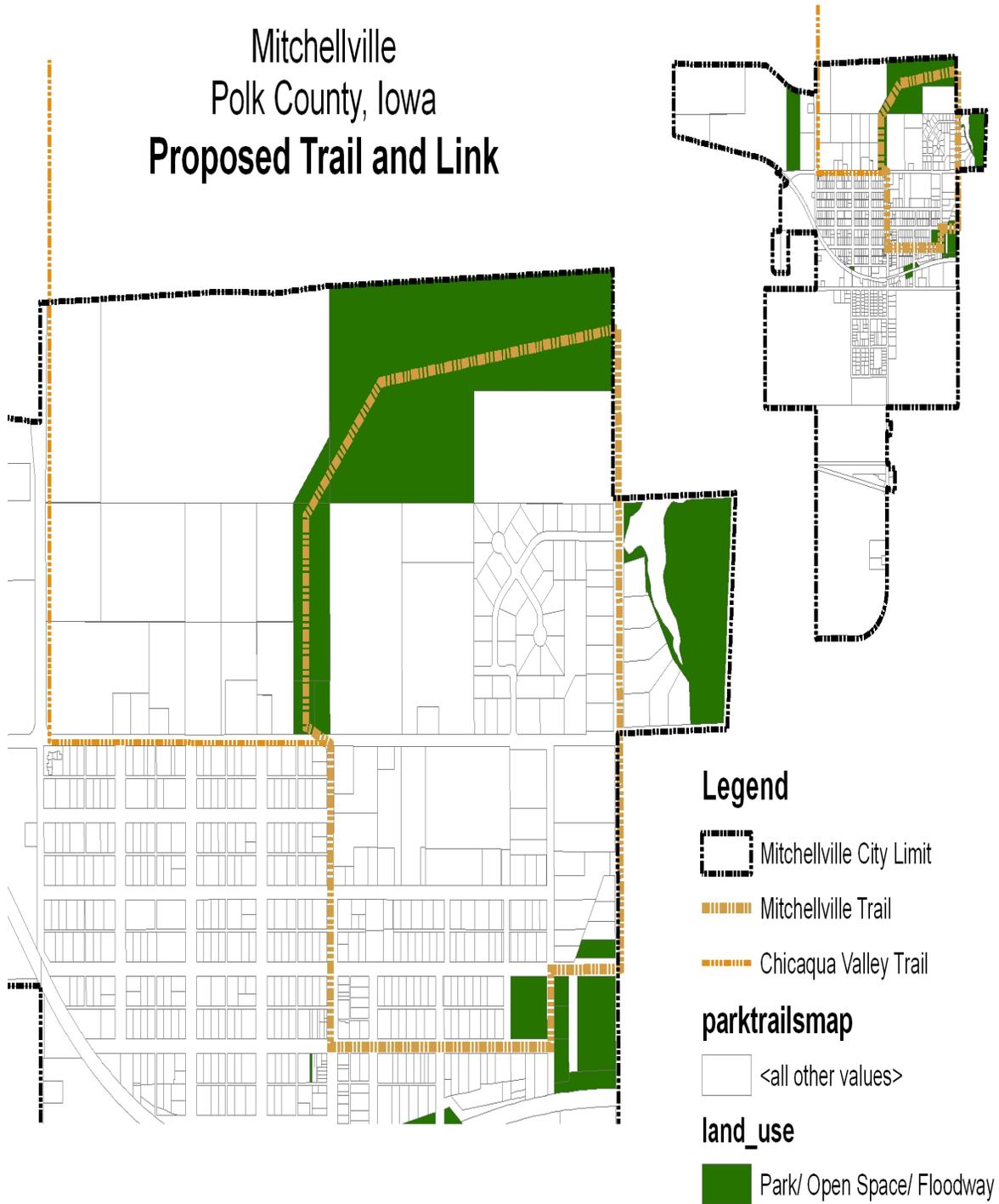
Mitchellville strives to portray itself as a proactive community dedicated to protecting the environment. Part of this effort focuses on the need to provide residents with recreational venues that provide a connection with the natural environment. Mitchellville's goal is to create and maintain a network of parks and trails that will allow residents to fulfill their recreational desires and allow them to explore the natural environment. Parks and trails need to be created and existing parks need to be continually maintained and updated to meet the needs of the residents. In order to obtain this goal, it is suggested that Mitchellville do the following.

- Improve upon the existing 9.5 acres of park and recreational lands that will provide the community with approximately fifteen acres of park and recreational land for each thousand residents, a recommendation of the Iowa State Conservation Commission.
- Create a Park and Trail master plan that will provide the city with a developed approach to locating, expanding, and maintaining all park and recreational areas in Mitchellville.
- Create a trail link to the Chichaqua Valley Trail network that would allow the community to be accessible to residents of other surrounding communities.

Current Conditions

Currently there are two parks in Mitchellville and one large park outside the city. The City Park is located on the southeast corner of 3rd Avenue and Jasper Avenue. City Park has a few baseball fields, a recreational area with playground equipment and two large pavilions, and shaded open space. Killinger Park, located just north of the existing library (2006) is a small open space which provides the community with a nice green space within the business district. Thomas Mitchell Park is located approximately 2.5 miles southwest of Mitchellville between the city and Altoona along NE 46th Street. This park is controlled by Polk County and provides Mitchellville with a larger park space for recreational opportunities that are relatively close to the city's center.

Mitchellville Polk County, Iowa Proposed Trail and Link



Iowa Correctional Institution for Women (ICIW)

Goals and Vision

Mitchellville should work on creating better communication with the Department of Corrections to ensure a stronger relationship with ICIW. It is highly recommended that the City of Mitchellville be involved in decisions regarding expansion of the facility. If the city and the ICIW work together to develop a facility, the improvements can meet both the needs of the facility and the city.

Background

Mitchellville is home to the Iowa Correctional Institution for Women, which has long been an important institution in the city. Originally, the ICIW was a seminary that was founded in 1872 by the city's founder, Thomas Mitchell. The seminary fell on hard times financially and was eventually sold to the state of Iowa, which turned it into a reformatory school for girls. In the early 1980's the state needed more space for female prison inmates in a segregated environment, so the reformatory school was converted into what is now the Iowa Correctional Institution for Women.

The Iowa Correctional Institution for Women is a medium/minimum security prison, which houses inmates in dorm-like living units and celled housing. In addition to this, a sixty bed return-to-confinement facility provides intensive treatment and programming of repeat offenders who have violated the terms of their probation and parole. ICIW provides educational and vocational services to inmates including Adult Basic Education, special education for eligible individuals, G.E.D., and high school diploma certification. Internal work assignments and vocational training courses in painting and a dietary managers program provide vocational training opportunities. An Iowa Prison Industries print shop also provides on-site vocational training. The institution emphasizes responsibility and accountability in preparing women offenders for successful return to the community. Programs offered focus on interpersonal relationships, domestic violence, career assessment and exploration, self-esteem, parenting, independent living, decision-making skills and thinking patterns, and health education. A substance abuse prevention, assessment, and referral program is licensed by the Iowa Department of Public Health. The facility also houses an in-patient substance abuse treatment program.

The capacity of ICIW is officially listed at 443 women and the population of the institution fluctuates around 580 women. Overcrowding is a problem that the

Department of Corrections is dealing with statewide. Mitchellville's facility may be experiencing more overcrowding than others due to the fact that, here in Iowa, the percentage of female prisoners per capita is rising much more quickly than their male counterparts. The facility currently employs about 190 staff members; it is an important employer for the area.

Recommendations

It is suggested that the city of Mitchellville continue to work toward an open dialogue with the Department of Corrections regarding future additions to the facility and the long term plans for it. In the past the city of Mitchellville and the Department of Corrections have not been able to communicate or cooperate very well on plans for expansion or future additions, which is a concern of some of the town residents. More effort must be put forth to improve coordination because there are indications that the ICIW will be expanding soon. The Department of Corrections is currently seeking a \$30 million to construct prison space for an additional 300 female inmates; the ICIW could receive part or all of the money. Other factors that indicate that the ICIW is going to be expanding in the near future include evidence of the rapid increase in female prisoners in Iowa and the need for more substance abuse programs. Iowa has one of the fastest growing female prisoner populations in the nation due in part to tougher laws for drug use and dealing. There has been a major increase in women being convicted of drug offenses in recent years, of whom many of which are mentally ill. To provide space for these needs, the Department of Corrections asked lawmakers in September of 2006 to expand the substance abuse center at Mitchellville, and for permission to transfer about 90 mentally ill patients from Mount Pleasant to Mitchellville.

Design Guidelines

Current Conditions

The city of Mitchellville currently doesn't have any design guidelines in place however guidelines could give the commercial district along Center Avenue and residential areas more uniformity.

Center Avenue

The Center Avenue area consists of numerous commercial buildings, most of which have experienced numerous tenants, and many of the buildings have not been well maintained. The area does not have a uniform design; the original brick facades of the buildings have either been covered up with other materials or have deteriorated over the years. (Fig. 3) One building that has a good façade is TJ's Tap Bar & Grill; it could be the cornerstone of commercial design in Mitchellville. (Fig. 4)

Residential

The city of Mitchellville does not currently require any design guidelines for their residential areas as well. The homes in Mitchellville are older, maintained homes that are lacking uniformity. The most recently developed homes may have a community covenant, which must be followed when a new home is constructed. The majority of the homes are single-family homes, which are mainly covered with siding and brick.

Figure 3: Center Avenue



Figure 4: TJ's Tap Bar



Why create design guidelines?

Many communities throughout the country are creating design guidelines to make a sense of community identity. Creating an identity helps an area to become a place of destination; a place that people would enjoy. There are areas that have small Main Streets like Mitchellville, where run-down buildings lay empty. Design guidelines are important because it is much easier to maintain commercial businesses in areas with good design that draws in people, as opposed to the continuous turnover and vacancy of old neglected buildings.

A community tends to prosper with design guidelines because residents take pride in the beautiful things in their community. It has been shown that areas which adopt guidelines generally require less maintenance, sit vacant for shorter periods of time, attract more stable businesses, and encourage residents to be more involved in their community.

Future Guidelines

We recommend that the city of Mitchellville look into implementing some design guidelines throughout the community. The initial phase could begin with any new commercial building being constructed or renovated in Mitchellville. TJ's Tap has already set a standard that could easily be followed by other businesses in the area. One standard that could be put in place is the limitation of certain exterior materials, and in the case of Mitchellville, the town should encourage the use of natural materials (clay fired brick or natural stone) to maintain the natural/rural character of Mitchellville. The city could implement a façade improvement program for all businesses on Center Avenue by offering some assistance to business owners who agree to assist in restoring the facades of the building to their natural state. Figures 5 and 6 show current conditions of Center Ave.

Sidewalk improvements should also be required. The Center Avenue area is already equipped with wide sidewalks; the installation of brick pavers to the sidewalks and street would add character and slow traffic. Also the installation of large planters or decorative tree grates, benches, and street lighting would add to the attraction of Center Avenue.

Design guidelines should be applied to residential areas as well. The city should implement some guidelines for all new construction and any renovations or additions to existing homes. The guidelines should limit the percentage of natural and non-natural exteriors of homes.

Figure 5: Current Conditions of Center Avenue



Figure 6: Current conditions of Center Avenue



Appendix

Community Goals

To assess Mitchellville community's goals and visions, the researchers invited community members to attend a focus group by hanging up signs around the town. The focus group was held on October 11, 2006 at 7:00PM in the Mitchellville Community Center; seven people attended. To begin, the researchers asked the group to talk about why they enjoy living in a small town. Many of the participants agreed that it was because it is easier to be active in the town and meet people, and it is a safe place to raise children. The researchers then asked about the assets that are valued in the community. The cultural assets are the Universalist church and other churches in the town; the historical assets are the 19th century homes, two railroads, Indian mounds, and a war memorial; and the natural assets are the parks, and a bike trail nearby. When asked about their goals and visions for Mitchellville, some people in the group thought it was important to improve the Main Street area of the town by renovating buildings, bringing in service businesses (especially a grocery store), and preserving the unique character of the area. The new library and city center, it is hoped, will help to catalyze growth in that area. Another idea that came up was to improve the existing entrance signs with plantings and brickwork. Many people stressed the need for curbs, street gutters and sidewalks. There was also talk about the entrance of an Ethanol plant and how it would help promote growth in the northwest area of the town.

After the focus group, the participants were asked to fill out a survey. The average amount of time that the participants have lived in Mitchellville is 34 years, and the average daily commute time is 16 minutes. When asked "How would you like to see the commercial area of Center Avenue to look?" the participants replied about how the area's look should be improved: "needs facelift", "new store fronts", "clean & inviting"; and that the area needs more service businesses. To the question "What are your issues or concerns for Mitchellville's future?" the respondents replied concerns about land availability and the community's ability to work together.

Because of low attendance at the focus group, the researchers left blank surveys with the city clerk to give to other community members. They also received information from the Mitchellville Community Improvement Group about the visioning session that they held in June 2005, to which sixty people attended. Signs were posting around Mitchellville inviting all of the community members to attend the "Vision to the Future" meeting. Rita Connor from Pleasant Hill moderated that meeting. The participants were asked to share their ideas as to what they would like to see Mitchellville look like in the future. Ideas were all written on easels around the room under different categories each person was given six paper dots and were asked to place the dots on those items with the highest priority to them. There was a follow up meeting a few weeks later to

explain the findings and how the community could accomplish the goals that were set forward, however there was low attendance, so few changes came out of the Vision meeting. The results are shown on the following table. Insert other tables and focus group results.

Survey results

I have lived in Mitchellville for _ years	11 to 50 years
Before living in Mitchellville, I lived:	
Outside city limits	3
In a city with a population less than 10,000	3
In a city with a population between 10,000-50,000	1
In a city with a population between 50,000-100,000	
In a city with a population more than 100,000	
My commute to work is _____ minutes	0 to 40 min
In my opinion Mitchellville	
Is growing too fast	
Is growing at a pace that is just right	1
Is not growing quickly enough	6
Needs more housing	6
Does not need more housing	0
Needs more sidewalks	7
Does not need more sidewalks	0
Needs more multi-family housing	2
Does not need more multi-family housing	1
Needs more commercial development	7
Does not need more commercial development	0
Needs more industrial development	7
Does not need more industrial development	0
Are sewer conditions sufficient	Yes 4, No 3
Are road conditions sufficient	Yes 3, OK 1, No 3

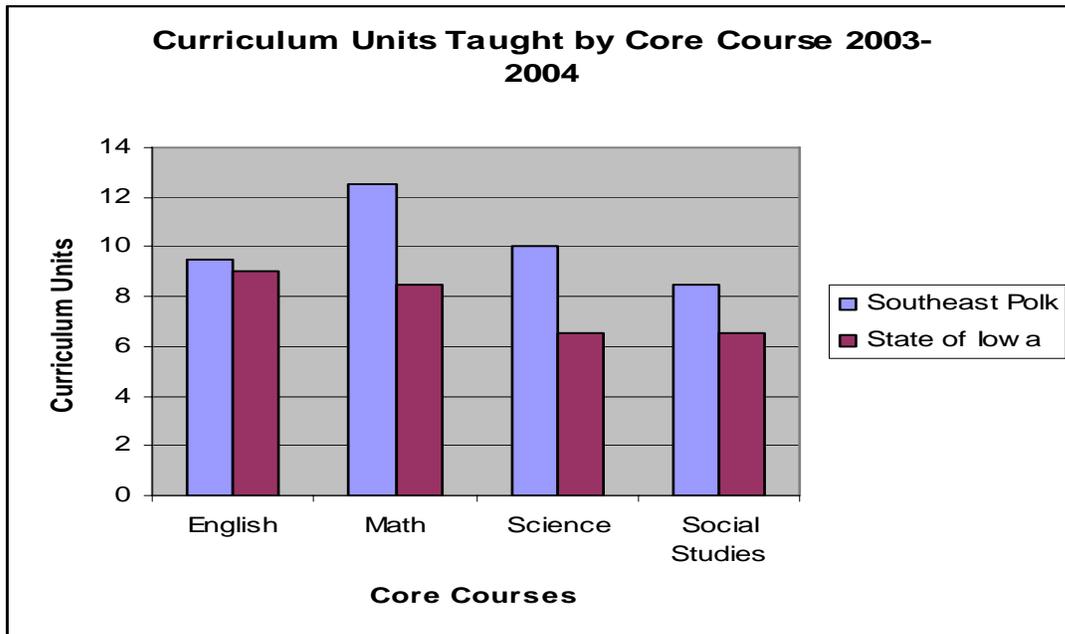
Economic Development

“Tax abatement is a valuable incentive to attract new businesses into the Fort Wayne area. Its major impact, however, is to stimulate reinvestment by existing businesses -- by not penalizing them with a major tax bill when they can least afford it - after having just spent their money for a building and/or manufacturing equipment, or research and development equipment. Because new taxes are phased-in, each year, new tax money goes into the community coffers while the businesses retain employees and create new job opportunities for our citizens. Without this incentive businesses might not make these capital improvements at all! To be eligible for tax abatement, the business must apply for designation as an Economic Revitalization area (ERA) before beginning the capital improvement”. Information was provided by www.fortwayne-ed.org.

Civic Facilities

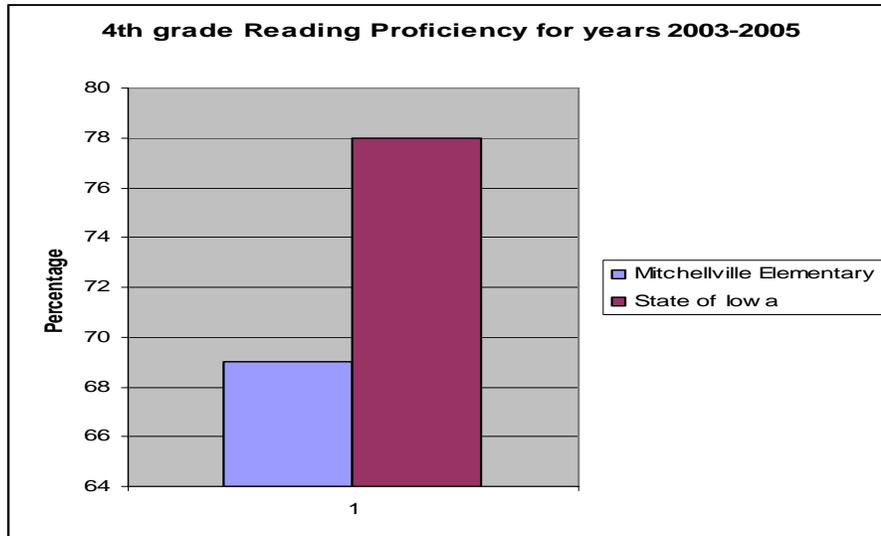
Graph 6 shows the curriculum taught by core course during the 2003-2004 school year and it shows that Southeast Polk schools are teaching more math and science units than compared to the state.

Graph 6: Curriculum Units



Graph 7 shows how the Mitchellville Elementary is doing in its reading proficiency for 4th graders. The school scores a 69% compared to the state average of 77%.

Graph 7: 4th Grade Reading



Graph 8 shows how the Mitchellville Elementary is doing in its math proficiency for 4th graders. The school scores an 80% compared to the state average of 79%.

Graph 8: 4th Grade Math

