2022

Aurora Comprehensive Plan

AURORA CITY CLERK

Introduction

In 2021, the City of Aurora partnered with the Southwest Missouri Council of Governments (SMCOG) to update its 2009 comprehensive plan. A comprehensive plan serves as a guide for the community's growth and development over the next 20 years. The plan is a collaborative effort between the local government and its citizens. The comprehensive plan is not a legally binding document but is used as a guide for the elected and appointed officials in making land use and policy decisions.

Planning Process

Process Overview

The plan was developed using a multi-step process to ensure the final product is an accurate representation of feedback from residents and stakeholders while providing clear goals and objectives to community members.

The planning process involved the creation of a Comprehensive Planning Committee (CPC) comprised of stakeholders and city staff. The committee met seven times throughout the planning process to discuss the topics addressed in this plan. The Comprehensive Planning Committee members were:

- Jon Holmes, City Administrator, City of Aurora
- Carrie Howlett, Community Development Director, City of Aurora
- Tamera Abell, Citizen/Planning & Zoning Commission member
- Bethany Aborn, Liberty Utilities
- Dennis Baker, Citizen/Freedom Bank
- Amy Blankenship, Citizen
- Chrissy Forrester, Citizen/Mercy Hospital employee
- Nikki Kennedy, Citizen
- Matt Maples, Citizen/Realtor
- Kim McCully-Mobley, Aurora R-8 schools/GRO/Main Street Aurora/Houn' Dawg Alumni Center
- Hannah Radar, Citizen/Local business owner
- Sandy Shoemaker, Realtor
- Rachel Wrinkle, Citizen

Community Engagement

Aurora hosted a community survey for residents that ran from September 21 through October 4, 2020. The purpose of the survey was to collect input from residents on a variety of topics to understand the needs and desires for future growth. A total of 283 responses were received from the public. The questions covered a variety of topics that are directly and indirectly influenced by a comprehensive plan, including:

- Housing
- Community Services
- Community Image
- Economic Development
- Land Use
- Transportation
- Parks and Recreation
- Downtown
- Elliott Avenue Corridor

An Open House was held at the Aurora High School on May 7, 2022, in conjunction with the City's 152nd birthday. Residents were asked to provide feedback on the draft goals and objectives and future land use map.

Residents were also asked to complete a goals and objectives prioritization survey that ran from May 7, 2022, through June 5, 2022. This enabled the SMCOG staff to provide a ranking of the goals and objectives to ensure the plan was representative of the entire community. A total of 71 responses were received from the public. The purpose of the survey was to prioritize overall goals and objectives. The results of the prioritizations are included in the implementation table.

Vision Statement

Aurora is sharing tradition, building community, targeting progress, staying connected, and moving forward with respect, optimism, and passion. We are dedicated to providing a safe, family-oriented community in which to live, work, play and grow.

Past Plans & Studies

The 2009 Comprehensive Plan served as a guide for the elected and appointed officials, citizens, and others in the private sector working to improve the City of Aurora. The plan included a study on soil typology and business surveys in the appendix section. Since the adoption of the 2009 Comprehensive Plan, several more studies have been completed. These studies gave recommendations that are vital to the development of Aurora. A brief description of each of these studies is provided in this section.

Soil Typology

The soil typology study is a chart that includes seven types of soil that can be found in Aurora and surrounding areas. In addition to the types of soil, the chart also gives information on the slope, drainage, permeability, runoff, available water capacity, shrink-swell potential, and the response to soil amendments. Each description provides notes on the soil's ability to support development and recommendations that should be considered. These descriptions and recommendations are as follows:

- Newtonia Silt Loam (1B): Suitable for most developments, including on-site waste disposal. Development should consider shrink-swell potential and permeability for septic tank absorption.
- Wilderness Cherty Silt Loam (5C): Suitable for development. Large and small sinkholes in some areas. Septic tank absorption fields should be fortified with a properly constructed mound of surface soil or other material to offset shallow fragipan.
- Hoberg Silt Loam (61B): Suitable for most development but should consider seasonal wetness and slow permeability caused by shallow fragipan.
- Hepler Silt Loam (76): This soil type is found primarily in floodplains and is generally not suitable for building site development.
- Viraton Silt Loam (81B): Suitable for most building site development. Septic tank absorption fields should be fortified with a properly constructed mound of surface soil or other material to offset shallow fragipan.
- Secesh-Cedargap Silt Loam (921): These soils are flood-prone, particularly the Cedargap soils. Soils are better suited for wildlife habitats than for building development.
- Dumps-Orthents Complex (940): Composition-Dumps: Mine spoils, mostly limestone and chert, from lead and zinc mine shafts. Also, mine tailings, overburden lifted prior to mining, and refuse sporadically dumped after mining operations stopped. Composition-Orthents: Mostly landfills from the past 30 years, which were created on abandoned mine shafts and trenches. After filling these areas covered with a thick layer of soil mixed with chert and dumps. The average mixture for a given area is 20% Orthents and 40% Dumps.

    There are several sites in the Aurora area that have this type of soil. Three smaller sites are in the floodplain near headwaters of Chat Creek on the east and northeast sides of Aurora. The Baldwin Park area is located on a dump-orthents complex.

Business Survey

Business surveys were conducted to understand the characteristics of businesses and the expansion plans of the Aurora business community. In 2008 and 2009, surveys were mailed to businesses holding a City of Aurora business permit.

In 2008, only 36.1% of businesses reported that they had been operating for over 10 years. The largest type of business was service-based at 39.6%, with 31.3% of businesses reporting as retail. The majority of responses indicated they were local and have a small staff. 85% of respondents report having 10 or fewer employees. The overwhelming majority of businesses did not plan to expand and did not have extra space to do so.

In 2009, 53.7% of businesses reported that they had been operating for over 10 years, a large jump over the results in 2008. The service industry grew the most since the previous 2008 survey at 44.2% of businesses, with retail numbers also going up in percentage to 32.7%. Staffing results were about the same, but notably, the largest category (21 or more employees) saw a 2% increase within Aurora. The majority of businesses still did not plan to expand or have extra lease space available.

Stormwater Master Plan 2019

In 2019, the City of Aurora contracted with Allgeier Martin and Associates to conduct a study of the city's stormwater system and provide recommendations for improvement. These recommendations included capital improvements, minor system improvements, and system maintenance. Each section was given a priority level with one being the most critical. There were 17 recommended improvement projects identified with a capital cost totaling $10 million. The top three items on the priority list were regional detention subbasins 2030, 2050, and 2090; box culvert/sidewalk network between W. Locust Street and E. South Street; and E. South Street at White Park.

Community Profile

History

The incorporated city limits of Aurora are in the southern area of Lawrence County, and serve much of Barry County, Missouri. It is the most populous city in the county, with a population of 7,461, according to 2020 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates. The city has a total land area of 6.33 square miles.

An area near Aurora known as Honey Creek was originally settled by pioneers from Tennessee, who later assisted in the founding of Aurora. The City of Aurora was platted by Stephen G. Elliott on May 9, 1870, after the Civil War. It was named Aurora after the Roman goddess of dawn.

In the 1880s, various structures were constructed in the town, including two general stores, two grocers, four blacksmiths, four churches, and a drug store. Later, in November of 1885, galena ore was discovered in the city. Aurora soon became a mining town as more of the ore was discovered around the city. The next major industry to come to Aurora was milling, with the introduction of Majestic Milling, a feed milling operation run by the MFA Milling Company. The grain elevators, built in the 1900s, are now being used for growing vegetables by a private company.

Major corridors in Aurora include US Hwy 60, Elliott Avenue, State Highway 265, and Church Street. Railroads also run through the city, which was originally established in the 1870s as part of the Frisco Railroad. They are now owned by Burlington Northern Santa Fe Corporation (BNSF) Railway. The railroads bisect the northern part of the city. Located on the east side of Aurora is Jerry Sumners Sr. Aurora Municipal Airport, which averages 24 flights per day.
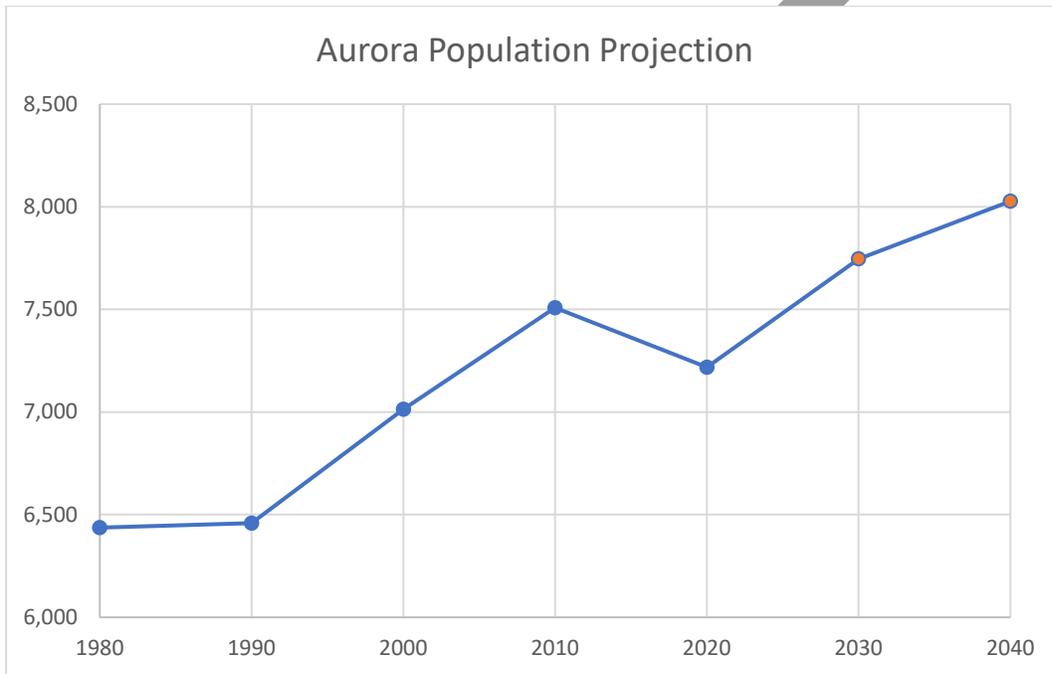
Demographics

Community demographics are an important tool in the comprehensive planning process. Population, economic characteristics, and employment data provide baseline characteristics that are important to identify future goals and objectives.

Population Trends

According to the 1900 decennial census, the population of Aurora was 6,191. The city saw a decline in population from 1900 until the 1940s. The city has seen steady growth in recent years, however, the
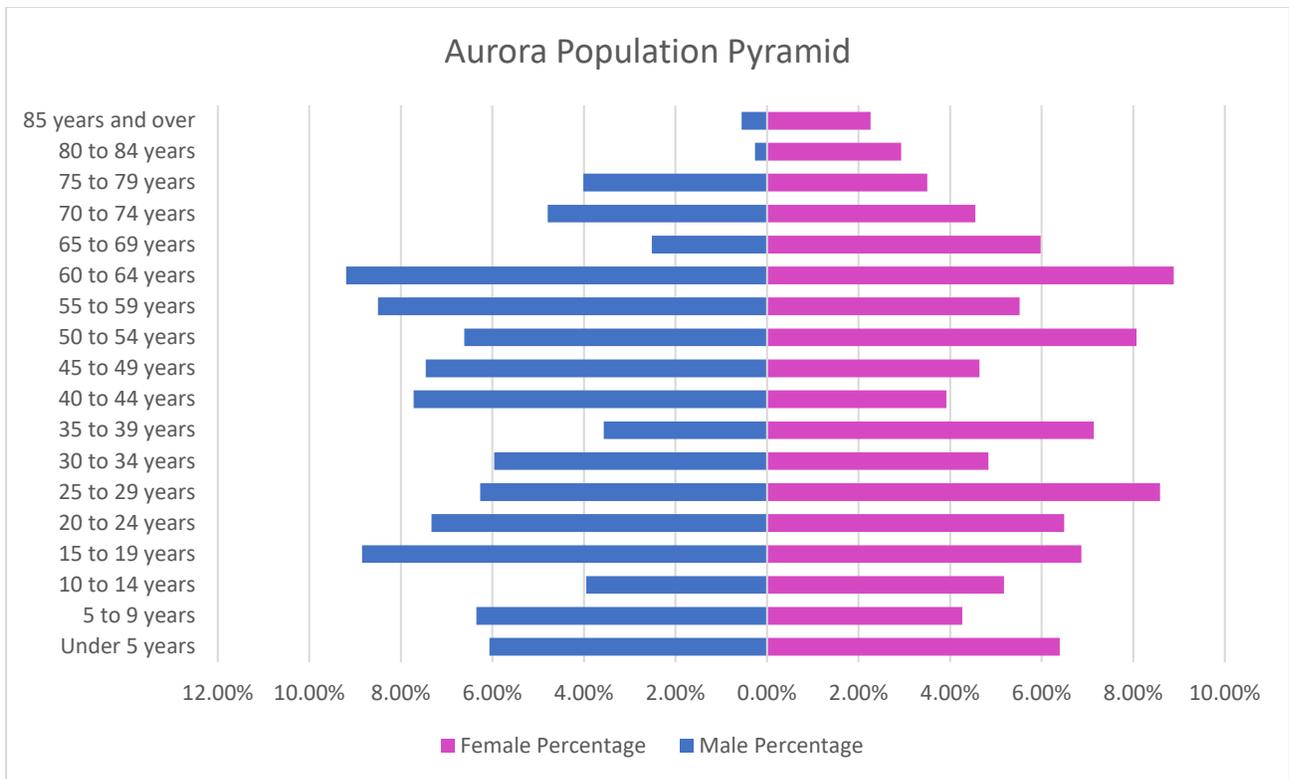
population slightly decreased from 7,505 in 2010 to 7,461 in 2020. This represents a slight decrease of 0.6% in the population over the last 10 years.

Using a series of population projection models, three population projections were identified. The low population projection, shown in orange, uses a linear formula. This projection estimates a growth of 7,972. The low population should be used when budgeting the city's finances, to ensure economic stability and to provide a conservative economic forecast. The high population projection, shown in dashed red, uses an exponential formula. This projection estimates an increase to 8,081. The high projection should be used when estimating future community needs. The likely projection, shown in blue, is the average of the high and low projections. This projection estimates growth of 8,027. The city may choose to use this projection to plan for future facilities and services.

Aurora Population Projection

A population pyramid provides a visual representation of demographics by gender. A stable population pyramid is one that resembles the traditional pyramid shape – a large base that tapers off towards the top. This pattern indicates that there is a larger youth population in the city and ensures that the population has the potential to grow. A growing population is healthy for a city because it indicates that the city will continue to thrive and prosper economically and culturally. It also means that the city will need to accommodate a growing population through the development of a diverse housing inventory, expansion of infrastructure, and commercial development to support it.

The figure below shows 2020 data, with a higher 15 – 19-year age group, and 60 – 64-year age group population. These data can be used to plan for future services and businesses targeting specific age groups. The increasing young and senior population means there is more pressure for services geared towards these age groups. Aurora must ensure services, such as recreational opportunities and senior centers, for the future population.

Aurora Population Pyramid

Age groups (top to bottom): 85 years and over, 80 to 84 years, 75 to 79 years, 70 to 74 years, 65 to 69 years, 60 to 64 years, 55 to 59 years, 50 to 54 years, 45 to 49 years, 40 to 44 years, 35 to 39 years, 30 to 34 years, 25 to 29 years, 20 to 24 years, 15 to 19 years, 10 to 14 years, 5 to 9 years, Under 5 years

X-axis: 12.00%, 10.00%, 8.00%, 6.00%, 4.00%, 2.00%, 0.00%, 2.00%, 4.00%, 6.00%, 8.00%, 10.00%

Legend: ■ Female Percentage ■ Male Percentage

Economics and Employment

The median household income in Aurora in 2010 was $31,288, which rose to $36,433 in 2020. This is lower than both the county ($44,060) and state averages ($57,290). This indicates that residents have less disposable income to support businesses within the community. Higher-income residents may also have greater expectations and demands for services, such as parks and education.

Employment data were analyzed for all of Lawrence County. Data available from the US Bureau of the Census's Quarterly Workforce Indicators provides data as recent as 2020. The top three sectors based on the number employed are:

- Healthcare and Social Assistance with 1,185 employed
- Manufacturing with 1,158 employed
- Retail Trade with 1,038 employed

Of these top employment sectors, only the Manufacturing sector provides an average weekly wage above the average across all sectors. This indicates that the county has a disproportionately higher number of citizens employed in sectors with below-average wages. In 2019, Educational Services saw a large upward trend in job growth, which has been steadily rising since 2017. Conversely, 2019 saw a large downward trend in the majority of major industries in Lawrence County, most likely due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Other major industries in the county such as manufacturing, construction, and retail trade tend to switch between upward and downwards trends and are not very stable. Healthcare and Social Assistance saw a major upward trend in 2005 but saw its largest downwards trend in job losses over 2019. Other industries are mostly stable in job net change.

The largest private employers in Aurora are Walmart Supercenter, Mercy Hospital Aurora, Sutherlands, Tyson Foods, Mayse Automotive, and Journagan True Value. In the public sector, the Aurora R-8 school district provides many jobs to residents.
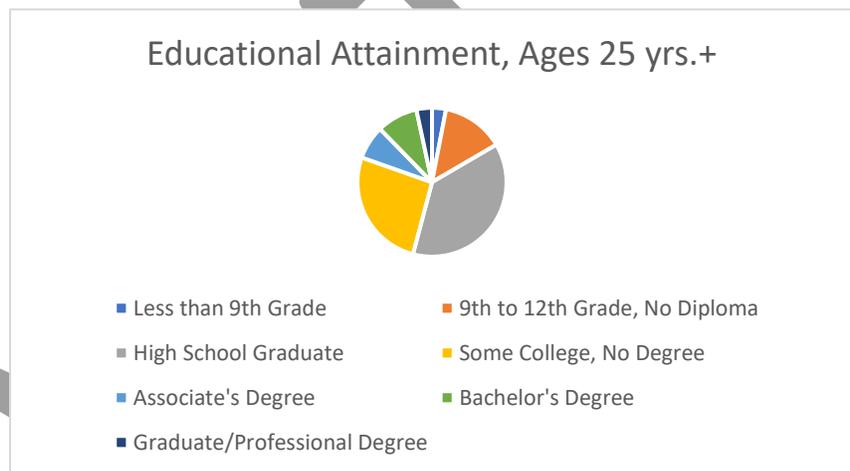
According to public information reports for 2020 taxable sales by jurisdiction, the top five sectors generating sales revenue in the City of Aurora were:

1. Retail Trade, with $11,556,319.41 in annual sales
2. Accommodation and Food Services, with $7,908,744.22 in annual sales
3. Wholesale Trade, with $1,771,832.93 in annual sales
4. Information, with $1,047,799.74 in annual sales
5. Profession, Scientific, and Technical Services with $523,963.97 in annual sales

This means that these industries brought in the most revenue to Aurora in 2020.

Education

Educational attainment in a community is often directly related to other factors, such as median income or types of jobs desired by residents, and indirectly, such as demand for parks and recreation or types of housing development driven by market demand. Therefore, a clear understanding of the educational attainment of residents is crucial to understanding pressures on private development and city services.

Educational Attainment, Ages 25 yrs.+

- Less than 9th Grade
- 9th to 12th Grade, No Diploma
- High School Graduate
- Some College, No Degree
- Associate's Degree
- Bachelor's Degree
- Graduate/Professional Degree

There are strong institutions that provide educational services from pre-kindergarten to higher education, both within the City of Aurora and the county. Aurora R-8 School District includes Pate Early Childhood Center, Robinson Elementary School, Aurora Junior High, and Aurora High. The school district services 1,770 students and employs 154 teachers.

Household Characteristics

Understanding market pressures and characteristics of households is essential to supporting private development of housing that meets the needs of current and future residents. The U.S. Census Bureau provides data related to homeownership and cost-burdened status of households, as well as age and types of units available within the community. These metrics, while not holistic, can provide basic insight into the residential market to understand where market deficiencies may exist that require public support to meet the needs of residents.

Homeownership

Homeownership statistics provide a valuable baseline indicator of the relative stability of a community's population. The American Community Survey's 2019 Estimates indicate that of the 3,301 households in Aurora, 66.9% of them are owner-occupied. This leaves the remaining 33.1% of units as renter occupied. Total unit occupancy in Aurora is 88.8%, indicating that additional housing is necessary to support current and future residents.

Types of Housing

The housing market in Aurora is predominantly low-density, with 86.45% of structures containing two or fewer units, meaning that most households are single-family or duplexes. 74.6% of residential structures

were built before 1990, indicating a relatively older housing stock, with only 1.8% of households being constructed in the last ten years. This indicates that Aurora has had a small amount of residential growth in recent years.

Housing Costs

The median value for homes in Aurora is $86,000, with the value range of $50,000 - $99,999 representing 42% of housing in Aurora. This indicates a low valuation of housing in the city (lower than that of the county at a median value of $109,600). The average gross monthly rent for Aurora is $718. According to 2020 ACS data, 28.3% of owner-occupied residencies were considered cost-burdened, while 11.5% of renters were considered cost-burdened. Households that spend more than 30% of their income on housing costs are considered cost-burdened. Details regarding the local market, as well as community survey results regarding housing, are detailed in the Housing Chapter.

Environment

The natural environment can play a significant role in the future of a city in terms of location and types of new developments. It is possible that environmental features can place constraints on developments with heightened regulatory requirements or by creating hazards to the public. Examples of these constraints would be potential sinkholes, flood plains, farmland, and topography. If any development were to take place on or near one of these areas, it will be required to comply with strict development requirements that could make a project financially nonviable. These requirements are meant to protect or mitigate the loss of life and property in the event of a disaster.

Sinkholes

Sinkholes can be detrimental to developments and infrastructure and cause damage to private property. In these cases, it is important for the city to participate in the county's hazard mitigation plan to ensure the city may access public funds for any disaster-related damages. Sinkholes can also affect the groundwater and under certain circumstances, the water could become contaminated. It is imperative that sites undergo soil characteristics analysis which will indicate any warning signs and allow for site design modifications to be made. Fortunately, Aurora is not extremely prone to sinkholes. There is only one sinkhole identified within city limits, in the midwestern portion.

# City of Aurora Sinkholes
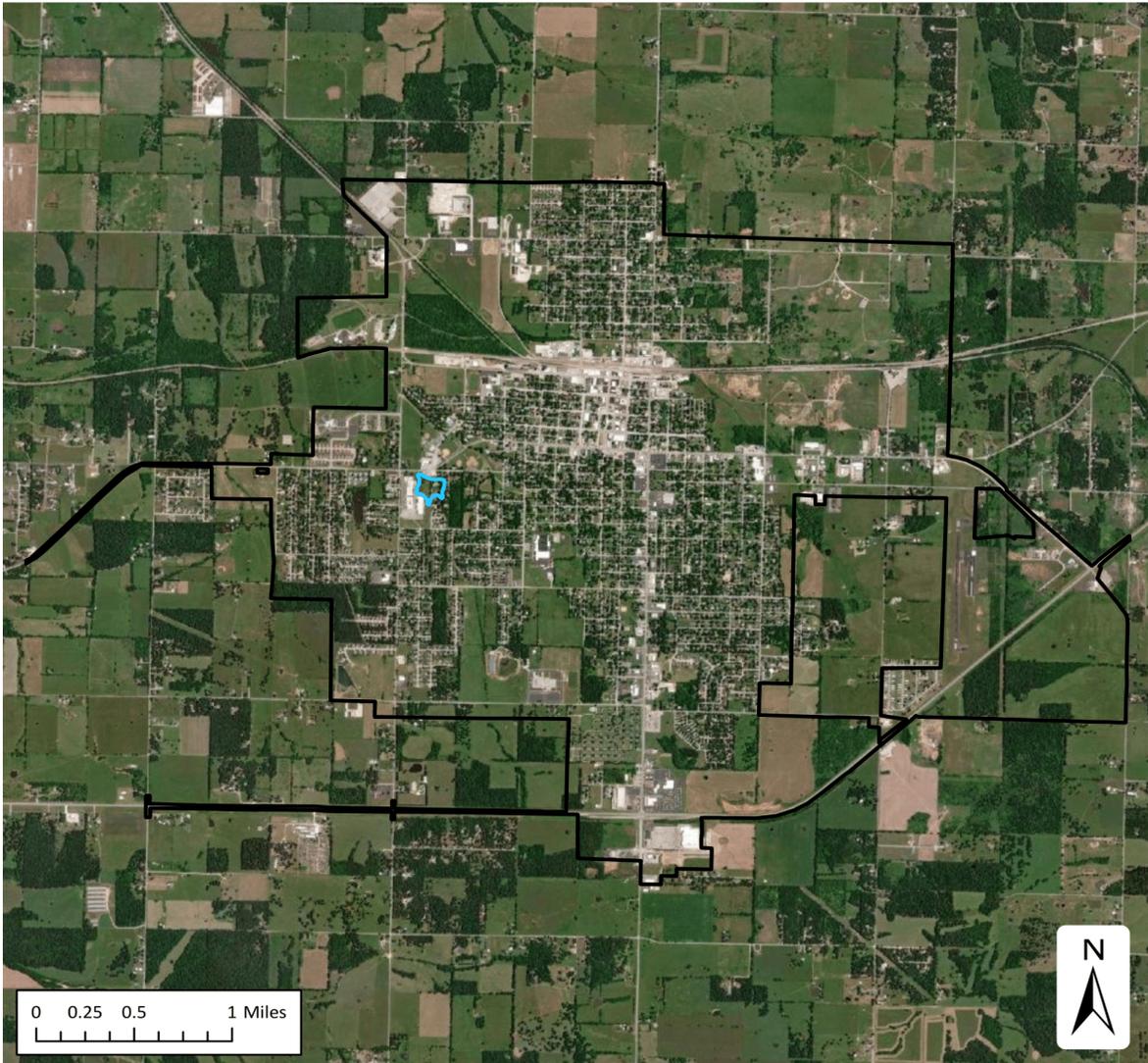
Sinkhole Boundary

City Limits

Floodplain

The 100-year floodplain is identified by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as a 1% probability of an area flooding in any given year. Properties within the floodplain are prone to loss of said property and loss of life if they are developed without compliance with city ordinances and require the property to be enrolled in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). These areas are highly regulated

by local ordinances, as well as state and federal regulations. Participation in the county's hazard mitigation plan, as well as NFIP, can reduce costs associated with damage and ensure new development is resilient to periodic flooding. Shown above are the flood zones within Aurora's city boundaries. Development within the highlighted area must be reviewed carefully to determine if the usage is appropriate and will comply with FEMA requirements.

City of Aurora Floodplain
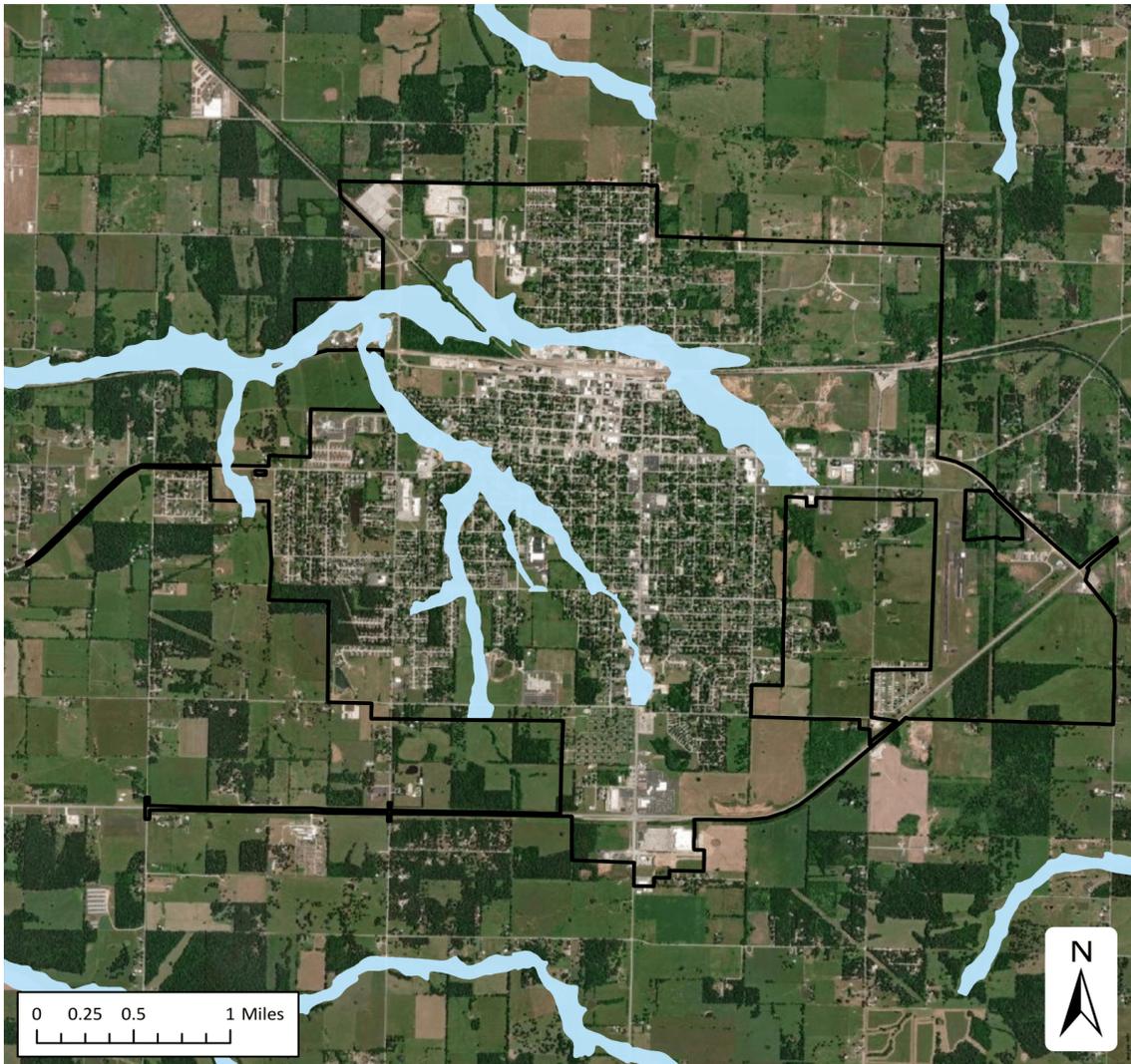
Flood Zone
City Limits

Topography

One of the biggest factors affecting development is the topography. Steep slopes present a number of issues that may hinder the development of a property, including requiring higher quality soil to prevent land subsidence under structures and challenges with maintaining stormwater runoff from increased impermeability. Extreme topography can also create challenges in the extension of infrastructure to areas without service. Low-lying areas may require additional costs to service with wastewater infrastructure, requiring extra lift stations to facilitate the flow of wastewater to treatment facilities.

## City of Aurora Topography
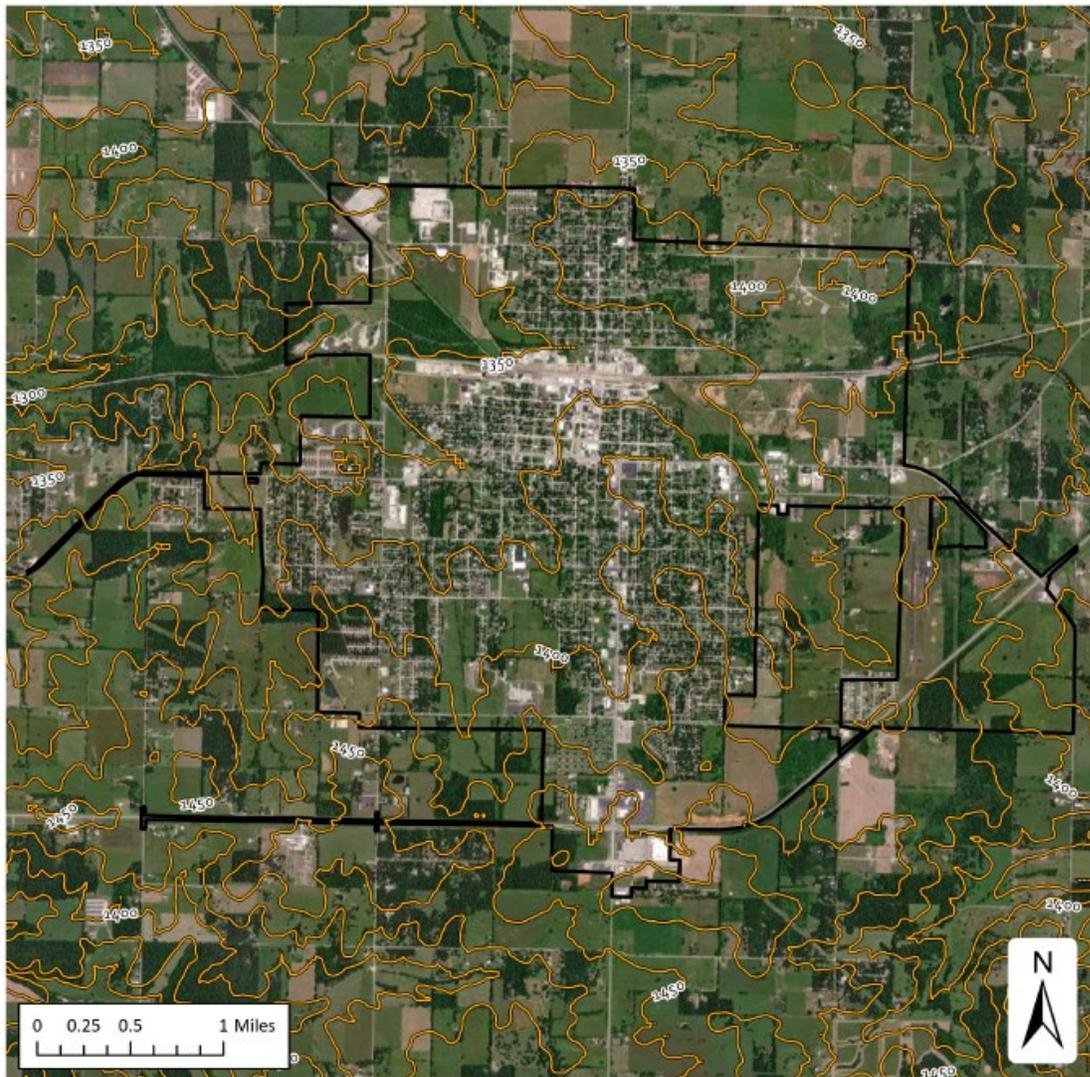
City Limits
Elevation contour (ft)

Prepared 6/28/2022 by

SMCOG
Southwest Missouri
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Farmland

Prime farmland is area that is designated as healthy and of top quality for farming by the Department of Agriculture. Prime farmland usually contains soil of great quality, adequate moisture, and ideal growing temperatures for peak growing seasons. A significant amount of prime farmland is within the city limits and around the city. While preservation of these natural resources is not critical nor required, in many cases, by development standards, some developers have utilized a technique known as a clustered subdivision to preserve a portion of natural assets on a parcel. A clustered subdivision design permits the same number of units to be located in a parcel but allows a developer to reduce minimum lot sizes so that a portion of the parcel is preserved. These areas may include public or semi-private amenities, including community gardens or trails.

City of Aurora USDA Prime Farmland
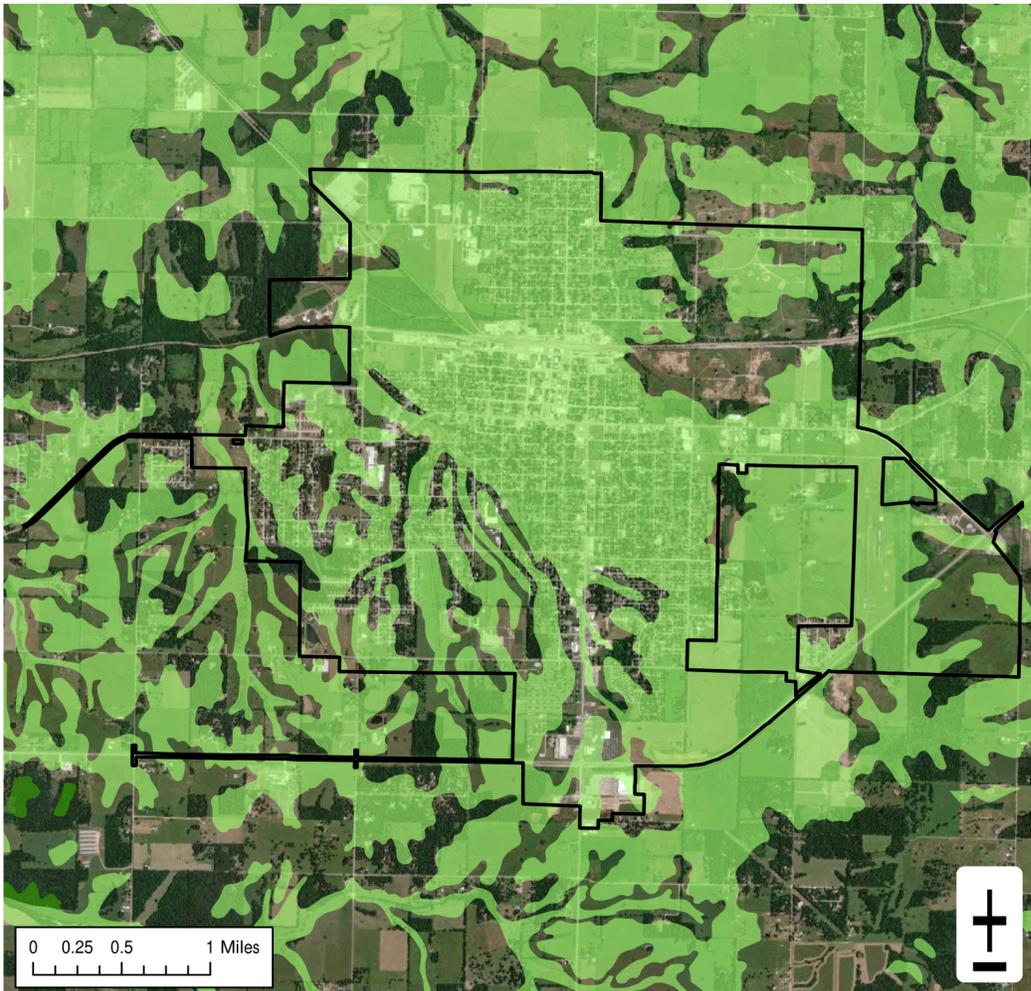
Farmland Classification

- Prime farmland
- Farmland of statewide importance
- City Limits

Prepared 4/27/2022 by

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Southwest Missouri
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Community Facilities

Overview

City Hall

Aurora City Hall is located at 2 W. Pleasant Street. The building holds offices for the city manager, city clerk, treasurer, building inspector, city collector, court administrator, finance director, and administrative assistants. It also houses the Community Development Department, the sewer & collection office, and serves as a meeting hall for the city council, along with any other city boards and commissions. It is the heart of downtown Aurora.

Police

The Aurora & Marionville Police Department, located at 106 S. Elliott Avenue, consists of sworn officers and civilian support employees. Although AMPD does not currently operate a website, they are active on their Facebook page (shared with Marionville). Wesley Coatney is the current Police Chief; he was sworn in as chief in August of 2021. The Operations Division of the PD is focused on investigation of longer crimes as well as extension programs such as working with the community, Aurora R-8, as well as the D.A.R.E. program. The Patrol Section is larger, comprised of 16 officers, who help respond to citizen complaints, field investigation of crimes, and engage in crime prevention. Some of the services provided by the Aurora & Marionville Police Department include crime investigation, family disturbances, motor vehicle collision investigation, traffic law enforcement, home and business security surveillance, vacation watch, child safety education, and drug abuse prevention and education. In addition, AMPD maintains and provides police records.

Fire

The Aurora Fire Department, established in 1887, provides fire-fighting services to the City of Aurora. These services include fire suppression and prevention, environmental protection, initial emergency medical services, extra-hazardous rescues, and the mitigation of man-made or natural catastrophes. The department consists of full-time staff complimented by volunteer staff with two fire stations. Divisions include Administration, City Staff, Emergency Management, Operations, and Training. The department offers fire and life-safety presentations and educational materials for businesses and community groups. The department has a Level B Hazardous Materials Response as well as an Insurance Services Office (ISO) rating of five. Aurora Fire Department utility consists of three fire engines, two brush units, two light rescue units, three support vehicles, a 75-foot quint ladder truck, and a level three structure collapse trailer.

Water

Water services are provided to the residents of Aurora within city limits by Liberty Utilities through Empire District.

Sewer

Sewage and wastewater service is provided to the residents of Aurora by the City of Aurora Sewer Collection System. In 2019, a stormwater master plan for the city of Aurora was adopted.

Electric

Electric services are provided to the residents of Aurora within city limits by Liberty Utilities through Empire District Electric Company.

Gas

Natural gas services in Aurora are provided by Missouri Gas Energy/Spire to Aurora residents.

Trash

The city of Aurora does not provide a trash collection service. However, multiple private vendors provide this service. These options are Doty Trash, Republic Services, and WCA Waste Corporation. Some programs also include recycling. Beginning in 2023, the city plans to establish a trash service for all residents.

Media

There are two options for internet and phone connection within the city of Aurora – CenturyLink and Suddenlink. Suddenlink also provides services for cable hookups.

Schools

Aurora R-8 is the local school district of Aurora. Currently, there are approximately 1,700 students in the school district. Facilities include Aurora High, Aurora Junior High, Robinson Elementary, and Pate Early Childhood Center. The district also owns offices, athletic complexes, and sporting fields. Aurora R-8 is governed by a board of education consisting of a board president and eight board members.

Churches

There are many churches of different religions and religious denominations that can be found in Aurora. Churches are listed as government/institutional buildings on the future land use map.

Library

Aurora is home to a branch of the Barry-Lawrence Library system located at 202 S. Jefferson Ave. The branch updates its Facebook page on events and program information for residents of Aurora.

Post Office

The City of Aurora has one USPS office located at 102 E. Olive Street. This is the main national post office located within the city.

City of Aurora Public Facilities

School   City Limits

Fire Department

Hospital

Police Station

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- Goal 1: Plan for infrastructure improvements to accommodate current and future growth
  - Objective 1: Improve current stormwater management system by developing strategies from the 2019 Stormwater Plan.

Narrative: A major focus over the last few years of development in Aurora has been improving the city's stormwater system. In 2019, a master stormwater plan was developed to help guide the future development of this infrastructure. The inclusion of this objective is to denote the importance of the goals and objectives set forth in that plan, emphasizing the key actions that should be taken next.

- o Objective 2: Ensure water and sewer capacity can accommodate for current and future growth.

    Narrative: Water services in Aurora are currently provided by Liberty Utilities through Empire District. However, capacity can still be controlled through collaboration and work with Liberty. A capacity study can be done on the current water capacity; when future development comes to Aurora, this can help give a better idea of what improvements/additions may need to happen. These results can be brought up with Liberty to introduce any of these changes. Reviewing the EPA's Storm Water Management Model can also help show the quality of the drainage systems in Aurora.

- o Objective 3: Improve broadband access to residents and businesses.
    Narrative: Broadband and internet services are becoming a bigger issue as more and more jobs move to remote work and technology becomes integrated into daily life. Rural areas are usually most affected by this, as they are often left with subpar connections and internet rates. The city can find where connections are lacking and/or speed is slow by utilizing the National Broadband Map. Funds can be used to make new connections or create relationships with other companies to offer better services in the area.

- Goal 2: Support community services to maintain and increase citizen satisfaction.
    - o Objective 1: Continue to provide high-quality emergency services.
    Narrative: Quality emergency services are a necessary service that jurisdictions provide to their citizens. Measuring the growth of the city and how this might affect or strain the current emergency capacity and budget is something that must be researched to keep current. Alert systems can also be put into place that provide a better way for residents to communicate with Aurora's emergency services.

    - o Objective 2: Explore youth program options within the city.
    Narrative: Expanding recreational programs to the youth would be beneficial to Aurora by providing entertainment and education to children, while also keeping them healthy and providing exercise. The programs may also help alleviate a lack of childcare services.

    - o Objective 3: Provide lighting in public areas to increase safety.
    Narrative: Some areas in Aurora would benefit from the addition of lighting, which would help make the area more visible, accessible, and safer to walk around. Making a switch to a more energy-efficient LED lighting system would be a cost-efficient solution to this issue.

Transportation

Overview

Elliott Avenue is the main north-south connection used in Aurora. This is where much of the economic activity is in the city. Church Street is the main connection that runs east to west. It connects to US

Highway 60 which runs to the south of Aurora. Another major road that connects to Aurora is Route 39 which turns into Olive Street and then Elliott Avenue when it enters the city limits.

On the northern part of Aurora, there is a set of train tracks called Missouri and Northern Arkansas Railroad (MNA). These tracks are a part of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Corp (BNSF). Most of Aurora's industrial infrastructure is located along these tracks. Aurora also has a municipal airport, the Jerry Sumners Sr. Aurora Municipal Airport. The airport is open to the public and makes flights to Monett, MO, and Fayetteville, AR.

Aurora's transportation planning falls under the jurisdiction of the Southwest Missouri Council of Governments (SMCOG).

Street Classification

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) identifies the street classification and functions of each type of roadway: minor arterial, major collector, principal arterial, and local. The figure below identifies the functional classification of each street within the city limits, and near the city.

Principal Arterial

Primary arterials accommodate moderate to high volumes and moderate speeds through major activity centers. Primary arterials connect to expressways that serve interstate and regional traffic. Access to the adjacent property is subordinate to traffic flow and is subject to the necessary entry and exit controls.

Minor Arterial

Minor arterials accommodate moderate volumes and moderate speeds. Access to the adjacent property is partially controlled to maintain the carrying capacity of the roadway. Minor arterials also serve major activity centers as well as less intense development areas such as small retail stores, and offices.

Major Collector

Collectors accommodate low to moderate volume and low-speed traffic. Collectors collect and distribute traffic between arterials and local streets. These streets are intended for short trips and provide access to adjacent property. Collectors serve less intense developments such as schools, residential, parks, and low-density commercial areas.

Local

Local streets accommodate low volume and low-speed traffic and discourage through traffic. These streets are intended for shorter trips and provide access to adjacent property.

City of Aurora Functional Classification
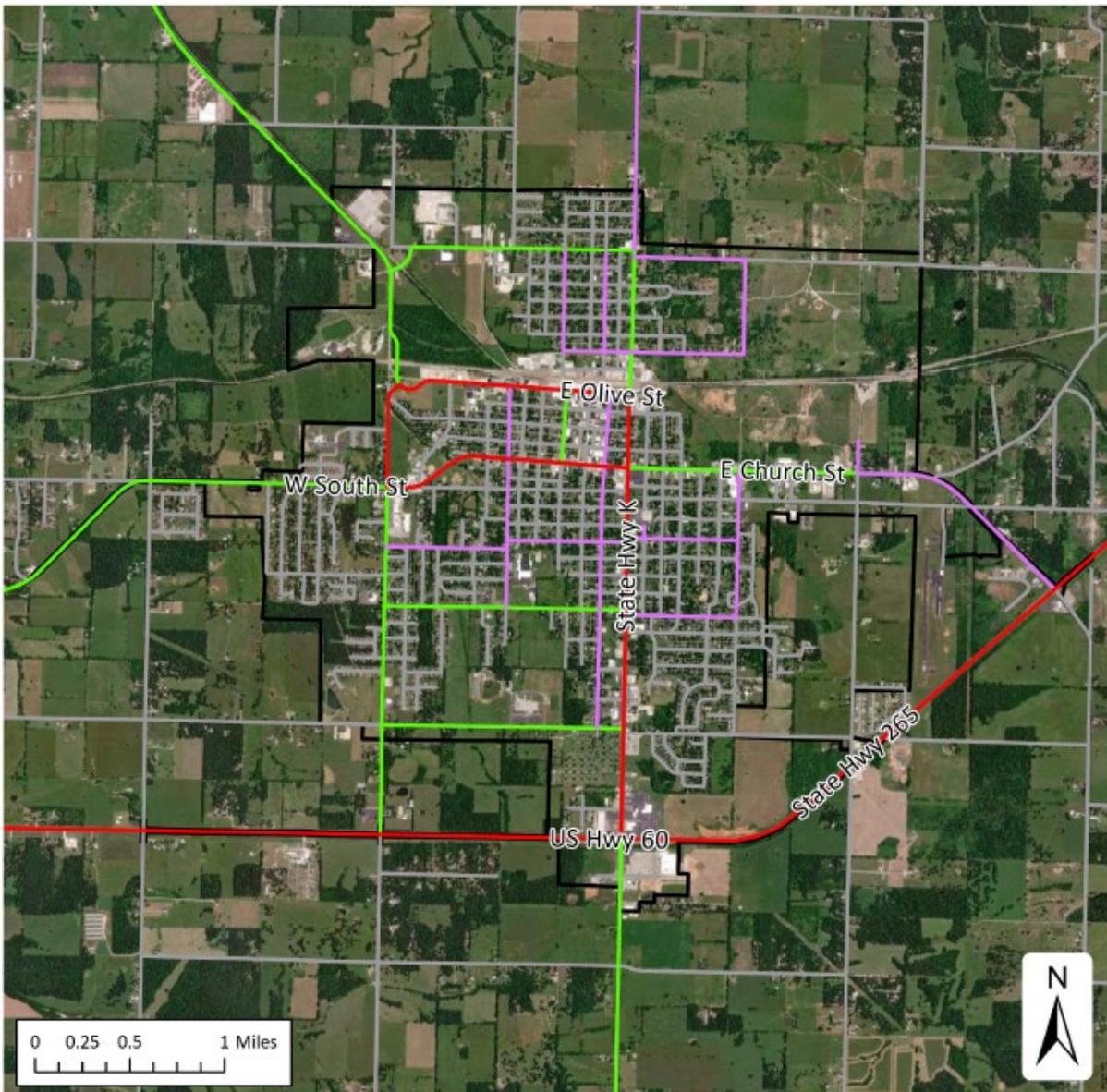
MoDOT Functional Class ⬒ City Limits
— Minor Arterial
— Major Collector
— Principal Arterial
— Local

- Goal 1: Create a multimodal transportation system that is accessible to all and promotes a healthy and active community.

o **Objective 1: Repair and expand existing sidewalks to enhance walkability in the community.**

Narrative: Conducting a sidewalk inventory to identify areas with the most need for improvements will guarantee the issues identified by the community be addressed. The city can then determine a priority list for sidewalks based on the inventory and assist in implementing improvements or extensions. To offset costs to the community, the city can apply for grants such as the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), which can be used to fund sidewalk improvement projects.

o **Objective 2: Make all sidewalks and curb ramps ADA accessible.**

Narrative: The American Disabilities Act (ADA) is a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination based on disability. This includes providing equal opportunity, especially for city design and mobility. Reviewing the sidewalk inventory for ADA compliance and creating a priority list for ADA improvements is a good step toward adapting the city for all. This will ensure that the City of Aurora is accessible to all residents and visitors.

o **Objective 3: Identify opportunities for trails and bike lanes.**

Narrative: Partnering with trails/greenway groups and bicycle advocacy organizations can assist in promoting use in the city. Investigating opportunities to connect to regional trails not only will promote use but can attract visitors. To better understand what the current infrastructure can handle, conduct a traffic study to identify streets that could accommodate bike lanes. Grants and other funding methods can help offset the cost to the community for bike lane development and begin the process of implementation.

o **Objective 4: Require sidewalks for all new development.**

Narrative: To promote bike and pedestrian movements, the city should ensure that new developments are connected with sidewalks.

o **Objective 5: Continue to improve downtown mobility.**

Narrative: To further advance the walkability of Aurora, identify any issues in the sidewalks or roads that hinder pedestrian mobility, as well as ensure all public spaces downtown are accessible and within ADA compliance to improve pedestrian mobility. The city can also focus on any opportunities to create connections between surrounding neighborhoods and the downtown, which would bring more business to the area and extend the connectivity of the City of Aurora.

- Goal 2: Maintain and Enhance current road system.
  o **Objective 1: Develop city-wide transportation plan.**

Narrative: A transportation plan focuses on the efficiency and quality of a city's transportation systems. To better understand the conditions of transportation in Aurora, the city should partner with consultants, non-profit organizations, or universities to assist in developing a master transportation plan and budget for funding the plan.

  o <u>Objective 2: Prioritize maintenance of existing roads to improve current conditions.</u>

Narrative: Creating an easy-to-use complaint system for public input on problem areas within the transportation network will help in prioritizing and maintaining Aurora's roads. The complaint system will ensure that any problems are being addressed by road and public works services. To further assist public works, a database can be created to record all maintenance projects. Continuing to assess the budget for repairs and making sure there is adequate funding will ensure quality roads in Aurora.

  o <u>Objective 3: Develop and Implement traffic calming measures.</u>

Narrative: As identified in the community survey, there are areas in Aurora that can pose a potential danger to pedestrians. To address this issue, utilize the traffic study to identify areas where traffic-calming measures such as bulb-outs, raised crosswalks, speed bumps, and other solutions can be implemented. Furthermore, the city should determine where stop signs or traffic lights can be added to areas with increased traffic counts and higher speeds.

  o <u>Objective 4: Acquire county-owned roads to ensure connectivity with new developments.</u>

Narrative: Some roads in Aurora are under Lawrence County supervision and ownership. To better maintain the road conditions in Aurora, the city should determine what areas are attainable within or near city limits. When the budget allows, the city should open talks with Lawrence County to inquire about developing road infrastructure in the determined areas.

- Goal 3: Collaborate with other planning partner agencies on transportation-related issues.
  - o <u>Objective 1: Prioritize needs within the city during SMCOG's annual transportation prioritization process with Lawrence County.</u>

Narrative: SMCOG annually sends out a transportation needs reporting form. Filling out this form will give Aurora a chance to communicate their needs to the county and to MoDOT. In addition to filling out the form, attending the Lawrence County prioritization commission meeting will provide the opportunity to get the city's needs higher on the county priority list.

  o <u>Objective 2: Continue to explore partnerships with developers, county, MoDOT, and MoDNR for funding priority projects.</u>

Narrative: Planning partners and agencies can be key to bringing transportation and infrastructure improvements to the city. Aurora should continue to work with planning partners to build and maintain relationships and regularly update them on potential transportation projects.

Housing

Overview

The City of Aurora has seen an increase in housing demand over the years. The cumulative days on market (CDOM) has decreased from 87 in 2020 to 29 in 2021, a change of 66.67%. These numbers have affected the absorption rate of homes in Aurora as well. The absorption rate is the speed at which homes are selling in a specific area. This rate went from 3.28 months in 2020 to 1.44 months in 2021.

A decrease of days on the market is not the only change to housing in Aurora. New listings and sales prices have increased by a significant margin. The average list price in 2020 was $137,333 and the average sale price for a home in the same year was $112,101. There was a significant increase in these prices in 2021, jumping to $186,909 (list price) and $140,543 (sale price). This is a 36.1% increase in the listing price and a 25.37% increase in sales price. All this data is an indicator of a strong market, demonstrating the growth and appeal of the City of Aurora.

According to the comprehensive plan community survey results, many residents are happy with their current housing situation. The categories for structure age, condition, proximity to public facilities, neighborhood quality, and location were all higher than 60% for the ratings of "somewhat satisfied" or "very satisfied." Residents did not have many complaints, with the same categories having less than 20% dissatisfaction ratings except for neighborhood quality. A neutral rating for the categories comprises the rest of the survey results. There was overwhelming support by the residents to bring in more traditional, single-family housing into the City of Aurora. Multi-family housing received less support in the survey; however, it remains an important part of Aurora's community and future development. Diverse housing options can help meet the needs and interests of different age groups and supply more choices for residents. Improvements to existing housing within Aurora is an important goal of the 2021 Aurora Comprehensive Plan.

- Goal 1: Improve the quality of existing housing and neighborhoods.
  - Objective 1: Continue to implement and enforce property maintenance codes.

  Narrative: An important part of planning and housing is ensuring the quality of existing housing as well as any potential new developments. Conducting housing inspections and educating residents on property maintenance codes are important aspects of improving the quality of housing in Aurora. These actions can be followed through with a user-based complaint system as well as increasing any potential fees to prevent abuse of avoiding city code.

  - Objective 2: Utilize dilapidated structures by encouraging residential infill development.

  Narrative: Lots that are either dilapidated, abandoned, or vacant are prime for investment as they can provide a space for development that may be cheaper than purchasing an existing developed lot. The city may be able to help reduce the cost of developing these lots by providing economic incentives as well as information to residents and developers to help with the renovation.

  - Objective 3: Provide neighborhood amenities, such as pocket parks, community gardens, etc.

  Narrative: An active, lively neighborhood will provide amenities to residents that will encourage a strong community and provide entertainment. While future developments may require such amenities, existing neighborhoods can be retrofitted with these benefits. Finding ideal parcels to build in, determining usage, and working with local organizations can help transform where people live.

- Goal 2: Diversify the housing stock to accommodate current and future needs.
  - Objective 1: Encourage development of diverse housing options.

  Narrative: While single-family is a key part of residential development in Aurora, multi-family housing can help provide much-needed growth to the community if done correctly. Multi-family development constraints can be reviewed by Aurora to determine where development might be stunted and provide more flexibility to those looking to live within the city.

o   Objective 2: Promote attainable housing.

Narrative: Housing is becoming scarce and expensive, which is a barrier to entry for new residents seeking to join the community. Further encouraging multi-family development through economic incentives as well as advertising Aurora's ability to develop sub-standard lot sizes can help eliminate these barriers and make Aurora a community for all.

o   Objective 3: Require developers to provide neighborhood amenities.

Narrative: Existing neighborhoods can start to implement new amenities now by putting the responsibility on developers to include benefits for residents of their new development that will help ensure that all new developments are high quality and affordable.

o   Objective 4: Continue to provide transparent communication about new residential development.

Narrative: Communication between city staff and residents is key to improving any community. Aurora strives to update its citizens on important changes and developments occurring within the city and hopes to improve transparency and accessibility to this information with this new plan.

Economic Development

Overview

EMSI, a labor analytics and economic data tool, indicates that 2,100 of the 3,918 jobs in Aurora are from commuters coming inbound. This means that 1,818 (46.4%) jobs in Aurora are by residents living and working in the area. Likewise, 53.6% of total jobs in Aurora come from outside the city. The majority of these commuters come from smaller surrounding communities such as Mount Vernon, Monett, and Marionville. EMSI data also tracks outbound commuters, showing that 3,870 of 7,461 residents are leaving Aurora for work. This is likely due to proximity to larger communities with a larger labor market, primarily the Springfield Metro Area.

Data from the 2020 American Community Survey shows that the median income for Aurora is $36,433, with 20% of Aurora citizens making between $35,000 - $49,999. Over half (59.5%) of Aurora's residents have an income within or above this range. "Cost-burdened" status is a status among renters when a household uses 30% (or more) of the total household income towards rent. In Aurora, the median rent costs $718. The total amount of cost-burdened households in Aurora is 43.7%.

Most businesses in Aurora are located along Elliott Ave., including a Walmart Supercenter, Sutherlands, Price Cutter, and the Mayse Automotive Car Dealership. Other notable businesses along this stretch include many restaurants ranging from fast food to sit-down, as well as automotive shops and banks. The street is home to the police department and many churches. Church Street is the second largest street for employment and intersects Elliot Avenue north of town. Along this street are many major businesses such as Mercy Hospital Aurora, Journagan True Value, and the Sunset Drive-In. The street also features gas stations and restaurants as well.

Community input shows that the residents of Aurora want to see growth within the city. The top development people want to see is local development such as small retail, restaurants and entertainment, and other service-based commercial businesses. Survey respondents emphasized job creation as a major aspect of new development. Residents want to see development come downtown and see continued growth along Elliott Avenue. The goals in this section focus on bringing in new development and attraction

to Aurora, supporting current and existing businesses, and focusing on revitalization and development specifically in downtown Aurora.

City of Aurora Commercial Land Use
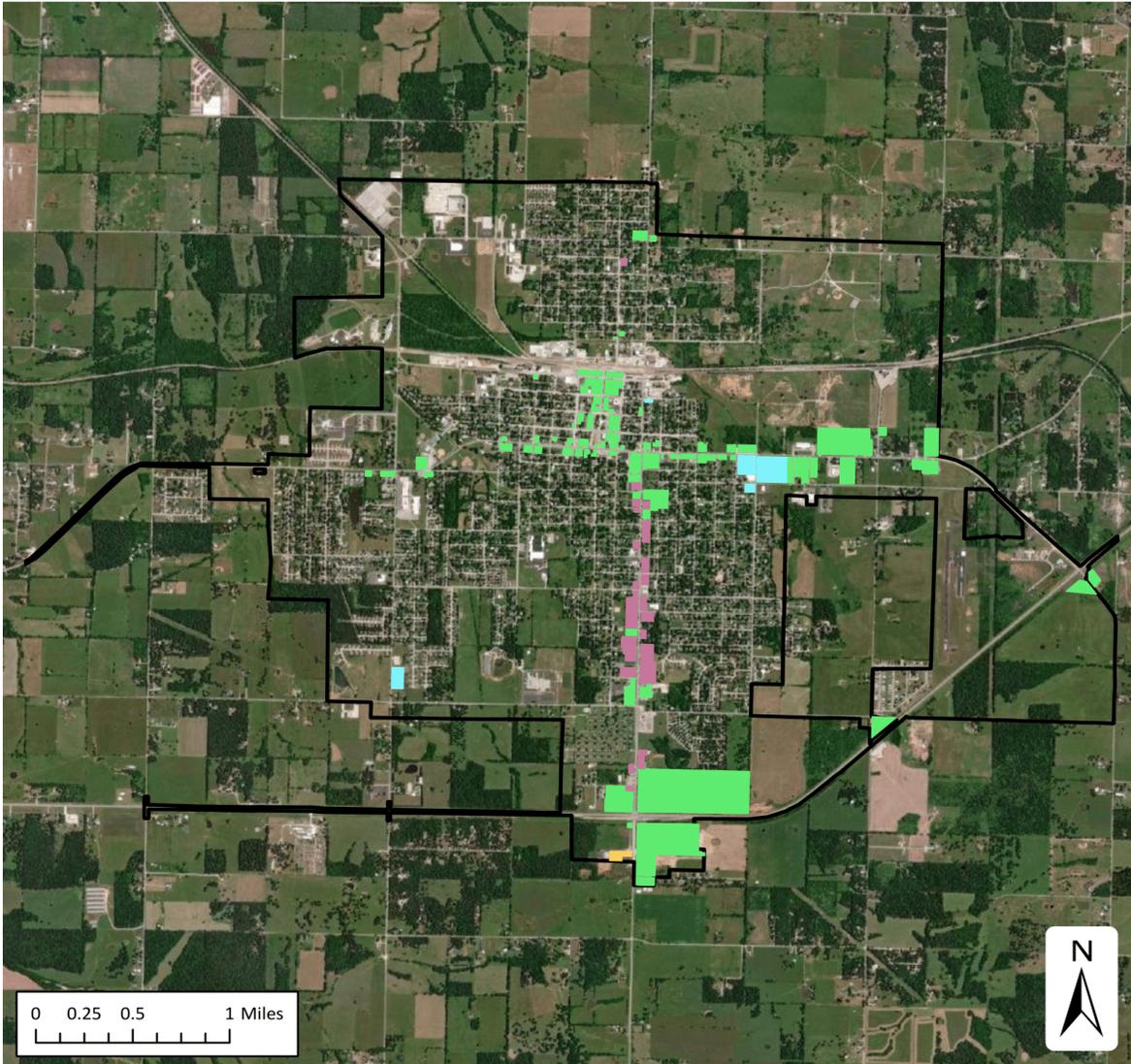
Commercial Land Use ⬡ City Limits

- ▨ Retail Commercial
- ▨ General Business
- ▨ Commercial District
- ▨ Non-Retail Commercial

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Shown above is the commercial land use within Aurora, which gives a quick overview of the types of businesses in the city of Aurora.

- Goal 1: Attract new businesses and visitors to the city.
    - o Objective 1: Use incentives to entice quality businesses and new development that aligns with the community vision.

Narrative: Economic incentives may be used by the city to help bring desirable commercial development to Aurora, bringing growth to the number of jobs and a boost to the local economy. Aurora may use a fiscal impact analysis to determine the dollar amounts of these incentives to find a "sweet spot" between encouraging development and maintaining a balanced budget.

    - o Objective 2: Assess options within vacant areas to determine how to revitalize abandoned buildings and properties to encourage inward growth.

Narrative: Infrastructure is key within dense areas to maintain capacity and a consistent level of usage. Future development in vacant areas should focus on places where infrastructure already exists. Using tools such as utility fee reduction or economic assistance through grants can help fund development within city limits and create a dense and lively city.

    - o Objective 3: Ensure that new developments are built in accordance with the city and state code.

Narrative: Creating a cohesive, all-encompassing plan for reviewing new development to ensure that it follows all codes and regulations within Aurora can help speed up development.

- Goal 2: Continue to support current businesses within Aurora.
    - o Objective 1: Promote communication between the city and business owners regarding economic development programs.

Narrative: Aurora can act as a resource for small businesses, compiling resources such as grants and loans that can help fund the next new startup in Aurora. They can also work with existing businesses to ensure that the economic strategies set forth in this plan will help with redevelopment and not just with future development.

    - o Objective 2: Continue to utilize the Chamber of Commerce and other organizations' resources to enhance economic growth.

Narrative: The Chamber of Commerce is a great resource for helping with any economic issues the city may be facing. Having the chamber create a plan that entities can work through together when analyzing the market can help bring new businesses to Aurora while complementing existing businesses.

    - o Objective 3: Develop sustainable economic development programs that are available for local small businesses.

Narrative: A revolving loan fund (RLF) is a type of gap financing primarily used for small business development projects. It is a self-replenishing pool of money, utilizing interest and principal payments on old loans to issue new ones. Aurora is working towards offering these services to its residents, which can help bring new business to the city. Education on gap financing and RLF will be pursued when the programs become available.

- Goal 3: Work towards revitalization and creation of a more vibrant community atmosphere in the downtown area.
    - o Objective 1: Explore options available for downtown revitalization.

Narrative: The revitalization of downtown Aurora is something many residents wanted to see based on community survey results. Actions towards creating a downtown sub-plan would help kickstart the movement and better detail the strategies that should be taken towards improvement. The city hopes to research potential funding opportunities to support any new redevelopment downtown.

- o Objective 2: Continue downtown beautification efforts through the addition of greenery, façade improvements, additional seating, and other aesthetic changes.

Narrative: One major aspect of improvements to be made downtown would be the addition of aesthetic changes that will beautify the area. Aurora hopes to budget for development using the historical downtown development fund, then review any constraints towards implementing these changes. The new downtown may see additions such as murals and artwork, greenery, more public seating, façade improvements, and other aesthetic changes.

- o Objective 4: Encourage and promote events in the downtown area.

Narrative: One key to transforming downtown Aurora is making it a place for people to come to visit. While additional businesses and aesthetics may help change this, another way to create a sense of place in the area is by hosting events. Aurora hopes to communicate with businesses and groups to assist them in making downtown an easy place to host events for residents and visitors to enjoy.

Community Image and Branding

Overview

The City of Aurora was founded in 1870 by Stephen G. Elliott for whom the main street is named. Since its establishment, the town was a very successful zinc mine and hub for multiple railroads. Today, Aurora is a small community with an undeniable charm. Based on the results of the comprehensive plan survey, Aurora's small-town feel is something residents take pride in and wish to see built upon. To ensure that the city maintains this feel, cohesive design standards should be put in place in commercial areas and future developments to encourage citizen participation and attract more visitors.

- Goal 1: Create a community brand and identity.
  - o Objective 1: Foster the "small-town feel" of Aurora with the development of a brand.

Narrative: The City of Aurora currently has no cohesive brand - having a theme/brand for a city has a host of benefits. A brand helps with community recognition, can increase tourism, and makes the city more attractive to potential business investors and developers. To identify what the brand of Aurora should be, it is recommended that the city host workshops where residents can voice their opinions. Once there is a consensus, creating branding packages and other promotional materials will assist in solidifying the new brand. Consistency is key. Implementing the brand within the city and matching the city's website and social media pages with the new brand will be crucial to the brand's success.

  - o Objective 2: Create a wayfinding signs system in the community.

Narrative: Wayfinding signs assist residents and visitors in navigating through the community with ease. Developing a consistent design for the signage can eliminate confusion and make them simple to navigate. Placing the signs at entry points along major thoroughfares will welcome

visitors and direct them to key destinations. Installing signage at those destinations will direct residents and visitors to local attractions such as parks, downtown, public facilities, or special districts.

- o Objective 3: Utilize technology and other outlets to promote and standardize Aurora's brand.

Narrative: Technology is a vital resource for communicating with residents. Reviewing the existing social media policy to ensure it determines specifics of utilization, such as the responsibility of ownership, approval of the content, and posting times to make communication between city officials and the community more efficient. Ensuring social media handles are present on public notices and communication materials to help grow notoriety and awareness of Aurora's media channels will also improve communication.

- Goal 2: Enhance community engagement.
  - o Objective 1: Engage community through events and programs.

Narrative: To increase community engagement, consider incorporating programs such as crosswalk and mural painting opportunities for community events. Host events like an annual social to develop relationships among public safety personnel, city staff, elected officials, and residents. Partnering with local schools, businesses, and organizations to host community events and parades can stimulate business and increase tourism. It is important to ensure that the permitting process for utilizing Aurora's downtown is clear to the public through education and information on media channels to encourage organizations not affiliated with the city to host events.

- o Objective 2: Utilize multiple channels of communication to engage residents and visitors.

Narrative: Getting information to all citizens is vital to any community. The city should ensure that all channels of communication are being used and improved, including email, newsletter, physical mail, newspaper, and social media. Advertising channels of communication through each other (e.g., mentioning Aurora's newsletter or email updates on social media and vice versa) will guarantee that residents will be informed.

Parks & Recreation

Overview

This section was done in tandem with Olsson, a planning firm, to analyze the condition of Aurora's parks and recommend improvements to be made. The city is also looking to begin initial steps towards other parks and recreation services, such as installing a recreation center. Olsson has developed a parks and recreation plan for the City of Aurora which can be found here.

Aurora is home to many parks, including Baldwin and White Park, which are the two largest parks in the city. Baldwin Park features walking trails, baseball fields, a soccer field, and a playground. White Park has trails, baseball fields, and tennis and basketball courts. Smaller parks in Aurora, such as Oak and Crosby Park, are mainly playground parks meant for use by children with pavilions for adults. Aurora is also home to an outdoor swimming pool that operates inside White Park.

Results from the Comprehensive Plan Community Survey show that the majority of respondents felt that the quality of parks within Aurora were "good" or "fair," representing 86% of responses. 10% felt that the parks were in "excellent" condition while only 4% felt the parks were in poor condition. Similarly, the majority of respondents (81%) also felt that recreation and sports programs in Aurora were "good" or "fair." Respondents felt the best sources of information regarding recreational programs and activities were word of mouth and email/Facebook. Many respondents noted they wanted to see a recreation center come to Aurora that can offer programs or activities to the children and teens within Aurora.

Land Use

Overview

Land use is a key part of the comprehensive plan and is required by state statutes. Land use planning is the process of developing a blueprint for the city's future. Being able to identify current and desired future land uses assists the city in implementing zoning codes and development regulations consistent with the needs of the community.

Current Land Use

To determine the current land use in Aurora, the Southwest Missouri Council of Governments (SMCOG) used GIS data from the city, Google Maps, Google Street View, and windshield surveys. Current land uses were grouped into categories:

Agricultural

Land that is actively used for agricultural purposes including animal grazing or growing of crops and hay. This is different than vacant land due to the active use of the property for a productive purpose.

Single-Family Residential

Residential properties containing a single-family home and sometimes an adjacent vacant property under the same ownership are designated as single-family. It is common for the same property owner to own two parcels; one parcel may appear vacant, but both are used for the same house and yard.

Multi-Family Residential

Residential properties with more than one unit are classified as multi-family. This would include duplexes, fourplexes, townhomes, and apartments.

Mixed-Use

A mixed-use designation is a parcel that provides more than one use or purpose within a shared building or development area. Mixed-use projects may include a combination of offices, retail, housing, recreational, or commercial uses.

Commercial

Property that is used as office space, restaurants, or retail purposes. Parcels designated as commercial generally have a lighter environmental impact than industrial and manufacturing uses.

Industry/Manufacturing

Parcels identified as industrial or manufacturing are tied to uses that have a heavier impact on the community, such as transportation, utility use, or runoff production. These are typically larger facilities on large parcels.

Government/Institutional

The general identifier for government or institutional property could be simplified as uses that do not contribute to the property tax base. This includes city facilities, school facilities, special districts (such as fire protection districts), churches, law enforcement, or libraries.

Parks and Open Space

City parks and parcels used as designated open space, such as a water detention or buffered open space. These are properties that likely won't be developed or should not be developed in the future.

Vacant

Properties with no existing structures or that are in use as agriculture or parks, recreation, or open space are identified as vacant. These parcels provide an opportunity for infill development on existing platted lots.

City of Aurora Current Land Use
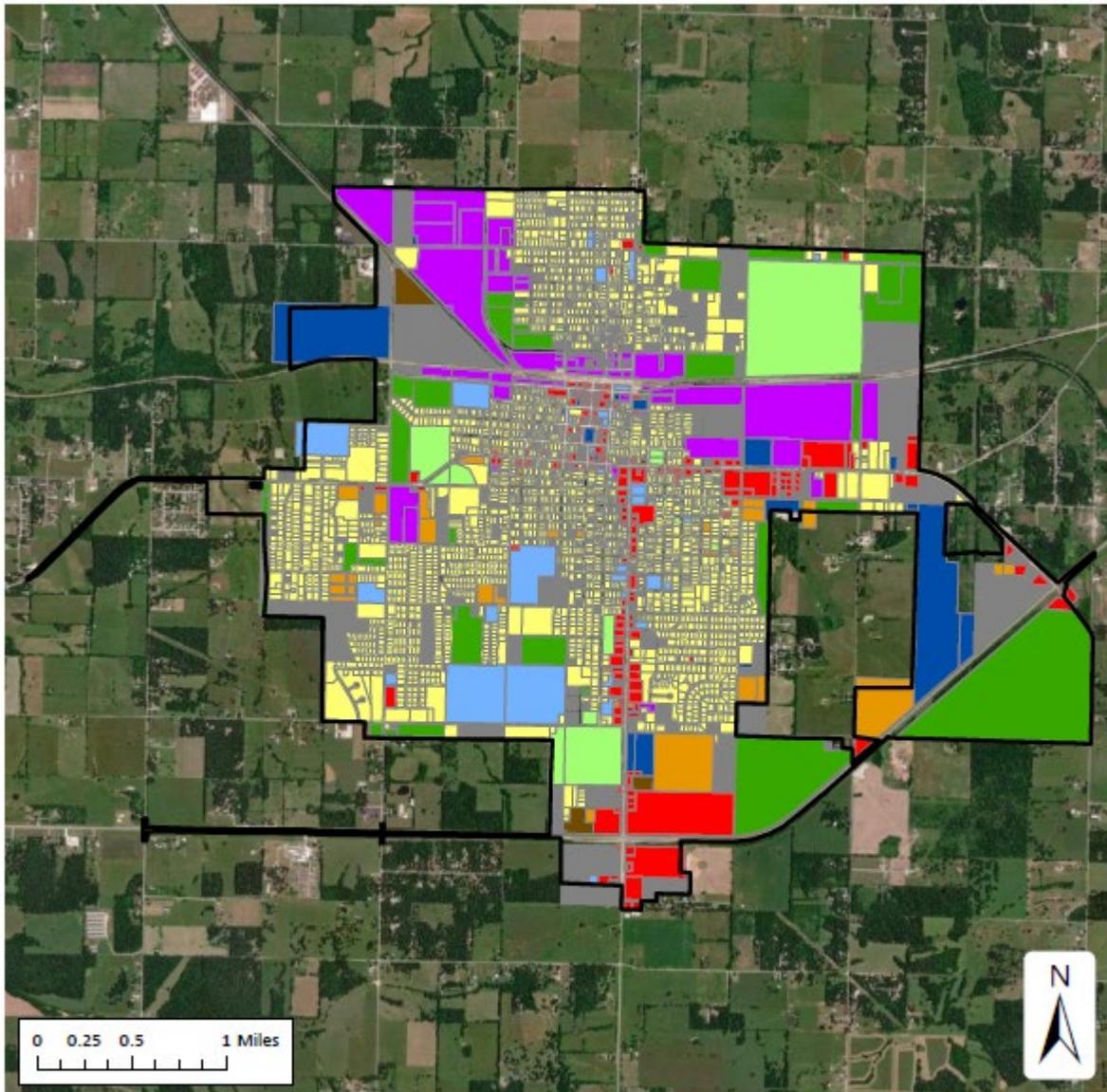
Current Land Use

- Open Space
- Agriculture
- Residential
- Multi-Family
- Mixed Use
- Government
- Institutional
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Vacant
- City Limits

Future Land Use

Over the next 20 years, the city should allow for moderate growth that is compact and contiguous. Future land use designations have been identified and mapped on a future land use map. The designations were determined based on land use, growth patterns, available infrastructure, and community input. There are a total of eight designations.

Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

The parks and recreation designation applies to public parks, trails, conservation areas, other recreational areas, and undeveloped areas. This designation is intended to provide land for recreation and enjoyment, provide areas for wildlife management, separate urban communities, preserve the historic character, and protect the land from future development. Development in these designated areas is limited to recreational, maintenance, and other facilities that serve the intended use of the site. These land parcels should be located along major floodplains, natural assets, any existing or potential public parks, or otherwise undevelopable lands with no immediate use.

Agricultural

The agricultural designation applies to mostly low-density residential properties that contain large tracts of agricultural land. These areas are primarily located outside of existing and future sewer service areas. These land parcels should be in areas with adequate water and other services but do not require central water and sewer services. The established low-density development pattern and ongoing agricultural activities in these areas contribute to their rural character. This character can be enhanced by encouraging only low-intensity uses and context-sensitive rural design.

Single-Family Residential

The single-family designation comprises residential properties with one unit. Residential properties under this designation include single-family dwelling units. Development in this designation may include cluster residential units to conserve open areas. These land parcels should be located in areas with adequate existing or planned transportation access and public infrastructure.

Multi-Family Residential

The mixed neighborhood designation comprises all residential except for low-density and single-family dwelling units. These land parcels are urban and in closer proximity to commercial services. Land parcels in this designation can be used to provide a transition from traditional neighborhoods to more intense uses and major thoroughfares. These land parcels should be located in areas with adequate existing or planned transportation access and public infrastructure.

Neighborhood Center

The neighborhood center designation encourages a variety of uses on these parcels. This designation provides a mix of multi-family housing, commercial, and office uses. The purpose of this land use is to accommodate a wide range of housing types combined with a mix of complementary and supporting uses and activities to serve the neighborhood. These land parcels should be located in areas with adequate existing or planned transportation access and public infrastructure. The uses should be compatible with surrounding development to be permitted.

Commercial

The commercial designation applies primarily to retail and office uses. Some other compatible uses under this designation are healthcare, community facilities, parks, and open space. These designations provide service retail and service needs of surrounding development. This designation also serves to increase employment and contribute to the city's tax base. This designation may also include restaurants and convenience retailers to serve employees and residents. These land parcels should be located in areas with adequate existing or planned transportation access and public infrastructure. The uses should be compatible with surrounding development to be permitted.

Regional Center

The regional center designation primarily applies to locations that primarily provide employment and economic development opportunities, with supportive high-density residential development. This designation may include industrial, warehouse, office, commercial such as restaurants and convenience retailers to serve employees, as well as high-density residential uses. These uses should be situated where they are not in conflict with existing employment land uses and should not be built in such a way to jeopardize the use of those lands most suitable for office or industrial development. These land parcels should be located in areas with adequate existing or planned transportation access and public infrastructure.

Government/Institutional

Government/Institutional designation applies to government, quasi-government, and non-profit facilities. Uses that fall under this designation are government offices, maintenance facilities, healthcare centers, religious, and educational facilities that serve the intended use of the site.

City of Aurora Future Land Use

Future Land Use

- Open Space
- Agriculture
- Residential
- Multi-Family
- Regional Center
- Neighborhood Center
- Government/Institutional
- Commercial
- Industrial
- City Limits

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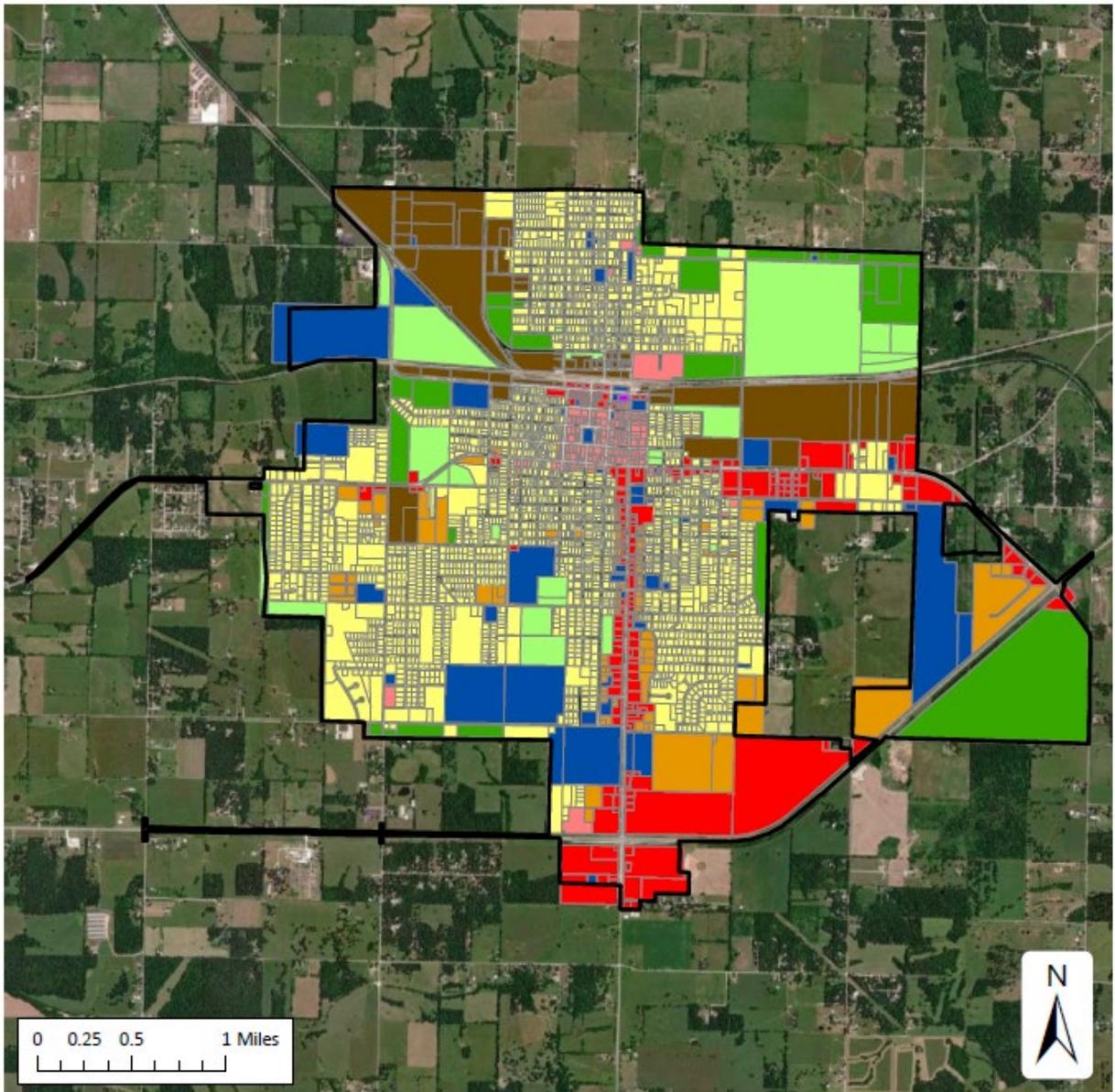
- Goal 1: Allow for inward growth within Aurora.

- Objective 1: Ensure zoning code and rezoning decisions do not conflict with the future land use (FLU) map.

Zoning for future development should be consistent with the future land use map. The city should consult the future land use map for new development and ensure that it aligns with proper zoning and development patterns. The city should review and amend the current zoning code to ensure that constraints towards anticipated development are eliminated.

- Objective 2: Improve feasibility of infill development through improvements to infrastructure.

Conducting a capacity study for current infrastructure will assist in focusing development where infrastructure is available. It can also help give an idea of where infrastructure can be expanded. Infill development within Aurora can be guided by a master infrastructure plan. This plan will focus specifically on infrastructure and could be developed by working with local engineering firms.

- Objective 3: Future annexations should focus on acquiring island parcels within the southeast portion of the city limits surrounded by three or more sides.

To assist with the acquisition of the desired parcels, the city of Aurora can waive fees associated with annexations (e.g., advertising, application, and utility connections). Opening communications with property owners to conduct annexation of areas adjacent to Jerry Sumners Sr. Aurora Municipal Airport will further this goal.

- Goal 2: Encourage future growth and developments which enhance small-town living qualities.
  - Objective 1: Review city code regarding buffers and screening standards to ensure ordinances are consistent with the general area.

Using transitional zones, intensify buffers, and screening requirements for each zone of intensity will assist in separating incompatible uses. Where transition zones are not appropriate or possible, the use of landscape buffers should be recommended. Incorporating landscape buffers and screening standards to protect adjacent property and separate uses is the best practice for land development.

- Objective 2: Maintain updated information on existing capacity, including any future planned developments or infrastructure updates.

To keep an up-to-date log of projects in Aurora, the city should create digital infrastructure maps of new and existing infrastructure. Making the maps easily available to developers and the public will assist with communication about the current and future conditions of Aurora. Placing links to the maps on the city website and social media pages will ensure its accessibility and visibility.

- Goal 3: Encourage commercial development along major intermodal transportation corridors.
  - Objective 1: Prioritize support for commercial development along the major road corridors of Elliott Avenue and Church Street.

Development should be encouraged in areas that are supported by existing infrastructure and major transportation corridors. This allows the developer to be efficient and fiscally responsible.

Elliott Avenue and Church Street are ideal corridors for commercial development. The city should amend the zoning code to allow for appropriate uses along these corridors.

- o **Objective 2: Support industrial development along the major intermodal transportation corridor in northwest Aurora.**

The northern portion of Aurora, especially along the railroad, utilizes some industrial and light manufacturing uses. Many of these parcels are designated as regional centers on the future land use map and align with the uses put forth in that land designation. Aurora can utilize areas designated as regional centers to provide manufacturing and appropriate usage by the railroad.

- o **Objective 3: Encourage higher density development along the major intermodal transportation corridors, such as Elliott Avenue, as a transitional layer between residential and commercial zoning.**

To have a better separation of use and to better utilize transitional zoning, the city should review existing constraints to mixed-use development in the zoning code. Attracting higher-density developments in and around major transportation corridors serves to improve Aurora's economy. Creating relationships with developers and providing incentives for these developments in Aurora can help speed up the introduction of mixed-use corridors within the city.

Elliott Avenue Corridor Sub-plan

Overview

As a component of the comprehensive plan, the city also partnered with SMCOG to develop a sub-plan of the Elliott Avenue corridor. A separate committee comprised of seven stakeholders was formed. The stakeholders comprised of residents, business owners along the corridor, or both. The stakeholders met two times throughout the planning process to discuss the topics addressed in this sub-plan. The stakeholders were:

- Connie Morris, People's Community Bank
- Amy Willhite, Citizen
- Curt Alderman, Citizen
- Dakota Willhite, Citizen
- Pam Alderman, Citizen/Mayse Automotive
- Scott Pettit, Citizen/Petit & Petit Law Office
- Sherry Hall, Your Pizza Place

Elliott Avenue is a major corridor within Aurora that acts as a business hotspot in Aurora as well as serves as a gateway into the city, connecting to Lawrence County and the state's highway system. Elliott Avenue connects Route K to the north and to Route 39 to the south, and the entire corridor is owned and managed by MoDOT. It is also intersected by US Hwy 60 and Business Hwy 60. The majority of the road is a principal arterial within the city and converts to a minor arterial as it leaves the city. North Elliott Avenue's connection to Route K is considered a major collector. MoDOT data show that the northern and southern connections range between 700 – 2000 Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT), and an average of 3500 – 5000 AADT within the city and near Hwy 60.

Community Engagement

Survey questions that targeted the Elliott Avenue corridor were included in the community survey that ran from September 21 through October 4, 2020. Survey results indicate that 59% of respondents wanted to see an increase in growth along the corridor. It is important to note that only a small amount want to see a decrease, and 38% of respondents were neutral about growth along Elliott Avenue. Respondents wanted to see changes along the whole corridor, but many wanted to see improvements at Elliott Avenue and Church Street intersection. The most requested type of development were restaurants (sit-down and fast food) and entertainment. Sidewalks were a commonly reported problem. 76% of respondents answered that they did not feel comfortable walking along Elliott Avenue. The lack of sidewalks was the biggest reported issue, with additional crosswalks and pedestrian signals also being noted.

Elliott Avenue Current Land Use

0   0.25   0.5   1 Miles

N

Current Land Use

Open Space	Multi-Family	Commercial
Agriculture	Mixed Use	Industrial
Residential	Government	Vacant
	Institutional	City Limits

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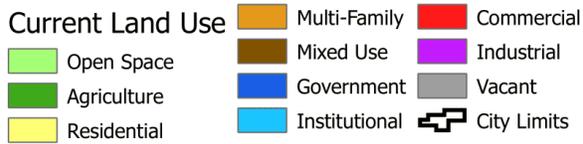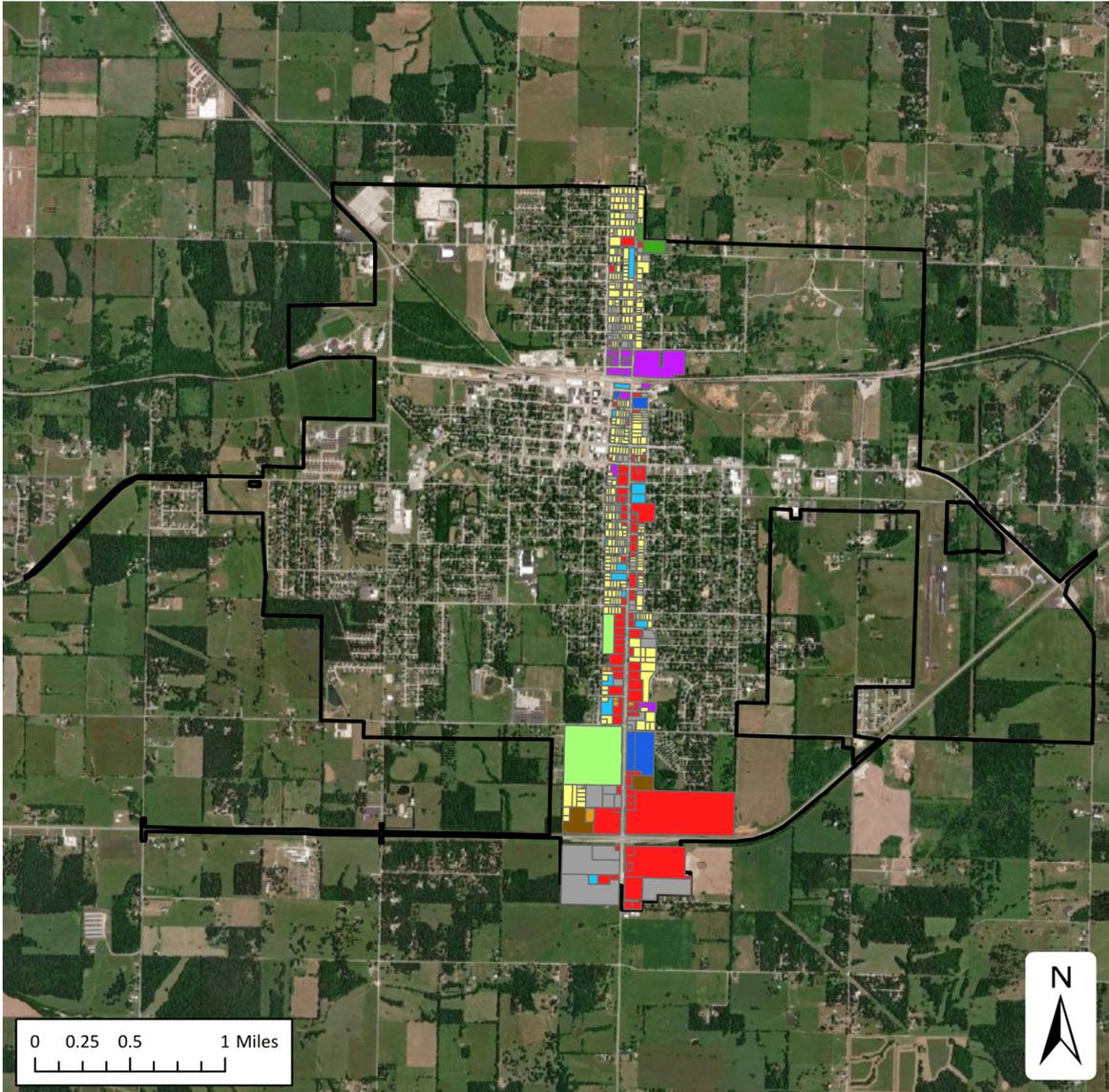
North Elliot Avenue is separated by railroad tracks located above Olive Street. This area is used mostly for single-family residential purposes, with small amounts of commercial and government/institutional usage. Closer to the railroad, there is a portion of parcels that are industrial usage. The southern portion, below the railroad, has a greater mixture of usage. This area acts as a major commercial driver and contains many businesses running to Aurora's city limits. There are also mixed single-family and multi-family residential parcels, as well as government/institutional usages. At the tail end of the corridor, some major developments are Maple Park Cemetery, a Walmart Supercenter, Mayse Automotive, and Sutherlands. Both sections along the corridor also contain several vacant parcels that are currently not being utilized.

Elliott Avenue Future Land Use
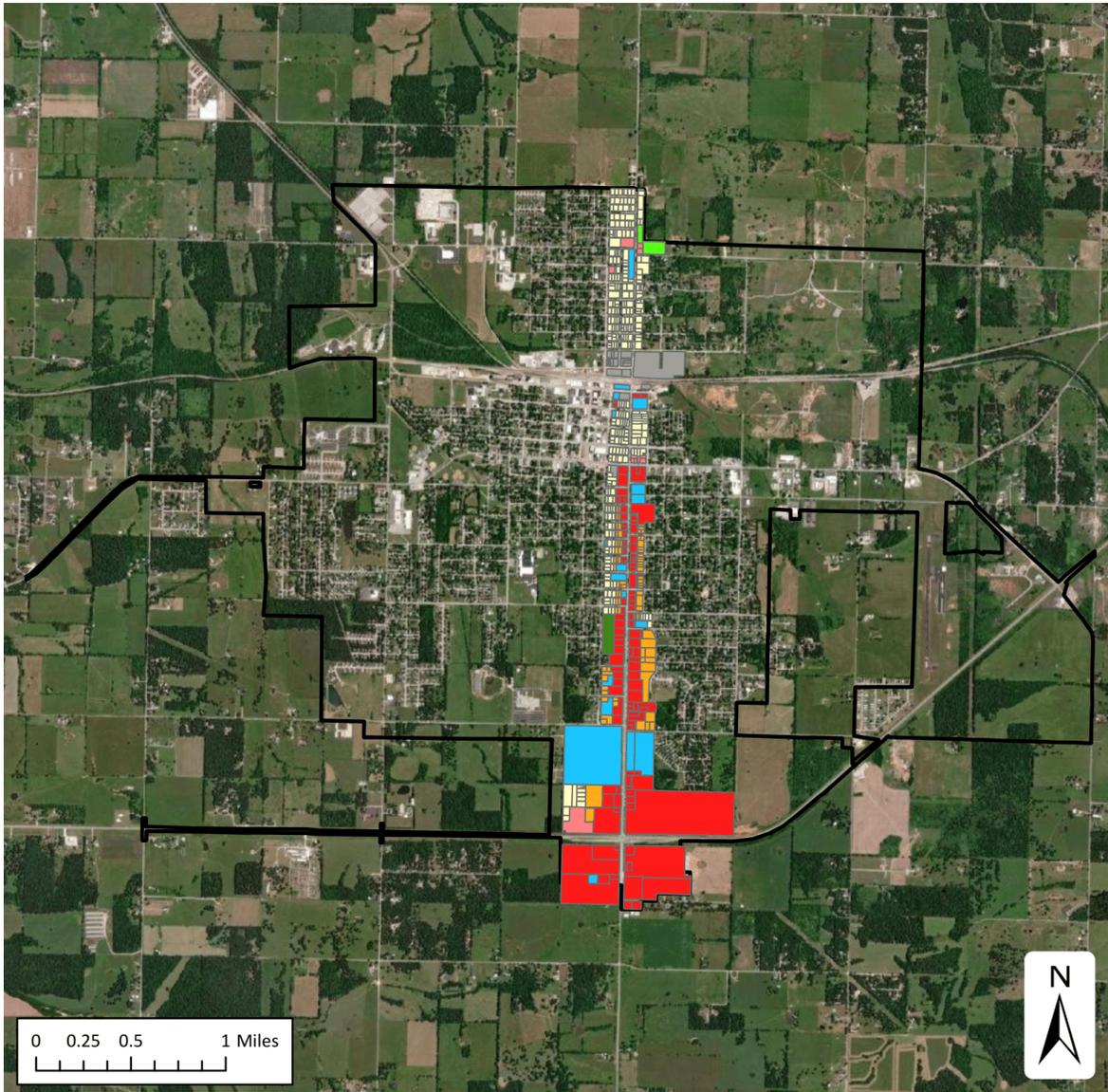
Future Land Use

- 🟩 Agriculture
- 🟥 Commercial
- 🟦 Government/Institutional
- 🟧 Multi-Family
- 🟥 Neighborhood Center
- 🟩 Open Space
- ⬜ Regional Center
- 🟨 Residential
- City Limits

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The goal of Elliott Avenue's future development is to remain a strong commercial corridor while making residential development more cohesive. Currently, due to the organic development of the corridor, the buffer between single-family use and commercial use is non-existent. As shown in the future

land use map, the end goal is to focus parcels adjacent to the road as commercial development, while also allowing for greater multi-family usage behind these parcels. This would create a buffer between neighborhoods and allow for high-density residential development closer to the corridor. The northern portion of Elliott Avenue will continue to be focused on single-family development, creating a community within this area of Aurora.

Goals and Objectives

- Goal 1: Identify and align appropriate types of development along Elliott Avenue with the comprehensive plan and Future Land Use Map.
    - Objective 1: Encourage restaurant, retail development, and recreation opportunities along Elliott Avenue.

    Narrative: The survey results indicated that many residents wanted to see additional commercial businesses come to Elliott Avenue. Some of the requested developments were restaurants, recreation, and retail. Conducting a market study to figure out what is needed to attract these businesses to Aurora can help determine the next best steps for the city going forward. Along with this, it is important to create strong relations with developers and use the study results as a follow-up to show why Aurora would be a good place to invest in.

    - Objective 2: Work with private-public partnerships (P3s) and other groups to help with start-up and support development of vacant properties along the corridor.

    Narrative: Local organizations, such as Create Here, are already working to help small businesses and entrepreneurs develop their businesses and get the resources they need. It is important for the city to focus on working with these organizations, along with the local Chamber of Commerce, to promote business development in the city.

- Goal 2: Work towards fixing issues related to transportation and walkability along Elliott Avenue corridor.
    - Objective 1: Work with SMCOG and MoDOT to determine feasibility of establishing sidewalks along the corridor, as well as maintenance of existing sidewalks.

    Narrative: The addition of sidewalks to Elliott Avenue would help make the city a safer, more walkable place for all. As the road is owned and managed by MoDOT, the city can work with MoDOT to develop an agreement to develop a sidewalk along the Elliott Avenue corridor.

    - Objective 2: Determine potential ways to improve parking along the corridor.

    Narrative: Parking along Elliott Avenue could be vastly improved with the addition of a parking maximum and the removal of parking minimum requirements. Parking minimums require a certain number of parking spaces per business and are wasteful in space. Removing these can help free up land for better use. Parking maximum standards in zoning ordinances limit the construction of parking lots that are larger than necessary.

    - Objective 3: Continue work towards decreasing accidents along Elliott Avenue, as well as general maintenance of intersections.

    Narrative: Unfortunately, the Elliott Avenue corridor has a history of crashes along the road. Utilizing crash data can help identify key areas of improvement, as well as determine the best fix for the issue that matches resources and funding.

- Goal 3: Analyze potential solutions towards stormwater issues that can hinder development along the corridor.
  - o Objective 1: Review 2019 Stormwater Master Plan and evaluate weaknesses along Elliott Avenue.

Narrative: The 2019 Stormwater Master Plan of Aurora is a guiding document for managing water infrastructure and drainage in Aurora. As one of the major corridors of the city, it is important to protect Elliott Avenue from flooding and other potential issues from storms. The city maintains a priority list for repairs and ensures that the plan and priority list address weaknesses and issues related to stormwater infrastructure along Elliott Avenue.

- Goal 4: Facilitate infill development and increase housing stock.
  - o Objective 1: Amend the zoning process for minor subdivisions to become an administrative function instead of a requirement to go before the Planning and Zoning commission.

Narrative: Minor subdivisions are similar to the process to create a subdivision but at a much smaller size and scale. Because of this, some of the developmental work could be handled "in-house" by staff rather than a full-scale review, which is necessary for subdivisions, by the Planning and Zoning Commission.

  - o Objective 2: Promote multi-family development as a transitional usage along Elliott Avenue.

Narrative: Currently, the two dominant uses along Elliott Avenue are commercial development and single-family residential homes. The city should encourage multi-family residential development as a transitional use between commercial and single-family residential homes. This would be beneficial because it would create housing opportunities for lower-income residents, while also serving as a transitional usage between neighborhoods and the commercial corridor and acting as a noise and landscape barrier.

  - o Objective 3: Improve existing housing quality as well as continue to assess options in revitalizing abandoned or foreclosed properties, especially north of Crescent Street.

Narrative: Building vacancies present an issue for many towns, and Aurora has its fair share of "fixer-uppers," either abandoned or simply unused by the current building owner. The city can help residents looking to revitalize these buildings by maintaining resources such as grants or home repair programs to renovate older housing and make it affordable and fresh for the future.

  - o Objective 4: Require landscape buffers for new development in the corridor to reduce noise, pollutants, and other distractions.

Narrative: Appealing landscape aesthetics, such as rows of bushes or trees, can help reduce distractions within the city. Requiring buffers by city code and utilizing screening along Elliott Avenue to beautify the corridor can help create a sense of place in the area.

Funding

The City of Aurora has maintained adequate fund balances, which is an essential part of financing large infrastructure projects. With new community projects underway and a desire for improved infill development, the continued maintenance of city funds is paramount to achieving these goals. A desire

for increased services will need to be matched by an increase in fund revenue. Such an increase in revenue typically comes from an increase in sales tax through retail business expansion and property taxes through the addition of residential and commercial property.

The city utilizes five types of municipal funds: general fund, transportation fund, park and stormwater fun, wastewater fund, and capital improvement fund.

- General Fund: The general fund is used for the general operation of the city such as police, fire services, planning and zoning, municipal court, and administration.
- Transportation Fund: The transportation fund is used for transportation-related expenditures such as street and airport activities.
- Park and Stormwater Fund: The park and stormwater fund is used for park and stormwater expenditures such as park maintenance, swimming pool, and stormwater operation and maintenance.
- Wastewater Fund: The wastewater fund is an enterprise fund and accounts for operations and infrastructure maintenance and development for wastewater utility.
- Capital Improvement Fund: The capital improvement fund is used for capital expenditures and may also be used for the operation of capital expenditures.

Revenues

The following chart shows the breakdown that demonstrates the sources and budgeted amounts for the City's revenues for the Fiscal Year 2022.
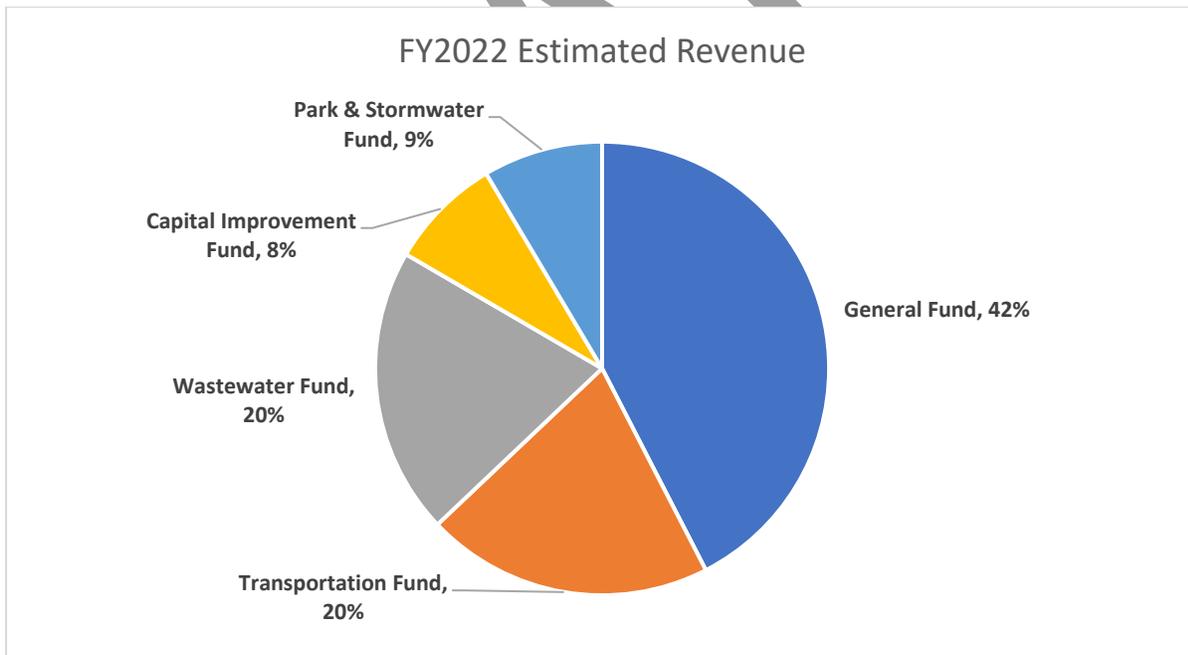
Expenditures

The following chart shows the breakdown that demonstrates the sources and budgeted amounts for the city's expenditures for the Fiscal Year 2022.
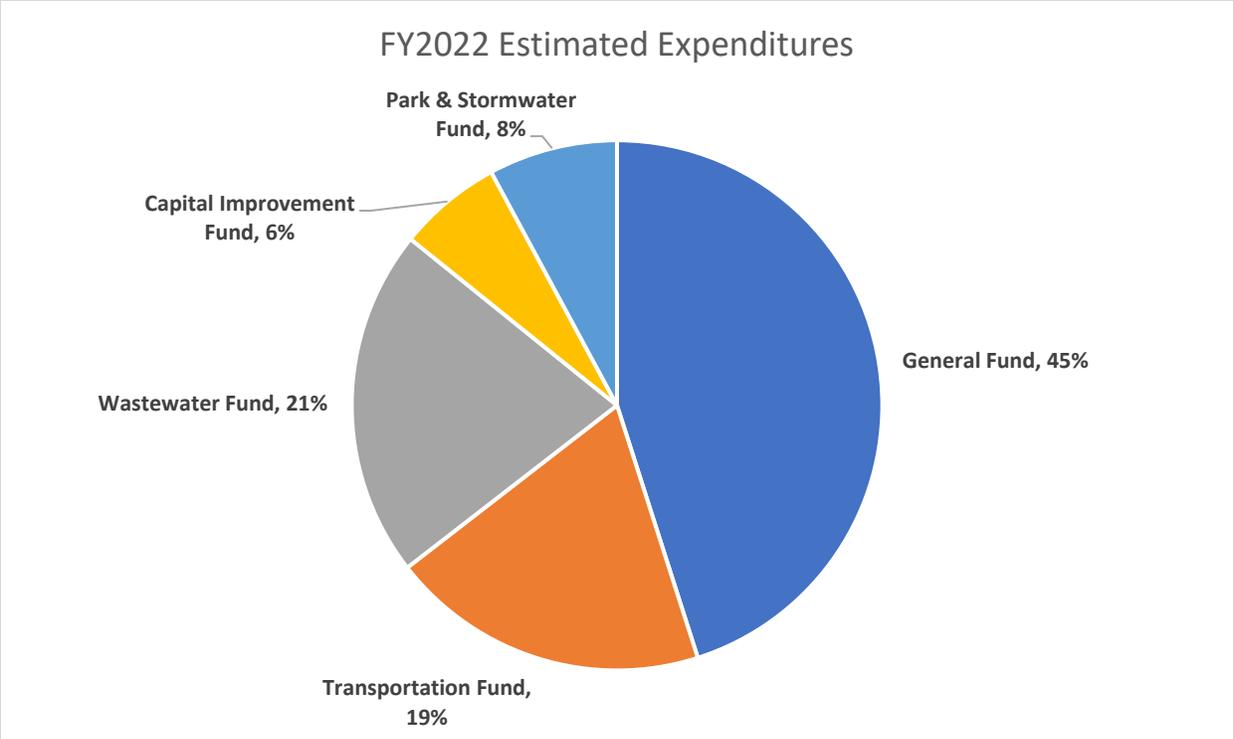
FY2022 Estimated Expenditures

- Park & Stormwater Fund, 8%
- Capital Improvement Fund, 6%
- Wastewater Fund, 21%
- General Fund, 45%
- Transportation Fund, 19%

The following chart shows the breakdown that demonstrates the sources and budgeted amounts for the city's General Fund expenditures for the Fiscal Year 2022. As typical for municipalities, law enforcement contributed significantly to the city's expenditures at 41%.

FY2022 General Fund Expense

- Animal Control, 4%
- Facilities, 3%
- Court, 2%
- Council, 5%
- Cemetery, 7%
- Community Development, 7%
- Finance, 7%
- Admin, 8%
- Police, 41%
- Fire, 16%
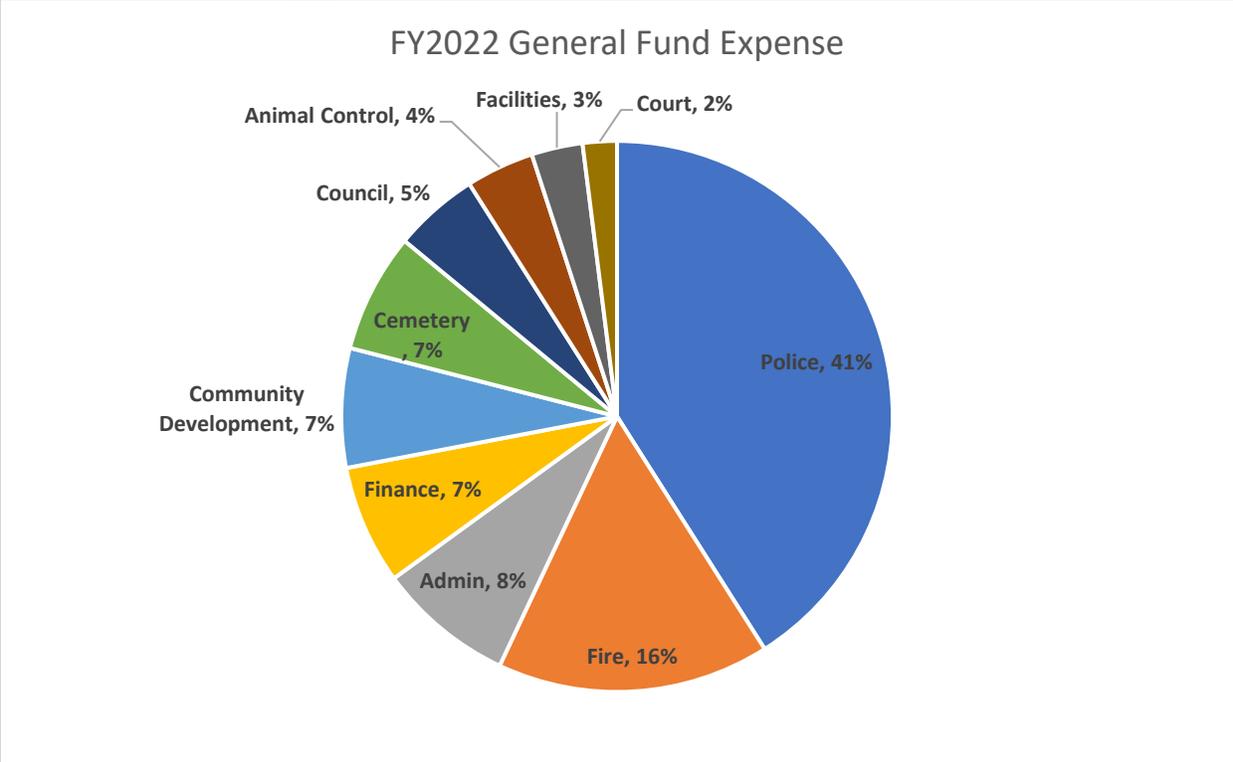
Potential Revenue Sources

Several revenue sources enabled under state statutes as well as grants are available for the city to fund additional activity. It is important to diversify the city's revenue sources to ensure the fiscal sustainability of its operations. Many of the revenue sources require residents' votes to implement. Below is a non-comprehensive list of additional funding sources the city may pursue.

Source	Allowable Uses	Maximum Allowed	Considerations
Economic Development Sales Tax RSMo 67.1305	At least 20% must be used for projects directly related to long-term economic development preparation; No more than 25% may be used for administration	Up to 0.5% of retail sales	Requires voter approval; Revenues must be managed in a separate fund; Requires an economic development tax board; Requires an annual report from the Board on the use of funds
Government Funds	Varies by program	N/A	Typically requires local match; Administration can be demanding; Partner agencies can typically offer free or subsidized grant writing and administration services
Foundation Funds	Varies by program	N/A	May require local match; Typically focused on quality of life initiatives, such as recreation; May have unique requirements
Crowdfunding	Determined by community	N/A	Can be facilitated through online platform; Typically used for specific, small-scale projects; Projects have high level of public support and increase as public engagement/accountability

Implementing the Plan

Comprehensive plan implementation requires all parties: public sector partnerships, private investment, and public engagement. Each party has the responsibility to ensure the goals and objectives laid out in the previous chapters come to fruition.

Jurisdiction Responsibilities

A local government has the responsibility to provide the best community possible to its citizens. This includes ensuring public health, safety, general welfare, and opportunity for responsible growth. The City Council, along with the Planning and Zoning Commission, takes a leadership role in making policy and land use decisions to stimulate growth and development. This power is granted to cities in Chapter 89 of the Missouri Statutes (MO Rev Stat 89.340). Although most of the identified goals and objectives may require action by city staff and officials, several other stakeholders play a vital role in the successful implementation of the comprehensive plan.

City Council

The City Council is the legislative and policy-making body for local government. The council may pass, amend, and remove local laws. The council has the authority to enact and amend zoning regulations after considering the recommendations of the Planning and Zoning Commission. The City Council must consider the comprehensive plan when making various policy decisions for the future of Aurora. While not required by law, it is recommended that the City Council also adopt the plan by resolution.

Planning and Zoning Commission

The primary role of the Planning and Zoning Commission is to review land use applications and make decisions based on the vision outlined in the comprehensive plan. The Planning and Zoning Commission acts as an advisory board by making land use and policy recommendations to the City Council.

Partner Agencies

Partnerships with other levels of governments – municipal, county, and state – and organizations are needed to implement objectives that involve infrastructure projects. Several agencies identified in this plan such as MoDOT are available to provide technical expertise and funding opportunities. These partner agencies can aid and support activities and advocacy efforts for citizens and community events. City staff should utilize these relationships to achieve successful outcomes.

Private Developers, Residents, and Volunteers

Many of the goals, objectives, and strategies rely on the private sector to come to completion. Changes in land use, new development proposals, and citizen education all require involvement and investment by private developers, residents, and volunteers. It is important for these stakeholders to understand their responsibility in implementing this plan as they play a crucial role in investing in the quality of life for Aurora residents. It is critical for the city to continue building relationships with these stakeholders and provide them with tools to successfully implement any planning efforts that are not within the capacity of the officials or the city staff.

Implementation Matrix

During the planning process, the comprehensive planning committee identified strategies for goals and objectives based on the community survey. These strategies ensure the needs and desires of the city residents are fulfilled. The following implementation matrix builds upon those goals and objectives. Priority rankings were based on the goals and objectives prioritization survey.

Objectives	Priority	Strategy	Responsible Entity — A bold X indicates lead entity					Existing Funding Sources	Potential Funding Sources
			County Council	Planning and Zoning Commission	Partner Agencies	Private Developers, Residents, Volunteers	City Staff		
Housing									
Goal 1: Improve the quality of existing housing and neighborhoods.									
Objective 1: Continue to implement and enforce property maintenance codes.	M	Implement joint staff inspections to address and follow code described by International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC), International Building Codes (IBC), and International Fire Codes (IFC).					**X**	N/A	
		Educate residents and property owners on property maintenance code requirements through public outreach on social media, news, in person, etc.				x	**X**	N/A	
		Develop a user-friendly resident complaint system to manage code enforcement violations.				x	**X**	N/A	
		Increase fines and fees associated with property maintenance violations and work with city legal counsel.	**X**				x	N/A	
Objective 2: Utilize dilapidated structures by encouraging residential infill development.	M	Provide incentives to residential development on lots containing unused, dilapidated structures such as waiving utility or permit fees.		x			**X**	General Fund	
		Explore potential grant funding for renovation of dilapidated structures such as city participation in the HOME program through HUD or through CDBG renovations/demolition grants.		x			**X**	N/A	
		Ensure current zoning of vacant lots allows for diverse housing development.		**X**				N/A	
		Market developable lands by providing online resources such as interactive maps.					**X**	General Fund	
Objective 3: Provide neighborhood amenities, such as pocket parks, community gardens, etc.	M	Identify unbuildable lots, such as those in the floodplain, that can better serve the neighborhood.	**X**				x	N/A	
		Determine best usage such as water retention, community gardens, pocket parks, or other ideas in hazard-prone areas.	**X**				x	N/A	
		Find grants or work with a local organization that helps provide funding for renovation of the parcel(s).		x		x	**X**	N/A	
Goal 2: Diversify the housing stock to accommodate current and future needs.									
Objective 1: Encourage development of diverse housing options.	L	Review existing constraints to development of multi-family residential development rather than single-		**X**				N/A	
		Allow flexibility within residential development of lots, including size, setbacks, and other standards.		**X**				N/A	
Objective 2: Promote attainable housing.	L	Develop incentives to attract multi-family housing development such as condominiums, townhouses, duplexes, or apartments to retain and attract residents.		**X**			x	General Fund	
		Encourage and advertise development of sub-standard lots.		x			**X**	General Fund	
Objective 3: Require developers to provide neighborhood amenities.	L	Amend code to require neighborhood amenities through subdivision platting regulations.		**X**				N/A	
Objective 4: Continue to improve communication about new residential development with transparent communication.	L	Update local news, social media, and send updates to residents about any relevant changes regarding new residential development in the city.				x	**X**	General Fund	

Objectives	Priority	Strategy	County Council	Planning and Zoning Commission	Partner Agencies	Private Developers, Residents, Volunteers	City Staff	Existing Funding Sources	Potential Funding Sources
				Responsible Entity — A bold **X** indicates lead entity					
Public Facilities and Services									
Goal 1: Plan for infrastructure improvements to accommodate current and future growth									
Objective 1: Improve current stormwater management system by developing strategies from the 2019 Stormwater Plan.	M	Move forward with development of detention areas in 2030, 2050, 2090 of the 2000 Major Basin.		x			**X**	Park and Stormwater Fund	
		Utilize funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and other grant opportunities to increase 2000 Major Basin detention areas.		**X**			x	N/A	Government Grants
		Inspect the undersized structures along the Major Basin.					**X**	Park and Stormwater Fund	
Objective 2: Ensure water and sewer capacity can accommodate for current and future growth.	M	Commission water and sewer rates studies to inspect current conditions and future capacity.		x	x		**X**	General Fund	Government Grants
		Communicate with Liberty Utilities to address potential changes to water rates and sewage capacity to ensure long-term fiscal sustainability and			x		**X**	N/A	
		Acquire the EPA's Storm Water Management Model (SWMM) to help predict the runoff quantity and quality from drainage systems.					**X**	N/A	
Objective 3: Improve broadband access to residents and businesses.	M	Determine where the underserved areas are within the community.				x	**X**	N/A	
		Review the National Broadband Map and analyze current pricing options within Aurora.					**X**	N/A	
		Utilize funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and other grant opportunities to enhance broadband services.		**X**			x	N/A	Government Grants
Goal 2: Support community services to maintain and increase citizens' satisfaction.									
Objective 1: Continue to provide high-quality emergency services.	M	Conduct capital inventory and assess future needs.	x				**X**	General Fund	
		Research expanding city messaging alert system to all citizens.					**X**	General Fund	Government Grants
Objective 2: Explore youth program options within the city.	M	Analyze feasibility for implementing youth recreation services and after-school programs through Parks and Recreation Department.					**X**	Park and Stormwater Fund	
Objective 3: Provide lighting in public areas to increase safety.	M	Identify areas with insufficient lighting coverage.			x		**X**	N/A	
		Update lighting in the city to be more energy-efficient and brighter (LED lights)					**X**	General Fund	

Objectives	Priority	Strategy	County Council	Planning and Zoning Commission	Partner Agencies	Private Developers, Residents, Volunteers	City Staff	Existing Funding Sources	Potential Funding Sources
			Responsible Entity						
			A bold **X** indicates lead entity						
Transportation									
Goal 1: Create a multimodal transportation system that is accessible to all and promotes a healthy and active community.									
Objective 1: Repair and expand existing sidewalks to enhance walkability in the community.	H	Conduct a sidewalk inventory to identify areas with the most need for improvements.		x			**X**	General Fund	
		Determine a priority list towards sidewalk improvements or extensions.	x	**X**			x	N/A	
		Apply for grants such as Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) to fund sidewalk improvement		x			**X**	N/A	Government Grants
Objective 2: Make all sidewalks and curb ramps ADA accessible.	H	Review sidewalk inventory for ADA compliance.					**X**	N/A	
		Create priority list for ADA improvements.					**X**	N/A	
Objective 3: Identify opportunities for trails and bike lanes.	H	Partner with trails and greenways groups and bicycle advocacy organizations to promote use.			x	x	**X**	N/A	
		Investigate opportunities for connections to regional trails.					**X**	N/A	Government Grants
		Conduct a traffic study to identify streets that could accommodate bike lanes.			**X**		x	General Fund	
		Research grants or other funding methods for bike lane development and begin implementation.					**X**	N/A	Government Grants
Objective 4: Require sidewalks for all new development.	H	Ensure the connectivity of new development with existing sidewalks.	x	**X**			x	N/A	
Objective 5: Continue to improve downtown mobility.	H	Identify any issues in the sidewalks or road that hinder pedestrian mobility.				x	**X**	N/A	
		Ensure all public spaces downtown are accessible and within ADA compliance.					**X**	Transportation Fund	
		Research opportunities to create connections between surrounding neighborhoods and the			x		**X**	N/A	Government Grants
Goal 2: Maintain and Enhance current road system.									
Objective 1: Develop city-wide transportation plan.	H	Partner with consultants, non-profit organizations, or universities to develop the plan.		**X**	x	x		General Fund	
		Create a budget to develop a city transportation plan.	**X**				x	General Fund	
Objective 2: Prioritize maintenance of existing roads to improve current conditions.	H	Allow for easier public input on problem areas within the transportation network through an easy-to-use complaint system.					**X**	General Fund	
		Ensure that any problem areas are being addressed by road and public works service and create a database to record all maintenance projects.					**X**	Transportation Fund	
		Continue to assess budget for repairs and make sure there is adequate funding.					**X**	N/A	Government Grants
Objective 3: Develop and Implement traffic calming measures.	H	Utilize traffic study to identify areas where traffic-calming measures such as bulb-outs, raised crosswalks, speed bumps and other solutions can be			**X**		x	N/A	
		Determine where stop signs or traffic lights can be added to areas with increased traffic counts and higher speeds.			**X**		x	N/A	
Objective 4: Acquire county-owned roads to ensure connectivity with new developments.	H	Determine what areas are attainable within or near city limits.		x			**X**	General Fund	
		When budget allows, open talks with Lawrence County transportation departments into acquiring road infrastructure.	x	**X**			x	Transportation Fund	
Goal 3: Collaborate with other planning partner agencies on transportation-related issues.									
Objective 1: Prioritize needs within the city during SMCOG's annual transportation prioritization process with Lawrence County.	L	Fill out the SMCOG transportation needs reporting form.	x	x			**X**	N/A	
		Attend the Lawrence County prioritization commission meeting.	x	x			**X**	N/A	
Objective 2: Continue to explore partnerships with developers, county, MoDOT, MoDNR, for funding priority projects.	L	Continue to work with planning partners to build and maintain relationships and regularly update them on potential transportation projects.	x	x			**X**	N/A	

Objectives	Priority	Strategy	Responsible Entity — A bold **X** indicates lead entity					Existing Funding Sources	Potential Funding Sources
			County Council	Planning and Zoning Commission	Partner Agencies	Private Developers, Residents, Volunteers	City Staff		
Community Image									
Goal 1: Create a community brand and identity.									
Objective 1: Foster the "small-town feel" of Aurora with the development of a brand.	L	Host community workshops to identify Aurora's				x	**X**	General Fund	
		Design a branding package and promotional materials.		x			**X**	General Fund	
		Implement new brand throughout the city, city's website, and social media pages.					**X**	N/A	
Objective 2: Create wayfinding signs system in the community.	L	Develop a consistent design.					**X**	General Fund	
		Locate entry points into city limits along major thoroughfares and to welcome into the city.					**X**	N/A	
		Install signage to direct residents and visitors to local attractions such as the parks, downtown, public facilities or special districts.	x	x			**X**	General Fund	Government Grants, Foundation Funds, Private Support
Objective 3: Utilize technology and other outlets to promote and standardize Aurora's brand.	L	Develop a social media policy that will determine specifics of utilization, such as responsibility of ownership, approval of content, posting times, etc.	x				**X**	General Fund	
		Ensure social media handles are present on public notices and communication materials to help grow notoriety and awareness of Aurora's media channels.					**X**	General Fund	
Goal 2: Enhance community engagement.									
Objective 1: Engage community through events and programs.	L	Consider incorporating crosswalk paintings and identify mural opportunities for community events.				x	**X**	General Fund	Foundation Funds
		Host an annual social to develop relationships among public safety personnel, city staff, elected officials, and residents.	x	x		x	**X**	General Fund	
		Ensure that permitting process for utilizing Aurora's downtown is clear to the public through education and information on media channels.		**X**			x	General Fund	
		Partner with local schools, businesses, and organizations to host community events/ parades.				x	**X**	General Fund	
Objective 2: Utilize multiple channels of communication to engage residents and visitors.	L	Ensure that all channels of communication are being used and improved, such as through email, newsletter, physical mail, newspaper, etc.					**X**	General Fund	
		Advertise other channels of communication through each other, such as talking about Aurora's newsletter or email updates on social media and vice versa.					**X**	General Fund	

Objectives	Priority	Strategy	County Council	Planning and Zoning Commission	Partner Agencies	Private Developers, Residents, Volunteers	City Staff	Existing Funding Sources	Potential Funding Sources
					Responsible Entity				
					A bold X indicates lead entity				
Economic Development										
Goal 1: Attract new businesses and visitors to the city.										
Objective 1: Use incentives to entice quality businesses and new development that align with the community vision.	H	Prepare a fiscal impact analysis to evaluate feasibility of reducing fees for developers.			**X**		x	General Fund	
		Adjust potential utility, rezoning, or other infrastructure fees to encourage.	**X**				x	General Fund	
Objective 2: Assess options within vacant areas to determine how to revitalize abandoned buildings and properties to encourage inward growth.	H	Highlight development in areas where infrastructure already exists.					**X**	N/A	
		Work in assisting any potential development that occurs in vacant spots, utilizing tools such as reduction of fees or other economic assistance such as federal, state, or local grants.	x	**X**			x	General Fund	Development Sales Tax, Govrnment Funds
Objective 3: Ensure that new development is in accordance with city	H	Implement a plan review process.		**X**			x	General Fund	
Goal 2: Continue to support current businesses within Aurora.										
Objective 1: Promote communication between the city and business owners regarding economic development programs.	H	Become a resource that helps compile grants and loans that are beneficial to small businesses such as SBA loans, gap finance loans, and other grants.					**X**	N/A	
		Ensure incentive policies support redevelopment and assistance for existing businesses.	**X**					General Fund	
Objective 2: Continue to utilize the Chamber of Commerce and other organizations' resources to enhance economic growth.	H	Create a marketing plan to identify potential development for the city.					**X**	General Fund	
		Work with local economic groups to identify market gaps and complimentary businesses that are important to attract.				x	**X**	N/A	
Objective 3: Develop sustainable and local economic development programs that are available for local small businesses.	H	Review options for implementing a revolving loan fund or gap financing.					**X**	N/A	
		After implementation, educate local business owners on the benefits of utilizing these programs.				x	**X**	General Fund	
Goal 3: Work towards revitalization and creation of a more vibrant community atmosphere in downtown.										
Objective 1: Explore options available for downtown revitalization.	M	Work with non-profits and local universities to create a downtown revitalization plan.		**X**		x	x	N/A	
		Research downtown revitalization grants.			x		**X**	N/A	Government Funds
Objective 2: Continue downtown beautification efforts through the addition of greenery, façade improvements, additional seating, and other aesthetic changes.	M	Budget for potential beautification downtown using the historical downtown development fund.	**X**	x			x	General Fund	
		Review constraints for local businesses owners to add potential improvements to the area such as to permit review, outdoor seating requirements, minimum code standards, lighting and parking standards.	x	**X**		x	x	N/A	
		Continue progress towards development of mural artwork in downtown Aurora.				x	**X**	General Fund	
Objective 3: Encourage and promote events in the downtown area.	M	Communicate with local businesses or groups for using downtown to host events.				x	**X**	N/A	
		Assist in advertisement of the events through city social media, news, or other outlets.					**X**	General Fund	
		Create user-friendly event permitting process.					**X**	General Fund	

Objectives	Priority	Strategy	County Council	Planning and Zoning Commission	Partner Agencies	Private Developers, Residents, Volunteers	City Staff	Existing Funding Sources	Potential Funding Sources
					Responsible Entity				
					A bold **X** indicates lead entity				

Land Use

Goal 1: Allow for inward growth within Aurora.

Objectives	Priority	Strategy	County Council	Planning and Zoning Commission	Partner Agencies	Private Developers, Residents, Volunteers	City Staff	Existing Funding Sources	Potential Funding Sources
Objective 1: Ensure zoning code and rezoning decisions do not conflict with future land use (FLU) map.	M	Consult the FLU map with new development and ensure that it aligns with proper development patterns.		**X**			x	N/A	
		Review and amend current zoning code and ensure that constraints towards anticipated development are eliminated.	x	**X**			x	N/A	
Objective 2: Improve feasibility of infill development through improvements to infrastructure.	L	Work with an engineering firm to develop a master infrastructure plan.		x		**X**	x	General Fund	
		Conduct a capacity study for current infrastructure.		x		**X**	x	General Fund	
		Focus development where infrastructure is available.		**X**			x	N/A	
Objective 3: Future annexations should focus on acquiring island parcels within the southeast portion of the city limits surrounded by three or more sides.	L	Waive fees associated with annexations, for instance advertising, application, and utility connections.		x			x	N/A	
		Communicate with property owners to conduct annexation of areas adjacent to Jerry Sumners Sr. Aurora Municipal Airport.		x			**X**	N/A	

Goal 2: Encourage future growth and developments which enhance small-town living qualities.

Objectives	Priority	Strategy	County Council	Planning and Zoning Commission	Partner Agencies	Private Developers, Residents, Volunteers	City Staff	Existing Funding Sources	Potential Funding Sources
Objective 1: Review city code regarding buffers and screening standards to ensure ordinances are consistent with the general area.	M	Using transitional zones, intensify buffers and screening requirements for each zone of intensity.	**X**	x			x	N/A	
		Incorporate landscape buffers and screening standards between uses to protect adjacent property and separate uses.	**X**	x			x	N/A	
Objective 2: Maintain updated information on existing capacity including any future planned developments or infrastructure updates.	M	Create digital infrastructure maps to track new and existing infrastructure.					**X**	General Fund	
		Make the maps available to developers and public.					**X**	N/A	

Goal 3: Encourage commercial development along major intermodal transportation corridors.

Objectives	Priority	Strategy	County Council	Planning and Zoning Commission	Partner Agencies	Private Developers, Residents, Volunteers	City Staff	Existing Funding Sources	Potential Funding Sources
Objective 1: Prioritize support for commercial development along the major road corridors of Elliott Ave. and	L	Amend zoning code to allow for appropriate uses that are conducive to this development along these areas.		**X**			x	N/A	
Objective 2: Support industrial development along the major intermodal transportation corridor in northwest Aurora.	L	Utilize areas designated as Regional Centers based on the Future Land Use Map to provide manufacturing and appropriate usage by the railroad.		**X**			x	N/A	
Objective 3: Encourage higher density development along the major intermodal transportation corridors, such as Elliott Avenue, as a transitional layer between residential and	L	Review existing constraints to mixed-use development in zoning code.		**X**			x	N/A	
		Attract higher-density developments by creating relationships with developers and providing incentives for these developments in Aurora.		**X**			x	N/A	

Objectives	Priority	Strategy	Responsible Entity					Existing Funding Sources	Potential Funding Sources
			A bold **X** indicates lead entity						
			County Council	Planning and Zoning Commission	Partner Agencies	Private Developers, Residents, Volunteers	City Staff		
Elliot Avenue									
Goal 1: Identify and align appropriate types of development along Elliott Avenue with the comprehensive plan and Future Land Use Map.									
Objective 1: Encourage restaurant, retail development, and recreational opportunities along Elliott Avenue.	H	Conduct a market study to better determine needs for commercial development.			**X**		x	General Fund	
		Maintain relations with developers and provide study results to encourage appropriate				x	**X**	N/A	
Objective 2: Work with private-public partnerships (P3s) and other groups to help with start-up and support development of vacant properties along	H	Work with local organizations that can help provide grants and other funding for development along Elliott.				x	**X**	N/A	Government Funds, Private Funds
Goal 2: Work towards fixing issues related to transportation and walkability along Elliott Avenue corridor.									
Objective 1: Work with SMCOG and MoDOT to determine feasibility of establishing sidewalks along the corridor, as well as maintenance of existing sidewalks.	M	Follow up on regional request to discuss sidewalk additions on Elliott Avenue.					**X**	N/A	
		Work with MoDOT to implement sidewalk changes within the city, such as taking responsibility of upkeep within city limits.				x	**X**	Transportation Funds	
Objective 2: Determine potential ways to improve parking along the corridor.	M	Look into creating parking maximums and removing parking minimums to encourage better usage of	x	**X**			x	N/A	
Objective 3: Continue work towards decreasing accidents along Elliott, as well as general maintenance of intersections.	H	Review MoDOT crash data, and identify key areas where crashes occur most frequently.				x	**X**	N/A	
		Determine what traffic improvements can be made in the area, depending on resources and funding.				x	x	**X**	Transportation Funds	Government Funds
Goal 3: Analyze potential solutions towards stormwater issues that can hinder development along the corridor.									
Objective 1: Review 2019 Stormwater Master Plan and evaluate weaknesses along Elliott Avenue.	M	Evaluate priority list within the plan and budget for necessary improvements or repairs.	**X**				x	Park and Stormwater Funds	Government Funds
		Begin repairs of necessary weak spots along Elliott Avenue.				x	**X**	Park and Stormwater Funds	Government Funds
Goal 4: Facilitate infill development and increase housing stock.									
Objective 1: Amend zoning process for minor subdivision to become an administrative function instead of a requirement to go before the Planning and Zoning commission.	L	Write proposed zoning code change and review with Planning and Zoning Commission, as well as the City Council for approval.	x	**X**			x	N/A	
Objective 2: Promote multi-family development as a transitional usage along Elliott Avenue.	L	Allow for multi-family development south of Olive Street to act as a transitional usage between single-family and commercial development.	x	**X**			x	N/A	
		Encourage multi-family development through incentives along Elliott Avenue.	x	**X**			x	N/A	
		Work with developers along Elliott Avenue during minor subdivision processes to speed up development.				x	**X**	N/A	
Objective 3: Improve existing housing quality as well as continue to assess options in revitalizing abandoned or foreclosed properties, especially north of	L	Explore grant opportunities to encourage the redevelopment of older housing.			x		**X**	N/A	
		Research local home repair programs as ways to renovate older housing stock.			x		**X**	N/A	
Objective 4: Require landscape buffers for new development in the corridor to reduce noise, pollutants, and other distractions.	L	Amend code to include stronger requirements for landscape buffers along the corridor.	x	**X**			x	N/A	
		Utilize screening along Elliott to beautify the landscape and create a more vibrant sense of place.		**X**			x	N/A	

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