

ALL

in

ALLAMAKEE

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN *for* ALLAMAKEE COUNTY

20
21



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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“You can have it **all in Allamakee County.**”

“We’re ‘**all-in**’ for **Allamakee County.**”

“It **all happens in Allamakee County.**”

“We’re **all in** this together.”

*Bluffs along the Upper Mississippi River
at Effigy Mounds National Monument
(Image Credit: National Park Service)*

ALL
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ALLAMAKEE

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Adoption Resolution



RESOLUTION # 21.176

**ADOPTION OF ALLAMAKEE COUNTY'S OFFICIAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN,
"ALL IN ALLAMAKEE" (THE "ALL-IN PLAN")**

WHEREAS it is recommended that the County's comprehensive plan be updated every five to ten years, and the previous comprehensive plan for Allamakee County was completed in 2002; and

WHEREAS the Allamakee County Board of Supervisors contracted Upper Explorerland Regional Planning Commission (UERPC) to provide professional planning services in developing a new comprehensive plan for Allamakee County; and

WHEREAS UERPC convened a comprehensive plan steering committee composed of economic development and tourism representation, community members, and members of the Allamakee County Planning and Zoning Commission and Board of Adjustments to guide the plan's development throughout the planning process; and

WHEREAS the planning process for the All-In Plan involved a robust public engagement component consisting of online surveys, multiple public engagement events at different locations around the county, and continuous opportunities for community members to provide comments and feedback throughout the planning process; and

WHEREAS this robust public engagement is the basis of the All-In Plan's community-derived, community-vetted policy framework, vision statements, and goals; and


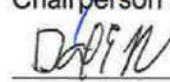
WHEREAS the All-In Plan steering committee and Allamakee County Planning and Zoning Commission have had the opportunity to thoroughly review the plan and have recommended it to the Board of Supervisors for public review and adoption; and

WHEREAS the Allamakee County Board of Supervisors held public hearings on April 19th, April 26th, and May 3rd, 2021, to receive and consider public comments on the All-In Plan;

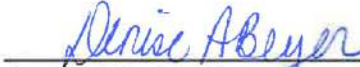
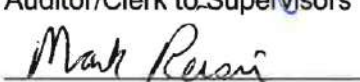
NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Supervisors of Allamakee County that "All in Allamakee" (the "All-In Plan") is adopted as the official comprehensive plan for Allamakee County.

Roll-call vote:

Byrnes	<u>Aye</u>
Reiser	<u>Aye</u>
Schellhammer	<u>Aye</u>


 Chairperson Larry Schellhammer

 Dan Byrnes, Supervisor

ATTEST:


 Auditor/Clerk to Supervisors

 Mark Reiser, Supervisor

Passed and adopted this 3rd day of MAY, 2021.

1: Introduction



OVERVIEW

Allamakee County sits at the extreme northeastern corner of the state of Iowa, bordering Minnesota and Wisconsin along the majestic Upper Mississippi River. The county is part of a geologically and culturally unique multi-state region known as the Driftless Area. The word “driftless” is a reference to the absence of glacial drift as the area escaped the land-flattening glaciation of the last ice age.¹ As such, in addition to agricultural uses, the landscape is defined by steep, forested ridges, deeply carved river valleys, unique karst geology, and spring-fed, cold-water trout streams.

Ecologically, the Driftless Area is something of a hybrid between northeastern woodlands and western prairies. While rolling plains and farmland are common in the central and southwestern parts of the county, the flora and fauna of Allamakee County’s bluffs and woodlands can more closely resemble those of the Great Lakes region and New England—sugar maples, tall white pines, balsam firs, and even the occasional moose or black bear.^{2,3} Visitors from a wide area are attracted to Allamakee County to enjoy the scenic natural areas and rural character for which it is so well known.

At the 2010 census, there were 14,330 people living in Allamakee County. The county’s population reached a height of 19,791 in 1880 and has declined gradually since. Waukon is the county seat and most populous municipality in the county with a population of 3,897 at the 2010 census. There are five other incorporated cities within the county: New Albin (the farthest northeast town in Iowa), Lansing, Harpers Ferry, Waterville, and Postville (which extends partly into Clayton County, Iowa). Table 1 shows a population comparison of these communities and the county as a whole.

Table 1: Population comparison of Allamakee County and its cities

	2010 census	2018 estimate
Allamakee County	14,330	13,880
Harpers Ferry	328	257
Lansing	999	769
New Albin	522	562
Postville	2,227	2,530
Waterville	144	116
Waukon	3,897	3,716

Data source: U.S. Census Bureau

Figure 1: Allamakee County graphic overview map





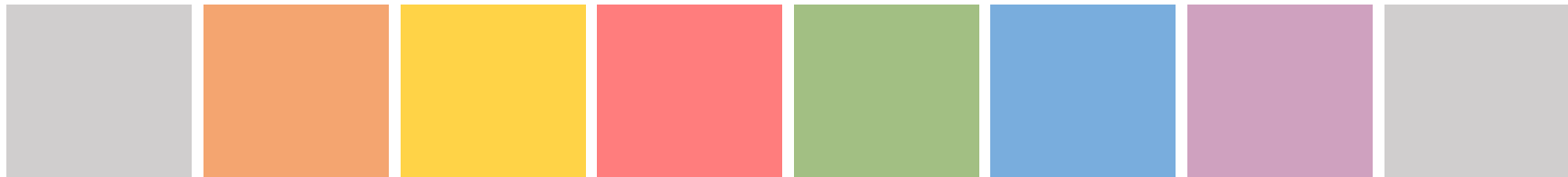
Snowy woodlands in Allamakee County (Image Credit: Laurie Moody)

PLANNING IN IOWA

The Iowa Smart Planning Principles (see Table 2) were signed into law on April 26, 2010, approximately one decade prior to this plan’s adoption. As one of the three primary components of the Iowa Smart Planning Act contained in State Code Chapter 18B, these principles must be considered and may be applied when local governments and state agencies deliberate all appropriate planning, zoning, development, and resource management decisions. The planning process for this comprehensive plan and the development of this plan document have earnestly taken all of these principles into consideration. The individual principles do not directly correspond to specific chapters or sections of this plan; rather, every one of the principles is threaded throughout the contents of the plan, as none of these planning principles can be separated from the others.

Table 2: Iowa Smart Planning Principles

Principle 1: Collaboration
Principle 2: Efficiency, Transparency, & Consistency
Principle 3: Clean, Renewable, & Efficient Energy
Principle 4: Occupational Diversity
Principle 5: Revitalization
Principle 6: Housing Diversity
Principle 7: Community Character
Principle 8: Natural Resources & Agricultural Protection
Principle 9: Sustainable Design
Principle 10: Transportation Diversity



ALL-IN PLANNING PROCESS

Allamakee County contracted with Upper Explorerland Regional Planning Commission (UERPC) for planning services to create an updated comprehensive plan for the County, whose previous plan was adopted in 2002. Early planning and organization for *All In Allamakee*, or the “All-In Plan” for short, began in the spring of 2018 with the organization of a steering committee consisting of Planning and Zoning Commission officials, economic development and tourism representatives, County staff, and other stakeholders. The steering committee helped guide the overall planning process, public outreach strategies, and creation of the final plan document.

UERPC created and deployed an online community survey that covered every topic area of the plan and remained open during the entire planning process. UERPC also organized and held a series of public meetings at different locations around the county during 2018 and 2019. All of this was done in an effort to gain as much community feedback as possible to guide the development of the plan.



*All-In Plan community open house
at Waukon Wellness Center
(Image Credit: Aaron Detter, UERPC)*

I'd love it...

A place to come back to

Desirable place to retire

Good schools

Good hospitals

Hotel - small conventions -

H.F. - leasing 50-100 group size

Good Restaurants

Living history farm 1920s era

EA county different craft decade

Waukon - Waukon Junction
bike trails. Destination

1000

Live, work and/or play.

Ample fabulous daycare

Ample fabulous housing options
for different stages of life

If we could improve current housing

Develop Recreational Areas we have

Unique topography to Farm - challenging

encourage diversity + variety of farm operations
including value added products

encourage young families to return OR to stay

Dream

- More, diverse

farms

- Young Farmers

- Housing Options

- Enhance existing
employment

- 4-Season
tourism
economy

(- Snow mobile
trails)

Farmers markets

* Stable, non-declining
population

Rural Nature of County

Need to make people aware of Farming history

Need Animal Ag + Protect Ag?

Loss / Access to State Land?

Ag Tourism - Need

Promote / Grow Farm (Local Grow opportunities)

Incorporate Conservation Programs in the schools.

We have a diverse economy

How does population spread impact economy.

Good / excellent Health Care Facilities.

Need to encourage housing improvements

Address / Need Transportation for elder population.

- Taxi / other svc's

Daycare svc. Need / Generational Care?

- want to attract quality EB's

Eco-Tourism

• River - Family time

• Hobbies - come together

• Buffaloes

• Safe

• Outdoors
Hunting / fishing

• Family connection
Village

• Simplicity
outdoors, come
often

• belong / comfortable

• Low property taxes

All-In Plan community visioning whiteboards from
meetings in Lansing, Postville, and Waukon

(Image Credit: Aaron Detter, UERPC)

The planning methodology that UERPC utilized to engage community members at these meetings is known as “appreciative inquiry.” Through that process, community members “discover” what is working well or not working, “dream” of what could be done better or what the future could look like, and “design” strategies to achieve that vision. In the fall of 2018, community visioning meetings were held in Lansing, Postville, and Waukon to engage residents and stakeholders in the first two phases (“discover” and “dream”). Later in 2019, a large community open house was held in Waukon to share information gathered so far, to engage community members in refining vision statements for each of the plan’s chapters, and to “design” strategies for achieving those visions.

UERPC drafted the final plan document during 2020. It was reviewed by the steering committee, Planning and Zoning Commission, and County Supervisors, then further refined by UERPC based on that feedback. A public review draft was publicized and posted on both UERPC’s and the County’s websites before the Board of Supervisors held a series of three public hearings and formally adopted the plan on May 3rd, 2021.



*All-In Plan community open house
at Waukon Wellness Center
(Image Credit: Aaron Detter, UERPC)*

“Isn’t everything in such a plan only advisory and ends up on the shelf without officials really using it when needed?”

IMPLEMENTATION

The All-In Plan is a community-derived, community-vetted framework for ensuring a healthy, prosperous Allamakee County. The plan is based on robust community involvement and on the sound planning principles set out in Iowa Code (see Table 2). It articulates aspirational policies intended to assist and guide decision-makers, leaders, elected officials, community members, and especially current and future County Supervisors, in working toward common goals. The County intends to implement the goals and policies of the All-In Plan in the following ways:

- Through internal procedures and practices;
- Through the decisions and actions of the Board of Supervisors (whose membership will change over the life of this plan);
- Through its work and coordination with other public agencies, with residents, and with members of the business community; and
- By making amendments and modifications to the County’s code of ordinances and zoning and subdivision ordinances when necessary and as appropriate.

At its heart, the All-In Plan is a tool for transparency and accountability. As an expression of local values and community will, the plan plays a role in helping to reduce and/or avoid controversy in local decision-making. The decisions of public bodies are defensible when they are consistent with and support the policies and goals of this plan.

Implementation of many of the goals in this plan rests with the County’s zoning and development regulations, which may require strategic modifications. The County may also pursue topic-specific subplans that go into higher detail on a particular subject matter, such as a county transportation plan, capital improvement plan, or even more focused studies such as a county trail plan or a storm-water management and mitigation plan. The County may also elect to develop performance measures and targets for certain topic areas or goals.

As circumstances change and evolve, as they are sure to do, the goals and policies of the All-In Plan can provide a unifying vision to help us all pull in the same direction, whatever the future may hold.

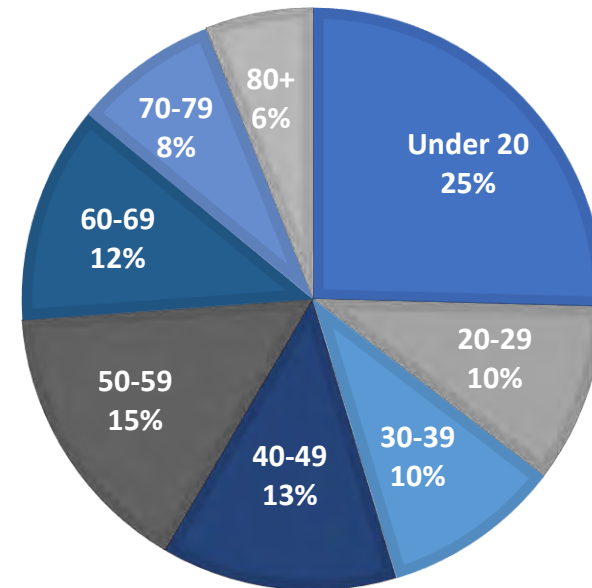
DEMOGRAPHIC SNAPSHOT

Table 3: County population by age and sex

Age Group	Female	Male	Total	Percent of total population
Under 20	1,751	1,890	3,641	25%
20-29	630	801	1,431	10%
30-39	675	752	1,427	10%
40-49	919	960	1,879	13%
50-59	1,090	1,115	2,205	15%
60-69	841	897	1,738	12%
70-79	582	570	1,152	8%
80 and over	532	325	857	6%
Total	7,020	7,310	14,330	100%

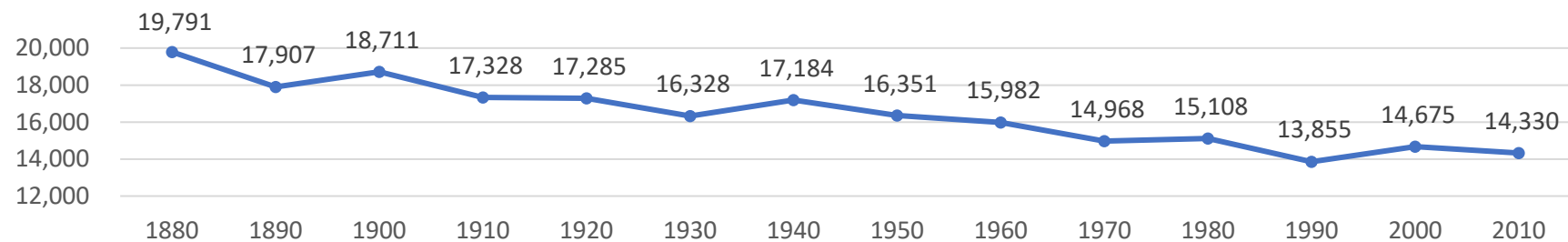
Data source: 2010 census, U.S. Census Bureau

Chart 1: Age groups as percentage of total county population



Data source: 2010 census, U.S. Census Bureau

Chart 2: Population of Allamakee County, 1880-2010



Data source: 2010 census, U.S. Census Bureau

2: Community Character & Culture



*Come make yourself at home
in New Albin, Iowa*

**Live in a beautiful area
Minutes from La Crosse
Affordable homes, low taxes
Blue Ribbon schools**
**Waving to your neighbors required*

Sponsored by Allamakee County Economic Development & Tourism



*Community promotional billboard in New Albin
(Image Credit: Debra Stantic)*

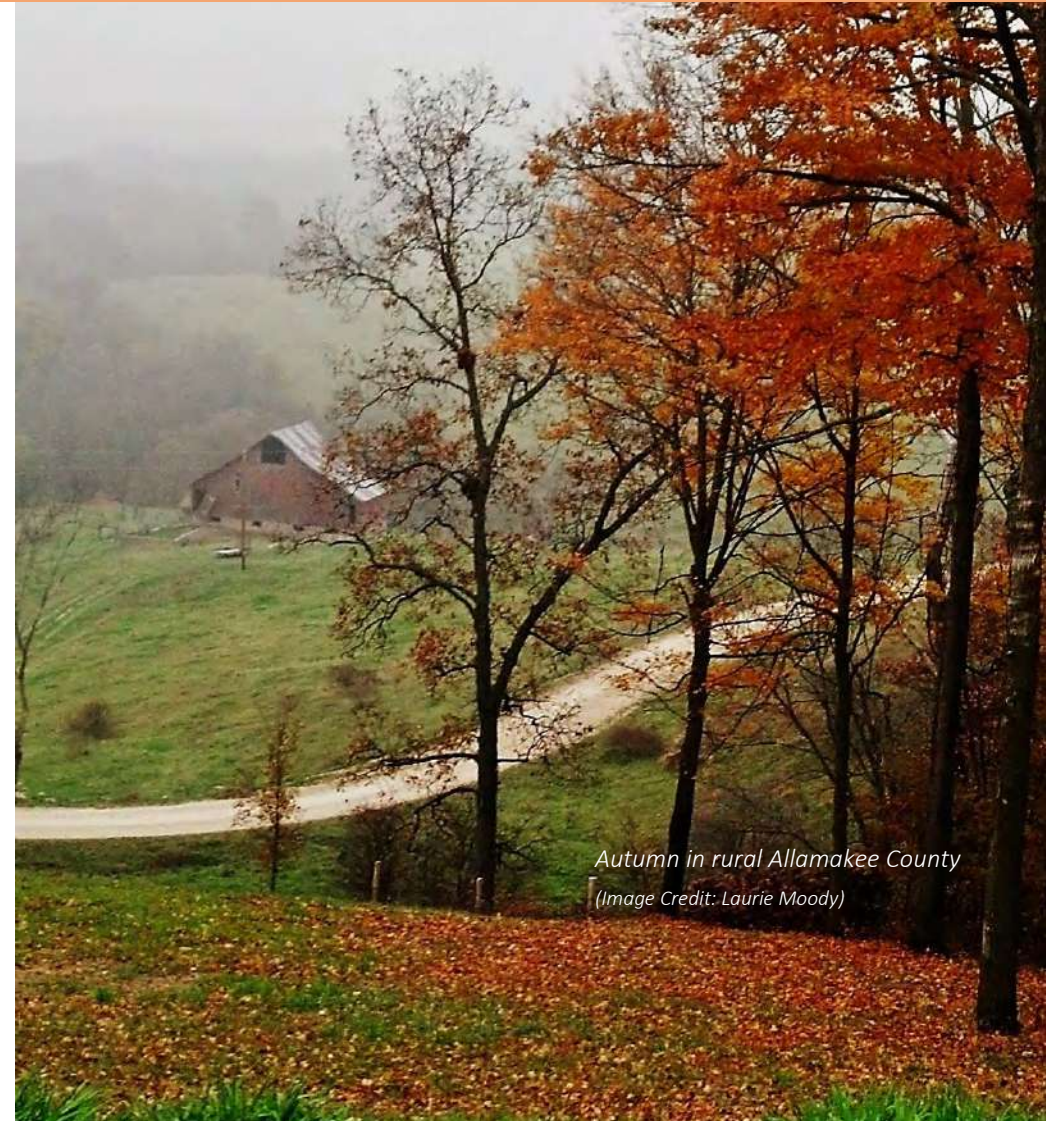
OUR VISION:

Allamakee County is a region blessed with natural beauty and the warmth and friendliness of its residents. The County is a place where people feel welcome and safe. The unique heritage, values, and culture of Allamakee County are evident in the natural and built environment and echoed through community events, festivals, and programs.

OVERVIEW

Situated in the scenic northeast corner of the state of Iowa, Allamakee County covers 639 square miles and is the 18th largest county in the state by area. Part of the multi-state Driftless Area, the county is characterized by traditional Iowa agricultural communities, woodlands and bluffs, and iconic and historic Mississippi River towns. Residents and visitors alike celebrate Allamakee County with festivals and cultural events throughout the year.

The region's human history stretches back over 1,000 years. Pre-Columbian mound-building cultures flourished in the area beginning around AD 900.⁴ Archaeologically and culturally significant sites in the county are protected at places like Fish Farm Mounds State Preserve near New Albin and Effigy Mounds National Monument in the southeast corner of the county.



*Autumn in rural Allamakee County
(Image Credit: Laurie Moody)*

French explorers Jacques Marquette and Louis Jolliet were likely the first Europeans to set eyes on this region. Beginning in 1673, they explored and mapped many parts of the Upper Mississippi River valley in areas of what are today Wisconsin and Iowa.⁵ Settlers of European descent first arrived in what is now Allamakee County around 1828, when soldiers from Fort Crawford at Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin, were sent to build a sawmill along the Yellow River.⁶

At the time of European contact, the area Allamakee County now occupies was part of a vast wilderness brimming with wildlife. Allamakee County's 1984 comprehensive plan noted that the Mississippi River,

numerous lakes, and smaller streams of the area provided an ample supply of water, fish, fur-bearing game, and water fowl to the indigenous people of the area, and herds of buffalo, elk, and deer roamed freely over meadows of wild rye and prairie grasses. In short, the 1984 plan summarizes, it was a paradise.

Native Americans living in the area were forced to relocate in 1848 by the U.S. government. Allamakee County was organized by the Iowa Legislature the following year, opening the door for white settlers to begin moving into the county. A period of white settlement and landscape transformation followed and continued into the 20th century.⁷



Home football game at Waukon High School

(Image Credit: Laurie Moody)

The Allamakee County of today is a place of welcoming communities where the area’s small-town, rural, and agrarian heritage is revered and protected. In addition to the ongoing economic importance of agriculture in the county, the county’s businesses and industries cater to a significant tourism and outdoor recreation economy.

Hunting and fishing have been an important aspect of local culture for generations, and Allamakee County’s outdoor appeal continues to expand its bounds. Today, residents and visitors are increasingly likely to see

vehicles carrying kayaks and mountain bikes sharing country roads with pickup trucks and tractors.

Allamakee County is a special place, where locals value the traditions of generations. At the same time, they look to the future and finding ways to improve the quality of life in their home county—often thought of as “livability”—and to attract and retain new residents and visitors through collaborative and innovative economic development and community efforts.

*Postville welcome sign
(Image Credit: City of Postville)*





INDIGENOUS CULTURE & HERITAGE

The land area which today constitutes Allamakee County is part of the traditional homelands of the Ioway, Sac, Meskwaki, Dakota, and Ho-Chunk Indigenous peoples, whose relationship to this land continues today. In the 19th century, the Ho-Chunk moved to this area from Wisconsin against their will. Not long after, pressure from the U.S. government and immigrant settlers forced them to relocate again.⁷ In a spirit of mutual respect and understanding, Allamakee County acknowledges that the modern history of the county is directly linked to the dispossession and forced migration of these Native peoples.

The importance of the region's Indigenous heritage can be found throughout Allamakee County, in local place names and at important cultural sites, such as Iowa's revered Effigy Mounds National Monument. The county seat, Waukon, is named for the Ho-Chunk leader Waukon Decorah, or his son Chief John Waukon. Though viewpoints on Waukon High School's mascot name may differ, its sports teams are proudly known as the Indians.

Indigenous youth in ceremonial dress at Effigy Mounds National Monument (Image Credit: National Park Service)

Located in the southeast corner of Allamakee County, Effigy Mounds National Monument is the state's only national park, managed by the National Park Service. The National Monument protects many animal-shaped "effigy" mounds built by the ancestors of the Ho-Chunk and other

Siouan peoples between 750 and 1,400 years ago.⁸ Mound sites in the county, both inside and outside of the park, are held sacred by many present-day American Indian tribes.

Present-day American Indian tribes culturally associated with Effigy Mounds National Monument⁸

Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska

Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma

Otoe-Missouria Tribe of Indians

Ho-Chunk Nation of Wisconsin

Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska

Upper Sioux Indian Community of Minnesota

Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community In the State of Minnesota

Lower Sioux Indian Community of Minnesota

Prairie Island Indian Community In the State of Minnesota

Sac and Fox of the Mississippi in Iowa

Sac and Fox Nation of Missouri in Kansas and Nebraska

Sac and Fox Nation of Oklahoma

Crow Creek Sioux of South Dakota

Omaha Tribe of Nebraska

Santee Sioux Nation

Standing Rock Sioux Tribe

Yankton Sioux of South Dakota

Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate

Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe

Ponca Tribe of Nebraska

Autumn at Effigy Mounds National Monument (Image Credit: National Park Service)

HERITAGE & HISTORIC SITES

Allamakee County is part of Iowa's vast *Silos and Smokestacks National Heritage Area* (SSNHA). One of 49 federally designated heritage areas in the United States, the SSNHA consists of a network of sites, programs, and events that interpret farm life, agricultural practices, and rural communities past and present.⁹

Allamakee County is home to 20 separate sites and

districts listed on the National Register of Historic Places. These properties and districts run the gamut of the county's history—from the early period of the county and its agricultural and industrial roots to the area's prehistoric and American Indian heritage. Table 4 lists the 20 properties and districts that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places in Allamakee County.¹⁰

Table 4: National Register of Historic Places listed properties and districts in Allamakee County

Allamakee County Courthouse, Waukon	Lansing stone school, Lansing
Old Allamakee County Courthouse, Lansing	Fred W. Meier round barn, southwest of Waukon
Old Allamakee County Courthouse, Waukon	Monsrud Bridge, Waterville
Effigy Mounds National Monument, south of Harpers Ferry	Old East Paint Creek Lutheran Church, Waterville
Fish Farm Mound Group, near New Albin	Thomas Reburn polygonal barn, New Albin
Otto J. Hager House, Waukon	Red Bridge, northeast of Postville
Iron post state line marker, New Albin (border with Minnesota)	Slinde Mound Group, Hanover Township
G. Kerndt & Brothers Elevator and Warehouses, Lansing	Turner Hall, Postville
G Kerndt & Brothers Office Block, Lansing	Upper Iowa River bridge, Dorchester
Lansing Fisheries Building, Lansing	Waterloo Ridge Lutheran Church Historic District, west of Dorchester
Lansing Main Street Historic District, Lansing	



Unique geography of the Driftless Region in rural Allamakee County

(Image Credit: Ann Klees)

Community Character & Culture Goals & Policies:

Goal C1:

Sites of intrinsic cultural significance and value are preserved for the enjoyment and appreciation of current and future generations.

Policy C1.1:

The potential negative impacts on cultural sites and amenities are considered in all County decisions involving development and the maintenance and operations of its facilities.

Policy C1.2:

The County is open to the discovery of unprotected sites and/or new sites of more-recent significance, and supports local, state, and national efforts to preserve and protect them.

Goal C2:

The county is home to a wide array of cultural events, institutions, and programs that improve residents' quality of life and attract visitors of all ages.

Policy C2.1:

The County seeks partnerships and opportunities to support groups and organizations working to bring cultural events, institutions, or programs to the county.

POLICY BASIS

Residents of Allamakee County cherish their cultural, natural, agricultural, and architectural heritage. They support ongoing and diligent stewardship and protection of the places they hold dear and which contribute to making Allamakee County such a special place.

Residents and visitors will continue to enjoy the festivals, celebrations, and cultural institutions Allamakee County is known for and support new opportunities for outreach and expansion of the cultural offerings available in the county.

The County, as a local public agency, recognizes these values and will endeavor to support them when possible through its operations, community involvement, internal procedures, and actions of the Board of Supervisors.

COMMUNITY VOICES

“If I could change one thing about Allamakee County, it would be to bring more art and culture to the area.”

Community Character & Culture Goals & Policies (cont'd):

Policy C2.2:

The County promotes efforts and programs that celebrate our agricultural heritage through preservation and interpretation of historic structures, living history demonstrations, and more.

Goal C3:

Allamakee County is a place that is welcoming to people of diverse perspectives and backgrounds and where people of differing heritage and origins live with mutual respect and dignity.

Policy C3.1:

The County considers Indigenous perspectives in its decision-making and policies.

Policy C3.2:

The County will seek opportunities to form sustained relationships of mutual respect and understanding with Indigenous communities whose cultural and spiritual connections to this area continue today.

Policy C3.3:

The County is proactive in engaging marginalized and underserved communities in local decision-making and looks for opportunities for outreach to minority communities such as the county's Jewish, East African, and Hispanic and Latin/o/a/x populations.



New Albin Area Veterans Memorial
(Image Credit: Debra Stantic)

COMMUNITY VOICES

“The Driftless Center is a huge resource. Educating people about their local history, unique features, and outdoor opportunities is super important to future generations.”

“I live in Allamakee County for the scenery, the topography, and the feeling of getting back to nature.”

3: Economy & Housing



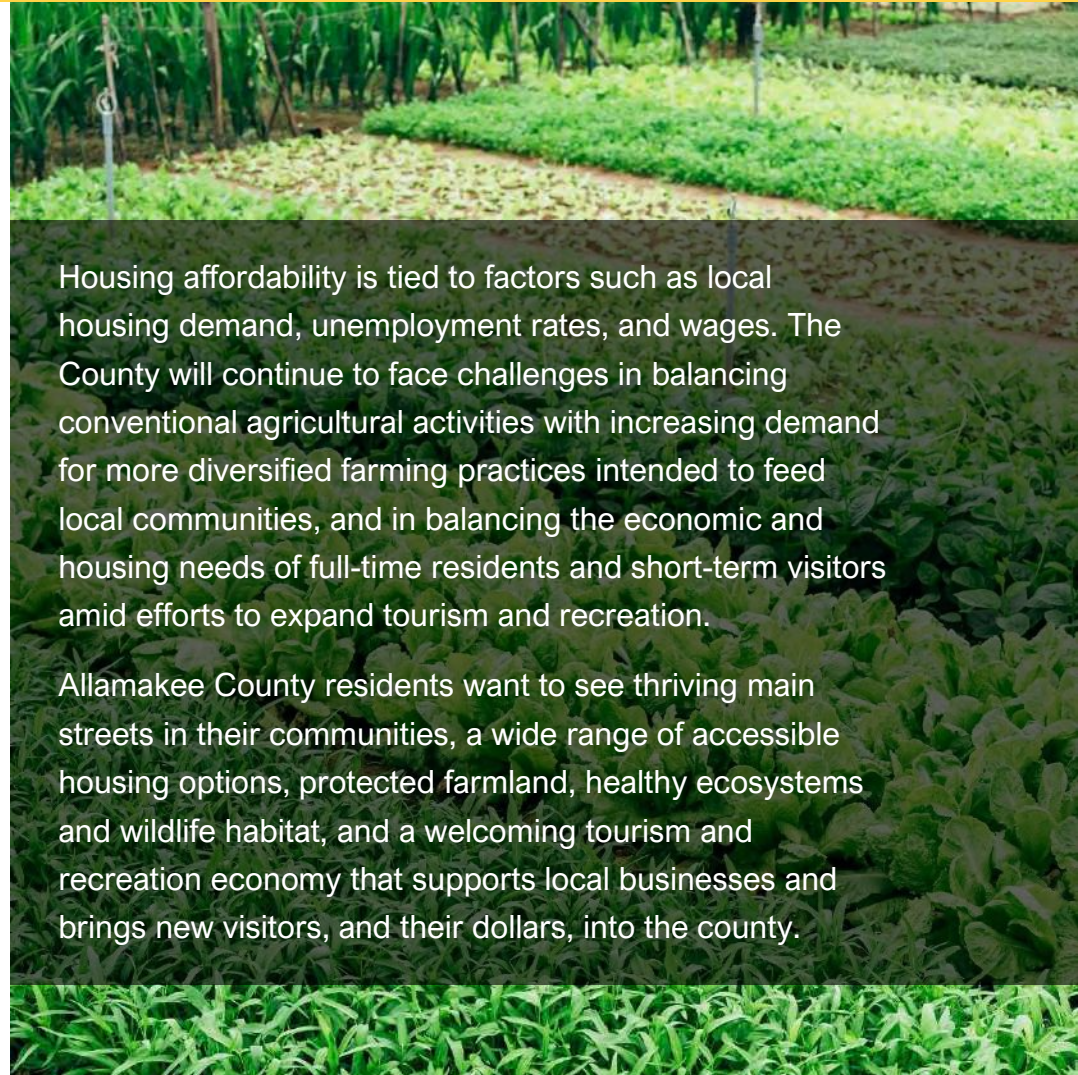
OUR VISION:

Allamakee County has a stable, diversified economy that provides for the needs of residents and visitors. Allamakee County's workforce benefits from a wide range of well-paying jobs that entice young people to stay and offer stability for residents and their families. The county's housing supply provides affordable options for all people—regardless of age, family size, or ability.

OVERVIEW

Housing and our local economies are intricately interconnected. Economic developers and business representatives frequently talk about a shortage of workers in our region. They often cite the availability of adequate, decent, and affordable housing as a top concern to prospective job-seekers looking to relocate to the county.

At the same time, our long-time resident population faces increasing housing pressure in the face of demand for part-time and vacation-oriented housing—a fact of life that comes with living in such a naturally beautiful area. People need access to diverse, affordable housing options that meet the needs of people of all ages and abilities, and families of all sizes.



Housing affordability is tied to factors such as local housing demand, unemployment rates, and wages. The County will continue to face challenges in balancing conventional agricultural activities with increasing demand for more diversified farming practices intended to feed local communities, and in balancing the economic and housing needs of full-time residents and short-term visitors amid efforts to expand tourism and recreation.

Allamakee County residents want to see thriving main streets in their communities, a wide range of accessible housing options, protected farmland, healthy ecosystems and wildlife habitat, and a welcoming tourism and recreation economy that supports local businesses and brings new visitors, and their dollars, into the county.



HOUSING TRENDS & COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

In 2018, Allamakee County Economic Development and Tourism commissioned Upper Explorerland Regional Planning Commission (UERPC) to complete a housing needs assessment to better understand housing issues and opportunities within Allamakee County and its six incorporated communities. Along with the goals and policies of this plan, that document—available for public review via the County and UERPC—and any subsequent county housing plan or update, shall continue to serve as a resource for housing policies and initiatives in Allamakee County.

The following section briefly summarizes the housing trends and needs identified in the 2018 study. The section following it looks at overall feedback and community views regarding housing that were received through the community survey as part of the planning process for the All-In Plan.

Housing & Demographic Trends

Since 1980, the number of individuals in the 45-64 age range has grown by 9% and the number of people aged 20-44 has decreased by 3%.

Approximately 5% of houses in the county have been rated in poor or very poor condition by the County Assessor's office—some of these houses may be considered uninhabitable.

Over 35% of houses in the county were built before 1940 and 65% were built prior to 1980.

Approximately 2,148 people commute into Allamakee County to work, 3,948 leave the county to work elsewhere, and 3,129 people both live and work in Allamakee County.

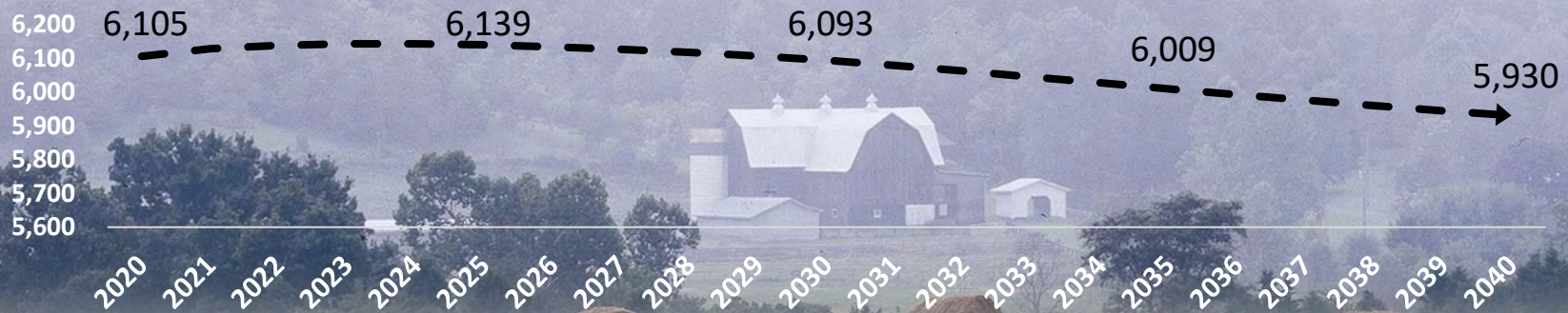
The U.S. Census Bureau estimates Allamakee County's

2018 median household income to be between \$46,243 and \$55,871. The 2018 housing study notes that a household with an income of \$45,890 can afford to buy a house in the \$50,000-\$99,000 range, approximately.

Nearly 60% of homeowners and over 20% of renters in Allamakee County are cost-burdened by housing. This means that 30% or more of their total household income is spent on housing costs.

There is a "mismatch" of affordability and availability of housing within the county, with an overabundance of housing stock in the \$50,000-\$99,999 value range and \$400-\$799 rent range, as well as in the \$300,000+ value range and \$2,000+ rent range. At the same time, there is a shortage of housing in the \$49,000-and-under value range and \$399-and-under rent range.

Chart 3: Allamakee County total households, 2020-2040 projections



Data source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc., State Data Center (State Library of Iowa)

Housing-related Survey Results Summary

Chart 4: Residence location of survey respondents (in town vs. rural)

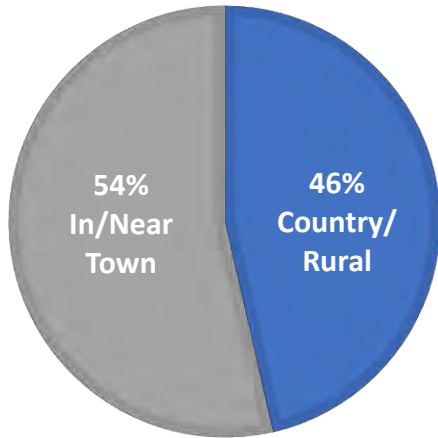


Chart 5: Survey responses: Why do you choose to live in Allamakee County? (Select all that apply.)

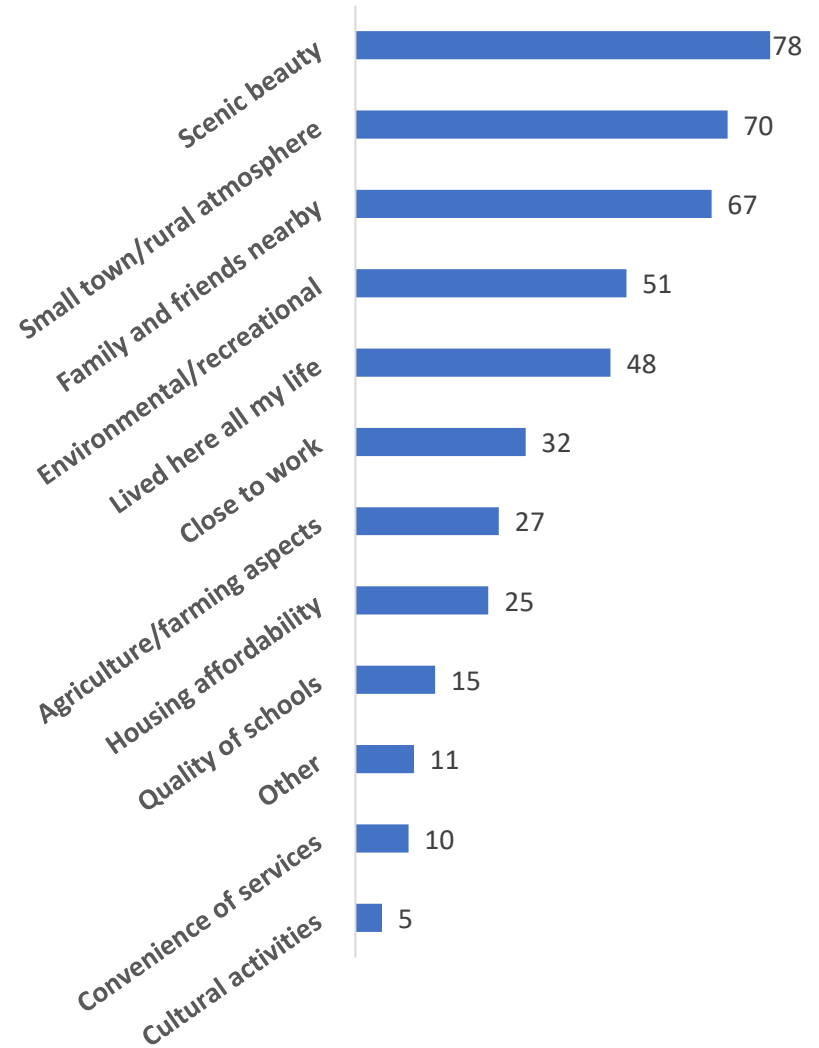
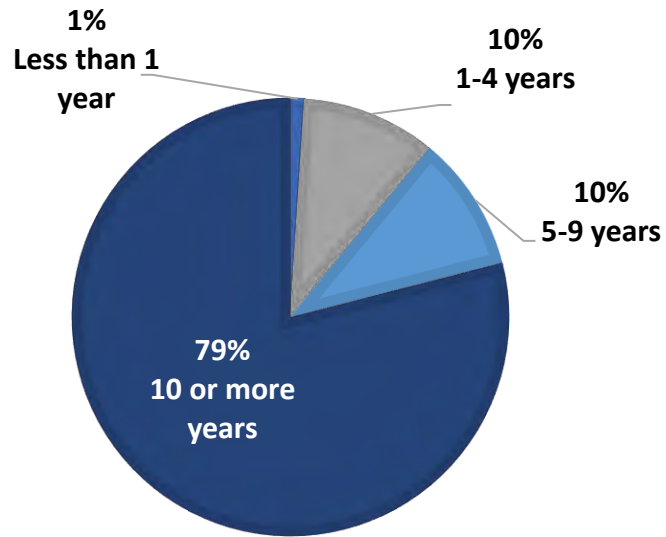


Chart 6: Survey responses: How long have you lived in Allamakee County?



Housing-related Survey Results Summary (cont'd)

Chart 7: Survey responses: Do you think there is adequate affordable housing available for all residents in Allamakee County?

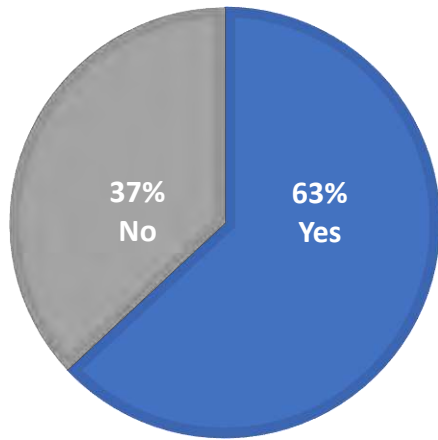


Chart 9: Survey responses: As a resident, do you know where to get assistance with housing issues?

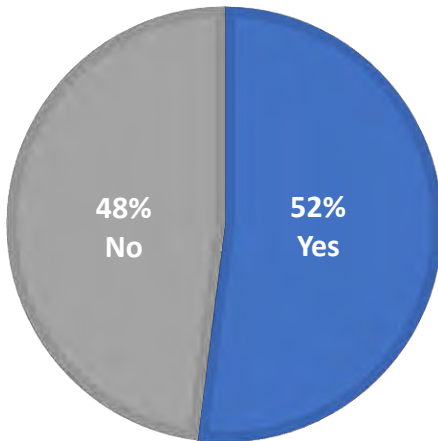
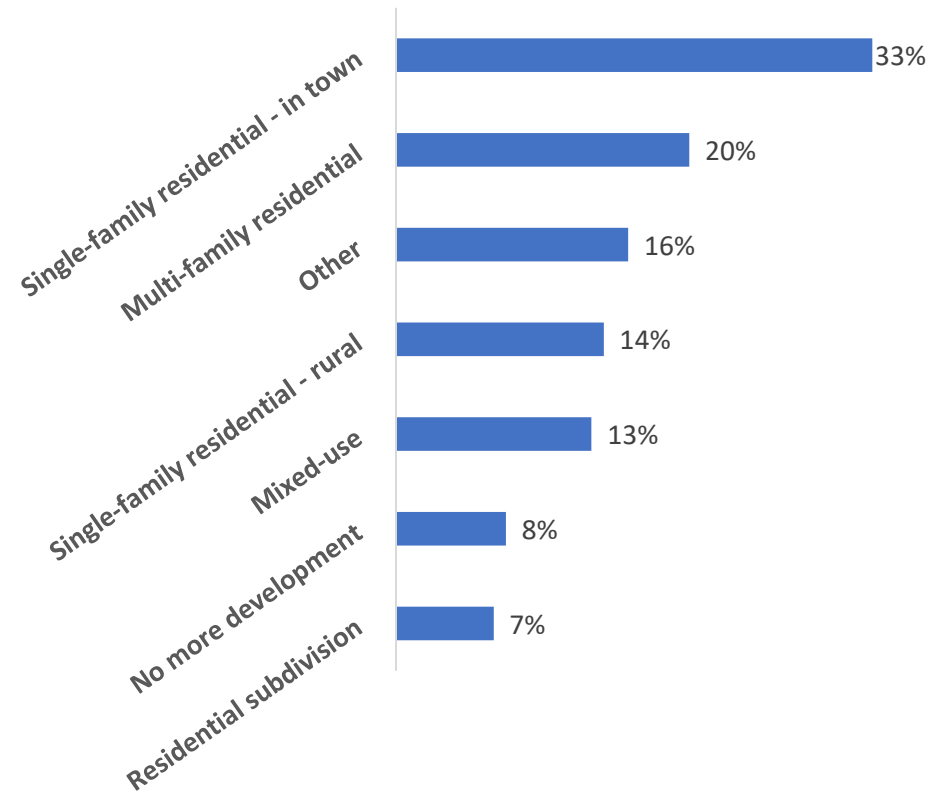


Chart 8: Survey responses: What kind of housing development do you want to see in Allamakee County? (Select all that apply.)



HOUSING POLICY BASIS

Residents of Allamakee County enjoy where they live for many reasons—the nearness of family and friends, the scenic beauty of our region, access to the outdoors, and more. At the same time, residents know we face challenges when it comes to making sure we have a housing supply that meets the needs of current and future residents of the county. With an aging population and the desire to attract younger residents and families, there are tremendous opportunities for housing strategies and development concepts that may be new to our area.

The County, as a local public agency, recognizes these challenges and will strive to find solutions that meet our communities' housing needs. Through actions of the Board of Supervisors when appropriate, the County will work collaboratively with community members and stakeholders to address our housing issues.

COMMUNITY VOICES

“We need zoning changes that allow for additional homes or cottages to be built on existing single-family lots.”

Housing Goals & Policies:

Goal H1:

The county's housing supply meets the needs of both employers and residents and contributes to the attraction of new businesses and residents to the county.

Policy H1.1:

The County seeks opportunities to coordinate and build relationships with existing and prospective employers to understand worker housing needs and work collaboratively toward solutions.

Policy H1.2:

The County works with local and regional economic development representatives and chambers of commerce on a continuing, collaborative basis to identify and respond to housing supply issues affecting the local economy.

Policy H1.3:

Through business and community partnerships and actions of the Board of Supervisors, the County seeks ways to incentivize and encourage the construction of new housing, the rehabilitation of existing housing, and the conversion of suitable non-residential structures into residential uses that move the county toward a balance of housing supply and demand.

Housing

Goals & Policies (cont'd):

Policy H1.4:

The County encourages and supports a mix of single-family and multi-family housing for those seeking to buy as well as rent their housing.

Goal H2:

Allamakee County is a place where housing diversity and innovative housing concepts provide options that meet the needs of all people—regardless of age, family size, or ability.

Policy H2.1:

The County periodically re-evaluates its ordinances and codes and modifies them when necessary to ensure that they do not present barriers to innovative or unconventional housing concepts that may further the goals of this and other chapters, such as adaptive re-use of existing structures and creative housing infill such as “tiny houses”.

Policy H2.2:

The County encourages local entrepreneurship among existing and prospective housing builders and developers, especially local and regional start-ups looking to bring innovative housing solutions to our communities.



COMMUNITY VOICES

“Family ties brought me to Waukon, and country living keeps me from moving.”

“It’s a beautiful, slow-paced, aesthetically pleasing, non-ag living environment along the Mississippi River, away from intense urban stresses, with direct access to ample hunting and walking opportunities. It’s my home county.”

Housing

Goals & Policies (cont'd):

Policy H2.3:

The County looks for opportunities to collaborate with stakeholders and community members in ways that bring accessible and affordable housing options, designed with a goal of accommodating people of all ages and abilities, to our communities (sometimes called “universal design”).

Goal H3:

Allamakee County’s housing supply is in good-to-excellent condition—for health and safety as well as the visual appeal and character of our communities.

Policy H3.1:

The County collaborates and coordinates on a continuing basis with regional agencies and organizations that provide housing rehabilitation assistance to those in need, such as Upper Explorerland Regional Planning Commission and Northeast Iowa Community Action Corporation.

Policy H3.2:

The County seeks to improve the condition of housing in Allamakee County through creating and/or continuing and/or supporting programs that provide incentives for homeowners and landlords to improve substandard housing.



COMMUNITY VOICES

“There’s a lack of variety of housing.”

“We need to improve housing efforts to bring people to our community to be successful, not just to come because we have ‘cheap’ housing.”

“Allamakee County has always been my home.”

Housing Goals & Policies (cont'd):

Goal H4:

The availability of quality, affordable housing is the fundamental base for Allamakee County's thriving economy and the wellbeing of its residents and communities.

Policy H4.1:

The affordability of quality housing in Allamakee County is a top concern. The County actively coordinates with state and regional agencies and providers to ensure affordable access to housing for those in need in Allamakee County.

Policy H4.2:

The County is proactive in ensuring that Allamakee County workers are paid a living wage—one that affords individuals and families safe and healthy living arrangements and the ability to meet their basic needs—and seeks to engage with local employers to understand and address barriers to higher wages in Allamakee County. (Cross listed as Policy E2.3)

Policy H4.3:

The County supports and encourages the development and improvement of transit services and safe facilities for non-motorized transportation in an effort to provide equitable access to and from the places where people live and the places where they work.

COMMUNITY VOICES

"We owned a house here which was used seasonally. Upon retirement, we decided to live in the house full-time."

"I moved to Allamakee County because of the scenic beauty of the blufflands, the woods and streams, the recreational opportunities, and the rural character."

ECONOMIC TRENDS & COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

This section looks at some of the economic trends identified for Allamakee County as well as population and employment projections to help envision future conditions. It also presents overall feedback and community views regarding the county's economy that were received through the community survey as part of the planning process for the All-In Plan.

Economies are an intricate mix of many different factors—financial interests, human capital, finite and renewable natural resources, etc. The factors that make up an economy, and which have enormous influence on quality of life, can depend on and support one another, but they can also be in fierce competition for limited and sometimes finite resources.

Our local economies are no different. The future economic health of our county and its communities is dependent on achieving and sustaining a healthy balance of both economic and environmental factors.





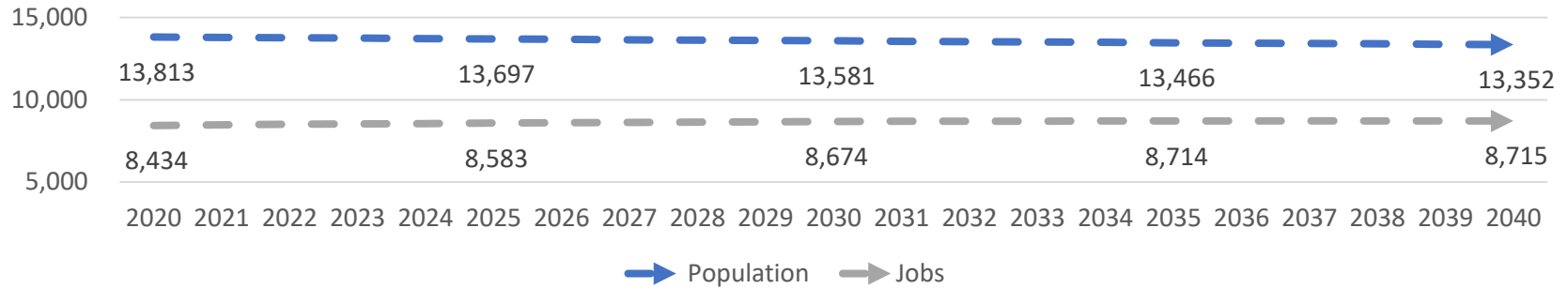
The population of Allamakee County is projected to decline by approximately 460 people between 2020 and 2040, while the overall number of jobs is projected to increase (Chart 10).¹¹ Though gradual population decline is projected, a loss of 460 people over two decades equates to a decrease of only about 3% over that period. Viewed from a different angle, Allamakee's population is projected to be rather stable.

A gradual decrease in population combined with the projected increase of jobs over the same period could contribute to lower unemployment and higher economic mobility for Allamakee County residents in coming years. This would be welcome news for many in our communities. As important as the availability of quality jobs is, it is not the only economic concern at the top of Allamakee County residents' minds.

Agricultural production is a titan of our county's economy, much as it is throughout the state. However, unlike much of the rest of the state, our county's pristine natural areas, steep wooded bluffs, and breathtaking Mississippi River views are the drivers of a recreation and tourism economy that is the foundation of many families' livelihoods.

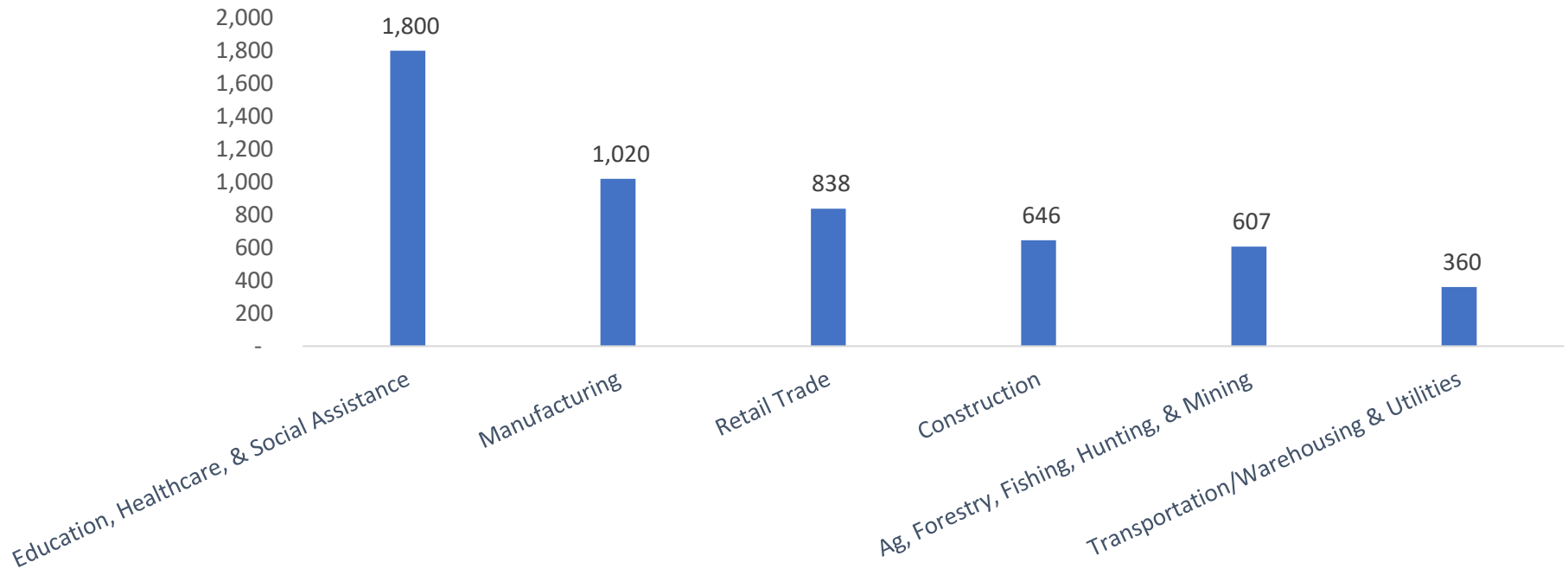
Economic Conditions & Trends Summary

Chart 10: Allamakee County population and jobs, 2020-2040 projections



Data source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc., State Data Center (State Library of Iowa)

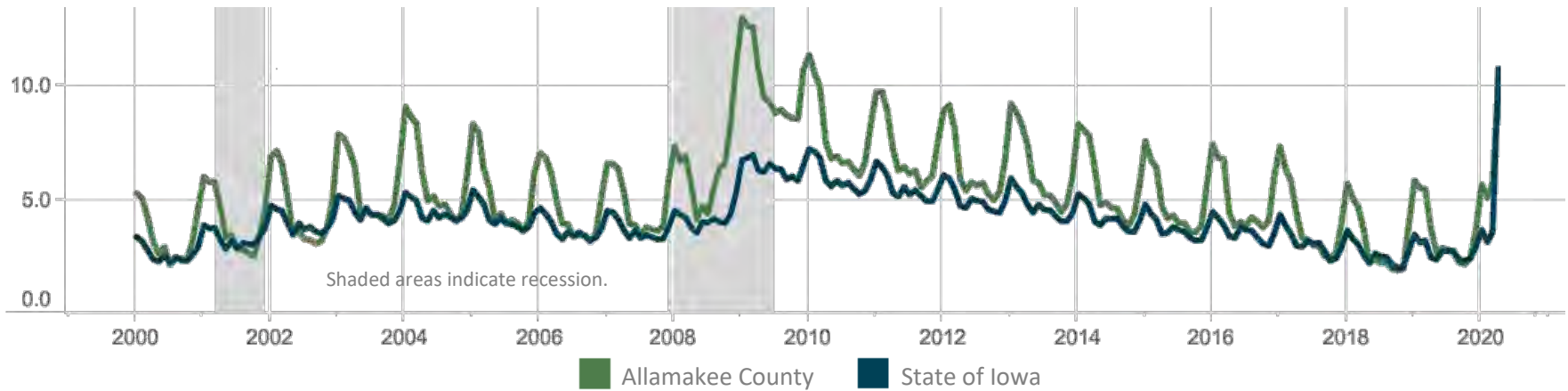
Chart 11: Top employing industries in Allamakee County by direct industry jobs



Data source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc., State Data Center (State Library of Iowa)

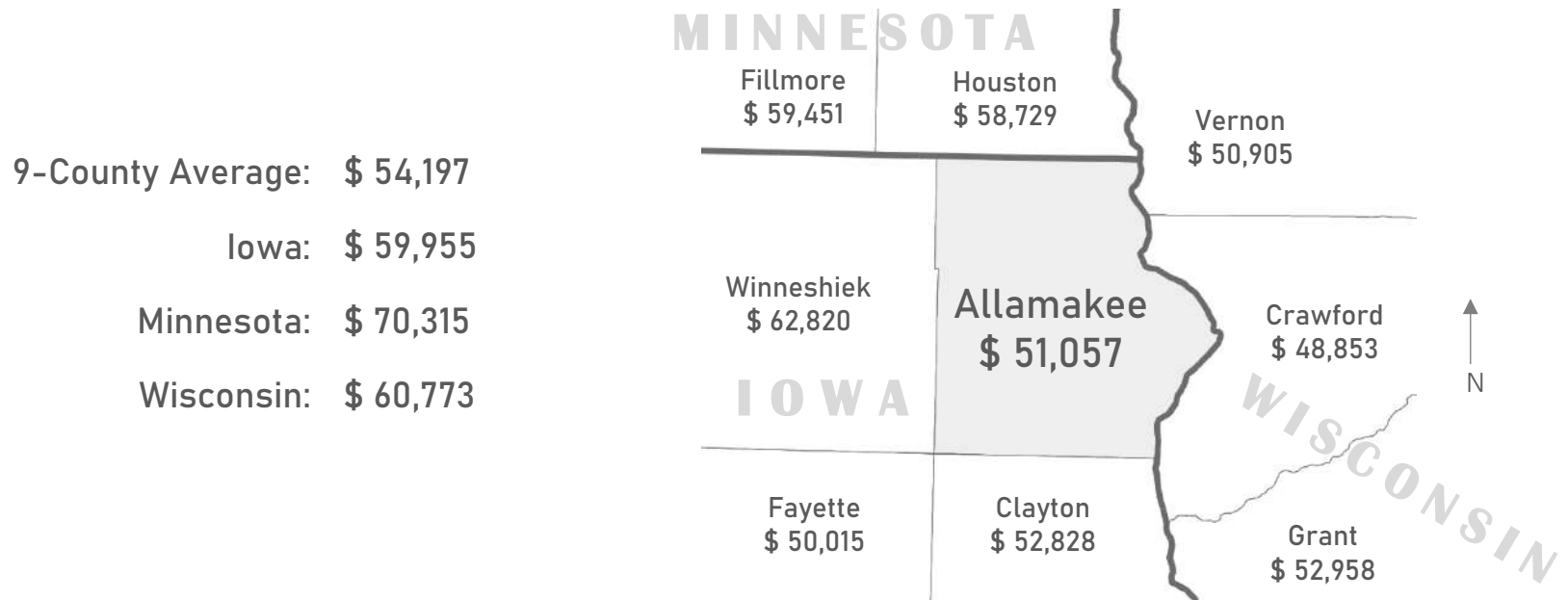
Economic Conditions & Trends Summary (cont'd)

Chart 12: Unemployment rate (%) for Allamakee County and Iowa, 2000-2020



Data and chart source: Iowa Workforce Development, 2020; Visual formatting: UERPC

Figure 2: Tri-state region median household income comparison by state and county



Data source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 ACS estimates

Economy-related Survey Results Summary

Chart 13: Survey responses: Where do you think commercial development such as restaurants, offices, retail, and banks should be located?

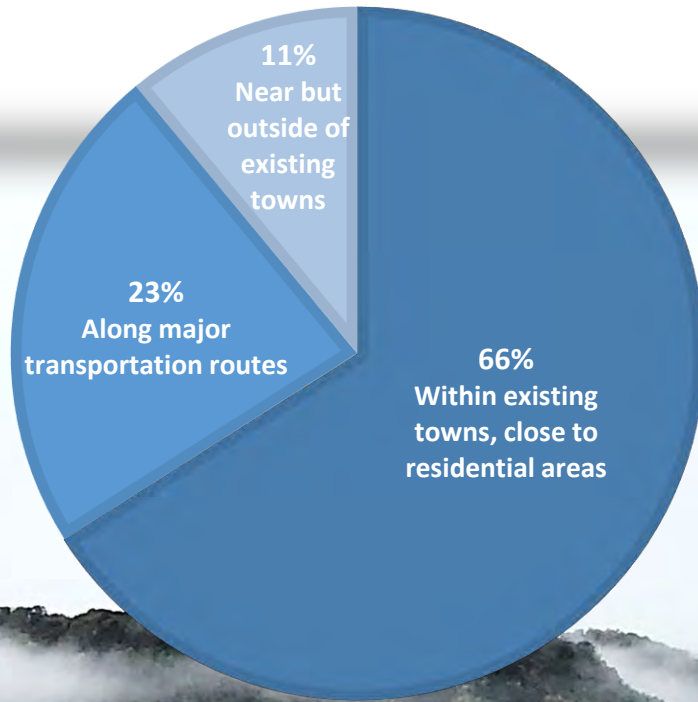


Table 5: Survey responses: What kind of business development does Allamakee County need? Please rate the following on their level of importance.

	Very Important	Important	Not Very Important	Not Important
Manufacturing	43%	47%	7%	3%
Office/Tech	27%	59%	12%	2%
Neighborhood Commercial	20%	62%	16%	2%
Regional Commercial	20%	66%	12%	2%
Professional Services	30%	58%	11%	1%
Distribution	19%	60%	17%	4%
Small Business Startups	41%	56%	3%	0%
Higher Education Facilities	23%	57%	19%	1%
Recreation & Tourism	58%	40%	2%	0%



Allamakee bluff country meets the Upper Mississippi River
(Image Credit: Main Street Lansing)

COMMUNITY VOICES

“Agriculture is our main business in the county, but we need to capitalize on our environment to attract people to come and see what Allamakee has to offer—like fishing, hunting, trails for walking and horseback riding, ATV/UTV trails etc. We need to find ways to attract people and industry to our county.”

ECONOMIC POLICY BASIS

Public input gathered through the planning process for the All-In Plan revealed that many Allamakee County residents are concerned about the effects of resource extraction and industrial-scale agriculture on the very natural assets that make our county such an attractive destination for eco-tourism and outdoor recreation.

Allamakee County residents recognize that there can be conflicts between ag and industrial interests in our county and efforts to protect sensitive natural resources and assets—but that these must coexist in order to sustain economically healthy communities.

Residents want better telecommunications infrastructure that brings higher-wage tech, office, and manufacturing jobs; but they do not want to compromise the scenic integrity of blufflands and viewsheds. They want more economic opportunities that encourage young people to stay. They want responsible development that considers environmental impacts. They value “buying local” and want to expand such opportunities through a more diversified economy—one that will help ensure the economic prosperity and resiliency of our communities.

Economic Goals & Policies:

Goal E1:

Allamakee County has a diversified economy that delivers a high quality of life for all residents and helps our communities weather and recover from times of economic disruption.

Policy E1.1:

The County encourages innovation and entrepreneurship that responds to local demand and economic issues while producing sustainable, quality, local jobs. (Cross listed as Policies E2.1 & E3.4)

Policy E1.2:

The County encourages and supports diversified agricultural activities that build a resilient local food economy.

Policy E1.3:

The County recognizes the role of commodity agriculture in the local and global economy. It also recognizes the economic, social, and environmental benefits of “buy local.” It continues to support commodity agriculture but also encourages a local supply-and-demand economy that helps insulate our communities from fluctuations in global commodity markets.

Policy E1.4:

The County supports efforts and policies that preserve and expand agriculture—both large- and small-scale—but also encourages the protection and restoration of prairies, woodlands, and blufflands which drive the recreation and tourism economy. (Cross listed as Policy N4.3)



Economic Goals & Policies (cont'd):

Goal E2:

A wide range of employment options and well-paying jobs supports the livelihoods and quality of life of Allamakee County residents, encourages young people to stay, and attracts new residents to the county.

Policy E2.1:

The County encourages innovation and entrepreneurship that responds to local demand and economic issues while producing sustainable, quality, local jobs. (Cross listed as Policies E1.1 & E3.4)

Policy E2.2:

The County works with local stakeholders to attract outside businesses and employers that bring additional manufacturing, tech, and office jobs to the county.

Policy E2.3:

The County is proactive in ensuring that the workers of Allamakee County are paid a living wage—one that affords individuals and families safe and healthy living arrangements and the ability to meet their basic needs—and seeks to engage with local employers to understand and address barriers to higher wages in Allamakee County. (Cross listed as Policy H4.2)



Kayakers on the Upper Mississippi River in Allamakee County

(Image Credit: Main Street Lansing)

COMMUNITY VOICES

“Move forward with a sustainable plan protecting the scenic ‘wildness’ of the county, because it’s a draw. Also, keep ag viable while protecting natural resources like water and air.”

Economic Goals & Policies (cont'd):

Goal E3:

Allamakee County's employers and workers, as well as prospective start-ups and entrepreneurs, have the resources they need for long-term economic success.

Policy E3.1:

The County pursues partnerships with local stakeholders, businesses, and community groups to support and provide technical training programs, apprenticeship opportunities, on-the-job training, and leadership training that are accessible to all members of our communities.

Policy E3.2:

The County recognizes the need to encourage and support young people in their early career pursuits, including programs and efforts to assist young farmers.

Policy E3.3:

The County supports efforts that provide support systems for new business enterprises, such as the establishment of small-business incubators, systems of shared workspace and resources, and other supportive infrastructure and programs.

Policy E3.4:

The County encourages innovation and entrepreneurship that responds to local demand and economic issues while producing sustainable, quality, local jobs. (Cross listed as Policies E1.1 & E2.1)

COMMUNITY VOICES

"I love the physical environment of the rolling hills, blufflands, woods, Mississippi River, creeks and streams, and the hard-working farm families. I'm glad to see small, unique business start-ups such as WW Homestead Dairy."

"There's a lack of amenities, shopping opportunities, and higher-paying jobs."

"There are minimal job opportunities with good pay, but we are close to such opportunities."

"There are limited career opportunities for young people."

"We need to support the small farmer and locally grown foods, not mega farms/dairies."

"Not having to go to Decorah for everything would be great."

“In our region, we are unable to pay decent wages to employees that have four-year degrees.”

“We need to encourage proactive programs to attract and retain light manufacturing and small- and medium-size businesses other than retail.”

“It may be very important to support our farmers in finding and developing new crops beyond just corn and beans. This is the future of agriculture. There is a need to be progressive.”

“Ag and eco-tourism have proven to be able to coincide in this county, and that is neat.”

“I think Allamakee County is the most beautiful county in Iowa. I also appreciate the uniqueness of many of the shops around the county.”

“Allamakee seems to be moving more to tourism. Preserving our natural resources is vital to supporting tourism and for future generations to enjoy.”

“Lean into your scenic beauty. Allamakee is ripe for environmental tourism. All of that gets ruined by extractive industry.”

“Natural resources are the reason we have so many visitors to this area. Since we cannot seem to draw businesses we need to capitalize on eco-tourism.”

“Both large and small agriculture is a benefit to our county.”

“I would like to see the main streets in our communities thrive.”

Wildlife tracks in the snow amid a winter sunrise in Allamakee County (Image Credit: Maria Stahl)

4: Hazards & Resiliency



OUR VISION:

Emergency personnel practice coordination and cooperation in responding to extreme weather and flooding events, human-caused events, and other hazards. Allamakee County residents and leaders are educated about hazards and ways to mitigate impacts and minimize risk. Community development patterns reflect hazard preparedness and foster both a high quality of life and increased resiliency—our ability to “bounce back” and/or carry on after a hazard event.

OVERVIEW

Sadly, many in our region have experienced the devastation of extreme weather events in recent years. Severe weather and other natural hazards have always been part of life in our neck of the woods. However, the effects of a changing climate are increasing the intensity and destruction of those severe weather events,¹² making it increasingly challenging for emergency responders to manage hazard events to protect lives and property, and for our communities to bounce back from the immediate aftermath. This is where resiliency comes in—our ability to absorb the shock of severe events and to recover to some sort of normalcy thereafter.

The resiliency of our communities owes a great deal to

the women and men we rely on to protect us—firefighters, police officers, emergency medical personnel, and volunteers who spring into action during hazard events. But our resiliency is also deeply connected to the built environment and our human impacts on the landscape—the way we build infrastructure such as transportation and stormwater management systems; where we build commercial and residential structures, and where we don't; our land stewardship and agricultural practices, and more.

Preparing for hazards and planning for recovery is how we protect ourselves and our communities during hazard events, and how we ensure a safe, prosperous future.



HAZARDS & RESILIENCY: BACKGROUND, TRENDS, & COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

According to the Iowa Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, the primary hazards in Iowa are those associated with severe weather, including heavy rains and flooding, tornadoes and high winds, ice storms, and blizzards and heavy snow.¹³ Manmade hazards, such as hazardous material spills, have also occurred in the state.

From 2013 to 2019, a seven-year period, Allamakee County was included in 15 disaster declarations (seven presidential declarations and eight state declarations). There was at least one declaration every year during that period. In 2016, there were five. Prior to 2013, there hadn't been a disaster declaration since 2008, when there was a single state declaration for severe storms (see Figure 3).¹³

In 2018, Allamakee County commissioned Upper Explorerland Regional Planning Commission (UERPC) to develop the Multi-Jurisdiction, Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan (abbreviated MJ-7), which covers Allamakee County and its six incorporated communities. That document, available for public review via the County and UERPC, and any subsequent county hazard mitigation plan or plan update, shall continue to serve as the guiding document for hazard mitigation and emergency response coordination in Allamakee County.

The following pages briefly summarize the mitigation activities identified in that plan as well as trends related to hazard mitigation and climate change opinions. They also feature overall feedback and community views regarding hazard events that were received through the community survey as part of the planning process for the All-In Plan.

Hazard Mitigation Feedback & Climate Trends

Almost three quarters of survey respondents (72%) said that the County’s emergency services were either good or excellent (42% and 30%, respectively), while 17% said they were fair, and only 3% said they were poor. (8% said “not applicable.”)

Almost a quarter of All-In Plan survey respondents (23%) said that the condition of the county’s stormwater infrastructure is poor.

According to the Yale Program on Climate Change Communication, which tracks opinions on climate change in the United States down to the county level, an estimated 64% of adults in Allamakee County think global warming is happening. Over half of adults in the county—an estimated 57%—are worried about it. And more than two-thirds of adults in the county—an estimated 70%—think global warming will harm future generations.¹⁴

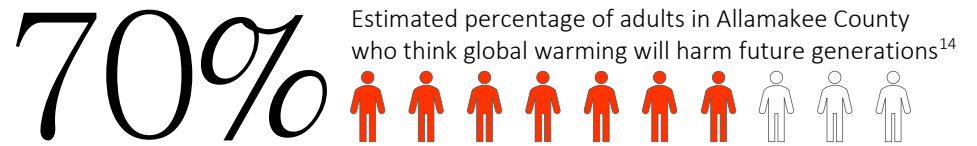
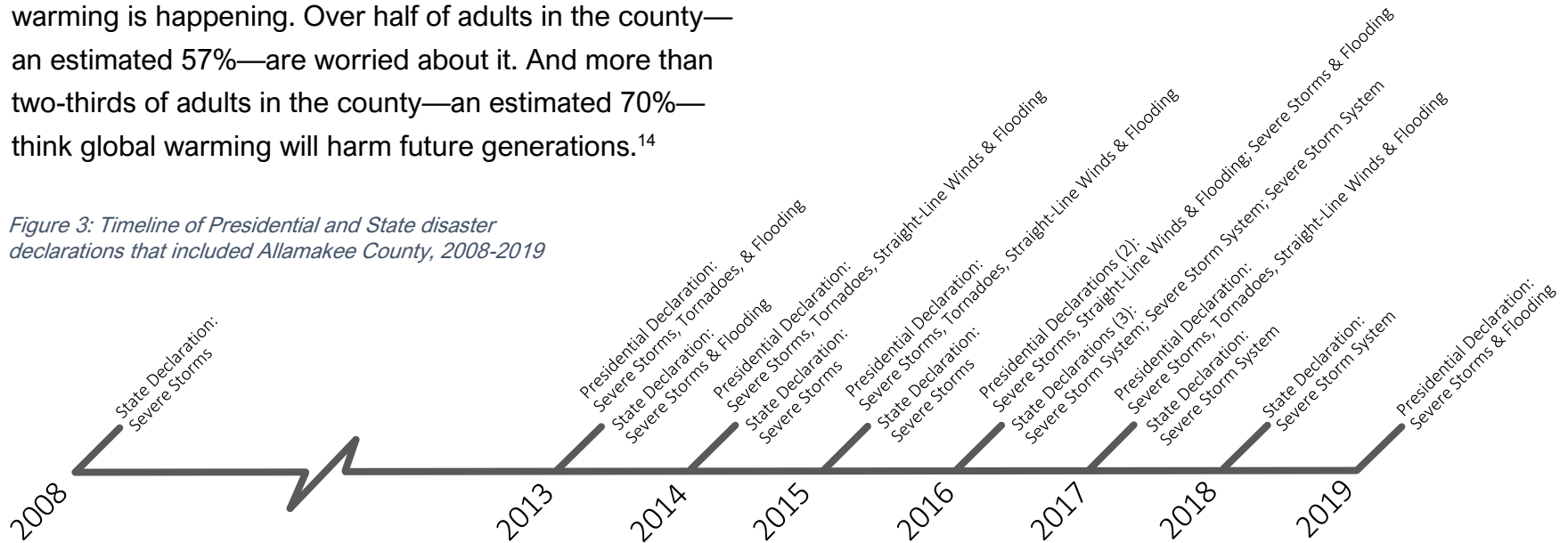


Figure 3: Timeline of Presidential and State disaster declarations that included Allamakee County, 2008-2019



Data source:
Iowa Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, 2020

2018 Allamakee County MJ-7 Hazard Mitigation Activities

- Train a CERT Team (Community Emergency Response Team) to perform limited life-saving actions to aid first responders
- Work with public health to develop an inventory of special needs individuals to provide to emergency response teams
- Continue to use and build public knowledge of warning systems/alert notification providers, including reverse 911 through county dispatch, Alert Iowa, and Code Red
- County/cities to transition to sirens with the capability for automated activation by the Allamakee County Sheriff's Office
- Create a countywide Community Shelter Plan
- Create a Rail Response Plan to prepare for the possibility of a rail accident
- Research and/or update zoning regulations to control development on landslide prone areas and steep slopes
- Lean initiative to form a countywide disaster response coalition to serve residents during and following storm or emergency events
- Evaluate areas that experience flood damage, and for which mitigation tools and/or strategies could minimize flooding vulnerabilities
- Participate in regional watershed planning and flood mitigation initiatives
- Construct on-road structures as funding becomes available; focus on Coon Creek watershed
- Assist cities in identifying generator needs, including considering transfer switches, storage location and fuel needs
- School districts to attain additional generators as needed
- Ensure that the Allamakee County MJ-7 plan remains current and publicly available; is updated through public participation; and is submitted for approval every 5 years with annual updates as needed
- Inventory high-risk areas in the county (e.g. mobile home parks, recreation areas, schools, etc.) and assess locations for "safe room" sites
- School districts to construct a facility outside of the floodplain that can be used as a storm shelter / tornado "safe room"
- Complete study of Volney Hill curve fertilizer spill and pursue mitigation actions if / when identified
- Assess other county roads that are at risk of truck accidents due to steep topography, curvature, or conditions; research applicable mitigation measures, and pursue implementation of measures at high-risk locations
- Review Upper Iowa River Watershed Management Authority Plan once complete, and implement recommended flood-mitigation measures across county as applicable
- Continue involvement in Upper Iowa River Watershed Management Authority planning and engagement
- Pursue opportunities for engaging cities and county agencies in watershed and flood mitigation planning and education
- Maintain membership in NFIP
- Develop a communication plan or system for local/county points of contact to exchange information on rainfall amounts, flooding conditions, and contamination of waterways or water sources
- Maintain transportation infrastructure, including addressing safety and functionality during storm events (e.g. stormwater runoff minimization, debris cleanup at bridges, etc.)

HAZARDS & RESILIENCY

POLICY BASIS

Comprehensive plans in Iowa are required by state law to “address prevention and mitigation of, response to, and recovery from a catastrophic flood.” In addition to its consideration in comprehensive plans being required by state law, catastrophic flooding is also top-of-mind for many Allamakee County residents when it comes to hazard events.

Residents are worried that our county’s current infrastructure and systems for handling stormwater will not be able to handle increasingly intense rain events. They’re concerned about the existence—and continued development—of structures within floodways and floodplains. Moreover, according to the most reliable source of location-specific climate change opinion data, a plurality of Allamakee County adult residents not only believe that global warming is happening, but that it will harm future generations.

Regardless of individual views on global climate change or its causes, the overwhelming consensus of the scientific community is that our climate has been changing and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. One result of the changing climate is an increase in the intensity of weather-related hazard events—something that personally touches the lives of Allamakee County residents.

The County, as a local public agency, acknowledges the reality of global climate change as well as the values and concerns of our residents. It will endeavor to take steps when possible, through its operations, internal procedures, and actions of the Board of Supervisors, to mitigate the increasingly intense effects of weather hazards and to increase our communities’ resiliency through its infrastructure and development practices; through emergency response coordination; and through increased education and awareness of hazard risks.

Hazards & Resiliency

Goals & Policies:

Goal R1:

The County's emergency response services are coordinated and always in a state of response readiness; residents are aware of hazards and of their role in reducing risk and increasing the safety and resiliency of our communities.

Policy R1.1:

The County, through its Emergency Management Coordinator and through the leadership of the Board of Supervisors, works on a continuing basis to implement and assess the progress of the mitigation activities identified in Allamakee County's Multi-Hazard, Multi-Jurisdiction plan ("MJ-7")

Policy R1.2:

The County seeks to engage with community members about hazards and safety through awareness campaigns and programming that proactively educate residents and visitors about hazard risks and response in Allamakee County.

Goal R2:

The built environment of Allamakee County—its transportation and stormwater systems as well as its inhabited structures and industrial facilities, and where they are located—is an environment that mitigates natural hazards and fosters community resiliency.



COMMUNITY VOICES

"Heavy rain turns the city streets and our yard into a lake."

"The surrounding area does not seem to be able to handle the excessive rain."

"I'm concerned about the effect of tiling on accelerating water runoff for flooding."

Hazards & Resiliency

Goals & Policies (cont'd):

Policy R2.1:

The County seeks collaboration and partnership with the Iowa Flood Center at the University of Iowa and the Upper Iowa River Watershed Management Authority, as well as other state and federal partners, to implement best practices in policies and procedures regarding mitigation of catastrophic floods.

Policy R2.2:

The County seeks collaboration and partnership with the Iowa Flood Center at the University of Iowa and the Upper Iowa River Watershed Management Authority, as well as other state and federal partners, to ensure that decisions regarding development, and its relation to and/or impact on hazard mitigation and climate resiliency, are data-driven and based on the most up-to-date science as it pertains to natural hazards and climate change.

Policy R2.3:

The County periodically re-assesses its zoning ordinance and floodplain overlay district regulations and makes modifications as appropriate that strengthen restrictions on development in floodplains to mitigate the impacts of catastrophic flooding events at the watershed level, as well as considers other ordinances and policies related to community development that foster increased resiliency to flooding and other natural hazards. (Cross listed as Policy L3.4)



COMMUNITY VOICES

“Continue to keep property from being rebuilt in high-risk flood zones.”

“Harpers does not have stormwater drains causing some local flooding during spring snowmelt.”

“Stormwater affects the rural road ditches.”

5: Natural Resources & Environment

Pollinators at Effigy Mounds National Monument

(Image Credit: National Park Service)



OUR VISION:

The quality of Allamakee County's natural environment enriches the lives of residents and supports a robust tourism economy. Residents and visitors to the County have clean, fresh air to breathe; pure, untainted water to drink; and healthy, uncontaminated soil beneath their feet. Wild flora and fauna benefit and thrive as the result of the same.

OVERVIEW

The natural environment of Allamakee County is extremely valuable to residents and visitors for many different reasons. The county's scenic natural beauty, abundant wildlife, productive soil, and myriad outdoor recreation opportunities are foundational to the quality of life of many Allamakee County residents. These natural assets are also foundational to our communities' economic health because of the significant role that agriculture, outdoor recreation, and eco-tourism play in our local economies.

Allamakee County is part of the Paleozoic Plateau ecoregion, one of ten ecoregions in the state identified by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (Iowa DNR) and part of a broader ecological and cultural region called

the Driftless Area, which extends over portions of Northeast Iowa, Southeast Minnesota, Southwest Wisconsin, and extreme Northwest Illinois.¹⁵ According to the Iowa DNR, our region is strikingly different from the rest of Iowa. Steep bluffs, high-relief rock outcrops, dense forests, and unique boreal microhabitats distinguish our ecoregion from the rolling corn-belt plains to the west. Over the centuries, groundwater has slowly dissolved the limestone and dolomite bedrock in this region, making it porous and permeable. This results in geology defined by "karst" features: waterfalls, underground streams, sinkholes, caves, and springs.

This karst geology is responsible for much of what makes Allamakee County such a unique and scenic area. Unfortunately, however, it is also responsible for making our groundwater especially vulnerable to contamination from agriculture and industrial activities.¹⁶

Many farmers and land-owners in the county have adopted conservation techniques that help preserve topsoil and limit or mitigate stormwater run-off. These efforts have greatly improved soil and water quality in Allamakee County. Nevertheless, many of the county's streams are classified by the Iowa DNR as impaired. This means they carry higher levels of pollution than state standards allow.¹⁷ Nearly the entire lengths of both the Upper Iowa River and Yellow River within the county, as well as many of their tributaries, are classified as impaired.¹⁸ There is much work to be done to ensure that our county's soil, water, and air remain healthy—for the benefit of current and future county residents, as well as visitors to our county and the wildlife that call it home.

The physical health of the environment is immensely important, not only to our own physical health and that of wildlife, but because of the critical role it plays in our area's scenic beauty and the visual qualities of our pristine natural areas. These are the utter basis and foundation of our county's draw to tourists and recreationists, providing



Fishing for northern pike on the frozen Upper Mississippi River in Allamakee County (Image Credit: Marlene Duffy)

a lifeblood of outside dollars that supports the economies of our communities and the livelihoods of our people.

In addition to helping us keep our bodies healthy, the physical health of our environment plays an enormous role in supporting our mental health. Not only do we need clean air to breathe and clean water to drink, but the beauty and solitude found in our natural environments provide us with invaluable and innumerable benefits when it comes to our mental and spiritual wellbeing.^{19, 20, 21} The importance of our cherished public lands and protected natural areas—places like Yellow River State Forest and Effigy Mounds National monument—cannot be overstated.

Of course, agriculture also plays an outsized role in our local economies. The top agricultural outputs in Allamakee County are grains/dry beans, milk from cows, cattle and calves, and hogs and pigs (see Table 7).²² However, as discussed in previous sections, large-scale agriculture and extractive industry can be in conflict with the health of our physical environment.

A key challenge in stewarding and preserving our natural heritage will be in finding ways for agriculture and our outdoor recreation and tourism-driven economies to coexist—and even mutually benefit and thrive.



Public access at Yellow River State Forest (Image Credit: Valerie Reinke)

When it comes to environmental and economic resiliency, agricultural producers are already implementing best practices in land stewardship and soil conservation. Additionally, there is great opportunity and desire from within our communities for more diversification in agriculture, both to benefit the health of the land and to feed the people of our communities.

Iowa is said to have the most altered landscape in the nation. Prior to the arrival of non-indigenous settlers to the state during the 19th century, 75-80% of Iowa's land cover consisted of native prairies; now, prairie covers less

than 0.1% of the state's land.²³ The vast majority of Allamakee County was once woodlands and forests, with dispersed areas of open prairie. The wooded bluffs we see today are a fragment of the woodland habitat that once existed.

Protecting what remains of Allamakee County's native habitat—and expanding and re-establishing it where possible—is critical to sustaining populations of native fish and wild game, for protecting threatened and endangered species, and to ensuring we don't lose the multitude of benefits that the natural environment provides to us.



Wheelchair-accessible public fishing on the Upper Mississippi River at Harpers Ferry (Image Credit: Valerie Reinke)



Ideal conditions produce a prized morel mushroom in an Allamakee County woodland (Image Credit: Laurie Moody)

Outdoor recreation, fishing, and hunting are exceedingly important to Allamakee County’s economy and to the quality of life of its residents. Residents and visitors alike relish opportunities to hunt and procure local, wild food for their families and communities, and to camp, boat, paddle, hike, bike, ride horses, ride off-road vehicles, run, swim, cross-country ski, and more in Allamakee County’s great outdoors.

All of these activities are important to the people who love them. The required quantity and characteristics of outdoor space varies by activity. Some activities can readily share space or facilities. Some activities, such as off-road vehicle and ATV/UTV riding, can conflict with lower-impact outdoor activities such as hiking or birdwatching, and may require separated areas in appropriate locations.

At the end of the day, when it comes to being stewards of our natural environment and protecting our natural resources and assets, it is all about balance—between agriculture and eco-tourism; between industrial and economic activity and the preservation of natural open space and viewsheds; between the various outdoor recreation activities and user groups, and more. Ensuring that Allamakee County remains the natural and scenic treasure that it is—for the multitude of benefits that brings to our county—is an aspiration that unites many of us.

NATURAL RESOURCES & ENVIRONMENT: BACKGROUND & COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

In terms of natural resources, the protection of water quality is overwhelmingly the highest priority of residents in Allamakee County based on responses to the All-In Plan community survey. Ninety-five percent of survey respondents identified it as a priority for protection. Perhaps more striking, 68% placed water quality as their number one priority overall. Clean air, soil, wildlife habitat, and protection of our woodlands and prairies are also priorities to many residents (see Chart 17).

In Allamakee County, we have about 290,000 acres in farmland.²² In terms of habitat and land cover, a little over half of the land cover in Allamakee County is human-developed vegetation or agriculture. More than a third of the county's land cover is forests and woodlands.

Developed and populated areas cover about 4% of the county (see Chart 18).²⁴

There are nine plant and animal species on the federal endangered species list that are known to occur or are believed to occur within Allamakee County. They include four endangered species and five threatened.²⁵

Additionally, Iowa law establishes a list of species designated by the state as being endangered, threatened, or of special concern.²⁶ There are 39 endangered species, 63 threatened species, and 68 species of special concern designated by the State of Iowa that are known to occur or are believed to occur within Allamakee County.²⁷ See Table 6 for a complete list of state and federal designations.

Nature / Environment Survey Results Summary

Chart 14: Survey responses: Of the following land-use activities, which are important to you? (Select all that apply.)

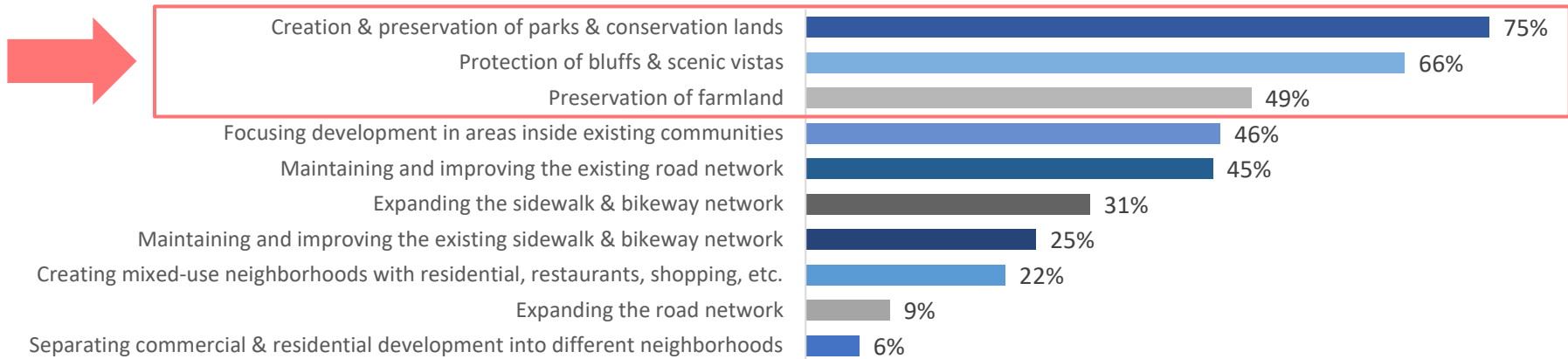
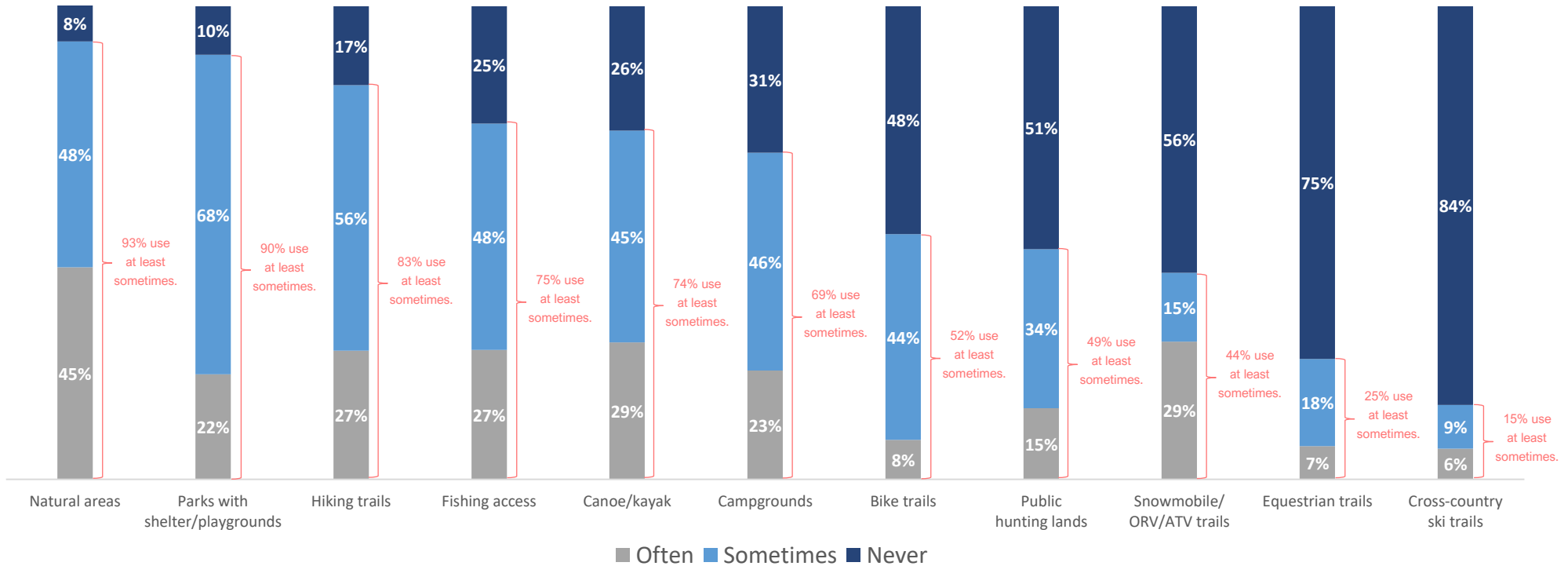


Chart 15: Survey responses: Which recreational amenities do you currently utilize in Allamakee County, and how often do you use them?



■ Often ■ Sometimes ■ Never

Nature / Environment Survey Results Summary (cont'd)

Chart 16: Survey responses: Are there any additional outdoor activities or outdoor recreation facilities you would like to see in Allamakee County? (Open question)

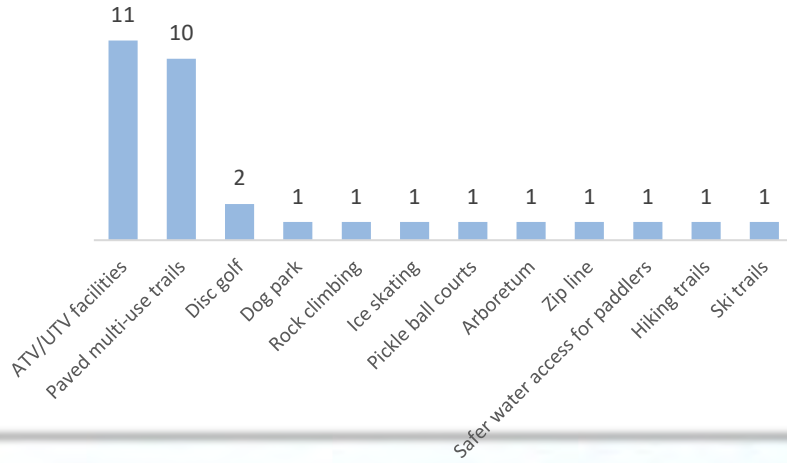
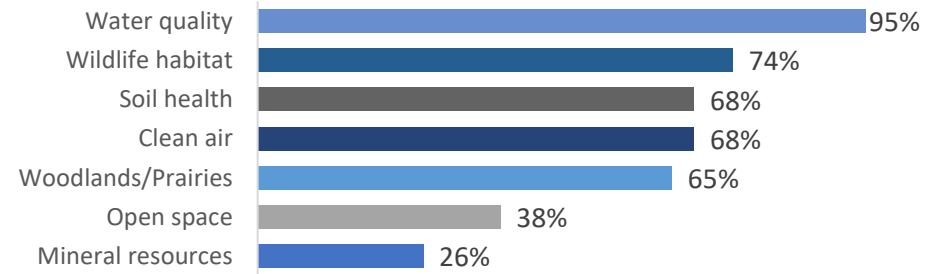


Chart 17: Survey responses: Which natural resources should be a priority to protect in Allamakee County? (Select all that apply.)



The scenic and wild Upper Iowa River valley in Allamakee County (Image Credit: Valerie Reinke)



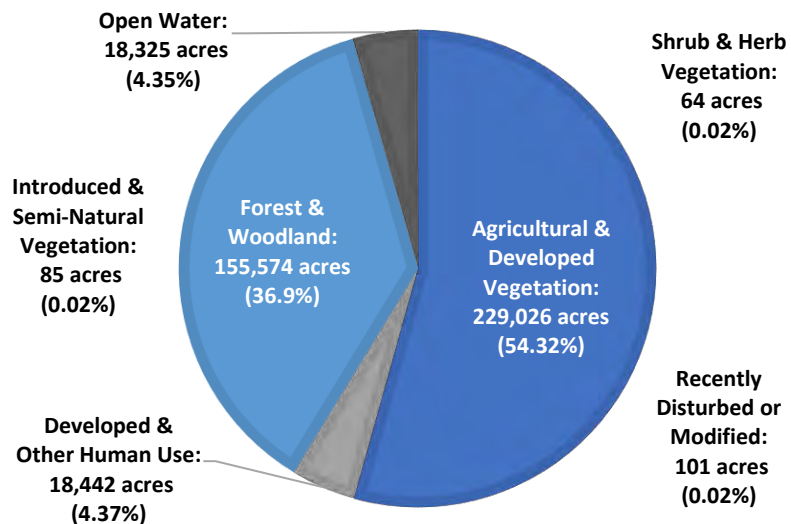
COMMUNITY VOICES

“I appreciate the ability for Agriculture and Ecotourism to coexist in this community.”

“It requires long-term vision to maintain healthy soil, water, and other natural resources for the health and wellbeing of all living beings.”

Natural Resources & Environment Background

Chart 18: Types of land cover in Allamakee County



Data source: United States Geological Survey, 2011

Table 7: Allamakee County agricultural products by annual sales and statewide rank

	Value of Annual Sales (\$1,000s)	Rank in Iowa	Counties Producing Item
Grains, oilseeds, dry beans, dry peas	\$61,035	88	99
Milk from cows	\$55,995	4	77
Cattle and calves	\$40,247	33	99
Hogs and pigs	\$35,970	60	99
Other crops and hay	\$4,284	3	99
Poultry and eggs	\$775	53	99
Sheep, goats, wool, mohair, milk	\$386	33	99
Horses, ponies, mules, burros, donkeys	\$192	26	99
Other animals and animal products	\$157	20	96
Vegetables, melons, potatoes	\$85	50	94
Fruits, tree nuts, berries	not available	50	94
Nursery, greenhouse, floriculture, sod	not available	22	89

Data source: United States Department of Agriculture, 2017 Census of Agriculture

Table 6: Threatened and endangered species found in Allamakee County (State and Federal designations)

FEDERAL DESIGNATIONS	STATE DESIGNATIONS	STATE DESIGNATIONS
Endangered Iowa Pleistocene Snail (<i>discus macclintocki</i>) Sheepnose Mussel (<i>plethobasus cyphus</i>) Higgins's-eye Pearly Mussel (<i>lampsilis higginsii</i>)	Threatened Mudpuppy (<i>necturus maculosus</i>) Henslow's Sparrow (<i>ammodramus henslowii</i>) Long-eared Owl (<i>asio otus</i>) American Brook Lamprey (<i>lampetra appendix</i>) Black Redhorse (<i>moxostoma duquesnei</i>) Chestnut Lamprey (<i>ichthyomyzon castaneus</i>) Grass Pickerel (<i>esox americanus</i>) Western Sand Darter (<i>ammocrypta clara</i>) Butterfly (<i>ellipsoptera lineolata</i>) Creepers (<i>strophitus undulatus</i>) Baltimore (<i>euphydryas phaeton</i>) Mulberry Wing (<i>poanes massasoit</i>) Silvery Blue (<i>glaucopteryx lygdamus</i>) Black Huckleberry (<i>gaylussacia baccata</i>) Bog Birch (<i>betula pumila</i>) Bog Willow (<i>salix pedicellaris</i>) Buckbean (<i>menyanthes trifoliata</i>) Bunchberry (<i>cornus canadensis</i>) Golden Corydalis (<i>corydalis aurea</i>) Golden Saxifrage (<i>chrysoplenium iowense</i>) Green Violet (<i>hybanthus concolor</i>) Jeweled Shooting Star (<i>dodecatheon amethystinum</i>) Kidney-leaf White Violet (<i>viola renifolia</i>) Low Sweet Blueberry (<i>vaccinium angustifolium</i>) Lupine (<i>lupinus perennis</i>) Narrowleaf Pinweed (<i>lechea intermedia</i>) Northern Black Currant (<i>ribes hudsonianum</i>) Northern Monkshood (<i>aconitum noveboracense</i>) One-sided Pyrola (<i>pyrola secunda</i>) Pale Corydalis (<i>corydalis sempervirens</i>) Pinesap (<i>monotropa hypopithys</i>) Pink Milkwort (<i>polygala incarnata</i>) Prince's Pine (<i>chimaphila umbellata</i>) Roundstem Foxglove (<i>agalnias gatteringeri</i>) Shining Willow (<i>salix lucida</i>) Shrubby Cinquefoil (<i>potentilla fruticosa</i>) Sweet Indian Plantain (<i>acalia suaveolens</i>) Twinflower (<i>linnaea borealis</i>) Twinleaf (<i>jeffersonia diphylla</i>) Velvet Leaf Blueberry (<i>vaccinium myrtilloides</i>) Woolly Milkweed (<i>asclepias lanuginosa</i>) Creeping Juniper (<i>juniperus horizontalis</i>) Hooker's Orchid (<i>platanthera hookeri</i>) Purple Fringed Orchid (<i>platanthera psychodes</i>) Slender Mountain-ricegrass (<i>oryzopsis pungens</i>) Yellow-lipped Ladies'-tresses (<i>spiranthes lucida</i>) Daisy-leaved Moonwort (<i>botrychium matricariifolium</i>) Ground Pine (<i>lycopodium clavatum</i>) Long Beechfern (<i>thelypteris phegopteris</i>) Purple Cliff-brake Fern (<i>Pellaea atropurpurea</i>) Rusty Woodsia (<i>woodsia ilvensis</i>) Bluff Vertigo (<i>vertigo meramecensis</i>) Briarton Pleistocene Vertigo (<i>vertigo brierensis</i>) Frigid Ambersnail (<i>catinella gelida</i>) Iowa Pleistocene Vertigo (<i>vertigo iowaensis</i>)	Special Concern Bald Eagle (<i>haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>) Peregrine Falcon (<i>falco peregrinus</i>) Pirate Perch (<i>aphredoderus sayanus</i>) Pugnose Minnow (<i>opsopoedus emiliae</i>) Columbine Dusky Wing (<i>erynnis lucilius</i>) Dion Skipper (<i>euphyes dion</i>) Dusted Skipper (<i>atrytonopsis hianna</i>) Edwards' Hairstreak (<i>satyrium edwardsii</i>) Hickory Hairstreak (<i>satyrium karyaeorum</i>) Leonard's Skipper (<i>hesperia leonardus</i>) Olympia Marble (<i>euchloe olympia</i>) Ottoo Skipper (<i>hesperia ottoe</i>) Salt and Pepper Skipper (<i>amblyscirtes hegon</i>) Sleepy Dusky Wing (<i>erynnis brizo</i>) Wild Indigo Dusky Wing (<i>erynnis baptisiae</i>) Southern Flying Squirrel (<i>glaucomys volans</i>) Alderleaf Buckthorn (<i>rhamnus alnifolia</i>) American Speedwell (<i>veronica americana</i>) Dock (<i>rumex occidentalis</i>) Glade Mallow (<i>napaea dioica</i>) Grape-stemmed Clematis (<i>clematis occidentalis</i>) Hill's Thistle (<i>circium hilli</i>) Hook-spurred Violet (<i>viola adunca</i>) Low Bindweed (<i>calystegia spithamea</i>) Mapleleaf Viburnum (<i>viburnum acerifolium</i>) Missouri Rockcress (<i>arabis missouriensis</i>) Mountain Maple (<i>acer spicatum</i>) Muskroot (<i>adoxa moschatellina</i>) Rock Sandwort (<i>minuartia michauxii</i>) Rough Bedstraw (<i>galium asprellum</i>) Sage Willow (<i>salix candida</i>) Sand Cherry (<i>prunus pumila</i>) Shadbush (<i>amelanchier sanguinea</i>) Small Bishop's Cap (<i>mitella nuda</i>) Snowberry (<i>symphoricarpos albus</i>) Spring Avens (<i>geum vernum</i>) Squaw Root (<i>conopholis americana</i>) Summer Grape (<i>vitis aestivalis</i>) Swamp Thistle (<i>circium muticum</i>) Uplander Boneset (<i>eupatorium sessilifolium</i>) Valerian (<i>valeriana edulis</i>) Violet (<i>viola maclochei</i>) Water Starwort (<i>brassica schreberi</i>) Water Shield (<i>callitriche heterophylla</i>) Balsam Fir (<i>abies balsamea</i>) Back's Sedge (<i>carex backii</i>) Bog Bluegrass (<i>poa paludigena</i>) Carey Sedge (<i>carex careyana</i>) Deep Green Sedge (<i>carex tonsa</i>) Drooping Bluegrass (<i>poa languidia</i>) Glomerate Sedge (<i>carex aggregata</i>) Great Plains Ladies'-tresses (<i>spiranthes magnicarpum</i>) Hidden Sedge (<i>carex umbellata</i>) Intermediate Sedge (<i>carex media</i>) Meadow Bluegrass (<i>poa wolfii</i>) Mountain Ricegrass (<i>oryzopsis asperifolia</i>) Richardson Sedge (<i>carex richardsonii</i>) Slender Sedge (<i>carex tenera</i>) Small White Lady's Slipper (<i>cypridium candidum</i>) Soft Rush (<i>juncus effusus</i>) Solomon's Seal (<i>polygonatum pubescens</i>) Tall Cotton Grass (<i>erophorum angustifolium</i>) Tall Millet-grass (<i>miliium effusum</i>) Crowfoot Clubmoss (<i>lycopodium digitatum</i>) Dwarf Scouring-rush (<i>equisetum scirpoides</i>) Ledge Spikemoss (<i>selaginella rupestris</i>) Limestone Oak Fern (<i>gymnocarpium robertianum</i>) Bullsnake (<i>pituophis catenifer sayi</i>)

Natural Resources & Environment

Goals & Policies:

Goal N1:

Protecting Allamakee County's streams, wetlands, lakes, and groundwater from pollution and contamination is a matter of critical importance and a top priority for policymakers and elected officials. Decisions that may impact water quality are made in consideration of our region's unique geology. The result is an environment of healthy aquatic ecosystems that ensures clean, safe drinking water for Allamakee County residents and others in the Mississippi River watershed.

Policy N1.1:

The County seeks to collaborate and coordinate with farmers, land-owners, and government stakeholders to decrease the number of impaired waters in Allamakee County, with an ultimate goal of zero impaired waters in the county.

Policy N1.2:

The County supports and encourages educational programs and seeks to sustain and strengthen partnerships and collaboration with regional stakeholders such as Allamakee County Soil and Water Conservation District, Northeast Iowa Resource Conservation and Development, and others, to

NATURAL RESOURCES & ENVIRONMENT POLICY BASIS

Residents of Allamakee County are a diverse group comprised of people of many varying viewpoints and backgrounds. Perhaps more than anything else, our love and respect for the scenic landscapes and natural environment of our county—regardless of our varying political views—is where we can find common ground.

Residents overwhelmingly agree that protection of our water resources ought to be a top priority; 95% of survey respondents chose it as a natural resource priority, and more than two-thirds (68%) chose it as their number one natural resource priority overall. Expanded access to trails is also a priority for county residents; 86% said that it was important to allocate transportation funding for trails, including 40% who said this was very important. Among the top reasons for living in or visiting Allamakee County identified by survey respondents were the county's scenic beauty (respondents' top pick at 69%), its small town and rural character (55%), and its recreational and environmental opportunities (46%).

Residents recognize the importance of both agriculture and outdoor recreation to the county's economy and greatly desire land-use, zoning, and policy decisions that support these activities while preserving the integrity and beauty of the natural environment. While industrial-scale production of row crops and livestock will likely continue as mainstays of Iowa's rural economy, there is desire from Allamakee County's communities for renewed focus on diversified farming that feeds local and regional communities. Residents want to preserve and improve opportunities for agriculture while also protecting and expanding conservation lands and open space, for outdoor recreation as well as the protection of wildlife habitat, blufflands, and scenic viewsheds.

The County, as a local public agency, recognizes these values and will endeavor to support them when possible through its operations, community involvement, internal procedures, and actions of the Board of Supervisors.

COMMUNITY VOICES

"Overprotect our precious streams and water."

"I do not trust the quality of the water."

"We need more buffers along streams to prevent erosion."

Natural Resources & Environment

Goals & Policies (cont'd):

Policy N1.2 (cont'd):

expand the use of regenerative agriculture methods and best practices in soil and water conservation among Allamakee County's production ag farmers and land-owners. (Cross listed as Policy N4.1)

Policy N1.3:

The County collaborates with community stakeholders, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (Iowa DNR), and current and prospective operators of concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs), as appropriate and necessary, to prevent or mitigate potential negative impacts of these facilities on neighboring communities and water quality. In its consideration of issues involving or pertaining to CAFOs and other sources of water contamination, the County is committed to ensuring the health of residents and visitors and to making decisions that are data-driven and based on sound science with respect to our unique karst geology. (Cross listed as Policy L3.3)

Policy N1.4:

The County encourages, and supports when possible, education programs and awareness campaigns that increase the public's understanding of water quality issues. The County seeks partnerships with municipalities and other stakeholders in Allamakee County and the region to accomplish the same.

Natural Resources

& Environment

Goals & Policies (cont'd):

Goal N2:

Allamakee County's blufflands, natural areas, scenic viewsheds, agricultural lands, and working landscapes are widely recognized as both irreplaceable and foundational to our county's culture, economy, and quality of life. The integrity of these assets, and the assets themselves, are diligently protected. (Cross listed as Goal L2)

Policy N2.1:

The County periodically reviews its zoning and subdivision ordinances, its blufflands protection overlay district, and prevailing land development practices in the county to ensure that the desired result of preserving and protecting blufflands is being achieved. (Cross listed as Policy L2.1)

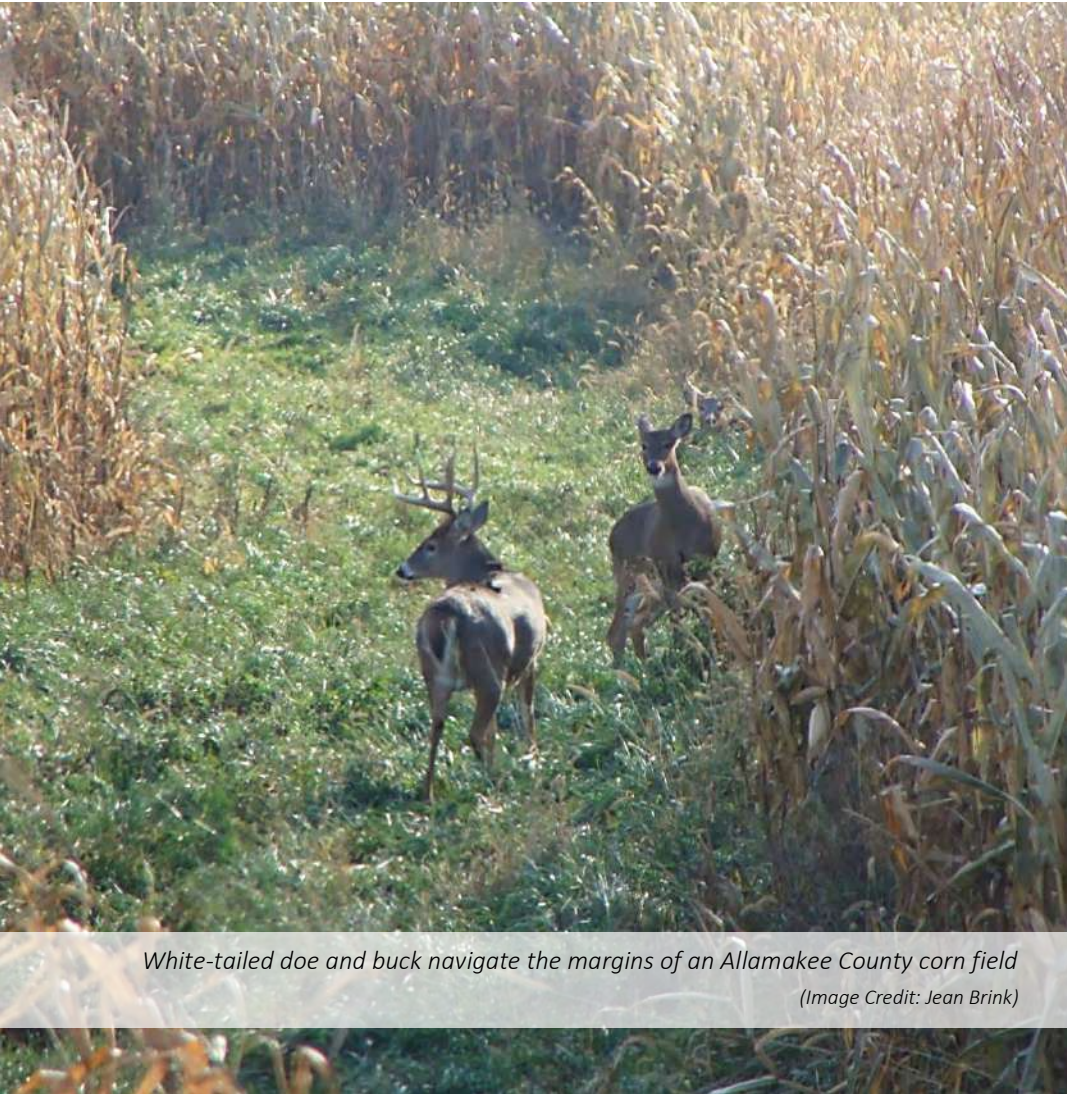
Policy N2.2:

The County seeks to find ways of strengthening protections for blufflands and scenic viewsheds in the county while balancing the needs and desires of individual property owners. Allamakee County and the Allamakee County Conservation Board seek opportunities to foster and sustain strategic partnerships with stakeholders, private land-owners, non-profits, and other government entities to protect and restore the natural and scenic integrity of our blufflands in perpetuity for future generations. (Cross listed as Policy L2.2)



COMMUNITY VOICES

“Respect for the land ought to be the very foundation and guiding principle of zoning and land-use decisions.”



*White-tailed doe and buck navigate the margins of an Allamakee County corn field
(Image Credit: Jean Brink)*

COMMUNITY VOICES

“I’m concerned about the increased number of CAFOs in the county with seemingly little to no oversight.”

“CAFOs need stronger restrictions.”

Natural Resources & Environment

Goals & Policies (cont’d):

Policy N2.3:

In an effort to protect and preserve the natural wildness and rural aesthetics that define Allamakee County, the County welcomes and encourages private land conservation through conservation easements, viewshed protection easements, and other legal tools available to land-owners. The County also seeks opportunities to preserve the same by expanding its park and conservation lands through fee-simple land acquisitions and collaborative conservation management opportunities in coordination with private land-owners.

Goal N3:

Conservation and restoration of native habitat are widely understood as intrinsically good in and of themselves. Through these ongoing activities, Allamakee County residents, visitors, and wildlife receive manifold benefits: hunters and anglers benefit from healthy and sustainable populations of native fish and game; nature-lovers and outdoor recreationists have more opportunities to view and enjoy the beauty of nature; and the wildlife that live in our county—especially threatened and endangered species—and that hold immeasurable value and importance within its ecosystems, have a better chance at long-term survival.

Natural Resources & Environment

Goals & Policies (cont'd):

Policy N3.1:

The County recognizes the important role of hunting and fishing in the culture and traditions of our residents, as well as in drawing visitors and additional revenue opportunities to the county. Allamakee County encourages the work of sportsmen's groups, habitat conservation non-profit and advocacy organizations, and other stakeholders in their efforts and seeks collaborative partnerships to protect and improve habitat for the county's wild fish and game populations.

Policy N3.2:

Allamakee County and the Allamakee County Conservation Board seek opportunities to foster and sustain strategic partnerships with stakeholders, other government entities, private land-owners, and non-profits to further the protection and restoration of Allamakee County's native ecosystems and wildlife habitat in perpetuity for future generations.

Policy N3.3:

Allamakee County cooperates and collaborates with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Iowa Department of Natural Resources, non-profit and advocacy organizations, private land-owners, and other stakeholders to ensure that threatened and endangered species, as well as



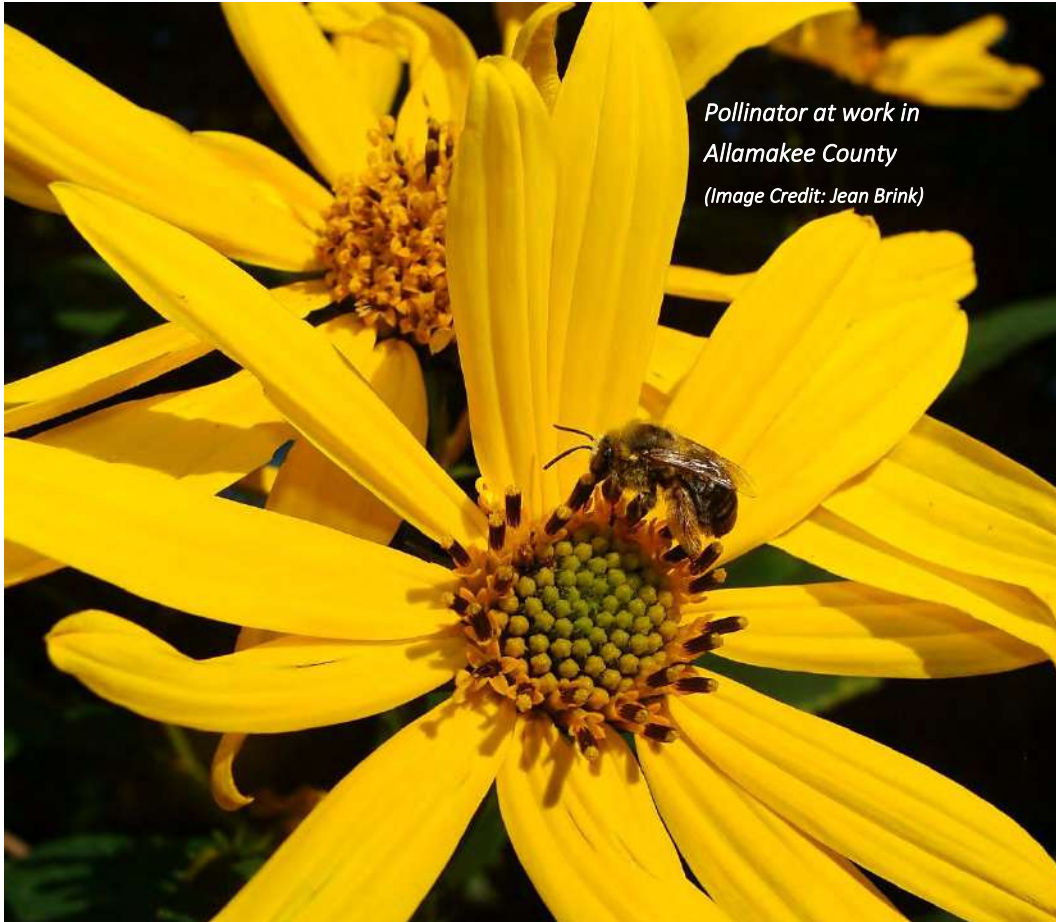
Clear Creek near Lansing, one of Allamakee County's many cherished trout streams (Image Credit: Aaron Detter, UERPC)

COMMUNITY VOICES

"There's easy access to top-notch trout streams."

"Please note, while I am for wildlife habitat, hunting, fishing, clean water and air, I am still 100% in favor of trail systems. This can all work together."

"Save the Earth, or we will not be able to share this beautiful experience we call Allamakee County."



Pollinator at work in
Allamakee County
(Image Credit: Jean Brink)

COMMUNITY VOICES

“I hate to see the county spraying and killing the wildflowers. When I moved here 20-plus years ago, I would drive along county roads that were lined with wildflowers. Now all there is along county roads are dead or mowed grass.”

“We need safer and more restricted use of pesticides.”

Natural Resources & Environment Goals & Policies (cont’d):

Policy N3.3 (cont’d):

species of special concern and other vulnerable species, are not further imperiled in the county and that land development practices, land management practices, agricultural practices, and other activities that affect habitat for these species in Allamakee County are done in ways that give these species opportunities to recover and thrive.

Policy N3.4:

The County desires to improve the ecological wellbeing of land it owns and operates, including road rights-of-way, parks, and other properties and facilities owned or managed by the County, through cost-effective, environmentally sound management practices. The County looks for opportunities to re-establish native habitats through seeding and management for native species when public safety and ecological benefit allow. The County also seeks to foster public-private partnerships to establish programs such as “no-spray” zones and other conservation management practices that allow land-owners opportunities to manage adjacent right-of-way in ways sensitive to their own land management, and in ways that cut down on County management costs.

Natural Resources & Environment

Goals & Policies (cont'd):

Goal N4:

The co-existence and co-prosperity of conventional production agriculture alongside smaller, diversified farms results in healthier eco-systems, locally produced food to feed our communities, and increased economic resiliency in Allamakee County.

Policy N4.1:

The County supports and encourages educational programs and seeks to sustain and strengthen partnerships and collaboration with regional stakeholders such as Allamakee County Soil and Water Conservation District, Northeast Iowa Resource Conservation and Development, and others, to expand the use of regenerative agriculture methods and best practices in soil and water conservation among Allamakee County's production ag farmers and land-owners. (Cross listed as Policy N1.2)

Policy N4.2:

The County acknowledges the many potential obstacles faced by both established and new farmers who want to start or transition to diversified farming operations, regenerative agricultural practices, and smaller-scale food production for local consumption. These obstacles may include lack of



Garden plot in Lansing where local food is grown as part of Iowa's Farm to School Program (Image Credit: Aaron Detter, UERPC)

COMMUNITY VOICES

"It may be very important to support our farmers in finding and developing new crops beyond just corn and beans. This is the future of agriculture. There is a need to be progressive."

"Both large and small agriculture is a benefit to our county."

"I would like to see farmers being more progressive and finding markets to serve other than corn and soybeans."



COMMUNITY VOICES

“We need to support the small farmer and locally grown foods.”

“Good farm management and erosion prevention should be a priority to all farmers, which in turn should help water quality of the local streams and rivers.”

“All natural resources are important to preserve and protect.”

Natural Resources & Environment Goals & Policies (cont'd):

Policy N4.2 (cont'd):

affordable access to land and capital, lack of educational and encouragement programs, market access issues, lack of value-added facilities and opportunities, and more. When possible, the County seeks to support efforts and programs that assist new and transitioning farmers in these areas to further increase our economic resiliency, increase ecosystem health, and increase access to local food.

Policy N4.3:

The County supports efforts and policies that preserve and expand agriculture—both large- and small-scale—but also encourages the protection and restoration of prairies, woodlands, and blufflands which drive the recreation and tourism economy. (Cross listed as Policy E1.4)

Goal N5:

All lawful outdoor recreational activities have a home in Allamakee County. The county’s facilities and dedicated spaces for the various recreational user groups are adequate, if not ample, and are accessible and available for the use and enjoyment of the public throughout the year. Whether and/or where the various recreational uses are allowed and/or provided for is a function of their

Natural Resources & Environment

Goals & Policies (cont'd):

Goal N5 (cont'd):

potential negative environmental impacts, their contextual appropriateness, and their compatibility with other user groups.

Policy N5.1:

The County recognizes that there is both a need and a broad desire among residents of Allamakee County for expanded, accessible facilities for walking and bicycling—especially paved multi-use trails—for recreational enjoyment and for general non-motorized transportation. The County seeks collaborative opportunities to expand and develop these facilities in Allamakee County and to form connected networks for non-motorized transportation within our region.

(Cross listed as Policy L1.2)

Policy N5.2:

The County values and seeks to strengthen and sustain its relationships and ongoing partnerships with regional natural resource and land-management agencies, including but not limited to the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (Iowa DNR), the National Park Service (NPS), and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), in recognition and furtherance of the tremendous benefits our county receives as a result of their presence.



COMMUNITY VOICES

“Keep ATVs and UTVs out of Yellow River State Forest. It’s known for hiking and backpacking. Please don’t ruin that hard-earned, beloved reputation.”

“Protect the peace and quiet of our state forest! Prevent noise pollution by keeping ATVs/UTVs out of there.”



COMMUNITY VOICES

“I’d like to see more ATV/UTV trails and parks in Allamakee County.”

“ATV/UTV parks and trails can be a substantial economic boost for the community”

“Horses don’t mix with the ATVs.”

Natural Resources & Environment Goals & Policies (cont’d):

Policy N5.3:

The County encourages and seeks to support the ongoing maintenance, expansion, and creation of outdoor recreation areas and facilities for all user groups in Allamakee County when possible, where contextually appropriate, and with consideration of environmental factors. (Cross listed as Policy L1.1)

Policy N5.4:

The County recognizes that there is a desire among recreational users of all-terrain vehicles and utility terrain vehicles (ATVs and UTVs) for more opportunities to ride in the county. The County encourages and seeks to support the development of these opportunities, but recognizes the manifest incompatibility of this activity with other forms of outdoor recreation. When making decisions that may affect the County’s multi-use recreation areas and facilities, and their accessibility to different user groups, the County will first prioritize access for user groups with the least detrimental and/or fewest negative impacts to other user groups and to the environment before considering the appropriateness and compatibility of access for higher-impact user groups.

6: Public Facilities, Services, & Infrastructure



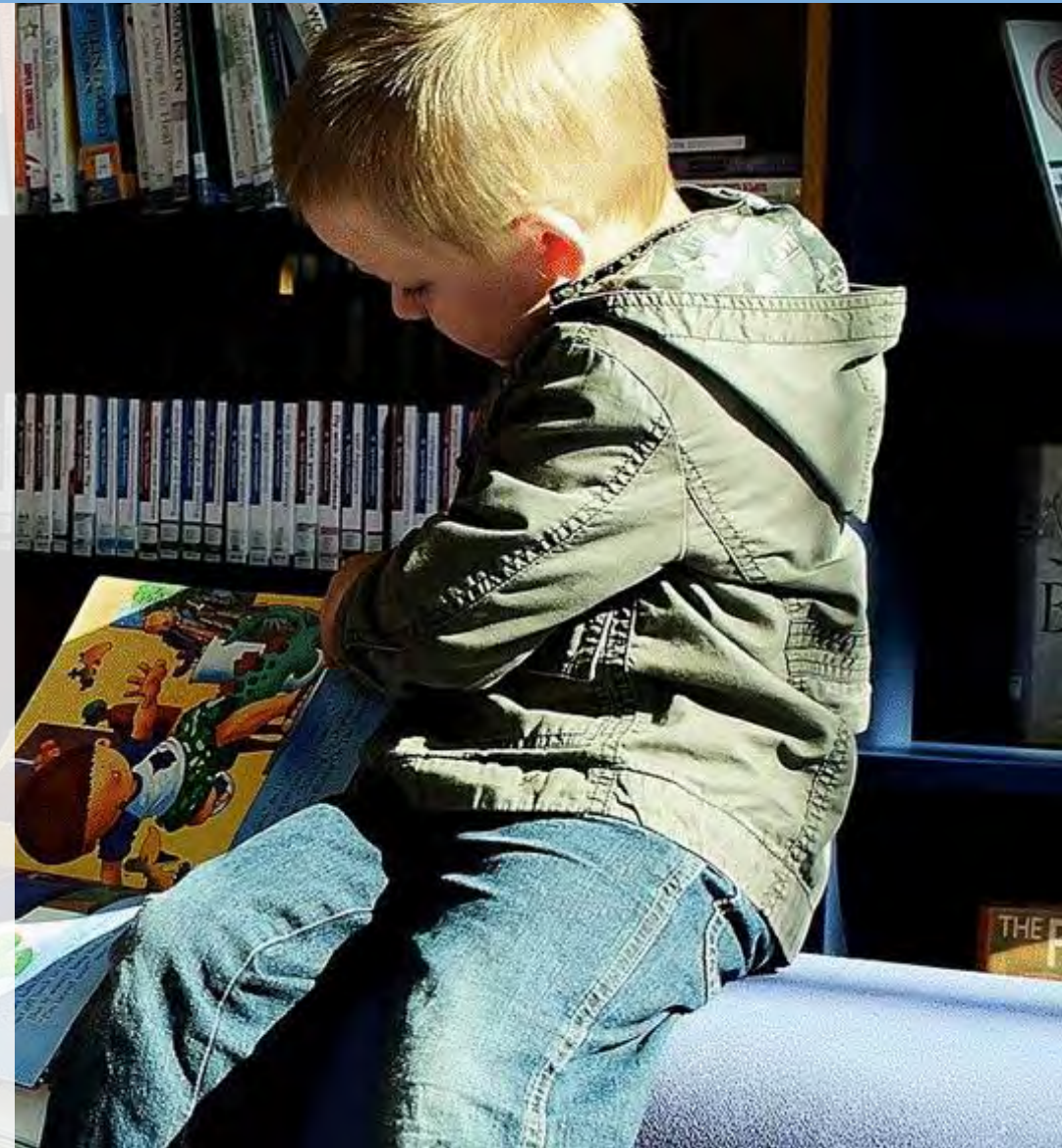
*Lull's Park in Postville
(Image Credit: City of Postville)*

OUR VISION:

Allamakee County's public facilities, services, and infrastructure are reliable, safe, efficient, and equitable. They provide a high quality of life for all residents and support a healthy, modern economy and a thriving tourism industry.

OVERVIEW

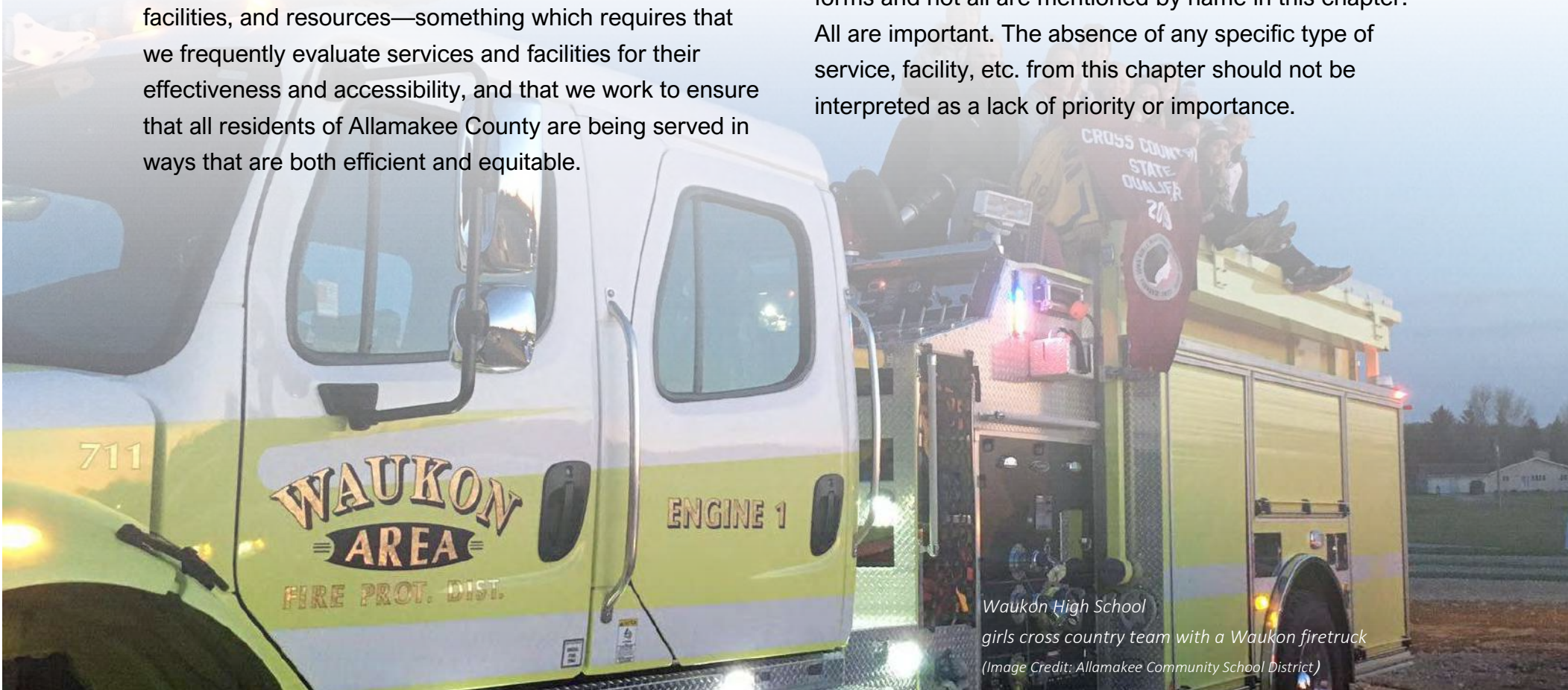
We have public workers who are dedicated to ensuring excellent services and facilities for Allamakee County residents, and their hard work shows. County residents benefit from the various public services, facilities, and infrastructure that are available to them. Of course, there is always room for improvement, and benefits may not always be equally or equitably distributed within and among our communities. Our public services and facilities can be nearly invisible to us on a daily basis—out of sight and out of mind—and yet we have high expectations that they will be there for us at the moment we want or need to use them. Many services and facilities also play a role in defining our communities' identities—things like our schools, law enforcement and firefighters, and public buildings such as our libraries and city halls. As such, they are intrinsically connected to who we are and to our valued quality of life here in Allamakee County.



Ongoing maintenance and preservation of our public facilities and infrastructure are necessary parts of keeping our communities safe and healthy and making sure that people’s basic needs are met. Our quality of life also depends greatly on essential public services, which require sustaining resources to continue to meet community needs. At the same time, we have areas of our county that are underserved or lacking in access to public services, facilities, and resources—something which requires that we frequently evaluate services and facilities for their effectiveness and accessibility, and that we work to ensure that all residents of Allamakee County are being served in ways that are both efficient and equitable.

Transportation infrastructure is of critical importance to Allamakee County residents and visitors—things like rural roads and bridges, multi-use trails, transit services, and sidewalks. However, these topics are part of the following chapter, Land Use & Transportation, and are not substantively considered in this chapter.

Public services, facilities, and infrastructure take many forms and not all are mentioned by name in this chapter. All are important. The absence of any specific type of service, facility, etc. from this chapter should not be interpreted as a lack of priority or importance.



*Waukon High School girls cross country team with a Waukon firetruck
(Image Credit: Allamakee Community School District)*

PUBLIC SERVICES, FACILITIES, & INFRASTRUCTURE: BACKGROUND & COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

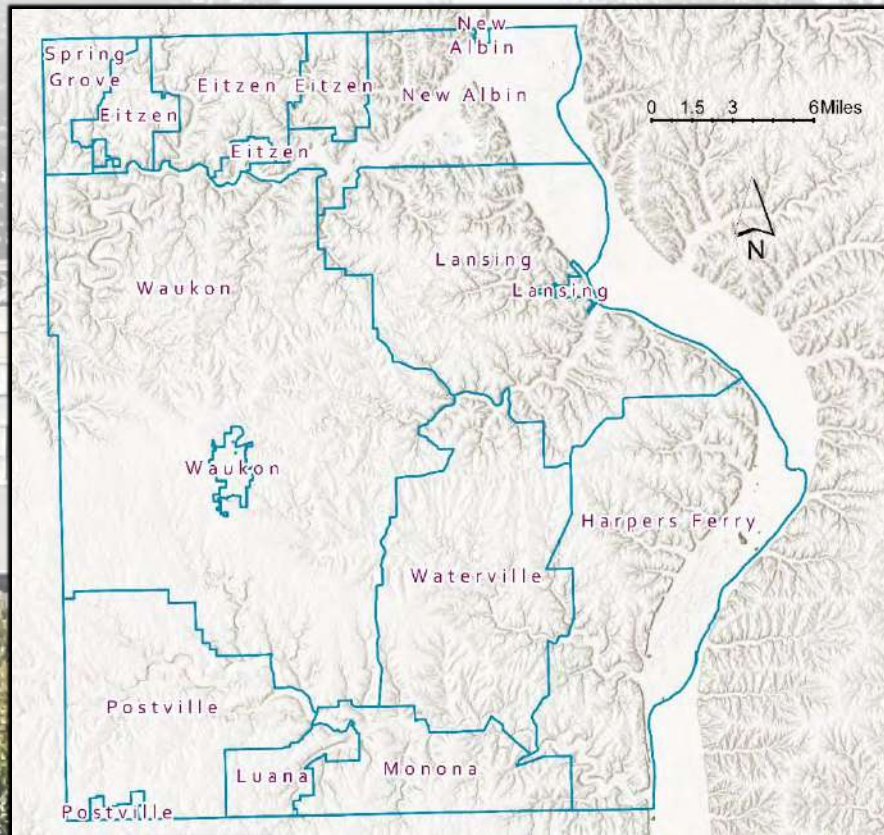
As noted in Chapter 5, Natural Resources & Environment, water quality is a top concern of residents in Allamakee County, with 95% of survey respondents saying that water quality should be a priority to protect (see Chart 17). Our public stormwater infrastructure has a major role to play in protecting water quality because of the amount of pollutants that may be washed into ground and surface water by precipitation. It was also noted in Chapter 4, Hazards & Resiliency, that nearly a quarter of survey respondents (23%) said that the condition and quality of the county's stormwater infrastructure are poor.

The county's water supply systems were thought of more favorably, with 53% of survey respondents saying that this infrastructure is in either good or excellent condition; only 5% said that it is poor. Similarly, only 5% of survey respondents consider the condition of the sanitary sewer system to be poor.

County residents generally appreciate our emergency services. Thirty percent of survey respondents said that emergency services in the county are excellent; only 3% said they were poor. There are some public service and infrastructure issues where residents see a need for improvement. One area in particular that presents problems for many people who live in and visit Allamakee County is our telecommunications infrastructure, especially serving sparsely populated rural areas away from towns. Over one-third of survey respondents said that internet access and cellular coverage are poor (34% and 37%, respectively). Twenty percent also felt that the availability of services and programs for youth and teenagers is poor.

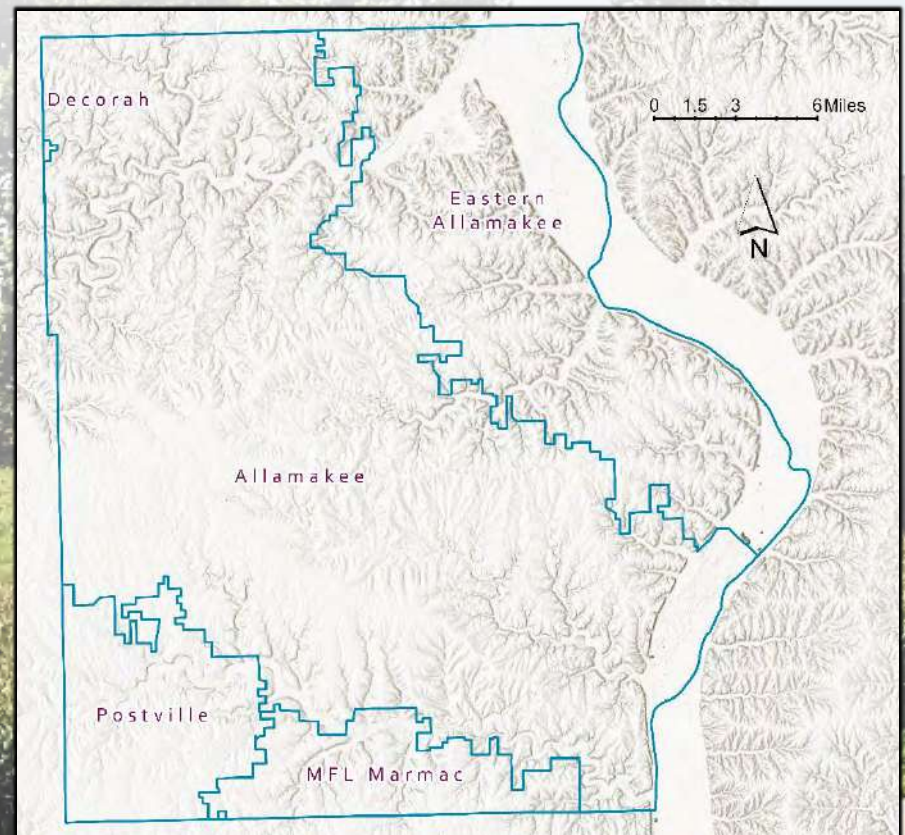
Public Services, Facilities, & Infrastructure Background

Figure 4 Allamakee County emergency service districts



Map source: UERPC, 2020

Figure 5: Allamakee County school districts



Map source: UERPC, 2020

Public Services, Facilities, & Infrastructure Background
(cont'd)

Table 8: 2020 student enrollment in Allamakee County school districts

Allamakee	1,051
Eastern Allamakee	303
Postville	745
MFL MarMac	734
TOTAL:	2,834

Data source: Iowa Department of Education, 2020

Table 9: Projected student enrollment in Allamakee County school districts, school years 2020-2021 to 2024-2025

SCHOOL YEAR:	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Allamakee	1,098	1,085	1,096	1,095	1,081
Eastern Allamakee	325	327	326	325	322
Postville	763	810	821	832	830
MFL MarMac	760	759	758	734	720

Data source: Iowa Department of Education, 2020

Table 10: Municipal water systems in Allamakee County

City	RESIDENTS SERVED	PIMARY SOURCE
Waukon	3,897	Groundwater
Postville	2,232	Groundwater
New Albin	529	Groundwater
Lansing	999	Groundwater
Harpers Ferry	328	Groundwater
TOTAL:	7,985	

Data source: Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 2020

Public Services, Facilities, & Infrastructure Background
(cont'd)

Figure 6: Allamakee County telecommunications coverage and access



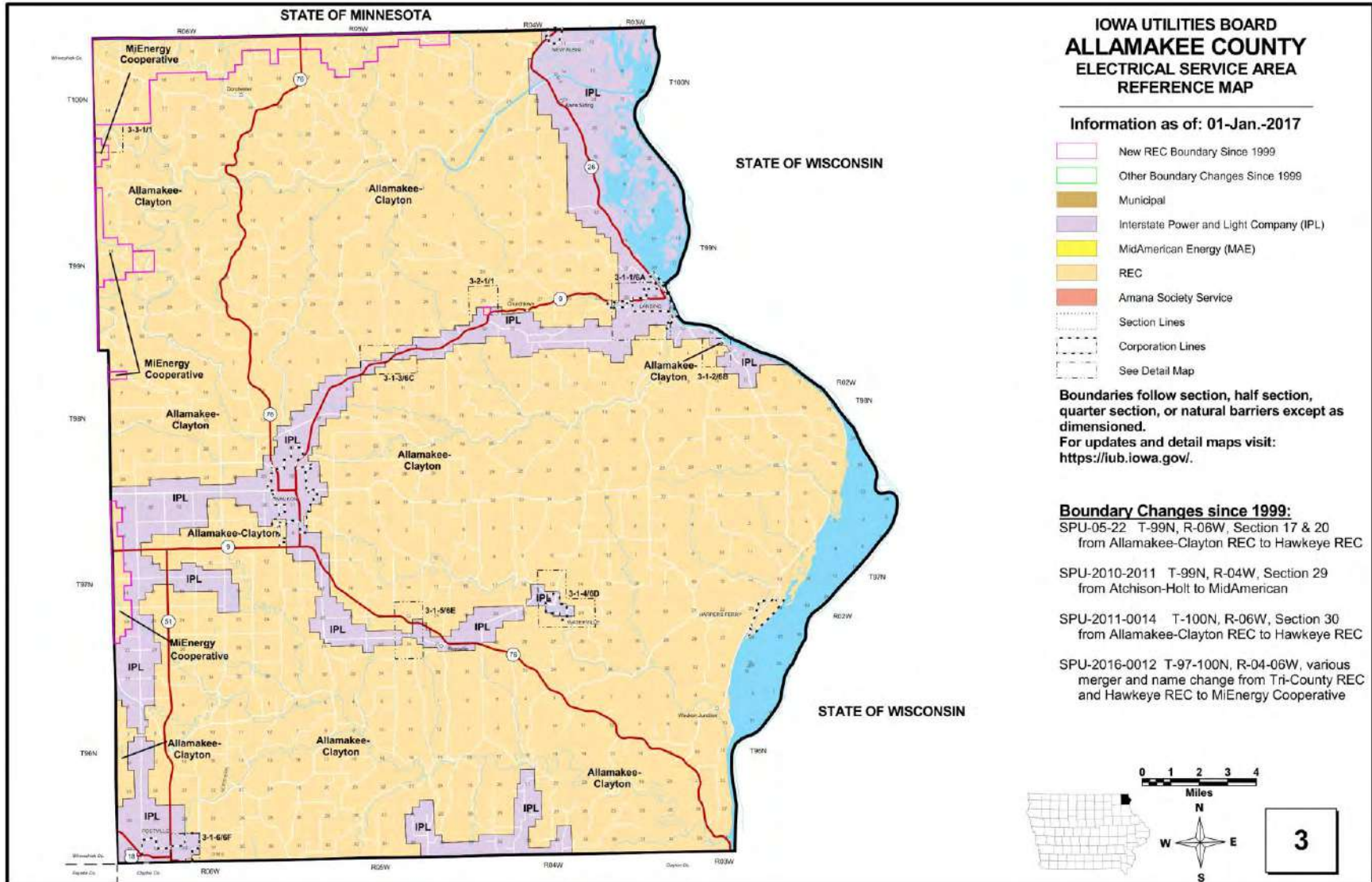
Table 11: Allamakee County healthcare facilities

NAME	TYPE	LOCATION
Good Samaritan Society	Free-standing nursing/skilled nursing	Postville
Good Samaritan Society	Free-standing nursing/skilled nursing	Waukon
Gundersen Lansing Clinic	Rural health clinic	Lansing
Gundersen Palmer Lutheran Hospital & Clinics	Rural health clinic	Postville
Northgate Care Center	Free-standing nursing/skilled nursing	Waukon
Southcrest Manor	Assisted Living	Waukon
Thornton Heights Assisted Living	Assisted Living	Lansing
Thornton Manor Nursing & Care Center	Free-standing nursing/skilled nursing	Lansing
Veterans Memorial Hospital	Critical access hospital	Waukon
VMH Community & Home Care	Home healthcare	Waukon

Data source: Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals, Health Facilities Division, 2019

*Public Services, Facilities, & Infrastructure Background
(cont'd)*

Figure 7: Allamakee County electrical service areas



Map source: Iowa Utilities Board, 2017

POLICY BASIS

Residents of Allamakee County appreciate the many public services and facilities available to them, and the infrastructure that makes daily life possible. Residents are especially grateful for the women and men who keep our communities safe. At the same time, our residents acknowledge the challenges that exist when it comes to ensuring the availability and quality of services and infrastructure across a large, rural county. Because residents and visitors rely on and value these services and facilities, they support efforts to ensure sustaining resources to continue providing these services and to maintain facilities and infrastructure in a state of good repair—and to do so in ways that are environmentally beneficial when possible.

As a public agency, Allamakee County recognizes the value of our public services, facilities, and infrastructure to our communities' wellbeing and economic health. The County will work collaboratively with community members and stakeholders to address challenges and find solutions, and to ensure the sustainability of these services, facilities, and infrastructure to meet the needs of current and future Allamakee County residents and visitors.

Public Facilities, Services, & Infrastructure Goals & Policies:

Goal P1:

Allamakee County residents and visitors benefit from public facilities and infrastructure that have adequate resources for maintenance and are kept in a state of good repair. Essential public services have adequate financial resources to continue on at high levels of service in a sustainable manner.

Policy P1.1:

The County looks to sustain the high level of service and the quality of its public facilities and infrastructure through its budgeting and prioritization process while seeking out additional revenues and funding sources to continue, improve, and expand access to its public services, facilities, and infrastructure.

Policy P1.2:

The County periodically assesses its capital assets to determine funding needs and priorities and will utilize additional tools and methods, such as developing a capital improvement plan or an asset management plan, as needed to assist in identifying priorities and funding needs.

Public Facilities, Services, & Infrastructure

Goals & Policies (cont'd):

Policy P1.3:

The County encourages and supports the development and incorporation of renewable energy and energy-efficient, environmentally sound principles and practices in the construction, maintenance, updating, and operations of its facilities and infrastructure.

Goal P2:

Stormwater infrastructure throughout the county, in both incorporated and unincorporated areas, supports water quality and biodiversity while mitigating the effects of catastrophic floods.

Policy P2.1:

The County incorporates sustainable drainage systems and stormwater management into infrastructure and capital projects when practicable.

Policy P2.2:

The County seeks to be proactive in adopting newer and/or innovative stormwater management methods and technologies, such as bioswales and detention/retention basins that create or support wetland habitats and biodiversity as they mitigate stormwater.



Main Street and the Upper Mississippi River in Lansing
(Image Credit: Main Street Lansing)

COMMUNITY VOICES

“Lack of infrastructure upkeep in our cities is an issue. First impressions leave lasting impressions.”

“If I could change one thing about Allamakee County, it would be to invest in our infrastructure to encourage new businesses.”



Harpers Ferry Community Center
(Image Credit: City of Harpers Ferry)

Public Facilities, Services, & Infrastructure

Goals & Policies (cont'd):

Goal P3:

Allamakee County residents and visitors benefit from ample spaces for recreation and community gathering at all times of year, and a variety of services and programming for youth education, recreation, and enrichment is available.

Policy P3.1:

The County seeks to support efforts that build upon existing assets such as the Waukon Wellness Center and the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center in Lansing as centers for community interaction and gathering.

Policy P3.2:

The County seeks to support efforts that broaden the scope of available community spaces and activities to better serve our communities' diverse needs.

Goal P4:

Residents, visitors, and businesses throughout the county have access to modern telecommunications infrastructure such as high-speed internet, cellular service, and mobile data networks. Such access improves residents' quality of

COMMUNITY VOICES

"I love our awesome library and Waukon Wellness Center."

Public Facilities, Services, & Infrastructure

Goals & Policies (cont'd):

Goal P4 (cont'd):

life, increases safety for residents and visitors, and bolsters economic prosperity through supporting business activity and tourism.

Policy P4.1:

The County supports the expansion of modern telecommunications access for all residents and visitors of Allamakee County, but is committed to the goals and policies articulated in Chapter 5, Natural Resources & Environment, for preserving and protecting blufflands and scenic viewsheds.

Policy P4.2:

The County seeks opportunities for collaboration and partnership with telecommunications providers and utilities to expand infrastructure and access across Allamakee County and the region.

Goal P5:

The County's public safety and emergency response personnel and volunteers are well trained and have ample resources to provide highly effective services that protect the wellbeing of all who live in and visit Allamakee County.



COMMUNITY VOICES

“There’s a need for youth to have access to health clinics and to have safe places to go.”

“There seems to be a lack of public health services in Allamakee county, in my experience. Many people go to Decorah because of this.”



Postville Swimming Pool (Image Credit: City of Postville)

COMMUNITY VOICES

“I feel safe here. I’m able to let my kids play outside.”

“There’s a failure to appreciate the importance of quality-of-life issues like good schools, good medical care, and the need for rules and regulations to safeguard the environment.”

“Our educational instruction for our kids is lagging compared to metro areas like Des Moines, Waterloo, and Cedar Rapids.”

“Things could be so much better. There is always room for improvement. There is apathy here, as there is everywhere. People need to care, and they need to have a place to go to dialogue, meet with others that have similar interests, and then figure out how to work together to make change.”

Public Facilities, Services, & Infrastructure

Goals & Policies (cont’d):

Policy P5.1:

The County looks to sustain the quality and high level-of-service of its public safety and emergency services and seeks out additional revenues and funding sources to continue, improve, and expand upon service delivery where possible and needed.

Policy P5.2:

The County supports training and outreach opportunities that educate and engage members of the public in how they can participate and support the work of public safety and emergency services personnel.

Goal P6:

Residents and visitors of Allamakee County have ready access to high-quality healthcare facilities and residents benefit from ample options for high-quality elder and dependent care services and facilities.

Policy P6.1:

The County works collaboratively with local and state public health officials to ensure that Allamakee County’s people and places are healthy and safe.

Public Facilities, Services, & Infrastructure

Goals & Policies (cont'd):

Policy P6.2:

The County continues its collaboration and partnerships with healthcare providers and facilities, municipalities, state and federal agencies, and community members to ensure that Allamakee County residents and visitors have access to quality healthcare.

Policy P6.3:

The County seeks opportunities to collaborate and partner with local providers and facilities, municipalities, state agencies, and community members to ensure that Allamakee County's senior and dependent care needs are being met.

Goal P7:

Allamakee County's school-aged children receive a quality education in modern, safe, and well-maintained schools. Residents benefit from ample, accessible, and affordable options for high-quality childcare and pre-kindergarten.

Policy P7.1:

The County continues its collaboration and partnerships with school districts, municipalities, state agencies, and community members to ensure that Allamakee County's educational needs are being met.



Waukon High School in Waukon

(Image Credit: Allamakee Community School District)

Policy P7.2:

The County seeks to work with stakeholders and partners, as needed and appropriate, to identify gaps in and barriers to access to high-quality, affordable childcare, and is committed to working collaboratively to find solutions.

7: Transportation & Land Use



Above image Credit: Waukon Chamber of Commerce



OUR VISION:

Allamakee County's residents, businesses, and visitors have safe and convenient transportation options. The transportation network is kept in a state of good repair and provides comfortable access and mobility for people of all ages and abilities. Land-use planning and development patterns work in concert with a multi-modal transportation network to conserve farmland and open space; limit emissions and resource depletion; and foster active, healthy, livable communities.

OVERVIEW

There is a complex, symbiotic interplay between land uses, development patterns, and transportation networks. The ways in which we use and develop land can be a major determinant of which transportation modes are available, safe, convenient, and comfortable—and which ones are not. Development patterns that promote a mixture of uses (retail, residential, commercial, etc.) near or within existing developed areas help to conserve farmland and wildlife habitat while also creating more transportation options for residents and visitors. This is because walking, bicycling, and transit become more viable in areas where people live closer to where they work, shop, and recreate. Conversely, haphazard development patterns and lack of appropriate land-use regulations can lead to populations being more spread out and residential areas being farther away from—or even physically separated from—services, retail, schools, offices, businesses, etc.



In such scenarios, access to a private motor vehicle is often the only option people have for safely accessing needed and desired services and activities. Approximately 43% of Allamakee County residents live outside of incorporated areas. In our large, rural county, long travel distances may sometimes be unavoidable.

Nevertheless, there is growing interest among county residents in livability and health; efforts to curb carbon emissions; access to affordable housing; creating

transportation options that allow seniors to age in place and for youth to be able to safely walk and bicycle to school and other activities; along with many other concerns that are affected by transportation and land use. There are many opportunities for our transportation infrastructure and operations to work in coordination with our land-use and development practices to foster livable communities where people of all ages, abilities, and financial means can thrive.



TRANSPORTATION TRENDS & COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

General aviation, inter-city bus services, and the movement of freight by rail, trucking, and river barges are important aspects of our transportation system that support our economies. Due to their much larger regional scale, these modes are better addressed in our region’s long-range transportation plan,²⁸ which the County will continue to use in support of regional transportation goals and coordination. This plan’s transportation focus relates to how people move from place to place within Allamakee County.

Our transportation system generally does an outstanding job of allowing people to get from point A to point B in their cars—and, by and large, the average person is content, or at least unconcerned, with the car-focused system such as it is. There have been over 1,760 crashes in Allamakee County since 2010—27 people were killed and hundreds suffered injuries, many of them life-altering (see Chart 19).²⁹ Transportation safety is beginning to be viewed more and more through the lens of public health, where traffic

fatalities and severe injuries are no longer seen as “accidents,” but as preventable tragedies that should never occur. This approach to transportation safety, known as “vision zero” or “toward zero deaths,” entails a paradigm shift in the way we think about traffic safety, where not even a single traffic-related death or severe injury is considered acceptable.³⁰

As noted elsewhere in this plan, residents of Allamakee County are increasingly interested in transportation improvements that make the system safe and comfortable for road-users of all ages and abilities. Maintenance and safety improvements are at the top of residents’ transportation priority lists, with 98% of survey respondents identifying routine maintenance as important or very important (45% and 53%, respectively) and 97% identifying safety improvements as important or very important (49% and 48%, respectively). Investing in non-motorized, multi-use trails is also at the top of residents’ transportation priority lists, with 87% of survey

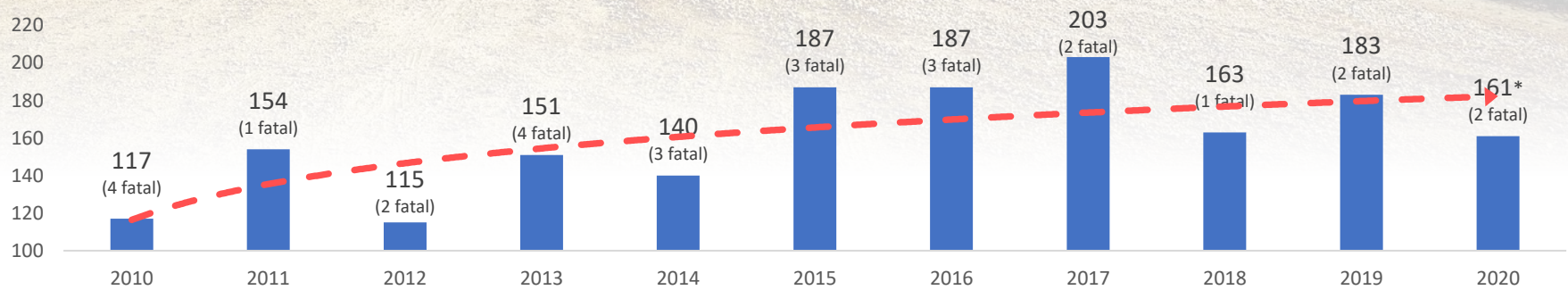
respondents identifying investment in trails as important or very important (47% and 40%, respectively). Fifty-seven percent of survey respondents said that the condition of sidewalks and trails in Allamakee County is fair or poor (43% and 14%, respectively). Respondents felt similarly about other forms of transportation infrastructure, but only unpaved county roads had a higher number of “poor” responses (16%).

While car transportation and infrastructure form a defining characteristic of American culture, it is important to remember that many members of our communities do not drive, or would prefer not to drive. We may not always think in these terms, but approximately one out of every three residents of Allamakee County does not drive. This includes those who are not old enough to drive, those who have given up driving or are unable to drive due to old age, and people of any age who are either unable to drive, don’t have access to a motor vehicle, or choose to use other modes of transportation as their primary means of getting around.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2018 estimates, as much as 9% of all households in Allamakee County do not have access to a personal motor vehicle.

The U.S. Census Bureau provides estimates of which mode of transportation Allamakee County workers use to get to work (see Chart 21). The majority of Allamakee County workers drive alone to work (77%), but the numbers of workers walking to work (6%) and carpooling to work (9%) are significant. Two percent of workers use other means such as bicycling or taxis to get to work, and 7% work from home. The U.S. Census Bureau’s Center for Economic Studies compiles additional data and estimates for the work trip, such as the in-flow and out-flow of Allamakee County (see Figure 9) commuters and the distances county residents travel to get to work (see Chart 20). Distance categories are quite coarse; a three-block walking trip, a one-mile bicycling trip, and a 9.9 mile car trip would all fall into one category, “less than 10 miles”—so there are limitations to what these data can tell us.

Chart 19: Vehicle crash trend in Allamakee County, 2010-2020



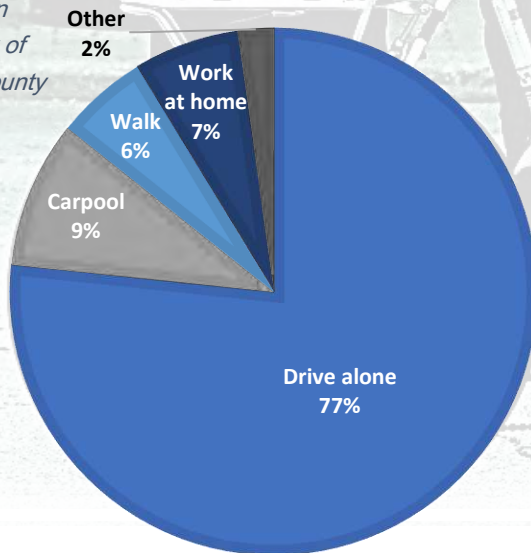
Data source: Iowa Department of Transportation, 2020

*Through 11/16/20

The recently completed long-range transportation plan²⁸ for the five-county region that includes Allamakee County found that 62% percent of survey respondents lived 10 miles or less from work. Further, it found that 44% lived two miles or less from work, including 27%—more than a quarter of respondents—who lived less than one mile from work. These are distances that could be easily bicycled or walked by many commuters in northeast Iowa; yet only 1.6% of survey respondents reported bicycling to work and only 6.3% reported walking to work. For our commuters' transportation mode choice to be more in line with these short commute distances, it will require facilities and conditions for walking and bicycling that are safer and more inviting than at present.

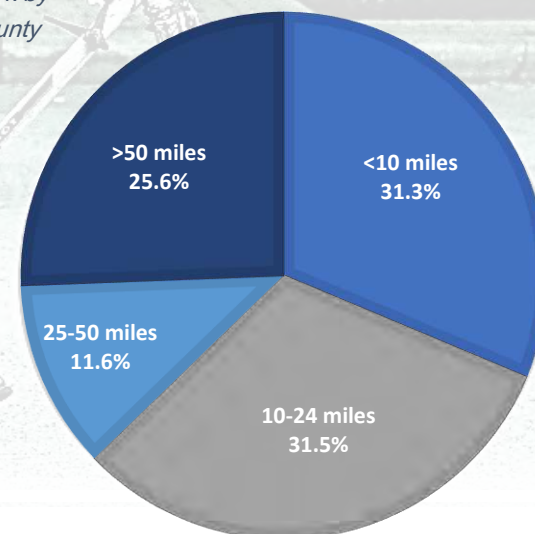
The field of transportation planning has long focused almost exclusively on the trip to and from work. Of course, people's lives and daily travel patterns are much more complex. In fact, work trips only account for about 15% of all trips.³¹ This heavy focus only on work trips has ignored a very large portion of the trips that make up our daily lives—trips to places like the grocery store or bank; trips to school; trips for enjoyment or recreation; trips to visit friends and family; and on and on. The field of transportation planning is moving toward a more holistic approach that aims to equitably consider all road users—including those driving, walking, bicycling, and using public transit—and to ensure that everyone has access to safe mobility options, no matter how they get around.

Chart 21: Transportation mode to work of Allamakee County residents



Data source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017 estimates

Chart 20: Distance traveled to work by Allamakee County residents



Data source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017 estimates

Transportation Background

Figure 8: Multi-modal transportation map of Allamakee County and surrounding area

Legend

Bridges by condition rating

- Out of service or failed condition
- Critical condition
- Serious condition
- Poor condition
- Fair condition
- Satisfactory condition
- Good condition
- Very good condition
- Excellent condition

- Municipal boundaries

- Scenic byways

- State & U.S. highways

- County & local roads

- Rail lines

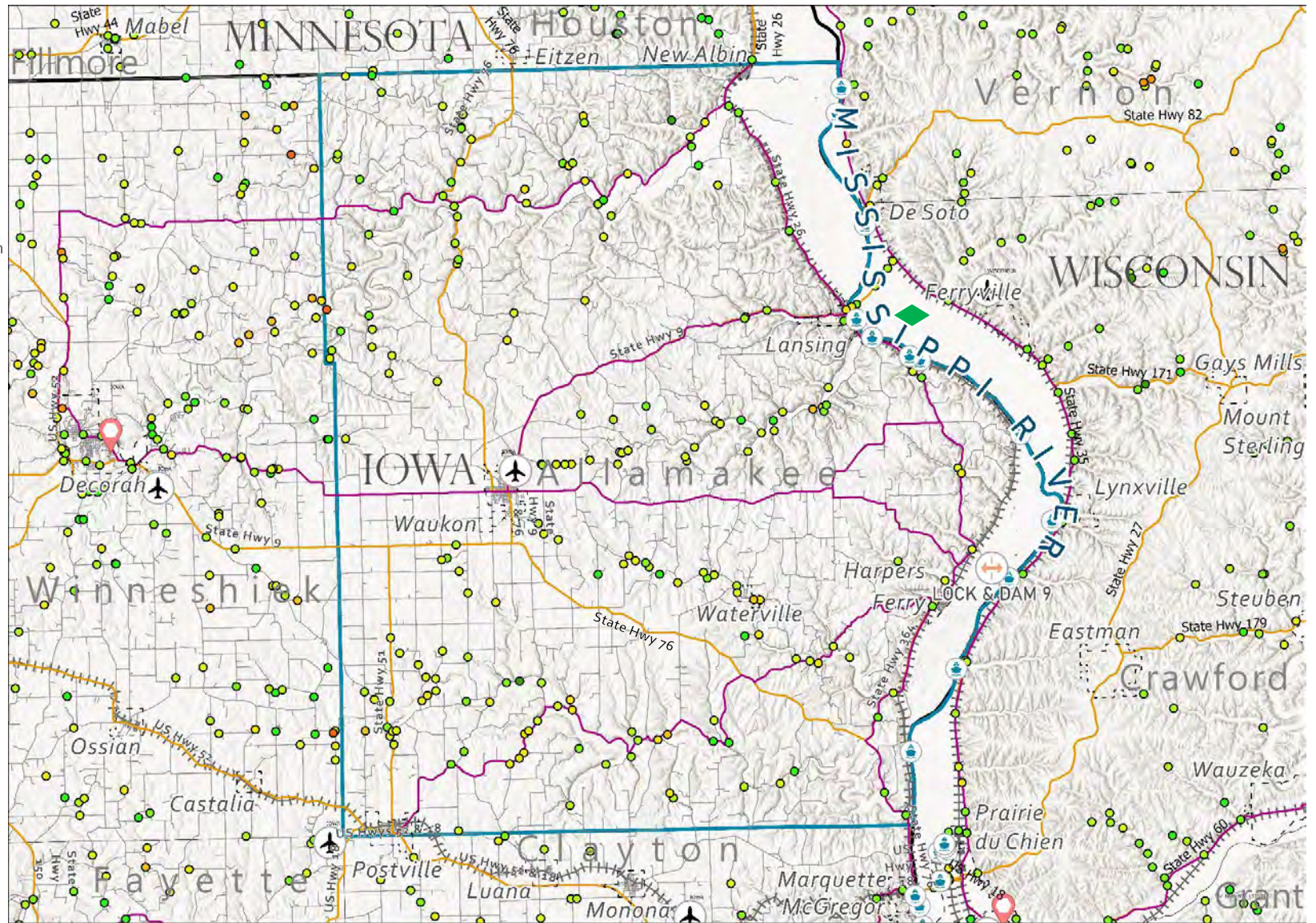
- ↔ Lock and Dam

- ⚓ Port/Barge Terminal

- ✈ Airport/Landing Strip

- 📍 Heliport

- ◆ Mississippi River Crossing



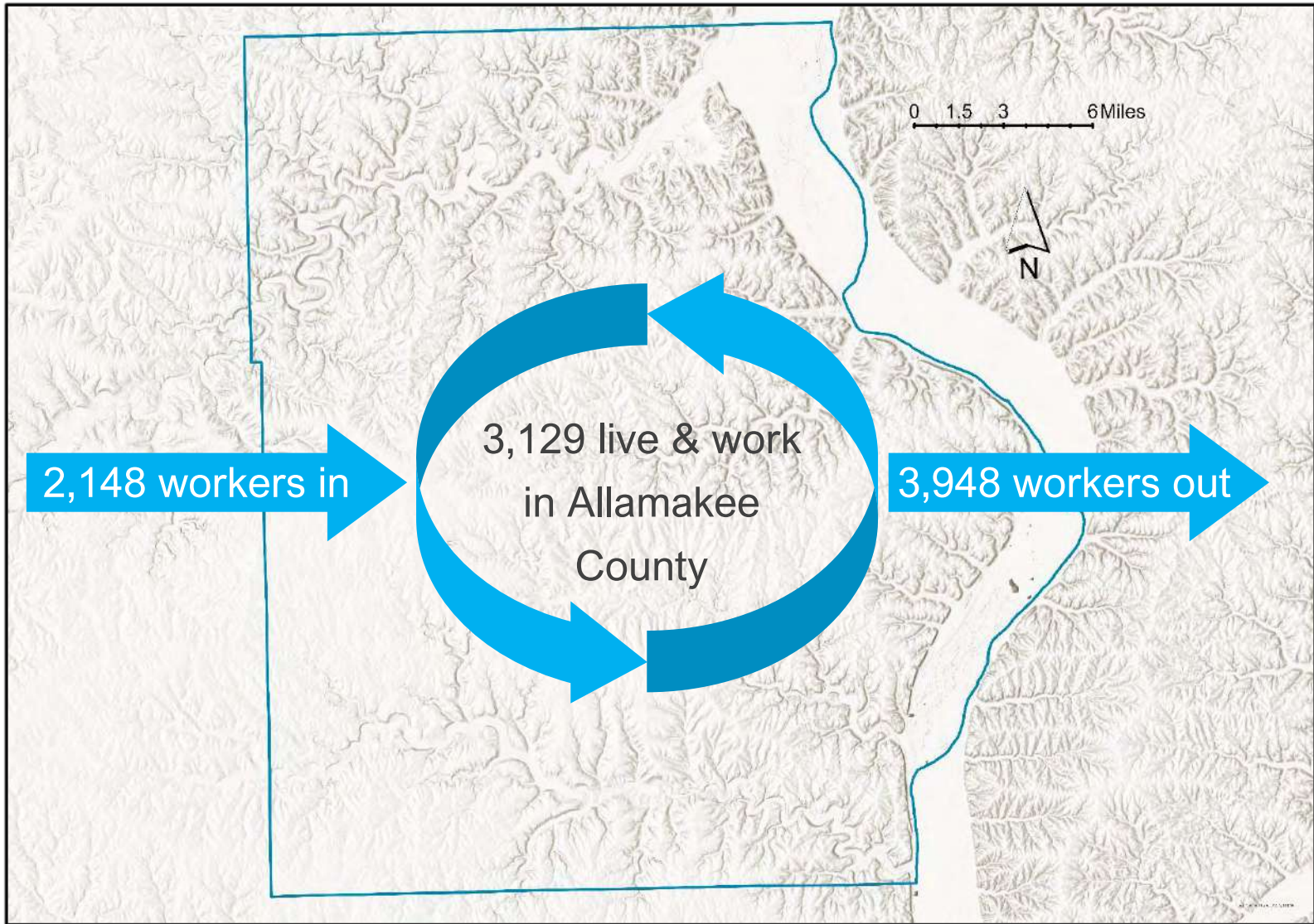
Map source: UERPC, 2020

0 5 10 20 Miles



Transportation Background (cont'd)

Figure 9: In-flow and out-flow of work commuters in Allamakee County



Infographic source: UERPC, 2020; Data source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017

Transportation

Goals & Policies:

Goal T1:

Allamakee County’s multi-modal transportation network is safe, comfortable, and accessible to people of all ages, abilities, and means. The prioritization and delivery of projects that improve safety for all road-users creates a multi-modal transportation network that ensures that not even one person is killed or severely injured in traffic crashes in Allamakee County.

Policy T1.1:

The County is committed to achieving zero traffic deaths and severe injuries in Allamakee County. The County will work collaboratively with its engineering staff and maintenance crews, state and local governments, law enforcement, and other stakeholders to identify and address dangerous hot spots through a systems approach to traffic safety that is holistic and ongoing. Hot spots are identified based not only on crash history but also on tacit or perceived danger—areas with latent demand but which vulnerable road-users avoid because these locations are known or perceived to be unsafe, resulting in a lack of crash history.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY BASIS

Operating and maintaining an extensive network of roads, streets and bridges throughout the county is no small task, and Allamakee County residents and visitors appreciate the fine work of County engineering and transportation personnel. In addition to residents’ and visitors’ high expectations for the motor vehicle access provided by the rural road network, they increasingly desire more, better, safer accommodations for non-drivers, for a multitude of reasons—personal health and wellbeing, environmental benefits, issues of equity and accessibility, and more. Ensuring that our publicly funded transportation facilities safely and equitably accommodate people of all ages and abilities is an enormous challenge. But it is a challenge

COMMUNITY VOICES

“If I could change one thing about Allamakee County, I would build more trails and other active transportation accommodations.”

Transportation

Goals & Policies (cont'd):

that citizens expect their leaders to address head-on, while continuing to maintain the high levels of service motorists have come to expect. A commitment to “vision zero” principles—where not even one traffic death or serious injury is considered tolerable—benefits all residents and increases safety for all road users.

Allamakee County residents and visitors expect a safe and well-maintained system of secondary roads. Concurrently, they are increasingly vocal about their desire for better, safer opportunities for walking and bicycling. These actualities—along with issues of accessibility and ADA compliance; environmental and health concerns; and the approximate 1/3 of county residents who do not drive—combine to create clear and strong justification for making reasonable and necessary adjustments in how we deploy transportation services and infrastructure in Allamakee County, to create a transportation system that is more sustainable, multi-modal, and equitable.

Policy T1.2:

The County seeks to fund and deliver transportation projects through an evaluation process that prioritizes those with the greatest safety impact and/or those that address the most pressing safety issues.

Policy T1.3:

To help ensure the safety of all users of the transportation system, particularly those most at risk in crashes, the County considers the context of its transportation facilities in setting appropriate speed limits. It seeks to work collaboratively with state and local agencies to ensure the same on their facilities.

Policy T1.4:

The County seeks to engage the community in meaningful, accessible outreach and discussion of traffic safety concerns, and to implement appropriate safety countermeasures when and where possible.

Policy T1.5:

In support of this goal, the County will assess progress toward zero fatal and serious injury crashes by reviewing annually (at minimum) relevant transportation safety data, research, and other information in collaboration with the Iowa Department of Transportation and Upper Explorerland Regional Planning Commission.

TRADITIONAL APPROACH

Traffic deaths are **INEVITABLE**
PERFECT human behavior
Prevent **COLLISIONS**
INDIVIDUAL responsibility
Saving lives is **EXPENSIVE**

VS

VISION ZERO

Traffic deaths are **PREVENTABLE**
Integrate **HUMAN FAILING** in approach
Prevent **FATAL AND SEVERE CRASHES**
SYSTEMS Approach
Saving lives is **NOT EXPENSIVE**

Transportation

Goals & Policies (cont'd):

Policy T1.6:

The County supports exploring the formation of a new advisory committee on transportation safety, access, and equity. Consisting of community members and stakeholders, the potential new group would advise the Board of Supervisors, other boards and committees, and County staff on matters of transportation safety, access, and equity.

Goal T2:

Transportation for non-drivers is available, safe, accessible, and affordable to all Allamakee County residents and visitors, regardless of their location, financial resources, or ability. Allamakee County's quality of life and economic prosperity reach new heights as the result of its walkable and bikeable communities.

Policy T2.1:

The County seeks not to discriminate on the basis of ability or disability in how it constructs, maintains, and operates transportation infrastructure that facilitates public mobility. As required by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the County will assess and update its ADA transition plan—or develop such a plan if one does not exist—to guide its work toward full ADA compliance of its transportation facilities. The County seeks to support the municipalities and communities of Allamakee County in pursuing the same.

EARL Public Transit bus with front-mounted bicycle rack

(Image Credit: Northeast Iowa Community Action Corporation)



COMMUNITY VOICES

"I'm a walker, and the condition of sidewalks is terrible or non-existent."

"Many communities are behind in maintaining a continuous sidewalk system—many people are walking in the streets."

COMMUNITY VOICES

“We could use more sidewalks, and improvements to the existing ones.”

“Make Waukon an inviting community by showcasing its beauty with sidewalks and walking/running trails.”

“There’s a lack of walking trails, bike paths, and a lack of even sidewalks in Waukon.”

“There is a lack of multi-use trails.”

“More bicycling and walking trails.”

“If I could change one thing about Allamakee County, it would be better sidewalks and walkability.”

“Need better access to multi-use trails/walking/biking/horse etc.”

“There is a lack of connected trails.”

Transportation

Goals & Policies (cont’d):

Policy T2.2:

The County values and considers the safety and comfort of people walking and bicycling in all of its transportation projects and activities. The County uses a context-sensitive approach in how it constructs, maintains, and operates its transportation facilities.

Policy T2.3:

The County coordinates and collaborates with regional stakeholders such as Northeast Iowa Community Action Corporation’s EARL Transit to ensure that county residents and visitors who cannot drive—or wish not to—have safe, affordable passenger transportation options within the tri-state region.

Policy T2.4:

The County values and supports projects and activities that give K-12 students the ability to safely and independently walk or bicycle to and from school and related activities, and to and from public facilities such as libraries, parks, and community centers.



COMMUNITY VOICES

“The highways in our county are deteriorated and need to be redone. Particularly concerned for novice drivers and motorcycles on such deteriorated roads.”

“Poorly designed and maintained town streets”

“Gravel roads are in poor to very poor shape, and walkways in town are mostly unsafe.”

“Gravel roads are a disaster.”

“Timely maintenance is critical to catching problems early.”

“Sidewalks need improvement.”

“Streets in the towns are showing their age.”

“If our roads are not good, and the scenery along the roadside is dead from spraying or cutting down of trees, the amount of people driving our ‘scenic byways’ will decline.”

Transportation

Goals & Policies (cont’d):

Policy T2.5:

The County supports, and seeks to expedite to the extent possible, the planning and construction of a network of paved, multi-use trails in Allamakee County that provide county residents and visitors additional transportation and recreation options and that connect with regional trails in neighboring counties.

Goal T3:

Allamakee County’s streets, roads, and bridges are in a state of good repair and support safe access and mobility for all system users.

Policy T3.1:

The County looks to sustain high levels of transportation safety and quality of transportation services through its budgeting and prioritization processes, while also seeking out additional revenues and innovative funding strategies to increase transportation safety and expand access to its transportation facilities and infrastructure.

Policy T3.2:

The County supports the continuing education and training of its transportation maintenance and engineering workforce to ensure the County is using the most up-to-date, best practices in its transportation maintenance, safety, and operations.

Transportation

Goals & Policies (cont'd):

Policy T3.3:

The County values and considers the safety and comfort of all transportation system users in its transportation projects and activities.

Policy T3.4:

In recognition of the higher wear and tear caused by increasingly large agricultural equipment and heavy-load vehicles utilizing the county's roadways and bridges, the County seeks to work with the Iowa DOT, community partners, and other stakeholders in ensuring that roads and bridges are kept in a state of good repair and continue to support agriculture in Allamakee County.

Goal T4:

Allamakee County's roads, bridges, and streets enhance the integrity of the natural environment and mitigate global climate change through the safe accommodation and encouragement of alternative and non-motorized transportation modes, and through the incorporation of green infrastructure into the transportation system when and where possible. The resilience of Allamakee County's communities and their ability to respond and bounce back from natural disasters and extreme weather events are also enhanced as a result.

COMMUNITY VOICES

"If I could change one thing about Allamakee County, it would be to improve its roads and streets."

Policy T4.1:

In recognition of the myriad benefits to the natural environment, human health, and society at large that occur when higher rates of people walk, bicycle, carpool, and use transit to complete daily trips, the County actively seeks ways to encourage residents and visitors to utilize these modes whenever possible.

Policy T4.2:

The County supports land-use and development practices that result in a mix of uses and activities—businesses, residences, restaurants, etc.—that exist in close proximity to each other within or near existing communities. Such development patterns give residents and visitors additional mobility options and choices that can reduce carbon emissions stemming from excessive reliance on motor vehicles and travel over long distances.

Policy T4.3:

The County seeks to support efforts to expand electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure and accessibility in Allamakee County and the surrounding region, and to expand renewable energy infrastructure to support an increasing fleet of EVs.

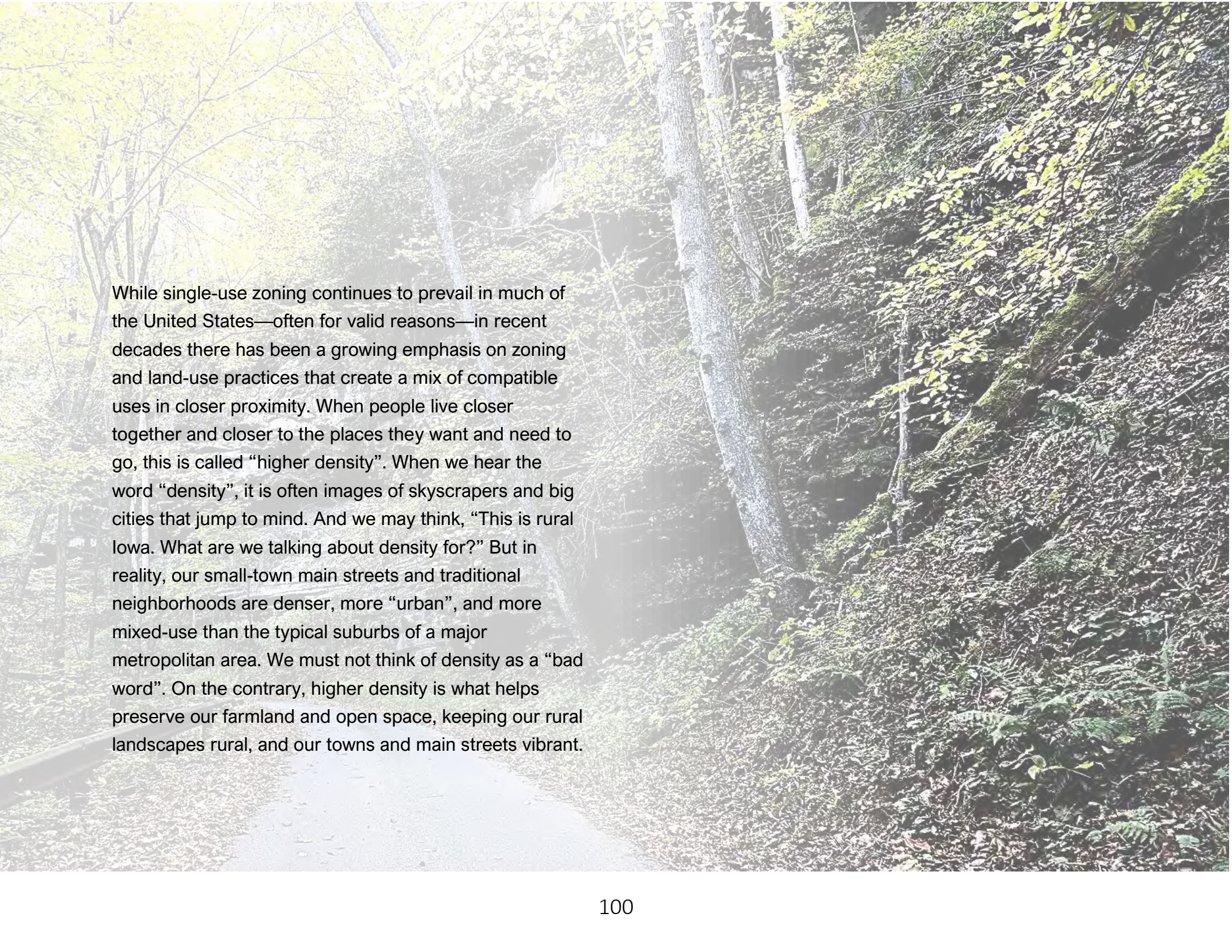
LAND USE BACKGROUND & DISCUSSION

It is fitting that a discussion of land use should come at the very end of this plan. We can consider land use to be the umbrella covering all the previous chapters. When we take a look around, all that there is as far as the eye can see is... land use. Whether sitting at home reading a book, working behind a desk in an office, harvesting your crop, or driving in your car, there is land beneath you, and you are using it for something.

Land-use zoning is how we determine which uses are appropriate in different areas, in consideration of a host of different factors—geography and environment, nearby or adjacent uses, availability of infrastructure, transportation access, and more. Land-use zoning as we know it today stems from America’s rapid industrialization during the 19th and early 20th centuries, when Americans started experiencing nuisances stemming

from heavy industrial land uses existing in close proximity to people’s residences. Zoning began focusing on the “compatibility” of certain uses—which ones could co-exist, and which ones should be separated.

This is how we arrived at the contemporary American landscape, where large, sometimes incredibly vast areas are dedicated to one single type of land use—generally, residential, commercial, industrial, or agricultural, with variations in the “intensity” of uses. This method of single-use zoning has its positives—stable or predictable property values, minimization of certain nuisances in residential and commercial areas, etc. However, it can also create unintended negative consequences, such as long travel distances and physical separation between different uses; high transportation costs and energy consumption; issues of equity and social justice, and more.

A photograph of a paved road winding through a dense forest. The road is on the left side of the frame, curving slightly. The forest is lush with green foliage, including many tall, thin trees and dense undergrowth. The lighting is bright, suggesting a sunny day. The overall scene is a natural, rural landscape.

While single-use zoning continues to prevail in much of the United States—often for valid reasons—in recent decades there has been a growing emphasis on zoning and land-use practices that create a mix of compatible uses in closer proximity. When people live closer together and closer to the places they want and need to go, this is called “higher density”. When we hear the word “density”, it is often images of skyscrapers and big cities that jump to mind. And we may think, “This is rural Iowa. What are we talking about density for?” But in reality, our small-town main streets and traditional neighborhoods are denser, more “urban”, and more mixed-use than the typical suburbs of a major metropolitan area. We must not think of density as a “bad word”. On the contrary, higher density is what helps preserve our farmland and open space, keeping our rural landscapes rural, and our towns and main streets vibrant.

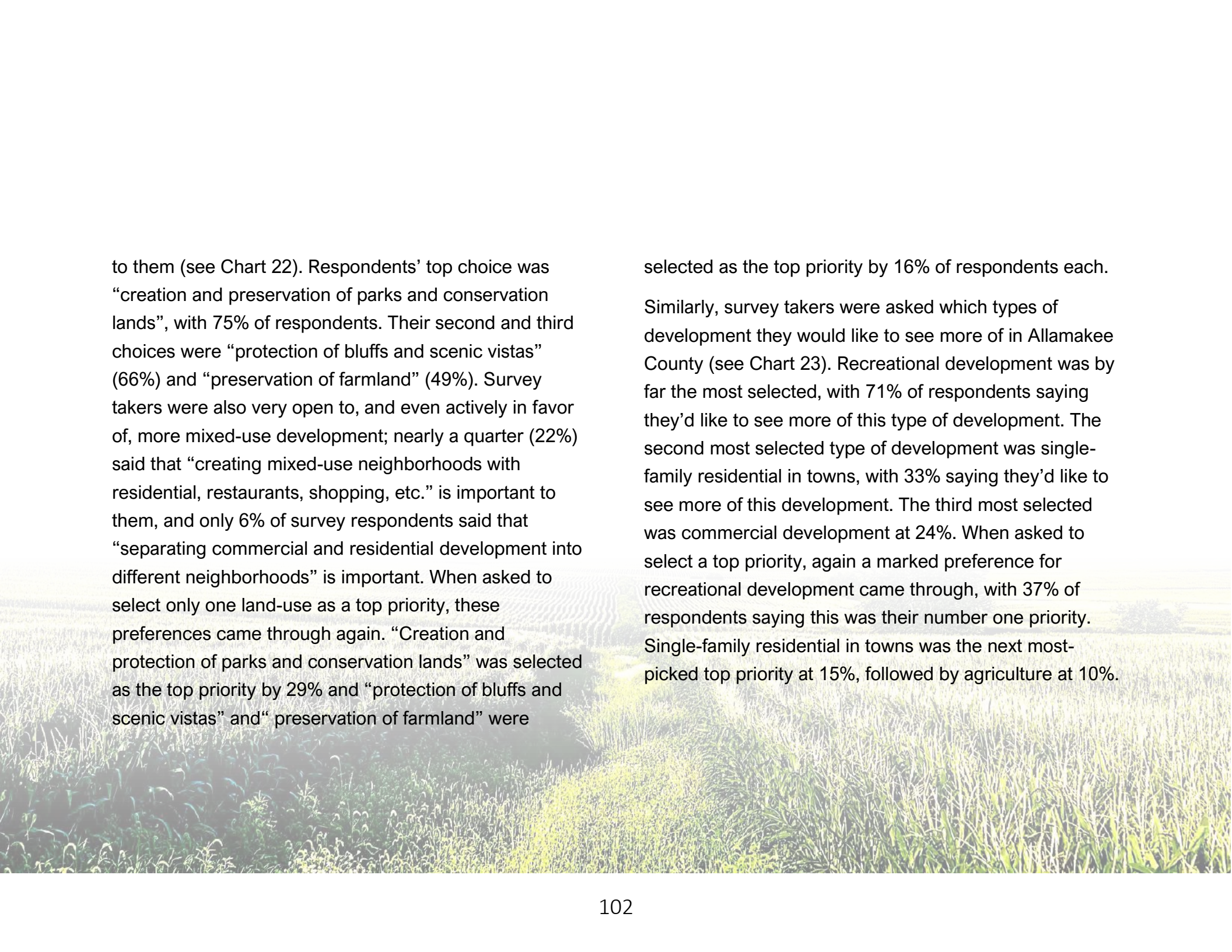
*Locals gather for live music in downtown Lansing
(Image Credit: Main Street Lansing)*



LAND USE TRENDS & COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

As in the rest of the state, the vast majority of the unincorporated area of Allamakee County is dominated by agricultural lands. The land area of Allamakee County is about 639 square miles, or 408,960 acres. As previously noted, about 290,000 acres of that land are in active farmland.²² 354,091 acres are classified as agricultural land by the Allamakee County Assessor, or approximately 87% of the county's total land area. In addition to land in active agricultural production, this classification also includes much of Allamakee County's privately owned woodlands as well as agricultural land that is not in active production or is being used for conservation. The rest of the land area consists of the county's incorporated municipalities, public lands, and unincorporated areas that are zoned commercial, industrial, and residential, generally clustered near towns and villages. Figure 10 and Figure 11 show the current zoning of Allamakee County.

All-In Plan survey takers were given a list of land-use activities and asked to identify which ones are important



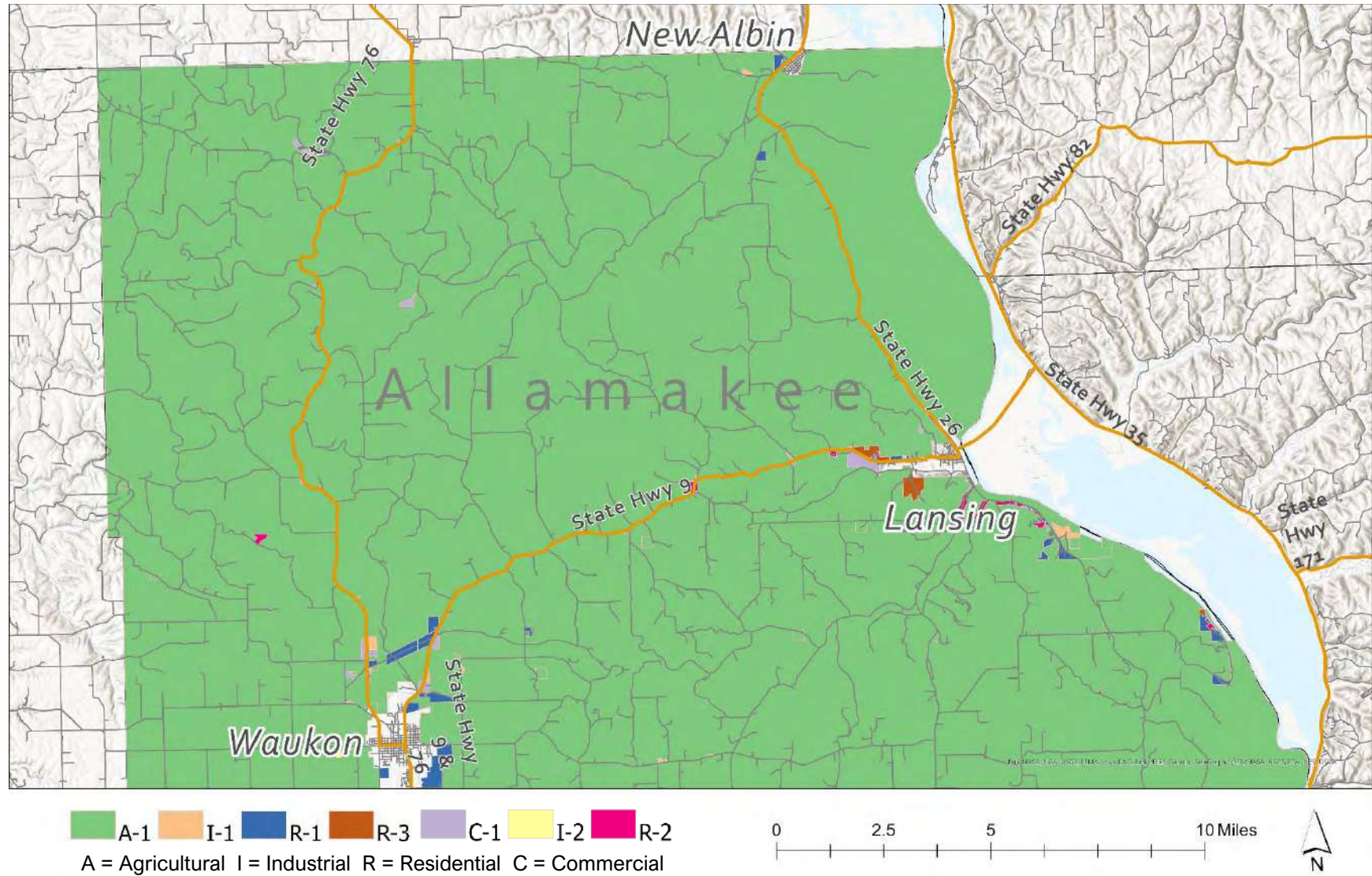
to them (see Chart 22). Respondents' top choice was "creation and preservation of parks and conservation lands", with 75% of respondents. Their second and third choices were "protection of bluffs and scenic vistas" (66%) and "preservation of farmland" (49%). Survey takers were also very open to, and even actively in favor of, more mixed-use development; nearly a quarter (22%) said that "creating mixed-use neighborhoods with residential, restaurants, shopping, etc." is important to them, and only 6% of survey respondents said that "separating commercial and residential development into different neighborhoods" is important. When asked to select only one land-use as a top priority, these preferences came through again. "Creation and protection of parks and conservation lands" was selected as the top priority by 29% and "protection of bluffs and scenic vistas" and "preservation of farmland" were

selected as the top priority by 16% of respondents each.

Similarly, survey takers were asked which types of development they would like to see more of in Allamakee County (see Chart 23). Recreational development was by far the most selected, with 71% of respondents saying they'd like to see more of this type of development. The second most selected type of development was single-family residential in towns, with 33% saying they'd like to see more of this development. The third most selected was commercial development at 24%. When asked to select a top priority, again a marked preference for recreational development came through, with 37% of respondents saying this was their number one priority. Single-family residential in towns was the next most-picked top priority at 15%, followed by agriculture at 10%.

Land-Use Background

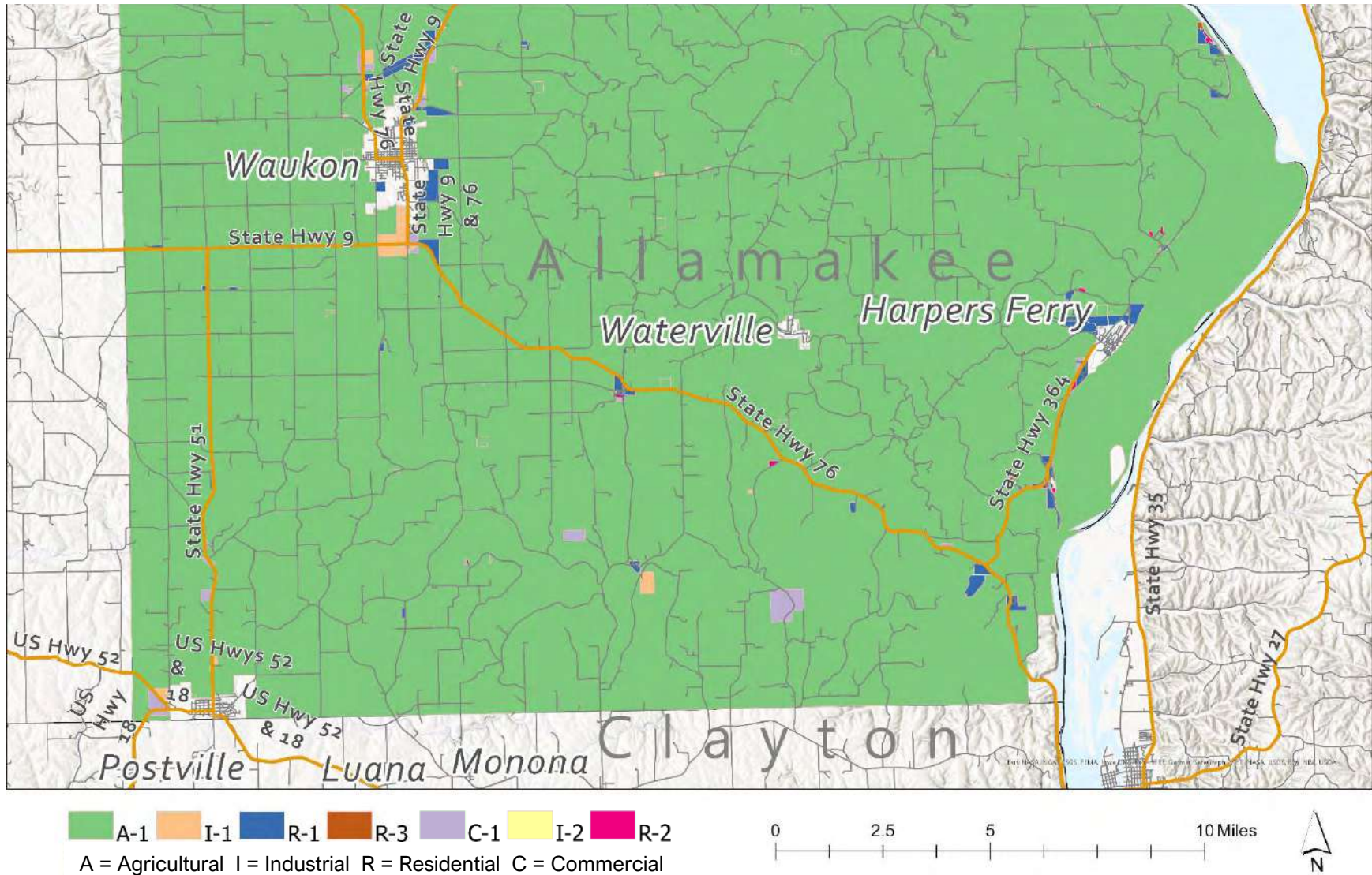
Figure 10: Allamakee County current land-use zoning map - NORTH



Data source: Allamakee County; Map source: UERPC, 2020

Land Use Background (cont'd)

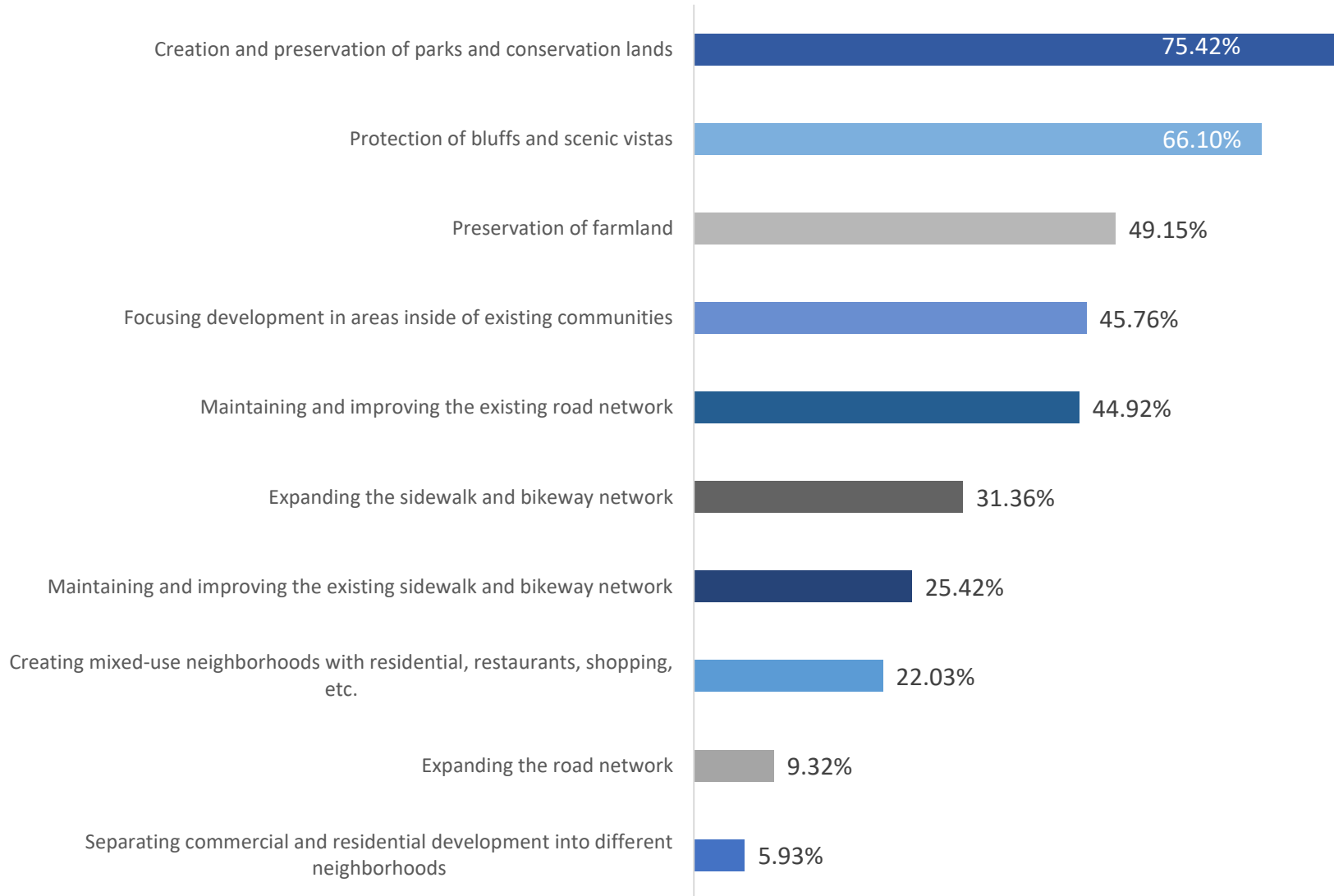
Figure 11: Allamakee County current land-use zoning map - SOUTH



Data source: Allamakee County; Map source: UERPC, 2020

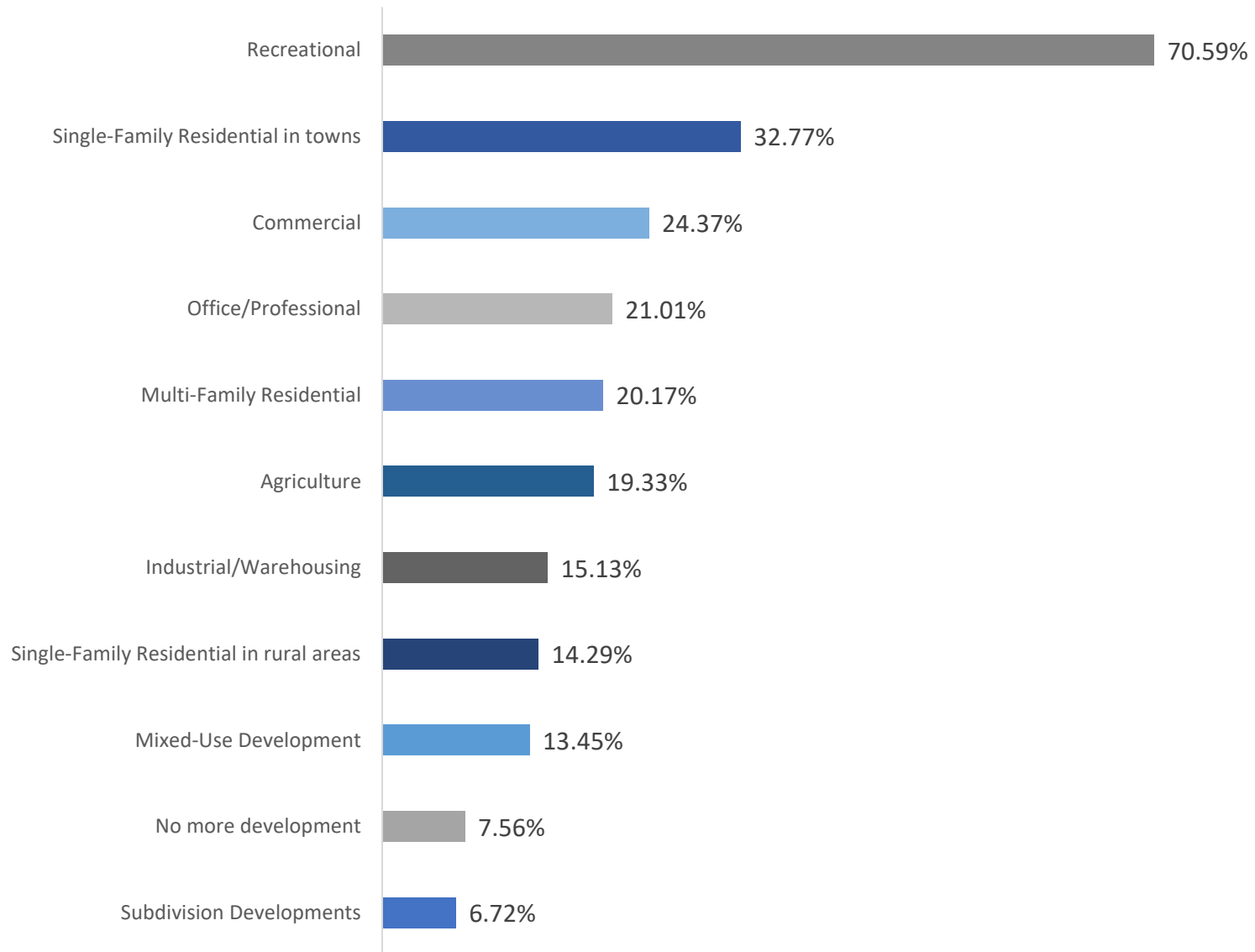
Land Use Community Feedback

Chart 22: Survey Responses: Of the following land-use activities, which are important to you? (Select all that apply.)



Land Use Community Feedback (cont'd)

Chart 23: Survey Responses: Which types of development would you like to see more of in Allamakee County? (Select all that apply.)



Land Use

Goals & Policies:

Goal L1:

Members of the public, both residents and visitors of the county, have the opportunity to avail themselves of a plethora of outdoor recreational opportunities, both within communities and in the rural and natural areas of the county. Along with farmland, much of the county's rural landscape is preserved as natural open space and parks that offer recreational opportunities for a wide variety of user groups. The county's towns and communities are connected to the broader tri-state region by a built-out network of multi-use trails.

Policy L1.1:

The County encourages and seeks to support the ongoing maintenance, expansion, and creation of outdoor recreation areas and facilities for all user groups in Allamakee County when possible, where contextually appropriate, and with consideration of environmental factors. (Cross listed as Policy N5.3)

Policy L1.2

The County recognizes that there is both a need and a broad desire among residents of Allamakee County for expanded, accessible facilities for walking and bicycling—especially paved multi-use trails—for recreational enjoyment and for general

LAND USE POLICY BASIS

Residents of Allamakee County have made it known that they value the rural character and landscapes that make Allamakee County special, and that they greatly wish to safeguard these assets, both for their own enjoyment and quality of life, and for future generations. They have also expressed, both directly and indirectly, an openness and desire to focus development in existing population centers and at appropriate densities that foster a mix of uses and enable more sustainable, walkable, and livable communities. Incidentally, the focusing of development where services and infrastructure are already in place is also good fiscal policy for cities and counties as it

COMMUNITY VOICES

“Respect for the land ought to be the very foundation and guiding principle of zoning and land-use decisions.”

“I'd like to see a more direct relationship between zoning and subdivision decisions and the comprehensive plan.”

“Make people adhere to the ordinances.”

Mural of the 1915 Ringling Bros. Circus parade, downtown Postville
(Image Credit: City of Postville)

maximizes the return on investment for the millions of taxpayer dollars spent on the provision of services and infrastructure—things like roads, storm sewers, water supply, etc.

The County, as a local public agency, recognizes these values and will endeavor to further the goals of both this chapter and the All-In Plan as a whole, through the review and strategic modification of its land-use and zoning regulations when needed and as appropriate; through its application and interpretation of the same; and through actions of the Board of Supervisors.

COMMUNITY VOICES

“Minimize residential sprawl close to communities—encourage infill.”

“CAFO’s need regulating. Are they polluting our rivers and streams? The bluffland protection ordinance needs to be strengthened, and a way needs to be found to bring in high speed internet without putting cell towers on our bluffs.”

Land Use

Goals & Policies (cont’d):

Policy L1.2 cont’d:

non-motorized transportation. The County seeks collaborative opportunities to expand and develop these facilities in Allamakee County and to form connected networks for non-motorized transportation within our region. (Cross listed as Policy N5.1)

Goal L2:

Allamakee County’s blufflands, natural areas, scenic viewsheds, agricultural lands, and working landscapes are widely recognized as both irreplaceable and foundational to our county’s culture, economy, and quality of life. The integrity of these assets, and the assets themselves, are diligently protected. (Cross listed as Goal N2)

Policy L2.1:

The County periodically reviews its zoning and subdivision ordinances, its blufflands protection overlay district, and prevailing land development practices in the county to ensure that the desired result of preserving and protecting blufflands is being achieved. (Cross listed as policy N2.1)

Policy L2.2:

The County seeks to find ways of strengthening protections for blufflands and scenic viewsheds in the county while balancing the needs and desires of individual property owners.



Downtown retail in Lansing
 (Image Credit: Main Street Lansing)

COMMUNITY VOICES

“Downtown areas should be the main business hub for office, retail, restaurants, and banks. Industrial and manufacturing on the edges of town.”

Land Use

Goals & Policies (cont'd):

Policy L2.2 cont'd:

Allamakee County and the Allamakee County Conservation Board seek opportunities to foster and sustain strategic partnerships with stakeholders, private land-owners, non-profits, and other government entities to protect and restore the natural and scenic integrity of our blufflands in perpetuity for future generations. (Cross listed as Policy N2.2)

Policy L2.3:

In order to preserve farmland and foster sustainable communities, the County seeks to encourage residential, commercial, and industrial development to locate within incorporated municipalities to the extent feasible. For that development which does occur in the unincorporated areas of the county, the County seeks to focus development as near as possible to or adjacent to existing municipal boundaries and areas with existing infrastructure, and to periodically review its zoning and subdivision ordinances to ensure that the desired result of preserving and protecting farmland is being achieved. (Cross listed as Policy L3.2)

Goal L3:

Through the County's strategic zoning and land-development regulations and its many partnerships with community members and organizations, Allamakee County's rural farmland, blufflands, conservation areas

Land Use

Goals & Policies (cont'd):

Goal L3 cont'd:

and parks are protected and perpetuated through the intentional placement of new development within or near its population centers and existing infrastructure, and land-use and development decisions that may affect water quality or floodways and flood plains are the subject of diligent scrutiny.

Policy L3.1:

The County acknowledges the high demand among residents for increased park and recreation opportunities such as multi-use trails and County parks, as well as the desire to protect blufflands and farmland. To these ends, the County seeks to collaborate and partner with the incorporated communities within its boundaries to encourage development activity that fosters a mix of uses within towns and that helps create sustainable, walkable, livable communities of lasting value.

Policy L3.2:

In order to preserve farmland and foster sustainable communities, the County seeks to encourage residential, commercial, and industrial development to locate within incorporated municipalities to the extent feasible. For that development which does occur in the unincorporated areas of the county, the County seeks to focus development as near as possible to or adjacent to existing municipal boundaries and

Policy L3.2 cont'd:

areas with existing infrastructure, and to periodically review its zoning and subdivision ordinances to ensure that the desired result of preserving and protecting farmland is being achieved. (Cross listed as Policy L2.3)

Policy L3.3:

The County collaborates with community stakeholders, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (Iowa DNR), and current and prospective operators of concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs), as appropriate and necessary, to prevent or mitigate negative impacts of these facilities on neighboring communities and water quality. In its consideration of issues involving or pertaining to CAFOs and other sources of water contamination, the County is committed to ensuring the health of residents and visitors and to making decisions that are data-driven and based on sound science with respect to our unique karst geology. (Cross listed as Policy N1.3)

Policy L3.4:

The County periodically re-assesses its zoning ordinance and floodplain overlay district regulations and makes modifications as appropriate that strengthen restrictions on development in floodplains to mitigate the impacts of catastrophic flooding events at the watershed level, as well as considers other ordinances and policies related to community development that foster increased resiliency to flooding and other natural hazards. (Cross listed as Policy R2.3)

Appendix A: Waukon Open House Posters

ALL IN ALLAMAKEE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN for ALLAMAKEE COUNTY

Community Character & Culture

DRAFT VISION:

Allamakee County is a region blessed with natural beauty and the warmth and friendliness of its residents. The County is a place where people feel welcome and safe. The unique heritage, values, and culture of Allamakee County are evident in the natural and built environment and echoed through community events, festivals, and programs.

ALLAMAKEE COUNTY IS KNOWN FOR:

- Its natural scenery, unique geology, and cultural heritage as part of the Driftless Region
- Its cultural diversity
- The Mississippi River and its three river towns
- Unique events such as farmers markets, Music in the Park, the Allamakee County Fair, and more!
- Native American heritage, and the state's only National Monument, Effigy Mounds
- Its wildlife and outdoor recreation opportunities
- 22 sites and districts listed on the National Register of Historic Places

RESIDENTS HAVE SAID THEY WOULD LIKE TO SEE:

- More community gathering places
- More cultural centers and museums
- More community events
- More community amenities such as dog parks and splash pads
- Preservation of farmland
- Preservation of bluffs and scenic vistas

What are your favorite things about Allamakee County? Special events? Unique places? What makes Allamakee County special?



#AllInAllamakee



ALL IN ALLAMAKEE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN for ALLAMAKEE COUNTY

Economy & Housing

DRAFT VISION:

Allamakee County has a stable, diversified economy that provides for the needs of residents and visitors. Allamakee County's workforce benefits from a wide range of well-paying jobs that entice young people to stay and offer stability for residents and their families. The County's housing supply provides affordable options for people of all ages and abilities.

RESIDENTS HAVE SAID THEY WOULD LIKE TO SEE:

- Affordable housing options for all ages
- Higher-wage jobs, especially in renewable energy, tech, tourism, and manufacturing
- A start-up business and entrepreneurial incubator
- Zoning reform to allow for accessory dwelling units
- Diversification of agriculture
- A balance of quality-of-life, eco-tourism, and large ag operations
- Development balanced with environmental concerns



Housing Snapshot (2017 ACS)

- **Occupancy**
 - Total housing units: 7,716
 - Occupied housing units: 6,037
 - Owner-occupied: 4,617
 - Homeowner vacancy rate: 1.7%
 - Rental vacancy rate: 9.7%
- **Age**
 - 34% built before 1940
 - 33.5% built 1940-1979
 - 31% built 1980-2009
 - 1.5% built 2010 or later
- **Median Value**
 - \$122,800

Income Snapshot (2017 ACS)

- **Median Household Income**
 - Allamakee County: \$47,895
 - Iowa: \$56,570
- **Mean (Average) Household Income**
 - Allamakee County: \$63,936
 - Iowa: \$73,510

46% of survey respondents feel there is not adequate affordable housing in Allamakee County.

What does a healthy economy and housing market look like in Allamakee County?



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Hazards & Resiliency

DRAFT VISION:

Emergency personnel practice coordination and cooperation in responding to extreme weather and flooding events, human-caused events, and other hazards. Allamakee County residents and leaders are educated about hazards and ways to mitigate impacts and minimize risk. Community development patterns reflect hazard preparedness and foster both high quality of life and increased resiliency—our ability to “bounce back” and/or carry on after a hazard event.

COMMUNITY SURVEY SNAPSHOT:

- Residents are highly satisfied with local emergency response services
- Almost one in four respondents (22%) said stormwater infrastructure is poor
- Residents are grateful for new stormwater management infrastructure such as retention ponds
- There is concern that current systems cannot handle increasingly intense rain events and other extreme weather
- Flash flooding is a problem and can create dangerous conditions in some areas of the County during heavy rainfall
- The impacts of climate change at the local level are an increasing concern

RESIDENTS HAVE SAID THEY WOULD LIKE TO SEE:

- More restrictions on building or rebuilding in flood zones
- Hazard mitigation strategies and policies that reflect the unique geology and geography of the region
- More community amenities such as parks that incorporate stormwater management best practices
- Implementation of green infrastructure

What does resiliency mean to you? How prepared are our communities to respond to hazard events?



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Natural Resources & Environment

DRAFT VISION:

The quality of Allamakee County’s natural environment enriches the lives of residents and supports a robust tourism economy. Residents and visitors to the County have clean, fresh air to breathe; pure, untainted water to drink; and healthy, uncontaminated soil beneath their feet. Wild flora and fauna benefit and thrive as the result of the same.

COMMUNITY SURVEY SNAPSHOT:

- Creation and preservation of parks and conservation lands is by far the top land-use priority; 72 % cited this as an important land-use activity, and it was also the #1 and #2 picks for top priority overall (29% #1, 24% #2).
- ATV/UTV/ORV recreationists would like to see more trails and access opportunities, while a plurality of survey respondents strongly desires to keep such motorized vehicles out of Yellow River State Forest and other treasured public lands.
- Some residents are very concerned about the effects of industrial agriculture, extractive industries, and CAFOs on public health and the environment.
- The impacts of climate change at the local level are an increasing concern

RESIDENTS HAVE SAID THEY WOULD LIKE TO SEE:

- Protection of open space by focusing new development within existing communities
- Opportunities for additional outdoor recreation such as rock-climbing and paddling
- Expanded hiking, equestrian, cross-country skiing, and nature trails
- Designated areas and trails for ATV/UTV/ORV recreational use
- Increased monitoring of water, soil, and air quality
- Improved hunting and fishing access
- Preservation of forests and prairies
- No-spray, chemical-free management of vegetation on County properties and roadsides
- Development of renewable energy

What do natural-resource protection and sustainability mean to you? What does this look like in Allamakee County?



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ALL IN ALLAMAKEE

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN for ALLAMAKEE COUNTY

Public Facilities, Services, & Infrastructure

DRAFT VISION:

Allamakee County's public facilities, services, and infrastructure are reliable, safe, efficient, and equitable. They provide a high quality of life for all residents and support a healthy, modern economy and a thriving tourism industry.

COMMUNITY SURVEY SNAPSHOT:

- Nearly a quarter of respondents (22%) said the County's stormwater infrastructure is poor
- 54% said water supply infrastructure is good or excellent
- Water quality is overwhelmingly a top priority; 95% picked it as a priority natural resource to protect, with 66% choosing it as their exclusive top priority
- More than one third (34%) said internet access is poor; 37% said cell reception is poor
- 29% said emergency services are excellent; only 2% said they are poor
- The County has many rural residents on private wells
- 20% said the availability of services and programs for youth and teenagers is poor

RESIDENTS HAVE SAID THEY WOULD LIKE TO SEE:

- More community gathering places
- More/better monitoring of water quality
- Better wireless and internet connectivity and reliability
- Bluffs and scenic vistas protected from cell tower development
- More/better childcare options

What public service or facility are you most grateful for? What are Allamakee County's greatest public utility and infrastructure needs?



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ALL IN ALLAMAKEE

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN for ALLAMAKEE COUNTY

Transportation & Land Use

DRAFT VISION:

Allamakee County's residents, businesses, and visitors have safe and convenient transportation options. The transportation network is kept in a state of good repair and provides comfortable access and mobility for people of all ages and abilities. Land-use planning and development patterns work in consort with a multi-modal transportation network to conserve farmland and open space; limit emissions and resource depletion; and foster active, healthy, livable communities.

COMMUNITY SURVEY SNAPSHOT:

- Creation and preservation of parks and conservation lands was the most-picked among important land uses (72%); followed by protection of bluffs and scenic vistas (63%) and preservation of farmland (49%)
- Recreational uses are far and away the top development priority—the highest pick in all three tiers: 1st 41%, 2nd 23%, and 3rd 18%; residential and commercial development in towns are the next highest priorities
- Multi-use trails are the top transportation spending priority; 49% important, 39% very important, and only 2% not at all important
- 52% said state highways are in good or excellent condition; only 9% said poor
- Only 8% said paved county roads are in poor condition

RESIDENTS HAVE SAID THEY WOULD LIKE TO SEE:

- Zoning and land-use decisions connected to soil and water health
- Preservation of farmland, bluffs, and scenic vistas
- Restriction of hog confinements and CAFOs
- More/better infrastructure for walking and bicycling
- Multi-use trails connected to the regional network
- Safety improvements to street and road system

What does a safe, accessible transportation network look like? What kinds of development would you like to see, and where should it go?



#AllInAllamakee



Appendix B: Compiled Community Comments

Compiled list of all comments received during the *All In Allamakee* planning process

All comments are reproduced here verbatim, exactly as given by the commentor.

Written comments from *All In Allamakee* online “Quick Questionnaire”

Question: Why do you choose to live in or visit Allamakee County?

- Outdoor activities, job
- Scenery, topography, feeling of getting back to nature.
- I work in Allamakee County.
- Rural character; scenic beauty, near Wisconsin for employment purposes
- family ties brought me to Waukon, and country living keeps me from moving.
- Location, scenery, river, small town atmosphere, close to family.
- We owned a house here which was used seasonally & upon retirement decided to live in the house full time
- Always been my home
- I own and operate a farm
- Beautiful scenery, small town atmosphere, river activities and reasonable cost of living.
- I think Allamakee County is the most beautiful county in Iowa. I also appreciate the uniqueness of many of the shops around the county.
- Family here, lives here all my life
- Family and home town
- husband's home community
- Home county and a beautiful and slow paced living environment—an esthetic, non ag environment along the Mississippi River, and away from intense urban stresses--direct access to ample hunting and walking opportunities, etc
- I love the small town feel along with the incredible scenery.
- I moved to Allamakee Co. because of the scenic beauty of the blufflands and woods, streams & recreational opportunities and the rural character.
- It is rural, quiet and beautiful, and I have friends here. You can't beat this place for doing your own thing.

- I grew up here and moved back after I was divorced when my children were small because it was a safer area to raise my small children as a single parent with family close by. It is also very scenic and I missed the natural beauty of this area.
- I grew up here. I love the beauty of Allamakee County.
- Lived here most of my life; it's home
- grew up here, close to family, employment
- I was raised here and have worked here for 12 years.
- My husband took a job in Allamakee County which required us to live here.
- Work

Question: What do you love about Allamakee County?

- Scenery, numerous things to do outdoor
- Yellow River State Forest... and my family history in the county. Its archaeological history, too.
- The beautiful scenery and friendly people.
- Scenic beauty; bluffs; rivers & streams; small towns;
- I love that there are no traffic jams and nature is always just outside my door.
- Its rural quality The Driftless Area environment it's home
- It's beauty
- I am comfortable here
- Scenery and general attitude of integrity, honesty and wholesomeness.
- Natural beauty, the pride residents have in their community.
- Small communities, beauty of the area
- Small town atmosphere
- countryside

- I love how everyone pitches in during a time of need there is no question our communities band together to help one another out.
- I love the physical environment of the rolling hills, blufflands, woods, Mississippi River, rivers and streams and the hardworking farm families. I'm glad to see small, unique business start-ups such as WW Homestead Dairy.
- The nature, the scenery, how unpopulated it is, the people are truly gems here.
- The hills and valleys.
- The beauty and small town atmosphere.
- Ruralness, beauty, simplicity
- our small town friendly atmosphere
- The scenery is beautiful.
- I feel safe here I'm able to let my kids play outside.
- The awesome library and the Wellness Center

Question: What do you dislike about Allamakee County?

- Rural roads and city streets
- ATVs and UTVs tearing around and their noise.
- There isn't anything that I don't like.
- tribalism; conservative viewpoints; rise of factory farms; lack of concern about pollution of streams & rivers; ignorance of sinkholes;
- economic depression... I wish there were more opportunities to share a progressive viewpoint with others and more community engagement
- road maintenance, lack of jobs, lack of daycare
- The agricultural interests don't seem to care about air and water quality Lack of a variety of housing Shrinking population which threatens our schools Lack of public funds to improve public infrastructure

- It is a long drive to get to a city and we do not have any 4 lane hiways
- Lack of opportunities for young adults and the short sighted narrow minded perspective of all governing entities.
- Lack of connected trails
- Lack of amenities, I.e. shopping opportunities and higher paying jobs
- lack of walking trails, bike paths and lack of even sidewalks in waukon
- minimal job opportunities w/good pay, BUT close to such opportunities
- One thing I feel has become a recent problem in Allamakee county is that we need to improve housing efforts and stability to continue to bring people to our community to be successful not to just come here because we have "cheap" housing.
- I'm concerned about the increased number of CAFO's in the county with seemingly little to no oversight.
- Nothing
- The limited career opportunities for young people, the lagging educational instruction for our kids as compared to metro areas like Ankeny, Des Moines, Waterloo, Cedar Rapids.
- The town of Waukon has poos leadership.
- Communities struggling
- the drug problem
- I wish we had more to do.
- The old way of thinking no one wants change they don't want to update I feel like they are trying to hold onto how it was back in the day, but they have to start seeing those days have come and gone we need to move on.

- Cliquey, not progressive, hostile to new ideas and people

Question: Is there anything standing in the way of Allamakee County becoming a better place to live and visit? If so, please describe.

- Keep ATVs and UTVs out of Yellow River State Forest. Its known in national media for hiking and backpacking. Please don't ruin that hard-earned, beloved reputation and leave potential visitors choosing other locations!
- No, not that I can think of at this time.
- Failure to appreciate the importance of quality of life issues like good schools, good medical care, need for rules and regulations to safeguard environment
- just attitudes... living the same way for decades.. not being comfortable with changes. Also there seems to be a lack of comfort with diversity.
- minimum wage - unable to pay employee's a decent wage that have a 4 year degree.
- People's conservative non-participation attitudes
- Not really
- Lack of opportunities for young adults
- Lack of infrastructure upkeep by cities is an issue. First impressions leave lasting impressions.
- Younger family attraction
- not necessarily standing in the way, but continued progressive leadership
- I see nothing. I would hate to see it become busier and more populated, so let people come but be sure they leave.
- I feel that too many folks are wanting to be too restrictive about growth and change. That they fear change will create negative results only.

- Small town politics.
- Need to re-identify who we are
- I feel there are individuals on some boards who are really holding progress back. We really need to start moving forward because Allamakee County is already so far behind the rest of the country.
- Lack of vision and ability to make long term plans with an eye towards future growth

Question: If you could change one thing about Allamakee County, what would it be?

- Improve roads and streets
- I'd change the idea that ATV and UTV people feel they can force their way into an area where they're not wanted, all to the detriment of YRSF in many ways.
- It would be nice if Postville had a grocery store come in and a dept. store went into the Shopko in Waukon.
- Open minds to realize what we do today affects future generations
- More art and opportunities for creative possibilities
- job market
- People's conservative non-participation attitudes
- bring more art and culture to the area
- The structure of the board of supervisors to promote representation from communities other than Waukon.
- Build more trails and other active transportation accommodations
- make Waukon an inviting community by show-casing its beauty with sidewalks, walking/running trails
- there is no single good or bad silver bullet.
- I would like to see the main streets in our communities thrive.

- Investment in infra structure to encroach new business.
- Closer to major interstates.
- Flourishing economy once again
- More shopping. More activities. Mom groups. More trails and outdoor activities in Waukon. Not having to go to Decorah for everything would be great.
- More shopping options such as a Target.
- Sidewalks, walkability would be a great change

Question: Is there anything else you'd like to share?

- Improvements cost money. That is generated from revenue. I think we need to take advantage of what brings most people to our area.
- Thank you so much for looking ahead to a well-thought-out plan to guide the county's future.
- Do your best to deliver an exciting comp plan focused on our future success
- I encourage the development, identification and promotion of biking and hiking trails. Also encourage proactive programs to attract and retain light manufacturing and small/medium business other than retail.
- I feel so lucky to have the opportunity to visit Allamakee County regularly. The landscape is breathtaking.
- later, as we go
- Allamakee seems to be moving more to tourism. Preserving our natural resources is vital to supporting tourism and for future generations to enjoy.
- We could really use more hotels maybe one with an indoor waterpark and family fun actives such as a go kart/mini golf complex or skate park.

Written comments from *All In Allamakee* online Community Survey

*Question: Why do you choose to live in or visit
Allamakee County?*

(Written responses from those who answered "other")

- I lived here for two years before moving to Decorah. I continue to work in Waukon.
- Job
- Living here is quiet, low traffic and feels relatively safe
- Horses back riding at yellow river
- I was born and raised here and now after 16 yrs. I have returned.
- Lived in clayton county
- Yellow River State Forest; home of my ancestors
- Easy access to top notch trout streams.
- Where life has lead me
- Keep ATV's out of Yellow River Forest
- Yellow River State Forest
- Hunting and fishing opportunities
- Trout fishing
- work in Allamakee County
- our turn to occupy house in family for 99 years
- Married a farmer.
- safety, valuable heritage

*Question: What is the top reason you choose to live in or
visit Allamakee County?*

(Written responses from those who answered "other")

- Job
- Nature.. I value and respect the land and hope most farmers also do the same
- I feel stuck here if it was not for family I would be gone you are vary close minded people unwilling to grow.
- I was born and raised here.
- Wilderness feeling & solitude of Yellow River State Forest
- Trout fishing
- Work
- owned house and used it on weekends. retired & moved here for full time living

*Question: Of the following land-use activities,
which are important to you?*

(Written responses from those who answered "other")

- Water and soil conservation - no CAFOs/factory farms and smarter use of pesticides
- Affordable living
- Gardening needs to be emphasized instead of just mono-cultures of beans and corn
- Making the town more accessible for folks with disabilities.
- agroforestry/perennial agriculture
- ORV trails and parks are the reason my family travels to other states along with many other people...get with the program Iowa !
- Bringing in more recreational activity's
- There should be more public ATV and UTV public trail systems
- Recreational use of land in this area

- ATV/OHV trails developed
- People oriented activities ATVing Fishing
- Protecting water quality
- Expanding places to ride UTVs
- F**K bicyclers
- UTV /atv use
- Maximize use of resources in allamakee county.
Offering access to UTV's through yellow river forest.
Road improvements to high traffic areas such as hwy 76, roads are deteriorated and are a safety issue.
- Keep ATV's out of Yellow River Forest
- Keeping Yellow River St Forest free of motorized vehicles
- Expanding UTV trails
- Lots of bike paths / trails
- Outdoor activity other than horse riding in Yellow River Forest
- Bike trails
- Cleaning up rivers & streams
- Educating everyone that land is to be respected, not seen solely as a resource to be used
- minimize residential sprawl close to communities-- encourage infill

Question: Of the aforementioned land-use activities, please select your top three priorities.

(Written responses from those who answered "other")

- Water and soil conservation
- affordable living
- improve economy of area
- Gardening... community gardens and special crops instead of mono cultures of beans and corn
- agroforestry/perennial agriculture

- Why is hunting not on the list or ORV use ...I think Allamakee county hates money .
- Ohh park
- Develop atv trails
- Recreational use of land in this area
- ATV/OHV trails
- Preserving nature but also equal access for atving fishing hiking etc
- Protecting ground and surface water quality
- UTV use
- Keep ATV's out of Yellow River Forest
- Developing more UTV trails
- More electrical/ handicapped uses
- Work together to improve tourism
- Open ALL County Roads to ATV/UTV recreational vehicles
- stop pollution of rivers & streams
- Land is not a resource to be USED, education needed to respect and care for land/Earth
- minimize sprawl

Question: Which types of development would you like to see more of in Allamakee County?

(Written responses from those who answered "other")

- Restaurants
- leadership development
- business and entrepreneurial incubator office spaces as well as town hall or community gathering spaces
- senior living community with mixed types of housing
- More easements to fishing and hunting grounds . ORV trail systems along roadways .(don't have to be blacktopped just dirt trails . riding on the gravel shoulder down the side of a highway is dangerous and asking for problems.can't hunt in yellow river

because the out of state Squirrel hunters kill anything that moves.

- More trails for atv and utv
- more trails for horse back ridding
- ATV and UTV trails in their own area away from YRSF
- A public land corridor along the Mississippi from Lansing to Harpers
- Keep ATV's out of Yellow River Forest
- Small town tourism via stores, activities, focus on the Driftless
- Parks
- Practical retail stores
- ATV/UTV county trails
- development of green energy options
- Development of bike trails
- jobs
- affordable housing for seniors and single parents
- more affordable housing

Question: Of the aforementioned types of development, please select your top three priorities?

(Written responses from those who answered "other")

- Restaurants
- business incubator space and community gathering space(s)
- senior living community with mixed types of housing
- More recreational
- Utv and atv park
- Keep ATV's out of Yellow River Forest
- Develop more Driftless interest
- Try to attract more industry to our county
- development of green energy options
- Bike Trails

Question: Is there anything else you'd like to share regarding land use and zoning in Allamakee County?

- Don't allow new homes and other residential structures to block scenic views of existing homes.
- Allamakee needs economic development growth.
- save the Earth, or we will not be able to share this beautiful experience referred to as Allamakee Co.
- a more direct relationship between zoning and sub. decisions and the Comp Plan
- Important to limit and prevent CSA farms (corporate farms) due to their sole focus on economic growth and lack of concern for water quality and the long term vision required to maintain healthy soil, water and other natural resources for the health and well-being of all living beings. Zoning and land use needs to include respect for the land as the very foundation and guiding principle.
- restriction of hog confinement operations and pre-defined areas they may be allowed
- I would like to see more regulation on farmers and residential owners to prevent the removal or cutting down of trees. Also, if there are trees removed, then one should be planted to replace it (the location can be different). I would like to see the county no longer cut down or prune trees along the highways, or spray the trees along the highways because it takes away the beauty of driving in this area. No visitor wants to see brown or dead trees lining scenic byways like A26, and other county roads.
- It would be nice to see people come here rather than leave here to vacation and partake in recreational activity. Wis.dells , Valley Fair , Adventure Land , Six Flags , Biwabik, Black River Falls, We all pay taxes

yet only a select few have a say that actually counts that is why small towns stay small and broke.

- There needs to be something here for people to move here.
- I would like to see a atv park in our county
- ATV/UTV parks and trails can be a substantial economic boost for the community
- we like to keep the yellow river state forest as a horse park not atve use or side besides , Horses dont mixed with the atve or side sides
- Do not allow ATV Use in Yellow River State Forest
- Off road vehicle trails
- Equal access for all recreation. People who pay taxes should have equal access such as atving and utving
- After being part of comprehensive planning in Fillmore County, MN and a number of its towns, which have similar terrain to Allamakee County, I've seen this occur: 1) Protect ag land... but keep big ag set-ups & confinements off steep and/or karst terrain; 2) keep rural subdivisions on hard-surface roads, although the most sense is developing by towns; 3) scenic beauty & little noise bring visitors & economic dollars -- if you want ATVs & UTVs to have a place, suggest buying property and zoning it for such use; 4) county and/or towns may wish to set up zoning allowing for "mother-in-law" houses on homesteads; 5) make sure adequate septic regulations and inspections are in place, especially with many cabins in the county; 6) have feedlot plans regarding placement and also plans for spreading and incorporating manure; 7) be prepared to zone adequately if party or wedding venues want to build in the country; 8) have a stipulation for a moratorium on controversial zoning issues to allow both sides to

be heard before construction or development begins; and 9) look at having setbacks from streams and floodplain (or floodway?) both in campgrounds and recreational areas, as well as ag areas prone to flash flooding and runoff. All I can think of for now. Thanks!

- NO industrial agriculture, CAFO's, or mining
- Please do not expand access for ATVs to include routes through the state forest.
- Keep ATV's out of Yellow River Forest
- More UTV access
- Keep UTV out of YRF
- Keeping road in Yellow River private to ATV and 4 wheelers
- Keep the areas we have for recreation quiet. Don't allow UTV use in our established Parks/Forest instead find a separate tract of land.
- Keep the trout streams safe!
- I feel the parks and recreational areas should be opened up to UTV riders.
- We need more jobs in the immediate are. With more business, brings more people and naturally encourages other business to come after.
- I know several people, including myself that travel to Decorah for recreational due to the lack that Waukon has. I love this town and want nothing more to see if flourish! I know all of this is easier said than done - but I know if there was more to do in Waukon, more people would come to the area. Ex - St. Patricks Day Parade, Easter Egg Hunt Activities, etc. I don't want to just mention things that people put on though - a paved biking road/trail might bring more people to Waukon?? Maybe if they connected like Ridgeway and Cresco's does? I know things like this would keep me in the area as opposed to traveling to

Decorah or surrounding areas to do so. The trail we have in Waukon is very nice, but would be amazing if something like that was paved. :)

- Stop rural housing and commercial developments
- To see ordinances followed; wavers, variance, conditional use permits are given with no concertation to the ordinance which is in place to regulate them.
- A trail system on state lands.
- CAFO's need regulating. Are they polluting our rivers and streams; Bluffland protection ordinance needs to be strengthened and a way needs to be found to bring in high speed internet without putting cell towers on our bluffs
- make people adhere to the ordinances. So many hoarder houses that are allowed to junk up their places
- Continue to keep frac sand mining out of the county. continue to keep property from being rebuilt in high risk flood zones.
- Zoning changes that allows for "grandparent" homes or cottages to be built on existing single family lots, for multiple generations of families to stay connected. Same as the Multi-family residential options, mentioned above; but zoning changes that make this possible.
- Zoning is not part of the options for consideration there are issues with zoning compliance--favoritism?
- No more CAFOs

Question: Which types of agricultural events or establishments do you currently attend or visit in Allamakee County?

(Written responses from those who answered "other")

- visiting farm families

- I used to have a community garden and would like to see that opportunity again in our county as not everyone owns a home or has property to plant a garden
- ag & forestry field days
- arts/crafts and green agriculture efforts
- visiting relatives's/friends farms

Question: Which natural resources should be a priority to protect in Allamakee County?

(Written responses from those who answered "other")

- All resources are important. We cannot afford to ignore protecting of all of the. I also am so glad our county prevailed against Sand Fracking and prevented that. Grateful for those with the foresight and tenacity to win the fight and keep our county safe from that.
- food forest
- Please note while I am for wildlife. Habitat and hunting , fishing , clean water and air I am still 100% in favor of trail systems .This can all work together.
- Noise pollution
- Keep YRF quiet, focus on environment
- Blufflands
- The peace and quiet of our state forest! prevent noise pollution by keeping UTV out of there.
- with the number of industrial livestock operations growing water quantity will need attention (should we ever have a dry year again)
- goat prairies, but all are important

Question: Of the aforementioned natural resources to be protected, please select your top three priorities.

(Written responses from those who answered "other")

- All resources are important to preserve and protect
- food forest
- None loggers are destroying yellow river forest
- Noise pollution
- goat prairies etc

Question: Is there anything else you'd like to share regarding agriculture and natural resources in Allamakee County?

- We need safer and more restricted use of pesticides. CAFOs need stronger restrictions.
- Promote Allamakee County
- We need to support the small farmer and locally grown foods, not mega farms/dairies.
- Comp Plkanshould not be enddorcng urban typesubdivisions all over the county--it distoarts land values, promotes traffic congestion, and removes good farm land, and introduces urban residents to adverse impacts of some farm operations
- It may be very important to support our farmers in finding and developing new crops beyond just corn and beans.. this is the future of agriculture.. there is a need to be progressive
- I feel that the natural resources of plants and trees in Allamakee County has been over looked and not cared for in the past. I hate to see the county spraying and killing the wild flowers. When I moved here 20+ years ago, I would drive along the county roads that were lined with wild flowers, now all there is along county roads are dead or mowed grass.

- I have lived here all my life and by the looks of it yellow river forest is getting destroyed by management.
- Ag and eco tourism have proven to be able to coincide in this county and that is neat.
- Allamakee county has priceless beauty but need to be more flexible to residents desires
- Move forward with a sustainable plan protecting the scenic "wildness" of the county because it's a draw. Also, keep ag viable while protecting natural resources like water and air.
- Lean into your scenic beauty. Allamakee is ripe for environmental tourism, all of that gets ruined by extractive industry.
- Keep ATV's out of Yellow River Forest
- Keep a handle on livestock manure handling and overprotect our precious streams and water
- Keep State Forest free from ATVs and UTVs
- Water qualities for both
- Natural resources are the reason we have so many visitors to this area. Since we cannot seem to draw businesses we need to capitalize on eco-tourism.
- Would like to see better upkeep of the parks. Yellow River Campground. For example. After Luster Heights was shut down, trails have suffered.
- We absolutely love Yellow River State Forest and the related area.
- more buffers along streams to prevent erosion
- Both large and small agriculture is a benefit to our county.
- good farm management and erosion prevention should be a priority to all farmers, which in turn should help water quality of the local streams and rivers.

- stop/limit commercial development in open spaces
- To establish farm produce Co-op to sell local grown. Farmers market are good but most are of limited time once day per week. A Co-op can receive the produce 3, 4, or 6 times a week and be continuously open established hour 5 or 6 days a week for selling. They could also set up a produce growing plan with local growers to fill require produce.
- There is a mindset that a farmer and developer should be able to do anything they want to without regulations. They fail to see that the land lives on long after them and that their actions today affect future generations.
- I like to the wildlife be protected, but I also want people to hunt and fish.
- I am a proponent of cell phone tower expansion for safety purposes.
- Progress and change is really needed in this fast paced time of political change. I would like to see farmers being more progressive and finding markets to serve other than corn and soybeans. Also, the invasive wild garlic issue has been going on for more than 5 years that I have noticed. This year is the first time I have heard any public concern. See the article in the newspaper 8/22/18 front page. Weed control without chemicals is important to explore.. there are ways to address invasive and noxious weeds besides use of chemicals.. like not letting them go to seed, and burning those that have seeded in late summer.
- concern about affect of tiling on accelerating water runoff for flooding massive logging on hillsides

Which recreational amenities do you currently utilize in Allamakee County? (Written responses from those who answered "other"):

- Multi-use hiking/horse trails; geocaching
- We don't camp at Yellow River Forest because there are no ATVs or utility hook-ups
- I'm a walker, and the condition of sidewalks is terrible or non-existent
- Driftless Center
- exploring wooded areas available to public use to learn about botanicals, bird-watching and to see if I can spot any wildlife
- historic sites

Question: Are there any additional sports or recreational activities you would like to see in Allamakee County?

- Off-road cycling trails
- More running and biking trails
- zip line
- indoor swimming pool, available during off season
- Frisbee gold
- Arboretum, cultural center/museum, indoor aquatic center
- ORV trails or parks....the county and state is losing out on alot of revenue.
- Ohv park
- Rock climbing
- More utv trails
- Expanded use of ATV/UTV trails to include yellow river forest.
- More UTV trails
- Waukon bike trail

- UTV trails
- Pickle ball courts
- Biking
- Ice Rink
- Bike trail like Decorah
- More community events in the city park.
- A dog park.
- UTV trails
- ATV/UTV and Water and Utility Hook ups at Yellow River Forest
- Atv park
- Fly fishing clinics
- More walking trails
- atv/utv/motorcycle usage
- more support for what we have
- More extensive hiking and ski trails.
- ATV TRAIL EXPANSION
- More connected trails and just bike trails in general
- bike trail
- safer access to water for the paddle sports
- Yes.. as many new ideas as possible because Nature activities add to the health of people and communities
- More paved trails in town, connecting to Decorah's trail system
- maybe disk golf--but few opportunities except Waukon Park

Question: Is there anything else you'd like to share regarding parks and recreation in Allamakee County?

- Improved swimming pool in Lansing
- Better bike trails
- We need better camping sites in the State Forest.

- The wellness center is a problem for me. The level of noise in that building is something I cannot tolerate which is very disappointing for me. It is the shape of the building which causes this, and I would like to point out that any future building projects take this into consideration
- The Driftless Center is a huge resources, the concept of educating people about their local history, unique features and outdoor opportunities is huge and super important to future generations.
- I would like to see more safe bike trails. Biking along the Lansing/ New Albin road is not safe. I would like to see just bike trails/walking trails separate from county roads.
- A nice shooting range would be good.
- More motor vehicle use
- The county needs to look at the positive economic impact that having an ATV/UTV Park or opening up trails on state land could have. Allamakee county is one of the poorest counties in Iowa, why not look at what WILL help the county financially?
- There is a need for expansion of the areas where atv/utvs ride. A ATV park in Allamakee County would provide a big impact to the financially and allow the many owners to stay in Allamakee County instead of spending \$1000's dollars in other states.
- Do not allow ATV Use in Yellow River State Forest
- Keep ATVs out of Yellow River Forest
- Keep ATVs out of Yellow River Forest -- off its roads and trails
- Build on the existing wealth of public land to create a long-distance hiking/backpacking trail.
- Expanded use of ATV/UTV trails to include yellow river forest.

- Keep ATV's out of Yellow River Forest
- More public boat docking
- Keep UTVs out of YRF
- No ATVs in our natural public lands
- We loved the Music in the Park.
- More roadside parks with working restrooms. Not a outhouse. Our area is visited by travelers a lot during the summer and leaf lookers during the fall
- Additional off road atv/utv trails
- Allamakee County would be benefited by creating ATV/UTV trails and keep our money in our county.
- Bike trails-Waukon city, Waukon to Waukon junction, YRSF and Waterville.
- More dnr presence
- Keep ATVs out of Yellow River State Park
- frustrating to see thousands of public land that is taken off the tax role and taken away from local farmers to be used for "public use" but in reality most not being used or a small amount of land catering to a small portion of the population.
- people and groups should not be allowed to have personalized benches, memorials or flags placed in parks and recreational areas.
- I'm excited about the splash pad in Harpers.
- A bike trail in Waukon would be nice.
- long bike / running trail safe for adults and children
- ability to ride atv in Yellow River Forest, more parking spaces at landings.
- More dollars to promote!
- The wellness center really needs improvement. It is too large.. too loud with echos.. not a friendly or warm place to visit - my opinion. I really wish there was some kind of sauna or whirlpool option for

seniors or people needing basic physical therapy options.

- We need to make the park in Waukon a priority and make sure it is upkept. Many people utilize the multiple facilities available. It needs to continue to be a safe place for families, especially children.
- more horse accessible trails would be nice

Question: Do you have any problems with the current water supply system? If so, please specify.

- Hi levels of nitrates and other containinants causing the need to filter water
- our well requires frequent monitor water quality and follow recommendations
- no such system in the rural areas
- It tastes very bad. I use a filter which is a cost to me personally but I do not trust the quality of the water
- No, we have our own well.
- not aware of any county water supply system
- We have a well but use a Culligan system for drinking water
- No. We have a well.
- No, private well
- No, have private well.
- Yes too many large scale animal confinement operations. They should not be allowed in this type of topography it will eventually ruin our drinking water
- No i have a well
- I always question the use of fluoride in the drinking water.
- I have concerns about the number of hog confinements and potential threats to the water supply for all Allamakee County residents
- I use a water filter to ensure my water quality

- no rural water system, nothing to do with transportation
- No, I am on a well

Question: Do you have any problems with the current sewer system or stormwater infrastructure?

If so, please specify.

- No, but Harpers does not have stormwater drains causing some local flooding when snow melts
- pump septic regularly
- no problems. I am grateful that we have the NW side retention pond that saved a lot of people flood problems since 2016
- No, we have our own septic.
- Yes, the surrounding area does not seem to be able to handle the excessive rain
- No. We have septic system
- No, private septic tank
- sounds like we are being taxed greatly for a new treatment plants to accommodate for poor planning in the past and excess water infiltration into the infrastructure.
- heavy rain turns the city street and yard into a lake
- no only future cost of it being passed onto the property owner
- no as long as the cause of the flood was taken care of
- No, septic system out here

Question: Do you have any concerns about the current conditions of the transportation system (roads, walkways, and multi-use trails)? If so, please specify.

- Gravel roads are in really bad shape in the spring with large ruts in them cause dby ppor gravel and large farm equipment driving on them

- more biking and running trails!
- Lots of potholes in roads.
- Need better access to multi-use trails/walking/biking/horse/ etc.
- Timely maintenance is critical to catching problems early.
- I think the roads in the county are full of cracks and not nice to drive on
- Rain water should not sit in the tire tracks in the lanes of the highways like it does especially on 76 the patch work that was done acts as a dike holding water in the inside tire tracks of both lanes.
- Open up ATV/UTV trails
- Funds have been spent on a bike path on the road out of Harpers Ferry and no funds are spent to expand trails for UTV's
- Gravel roads are a disaster
- Some need help
- Lack of multi-use trails
- Yes fix them
- Wash outs on Paint Rock Road
- Yes, the highways in our county are deteriorated and need to be redone. Particularly concerned for novice drivers and motorcycles on such deteriorated roads.
- Gravel roads need to be paved especially mays Prairie. It is high use.
- Gravel roads are rough, poor visibility at rural intersections.
- Roads (state) need improvement.
- Sidewalks need improvement
- Multi-use trails do not include ATV's, this needs to change.
- Not much gravel used to many fines
- Many roads need to be improved.

- only concern would be public expense to small amount of population that use it.
- safety, over-development, commercialization
- State Highways are in poor condition
- I would like to see this expanded
- Gravel Roads are in poor to very poor shape, walkways in town are mostly unsafe
- don't exist!
- we could use more sidewalks, and improvements to the existing ones.
- Many communities are behind in maintaining a continuous sidewalk system—many walking in streets

Question: Is there anything else you'd like to share regarding infrastructure in Allamakee County?

- We need to develop better opportunities for economic development to encourage young people to stay here.
- commercial development should be minimized and directed by environmental concerns
- existing urban infrastructure is not being promoted to serving adjacent developing lands, thereby not maximizing these public investments
- lack of governmental renewable energy usage
- If our roads are not good and the scenery along the road side is dead from sprays or cutting down of trees, the amount of people driving out "scenic byways" will decline
- Consider a fee for use on bicycles, hikers and horseback riders as all other recreation users pay something towards the use (Boats, ATV's, golf carts, kayaks, The later pay a fee and also spend great deals of \$\$\$ while the first group uses some of the same areas without contributing to the cost.

- High speed internet would be a big plus
- Streets in the towns are showing their age
- Pave the gravel roads. Pave may's prairie rd.
- Limited cell phone service.
- We seldom see bicyclists on the new bike path. We need more access for motorized ATVs as they pay registration.
- I believe there is a need to upgrade or maintain current old infrastructure for the public utilities.
- poorly designed and maintained town streets
- Storm water effects the rural road ditches. when county crews remove bank lateral support by over dredging the ditch. Leaving them to sluffing or sliding by not putting in place proper replacement support. Failing to implement erosion control measures. There another effect which happens by road coverts are placed high above ground level restricting water flow. Poorly and improperly maintained road ditch detracts away from scenic beauty. Are unsafe in the event in which vehicle leaves the road. A bike/hiking trail should be away a road maybe parallel to it but not part of it. Trees are beautiful but they don't belong over a public road state or county outside a park. Their a hazard when they fall into the roadway by being so close, they obstruct visibility. Road ditches should be maintained in which they can be mowed once in the fall and along the edge 3 times a growing season. Wildlife habitat belongs outside of road right-of-way not part of it. To use wildlife protection as an excuse for not mowing but spray them with poisons as acceptable is Counterintuitive.
- Recycling is sort of a joke.... Drive 30 miles to recycle?

- I don't like the bike paths being on the side of the road.
- More and larger truck traffic is taking a toll on the roads.

Question: What kind of business development does Allamakee County need? Please rate the following on their level of importance.

(Written responses from those who answered "other")

- any county "needs" all the above
- Large corporations should not be an option for our area... like Distribution facilities (Amazon, UPS, etc
- Buy local challenges.
- general type store since ShopKo has left
- Childcare!
- Retail spaces filled
- More facilities to attract tourism
- small business incubator would be very helpful to encourage innovation
- need entrepreneurs wanting to or encouraged to create businesses

Question: Is there anything else you'd like to share regarding economic development in Allamakee County?

- We need businesses in Allamakee County and people need to shop local and support them!
- We need to work to bring higher wage jobs to the county.
- such needs are determined by those behind such uses; its the appeal and resources of the community that largely determines if they get such uses
- It may be important to come to some kind of agreement about what 'we' really want to be... a small town with a connected community and meeting spaces in town, or a commuter community that

people just live here because they can commute to somewhere else, or do we want to be the next Detroit with huge industry and ? What?

- It's really important been support our local businesses.
- Since the ShopKo has left Waukon, people are having to travel outside the Allamakee County area to purchase necessities.
- It's stagnant.
- Need to be able to develop and MAINTAIN our current childcare
- Many persons drive to maintain a job that will support a family. Bring these companies into the county.
- Declining economic development is a challenge for residents to find career opportunities within allamakee county. Recruiting to the area is challenging with declining economic development. Residents are commuting to other counties to find career opportunities.
- Needs a stores.
- Bring business to this county. There are a select few that do not want to let these businesses in
- Taxes should be reasonable for a small business
- Downtown areas should be the main business hub for office, retails, restaurants, and banks. Industrial and manufacturing on the edges of town.
- support for our local arts/crafts and green agriculture efforts
- Getting a handle on contiunuous feed lot development, scaring some away from living here AND causing some to leave county--where does this pattern lead going into the future of our county?

Question; Do you think there is adequate affordable housing available for all residents in Allamakee County? If no, where do you see the need for affordable housing?

- Lansing
- Temporary housing for single or multi-family use
- EVERYWHERE, nothing is affordable when earned income doesn't increase, yet the standard of living does
- Waukon and Postville
- all communities need more affordable housing
- Those people that cannot afford to buy property, like young people just starting out, single parent families just starting over and senior citizens that no longer need to own a home, mow the lawn and shovel the sidewalks.
- Lower income options, options for folks with disabilities including low vision or decreased mobility.
- Postville. Rent is too high for what they get. Housing is also disgusting.
- Harpers Ferry has limited homes for sale
- In town Need affordable places to rent or buy
- Unsure if this is an issue
- Northern part of county
- Lower taxes so Home Owners can afford to rent out property
- Lansing
- Shortage of housing period.
- more quality low income properties in good repair
- Waukon
- construction costs have made it unaffordable to build, public entities that cost the public more money should not be building. The taxpayers can't afford more taxes.
- More HUD sites

- small towns
- There is always someone looking to find an affordable place to livem, building new facilities would be too expensive for the lower class folks who are in the most need.
- In town
- LOW INCOME HOUSING IN POSTVILLE
- Houlsing for low income families.
- in and near the towns
- More senior complexes are needed to open up more houses
- Quality, energy efficient housing is needed in rural areas as well as in towns; many more rental properties are needed
- Throughout the county New Albin, Lansing Waukon Harpers Ferry
- For those making \$15/hour
- Need more places like WestWood Apartments, not specifically HUD facilities; but similar to what happened in Cresco. A resident inherited funds after living in poverty for years, and then worked to create affordable housing for people before he died. There are two properties, one for seniors on the Main road coming into town on the east side, and the other on the west side. I forget the name of the properties; but they are very nice. Affordable housing works best if people take pride in living there.
- Lower income housing options
- we need more rentals available. But NOT for those who use section 8 assistance and come to bring drugs into our town.
- in all communities
- more rental opportunities

Question: Please rate your level of satisfaction for each of the following services in Allamakee County.

(Additional comments)

- Have had no need or no use of the last four service categories
- We need to bring an institution of higher education into the County.
- Things could be so much better. There is always room for improvement. There is apathy here, as it is everywhere. People need to care, and they need to have a place to go to dialogue, meet with others that have the same interests and then figure out how to work together to make change.
- The health care in Waukon is exceptional. However, with Waukon Mayo Clinic leaving, there will be less people coming in from surrounding towns, such as Postville, Luana, Monona, to receive health care. Due to the people not coming to the Waukon Mayo clinic, they will no longer go to the Pharmacy, restaurants, and grocery stores. The decline of the health care system in Waukon will be the death of the city.
- Postville District is lacking space and is overloaded with so many children that are below the normal level, that children who should excel are left behind.
- We have doctors in Prairie du Chien
- There seems to be a lack of public health services in Allamakee county in my experience. Many people utilize Decorah public health due to this.
- Allamakee county needs more doctors.
- drug use seems very prevalent - would like to see more assistance with this.
- don't have firsthand experience with the last three but I do believe they are on a par with the other services

- Need for youth to have access to health clinics (birth control, testing, etc) having a safe place to go.
- The hospital has no idea what trauma informed care is. They do not know how to handle people that need mental health care at all. I have heard many people say that they are determined to stay away from them at all costs. Hospital policy treats all people that present with MH issues as addicts and criminals. This causes more trauma, and they just move those people out as fast as they can.
- don't know about teen services Does your Comp Plan have the authority to deal with all these services?

Question: Is there anything else you'd like to share regarding community services and housing in Allamakee County?

- Some of the housing stock is in poor condition. Perhaps a program to support young families or seniors to improve the condition of housing.
- YES... please let me know about future meetings on these topics.
- the updating and repair of existing residential structures would provide jobs, improve neighborhoods and housing options
- I would really like to have other choices in this town.
- Is there a homeless problem in the county?

Question: Lastly, please feel free to provide any additional comments about Allamakee County and the All-In Plan.

- We need to make a stronger county effort to coordinate local services and attend to environmental concerns.
- isn't everything in such a plan only advisory and ends up on the shelf without officials really using it when needed?

- I do not use social media... that is why there needs to be a community center. AND... it may be important to recognize that due to security concerns of social media, there needs to be an alternative to that, especially for people that did not grow up and go to school here.
- I have many years as a reporter covering zoning issues and the creation of comprehensive plans in SE Minnesota. I might have valuable input... then again, I don't live in Allamakee County... and never have. But I've lived in Clayton & Winneshiek counties... my ancestors settled in Allamakee County as long ago as the Civil War era... and my vital records reside in the Allamakee County Courthouse.
- Keep ATV's out of Yellow River Forest
- Meetings should be in the evenings so more people could attend . most residents work during the day time hours

Like fishing, hunting, trials for walking and horseback riding, atv/utv trials ect. We need to find ways to attract people and industry to our county.

- To clutter the bluff with Ominous structure so few can wireless connect with-out roaming or a few have the eagles view. Has little to do with tourist coming in to enjoying the sight. It does have lot to do with destroying their beauty.
- I don't think the Driftless Center should have been built. Where did all the money come from? Are the taxpayers paying for it? More money needs to go into our school systems so the teachers aren't having to put in their own money.
- big meth problem in Allamakee County - snuff out drugs
- Thank you for conducting this survey. I would like to contribute to the community in some way(s); but have found if a person is not born, raised and attending school here they are outside the loop.
- Good luck

- Agriculture is our main business in the county but we need to capitalize on our environment to attract people to come and see what allamakee has to offer.

**Written feedback from *All in Allamakee*
community workshops in
Postville, Waukon, and Lansing**

***Question: What's working well? What makes Allamakee
County Special?***

- Key identified themes: Nature, Farming, People, Unique Beauty
- Outdoor opportunities
- Solitude and peace in nature
- Mount Hosmer (scenery)
- The people/willingness to help out
- The sounds of Allamakee County
- The sights
- Rural nature of county
- We have a diverse economy.
- Good/excellent health care facilities
- Unique topography to farm (challenging)
- Family oriented community
- Hometown friendliness
- Community support
- River – family time
- RAGBRAI – came together
- Blufflands
- Safe
- Outdoors hunting/fishing
- Family connection, village
- Simplicity, outdoors, campgrounds
- Belong/comfortable
- Low property taxes
- Beautiful nature
- Driftless Center

- What we can do if we put our minds to it
- The river/nature
- NE IA farm crawl
- Rural characteristic
- Small businesses

Question: What isn't working so well?

- Need more farmers (livestock)
- Cell/broadband
- Young people not water skiing
- Empty farmsteads
- Economy/economies of scale
- Farms used to be more diverse. Need smaller farmers
- Opportunities for children in small schools
- Daycare services, need/generational care
- Need to make people aware of farming imports
- How does population spread impact economy?
- Dangerous roads for cycling
- Lacking outfitters
- Allamakee County is a mystery to its own people
- Lacking diversity
- Closure of girl scout camp

***Question: What could be done better? What could
Allamakee County be like in the future?***

- ED idea: Farm tours, B&B, farmers markets
- More diverse farms
- Young farmers
- Housing options
- Enhance existing employment
- 4-season tourism economy (snow mobile trails)
- Stable, non-declining population

- Address/need transportation for elder population (taxi, other services)
- Eco-tourism
- Hike Allamakee – develop recreational opportunities (Effigy Mounds, Yellow River Forest, Need access to state/fed lands)
- Need to address Forest Reserve
- Need people; Educate kids, keep them here
- Need housing/developers
- Keep what’s good, just improve on it.
- Try to keep housing in/near existing infrastructure/towns
- Support sustainable Ag businesses: value added; smaller farms; programs/county/fed/state; Food plot farming
- Community kitchen (in Winneshiek now) – Waterville school?
- Create a “sense of place”
- Wineries/Breweries/Distillery
- Need animal ag + protect Ag?
- Loss/need for access to state lands
- Ag tourism need
- Promote/grow farm/local grow opportunities
- Incorporate conservation programs in the schools.
- Need to encourage housing improvements
- Develop recreational areas we have
- Encourage diversify and variety of farm operations including value-added products
- Encourage young families to return or to stay; financial education programs
- More shopping opportunities
- More lodging opportunities
- More dining opportunities
- Expand business collaboration and promotion – digital media
- More outdoor recreation – Hike and bike Allamakee, land and water trails
- Expand use of public lands – mark trails and publicize
- Promote community activities i.e. group recreation activities
- Apprentice programs, Employees
- Promote Allamakee County experience
- Timber framing
- Better utilize groups like AmeriCorps
- Countywide healthcare access
- Cell/internet
- Desirable place to retire (low housing low tax)
- A place to come back to
- Good schools
- Good hospitals
- Hotel – small conventions – H.F.-Lansing – 50-100 group size
- Good restaurants
- Living history farm 1920s era EA county different era/decade
- Waukon-Waukon Junction bike trails. Destination.
- Live, work and/or play
- Ample fabulous daycare
- Ample fabulous housing options for different stages of life
- If we could improve current housing
- If we had collaboration in housing - funding

Written feedback from *All In Allamakee* community open house in Waukon

Topic: Community Character and Culture

- (Re draft vision statement): Agree 😊
- Would like to see more community gathering places (also underlined by another attendee)
- Would like to see more cultural centers
- Would like to see more community events
- Would like to see more businesses/employment opportunities
- Lively downtown (also underlined by another attendee)
- Would like to see fixing buildings downtown so buildings can be used (also underlined by another attendee)
- Would like to see more biking/walking trails. Make it accessible, and focus on expanding tourism.
- Favorite things about Allamakee County? Landscape is beautiful – rivers, valleys & bluffs
- Favorite things about Allamakee County? Friendly small towns
- Favorite things about Allamakee County? Historical sites
- Favorite things about Allamakee County? Rivers/Streams/Bluffs/People/History/Family
- Favorite things about Allamakee County? Low population – thus fewer people invading our secluded areas & building homes
- Favorite things about Allamakee County? Rural nature of the county – Love it!
- Favorite things about Allamakee County? It's safe.

- Favorite things about Allamakee County? Natural beauty.

Topic: Economy and Housing

- Agriculture and supporting services often overlooked as a route to bring or keep young folks in the community.
- Must encourage broadband access expansion; important to residents; can provide a wider range of employment opportunities for telecommuting
- Establish industry incubator/Encourage entrepreneurial businesses. (Two other attendees indicated agreement)
- Housing definitely needed to help with employment needs (One other attendee indicated agreement)
- Business incubator in current empty building, maybe Mayo Clinic?
- More homes or apartments to rent

Topic: Hazards and Resiliency

- We need to continue to support our local hospital & efforts to increase those getting EMT & paramedic certifications. (One other attendee wrote: Agreed!)
- Cell phone/internet-drone; tourists hiking, canoeing, etc., high water, lost

Topic: Natural Resources and Environment

- We are in karst topography so control of CAFOs, and other water quality threats, should be a top priority in this county.
- The county needs an ATV/UTV park for off-road use. More & more families have UTVs and additional places for them are needed. (One other attendee wrote: Agree)

- Farmland preservation to slow or control of non-farm rural housing development
- Concerned with water quality, particularly high nitrates in rural water/wells; Support testing, but need to improve the quality where tests are high
- Appreciate the ability for Agriculture and Ecotourism to coexist in this community.
- Disagree w/ comment about CAFOs. Feel we are in better shape today w/ current practices.
- CAFOs play a major part in our economy, providing many jobs & economic benefits & animal ag is more sustainable than it has ever been, lots of misconceptions on this, CAFOs are very important to Allamakee
- Need to highlight our natural resources here, lots of beauty
- Need to be aware of potential mining for precious metals
- Many tourism development ideas needed—brings economical stability to all communities

Topic: Public Facilities, Services, and Infrastructure

- To the 20% who say availability of youth services and programming are poor: Are they in 4-H? Are they involved in their church youth group? Do they use the wellness center? Do they attend/participate in the County Fair?

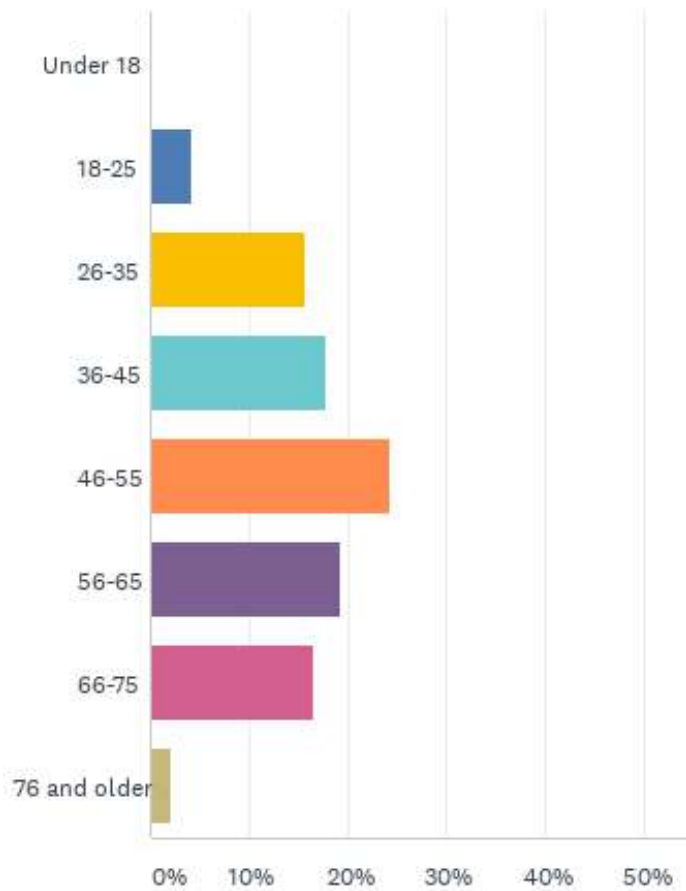
- Agree with all the items listed that Residents said they would like to see.
- Would like to see additional things for pre teen/teens to do at night.
- Better wireless/cellular access is dependent upon towers – i.e. zoning should protect the landscape but not restrict completely—provide a guide for tower developers. 37% reporting poor reception in the county is HIGH.
- Encourage fiber deployment w/ locally owned providers who are more nimble.
- Connectivity will be #1 driver for economic development in future.
- Need cell towers & good service in rural areas

Topic: Transportation and Land Use

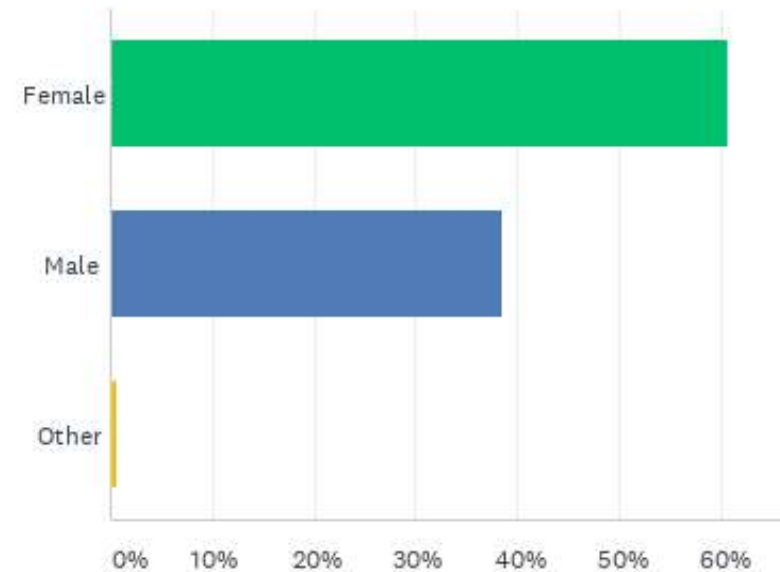
- We should not forget our Amish community and their need for safe shoulders to drive buggies on.
- Develop more trails/multi-use
- Develop more bike trails
- Concerns with gravel road conditions & safety in winter & spring months. Look to state of Wisconsin on road conditions in rural areas.
- More financial assistance with transportation to low income that may need EARL services.
- Hwy 9 needs to be redone, not just repaired

Appendix C: Online Survey Summary Charts

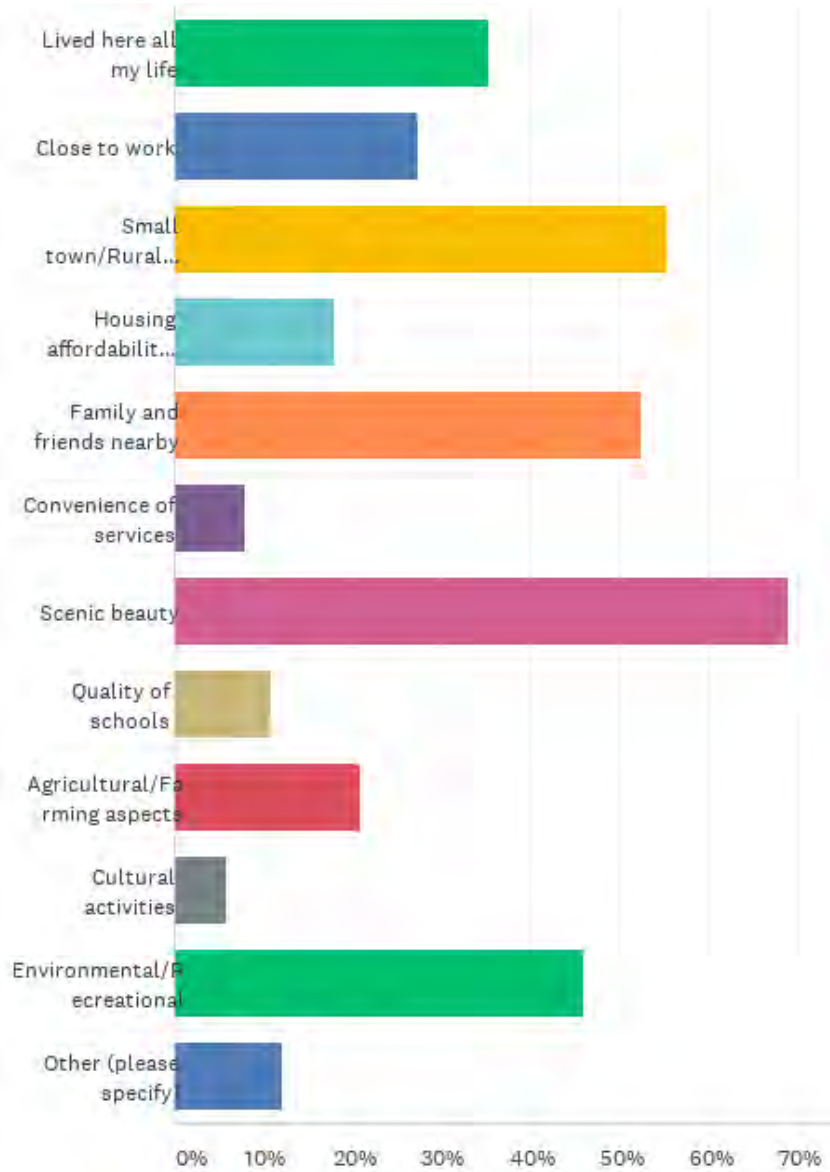
What is your age group?



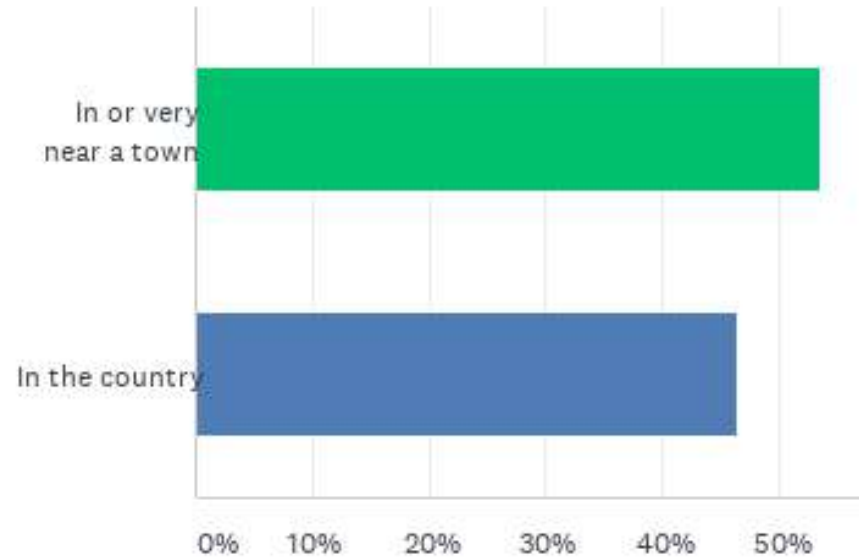
What is your gender?



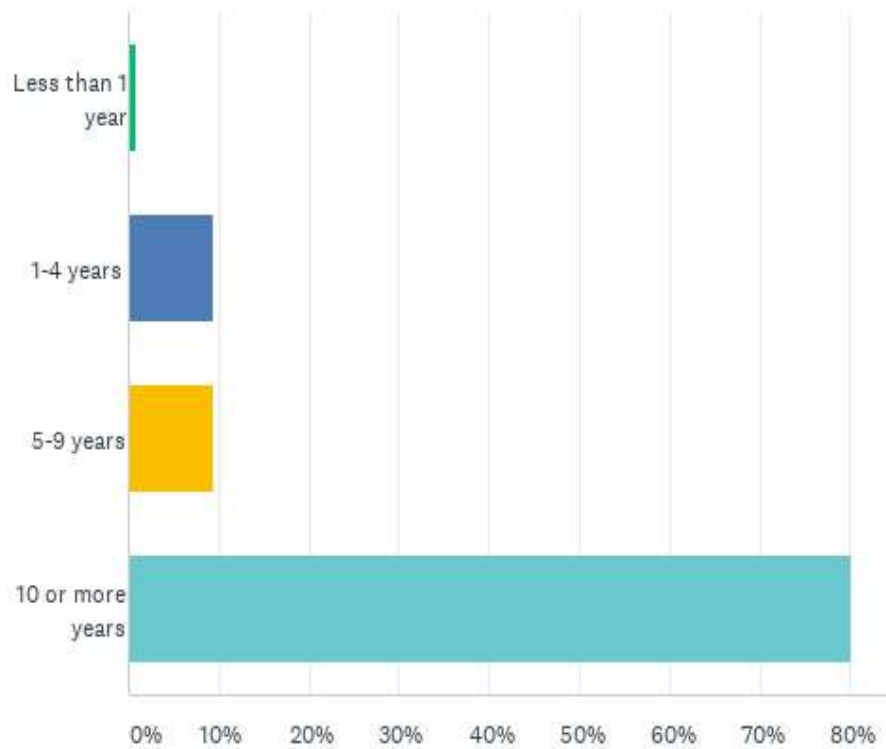
Why do you choose to live in or visit Allamakee County? (Select all that apply.)



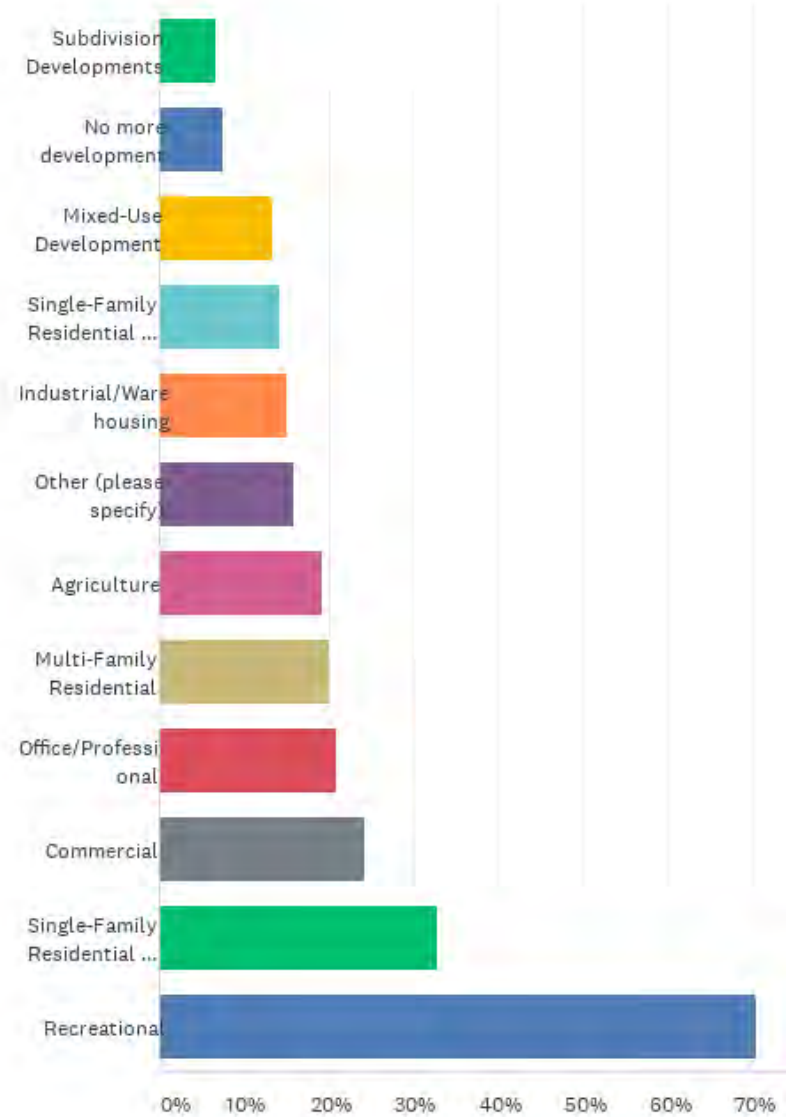
Do you live in or very near town? Or do you live in the country?



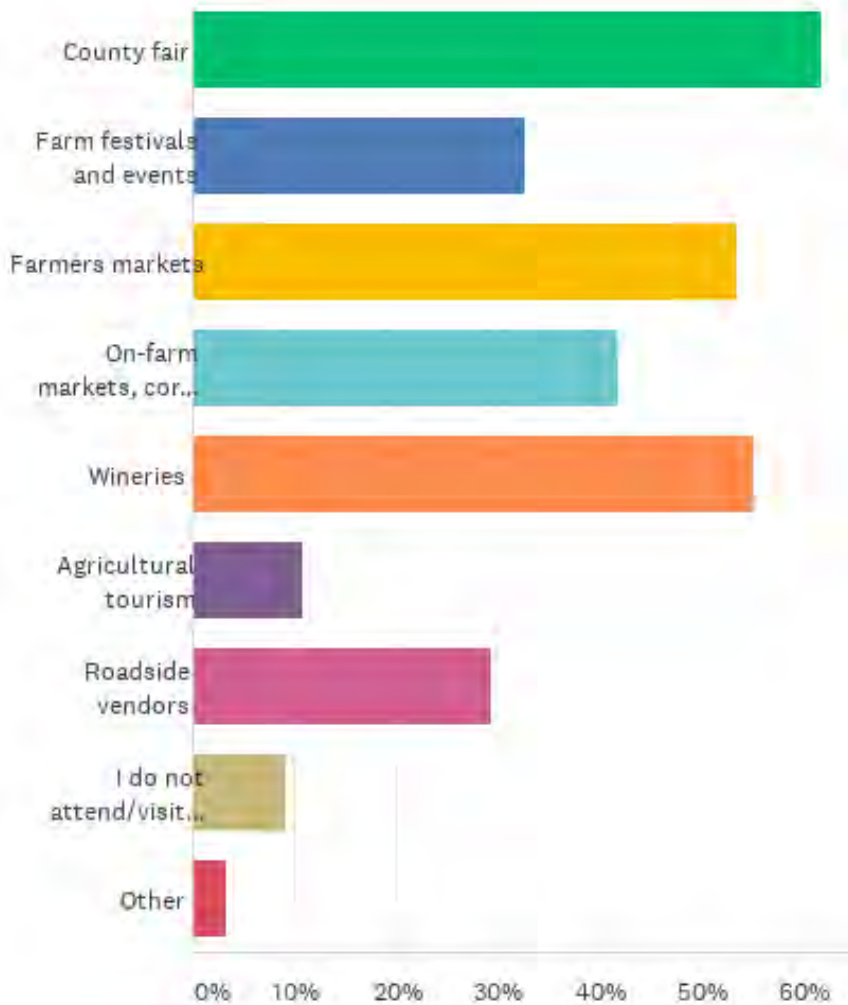
How long have you been a resident of Allamakee County?



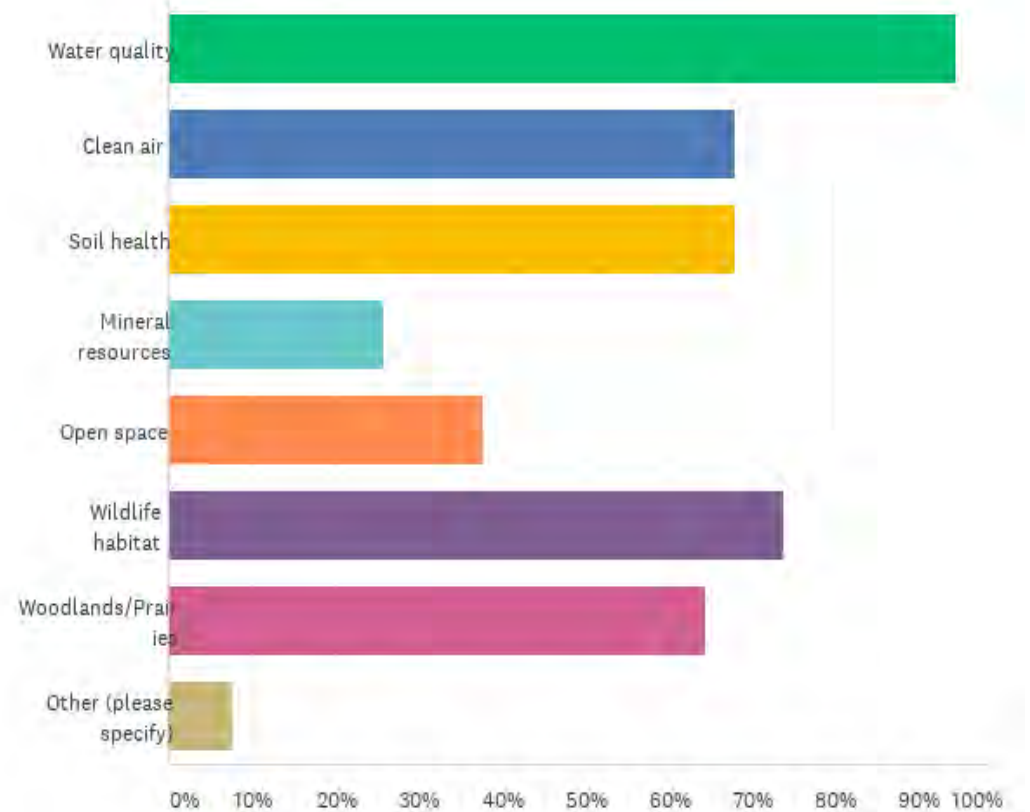
Which types of development would you like to see more of in Allamakee County? (Select all that apply.)



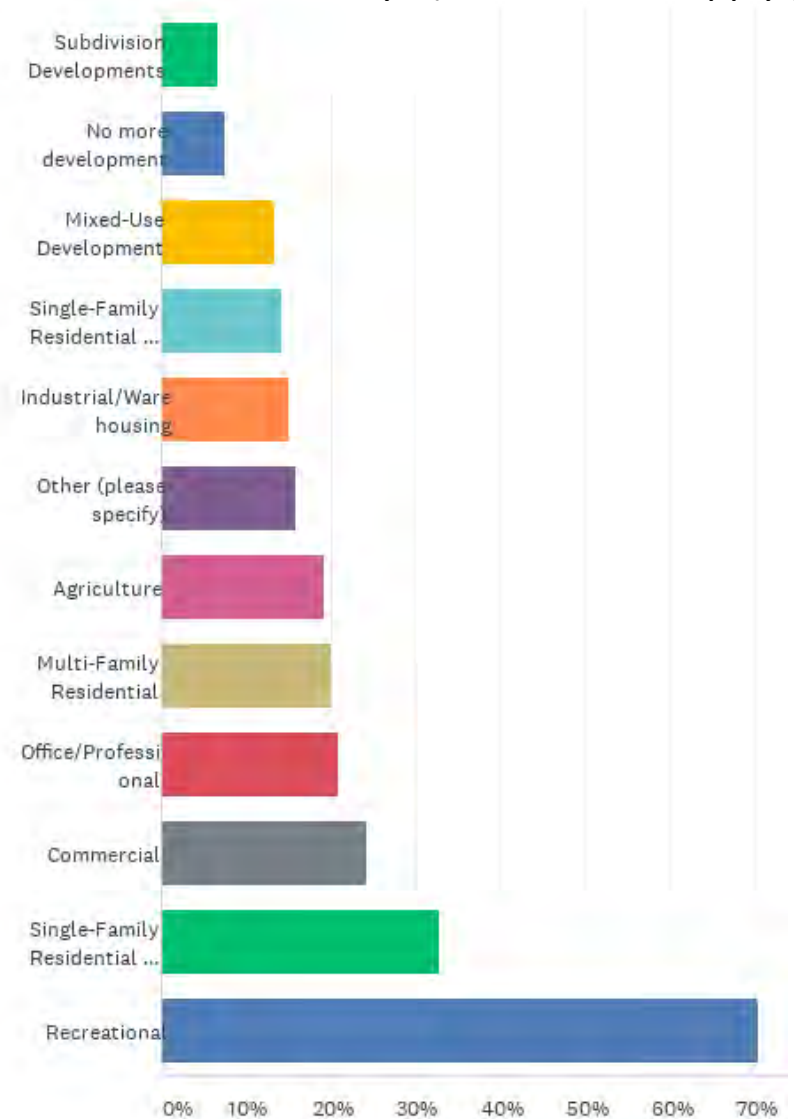
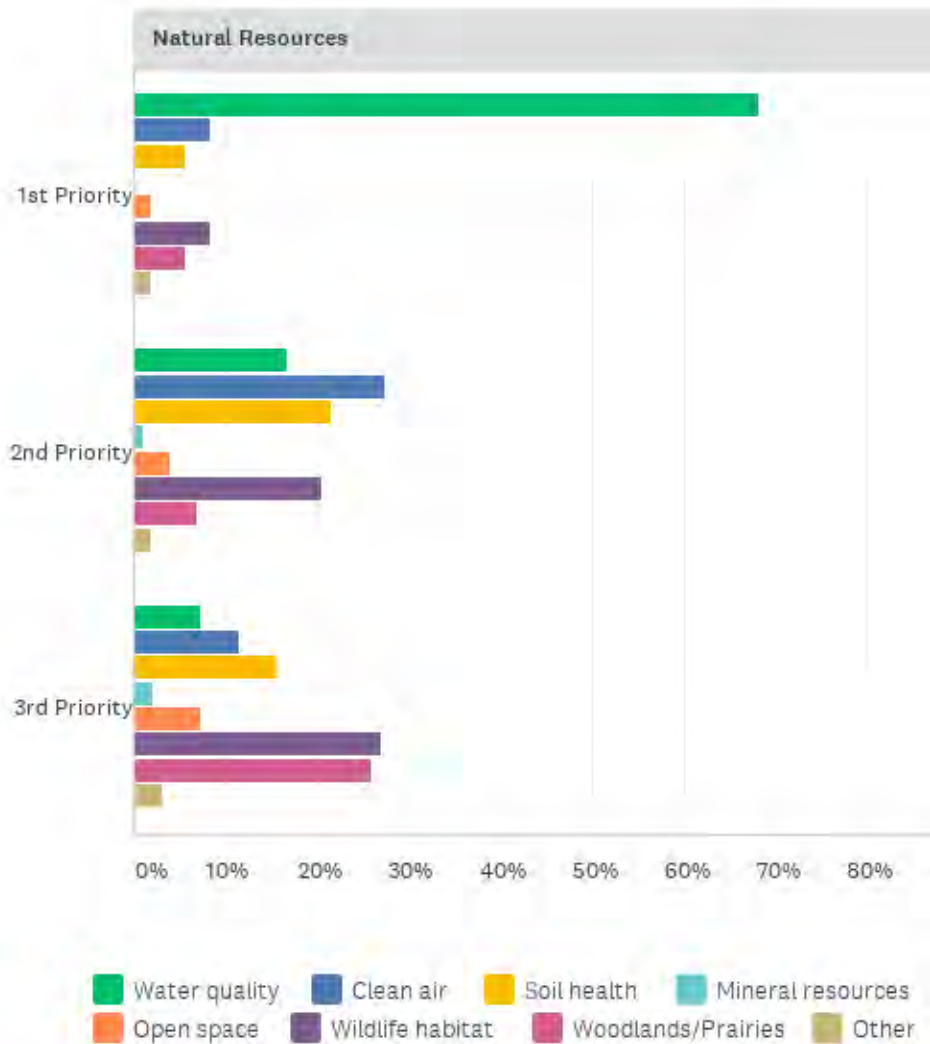
Which types of agricultural events or establishments to you currently attend or visit in Allamakee County? (Select all that apply.)



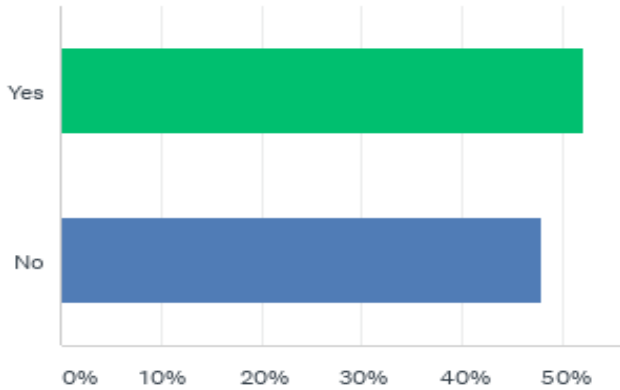
Which natural resources should be a priority to protect in Allamakee County? (Select all that apply.)



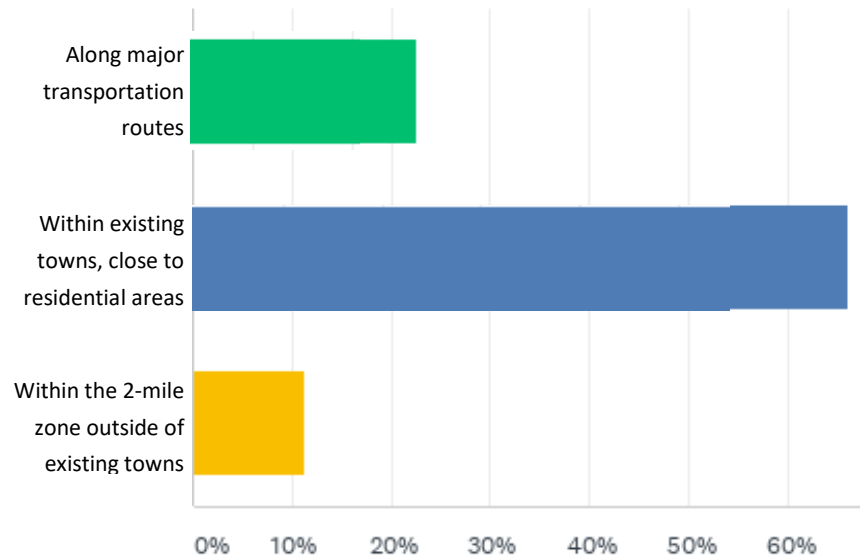
Of the aforementioned natural resources to be protected, please select your top three priorities. Which types of development would you like to see more of in Allamakee County? (Select all that apply.)



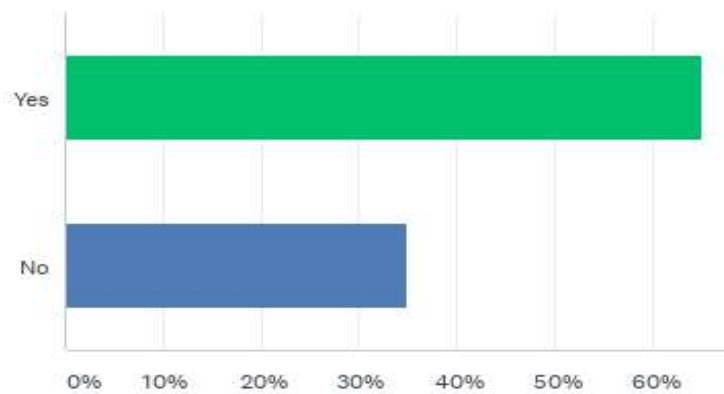
Do you think there is adequate affordable housing available for all residents in Allamakee County?



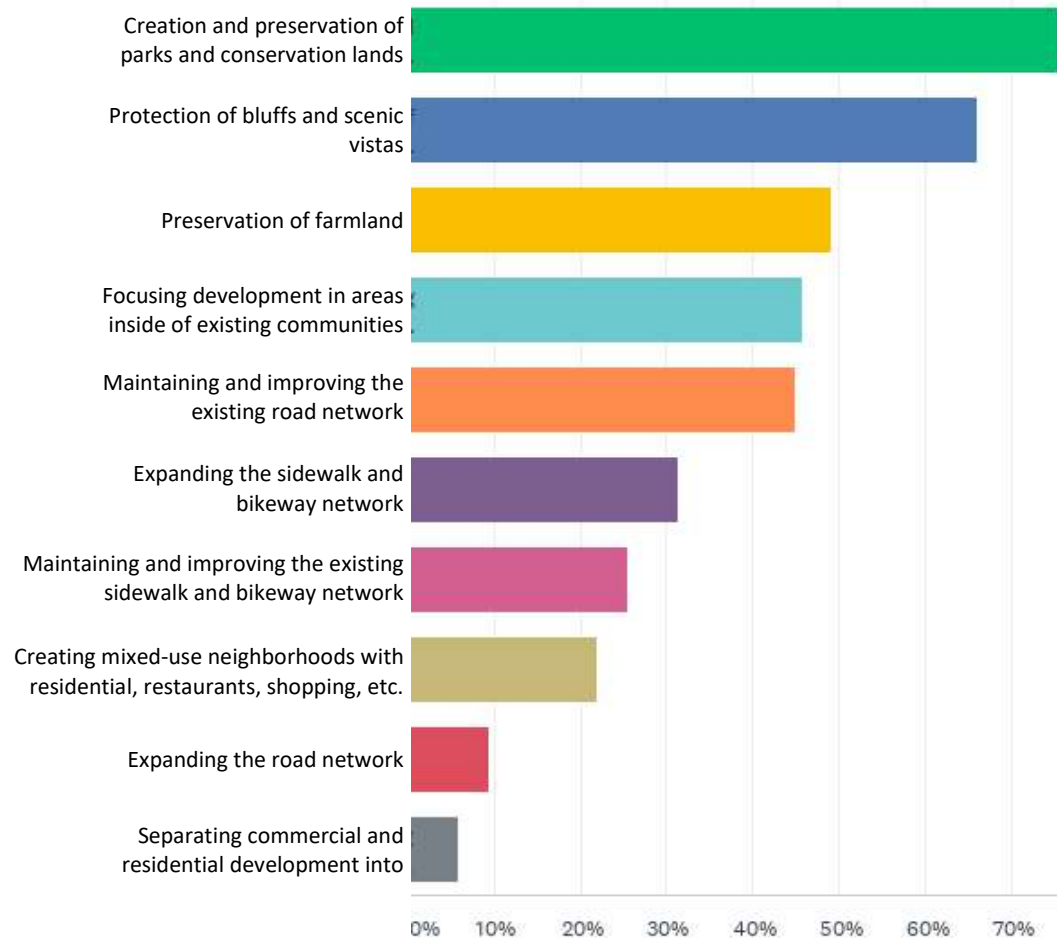
Where do you think commercial development such as restaurants, offices, retail, and banks should be located? (Select all that apply.)



As a resident, do you know where to get assistance with community services or housing issues?



Of the following land-use activities, which are important to you? (Select all that apply.)



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