



**OFFICE OF THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR**

Johnston, Iowa

AGENDA COMMUNICATION

March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2017

SUBJECT: Continue Discussion on Johnston Town Center and Upcoming Implementation Steps.

**ACTION REQUIRED:**

- Ordinance
- Resolution
- Approval
- Receive/File
- Attorney Review

**SYNOPSIS**

A public meeting will be held April 18<sup>th</sup> 5-7pm to receive input on four Town Center concepts created by Confluence. Following this meeting, staff and Confluence will refine the designs prior to bringing them to Council and P&Z for approval.

As Confluence continues work on these site plan details in the coming two months, staff suggests seeking proposals for an updated "Use Space Analysis" for City Hall to determine space and layout needs. This will take place alongside conversations on whether to incorporate City Hall into the Town Center Project or eventually relocate City Hall elsewhere when the current site is redeveloped.

Staff also recommends extending Confluence's scope of work to include Development Strategies for the Town Center Site. Services would include working with staff to price infrastructure and other site development costs, recommending public-private partnership strategies and generating materials for a potential RFP.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

A suite of Development Strategies Services is identified in the current Confluence Contract as an optional service priced at \$34,400. Funds are available through the East Central TIF District.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff anticipates handling components of the proposed Development Strategies suite of services internally but recommends approval for up to \$34,400 pending further discussion with Confluence on specific terms.

Staff also suggests seeking proposals for a Use Space Analysis for City Hall.



# MERLE HAY ROAD REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

JOHNSTON, IOWA

SITE ANALYSIS SUMMARY REPORT  
FEBRUARY 2017

CONFLUENCE  
LELAND CONSULTING GROUP

*Johnston*  
THRIVE. EVERY DAY.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## CITY OFFICIALS

Mayor Paula Dierenfeld, Mayor  
Gerd Clabaugh, City Council  
David Lindeman, City Council  
Matt Brown, City Council  
Tom Cope, City Council  
John Temple, City Council

## PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION

Julie Smith  
Stuart Spencer  
Jennifer Pavlovec  
Frank Severino  
David Johnson  
Jay Petersma  
Kathy Anderson

## TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE / CITY STAFF

Jim Sanders, City Administrator  
David Wilwerding, Community Development Director  
Adam Plagge, Economic Development Manager  
Clayton Ender, Planner  
Rebekah Davis, Administrative Assistant

PLANNING TEAM

CONFLUENCE

 LELAND CONSULTING GROUP

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## CHAPTER 1: SITE ANALYSIS

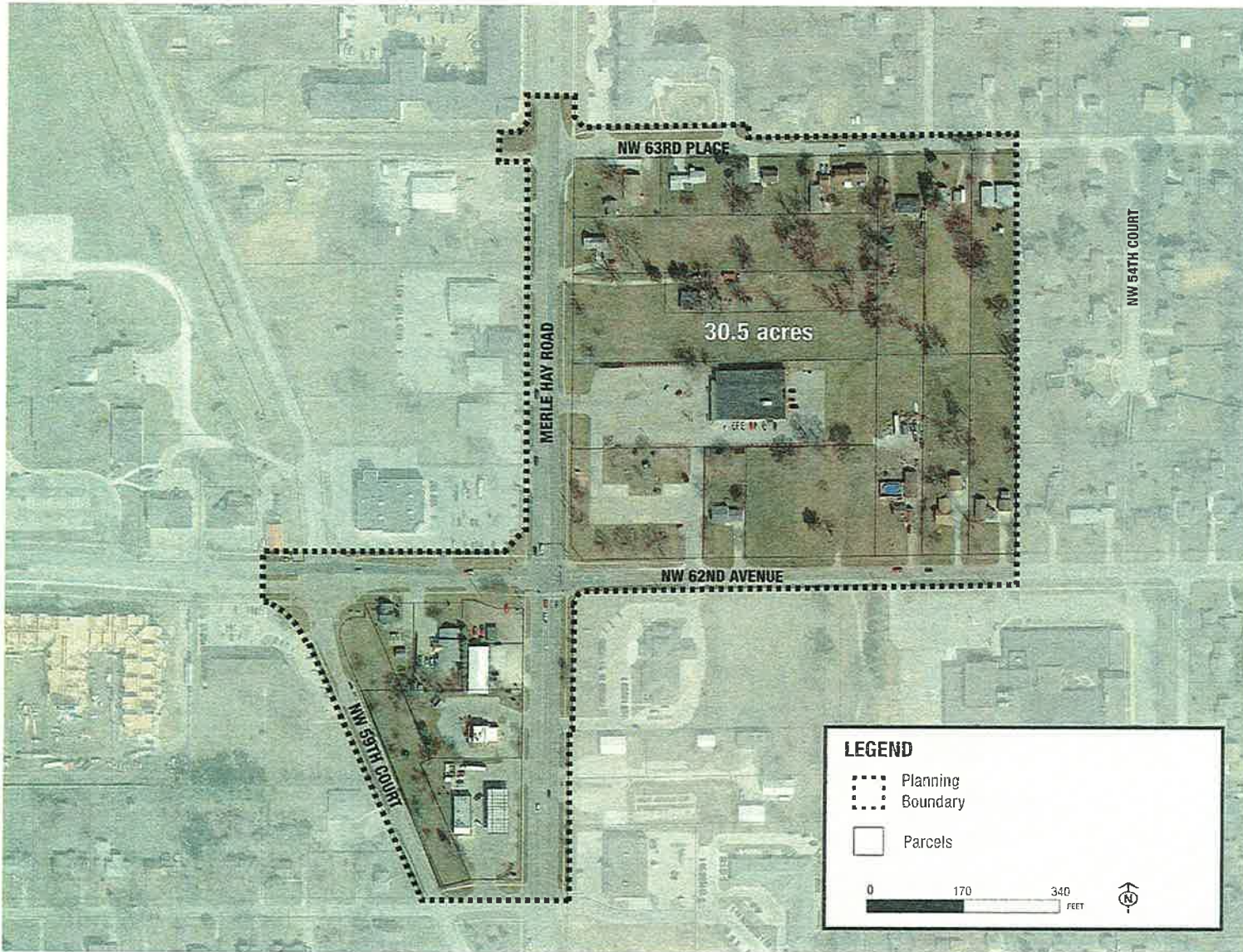
STUDY AREA	7-9
REGIONAL CONTEXT	10
LAND USE	11
CIRCULATION	12
UTILITIES + TOPOGRAPHY	13
MARKET ANALYSIS	14-16
PROPERTY OWNER INPUT	17
JOINT WORKSHOP # 1	18-23

## STUDY AREA

In 2007, the City of Johnston hired a consultant to complete a redevelopment study for the area along Merle Hay Road. During the study, the area along Merle Hay Road from NW 62nd Avenue to NW 63rd Place was identified as a suitable location for a town center development. The town center would create an identity for the city, become a destination point for residents and visitors, and promote commercial and retail activities in the heart of the city. The Merle Hay Road Redevelopment Plan is now building off the 2007 study to create a guide for making this plan into an actionable strategy.

The adjacent map highlights the study area which covers approximately 30.5 acres of land. Included in the study area is all the private property, publicly owned property, and public right-of-way in the area. The study area currently includes Johnston City Hall, various commercial and retail buildings, as well as several single-family homes. Also nearby, are several schools including Lawson Elementary School, Johnston Middle School, and Johnston High School.

The purpose of this plan is to promote and catalyze the redevelopment of the properties. The plan will create a clear vision and strategy for this important growth area. The final product will include goals and strategies to assist the City of Johnston in turning this idea into reality.



## STUDY AREA - NORTHEAST

The Northeast corner of the project area is fairly open and undeveloped, with Johnston City Hall as the anchor in the Southwest corner. The area, in general is very flat and unoccupied, with a substantial open greenspace in the center surrounded by single family homes on the Northern and Eastern borders. The entire area (not including Rights-of-ways) is around 20 acres.





Merle Hay Rd. & NW 62nd Ave. Facing Southwest

## STUDY AREA - SOUTHWEST

The Southwest corner of the project area consists primarily of commercial uses, with professional office space in the Northwest corner. Existing businesses include:

- Casey's General Store
- Dairy Queen
- Johnston Bait and Tackle
- Johnston Barber Shop
- Shultz Chiropractor & Acupuncture

## REGIONAL CONTEXT

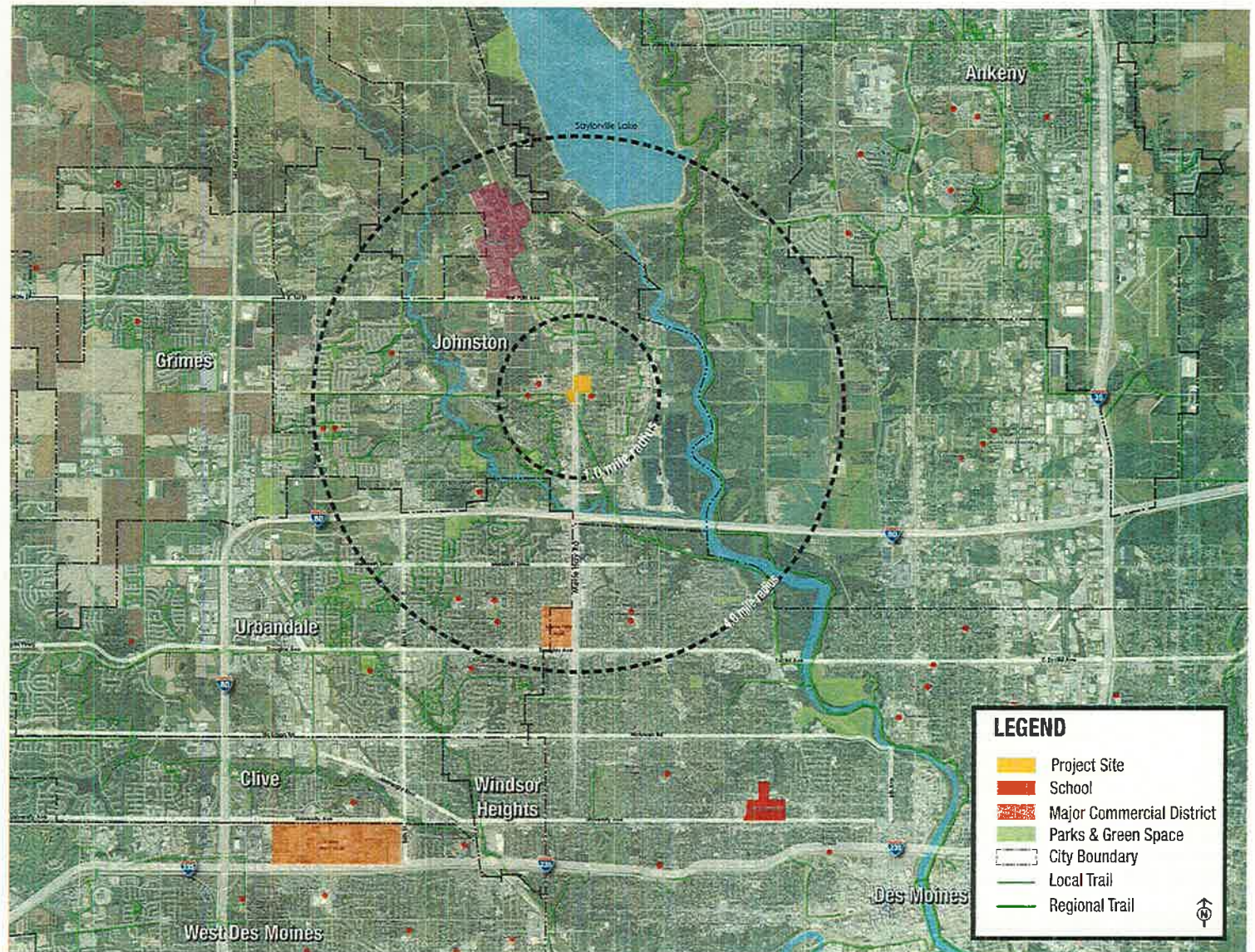
This map shows the study area within a larger regional context. The black dashed lines represent buffer areas of 1 and 5 miles from the redevelopment plan study area. In addition to the project site and buffers, nearby schools, major commercial districts, parks and open space, and city boundaries are shown.

Johnston, Iowa is located northwest of Des Moines and south of Saylorville Lake. The city borders Urbandale to the south, Grimes to the west, and the Des Moines River acts as a large part of its eastern border. Also close by to the east is Ankeny, Iowa.

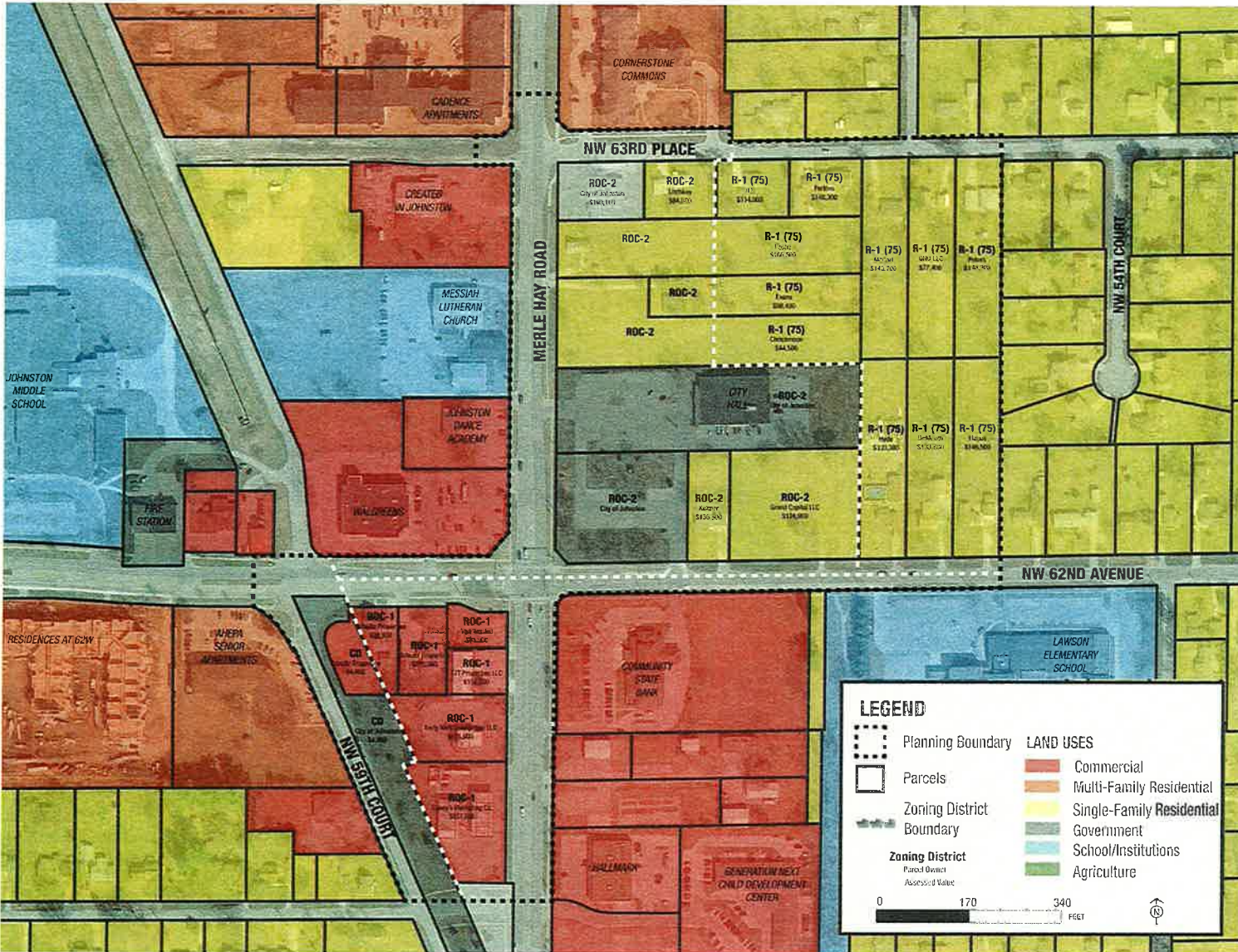
Merle Hay Road, a long arterial road, begins in Des Moines and extends through several municipalities, with a terminal point approximately 1.25 miles north of the intersection of Merle Hay Road and NW 62nd Avenue in the study area. Interstate 80 is approximately 1.5 miles south of the study area.

The section of Merle Hay Road south of the study area is home to several restaurants, retail, and commercial locations. The only other major commercial district located within the five-mile buffer of the study area is Merle Hay Mall which is approximately 3 miles south of the study area.

Saylorville Lake is approximately 2.3 miles from the study area. Two other water features approximately 1.5 miles from the study area are the Des Moines River and Beaver Creek. There are several trails within 1.5 miles of the study area. Approximately 1.3 miles from the study area is the terminus of the Trestle to Trestle Trail with a local connection to the trail. 25 miles from the study area, The Neal Smith Trail along the Des Moines River is approximately 1.5 miles from the study area. Beyond these two regional trails, there are many local trails within a one-mile radius of the study area, all highlighted in the adjacent map.







## LAND USE

This map portrays several administrative and legal attributes of the study area. The current land uses by parcel are displayed through traditional land use colors. The zoning district or districts applied to the parcels is listed along with the property owner's last name and the combined assessed value of the land and structures according to the Polk County tax assessor's office. Non-right-of-way parcels owned by the city are listed as government land use.

The study area is part of a zoning overlay district entitled the Merle Hay Overlay. Three of the parcels are a part of two different zoning district boundaries, with roughly half of the parcel falling into the Single-Family Residential R-1 (75) zoning district and the other half in the Mixed-Use District, ROC-2. The Merle Hay Overlay is intended to enhance the visual appearance and image of the Merle Hay Road Corridor and advance the public welfare through the resulting benefits to the economy and quality of life for the City of Johnston.<sup>1</sup>

In general, the southwestern section of the study area has more commercial based land uses whereas the northeastern section remains more single-family residential. This is also reflected in the ownership and assessed value. More LLCs and corporations own parcels in the southwestern and more individuals owning land in the northeastern section. Assessed values are significantly higher in the southwestern commercial section of the study area.

<sup>1</sup> City of Johnston (2016). *169 06 Merle Hay Road Corridor Overlay Zoning Ordinance*. Johnston, IA: City of Johnston.

## CIRCULATION

This map shows a diagram of automobile and pedestrian based circulation in and around the study area. The location and extent of sidewalk infrastructure is delineated along with the location of pedestrian crosswalks.

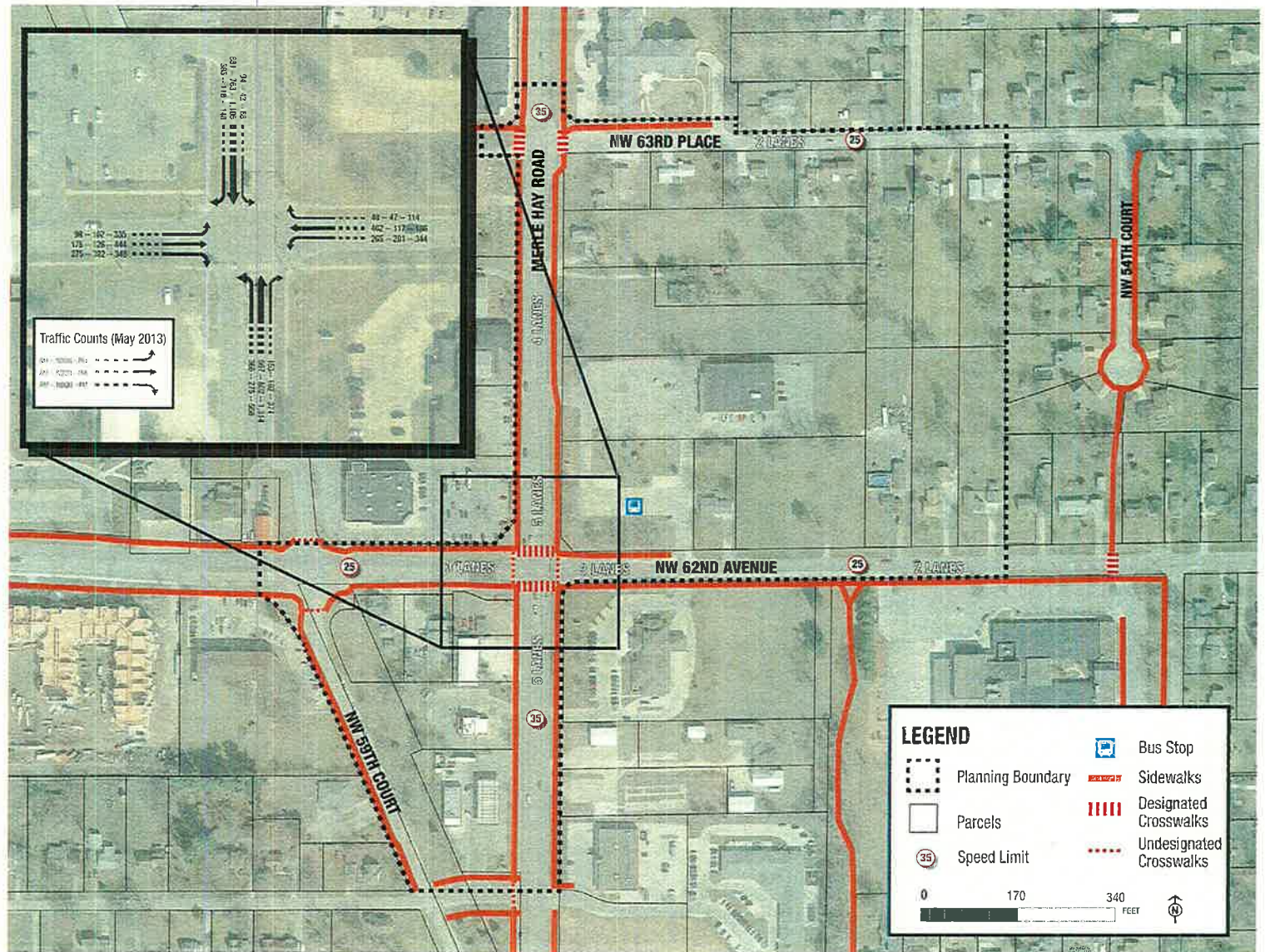
In addition to pedestrian circulation infrastructure, the number of lanes at different portions of the main thoroughfares and the speed limits were listed. The speed limit for Merle Hay Road is 35 miles per hour and 25 miles per hour for NW 62nd Avenue.

The call-out box presents traffic information made available to us by the City from May 2013. Generally, the traffic flow was highest for north and southbound trips on Merle Hay Road.

Delineated crosswalks for pedestrians looking to cross Merle Hay Road only really exist at the intersection of Merle Hay Road and NW 62nd Avenue.

There is fairly cohesive sidewalk connectivity along the south side of NW 62nd Avenue and along Merle Hay Road. The sidewalk connecting the single-family homes along the cul-de-sac on NW 54th Court to NW 62nd Avenue and Lawson Elementary provides a convenient connection between NW 63rd Place and NW 62nd Avenue.

Some areas where sidewalk connectivity is lacking is along the north side of NW 62nd Avenue east of the intersection with Merle Hay Road. NW 63rd Place also has some large missing segments of sidewalk.



### UTILITIES + TOPOGRAPHY

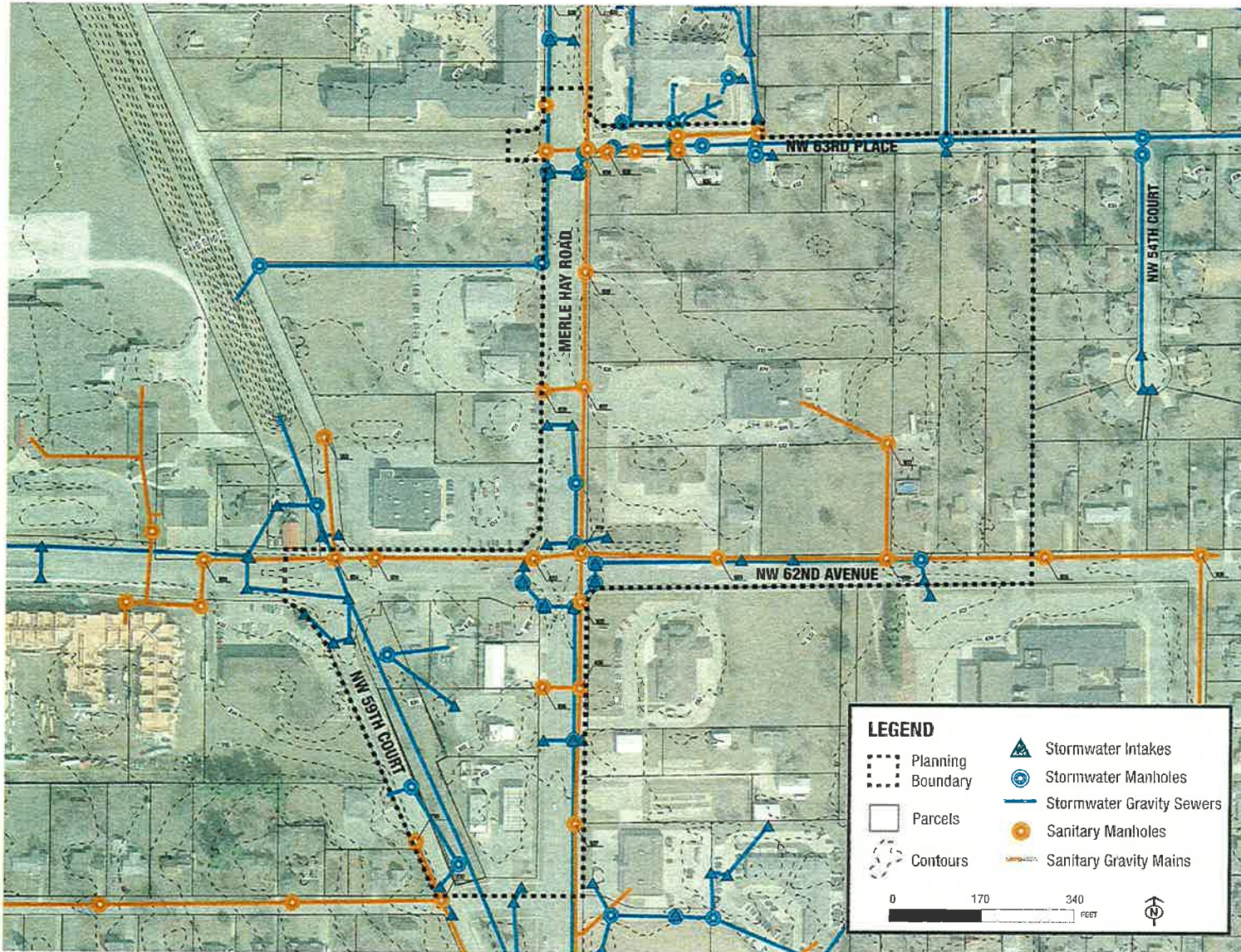
This map diagrams the available information on stormwater manholes, intakes, and sewers as well as sanitary manholes and gravity mains. The utility system is overlain with two-foot contours of the site. When available, the listed rim elevation of the sanitary manholes was provided.

The sanitary sewer system is shown in orange on the map. In general, the sanitary sewer system tends to run along the right side of the street system. There is a large cluster of sanitary manholes in northern section of the study area near the intersection of Merle Hay Road and NW 63rd Place.

The stormwater system is shown in blue. This includes the stormwater gravity sewers, manholes, and intakes. There is a cluster of stormwater intakes near the intersection of Merle Hay Road and NW 62nd Avenue.

There are clusters of stormwater intakes and stormwater and sanitary manholes around the intersection of Merle Hay Road and NW 62nd Avenue as well as at the intersection of Merle Hay Road and NW 63rd Place.

Overall, the study area is a relatively flat landscape. The contours of the study area and surrounding area only have an elevation change difference of around 2 to 4 feet with most areas keeping a fairly consistent slope.



## MARKET ANALYSIS

Confluence engaged Leland Consulting Group to assist with the market analysis section of the redevelopment plan. Leland Consulting Group investigated relevant market and economic conditions to help guide a sound strategy for site redevelopment, consistent with an evolving civic vision.

This market analysis provides a baseline assessment of demographic, economic, and real estate conditions affecting the Merle Hay Road and NW 62nd Avenue site in Johnston. Based on observed supply and demand characteristics and real estate trends, in both the immediate subject vicinity and the larger metropolitan market area, this analysis highlights opportunities for attracting new development consistent with an emerging overall site vision. Recommendations, based on professional judgement, are supported by available evidence. Evidence includes a combination of relevant existing market studies, where possible, and public and subscription databases.

A full-length version of the market analysis will be provided in a supplemental attachment. The Task 1 report includes two summary tables: (1) Site Analysis / Market Competitiveness Summary and (2) Subject Property Development Recommendations Supportable by 2026.

## SUBJECT PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS SUPPORTABLE BY 2026

Product Type	Demand (Conservative)	Demand (Attainable)	Notes
<b>Residential</b>			
			Density: aim for minimum of 20 du/a, possibly higher
Ownership Attached	40 Units	70 Units	Condo, townhomes, rowhomes, or stacked flats. Consider 3 or even 4-story form to help define compact, walkable town center streetscape
Apartments	100 Units	170 Units	3-4 story apartments, stacked-flat rentals, and mixed use developments. Strongest apartment market likely over next 1-3 years, but continued moderate demand in years 4-6
Single-Family Detached	*	*	SFD is supported by the market for this area but is a poor fit with town center-like projects
<b>Non-Residential</b>			
			Density: aim for minimum .25 FAR, maybe higher
Professional Storefront Office (including potentially live/work creative space)	8,000 s.f	12,000 s.f	Demand growth for professional/technical services and health/medical clinics (including dental, chiropractic, physical therapy, etc.) could support a smaller office building, but more likely to be part of mix for storefront-type space
Fitness, Yoga, Jujitsu or Dance or similar studio space	5,000 s.f	7,000 s.f	
Dining & Drinking	5,000 s.f.	10,000 s.f	Ideal anchor would be spin-off of local major restaurant in need of expansion
Grocery, Food & Beverage	15,000 s.f	25,000 s.f	Natural Grocer, Trader Joe's or similar smaller format market. Independent meat market or similar would also be excellent for establishing local flavor
Specialty/Art Cinema, specialty indoor sport (basketball, archery, shooting, ??)	5,000 s.f	10,000 s.f.	Difficult to predict. Need motivated local tenant types to drive brainstorming (may need special credit/subsidy to pencil)
Misc. Retail, Health & Beauty, General Merchandise	10,000 s.f.	15,000 s.f.	

Source: Leland Consulting Group

## SITE ANALYSIS / MARKET COMPETITIVENESS SUMMARY

Category	Subject Evaluation	Site Notes
<p><b>Proximity to Employment</b></p> <p>Convenience to a variety of employment options is important for residential development.</p> <p>Dining and certain convenience retail developments draw a portion of demand from daytime (typically office) employment</p>	<p>★★★★★ very strong ★★★★ strong ★★★ adequate ★★ fair ★ weak</p> <p>★★★★★</p> <p>The subject property is very convenient to a number of major employers lying a short distance to the west and is reasonably convenient to major employment clusters in Urbandale and West Des Moines</p>	<p>Physical proximity to Downtown Des Moines, a major employment center, is good, but suffers from poor north-south roadway capacity south of Johnston</p>
<p><b>Proximity to Households</b></p> <p>Being near concentrations of household spending power is a key asset for retail sites. Suburban neighborhood retail centers need sufficient rooftops within 2-3 miles, while big box and regional centers draw from 3 to 5 miles and often beyond.</p>	<p>★★★★ 1/2</p> <p>Spending power and projected household growth are both very strong in Johnston, but area residential development is at typically low suburban densities (and constrained by land-intensive ag/R&amp;D uses and both Beaver Creek and Des Moines River floodplains).</p>	<p>Both growth and affluence are highest to the north and west of the study area and generally decline moving towards Johnston's eastern and southern borders</p>
<p><b>Proximity to Shopping, Dining, Schools</b></p> <p>Prospective residential renters and homebuyers desire retail amenities and quality schools within a convenient drive</p>	<p>★★★★★</p> <p>Johnston's schools have an excellent reputation in the region and are an asset for residential developers. Retail and dining options on Merle Hay Road have improved in recent years south of the subject property, but the overall quality of retail serving northwest Johnston is somewhat lacking.</p>	<p>Although Merle Hay Road is the nearest regional shopping center, convenient interstate access and superior tenant mix of the newer Jordan Creek Town Center in West Des Moines draws spending from Johnston households</p>
<p><b>Visibility</b></p> <p>Visibility from major roads and highways can add continual advertising value for both retail and office properties, boosting name recognition and wayfinding. (Distinctive signage and architecture can be an important complement)</p>	<p>★★★★</p> <p>Adequate visibility, generally limited to autos directly passing along Merle Hay Road or NW 62nd Avenue</p>	<p>As with much of the Des Moines area, tree cover and lack of major elevation changes is a limiting factor for visual prominence, especially for non-highway sites.</p> <p>Visibility conditions are not favorable for major office development, but could support smaller-scale professional office space</p>

**SITE ANALYSIS / MARKET COMPETITIVENESS SUMMARY**

Category	Subject Evaluation	Site Notes
<p><b>Access</b></p> <p>Ease of access (mainly auto, but also transit and ped) is critical for retail developments and is generally desirable for prospective office and residential land uses (although should be balanced with some degree of privacy and safety for homes and apartments)</p>	<p>Very good local access for nearby residents, especially in Johnston</p> <p>Saylorville Lake is a major impediment to vehicular access to the north of the site, while the Des Moines River basin constrains access (and development density) to the east.</p> <p>North-south access is generally good along Merle Hay Road south of the site until Douglas Avenue, then degrades rapidly south into Des Moines</p>	<p>Access conditions strongly favor neighborhood (grocery-anchored) scale as an upper limit to retain intensity for the subject.</p> <p>Access is generally well-suited to low and medium-density residential land uses, but would be somewhat inconvenient choice for downtown employees</p>
<p><b>Traffic</b></p> <p>High automobile traffic is generally considered desirable for retail (within limits) but typically avoided by residential developments. Some office tenants (and notably, consumer banks) seek out high-traffic locations to boost advertising/signage benefits</p>	<p>Traffic along Merle Hay Road is highest near its intersection with I-80, (~32,000 ADT) and decline steadily moving northward towards the subject intersection (~16,000 ADT). East-west traffic is just under half that along NW 62nd Avenue (with peaks due to the three nearby schools)</p>	<p>Volumes are generally supportive of neighborhood scale retail, at least on Merle Hay Road, without rising to a nuisance level for potential residential development.</p> <p>Traffic could, of course, increase somewhat from development on the site itself.</p>
<p><b>Neighboring</b></p> <p>Land use compatibility is important to all development types. Retail generally prefers proximity to other retail (or similar activity generators), while lower-density residential requires a buffer from more intense land uses</p>	<p>The existing immediate environs has a mix of generally low-to-medium-intensity land uses, including City Hall, low density residential, senior apartments, free-standing/pad retailers, a consumer bank, and other lower density service establishments.</p> <p>The high school and middle school lie just west of the subject property while an elementary school is just to the east, all on NW 62nd Avenue. A large preschool lies to the southeast. A retirement center and hospice are two blocks southwest of the subject.</p>	<p>The widely-varied mix of land uses within the study area and immediate vicinity detract somewhat from a coherent sense of purpose or identity for the area. Given the fractured nature of the property ownership, this issue is not easily addressed, suggesting a possible benefit for City-led assembly.</p>
<p><b>Site</b></p> <p>Aesthetic aspects such as natural landscape, views to and from the site, as well as streetscape and other urban architectural amenities can boost property value and market competitiveness across land uses.</p>	<p>The site is quite flat and lacks much in the way of streetscaping, natural features or other pedestrian-friendly amenities beyond a sidewalk and occasional tree plantings and some well-tended lawns</p>	<p>Very deep building setbacks and abundant surface parking detract from any sense of connection with the street. While typical of suburban Iowa, this land use pattern runs counter to any desired impressions of quaintness or small-town urban walkability.</p>

**Subject Evaluation**

★★★★★ very strong  
 ★★★★★ strong  
 ★★★☆☆ adequate  
 ★★☆☆☆ fair  
 ★☆☆☆☆ weak

★ ★ ★ 1/2

★ ★ ★

★ ★ ★ 1/2

★ ★ 1/2

## PROPERTY OWNER INPUT

Input from the surrounding property owners is vital to the creation of a planning document that will have ownership from the community. This involves establishing an interactive, inclusive, and transparent planning process involving key stakeholders including adjacent property owners.

Interview requests were sent to all property owners within the planning boundary. The consultant team was able to meet with 11 of the 19 individual property owners within the planning area. The map on the right shows the parcel owners we were able to meet with for the project. Some property owners did not respond to the request to meet and other declined. Present at the meeting were representatives from both Confluence and Leland Consulting. The meetings were held over several days in early December 2016.

The meetings were meant to start a dialogue with the local property owners in the study area. During the meetings, the planning project was introduced, property owner initial input was obtained, and their ideas were collected to help guide the planning process.

It was revealed during the meetings, that many of the existing businesses in the southwest corner of NW 62nd Avenue and Merle Hay Road were not actively selling their properties, but would be interested in selling for the right price.

Other concerns and comments brought up during the meeting surrounded the viability of increased commercial and retail businesses in the area. Property owners wondered if the area could support more than the current retail and commercial options.

There was some noted concern over the increased in multi-family residential developments in the area given the single-family neighborhoods that surround the study area.

It was noted by many in the meetings that the study area should be made more walkable. They specifically mentioned sidewalk improvements and trail connections.

One property owner suggested that a unifying development theme and design standard be created for the area.

There were several development types that were put forth by the property owners:

- Specialty Retail
- Grocery Stores
- Auto Parts Store
- Sporting Goods Store with bike and kayak rentals
- Fitness Center
- Entertainment venues such as micro-brewery or climbing wall
- An aquatic center, pool, water park, or splash pad
- Big box retail
- Nice sit-down restaurants
- Outdoor seating areas
- Food Trucks
- Daycare Centers
- Laundry mat
- Higher-end hotel and restaurant
- High end apartments
- Affordable/entry-level apartments
- Townhomes
- Senior Housing
- Strong civic component such as community center or learning center

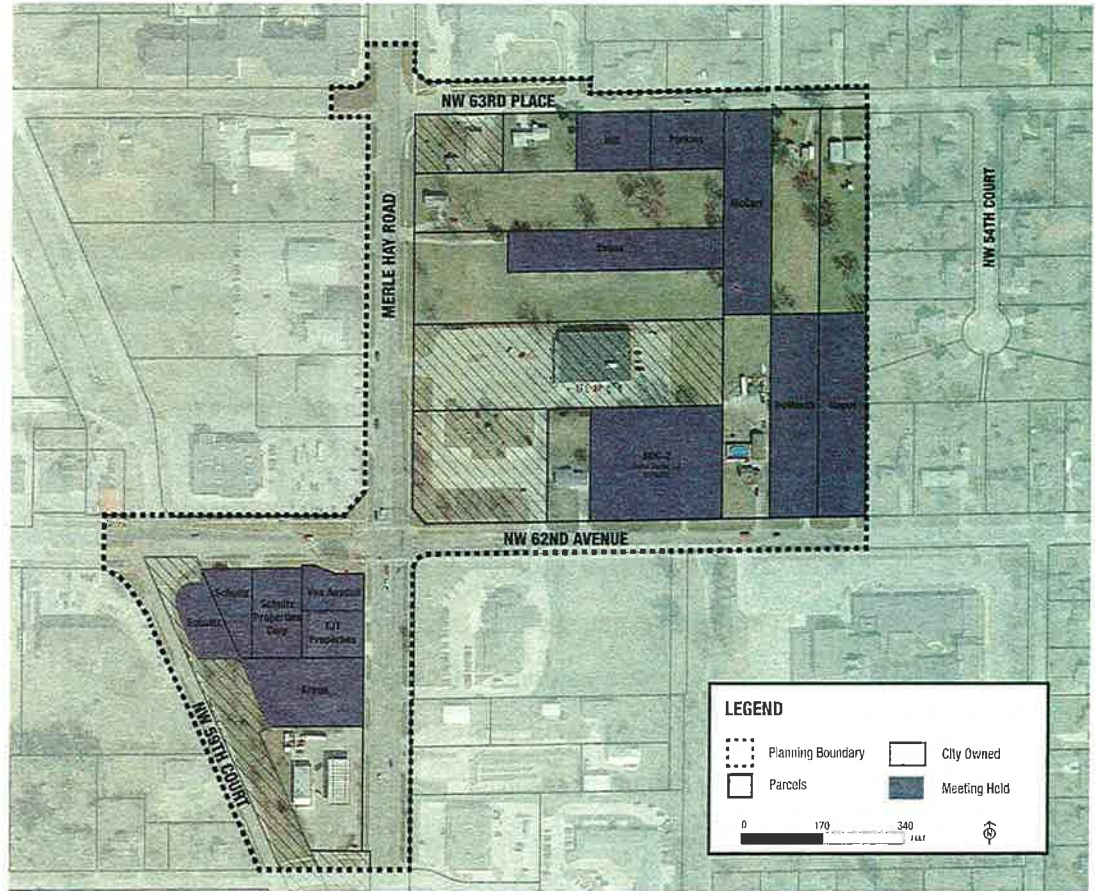


Figure X.X Property Owner Meetings

## JOINT WORKSHOP # 1

The first Joint Workshop with the City Council and the Planning and Zoning Commission was held on January 30, 2017. The purpose of this meeting was to further discussion amongst key decision makers, present preliminary analysis of the site and market conditions, and to gain feedback for the vision of the site.

### Goal Setting

It is vital to the master planning process to have a firm understanding of the goals of the project. Confluence had narrowed in on an overall goal to "Develop a plan to create a town center for the community." The attendees were then asked to confirm and/or expand on this project goal.

Generally, there was consensus on this project goal statement. By the end of the meeting, some members added a goal for the area to be walkable and a downtown for a community that has none. Others wanted to distinguish between the town center and a town center for Johnston as there are other projects in the work, particularly Gateway at 86th Street in Johnston, which may compete for the town center designation. Given the discussion, the overall goal was expanded to the following:

**“DEVELOP A CLEAR VISION FOR A WALKABLE, MIXED-USE TOWN CENTER WITH A COHESIVE SMALL TOWN FEEL”**

### Headline News

Following the Goal Setting exercise, attendees were asked to create a hypothetical news headline for the story discussing the completed town center project. This is meant to further help capture a shared vision for the site. Examples of headline news stories are provided on the right side of the page.

Throughout the presentation, attendees were encouraged to fill out a small questionnaire about the project. There were four questions and a space for generally comments. The four questions and received answers are summarized on the following page.

## HEADLINE NEWS

“City of Johnston opens community retail center”

“Johnston ‘thrive’ comes alive”

“Johnston creates new sculpture park...”

“New Johnston project is first of its kind in metro”

“New downtown in a 50-year-old city”

“The City of Johnston has done it again, come and see new and improved city center”

“Johnston unveils state of the art town center”

“Upscale Johnston town center opens with retail, entertainment, and arts”



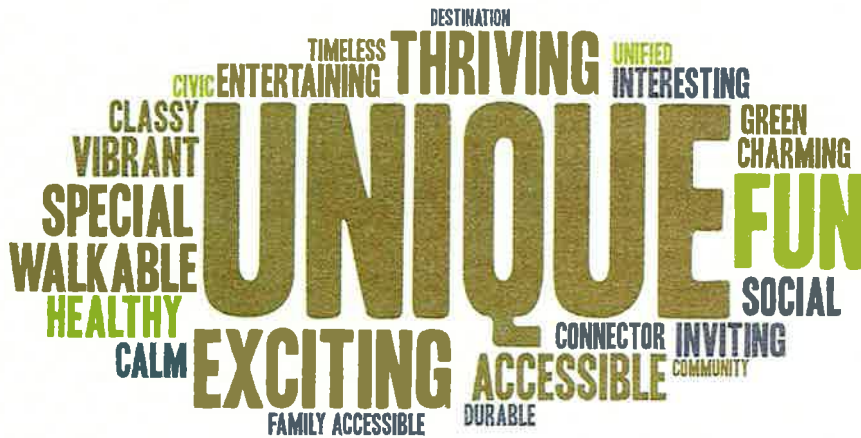


# QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

1. List five words that describe the area today:



2. List five words that describe how you'd like the area to be in the future:



## QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTIONS:



What type of uses, activities, or features are missing in this area?

- Daily retail
- Civic opportunities
- Gathering area
- Retail
- Aquatic center
- Spa
- Lamie/Gateway market
- Dog Park
- Health Market
- Boutique Hotel

- Gateway market
- Entertainment
- Retail
- Restaurants
- Specialty shops
- Fitness center
- Family focused
- YMCA type
- Specialty grocery

To what extent should we emphasize bicycle/pedestrian facilities in this area?

(7-8-6-8-10-10-6-5) Average: 7.5

**I** SITE ANALYSIS

**Site Analysis**

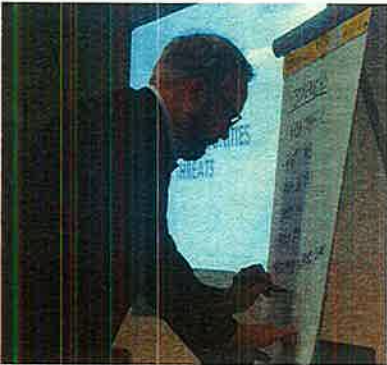
After the initial engagement exercises, an overview of the site analysis was provided by the consultants. The site analysis included information on the regional context of the study area and a review of the study area's land uses, assessed values, zoning, utility location, and auto/pedestrian circulation.

**Market Analysis**

A summary of the market analyses, which had been provided in full for their review earlier in the week, was provided. During this time, attendees were encouraged to ask questions or request clarification on the report to send back questions to the Leland Consulting Group.

**SWOT**

After the attendees listened to the site analysis and a market analysis, they were asked to partake in a strength, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats analysis, commonly referred to as SWOT analysis. These interactive exercises allow for an open discussion about the possibilities of the site and the constraints facing the project. It also gives an opportunity for the committee members to hear the perspectives of their peers.



**STRENGTHS  
WEAKNESSES  
OPPORTUNITIES  
THREATS**

**STRENGTHS**

- High traffic/major crossroad
- Flat land
- High Incomes
- Sandy soil
- Fairly open
- Proximity to employers / schools
- Engaged landowners
- Route to Saylorville
- Timing (new construction)
- Strong City leadership

**WEAKNESSES**

- Many property owners (some unwilling)
- Too far north of interstate
- Existing infrastructure
- Not on way to major destinations
- Low population density
- City hall relocation
- Retail competition
- Merle Hay Road perception

**OPPORTUNITIES**

- Retail dollars capture
- Unique destination
- Social gathering place
- Fun, interesting "draw"
- Civic use
- Complement vs. compete with existing uses
- Unifying branding
- Trail connections (regional)
- Mix of civic/retail/commercial
- Destination fitness/recreation center
- Splash pad / waterpark
- Demand for multi-family
- Charm/upscale appeal

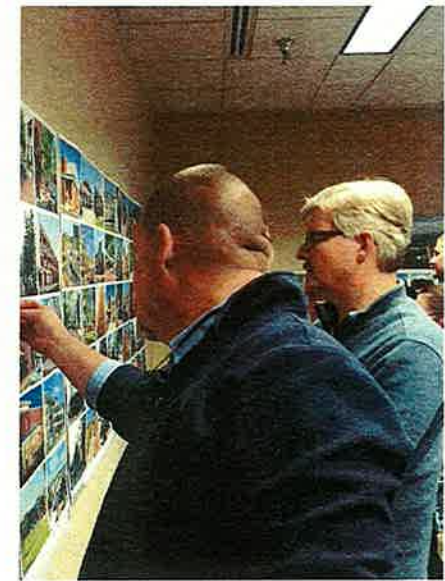
**THREATS**

- Development on 141 (Grimes)
- Cost of redevelopment
- Complications of zoning process
- Transitional zoning
- Economy (Market Cycle)
- Current owners
- City hall existing location
- Un-taxed property
- Dependence on major employers
- Impact on competition
- Gateway 86th St Development

Visual Preference

After the presentations, a visual preference exercise was made available to attendees. Four large posters were hung on the wall of the meeting space. Each poster had fifteen images of different town-center based land uses, streetscapes, and densities. Each City Council and Planning and Zoning Board Member was given eight green dots and eight red dots. The green dots represented the images that they did like and the red dots represented images they did not like or thought were inappropriate for the study area.

After each member had an opportunity to complete the visual preference exercise, the group reconvened to reassess the goals discussed at the beginning of the meeting. The group was asked to consider all the site analysis, market analysis, discussion from the group, and the visual preference exercise to see if exposure to any of that information changed their view of the project goal.



## CONCLUSIONS

### LIKES

- Programmable open space (Farmers Markets, Events, etc.)
- Plaza/Park Square
- Boutique scale retail
- Water features (fountains/splashpads)
- Pavilion overhead structures
- Outdoor restaurant seating
- 1-3 story building scale
- Alleys of trees
- Street Trees

### DISLIKES

- Residential (excluding mixed use)
- Banks
- Chain retail/restaurants
- Parking lots
- Buildings over 3 stories
- Traditional architectural styles
- Outlet Retail
- Offices



# LIKES

