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Community Indicators Report

The Community Indicators Report is a summary of current conditions and recent trends in Story County, based on the best available data. The purpose of these indicators is to enable informed choices about the future of the county. This report is included as an appendix to the C2C Plan so that it may be updated from time to time as new data becomes available. It is not a policy document.

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County History



The land that today is known as Story County was originally prairie, with the exception of some groves along the larger streams in the area. In 1846, the boundaries of Story County were established. The county has an area of 576 square miles.

The county was named after Joseph Story, a pre-eminent United States Supreme Court Justice, in 1853.

The first settlers in Story County came mainly from Indiana, New York, and Pennsylvania. Later, many Norwegians, Germans, and Danes came directly from overseas and inhabited the area. The first large population influx occurred during the 1850s.

Story County was not mentioned in the Federal Census in 1850, but figures from the State of Iowa put the population at 214 in 1852. By 1860, the population had increased to 4,501.

Three commissioners appointed by the Iowa Legislature selected the location of the county seat on June 27, 1853. The location was Nevada.

(Source: Story County, Iowa website)

About the Data

These indicators utilize a mixture of local, County, State, and Federal data sources. The U.S. Census has historically been a key source of data for many community indicators. Much of the information previously collected by the decennial U.S. Census is now collected only by the American Community Survey (ACS). The ACS is an ongoing survey that collects sample data every year and reports estimates of population and housing characteristics. For communities smaller than 20,000 people, the best available estimates are reported as rolling averages over 5-year periods – they indicate average conditions over the reporting period rather than a snapshot of a single point of time.

Because the ACS estimates are based on a sample of the population, they include some error. The margin of error is reported for each estimate, and is an indication of how reliable the estimate is. As a general rule, the ACS data is quite reliable at the state level, generally reliable at the county level, and less reliable at the municipal level. The margin of error makes the data much more difficult to interpret.

The second important note when using ACS estimates is that they cannot be compared to decennial census data because they are measured in different ways. While some of the tables in this report show both decennial census data and ACS data, caution should be used when trying to draw conclusions about trends by comparing the two sets of numbers.

	Village of Malibu		Chevrolet County		
	No.	Per	No.	Per	
1980	124	2.2	79,564	5.0	← Census data
1990	138	3.4	100,601	6.0	
2000	145	10	145,452	7.0	
Avg. 2005-2009	378		253,053		← ACS data

↑ error exceeds 10% ↑ error less than 10%

This report is a summary of current conditions and recent trends in Story County, based on the best available data. The purpose of these indicators is to enable informed choices about the future of the county.



Population Trends

From 1990 to 2020, Story County’s population grew by 32.7%, from 74,252 to 98,537. This equates to a 0.99% average annual growth rate. Between the 2010 and 2020 Census counts, the county maintained this annual rate and experienced a 10% growth rate for the decade.

For comparison, from 2010 to 2020, the Des Moines, Ames, West Des Moines Metropolitan Statistical Area (Polk, Dallas, Warren, Jasper, Madison, Guthrie, Boone, and Story Counties) experienced a 14.2% average growth rate. Dallas County’s growth rate was 50.7%, Polk’s was 14.3%, and Warren’s was 13.4%. Statewide, Story County saw the fifth highest overall growth rate after these other counties and Johnson County (16.8%). Overall, the State of Iowa’s percent change in population was 4.7%.

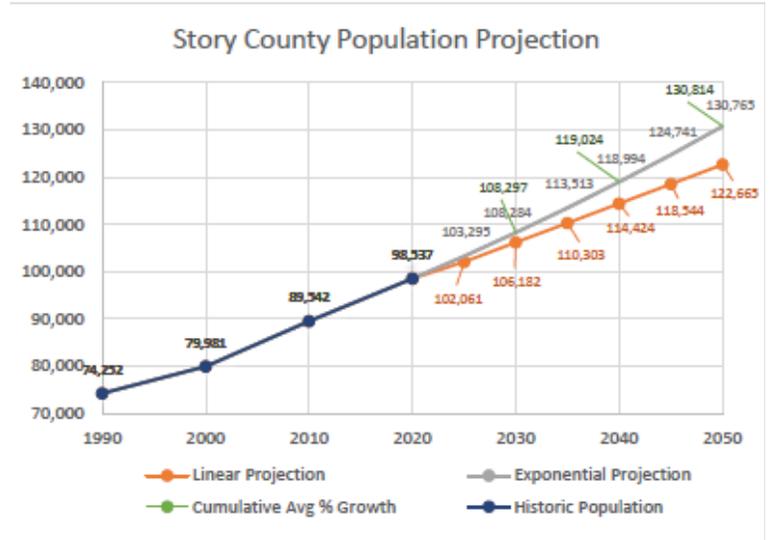
Taking these growth trends into account, Story County can expect around 10,000 new residents by 2030, bringing the total population between 106,000 and 108,000 people. By 2050, Story County will eclipse 130,000 residents.

Growth has not been uniform across all Story County cities or unincorporated areas. The areas that were the main contributors to the county’s growth from 2010-2020 are Ames, Huxley, and the unincorporated areas. Gilbert also saw a strong growth rate from 2010 to 2020 (11.9%) but a smaller numeric increase due to its size. Ames and Huxley saw rates of 12.7% and 27.9%, respectively.

From 2010 to 2020, the majority (eight) municipalities saw no increase or a decrease in population. However, of the 15 municipalities within Story County, 13 have experienced population growth since 1990. Only Zearing and the portion of Sheldahl within Story County have lost population since 1990.

POPULATION TRENDS AND PROJECTIONS

Source: 1990 – 2020 Decennial Census



Source: 1990 – 2020 Decennial Census

MUNICIPAL POPULATION TRENDS, 1990-2010

Source: US Census

Municipal Population Trends					Numeric Change 2010-2020	% Change 2010-2020
	1990	2000	2010	2020		
Sheldahl (part)	171	158	156	135	-21	-13.5%
Maxwell	788	807	920	859	-61	-6.6%
Zearing	614	617	554	528	-26	-4.7%
Colo	771	868	876	845	-31	-3.5%
Story City	2,959	3,228	3,431	3,352	-79	-2.3%
Kelley	246	300	309	304	-5	-1.6%
Cambridge	714	819	827	827	0	0.0%
Collins	455	499	495	495	0	0.0%
Nevada	6,009	6,658	6,798	6,925	127	1.9%
Slater	1,268	1,306	1,489	1,543	54	3.6%
Unincorporated	9,060	9,045	8,706	9,127	421	4.8%
McCallsburg	292	318	333	353	20	6.0%
Roland	1,035	1,324	1,284	1,362	78	6.1%
Gilbert	796	987	1,082	1,211	129	11.9%
Ames	47,198	50,731	58,965	66,427	7462	12.7%
Huxley	2,047	2,316	3,317	4,244	927	27.9%
County Total	74,252	79,981	89,542	98,537	23.2%	10.0%

Unincorporated Growth

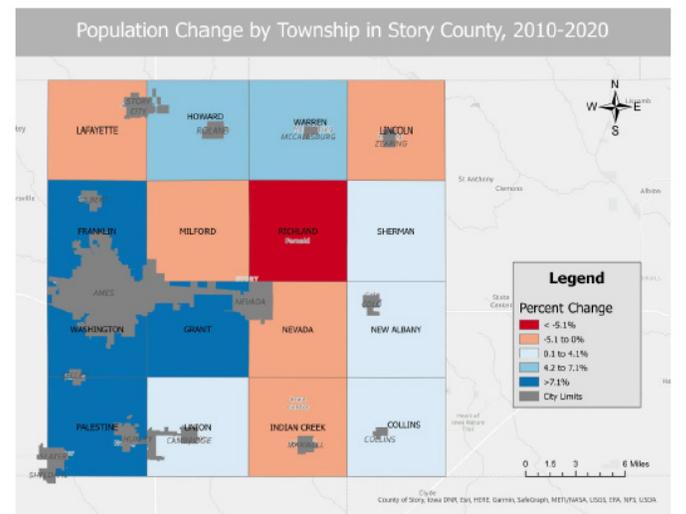
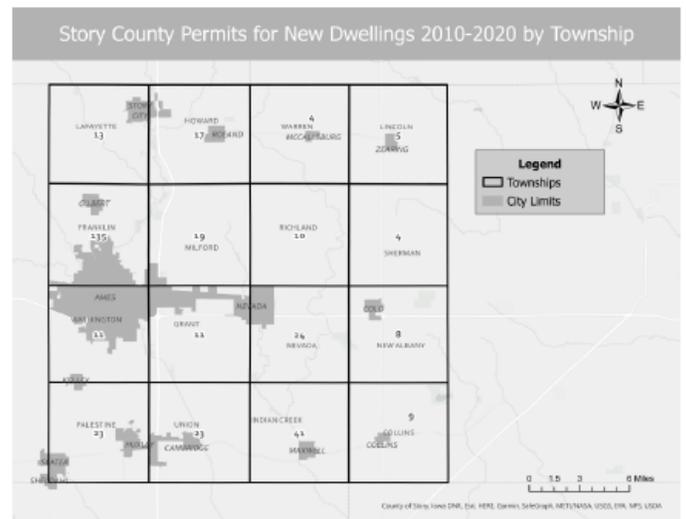
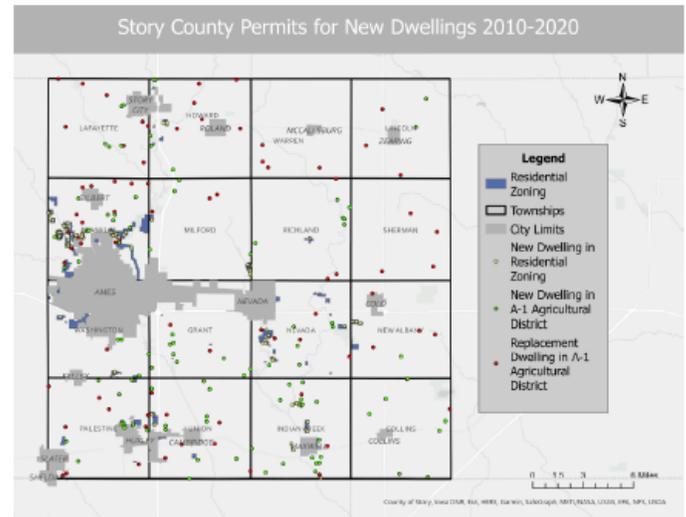
The unincorporated areas of Story County gained an additional 421 people from 2010 to 2020, the third-highest numeric increase when compared to Story County’s cities. Permit data from the time period shows 357 new houses were constructed. Assuming an average household size of 2.62 based on Decennial Census Data, this should have resulted in a population increase closer to 935 people. Accounting for a portion of this trend, approximately 100 homes were annexed by municipalities between 2010 and 2020. Of the 177 homes built in the A-1 Agricultural Zoning District, 80 were replacing existing dwellings. Removing these two factors from the permitting trends, a population increase of 491 people, closer to that shown by the Census, would be anticipated. Outmigration from the unincorporated area as residents age or move is also anticipated.

To better understand where this unincorporated growth occurred, the location of permits for new residential construction from 2010-2020 was mapped. Growth is concentrated in a few areas, with much of the unincorporated areas experiencing minimal growth or a decline in population.

Of the permits, 180 were issued in areas zoned residential (R-1, R-2, or A-R) indicating they are located in rural residential subdivisions. These rural residential areas are primarily located on the periphery of Ames.

Counts of permits for new dwellings from 2010-2020 by township show similar spatial trends. Franklin Township had 135 permits issued, the majority of permits issued for the time period. This township contains the area north of Ames where the majority of rural residential subdivisions developed during the time period. Only 28 of the permits in Franklin Township were on parcels zoned A-1 Agricultural. The remaining 107 permits were for dwellings in rural subdivisions. Indian Creek Township had 41 total permits issued, the next highest count after Franklin Township. Of these, 22 were in rural residential subdivisions. This township includes the City of Maxwell, which saw a decrease in population.

When combining both city and rural growth trends at the township level, the majority of growth in Story County is centered around Ames, Gilbert, and Huxley and the townships in which they are located.



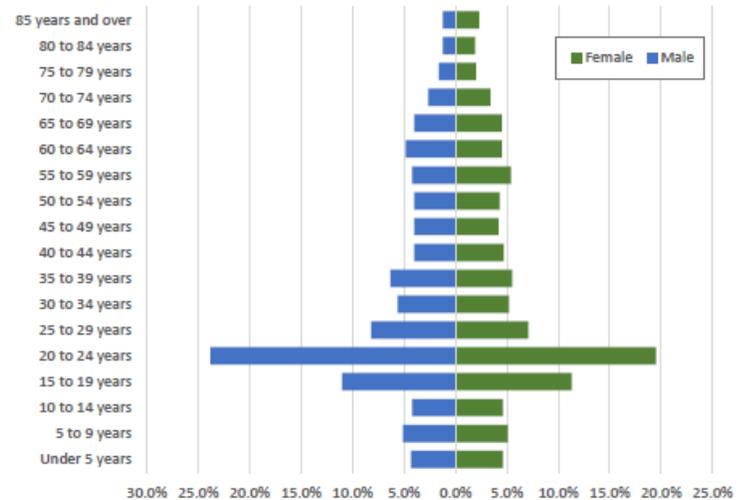


Age

In 2021, the median age in the county was 26.9. This is consistent with past data and lower than the statewide median of 38.3. The age distribution of the county remained fairly consistent with historic patterns, with a slight 2.3% increase in the population 65 and older since 2010. However, Story County continues to have a lower percentage of persons over 50 years old compared to the state, and the largest age group in the county is 20 to 24 years old. This is likely due to the presence of Iowa State University.

2021 POPULATION DISTRIBUTION BY AGE

Source: 2021 American Communities Survey



Race and Ethnicity

The 2020 Decennial Census shows that the diversity of race and ethnicity in Story County is similar to the State of Iowa as a whole—82% of the population in Story County is white, compared to 84% statewide. In 2010, 87% of the Story County population was white. The Asian population is slightly higher in Story County than statewide, while there is a lower proportion of County residents are Hispanic or Latino. However, in 2010 3% of the population in Story County was Hispanic or Latino. By 2020, this had increased to 5.1%.

POPULATION BY RACE AND ETHNICITY

Source: 2020 Decennial Census

	Story County		Iowa	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Race:				
White	81,046	82.25%	2,694,521	84.46%
Black or African American	3,019	3.06%	131,972	4.14%
American Indian and Alaska Native	324	0.33%	14,486	0.45%
Asian	5,461	5.54%	75,629	2.37%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	34	0.03%	5,758	0.18%
Some Other Race	2,641	2.68%	88,720	2.78%
Two or more races	6,012	6.10%	179,283	5.62%
Ethnicity:				
Hispanic or Latino	5,032	5.1%	215,986	6.77%
Not Hispanic or Latino	93,505	94.9%	2,974,383	93.23%
Total:	98,537	100%	3,190,369	100%

Reflective of the race and ethnicity trends, the majority of residents in Story County and the State of Iowa speak only English; however, 11.4% of Story County residents speak a language other than English. Compared to the state, a larger percentage of residents in Story County speak Asian and Pacific Island languages than statewide, while Spanish is spoken less frequently in the county than statewide.

LANGUAGES IN STORY COUNTY

Source: 2017-2021 American Communities Survey Five-Year Estimates

	Story County		Iowa	
	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent
Population 5 years and older	93,738		2,984,520	
Speak Only English	83,041	88.6%	2,729,246	91.4%
Speak a Language other than English	10,697	11.4%	255,274	8.6%
Spanish	1,884	2.0%	125,611	4.2%
Other Indo-European languages	2,640	2.8%	54,062	1.8%
Asian and Pacific Island	5,580	6.0%	50,668	1.7%
Other Languages	593	0.6%	24,933	0.8%
Population who speak English less than "very well"	3,869	4.1%	100,828	3.4%

Households and Families

According to the most recently available American Communities Survey data from the U.S. Census Bureau, Story County has an estimated 37,944 households, with an average household size of 2.29. As previously mentioned, the household size for the unincorporated areas is slightly higher (2.62 persons per household) than the countywide average according to calculations with the 2020 Census counts.

Families make up roughly 50% of all households in Story County as compared to 61.1% statewide. This lower percentage of families at the county level is likely due to the student and young adult population influence by Iowa State University, which is also reflected in the lower median age previously discussed. Similarly, Story County has fewer households with children under 18 years old or with one or more people over 65 years old than the statewide trend. Among the families with a child under 18 years old, 76.7% have at least one child of school age (between 6 to 17 years old).

Growth Projections

In 2020, Story County completed a countywide, comprehensive housing needs study. This study focused on housing needs in the county outside of Ames, providing clarity and detail beyond the general countywide housing trends outlined in the C2C Plan from 2015, which projected an increase of approximately 12,680 households between 2010 to 2030 or approximately 13,254 housing units, an increase of 36%. This projection included housing growth in the City of Ames.

Because Ames’s population size has a large influence on countywide data, looking at housing in Story County outside of Ames is an extremely helpful tool to inform County housing goals and objectives. The housing study projected housing needs for each community and unincorporated Story County (excluding Ames) by 2040. Huxley has the highest projected housing demand, with over 1,000 homes needed to meet future growth, while Nevada (514) and the unincorporated areas (327) are the next largest sources of demand. This translates to a need for 148 housing units to be constructed annually outside of Ames and within Story County. From 2015-2019, an average of 130 homes were built per year countywide (excluding Ames) with an average of just 115 home/year in 2018-2019. Construction activity will need to increase to close the gap between supply and projected demand.

HOUSEHOLDS AND FAMILIES

Source: 2017-2021 American Communities Survey Five-Year Estimates

	Story County	Iowa
Total Households	37,944	1,275,893
Average Household Size	2.29	2.42
Total Families	8,935	779,902
Average Family Size	2.90	3.02
Percentage of Family Households	49.9%	61.1%
Household Characteristics		
Households with one or more people under 18 years	21.9%	29.3%
Households with one or more people 65 year and over	23.1%	29.5%
Householder living alone	32.0%	29.8%
Living alone and 65 years and over	10.0%	12.3%
Children		
Households with children of householder under 18 years	7,912	347,850
Under 6 years only	23.3%	22.1%
Under 6 years and 6 to 17 years	21.6%	21.7%
6 to 17 years only	55.1%	56.2%

HOUSING UNITS PROJECTIONS, 2020-2040

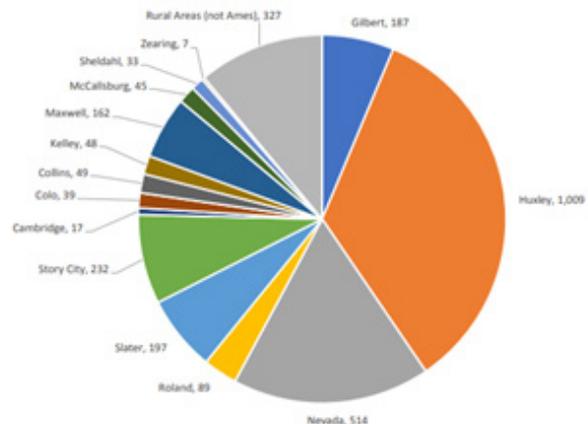
Source: RDG Planning and Design

Figure 4.4: Story County Housing Needs, excluding Ames

	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	Total
Population at End of Period	31,448	32,726	34,057	35,441	36,881	
Household Population at End of Period	31,030	32,291	33,603	34,969	36,390	
Average People per Household	2.40	2.40	2.40	2.39	2.38	
Household Demand at End of Period	12,929	13,455	14,001	14,647	15,322	
Projected Vacancy Rate	5.0%	5.5%	6.0%	6.3%	6.5%	
Unit Needs at End of Period	13,609	14,238	14,895	15,623	16,387	
Replacement Need (total lost units)		45	45	45	45	180
Cumulative Need During Period		673	702	773	809	2,958
Average Annual Construction		135	140	155	162	148

Source: RDG Planning & Design

Figure 4.5: 2020-2040 Housing Needs by City



Households refer to the people living in a household, while housing units refer to the structures in which people could live, vacant or not.

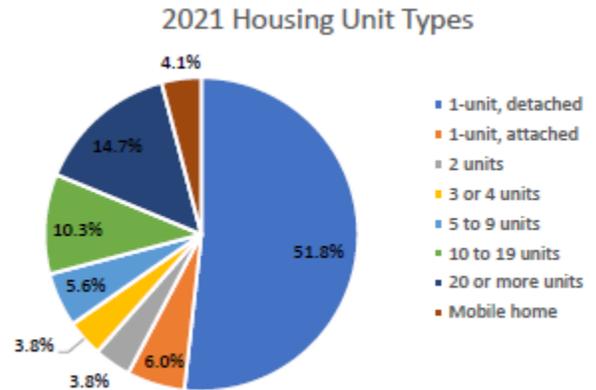
Occupancy and Housing Stock

Story County’s housing stock, including that in the City of Ames, remains predominantly single family homes, although the percentage of housing stock that is single-family detached homes fell from 58.5% in 2011 to 51.8% in 2021.

The 2017-2021 American Communities Survey Five Year Estimate occupancy data indicate that 55.8% of county residents live in owner-occupied housing, which is comparable with 2010 Census data. Homeowner vacancy is at 0.2% while rental vacancy has increased over the past decade to 7.1%. Typically, a healthy or natural vacancy rate for rentals is between 7-8% and 2% or less of owned units. The age of housing stock shows the percentage of homes built in each decade has slowly declined since 1990, reflecting the housing gap facing the county.

2021 HOUSING UNIT TYPES

Source: 2017-2021 American Communities Survey Five-Year Estimates



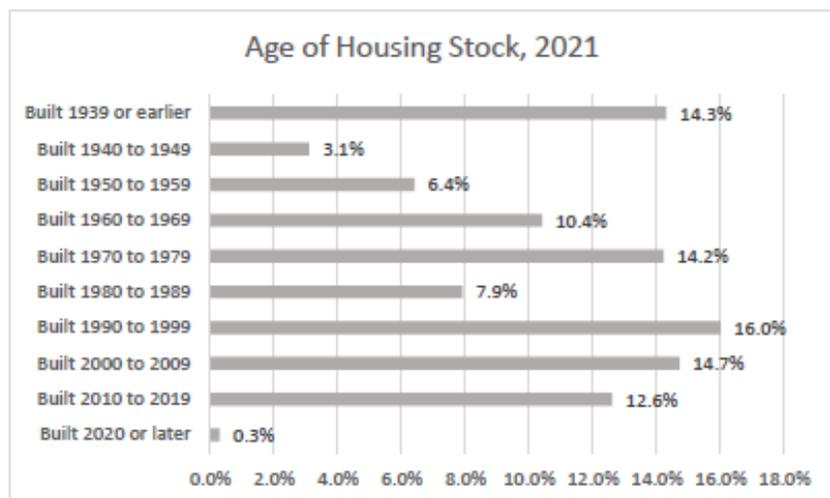
OCCUPANCY

Source: American Communities Survey Five-Year Estimates

Occupancy	2011-2015 Estimates	2015-2019 Estimates	2017-2021 Estimates
Total housing units	37,688	39,962	40,869
Occupied housing units	95.3%	94.6%	92.8%
Vacant housing units	4.7%	5.4%	7.2%
Homeowner vacancy rate	1.0%	0.5%	0.2%
Rental vacancy rate	1.7%	3.7%	7.1%
Owner-occupied	53.4%	53.5%	55.8%
Renter-occupied	46.6%	46.5%	44.2%

YEAR STRUCTURE BUILT, 2021

Source: 2017-2021 American Communities Survey Five-Year Estimates



Affordability and Value

Affordable housing opportunities are often provided through the sale of older housing units. Housing is generally considered “affordable” when the owner or renter’s monthly housing costs do not exceed 30% of their gross monthly income.

Median housing values for owner-occupied units in Story County increased by 28.3% over the past decade based on five-year American Communities Survey Estimates. Statewide, there was an increase of 24.5% in the median owner-occupied value. The 2016-2021 American Communities Survey Five-Year estimate for median owner-occupied unit in Story County is \$205,300 versus \$160,700 for the State of Iowa.

For renters, the median gross rent price in Story County increased by 32.6% from the five-year estimates for 2006-2011 to those for 2016-2021, which matches the increase seen statewide for the time period. Similar to home values, the median rental price in Story County is higher than in the state (\$947 vs \$845).

To see how these prices translate to affordability, the percentage of owners and renters who pay above 30% of their income for housing is examined, a threshold referred to as “cost-burden.” In 2011, 20.1% of owners were cost-burdened, while in 2021, 19.3% of owner-occupied units with a mortgage were cost-burdened. For renters, 53.9% were cost-burdened in 2011 and 52.2% were in 2021 (based on gross rent). The percentage of cost-burdened households have remained steady over the past decade, however, improvements in affordability, especially at certain income levels are needed.

GROSS RENT

Source: American Communities Survey Five-Year Estimates

Gross Rent	2006-2011	2016-2021
Less than \$500	12.4%	6.6%
\$500 to \$999	71.1%	50.2%
\$1,000 to \$1,499	13.4%	31.0%
\$1,500 or more	3.1%	12.3%
Median (dollars)	\$714	\$947

VALUE (FOR HOMES WITH MORTGAGES)

Source: American Communities Survey Five-Year Estimates

Value for Owner-Occupied Units	2006-2011	2016-2021
Less than \$50,000	6.4%	6.3%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	11.6%	6.0%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	27.0%	13.9%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	22.2%	21.6%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	21.8%	31.0%
\$300,000 to \$499,999	8.5%	17.9%
\$500,000 to \$999,999	2.1%	3.0%
\$1,000,000 or more	0.2%	0.3%
Median (dollars)	\$159,900	\$205,300

SELECTED MONTHLY OWNER COSTS;

Source: American Communities Survey Five-Year Estimates

Selected Monthly Owner Costs as Percentage of Income	2006-2011 Housing units with a mortgage	2016-2021 Housing units with a mortgage 2016-2021
Less than 20.0 percent	45.5%	54.4%
20.0 to 24.9 percent	21.7%	15.9%
25.0 to 29.9 percent	12.6%	10.4%
30.0 to 34.9 percent	7.8%	7.8%
35.0 percent or more	12.3%	11.5%

GROSS RENT AS PERCENTAGE OF INCOME

Source: American Communities Survey Five-Year Estimates

Gross Rent as a Percentage of Income	2006-2011	2016-2021
Less than 15.0 percent	11.0%	11.9%
15.0 to 19.9 percent	13.8%	12.4%
20.0 to 24.9 percent	11.5%	11.9%
25.0 to 29.9 percent	9.8%	11.6%
30.0 to 34.9 percent	6.9%	6.9%
35.0 percent or more	47.0%	45.3%



Story County Housing Needs Study - 2020

The 2020 Story County Housing Needs Study identified housing needs at various price points based on the distribution of income levels of Story County residents (excluding those in the City of Ames). This analysis revealed a gap in the existing housing stock for affordable options for households with an income of 0-50% of the Area Median Income (AMI). These homes are valued at under \$60,000 for homes and under \$500 for rentals. There are also high levels of unmet demand for households making above \$75,000—these homes are valued at \$200,000 and above or above \$1,500 in rent. The study indicated a large surplus of housing options for households with incomes between 50% and 140% of the AMI. This suggests housing needs are greatest at high and low price points to accommodate those making under 50% of the median income and above 140%.

Housing: A Place to Call Home

Story County, City of Ames, and Iowa State University sponsored a housing conference in March 2016. The event, organized by A Mid-Iowa Organizing Strategy (AMOS) and called "A Place to Call Home: Options for Housing Stability in Ames and Story County," focused on identifying and building support for long-term solutions to low-cost housing in the Ames area.

The agenda included the following topic areas:

"The Effects of Housing Instability on Ames and Story County"
Presentation of data for Ames/Story County on current situation

Summary: brief presentation based on recent data gathered and analyzed regarding Story County and its cities. It clearly points to issues facing the private sector, local governments, and renters and home-buyers with limited means, as they seek that a diversity of housing be available so people can live in their preferred community.

Best Practices of Local Housing Trust Funds: Why they are needed, what have they accomplished in Iowa?

Summary: an overview of trust funds and their impact on housing in Iowa and information regarding experiences with developing and implementing a local housing trust fund.

Tools and Resources in the Development of Affordable Housing: The Role of Developers.

Summary: tools and resources used to successfully build low-cost units across the state.

Housing Resources for Non-Profits

Summary: How can non-profit organizations leverage external financial resources to strengthen their ability to maintain or increase housing-related services for low-income persons and families?



Figure 2.23: Housing Affordability, Story County excluding Ames



Source: American Community Survey, 2014-2018; RDG Planning & Design

Innovative Solutions to Affordable Housing, Jobs, and Transportation in Urban and Rural Areas.

Summary: How can unique solutions be provided in both Ames and rural areas of Story County? What policies might allow low-income workers in particular to live closer to their work place? Are there reliable and inexpensive public or collective transport options that will complement private autos?

The identified goals for the conference included:

- Bring together housing stakeholders (builders and developers, realtors, not-for-profits, local governments, neighborhood associations, transportation entities serving Ames and Story County, community school districts, the Iowa State University community, and residents living this issue day-to-day) so that they may understand on another's concerns and allow all to take a more realistic approach to the question of housing instability in Story County.
- Educate people about housing instability in Ames and Story County and ways in which those working in a specific Story County community could acquire quality affordable housing there. This includes drawing on experiences with other localities, and assessing resources and circumstances.
- Catalyze actions that wide housing options for low-income workers and other disadvantaged members in Story County communities. The concept of a local Housing Trust Fund as an initial step toward dealing more broadly with local housing instability was proposed.

Commuting

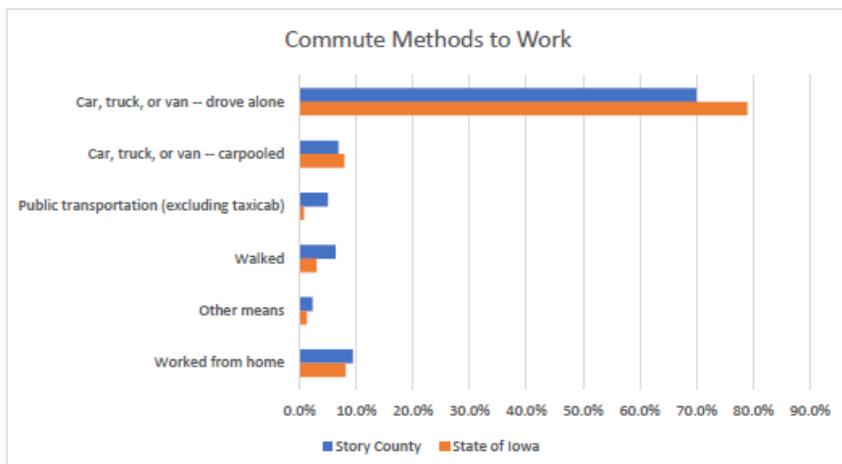
Commuting patterns have remained consistent over the past decade. Based on 2016-2021 American Communities Survey estimates, approximately 45.9% of residents have a commute under 15 minutes, while the mean commute time was 18.4 minutes. This is below the state average of 19.6 minutes.

Most Story County residents drive alone to work (70.0%) This percentage is down from 81.1% in 2013 (based on 2009-2013 American Communities Survey estimates). This change is reflected in an increase in the percentage of workers who work from home from (2.9% in 2013 to 9.4% in 2021), likely an effect of the COVID-19 pandemic. Compared to the state, Story County residents are also much more likely to use public transportation, walk, or use other means to get to work. This results in less workers commuting in a personal vehicle alone and more diversified commuting patterns.

More Story County residents (81.5%) stay in the County to work than is typical statewide (75.7%). Based on the 2019 Census OnTheMap tool, 13,091 commuters stay in the County for work. There are 12,996 out-commuters and 16,554 in-commuters to Story County. Looking at the distance from home to work by Census Block (for the primary job of an individual worker), over 50% of workers commute to a Census Block located less than 10 miles in any direction for work, with 70.5% commuting 24 or fewer miles. The majority of residents commuting 25-50 miles away commute south (likely to the Des Moines Metro area). Those commuting more than 50 miles mostly commute to the east (likely Marshalltown or Cedar Rapids).

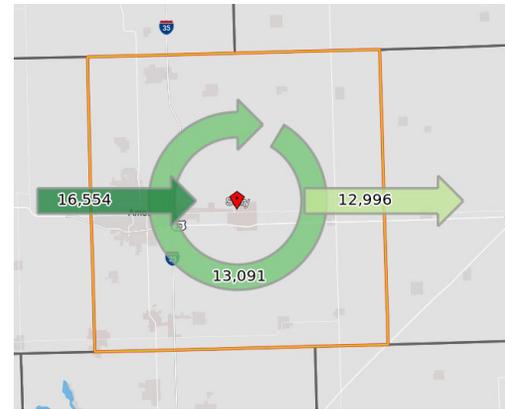
COMMUTING METHODS TO WORK

Source: American Communities Survey Five-Year Estimates 2016-2021



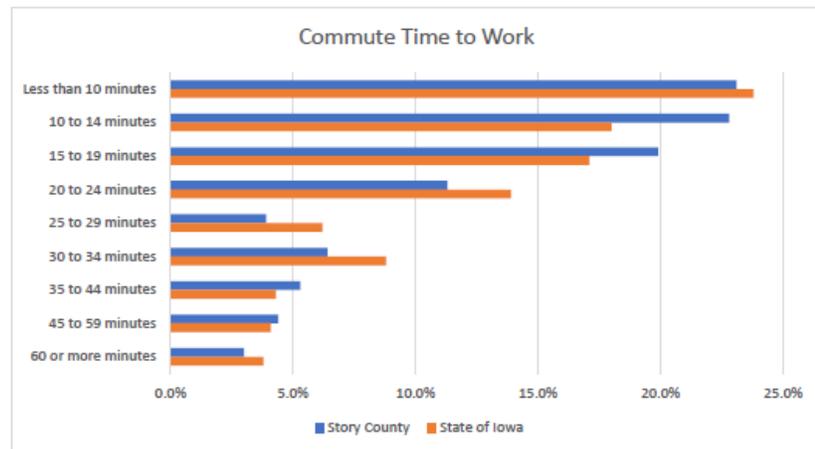
PATTERNS OF COMMUTING

Source: Census OnTheMap, 2019



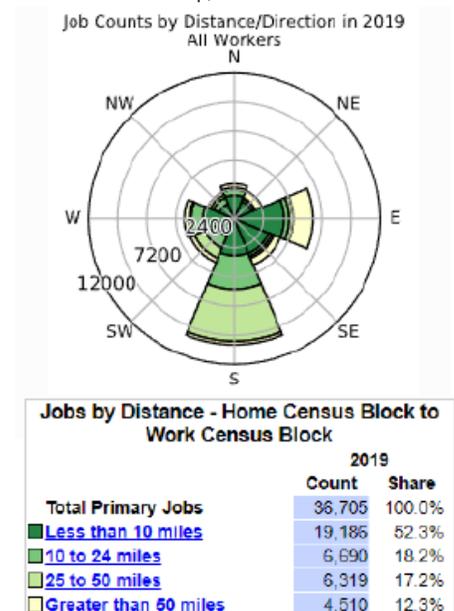
COMMUTING TIME TO WORK

Source: American Communities Survey Five-Year Estimates 2016-2021



JOB COUNTS BY DISTANCE/DIRECTION

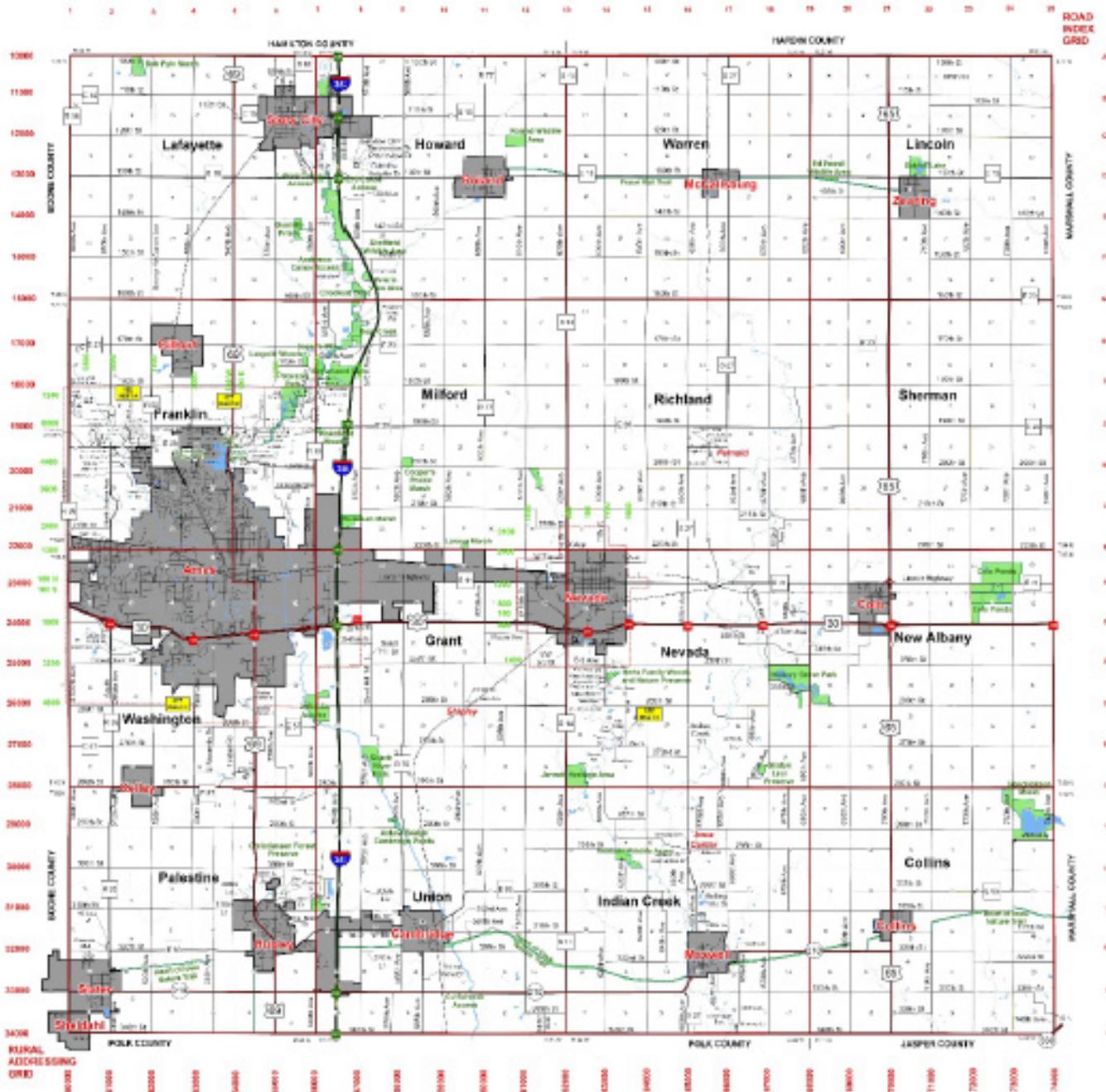
Source: Census OnTheMap, 2019





Story County Transportation Map

Story County Official Road Map, 2022



Major Modes of Travel

Road Classifications

All federal, state, county, and local roads are classified into categories under the “Roadway Functional Classification System” based upon the type of service they provide. In general, roadways with a higher functional classification should be designed with limited access (i.e. fewer driveways) and higher speed traffic.

Lincoln Highway

The Lincoln Highway was once the most famous road in America. It was the first successful transcontinental highway and served as the catalyst for the driving improvements then demanded by an increasingly mobile public. The Lincoln Highway was the first successful, all-weather, coast-to-coast, automobile highway. The Lincoln Highway bisects Story County and runs parallel to the north of Highway 30.

Jefferson Highway

The Jefferson Highway was organized in 1915, running in a north-south direction between New Orleans and Winnipeg. Colo is the location of the intersection of the Lincoln and Jefferson Highways where the L&J Service station is named in honor of the two highways.

Aviation Service

The James Herman Banning Ames Municipal Airport is a City-owned public use airport. The airport has two paved runways (01/19 and 13/31) which are 5,701 and 3,491 feet long, respectively. It is a high quality facility that currently sees light use, including recreational flights, flight training, refueling stopovers and some executive travel by large corporations with local facilities and ISU.

Truck Routes

Story County has six major roads:

- Interstate 35
- US Highway 30
- US Highway 65
- US Highway 69
- Iowa Highway 210
- Iowa Highway 330

Roadway Improvement Projects

Iowa’s Five Year Highway Improvement Program identifies projects by county and project limits. Below is a list of projects to be completed during the 2023-2028 period within Story County.

PLANNED ROAD IMPROVEMENTS

Source: Iowa Department of Transportation

Highway	Location	Year	Type of Work
30	South Skunk River 1.2 Miles West of I-35 (eastbound/westbound)	2025	New/Replacement Bridge
30	West Branch of Indian Creek 0.5 miles East of County Road S14 (westbound)	2028	Bridge Deck Overlay
30	610th Avenue Interchange at Nevada	2025	New Bridge, Grading and Paving
30	0.5 miles east of I-35 to East of 590th	2024	Paving
I-35	Story Overlook 3.6 miles north of E29 (southbound) (remove)	2027	Grading
I-35	North of County Road E57/260th Street to 0.6 miles north of US 30	2028	Grade and Pave
69	South of Jewel Drive to North of Bloomington Road in Ames	2024	Pavement Rehab
69	Walnut Creek 0.2 miles north of County Road E57	2024	Bridge Replacement

Railroad Service

Passenger rail is not directly available in Story County. The closest Amtrak station is located in Osceola, Iowa around 80 miles south of Story County. Three rail lines pass through Story County all controlled by the Union Pacific Railroad Company. The line commonly referred to by Union Pacific as the Overland Route runs east to west through Story County on its route from Chicago, Illinois to Oakland, California. The Overland Route passes through the Story County communities of Colo, Nevada, and Ames. The line commonly referred to by Union Pacific as the Spine Line runs north to south through Story County on its route from Minneapolis, Minnesota, and Kansas City, Missouri. The Spine Line passes through the Story County communities of McCallsburg, Nevada and Cambridge. The third line in Story County, whose origin is in Ames, passes through the Story County communities of Gilbert and Story City.

Transit Service

HIRTA (Heart of Iowa Regional Transit Agency) provides door - to - door transit services in the counties of Boone, Dallas, Jasper, Madison, Marion, Story and Warren. All rides are open to the general public, including persons with disabilities. There are two intercity bus services Jefferson Lines and Burlington Trailways in Story County. Des Moines Area Regional Transit (DART) offers a Rideshare carpool/vanpool commuter database.



Water Trail

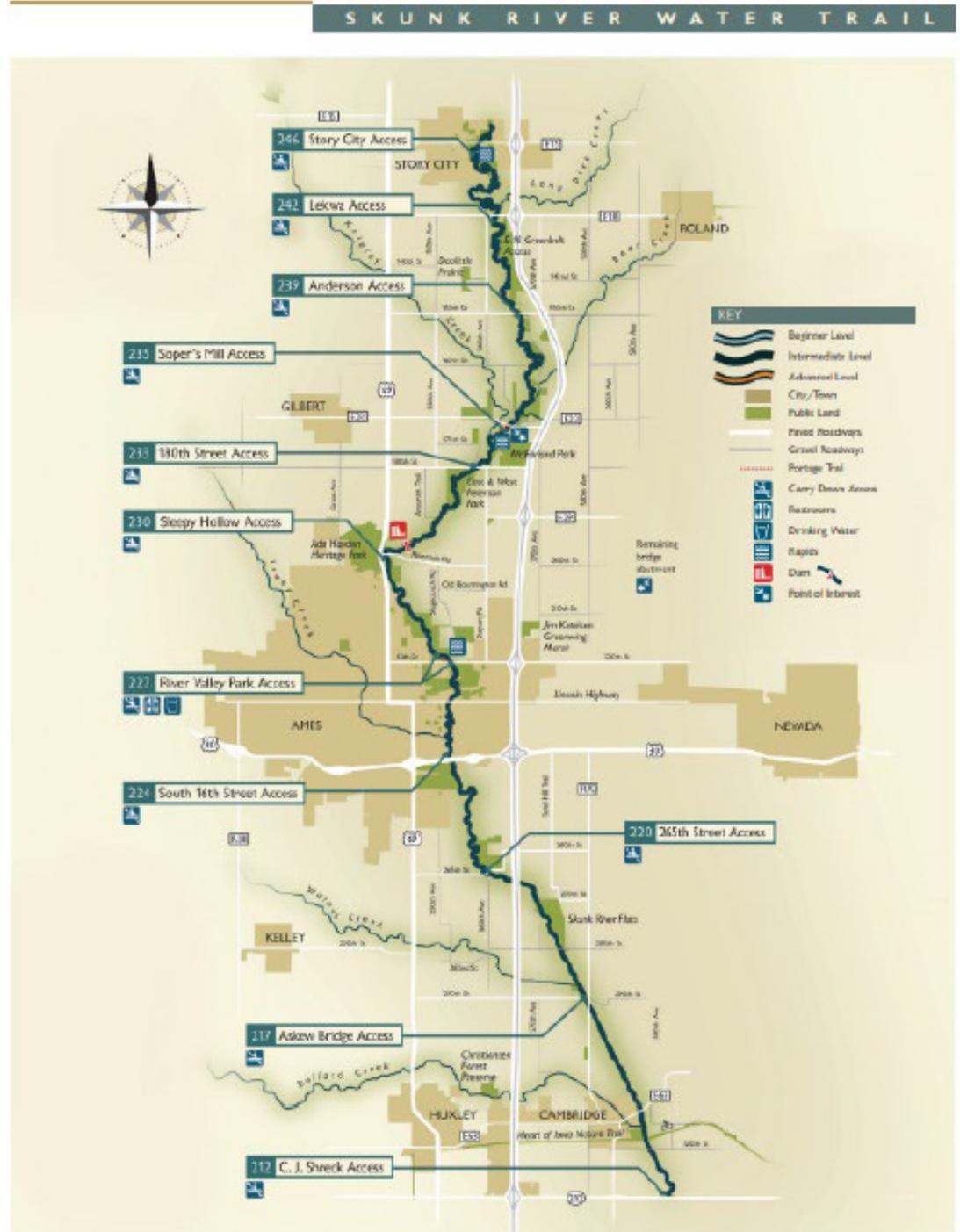
The National Water Trails System is a distinctive national network of exemplary water trails of local and regional significance that are cooperatively supported and sustained. The trail system has been established to protect and restore America’s rivers, shorelines and waterways and to increase access to outdoor recreation on shorelines and waterways.

Skunk River Water Trail

A part of the state’s 4th largest drainage basin, the South Skunk travels 193 miles from Northeast Hamilton County to the confluence with the North Skunk in Southeast Keokuk County. From the confluence, the Skunk River flows another 70 miles to the Mississippi River South of Burlington.

Story County Skunk River access points are located at:

- Story City Park #246
- Lekwa Access #242
- Anderson Access #239
- Soper’s Mill #235
- West Peterson Park #233
- Sleepy Hollow #230
- River Valley Park #227
- South 16th Street #224
- 265th Street #220
- Askew Bridge #217
- C.J. Shreck Access #212

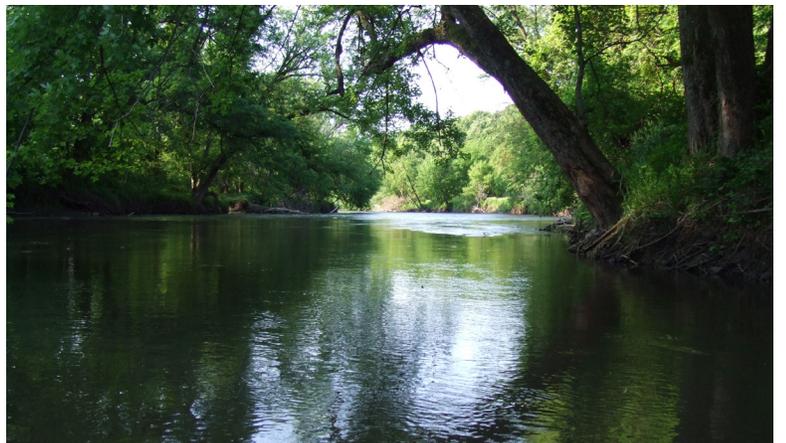


Pedestrian and Bike Network

Pedestrians and bicyclists use a combination of roadways, sidewalks, and off-street trails. Sidewalks are prevalent within the county's municipalities, but they are not found everywhere. In unincorporated areas sidewalks are rare.

There are several local and regional trails within Story County. The High Trestle Trail and Heart of Iowa Nature Trail are the two regional trails in Story County. The High Trestle Trail is a 25-mile trail that runs between Ankeny, on the outskirts of Des Moines, and Woodward. You can pick up the paved corridor in several places, but a great staging point is Slater. It is the trail's hinge, where you can swing south 12.2 miles toward Ankeny or aim west 12.7 miles to Woodward (or travel nearly 30 miles east on the Heart of Iowa Nature Trail).

The Heart of Iowa Nature Trail offers expansive views plus significant prairie remnants east of Slater, a pioneer cemetery and historical museum in Maxwell, heavily wooded tracts near Cambridge and Maxwell and two wetland areas west of Cambridge. A double track allows room for horses. Between Collins and Rhodes, trail users cross the Hoy Bridge, which is 212 feet long and 60 feet tall. This unique, massive concrete arch bridge was built in 1912 to accommodate a double railroad over Clear Creek.





Trail System Map



Education and Income

Education attainment data can provides insights into the existing labor force in Story County and identifies needs and opportunities for workforce training. The 2016-2021 American Communities Survey data estimate that 96.9% of residents over 25 years or older in Story County have at least a high school degree, which is 4.1% higher than the state average and a 1.4% improvement since 2013. Story County continues to have a significantly higher percent of adults with a bachelor's and graduate degrees were substantially higher or higher than the state. The county has also seen an increase of those with a Bachelor's degree or higher of 3.4% since 2013. Now, over 50% of the population 25 years and older has a Bachelor's degree.

These high education levels correlate with the median family income in the county, which is almost \$20,000 higher than the statewide family median (\$101,971 versus \$83,979, respectively). The median family income has grown 5.1% faster than the state median since 2013. The median household and per capita incomes remain slightly lower in Story County than statewide, likely due to the student and young workforce population surrounding Iowa State University. Similarly, the poverty level is higher among all people in Story County than statewide. However, the family poverty level of 5.6% is lower than the statewide, where 7.0% of Iowa families have an income below the poverty level. Poverty rates have declined slightly in Story County and the State of Iowa for both the general population and families since 2013, though goals should still focus on continuing to reduce poverty among Story County residents.

Note: The Census Bureau uses a set of income thresholds that vary by family size and composition to identify poverty levels. If the total income for a family or unrelated individual falls below the relevant poverty threshold, then the family or unrelated individual is classified as being "below the poverty level".

INCOME TRENDS

Source: American Communities Survey Five-Year Estimates 2016-2021

Income Trends	Story County	State of Iowa
Per Capita Income	\$33,211	\$34,817
Median Family Income	\$101,971	\$83,979
Median Household Income	\$62,578	\$65,429
Income below the poverty level		
<i>All People</i>	19.4%	11.0%
<i>Families</i>	5.6%	7.0%

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Source: American Communities Survey Five-Year Estimates 2016-2021

Educational Attainment, Population 25 and over	Story County	State of Iowa
Less than 9th grade	0.7%	2.8%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	2.5%	4.4%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	16.8%	30.6%
Some college, no degree	17.9%	20.5%
Associate's degree	11.1%	12.0%
Bachelor's degree	30.0%	20.0%
Graduate or professional degree	21.1%	9.7%
High school graduate or higher	96.9%	92.8%
Bachelor's degree or higher	51.1%	29.7%

Existing Labor Force

Based on the tables and graphs on the right the following can be said regarding the county's existing labor force:

- The labor force in Story County continues to show positive growth over the past decade.
- The county labor force grew by 4% since 2013, almost double the statewide average of 2.37% (based on 2009-2013 and 2016-2021 American Communities Survey estimates).
- Unemployment decreased in both Story County and the state, with a very low 1.9% unemployment rate according to most recent December 2022 data from Iowa Workforce Development.
- Story County has more workers in the government sector than statewide, likely due to employment opportunities at Iowa State University, Iowa Department of Transportation, and the United States Department of Agriculture. This percentage is consistent with past trends.
- The occupational distribution in Story County remains similar, with a majority of people employed in management, business, science, and art professions. Story County now has a slightly higher percentage of residents employed in service professions than statewide.
- The largest industry in Story County is most notably educational services and health and social assistance (35.9%), which is significantly higher than the state (24.2%). Industries such as manufacturing, retail trade, finance and insurance, and real estate and rental/leasing are lower than at the state level. The large percentage of educational, health, and social services is also likely a reflection of Iowa State University as a key source of county employment.

Note: A community's labor force includes all people over the age of 16 classified as employed or unemployed as well as members of the U.S. Armed Forces. Those not included in the labor force statistics include students, homemakers, retired workers, seasonal workers not currently looking for work, institutionalized people, and those doing only incidental unpaid family work.

EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Source: Iowa Workforce Development

Employment Status		
	Story County	State of Iowa
In Labor Force (ACS 2013-2019)	52,274	1,650,140
Unemployment Rate	6.2%	5.8%
In Labor Force (ACS 2016-2021)	54,367	1,689,338
Unemployment Rate*	1.9%	3.0%

*Latest Dec. 2022, Not seasonally adjusted

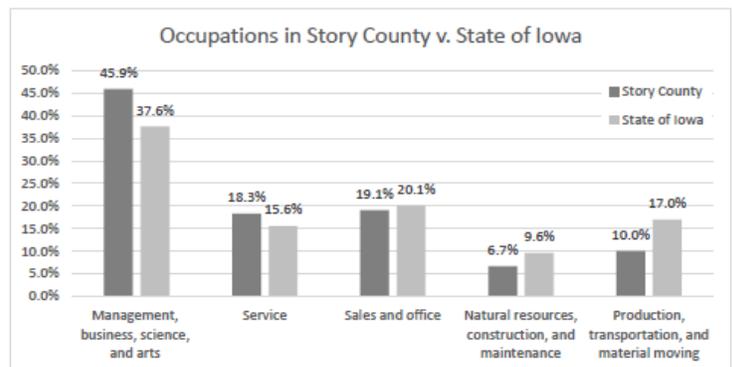
CLASS OF WORKER

Source: American Communities Survey Five-Year Estimates 2016-2021

Class of Worker		
	Story County	State of Iowa
Private wage and salary workers	65.5%	79.7%
Government workers	30.2%	13.8%
Self-employed in own not incorporated business workers	4.1%	6.4%
Unpaid family workers	0.2%	0.2%

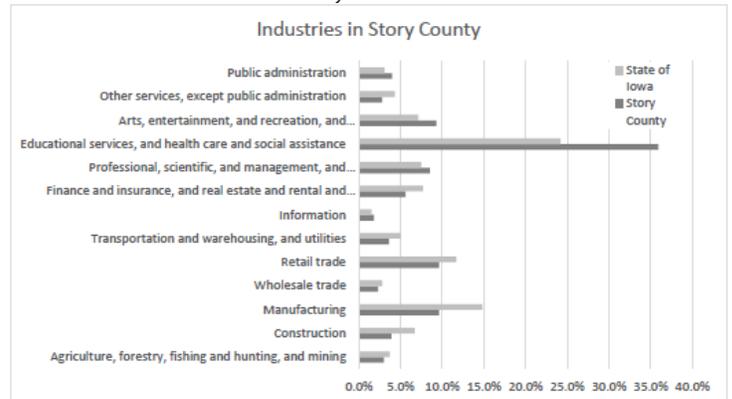
OCCUPATIONS IN STORY COUNTY VS. STATE OF IOWA

Source: American Communities Survey Five-Year Estimates 2016-2021

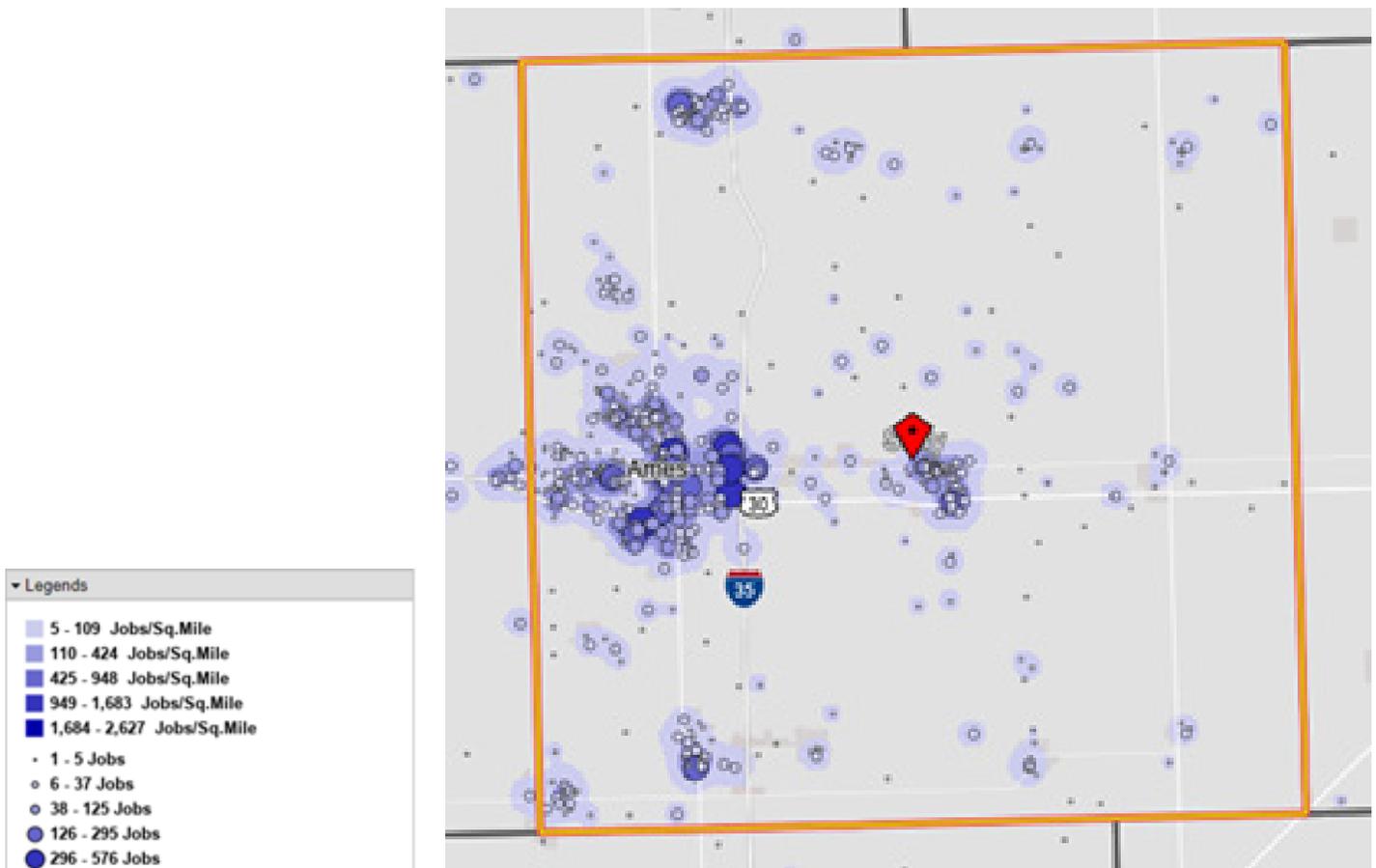


INDUSTRY

Source: American Communities Survey Five-Year Estimates 2016-2021



Finally, the 2019 Census on the Map tool shows employment clusters with jobs per square mile. Most clusters are in Ames, Huxley, and Story City with the clusters centering on industrial parks and other areas where large manufacturers have clustered (e.g. 13th Street and Dayton Avenue in Ames).



Source: Census OnTheMap, 2019



General Facilities

Health Care Facilities

The county's leading medical facility is Mary Greeley Medical Center, located in Ames. Mary Greeley is a 220-bed regional hospital that provides healthcare to the residents of a 13-county area in central Iowa, including Story, Boone, Marshall, Greene, Hamilton, Hardin, Sac, Calhoun, Wright, Carroll, Tama, Dallas and Polk. The hospital is home to inpatient and outpatient services that support a continuum of care for patients, including surgery, cancer care, cardiac care, diabetes and nutrition care, orthopedics, obstetrics and gynecology, gastroenterology, mental health services, palliative care, home health care, hospice care, rehabilitation and more.

The county is also home to Story City Municipal Hospital, which has 36 beds, located in Story City, and the Story County Hospital, which has 122 beds, located in Nevada.

Police and Emergency Facilities

Law enforcement in the county is provided by the Story County Sheriff and municipal police departments. Four municipalities have their own police department (Ames, Story City, Huxley and Nevada). Huxley's police department provides services for the City of Cambridge. The Story County Sheriff's Department, located in Nevada, provides law enforcement for the remaining communities and unincorporated areas.

Fire protection and emergency services are provided by twelve local fire departments: Ames, Cambridge, Colo, Huxley, Kelley, Maxwell, McCallsburg, Nevada, Roland, Story City, Gilbert, and Zearing.

Public Cemeteries

All fifteen municipalities have public cemetery facilities in Story County, as listed below:

- Ames
- Story City
- McCallsburg
- Nevada
- Colo
- Kelley
- Slater
- Huxley
- Cambridge
- Zearing
- Gilbert
- Sheldahl
- Collins
- Maxwell
- Roland

There are a number of other cemeteries located in unincorporated Story County managed by township trustees.

Library Facilities

Story County is home to twelve public libraries, located in Ames, Collins, Huxley, Maxwell, Roland, Story City, Cambridge, Colo, Nevada, Slater, and Zearing. Parks Library (ISU) and Ames Public Library are both located within Ames.

School Facilities

The county is served by 10 school districts (Ames Community School District, Ballard Community School District, Collins-Maxwell Community School District, Colo-Nesco Community School District, Gilbert Community School District, Nevada Community School District, United Community School District, West Marshall Community School District, North Polk Community School District and Roland-Story Community School District). In total, the county is home to 27 schools, that provide services to nearly 11,000 students.

Nearby Higher Education Facilities

In addition to four area trade, technical, and community schools, there are four higher education facilities with traditional four-year programs located within forty-five miles, as listed below.

- Iowa State University (Ames)
- University of Iowa Des Moines Campus (Des Moines)
- DMACC (Ankeny)
- Des Moines University (Des Moines)
- Drake University (Des Moines)
- Grandview University (Des Moines)
- Mercy College of Health Sciences (Des Moines)
- Faith Baptist Bible College and Theological Seminary (Ankeny)

Parks and Recreation

There are 1,500+ acres of parkland throughout Story county controlled by various entities. Hickory Grove Park is the largest and most popular of Story County’s parks. This 445-acre multiple-use recreational area southwest of Colo contains a 98-acre lake stocked with largemouth bass, bluegill, crappie, channel catfish, and grass carp. Ada Hayden Heritage Park in Ames is an other notable park, which is comprised of over 430 acres.



Hickory Grove Park
Source: www.traveliowa.com

PARKLAND NEEDS FORECAST, 2010-2030

Source: 2010 Census, MSA Predictions

	2010	2020	2030
Population	89,542	96,451	104,962
Demand (6 acres / 1,000)	537	579	630
Demand (12 acres / 1,000)	1075	1157	1260
Total Supply	1523.59		
Surplus Deficit (6 acres / 1,000)	986.59	944.59	893.59

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) recommends 6-12 total acres of parks or recreation space per 1,000 people within a community. NRPA also defines park and open space types, including desirable size, service area, and total acres needed to service a community.

- Mini Parks - 2 acres or less in size, servicing 1/8 mile radius (0.25-0.5 acres / 1,000 residents)
- Neighborhood Playgrounds - 2-4 acres in size, servicing 1/4 mile radius (0.5-1.5 acres / 1,000)
- Neighborhood Parks - 2-10 acres in size, servicing 1/4 mile radius (1.0-2.0 acres/ 1,000)
- Community Play fields/Parks - 5 acres or more, servicing 1.0 mile radius (5-8 acres / 1,000)

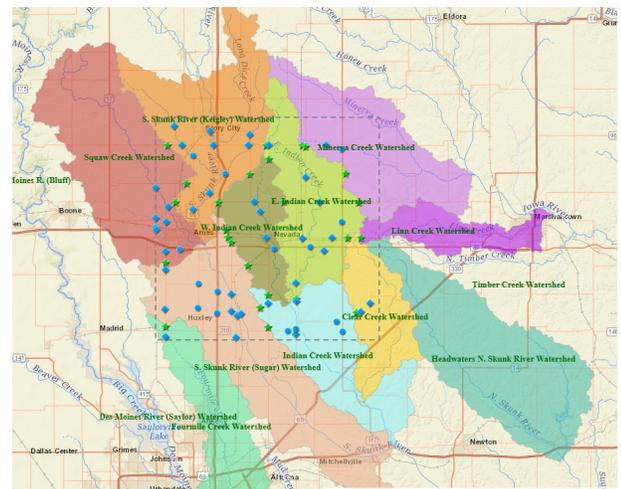
Utilities and Services

Wastewater Treatment

Wastewater is typically managed by municipal collection and treatment systems in each of the municipalities, and by private septic systems in the rest of the county.

Stormwater Management and Watersheds

In early 2017, the Board of Supervisors brought on a consulting firm to develop a countywide watershed assessment for Story County. By looking at watersheds on a smaller scale – technically, the Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC) 10 and 12 watershed levels – a comprehensive assessment that identifies watershed-specific goals and implementation strategies addressing education, outreach, and water quality improvement goals was developed. Story County is leading the state as the first county to look at watersheds at the county-wide level.





Story County has four watershed management plans. These plans and the county-wide assessment are available on the Story County website and summarized below:

Ioway Creek Watershed

Story County was part of a larger effort by the Ioway Creek Watershed Management Authority to develop a comprehensive watershed plan for the Ioway Creek Watershed and is a founding member of the Squaw Creek Watershed Management Authority.

Fourmile Creek Watershed

The town of Sheldahl and the southwestern tip of the county is part of the Fourmile Creek Watershed. Completed in 2014, the management plan is used to guide all watershed improvement efforts.

Headwaters of the South Skunk Watershed

Realizing how important the South Skunk River is to the public and wildlife, multiple partners came together to form the Headwaters of the South Skunk Watershed Management Authority. Late 2021 and throughout 2022, meetings with multiple stakeholders were held to produce a roadmap for addressing the most pressing water quality issues in the watershed.

Hickory Grove Watershed

Story County Conservation, in partnership with Iowa State University, and several agencies, local organizations and groups, including Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, USDA-NRCS, Story Soil and Water Conservation District, Prairie Rivers of Iowa RC&D, Iowa Learning Farms, and landowners and residents, created the Hickory Grove Lake Watershed Management Action plan. The action plan is aimed to enhance water quality, improve safety, and reduce bacteria at the beach at Hickory Grove Park.

Solid Waste and Recycling Facilities

Solid waste, yard waste, and recycling services are provided by differing contractors according to each municipality. The Arnold O. Chantland Resource Recovery Plant (RRP) located in Ames was the first municipally operated waste-to-energy facility in the nation and was built in 1975. The plant receives garbage/refuse from Ames and the surrounding communities in Story County through existing intergovernmental agreements.

Water Supply

Water supply for municipal county residents is provided through municipal well and distribution systems. Rural residents and businesses are served by private wells and rural water associations.

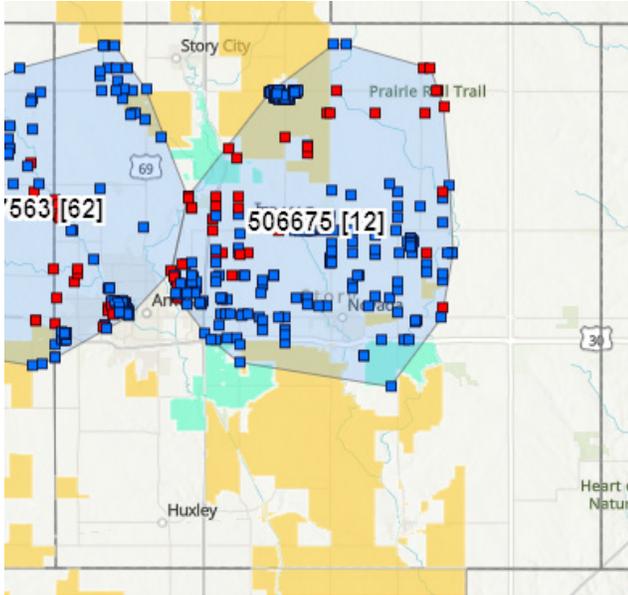
Telecommunications Facilities

Even prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Story County was aware of the ongoing need for greater broadband connectivity throughout the county. Dating back to 2014, when Story County became a Connect Iowa community, the county recognized the pivotal role technology plays in how businesses operate, how services are provided, and the degree to which our citizens need reliable internet access. Our Strategic Plan built on that work, stating that we will “Update and expand broadband connectivity needs assessment throughout Story County and explore options for expansion of services.” COVID-19 cemented our commitment and dedication to addressing these needs.

Story County staff worked with the Greater Des Moines Partnership (GDMP) to assess broadband needs in Story County and through the Central Iowa Region through a 2020 broadband needs study. There are several areas of the county where download and upload speeds do not provide broadband-level connections. The rurality of the unincorporated areas also poses a challenge for deploying fiber.

As a first step in fulfilling connectivity needs, the Story County Board of Supervisors used American Rescue Plan Act funding to match providers’ applications to the Office of the Chief Information Officer Notice of Funding Opportunity #006. Colo Telephone, Huxley Communications, and Stratford Regional Telephone (local telephone cooperatives) received \$65,000 in matching funds from the County.

Story County also has two designated Broadband Intervention Zones. Portions of north central and northwestern Story County are two of 96 Broadband Intervention Zones statewide.



Iowa Broadband Intervention Zones, Story County 2023

Historic Resources

National Historic Landmarks on the National Register

Story County has one landmark on the National Historic Register. The Knapp-Wilson house is located on the Iowa State University campus in Ames. The Farm House, as it has always been known in Iowa, was built as the main building of the model farm which began in the middle of 648 acres about 30 miles north of Des Moines, and became Iowa State University.

Work was started on the house a year after a bill for the organization of a state agricultural college was passed in 1858. The kitchen wing was begun first, in 1860, and the main portion of the house in 1861. The house was substantially completed in the spring of 1864, the verandah and several outbuildings were built in 1865 and the annual report of the college that year described the building as “finished except for painting the inside work.”



The Farm House, Iowa State University

National Register of Historic Places

The National Register is the official national list of historic properties in American worthy of preservation, maintained by the National Park Service. As of 2015, Story County has thirty-four national registered historic places.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Source: National Park Service

Site	Location
Agriculture Hall	Ames
Alumni Hall	Ames
Ames High School	Ames
Bandshell Park Historic District	Ames
Budd, Prof, J.L., Sarah M., and Etta Budd, House	Ames
Christian Petersen Courtyard Sculptures, and Dairy Industry Bldg	Ames
Colonials Club House	Ames
Delta Upsilon Chapter House	Ames
Engineering Hall	Ames
Iowa Beta Chapter of Sigma Phi Epsilon	Ames
Knapp-Wilson House	Ames
MacDonald, Gilmour B. and Edith Craig, House	Ames
Marston Water Tower	Ames
Morrill Hall	Ames
Municipal Building	Ames
Old Town Historic District	Ames
Pleasant Grove Community Church and Cemetery	Ames
Roosevelt School	Ames
Sigma Sigma-Delta Chi Fraternity House	Ames
Skunk River Bridge	Ames
Mulcahy Barn	Colo
Keigley Branch Bridge	Gilbert
Octagon Round Barn, Indian Creek Township	Iowa Center
Wood, William Kennison, House	Iowa Center
Calamus Creek Bridge	Maxwell
Briggs Terrace	Nevada
East Indian Creek Bridge	Nevada
Edwards-Swayze House	Nevada
Nevada Downtown Historic District	Nevada
Sheldahl First Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church	Sheldahl
Grand Auditorium and Hotel Block	Story City
Henryson, Henry T. and Emilie (Wiese), House	Story City
Herschel-Spillman Two-Row Portable Menagerie Carousel	Story City
Lincoln Township Mausoleum	Zearing



Historic Lincoln Highway Banner - Ames



Mulcahy Barn - Colo



Edwards-Swazy House - Nevada



Old Story County Courthouse and construction of existing Administration Building - Nevada



Marston Water Tower - Ames

COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

Existing Areas of Collaboration

Local Units of Government	Existing Cooperation Efforts
County and municipal governments	Law enforcement services and support by the Story County Sheriff’s Department, Story County Emergency Management Agency
Various combinations of municipal governments throughout the county	Fire, EMS services and animal control agreements
Story County, Nevada	28E Agreement
Story County and municipalities	TIF Funded Urban Renewal Projects, façade grants, Story County Economic Development Group
Various counties and municipalities	Watershed management plans – Ioway Creek, Four-Mile Creek, Headwaters of the South Skunk
Story County, municipalities, schools, Iowa State University	Multi-Jurisdictional Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan

Story County ASSET

The Story County ASSET (Analysis of Social Service Team) has existed in Story County since 1985. ASSET brings together five major funders of human services programs in a collaborative, volunteer-led effort to coordinate local planning, assess needs, evaluate the capabilities of agencies to provide programs, and recommend funding for programs. Members include:

- City of Ames
- Iowa State University Student Government
- Story County
- United Way of Story County



IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
GOVERNMENT OF THE STUDENT BODY



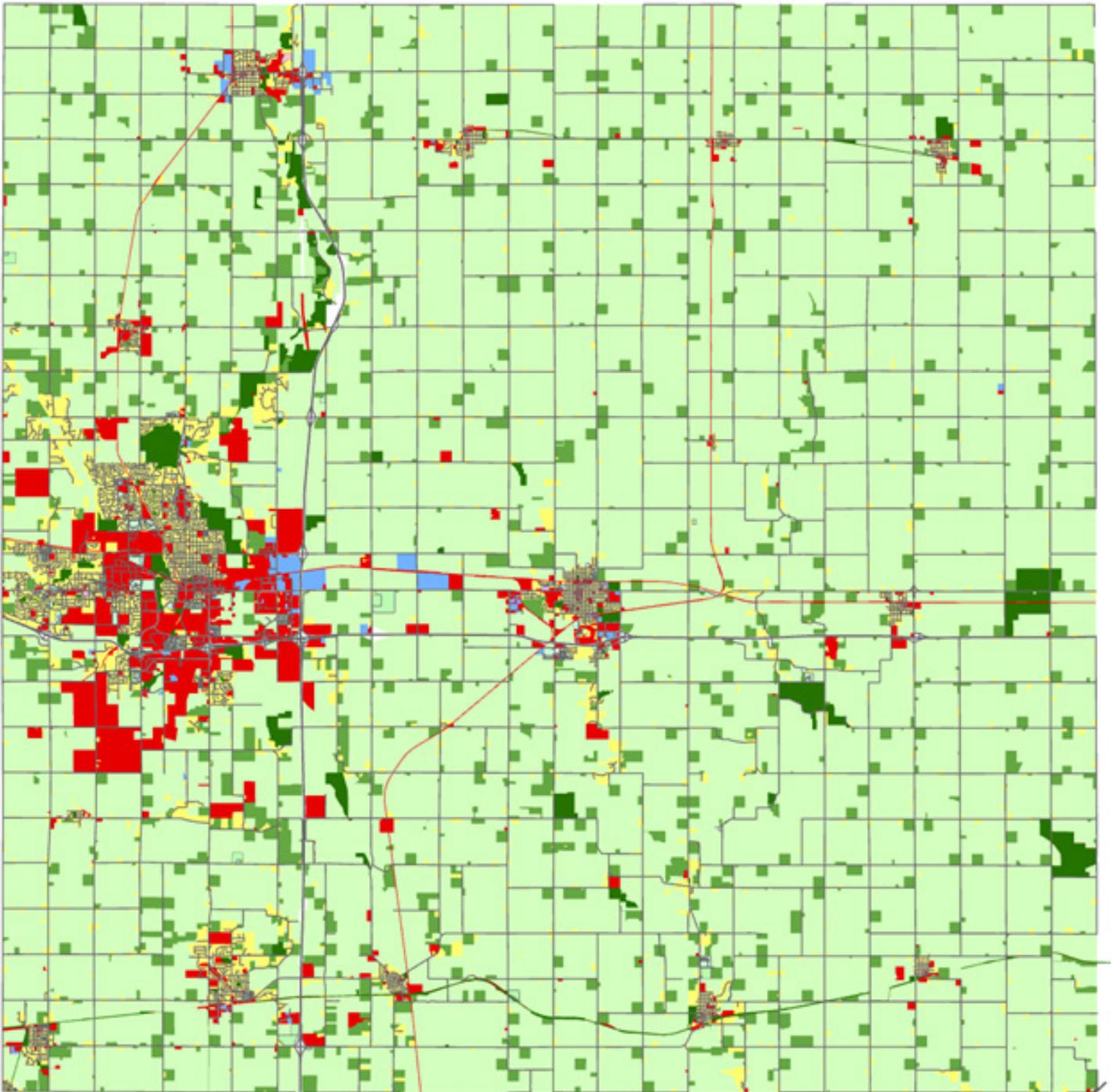


Potential Areas of Collaboration

- **Voluntary Assistance:** Communities can voluntarily agree to provide a service to neighbors because doing so makes economic sense and improves service levels.
- **Trading Services:** Communities could agree to exchange services, such as the use of different pieces of equipment, equipment for labor, or labor for labor.
- **Renting Equipment:** Communities could rent equipment to, or from, neighboring communities and other governmental units. Renting equipment can make sense for both communities – the community renting gets the use of equipment without having to buy it, and the community renting out the equipment earns income from the equipment rather than having it sit idle.
- **Contracting:** Communities can contract with another community or jurisdiction to provide a service.
- **Sharing Staff:** Communities can share staff with neighboring communities and other jurisdictions – both municipal employees and independently contracted professionals. They can share a building inspector, planner, engineer, zoning administrator, clerk, etc.
- **Consolidating Services:** Communities can agree with one or more other communities or the County to provide a service together.
- **Joint Use of a Facility:** Communities can share a public facility along with other jurisdictions. The facility could be jointly owned or one jurisdiction could rent space from another.
- **Special Purpose Districts:** Special purpose districts, such as park districts, are created to provide a particular service, unlike municipalities that provide many different types of services. Like municipalities, special purpose districts are separate and legally independent entities.
- **Joint Purchase and Ownership of Equipment:** Communities could agree with other jurisdictions to jointly purchase and own equipment such as pothole patching machines, mowers, rollers, snowplows, street sweepers, etc.
- **Cooperative Purchasing:** Cooperative purchasing, or procurement, is where jurisdictions purchase supplies and equipment together to gain more favorable prices.
- **Intergovernmental Agreements:** These can be proactive or reactive. There are three types of intergovernmental agreements that can be formed including general agreements, cooperative boundary agreements, and stipulations and orders.

Source: WIDOA Intergovernmental Cooperation Element Guide

Existing Land Uses



This map illustrates the type and location of the following land uses in Story County: agricultural, agricultural dwelling, commercial, industrial, parks and open space, residential, railroad, university, civic, and government owned.

This map provides context for the current state of Story County, and will serve as a base to be further analyzed in creating the Future Land Use Map and Plan for Story County.

Legend

- Property Class
- A
 - A, AD
 - C
 - I
 - R
 - Roads
 - Parks

