

City of Grand Island, NE
Blight and Substandard Study
Area #37
April 2023



PURPOSE OF THE BLIGHT AND SUBSTANDARD STUDY

The purpose of completing this Blight and Substandard study is to examine existing conditions within a specific part of Grand Island. This study has been commissioned by Phillip Beckett in order to analyze the possibility of declaring the area as blighted and substandard.

The City of Grand Island, when considering conditions of Blight and Substandard, will be looking at those issues and definitions provided for in the Nebraska Community Redevelopment Law as found in Chapter 18, Section 2104 of the Revised Nebraska State Statutes, as follows:

"The governing body of a city, to the greatest extent it deems to be feasible in carrying out the provisions of the Community Development Law, shall afford maximum opportunity, consistent with the sound needs of the city as a whole, to the rehabilitation or redevelopment of the community redevelopment area by private enterprises. The governing body of a city shall give consideration to this objective in exercising its powers under the Community Development Law, including the formulation of a workable program, the approval of community redevelopment plans consistent with the general plan for the development of the city, the exercise of its zoning powers, the enforcement of other laws, codes, and regulations, relating to the use of land and the use and occupancy of buildings and improvements, the disposition of any property acquired, and the providing of necessary public improvements."

The Nebraska Revised Statutes §18-2105 continues by granting authority to the governing body for formulation of a workable program; disaster assistance; effect. The statute reads,

"The governing body of a city or an authority at its direction for the purposes of the Community Development Law may formulate for the entire municipality a workable program for utilizing appropriate private and public resources to eliminate or prevent the development or spread of urban blight, to encourage needed urban rehabilitation, to provide for the redevelopment of substandard and blighted areas, or to undertake such of the aforesaid activities or other feasible municipal activities as may be suitably employed to achieve the objectives of such workable program. Such workable program may include, without limitation, provision for the prevention of the spread of blight into areas of the municipality which are free from blight through diligent enforcement of housing, zoning, and occupancy controls and standards; the rehabilitation or conservation of substandard and blighted areas or portions thereof by replanning, removing congestion, providing parks, playgrounds, and other public improvements by encouraging voluntary rehabilitation and by compelling the repair and rehabilitation of deteriorated or deteriorating structures; and the clearance and redevelopment of substandard and blighted areas or portions thereof."

"Notwithstanding any other provisions of the Community Development Law, where the local governing body certifies that an area is in need of redevelopment or rehabilitation as a result of flood, fire, hurricane, earthquake, storm, or other catastrophe respecting which the Governor of the state has certified the need for disaster assistance under federal law, the local governing body may approve a redevelopment plan and a redevelopment project with respect to such area without regard to the provisions of the Community Development Law requiring a general plan for the municipality and notice and public hearing or findings other than herein set forth."

Based on the Nebraska Revised Statutes §18-2103 the following definitions shall apply:

"Blighted area means an area (a) which, by reason of the presence of a substantial number of deteriorated or deteriorating structures, existence of defective or inadequate street layout, faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness, insanitary or unsafe conditions, deterioration of site or other improvements, diversity of ownership, tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land, defective or unusual conditions of title, improper subdivision or obsolete platting, or the existence of conditions which endanger life or

property by fire and other causes, or any combination of such factors, substantially impairs or arrests the sound growth of the community, retards the provision of housing accommodations, or constitutes an economic or social liability and is detrimental to the public health, safety, morals, or welfare in its present condition and use and (b) in which there is at least one of the following conditions: (i) Unemployment in the designated area is at least one hundred twenty percent of the state or national average; (ii) the average age of the residential or commercial units in the area is at least forty years; (iii) more than half of the platted and subdivided property in an area is unimproved land that has been within the city for forty years and has remained unimproved during that time; (iv) the per capita income of the area is lower than the average per capita income of the city or village in which the area is designated; or (v) the area has had either stable or decreasing population based on the last two decennial censuses. In no event shall a city of the metropolitan, primary, or first class designate more than thirty-five percent of the city as blighted, a city of the second class shall not designate an area larger than fifty percent of the city as blighted, and a village shall not designate an area larger than one hundred percent of the village as blighted. A redevelopment project involving a formerly used defense site as authorized under section 18-2123.01 shall not count towards the percentage limitations contained in this subdivision;"

"Extremely blighted area means a substandard and blighted area in which: (a) The average rate of unemployment in the area during the period covered by the most recent federal decennial census is at least two hundred percent of the average rate of unemployment in the state during the same period; and (b) the average poverty rate in the area exceeds twenty percent for the total federal census tract or tracts or federal census block group or block groups in the area;"

"Substandard area means an area in which there is a predominance of buildings or improvements, whether nonresidential or residential in character, which, by reason of dilapidation, deterioration, age or obsolescence, inadequate provision for ventilation, light, air, sanitation, or open spaces, high density of population and overcrowding, or the existence of conditions which endanger life or property by fire and other causes, or any combination of such factors, is conducive to ill health, transmission of disease, infant mortality, juvenile delinquency, and crime, (which cannot be remedied through construction of prisons), and is detrimental to the public health, safety, morals, or welfare; and"

"Workforce housing means:

- (a) Housing that meets the needs of today's working families;
- (b) Housing that is attractive to new residents considering relocation to a rural community;
- (c) Owner-occupied housing units that cost not more than two hundred seventy-five thousand dollars to construct or rental housing units that cost not more than two hundred thousand dollars per unit to construct. For purposes of this subdivision (c), housing unit costs shall be updated annually by the Department of Economic Development based upon the most recent increase or decrease in the Producer Price Index for all commodities, published by the United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics;
- (d) Owner-occupied and rental housing units for which the cost to substantially rehabilitate exceeds fifty percent of a unit's assessed value; and
- (e) Upper-story housing."

This Blight and Substandard Study is being considered a blighted and substandard area under the definition established by the City of Grand Island. The Study is intended to give the Grand Island Community Redevelopment Authority, Hall County Regional Planning Commission and Grand Island City Council the basis for identifying and declaring Blighted and Substandard conditions existing within the City's jurisdiction and as allowed under Chapter 18. Through this process, the City and property owners will be attempting to address economic and/or social liabilities which are harmful to the well-being of the entire community.

The study area can be seen in Figure 1 of this report. A Redevelopment Plan to be submitted in the future containing, in accordance with the law, definite local objectives regarding appropriate land uses, improved traffic, public transportation, public utilities and other public improvements, and the proposed land uses and building requirements in the redevelopment area and shall include:

- The boundaries defining the blighted and substandard areas in question (including existing uses and conditions of the property within the area), and
- A list of the conditions present, which qualify the area as blighted and substandard.

BLIGHT AND SUBSTANDARD ELIGIBILITY STUDY

This study targets a specific area within an established part of the community for evaluation. The area is indicated in Figure 1 of this report. The existing uses in this Micro-blight include residential uses including accessory uses within the corporate limits of Grand Island.

Through the redevelopment process the City of Grand Island can guide future development and redevelopment throughout the area. The use of the Community Redevelopment Act by the City of Grand Island is intended to redevelop and improve the area. Using the Community Redevelopment Act, the City of Grand Island can assist in the elimination of negative conditions and implement different programs/projects identified for the City.

The following is the description of the designated area within Grand Island.

Point of beginning is the intersection of the centerlines of White Avenue and Faidley Avenue; thence southerly along the centerline of White Avenue to the intersection of the centerline of West 6th Street; thence, westerly along the centerline of West 6th Street to the intersection with the centerline of Carey Avenue; thence, northerly along the centerline of Carey Avenue to the intersection with the centerline of Faidley Avenue; thence, easterly along the centerline of Faidley Avenue to the point of beginning.

Study Area

Figure 1: Study Area Map



Source: Hall County GIS and Marvin Planning Consultants 2023

Note: Lines and Aerial may not match.

EXISTING LAND USES

The term "Land Use" refers to the developed uses in place within a building or on a specific parcel of land. The number and type of uses are constantly changing within a community and produce a number of impacts either benefitting or detracting from the community. Existing patterns of land use are often fixed in older communities and neighborhoods, while development in newer areas is often reflective of current development practices.

Existing Land Use Analysis within Study Area

As part of the planning process, a survey was conducted through both in-field observations, as well as data collection online using the Hall County Assessors website. This survey noted the use of each parcel of land within the study area. These data from the survey are analyzed in the following paragraphs.

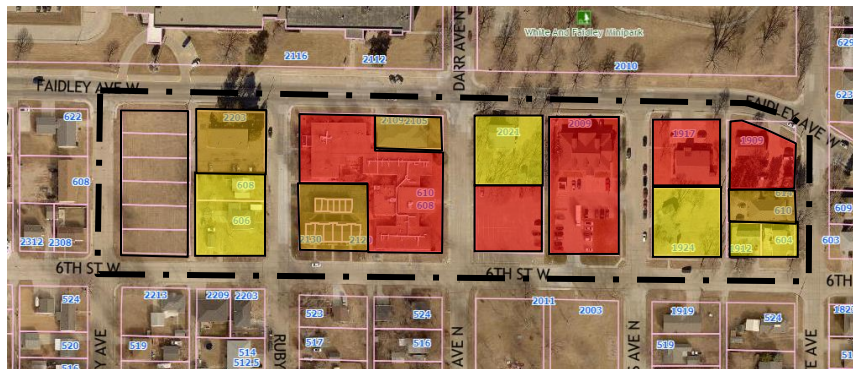
TABLE 1: EXISTING LAND USE, GRAND ISLAND - 2023

Type of Use	Acres	Percent of Developed land within the Study Area	Percent of Study Area
Residential	2.17	25.8%	23.8%
Single-family	1.24	14.7%	13.6%
Multi-family	.93	11.1%	10.2%
Manufactured Housing	0	0.0%	0.0%
Commercial	3.19	37.9%	35.1%
Industrial	0	0.0%	0.0%
Quasi-Public/Public	0	0.0%	0.0%
Parks/Recreation	0	0.0%	0.0%
Transportation	3.05	36.3%	33.5%
Total Developed Land	8.41	100.0%	92.4%
Vacant/Agriculture	.69		7.6%
Total Area	9.10		100.0%

Source: Marvin Planning Consultants 2023

Table 1 includes the existing land uses for the entire study area. The table contains the total acres determined per land use from the survey; next is the percentage of those areas compared to the total developed land; and finally, the third set of data compare all land uses to the total area within the Study Area. The Study Area is made up of single-family (10.6%), multi-family dwellings (10.8%), Transportation oriented land (street and R.O.W) (33.2%). However, there is a total of .69 acres (9.7%) of the study area that is considered vacant.

**Figure 2
Existing Land Use Map**



Source: Hall County GIS and Marvin Planning Consultants 2023

Note: Lines and Aerial may not match.



FINDINGS OF BLIGHT AND SUBSTANDARD CONDITIONS ELIGIBILITY STUDY

This section of the study examines the conditions found in the study area. The Findings Section will review the conditions based upon the statutory definitions.

CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

There were a number of conditions examined and evaluated in the field and online. There are a number of conditions that will be reviewed in detail, on the following pages, while some of the statutory conditions are not present.

Structural Conditions

Structural conditions were evaluated, structures were either rated as: Very Good, Good, Fair, Average, or badly worn. The data and rating system comes from the Hall County Assessor's database and some field observations of the building conditions. The Hall County Assessor's database is the same database used to value properties in the area.

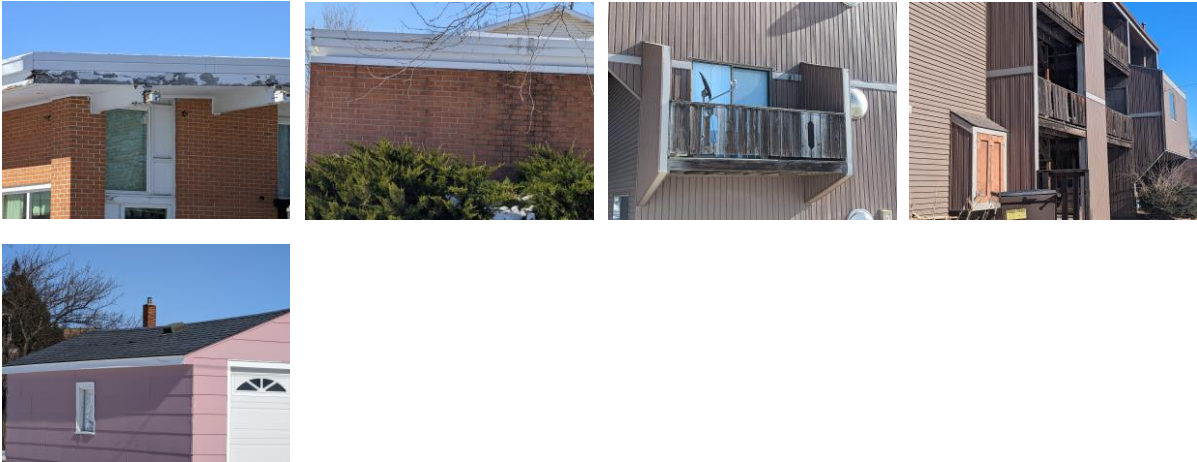
Based upon the data provided to the planning team, the following is the breakdown for structures in the study area:

- 0 (0.0%) structures rated as very good
- 1 (11.1%) structure rated as good
- 8 (44.4%) structures rated as average
- 6 (44.4%) structure rated as fair
- 0 (0.0%) structure rated as badly worn

Figure 3: Structural Conditions



Source: Hall County Assessor and Marvin Planning Consultants 2023
Note: Lines and Aerial may not match.



Based upon these data, an assumption has been made that average condition and less would constitute less than desirable conditions due to age and conditions. It is common for older structures to get more maintenance and upkeep in order to maintain a good or higher condition. Even an average structure will show some signs of deteriorating which in turn can become a dilapidated structure in the future if it is not addressed over time. Overall, 88.8% of the structures in this study area are average condition or worse.

Due to the stated conditions found in the Hall County Assessor's data, the condition of the structure is a contributing factor.

Deterioration of Site or Other Improvements

Site Improvements Conditions

The properties within the study area were accessed via the public street system and the individual parking lots when possible. The only critical areas in need of site improvements within this study area are on individual properties.

Based upon review of images of the study area below a number of the private parking areas are in need to be updated and are creating deteriorated conditions within the study area.



Based upon the field analysis, there are sufficient elements present to meet the definition of deterioration of site and other improvements in the Study Area.

Age of Structure

Age of structures can be a contributing factor to the blighted and substandard conditions in an area. Statutes allow for a predominance of structures 40 years of age or older to be a contributing factor regardless of their condition. The following paragraphs document the structural age of the structures within the Study Area. Note the age of structure was determined from the Appraisal data within the Hall County Assessor’s website data.

TABLE 2: AVERAGE STRUCTURAL AGE, BY METHOD - 2023

	Number of Structures	Construction date	Age	Cumulative Age
	1	1900	123	123
	1	1920	103	226
	1	1935	88	314
	1	1940	83	397
	1	1958	65	462
	1	1960	63	525
	1	1962	61	586
	1	1963	60	646
	1	1975	48	694
	1	1979	44	738
	1	1980	43	781
	2	1992	62	843
	1	1995	28	871
	1	2003	20	891
Total Cummulative	15			891
Average Age				59.4

Source: Hall County Assessor’s and Marvin Planning Consultants 2023

Within the study area there are 15 primary structures. After researching the structural age on the Hall County Assessor’s and Treasurer’s websites the six of the nine structures are over 40 years of age. When examining the age based upon a cumulative approach, as in Table 2, the average age of the primary structures is equal to 59.4 years; thus, meeting the requirements of the statutes.

The age of the structures would be a direct contributing factor.

Improper Subdivision or Obsolete Platting

There is a presence of platted lots in the study area having been platted for more than 40 years without being built upon.

Blighting Summary

These conditions are contributing to the blighted conditions of the study area.

Criteria under Part A of the Blight Definition

- **Substantial number of deteriorating structures**
 - Within the study area 88.8% of the structures were deemed to be in either average or badly worn condition.

- **Deterioration of site or other improvements**
 - All of the deterioration of site improvements fall on private property and are a contributing factor.
 - Their current condition, if left alone, will become even more deteriorated in the very near future.

- **Diversity of Ownership**
 - There are approximately 21 different property owners within the study area.

Criteria under Part B of the Blight Definition

- **The average age of the residential or commercial units in the area is at least forty years**
 - The average age based upon a cumulative age calculation is 46.8 years.

- **Improper Subdivision or Obsolete Platting**
 - There is a presence of platted undeveloped lots within the study area.

The other criteria for Blight were not present in the area, these included:

- Faulty Lot Layout
- Combination of factors which are impairing and/or arresting sound growth.
- Stable or decreasing population based upon the last two decennial census.
- Insanitary and Unsafe Conditions
- Dangerous conditions to life or property due to fire or other causes
- Defective/Inadequate street layouts
- Tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding fair value of the land.
- Defective or unusual condition of title,
- Unemployment in the designated area is at least 120% of the state or national average.
- The per capita income of the area is lower than the average per capita income of the city or village in which the area is designated.

These issues were either not present or were limited enough as to have little impact on the overall condition of the study area.

Substandard Conditions

Average age of the residential/commercial units in the area is at least 40 years

Age of structures can be a contributing factor to the blighted and substandard conditions in an area. Statutes allow for a predominance of structures 40 years of age or older to be a contributing factor regardless of their condition. The following paragraphs document the structural age of the structures within the Study Area. Note the age of structure was determined from the Appraisal data within the Hall County Assessor's website data.

TABLE 3: AVERAGE STRUCTURAL AGE, BY METHOD - 2023

	Number of Structures	Construction date	Age	Cumulative Age
	1	1900	123	123
	1	1920	103	226
	1	1935	88	314
	1	1940	83	397
	1	1958	65	462
	1	1960	63	525
	1	1962	61	586
	1	1963	60	646
	1	1975	48	694
	1	1979	44	738
	1	1980	43	781
	2	1992	62	843
	1	1995	28	871
	1	2003	20	891
Total Cumulative	15			891
Average Age				59.4

Source: Hall County Assessor's and Marvin Planning Consultants 2023

Within the study area there are 15 primary structures. After researching the structural age on the Hall County Assessor's and Treasurer's websites the six of the nine structures are over 40 years of age. When examining the age based upon a cumulative approach, as in Table 3, the average age of the primary structures is equal to 59.4 years; thus, meeting the requirements of the statutes.

The age of the structures would be a direct contributing factor.

Substandard Summary

Nebraska State Statute requires that "...an area in which there is a predominance of buildings or improvements, whether nonresidential or residential in character, which, by reason of dilapidation, deterioration, **age** or obsolescence, inadequate provision for ventilation, light, air, sanitation, or open spaces, high density of population and overcrowding, or **the existence of conditions which endanger life or property by fire and other causes**, or any combination of such factors, is conducive to ill health, transmission of disease, infant mortality, juvenile delinquency, and crime, (which cannot be remedied through construction of prisons), and is detrimental to the public health, safety, morals, or welfare;"

This Study Area in Grand Island meets the definition of Substandard as defined in the Revised Nebraska State Statutes.

FINDINGS FOR GRAND ISLAND BLIGHT STUDY AREA #37

Blight Study Area #37 has several items contributing to the Blight and Substandard Conditions. These conditions include:

Blighted Conditions under Part A

- **Substantial number of deteriorating structures**
- **Deterioration of site or other improvements**
- **Diversity of Ownership**

Criteria under Part B of the Blight Definition

- The average age of the residential or commercial units in the area is at least forty years.
- Improper Subdivision or Obsolete Platting

Substandard Conditions

- Average age of the structures in the area is at least forty years.