

City of Grand Island, NE
Blight and Substandard Study
Area #32
May 2021

Google Earth

PURPOSE OF THE BLIGHT AND SUBSTANDARD STUDY

The purpose of completing this Blight and Substandard study is to examine existing conditions within Study Area 32 of the city of Grand Island. This study has been commissioned by the Rhoads Enterprises, Inc. in order to analyze the possibility of declaring the area as blighted and substandard within this specific study area.

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 only for a portion of the corporate limits of the city which has not previously been so designated. The Study is intended to give the Grand Island CRA, 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, Section 2123.01. 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 will contain, 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 the specified area indicated in Figure 1 of this report. The existing uses in this area includes several uses including, residential, commercial, industrial, and public uses.

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 is intended to redevelop and improve areas of the community. 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 the City of Grand Island. Point of beginning is the intersection of the centerlines of Old Potash Road and North Road; thence, northerly along the centerline of North Road to the extended north property line of a tract referred to as Miscellaneous Tracts 14-11-10 PT SE 1/4 SE 1/4 2.72 AC (124 North Road North; thence, westerly along the said north property line and continuing along the north property of a tract referred to as Pontious Sub Part Lot 1 100' X 185.47' & All of Lot 2, at the northwest corner of said lot, thence boundary turns south along the west property line of said lot and continuing to the intersection with the centerline of Old Potash Street; thence westerly along the centerline of Old Potash Road to the intersection with the extended west line of the NE 1/4 of the NE1/4 of 23-11-10; thence, southerly along said west line of the NE 1/4 of the NE1/4 of 23-11-10 to the southwest corner of a tract referred to as Misc tract to the City of Grand Island S 1/2 NE 1/4 NE 1/4 23-11-10; thence, easterly along said south property line and continuing onto the south property line of a tract referred to as Misc Tracts 23-11-10 Pt NE 1/4 NE 1/4 2.29 AC and continuing to the intersection with the centerline of North Road; thence, Northerly along said centerline to the POB. A total of 43.29+/- acres

Study Area

Figure 1: Study Area Map



Source: Google Earth, Marvin Planning Consultants 2021

Figure 2: Existing Land Use Map

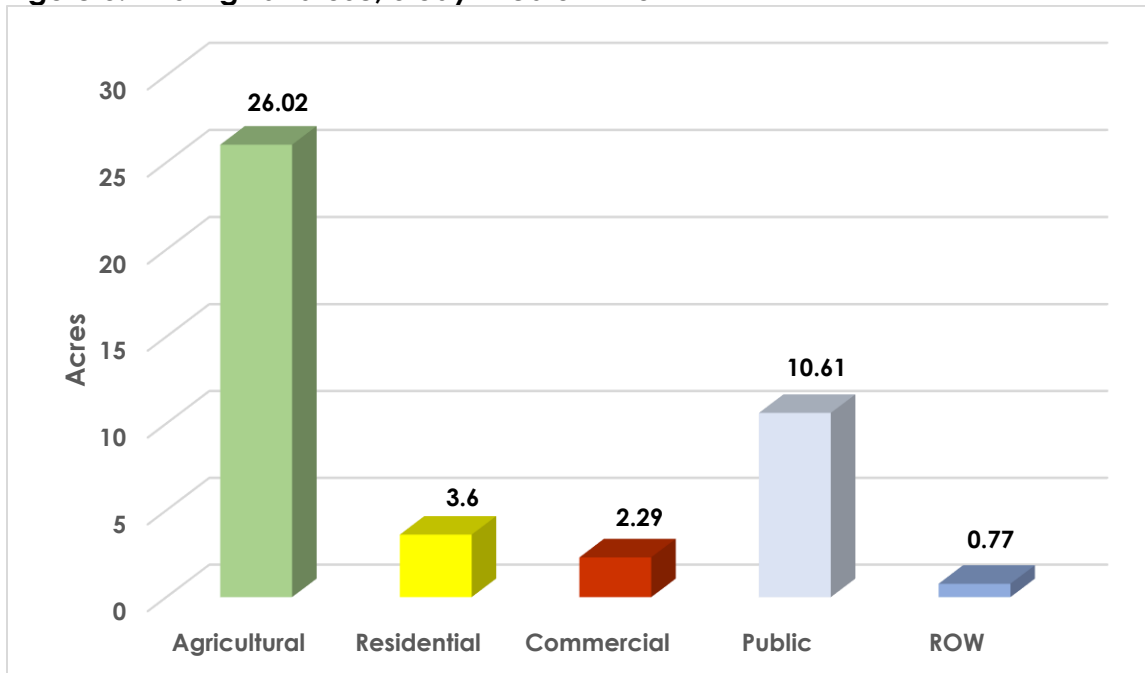


Source: Hall County Assessor's Office, Marvin Planning Consultants 2021

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. Because of this, the short and long-term success and sustainability of the community is directly contingent upon available resources utilized in the best manner given the constraints the City faces during the course of the planning period. 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.

Figure 3: Existing Land Use, Study Area 32 – 2021



Source: Marvin Planning Consultants 2021

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. Figures 2 and 3 shows the different uses present within the corporate limits of the during development of the Comprehensive Plan. The different uses also have the overall percent of the total area.

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 to 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: Excellent, Very Good, Above Normal, Normal, Below Normal, Poor or Very Poor. The data and rating system come from the Hall County Assessor's database and is the same database used to value properties in the area. According to the data there are 10 structures in the study area.

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

- **0 (0.00%) structures rated as Excellent**
- **0 (0.00%) structure rated as Very Good**
- **0 (0.00%) structures rated as Above Normal**
- **10 (100.00%) structures rated Normal**
- **0 (0.00%) structures rated Below Normal**
- **0 (0.00%) structures rated Poor**
- **0 (0.00%) structure rated as Very Poor**

Based upon these data, an assumption has been made that normal conditions in combination with the age of structures or a condition less than normal may constitute the possibility of some or considerable deterioration. It is common for older structures to need more maintenance and upkeep in order to maintain a good or higher condition. Even a structure rated as normal 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, 100.00% of the structures in this study area are considered as a normal condition.

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**Sidewalk Conditions**

Sidewalks, regardless of the area and uses within a community, should provide a safe means of movement for pedestrians. Sidewalks become increasingly more important along transportation routes considered to be arterials and highways. A sidewalk allows for pedestrian movement while keeping people off heavily traveled streets.

Figure 4: Structure Conditions, Study Area 32 – 2021



Source: Hall County Assessor's Office, Marvin Planning Consultants 2021

The sidewalk conditions were analyzed in the Study Area. The sidewalks were rated on five categories: Excellent, Good, Average, Fair, Poor, and missing completely.

Within the study area there is approximately 3,000 lineal feet or .57 miles of area where sidewalk could or should be located. After reviewing the conditions in the field, the following is how the sidewalk conditions breakdown within the study area:

- **0 (0.00%) lineal feet of Excellent sidewalk**
- **0 (0.00%) lineal feet of Good sidewalk**
- **0 (0.00%) lineal feet of Average sidewalk**
- **0 (0.00%) lineal feet of Fair sidewalk**
- **3,000 (100.00%) lineal feet of Poor or Missing sidewalk**

The study area does not contain any sidewalks either along Old Potash Road or North Road. Sidewalk is critical to the overall pedestrian movement of an area, long-term. Even sidewalk constructed which at present goes nowhere will eventually connect to several portions of the community.

Due to the lack of sidewalk, sidewalks are considered a direct contributing factor.



Source: Grand Island GIS/Street View, Marvin Planning Consultants 2021

Figure 5: Sidewalk Conditions, Study Area 32 – 2021



Source: Marvin Planning Consultants 2021

Figure 6: Curb and Gutter Conditions



Source: Marvin Planning Consultants 2021



Figure 7: Street Conditions

Source: Marvin Planning Consultants 2021

Curb and Gutter

Curb and Gutters have a number of direct and indirect roles in communities. Their primary function is to be a barrier to collect and direct water to be drained away. On a secondary level, they can help define where the streets start and stop, and they act as a physical barrier between pedestrian and vehicular traffic.

Curb and gutter for the Study Area were examined similarly to sidewalks. The curb and gutter were graded as either Excellent, Good, Average, Fair, Poor and Missing. There is no curb and gutter within the study area. And is considered rural section drainage.

Within the study area there is approximately 3,000 lineal feet of curb and gutter possible. After reviewing the conditions in the field, the following is how the curb and gutter conditions breakdown within the corporate limits:

- **0 (0.0%) lineal feet of Excellent curb and gutter**
- **0 (0.00%) lineal feet of Good curb and gutter**
- **0 (0.00%) lineal feet of Average curb and gutter**
- **0 (0.00%) lineal feet of Fair curb and gutter**
- **3,000 (100.00%) lineal feet of Poor or Missing curb and gutter**

The majority of the community's streets and drainage have been designed and constructed in a manner referred to as rural section. A rural section street/road is one where water drains directly from the driving surface into ditches paralleling the street. This approach is adequate; however, this design typically sees the ditches begin to silt in and/or have tall grass growing in them. These factors quickly deteriorate the ability of the ditch to adequately drain away water from the driving surface and this typically leads to localized flooding and ponding.

Due to the large amount of deteriorating and missing curb and gutter, the curb and gutter conditions would be a direct contributing factor.

Streets

Streets within a community are essential to moving people and vehicles from place to place. Their condition and construction have an impact on the appearance of a community, which leads directly to how a community is perceived by the outside world.

Within the study area there is approximately 2,630 lineal feet or .49 miles of street possible. After reviewing the conditions in the field, the following is how the street conditions breakdown within the corporate limits:

- **425 (16.2%) lineal feet of Excellent street**
- **0 (0.0%) lineal feet of Good street**
- **2,205 (83.8%) lineal feet of Average street**
- **0 (0.0%) lineal feet of Fair street**
- **0 (0.0%) lineal feet of Poor street**

The streets within the Study Area are in either excellent condition or average condition. Overall, 83.8% are considered to be in average condition; thus, making streets a contributing factor. Similar to sidewalks and curb and gutter, a rating of average is considered the beginning of deterioration and may continue to decline over the next few years.

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 1: Average Structural Age, By Method – 2021

Number	Year	Age		Cumulative
2	1950	61	122	122
1	1975	46	46	168
5	1979	42	210	378
1	1989	32	32	410
1	2013	8	8	418
10				418
				41.8

Source: Hall County Assessor's and Marvin Planning Consultants 2021

Age of Structure

Within the study area there are 10 structures. After researching the structural age on the Hall County Assessor's website, the following breakdown was determined:

- 8 (80.0%) unit was determined to be 40 years of age or older.
- 2 (20.0%) unit was determined to be less than 40 years of age.

However, when examining the age based upon a cumulative approach, as in Table 1 the average age of the primary structures is equal to 41.8 years; thus, meeting the requirements of the statutes.

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

Figure 8: Age of Structures



Source: Hall County Assessor's Office, Marvin Planning Consultants 2021

Blighting Summary

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

- **Substantial number of deteriorating structures**
 - Within the study are 100.00% of the structures were deemed to be in normal condition or worse.
- **Deterioration of site or other improvements**
 - Curb and gutter are missing throughout the study area.
 - The study area has what is considered rural section (ditches) and the drainage areas appear to be silting in.
 - Streets through most of the study area were an average or excellent condition.
 - Sidewalks are missing within the entire study area.
- **Diversity of Ownership**
 - There are many different property owners within the study area including the City of Grand Island.
 - The diversity of ownership may be a barrier to future development.

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.**
 - 8 (80.0%) buildings or improvements were determined to be 40 years of age or older.
 - 2 (20.0%) buildings or improvements were determined to be less than 40 years of age.
 - The average age based upon a cumulative age calculation is 41.8 years.

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

- Factors Which Are Impairing And/or Arresting Sound Growth
- Insanitary and Unsafe Conditions
- Dangerous conditions to life or property due to fire or other causes
- Faulty Lot Layout
- Improper Subdivision or Obsolete Platting
- Stable or decreasing population based on the last two decennial censuses.
- 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.

- One-half of unimproved property is over 40 years old.
- 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 or 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 2: Average Unit Age, By Method – 2021

Number	Year	Age		Cumulative
2	1950	61	122	122
1	1975	46	46	168
5	1979	42	210	378
1	1989	32	32	410
1	2013	8	8	418
10				418
				41.8

Source: Hall County Assessor's and Marvin Planning Consultants 2021

Age of Structure

Within the study area there are 10 structures. After researching the structural age on the Hall County Assessor's website, the following breakdown was determined:

- 8 (80.0%) units were determined to be 40 years of age or older.
- 2 (20.0%) units were determined to be less than 40 years of age.

However, when examining the age based upon a cumulative approach, as in Table 2 the average age of the units is equal to 41.8 years; thus, meeting the requirements of the statutes.

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

Figure 8: Age of Structures



Source: Hall County Assessor's Office, Marvin Planning Consultants 2021

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 meets the definition of Substandard as defined in the Revised Nebraska State Statutes.

FINDINGS FOR BLIGHT AND SUBSTANDARD STUDY AREA #32

Blight Study Area #32 has several items contributing to the Blight and Substandard Conditions. These conditions include:

Blighted Conditions

- **Substantial number of deteriorated or deteriorating structures.**
- **Condition of Structures**
- **Diversity of Ownership**
- **Average age of the residential or commercial units in the area is at least 40 years.**

Substandard Conditions

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