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**2012**

## WRIGHT COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Developed by the Wright County Planning and Zoning Commission

*Planning Assistance Provided by MIDAS Council of Governments*





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## **Executive Summary**

The Wright County Comprehensive Plan outlines existing conditions, establishes future goals, objectives and implementation strategies and identifies existing and desired land uses within the unincorporated area of the County. The plan was developed using existing data, as well as community input through various committee meetings, public focus group meetings and a public survey, which all residents and businesses of the unincorporated area were encouraged to complete.

In developing the Plan, the Planning and Zoning Commission considered the ten (10) Smart Planning Principles and thirteen (13) Planning Elements suggested in Iowa's Smart Planning Legislation, SF 2389. The following describes how each element is recognized in the plan.

Public Participation was used throughout the planning process. The public was first encouraged to provide feedback to a survey that discussed each element of the plan; surveys were dispersed to all residents and businesses located in the unincorporated area of the County. Upon the collection and interpretation of the survey results, the Planning and Zoning Commissions invited the public to attend and participate in three focus group meetings, which included conversation on each element of the plan. Notices for each focus group meeting were published in the Clarion Monitor, Belmond News and the Eagle Grove Eagle per Chapter 331.305 of the 2011 Iowa Administrative Code (IAC).

Prior to formulating a draft of the comprehensive plan, the public was again encouraged to provide their input on the future land use map, which was developed by the planning and zoning commission along with other City and County staff input. The meeting was held in an "open house" manner, where the public could come and go as they please. The notice for this "open house" was again published per IAC 331.305.

Upon development of a draft plan, the Wright County Planning and Zoning Commission reviewed the document and provided suggestions for improvements to the plan. Once the suggested changes were made, the Commission approved the plan and granted the public another opportunity to provide their input on the Wright County Comprehensive Plan via a public meeting, which notice was posted for per IAC 331.305.

Issues and Opportunities were discussed by the planning committee through the public focus group meetings. Each planning element was discussed at these meetings and the attendees were asked what the County's strengths, weaknesses and opportunities were relating to each element.

Community Character is reflected on throughout the plan, especially in Chapter 5, where the central planning elements are discussed.

Economic Development, Agriculture, Housing, Transportation, Public Infrastructure and Utilities, Community Facilities, Land Use and Implementation are all elements of the plan that are patently displayed in Chapters 5 and 6.

Intergovernmental Collaboration was practiced throughout the land use portion of the plan. Each City within the County was sent a survey regarding their land use practices. Each were then invited to attend

a Planning Committee meeting to review the Future Land Use Map of the County and recommend any suggestions they might have in relation to their Cities' land use practices.

Hazards were considered through a County-wide hazard mitigation plan, which is seeking FEMA approval by May of 2013. Upon FEMA approval of the Wright County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan, the plan will be added as appendix to this plan.

Upon consideration of the above-listed elements, the County followed a planning process that encouraged public participation, identified existing conditions and established and evaluated future goals and objectives. Implementation of this plan will assist the county government in making informed decisions on future land use proposals.

## 1. Introduction and Planning Process

A comprehensive plan is a living document developed by a group of community or county stakeholders, which presents a vision for the future of its indicated area. Also known as a master plan or land use plan, the comprehensive plan includes long-range goals and objectives for all activities that impact growth and development in a community or county; especially those activities relating to land use.

It is necessary for a county to have a comprehensive plan to assist public officials and county boards in their decision-making process. The plan provides justification for decisions relating to public and private land development proposals; expenditure of funds for infrastructure and public facilities; and it presents methods to address issues of pressing concern (Iowa State University - University Extension, 2008).

The Wright County Comprehensive Plan outlines existing conditions, establishes future goals, objectives and implementation strategies and identifies existing and desired land uses within the County. The plan was developed using existing data, as well as local input through various committee meetings, public focus group meetings and a public survey, which all residents and businesses were encouraged to complete. The Planning and Zoning Commission was involved in the entire planning process, which followed the subsequent itinerary:

1. Discussed and considered Smart Planning Principles
2. Discussed ideas for data collection
3. Obtained plans already established
4. Discussed and determined planning elements
5. Developed and dispersed separate surveys to residents and businesses of the unincorporated area of the County and to cities located within the County
6. Reviewed survey results with the Planning and Zoning Commission
7. Planned and held public focus group meetings on housing, transportation, public services and infrastructure, economic development, agriculture, and recreation and conservation.
8. Discussed existing conditions
9. Discussed and developed goals and objectives
10. Developed implementation strategies
11. Developed existing and future land use maps
12. Met with cities to discuss proposed future land use maps
13. Provided public opportunity to review the proposed future land use map
14. Reviewed a draft of the Comprehensive Plan
15. Allowed the public 30 days to comment on the plan
16. Held Public Hearing on proposed plan
17. The Planning and Zoning Commission gave recommendation to the Board of Supervisors for adoption of the Wright County Comprehensive Plan
18. The Wright County Board of Supervisors approved and adopted the Wright County Comprehensive Plan

The Wright County Comprehensive Plan consists of the compilation of objectives and goals that address the following elements: **agriculture, economic development, housing, recreation and conservation,**



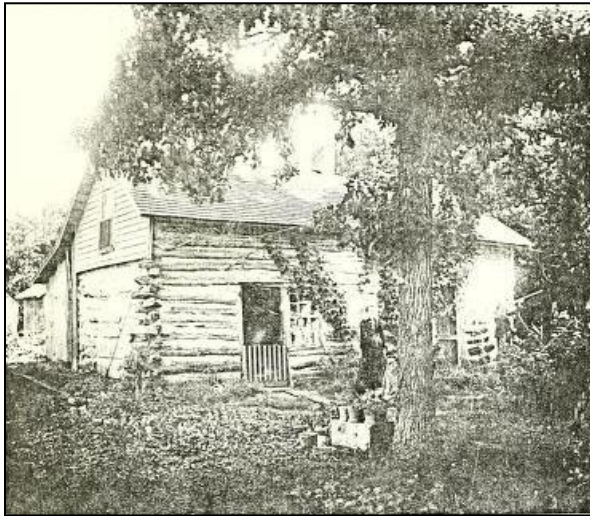
**transportation, public services and infrastructure, and land use.** As the County changes from year-to-year, so will its residents' and business' needs; therefore, this plan may be amended, changed or revised as needed.

## 2. History of Wright County

Wright County was officially organized in 1855 and was named after Silas Wright and Joseph Albert Wright, who were influential Governors from the States of New York and Indiana; of which States many of the County's earlier settlers migrated from. Prior to its organization, Wright County was part of Delaware, Polk, Boone and Webster County and only consisted of hunters and trappers who traveled in the area. The first settlements began in 1854; of the first settlers were William H. Montgomery, William Stryker and Minter Brassfield, each of which came with their families within a few weeks of one another.

The first election took place in 1855 during the month of August. At this time the original County Seat was established in Eagleville, which was a town that was platted west of present-day Eagle Grove, but never fully built. The Courthouse was located in a log cabin owned by S.B. Hewett, Sr. In 1858 the County Seat was moved to "Liberty", which today is known as Goldfield. The County Seat made its final move in 1865 to Grant, which was chosen for its central location. In June of 1870 the City of Grant was renamed Clarion, which is after Clarion, Pennsylvania.

Figure 2.1 First County Courthouse – Eagleville, IA



<http://archive.org/stream/historyofwrightc01bird#page/133/mode/1up>

Figure 2.2 Wright County Courthouse - Clarion, IA



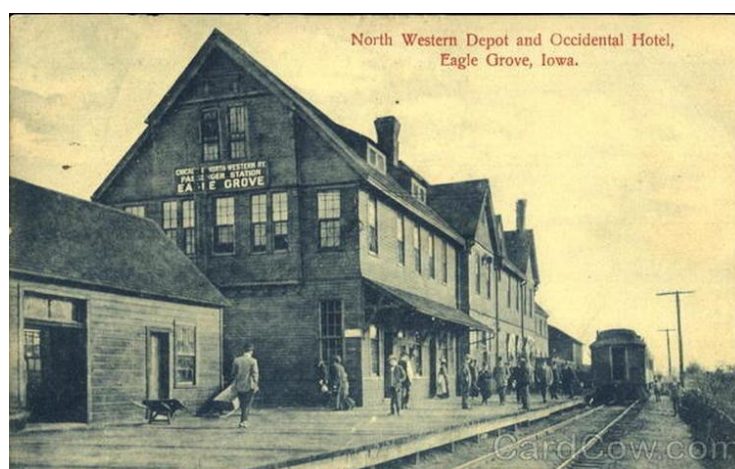
<http://www.iowacourts.gov/wfdata/frame1759-1464/nressrel98.asn>

After the organization of the County Seat in Grant (Clarion), a decision on whether to move the old courthouse from Liberty (Goldfield) to Grant or build a new one could not be reached. The problem was finally resolved in November 1865, when the courthouse committee contracted Perry & Nees to build a two-story, frame building for \$5,600.

Approximately twenty years later, in the 1890 election, the voters approved the building of a new courthouse and jail. Much celebration took place upon approval of this building. The present day courthouse was fully constructed in 1892. The red brick building has since undergone extensive remodeling to the interior and exterior, which was completed in 1974.

The first railroad completed in Wright County was the old Burlington, Cedar Rapids and Northern, which reached Clarion in 1881. A few months later the Chicago & Northwestern road reached Goldfield, having been at Eagle Grove a few months before. A branch of the Iowa Central road was also soon pushed through to Belmond and reached Clarion by August of 1895. By 1915 approximately 120 miles of rail lines ran through Wright County including lines run by Chicago and Northwestern; Chicago and Iowa; Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific and Chicago Great Western.

**Figure 2.3: Northwestern Depot - Eagle Grove, IA**



<http://herebedragons.weebly.com/orr-lore.html>

While the construction of the railroad lines greatly aided in the settlement of Wright County, so did the cost of land with good soil. In 1880 Wright County had 785 farms. A majority of which were occupied by the owners who worked them. In 1905 the number of farms went up to 1,688. Since this time the County has developed into an important corn and soybean production area, which is discussed in Chapter 5 of this plan.

*The History of Wright County was developed from the History of County Governments in Iowa (Iowa State Association of Counties, 1992) and History of Wright County, Iowa (Birdsall, History of Wright County, IA, 1915).*

## **Places of Historical Significance in Wright County**

### ***National Historic Register of Historic Places***

According to the National Register of Historic Places, there are eleven (11) historical sites currently designated as significant within the County. The properties listed in the Register include those sites that are significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering and/or culture. These sites are

being preserved to ensure that the County's historic past can be reflected upon and remembered during the entire time of the County's formation. Below is a listing of each of the historical sites currently listed in the National Register of Historical Places and a brief background of each site (National Register of Historic Places, 2012).

**Boone River Bridge** – Is a Historic Bridge located over the Boone River near Goldfield with a period of significance between 1900 and 1924. The bridge was added to the register in 1998.

**Burlington, Cedar Rapids and Northern Passenger Depot** – Represents a “Romanesque” style of Architecture depot that was built in 1896. It was the first railway depot in Wright County. The Dows Historical Society purchased and restored the depot in 1988.

**Burlington, Cedar Rapids and Northern Passenger Station** – Served as the Railway station for Clarion, IA. Its period of significance is between 1875 and 1899.

**Clarion Public Library (Morgan Everett Library)** – Was built in 1908 and has served as the City of Clarion's Public Library since such time. The library was completely remodeled in 1984 with a grant from the Kinney-Lindstrom Fund and help from the City Council. The library is the same style of architecture as is noted in many Carnegie libraries.

**Cornelia Lake Bridge** – Located northeast of Clarion over an inlet of Cornelia Lake, the bridge is Wright County's oldest steel truss. The bridge was built across the Iowa River in Section 24 of what is now Grant Township and served in this location for more than 100 years. Upon its replacement in 1986, the bridge was determined eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places and then moved nearby Cornelia Lake Park.

**Eagle Grove Public Library** – Displays an architectural style known as “Beaux Arts”, which is common of having a rusticated and raised first story and arched windows and doors. The public library opened in Eagle Grove in 1902. It was used as a library until a new, single-story location was built in 1976. The historic building is now home to the Eagle Grove Historical Society and Museum.

**Exchange Building** – Is located in Dows, IA and held a historic function for commerce and trade, generally used as a financial institution. Its period of significance is between 1875 and 1899.

**Fillmore Block** – Is also known as the Dows Mercantile Store. The building was constructed in 1894 and has hosted many businesses. The Dows Historical Society purchased the building in 1987. It was reopened two years later as an antique mall that also sells Iowa-made products.

**Goldfield Bridge** – Is located over the Boone River in Goldfield, IA. The bridge was engineered and constructed by the Iowa Bridge Company and the Iowa State Highway Commission and has a period of significance between 1900 and 1924.

**Quasdorf Blacksmith and Wagon Shop** – Located in Dows, IA; the shop displays a “Romanesque” style of architecture and now serves as a museum. Built in 1899, the shop operated continuously until 1990 when the owner Frank Quasdorf willed it to the Dows Historical Society.

**Wright County Courthouse** – Was constructed in 1892 and fully remodeled in 1974. Still serving as the County’s space for government operations, the Wright County Courthouse is located in Clarion. The courthouse is three stories high, except for the clock tower, which rises high above the multi-gabled roof.

### 3. Physical Description

Physical features of Wright County are important in Land Use development to ensure that proper land uses are enforced in environmentally sensitive areas. This section gives a background on the physical features that are present throughout the County including topography, water features, drainage and watersheds and soils.

#### Topography and Landforms

Wright County is located in north-central Iowa and is surrounded by Webster and Humboldt Counties to the west, Hamilton County to the south, Franklin County to the east and Hancock County to the north. The County ranges in altitude from 1,300 feet in Blaine Township, located west of Dows; to 956 feet in Troy Township, west of Woolstock (NRGIS Library, 1999).

The County consists of 576 square miles (USDA, 1992) and is located in the landform known as Des Moines Lobe, which is often referred to as the Prairie Pothole Region. Historic glacial activity left the area covered in irregular ponds and wetlands (INDR, 2011); much of which have since been tilled for agriculture use.

Figure 3.1: Map of the Des Moines Lobe



<http://iowapolicypoints.org/2011/06/22/more-drainage-and-water-quality-benefits-too-maybe/>

#### Water Features

Wright County has multiple water features consisting of creeks, streams, rivers and Lakes. The notable Lakes of the County include Morse Lake, Lake Cornelia, Elm Lake, and Big Wall Lake. Morse Lake, located near Belmond is a natural lake featuring a Grassland and Bird Conservation on the southern



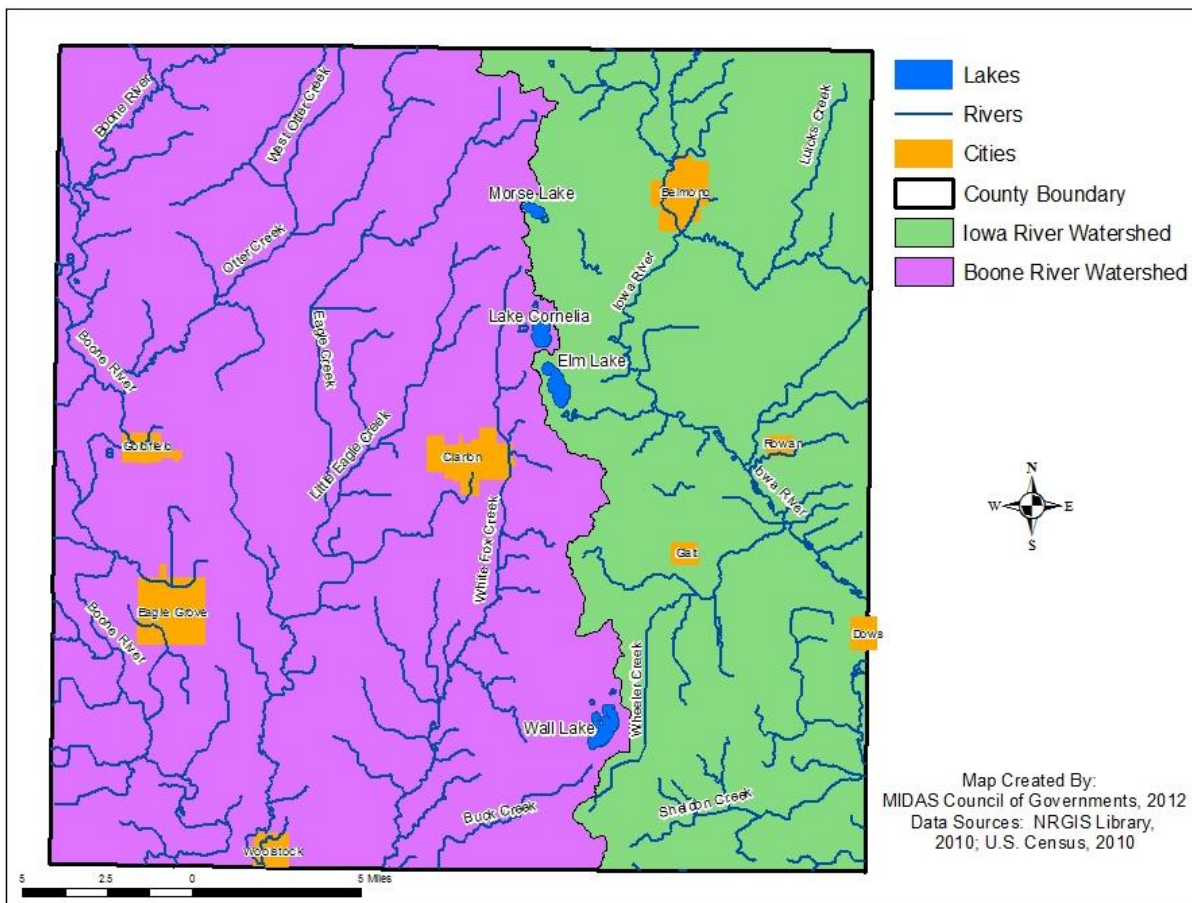
edge. To the southwest is Lake Cornelia, which is lined with residential property and camping areas, the land surrounding the Lake continues to develop due to the variety of recreational attractions available.

Immediately south of Lake Cornelia is Elm Lake, which is surrounded by sloping hills and winding shores, and known for its natural vegetation. Some development has occurred along the eastern shores.

Moving even further south into Wall Lake Township is Wall Lake. Named for its wall of boulders that had once formed around the shores, the lake is simply a “kettle hole” in the midst of the plane. The Wall of the Lake has since disappeared, hauled away to make foundation stones (Macbride, 1909).

Along with the lakes, many streams trickle throughout the County and drain into two major tributaries of the Mississippi; the Boone River and the Iowa River. The Boone River along the western edge of the County and the Iowa River along the eastern edge, both make up the two major watersheds that the County’s surface waters drain into.

**Figure 3.2: Map of Wright County Waterways & Watersheds**



### **Drainage and Watersheds**

As shown in Figure 3.2, Wright County crosses 2 watersheds, including the Boone River and the upper portion of the Iowa River (United States Environmental Protection Agency, 2012). The Boone

Watershed intercepts the entire western and central portion of Wright County and is an area of gently flat to rolling hills (USDA/NRCS, 2008). Prior to subsurface drainage, this region had abundant wetlands, many of which were interconnected prairie potholes. Now a large portion of the region is artificially drained to support row crop agriculture. According to the USDA and NRCS Rapid Watershed Assessment, approximately half of the soils in the watershed are poorly drained; 93% of these poorly drained soils are in row crop agriculture. A common source of agricultural drainage is the use of subsurface or artificial drainage, which commonly causes excess nutrients and pollutants to enter the streams, since water is poorly filtered (USDA/NRCS, 2008)

A portion of the Upper Iowa River Watershed crosses through the eastern part of Wright County, which consists of nearly level to gently rolling hills with relatively short slopes (USDA/NRCS, 2008). Like the Boone Watershed, most of the wet soils have been artificially drained to maximize crop production. Approximately 38% of the soils in the watershed are poorly drained, of this, nearly 83% percent is in row crop agriculture. As mentioned, the row crop agriculture land is drained using subsurface drainage, to increase agricultural production. The use of such drainage lowers the water table making what would be a wetland or wet meadow area, dryer, more productive farm land (USDA/NRCS, 2008).

## **Soils**

The soils of Wright County are a very important feature of the unincorporated area, as farmers harvested a total of 289,365 acres in corn and beans in 2009; accounting for approximately 80% of the County's total land area (including incorporated areas) (Otto, 2009).

There are six major soil associations characterized within Wright County, including Canisteo-Nicollet-Webster (40%), Brownton-Ottosen-Bode (27%), Canisteo-Clarion-Nicollet (16%), Clarion-Storden-Webster (9%), Wadena-Coland (5%) and Hayden-Storden-Hanion (2%) Associations (USDA, 1992).

Canisteo-Nicollet-Webster, Brownton-Ottosen-Bode and Canisteo-Clarion-Nicollet Soil Associations consist of approximately 83% of land in Wright County. They each have similar characteristics in that they are silty, loamy soils formed in glacial sediments and till, and are all located on uplands. Each association of soil also has different characteristics that may be examined in the Soil Survey of Wright County, Iowa (USDA, 1992).

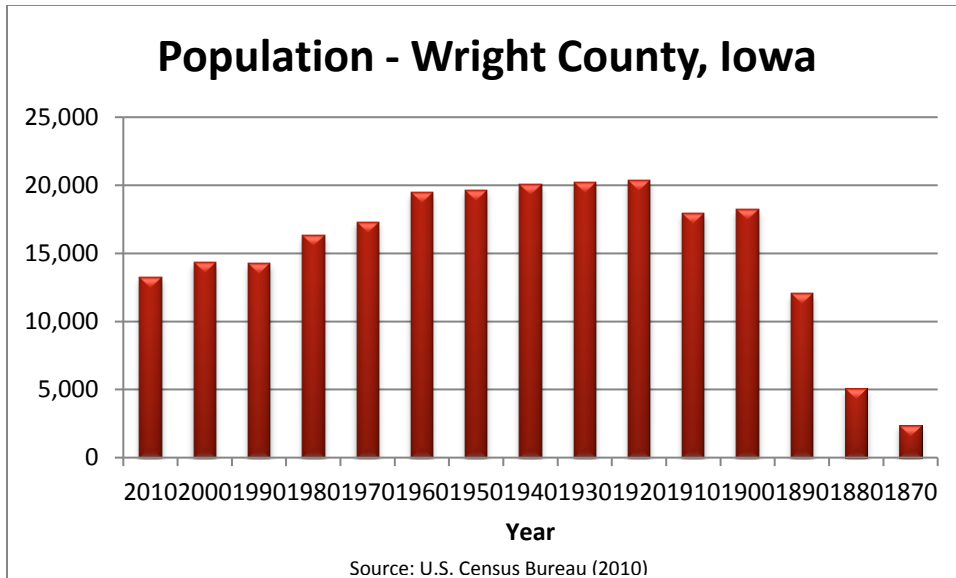
The soil classification (association), slope, and erosion class are each used to determine the Corn Suitability Rating (CSR), which is an index of productivity for row-crop production. Land Use patterns are often shaped around the CSR, especially in unincorporated areas of Iowa where agriculture is a common use. See Section "5.2 Agriculture" of this plan for more information on the CSR and how it is used in land use planning in Wright County.

## **4. Demographics**

The population of Wright County is 13,229 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). Wright County saw a major increase in population from 1870 to 1920. Since this time the population has slowly decreased. From

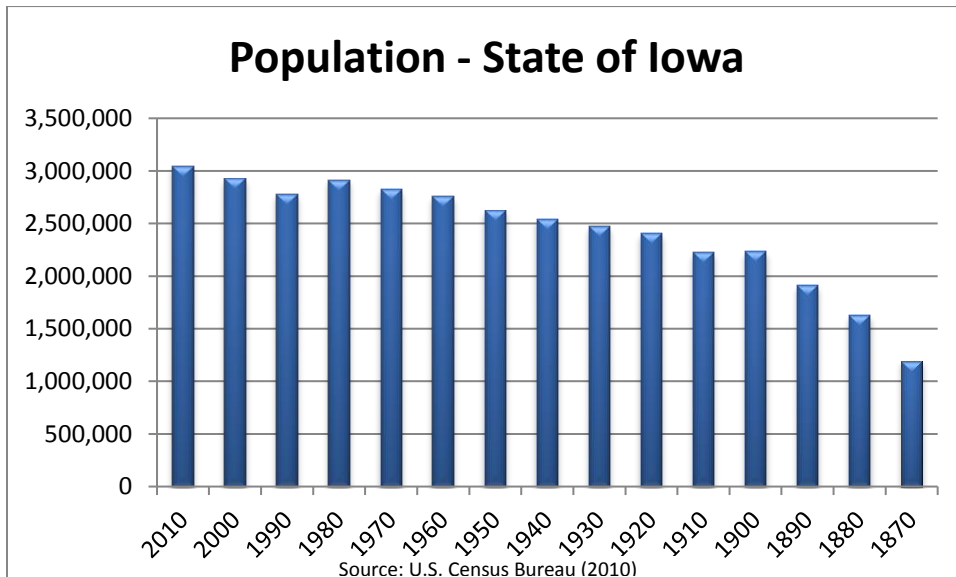
2000 to 2010 the population decreased by 1,105 persons, which results in a 7% decrease. Planning for these changes in population is critical in discussing the future of Wright County.

**Figure 4.1: Population of Wright County 1870-2010**



As displayed in Figure 4.2, the State of Iowa’s population change is quite different from Wright County, as the State reached its peak population in 2010. The population decrease in Wright County is a common trend occurring throughout many rural areas in Iowa. Younger populations are migrating towards larger, metropolitan areas such as Des Moines, Omaha and their surrounding suburban neighborhoods.

**Figure 4.2: Population of Iowa 1870-2010**



Future population trends seem to be moving in the same direction, as displayed in Table 4.1. The State of Iowa continues to increase in population, while Wright County continues to decrease in population through 2040.

**Table 4.1: Projected Population**

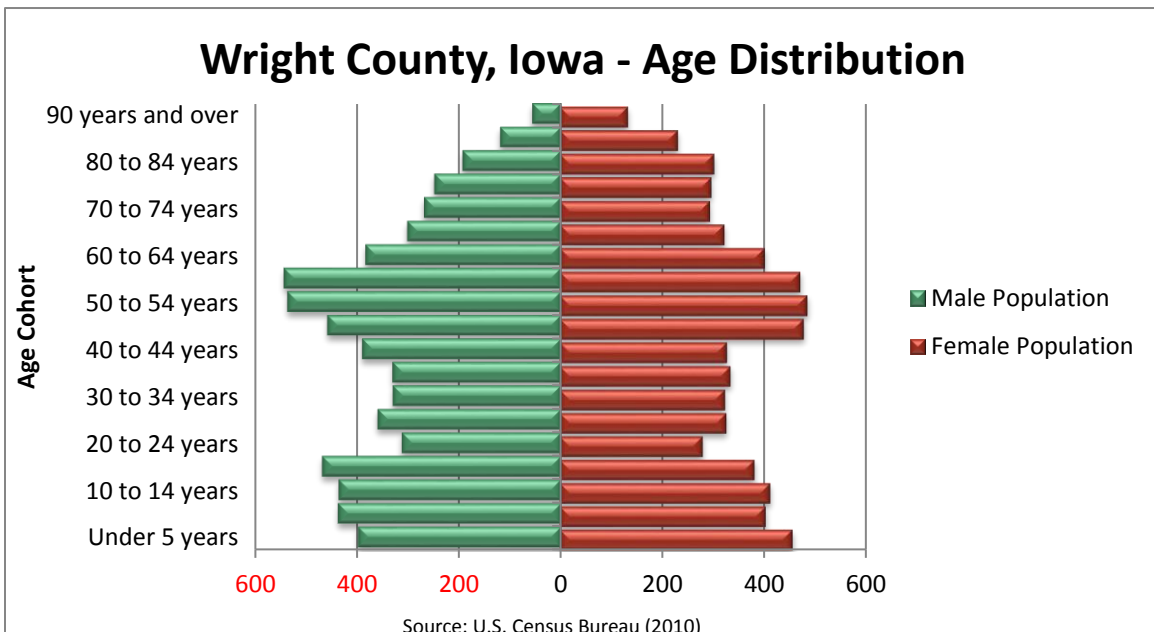
	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
<b>State of Iowa</b>	3,097,663	3,172,237	3,249,751	3,328,308	3,407,575	3,487,942
<b>Wright County</b>	12,560	12,346	12,142	11,943	11,746	11,552

Source: Iowa State Data Center (2010)

The migration trend Wright County is experiencing is also evident when investigating the median age of residents in rural areas. The median age of residents in Wright County is 44.4, which is quite a bit higher than the State at 38.1 and the Nation at 37.2 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).

Figure 4.3 shows the distribution of age and sex in Wright County as of 2010. The yellow pillars represent the male population, while the red pillars represent the female population in each age cohort. The male-to-female ratio of the County is relatively equal with about 49.7% or 6,575 males and 50.3% or 6,654 females. Approximately 14.8% of the County’s population is between the ages of 45 and 54 years of age and approximately 20.9% is 65 or older. All-in-all almost half of the population is 45 or older, which can account for the County’s higher than average median age.

**Figure 4.3: Wright County Age Cohorts**



As displayed in Table 4.2, approximately 94.8% of Wright County’s population is white alone. The County also has a number of African Americans, American Indians or Alaska Natives, Asians and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islanders. Of the total population, 1,274 persons are Hispanic or Latino (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).



**Table 4.2: Wright County Demographics**

<b>Race - 2010</b>		
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Total population	13,229	100
White	12,545	94.8
Black or African American	57	0.4
American Indian and Alaska Native	20	0.2
Asian	33	0.2
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	6	0.0
Some Other Race	359	2.7
Two or More Races	209	1.6

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2010)

The demographics of Wright County are relatively similar to that of many rural areas within the region, which are struggling to maintain their population. The following portion of the plan will look further into conditions of the County by exploring various components of its local economy, housing, transportation, and public facilities and services.

## **5. Planning Elements**

The subsequent portion of the plan focuses on existing conditions, goals, objectives and implementation strategies of the following elements: **economic development, agriculture, housing, transportation, public services and infrastructure, recreation and conservation and land use.**

The existing conditions provide a basis for future expectations of the County with regards to growth, housing needs, employment, land use needs and other important components of the comprehensive plan.

The goals and objectives target the County's desired physical, social and economic environment. The goals set the tone for the development decisions in terms of the citizens' desired quality of life, while the objectives are the stepping stones to achieving each goal.

### **5.1 Economic Development**

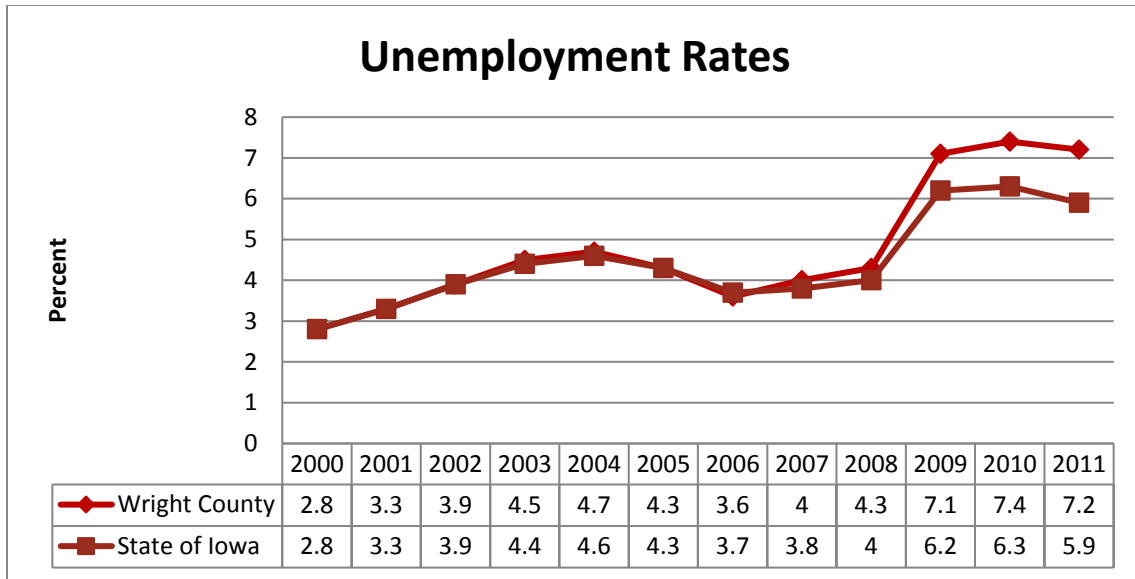
Economic development is a long-term planning element that works toward sustaining and/or increasing population and providing a good standard of living for individuals through employment, industry, and local goods and services. Many rural areas of Iowa have experienced some major hits to their local economy due to changes in mobility, retail development and other kinds of commerce. Today, more than ever, rural areas must strive to use their distinctive assets to provide a basis for economic development activities.

**Existing Conditions**

**Employment Trends**

The unemployment rate is often used as an indicator of the health of the local economy. In figure 5.1 there is a major increase evident in unemployment within Wright County since 2008, which is a common trend for the region having lost multiple manufacturing jobs.

**Figure 5.1: Unemployment Rates for Wright County and Iowa, 2000-2011**



Source: Iowa Workforce Development (2012)

Since 2011, Wright County has seen a steady decrease in unemployment until June of 2012. The larger decrease in unemployment in April and May could be due to the agriculture climate of the County, as spring of 2012 called for an early planting season when additional farming staff may have been hired.

**Table 5.1: 2012 Wright County Unemployment Rate by Month**

2012 Wright County Unemployment Rates	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July
	6.7	6.5	6.4	5.8	5.4	5.8	5.7

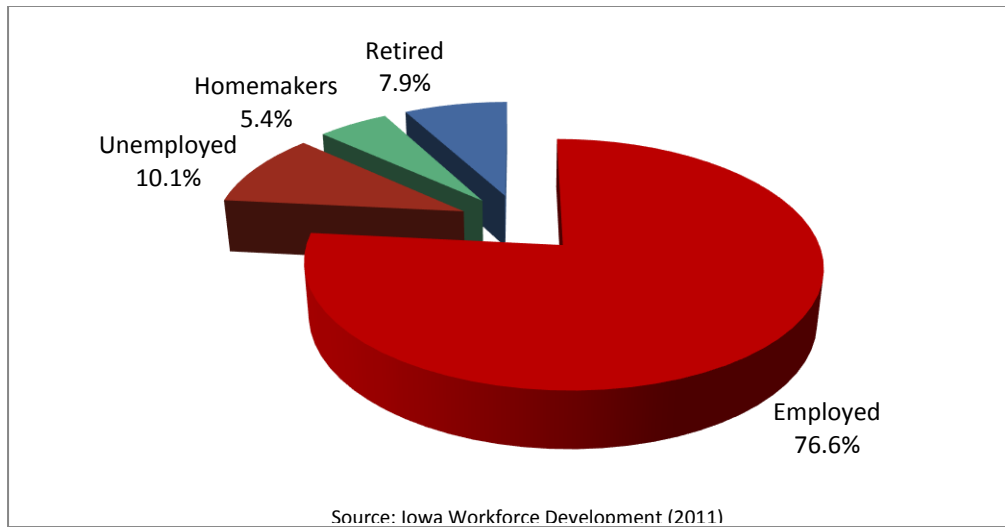
Source: Iowa Workforce Development (2012)

The County’s current unemployment rate is somewhat higher than the state at 5.3%, but lower than the nation at 8.1%; showing that jobs are needed, but that the County isn’t in the worst standing.

**Employment Sectors**

According to the 2011 Wright County Laborshed Analysis, approximately 77% of respondents were employed and part of Wright County’s civilian labor force. Figure 5.2 displays the Employment Status of those persons who responded to the Laborshed survey, which consists of persons from both the incorporated and unincorporated areas of Wright County.

**Figure 5.2: Employment Status – Wright County – 2011**



As displayed in Figure 5.3, the majority of respondents worked in manufacturing, education and health care & social services, which are all locally established employers. As of 2010, some of Wright County’s largest employers included Eaton Corporation, Hewlett-Packard, Printing Services Inc., Belmont-Klemme Community Schools, AG Processing, Gold-Eagle Cooperative, Hagie Manufacturing Company and Belmont Medical Clinic (Iowa Department of Transportation, 2010).

**Figure 5.3: Where the Employed Are Working – Wright County – 2011**

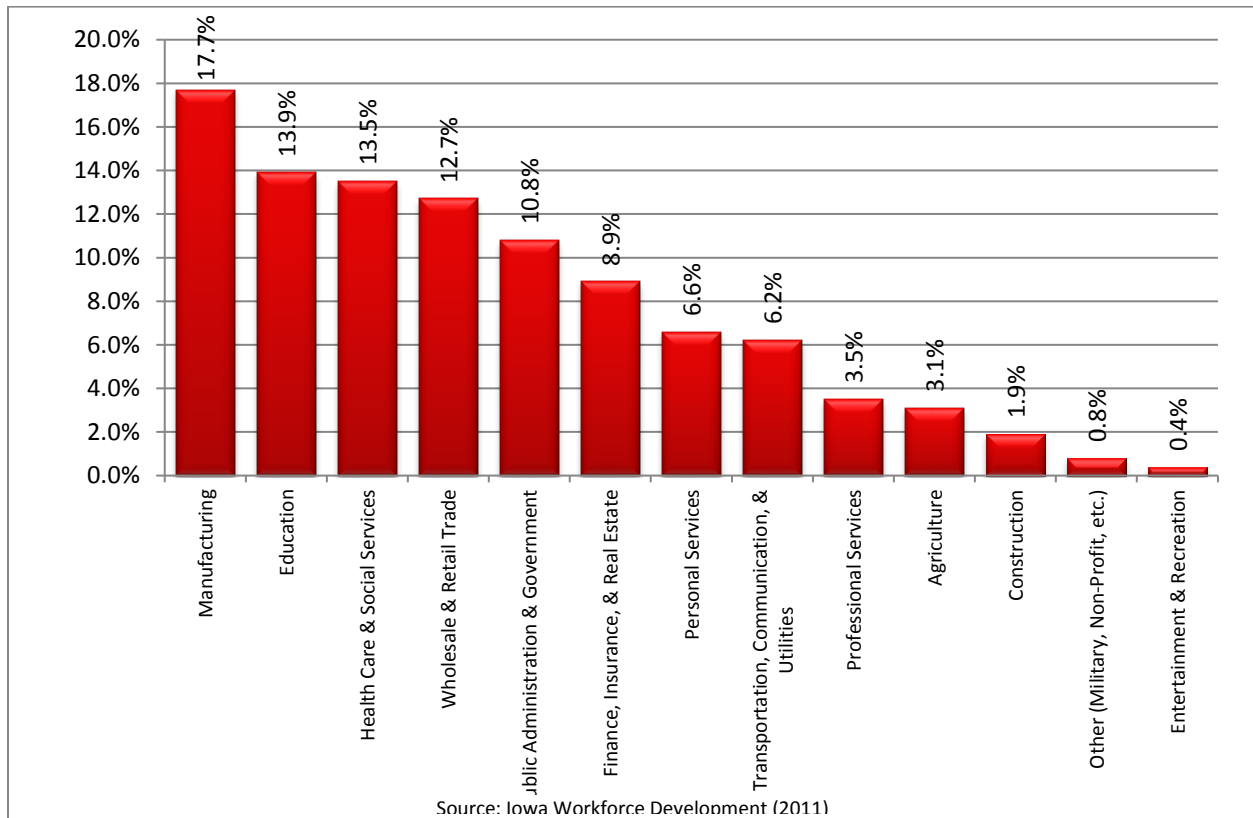


Table 5.2 displays Census data comparing employment changes between 2000 and 2010 in Wright County. This data indicates, to some degree, how industry trends have varied within the past 10 years. The most drastic changes from 2000 to 2010 in any of the industrial sectors occurred in the manufacturing, which experienced a net decrease of 157 jobs. However, considering the largest percentage change, the mining industry increased the most by experiencing a 100% decrease, resulting in 3 less jobs; next was administrative/support/waste management with a 36.8% increase, resulting in 85 additional jobs; and information with a 31.4% decrease, resulting in 109 less jobs. Overall there was a decrease in 383 jobs from 2000 to 2010.

**Table 5.2: Employment trends by Industrial Sector – Wright County – 2000-2010**

Industry	2000*	2010**	% change
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	702	808	7.0%
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	3	0	-100.0%
Construction	415	275	-20.3%
Manufacturing	1,380	1,223	-6.0%
Wholesale trade	261	302	7.3%
Retail trade	640	663	1.8%
Transportation and warehousing	466	372	-11.2%
Utilities	70	64	-4.5%
Information	228	119	-31.4%
Finance and insurance	195	165	-8.3%
Real estate and rental and leasing	40	42	2.4%
Professional, scientific, and technical services	208	161	-12.7%
Management of companies and enterprises	0	0	-
Administrative and support and waste management	73	158	36.8%
Educational services	573	586	1.1%
Health care and social assistance	919	889	-1.7%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	42	68	23.6%
Accommodation and food services	242	190	-12.0%
Other services, except public administration	336	299	-5.8%
Public administration	136	162	8.7%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6,929</b>	<b>6,546</b>	<b>-2.8%</b>

\*2000 data based on 2000 census data

\*\*2010 data based on ACS 5-year survey, each value has a given margin of error

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2010)

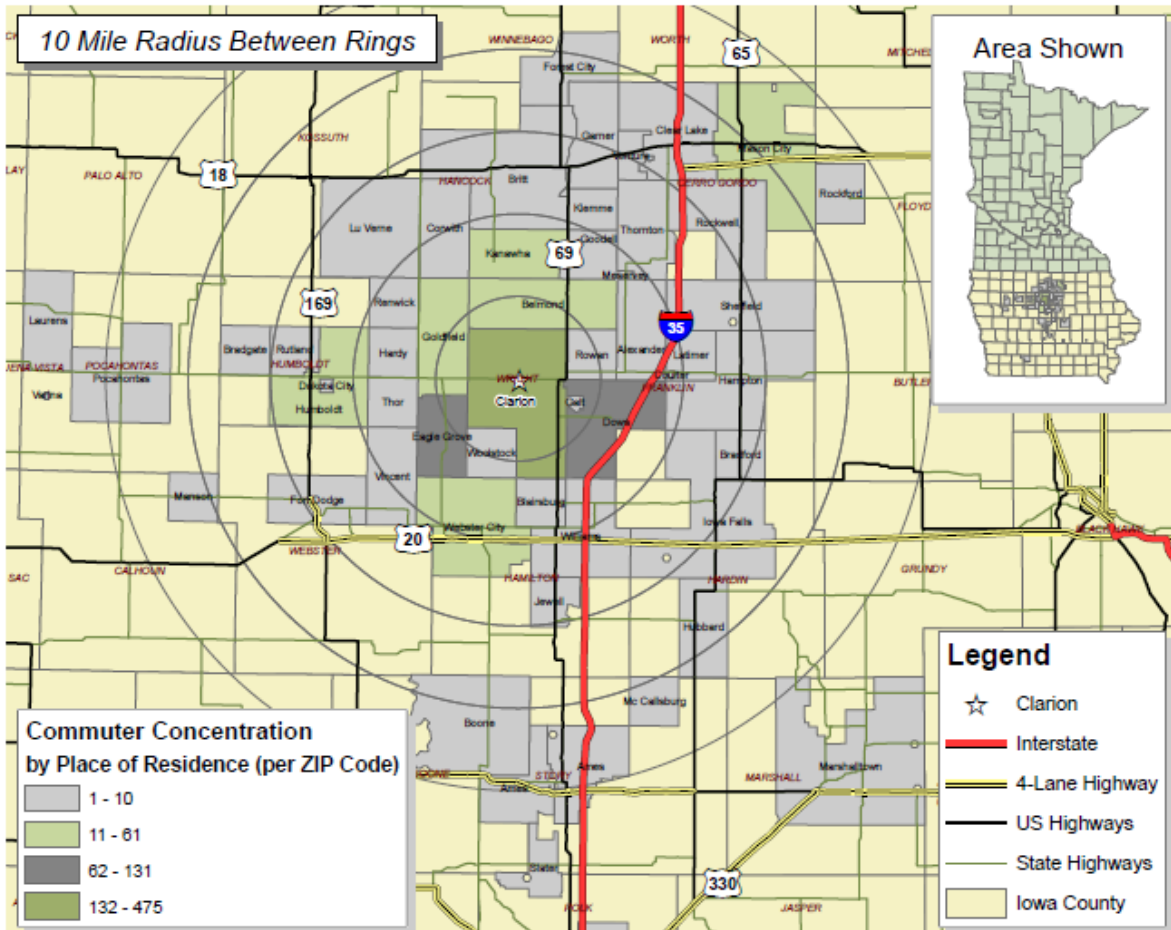
These trends indicate that there has been a decrease in the number of employment opportunities in Wright County and that additional tools may need to be implemented to stimulate growth within specific industrial sectors.

### ***Commuting Patterns***

According to the 2010 U.S. Census, the American Community Survey 5-year estimates show that of those commuting to work, approximately 77.6% drove alone, 10% carpooled, 1.2% used public transportation, 5.7% walked, 1.2% used other means and 4.4% worked from home. The average travel time to work was 14.6 minutes.

Figure 5.5 displays commuting patterns within Wright County. The map represents commuting patterns into Clarion with the concentration per zip code represented in the legend. The map shows that a majority of commuters into Clarion are located in the Clarion, Eagle Grove and Dows areas. A number of other commuters come from within Webster, Hamilton, Hancock and even Cerro Gordo Counties.

**Figure 5.5: Commuter Patterns for Wright County**



Source: Iowa Workforce Development (2011)

According to Iowa Workforce Development “those who are willing to change/accept employment in the Fort Dodge and Wright County Laborshed area are willing to commute an average of 23 miles one way for employment opportunities” (Iowa Workforce Development, 2011).

The out commute of a community represents the percentage of residents living in the node community (Clarion), but working for employers located in other communities. The out commute for Clarion is estimated at 14%, which accounts for approximately 177 people in Clarion commuting to other communities for employment (Iowa Workforce Development, 2011); most of those who out commute work in Belmond, Eagle Grove or Goldfield.

### **Wright County Economic Development**



The mission of Wright County Economic Development (WCED) is to “retain what we have, expand and grow, seek out the future”. WCED provides resources and information for business and housing in Wright County. The WCED Revolving Loan Fund provides assistance to existing businesses and potential businesses that are looking to locate in the area. The First-time Home Owners Loan Program helps Wright County families acquire single family residences through low-interest loans, down payment assistance or repair assistance. Other programs or resources are available on the County’s website or by contacting WCED.

### **Goals and Implementation Actions (Economic Development)**

#### **Goal: Promote countywide economic development**

Economic indicators such as gains or decline in labor force, employment or unemployment rates and increases or decreases in industry help the County to understand their economic standing and future economic opportunities. By encouraging the expansion of existing contributors and appealing to future contributors, the County should continue to promote countywide economic development efforts.

#### **Objective E.1 Promote Agricultural development**

##### Implementation Strategies

##### **E.1.1 Provide incentives for agri-business**

Agriculture has been a major economic attribute for Wright County. Encouraging agriculture related businesses such as food production, seed supply, agrichemicals, machinery, wholesale, distribution, etc., will help to maintain the County’s existing agriculture economy and build upon this economy by encouraging different types of agri-business. Some incentives that can be used to encourage such industry include Tax Increment Financing (TIF), Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Value-Added Agricultural Products and Processes Financial Assistance Program (VAAPFAP).

#### **Objective E.2 Identify areas for commercial and industrial uses**

##### Implementation Strategies

##### **E.2.1 Encourage commercial and industrial development along corridors identified in the Future Land Use map**

Wright County should promote commercial and industrial development in spaces adequate for such uses. As identified in the future land use map, the county has identified some commercial/industrial corridors where they would like to encourage such development. Doing so will eliminate conflicting land uses in other, undesired portions of the County and will promote safety and convenience, improve traffic safety and flow, and enhance economic viability.

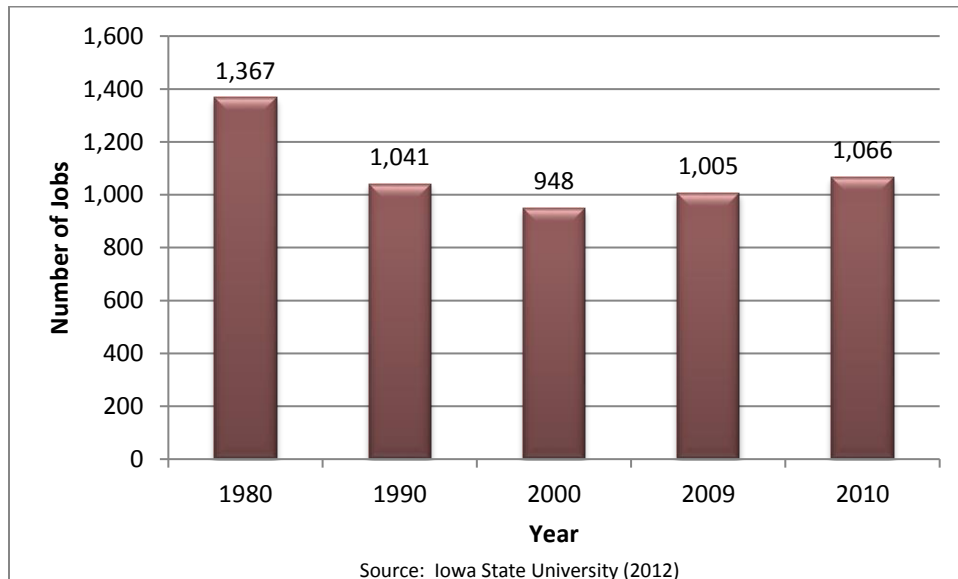
## 5.2 Agriculture

### Existing Conditions

#### *Agricultural Economy*

Agriculture is important to the economic fabric of Wright County. It provides employment, income and local products to the County. Figure 5.6 shows Farm Employment in Wright County for full-time and part-time employees by year. According to this table, farm employment for Wright County increased by 61 persons from 2009 to 2010 (Iowa State University, 2012).

**Figure 5.6: Wright County Farm Employment – 1980-2010**



There are two major agriculture productions that drive the agricultural economy in Wright County; livestock and cropland. Livestock production generates the greatest portion of farm sales in Wright County and accounts for 20.9% of the County’s total economic output (Iowa State University - University Extension, 2009). Livestock production includes hogs, cattle, sheep and poultry. The County ranked number 5 in the State for value of livestock, poultry and their products, number 1 in value of sales for poultry and eggs, number 1 for inventory of layers and pullets for laying flock replacement and number 7 in inventory of cattle and calves (USDA, 2007).

Cropland generates the second largest portion of farm sales at 9% of the County’s total economic output (Iowa State University - University Extension, 2009). The County’s top two crop productions include corn for grain and soybeans for beans (USDA, 2007). As of 2007, farmland accounted for 88% of the surface land in the County; however, while the number of farms was increasing, the amount of farmland was decreasing (Table 5.3).

**Table 5.3: Agriculture Data 1900-2007 – Wright County**

	1900	1950	1982	1992	2002	2007
<b>Number of Farms</b>	-	1983	1009	812	752	771
<b>Total Farmland (acres)</b>	-	-	-	-	345,490	327,728
<b>Average Size of Farm (acres)</b>	195	183	357	-	459	425

Source: Iowa State University (2012)

The size of farms was expressed as a concern in the focus group meetings conducted in Wright County (see Appendix C). Residents feared that corporate farming would become a dominant trend in the County. As shown in Table 5.3, the average size of farms increased from 1900 to 2002; however from 2002 to 2007 the size of farms decreased by 34 acres.

***Agricultural Land Values***

Land use decisions are heavily based on protecting prime farmland, which is defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, as having an adequate supply of moisture, favorable temperature and growing season, acceptable levels of acidity, few or no rocks, permeability to water and air, is not excessively erodible or saturated with water, is not frequently flooded and has a slope that ranges between 0 to 6 percent (Dideriksen, 1992).

According to the Soil Survey of Wright County (1992), nearly 82% of the total acreage in Wright County met the soil requirements for prime farmland; however, as of 2007, farmland accounted for 88% of the land in the County.

Wright County is fortunate to have as much prime farmland as it does; therefore keeping land values higher than statewide averages. Table 5.4 shows the value of Farmland in Wright County to be \$8,760 per acre, which is an increase from 2010.

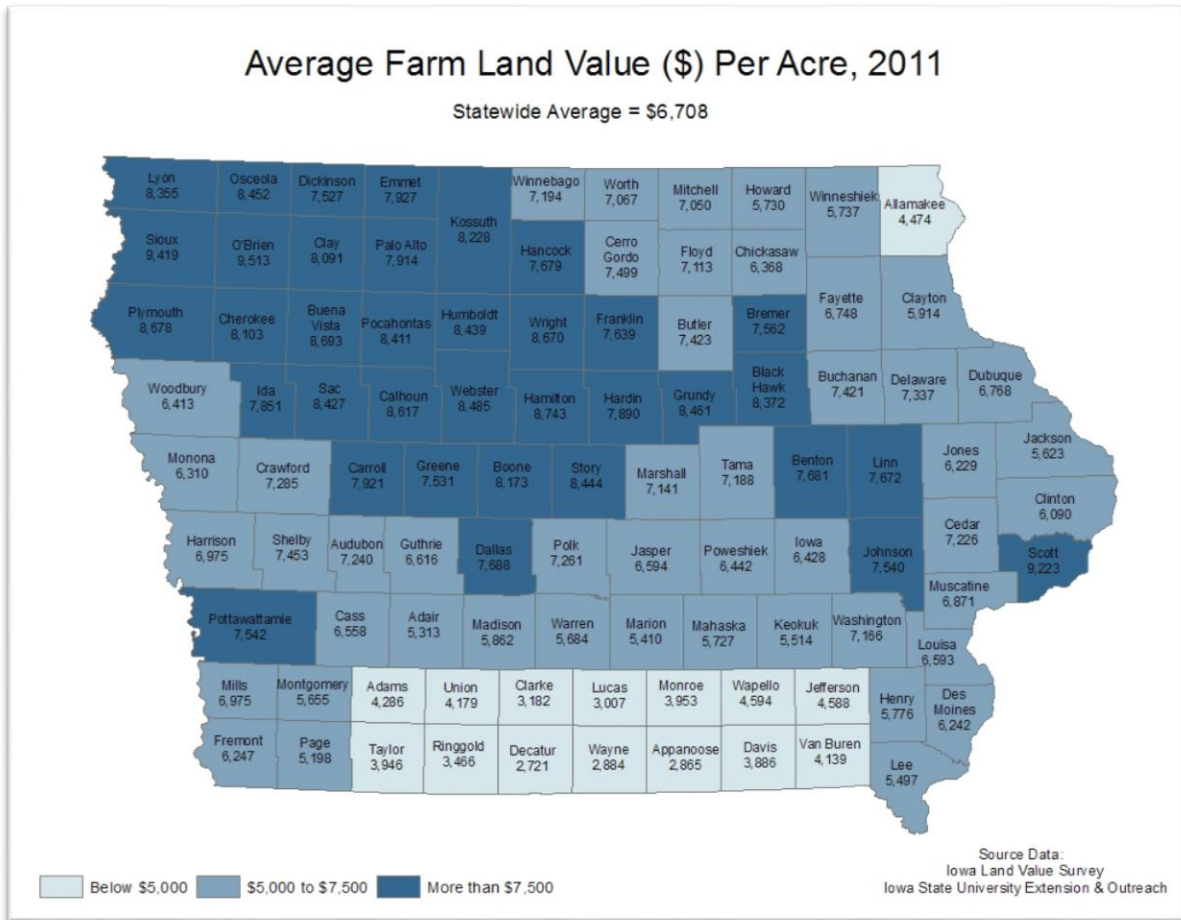
**Table 5.4: Average Farm Land Value – 1980-2011**

	1980	1990	2000	2010	2011
<b>Land Value</b>	\$2,921	\$1,722	\$2,434	\$6,553	\$8,670

The map displayed in Figure 5.7 depicts average land values across the State of Iowa during 2011. As indicated on the map, it is evident that Wright County is situated amongst some of the richest, prime agricultural soils across the nation. North central to Northwest Iowa, on average, offers the highest land values found across the state.



Figure 5.7: Average Farm Land Value - 2011

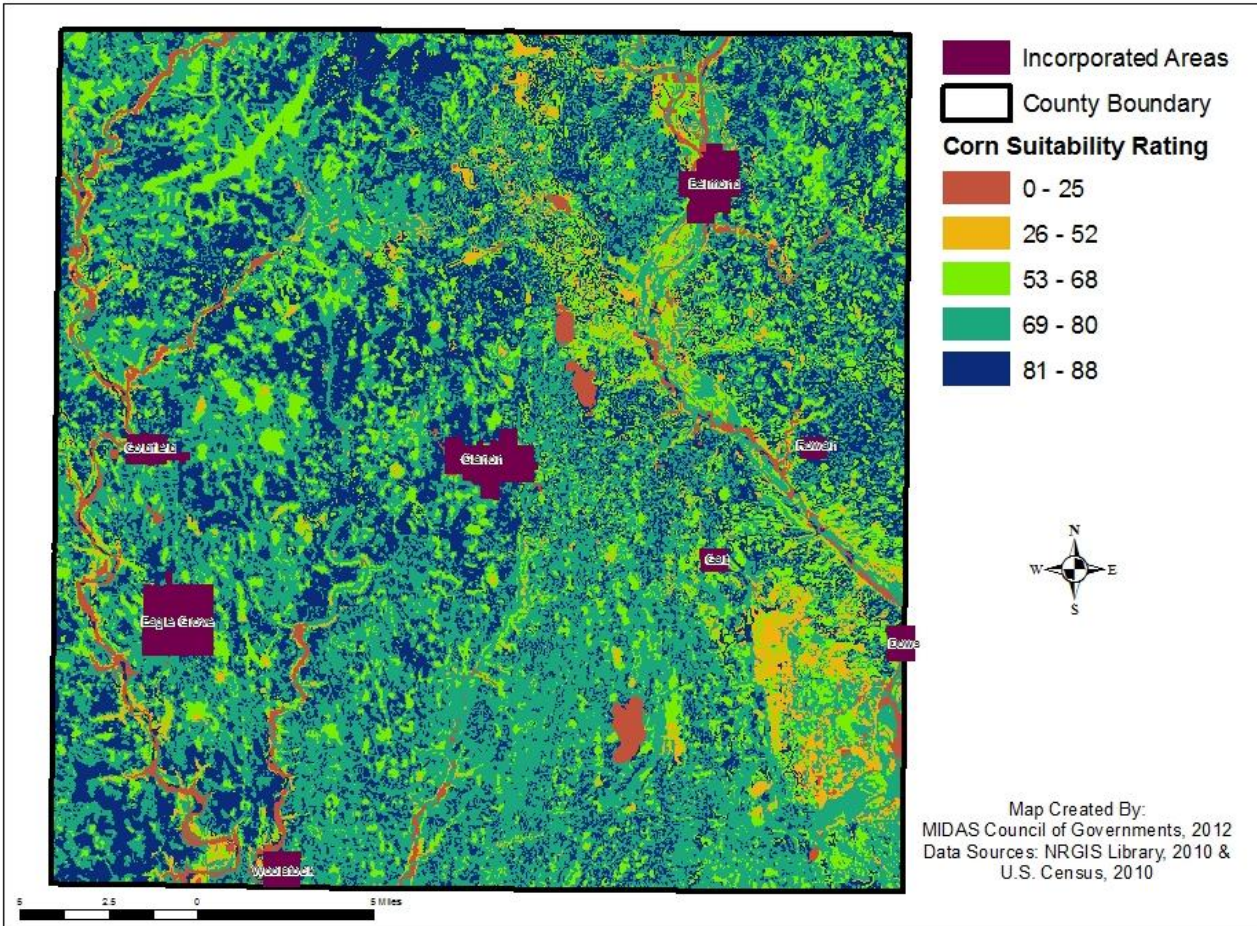


Source: Iowa State University (2012)

***Corn Suitability Rating***

The corn suitability rating is an index rating of each different kind of soil based on its potential row-crop productivity. Factors that impact the CSR include soil profile properties, weather conditions and slope characteristics. (Miller, 2005) The CSR for Wright County tends to be rather high, especially in areas with flat grounds. Figure 5.8 displays a map of the County’s CSR, excluding the incorporated areas. The higher the CSR, the better its potential is for row-crop productivity.

Figure 5.8: Wright County CSR



**Goals and Implementation Actions (Agriculture)**

**Goal: Preserve and protect Agricultural land with emphasis on prime agricultural areas**

Agricultural land is a valuable resource and a major economic driver within Wright County. Preserving and protecting prime agriculture land from prospective development and urban sprawl will ensure that agricultural products and farming will continue to have a strong presence within Wright County.

*Objective A.1 Direct development away from agriculture lands, where possible*

Implementation Strategies

**A.1.1 Prioritize agricultural land development using the Corn Suitability Rating (CSR)**

The corn suitability rating is an index rating of each different kind of soil based on its potential row-crop productivity. Factors that impact the CSR include soil profile properties, weather conditions and slope characteristics. (Miller, 2005) Agriculture lands identified to have a high CSR should be protected to ensure the most successful row-crop production within Wright County; and those areas with a low CSR, should be recognized as areas where future development could potentially be located, if necessary.

**A.1.2 Encourage development within and adjacent to incorporated areas**

In association with prioritizing agricultural land development based on the CSR, the County should direct residential, commercial, industrial and other forms of development

toward areas where such development currently exists. Establishing development contiguous to existing land uses will discourage urban sprawl and pocket development throughout the unincorporated area of the County, while protecting the existing prime agricultural land.

*Objective A.2 Encourage growth in agricultural economy*

Implementation Strategies

**A.2.1 Provide financial incentives to agricultural related development with priority given to agri-business.**

Agriculture lands and agriculture-related businesses in the unincorporated area of Wright County have historically been, and currently are, a major economic driver within the County. Encouraging agricultural-related development will ensure that that agriculture has a strong existence within the County's economy. Providing financial incentives to agricultural-related development will establish an additional backbone for the County to use to encourage such development. (Will include a brief summary of financial incentives)

**A.2.2 Explore the terms "family farm" and "commercial farm", and encourage development of the smaller, more locally supportive and beneficial farm-type of the two.**

The terms "family farm" and "commercial farm" are complicated terms to define and potentially identify. Establishing a definition of either term will help the County to clearly express the type of farming that they would like to encourage, which specifically includes those agricultural entities that strongly support the local economy, encourage a high quality of life, build a strong agricultural "community" and have stake in the County's overall well-being.

*Objective A.3 Locate commercial and industrial development adjacent to areas with the necessary services and infrastructure*

Implementation Strategies

**A.3.1 Review and update county zoning ordinance and map**

The zoning ordinance is a legal document used to manage land use and development. Updating the ordinance will help to shape future growth and keep it within the County's vision.

**A.3.2 Enforce the zoning ordinance and limit the number of variances granted**

In addition to updating the zoning ordinance, the County should continue to enforce the zoning ordinance to ensure proper usage of land and that legal processes are followed. As currently required by Wright County, variances should only be allowed when the applicant can prove to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors that enforcement of the ordinance will inflict an unnecessary hardship on the landowner following the three-part test set out by the Iowa Courts. This means that the applicant must satisfy the following:

1. The land in question cannot yield a reasonable return if used only for purpose allowed in that zone;
2. The plight of the landowner is due to unique circumstances and not to general conditions in neighborhood, which may reflect the unreasonableness of the ordinance itself; and
3. The use to be authorized by variance will not alter essential character of the County.

**A.3.3 Monitor agriculture designations to ensure appropriate use**

Agriculture properties should be monitored to ensure that they are being used as an agriculture use and not any other land use such as commercial or industrial. Monitoring

and enforcing prohibited uses will ensure proper taxing and maintain the County’s vision and identity for the unincorporated area.

### 5.3 Housing

Housing is an important issue as it is one of humanity’s basic needs. While some people are concerned with the increase in nonfarm dwellings locating in the unincorporated area others see it as a indicator that people want the better quality of life provided in the rural area of the County. The following portion of this plan concentrates on housing data for the County including the number of housing units, type of housing units, age of housing structures, and other data relating to housing. Where available 2000 and 2010 census data is used to identify how the community is changing.

#### Existing Conditions

##### *Total and Vacant Housing Units*

Table 5.2 displays the number of occupied and vacant housing units in the unincorporated area of the County, the incorporated area of Wright County and the State of Iowa for the years 2000 and 2010. Between 2000 and 2010 the number of housing units in the incorporated cities of Wright County increased by less than 1% and the State of Iowa increased by 8%, while the unincorporated area of the County decreased by 2%. This could indicate that the county is removing older, dilapidated housing while few new homes are being built in the unincorporated area. The number of vacant units increased in all three areas over the past ten years; however, the unincorporated area of Wright County had the smallest vacancy rate increase of 16.7%. Also the incorporated cities in the County and the State of Iowa vacancy rates increased by 46% and 38%, respectively. These trends are evidence of the economic downturn that took place in recent years. Many people are leaving rural areas for larger, metropolitan areas. Due to this shift, development lessened in rural communities and increased elsewhere in the State. A surplus in housing units occurred because of the housing units built in Iowa between 2000 and 2010, 30% were left vacant or caused occupied units to become vacant.

**Table 5.5: Occupancy Status**

OCCUPANCY STATUS	2000			2010		
	Unincorporated Area of Wright County	Incorporated Cities in Wright County	Iowa	Unincorporated Area of Wright County	Incorporated Cities in Wright County	Iowa
Total housing units	1,539	5,020	1,232,511	1,507	5,022	1,336,417
Occupied housing units	1,264 (82.1%)	4,676 (93.2%)	1,149,276 (93.2%)	1,186 (78.7%)	4,439 (88.4%)	1,221,576 (91.4%)
Vacant housing units	275 (17.9%)	344 (6.8%)	83,235 (6.8%)	321 (21.3%)	583 (11.6%)	114,841 (8.6%)

Source: U.S. Census (2000 & 2010)

While the number of occupied units has decreased for both the unincorporated and incorporated portion of Wright County, the number of owner-occupied housing units for the unincorporated area has increased from 2000 to 2010. This is an indication that people living in the unincorporated area of the county are more likely to own their own home than rent.

**Table 5.6: Tenure**

TENURE	2000			2010		
	Unincorporated Area of Wright County	Incorporated Cities in Wright County	Iowa	Unincorporated Area of Wright County	Incorporated Cities in Wright County	Iowa
Occupied housing units	1,264	4,676	1,149,276	1,186	4,439	1,221,576
Owner-occupied housing units	951 (75.2%)	3,456 (73.9%)	831,419 (72.3%)	975 (82.2%)	3,159 (71.2%)	880,635 (72.1%)
Renter-occupied housing units	313 (24.8%)	1,220 (26.1%)	317,857 (27.7%)	211 (17.8%)	1,280 (28.8%)	340,941 (27.9%)

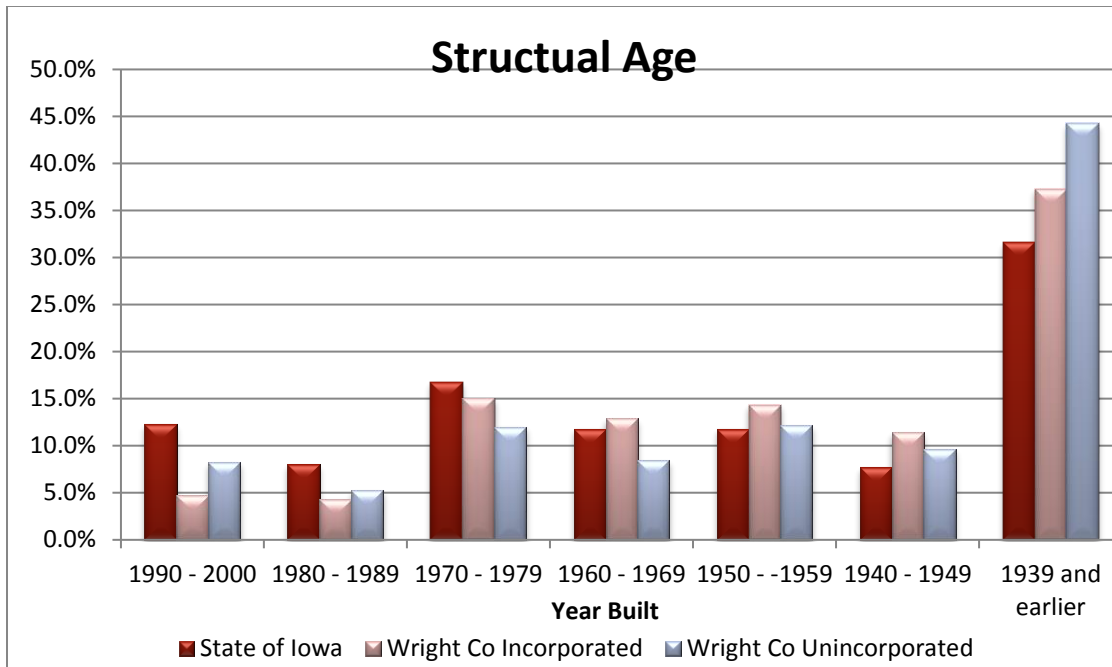
Source: U.S. Census (2000 & 2010)

### ***Age of Housing Structures***

Figure 5.9 compares the age of housing units in the incorporated area of Wright County, the unincorporated area, and Iowa according to the 2000 census. Approximately 44% of Wright County's unincorporated units were constructed prior to 1939. From 1990 to 2000 only 126 (8.2%) structures were built in the unincorporated area of the County, 238 (4.7%) structures were built in the incorporated areas of the County and 151,404 (12.3%) structures were built in the State of Iowa. Since 1970 the State has exceeded both the incorporated and unincorporated area of Wright County in the percentage of housing units developed. This could again be due to the development of high density residential units in metropolitan areas of the State that target younger populations.



Figure 5.9: Age of Structures – Unincorporated and Incorporated area of Wright County, State of Iowa



**Home Values**

Table 5.7 shows that the median housing value of owner occupied units for every incorporated city in Wright County and the County as a whole is below the State of Iowa median value. While this is the middle value of housing numbers, approximately 47% of housing units hold a value of less than \$50,000 within the County. 12 % of housing units in the state cost anywhere between \$150,000 and \$299,000 while only 3% of the housing units in Wright County fall in this range. In the county approximately 21% of the owner occupied homes are valued between \$50,000 and \$69,000 while the only 17% of the homes in the State of Iowa fall into this value range. This data shows that Wright County, in general, is a pretty affordable place to own a home.

Table 5.7: Housing Value

Median Housing Value - 2000	
Belmond	\$62,800
Clarion	\$37,026
Dows	\$31,100
Eagle Grove	\$44,200
Galt	\$34,400
Goldfield	\$38,300
Rowan	\$25,300
Woolstock	\$40,500
Wright County	\$52,500
Iowa	\$82,500

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2000)

Wright County has experienced housing trends similar to many other rural communities throughout the State of Iowa. The County has vacant housing that is affordable for residents; however, very little development is occurring within the county.

### **Goals and Implementation Actions (Housing)**

**Goal: Direct residential growth toward areas with existing infrastructure**

In order to make the most efficient use of existing or readily expandable utilities, it is essential that future residential growth first occurs within existing developed areas of the County. It is anticipated that growth that occurs outside these areas follow the guidelines discussed in each of the following objectives.

*Objective H.1 Promote residential growth in suitable areas for such development*

#### Implementation Strategies

##### **H.1.1 Encourage and/or enforce when applicable, residential development outside of floodplain**

To ensure the safety and well-being of Wright County residents, the County should direct residential outside of the floodplain. This will protect residents and structures from avoidable flood circumstances.

##### **H.1.2 Develop a map of potential residential areas based on the Corn Suitability Rating (CSR)**

By establishing a map of the CSR values within Wright County, the County can direct residential development away from prime agriculture land. The County should establish a scale of the ratings suitable for development.

*Objective H.2 Encourage quality housing*

#### Implementation Strategies

##### **H.2.1 Research and develop strategies for nuisance abatement**

Nuisance abatement may relate to specific violations of building, fire, zoning, animals, noise, juveniles and health. By researching development strategies and applying those that the County will enforce will promote safety, welfare, and well-being for all of the County's residents.

##### **H.2.2 Explore rental inspection/certification programs**

A rental inspection and/or certification program ensures that residential rentals are up to code and suitable for living. Similar to strategy H2.1, exploring options to implement a rental inspection program will promote safety, welfare, and well-being for all of the County's residents and ensure that the housing stock is of quality form for living.

## **5.4 Transportation**

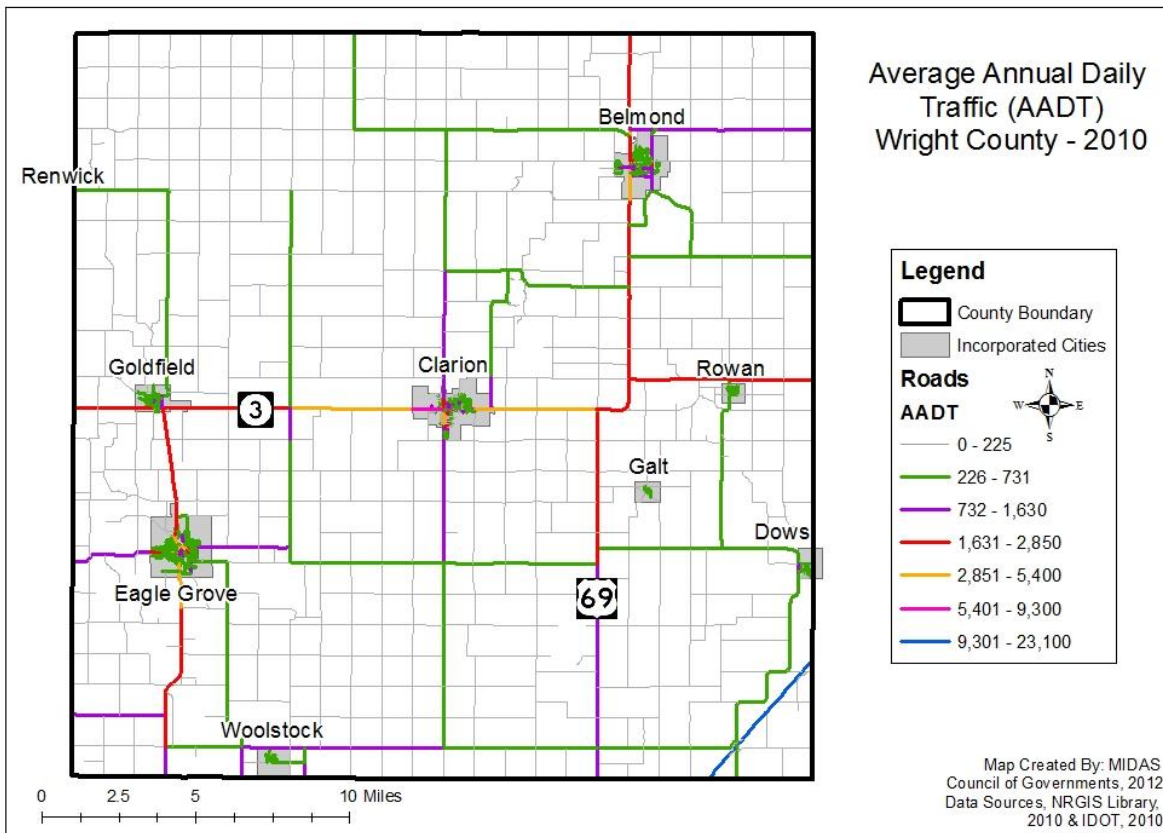
Transportation has a major influence on land use. The transportation element of the plan evaluates and expands upon transportation options within the County.

### **Existing Conditions**

Transportation options in the County include air, personal vehicle, public transit walking, biking, and train. The most common mode of transportation used by the county is motor vehicle. Figure 5.10

displays the County’s location in regards to County and State Roads. Wright County has access to the interstate with I-35 running through the southeastern portion of the county, State Highways 3, 17 and 69 are also present within Wright County.

**Figure 5.10 Wright County Transportation**



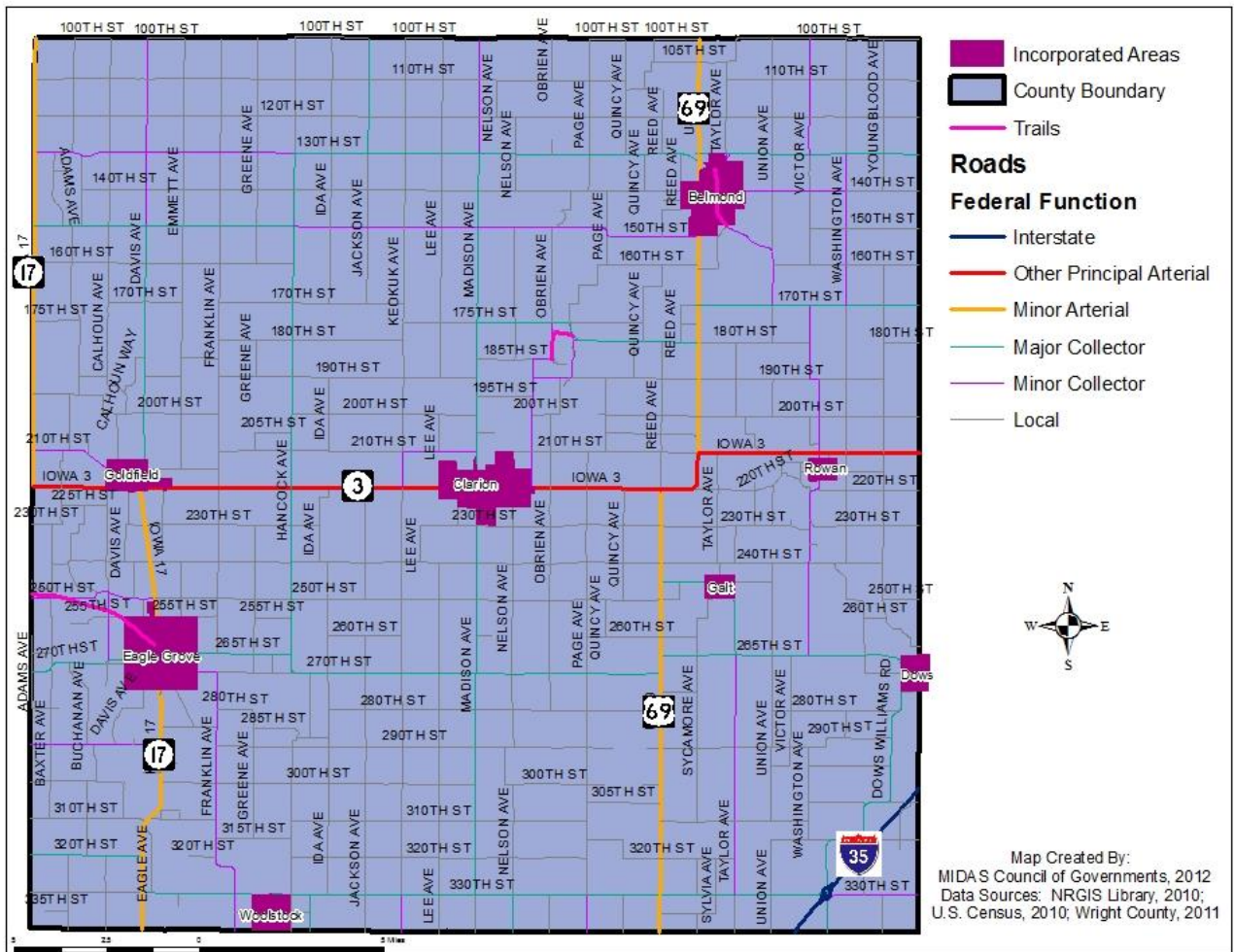
Limited air service is available through the Belmont, Clarion and Eagle Grove airports. The closest commercial regional airport is in Fort Dodge.

Wright County is served by Wright County Transit. Wright County Transit is a MIDAS RTA sub-provider. MIDAS provides the transit authority, buses, bus insurance, bus maintenance and Drug and Alcohol program. MIDAS also provides Wright County with federal and state funds. Wright County provides their own drivers and dispatch, and sets their own transit rates. Wright County runs a Demand Response service. Services are provided Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Wright County sub-contracts out to the cities of Clarion and Eagle Grove to provide public transit within their cities.

While residents are able to use their personal vehicles for local travel, walking and biking are common modes during the spring and summer months. Figure 5.11 shows the existing roadways and trails in the county.



Figure 5.11 Wright County Roads and Trails



The Union Pacific Railroad and the Iowa Northern Railway run through the County. These railroads haul only freight which includes automobiles and parts, chemicals/fertilizer, coal, ethanol, food and food products, forest products, grain, machinery, metals and minerals.

**Goals and Implementation Actions (Transportation)**

**Goal:** *Develop a transportation system that will promote the safe, efficient and economic movement of people and goods*

Improvements to the County’s transportation infrastructure systems is one of the primary vital components to developing a sound economic base. To ensure the best use of County funds and proper movement, all roads should be regularly maintained and future development should be located where suitable road access is available.

*Objective T.1 Regularly maintain and improve existing roads*

Implementation Strategies

**T.1.1 Provide regular funding source for maintenance**

Good roads and adequate maintenance of such is a common goal for Counties throughout the State of Iowa. A major obstacle in achieving this goal is identifying funding options to maintain all roadways. Establishing a regular source for maintenance would help the County to plan for and enhance roadways within the County. (Identify potential funding sources)

*Objective T.2 Encourage infill development to eliminate wear on rural roads not suitable for heavy traffic*  
Implementation Strategies

**T.2.1 Revise existing zoning ordinance to encourage infill development**

New commercial and industrial development should be directed as infill in existing developed areas and towards cities. This will result in less traffic congestion on the County's major highways and result in lower costs for infrastructure.

**T.2.2 Work in conjunction with Cities on proposed development projects and/or zoning**

Ensuring that proposed developments are placed in an adequate space requires communication between the unincorporated area and cities to ensure that necessary infrastructure is available to the degree necessary for the proposed development.

*Objective T.3 Locate developments with high truck traffic along roads suitable for such traffic*  
Implementation Strategies

**T.3.1 Include zoning regulations in the existing zoning ordinance that promote development near roads suitable for such development**

Wright County should promote commercial and industrial development in spaces with access to adequate roadways for the proposed development. This will ensure that roads are being used to their intended capacity and will require less maintenance on those roads not suitable for certain traffic.

**T.3.2 Identified preferred roads for development options**

Identifying roadways suitable for certain traffic will help the County to determine where future commercial and industrial development might locate. Ensuring that proper transportation networks are available will require less maintenance on low-grade roads and encourage use of capable roadways.

**T.3.3 Establish weight limits for established "low use" roads**

Similar to strategy T.3.2, identifying roadways not suitable for certain traffic will help the County to determine which roads should have weight limits. Enforcement of such limits will result in less required maintenance for such roads.

## **5.5 Public Services and Infrastructure**

Good public services and infrastructure promotes quality conditions relating to the governmental and social well-being of the residents of Wright County. The focus of this section is on the services present within the County as well as physical infrastructure services that are provided to residents of the County by the County.

## **Existing Services**

Wright County strives to provide all those services necessary to maintain the day-to-day activities of its residents and businesses; services range anywhere from County Engineering, to Assessors Services, to Community Services and Public Health. Below is a listing of the prominent services provided by the County. While other services are available, a majority of such fall within the following divisions:

Government Structure: The County's government takes structure through the Board of Supervisors (B.O.S.), which is the county body formed to discuss and determine decisions relating to County funds, proposed ordinances, proposed projects and other initiatives that may require an approved agreement with the County. The B.O.S. consists of the chairman and two (2) members representing each District for four-year terms. The B.O.S. holds their regular weekly meetings on each Monday.

Fire Protection Services: Wright County is served by the municipal fire departments through mutual aid agreements between each. The fire departments that serve the county include Clarion, Dows, Eagle Grove, Goldfield and Woolstock Fire Departments.

Health Care Service: The Wright County Health Department offers skilled nursing services who work with resident's physicians to provide in-home healthcare. Other County Health Care services include hospice, mental health, adult health and environmental health services. Public Health is housed in Clarion at 115 1<sup>st</sup> Street Southeast.

Wright County is also served by Wright Medical Center and Belmond Medical Center. Both Medical Centers take pride in their services. Wright Medical Center is located in Clarion and provides services in cardiopulmonary, obstetrics/gynecology, orthopedics, maternity, radiology, rehabilitation and many others. Belmond Medical Center is located in Belmond and provides services in acute care, cardiac rehabilitation, cardiopulmonary rehabilitation, occupational therapy, radiology and many others.

Law Enforcement: The Wright County Sheriff and Sheriff's Deputies are the police force for residents of the unincorporated areas of the county. The Sheriff's Office handles all routine and emergency calls for these areas, and regularly patrols all areas of the County. Located at 719 2<sup>nd</sup> Street Southwest in Clarion, the Sheriff's Office is comprised of the Civil Division, Patrol Division, Records Division, Jail Division and Emergency Management.

Emergency Management Services: The Wright County Emergency Management Agency plans for disasters, responds to disasters, organizes the recovery from disasters and mitigates situations that could cause harm during a disaster. The Emergency Management Department works with fire departments, law enforcement agencies, emergency medical services, hospitals, public health, public works, utilities, and many other local agencies. The Department also works with State and Federal agencies including Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division (IHSEM), Federal Emergency Agency (FEMA), and the Department of Homeland Security.

## **Existing Infrastructure**

Electricity & Natural Gas: Wright County receives the majority of its electric and gas from Alliant/Interstate Power & Light and MidAmerican Energy. Electrical service is also provided to much of

the unincorporated area by Prairie Energy Cooperative. Woolstock Municipal also provides some electrical services; however, mostly in the incorporated area.

Communication (Phone/Internet): Telephone and internet providers in Wright County include Airband Communications; CenturyLink; Communications 1 Network, Inc; DISH Network Corporation, Frontier Communications of Iowa, Inc; Goldfield access Network, LC; Goldfield Telephone Company; Greenway Communications, LLC; Hughes Network Systems, LLC; Mediacom; SpeedNet; ViaSat, Inc; Webster-Calhoun Cooperative Telephone Association; Windstream; and Woolstock Mutual Telephone Association. Mobile internet providers include AT&T Mobility, LLC ; U.S. Cellular and Verizon Wireless.

Water Utility: While some municipal water companies may have extended their drinking water services outside of their City limits, it is common for the unincorporated area of Wright County to use their own personal wells for drinking water. Wells are most suitable for this area because houses are scattered throughout the rural landscape; connecting drinking water systems throughout the County would be costly.

Storm Sewer System: A storm sewer utility is not a common utility in the unincorporated area of Wright County, except for those areas where city storm sewer systems may have been extended outside of their incorporated limits. The majority of drainage is provided by agriculture tiling that is maintained by each appropriate Drainage District. Much of the tiling infrastructure is aging and needs to be repaired or replaced.

Wastewater Treatment: Besides those properties located around Lake Cornelia, a majority of properties in the unincorporated area of Wright County each use a personal septic system for their sewage because, similar to drinking water services, it would be too costly to extend a sewage treatment system throughout the unincorporated area. The Lake Cornelia Sanitary Sewer District completed their wastewater treatment system in the mid-1980's. This system consists of a 3-cell controlled discharge lagoon and sanitary sewer system. All properties that generate wastewater within the district are required to be connected to this system.

### **Goals and Implementation Actions (Public Services & Infrastructure)**

***Goal: Ensure water, wastewater and storm water regulations are followed***

In order to reduce and prevent issues with water supply and distribution, sanitation, and flooding in the unincorporated area of Wright County the County must ensure that all requirements relating to such are being followed.

*Objective P.1 Develop and maintain well, sewer and drainage well requirements*

#### Implementation Strategies

##### **P.1.1 Follow and enforce IDNR regulations relating to well, sewer and drainage well requirements**

The IDNR has certain guidelines regarding private wells, private septic systems and drainage wells that the County is to inspect, permit and enforce. Ensuring that all requirements for wells, septic systems and drainage wells are administered at the County

level will ensure groundwater and environmental protection and prevent water contamination.

**P.1.2 Research and consider adopting and enforcing additional well, sewer and drainage well requirements**

Along with following and enforcing IDNR regulations relating to wells, sewers and drainage wells; the County should research additional regulations that may be beneficial to the County. Adopting such requirements will ensure additional groundwater and environmental protection and prevent water contamination.

## **5.6 Recreation & Conservation**

The recreation & conservation element of the plan provides the opportunity to improve the quality of life for residents of Wright County through health, leisure and entertainment along with the developing the wellbeing of the environment surrounding the residents. People value activities available to them and often times make the decision to locate somewhere based on the recreational resources. This aspect of the plan will look at the existing recreational and conservation opportunities and establish additional opportunities that are of interest to the general public.

Most of the recreation and conservation areas in the county are operated and maintained by the Wright County Conservation Board which was developed in 1958. This board was established to acquire and develop county parks, preserves, forests, and wildlife and conservation areas. Since its development, the Wright County Conservation Board has acquired over 1,900 acres of wildlife habitat and planted over 600,000 trees and shrubs through purchases and donations. (Board, 01-06)

### **Existing Conditions**

The following displays the Wright County Conservation Board's accomplishments over the years due to their hard work and dedication. These parks and wildlife areas are used by many of the residents in the county throughout the changing seasons. Many of the residents include hunters, fishers, photographers, walkers, bikers, paddlers, and other outdoor adventurers.

HOMESTEAD RIDGE AREA: This site boasts 108 acres of upland and bottomland forest along the Boone River about 3 miles west of Woolstock. This an excellent habitat area with deer, wild turkey, squirrels and raccoon found on the area. Approximately 1/2 mile of the Boone River flows through the area offering fishing opportunities for smallmouth bass, catfish and northern pike. This area is the location of the first white settlers homestead in Wright County. The area was purchased with Wildlife Habitat Stamp Funds and is open to hunting and trapping.

BOONE RIVER GREENBELT, MIDDLETON: A 278 acre area located 4 miles south of Eagle Grove and 1/2 mile east of Troy Rest Area. This river corridor includes oak hickory forest, open grassland, flood plain forest, and newly seeded prairie. The greenbelt offers a good place to see some of Wright County's wild life as well as take advantage of 2 miles of river for fishing and canoeing. The area is open to hunting and trapping. This area was purchased with Wildlife Habitat Stamp Funds.

TROY ROADSIDE PARK: This is a one acre rest area located on the Boone River for fishing and canoeing. The park is located 3 miles south of Eagle Grove on Highway 17.

SPORTSMAN WILDLIFE AREA: This is a 17 acre wooded area along the Boone River located 1 mile south and 1- 1/2 miles west of Eagle Grove. In 1975, the Conservation Board decided to let the area revert to a more natural state. Hunting is permitted on the area.

THREE RIVERS TRAIL: This is a part of a 40 mile long trail built on abandoned railroad right-of-way. The trail runs from 2 miles west of Eagle Grove through Humboldt and on to Rolfe in Pocahontas County. There is also a 6 mile spur south of Dakota City to Gotch Park. The trail is surfaced with crushed limestone with rest areas in Thor, Dakota City, Bradgate, Rutland, and Rolfe. Wright County manages only the portion located in Wright County.

OTTER CREEK AREA: This is a 77 acre upland-woodland area located on Otter Creek 1- 1/2 miles north of Goldfield. The area has four small fields that have been planted to trees and native grasses. The area was purchased with Wildlife Habitat Stamp Funding and is open to hunting and trapping.

OAKDALE PARK: 127 acre area located 1 mile east and 1- 1/2 miles south of Renwick along the Boone River. The area is timbered and has a good variety of woodland trees, shrubs, and wildflowers. Two shelter houses, modern restrooms, barbecue grills, water, electricity, and picnic tables are available. The Izaak Walton League maintains a clubhouse and trap shooting range on the area. The conservation board has recently purchased additional wildlife and fishing access adjacent to this area. The new areas were purchased with Wildlife Habitat Stamp Funds and are open to hunting as posted.

BENSON ROADSIDE PARK: This one acre roadside park is located 3 miles west of Clarion on Highway 3. An artesian well, shelter house, and picnic tables are available on site.

PRAIRIE SMOKE WILDLIFE AREA: Three railroad right-of-ways located along the old 'Clarion to Coulter' line make up this area. Several of the land tracts have a good selection of native grasses and flowers that were common to Iowa when it was first settled. Hunting is permitted.

PIKES TIMBER: This is a heavily timbered, 46 acre park and wildlife area that is located 1-1/2 miles east and 1/2 mile south of Lake Cornelia. The area has three shelter houses, toilets, electricity, water, and playground equipment. The Iowa River flows the length of the park.

LAKE CORNELIA PARK: This Park is a 122 acre recreation area jointly owned by the State of Iowa and Wright County and managed by the Wright County Conservation Board. The park provides water, showers, modern and pit latrines, boat ramp, picnicking facilities, playgrounds and open fields, and camping with 50 amp electrical outlets. The Wright County Conservation Board headquarters and Park Ranger are located on the area. The park is located on the north end of Lake Cornelia which is a 243 acre natural glacial lake with an average depth of 7 feet and a maximum depth of 18 feet. The lake provides fishing for walleye, channel catfish, perch, crappie, bluegill and largemouth bass. Hunting is allowed on the 25 acres north of C25.

ELDRIDGE PARK: This is a one acre park located on the southwest side of Lake Cornelia. Picnic tables are available and the land was donated by the Eldridge Estate.

CAMBIER RIVER BEND AREA: This wildlife management area was acquired with a donation from the Cambier Family in 1997 and with Wildlife Habitat Stamp Funds. The area is located 3 miles southwest of Belmont along the Iowa River. The conservation board is reconstructing prairie areas, planting food patches, and will develop a river/canoe access. Over 1/2 mile of the Iowa River is protected by this area along with several river oxbows. The area is mostly grassland with some second growth woodlands. It is open to hunting and is 92 acres in size.

FOUR SEASONS WILDLIFE AREA: This 218 acre plot of open grasslands is located east of Lake Cornelia on the northwest corner of Quincy Avenue and C25. The area was purchased with Wildlife Habitat Stamp Funding and donations from Ducks Unlimited, Pheasants Forever, and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. Development will include native grass plantings and wetland restoration. The area is open to hunting, fishing, and trapping. The area provides access to over half a mile of the Iowa River.

ROLLING ACRES POTHOLES: This is an 80 acre prairie pothole area that is jointly owned by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources and Wright County Conservation with management by the Wright County Conservation Board. The area is located east of Morse Lake on 150<sup>th</sup> street (west of Page Avenue) and includes several prairie potholes mixed with upland and crop fields that were planted to native grasses and food patches. Hunting is allowed in this area.

ST. JOHNS CHURCH AREA: This one acre wildlife habitat planting is on the site of the old Saint Johns Lutheran Church, located in rural Wright County on Ida Avenue between 130<sup>th</sup> and 140<sup>th</sup> Streets. This church community disbanded in 1993 and donated the land to the Wright County Conservation Board as a wildlife habitat area. Trees were planted in 1994, with a marker which denotes the historic site.

GUN CLUB CORNER: This 3 -1/2 acres of wildlife habitat was donated to the conservation board by the Iowa River Conservation Club. The area is located 1/2 mile north of Dows on County Road C54 and is open to hunting.

DOWS COMMUNITY PARK: This 3 acre park is located 1 mile northwest of Dows. The area is heavily timbered with hickory trees and includes a shelter house, water, toilets, and picnic tables.

GROOM-DECOSTER WILDLIFE AREA: This plot of 158 acres is located south of Rowan along the Iowa River. Most of the area is open grasslands planted to native grass. Several small wetlands have been restored on the area and tree plantings will provide cover as they mature. Thirty-eight acres were donated by A.J. Decoster, and the rest of this area was purchased with Wildlife Habitat Stamp Funds. The area is open to hunting and trapping.

BINGHAM PARK: This 18 acre timber area offers an excellent opportunity for the naturalist. It is located southwest of Rowan on the west side of Victor Avenue s and runs along the Iowa River. The park has shelter house, toilets, water, and picnic tables available. This area was donated by the Bingham family.

HORSE GROVE-RIETZ FOREST AREA: This area combined has 135 acres of woodland and open areas along the Iowa River southwest of Rowan. Fifteen acres were donated by the Ihm family and are closed to hunting for use as an outdoor classroom and natural preserve. The remaining 120 acres were



purchased with Wildlife Habitat Stamp Funds and are open to hunting and trapping. The area contains both upland and bottomland forests and several small fields that have been planted to tree or native grass. This is an excellent area for the photographer, mushroom or berry hunter, or for anyone just looking to explore nature.

SNARL STREET WETLANDS: An area of 116 acres, located 2 miles west of Rowan on Highway 3, was purchased with Wildlife Habitat Stamp Funding and donations from Ducks Unlimited and Pheasants Forever. The area contains restored upland grasslands, river bottom timber, and wetlands. The Iowa River flows along the southern 1/3 of this area. The area is open to fishing, hunting, and trapping.

GEORGE ELDER WOODS: This 21 acre upland forest area which was donated to the people of Wright County by the family of George Elder. It is the family's wish that the area remain in an undeveloped state as forest and wildlife habitat. The area is located one mile south of Belmond on the east side of the Iowa River.

FINN PRAIRIE PRESERVE: This is a one acre plot is located 3 miles east of Belmond on County Road C20. The area is a past site of a country school house and is thought to contain a variety of original prairie grasses and flowers. The prairie is a fun spot to explore for wild flowers and experience an Iowa prairie. The preserve was donated by the James Finn family and the Pleasant 4-H clubs.

SULLIVAN WILDLIFE HABITAT AREA: The 64 acre area is located 2 miles north of Belmond and was purchased with Wildlife Habitat Stamp Funds. Development here includes seeding and tree planting, parking facilities, and a fishing and canoe access. The area will remain undeveloped and in a natural state and is open to hunting and trapping.

EDWIN J. McCLENAHAN WILDLIFE AREA: This 60 acres of upland and flood plain forest is located east of Elm Lake, along the Iowa River. An area of 30 acres was donated as a memorial to the donors' son with the remainder being purchased with Wildlife Habitat Funds and donations from Pheasants Forever and Wild Turkey Federation. The area provides access to the Iowa River for fishing and canoeing and is open to hunting and trapping. The Edwin J. McClenahan Wildlife Area is located at the corner of 190<sup>th</sup> Street and Reed Avenue in Wright County.

ELM LAKE ACCESS: The 58 acres of wetlands and upland wildlife habitat is divided into two tracts on Elm Lake. The north tract provides lake access and parking. The area is open to hunting and trapping.

## **STATE AREAS**

BIG WALL LAKE: This area is located 5 miles east and 7 miles south of Clarion. Big Wall Lake is a 907 acre marsh and is open to hunting and trapping. There are also 73 acres of timber and upland habitat available. The state maintains three access areas to the lake.

ELM LAKE: This area contains 619 acres of lake, marsh and upland habitat and is located 2 miles east and 2 miles north of Clarion. Elm Lake is a shallow 466 acre glacial lake-marsh with 150 acres of upland habitat located on the south and west side of the lake. The state provides a public access on the eastside of the lake and is open to hunting and trapping.



HELMKE WILDLIFE AREA: This 52 acre wildlife management and river access area is owned by the DNR and managed by the Wright County Conservation Board. The Helmke area is located in northwest Wright County, north of 130<sup>th</sup> Street between Buchanan Avenue and Calhoun Avenue. Being situated on the upper reaches of the Boone River, the Helmke area provides access to over 1/2 mile of stream. State land borders both sides of the river and contains several ponds, grasslands, and both upland oak timber and bottomland timber. It is open to hunting, trapping, and fishing. Future plans include a canoe access and parking areas.

LOWER MORSE LAKE WATERFOWL PRODUCTION AREA: This upland-wetland habitat area is owned by The Fish and Wildlife Service, The State of Iowa and is managed by the Iowa DNR. The area contains open grasslands, reconstructed prairie, and restored wetlands. Numerous wetlands from one acre to over 80 acres have been restored through the project. The area is over 1900 acres in size and is open to hunting and trapping.

MORSE LAKE: A 108 acre shallow lake-marsh located 5 miles west of Belmond contains 64 acres of upland habitat, marshlands, and is open to hunting and trapping. A concrete boat ramp is provided for users.

OLAF WATERFOWL PRODUCTION AREA: This 38 acres of wetland-grasslands was purchased by the fish and wild life service and is managed as a waterfowl production area by the Iowa DNR and is open to hunting and trapping. It is located in northern Wright County on Nelson Avenue, between 110<sup>th</sup> Street and 120<sup>th</sup> Street.

WHITETAIL FLATS AREA: This area is located 3 miles south of Dows in both Wright and Franklin counties and contains 391 acres of river bottom timber, upland habitat, and marsh. The Iowa River also runs through the area and is open to hunting and trapping. The state maintains two access points in the area.

*The above listing was developed from the Wright County Conservation Board's publication **A Guide to the Recreation and Conservation Areas of Wright County** (Wright County Conservation Board, 01-06)*

### ***Recreation and Conservation Responsibilities***

Wright County has the responsibility of maintaining and developing new opportunities for outdoor entertainment, recreation and conservation throughout the area. The task of maintenance often comes to the minds of many of the residents when surveyed about the condition of the area. Below is a listing of the importance of services and/or facilities to residents of the County based on the surveys that were disbursed and collected in the unincorporated area of the County for the full survey results see Appendix B:

#### RECREATION SERVICES:

- **Less Important** - Frisbee Golf, Football Fields, soccer fields, Tennis/racquetball courts, skate parks
- **Neutral** – Baseball/softball fields, Basketball courts, Sand volleyball courts, motor boating, Bike trails
- **More Important** – Hiking trails, Bike trails

CONSERVATION SERVICES:

- **Less Important** - Off-road vehicles/ATV areas, target shooting,
- **Neutral** – Non-motor boating, tent camping, hunting areas, bird sanctuaries
- **More Important** – Fish areas, lake/river access

Majority rated the parks and public areas in Wright County as Good

Most had no opinion if there should be more or less parks/public areas in the county.

**Goals and Implementation Actions (Recreation and Conservation)**

***Goal (1): Protect environmental features such as floodplains, wetlands, and other sensitive areas***

Development occurring within designated natural resources or environmentally sensitive areas should be preceded with caution, if at all. That which is allowed should be minimal in its impact to the environment and should take into account watershed impact, drainage and utilities.

*Objective R.1 Direct development away from floodplains/wetlands*

Implementation Strategies

**R.1.1 Adopt and enforce a floodplain ordinance**

The goal of a floodplain ordinance is to discourage development within a floodplain to protect both the natural environment, and to protect people and structures from unnecessary damages due to flooding. A floodplain ordinance provides certain requirements for development within a floodplain ranging from allowing development based on certain met requirements, or restricting any development at all. Model floodplain ordinances may be provided by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR).

*Objective R.2 Protect soil from eroding by improving waterways and embankments using resources planning and management measures*

Implementation Strategies

**R.2.1 Develop a plan to clear rivers in the County**

Water resources planning and management measures such as removing debris from rivers will ensure safety of individuals using the rivers for recreational use and keep rivers from backing up and causing extensive flooding. A plan for clearing rivers should work as a guide and should identify rivers and creeks, problematic areas, timeframe for clean-ups and potential funding sources for clearance.

**R.2.2 Establish tools for bank protection**

Used as a form or preventing flooding and soils erosion along, tools for bank protection include vegetation, dams, levees, riprap, retaining walls, and many others. By identifying vulnerable areas and establishing a plan to address such areas, the County will be able to address the major concern of stream bank erosion.

**R.2.3 Develop a program for drainage control**

Drainage and storm water management is a major concern that exists throughout the state of Iowa. Drainage control programs are implemented through storm water management control practices, which include land use controls, bio-swales, constructed wetlands, infiltration basins and others; each of these practices, when used in conjunction addresses concerns of erosion, flooding, drain outlets and water quality.

***Goal (2): Maintain/improve citizens quality of life***

The quality of life in Wright County is a very important factor in the effort to continue the County's growth and prosperity. Among the features that contribute to quality of life are traffic, crime, job opportunities and parks. (Myers, 1988) In order to present an attractive and beautiful setting for residents to live and guest to visit, the County must concentrate on improving all features that contribute to the quality of life, including those related to parks and recreation. Recreation and natural resources provide many benefits and amenities to the quality of life in Wright County.

*Objective R.3 Develop additional recreational opportunities*

Implementation Strategies

**R.3.1 Develop trails within and around recreational areas**

Trails are a desired recreational amenity that bikers, runners, horseback riders and many other recreational seekers use. Connecting the recreational areas via a trail network will expand the use of parks and other recreational facilities and encourage active living within the County.

**R.3.2 Research funding for maintenance/expansion of recreational opportunities**

A major obstacle when developing plans for maintenance and expansion of recreational facilities is identifying where funds will come from for implementation. Sources the County may look into for future funding options include (Will include a brief summary of potential funding options)

**R.3.3 Develop County Recreation Plan**

A County Recreation plan will give the County some guidance on maintaining and expanding existing recreational areas, preserving natural areas, and providing other types of recreational opportunities to the public. If implemented correctly a recreation plan may help to build on the County's quality of life and attract visitors to the available recreational areas.

*Objective R.4 Improve waterways*

Implementation Strategies

**R.4.1 Develop a plan to clear rivers in the county**

Water resources planning and management measures such as removing debris from rivers will ensure safety of individuals using the rivers for recreational use and keep rivers from backing up and causing extensive flooding. A plan for clearing rivers should work as a guide and should identify rivers and creeks, problematic areas, timeframe for clean-ups and potential funding sources for clearance.

**R.4.2 Build on aquatic assets by improving waterways**

According to the results of the Wright County citizens Input Survey that was dispersed to all residents of the unincorporated area in 2011, the majority of respondents noted that fishing areas and lake and river access are important parks, recreation and conservation services. Improving waterways will directly address this desire for suitable fishing areas and lake and river access.

## **5.7 Land Use**

Zoning policy and land use strategies are important tools that the Planning and Zoning Commission and Board of Supervisors use to make informed decisions on proposed re-zonings, variances and other land use requests. The evaluation of existing and future land uses is a process that requires public input and participation. The following portion of the plan includes a discussion of the County's current zoning

ordinance, existing land uses, and proposed future land uses, all of which were developed through comprehensive plan committee meetings and public input meetings.

### **Existing Conditions**

The County's current zoning ordinance includes six zoning classes; Agricultural District (A), Suburban Residential District (R-S), Residential Lake District (R-L), Lake Commercial District (C-L), Rural Commercial District (C-R), and Industrial District (I). As portrayed in the Zoning Map on page 41, the majority of the county has been zoned for agriculture, with some commercial and industrial corridors and residential spaces along the lakes.

In order to understand the nature of the County's physical land use patterns, an existing land use map was developed. Developed through an aerial view of the County and multiple land use discussions with the comprehensive planning committee, the Existing Land Use Map is illustrated on page 42. This map does not fully reflect the existing zoning map or ordinance, but instead identifies the specific land uses that each area is currently being used as. For example, a lot that, based on the aerial view and committee input, is being used for crop production would be considered an Agricultural use. An overview of each individual existing land use classification is discussed below. (Northwest Iowa Planning & Development Commission, 2006):

**Vacant (V) -** Land and/or structures for which no current use can be ascertained due to inactivity. This would include abandoned buildings or structures, along with property or sites that are currently not utilized for any productive purpose.

**Agricultural/Open Space (A) -** Land being used for crop production, the raising and/or production of livestock, and or/other agricultural-based commodities. This may also include land for agriculture dwellings or privately-owned lands devoted to the protection, preservation or sustainability of natural resources and native land uses.

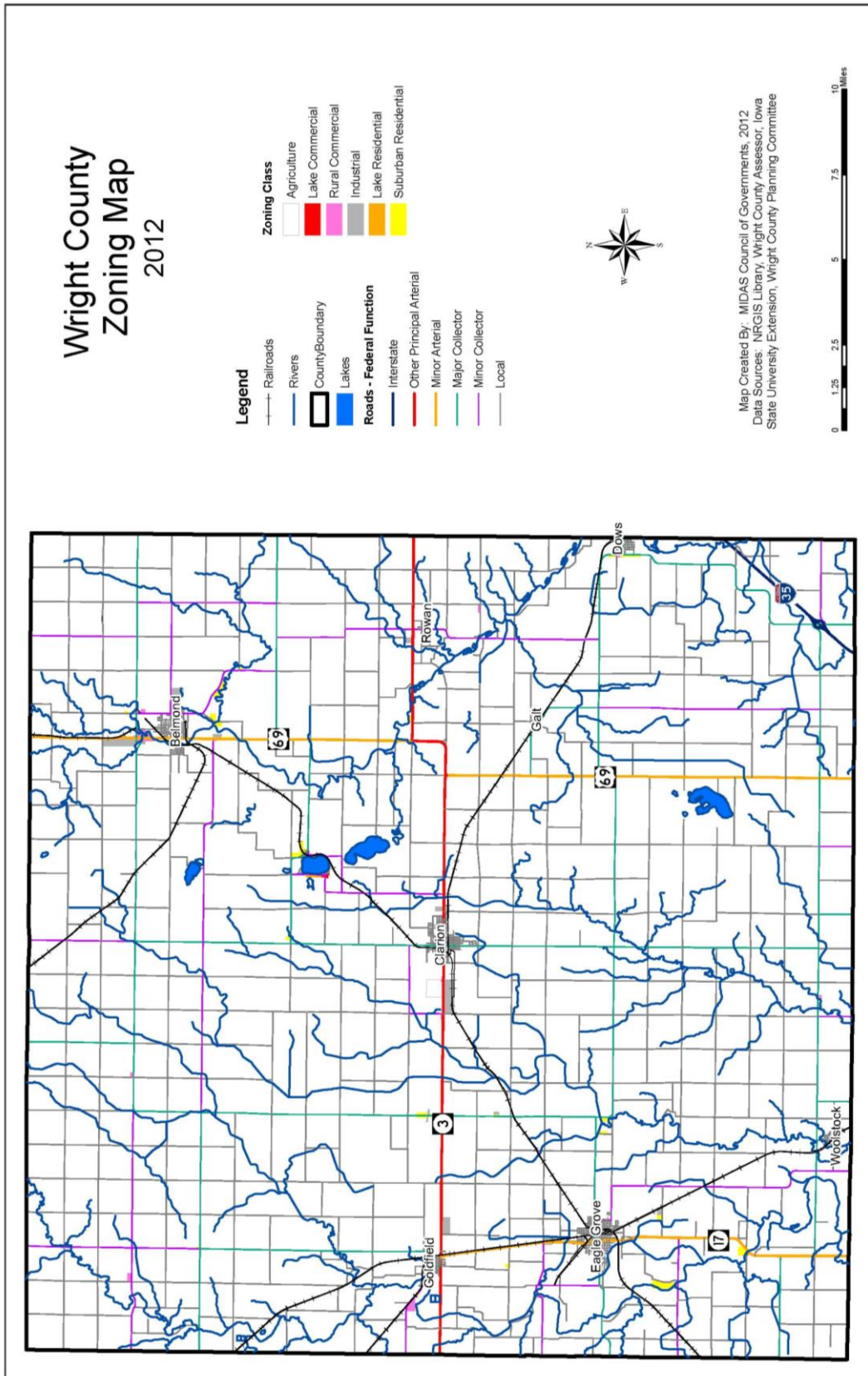
**Residential (R) -** Structures occupied for dwelling purposes.

**Commercial (C) -** Structures and/or land used for the sale, rental, service, trade, commerce and distribution of goods such as retail, entertainment, food, and other businesses providing the sale of goods, products, and services; excluding wholesale and manufacturing. Commercial activities do not include extraction of natural resources or production by non-agricultural purposes.

**Industrial (I) -** Structures and/or land used primarily for the manufacturing, packaging, warehousing, or distribution of natural or man-made products, and on-site extraction of natural resources.

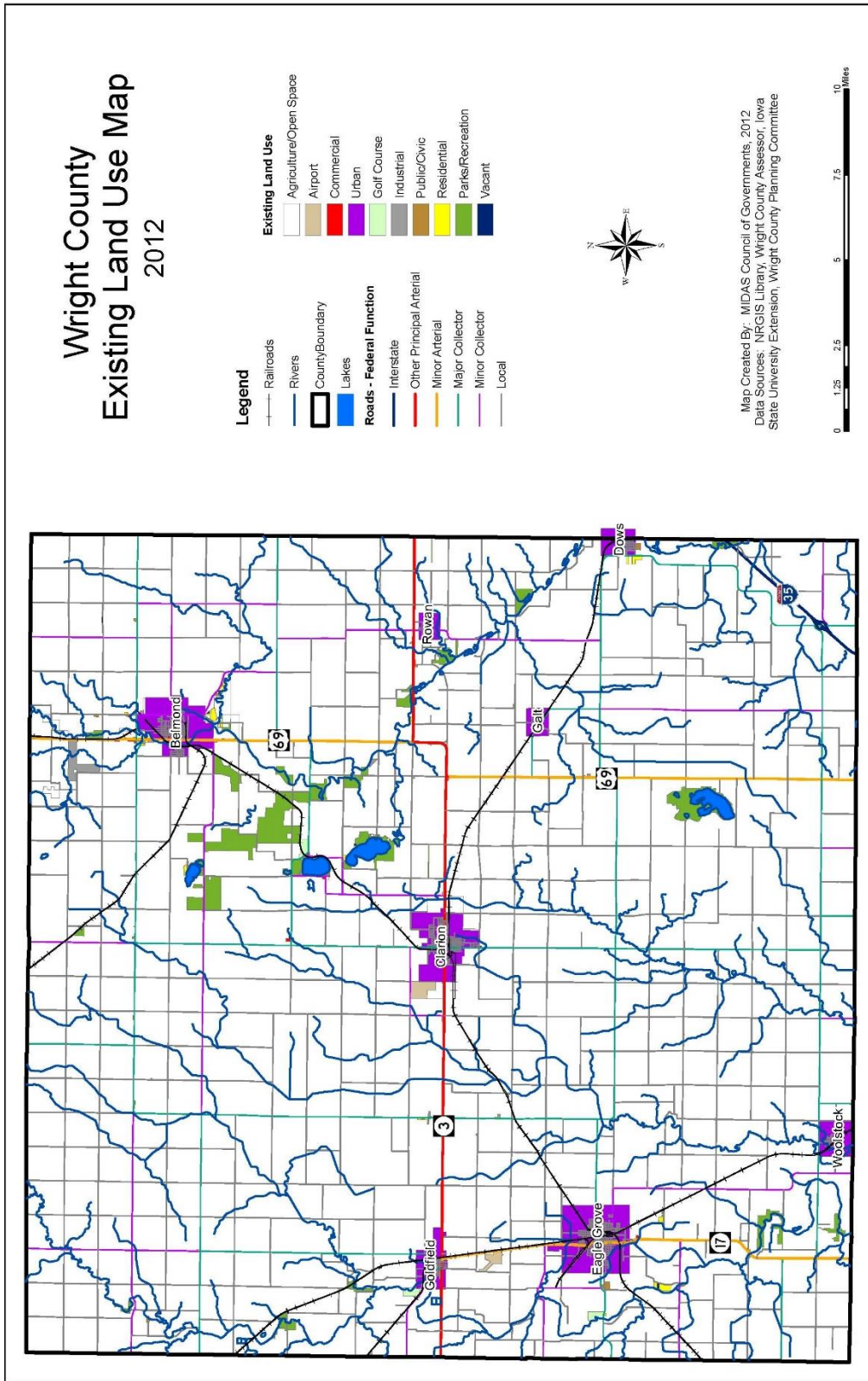
- Public/Civic (P) -** Structures and/or land available for use by the general public for non-commercial purposes such as educational, cultural, medical, protective, cemeteries, social clubs, and government uses which are strongly vested with public or social importance.
  
- Parks & Recreation (RC) -** Public areas devoted to active or passive recreation activities for use by the general public. This includes city, county and state parks, playgrounds and similar uses.
  
- Airport (AP) -** Land used for the take-off and landing of aircraft such as fixed-wing aircrafts, helicopters, blimps and other types of aircraft.
  
- Golf Course (GC) -** Land used by the public for golfing, which includes fairways, greens, cart sheds, clubhouses and other storage or space for other related commodities.
  
- Urban (U) -** Land located in the incorporated area of a City.

**Wright County Existing Zoning Map**





Wright County Existing Land Use Map





**Goals and Implementation Actions (Overall)**

<b>Comprehensive Action Plan Overview</b>				
<b>Mitigation Strategies</b>	<b>Start Date - Time Frame</b>			<b>Responsible Parties</b>
	<b>0-1 year</b>	<b>2-4 years</b>	<b>5+ years</b>	
<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>				
<b>Goal: Promote countywide economic development</b>				
<b>Objective E.1 Promote Agricultural development</b>				
E.1.1 Provide incentives for agri-business				
<b>Objective E.2 Identify areas for commercial and industrial uses</b>				
E.2.1 Encourage commercial and industrial development along corridors identified in the Future Land Use map				
<b>AGRICULTURE</b>				
<b>Goal: Preserve and protect Agricultural land with emphasis on prime agricultural areas</b>				
<b>Objective A.1 Direct development away from agriculture lands, where possible</b>				
A.1.1 Prioritize agricultural land development using the Corn Suitability Rating (CSR)				
A.1.2 Encourage development within and adjacent to incorporated areas				
<b>Objective A.2 Encourage growth in agricultural economy</b>				
A.2.1 Provide financial incentives to agricultural related development with priority given to agri-business				
A.2.2 Explore the terms “family farm” and “commercial farm”, and encourage development of the smaller, more locally supportive and beneficial farm-type of the two				
<b>Objective A.3 Locate commercial and industrial development adjacent to areas with the necessary services and infrastructure</b>				
A.3.1 Review and update county zoning ordinance and map				
A.3.2 Enforce the zoning ordinance and limit the number of variances granted				
A.3.3 Monitor agriculture designations to ensure appropriate use				

Wright County Comprehensive Plan - 2012

Mitigation Strategies	Start Date - Time Frame			Responsible Parties
	0-1 year	2-4 years	5+ years	
<b>HOUSING</b>				
<b>Goal: Direct residential growth toward areas with existing infrastructure</b>				
<b>Objective H.1 Promote residential growth in suitable areas for such development</b>				
H.1.1 Encourage and/or enforce when applicable, residential development outside of floodplain				
H.1.2 Develop a map of potential residential areas based on the Corn Suitability Rating (CSR)				
<b>Objective H.1 Promote residential growth in suitable areas for such development</b>				
H.2.1 Research and develop strategies for nuisance abatement				
H.2.2 Explore rental inspection/certification programs				
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>				
<b>Goal: Develop a transportation system that will promote the safe, efficient and economic movement of people and goods</b>				
<b>Objective T.1 Regularly maintain and improve existing roads</b>				
T.1.1 Provide regular funding source for maintenance				
<b>Objective T.2 Encourage infill development to eliminate wear on rural roads not suitable for heavy traffic</b>				
T.2.1 Revise existing zoning ordinance to encourage infill development				
T.2.2 Work in conjunction with Cities on proposed development projects and/or zoning				
<b>Objective T.3 Locate developments with high truck traffic along roads suitable for such traffic</b>				
T.3.1 Include zoning regulations in the existing ordinance that promote development near roads suitable for such development				
T.3.2 Identified preferred roads for development options				
T.3.3 Establish weight limits for established "low use" roads				
<b>PUBLIC SERVICES &amp; INFRASTRUCTURE</b>				
<b>Goal: Ensure water, wastewater and storm water regulations are followed</b>				
<b>Objective P.1 Develop and maintain well, sewer and drainage well requirement</b>				
P.1.1 Follow and enforce IDNR regulations relating to well, sewer and drainage well requirements				
P.1.2 Research and consider adopting and enforcing additional well, sewer and drainage well requirements				

Wright County Comprehensive Plan - 2012

Mitigation Strategies	Start Date - Time Frame			Responsible Parties
	0-1 year	2-4 years	5+ years	
<b>RECREATION AND CONSERVATION</b>				
<b>Goal (1): Protect environmental features such as floodplains, wetlands, and other sensitive areas</b>				
<b>Objective R.1 Direct development away from floodplains/wetlands</b>				
R.1.1 Adopt and enforce a floodplain ordinance				
<b>Objective R.2 Protect soil from eroding by improving waterways and embankments using resources planning and management measures</b>				
R.2.1 Develop a plan to clear rivers in the County				
R.2.2 Establish tools for bank protection				
R.2.3 Develop a program for drainage control				
<b>Goal (2): Maintain/improve citizens quality of life</b>				
<b>Objective R.3 Develop additional recreational opportunities</b>				
R.3.1 Develop trails within and around recreational areas				
R.3.2 Research funding for maintenance/expansion of recreational opportunities				
R.3.3 Develop County Recreation Plan				
<b>Objective R.4 Improve waterways</b>				
R.4.1 Develop a plan to clear rivers in the county				
R.4.2 Build on aquatic assets by improving waterways				
<b>IMPLEMENTATION</b>				
<b>Goal: Implement county comprehensive plan</b>				
<b>Objective 7.1 Adopt/amend county comprehensive plan when appropriate</b>				
7.1.1 Review comprehensive plan annually				

The table above provides the County with a resource for benchmarking and “checking off” plan goals. This table should be reviewed and updated regularly. These goals and implementation actions should stay in accordance with the Future Land Use Map, or vice-versa. Use of the Future Land Use Map is discussed in the following paragraph.

**Use the Future Land Use Map as a guide to the Zoning Map:** The future land use map, page 47, provides a guide for the county to follow when approached with future zoning questions or changes. All residents and businesses within the City have had the chance to review and suggest changes to the future land use map. Any future land use suggestions were taken into consideration before Board of Supervisors Approval. The following describes each future land use classification, as determined by the Wright County Comprehensive Planning Committee:

**Agricultural/Open Space (A) -** Land being used for crop production, the raising and/or production of livestock, and or/other agricultural-based commodities. This may also include land for agriculture dwellings or privately-owned lands devoted to the protection, preservation or sustainability of natural resources and native land uses.

**Residential (R) -** Structures occupied for dwelling purposes.

**Commercial (C) -** Structures and/or land used for the sale, rental, service, trade, commerce and distribution of goods such as retail, entertainment, food, and other businesses providing the sale of goods, products, and services; excluding wholesale and manufacturing. Commercial activities do not include extraction of natural resources or production by non-agricultural purposes.

**Industrial (I) -** Structures and/or land used primarily for the manufacturing, packaging, warehousing, or distribution of natural or man-made products, and on-site extraction of natural resources.

**Commercial/Industrial (CI) -** Structures and/or land used for classifications that fit within Commercial and/or Industrial uses as defined above.

**Public/Civic (P) -** Structures and/or land available for use by the general public for non-commercial purposes such as educational, cultural, medical, protective, cemeteries, social clubs, and government uses which are strongly vested with public or social importance.

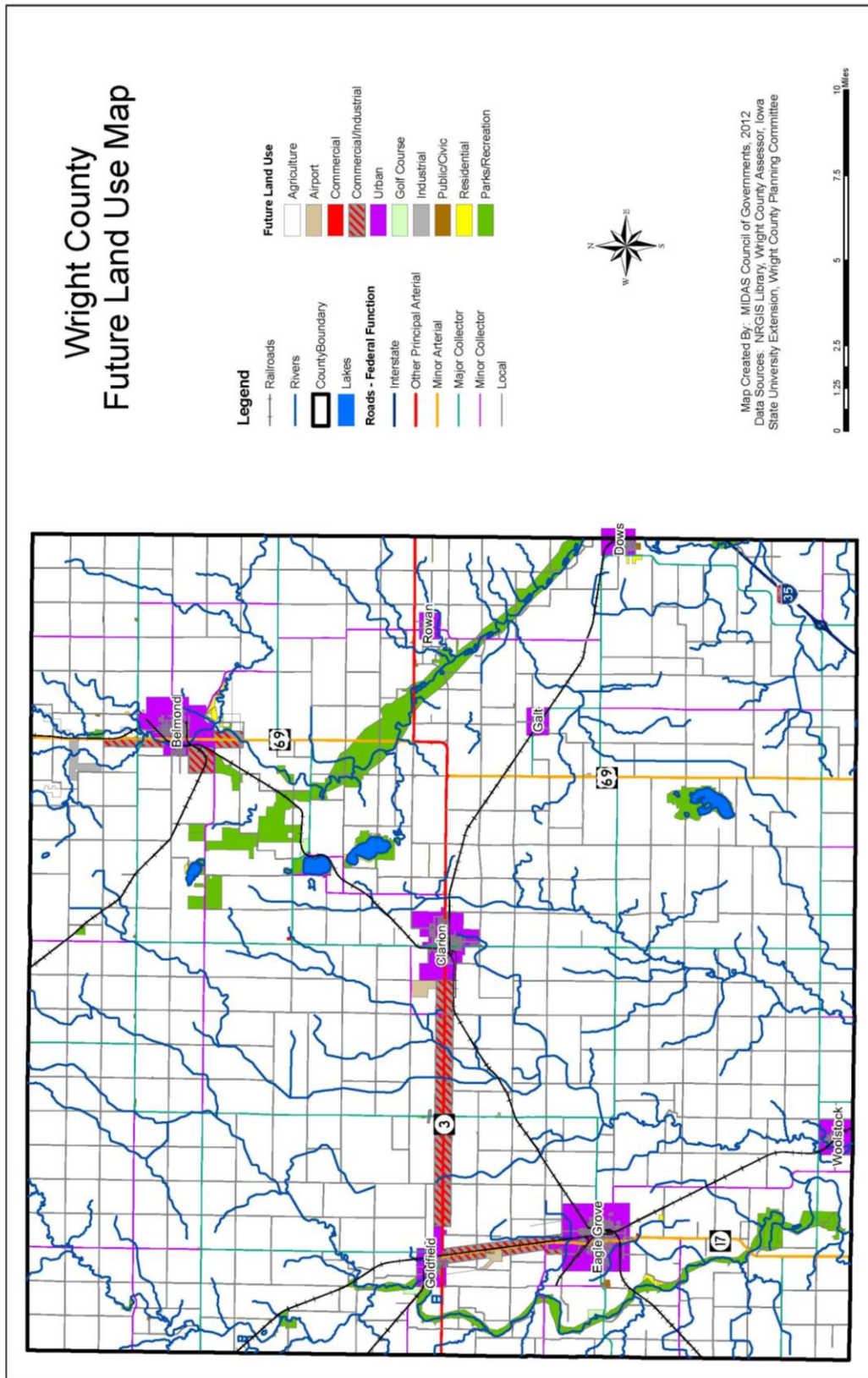
**Parks & Recreation (RC) -** Public areas devoted to active or passive recreation activities for use by the general public. This includes city, county and state parks, playgrounds and similar uses.

**Airport (AP) -** Land used for the take-off and landing of aircraft such as fixed-wing aircrafts, helicopters, blimps and other types of aircraft.

**Golf Course (GC) -** Land used by the public for golfing, which includes fairways, greens, cart sheds, clubhouses and other storage or space for other related commodities.

**Urban (U) -** Land located in the incorporated area of a City.

Wright County Future Land Use Map



## 6. Implementation

### ***Goal: Implement county comprehensive plan***

The Wright County Comprehensive Plan has been prepared as a representation of the interests of all County residents within the unincorporated area, and should be referred to when considering future land use proposals and also when executing the County's long term goals and objectives. The plan provides a framework for achieving desired tasks relating to agriculture, economic development, housing, transportation, public facilities, and recreation and conservation. Both the public and private sectors can use this plan to make informed decision on ordinance development, rezonings, variances and other land use projects or proposals.

### *Objective 7.1 Adopt/amend county comprehensive plan when appropriate*

#### Implementation Strategies

##### **7.1.1 Review comprehensive plan annually**

- Along with implementing the Wright County Comprehensive Plan, the Planning Commission should evaluate the Plan on an annual basis to account for development changes that may occur in any given year. Reviewing the plan ensures that planning goals, objectives and implementation strategies are updated. The implementation strategies may be benchmarked or "checked off" as each strategy is completed.

The local and surrounding governments shall use the plan as a guide in making land use decisions. The plan has been prepared as a representation of the interest of all county residents. Any activities that impact land uses within the unincorporated area of Wright County should follow the comprehensive plan.

The private sector, including developers and land owners, will use this document to educate themselves on the official positions of the County regarding land use and policy issues. The plan will act as an outline for land investments, purchases or development decisions. With such knowledge, the public and governing bodies will be able to make informed decisions, complimentary to the comprehensive plan, on rezonings, variances, ordinance development, and other land use projects or proposals.

### **Plan Updates**

The plan should be used and reviewed on a regular basis. As the county changes from year-to-year, so will its needs; therefore, this plan may be amended, changed or revised as needed. It is suggested that the Planning and Zoning Commission review the plan on an annual basis and recommend any necessary actions or amendments to the Board of Supervisors in a legal and orderly manner. The Planning and Zoning Commission shall pay special attention to the planning goals, objectives and implementation strategies within each planning element. The implementation strategies may be benchmarked or "checked off" as each strategy is completed.

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## **Appendix B: Community Survey Results (2/2011)**

### **Agriculture**

- Majority said County should not be allowed to regulate non-residential agricultural property.
- Majority said County should look into programs to preserve agriculture land
- Majority said the County should not encourage more organic farming?
- Majority of respondents participated in crop farming
- Majority of respondents have owned farm 50-99 years
- Majority of respondents have said there were drainage issues on their farm land

### **Economic Development**

- Majority of respondents Commercial/industrial development most likely occurring within City boundaries
- Majority of respondents choose manufacturing to provide incentives to with a close second being Industrial Agriculture and Commercial third.
- Majority of citizens said Wright County should work to establish more non-ag businesses however a majority of business said the county shouldn't
- Majority of public said commercial livestock facilities should be more than 5 miles from residential/public/state-federal lands/lakes/waterways
- Majority of businesses said commercial livestock facilities should be 1 mile from residential/public/state-federal lands/lakes/waterways
- Majority of public said wind power generators should be ¼ - 1 mile from residential /public uses/state-federal lands/lakes/waterways
- Majority of businesses said wind power generators should be ¼ - 1 mile from residential/public/state-federal lands/lakes/waterways
- Public was close on if residential development should be discouraged on ag land (47% yes 53% No) and Business was split.
- Public was close on discouraging commercial industrial development on ag land (51% yes, 49% no) and business 61% said no.

### **Public Services & Infrastructure**

- Money spent on service in county should remain same except roads and transportation there should be more.
- Majority do not want rural water provided in the County
- 34% have DSL internet services, 25% have none and 18% have satellite
- 63% have satellite television

### **Recreation/Conservation**

- Majority rated the parks and public areas in Wright County as Good
- Most had no opinion if there should be more or less parks/public areas in the county.
- Importance of recreation services:

## Community Survey Results

- Less important - Frisbee Golf, Football Fields, Soccer Fields, Tennis/Racquetball Courts, Skate Parks
  - Neutral – Baseball/Softball Fields, Basketball Courts, Sand Volleyball Courts, Motor Boating
  - More important – Hiking Trails
  - Bike Trails tied at neutral to more important
- Importance of conservation services:
    - Less important - Off-road vehicles/ATV areas, target shooting,
    - Neutral – Non-motor boating, tent camping, hunting areas, bird sanctuaries,
    - More important – Fish areas, lake/river access

### **Housing**

- Majority own their own residence
- Majority have lived at current address more than 6 years
- Majority do not have a mortgage
- Majority are satisfied with current housing
- Major reason for living in county Quality of life and ag interest
- 38% said residential subdivisions should not be allowed in county and 32% said they should
- Majority said that there should be specific regulations to build a subdivision
- 42% do not want subdivisions to be built near recreation/conservation areas
- Majority do not think ag property should be regulated by the county.

### **Transportation**

- 59% residents located on gravel roads
- 43% said there should be better maintenance of roads, 21% increase bridge maintenance and 17% said close low usage roads
- Over half said road maintenance should be paid with gas tax.
- Majority did not believe there should be designated farm routes
- Majority said that businesses with large truck traffic should not be allowed on gravel/inadequate secondary roads

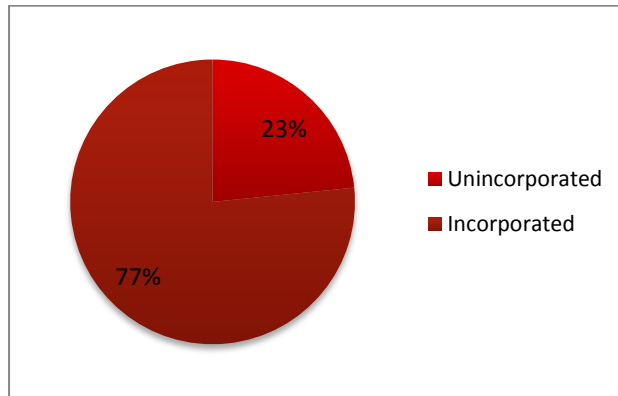
**Business Survey Results**

**Economic Development Questions**

**Total Surveys Returned: 43 (out of 182) - - 23%**

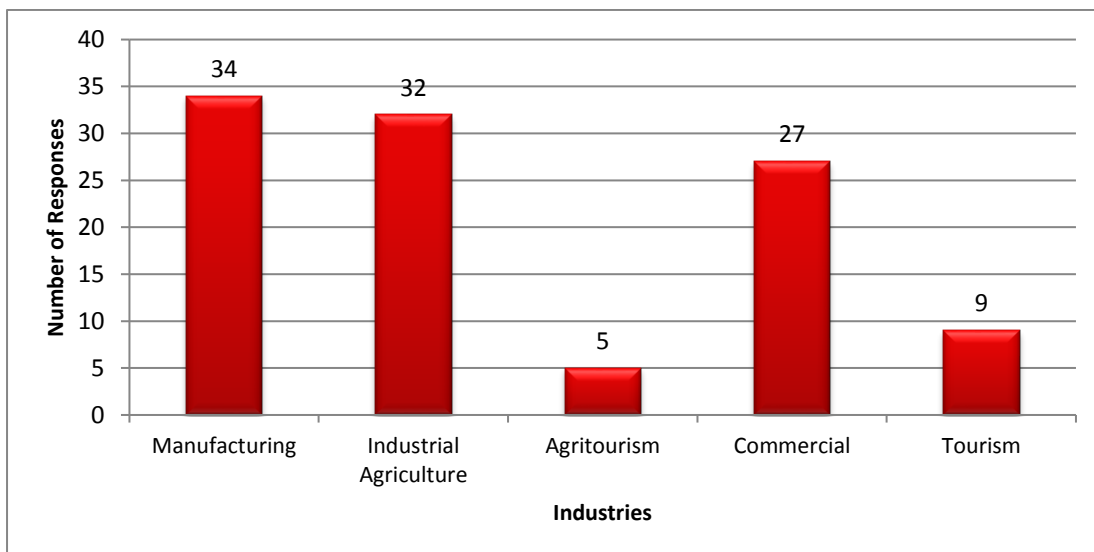
**Where would you like to see commercial/industrial development occur in Wright County?**

	Unincorporated	Incorporated
Number	11	36
Percentage	23%	77%



**Which industries should be attracted through incentives provided by the County?**

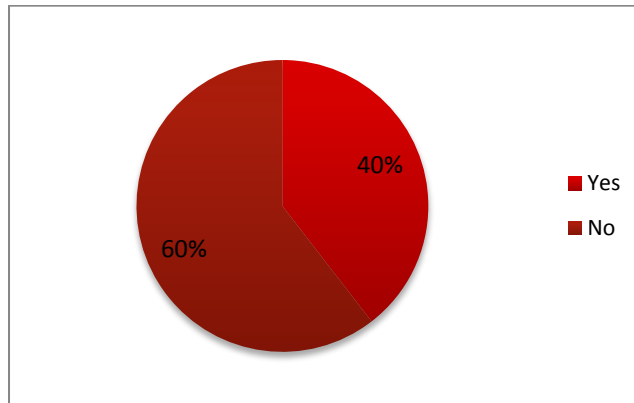
	Manufacturing	Industrial Agriculture	Agritourism	Commercial	Tourism
Number	34	32	5	27	9
Percentage	32%	30%	5%	25%	8%



## Business Survey Results

**Should the unincorporated area of Wright County work to establish more non-agriculture businesses or industries?**

	Yes	No
Number	17	26
Percentage	40%	60%



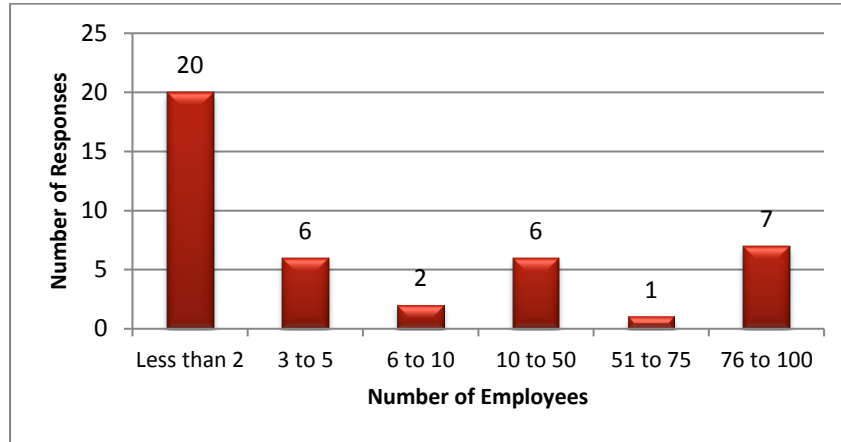
**How could Wright County better integrate with surrounding counties economically?**

- Doing good job by sharing engineer with Hamilton Co.
- Need infrastructure maps of the whole region
- Join surrounding counties in Regional Development, any new jobs/ businesses help Wright Co. citizens
- More chicken houses, make Wright Co. the egg capitol of the USA
- Work together to build water, electric, and waste systems
- Promote empty buildings in Wright Co. in order to put people to work.
- Try not to duplicate and share costs
- Build on non-producing (corn, soybean) acres
- By cooperating with the use of County equipment and law enforcement-someday possibly combining county offices - USDA offices and maybe other we are no longer in the horse and buggy times!

**How many employees does your business have?**

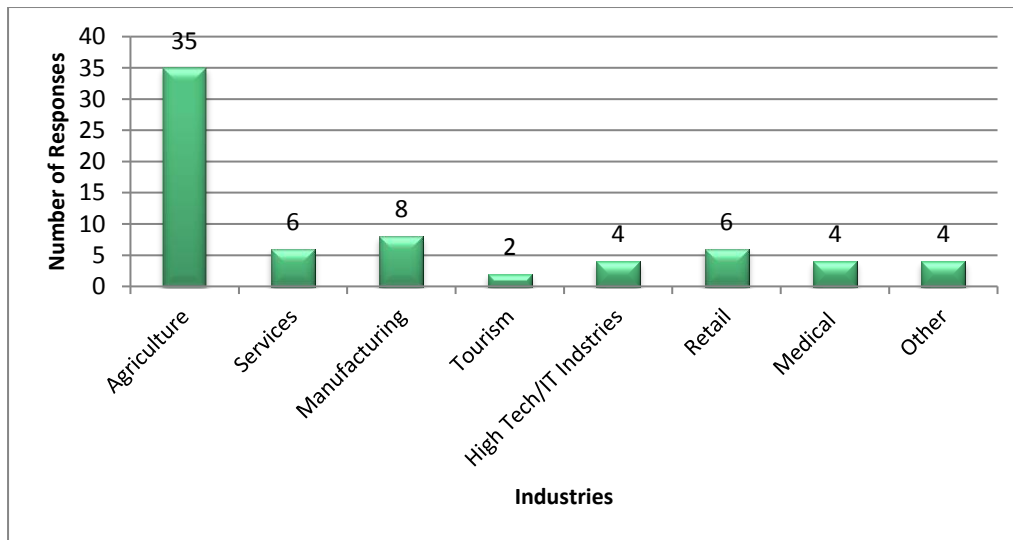
	Less than 2	3 to 5	6 to 10	10 to 50	51 to 75	76 to 100
Number	20	6	2	6	1	7
Percentage	48%	14%	5%	14%	2%	17%

## Business Survey Results



Which of the following industries does your business participate in?

	Agriculture	Services	Manufacturing	Tourism	High Tech/IT Industries	Retail	Medical	Other
Number	35	6	8	2	4	6	4	4
Percentage	51%	9%	12%	3%	6%	9%	6%	6%



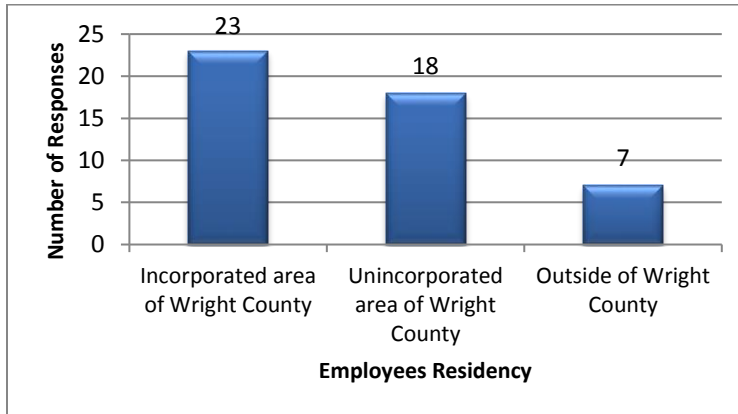
**Other Industries:**

- Wholesale (2)
- Veterinary

## Business Survey Results

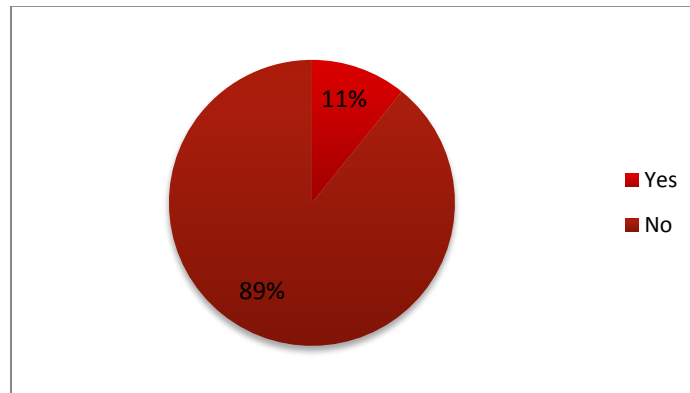
**Where do most of your employees live?**

	Incorporated area of Wright County	Unincorporated area of Wright County	Outside of Wright County
Number	23	18	7
Percentage	48%	38%	15%



**Have you encountered any problems in hiring or retaining employees due to housing?**

	Yes	No
Number	4	33
Percentage	11%	89%

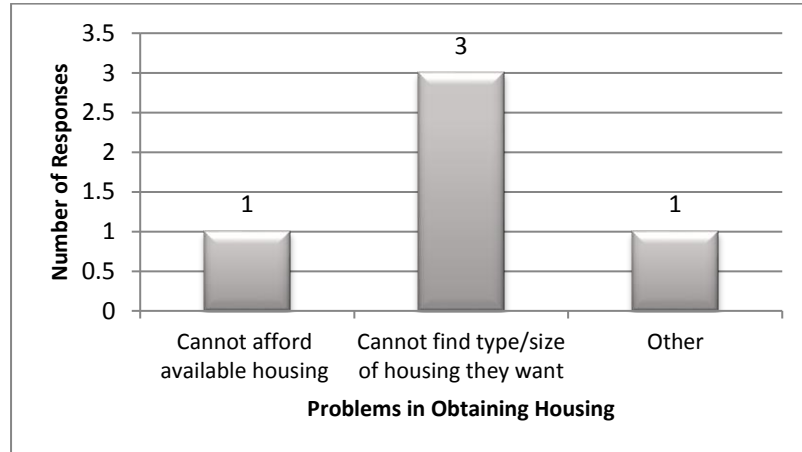




## Business Survey Results

a) If so, which of the following problems have the employees encountered in obtaining housing?

	Cannot afford available housing	Cannot find type/size of housing they want	Other
Number	23	18	7
Percentage	48%	38%	15%



**Other reasons:**

- More rental properties

b) Have the above issues occurred more significantly with employees at a particular wage level?

	Yes	No
Number	4	4
Percentage	50%	50%

**If yes, what wage level?**

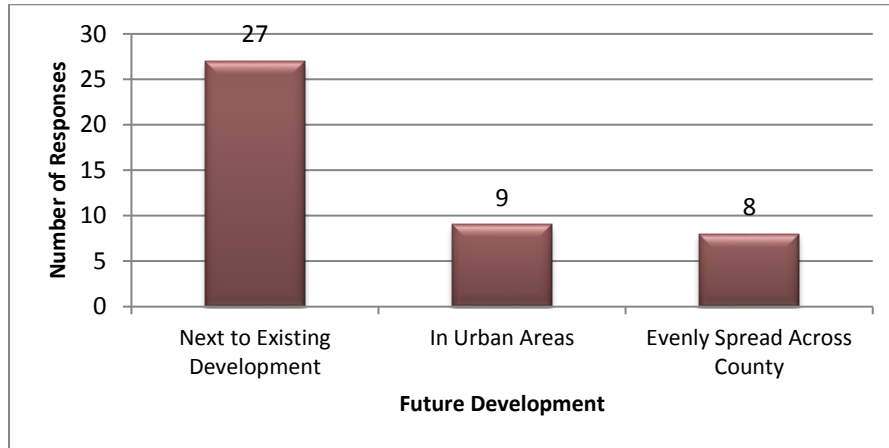
- \$25,000
- Higher Paid Employees
- \$10 per/hr
- Management Level

## Business Survey Results

### Land Use Questions

**Where should future development be focused in Wright County?**

	Next to Existing Development	In Urban Areas	Evenly Spread Across County
Number	27	9	8
Percentage	61%	20%	18%



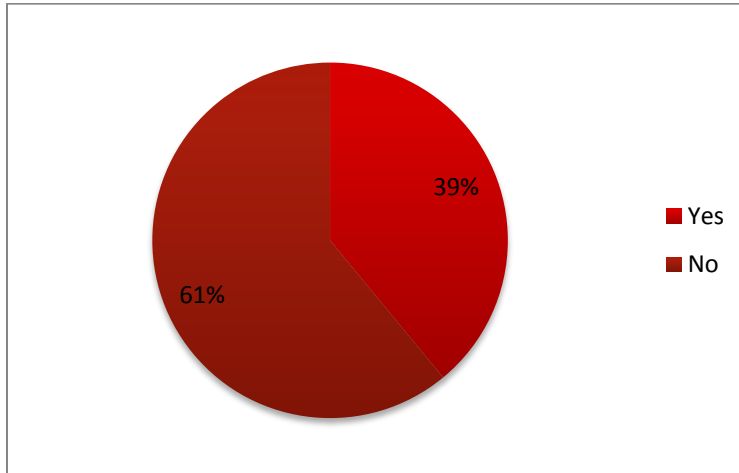
**Should the county discourage residential development on agricultural land?**

	Yes	No
Number	21	21
Percentage	50%	50%

**Should the county discourage commercial/industrial development on agricultural land?**

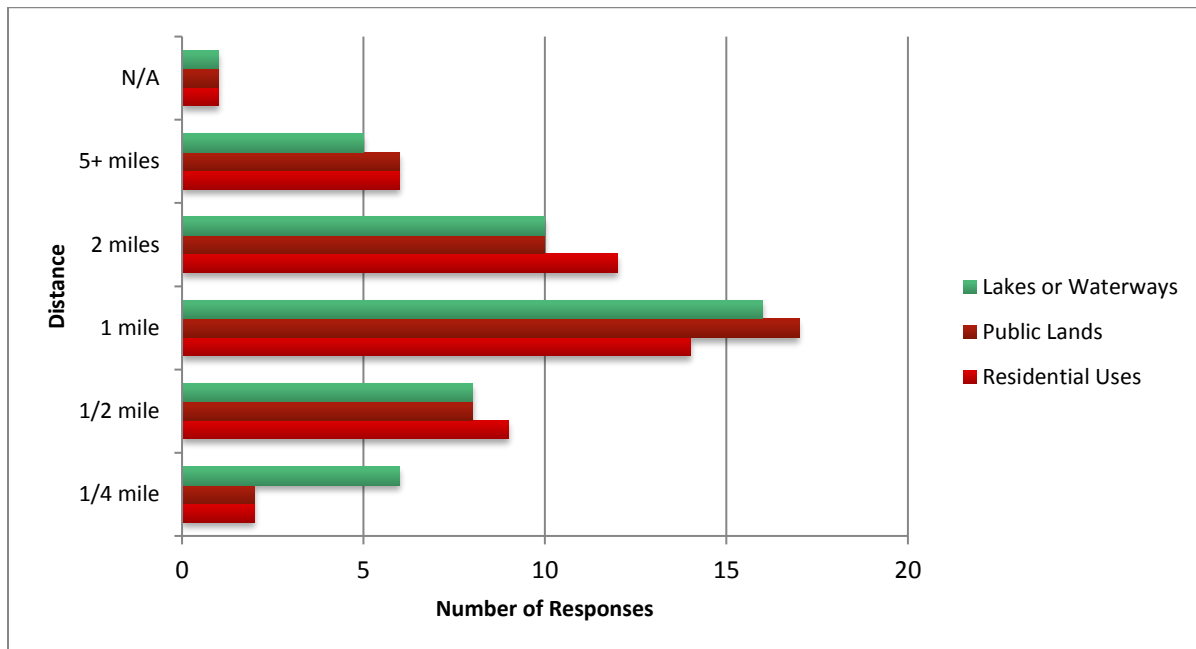
	Yes	No
Number	16	25
Percentage	39%	61%

### Business Survey Results



**How close should commercial livestock facilities be allowed to locate near the following?**

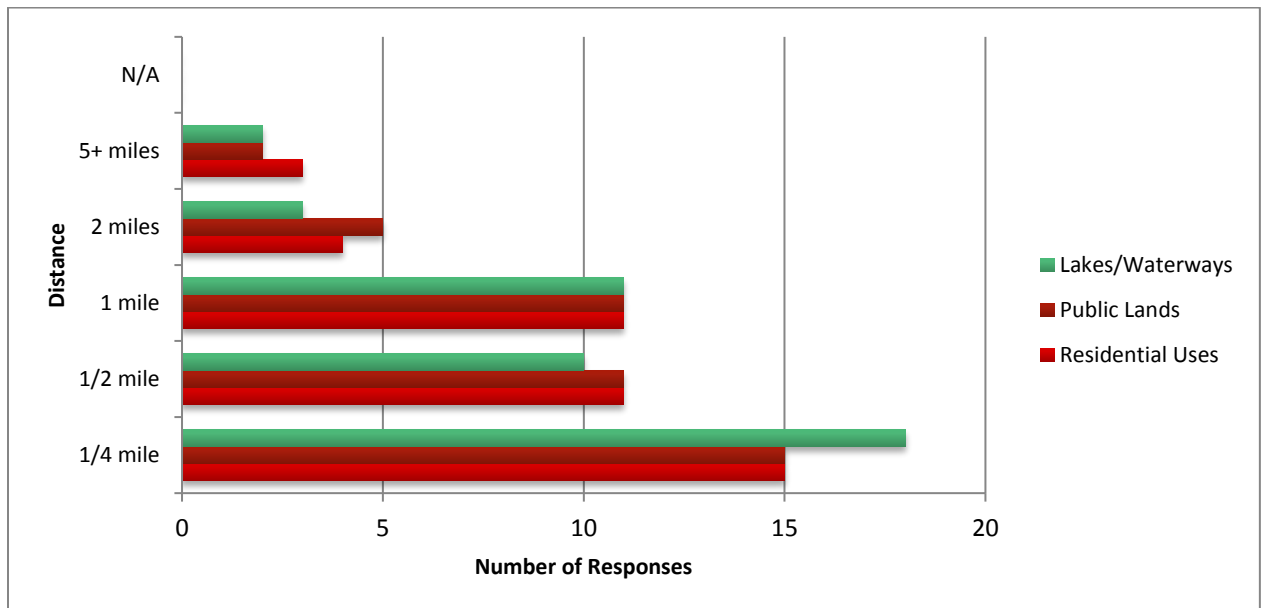
	1/4 mile	1/2 mile	1 mile	2 miles	5+ miles	N/A
Residential Uses	2	9	14	12	6	1
	6%	11%	22%	20%	39%	2%
Public Lands	2	8	17	10	6	1
	6%	7%	24%	19%	42%	2%
Lakes/Waterways	6	8	16	10	5	1
	6%	6%	19%	16%	49%	3%



## Business Survey Results

**How close should wind power generators be allowed to locate near the following?**

	1/4 mile	1/2 mile	1 mile	2 miles	5+ miles	N/A
Residential Uses	15	11	11	4	3	0
	6%	11%	22%	20%	39%	2%
Public Lands	15	11	11	5	2	0
	6%	7%	24%	19%	42%	2%
Lakes/Waterways	18	10	11	3	2	0
	6%	6%	19%	16%	49%	3%

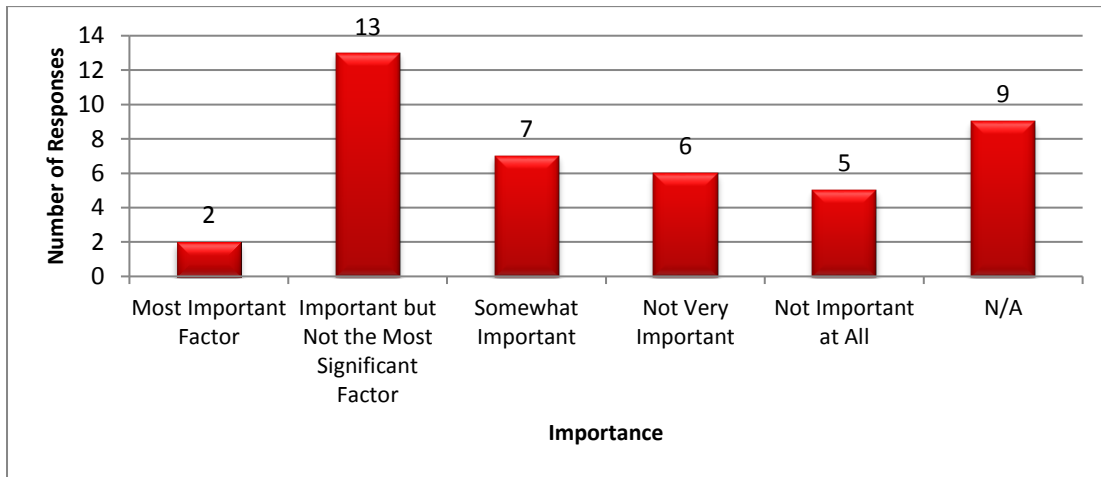


## Business Survey Results

### Transportation Questions

**How important was transportation infrastructure in selecting where to locate your business?**

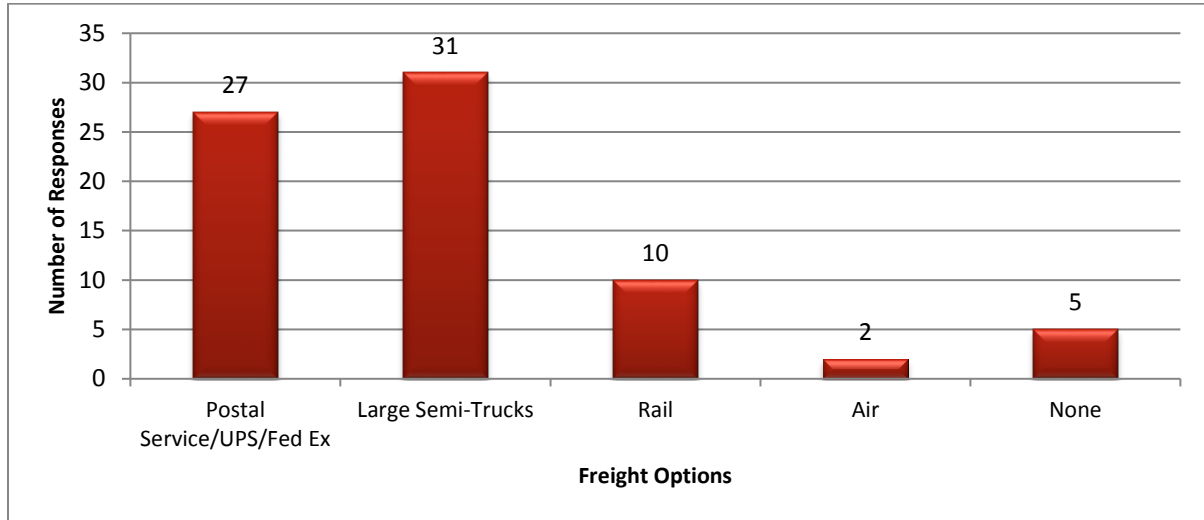
	Most Important Factor	Important but Not Most Significant	Somewhat Important	Not Very Important	Not Important at All	N/A
Number	2	13	7	6	5	9
Percentage	5%	31%	17%	14%	12%	21%



**What freight options are important to your business?**

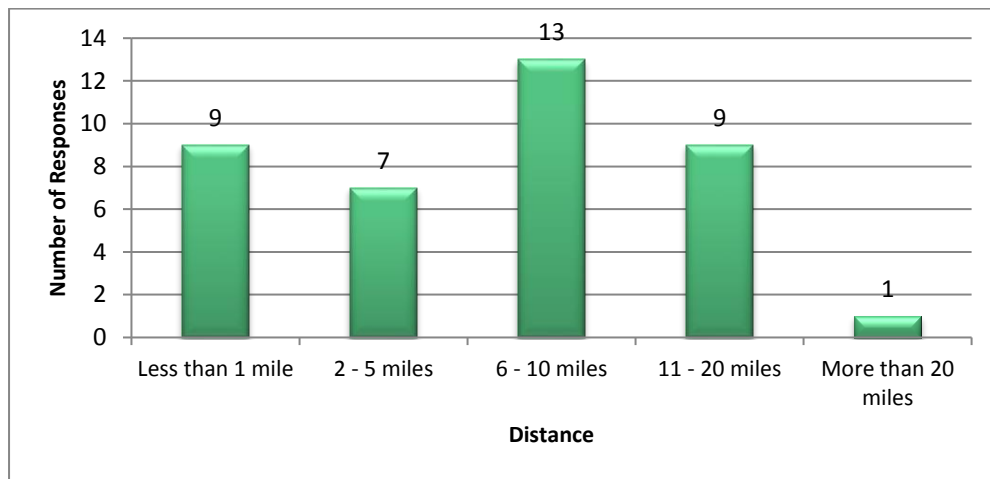
	USPS/UPS/Fed Ex	Large Semi-Trucks	Rail	Air	None
Number	27	31	10	2	5
Percentage	36%	41%	13%	3%	7%

## Business Survey Results



**What is the average distance your employees travel to work?**

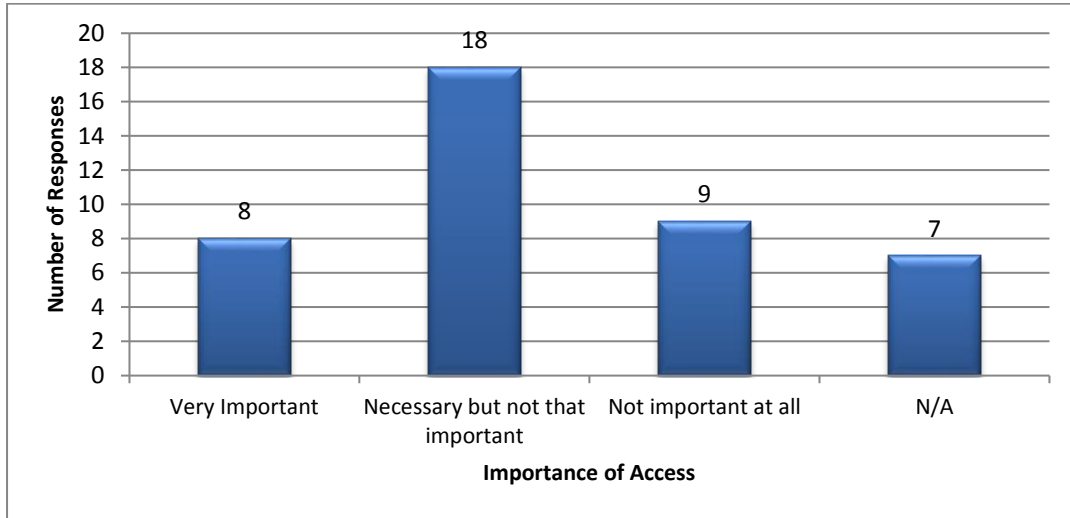
	Less than 1 mile	2 - 5 miles	6 - 10 miles	11 - 20 miles	More than 20 miles
Number	9	7	13	9	1
Percentage	23%	18%	33%	23%	3%



**How important is it for customers to have good access to your place of business?**

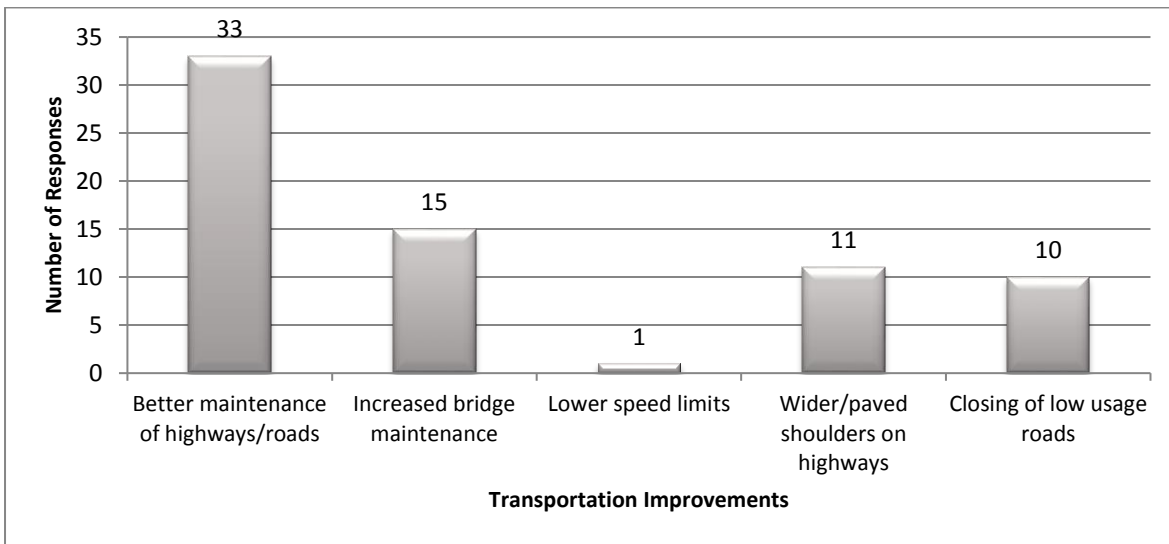
	Very Important	Necessary but not that important	Not important at all	N/A
Number	8	18	9	7
Percentage	19%	43%	21%	17%

### Business Survey Results



### What transportation improvements should the County consider?

	Better maintenance of highways/roads	Increased bridge maintenance	Lower speed limits	Wider/paved shoulders on highways	Closing of low usage roads
Number	33	15	1	11	10
Percentage	47%	21%	1%	16%	14%

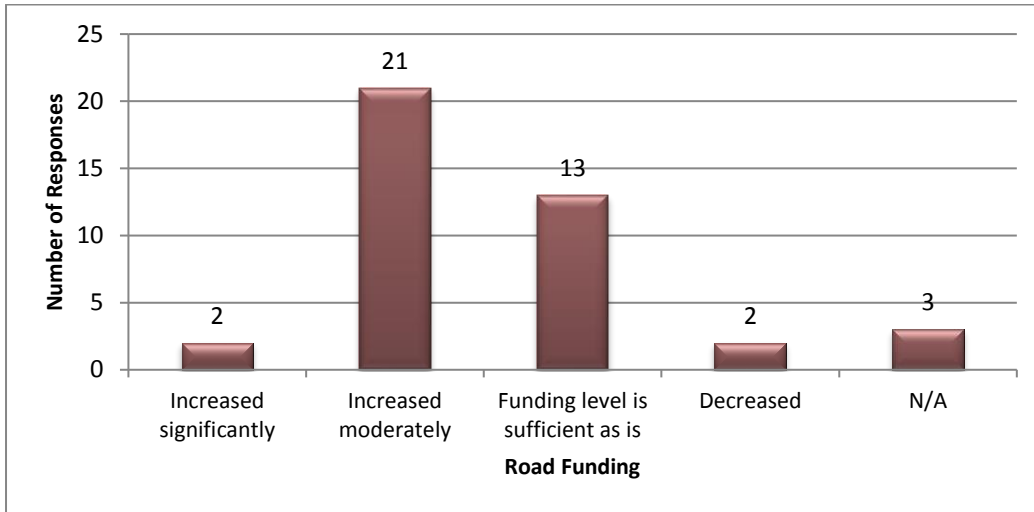


### Road funding in Wright County should be:

	Increased significantly	Increased moderately	Funding level is sufficient as is	Decreased	N/A
Number	2	21	13	2	3
Percentage	5%	51%	32%	5%	7%

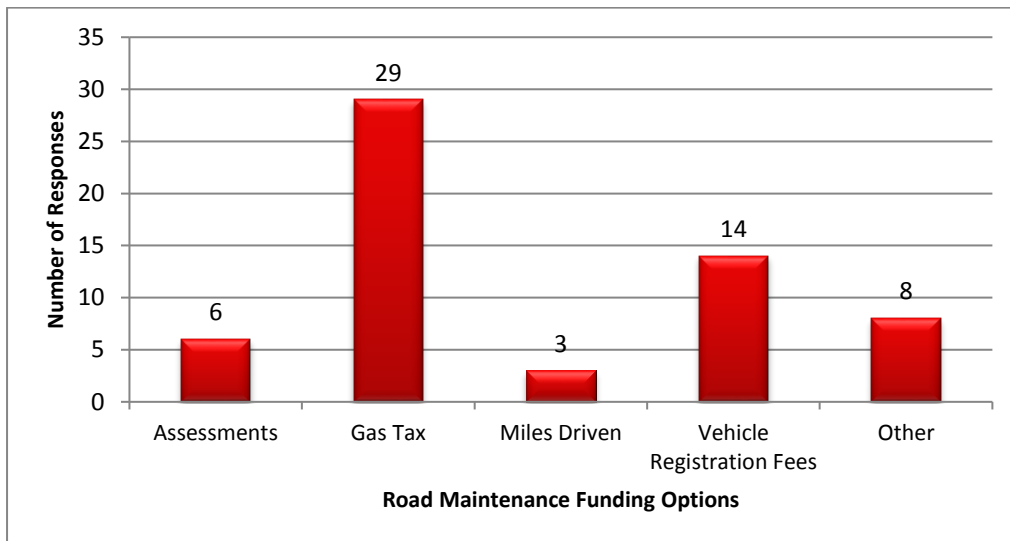


## Business Survey Results



### How do you think road maintenance/improvements should be paid for?

	Assessments	Gas Tax	Miles Driven	Vehicle Registration Fees	Other
Number	6	29	3	14	8
Percentage	10%	48%	5%	23%	13%



### Other Funding Suggestions:

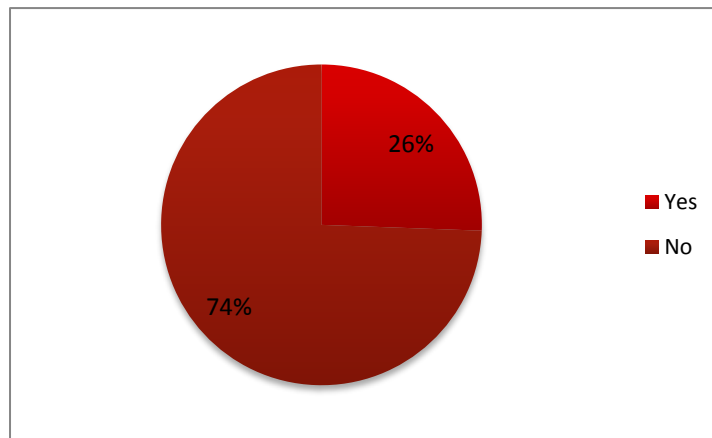
- Bonds, like Palo Alta County did
- All registrations should be equal

## Business Survey Results

- Register & Road use Tax on Ag Equipment
- Eliminate farm discount for pickup registrations and license all farm machinery that uses roads
- Farmers that don't pay to drive heavy equipment on roads
- We are taxed now for this
- Road use tax State level on smaller vehicles than semis to be used County level (reimbursed from State to County)
- Usage fees on grain wagons used to haul grain to town, and on manure wagons and grain carts.

**Should there be routes for farm equipment like there are for trucks?**

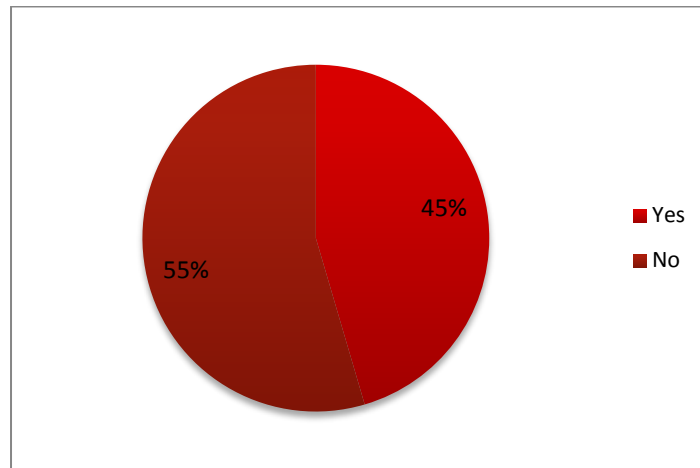
	Yes	No
Number	11	32
Percentage	26%	74%



## Business Survey Results

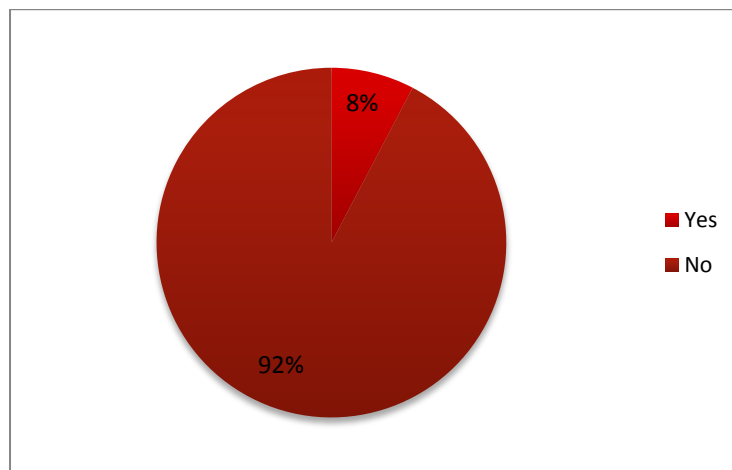
Should businesses/industries which would bring in large truck traffic be allowed to locate on a gravel or secondary road that is not adequate for such traffic?

	Yes	No
Number	20	24
Percentage	45%	55%



Would having public transit available in the county benefit your employees?

	Yes	No
Number	3	36
Percentage	8%	92%

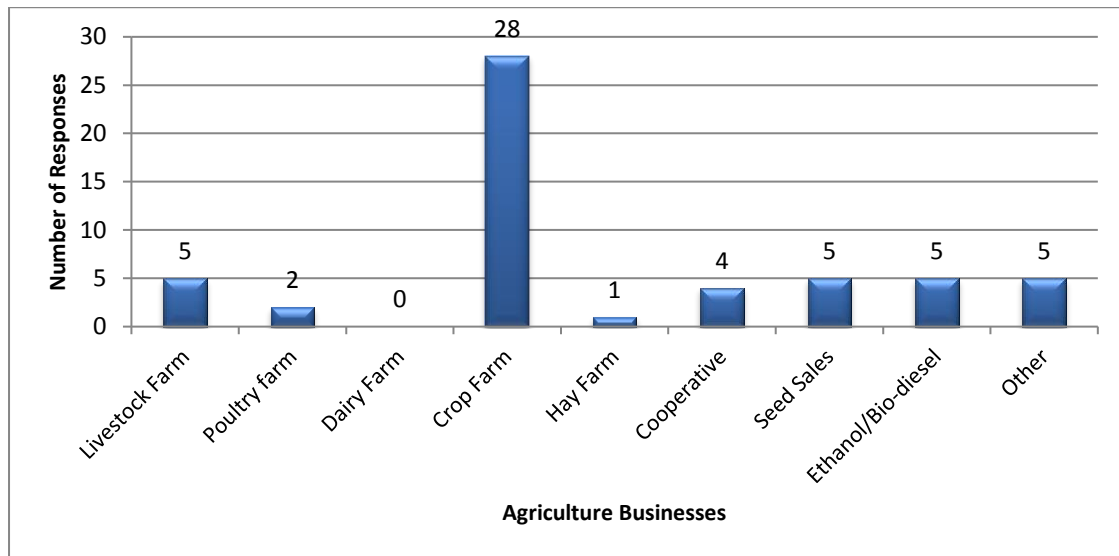


## Business Survey Results

### Agriculture Questions

What type of agriculture business are you?

	Livestock Farm	Poultry farm	Dairy Farm	Crop Farm	Hay Farm	Cooperative	Seed Sales	Ethanol/Bio-diesel	Other
Number	5	2	0	28	1	4	5	5	5
Percentage	9%	4%	0%	51%	2%	7%	9%	9%	9%



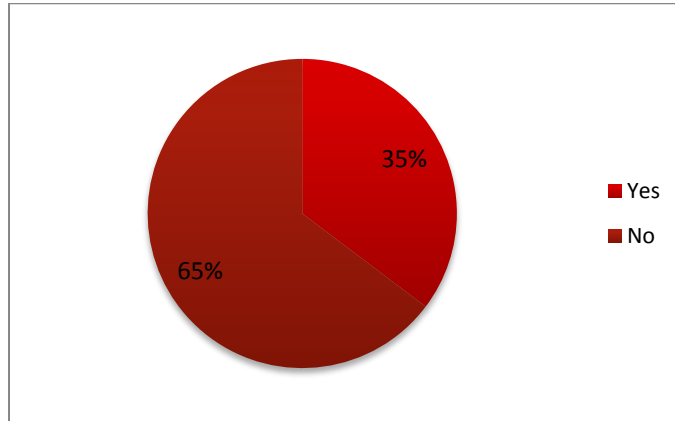
**Other types of Agriculture Businesses:**

- Equipment manufacturing and farming
- Construction
- Manure spreading
- Hauling of feed and grain

## Business Survey Results

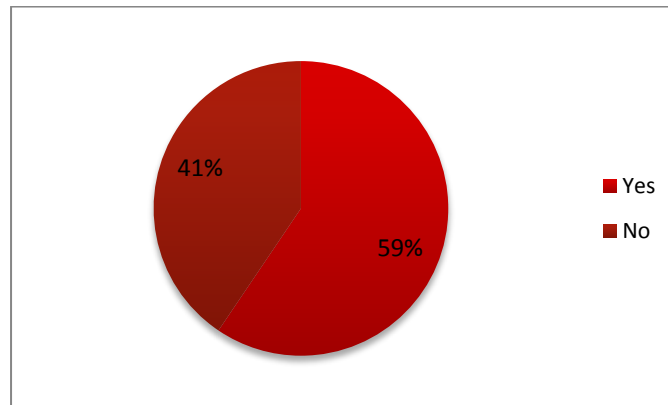
**Do you feel that Wright County should be allowed to regulate non-residential agricultural property?**

	Yes	No
Number	12	22
Percentage	35%	65%



**Should the County look into programs to preserve agriculture lands?**

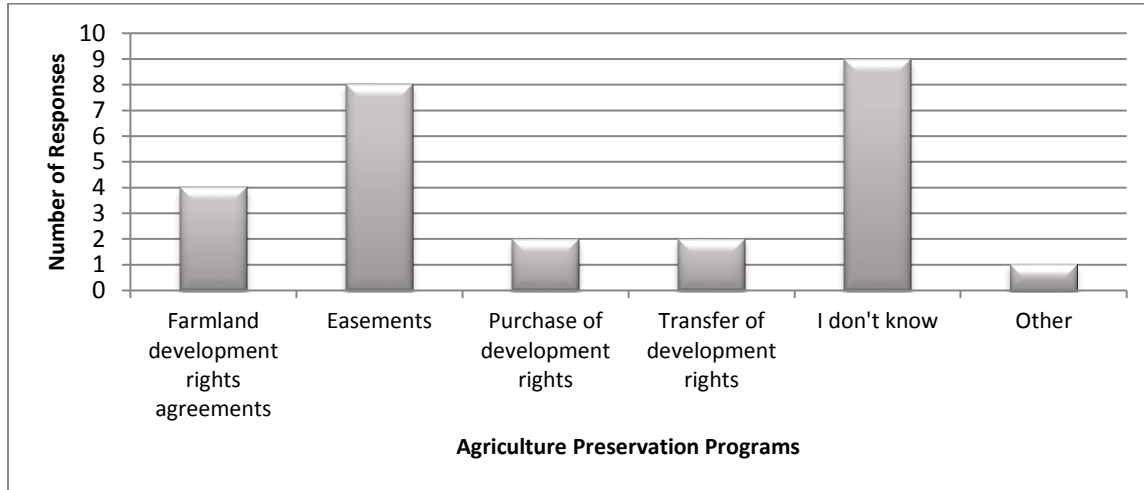
	Yes	No
Number	22	15
Percentage	59%	41%



**a) If yes, which programs would you suggest?**

	Farmland development rights agreements	Easements	Purchase of development rights	Transfer of development rights	I don't know	Other
Number	4	8	2	2	9	1
Percentage	15%	31%	8%	8%	35%	4%

## Business Survey Results

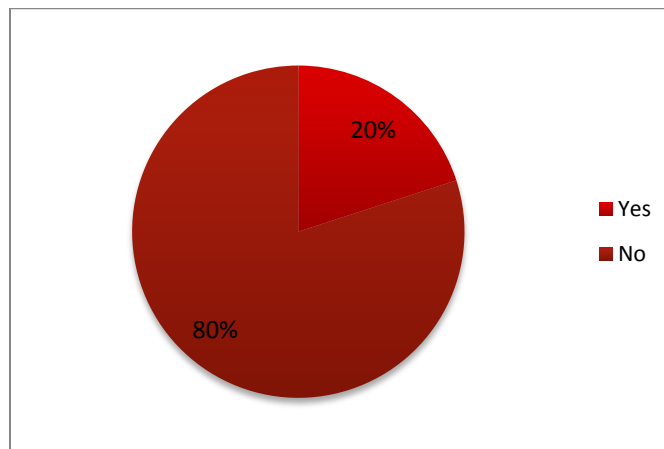


### Other programs:

- Care should be taken to prevent prime farmland from being taken out of production - we will run out of food one of these days
- Sometimes these small operations present many problems for food producers

### Should more initiatives related to organic farming be encouraged throughout the County?

	Yes	No
Number	7	28
Percentage	20%	80%



### What entities or type of entities do you sell your product(s) to?

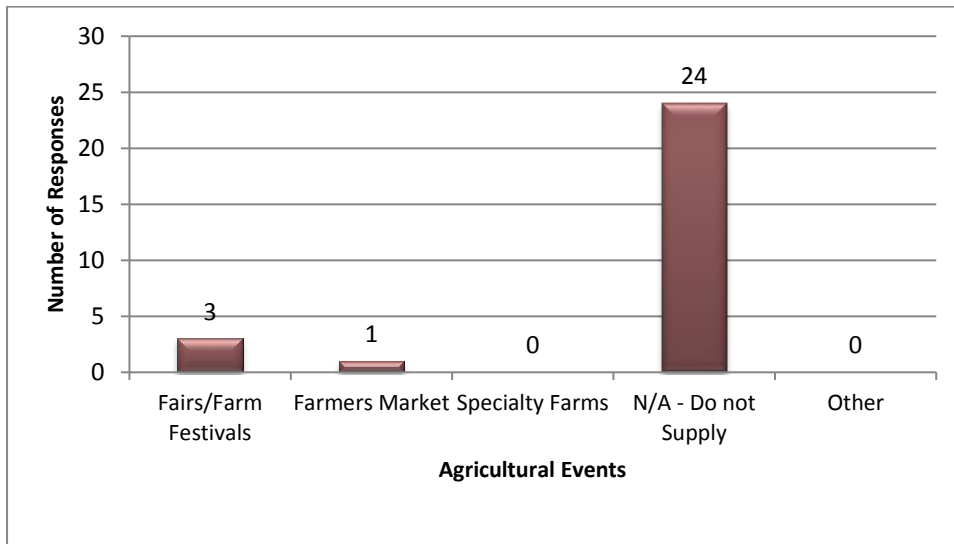
- Cooperatives (15)
- Farmers (4)
- Ethanol Plants (4)

## Business Survey Results

- Seed Companies (4)
- Grain Companies (4)
- Feed mill (2)
- Private (2)
- Livestock Producers (2)
- Crop producers
- Commercial operations
- Eggs
- Resellers
- Private Companies

**Do you supply your products to any of the following events or resources in Wright County?**

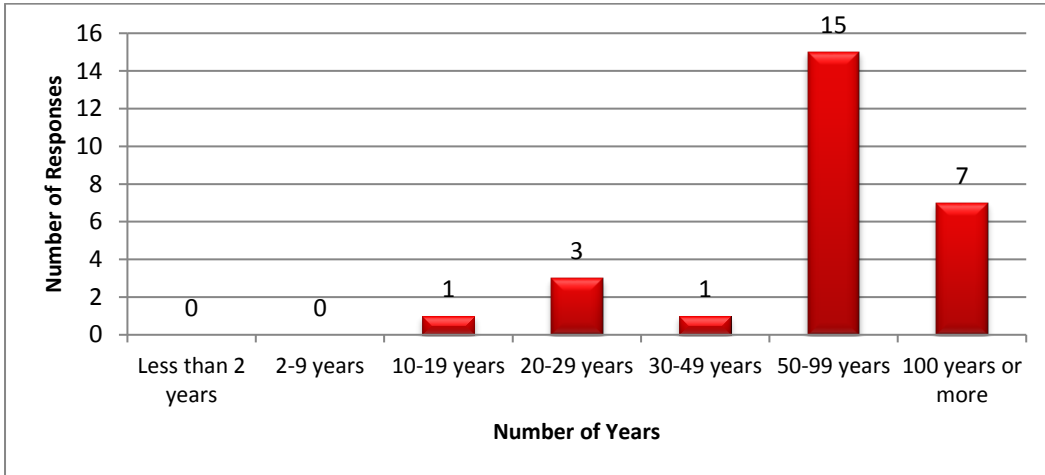
	Fairs/Farm Festivals	Farmers Market	Specialty Farms	N/A - Do not Supply	Other
Number	3	1	0	24	0
Percentage	11%	4%	0%	86%	0%



**If your business is a family-owned farm, how long has it been in your family?**

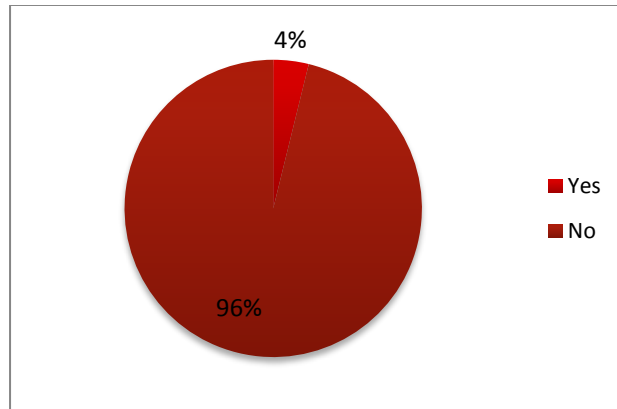
	Less than 2 years	2-9 years	10-19 years	20-29 years	30-49 years	50-99 years	100 years or more
Number	0	0	1	3	1	15	7
Percentage	0%	0%	4%	11%	4%	56%	26%

## Business Survey Results



**If your business consists of crop farming, would an irrigation system be helpful in improving the crop yield?**

	Yes	No
Number	1	25
Percentage	4%	96%



**If your business consists of crop farming, are there drainage issues on the land you farm?**

	Yes	No
Number	20	7
Percentage	74%	26%

### Additional Agriculture Comments:

- Feel that there are too many laws regulating agriculture, I feel that farmers have been doing a lot better job controlling pollution



## Business Survey Results

- The land and its ability to produce is a great resource. The world will need more production. Use land wisely
- No back tracking on production, who will pull the weeds on organic farms ( migrant workers ?)
- Support ethanol, great schools, roads and drainage systems, bridges industry and business, good sources of electric, water and waste for industry.
- Land is highly visible and everyone passes their expenses on to property tax
- Agriculture is what sustains Wright Co. - you have to work with what you have - you cant make it something it isn't. We're not a tourism County - Ag does not need County supervision!
- We have excellent soil in this part of the state - Don't let this resource be taken up by large hog and chicken farms - use the less desirable land for these
- The factory commercial livestock facilities should be taxed as a factory, they are not the family farm that made Wright county the great county it is today
- We have the best soil in Iowa, United States, and the World. We have a responsibility to take care of it so it continues into the future - growing crops to feed the world.

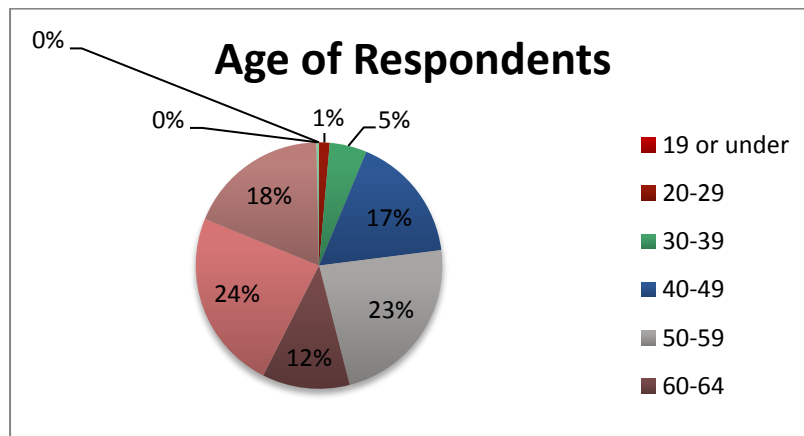
## Resident Survey Results

### General Questions

**Total Surveys Returned: 287 (out of 979)**

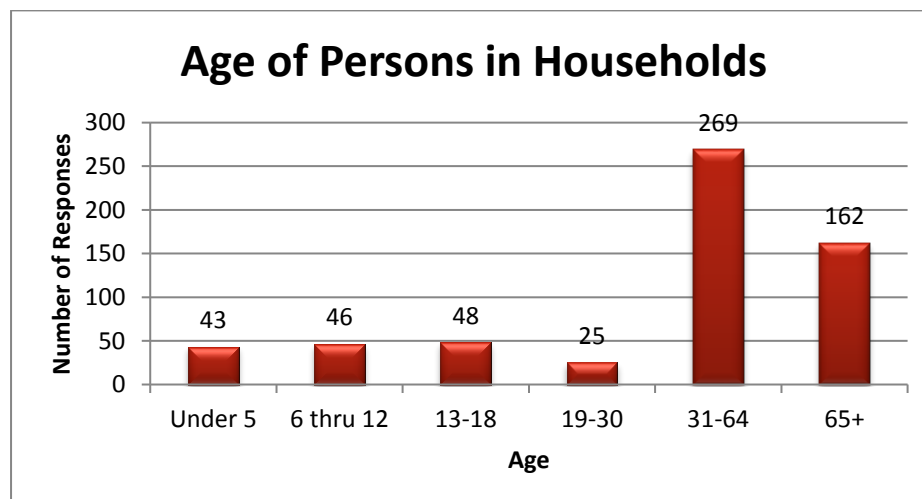
**What is your age?**

	19 or under	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-64	65-74	75 or older	No answer	Total
Number	0	4	14	48	66	33	68	53	1	286
Percentage	0%	1%	5%	17%	23%	12%	24%	19%	0%	



**Please indicate the number of persons in your household, including yourself, by age:**

	Under 5	6 thru 12	13-18	19-30	31-64	65+
Number	43	46	48	25	269	162
Percentage	7%	8%	8%	4%	45%	27%

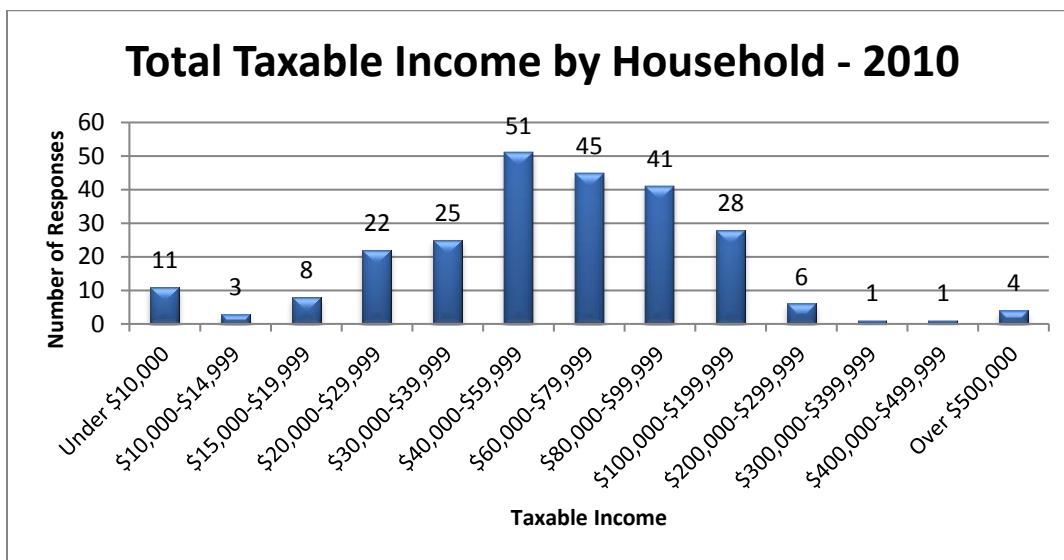


## Resident Survey Results

**What was your household's total taxable income from all sources in 2010?**

Under \$10,000	\$10,000-\$14,999	\$15,000-\$19,999	\$20,000-\$29,999	\$30,000-\$39,999	\$40,000-\$59,999
11	3	8	22	25	51
4%	1%	3%	8%	9%	18%

\$60,000-\$79,999	\$80,000-\$99,999	\$100,000-\$199,999	\$200,000-\$299,999	\$300,000-\$399,999	\$400,000-\$499,999	Over \$500,000
45	41	28	6	1	1	4
16%	14%	10%	2%	0%	0%	1%



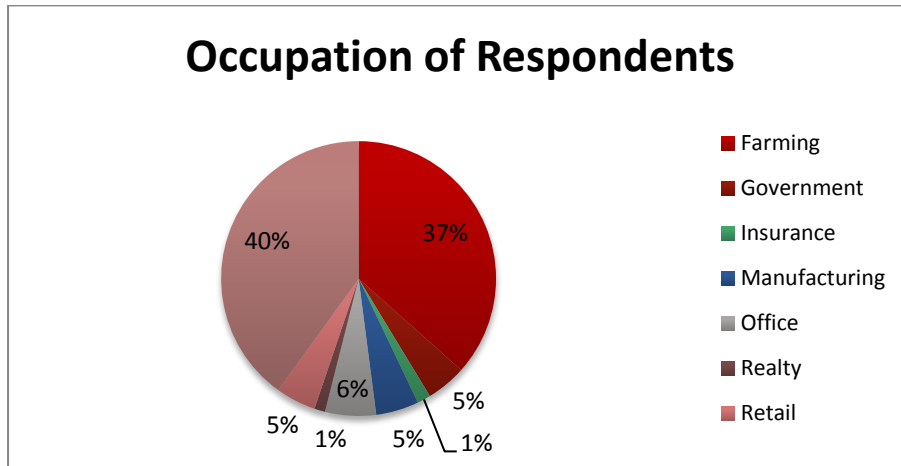
**What is your household's Racial/Ethnic Group?**

White	Black/African American	Asian	American Indian/Alaskan Native	Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	Other/Multiracial	No Answer
279	0	0	0	0	0	8

## Resident Survey Results

### What is your occupation?

	Farming	Government	Insurance	Manufacturing	Office	Realty	Retail	Other	Total
Number	116	15	5	16	19	4	15	127	317
Percentage	37%	5%	2%	5%	6%	1%	5%	40%	



#### Other occupations:

- Retired (62)
- Ag-Related (6)
- Trucking (5)
- House Wife (4)
- Healthcare (3)
- Construction (3)
- Transportation (3)
- Self Employed (3)
- Professional (3)
- Veterinary (3)
- Medical (3)
- Contractor (2)
- Unemployed (2)
- Railroad (2)
- Educator (2)
- School bus driver
- Warehouse
- Tiling
- Salesman
- Housekeeper at hospital
- Management
- Food Service
- Church worker
- Financial Planning

### Do you feel enforcement of county regulations has been effective?

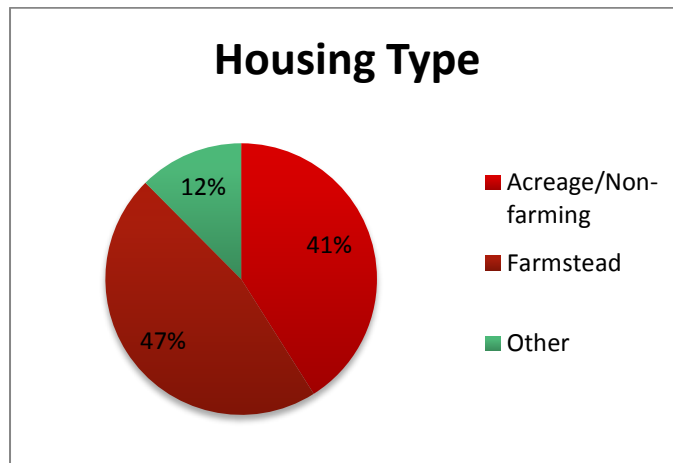
	Yes	No	No Opinion
Number	97	34	118
Percentage	39%	14%	47%

## Resident Survey Results

### Housing Questions

In what type of housing do you now live?

	Acreage/Non-farming	Farmstead	Other
Number	112	127	34
Percentage	41%	47%	12%



**Acreage/Non-farming, number of non-tillable acres:**

- 0-1 acres (15)
- 1.1-2 acres (12)
- 2.1-3 acres (10)
- 3.1-4 acres (15)
- 4.1-5 acres (11)
- 5.1-7 acres (12)
- 7.1-10 acres (3)
- 10-20 acres (4)
- 20-50 acres (1)
- 50-103 acres (3)

**Farmstead, number of non-tillable acres:**

- 2.1-3 acres (14)
- 3.1-4 acres (9)
- 4.1-5 acres (12)
- 5.1-7 acres (10)
- 7.1-10 acres (17)
- 10-20 acres (9)
- 20-50 acres (7)
- 50-100 acres (2)
- 101-300 acres (5)
- 301-500 acres(1)
- 500+ acres (2)

**Other housing types:**

- Lake Home (15)
- Single Family Home (4)
- Edge of town
- House outside of City Limits
- Assisted living apartments
- Apartment
- Large Lot - 1/2 acre
- 150x300 lot

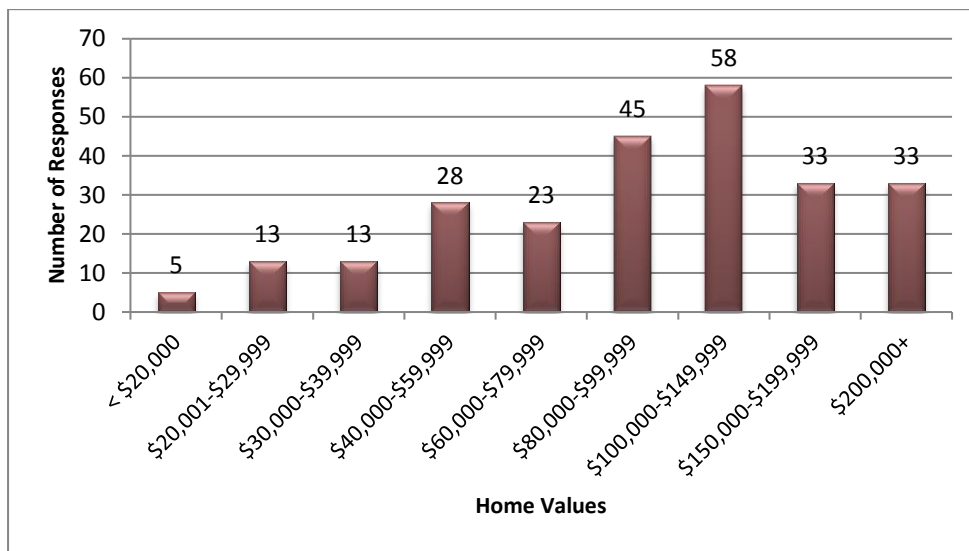
## Resident Survey Results

**Do you rent or own your residence?**

	Rent	Own
Number	14	267
Percentage	5%	95%

**What is the actual value of your home (owners only)?**

	< \$20,000	\$20,001-\$29,999	\$30,000-\$39,999	\$40,000-\$59,999	\$60,000-\$79,999	\$80,000-\$99,999	\$100,000-\$149,999	\$150,000-\$199,999	\$200,000+
Number	5	13	13	28	23	45	58	33	33
Percentage	2%	5%	5%	11%	9%	18%	23%	13%	13%



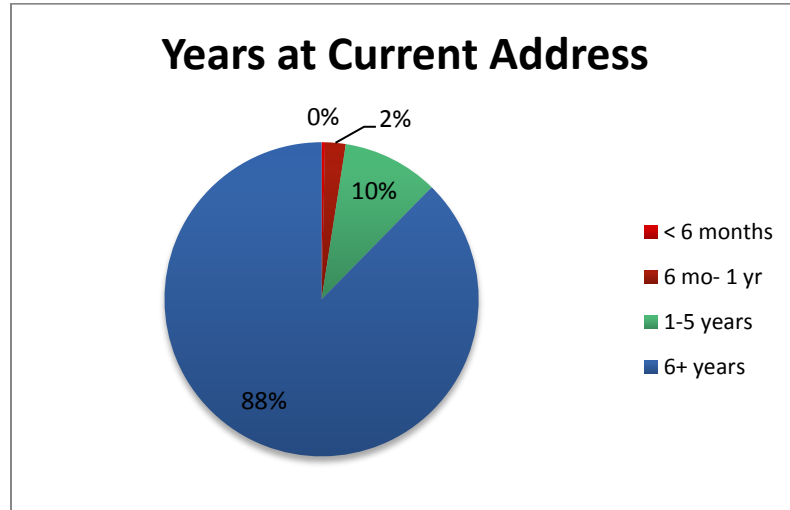
**Are you satisfied with your current housing?**

	Yes	No
Number	261	19
Percentage	93%	7%

**How long have you lived at your current address?**

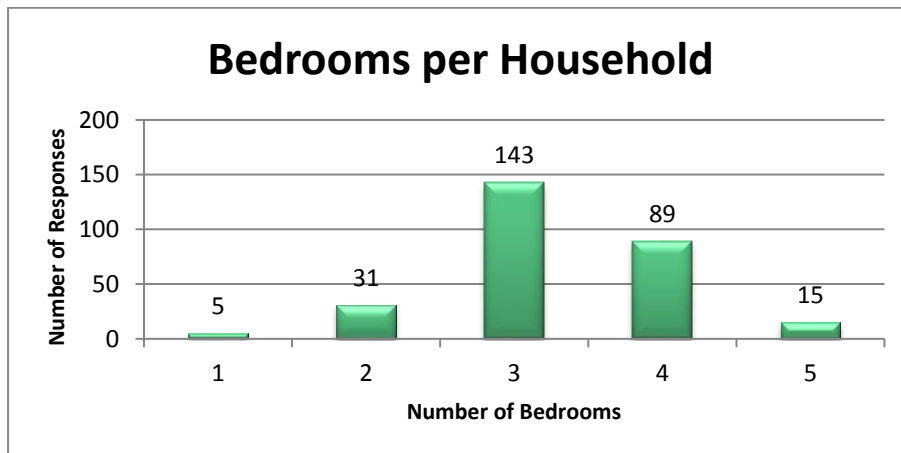
	< 6 months	6 mo- 1 yr	1-5 years	6+ years
Number	1	6	28	248
Percentage	0%	2%	10%	88%

## Resident Survey Results



**How many bedrooms are in your home?**

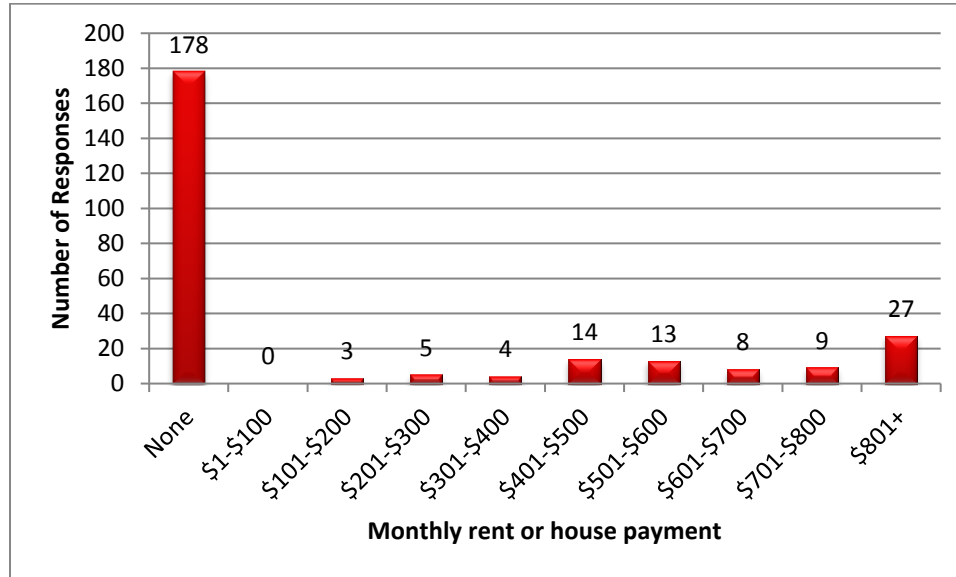
	1	2	3	4	5 +
Number	5	31	143	89	15
Percentage	2%	11%	51%	31%	5%



**What is your current monthly rent or house payment?**

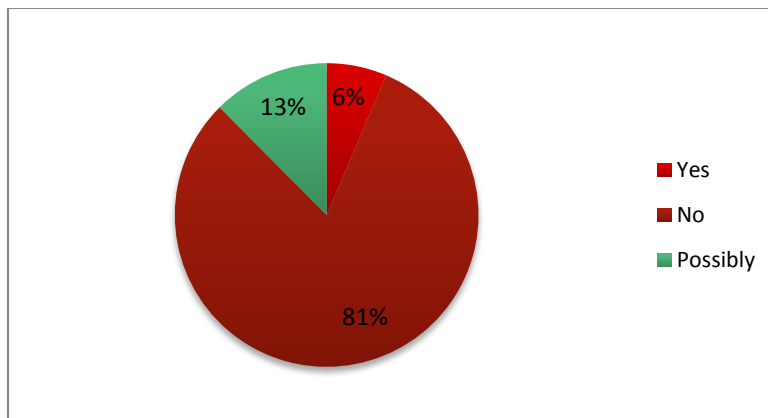
	None	\$1- \$100	\$101- \$200	\$201- \$300	\$301- \$400	\$401- \$500	\$501- \$600	\$601- \$700	\$701- \$800	\$801+
Number	178	0	3	5	4	14	13	8	9	27
Percentage	68%	0%	1%	2%	2%	5%	5%	3%	3%	10%

## Resident Survey Results



### Will you be looking for different housing within the next two years?

	Yes	No	Possibly
Number	18	228	35
Percentage	6%	81%	12%



### Why would you consider different housing?

	Want larger home	Want smaller home	Want to be closer to work	Renting, want to own	Want new location	Retiring	Want to live in a city	Want to live near lake	Other	N/A
Number	18	29	8	0	16	26	11	14	28	130
Percentage	6%	10%	3%	0%	6%	9%	4%	5%	10%	46%



## Resident Survey Results

### Other reasons respondents would consider different housing:

- Would like a new home (4)
- Taxes (2)
- Out of state (2)
- Would like to build at current location (2)
- Undesirable agriculture projects (2)
- Health (2)
- To be closer to family (2)
- Am Never Home
- Home flooded
- To travel
- If found a new job
- Warmer Climate
- To purchase other toys
- Place requiring less work
- Jobs
- Building new home
- Sell farm

### Why do you choose to live in the unincorporated area of the county instead of in a city?

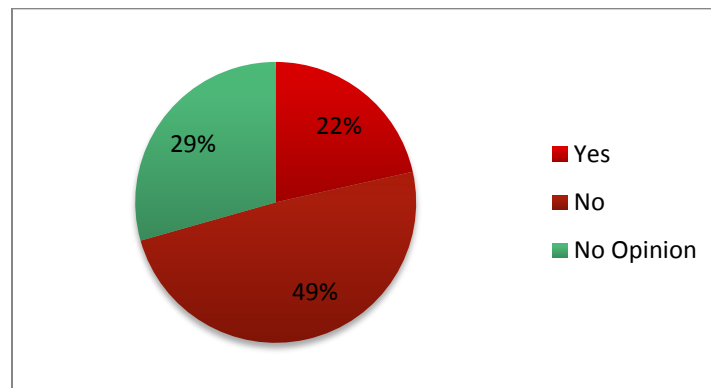
	Agricultural interest	Fewer regulations	Housing more affordable	No neighbors	Optimum location for work	Quality of life better	Recreational Activities	Taxes are less	Other
Number	150	84	34	99	39	151	72	41	20
Percentage	22%	12%	5%	14%	6%	22%	10%	6%	3%

### Other reasons respondents live in the unincorporated area:

- Lake (5)
- Peaceful/Quiet (4)
- Own a farm (3)
- Enjoy wildlife (2)
- Larger Lots
- Retired
- Trucks undesirable in town
- Have lived here entire life
- Location
- Less gossip

### Should there be a minimum parcel size that a new home can be built on?

	Yes	No	No Opinion
Number	60	137	82
Percentage	22%	49%	29%



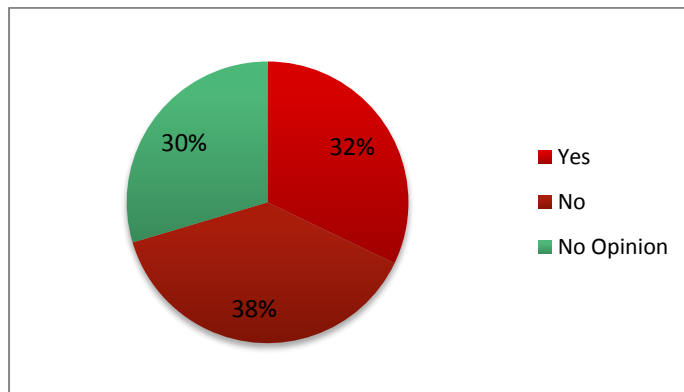
## Resident Survey Results

### Minimum parcel size for new homes (in acres):

- 2 (10)
- 1.5 (2)
- 25
- 1 (9)
- 40 (2)
- 20
- 5 (7)
- 10
- 5500 sf
- 4 (6)
- Enough for a septic field
- 4 to 5
- 3 (4)
- 1 to 2
- 0.5 (4)

### Should residential subdivisions be allowed to be built in the unincorporated county?

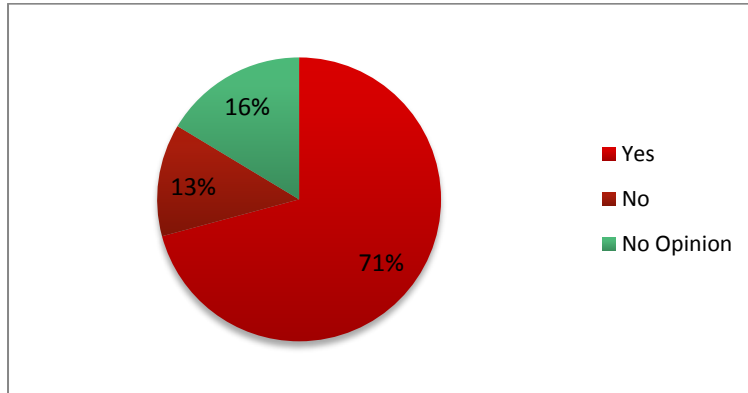
	Yes	No	No Opinion
Number	89	106	82
Percentage	32%	38%	30%



### Should there be specific regulations to build a subdivision?

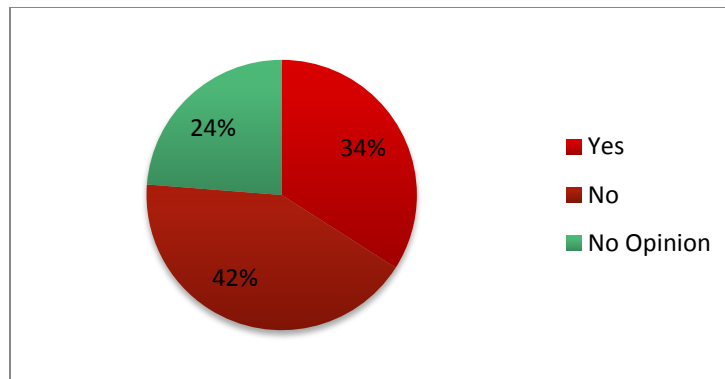
	Yes	No	No Opinion
Number	199	36	46
Percentage	71%	13%	16%

### Resident Survey Results



**Should residential subdivision be allowed to be built in the county near recreation/conservation areas?**

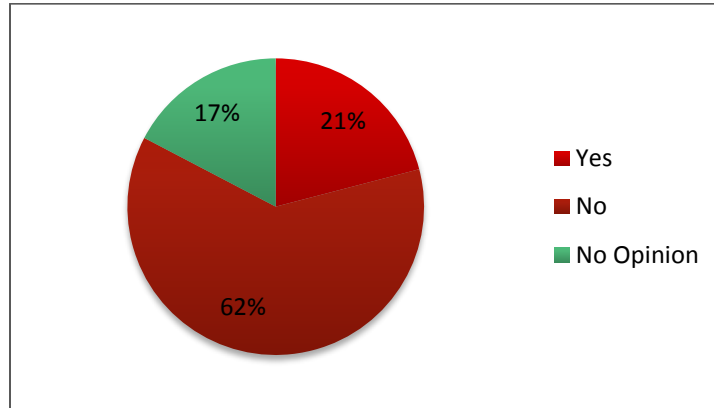
	Yes	No	No Opinion
Number	96	119	67
Percentage	34%	42%	24%



**Do you feel Counties should be allowed to regulate agricultural property?**

	Yes	No	No Opinion
Number	58	171	48
Percentage	21%	62%	17%

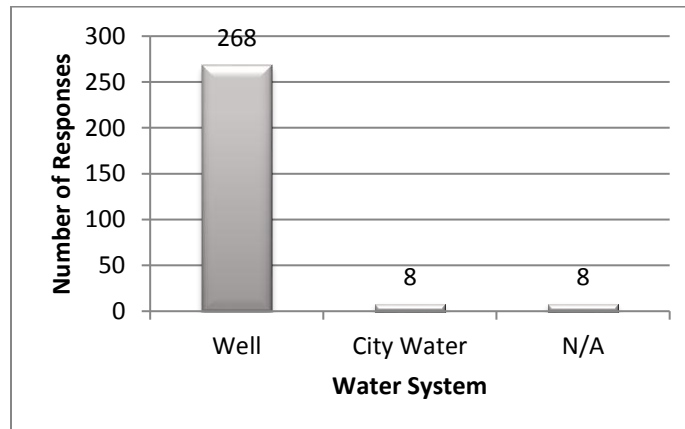
## Resident Survey Results



## Infrastructure Questions

**Do you have a well water system or are you hooked to a City water system?**

	Well	City Water	N/A
Number	268	8	8
Percentage	94%	3%	3%



### Well Depths (feet):

- 0-50: (4)
- 51-75: (10)
- 76-100: (16)
- 101-125: (31)
- 126-150: (22)
- 151-175: (7)
- 176-200: (23)
- 200-250: (11)
- 250-300: (10)
- 300+: (5)
- Artesian Well (4)
- Flowing Well

### City Water Providers:

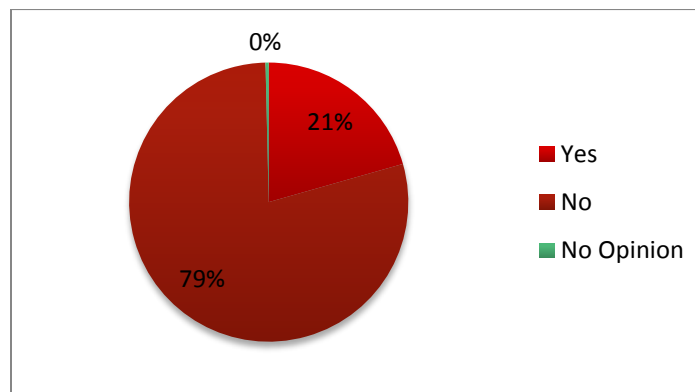
- City of Rowan
- Holmes Water Fund

## Resident Survey Results

- City of Clarion
- City of Eagle Grove

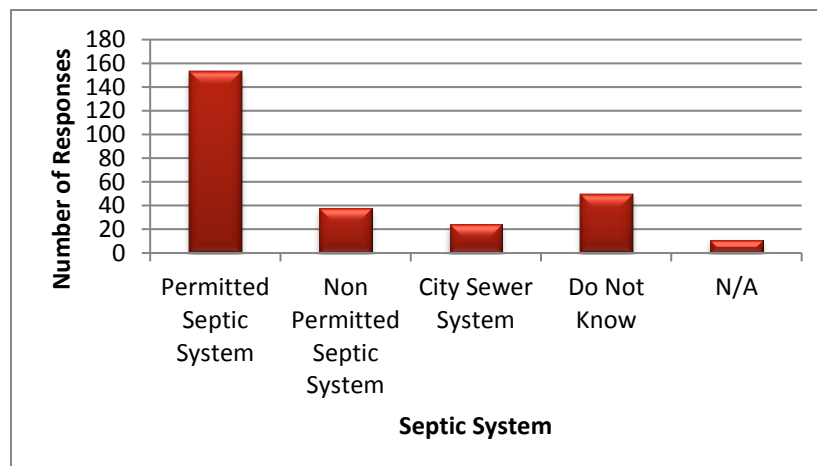
**Would you like to see rural water provided to Wright County in the future?**

	Yes	No	No Opinion
Number	56	215	1
Percentage	21%	79%	0%



**Do you have a septic system with a leach bed system, or are you hooked up to a City sewer system?**

	Permitted Septic System	Non Permitted Septic System	City Sewer System	Do Not Know	N/A
Number	153	38	24	50	11
Percentage	55%	14%	9%	18%	4%



## Resident Survey Results

### City Sewer System Providers:

- Lake Cornelia Sewer District (14)
- City of Clarion
- Sewer District

### Does your household use the following communication services?

#### Television:

	Satellite	Cable	Antenna	None
Number	200	25	86	5
Percentage	63%	8%	27%	2%

#### Satellite Providers:

- Dish Network (100)
- Direct TV (55)
- Windstream

#### Cable Providers:

- Mediacom (12)
- Communications One Network (2)
- Goldfield Communications (2)
- Kanawha Communications
- Wmtel

#### Telephone:

	Landline	Cell Phone	None
Number	226	228	2
Percentage	50%	50%	0%

#### Landline Providers:

- Frontier (53)
- Goldfield Access (47)
- Qwest (47)
- Wmtel (13)
- Windstream (8)
- Communications One Network (5)
- Mediacom (4)
- US West (2)
- Kanawha Communications
- AT&T
- Iowa Telecom

#### Cell Phone Providers:

- US Cellular (110)
- Verizon (65)
- Tracfone (11)
- I-Wireless (5)
- AT&T (2)
- Consumer Cellular (2)
- Communications One Network
- Sprint

## Resident Survey Results

### Internet:

	Satellite Internet	Cable Internet	DSL Internet	Home Wireless Internet	Dial Up Internet	Mobile Wireless Internet	None
Number	48	14	92	20	10	18	65
Percentage	18%	5%	34%	7%	4%	7%	24%

#### Satellite Internet Providers:

- Communications One Network
- Wmtel (27)
- Wild Blue/Peconet (6)
- Greenway (4)
- Mediacom (2)
- Hughes Net
- Windstream
- Speed Net

#### Cable Internet Providers:

- Mediacom (11)
- Wmtel

#### DSL Internet Providers:

- Frontier (22)
- Wmtel (21)
- Goldfield (16)
- Greenway (3)
- Communications One Network (3)
- Greenway Communications (2)
- Speed Net (2)
- Mediacom (2)
- Speednet
- Windstream

#### Home Wireless Internet Providers:

- Wmtel (16)
- Greenway (2)
- Peconet

#### Dial Up Internet Providers:

- Frontier (5)
- Goldfield Access Net (4)
- Wmtel

#### Mobile Wireless Internet Providers:

- Verizon (8)
- US Cellular (6)
- AT&T

## Resident Survey Results

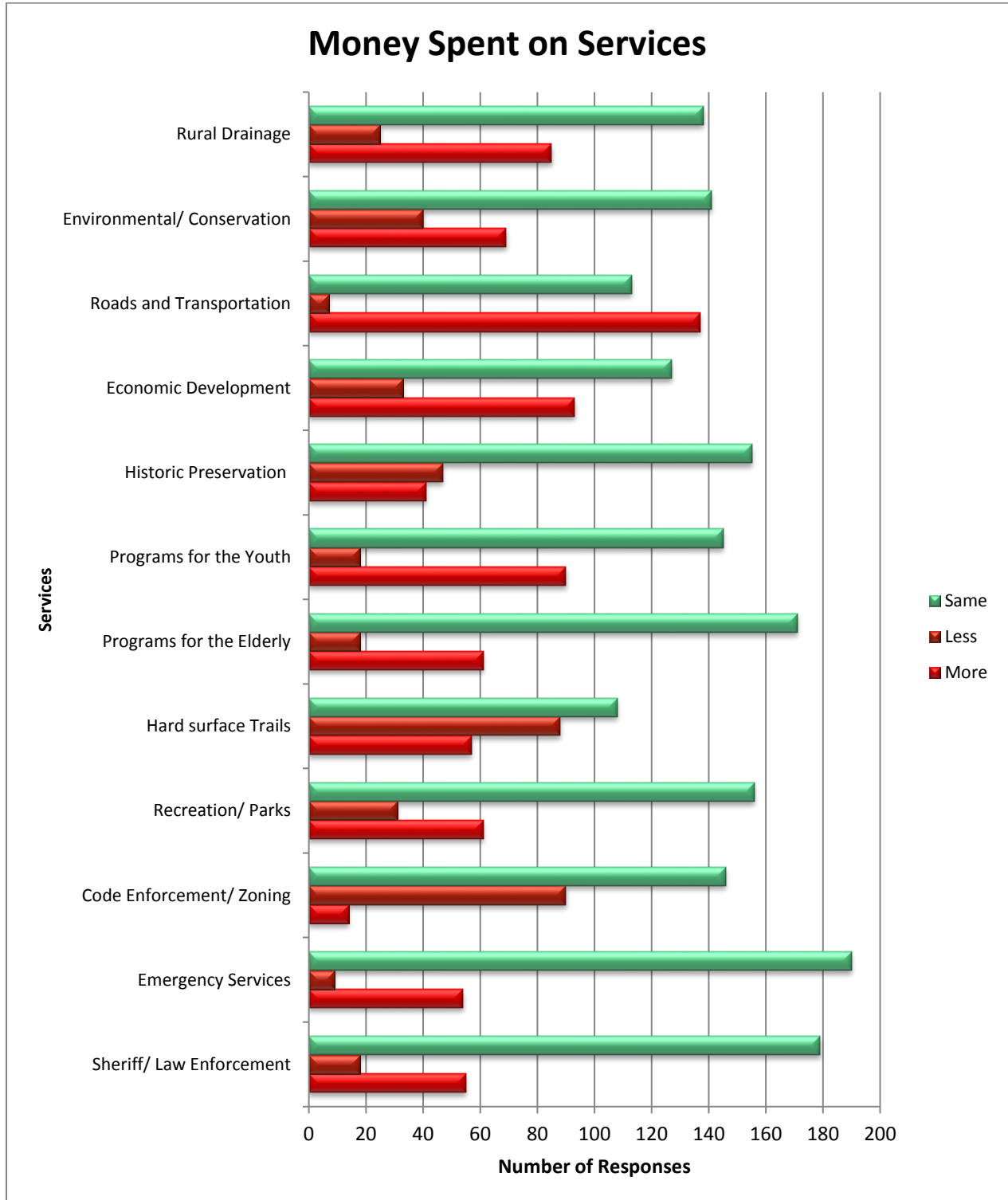
### Public Services Questions

**Of the following services, where would you like to see Wright County spend MORE, LESS or SAME amount of money in the next 5 to 10 years?**

	More	Less	Same	
Sheriff/ Law Enforcement	55	18	179	252
	22%	7%	71%	
Emergency Services	54	9	190	253
	21%	4%	75%	
Code Enforcement/ Zoning	14	90	146	250
	6%	36%	58%	
Recreation/ Parks	61	31	156	248
	25%	13%	63%	
Hard surface Trails	57	88	108	253
	23%	35%	43%	
Programs for the Elderly	61	18	171	250
	24%	7%	68%	
Programs for the Youth	90	18	145	253
	36%	7%	57%	
Historic Preservation	41	47	155	243
	17%	19%	64%	
Economic Development	93	33	127	253
	37%	13%	50%	
Roads and Transportation	137	7	113	257
	53%	3%	44%	
Environmental/ Conservation	69	40	141	250
	28%	16%	56%	
Rural Drainage	85	25	138	248
	34%	10%	56%	



## Resident Survey Results



**Comments:**

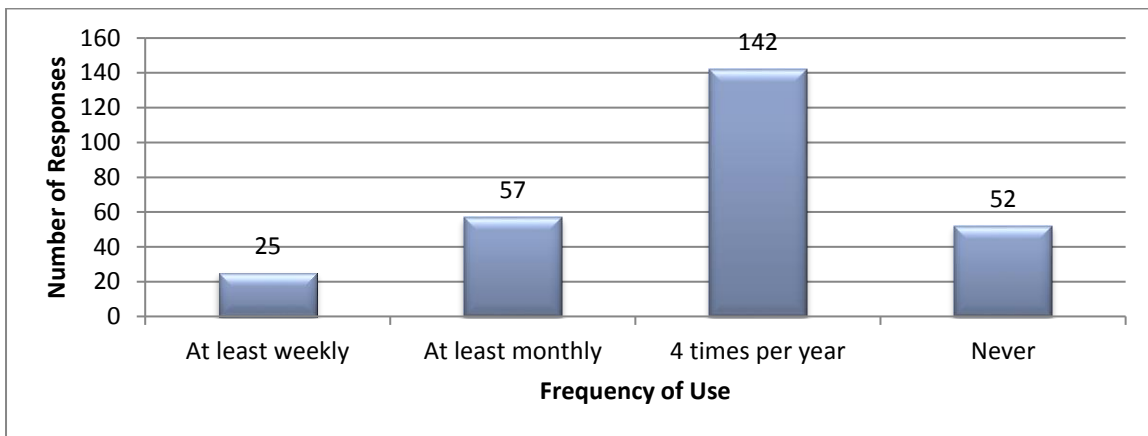
Regarding rural drainage: landowners in drainage district pay the bill.

## Resident Survey Results

### Recreation and Conservation Questions

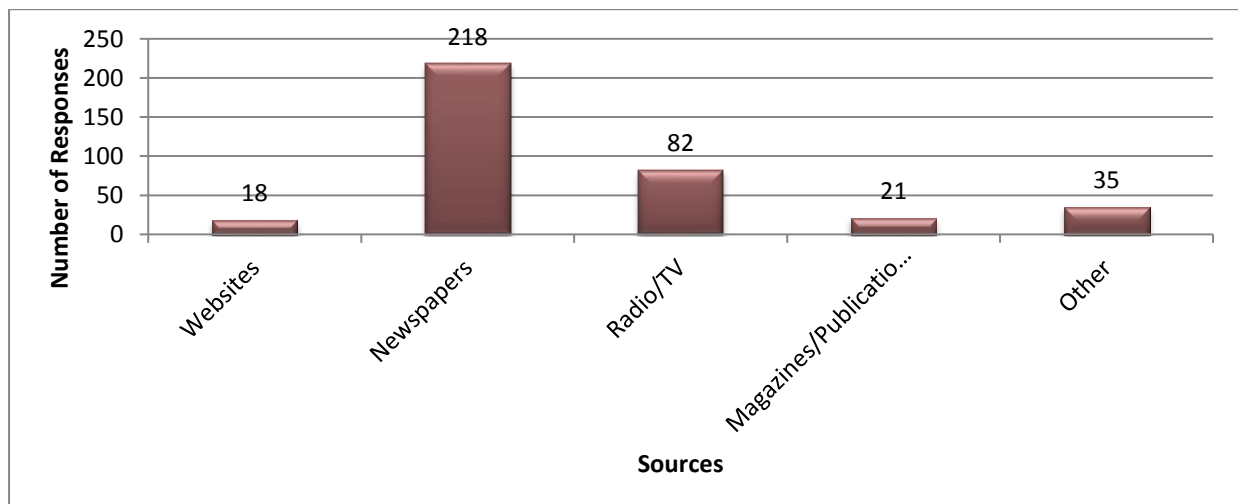
**How often does your household visit parks and public use areas in the unincorporated area of Wright County?**

	At least weekly	At least monthly	4 times per year	Never
Number	25	57	142	52
Percentage	9%	21%	51%	19%



**How do you hear about events at parks and public use areas in the unincorporated area of Wright County?**

	Websites	Newspapers	Radio/TV	Magazines/Publications	Other
Number	18	218	82	21	35
Percentage	5%	58%	22%	6%	9%



## Resident Survey Results

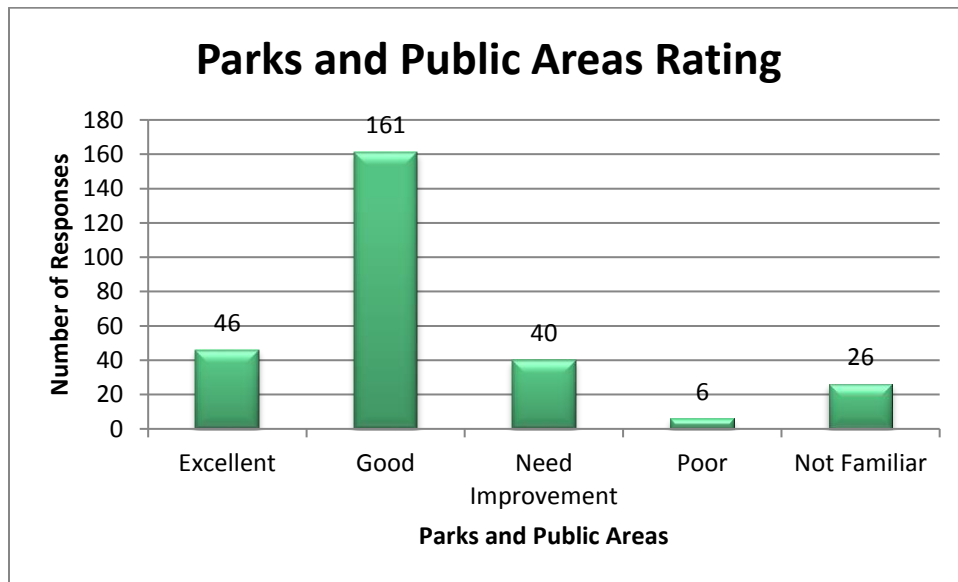
**Other ways people hear about events at parks and public use areas in the unincorporated area of Wright County:**

**Lake Cornelia Improvement Association Newsletter (2)**

- Other People (17)
  - Don't hear (4)
  - Familiar (3)
  - Emails (2)
  - School (2)
- Flyers
  - Newsletter
  - Mailings
  - Church Announcements
- Live by one
  - No events in area park
  - Civic Groups

**How would you rate the parks and public use areas in the unincorporated area of Wright County?**

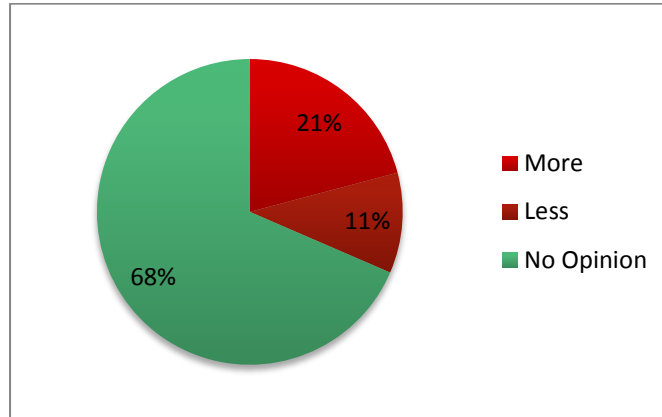
	Excellent	Good	Need Improvement	Poor	Not Familiar
Number	46	161	40	6	26
Percentage	16%	58%	14%	2%	9%



## Resident Survey Results

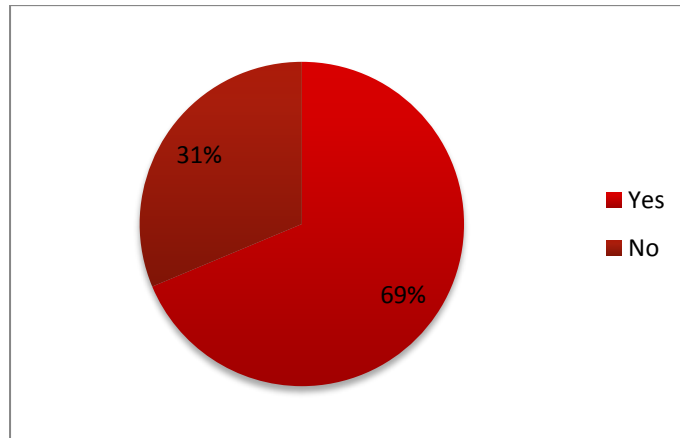
**Should there be more or less parks and public use areas in the unincorporated area of Wright County?**

	More	Less	No Opinion
Number	53	27	174
Percentage	21%	11%	69%



**Should public use activities be available in the unincorporated area of Wright County?**

	Yes	No
Number	158	72
Percentage	69%	31%



**Comments:**

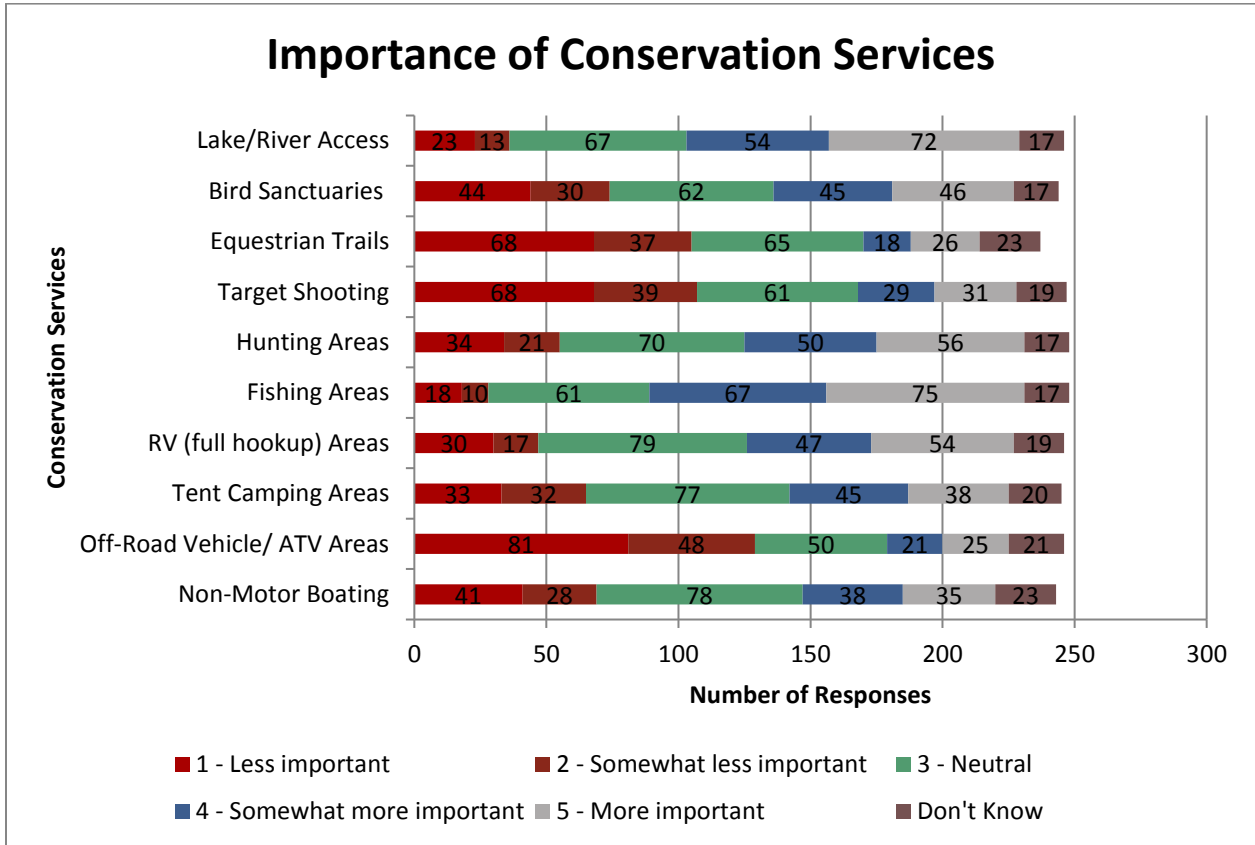
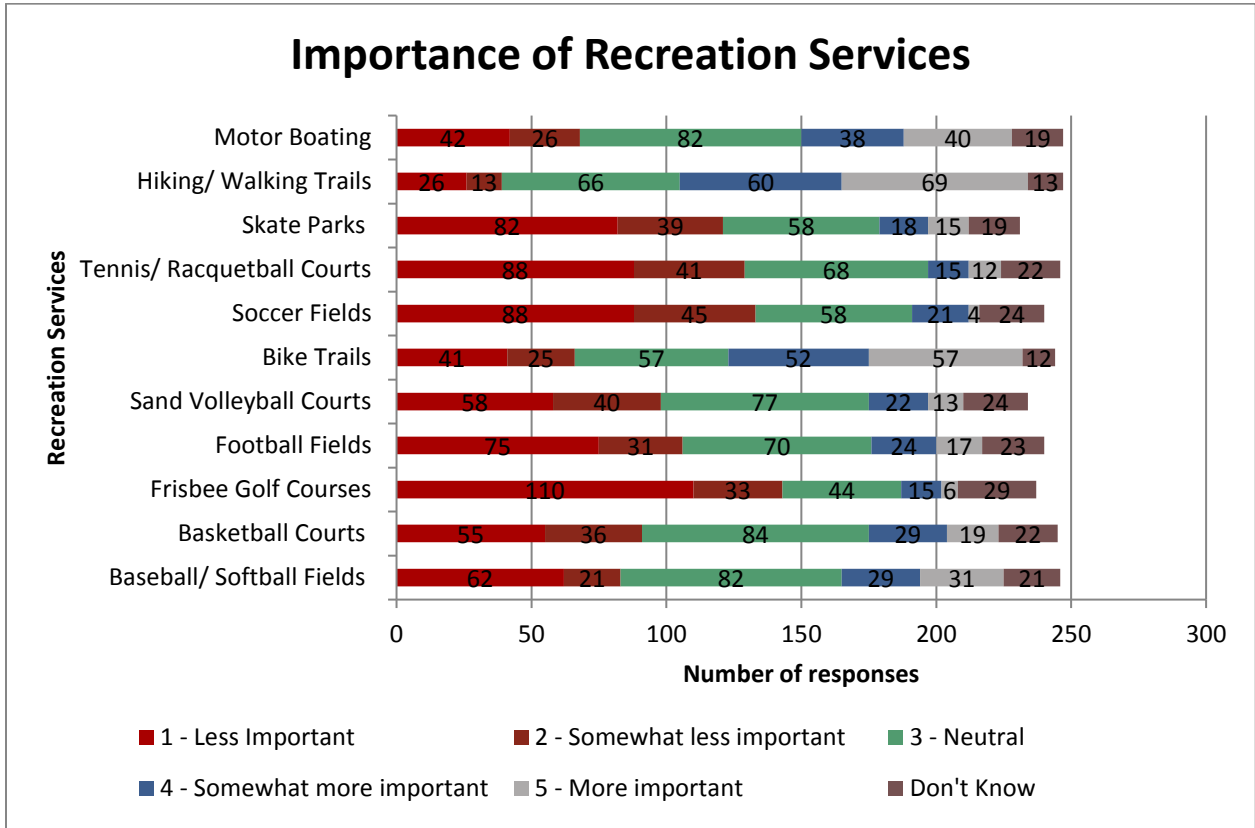
The park east of 5 mile corner (69/3) needs work, trees falling down; used to serve many travelers years ago.

## Resident Survey Results

**Of the following Parks, Recreation and Conservation services, rate the importance; 1 being LESS important to 5 being MORE important:**

	1	2	3	4	5	Don't Know
Baseball/ Softball Fields	62	21	82	29	31	21
	25%	9%	33%	12%	13%	9%
Basketball Courts	55	36	84	29	19	22
	22%	15%	34%	12%	8%	9%
Frisbee Golf Courses	110	33	44	15	6	29
	46%	14%	19%	6%	3%	12%
Football Fields	75	31	70	24	17	23
	31%	13%	29%	10%	7%	10%
Sand Volleyball Courts	58	40	77	22	13	24
	25%	17%	33%	9%	6%	10%
Bike Trails	41	25	57	52	57	12
	17%	10%	23%	21%	23%	5%
Soccer Fields	88	45	58	21	4	24
	37%	19%	24%	9%	2%	10%
Tennis/ Racquetball Courts	88	41	68	15	12	22
	36%	17%	28%	6%	5%	9%
Skate Parks	82	39	58	18	15	19
	35%	17%	25%	8%	6%	8%
Hiking/ Walking Trails	26	13	66	60	69	13
	11%	5%	27%	24%	28%	5%
Motor Boating	42	26	82	38	40	19
	17%	11%	33%	15%	16%	8%
Non-Motor Boating	41	28	78	38	35	23
	17%	12%	32%	16%	14%	9%
Off-Road Vehicle/ ATV Areas	81	48	50	21	25	21
	33%	20%	20%	9%	10%	9%
Tent Camping Areas	33	32	77	45	38	20
	13%	13%	31%	18%	16%	8%
RV (full hookup) Areas	30	17	79	47	54	19
	12%	7%	32%	19%	22%	8%
Fishing Areas	18	10	61	67	75	17
	7%	4%	25%	27%	30%	7%
Hunting Areas	34	21	70	50	56	17
	14%	8%	28%	20%	23%	7%
Target Shooting	68	39	61	29	31	19
	28%	16%	25%	12%	13%	8%
Equestrian Trails	68	37	65	18	26	23
	29%	16%	27%	8%	11%	10%
Bird Sanctuaries	44	30	62	45	46	17
	18%	12%	25%	18%	19%	7%
Lake/River Access	23	13	67	54	72	17
	9%	5%	27%	22%	29%	7%

## Resident Survey Results

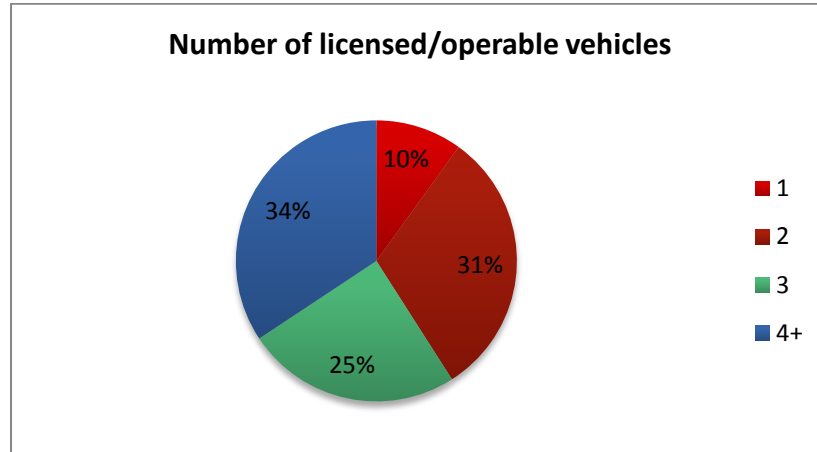


## Resident Survey Results

### Transportation Questions

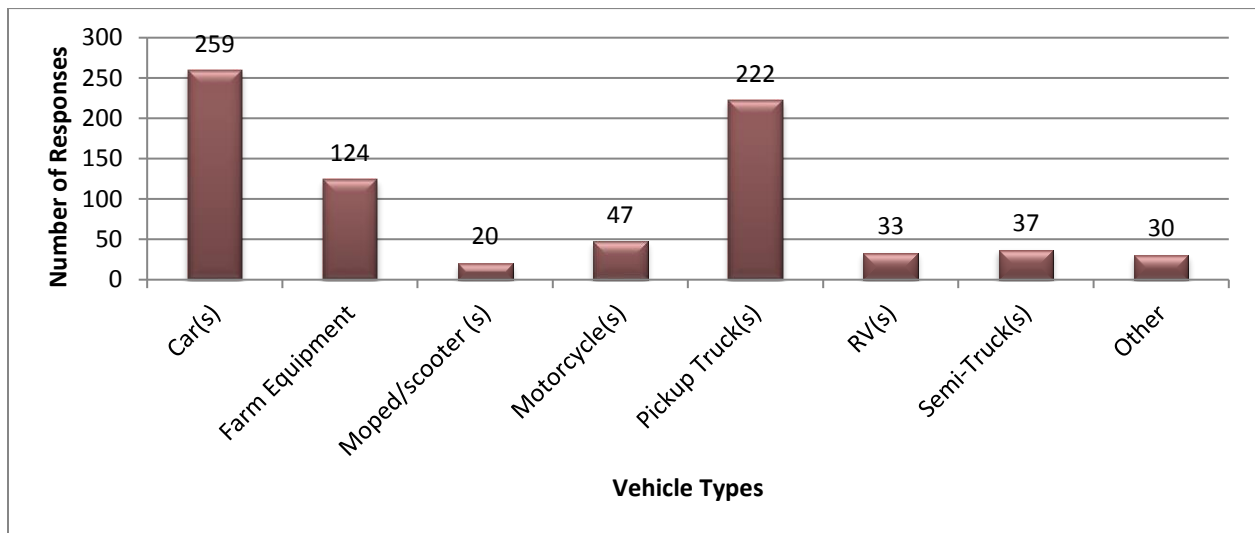
**How many transportation/road licensed and operable vehicles does your household have?**

	1	2	3	4+
Number	27	84	67	93
Percentage	10%	31%	25%	34%



**What type of vehicles does your household have? (check all that apply)**

	Car(s)	Farm Equipment	Moped/scooter (s)	Motorcycle(s)	Pickup Truck(s)	RV(s)	Semi-Truck(s)	Other
Number	259	124	20	47	222	33	37	30
Percentage	34%	16%	3%	6%	29%	4%	5%	4%



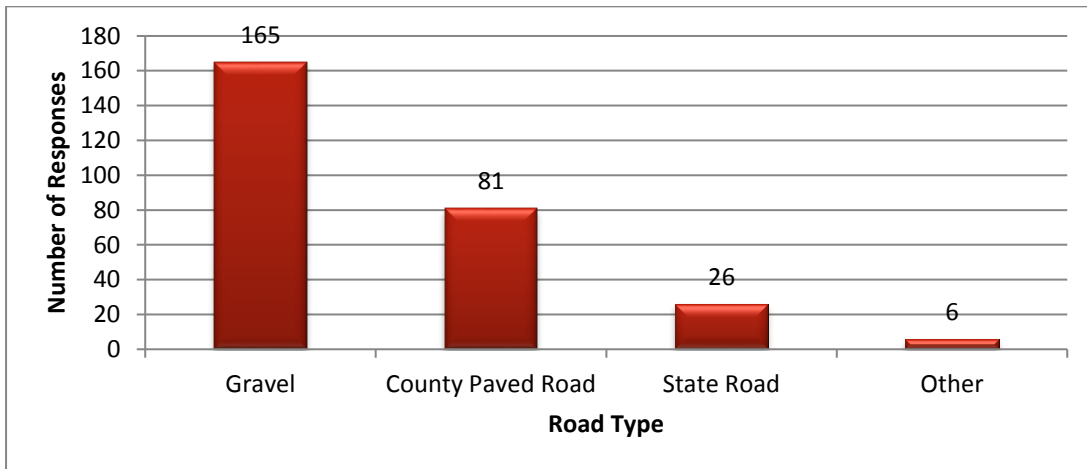
## Resident Survey Results

### Other vehicle types:

- ATV (6)
- Golf Cart
- Straight Truck (4)
- Travel trailer
- Snowmobile (2)
- Collector
- Grain Trucks (1)
- Ranger

### What type of road is your home located on?

	Gravel	County Paved Road	State Road	Other
Number	165	81	26	6
Percentage	59%	29%	9%	2%



### Other road types:

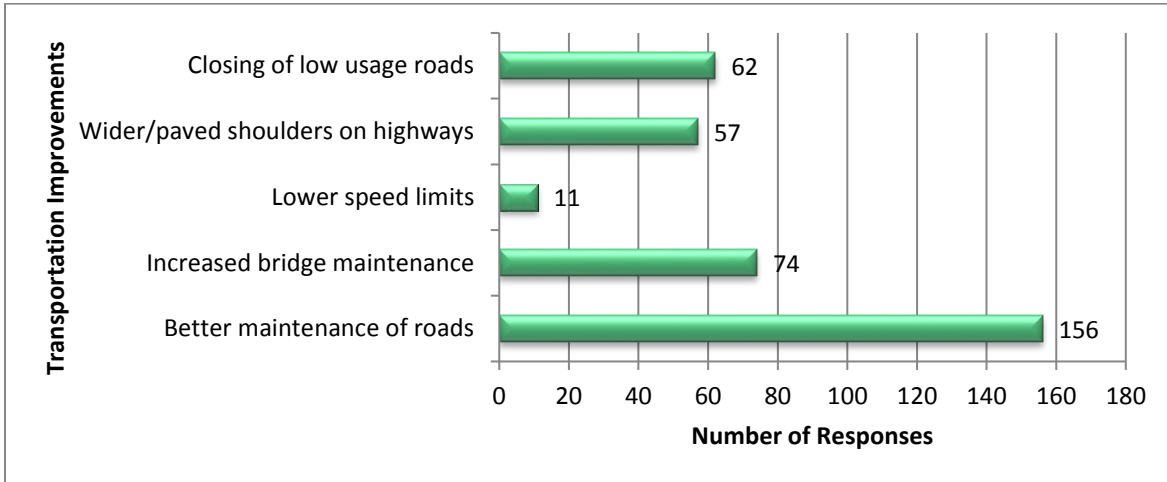
- Blacktop (2)
- City Street - Lake home
- Private paved (2)
- Gravel (mud)



## Resident Survey Results

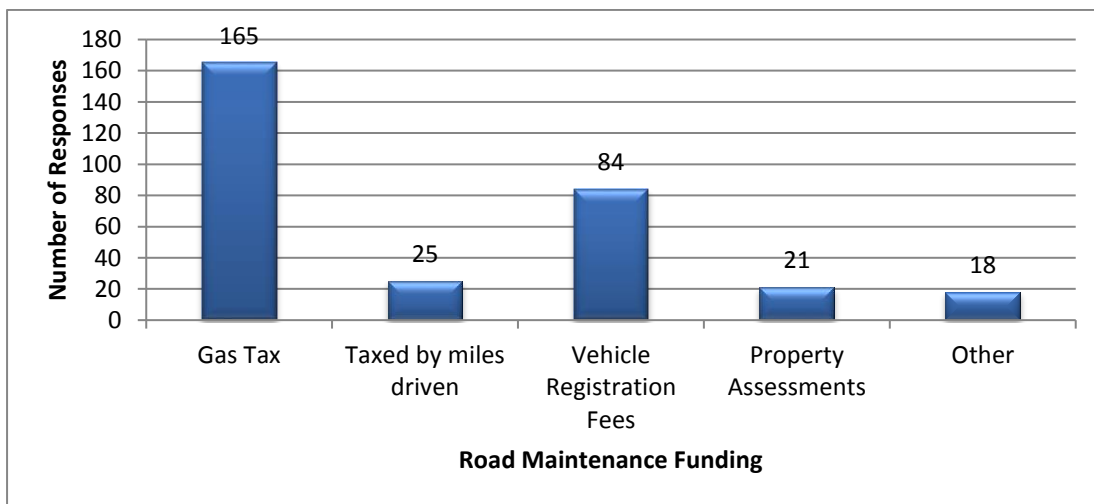
**What transportation improvements should the County consider? (check all that apply)**

	Better maintenance of roads	Increased bridge maintenance	Lower speed limits	Wider/paved shoulders on highways	Closing of low usage roads
Number	156	74	11	57	62
Percentage	43%	21%	3%	16%	17%



**How do you think road maintenance should be paid for?**

	Gas Tax	Taxed by miles driven	Vehicle Registration Fees	Property Assessments	Other
Number	165	25	84	21	18
Percentage	53%	8%	27%	7%	6%



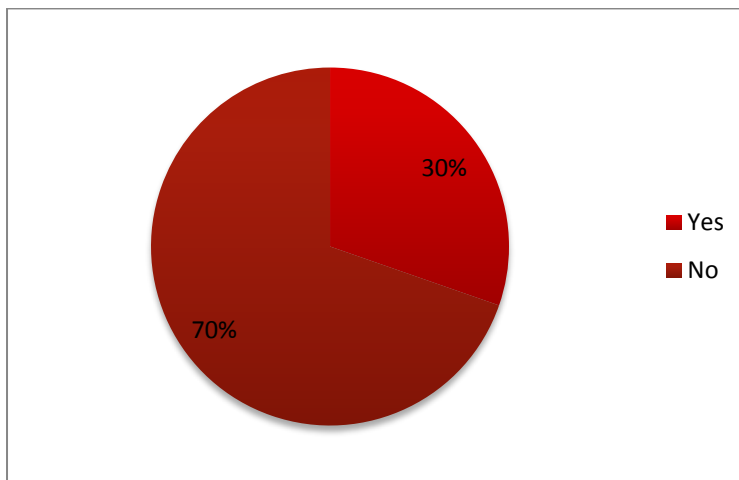
## Resident Survey Results

### Other types of funding for road maintenance:

- How the county currently does it (3)
- Farm equipment should be licensed/registered to be on the road (2)
- Weight tax on vehicles and farm equipment (3)
- May need to have the non or corporate farm operations support their roads (2)
- Companies that own big trucks should pay more
- Tax Corporations
- Usage
- Sales Tax
- Proper spending of the monies they have
- Tax everyone

### Should there be specific routes for farm equipment like cities have for semi-trucks (i.e. truck routes)?

	Yes	No
Number	81	186
Percentage	30%	70%



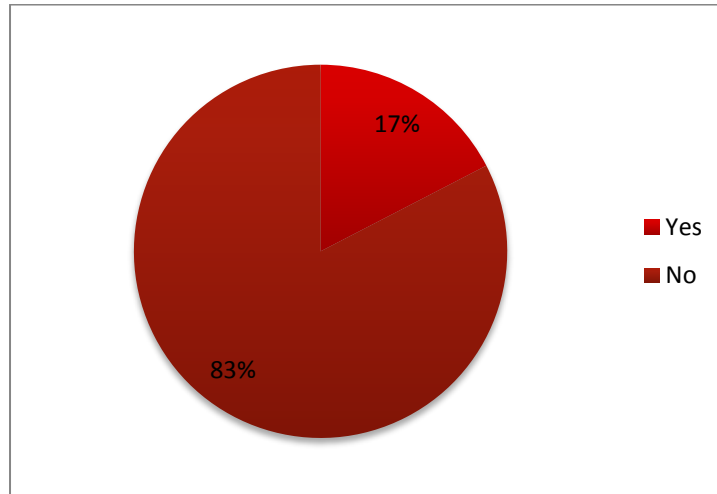
### Should businesses/industries with large truck traffic be allowed to locate on gravel or secondary roads not adequate for such traffic?

	Yes	No
Number	70	195
Percentage	26%	74%

## Resident Survey Results

**If public transit was available in the county would you use it?**

	Yes	No
Number	47	223
Percentage	17%	83%



### **Additional Transportation Comments:**

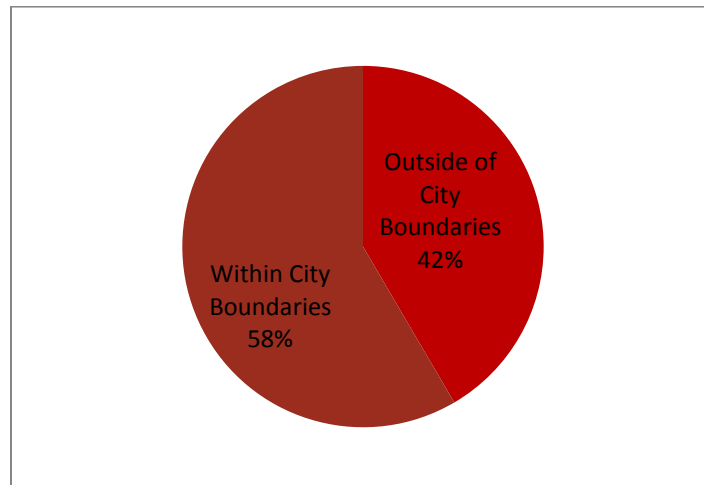
- Heavier equipment causes more damage
- Open low usage roads - we've had 2 close on either side of us. Very disappointing
- Corporate use should have to use designated routes
- No disc blade on maintainer
- No feed trucks on gravel between blacktops
- County paved road has not be re-surfaced for 21 years
- What if my field is not on the farm equipment route?

## Resident Survey Results

### Economic Development Questions

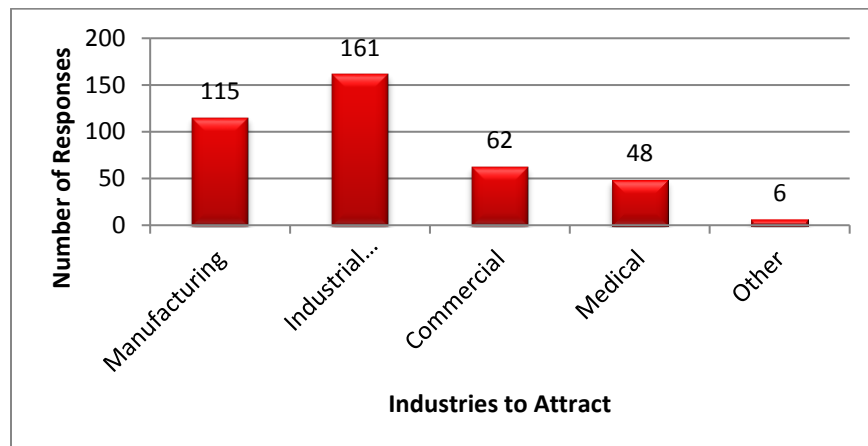
Where do you see commercial/industrial development most likely occurring in the County?

	Outside of City Boundaries	Within City Boundaries
Number	106	149
Percentage	42%	58%



What types of industry do you see the County attracting within both the unincorporated area and the cities?

	Manufacturing	Industrial Agriculture	Commercial	Medical	Other
Number	115	161	62	48	6
Percentage	29%	41%	16%	12%	2%



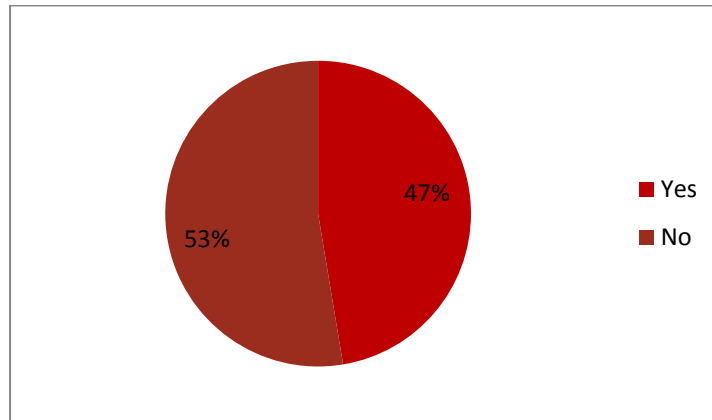
## Resident Survey Results

### Other industries to attract:

- Farming
- Hog & Chicken Farms

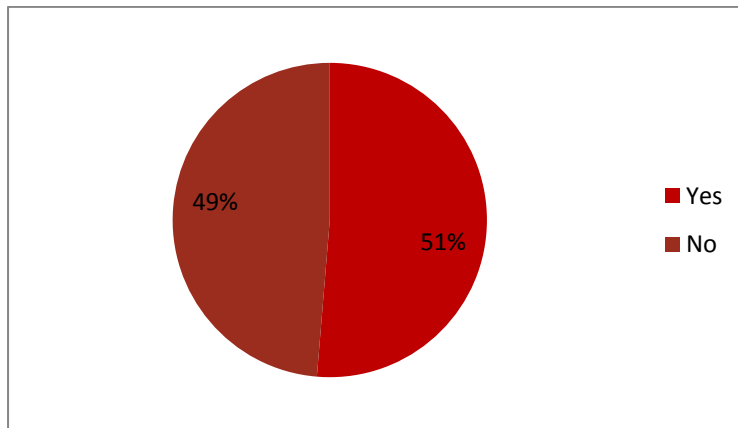
### Should the county discourage residential development on agricultural land?

	Yes	No
Number	127	141
Percentage	47%	53%



### Should the county discourage commercial/industrial development on agricultural land?

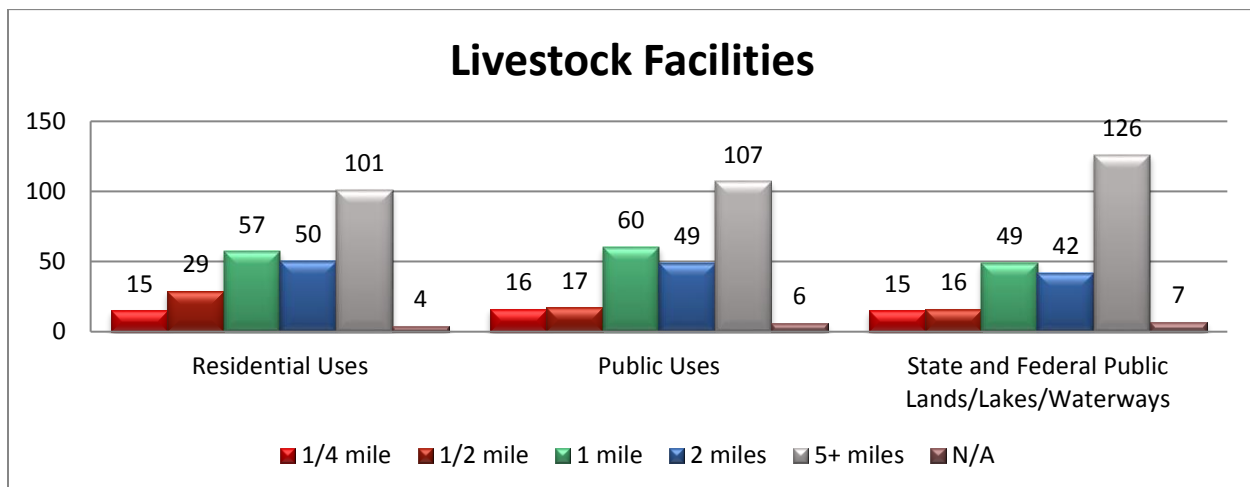
	Yes	No
Number	137	130
Percentage	51%	49%



## Resident Survey Results

**How close should commercial livestock facilities be allowed to locate near the following:**

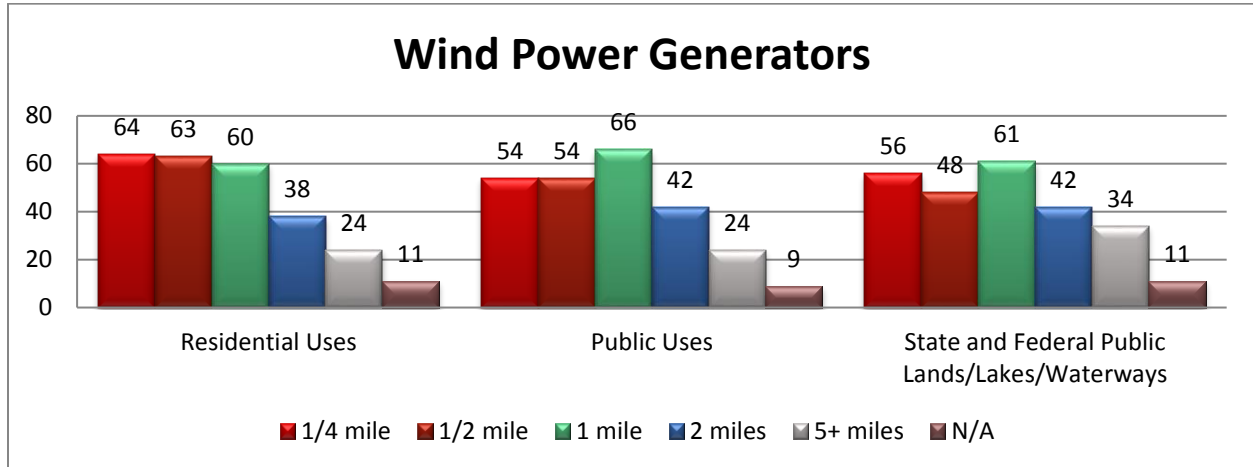
	1/4 mile	1/2 mile	1 mile	2 miles	5+ miles	N/A
Residential Uses	15	29	57	50	101	4
	6%	11%	22%	20%	39%	2%
Public Uses	16	17	60	49	107	6
	6%	7%	24%	19%	42%	2%
State and Federal Public Lands/Lakes/Waterways	15	16	49	42	126	7
	6%	6%	19%	16%	49%	3%



**How close should wind power generators be allowed to locate near the following:**

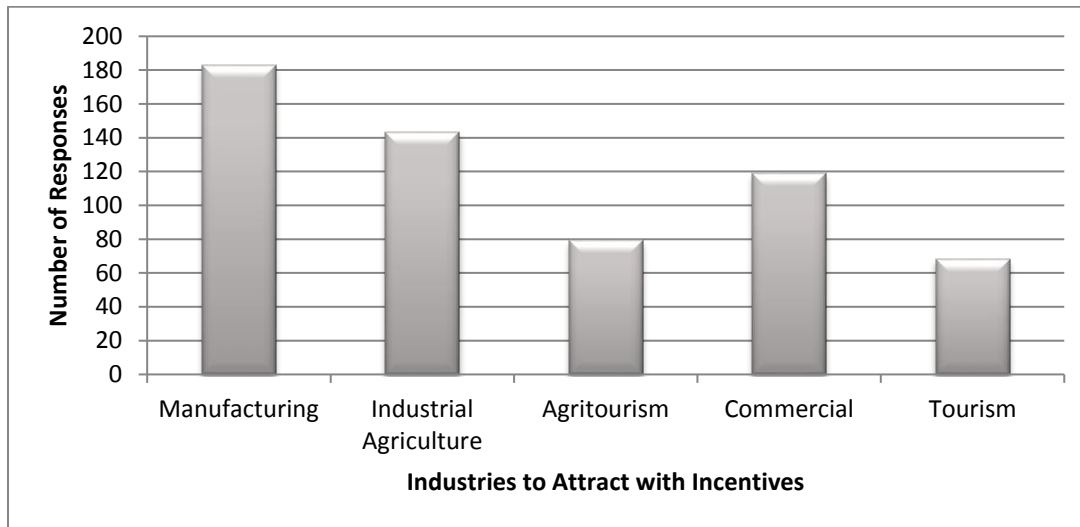
	1/4 mile	1/2 mile	1 mile	2 miles	5+ miles	N/A
Residential Uses	64	63	60	38	24	11
	25%	24%	23%	15%	9%	4%
Public Uses	54	54	66	42	24	9
	22%	22%	27%	17%	10%	4%
State and Federal Public Lands/Lakes/Waterways	56	48	61	42	34	11
	22%	19%	24%	17%	13%	4%

## Resident Survey Results



**Which industries should be attracted through incentives provided by the County?**

	Manufacturing	Industrial Agriculture	Agritourism	Commercial	Tourism
Number	183	143	79	119	68
Percentage	31%	24%	13%	20%	11%



**Should Wright County work to establish more non-agriculture businesses or industries?**

	Yes	No
Number	216	40
Percentage	84%	16%

## Resident Survey Results

### How could Wright County compliment surrounding counties economically?

- Work with surrounding counties to promote business
- Offer employment opportunities
- Compete on development
- More manufacturing and retail, such as Wal-Mart, McDonalds, shopping centers
- Assist the smaller communities like Electrolux did
- Work with area counties to combine counties, start phasing out large livestock unless, you can reduce flies and smell
- Be a leader in job growth, reasonable taxes, and smart use of funds.
- By being fiscally responsible so taxes for businesses and public can be held to a minimum
- Not all with county dollars - services could be exchanged, as needed
- Cooperate with needs that established companies may have
- Non-agriculture jobs are important. We're losing them to other counties and people here needs jobs or will leave also. Not everyone can work an agriculture related job
- Medical resources; jail facilities; organic produce
- Share resources if possible
- Share superintendents
- Merge counties to eliminate duplicate governments and services. Merge Iowa to 25 counties, so merge Wright County with 3 others to serve a larger area with fewer administrators.
- Solicit industry as a regional unit
- More outdoor bike trails
- More services for the elderly - entertainment
- Keeping homeowners required to maintain their property
- Have good recreational facilities
- Working together to develop more jobs for everyone and to develop more industries
- Merge county facilities for expense control - maintenance and such
- 

### Additional Comments:

- Please no more confinements
- Commercial livestock facilities should only be allowed on owners residential land so that have to smell it 24/7 and pay for road damage done by all the truck traffic.
- No more commercial livestock facilities
- No development in the unincorporated area



## Resident Survey Results

- Have livestock facility 1/2 mile from us. Stench is terrible!
- Need different supervision in commercial/industrial development in regards to cities and county
- No more hog or chicken buildings - gives Wright County a bad image.
- Less regulations & Less Taxes
- Share positions such as sanitarian, county attorney, etc.
- Consolidation of Court Houses
- Better Snowmobile trails - big business
- Jointly advertise similar businesses
- No more confinements
- Dust control on heavy traveled roads
- Republicans & democrats need to stop back-biting each other and work for the common man/woman.
- Tax incentives for new businesses
- Tax illegal's who have been here in Iowa for 5 years or more, make them contributors to the tax system!
- Wright County needs to figure out how to control what they spend on things that don't matter. We are losing population which means less revenue. Some things in the county need to be disposed of, but it's a matter of their check.
- Coordination of road building & maintenance
- I would like to see a small mall and a larger grocery store that offers more organic and vegan/vegetarian food.
- Communication and work together to improve both counties (2)
- Share equipment
- Combine county business
- Share Services

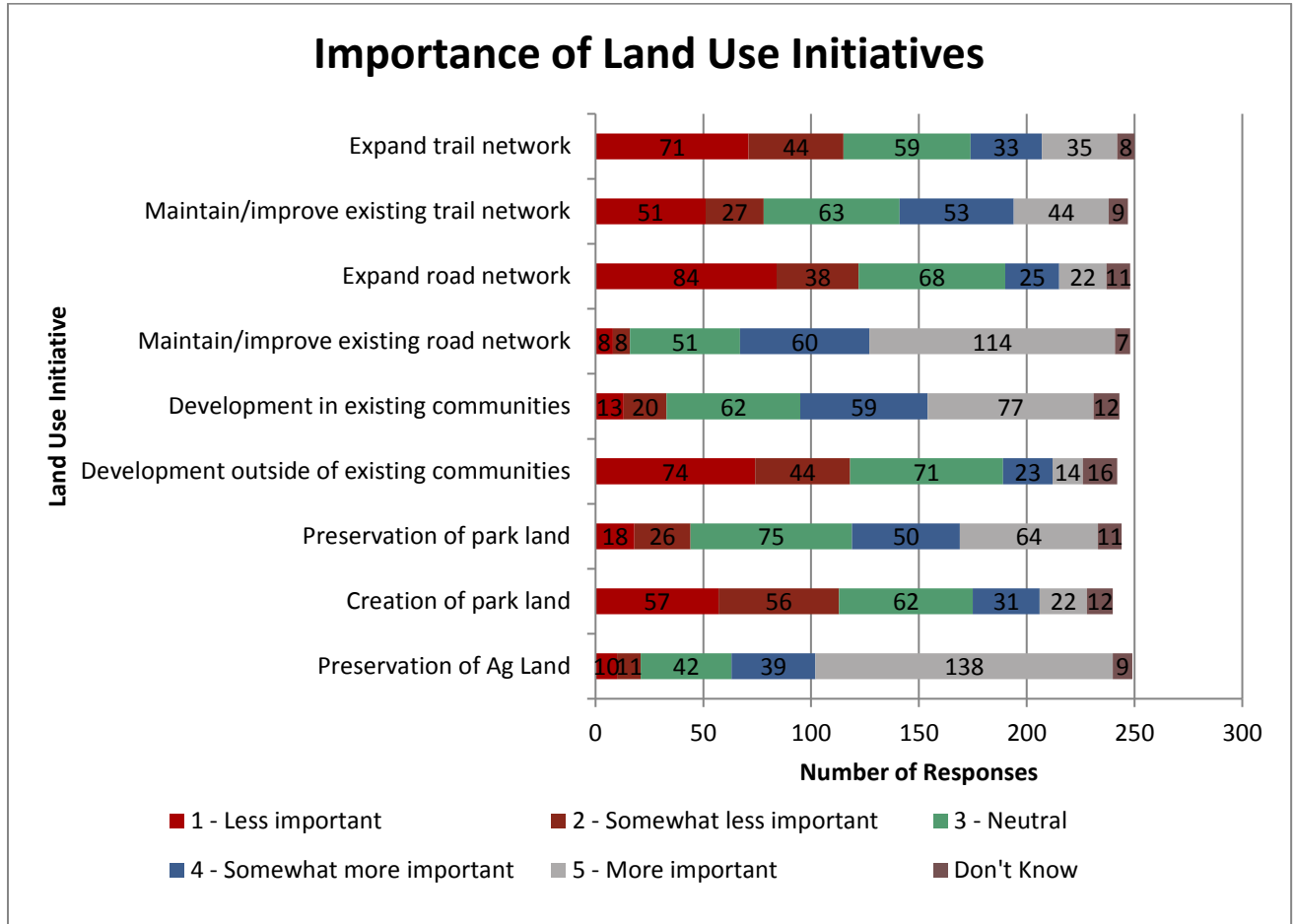
## Resident Survey Results

### Land Use Questions

Rate the importance of the following land use initiatives; 1 being LESS important to 5 being MORE important:

	1	2	3	4	5	Don't Know
Preservation of Ag Land	10	11	42	39	138	9
	4%	4%	17%	16%	55%	4%
Creation of park land	57	56	62	31	22	12
	24%	23%	26%	13%	9%	5%
Preservation of park land	18	26	75	50	64	11
	7%	11%	31%	20%	26%	5%
Development outside of existing communities	74	44	71	23	14	16
	31%	18%	29%	10%	6%	7%
Development in existing communities	13	20	62	59	77	12
	5%	8%	26%	24%	32%	5%
Maintain/improve existing road network	8	8	51	60	114	7
	3%	3%	21%	24%	46%	3%
Expand road network	84	38	68	25	22	11
	34%	15%	27%	10%	9%	4%
Maintain/improve existing trail network	51	27	63	53	44	9
	21%	11%	26%	21%	18%	4%
Expand trail network	71	44	59	33	35	8
	28%	18%	24%	13%	14%	3%

## Resident Survey Results

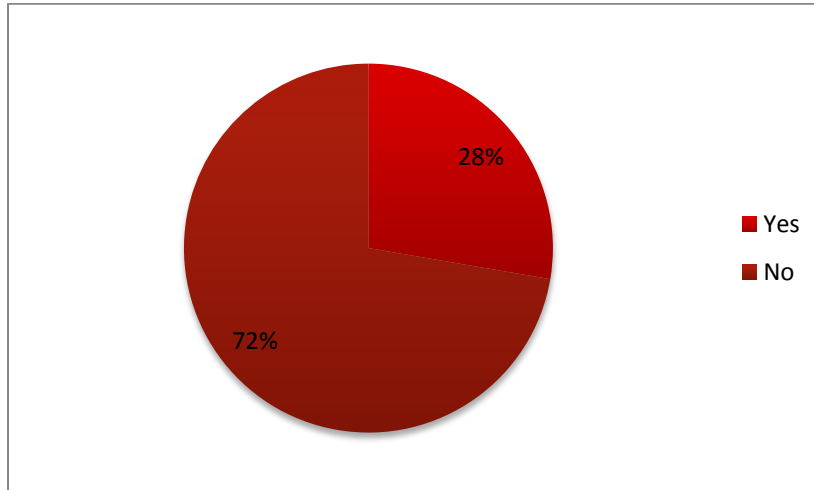


## Resident Survey Results

### Agricultural Questions

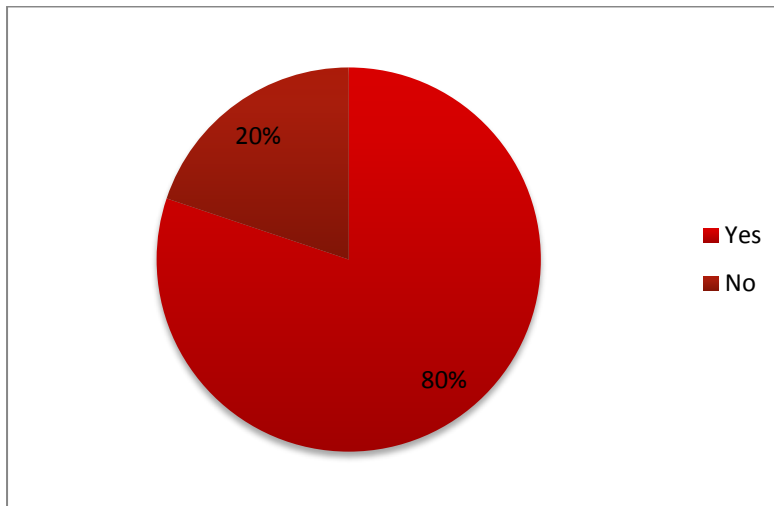
Do you feel that Wright County should be allowed to regulate non-residential, agricultural property?

	Yes	No
Number	72	188
Percentage	28%	72%



Should the county look into programs that work to preserve agricultural lands?

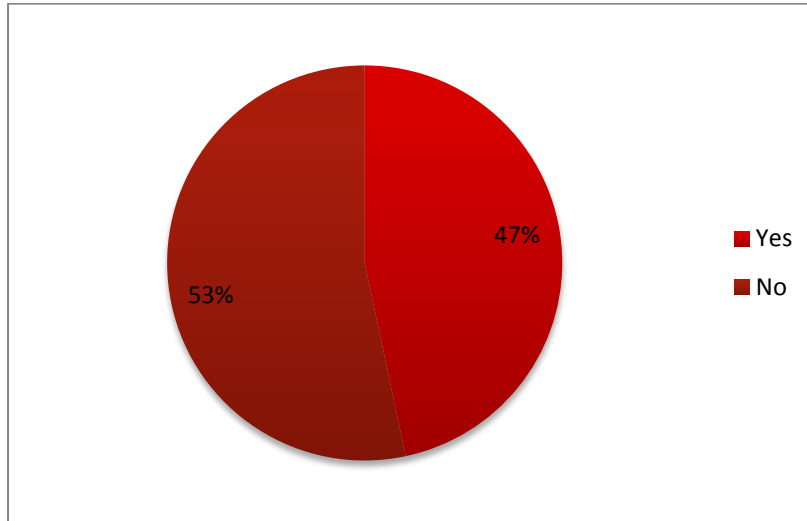
	Yes	No
Number	210	52
Percentage	80%	20%



## Resident Survey Results

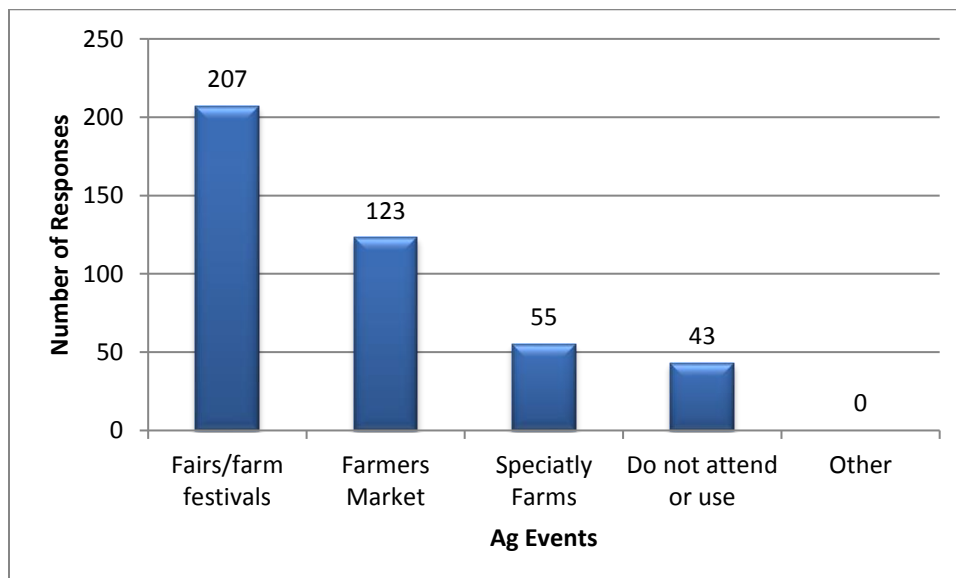
**Should more initiatives related to organic farming be encouraged throughout the County?**

	Yes	No
Number	119	136
Percentage	47%	53%



**What agricultural events do you regularly attend within Wright County?**

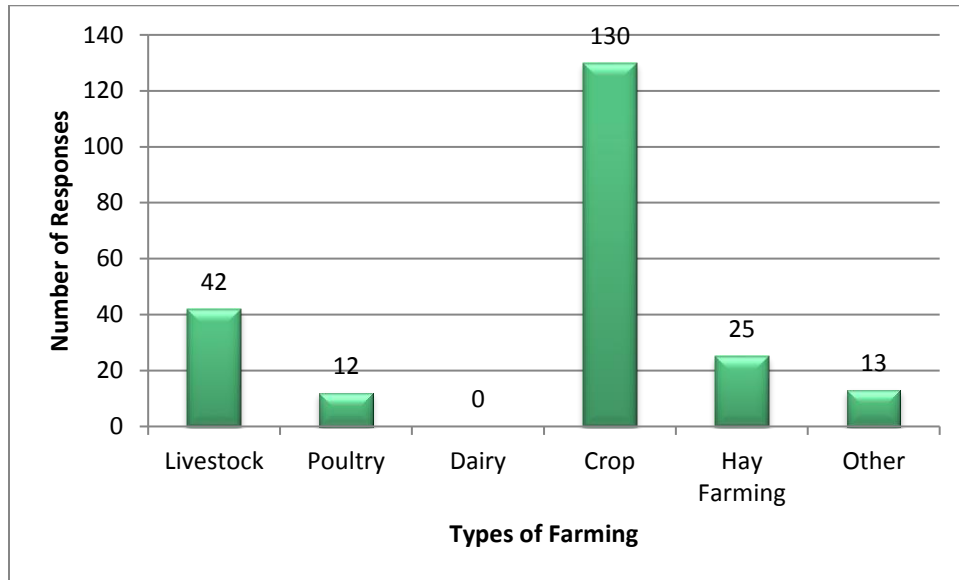
	Fairs/farm festivals	Farmers Market	Specialty Farms	Do not attend or use	Other
Number	207	123	55	43	0
Percentage	48%	29%	13%	10%	0%



## Resident Survey Results

### What type of farming do you participate in?

	Livestock	Poultry	Dairy	Crop	Hay Farming	Other
Number	42	12	0	130	25	13
Percentage	19%	5%	0%	59%	11%	6%



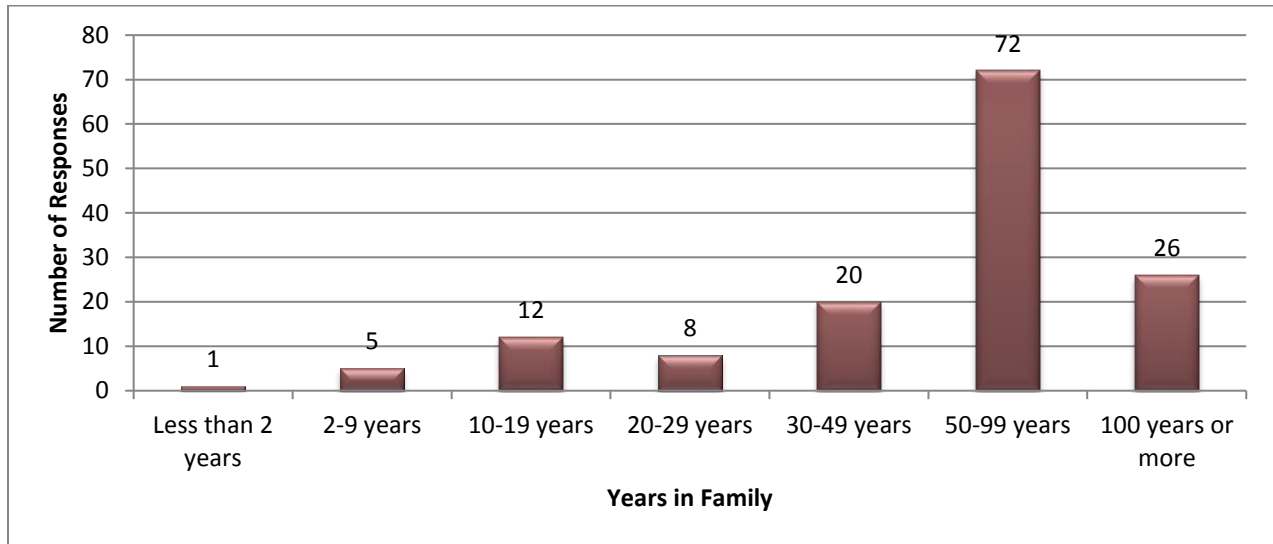
### Other types of Farming:

- Cash Rent Land (3)
- Rent/lease farm ground (2)
- Horses (2)
- Our nephew farms our land
- Land farmed by others
- Vegetables
- Small Animals
- Bison (Meat)
- Rent & cost share

## Resident Survey Results

**If you own the farm on which you work, how long has it been in your family?**

	Less than 2 years	2-9 years	10-19 years	20-29 years	30-49 years	50-99 years	100 years or more
Number	1	5	12	8	20	72	26
Percentage	1%	3%	8%	6%	14%	50%	18%

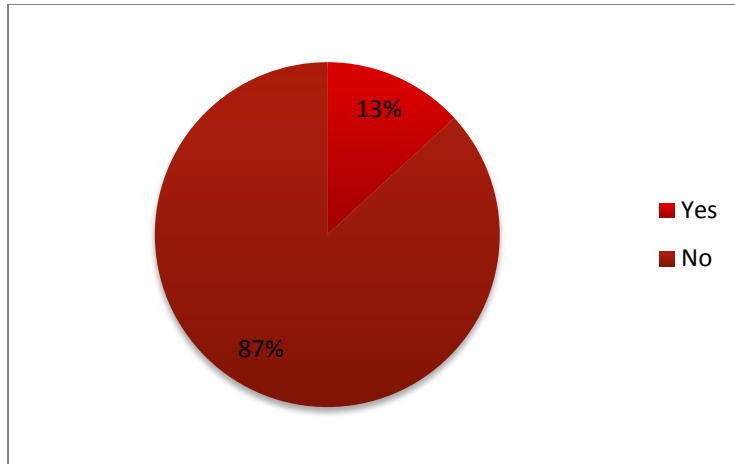


**What entities or types of entities do you sell your products to?**

- Cooperative/Elevator (64)
- Seed Company (13)
- Ethanol Plant (9)
- Individuals/Direct Sales (8)
- Feed Mills (3)
- Processors (2)
- Sale Barns (2)
- Hay, Cattle (2)
- Hogs go to Nimon Ranch
- Tyson Pack, Denison
- Waverly Sales Company
- Packers
- Area farmers
- Crops
- Eggs
- Livestock Owners
- Corn LP
- Meat Locker/Butchery
- Local Cattle Feeder
- Horse Owners
- Feed to Horses (Hay)

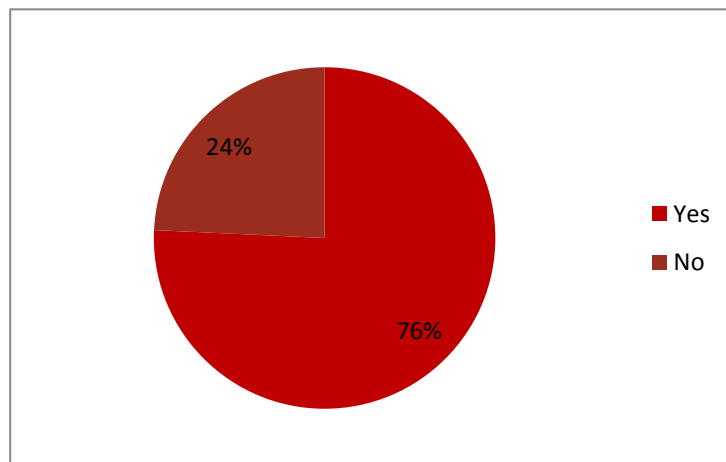
**Would an irrigation system be helpful in improving the crop yield on the land you farm?**

	Yes	No
Number	17	112
Percentage	13%	87%



**Are there drainage issues on the land you farm?**

	Yes	No
Number	103	33
Percentage	76%	24%





## **Appendix C: Focus Meeting Results (6/14/2011 & 6/15/2011)**

### **Agriculture**

#### Strengths:

- Rich Agriculture Land – Top grade “Clarion” soil
- 88% of the County’s land is used for agriculture (Iowa State Extension, 2009)
- Agriculture is self-sustaining (it takes care of itself)
- The County’s agricultural products are in full demand
- The County is able to use grain locally
- There is a diversity of types of farming in the county (i.e. livestock, corn, soybeans, etc.)

#### Weaknesses:

- There is a shortage in veterinary services
- There are many drainage issues with agriculture land in the County
- Some livestock facilities are seen as a nuisance to residences

#### Future Considerations:

- In a gas crisis, the County has the rail infrastructure to still ship goods; however, such crisis may impact the production of goods (due to tractor/machinery use)
- As seen in the past, an egg crisis could have a major impact on the County
- A common trend to plan for is that there are fewer individual farmers operating due to large farms
- Equipment is changing; this is seen as both a strength and a weakness
- Water is key in agriculture, a shortage in the future could cause tremendous difficulties
  - Water shortage could take place due to ethanol production and livestock facilities

## Economic Development

### Strengths:

- Wright County Economic Development Department
- Strong agriculture industry
- Good medical services
- Low Interest Loan Program
- Tax Abatement Programs
- Encourage new businesses
- Quality workforce available
- Transportation access (highway, interstate)
- School systems
  - Higher education
  - Multiple forms of government to draw business (local, county, federal government access for funding)

### Weaknesses:

- Shortage in quality labor pool
- Age of labor pool
- Younger people are leaving and not coming back

### Future Considerations:

- Distance from regional economic centers seen as both a strength and weakness
- Get high speed internet to the area (10 mbps download speed or greater)
- Continue support of Wright County Economic Development
- Continue to develop agriculture
  - Value added businesses
- Maintain and/or improve recreation
  - Activities to draw families
  - Continue the county fair
  - Promote existing natural resources
  - Improve youth activities
- Maintain infrastructure

**Public Services**  
Law Enforcement  
Medical Facilities  
Fire and Rescue  
Solid Waste System  
Drainage

Strengths:

- Two great medical facilities
- Strong County Firefighters Association
- Solid waste system works well

Weaknesses:

- Fire Department and Emergency Response equipment, training and certification is expensive and time-consuming
- Drainage is a major issue throughout the County
  - City Storm sewers run into the river, some to rural ditches
  - Drainage systems are aging and insufficient
  - When the government buys the land that entity should maintain the drainage tiles

Future Considerations:

- Educate the public to bring about an understanding of drainage issues
  - Drainage is a fundamental concern to Wright County; poor systems affect agriculture, economic development and overall quality of life.
- Market the two medical centers

## Recreation and Conservation

### Strengths:

- County conservation has been a great asset to the County
  - Is a draw for outsiders and industry
- Recreation is an asset to the County
- Aquatic assets are present (4 lakes)
- Great amount of land with recreational access
- Specific recreational areas and events are appealing
  - Lake Cornelia Trail
  - Winter-fest
  - Morse Lake Area
  - Pikes Timber Area

### Weaknesses:

- Worried that recreation and conservation land will diminish as it becomes expensive
- Additions and improvements require people and population, which has decreased in recent years
- Cost of maintenance and improvements is a pressing issue

### Future Considerations:

- Enforcement of development
- Connection of Three Rivers Trail to Mason City, Fort Dodge to Belmond, Fort Dodge to Forest City (North Iowa Short Line Rail)
- Wider shoulders on roads to keep recreational uses off of highways (ex: Bikes on Highway 69)
- Create Youth Programs and keep as a priority
- Continue to work with Wright County Conservation

## Housing

### Strengths:

- Quality of Life (some comes for the cities)
- Affordable Housing
- Less Regulation

### Weaknesses:

- Quality of life partially from cities
- Run down rental properties

### Future Considerations:

- Minimum acre requirements
- Regulate subdivisions
- Limited development around water bodies
- Rental property inspection
- Enforce nuisance ordinances
- DNR Sewer requirements

## Transportation

### Strengths:

- County uses alternative funds (TIF) for bridge repair
- Road clearance in winter
- Good rail service
- Good access to property

### Weaknesses:

- Manure/feed transportation
- Road shoulders not adequate for farm equipment
- Grain transported by roads
- Trails should be allowed along roadways/wider shoulders
- Low traveled roads
- Bridge replacement
- Gas tax too low

### Future Considerations:

- Adequate equipment
- Adequate funding for maintenance
- Close non-use roads in winter
- Advocate for increased gas tax
- Establish truck routes
- Weight limits on roads