

Ely Comprehensive Plan 2015 Update

The community of Ely, Iowa is currently experiencing something that most small Iowa towns are desperately seeking, growth. Ely was in many ways a “typical” small Iowa town through the mid-1990’s with a base population that fluctuated over the decades but generally remained around 500 or less. This pattern changed in the 1990’s as the result of several residential subdivisions creating hundreds of residential lots, including notably Southbrook. Ely’s population increased from 517 to 1,149 between 1990 and 2000, an increase of 122% during that time. The growth trend continued from 2000 through 2010, though at a slightly lesser rate. Ely’s 2010 population was 1,776 which is an increase of 627 residents over the year 2000, or 54.5%. This population increase occurred during the “Great Recession” of the late 2000’s and early 2010’s. Population growth continues, with Ely’s “un-official” being 1,931 in 2013 per the most recently available estimate from the US Census Bureau.

This type of residential growth, while not unique in the state of Iowa, creates challenges for new types of development, capacity of services, and sustainability. With the increasing demand on city services and infrastructure, the City Council determined that there was a need to review and update the community’s comprehensive plan.

At its most basic, a comprehensive plan is a statement of policy and intent. It gives direction to the location, form, and function of growth and maintenance of the community. Since the plan is a policy document, its recommendations must be implemented through the policies, programs, and ordinances that direct both current planning needs (dealing with ongoing development proposals) and long-term concerns and issues.

The plan serves two important functions. First, it will assist the City of Ely in addressing current growth impacts, while maintaining the quality of life its residents expect. This will be accomplished through a series of implementation recommendations located throughout the plan. However, those recommended actions and policies are aimed at much more than the current or short-term activity. They are intended to create a desirable community some twenty years in the future, the year 2035 (the anticipated useful life of this plan).

Secondly, the plan is a description of a comprehensive, well thought out, vision for the City of Ely of tomorrow and a record of the policies and strategies needed to achieve that vision. This plan will serve current elected officials and staff in guiding short-term as well as long-term growth. It will also provide a background into the desires of the community and the goals it has set for itself for the officials and staff yet to come.

Goals

1. To encourage the future development and redevelopment of the City with sound planning principles for the utilization of the land to its highest and best use while respecting the natural, physical and existing constraints on a property.
2. To provide adequate support services and municipal services for the existing community and the developing community to protect the health, safety and welfare of the citizens.
3. To provide for orderly growth and development of the city without compromising the existing sense of community.
4. To ensure that public facilities, including streets, water, sewer, sidewalks, and recreation are adequately, efficiently and effectively provided.
5. To ensure a rational arrangement of land uses in the City that will provide all residents and property owners with cost effective and efficient municipal services: protecting health, welfare, property values, provide adequate housing; and enable the community to grow and develop.
6. To encourage new business, light-manufacturing, and population to expand or locate in the City to broaden and strengthen the tax base, provide employment opportunities, and solidify the sense of “community identity.”
7. To encourage the City Council to create a downtown revival committee to look at different options for reviving or restructuring the downtown.
8. To encourage the development and construction of homes that serve the interest or demand for a diverse range of residents and price points; including starter homes for starting families, homes that are affordable and comfortable for elderly, to upper range homes. All by encouraging construction of a variety of new or rejuvenated residential structures such as apartments, rejuvenating older, bigger homes, or construction of smaller starter homes and construction of larger mid-range homes in the \$300,000 (2014 value) price point range.
9. Continued development of parks and recreational facilities to keep up with demands of a growing community.

Objectives

1. Develop and implement a continuous capital improvements program that identifies and appropriates funding for high priority capital projects.
2. Revise the Zoning Map to reflect the desired development patterns of the Comprehensive Plan.
3. Revise the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances to encourage efficient use of land and public facilities. Regulations should be applied with the purpose of reducing the negative impacts of various uses and accentuating the positive aspects of development.
4. Promote the community as a desirable place to live and work.
5. Develop a package of financial incentives and other growth opportunities to assist businesses and light-industry to create jobs in Ely.
6. Promote Ely to Ely residents.
7. Recommend to review and update the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Map in 2022.

Policies

1. The Planning and Zoning Commission, the City Council and the city staff will implement growth and land use policies through their every day decision-making process. Individuals or groups within the community participating in, or impacted by, the future growth and development of the city should utilize the policies as a guide in their activities. Implementation methods will include the enactment and amendment of the various city ordinances; the Official Zoning Map; Subdivision Control Ordinance; Capital Improvements Programming; and Annexation and Utility Extension Policies.
2. The City's Zoning Ordinance should be reviewed and amended where appropriate as it relates to effective transitioning and buffering between incompatible uses including amending the City Code as it relates to buffer area requirements including permitted structures and improvements allowed within a buffer area.
3. The City should ensure the continued expenditure of funds on services promoting and enhancing the city's residential character such as library, human services, and park and recreational facilities.
4. The City should prepare and/or compile development standards or policies addressing rural or fringe area development including policies addressing sewage disposal systems, preservation of natural resources, and the extension of/or provision of City Services including utility extensions to ensure that new development minimizes the impact upon the natural and scenic qualities of undeveloped areas.
5. The City should provide adequate and equitable services to all population groups in the City including the elderly, minority, and disabled in a fiscally responsible manner.
6. The City should accept financial liability for facilities and services only when there is clear public benefit to justify the expenditure.
7. The City should provide for the implementation of programs that will reduce the initial construction costs and/or eliminate the long-term maintenance costs of capital facilities.
8. The City should insist that all new development and redevelopment be compatible with the development orientation stated in the Comprehensive Plan.
9. The City should support and, when possible, participate in the efforts of new businesses to establish operations in the City.

10. The City should support and, when possible, assist existing businesses to remain and/or expand in the City.
11. The City should require that new developments install adequate public facilities and arrange for City participation in constructing facilities that have community-wide benefits.

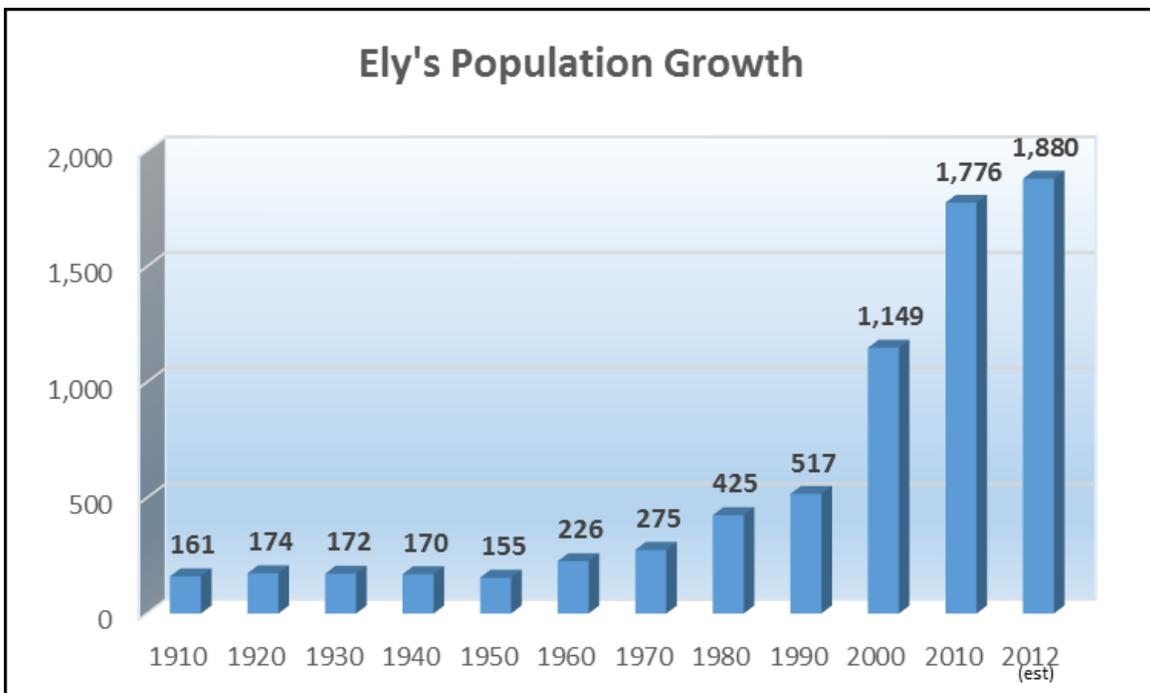
Demographics

The average Ely household will consist of two adults in their early thirty's and a single child living in a home they own. The median household income is \$97,196. The median home is assessed at a value of \$173,500 and was built in 1998. Both adults work outside of the home, and outside of the community, and the child will attend school in the CollegeCommunitySchool district.

This information will help provide us with the framework to determine the make-up of the community and the direction that the community may need to move in to best serve the needs of its residents. Review of current and past demographic data will make it possible to make a better prediction of how the community will develop in the next twenty years.

Population Trends:

Using the 2008 – 2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, the estimated 2012 population of Ely is 1,880, or a 5.9% population increase in two years. Combining that projection with historical information from the U.S. Census Bureau, the City's population growth curve appears as:



Source: 1910-2010 U.S. Census Bureau and

2008–2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Population Projections:

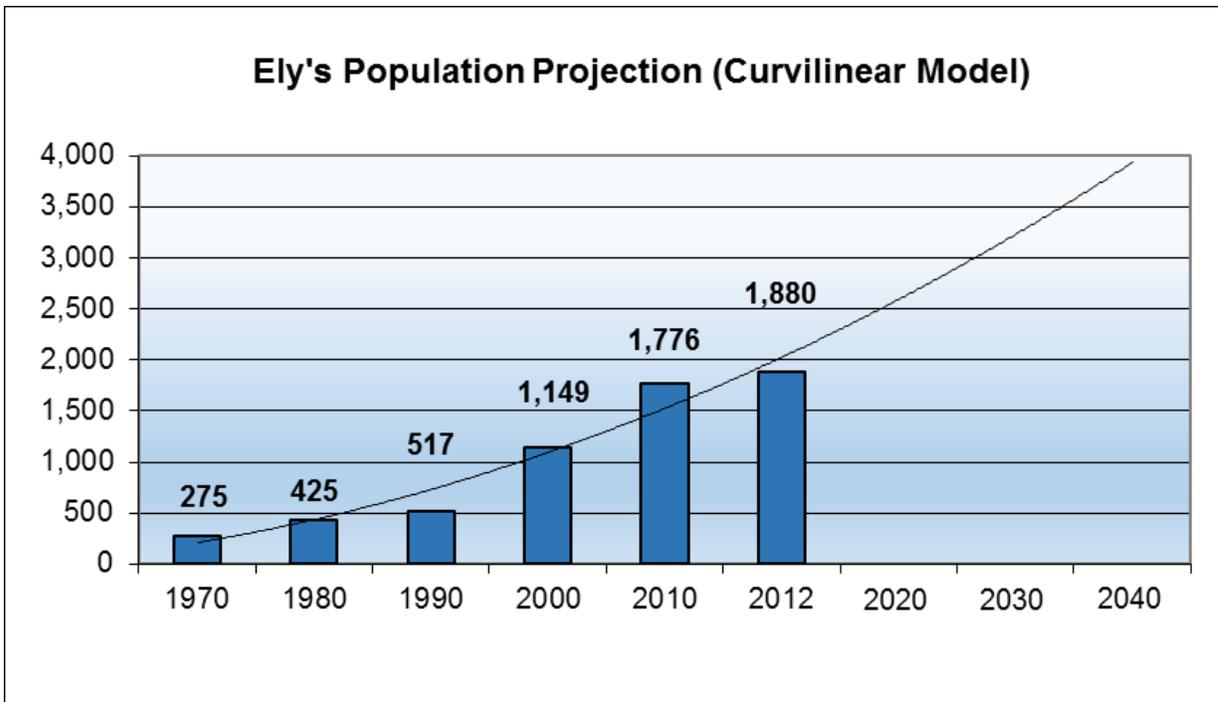
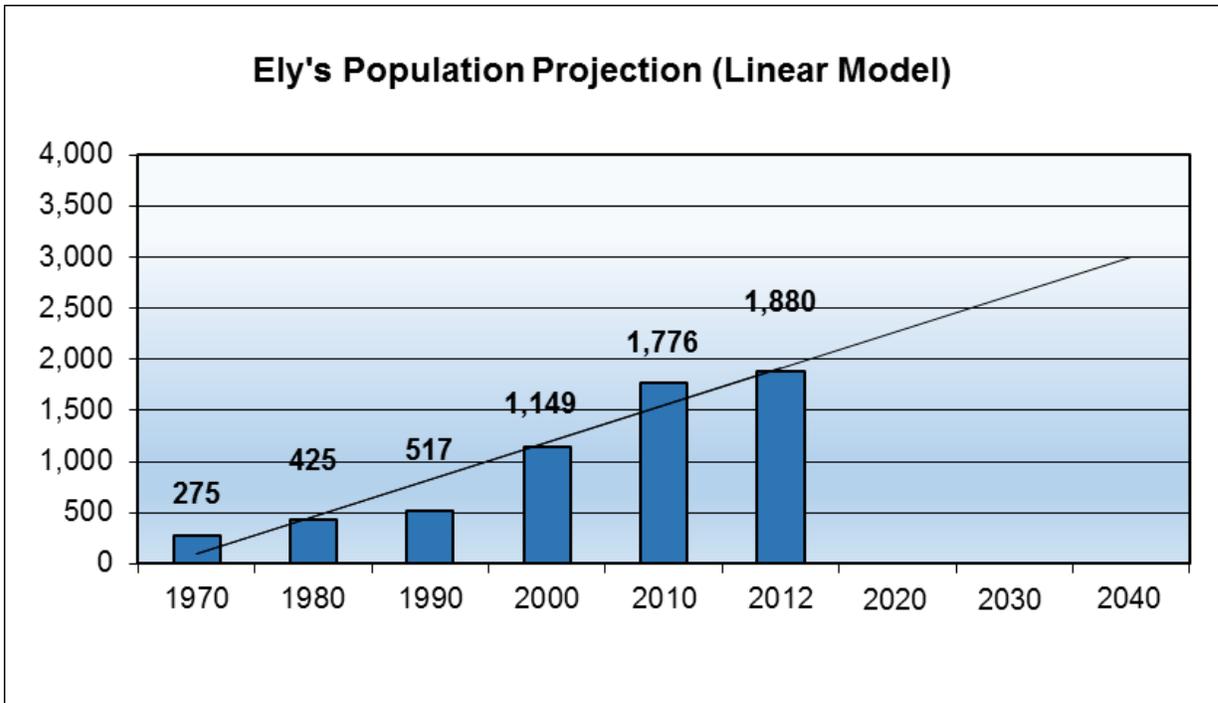
Population projections provide an insight as to the possible future growth of a community. Using these estimates, a community is able to project the appropriate level of services that may be needed. A community may need to drill another well to increase the water supply to support the number of new residents, or a community may need to expand the capacity of the waste water treatment plant to support the future growth. Caution should be used however when basing the need for future service expansions upon these numbers, as these are estimates and may not accurately project the future growth of a community.

Population change is controlled by two factors: birth to death ratios, and in/out migrations. When there are more births than deaths the population will increase, and the vice versa is also the same. Also, migrating patterns may possess a significant change in populations. If there are more people moving into the area than out of, you will see a population increase.

Birth to death ratios and migration patterns are influenced by changes in lifestyles and economic issues, and as such these should be considered accordingly. Current lifestyle trends can be used to point to possible future population fluctuations. In general, people in the United States are starting their families later in life, and the number of children that they are having is declining. This is affecting the birth to death ratios as families are only having one to two children. This results in a zero sum gain, as the children really only replace their parents. Migrating patterns are affected by the economy and desired lifestyles. Changes in the local, state, and federal economies will have an exacting effect on migration patterns.

The table and charts below show a conservative and a high population projection based on census numbers from 1970 forward. It is a possibility that the City of Ely’s population could reach 4,000 by 2040. Changes in lifestyles and the economy could slow the rate of growth the City will experience as well as availability of developed land, thus caution should be used when using this table for future development plans.

Population Projection	<u>2020</u>	<u>2030</u>	<u>2040</u>
Conservative (Linear)	2,250	2,600	3,000
High (Curvilinear)	2,500	3,100	4,000

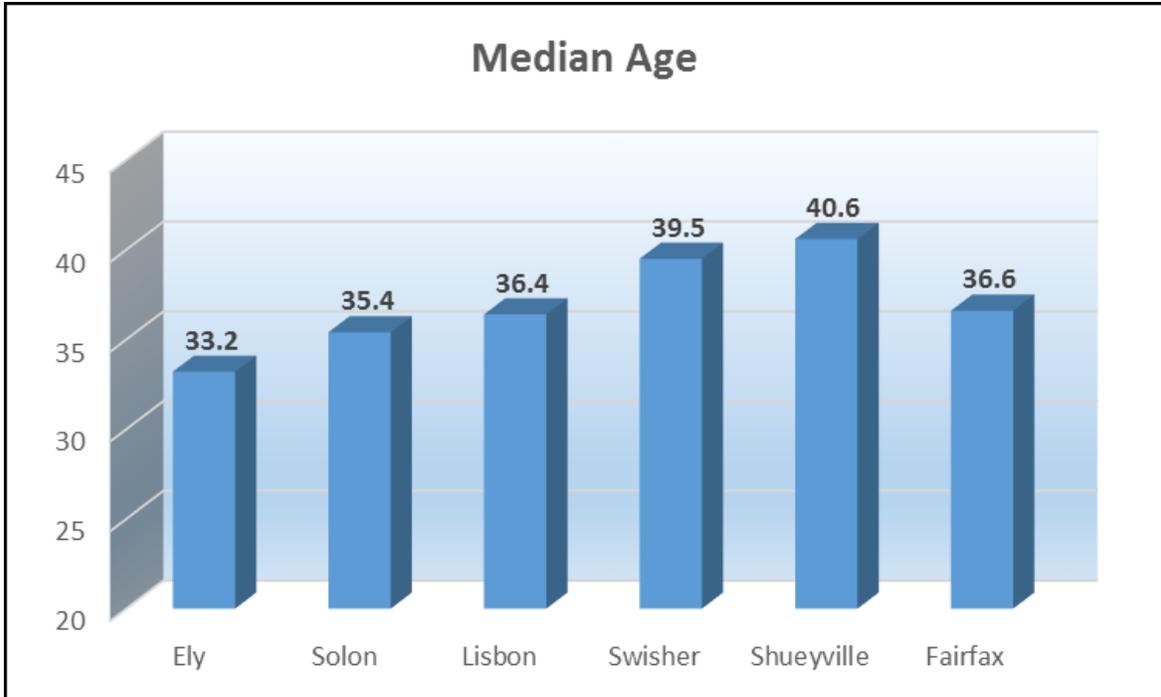


Demographic Traits:

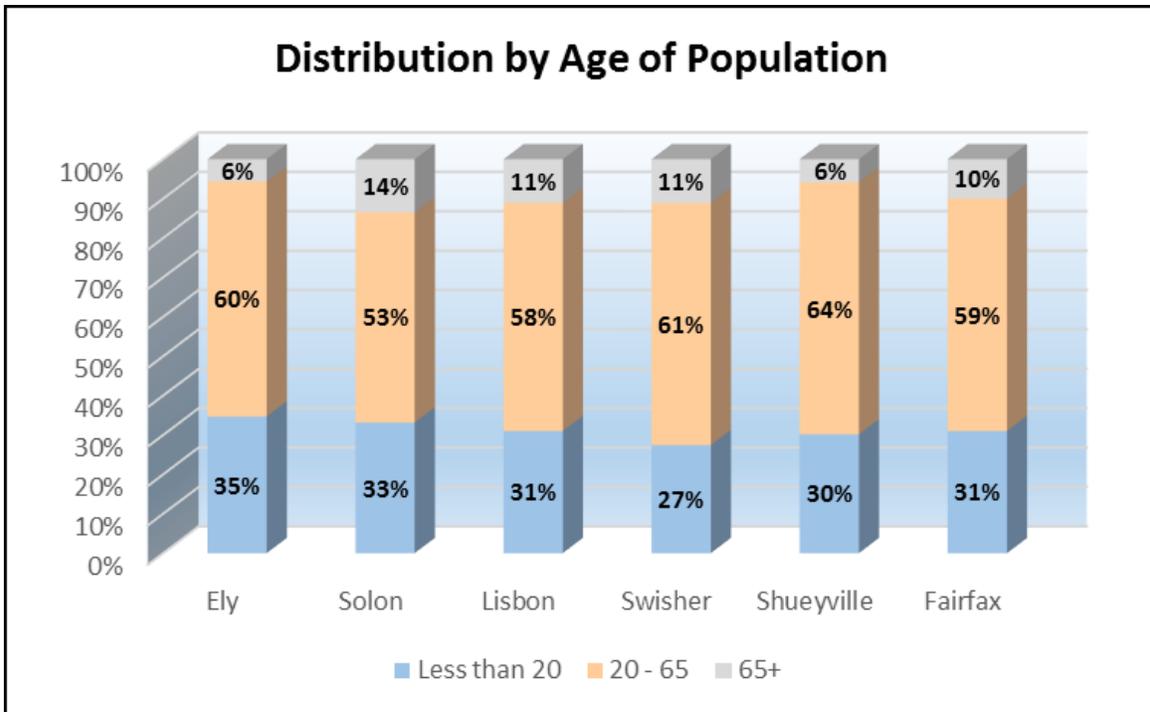
Beyond the straightforward task of counting how many citizens reside in a city, it's also important to recognize the unique characteristics of the population. Doing so helps the city better align its services and facilities with the needs of the citizens. When compared against other cities, it can also serve as an indicator of the needs of specific subsets of citizens within the city.

As the following graphs illustrate, Ely exhibits the following distinctive benchmarks when compared to benchmark cities of Solon, Lisbon, Swisher, Shueyville and Fairfax:

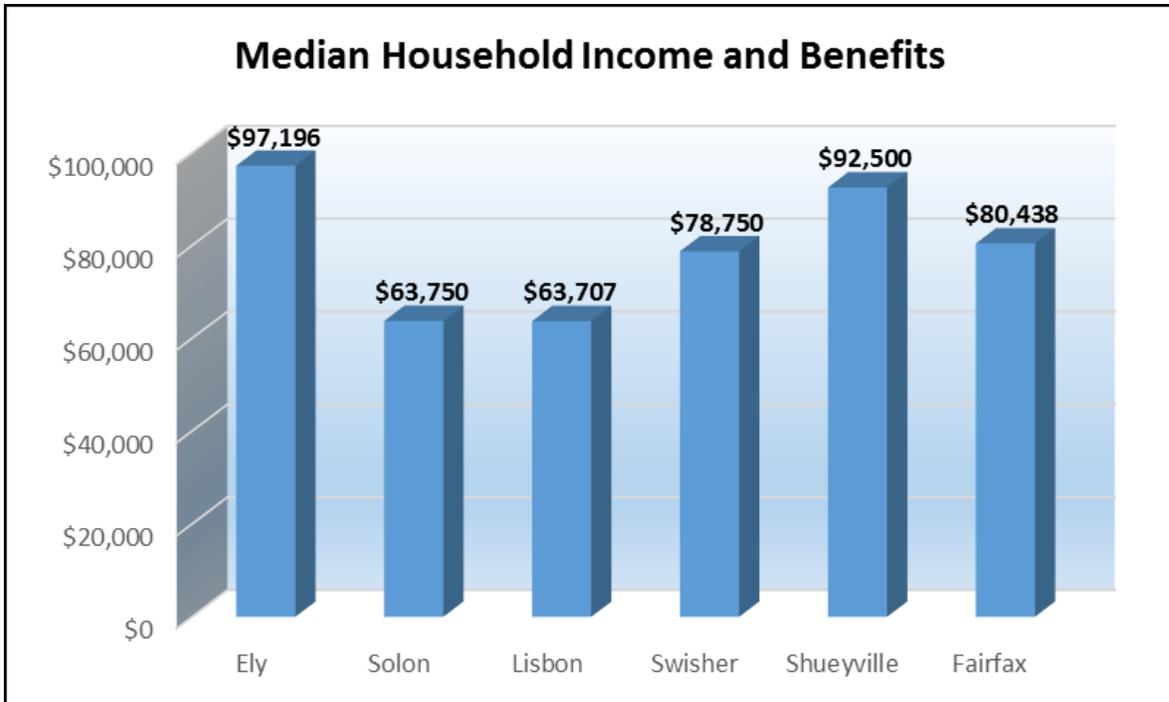
- Ely is a relatively young city, with a median age more than 2 years lower than surrounding communities of comparable size
- The percentage of Ely's population less than age 20 is higher than its peers. On the other end of the scale, Ely's percentage of citizens older than 60 is the lowest of its peers.
- Economically, Ely's median household income (including benefits) is the highest among its peers.
- When comparing the median household income/benefits of the different cities, Ely has more households earning more than \$100,000 than any of its peer cities.
- The percentage of Ely's households with income/benefits in the \$50,000 through \$99,999 category is the lowest among its peers.
- In terms of both education level and housing mix (owner-occupied vs. renter-occupied), Ely is about average compared to its peers.
- Comparing the type of workers in the different cities, Ely's distribution between private wage/salary workers, government workers and the self-employed is very similar to its peers, with exception of Solon which has a substantially higher percentage of government workers (and a conversely lower percentage of Private wage/salary workers). This is likely driven by Solon's proximity to the University of Iowa and its associated employers.



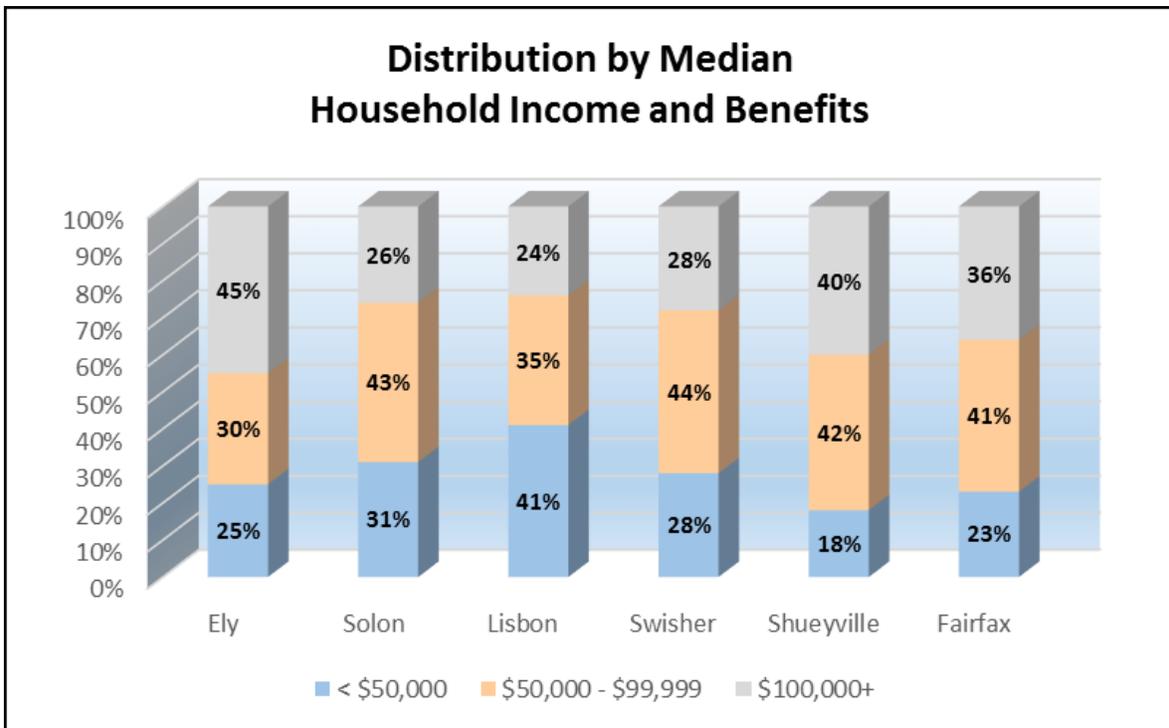
Source: 2010 U.S. Census Bureau



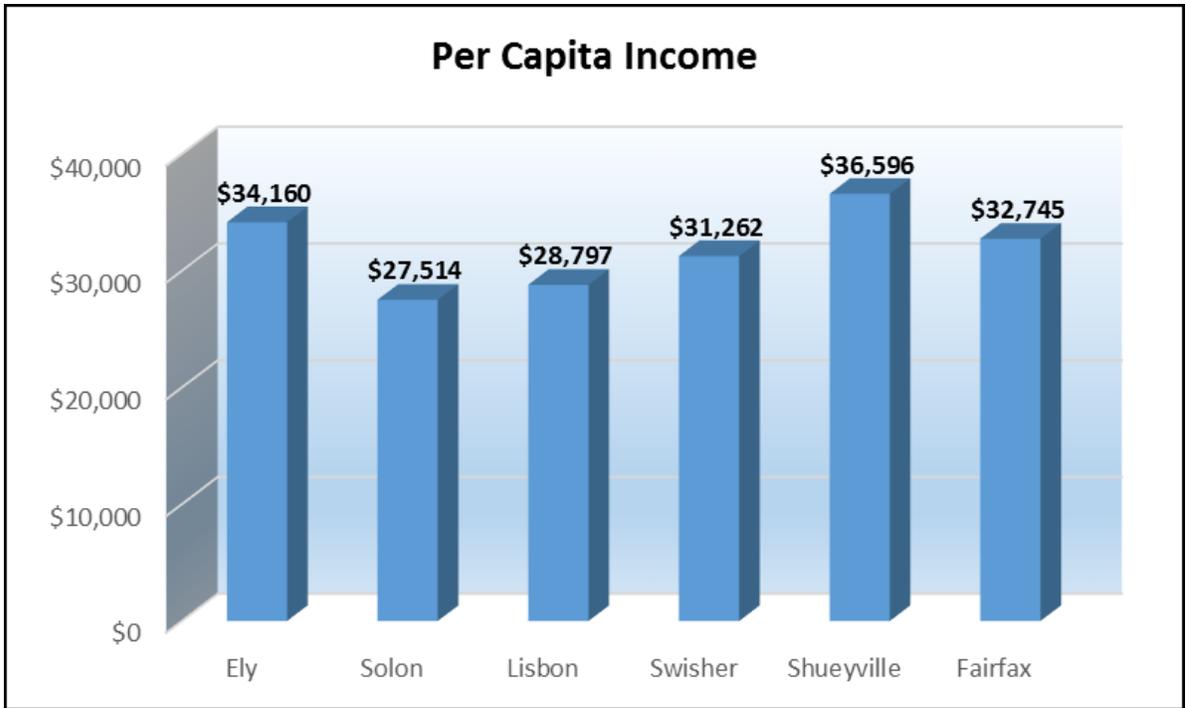
Source: 2010 U.S. Census Bureau



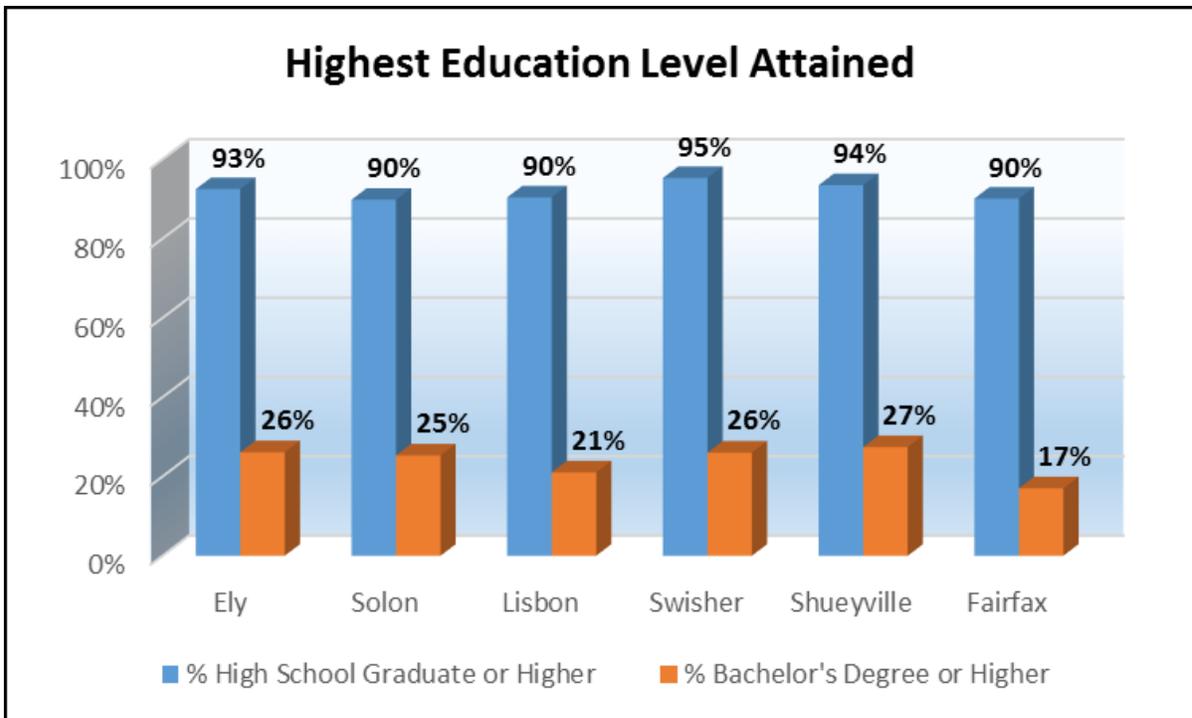
Source: 2008 – 2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



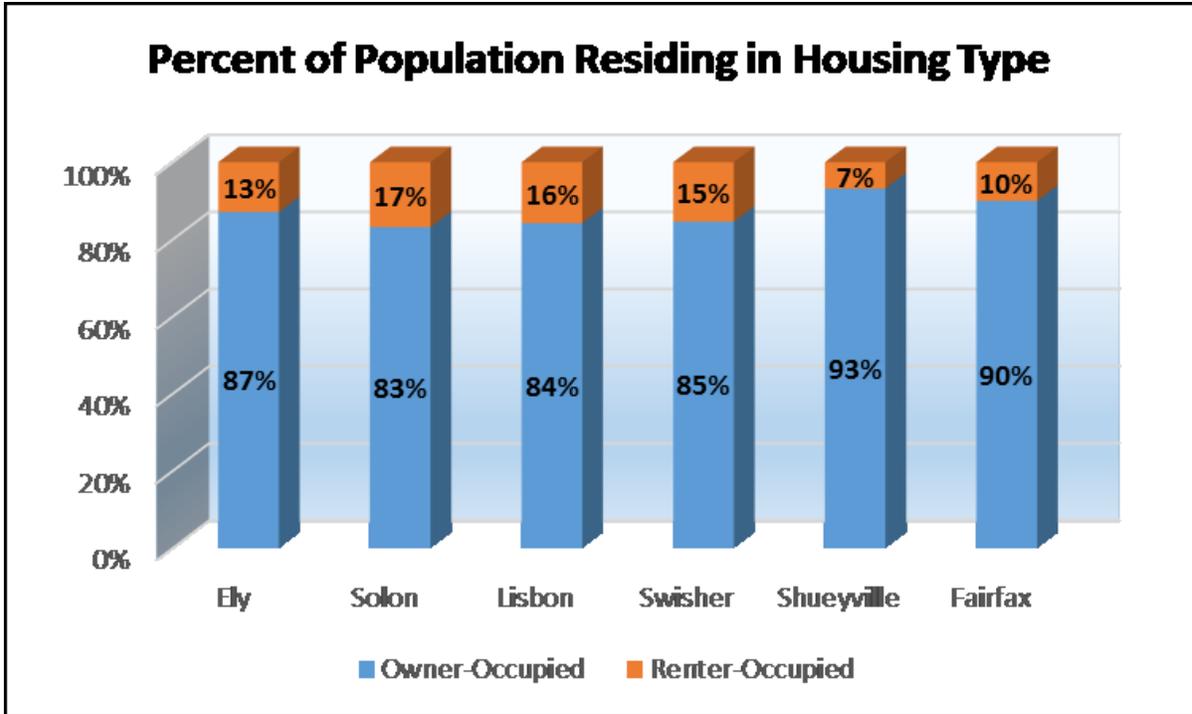
Source: 2008 – 2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



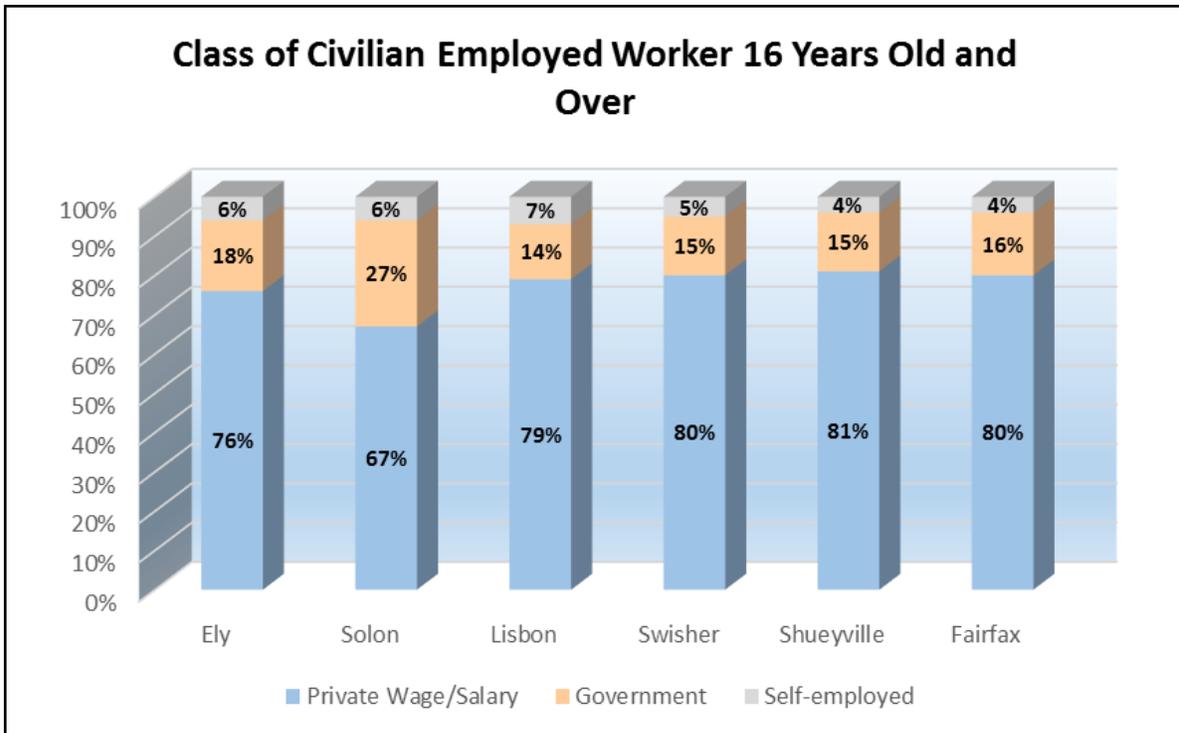
Source: 2008 – 2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



Source: 2010 U.S. Census Bureau



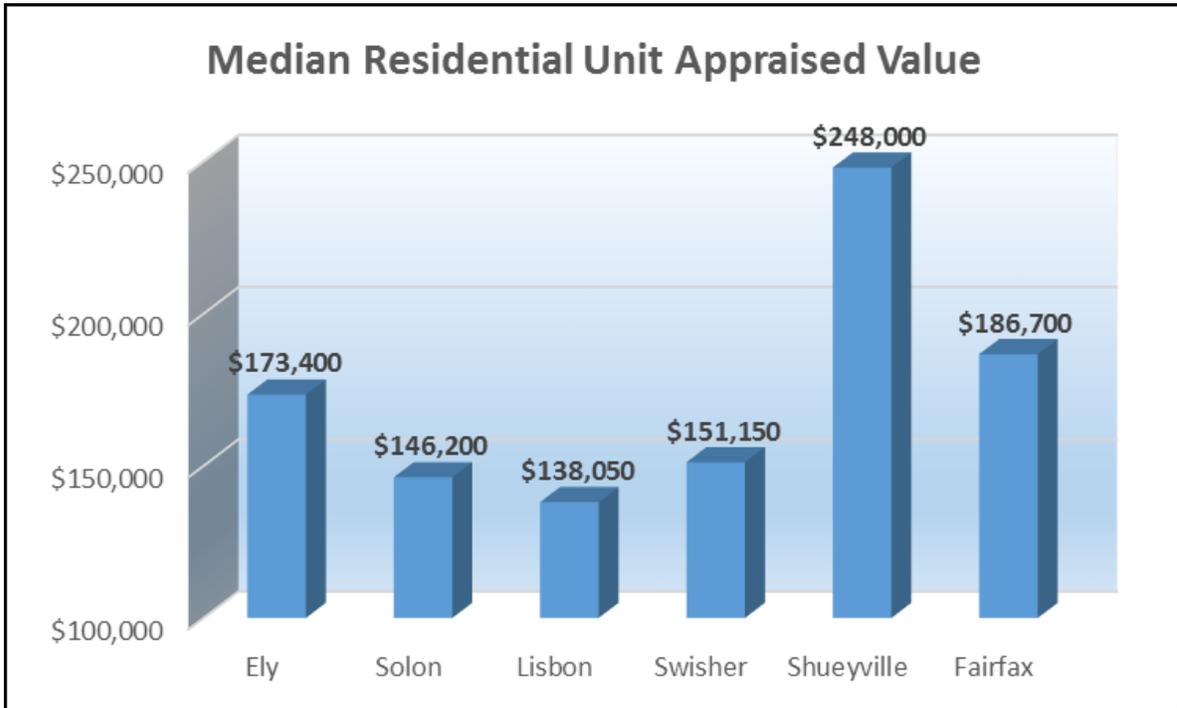
Source: 2010 U.S. Census Bureau



Source: 2008 – 2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Housing:

The median assessed value of a residential unit in the City of Ely is \$173,400, a 41% increase since 2000. While considerably lower than the \$248,000 median assessed value of a residential unit the City of Shueyville, it is higher than the median value of similar property in three of its peer cities (Lisbon, Solon and Swisher).



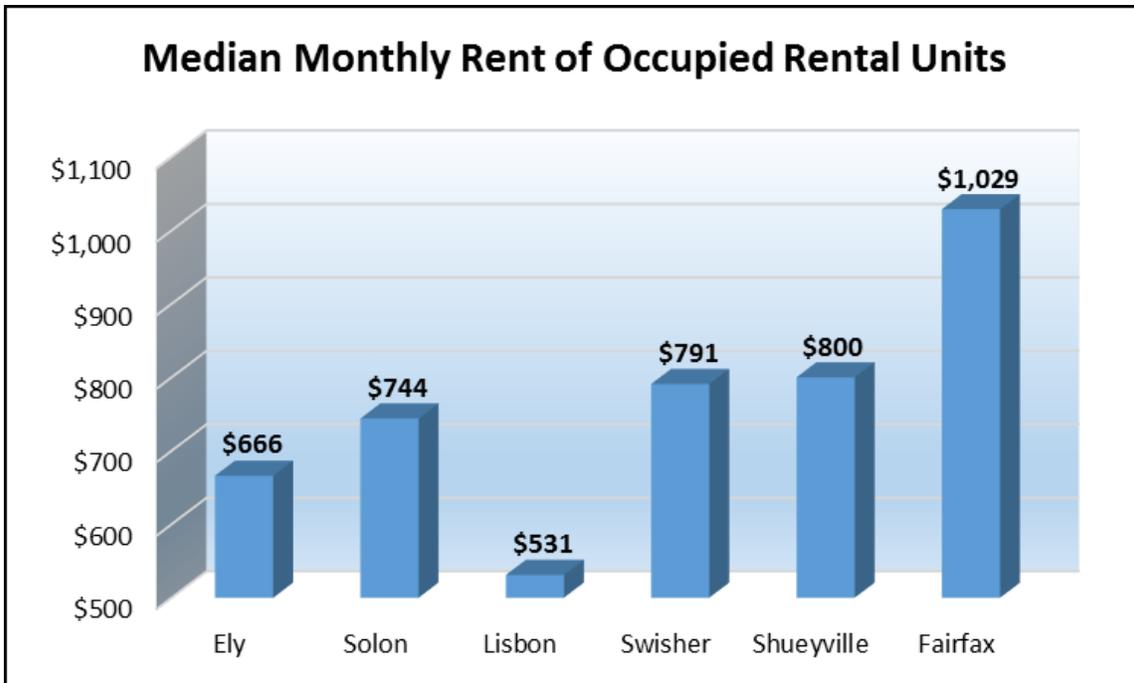
Source: 2014 Linn and Johnson County Assessor’s Offices

The 2014 housing stock within the City of Ely is comprised of the following:

3	1-story brick	71	Split foyer frame
81	1-story condo	22	Split-level frame
317	1-story frame	2	2-story condo
1	1-story log – pine	154	2-story frame
22	1½-story frame	3	Manufactured homes

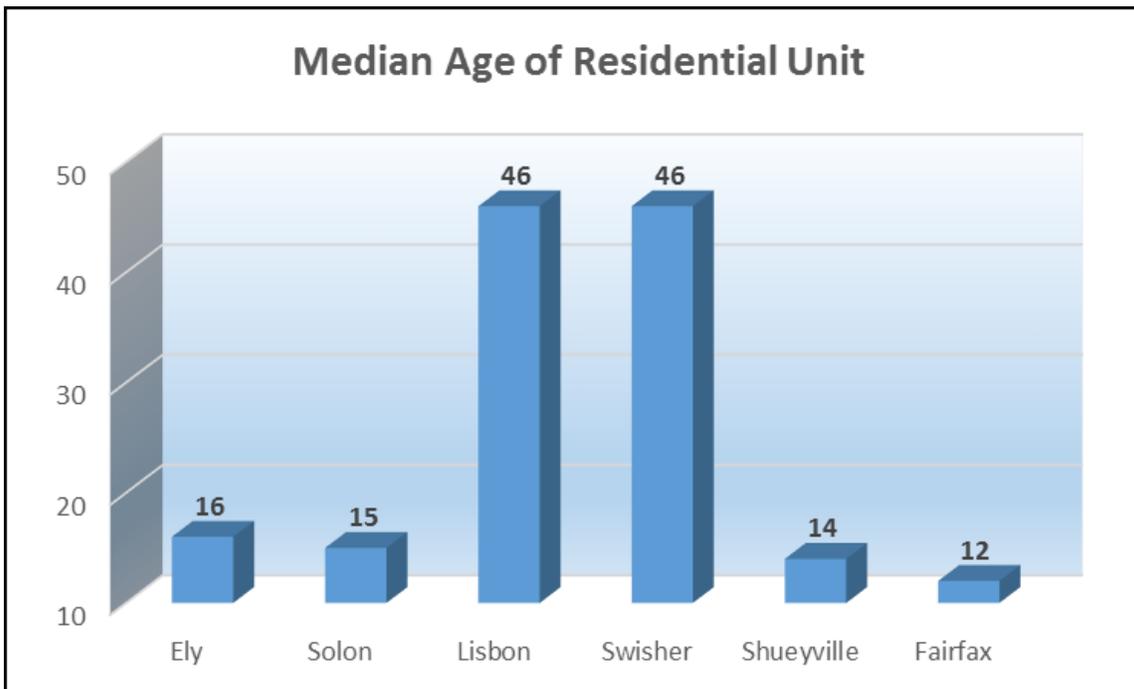
Source: 2014 Linn County Assessor’s Offices

In contrast to the overall higher assessed values for residential units in the City of Ely, the median gross rent is the second lowest of the immediate communities at \$666/month.



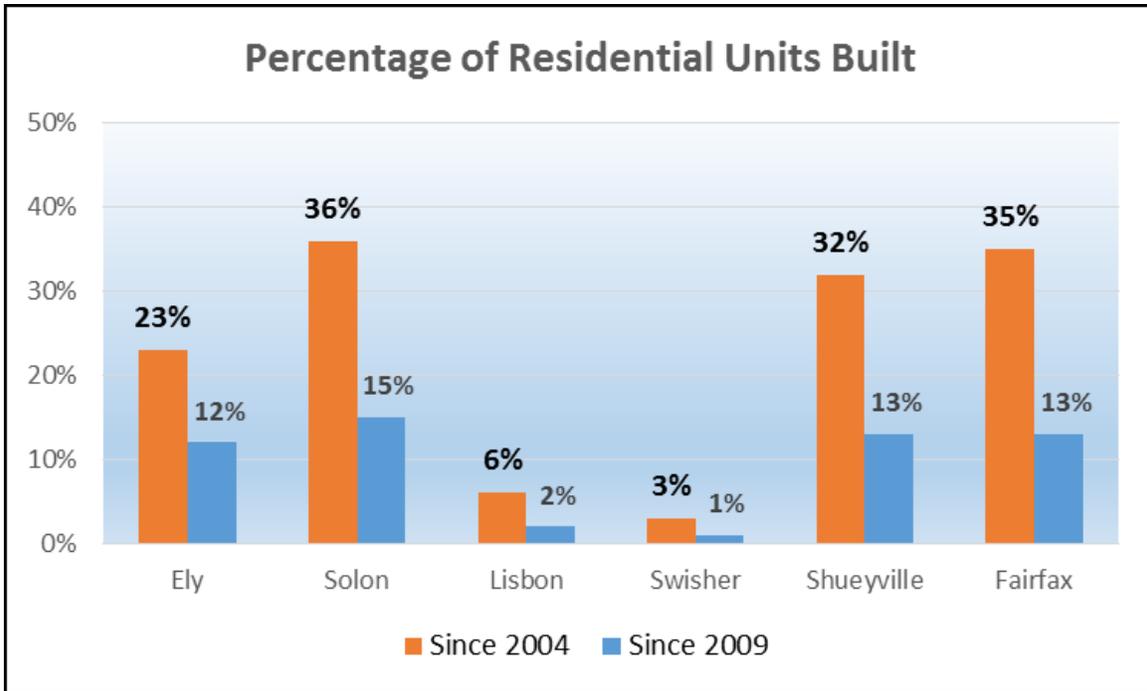
Source: 2008 – 2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

The age of the housing stock is a good indication as to how, and when, the community has developed. The median age of Ely’s residential units is comparable to most of its peers and is quite a bit younger than that found in the longer-established cities of Lisbon and Swisher.



Source: 2014 Linn and Johnson County Assessor’s Offices

While the percentage of residential units built in Solon, Shueyville and Fairfax during the past ten years is markedly higher than Ely’s experience, that gap is substantially closed when reviewing construction activity during the most recent 5 years. This means Ely did not experience as deep a new housing construction slump as their peers – an indicator of a sustained perception of Ely as a desirable place to live. With the recent approval of 271 new residential lots on the north and south sides of town, Ely should anticipate continued, and perhaps rapid, growth during the next five years.



Source: 2014 Linn and Johnson County Assessor’s Offices

Land Use and Street Plan

Examination of the community's land use has been an integral part of the various community plans that have been prepared over the years. Given Ely's current growth capability, land use management is a particularly important issue for the community. Moreover, it is an area in which the City's role is constantly changing as the methods of land use management change; statutes change; development patterns and types change; and the City's ability to respond to growth change.

Through the planning process there has been considerable confusion and misunderstandings as to what constitutes different types of residential development. This is a result largely of the existing zoning ordinances manner of handling the various residential uses. In the following sections, residential uses are referred to by specific housing type: such as, single-family home, two family or multi-family home, or by its density. Housing type is self explanatory, but density needs the following definitions.

Residential Use – This category includes single-family residential uses, non-commercial recreational and open space areas, and institutional uses such as churches and schools.

Low Density Residential – The low-density residential land use category defines areas where the predominant land use is single family residential detached at a density of six (6) dwelling units per acre or less. It may include two family attached residential where it is located along collector or arterial streets and/or it is placed as a buffer to medium density residential or non-residential uses. The character of the neighborhood is very pedestrian, attached garages are customarily provided with all dwelling units, dwelling units customarily have outdoor space devoted exclusively to the use of the occupant and usually dwelling units have a door directly to the outdoors.

Medium Density Residential – The medium residential land use category defines area where there is a widely varying type of residential housing at densities of six (6) to twelve (12) dwelling units per acre. It may include single family residential at higher densities resulting in smaller lots and clustering. It may also include concentrations of attached single-family housing and multi-family housing. The neighborhoods have a character where the buildings dominate the landscape, parking lots and shared garages are the norm and the open space areas are in concentrated locations.

Higher Density Residential Use – This category includes all residential uses, non-commercial recreational and open space areas, and institutional uses such as churches and schools. The distinction between this category and the other residential categories is a matter of density or housing units and intensity of residential activities. Uses such as apartments, duplexes, tri-plexes and mobile homes tend to occupy smaller land area per unit than traditional single-family dwellings and consequently activity is more concentrated. This type of residential use can provide housing opportunities for people of limited economic resources. The characteristics of this housing category and their occupants necessitate location at sites where water and sewer is available with substantial capacity and where there is convenient access to higher capacity streets such as Arterial

and Collector Streets. Generally, higher density housing should be oriented away from lower density housing.

Commercial Uses – This category includes retail sales, business offices, government activities, and professional services. It does not include manufacturing assembly, warehousing or distribution facilities. Though other uses may exist and function adjacent to, or within this category, they are not the primary purpose of the plan designation. An example is an apartment located above a retail store: business is the primary purpose and residential secondary.

This category should be located where supporting facilities such as street access, water and sewer are adequate and where businesses are visible to consumers.

Light Intensity/Low Density Commercial Uses: This category is for business, office or similar commercial activities intended to occur in areas with low density of buildings, do not rely on high levels of traffic passing by the location. Uses in this category are businesses that do not generate ongoing traffic volumes, produce minimal off site noise and light (reflected or radiated) if any, and otherwise effect neighbors and neighboring property in a very minimal manner. Examples include banquet facilities.

Industrial Uses – This category includes manufacturing, warehousing, and distribution type activities. The nature of these uses precludes non-industrial uses from being within the area designated because of safety and environmental impacts. Additionally, the industrial area would be oriented away from residential uses such that ancillary activities such as truck traffic and third shift operation will not adversely affect the residential neighborhood environment.

Industrial area should be accessible to good transportation, highway and rail, and where there are adequate municipal services.

Open Space/Natural Areas – This category includes activities such as non-commercial and commercial recreation, arboretums, nature preserves, cemeteries, agriculture and publicly authorized landfill. The area generally covers lands that should not be developed for environmental reasons, such as floodplains, and lands that are unfeasible/uneconomical/unreasonable to provide with municipal services. Very low density, non-farm residential uses are permissible but suburban type development should not be allowed.

The purpose of this category is to encourage concentration of development within the service area of municipal facilities, protect sensitive environments such as floodplains and prevent conversion of agricultural land to non-farm uses.

Land Use

The zoning designation A-1 represents agricultural areas and R-1, R-2, and R-3 denote different levels of residential density. The designations C-1 and C-2 denote the different types of Commercial areas; M-1 and M-2 indicate the different levels of industries.

Streets and Circulation

There are two primary (hard surfaced) access routes into Ely. The first is Ely Road (Linn County Road W6E). This north-south County blacktop road provides direct access to Ely from the Cedar Rapids metro area and the northern half of Lake Macbride State Park. Ely Road (W6E), also known as State Street within the community, provides the primary access route to Highway 30 on the outskirts of Cedar Rapids. Two miles south of Ely, Ely Road (W6E) intersects with Johnson County road F12. F12 runs due west and intersects with Interstate 380 between Swisher and Shueyville, allowing Ely with easy access to the area's interstate transit system. The second hard surfaced roadway access is Jappa Road (Linn County W8E). Jappa Road (W8E) is also a north-south blacktop that is used by Ely residents approaching the community from the East on Highway 30.

These routes provide adequate transportation for Ely residents, businesses and industries. However, by not carefully planning land use development along these roads the community risks losing the advantages they provide.

There are three principal street designations: Arterial, Collector, and Local streets. These streets are separated by the amount of traffic that they are capable of handling from most to least, respectfully.

Arterial streets – Arterial streets are streets that carry high volume of traffic at speeds generally above 40mph. These streets usually carry the traffic through downtown or to cross town locations and points beyond.

Collector streets – Collector streets provide for movement from local streets to arterial streets at moderate speeds.

Local streets – Local streets provide for the movement between collectors, residential and commercial areas at low speeds.

Street Use – Traffic conflicts can occur between Industrial, Commercial and Residential activities and thus the need for street use and land use plans. Truck routes and sidewalks are examples of separation by using land use and street use planning.

Accessibility to commercial areas should be controlled by allowing only two driveways per business property, and in no instance shall the entire frontage be made into an access area, as this presents a significant safety hazard.

To facilitate and encourage new development in the City, the location of arterial and collector streets should be identified and their right of ways dedicated and/or improvement prescribed by development regulations.

Recommended Street Development Policies

In order to facilitate the development, maintenance and improvement of City streets and thoroughfares, the following general policies are recommended to aid the City in making decisions and plans. It is the broad purpose of these policies to insure the safe, functional, efficient, and cost effective operation and development of City streets. While it is not possible for policy guidelines to be of such detail that all circumstances that may arise in the future are addressed, they do contain sufficient detail to serve as a guide for decisions the future may require.

It shall be a policy of the City of Ely to permit or limit access as described below on each street type. Frequently these access directives will of necessity not be followed because of prior development trends and access allowances. While it may be desirable for the City to attempt and achieve the access control suggested by these policies on the non-compliant streets failure to do so will neither compromise the street's functional classification nor suggest the City is compromising these policies. The policy conflict is accepted as an irreconcilable circumstance in many cases.

Arterial streets – Access should be limited to intersecting streets, pre-existing conditions, major traffic generators and limited private access where other access alternatives are not suitable.

Collector streets – Limited access will be permitted but design alternatives that emphasize access clusters, sharing and other safety related improvements shall be pursued as much as possible.

Local streets – While access to property is permitted, the City shall adopt standards to insure placement, sizing and frequency of access is designed to minimize traffic conflicts and enhance public safety.

It is proposed to be a policy of the City of Ely to take all necessary steps to insure that sufficient right of way is reserved to meet the projected future needs of all City streets. To this end the following specific guidelines are set forth.

Dedication of right of way – Whenever lands are being subdivided that include either existing or proposed future streets, the sub-divider shall be required to dedicate to the City all required right of way.

Setbacks – The City shall establish appropriate setback requirements in areas adjoining streets that were established without the required right of way in order to minimize encroachments into potential future right of way acquisition areas.

Right of way widths – The arterial streets shall have a right of way width of 80 feet. Collector streets shall have a right of way width of 60 feet. Local streets shall have a right of way width of 50 feet.

It is a policy of the City of Ely testablishing roadway standards including but not limited to pavement type, thickness, width, drainage, and geometric design for each of the functional classifications. The City's baseline standard shall be established for local streets.

It is policy of the City of Ely to require all developers and sub-dividers to prepare Master Plans that show the general locations of all local and through streets for the entire site controlled or owned by the developer.

It is policy of the City of Ely to require sub-dividers of land to construct, at their cost, all new local and collector streets to their respective City standards. For new arterial streets, the sub-divider shall not be required to construct streets in excess of the collector street standards.

Where existing streets fall within a new or replatted subdivision and require improvements, the sub-divider shall be required to pay the entire cost of the improvements for local and collector streets. In the case of existing arterial streets, the sub-divider shall pay half of the cost of the improvements, provided it shall not exceed the cost of construction to collector standards. The City may permit the utilization of street assessments for the construction of improvements on existing streets in new subdivisions.

It is a proposed policy of the City of Ely to assess benefiting properties for improvements to existing streets. Benefiting property shall fall into three classes of beneficiaries; single family residential, multi-family residential, and non-residential. A property shall be classified according to its most intense use if utilized in more than one of the categories or is zoned for a more intense use. The following general assessment policies shall apply to each of the categories, subject to statutory requirements:

Single Family Residential – It shall be a policy of the City of Ely to assess benefiting single-family residential property no more than an amount equivalent to the cost of a local street.

Multi-Family Residential – It shall be a policy of the City of Ely to assess the benefiting multi-family residential property for no more than an amount equivalent to the cost of a collector street.

Non-Residential – It shall be a policy of the City of Ely to assess the benefiting non-residential property no more than an amount equivalent to the cost of a collector street.

Where the improvement to be assessed is primarily a reconstruction of the street, the assessment policy may be modified to meet the particular circumstances; following the general concept of diminished proportional benefit where deterioration and the need for reconstruction is a result of utilization unrelated to the adjoining properties.

Street Construction Standards

	<u>R.O.W.</u>	<u>Width Curb to Curb</u>	<u>Minimum Crown</u>	<u>Pavement</u>
Arterial	80	44'	6"	Rigid
Truck Route	60'	40'	6"	Rigid
Collector Streets	60'	36'	6"	Flexible
Local Streets	50'	28'	6"	Flexible
Frontage Streets	40'	26'	6"	Flexible
Cul de sacs	Residential standards: Length not more than 500' <i>Shall provide a turnaround with a right-of-way width of 50' and roadway radius of 40'.</i>			

Pavement Construction*

Design thickness is dependent upon soil conditions and projected traffic, but shall not be less than the following minimums nor appropriate state specifications.

Sub-grade: material with not less than 2-5 bearing ratio (BR)

Flexible pavement: (Residential Streets and Cul-de-sacs only)

- 1.5 inches binder course
- 1 inch wearing surface

Rigid pavement: (can be used on all streets)

- 7 inch Portland cement
- Minimum 28 day compressive strength = 3500 psi
- Air entrainment 4-7%
- Slump between 2 and 4 inches

* *The City Council may stipulate additional pavement construction design requirements.*

Land Use Development and Proposed Street Use Plan

Development Area

State Street – Jappa Road Corridor

New residential neighborhoods are developing in the North Central quadrant of the community. A collector street will need to be developed to connect State Street with the Jappa Road. Currently this connection is made via Dows Street. However, as the development of the residential neighborhoods continues in this area of town, there will be a need to lessen the congestion that will inevitably occur along Dows Street.

Issues:

- A. Conceptual plan for a collector street to connect State Street to Jappa Road are in place as presented in the preliminary plats for “Edellen Meadows” preliminary plat Wolf 1st Addition. These preliminary plats include plans to construct a collector street within the proposed development from Jappa Road; and reserves area for a roadway easement to extend the collector street and connect with State Street. Development along State Street will make it extremely difficult to locate and connect additional future street right-of-way to the road. Construction of Ely City Park and development of the North Park Second Addition limit the ability to use any portion of that area for the collector street’s right-of-way. Planning for future growth and transportation issues will need to be completed prior to any addition development within the area.

Rogers Creek Road – Banner Valley Road – State Street

Again, this area seems to be prime for residential development within the next twenty to thirty years. Developing a future street use plan for this area will help the Planning and Zoning Board and City Council promote organized development within the area. As State Street's volume increases, local residents will desire alternate routes to connect the southern edge of the community to the northern edge. Currently State Street is the only street within the community that runs from one end of the community to the other in a North-South direction.

Issues:

- A. Currently two Quarter Sections (approximately) within this area are not within the corporate limits of the community, and the landowners have not been receptive to the idea of annexing into the community. While initially this poses a problem for the community, it does not restrict the Planning and Zoning Commission from developing a future Transportation Plan for the area. There will be a point in time when this area will be annexed into the community and the development of transportation routes will need to be defined for future development.
- B. Glendale Lane currently stops at a T-intersection along the corporate limits of the community. Thus, a portion of the proposed road will run through an unincorporated quarter section along the eastern edge of the community. Future development of the property should be encouraged to annex into the City. Glendale Lane should be developed as a collector street connecting to Rogers Creek Road.

State Street

State Street needs to have major upgrades, as the major thoroughfare within the community. It is the primary road to connect the city to Cedar Rapids and Lake Macbride. Development along State Street within the community has largely been commercial and light industrial. Ely's growth in general, along with its location and growing economy results in continued increase of the number of cars and trucks that are stopping and turning into these businesses, thus slowing down the rate in which traffic can flow in and out of the area. While at a first glance this would appear to be an excellent way to allow people to experience the community, it does present a safety hazard as it increases the likelihood of car accidents.

Issues:

- A. State Street is currently a county road for which major upgrades are needed. Dependent upon the traffic counts and number accident reports along this section of road, turn lanes should to be installed to help promote the flow of traffic through the community. The number of access points onto State Street should be reviewed to determine the best way to facilitate new construction along this strip of road.

Opportunities and Constraints

The City of Ely is blessed with development opportunities. However, along with those opportunities the City needs to overcome some substantial constraints as well. The community desires to promote the characteristics of small town living, the availability of quality schools, and the recreational opportunities that are available to them. Yet, in the very near future, the community will need to deal with the encroachment of the City of Cedar Rapids, an aging infrastructure system, and residents demanding more services.

Opportunities

The City of Ely has a number of opportunities available to the community, making it a very desirable place to live and raise a family. The close proximity of Cedar Rapids and Iowa City provides the community with the cultural and entertainment possibilities that only enhance the quality of living in Ely.

College sporting events, symphonies, and large conference centers continue to provide the residents with attractive entertainment opportunities. Recreational activities such as camping, boating, hiking, biking, fishing, and water skiing are available nearby at Lake Macbride State Park and the Coralville Reservoir.

Constraints

While the City of Ely has a number of opportunities that will stimulate the development of the community, the city will need to find ways to minimize the constraints found in other small communities. One of the largest constraints that the City of Ely has to contend with is the rapidly expanding demand upon the community's infrastructure. The size and capacity of the City's water and sanitary sewer systems can and are quickly becoming overburden with the rapid development of residential housing within the community.

Other constraints facing the community include: the lack of developable commercial property; continued encroachment of the City of Cedar Rapids, land locking the City's growth to the North; difficult soil conditions and a developed flood plains inhibit the growth of the community to the West; and fierce competition with surrounding communities for the attraction of business growth inhibits the City's efforts to develop a diverse tax base.

Public Facilities and Services

Introduction

Overall the basic public facilities and services provided in Ely, and infrastructure to deliver and support public services meet current demands and expectations. Many components of Ely's public facilities and infrastructure have capacity to serve and support expected or foreseen growth. There are some locations in Ely that are better situated with capacity to support growth or commercial./industrial uses. Conversely there are locations in Ely that may be otherwise desirable for development, where infrastructure such as city water or sanitary sewer, is not currently present. The capacity and availability of public services and infrastructure are certainly critical for well planned and sustainable development; development in the future may be constrained due to availability of public facilities. Public facilities are generally costly capital improvement items, thus the future of the system depends upon investments made today.

City Hall/Community Center/Museum

City Hall is located at 1570 Rowley Street and houses the City's community center and museum. Originally designed as a schoolhouse in the 1930's, the two-story, brick facility was converted to fulfill other public purposes. The building was renovated in 2005; City administrative offices are located on the second floor of the building and currently house the City Clerk/Administrator and Deputy City Clerk.

There are several historic exhibits and presentations on display at the Ely Community Center. The City's Historic Preservation Center was established in 1972, is located on the second floor of the Community Center and primarily contains photographs, books and local historical artifacts. The history center is operated by the volunteers through the Ely Historic Preservation Society; the office hours are usually Wednesdays from 9:00 a.m. – noon; with additional opportunities by advance arrangement with the Historic Preservation Society.

The community center occupies the majority of the space in this facility, and is the primary meeting center for all of the community organizations. Meeting rooms are available to the general public for a nominal fee. The community center is also the location of the Congregate Meal site. Meals are served Tuesday and Fridays to senior citizens and others from around the community.

Library

The Library is located at 1595 Dows Street. The building has been recently renovated from its prior use as the City's Fire Station to house the library. The library now occupies more than 3800 square feet and is capable of providing more services to the City's residents.

Fire Department

The Ely Fire Department provides fire prevention, safety and suppression for the City of Ely and unincorporated territory of Putnam and College Townships. The department is as it has always been, fully volunteer. The Fire Station is located at 1300

Main Street, which was built in 2003, stores equipment, vehicles and gear, and serves as the department's training and command center. The department's roster is generally comprised of 25 member volunteers. The Ely Fire Department is independent of the City of Ely, and operates under a board comprised of elected officials of the City of Ely, Putnam Township, and College Township.

Public Works

Ely's Public Works Department maintains Ely's streets system, parks, drinking water, sanitary sewer, and storm sewer facilities. The principle Public Works facility is at 1124 Vista Road by the Wastewater Treatment Plant; with an older unheated building at 1580 Main Street. The City has three full-time employees in the Public Works Department as of August 2014.

Public Safety

The City of Ely contracts with the Linn County Sheriff's Office to provide law enforcement and public safety patrol for the community. The County Sheriff's Office provides routine patrol throughout the community on a regular basis, as well as patrol and law enforcement services on contract basis with Ely. Ambulance service is provided by Area Ambulance, Inc., in Cedar Rapids.

Water

Ely built a 300,000 gallon water tower in 2010. The City's water tower is located on a five acre parcel of land at 370 Jappa Road. The city's water tower was built at elevation to be able to provide adequate pressure (at least 40 psi) for all locations in Ely, or perceived as likely to be annexed in the reasonable future. The water tower could store roughly 33% more water than average daily use in July 2014. Ely has two wells providing water to the community. Establishing a third well is one of the city's near term goals.

Sanitary Sewer

The City of Ely currently uses a WesTech STM_Aerotor two cell activated sludge/fixed film treatment system to treat sanitary wastewater. This facility came online in 2007; with estimated design capacity to service 3,000 to 3,500 residents, depending on other conditions and activity that occur as Ely develops. In May, 2014 the Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) was operating at roughly 31% of design capacity. The WWTP was built to facilitate expansion by adding a third treatment cell when needed. The Wastewater Treatment Plant is located at 1122 Vista Road.

Schools

Currently, there is not a public or private school located within the City of Ely. School age children are served by the College Community School District.

Electrical

Alliant Energy and Linn County Rural Electric Cooperative provide electricity to the community.

Gas

MidAmerican Energy provides the community with natural gas.

Telephone, Cable/Digital Television and Internet Service

South Slope provides cable/digital television and wired internet service for Ely. South Slope installed a fiber-optic backbone for the communications services they offer. The fiber-optic capacity is available at most locations in Ely. South Slope's headquarters is in North Liberty.

Parks and Recreation

Parks

There are currently four city parks in Ely. There are no county, state or federal parks in Ely.

- **Community Center Park.** Located along Rowley Street next to City Hall. Ely's oldest park offers half-court basketball, tennis court, children's playground and open area for you to enjoy. This park is home to the Ely Farmers Market (Tuesdays 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. & Saturdays 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.) from May to October and many Fall Fest activities.
- **Ely City Park** at north end of Hillcrest Street. City Park offers two softball/baseball diamonds, soccer/football field, playground equipment, several acres of open area, and a pond. In 2014 this park was still a "work in progress" with a building offering three-season restrooms and a concession facility under construction. Many events for Ely Fall Fest are held here, most notably Ely's famous Kickball Tournament. This park is great to enjoy open air, play some ball or just wandering about.
- **Schulte Park** at 1310 Banner Valley Road. In Southbrook Addition this park offers the George Reyhons Pavilion equipped with picnic tables, counter space, grill for charcoal cooking, electricity, lighting, restroom, a fantastic children's playground and open space for games or parking. Pavilion may be rented for a nominal fee per day through City Hall. Call 848-4103 for more details and reservations.
- **Vavra Park.** Nestled quietly off the west side of Vavra Drive, picnic tables and a surfaced play area are offered at this quiet, streamside location.

Hoover Nature Trail

The Hoover Nature Trail is a major recreational trail in Iowa that will be 115 miles long and will link at least 16 cities in 6 counties when completed. The Hoover Nature Trail is part of the American Discovery Trail in Iowa; which is the nation's first coast-to-coast, non-motorized trail. It is a new breed of national trail - part city, part small town, part forest, part mountains, part desert - all in one trail. In 6,800 miles of adventure, discovery and fun, it stretches from Delaware to California. It reaches across America, linking community to community and providing trail users the opportunity to journey into the heart of all that is uniquely American - its culture, heritage, landscape, and spirit. Completion of this project ties directly into the overall completion of the Hoover Trail and American Discovery Trail.

The Hoover Nature Trail connects Ely to Cedar Rapids, as of 2014. This trail is expected to be extended south through Johnson County to Solon and Iowa City in the late 2010's. The trail is seen as a potential benefit for retail and restaurant/bar type businesses, and is perceived by many to be an attraction for living in Ely. Ely should advocate the extension of the Hoover Nature Trail south of town to connect to planned extension of the trail in Johnson County.

Issues

There are a number of issues that the City of Ely will have to contend with in the next five to ten years. The issues include awareness of the growing communities around Ely, continued residential development, infrastructure development/expansions, and limited developable land within the community. Each issue will have a definite impact upon the quality of life the residents of Ely want, and as such, each issue will need the appropriate consideration to minimize any negative effects.

Growth of Communities Surrounding Ely

Ely needs to be aware and willing to work with communities around it as they continue to grow. Cedar Rapids is the most noted community as its borders are the closest to Ely. A potential solution may be an agreement between the City of Ely, the City of Cedar Rapids and Linn County in how the land between the communities may be developed in the future.

Continued Residential Development

The City of Ely has experienced rapid residential development within the community. Residential development does not necessarily create an issue, however, rapid development can tax a community's infrastructure and services. Increasing demand upon on community's water and sewer system can quickly outstretch the current capacity of these services. Unable to keep up with the new demand, cities are then forced to find funding sources to either increase the capacity of their systems or upgrading the current facilities, or a combination of the two.

Should the City of Ely continue to experience the same development that it has experienced in recent years, the community should look into potential expansion of its current sewer and water system as necessary. Other infrastructure such as roads should also be regularly monitored and improved to help prevent a sudden need for mass improvement in a short period of time which would create a financial burden on the city and its residents.

As the population continues to increase, the need for public safety will also increase. Residents want and need to feel safe within their communities. Continuation of a community protection agreement with the Linn County Sheriff's Office should be maintained and reviewed as needed. An analysis of the number of calls the Sheriff's department has received in the last five years should be able to provide the community with an idea of what level of police protection they are currently receiving, and if the City will need to increase it's role in the provision of public safety.

Community Identity

Community pride strengthens the residents' desire to live and work within the community. Development of community pride can begin with the definition of a community's identity; it's self-image so to speak. The community is a self-described "bedroom community," and therefore should look at ways to incorporate this image into it's community pride. We should also consider, that due to the fast growth of the city in the past decade there are many new residents in the city. Creating a sense of community with new members requires the promotion of city-wide events, activities and promotions to bring the people together. The better a community gets to know each other the higher the sense of pride and dedication to the city they live in.

Enforcement of nuisance abatement and junk vehicle violations play a key role within community pride. Eliminating eyesores play a key role in whether a homeowner is willing to invest in improvements to their own property. If the homeowner believes that they will realize their investments in their homes on resale, they are more likely to invest the time and money in maintaining a quality home within the community.

Infrastructure

Many of the City's key infrastructure systems were upgraded from 2006 through 2014 to meet demand of the current population and provide capacity for the community's rapid development. While the upgrades to the city's wastewater treatment and water systems were designed and built with the future in mind the city needs to remain cognizant of the stress and demands that any growth inevitably places on city infrastructure such as sanitary and storm sewer, drinking water and streets. The City of Ely is currently working on the installation of a new-elevated water storage tank and installation of a new water well to meet the current and future demands for service.

Ely's wastewater treatment facility was upgraded from a two-cell aerated lagoon system to a mechanical WesTech STM_Aerotator two cell activated sludge/fixed film treatment system to treat sanitary wastewater. This facility came online in 2007; with nominal design capacity to service 3,000 to 3,500 residents. The City's water tower at 370 Jappa Road was activated in 2012, with storage capacity of 300,000 gallons. Water and wastewater capacity are expected to be adequate for several years of growth, though the city needs to monitor use and the demands on these facilities on an ongoing basis.

Storm water runoff and flooding are issues that continue to be concerns related to new development, and even older established locations. Ely enacted storm water management standards for new developments, and should continue to investigate, advocate and enact a proactive stance in regard to all aspects of storm water management for new developments and established neighborhoods. Ely should continue to take and corrective actions in problem areas of the community.

As development occurs it is necessary that water, sanitary sewer, storm water, and traffic and road developments are analyzed to minimize any negative impacts to the surrounding area.

Limitation of Developable Land

Currently, the City of Ely has very little commercial or industrial land available for development. Restricting commercial and industrial development to State Street and the downtown area has limited the development of new businesses and industries. Locating an area within the City's corporate limits for new business/industrial development is hampered by topography, increasing residential development, and infrastructure capacity.

Community leaders need to consider the issue of diversifying the City's tax base. Introducing new businesses within the community will help to offset the cost to the homeowners for the increasing demand for services. The lack of diversification of the City of Ely's tax base leaves the City's budget open to economic instability.

Economic Development

The state and country are slowly recovering from the most recent recession, as evidenced by the continued development that is occurring in the I-380 corridor. This area has shown a strong propensity for fast residential development within smaller communities in a 20-mile radius of either Iowa City or Cedar Rapids. The communities of North Liberty, Solon, Swisher and Fairfax are experiencing the same extraordinary growth as Ely. The increased demand for residential developments within the smaller communities can be attributed to the quality of living, lower crime rates, and the perception that it is cheaper to live in the smaller communities.

The attraction to living in smaller cities provides these communities with economic development opportunities. The City of Ely is in a wonderful position to market itself for new business developments. With the influx of new housing developments, combined with the relatively short distance to larger metropolitan areas and nearby recreational attractions, the City could become a viable hot bed for the service industry. The community should market their proximity to the metropolitan communities to attract businesses that would be able to provide service locally, as well as serving the region.

Currently, the City of Ely has a limited number of locations attractive to commercial development, especially for retail establishments. The biggest challenges appear to be adequate parking spaces and easy access from State Street, the community's main through street. Addressing these issues are critical first steps to making Ely a desirable location for commercial development.

The Economic Development Group of Ely (EDGE) in the past has developed marketing material touting the advantages offered by the city, as well as a web page. However, this material is nearly five years old and should be updated to reflect current conditions. EDGE should also be encouraged to re-energize its business outreach activities to encourage new development within the city.

Ely has an established and robust series of community events and recreational programs throughout the year. Seasonal business activities and tourism needs affiliated with those events should also be explored.

Niche marketing, or the attraction of businesses that serve a specific need could also be used as a way to identify the community and create a name brand loyalty similar to that done with Amana Meats, are ways to create an environment conducive for business creation. The niche markets could also be related with the recreational activities that are available nearby. The continued development of the bike trail from Cedar Rapids to Lake MacBride creates a need for a bicycle shop and other related service companies within the community and along the bike trail.

Zoning Considerations

Establishing district types and standards, then determining which territory will be included in the zoning districts is a critical component in carrying out the city's land use policies, and achieving the goals of this plan. Zoning was created to protect public health, safety, and welfare by encouraging harmonious development; thus, protecting individuals from adverse impacts of various activities.

Residential Zoning

The vast majority of land in Ely is zoned R-1, R-1A or R-1B, all of which are single-family residential zoning districts, the difference among them being minimum lot sizes, which reflect differences in lot sizes during Ely's development. Other residential zoning districts are:

- R-2, Multi-Family which allows single and two-family dwellings
- R-3 Multi-Family, which allows single, two-family and multiple family structures with up to four residential units
- R-4 Multi-Family which allows single, two-family and multiple family structures with up to eight residential units.

The residential zoning districts achieve the goals of the land use plan and of Ely's residents. Ely experienced steady residential growth, even during the "Great Recession" after 2008; and homes for sale seldom remain on the market for prolonged periods of time. There are few requests for variance from the residential zoning standards, which suggests they are generally effective and allow Ely's residents and homeowners to use their land in ways that generally meet their needs and meet the expectations of the community.

Ely also enacted the MH-R Mobile Home Park/Manufactured Home Park/Factory-built Home Park zoning district which allows mobile home parks, subject to meeting infrastructure and development standards. No land in Ely is included in the "MH-R" district as of September, 2014.

The City may want to evaluate land use policy and zoning and site standards, based on recent trends observed in recent years:

- Lot dimension standards that support houses with three car garages.
- Development standards that facilitate a broader range of residential options and housing prices.

Ely may be encouraged by landowners, potential developers or others with interest, to consider residential zoning standards for larger lot residential development on land where municipal water or sanitary sewer are not available at the time a party is interested in developing the land, or where those services are not easily extended to serve the property. This can be a difficult matter to evaluate and arrive at a policy that effectively balances the property owner/developers interest and those of the city and community in general. The P&Z and city in general are inevitably aware of the property owner or potential

developer's legitimate interest in gaining a reasonable return on their investment; at the same time the city has a valid interest in assuring residential development occurs in an orderly manner, in a manner that allows for cost effective delivery of municipal services, and that supports orderly extension of utility infrastructure including city water and sanitary sewer.

Commercial Zoning

Ely has three commercial zoning districts:

- C-1 Central Business District Commercial. The intent of this district is to: "preserve a central business district convenient and attractive for a wide range of retail uses and businesses, government and professional offices and places of amusement in a setting conducive to and safe for a high volume of pedestrian traffic." Territory included in the C-1 district is on the east side of State Street for one half-block on either side of Dows Street, and on the east side of Main Street from Fuhrmeister Street to Rowley Street.
- C-1a Downtown Commercial. The intent of this zoning district is to: "establish and preserve the historic characteristic of Ely's commercial downtown area as an attractive location for retail; food and drink; business, government and professional offices; and second story residential uses. The district seeks to encourage mixed commercial and residential use of buildings; with retail, commercial and business uses on street level and residential uses on second floor. Additional intent of the C-1a district is to foster traditional "historic" downtown activities and uses that benefit from convenient parking and intense pedestrian use." The C-1a district is comprised of property on either side of Dows Street from State to Main Street, the district extends roughly one-lot in from Dows Street. This district generally includes Ely's Historic Downtown, which is listed with the National Historic Registry as a historic district.
- C-2 Highway Commercial District. The intent of this zoning district is: "To establish and preserve general commercial areas consisting of shopping centers and commercial strips where customers reach individual business establishments primarily by automobile." Most of the land in the C-2 district is on the west side of State Street extending from Rogers Creek to Traer Street, with two separate parcels on the north portion of State Street.

"Light Intensity/Low Density" commercial uses would be included in the C-2 district when appropriate.

Ely's commercial zoning districts are cumulative in nature, in that uses or activities allowed in a "lower" district are allowed in "higher" or nominally more intense zoning districts, plus the additional uses set out in the "higher" district. This includes residential uses, so a lot in the C-2 district may be used as an R-1 property. That residential uses are allowed as permitted uses in commercial zoning districts can be both beneficial and present a challenge in certain circumstances. Many mortgage lenders have stringent requirements regarding mortgages for non-conforming properties due to the uncertainty

of whether the property will be able to get a variance if damaged or destroyed. The cumulative nature of the commercial and residential zoning districts mitigates those concerns.

Market forces and the ability of the business to profit from their activity are the driving engines for successful business activity and commercial development. Land use policies and zoning regulations may affect the cost of doing business through the cost of adhering to development standards and any aesthetic standards a city may enact. They may also play a role in creating and perpetuating appearance, access and aesthetic expectations that enhance the business environment.

Commercial development and growth has been a challenge for Ely. One of the perceived difficulties has consistently been potential customer base, which is mainly a function of Ely's population. As Ely's population continues to grow, the population and potential customers may soon hit the critical mass to make Ely attractive to retail, service and convenience related businesses. The city needs to review and evaluate commercial land use policies and zoning ordinance as to whether policies and regulations support desired commercial land uses and hinder unwelcome types of commercial uses. Specifically, Ely may be benefitted by:

- Establishing standards for appearance of commercial properties that include such things as screening of trash dumpsters or similar essential but unattractive items, number and design of street accesses, landscape or vegetative buffers between commercial and residential properties, and landscape features for the front of commercial properties.
- Consider additional parking controls as streets change in traffic volume.

Industrial Zoning

Ely has two industrial zoning districts, M-2 Light Industrial and M-2 Heavy Industrial. These two districts deal with intensity of industrial activities; and the effects of the uses on neighboring properties and the community in general. The industrial zoning districts are not cumulative in the way the residential and commercial districts are; less intense residential or commercial uses are not listed as allowed uses in the industrial zoning districts. This differentiation help protect the less intense activities like residential from the less desirable effects associated with industrial activity such as traffic, noise, smells and so forth. It also serves to illuminate the importance of effective land use planning and policies.

Public Use Zoning

The P-1 Public Use zoning district is used to identify and provide reference to land owned by a level of government, whether United States federal government, the State of Iowa, Linn County, College Community School District, or the City of Ely. It is important to note that public buildings or uses may be located in other zoning districts, most notably the C-1 and C-2 Commercial zoning districts. All land designated as P-1 Public Use zoning district is owned and used by the City of Ely as of the date of this plan. The six parcels in the P-1 zoning district are currently used as follows:

- Parks – four parcels for Community Center Park, Schulte Park, Vavra Park and City Park.
- Government buildings – Ely Community Center at 1570 Rowley St., which is surrounded by Community Center Park.
- Government Operations and Infrastructure. Two parcels; one which is the site of the city’s wastewater treatment facility and public works shop at 1122 Vista Road. The other is the location of the city’s water tower at 370 Jappa Rd.

Other Zoning Considerations

- Ely may benefit by considering zoning standards and a district for large parcel office/office park uses, especially as new territory is annexed into Ely. This zoning district may not be a viable or welcome designation for land currently within Ely. However, establishing the allowed uses and development standards may result in an important tool for implementing this plan and the city’s overall land use policies.

General Development Considerations

Ely has experienced considerable residential growth and construction of new homes since 1990, the vast majority of the growth has happened in subdivisions developed by private developers. Ely's subdivision ordinance and related regulations establish minimum requirements and construction standards for developing residential subdivisions. These standards are essential tools for assuring new development and the homes in them have adequate utilities, streets, and other public facilities to serve their needs, both in the immediate present and for the long term.

At times in Ely's history developers requested, and were granted, waivers from various requirements of the subdivision ordinance and/or construction standards. The city approved some of these requests, though the city has done so less frequently in the 2010's. Land development is generally a business, with the developer appropriately motivated to make profit on their investment and work. This being the case Ely can expect requests from future developers for waivers from various construction requirements. While arguments for reducing development cost and therefore the affordability of housing are at times persuasive, the long-term impacts are equally important and must be considered by the city.

Pedestrians and Recreational Activities

Sidewalks are required to be installed during the land development process by Ely's subdivision ordinance. The developer may install sidewalks at the same time streets and other improvements are constructed, or the sidewalk may be installed after a house is built and before it is occupied. Ely has enforced this requirement with more consistency over the years, and should continue to do so.

Ely is connected to the Hoover Nature Trail which offers recreational users the opportunity to bicycle, roller blade, run, or walk along the trail which connects to Cedar Rapids and then the rest of Iowa. Ely may be benefitted by establishing a master recreational trail plan, and policy or standards for installing recreational trail facilities in new developments.

Streets and Connectivity

This plan presents an overall transportation/street plan for the city, and Ely's subdivision ordinance establishes construction standards for various levels of streets ranging from standard residential to collector. Ely should continue to utilize these tools, and evaluate the standards from time to time to make sure they reflect the city's needs.

Ely should continue to emphasize connectivity of streets within new developments, and between developments. Making sure the city's streets connect to other streets within a subdivision or neighborhood enhances resident safety by allowing for more than one way to get to their property and evens out traffic flow. Making sure streets connect between subdivisions assures more orderly development of property, decreases the city's cost for building streets and infrastructure, and facilitate an effective transportation system. It is also often unpopular with land developers because the cost of

constructing the street, or infrastructure, and they perceive it as having little direct benefit to the land they are developing.

Utilities including City Water and Sanitary Sewer.

The subdivision ordinance sets out minimum standards for the various utilities the developer is to install within the property under development. Ely should continue to adhere to these minimums, and review them as needed to assure they are adequate. Connectivity among subdivisions is a crucial principle for this type of infrastructure. Developers often request waivers from requirements to extend water or sanitary sewer infrastructure to adjoining properties, similar to streets. Ely needs to consider these requests carefully, especially in light of the higher costs and difficulties associated with installing them after development.

Ely began the practice of assuring water or sanitary sewer capacity is available for additional properties by reimbursing the developer for the cost of the “oversized” utilities within a subdivision. The city should continue to follow this practice, and may benefit from reviewing this policy from time to time.

Storm Water Management

Effective storm water management is important for any development in any location. Storm water management is a critical design and construction concern because of Ely’s topography. Some of Ely is built on higher areas and hillsides while other areas of Ely are in lower areas among the streams that are one of Ely’s natural attractions. Ely enacted a storm water management ordinance that requires the post-developed rate of flow after a 100-year rain event to be no greater than the pre-development flow from a 5-year rain event. This is a fairly common standard, which relies on detention/retention facilities built in conjunction with new developments to achieve the goal. Ely may be a community for which this common standard may not be adequate to meet residents concerns of adequate protection of life and property.

The city will benefit by adopting policies, standards or programs to:

- Establish storm water management regulations related to new subdivisions that are more stringent than the existing standards.
- Encourage developers to build and implement even more aggressive and proactive storm water management practices voluntarily, or by the city offering some form of incentive to do so.
- Encourage existing home and property owners to use storm water best management practices like:
 - Rain gardens
 - Rain Barrels
 - Use of native grasses and plantings where appropriate and feasible
 - Pervious street, sidewalk or parking area surfaces

WETLANDS/FLOODING

WETLANDS

A wetland is currently defined as an area, which under normal circumstances, contains hydric soils, a predominance of vegetation adapted for life in saturated soils, and enough hydrology to favor the survival of hydrophytes (water-loving plants). Wetlands are commonly referred to as potholes, bogs, backwaters, sloughs, bayous, and swamps. Among other things, they are valuable in flood attenuation, filtration, fish and wildlife habitat, aesthetics, recreation, and groundwater recharge and discharge. The excavation of/or placement of dredged or fill material into wetlands and other waters of the United States is regulated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources under the Clean Water Act and by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service under the Food Security Act. Any work planned in wetland or in other waters of the United States should be approved by these agencies.

It is recommended that development within and around the city avoid wetlands to the fullest extent practical. It is further recommended that wetlands and other waters be used and preserved as natural green spaces, parks, and/or wildlife habitats or preserves in order to enhance the rural and natural.

FLOOD PLAIN

The 100-year floodplain should be used for parkland and natural green and open space. Building within the 100 year floodplain is allowed by the National Flood Insurance Program but is restricted by the following regulations. However, once again, any development within said 100-year floodplain should be discouraged to greatly reduce future flooding complications.

The following are definitions and current regulations concerning flood plains:

Floodway: The channel of any watercourse and the adjacent portion of the flood plain that must be reserved in order to discharge a 100-year flood without cumulatively increasing the water surface elevation more than a specified height at any point assuming equal conveyance reduction outside the channel from the two (2) sides of the flood plain.

Floodway Fringe: That portion of the flood plain landward of the encroachment limit that shall from time to time be inundated by floodwaters. Flooding in the fringe area is generally characterized by more shallow and slower moving floodwaters.

100-Year Flood Plain: The highest level of a flood having a one (1) percent chance of occurring in any given year. The level of the 100-year flood and the floodway boundary is determined by the Federal Emergency Management

Agency (FEMA) and shall be the basis for establishing the floodway and floodway fringe.

Regulations: No structure of any type is allowed within the floodway without permission of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and only those uses, which do not impede the natural flow of the water course(s) flooding, shall be allowed.

Furthermore, as per the regulations of the National Flood Insurance Program, all municipalities shall establish Flood Plain Districts and Regulations. These Regulations shall state that any structure erected within the 100-year flood plain shall have their lowest level elevated one (1) foot above the established 100-year flood plain level and that all structures additionally be properly anchored and constructed so to minimize flood damage.

No structure not properly elevated and built within the 100 year floodplain prior to City regulations forbidding such shall be repaired and/or used once receiving damaged, by any means, of beyond 50%. Nor shall any above said structure be improved or expanded beyond 50%.