COMPREHENSIVE

DEVELOPMENT PLAN UPDATE

2007 to 2030

Prepared For

SEWARD COUNTY

NEBRASKA

Prepared By

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Location

Seward County is located in southeastern Nebraska. The county is immediately west of Lancaster County which contains the city of Lincoln, the State Capital of Nebraska. Seward County is also bounded by Butler County to the north, Saline County to the South and York County to the west. Other counties that touch Seward County at the corners are Saunders County to the northeast, Fillmore County to the southwest, and Polk County to the northwest. Seward County contains 16 townships (four by four) or approximately 576 square miles of area. The county is bisected by Interstate 80, and also is along U.S. Highway 6, U.S. Highway 34 and Nebraska Highway 15.

History of Seward County

(EXCERPTS FROM http://www.rootsweb.com/~neresour/andreas/SEWARD/SEWARD-P1.HTML)

The original name of the county was Green, but, shortly after the commencement of our domestic conflict, it was changed to that of Seward. This was done because of the course taken by the Senator from Missouri, in whose honor it had been named. Senator Green took an active part in the rebellion against the Government, and sought to use his influence against its overthrow. The Legislature promptly removed from the page of history a name that had become tarnished with the dark stain of treason, and placed in its stead that of the distinguished statesman and advocate of freedom, William H. Seward.

With the history of J Precinct, begins the history of Seward County. In the fall of 1858, Daniel Morgan and his sons, William, Thomas and Lewis, made the first settlement in the county, taking up a pre-emption claim on Section 26, Township 10, Range 3, and receive the honors of the historian. Mr. Morgan continued his residence until 1878, at which date his death occurred. At this period, Nebraska was a wilderness. Hardly a settler had pushed his way west of the Missouri River, which was the nearest point of obtaining supplies--a distance of fully seventy miles, with many unbridged streams intervening, making it a long and perilous journey.

In 1865, under Territorial laws of Nebraska, Seward County was attached to Lancaster County for judicial purposes, and was yet unorganized. In October of this year, the Commissioners of Lancaster County called an election to be held in Seward County at the general election for county officers throughout the Territory. At this election, the following-named gentlemen were elected as the Board of County Commissioners for Seward County; William J. Imlay, of Seward; William J. Thompson, of Beaver Crossing; H. W. Parker, of Camden.

The board met and organized, and divided the county into five Election Precincts, and the returns of the several elections having been canvassed, it was found that the following gentlemen were the successful candidates; Thomas West, Clerk; C. J. Niehardt, Treasurer, W. E. Chapin, Sheriff; J. L. Davison, Probate Judge.

An effort was made to locate the county seat at Camden, but during the years 1865-66, the Commissioners held their meetings alternately at the residence of the County Clerk on the West Blue, at West Mills, and at the house of the County Treasurer on the Big Blue, five miles south of Seward.

The north half of the county in the mean time had been organized into Seward and Oak Grove Precincts, and the south half into three, Camden, Milford and Beaver Crossing. At this date, the population of the county was small, and hence

the valuation of property here was not sufficient to defray the ordinary expenses of county government. The amount of the levy for the current years of 1865-66 was $423.34.

It was evident, as early as the year 1866 that the settlers in the northern and southern part of the county were not going to work harmoniously together in their county organization. They were universally men of more than average intellect, and the strife and jealousies naturally arising from the differences in locality and the aspiring disposition of the sectional leaders, were the source out of which grew constant agitation in the contest for county seat honors. This was the great question that arose for adjudication, the vexed question of definitely locating the county seat. The settlements were yet sparse and scattered, the settlers generally poor, and politicians comparatively numerous. The records of the county for the years 1865-66 are as follows:

< 17, Dec Neb., Co., Seward RANCH,>
"County Commissioners H. W. Parker, W. J. Thompson and William Imlay met at Thompson's Ranch and transacted the following business: The bonds of H. W. Parker, W. J. Thompson and William Imlay, County Commissioners; J. L. Davison, Probate Judge; C. J. Niehardt, County Treasurer; S. A. Chapin, Sheriff; C. J. Niehardt and Orian Johnson, Justices of the Peace, were presented, acted upon and approved. The board ordered the Clerk to order from the Territorial Auditor the blank books belonging to the county.
"There being no further business, the board adjourned to meet at the house of H. W. Parker on the second Monday in January, 1866 THOMAS WEST, County Clerk."

"OFFICE OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS,
Seward Co., Neb., Feb. 19, 1866.

The early days of Seward County were not unlike the trials and tribulations seen by other counties in Nebraska. The county seat eventually located in Seward in 1871 after an impromptu election and a race to Lincoln to file the proper papers. Up until then the county seat had been located in Milford.

This section is not a detailed history but a brief glimpse at some of the issues that led to the formation of the county. For more detailed information check the county's historical society or the following websites:
http://www.rootsweb.com/~neresour/andreas/seward/seward-p1.html)
http://www.casde.unl.edu/history/counties/seward/seward/seward.htm

THE PURPOSE OF COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

The Seward County Comprehensive Development Plan is designed to promote orderly growth and development for the county and its communities. The Comprehensive Development Plan will provide policy guidelines to enable citizens and elected officials to make informed decisions about the future of the County.

The Plan acts as a tool to "Develop
a road map that guides the community
through change"

The Comprehensive Development Plan will provide a guideline for the location of future developments within the planning jurisdiction of Seward County. The Comprehensive Development Plan is intended to encourage a strong economic base for the county so the goals of the county are achieved.

The Plan will assist Seward County in evaluating the impacts of development (i.e. economic, social, fiscal, service and amenity provision, health, safety and general welfare) and encourage appropriate land uses throughout the jurisdictional area of the county. The objective of planning is to provide a framework for guiding the community—whether a village, city, county, toward orderly growth and development. The Plan assists the county in balancing the physical, social, economic, and aesthetic features as it responds to private sector interests.

Planned growth will make Seward County more effective in serving residents, more efficient in using resources, and able to meet the standard of living and quality of life every individual desires.

THE COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING PROCESS

Comprehensive planning begins with the data collection phase. Data are collected that provide a snapshot of the past and present county conditions. Analysis of data provides the basis for developing forecasts for future land-use demands in the county.

The second phase of the planning process is the development of general goals and policies, based upon the issues facing the county. These are practical guidelines for improving existing conditions and guiding future growth. The Comprehensive Development Plan is a vision presented in text, graphics and tables that represent the desires of the county for the future.

The Comprehensive Development Plan represents a blueprint designed to identify, assess, and develop actions and policies in the areas of population, land use, transportation, housing, economic development, community facilities, and utilities. The Comprehensive Development Plan contains recommendations that when implemented will be of value to the county and its residents.

Implementation is the final phase of the process. A broad range of development policies and programs are required to implement the Comprehensive Development Plan. The Comprehensive Development Plan identifies the tools, programs, and methods necessary to carry out the recommendations. Nevertheless, the implementation of the development policies contained within the Comprehensive Development Plan is dependent upon the adoption of the Plan by the governing body, and the leadership exercised by the present and future elected and appointed officials of the county.

The Plan was prepared under the direction of the Seward County Planning Commission and the zoning office, with the assistance and participation of the Seward County Board of Commissioners, the Plan Review Committee and citizens of Seward County. The planning time period for achieving goals, programs, and developments identified in the Seward County Comprehensive Development Plan is 20 years. However, the county should review the Plan annually and update the document every ten to fifteen years, or when a pressing need is identified. Updating the Comprehensive Development Plan will allow the county to incorporate ideas and developments that were not known at the time of the present comprehensive planning process.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMPONENTS

Nebraska State Statutes require the inclusion of certain elements in a Comprehensive Plan. A "Comprehensive Development Plan," as defined in Neb. Rev. Stat. § 23-114.02 (Reissue 1997), "shall consist of both graphic and textual material and shall be designed to accommodate anticipated long-range future growth." The Comprehensive Plan is comprised of the following chapters and sections:

- Profile Seward County
  - County Assessment – Conditions and Trend Analysis
  - County Facilities
  - Environmental Conditions
- Envision Seward County
  - Town Hall meeting results
  - Goals and policy development
- Develop Seward County
  - Existing Land Use
  - Existing Transportation Systems
  - County Land Use Management Plan (CLUMP)
  - Future Land Use Plan
  - Transportation Plan
- Seward County Plan Implementation

Analyzing past and existing demographic, housing, economic and social trends permit the projection of likely conditions in the future. Projections and forecasts are useful tools in planning for the future; however, these tools are not always accurate and may change due to unforeseen factors. Also, past trends may be skewed or the data may be inaccurate, creating a distorted picture of past conditions. Therefore, it is important for Seward County to closely monitor population, housing and economic conditions that may impact the county. Through periodic monitoring, the county can adapt and adjust to changes at the local level. Having the ability to adapt to socio-economic change allows the county to maintain an effective Comprehensive Development Plan for the future, to enhance the quality of life, and to raise the standard of living for all residents.

The Comprehensive Development Plan records where Seward County has been, where it is now, and where it likely will be in the future. Having this record in the Comprehensive Development Plan will serve to inform county officials as much as possible. The Comprehensive Development Plan is an information and management tool for county leaders to use in their decision-making process when considering future developments. The Comprehensive Development Plan is not a static document; it should evolve as changes in the land-use, population or local economy occur during the planning period. This information is the basis for Seward County's evolution as it achieves its physical, social, and economic goals.

GOVERNMENTAL AND JURISDICTIONAL ORGANIZATION

The Seward County Board of Commissioners, which is a board of elected officials, performs the governmental functions for the county. Each incorporated community in Seward County also has elected officials and officers that oversee how their community is governed.

The planning and zoning jurisdiction of Seward County, pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 23-114 (Reissue 1997), includes all of the unincorporated portions of the county, excluding the established extraterritorial jurisdiction of each incorporated city or village.

Pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 17-1002 (Reissue 1997), the planning and zoning jurisdiction for the incorporated communities in Seward County that have adopted Comprehensive Planning and Zoning Ordinances, except for Seward, includes the area within one mile of their corporate limits. The City of Seward has the authority to exercise planning and zoning jurisdiction throughout a two-mile extraterritorial jurisdiction. As these communities grow and annex land into their corporate limits, their extraterritorial jurisdictions will extend further into the county. There are nine communities in Seward County, besides Seward, that are incorporated, including Beaver Crossing, Bee, Cordova, Garland, Goehner, Milford, Pleasant Dale, Staplehurst, and Utica. The area also has the unincorporated areas of Rudy and Tamora. Tamora unincorporated since the last plan was completed.

PROFILE SEWARD COUNTY

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Population statistics aid decision-makers by developing a broad picture of Seward County. It is important for Seward County to understand where it has been, where it is and where it appears to be going. Population is the driving force behind housing, local employment, economic, and fiscal stability of the county. Historic population conditions assist in developing demographic projections, which in turn assist in determining future housing, retail, medical, employment and educational needs within the county. Projections provide an estimate for the county to base future land-use and development decisions. However, population projections are only estimates and unforeseen factors may effect projections significantly.

Population Trends and Analysis

Table 1 indicates the population for the incorporated communities in Seward County, the unincorporated areas, and Seward County as a whole, between 1980 and 2003. This information provides the residents of Seward County with a better understanding of their past and present population trends and changes. Seward County's population in 2000 was 16,496 persons, which was an increase of 1,046 persons, or 6.8%, from 1990. The county's population in 2003 was estimated to be 16.671, an increase of 175 persons, 1.1%, over 2000.

The table indicates that Seward County had a net increase of 882 persons or 5.6% between 1980 and 2003. This was driven primarily by an increase in the populations of Seward County's incorporated areas. The greatest population increases, with regard to percentages, for the incorporated areas, occurred in Utica and Seward. Seward County saw only four of its communities (Utica, Seward, Bee, and Goehner) increase in population. However, examining the changes in population between 1990 and 2000; there were two additional communities that saw growth during that period, Milford and Beaver Crossing.

Seward County exhibited its greatest population gain, both in terms of total number of persons and in percentage, within Table 1, between 1990 and 2000, when it recorded an increase of 1,046 persons, or 6.8%. During this period, the unincorporated areas of Seward County experienced a population gain of 364 persons, or 7.1%, and the incorporated areas increased by 682 persons, or 6.6%.

Since 2000, estimates for Seward County show the population has continued to increase slowly overall. However, only two communities were responsible for this growth, Seward and Pleasant Dale. The county increased by 1.1% from 2000 to 2003, while the incorporated and unincorporated areas had population changes of 3.5% and -3.7%, respectively. In addition, changes during this period indicate that Seward has increased by 433 people or 6.9% in three years. Again, the overall increase in Seward County was only 175 people or 1.1%.

Table 2 indicates the population for the Lincoln-Lancaster County Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), of which Seward County joined in 2003. This MSA includes the Nebraska Counties of Lancaster and Seward. Since Seward County is now considered a part of a larger economic region, it is important for the county to have an understanding of the role they play within that area. The information shown in Table 2 allows Seward County to compare its growth to the growth of the surrounding area.

TABLE 1: POPULATION TRENDS, SEWARD COUNTY AND COMMUNITIES, 1980 TO 2003

Community	1980	1990	% Change 1980 to 1990	2000	% Change 1990 to 2000	2003	% Change 2000 to 2003	% Change 1980 to 2003
Beaver Crossing	458	448	-2.2%	457	2.0%	440	-3.7%	-3.9%
Bee	192	209	8.9%	223	6.7%	220	-1.3%	14.6%
Cordova	129	147	14.0%	127	-13.6%	121	-4.7%	-6.2%
Garland	257	247	-3.9%	247	0.0%	246	-0.4%	-4.3%
Goehner	165	192	16.4%	186	-3.1%	179	-3.8%	8.5%
Milford	2,108	1,942	-7.9%	2,070	6.6%	2,067	-0.1%	-1.9%
Pleasant Dale	259	253	-2.3%	245	-3.2%	249	1.6%	-3.9%
Seward	5,713	5,862	2.6%	6,319	7.8%	6,752	6.9%	18.2%
Staplehurst	306	281	-8.2%	270	-3.9%	260	-3.7%	-15.0%
Utica	689	725	5.2%	844	16.4%	835	-1.1%	21.2%
Incorporated Areas	10,276	10,306	0.3%	10,988	6.6%	11,369	3.5%	10.6%
Unincorporated Areas	5,513	5,144	-6.7%	5,508	7.1%	5,302	-3.7%	-3.8%
Seward County	**15,789**	**15,450**	**-2.1%**	**16,496**	**6.8%**	**16,671**	**1.1%**	**5.6%**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population and Housing, 1980 - 1990, 2000, 2003

Some of the following comparisons are being analyzed in order to indicate how Seward County would have compared with Lancaster County and the MSA, if the county had been included in the past. Seward County is the least populated county within the MSA. Seward County's growth rate between 1980 and 2003 was 5.6%, compared to the MSA's growth rate of 33.1%. In 1980, Seward County would have accounted for 7.57% of the population of the MSA. By 2000, Seward County had decreased its percentage to 6.18%. The population growth rate in Seward County has been much slower than Lancaster County over the past 23 years. This comparison should be examined as new census data are released.

TABLE 2: POPULATION TRENDS, LINCOLN-LANCASTER COUNTY METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREA, 1980 -2003

County	1980	1990	% Change 1980 to 1990	2000	% Change 1990 to 2000	2003	% Change 2000 to 2003	% Change 1980 to 2003
Seward County*	15,789	15,450	-2.1%	16,496	6.8%	16,671	1.1%	5.6%
Lancaster County	192,884	213,641	10.8%	250,291	17.2%	260,995	4.3%	35.3%
Total MSA*	**208,673**	**229,091**	**9.8%**	**266,787**	**16.5%**	**277,666**	**4.1%**	**33.1%**
Seward County / MSA	**7.57%**	**6.74%**	**-10.9%**	**6.18%**	**-8.3%**	**6.00%**	**-2.9%**	**-20.6%**
State of Nebraska	**1,572,296**	**1,580,622**	**0.5%**	**1,711,263**	**8.3%**	**1,739,291**	**1.6%**	**10.6%**

* Seward County was added to the Lincoln-Lancaster County Metropolitan Statistical Area in 2003. Data for 1980, 1990 and 2000 for reference only.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population and Housing, 1980 - 1990, 2000, 2003

Migration Analysis

Migration Analysis allows a county to understand how specific dynamics are in influencing population change. Migration indicates the population size that has migrated in or out of the county. The migration number is determined by subtracting the natural change in population (i.e. births minus deaths) from the total change in population. Table 3 shows the total change in population for Seward County from 1960-1970, 1970-1980, 1980-1990, and 1990-1998. A negative number in the "Total Migration" column indicates the number of persons that have left the county, while a positive

number indicates the number of persons that have moved into the county. Unfortunately, this analysis is primarily available for the county as a whole. These data have limited availability for communities under 1,000 persons.

Migration analysis is important for a county to understand since it offers an explanation of what affected the population changes over time. Through migration analysis, it can be determined how much of a population change was due to persons moving in or out of an area, and how much was due to births or deaths in the area. For example, assume an area had a total change of 100 persons during any given time period, but there were 15 more births than deaths during that same time period. Looking at the natural change only, the area should have grown by 15 persons. However, when the total change of 100 is taken into account, we need to subtract out those births in order to determine what caused the remaining change. If the total change of 100 was an increase, then 85 people moved into the area (100 increase – 15 births that occurred in area = 85 additional people in area). If, however, the total change of 100 represented a loss, then 115 people moved out of the area (100 decrease + 15 births in the area that did not increase the population = 115 people moved out of the area).

TABLE 3: MIGRATION ANALYSIS, SEWARD COUNTY, 1960 TO 2003

Time Period	Total Change (persons)	Natural Change (persons)	% Natural Change	Total Migration (persons)	% Migration
1960-1970	879	(727)	-	1,606	-
1970-1980	1,329	653	-	676	-
1980-1990	(339)	764	-	(1,103)	-
1990-2000	1,046	149	-	897	-
2000-2001	156	146	-	10	-
2001-2002	(19)	165	-	(184)	-
2002-2003	38	(1)	-	39	-
Total	**3,090**	**1,149**	**37.2%**	**1,941**	**62.8%**

Source(s): U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population and Housing, 1960 - 1990, 1998
Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services System, Vital Statistics Report(s), 1960 –1998

Table 3 indicates births exceeded deaths in Seward County for each reporting period, except 1960 to 1970 and 2003 to 2003. Based upon this information and the migration analysis formula, the primary factor of Seward County's increasing population can be determined for any given period. During the reporting periods of 1960 to 1970, 1970 to 1980, 1990 to 2000, 2000 to 2001 and 2002 to 2003 has been in-migration. Only 1980 to 1990 and 2001 to 2002 indicated that there was an overall out-migration. It is important to note that both migration and the natural change for the 1960 to 2003 period were positive. However, the population increases affected by in-migration impacted the county by 2:1 over the natural change.

Age Structure Analysis

Age structure is an important component of population analysis. By analyzing age structure, one can determine which age groups (cohorts) within Seward County are being affected by population shifts and changes. Each age cohort affects the population in a number of different ways. For example, the existence of larger young cohorts (20-44 years) means that there is a greater ability to sustain future population growth than does larger older cohorts. On the other hand, if the large, young cohorts maintain their relative size, but do not increase the population as expected, they will, as a group,

tend to strain the resources of an area as they age. Understanding what is happening within the age groups of the county's population is necessary to effectively plan for the future.

TABLE 4: AGE-SEX CHARACTERISTICS, SEWARD COUNTY, 1990 TO 2000

Age	1990		2000		1990-2000		1990-2000	
	Male and Female	% of Total	Male and Female	% of Total	Net Change	% Change	Cohort Change	% Change
0-4	1,069	6.9%	924	5.6%	-145	-13.6%	924	-
5-9	1,238	8.0%	1,113	6.7%	-125	-10.1%	1,113	-
10-14	1,207	7.8%	1,225	7.4%	18	1.5%	156	14.6%
15-19	1,385	9.0%	1,784	10.8%	399	28.8%	546	44.1%
20-24	1,210	7.8%	1,390	8.4%	180	14.9%	183	15.2%
25-29	923	6.0%	791	4.8%	-132	-14.3%	-594	-42.9%
30-34	1,131	7.3%	865	5.2%	-266	-23.5%	-345	-28.5%
35-44	2,076	13.4%	2,401	14.6%	325	15.7%	347	16.9%
45-54	1,428	9.2%	2,100	12.7%	672	47.1%	24	1.2%
55-64	1,327	8.6%	1,401	8.5%	74	5.6%	-27	-1.9%
65-74	1,235	8.0%	1,170	7.1%	-65	-5.3%	-157	-11.8%
75 & older	1,221	7.9%	1,332	8.1%	111	9.1%	-1,124	-45.8%
Total	**15,450**	**100.0%**	**16,496**	**100.0%**	**1,046**	**6.8%**	**1,046**	**6.8%**

Selected Characteristics	1990		2000		Total Change	
	Under 18 years of age	4,109	Under 18 years of age	4,079	18 and under	**-30**
	% of total population	26.6%	% of total population	24.7%	% change	**-0.7%**
	Total 65 yrs and older	2,456	Total 65 yrs and older	2502	65 and older	**46**
	% of total population	15.9%	% of total population	15.2%	% change	**1.9%**
	Median Age	33.1	Median Age	35.7	Median Age	**2.6**
	Total Females	7,701	Total Females	8,117	Total Females	**416**
	Total Males	7,749	Total Males	8,379	Total Males	**630**
	Total Population	**15,450**	**Total Population**	**16,496**	**Total Change**	**1,046**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population and Housing, STF-1A, 1980, 1990

Table 4 exhibits the age cohort structure for Seward County in 1990 and 2000. Examining population age structure may indicate significant changes affecting the different population segments within the county. Realizing how many persons are in each age cohort, and at what rate the age cohorts are changing in size, will allow for informed decision-making in order to maximize the future use of resources. As shown in Table 4, changes between 1990 and 2000 occurred within a number of different age group cohorts.

One method of analyzing cohort movement in a population involves comparing the number of persons aged between 0 and 4 years in 1990 with the number of persons in the same age cohort 10 years later, or aged between 10 and 14 years in 2000. For example, in Seward County, there were 1,069 children between the ages of 0 and 4 in 1990, and in 2000 there were 1,225 children between the ages of 10 and 14, an increase of 156 children. A review of population by this method permits one to undertake a detailed analysis of which cohorts are moving in and out of the county. The positive change in this cohort indicates in-migration.

Seward County experienced growth in many of its age cohorts. The 0 to 4 and 5 to 9 cohorts always indicate an increase, since the persons, in that group, were not born when the previous census was completed. Note that the cohorts represented in Table 4 differ from those listed below due to the consolidation of the 25-29 and 30-34 cohorts from 1990

into a 35-44 cohort in 2000. Increases in the cohorts occurred in five age groups between 1990 and 2000, these cohort shifts were:

1990 Age Cohort	Number	2000 Age Cohort	Number	Change
NA	NA	0-4 years	924 persons	+ 924 persons
NA	NA	5-9 years	1,113 persons	+ 1,113 persons
0-4 years	1,069 persons	10-14 years	1,225 persons	+ 156 persons
5-9 years	1,238 persons	15-19 years	1,784 persons	+ 546 persons
10-14 years	1,207 persons	20-24 years	1,390 persons	+ 183 persons
25-34 years	2,054 persons	35-44 years	2,401 persons	+ 347 persons
35-44 years	2,076 persons	45-54 years	2,100 persons	+ 24 persons
Total Change				**+ 3,293 persons**

Outside of the 2000 age groups of 0-4 and 5-9 years, the greatest increases included the 15-19 (2000) and 35-44 (2000) age groups. An important trend to note in Seward County is the increase into the 2000 cohorts of 15-19 and 20-24. Typically, in Nebraska areas outside of Lincoln and Omaha, these cohorts decrease due to movement to secondary education locations. That movement to secondary educational institutions is the exact reason why Seward County has seen an increase, since Seward County is home to Concordia University (Seward) and Southeast Community College (Milford). In addition, the increases seen in the 2000 cohorts of 10-14 and 35-44 indicate a solid in-migration of family populations between 1990 and 2000.

There were also five age-cohorts that existed in 1990 that declined in number in 2000. While the county population increased during this ten year span, an analysis of where the changes took place will lead to an understanding of what services will be needed in the future.

Decreases in the cohorts occurred in a number of age groups between 1990 and 2000, these cohort shifts were:

1990 Age Cohort	Number	2000 Age Cohort	Number	Change
15-19 years	1,385 persons	25-29 years	791 persons	- 594 persons
20-24 years	1,210 persons	30-34 years	865 persons	- 345 persons
45-54 years	1,428 persons	55-64 years	1,401 persons	- 27 persons
55-64 years	1,327 persons	65-74 years	1,170 persons	- 1,572 persons
65 years +	2,456 persons	75 years +	1,332 persons	-1,124 persons
Total Change				**- 3,662 persons**

The three age cohorts, from 2000, representing the most negative change, are the 65-75, 75 years and older, and 25-29 age cohorts. The changes in the 75 years and older age cohort were most likely due to either deaths or people moving into elderly care facilities located in other counties. The changes in the 25-29 age cohorts in 2000 is most likely related to persons completing their secondary education and moving onto new careers outside of the county. The change in the latter cohort indicates that the county and communities need to focus on economic development strategies that attempt to capture a larger share of that age group as they finish their college education. However, the 2000 U. S. Census is indicating that a large number of families are moving to Seward County once they pass the higher age group. Some of

this may be due to increased employment opportunities in the county, which can be attributed by Seward County's close proximity to Lincoln.

The median age in Seward County increased from 33.1 years in 1990 to 35.7 years in 2000. The proportion of persons less than 18 years of age decreased slightly in total population between 1990 and 2000, while those aged 65 years and older increased by 1.9% overall. There is a segment of the population that works in Lincoln and has chosen to live in Seward County and commute. The 10-14 year old age group of 2000 showed an increase of 156 persons, which leads to the assumption that people with young families may be drawn to Seward County because of its quality of life and close proximity to Lincoln.

The change in people ages 55-74 has decreased by 1,308 persons. In order to accommodate a growing number of elderly, whom tend to desire the ability to remain in place as they age, Seward County, in cooperation with the communities, should be involved in developing facilities that can house those that need assistance and allow them to feel safe and comfortable. To encourage the return of the younger and middle age groups, the county should be involved in economic development activities, including housing options and the continued maintenance and improvement of infrastructure to accommodate new growth, making Seward County an attractive place to live and work. Having Lincoln commuters live in Seward County is fine for increasing the population base, but Seward County needs a plan to also develop its economic base. With a larger, secure economic base, Seward County would be better positioned to plan for and meet its future service needs.

Population Projections

Population Projections are estimates based upon past and present circumstances. Population projections allow Seward County to estimate what the population will be in future years by looking at past trends. By scrutinizing population changes in this manner, the county will be able to develop a baseline of change from which they can create different future scenarios. A number of factors (demographics, economics, social, etc.) may affect projections positively or negatively. At the present time, these projections are the best crystal ball Seward County has for predicting future population changes. There are many methods to project the future population trends; the eight projections used below are intended to give Seward County a broad overview of the possible population changes that could occur in the future.

Trend Line Analysis

Trend Line Analysis is a process of projecting future populations based upon changes during a specified period of time. In the analysis of Seward County, three different trend lines were reviewed: 1960 to 2000, 1980 to 2000, and 1990 to 2000. A review of these trend lines indicates Seward County will continue to increase in population through 2030. The following projections summarize the decennial population for Seward County through 2030.

Seward County Trend Analysis

Year	Trend: 1960 to 2003	Trend: 1970 to 2003	Trend: 1990 to 2003
2010	17,107 persons	17,031 persons	17,198 persons
2020	18,012 persons	17,820 persons	18,243 persons
2030	18,965 persons	18,646 persons	19,353 persons

Cohort Survival Analysis

Cohort Survival Analysis reviews the population by different age groups and sex. The population age groups are then projected forward by decade using survival rates for the different age cohorts. This projection model accounts for average birth rates by sex and adds the new births into the future population.

The Cohort Survival Model projection indicates Seward County's population will increase each decade through 2030. The following projection for Seward County is based on applying survival rates to age cohorts, but does not consider the effects of either in-migration or out-migration.

Seward County Cohort Survival Analysis

Year	Cohort Survival Model
2010	16,946 persons
2020	18,123 persons
2030	19,408 persons

Modified Cohort Survival Analysis

The Modified Cohort Survival Analysis reviews the populations generated by the cohort model and adjust the population for migration. The adjustments are based upon assumed levels of migration, in the case of Seward County it was in-migration. The modified models examined a 2.7% per decade in-migration (similar to the present trend seen in Seward County), a 5.0% per decade in-migration, a 7.5% per decade in-migration, and a 10% per decade in-migration. The latter three were completed in order to examine the growth of Seward County if the level of in-migration were to suddenly increase over the planning period.

Seward County Modified Cohort Survival Analysis with 2.7% In-migration per decade

Year	Modified Cohort Survival Model
2010	17,216 persons
2020	18,890 persons
2030	20,720 persons

Seward County Modified Cohort Survival Analysis with 5.0% In-migration per decade

Year	Modified Cohort Survival Model
2010	17,601 persons
2020	19,717 persons
2030	22,052 persons

Seward County Modified Cohort Survival Analysis with 7.5% In-migration per decade

Year	Modified Cohort Survival Model
2010	18,020 persons
2020	20,637 persons
2030	23,566 persons

Seward County Modified Cohort Survival Analysis with 10.0% In-migration per decade

Year	Modified Cohort Survival Model

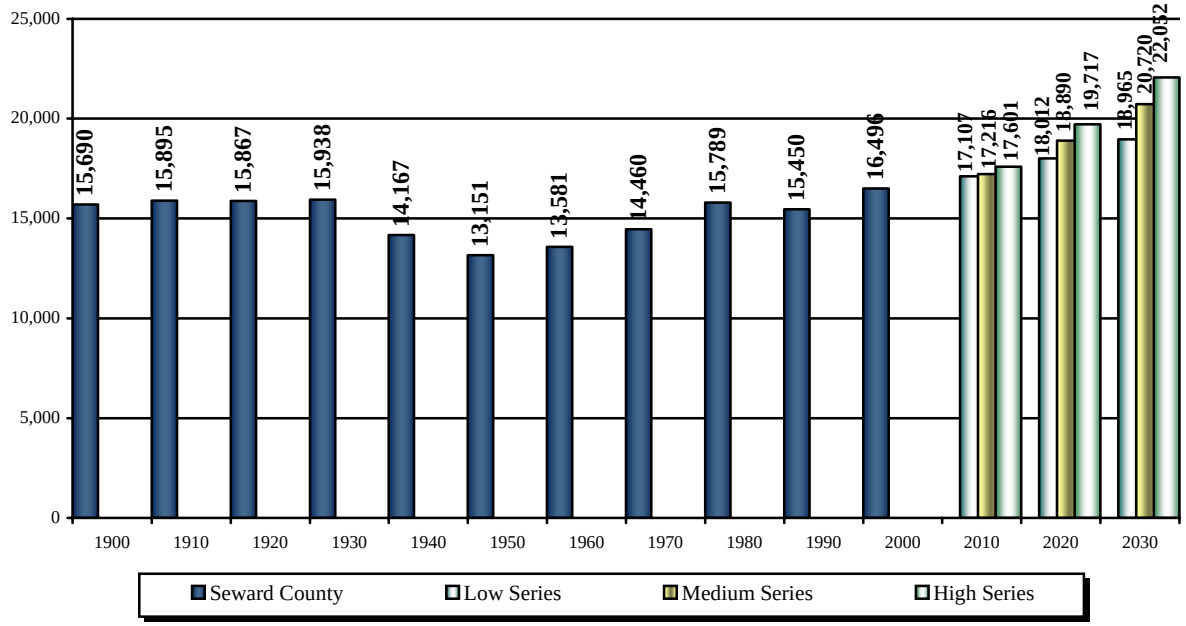
2010	18,439 persons
2020	21,578 persons
2030	25,149 persons

Summary of Population Projections

Using the modeling techniques discussed in the previous paragraphs, a summary of the six population projections for Seward County through the year 2030 is shown in Figure 1. Three population projection scenarios were selected and include (1) a Low Series; (2) a Medium Series; and, (3) a High Series. All of the projections forecast an increase in County population through the year 2030. The following population projections indicate the different scenarios that may be encountered by Seward County through the year 2030.

Year	**Low Series = *1960-2003***	**Medium Series = *2.7% In-migration***	**High Series = *5% In-migration***
2010	17,107 persons	17,216 persons	17,601 persons
2020	18,012 persons	18,890 persons	19,717 persons
2030	18,965 persons	20,720 persons	22,052 persons

FIGURE 1: POPULATION TRENDS AND PROJECTIONS, SEWARD COUNTY, 1900 TO 2030



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population and Housing, 1900-2000, 2003

Figure 1 reviews the population history of Seward County between 1900 and 2000, and identifies the three population projection scenarios into the years 2010, 2020, and 2030. Figure 1 indicates the peak population for Seward County occurred in 2000 with 16,496 people. Beginning in 1900, Seward County has had and overall steady population. The only major changes occurred during the 1930's and 1940's. This decrease could be attributed somewhat to the economic condition of the United States, as well as World War II which occurred during these two decade However, starting in 1950, Seward County began to slowly increase in population.

As stated previously, the projections have been developed from data and past trends, as well as present conditions. A number of external and internal demographic, economic and social factors may affect these population forecasts. Seward County should monitor population trends, size and composition periodically in order to understand in what direction their community is heading. Seward County's greatest population threat continues to be out-migration, and strategies should be developed to further examine and prevent this phenomenon.

TABLE 5: POPULATION PROJECTION SERIES, SEWARD COUNTY AND COMMUNITIES, 2000 TO 2030

Community	2000 Census	Low Series			Medium Series			High Series		
		2010	2020	2030	2010	2020	2030	2010	2020	2030
Beaver Crossing	457	474	499	525	477	523	574	488	546	611
Bee	223	231	243	256	233	255	280	238	267	298
Cordova	127	132	139	146	133	145	160	136	152	170
Garland	247	256	270	284	258	283	310	264	295	330
Goehner	186	193	203	214	194	213	234	198	222	249
Milford	2,070	2,147	2,260	2,380	2,160	2,370	2,600	2,209	2,474	2,767
Pleasant Dale	245	254	268	282	256	281	308	261	293	328
Seward	6,319	6,553	6,900	7,265	6,595	7,236	7,937	6,742	7,553	8,447
Staplehurst	270	280	295	310	282	309	339	288	323	361
Utica	725	752	792	834	757	830	911	774	867	969
Incorporated Areas	10,869	11,272	11,868	12,496	11,343	12,446	13,652	11,597	12,991	14,530
Unincorporated Areas	5,627	5,835	6,144	6,469	5,873	6,444	7,068	6,004	6,726	7,522
Seward County	**16,496**	**17,107**	**18,012**	**18,965**	**17,216**	**18,890**	**20,720**	**17,601**	**19,717**	**22,052**

Source: Population projections, JEO Consulting Group, 2005

Table 5 shows the population projection by series for each of the areas within Seward County. The population projections for the communities were found by determining the proportion of the total population that each community had in 2000 and calculating that percentage for each series. This method of projection is helpful and gives an idea of where people are likely to live. This method does not consider the social issues that people use when choosing a place to live, which have the potential to alter population projections in any direction.

HOUSING PROFILE

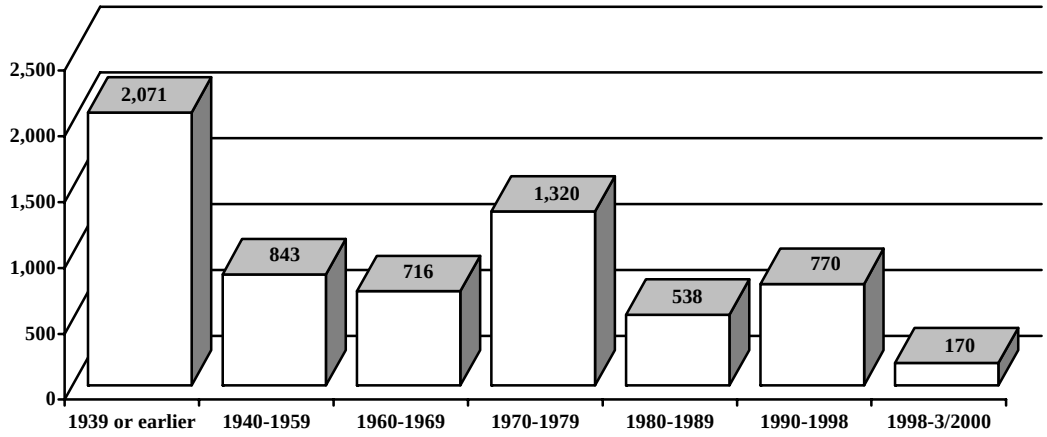
The Housing Profile in this Plan identifies existing housing characteristics and projected housing needs for residents of Seward County. The primary goal of the housing profile is to allow the county to determine what needs to be done in order to provide safe, decent, sanitary and affordable housing for every family and individual residing within Seward County. The housing profile is an analysis that aids in determining the composition of owner-occupied and renter-occupied units, as well as the existence of vacant units. It is important to evaluate information on the value of owner-occupied housing units, and monthly rents for renter-occupied housing units, to determine if housing costs are a financial burden to Seward County residents.

To project future housing needs, several factors must be considered. These factors include population change, household income, employment rates, land use patterns, and residents' attitudes. The following tables and figures provide the information to aid in determining future housing needs and develop policies designed to accomplish the housing goals for Seward County.

Age of Existing Housing Stock

An analysis of the age of Seward County's housing stock reveals a great deal about population and economic conditions of the past. The age of the housing stock may also indicate the need for rehabilitation efforts, or new construction within the county. Examining the housing stock is important in order to understand the overall quality of housing and the quality of life in Seward County.

FIGURE 2: AGE OF EXISTING HOUSING STOCK, SEWARD COUNTY, 2000



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population and Housing, SF3, 2000

Figure 2 indicates 2,071, or 32.2% of Seward County's 6,428 total housing units, were constructed prior to 1940. There were 1,320 housing units, or 20.5% of the total, constructed between 1970 and 1979; this indicates there was a strong economy during this time. In addition, there were 940 housing units or 14.6% of the total units were built between 1990 and March of 2000. Nearly 1/3 of Seward County's housing units were built prior to 1940, which may indicate a need for a housing rehabilitation program to improve the quality and energy efficiency of these older homes. Additionally, demolition of units that are beyond rehabilitation may be necessary.

Housing Trends

An analysis of housing trends can reveal a great deal about the different sectors of the population in the County. Housing trends may also indicate the potential demand for additional owner- or renter-occupied housing. Examining housing trends is important in order to understand the overall diversity of the population and their quality of life within Seward County.

TABLE 6: COMMUNITY HOUSING TRENDS, SEWARD COUNTY, 1990 AND 2000

Selected Characteristics	1990	2000	% Change 1990-2000
Population	15,450	16,496	6.8%
Persons in Household	14,299	15,205	6.3%
Persons in Group Quarters	1,151	1,291	12.2%
Persons per Household	2.63	2.65	0.8%
Total Housing Units	5,908	6,428	8.8%
Occupied Housing Units	5,432	6,013	10.7%
Owner-occupied units	3,822	4,331	13.3%
Renter-occupied units	1,610	1,682	4.5%
Vacant Housing Units	476	415	-12.8%
Owner-Occupied vacancy rate	0.9%	-	-
Renter-Occupied vacancy rate	5.7%	-	-
Single-family Units	4,751	5,150	8.4%
Duplex/Multiple-family units	681	901	32.3%
Mobile Homes, trailer, other	476	377	-20.8%
Median Contract Rent - 1990 and 2000			
Seward County	$234	$449	**91.9%**
Nebraska	**$348**	**$491**	**41.1%**
Median Value of Owner-Occupied Units - 1990 and 2000			
Seward County	$48,900	$88,100	**80.2%**
Nebraska	**$50,000**	**$88,000**	**76.0%**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population and Housing, STF-1A, 1990, DP-4 2000

Table 6 indicates the number of persons living in households increased between 1990 and 2000 by 906 persons, or 6.3%, and the number of persons in group quarters increased by 140 persons, or 12.2%. In addition, the number of persons per household increased from 2.63 to 2.65 persons. Nationally, however, the trend has been towards a declining household size, and Seward County appears to be experiencing an increase in the household size.

Table 6 also indicates the number of occupied housing units increased from 5,432 in 1990 to 6,013 in 2000, or 10.7%, while vacant housing units decreased, from 476 in 1990 to 415 in 2000, or -12.8%. The increase in the number of housing units is due to new home construction, and potentially the rehabilitation and use of vacant housing in the county.

Single-family housing units increased slightly from 4,751 in 1990 to 5,150 in 2000, or 8.4%. Duplex and multi-family housing had the largest change, increasing from 681 units to 901 units in 2000, or 32.3%. Mobile homes and trailers decreased from 476 to 377, or -20.8%.

Median contract rent in Seward County increased from $234 per month in 1990 to $449 per month in 2000, or 91.9%. The State's median monthly contract rent increased by 41.1%. This indicates Seward County has seen contract rent increase at a greater rate than the state and has surpassed the state's average. This likely will continue to increase as more commuters make the choice to live in a rural setting, or small communities, near Lincoln. Comparing changes in monthly rents between 1990 and 2000 with the Consumer Price Index (CPI) enables the local housing market to be compared to national economic conditions. Inflation between 1990 and 2000 increased at a rate of 32.1%, indicating Seward County rents increased at a rate nearly three times faster than the rate of inflation. Thus, Seward County tenants were paying considerably higher monthly rents in 2000, in terms of real dollars, than they were in 1990, on average.

The Median value of owner-occupied housing units in Seward County increased from $48,900 in 1990 to $88,100 in 2000 and represents an increase of 80.2%. The median value for owner-occupied housing units in the state showed an

increased of 76.0%. Housing values in Seward County increased at a rate over two times greater than the CPI. This indicates housing values statewide and countywide exceeded inflation and were valued considerably higher in 2000, in terms of real dollars, than in 1990, on average.

In terms of real dollars, tenants in Seward County were paying greater contract rent. In addition, the residents in the county saw a substantial increase in housing costs. This trend is consistent with the state, as data show housing costs across Nebraska have exceeded inflation. This trend has created a seller's market, it can also act as an incentive to property owners to update and rehabilitate housing units.

TABLE 7: HOUSING UNITS BY COMMUNITY, SEWARD COUNTY - 2000

Community	Housing Units 2000	Occupied Housing Units 2000	Vacant Units 2000	Owner Occupied 2000	Renter Occupied 2000	Persons per Household 2000
Beaver Crossing	203	184	19	164	20	2.48
Bee	89	84	5	73	11	2.65
Cordova	69	62	7	62	7	2.05
Garland	100	99	1	80	19	2.49
Goehner	77	75	2	63	12	2.48
Milford	770	722	48	453	269	2.44
Pleasant Dale	111	105	6	71	34	2.33
Seward	2,415	2,281	134	1,497	784	2.39
Staplehurst	116	108	8	81	27	2.5
Utica	350	326	24	250	76	2.48
Incorporated Areas	**4,300**	**4,046**	**254**	**2,794**	**1,259**	**2.43**
Unincorporated Areas	**2,128**	**1,967**	**161**	**1,537**	**423**	**-**
Seward County	**6,428**	**6,013**	**415**	**4,331**	**1,682**	**2.65**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population and Housing, SF1 – DP1 2000

Table 7 examines the housing units based upon the communities in Seward County, as well as the units in the unincorporated areas for 2000. The table indicates that the majority of the housing units are located in the communities; this is not a surprise. However, quantifying these numbers will allow the county to understand the conditions within the unincorporated areas of Seward County. Based upon Table 7, 33.1% of the housing units were located within the unincorporated area of Seward County. However, 38.8% of the vacant units were located in the unincorporated area. In regards to renter occupied units, only 25.1% of the units were in the unincorporated area.

TABLE 8: TENURE OF HOUSEHOLD BY SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS, SEWARD COUNTY, 1990 TO 2000

Householder Characteristic	1990				2000				O.O.	R.O.
	Owner-Occupied	% O.O	Renter-Occupied	% R.O	Owner-Occupied	% O.O	Renter-Occupied	% R.O	Percent Change	
Tenure by Number of Persons in Housing Unit (Occupied Housing Units)										
1 person	693	18.1%	531	33.0%	824	19.0%	675	40.1%	18.9%	27.1%
2 persons	1,486	38.9%	465	28.9%	1,770	40.9%	450	26.8%	19.1%	-3.2%
3 persons	558	14.6%	223	13.9%	597	13.8%	250	14.9%	7.0%	12.1%
4 persons	637	16.7%	200	12.4%	631	14.6%	179	10.6%	-0.9%	-10.5%
5 persons	311	8.1%	120	7.5%	341	7.9%	89	5.3%	9.6%	-25.8%
6 persons or more	137	3.6%	71	4.4%	168	3.9%	39	2.3%	22.6%	-45.1%
TOTAL	**3,822**	**100.0%**	**1,610**	**100.0%**	**4,331**	**100.0%**	**1,682**	**100.0%**	**13.3%**	**4.5%**
Tenure by Age of Householder (Occupied Housing Units)										
15 to 24 years	34	0.9%	295	17.5%	41	0.9%	350	20.8%	20.6%	18.6%
25 to 34 years	504	13.2%	477	28.4%	465	10.7%	352	20.9%	-7.7%	-26.2%
35 to 44 years	796	20.8%	312	18.5%	994	23.0%	298	17.7%	24.9%	-4.5%
45 to 54 years	624	16.3%	135	8.0%	941	21.7%	214	12.7%	50.8%	58.5%
55 to 64 years	649	17.0%	95	5.6%	673	15.5%	103	6.1%	3.7%	8.4%
65 to 74 years	626	16.4%	111	6.6%	609	14.1%	99	5.9%	-2.7%	-10.8%
75 years and over	589	15.4%	185	11.0%	608	14.0%	266	15.8%	3.2%	43.8%
TOTAL	**3,822**	**100.0%**	**1,610**	**95.7%**	**4,331**	**100.0%**	**1,682**	**100.0%**	13.3%	4.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population and Housing, STF-1A, 1990 / SF4 2000

Table 8 shows tenure (owner-occupied and renter-occupied) of households by number and age of persons in each housing unit. Analyzing these data allow the county the ability to determine where there may be a need for additional housing. In addition, the county could target efforts for housing rehabilitation and construction at those segments of the population exhibiting the largest need.

The largest section of owner-occupied housing in Seward County in 2000, based upon number of persons, was two person households, with 1,770 units, or 40.9% of the total owner-occupied units. By comparison, the largest household size for rentals was the single person households which had 675 renter-occupied housing units, or 40.1% of the total renter-occupied units. Seward County was comprised of 3,719 1- or 2-person households, or 61.8% of all households. Households having 5- or more persons comprised only 11.8% of the owner-occupied segment, and 7.6% of the renter-occupied segment. Countywide, households of 5- or more persons accounted for only 637 units, or 10.6% of the total.

When compared to 1990, five of the six owner-occupied household groups grew in number. Owner-occupied household groups of six persons or more grew by the greatest number, increasing by 31 units, or 22.6%. Only two of the six renter-occupied housing unit groups increased, with one person units increasing the most with 144 new units, or a 27.1% increase. Renter-occupied units with six persons or more had the greatest decrease, losing 32 units or -45.1% from 1990.

According to the 2000 data in Table 8, the largest groups of the owner-occupied units were the 35 to 44 years and 45 to 54 years. The age groups accounted for 23.0% and 21.7% of the total, respectively. The two groups combined totaled 44.7%. Tenure by age indicates 65.3% of owner-occupied housing units were comprised of persons aged 45 years and

older, while 40.5% of renter-occupied units were comprised of persons aged 45 years and younger. Seward County, typically, has a lower percentage of renter units being leased to people 45 years and older; this is due in part to the two secondary educational systems in the county, Concordia University and Southeast Community College. Rental units in the possession of persons less than 34 years of age accounted for 41.7% of the total rental units. The largest category of renter-occupied units was the 25 to 34 age group, with 20.9% of the renter-occupied total; this was followed closely by the 15 to 24 age group with 20.8%.

TABLE 9: SELECTED HOUSING CONDITIONS, SEWARD COUNTY, 1990 AND 2000

Housing Profile	Seward County		State of Nebraska	
	Total	% of Total	Total	% of Total
1990 Housing Units	5,908		660,621	
1990 Occupied Housing Units	5,432	91.9%	602,363	91.2%
2000 Housing Units	6,428		722,668	
2000 Occupied Housing Units	6,013	93.5%	666,184	92.2%
Change in Number of Units 1990 to 2000				
Total Change	520	8.8%	62,047	9.4%
Annual Change	52	0.9%	6,205	0.9%
Total Change in Occupied Units	581	10.7%	63,821	10.6%
Annual Change in Occupied Units	58	1.1%	6,382	1.1%
Characteristics				
1990 Units Lacking Complete Plumbing Facilities	32	0.5%	5,242	0.8%
1990 Units with More Than One Person per Room	77	1.3%	10,512	1.6%
2000 Units Lacking Complete Plumbing Facilities	20	0.3%	6,398	0.9%
2000 Units with More Than One Person per Room	76	1.2%	17,963	2.5%
Substandard Units				
1990 Total	109	1.8%	15,754	2.4%
2000 Total	96	1.5%	24,361	3.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population and Housing, STF-3A, 1990, DP-4 2000

Table 9 indicates changes in housing conditions and includes an inventory of substandard housing for Seward County. The occupancy household rate in Seward County increased from 91.9% of all housing in 1990 to 93.5% of all housing in 2000. Between 1990 and 2000, the number of housing units in Seward County increased by 520, or an average of 52 units per year. However, there was an increase of 581 new occupied housing units. This indicates the loss of vacant housing in the county was partly due to these units becoming inhabited.

According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) guidelines, housing units lacking complete plumbing or are overcrowded are considered substandard housing units. HUD defines a complete plumbing facility as hot and cold-piped water, a bathtub or shower, and a flush toilet. HUD defines overcrowding as more than one person per room. These criteria when applied to Seward County indicate 96 housing units, or 1.5% of the total units, were substandard in 2000. However, this figure was reached by adding together the number of housing meeting one criterion to the number of housing units meeting the other criterion. However, the largest amount of substandard units was based on overcrowding.

What these data fail to consider are housing units that have met both criterion and any such housing unit was counted twice, once under each criterion. Even so, the county should not assume that these data overestimate the number of substandard housing. Housing units containing major defects requiring rehabilitation or upgrading to meet building, electrical or plumbing codes should also be included in an analysis of substandard housing. A comprehensive survey of

the entire housing stock should be completed every five years to determine and identify the housing units that would benefit from remodeling or rehabilitation work. This process will help ensure that a community maintains a high quality of life for its residents through protecting the quality and quantity of its housing stock.

ECONOMIC AND EMPLOYMENT PROFILE

Economic data are collected in order to understand area markets, changes in economic activity and employment needs and opportunities within Seward County. In this section, employment by industry, household income statistics, transfer payments, and basic/non-basic analyses were reviewed for Seward County, the Metropolitan Statistical Area (when possible), and Nebraska.

Income Statistics

Income statistics for households are important for determining the earning power of households in a community. The data presented here show household income levels for Seward County in comparison to the state. These data were reviewed to determine whether households experienced income increases at a rate comparable to the state of Nebraska and the Consumer Price Index (CPI). Note that income statistics may exhibit different numbers than housing statistics; for example, Table 9 shows that there were 6,428 households in Seward County in 2000, but Table 10 shows that there were only 6,005. Discrepancies of this nature are to be expected, and can be accounted for by the fact that these data were derived from different census survey formats.

TABLE 10: HOUSEHOLD INCOME, SEWARD COUNTY, 1990 AND 2000

Household Income Ranges	1990				2000			
	Seward County	% of Total	State of Nebraska	% of Total	Seward County	% of Total	State of Nebraska	% of Total
Less than $10,000	696	12.8%	95,602	15.9%	474	7.9%	55,340	8.3%
$10,000 to $14,999	563	10.4%	64,661	10.7%	356	5.9%	43,915	6.6%
$15,000 to $24,999	1,180	21.7%	128,454	21.3%	853	14.2%	98,663	14.8%
$25,000 to $34,999	1,119	20.6%	108,560	18.0%	800	13.3%	97,932	14.7%
$35,000 to $49,999	1,120	20.6%	107,111	17.8%	1,081	18.0%	122,654	18.4%
$50,000 and over	749	13.8%	98,470	16.3%	2,441	40.6%	248,491	37.3%
Total	**5,427**	**100.0%**	**602,858**	**100.0%**	**6,005**	**100.0%**	**666,995**	**100.0%**
Median Household Income	$27,200		$26,016		$42,700		$39,250	
Number of Households	5,427		602,858		6,005		666,995	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population and Housing, STF-3A, 1990 / DP-3 2000

Table 10 indicates the number of households in each income range for Seward County for 1990 and 2000. In 1990, the household income range most commonly reported was $15,000 to $24,999, which accounted for 21.7% of all households. By 2000, the income range reported most was the $50,000 and over which accounted for 40.6% of the total. Those households earning less than $15,000 decreased from 23.2% in 1990 to only 13.8% in 2000, nearly ½ of the 1990 total.

The median household income for Seward County was $27,200 in 1990, which was nearly $1,184 higher than the State average. By 2000, the median household income increased to $42,700 or an increase of 57.0%% and was over $3,000.00 higher than the state average. The CPI for this period was 32.1%, which indicates incomes in Seward County did exceed inflation. Seward County households were earning more, in real dollars, in 2000 than in 1990.

TABLE 11: HOUSEHOLD INCOME BY AGE (55 YEARS AND OLDER) SEWARD COUNTY, 2000

Income Categories	55 to 64 years	65 to 74 years	75 years and over	Households age 55 and over	Households age 55 and over	Total Households	% of Total Households age 55 & over
Less than $10,000	29	79	157	**265**	11.2%	474	55.9%
$10,000 to $14,999	27	41	171	**239**	10.1%	356	67.1%
$15,000 to $24,999	90	162	203	**455**	19.3%	853	53.3%
$25,000 to $34,999	81	160	103	**344**	14.6%	800	43.0%
$35,000 to $49,999	141	103	105	**349**	14.8%	1,081	32.3%
$50,000 or more	382	203	119	**704**	29.9%	2,441	28.8%
Total	**750**	**748**	**858**	**2,356**	**100.0%**	**6,005**	**39.2%**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population and Housing, SF4 2000

Table 11 indicates household income for Seward County householders aged 55 years and over in 2000. The purpose for this information is to determine the income level of Seward County's senior households. The Table indicates 2,356 households meeting this criterion. Of the 2,356 households in Table 11, 959 or 40.7% had incomes less than $25,000 per year. Furthermore, 504 of these households, or 21.4% of the total households, had incomes less than $15,000 per year; in addition, these 504 households accounted for 60.7% of all households in the county earning less than $15,000. This information indicates many of these households could be eligible for housing assistance to ensure they continue to live at an appropriate standard of living. The number of senior households could easily continue to grow during the next twenty years. As the size of the 55 and over age cohort increases, these typically fixed income households may be required to provide their entire housing needs for a longer period. In addition, the fixed incomes that seniors tend to live on generally decline at a faster rate than any other segment of the population, in terms of real dollars.

The last two columns of Table 11 indicate the total number of households in each income level and the proportion of those households that were age 55 years and older. Note that in the income level of less than $10,000, 55.9% of all households were over the age of 55. By contrast, only 32.3% of all households in the $35,000 to $49,999 income range are over 55 years of age, and only 28.8% of all households in the $50,000 or more income range was over 55 years of age. This indicates that those who are over 55 years of age in Seward County account for a strong part of these income groups and appear to be increasing in line with all ages in these income groups. As noted above, the over 55 age group may increase faster than any other cohort in the next twenty years.

TABLE 12: HOUSING COSTS AS A PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME, SEWARD COUNTY, 2000

Income Categories	Owner-Occupied Households	% O.O. Households	Renter-Occupied Households	% R.O. Households	Total Households	% of Total Households
Less than $10,000						
Less than 30% of income	26	0.8%	37	2.7%	**63**	**1.4%**
More than 30% of income	111	3.4%	180	12.9%	**291**	**6.3%**
$10,000 to $19,999						
Less than 30% of income	209	6.5%	130	9.4%	**339**	**7.4%**
More than 30% of income	132	4.1%	168	12.1%	**300**	**6.5%**
$20,000 to $34,999						
Less than 30% of income	443	13.8%	336	24.2%	**779**	**16.9%**
More than 30% of income	130	4.0%	51	3.7%	**181**	**3.9%**
$35,000 to $49,999						
Less than 30% of income	499	15.5%	208	15.0%	**707**	**15.3%**
More than 30% of income	83	2.6%	19	1.4%	**102**	**2.2%**
$50,000 or more						
Less than 30% of income	1,494	46.4%	255	18.3%	**1,750**	**38.0%**
More than 30% of income	91	2.8%	6	0.4%	**97**	**2.1%**
TOTAL	**3,218**	**100.0%**	**1,390**	**100.0%**	**4,608**	**100.0%**
Housing Cost Analysis						
Less than 30% of income	**2,671**	**83.0%**	**966**	**69.5%**	**3,637**	**78.9%**
More than 30% of income	**547**	**17.0%**	**424**	**30.5%**	**971**	**21.1%**
TOTAL	**3,218**	**100.0%**	**1,390**	**100.0%**	**4,608**	**100.0%**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population and Housing, SF 3 Table H73 and H97, 2000

Table 12 shows owner-occupied and renter-occupied housing costs as a percentage of householder income in 2000. In addition, the Table identifies the number of households experiencing a housing cost burden. Note the total number of households is different, due to the use of a different survey form. A housing cost burden, as defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), occurs when gross housing costs, including utility costs, exceed 30% of gross household income, based on data published by the U.S. Census Bureau. Table 12 shows 3,637 households, or 78.9% of total households, paid less than 30% of their income towards housing costs. This means the remaining 971 households, or 21.1% of the total, were experiencing a housing cost burden.

There were 547 owner-occupied households and 424 renter-occupied households that experienced this housing cost burden. However, even though the total number of owner-occupied units exceeded the renter-occupied, only 17.0% of owner-occupied households had a housing cost burden, while 30.5% of renter-occupied households had a housing cost burden. The median rent in Seward County, which was $449 and was slightly less than the state median of $491.

Table 13 shows owner and renter costs for householders age 65 and over. Similar trends are shown in Table 13 as were shown in Table 12. A housing cost burden affects 310 households age 65 and over. In 2000, there were 155 owner-occupied households age 65 and over with a housing cost burden or 16.5% of the total households with this burden. However, 155 renter-occupied households age 65 and over experienced a housing cost burden, or 51.3% of the total households with this burden. While only 21.1% of the County population as a whole experienced a housing cost burden,

25.0% of all households over age 65 experienced a housing cost burden. This finding is of particular importance because it shows that elderly households account for 31.9% of all the households indicating a housing cost burden; all while they continue to face increasing housing costs and fixed or decreasing incomes.

TABLE 13: AGE 65 AND OLDER COSTS AS PERCENTAGE OF INCOME, SEWARD COUNTY, 2000

Income Categories	Owner-Occupied Households	% O.O. Households	Renter-Occupied Households	% R.O. Households	Total Households age 65 and Over	% of Total Households
Housing Cost Analysis						
Less than 30% of income	782	83.5%	147	48.7%	**929**	**75.0%**
More than 30% of income	155	16.5%	155	51.3%	**310**	**25.0%**
TOTAL	**937**	**100.0%**	**302**	**100.0%**	**1,239**	**100.0%**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population and Housing, SF 3 Table H71 and H96, 2000

The relationship between income and housing is the most crucial factor in the provision of safe, decent, sanitary and affordable housing for all households and individuals. Seward County should look at developing and implementing a set of housing goals when making decisions regarding future developments. Specifically, Seward County should develop a list of policies that are based on the following factors:

- Seward County should assist the elderly populations by ensuring policies are developed permitting and encouraging the continued support of services that aid in the quality of life for elderly residents.
- Seward County should continue to play an important role in the development of affordable housing options for all residents through appropriate land-use policies.

Income Source and Public Assistance

Table 14 shows personal income by source for Seward County, the MSA, and the State. Between 1970 and 2000, the CPI was 345.1%. Total income, non-farm income and per capita income showed tremendous growth. Non-farm income increased from $47,242,000 in 1970 to $433,528,000 in 2000, or an increase of 817.7%, which was 2 ½ times the CPI. In 2000, farm income had risen from $7,430,000 to $20,206,000, or 172.0%, which is approximately ½ of the CPI. Farm income increased the least of the three income factors. Per capita income increased from $3,261 in 1970 to $26,227 in 2000, or an increase of 704.3%, which was twice the CPI. The rate at which non-farm income and farm income were increasing suggests that farm related employment activities are being replaced by non-farm related jobs. These data indicate Seward County has been going through an economic transformation.

TABLE 14: INCOME BY SOURCE, STATE, MSA, AND SEWARD COUNTY, 1970 TO 2000

Income Characteristics	1970	1980	1990	2000	% Change 1970 2000	% Annual Change	2000 Seward Co. vs. MSA
Seward County							
Total Personal Income	$47,242,000	$111,737,000	$259,354,000	$433,528,000	817.7%	30.3%	5.6%
Non-farm Income	$39,812,000	$122,340,000	$223,024,000	$413,322,000	938.2%	34.7%	5.3%
Farm Income	$7,430,000	-$10,603,000	$36,330,000	$20,206,000	172.0%	6.4%	60.8%
Per Capita Income	$3,261	$7,081	$16,744	$26,227	704.3%	26.1%	90.3%
Metropolitan Statistical Area							
Total Personal Income	$736,738,000	$2,027,539,000	$4,148,712,000	$7,774,823,000	955.3%	35.4%	
Non-farm Income	$723,819,000	$2,044,077,000	$4,092,068,000	$7,741,607,000	969.6%	35.9%	
Farm Income	$12,919,000	-$16,538,000	$56,644,000	$33,216,000	157.1%	5.8%	
Metropolitan Statistical Area							
Per capita income	$4,020	$9,684	$18,024	$29,041	622.4%	23.1%	
State of Nebraska							
Total Personal Income	$5,637,959,000	$14,368,845,000	$27,717,230,000	$47,328,771,000	739.5%	27.4%	
Non-farm Income	$5,100,114,000	$14,273,446,000	$25,569,663,000	$35,156,704,000	589.3%	21.8%	
Farm Income	$537,845,000	$95,399,000	$2,147,567,000	$963,203,000	79.1%	2.9%	
State of Nebraska							
Per capita income	$3,789	$9,139	$17,536	$27,627	629.1%	23.3%	

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Information System, 2000

It is important for Seward County to understand its position within the MSA. Between 1970 and 2000, Seward County had a similar annual change in non-farm income, farm income, and per capita income as the MSA. Non-farm income in 2000 in Seward County was 5.3% of total non-farm income compared to the MSA; however, farm income was 60.8% of the entire MSA. Per capita income in Seward County had an annual increase of 26.1% between 1970 and 2000, compared to an increase of 23.1% for the MSA. The per capita income in Seward County in 2000 was 90.3 % of the entire MSA per capita income.

The per capita income in Seward County has historically increased at a rate higher than the state as a whole. Seward County's per capita income has remained less than the state of Nebraska, but has actually increased at a greater rate per year, thus the per capita income of Seward County is slowly catching the state. Seward County appears to have a strong economic base, however, the county still needs to monitor and manage its resources and continue to develop its economic base so that it can sustain its per capita income growth rate.

Table 15 indicates Transfer Payments to individuals in Seward County from 1970 to 2000. Note the total amount of Transfer Payments equals Government Payments to Individuals plus Payments to Non-Profit Institutions plus Business Payments. The remaining categories listed in Table 15 are sub-parts of the Government Payments to Individuals category.

TABLE 15: TRANSFER PAYMENTS, STATE, MSA, AND SEWARD COUNTY, 1970 TO 2000

Payment Type	1970	1980	1990	2000	% Change 1970 to 2000	% Change/Year
Seward County						
Government payments to individuals	$3,783,000	$13,340,000	$26,970,000	$48,512,000	1182.37%	39.4%
Retirement, Disability & Insurance Benefits	$2,539,000	$8,335,000	$17,356,000	$27,202,000	971.37%	32.4%
Medical Payments	$670,000	$2,550,000	$6,796,000	$16,741,000	2398.66%	80.0%
Income Maintenance Benefits (SSI, AFDC, Food Stamps, etc)	$152,000	$537,000	$1,014,000	$2,106,000	1285.53%	42.9%
Unemployment Insurance Benefits	(L)	$244,000	$264,000	$471,000	93.03%	4.7%
Veteran's Benefits	$345,000	$697,000	$830,000	$1,244,000	260.58%	8.7%
Federal Education and Training Assistance	(L)	$975,000	$702,000	$714,000	-26.77%	-1.3%
Payment to Non-profit Institutions	$269,000	$689,000	$941,000	$1,815,000	574.72%	19.2%
Business Payments	$153,000	$439,000	$1,089,000	$1,868,000	1120.92%	37.4%
Total	**$4,205,000**	**$14,468,000**	**$29,000,000**	**$52,879,000**	**1157.53%**	38.6%
Transfer Payments Per Capita	$290	$917	$1,872	$3,158	989.0%	36.6%
Total Per Capita Income	$3,261	$7,081	$16,744	$26,227	704.3%	26.1%
Per Capita Transfer Payments as % of Per Capita Income	**8.9%**	**13.0%**	**11.2%**	**12.0%**	**35.4%**	**1.3%**
Metropolitan Statistical Area						
Total	**$54,911,000**	**$199,049,000**	**$419,664,000**	**$807,391,000**	**1370.36%**	50.8%
Transfer Payments Per Capita	$300	$951	$1,823	$3,016	905.3%	33.5%
Total Per Capita Income	$4,020	$9,684	$18,024	$29,041	622.4%	23.1%
Per Capita Transfer Payments as % of Per Capita Income	**7.5%**	**9.8%**	**10.1%**	**10.4%**	**39.2%**	**1.5%**
State of Nebraska						
Total	**$536,625,000**	**$1,866,193,000**	**$3,719,752,000**	**$6,074,618,000**	**1032.00%**	38.2%
Transfer Payments Per Capita	$361	$1,187	$2,353	$3,546	882%	33%
Total Per Capita Income	$3,789	$9,139	$17,536	$27,627	629%	23%
Per Capita Transfer Payments as % of Per Capita Income	**9.5%**	**13.0%**	**13.4%**	**12.8%**	**34.7%**	**1.3%**

(L) – Less than $50,000, estimates are included in totals.
Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Information System, 2004

Total transfer payments between 1970 and 2000 showed an increase in each reporting period. Government payments, retirement and disability insurance benefits, and medical payments comprised the majority of total transfer payments. The largest percentage increase occurred within Medical Payments, which increased by over $16,071,000 or 2398.7%. Income Maintenance Payments also increased dramatically; these payments, which include SSI, AFDC, and food stamps, increased by $1,954,000, or 1285.5%.

The trend for transfer payments per capita between 1970 and 2000 indicates payments increased significantly to individuals in Seward County, increasing by 989% in 30 years. However, transfer payments, as a proportion of per capita income, increased at a much lower rate between 1970 and 2000. In 1970, transfer payments comprised 8.9% of total per capita income, and in 2000, transfer payments were 12.0% of total per capita income.

In 1970, Total Transfer Payments for Seward County were $4,205,000, and for the MSA were $54,911,000. By 2000, Total Transfer Payments for Seward County were $52,879,000, or an increase of 1157.5%, and the MSA total was

$807,391,000, or an increase of 1370.4%. In 2000, transfer payments per capita in Seward County were $3,158.00, and in the whole MSA were $3,016.00.

Industry Employment

Analyzing employment by industry assists a county in determining the key components of their labor force. This section indicates the type of industry comprising the local economy, as well as identifying particular occupations that employ residents. Table 16 indicates employment size by industry for Seward County, the MSA and the state of Nebraska between 1970 and 2000.

TABLE 16: EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY, STATE, MSA, AND SEWARD COUNTY, 1970 - 2000

Seward County	1970	% of Total	1980	% of Total	1990	% of Total	2000	% of Total	% Change 1970 to 2000	Seward Co. vs. MSA
Farm Employment	1,371	23.7%	1,546	21.1%	1,144	13.3%	981	10.3%	-28.4%	35.9%
Non-farm Employment	4,283	74.1%	5,786	78.9%	7,477	86.7%	8,586	89.7%	100.5%	4.5%
Ag. Serv, forestry, fishing, mining and other	23	0.4%	54	0.7%	438	5.1%	329	3.4%	1330.4%	-
Construction	238	4.1%	310	4.2%	260	3.0%	519	5.4%	118.1%	4.7%
Manufacturing	369	6.4%	795	10.8%	915	10.6%	1,135	11.9%	207.6%	5.8%
Transportation and Public Utilities	192	0.0% 3.3%	235	3.2%	470	5.5%	537	5.6%	179.7%	5.3%
Wholesale Trade	128	2.2%	229	3.1%	275	3.2%	289	3.0%	125.8%	4.3%
Retail Trade	1,151	19.9%	1,146	15.6%	1,244	14.4%	1,419	14.8%	23.3%	4.3%
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	344	6.0%	415	5.7%	410	4.8%	460	4.8%	33.7%	2.8%
Services	1,231	21.3%	1,457	19.9%	2,393	27.8%	2,807	29.3%	128.0%	4.6%
Government and Government Enterprises	727	12.6%	1,145	15.6%	1,068	12.4%	2,807	29.3%	286.1%	8.7%
Totals	5,778	100.0%	7,332	100.0%	8,621	100.0%	9,567	100.0%	65.6%	4.9%
Metropolitan Statistical Area										
Farm Employment	3,057	3.2%	3,576	2.8%	2,883	1.8%	2,731	1.4%	-10.7%	
Non-farm Employment	91,810	96.8%	124,153	97.2%	153,738	98.2%	192,196	98.6%	109.3%	
Ag. Serv, forestry, fishing, mining and other	328	0.3%	718	0.6%	1,575	1.0%	D	-	-	
Construction	4,652	4.9%	5,932	4.6%	6,698	4.3%	11,149	5.7%	139.7%	
Manufacturing	11,089	11.7%	14,609	11.4%	16,165	10.3%	19,648	10.1%	77.2%	
Transportation and Public Utilities	5,600	5.9%	8,203	6.4%	8,108	5.2%	10,119	-	-	
Wholesale Trade	3,383	3.6%	5,410	4.2%	6,122	3.9%	6,769	3.5%	100.1%	
Retail Trade	15,543	16.4%	21,244	16.6%	28,764	18.4%	32,685	16.8%	110.3%	
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	7,819	8.2%	11,205	8.8%	13,390	8.5%	16,353	8.4%	109.1%	
Services	18,774	19.8%	26,364	20.6%	41,959	26.8%	60,874	31.2%	224.2%	
Government and Government Enterprises	24,622	26.0%	30,468	23.9%	30,957	19.8%	32,395	16.6%	31.6%	
Totals	94,867	100.0%	127,729	100.0%	156,621	100.0%	194,927	100.0%	105.5%	
State of Nebraska										
Farm Employment	86,162	12.0%	90,094	10.3%	72,046	7.3%	65,596	5.5%	-23.9%	
Non-farm Employment	629,041	88.0%	788,848	89.7%	919,722	92.7%	1,117,724	94.5%	77.7%	
Ag. Serv, forestry, fishing, mining and other	6,806	1.0%	9,504	1.1%	13,994	1.4%	17,008	1.4%	149.9%	
Construction	35,508	5.0%	42,764	4.9%	41,327	4.2%	63,756	5.4%	79.6%	
Manufacturing	86,992	12.2%	98,442	11.2%	102,856	10.4%	122,392	10.3%	40.7%	
Transportation and Public Utilities	42,428	5.9%	54,604	6.2%	53,471	5.4%	67,871	5.7%	60.0%	
Wholesale Trade	29,561	4.1%	51,512	5.9%	55,704	5.6%	58,044	4.9%	96.4%	
Retail Trade	124,048	17.3%	144,163	16.4%	162,811	16.4%	195,411	16.5%	57.5%	
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	43,837	6.1%	65,519	7.5%	74,292	7.5%	89,325	7.5%	103.8%	
Services	126,366	17.7%	171,428	19.5%	252,681	25.5%	339,085	28.7%	168.3%	
Government and Government Enterprises	133,495	18.7%	150,912	17.2%	162,586	16.4%	162,618	13.7%	21.8%	
Totals	715,203	100.0%	878,942	100.0%	991,768	100.0%	1,183,320	100.0%	65.5%	

Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Information System, 2004

Between 1970 and 2000, Seward County experienced many changes within its industries. Overall, the workforce in Seward County increased by 3,789 jobs, or 65.6%. The MSA increased by 100,060 jobs, or 105.5%, while the State of Nebraska had an increase of 468,117 positions, or 65.5%.

Seward County industries with the greatest percent increases were agricultural services, forestry, fishing, mining and other, with an increase of 306 jobs or and increase of 1330.4%, Government and Government Enterprises, with an increase of 2,080 jobs or 286.1%, and Manufacturing, with an increase of 766 jobs. The only industry that indicated a loss of employment was Farm employment which lost 390 jobs overall between the 1970 to 2000 time periods.

Increases in employment positions occurred in all other industry categories:

- Government and Government Enterprises + 2,080 jobs
- Services + 1,576 jobs
- Manufacturing + 766 jobs
- Transportation and Public Utilities + 345 jobs
- Ag. Services, Forestry, Fishing, Mining, Other + 306 jobs
- Construction + 281 jobs
- Retail Trade + 268 jobs
- Wholesale Trade + 161 jobs
- Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate + 116 jobs

Changes within Seward County are reflective of the move nationally for more service-related industries. Seward County, together with their economic development partners need to continually work to identify the county and community assets. The county can play heavily on its proximity to Lincoln and major transportation routes when recruiting businesses and industry. As new jobs come to Seward County, so will the demand for residential development. As stated previously, a solid population base is reflective of all other aspects of the county's economic health.

Table 16 also demonstrates the importance of this MSA to the State as a whole. While the State had an increase of 468,117 jobs, this MSA had an increase of 100,060 jobs. That means that this MSA added nearly one-fourth of the State's total jobs. However, the comparison is between Seward County, the MSA, and the state. This information underscores the importance of Seward County's membership within the MSA. If this MSA is going to continue to expand as it has, and the trend suggests it will, people moving into the area will need a place to live. Seward County could use its small town and rural atmosphere and proximity to Lincoln to attract people who work in this MSA to live in the county. However, policies and strategies for future land uses will need to be specific and regulated in order to maintain the rural atmosphere.

Commuter Trends

Tables 17 and 18 show the commuter characteristics for Seward County. Table 17 indicates where the residents of Seward County work. A trend seen between 1970 and 2000 indicates the resident workforce employed in Seward County increased, as did the number of residents commuting out of the county.

TABLE 17: COMMUTER POPULATION TRENDS, RESIDENTS OF SEWARD COUNTY, 1970 TO 2000

County of Residence	Work County	1970	1980	1990	2000	Change 1970-2000	% of 1970 Total	% of 2000 Total
Seward County	Pottawattamie County, IA	0	0	0	8	8	0.0%	0.1%
	Olmstead, MN	0	0	0	14	14	0.0%	0.2%
	Butler County	0	28	64	62	62	0.0%	0.7%
	Dodge County	0	0	0	18	18	0.0%	0.2%
	Douglas County	12	18	55	74	62	0.2%	0.9%
	Fillmore County	0	0	0	12	12	0.0%	0.1%
	Gage County	0	0	0	8	8	0.0%	0.1%
	Hall County	0	5	32	12	12	0.0%	0.1%
	Lancaster County	754	1016	1532	2478	1,724	12.8%	29.4%
	Otoe County	0	0	0	8	8	0.0%	0.1%
	Platte County	0	0	0	14	14	0.0%	0.2%
	Polk County	0	0	0	16	16	0.0%	0.2%
	Saline County	52	110	163	139	87	0.9%	1.6%
	Saunders County	12	0	0	28	16	0.2%	0.3%
	Seward County	4,855	5,305	5,579	5,300	445	82.6%	62.8%
	York County	64	84	135	243	179	1.1%	2.9%
	Elsewhere	131	158	206	0	-131	2.2%	0.0%
	Total	**5,880**	**6,724**	**7,766**	**8,434**	**2,554**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Information System, 2004

The number of Seward County residents employed in Seward County increased by 445, while the number of Seward County residents commuting out of Seward County increased by 2,109 people. The majority of the outgoing commuter increase was seen as employment in Lancaster County (Lincoln), which had 1,724 of the 2,552 or 67.6% of the total increases in the commuter workforce. The total workforce commuting to Lancaster County for employment increased from 12.8% of the total in 1970, to 29.4% of the total in 2000. The percentage of Seward County residents working in Seward County decreased from 82.6% in 1970, to 62.8% in 2000. The remaining 7.8% of the 2000 workforce were scattered between at least 15 other counties in the region.

The number of Seward County residents employed in Seward County increased by 1,760, while the number of workers commuting in to Seward County increased by 1,315. The majority of the incoming commuter population came from Lancaster County (Lincoln), which added 614, or 46.7%, of the total increase of 1,315 in the commuter workforce. The total workforce commuting from Lancaster County for employment increased from 1.7% of the total in 1970, to 10.2% of the total in 2000. The percentage of Seward County workers living in Seward County decreased from 93.9% in 1970, to 76.5% in 2000. The remaining 13.3% of the 2000 workforce commute into Seward County from at least 21 other counties in the region.

TABLE 18: COMMUTER POPULATION TRENDS; WORKERS IN SEWARD COUNTY, 1970 TO 2000

Work County	County of Residence	1970	1980	1990	2000	Change 1970-2000	% of 1970 Total	% of 2000 Total
Seward County	Harrison County, IA	0	0	0	14	14	0.0%	0.2%
	Pottawattamie County, IA	0	0	0	18	18	0.0%	0.3%
	Buffalo County	0	0	21	0	0	0.0%	0.0%
	Burt County	0	0	0	8	8	0.0%	0.1%
	Butler County	104	110	225	260	156	2.0%	3.8%
	Cass County	0	0	0	28	28	0.0%	0.4%
	Deuel County	0	0	0	8	8	0.0%	0.1%
	Dodge County	0	0	0	19	19	0.0%	0.3%
	Douglas County	0	13	21	34	34	0.0%	0.5%
	Fillmore County	0	0	0	42	42	0.0%	0.6%
	Gage County	0	0	20	0	0	0.0%	0.0%
	Holt County	0	0	0	10	10	0.0%	0.1%
	Jefferson County	0	0	0	25	25	0.0%	0.4%
	Lancaster County	90	211	329	704	614	1.7%	10.2%
	Madison County	0	4	25	0	0	0.0%	0.0%
	Polk County	0	0	0	16	16	0.0%	0.2%
	Saline County	28	38	109	182	154	0.5%	2.6%
	Sarpy County	0	0	0	22	22	0.0%	0.3%
	Saunders County	16	22	13	22	6	0.3%	0.3%
	Seward County	4,855	5,305	5,579	5,300	445	93.9%	76.5%
	Washington County	0	0	0	43	43	0.0%	0.6%
	York County	75	72	124	167	92	1.5%	2.4%
	Laramie County, WY	0	0	0	20	20	0.0%	0.3%
	Total	**5,168**	**5,775**	**6,466**	**6,928**	**1,760**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**
	Total Commuters	104	123	287	427	1,740		
	% Commuters	2.0%	2.1%	4.4%	6.2%	310.6%		

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Information System, 2004

During 1970, there were 1,025 workers living in Seward County that commuted elsewhere for employment. There were also 313 workers living elsewhere that commuted into Seward County for employment. By 2000, these numbers changed to 3,134 commuting out of Seward County, and 1,628 commuting into Seward County. These changes represent an increase of 205.8% in the number commuting out, and 420.1% in the number commuting into Seward County. The percentage of workers commuting into Seward County grew by over two times the rate than those commuting out of the county. However, the number of workers leaving the county for employment is nearly twice the number of workers coming into the county for employment.

The information in Tables 17 and 18 allows the county to identify how much money is leaving the county every day in the pockets of resident commuters. In addition, the county can get an idea of how much is coming into the county from non-resident commuters. By knowing how many residents are leaving the county for employment, Seward County can develop strategies to create jobs within the county that will attract and keep its own residents in the county, spending their money on goods and services provided by the county workforce.

Travel time to work is another factor that can be used to gauge where Seward County's workforce has been commuting. Table 19 shows how many residents of Seward County travel to work in each of several time categories.

TABLE 19: TRAVEL TIME TO WORK, SEWARD COUNTY, 1990 TO 2000

Travel Time Categories	1990	% of Total	2000	% of Total	% Change
Less than 5 minutes	847	11.0%	853	9.9%	0.7%
5 to 9 minutes	1,811	23.6%	1,928	22.4%	6.5%
10 to 19 minutes	1,847	24.1%	1,732	20.2%	-6.2%
20 to 29 minutes	1,021	13.3%	1,137	13.2%	11.4%
30 to 44 minutes	1,053	13.7%	1,761	20.5%	67.2%
45 to 59 minutes	242	3.2%	469	5.5%	93.8%
60 minutes or more	164	2.1%	247	2.9%	50.6%
Worked at home	681	8.9%	461	5.4%	-32.3%
Total	**7,666**	**100.0%**	**8,588**	**100.0%**	**12.0%**
Mean Travel Time (minutes)	**16.9**		**19.9**		**17.8%**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population and Housing, STF-3A, 1990 – SF 3 Table PCT56 and DP3, 2000

Table 19 indicates the workforce in 2000 spent three minutes more traveling to work than in 1990. The average travel time increased from 16.9 minutes in 1990 to 19.9 minutes in 2000. The largest increase occurred in the 45 to 59 minute category, which increased by 227 persons, or 93.8 %. The next largest increase occurred in the 30 to 45 minute category, which increased by 708 persons, or 67.2%. Increases in travel times are more likely due to the population commuting to the Lincoln area than other places. However, there has been an increase in the number of commuters from 1990 to 2000 going to the following counties:

- Douglas County
- Dodge County
- Otoe County
- Platte County
- Saunders County
- Pottawattamie County, Iowa

All of these counties would have contributed to the increasing commute times.

The number of persons working at home decreased by the greatest amount; it decreased by 220 people, or -32.3%. This may be have been caused by the availability of more and better paying jobs in the area, but also may be a result of a population that has fewer children to take care of at home, and is therefore able to work farther from home.

Regional Basic/Non-Basic Analysis

The following data examine six occupational areas established by the U.S. Census Bureau to evaluate trends in employment and the area economy. Basic employment and non-basic employment are defined as follows:

- Basic employment is business activity providing services primarily outside the area through the sale of goods and services, the revenues of which are directed to the local area in the form of wages and payments to local suppliers.
- Non-Basic employment is business activity providing services primarily within the local area through the sale of goods and services, and the revenues of such sales re-circulate within the community in the form of wages and expenditures by local citizens.

This analysis is used to further understand which occupational areas are exporting goods and services outside the area, thus importing dollars into the local economy. The six occupational categories used in the analysis are listed below:

- Management, professional, and related occupations
- Service occupations
- Sales and office occupations
- Farming, fishing and forestry occupations
- Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations
- Production, transportation, and material moving occupations

A related concept to the basic/non-basic distinction is that of a Basic Multiplier. The basic multiplier is a number, which represents how many non-basic jobs are supported by each basic job. A high basic multiplier means that the loss of one basic job will have a large potential impact on the local economy if changes in employment occur. The rationale behind this analysis is that if basic jobs bring new money into a local economy, that money becomes the wages for workers in that economy. Finally, the more money generated by basic jobs within a county; the more non-basic jobs that are supported.

TABLE 20: BASIC/NON-BASIC EMPLOYMENT BY OCCUPATION, SEWARD COUNTY, 2000

Occupation Category	Number of Seward County Workforce	% of Seward County Workforce	% of State workforce	Seward County minus State of Nebraska	Basic	Non-Basic
Management, professional, and related occupations	2,724	31.4%	33.0%	-1.6%	0.0%	31.4%
Service occupations	1,349	15.6%	14.6%	**1.0%**	**1.0%**	14.6%
Sales and office occupations	1,935	22.3%	26.4%	-4.1%	0.0%	22.3%
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	120	1.4%	1.6%	**-0.2%**	**0.0%**	1.4%
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	1,073	12.4%	9.3%	**3.1%**	**3.1%**	9.3%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	1,461	16.9%	15.1%	1.8%	1.8%	15.1%
TOTAL	**8,662**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**		**5.8%**	**94.2%**
Economic base multiplier	**16.16**					

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population and Housing, DP-3, 2000

Table 20 indicates the occupation category, the percent of Seward County residents employed in each category, the percent of state residents employed in each category, and the basic and non-basic employment for that category in Seward County. The formula for determining the basic or non-basic nature of an occupation entails subtracting the state's percentage of workforce in a particular occupation from the percentage of the workforce in that occupation in the county. If the county has a lower proportion of its workforce employed in an occupation than the state as a whole, then that occupation is non-basic.

In Seward County, there are three basic occupation industries: 1) Service occupations, 2) Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations, and 3) Production, transportation and material moving occupations. Goods and services from these occupations are exported to markets outside of Nebraska, which in turn generate an infusion of dollars into the local economy. Table 20 shows that 94.2% of the jobs in Seward County are non-basic, while only 5.8% provide goods and services outside of the county. With three of the six categories indicating exports, this is not a bad balance; however, over 50% of the exports are tied to one category. If an economic downturn occurred in this area, it could have a major impact on the county's economy.

The basic multiplier for Seward County is 16.16. This number indicates 16.16 non-basic jobs are supported by every one basic job in Seward County. Every time Seward County loses a job in 1) Service occupations, 2) Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations, and 3) Production, transportation and material moving occupations, the county potentially could lose 16.16 non-basic jobs. In order to decrease this potential, Seward County needs to accentuate the basic jobs by diversifying the employment base even more. Counties want a balance of basic and non-basic employment in their economy to ensure future economic stability.

TABLE 21: REGIONAL AND STATE LABOR FORCE COMPARISONS, SEWARD COUNTY, 2000

Location	Occupation 1	Occupation 2	Occupation 3	Occupation 4	Occupation 5	Occupation 6	Base Multiplier
Nebraska	33.0%	14.6%	26.4%	1.6%	9.3%	15.1%	NA
Seward County	31.4%	**15.6%**	22.3%	1.4%	**12.4%**	**16.9%**	**16.16**
Butler County	29.3%	13.6%	19.5%	**3.2%**	**9.6%**	**24.8%**	8.64
Fillmore County	**34.6%**	**14.8%**	19.4%	**4.4%**	**12.4%**	14.4%	12.96
Lancaster County	**36.0%**	**15.0%**	**26.8%**	0.3%	8.4%	13.4%	25.78
Polk County	31.6%	**14.9%**	19.3%	**5.2%**	**12.7%**	**16.2%**	11.78
Saline County	29.1%	13.8%	18.1%	1.4%	9.3%	**28.3%**	7.59
Saunders County	28.5%	14.6%	24.9%	1.0%	**12.5%**	**18.6%**	14.98
York County	29.2%	**17.8%**	23.2%	**1.8%**	**11.1%**	**16.9%**	14.41
Average of Counties	**35.7%**	**17.2%**	**24.8%**	**2.7%**	**12.6%**	**21.4%**	**16.0**

Occupation 1 = Management, professional, and related occupations
Occupation 2 = Service occupations
Occupation 3 = Sales and office occupations
Occupation 4 = Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations
Occupation 5 = Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations
Occupation 6 = Production, transportation, and material moving occupations

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population and Housing, DP-3, 2000

Table 21 indicates the 2000 percentage of employment by occupational categories for residents of the state of Nebraska, Seward County, and surrounding counties. The comparison with surrounding counties indicates the percentage of Seward County residents employed in each occupation category in comparable to the surrounding counties. Seward County is located near the middle or top of each occupational category. In no case does Seward County have the lowest percentage of employment. Interestingly, Seward County's Basic Multiplier is much higher than most of the surrounding counties.

While the surrounding counties have a multiplier in the range of 7.59 to 25.78, Seward County's multiplier is 16.16. The impact of such a high multiplier is that Seward County is much more sensitive to the loss of one basic position than its neighboring counties, especially since more than 50% of the basic employment is in one category. The reason for the higher multiplier is that the workforce is only 5.8% basic. This indicates a very small proportion of the workforce is responsible for generating the flow of new money into the county. The higher the basic percentage becomes the lower the basic multiplier will become. There is no perfect multiplier number; however, the multiplier must be balanced with a broad based basic sector.

One way for the county to increase the proportion of basic labor would be to increase the number of jobs in the existing basic categories, 1) Service occupations, 2) Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations, and 3) Production, transportation and material moving occupations. Another strategy would be for Seward County to diversify its employment opportunities and increase the strength and security of its workforce. To do this, Seward County must bring some of its non-basic jobs into the basic category.

Table 20 shows that the three non-basic occupation categories are very close to the same percentage as the state, so it is possible that these categories could become basic, if additional jobs were created. If these occupational areas were to surpass the state percentage, they would start to contribute to the basic employment of the county, which in turn would lower the basic multiplier. However, as jobs are added to one Occupation Category, the percentages for all of the industries will change. This makes forecasting future basic and non-basic occupations complex and difficult.

Table 22 offers another basic/non-basic analysis. This approach is based upon Industry Categories instead of Occupation Categories. With the data presented in this Table, Seward County will have more detailed information to define where job growth needs to occur. Note the total percentage of basic and non-basic employment is calculated in this Table.

TABLE 22: BASIC/NON-BASIC EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY, SEWARD COUNTY, 2000

Industry Categories	Seward County		State of Nebraska		Seward County minus State of Nebraska	Basic	Non-Basic
	2000	% of Total	2000	% of Total			
Agriculture, forestry, hunting and mining	**672**	**7.8%**	**48,942**	**5.6%**	**2.3%**	**2.3%**	**5.6%**
Construction	**569**	**6.6%**	**56,794**	**6.5%**	**0.2%**	**0.2%**	**6.5%**
Manufacturing	**1,125**	**13.1%**	**107,439**	**12.2%**	**0.9%**	**0.9%**	**12.2%**
Wholesale Trade	251	2.9%	31,265	3.6%	-0.6%	0.0%	2.9%
Retail Trade	857	10.0%	106,303	12.1%	-2.1%	0.0%	10.0%
Transportation and warehousing and utilities	515	6.0%	53,922	6.1%	**-0.1%**	0.0%	6.0%
Information	27	0.3%	21,732	2.5%	**-2.2%**	0.0%	0.3%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate and rental and leasing	403	4.7%	67,370	7.7%	-3.0%	0.0%	4.7%
Professional, scientific, management, administration, and waste management service	515	6.0%	63,663	7.3%	**-1.2%**	0.0%	6.0%
Educational , health, and social services	**2,177**	**25.4%**	**181,833**	**20.7%**	**4.7%**	**4.7%**	**20.7%**
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	515	6.0%	63,635	7.3%	-1.2%	0.0%	6.0%
Other services (except public administration)	**488**	**5.7%**	**40,406**	**4.6%**	**1.1%**	**1.1%**	**4.6%**
Public Administration	**448**	**5.2%**	**33,933**	**3.9%**	**1.4%**	**1.4%**	**3.9%**
Total	**8,562**	**100.0%**	**877,237**	**100.0%**		**10.5%**	**89.5%**
Base Multiplier	**8.53**						

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Information System, 1999

According to Table 22, the following industries are strong in Seward County:

- Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting and mining
- Construction
- Manufacturing
- Educational, health, and social services
- Other Services
- Public Administration

These industries are providing many of the basic jobs that are supporting non-basic employment. The industries having the most room for growth are Retail Trade, Information, Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate. These industries fail to meet the State average by 2.1%, 2.2%, and 3.0% respectively.

Tables 20 and 22 combine to give Seward County a picture of its employment situation and where it could go. In order to boost the economy of the County, there must be a flow of money into the county from other regions. To do that, the county needs to offer goods and services to those other areas. The county could also diversify its economic structure, which will add strength and stability.

AGRICULTURAL PROFILE

The agricultural profile enables a county to evaluate the influence of the agriculture industry on the area economy. Since most Nebraska counties were formed around county seats and agriculture, the agricultural economy, historically, has been the center of economic activity for counties. The U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Agriculture tracks agricultural statistics every five years. Since that frequency does not coincide with the decennial U.S. Census of Population and Housing, it is difficult to compare sets of census data.

Agriculture Trends

Table 23 identifies key components affecting Seward County's agricultural profile. This Table indicates the number of farms within Seward County decreased between 1987 and 2002, likely due to an agricultural sector that has operated with economic instability. The average size of farms increased from 348 acres in 1987 to 422 acres in 2002. The average value of land and buildings increased from $310,478 per farm in 1987 to $772,875 per farm in 2002 and from $906 per acre in 1987 to $1,786 per acre in 2002. The typical trend in Nebraska has been for the number of farms to decrease, but increase in size and value. The number of acres committed to crops, as well as the number of acres actually harvested, has also increased.

TABLE 23: AGRICULTURAL PROFILE, SEWARD COUNTY, 1987-2002

Agricultural Characteristics	1987	1992	1997	2002	% Change 1987-2002
Number of Farms	974	879	833	862	-11.5%
Land in Farms (acres)	339,349	314,949	320,618	364,178	7.3%
Average size of farms (acres)	348	358	385	422	21.3%
Total land area for Seward County	368,448	368,448	368,448	368,448	0.0%
Percentage of land in farm production	92.1%	85.5%	87.0%	98.8%	7.3%
Total cropland (acres)	297,213	274,777	278,609	306,353	3.1%
Harvested cropland (acres)	213,318	230,961	251,976	277,726	30.2%
Estimated Market Value of Land & Bldg (avg./farm)	**$310,475**	**$334,133**	**$605,825**	**$772,875**	**148.9%**
Estimated Market Value of Land & Bldg (avg./acre)	**$906**	**$1,003**	**$1,521**	**$1,786**	**97.1%**

Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture, 1992, 1997, 2002

The average size of farms in Seward County has increased by 21.3%. Looking only at the period from 1987 to 2002, Table 22 shows the average value per farm increased by 148.9% and the average value per acre increased by 97.1%.

TABLE 24: NUMBER OF FARMS BY SIZE, SEWARD COUNTY, 1987-2002

Farm Size (acres)	1987	1992	1997	2002	% Change 1987-2002
1 to 9	51	85	97	35	-31.4%
10 to 49	87	106	134	156	79.3%
50 to 179	227	202	197	226	-0.4%
180 to 499	305	243	200	186	-39.0%
500 to 999	201	174	173	147	-26.9%
1,000 or more	57	69	78	112	96.5%
Total	**928**	**879**	**879**	**862**	**-7.1%**

Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture, 1992, 1997, 2002

The size of farms, in acres, is indicated in Table 24. Table 24 shows between 1987 and 2002 there was a mixture change with regard to farm size. Those farms 1 to 9 acres in size saw a -31.4 change while those 10 to 49 acres saw an increase of 79.33%. Furthermore, the number of farms between 180 acres and 999 acres decreased by 173 farms or -34.2%. Finally, those farms over 1,000 acres nearly double in the 15 year period, increasing by 96.5%. Seward County has seen some unique changes with regard to the number of farms by size.

TABLE 25: NUMBER OF FARMS AND LIVESTOCK BY TYPE, SEWARD COUNTY, 1987 TO 2002

Type of Livestock	1987	1992	1997	2002	% Change 1987 to 2002
Cattle and Calves					
farms	485	418	412	345	-28.9%
animals	40,460	34,736	41,953	44,108	9.0%
average per farm	83	83	102	128	53.3%
Beef Cows					
farms	352	325	319	284	-19.3%
animals	8,617	8,376	9,845	10,836	25.8%
average per farm	24	26	31	38	55.9%
Milk cows					
farms	46	28	12	11	-76.1%
animals	1,810	1,443	1,191	1,269	-29.9%
average per farm	39	52	99	115	193.2%
Hogs and Pigs					
farms	201	194	90	74	-63.2%
animals	47,763	64,773	44,268	40,896	-14.4%
average per farm	238	334	492	553	132.6%
Sheep and lambs					
farms	60	47	29	24	-60.0%
animals	3,174	3,480	1,071	1,143	-64.0%
average per farm	53	74	37	48	-10.0%
Chickens (layers and pullets)					
farms	71	24	21	11	-84.5%
animals	3,227	1,262	546	395	-87.8%
average per farm	45	53	26	36	-21.0%
Turkeys					
farms	NA	NA	4	2	
animals	514,782	(D)	(D)	(D)	
average per farm					

Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture, 1992, 1997, 2002

Table 25 indicates the number of farms and livestock by type for Seward County between 1987 and 2002. The predominant livestock raised in Seward County are cattle and calves as well as hogs and pigs. All livestock productions showed a decline in the number of farms raising animals; while only two areas showed an increase in the total number raised, cattle and calves and beef cows. Cattle and calf operations have declined in number, but the total number of animals raised increased between 1987 and 2002. Average livestock numbers per farm were calculated for each type of operation and the results indicated that every livestock group except chickens, sheep and lambs increased despite the declining number of farms. Turkeys in 1987 had over 500,000 animals and by the 1992 U.S. Agricultural Census, the number was no longer able to be disclosed due a so few numbers and/or fewer operators.

TABLE 26: NUMBER OF FARMS AND CROPS BY TYPE, SEWARD COUNTY, 1987 TO 2002

Type of Crop	1987	1992	1997	2002	% Change 1987 to 2002
Corn for Grain					
farms	468	393	465	465	-0.6%
acres	74,111	87,564	128,849	134,129	81.0%
average per farm	158	223	277	288	82.2%
Corn for Silage					
farms	39	32	42	74	89.7%
acres	1,837	1,272	1,688	4,539	147.1%
average per farm	47	40	40	61	30.2%
Sorghum					
farms	591	510	305	125	-78.8%
acres	67,710	77,705	32,287	7,798	-88.5%
average per farm	115	152	106	62	-45.5%
Wheat					
farms	332	203	103	43	-87.0%
acres	12,421	8,387	3,813	2,316	-81.4%
average per farm	37	41	37	54	44.0%
Oats					
farms	127	92	50	26	-79.5%
acres	2,278	1,628	873	486	-78.7%
average per farm	18	18	17	19	4.2%
Soybeans					
farms	625	489	491	472	-24.5%
acres	45,949	44,705	76,458	117,228	155.1%
average per farm	74	91	156	248	237.8%
Alfalfa					
farms	438	429	378	346	-21.0%
acres	11,936	12,569	12,230	12,074	1.2%
average per farm	27	29	32	35	28.1%

Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture, 1992, 1997, 2002

Table 26 indicates the number of farms and crop by type for the period from 1987 to 2002. This Table shows the prominent crops grown in the county. In addition, the Table indicates the total number of farms producing the specific crop and finally an average per farm. Corn and soybeans have been the two most frequently raised crops in Seward County since 1987. Four of the seven categories showed an increase in acres farmed; these include Corn for grain, Corn for silage, Soybeans, and Alfalfa. The crop with the largest increase is Soybeans with an increase of 155.1%, while Corn for silage increased by 147.1%. There was only one crop type that indicated an increase in the number of farms planting the product, which was Corn for Silage. Finally, in all but one crop, the average acres per farm increased during the same

period. This indicates the farms that are continuing to grow these crops are getting larger; this is a statewide as well as a nationwide trend.

COUNTY FACILITIES

State and local governments provide a number of goods and services for their citizens. The people, buildings, equipment and land utilized in the process of providing these goods and services are referred to as public facilities.

Public facilities represent a wide range of buildings, utilities, and services that are built and maintained by the different levels of government. Such facilities are provided to insure the safety, well being and enjoyment of the residents of a jurisdiction, in this case, Seward County. These facilities and services provide county residents with social, cultural, educational, and recreational opportunities, as well as law enforcement and fire protection services designed to meet area needs. It is important for all levels of government to anticipate the future demand for their goods and services if they are to remain strong and vital. The first step is to evaluate the ability of the county to meet that future demand and determine the level of services that will be provided. The analysis of existing facilities, and future goods and services are contained in the Facilities Plan. Alternatively, in some instances, there are a number of goods and services that are not provided by the local or state governmental body and thus are provided by non-governmental private or non-profit organizations for the communities and the county as a whole. These organizations are important providers of goods and services.

Facilities Plan

The Facilities Plan component of a Comprehensive Development Plan reviews present capacities of all public and private facilities and services. This section evaluates the current demands and accepted standards to determine whether capacity is adequate, as well as determine what level of service is required to meet future demands within the planning period. Finally, recommended improvements for public goods and services that are not adequate for present or future needs are provided.

The Facilities Plan for Seward County is divided into the following categories:

- Recreational Facilities
- Educational Facilities
- Fire and Police Protection
- County Buildings
- Transportation Facilities
- Communication Facilities
- Public Utilities
- Health Facilities

RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Seward County is located in Nebraska's Southeast Recreation Planning, Region II, and a region within the Nebraska Department of Game and Parks system. Region II includes 17 counties in southeast Nebraska. The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission have established standards for different communities in Nebraska based upon population levels. The Commission recommends rural communities provide 20 acres of parkland per 1,000 people for communities with a population of 2,500 to 9,999. In addition, the standard has been increased to 25 acres of parkland per 1,000 people for communities under 2,500 people.

The following facilities and programs can be found in the identified communities of Seward County:

Community	Amenity
Seward	***Facilities*** Swimming Pool, Tennis Courts (3 at two locations), Fitness Center, Ballfields (7), Blue Valley Campground, Plum Creek Trail, Sand Volleyball Court, Horse Courts, Boy Scout Building, Athletic Fields (Plum Creek Park, Concordia University, Elementary School, Seward Sports Complex), City parks (10 locations) ***Programs*** Youth Basketball, Youth Wrestling, Youth Spring Soccer, Youth Baseball, Youth Volleyball, Youth Flag Football, Youth Midget Football, Youth Fall Soccer, Adult Co-Ed Softball, Co-Ed Volleyball, Men's 30 and over Basketball, Men's Basketball, Women's Volleyball,
Beaver Crossing	***Facilities*** Swimming Pool, Tennis Courts, Ballfields (1), Basketball Court, Swing sets, picnic area, three shelters, camping area.
Bee	***Facilities*** Ballfield (1), Horse Courts (spring 2006), City park, Toddler Play structure (spring 2006), Swing set and slide.
Cordova	***Facilities*** Ballfield (1), Tennis Court/basketball court, City park (modern restroom, playground equipment, Picnic shelter, picnic tables)
Garland	***Facilities*** Ballfield (1), Tennis Court, City park (restrooms and playground equipment, Picnic shelters (2), picnic tables)
Goehner	***Facilities*** Ballfield (1), Tennis Court, City park with restrooms and playground equipment, Picnic shelters (2), picnic tables)
Milford	***Facilities*** Ballfield (1), Tennis Court, City park with restrooms and playground equipment, Picnic shelters (2), picnic tables)
Pleasant Dale	***Facilities*** Ballfield (1), City park (playground equipment, Picnic shelter, picnic tables)
Staplehurst	***Facilities*** Ballfield (1), Tennis Court/basketball court, City park with restrooms and playground equipment, Picnic shelter, picnic tables)
Utica	***Facilities*** Ballfield Complex (2 fields, one practice field, Concession stand, restrooms) City park (3) (restrooms, playground equipment, Tennis/multi-purpose courts, Picnic shelter, picnic tables), Swimming pools, RV pads (5), Sand Volleyball

Table 27 identifies each community in Seward County and the number of parkland acres in terms of land and water. In addition, the Table compares the existing supply to the ideal condition as determined by the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission standards previously identified. According to the Table, the municipalities in Seward County appear to have adequate park and recreation facilities to serve the citizens of the county.

TABLE 27: SUPPLY AND NEED OF MUNICIPAL RECREATIONAL LAND – SEWARD COUNTY

Community	2003 Population (est.)	Parkland Supply (acres)		Total Parkland		Parkland Deficiency
		Land	Water	Supply	Need	
Beaver Crossing	440	13	0	13	11	-2
Bee	220		0	0	6	
Cordova	121	1	0	1	3	-2
Garland	246	10	0	10	6	0
Goehner	179	1	0	1	5	-4
Milford	2,067	36	0	36	52	-16
Pleasant Dale	249	5	0	5	6	0
Seward	6,752	51	2	53	135	-84
Staplehurst	260	8	0	8	7	0
Utica	835	8	0	8	21	-13
Total		**133**	**2**	**135**	**252**	**-121**

Source: Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, 1992 and 2003 US Census

Based upon the data in Table 27 and in Table 24 of the 1995 Seward County Comprehensive Development Plan, the total demand for parkland in Seward County's communities has increased from 216 acres (based upon 1990 population numbers) to 252 acres (based upon 2003 population estimates). The deficiency in parkland went from -88 acres in the 1995 Comprehensive Development Plan to -121 acres.

State Recreational Facilities

All of the parks listed below are located in or near Seward County and provide special recreational resources to the residents of the county. A general distance of 30 miles was used when determining what sites to include in the following:

Blue River State Recreation Area is located five miles north of Dorchester along Nebraska Highway 15 and U.S. Highway 6 within Seward County. The facility is a 14-acre area located adjacent to the Big Blue River. The facility offers the public picnicking and fishing. The recreational area is only open for day use.

TABLE 28: SUPPLY AND NEED OF RURAL RECREATIONAL LAND – SEWARD COUNTY

State Wildlife Areas				
	Land (acres)	Water (acres)	Marsh (acres)	Total
Blue Bluff	2.28	1	0	3.28
Burr Oak	138.50	0	0	138.5
North Lake Basin	211	0	153	364
Oak Glen	629.58	3	0	632.58
Twin Lakes #13	1,015.00	255	0	1,270
Natural Resource District Area – Meadowlark	265	55	0	320
Total	**2,261.36**	**314**	**153**	**2,728.36**

Source: Nebraska Game and Parks Commission

Golf Courses

The following are the golf courses within Seward County and other nearby communities. The following is a listing of golf courses supporting the Seward County residents:

Course	Community
Seward Country Club (Private)	Seward
York Country Club (Private)	York
Friend Country Club (Semi-private)	Friend
Thornridge Golf Course (Public)	Milford
College Heights Country Club (Private)	Crete
Henderson Golf Association (Public)	Henderson
Sandy Meadows Golf Course (Public)	Waco

EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

Public Schools

The public schools in Nebraska are grouped into six classes, depending upon the type of educational services provided and the size of the school district. The six classes, as defined by the State of Nebraska, are:

Class 1 Any school district that maintains only elementary grades under the direction of a single school board. These districts were dissolved as of June 15, 2006.

Class 2 Any school district with territory having a population of 1,000 inhabitants or less that maintains both elementary and high school grades under the direction of a single school board.

Class 3 Any school district with territory having a population of more than 1,000 and less than 100,000 that maintains both elementary and high school grades under the direction of a single school board.

Class 4 Any school district with territory having a population of 100,000 or more and less than 200,000 inhabitants that maintains both elementary and high school grades under the direction of a single school board.

Class 5 Any school district with territory having a population of 200,000 or more that maintains both elementary and high school grades under the direction of a single school board.

Class 6 Any school district that maintains only a high school under the direction of a single school board. The territory of Class 6 district is made up entirely of Class 1 districts (or portions thereof) that have joined the Class 6.

There are three school districts within Seward County. Figure 4 indicates the boundaries of the different districts. The school districts include Seward Public Schools, Milford Public Schools, and Centennial Public Schools.

Seward Public Schools are classified as a Class 3 district. The district designation is 80-0009-000. The school district is made up of grades Pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade. The district has three school facilities within the district; an elementary school, middle school, and a high school. The schools are located within the city of Seward.

The Centennial School Districts is a Class 3 district and the district number is 80-0567. The school district is made up of grades Pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade. The district currently has two different buildings that house students; an elementary facility and a junior-senior high school facility. Both facilities are located in Utica, Nebraska.

The Milford Public School District is a Class 3 district and the district's identification number is 80-0005-000. The school district is made up of grades Pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade. The district has an elementary facility and a combined middle and high school facility. In addition to the district's elementary school, the Milford district is affiliated with the Pleasant Dale Elementary School in Pleasant Dale.

The following are data received through the Nebraska Department of Education and is for the 2003 -2004 school year:

Enrollment	Pre-K	K through 6	7 through 8	9 through 12	Total
Seward Public Schools	9	621	212	513	1,355
Milford Public Schools	7	363	103	241	714
Centennial Public Schools	8	244	83	246	581

The districts have the following staffing breakdowns; the data includes student ratios and the state average:

Staffing type	Total number	Students/staff member	State Average
Seward Public School District			
Teachers	87	NA	14
Instructional Aides	26	NA	73
Guidance Counselors	4	NA	387
Librarians/Media Specialists	3	NA	557
District-level Administrators	3	NA	675
School-level Administrators	5	NA	302
Milford Public School District			
Teachers	46	NA	
Instructional Aides	10	NA	
Guidance Counselors	1	NA	
Librarians/Media Specialists	1	NA	
District-level Administrators	2	NA	
School-level Administrators	2	NA	
Centennial Public School District			
Teachers	45	14	
Instructional Aides	13	48	
Guidance Counselors	1	624	
Librarians/Media Specialists	1	624	
District-level Administrators	2	312	
School-level Administrators	3	208	

The districts have the following assessed valuation, tax levies and per pupil costs:

District	Assessed Valuation	Levies per $100 of Valuation		Per pupil Costs
		General	Total Other Levies	
Seward Public Schools	$641,433,395	$1.1015	$0.1165	
Milford Public Schools	$242,139,340	$0.9557	$0.1286	
Centennial Public Schools	$471,737,622	$1.0197	$0.0848	

Note that until the 2004-2005 school year, Bee Public Schools was an additional district within Seward County. The district was a Class 1 district with an affiliation with the Seward Public Schools.

Other Public School Entities serving Seward County

The school districts of Seward County are served by Educational Service Unit number 6 based in Milford. This supplementary educational service provides member school districts with assistance, and develops recommendations for services that will be provided to schools. More information can be found at http://www.esu6.org.

Other Educational Opportunities within Seward County (Parochial School Systems)

The following schools are part of the educational opportunities in Seward County. These schools represent the parochial/faith based educational system that is in place.

• St. John's Lutheran Schools (Elementary and Junior High schools)	Seward
• St. Vincent DePaul Catholic School (Elementary School)	Seward
• St. Paul's Lutheran School (Elementary School)	Utica
• Nebraska EV Lutheran High School	Waco
• Trinity Lutheran Grade School	Waco
• Our Redeemer	Staplehurst

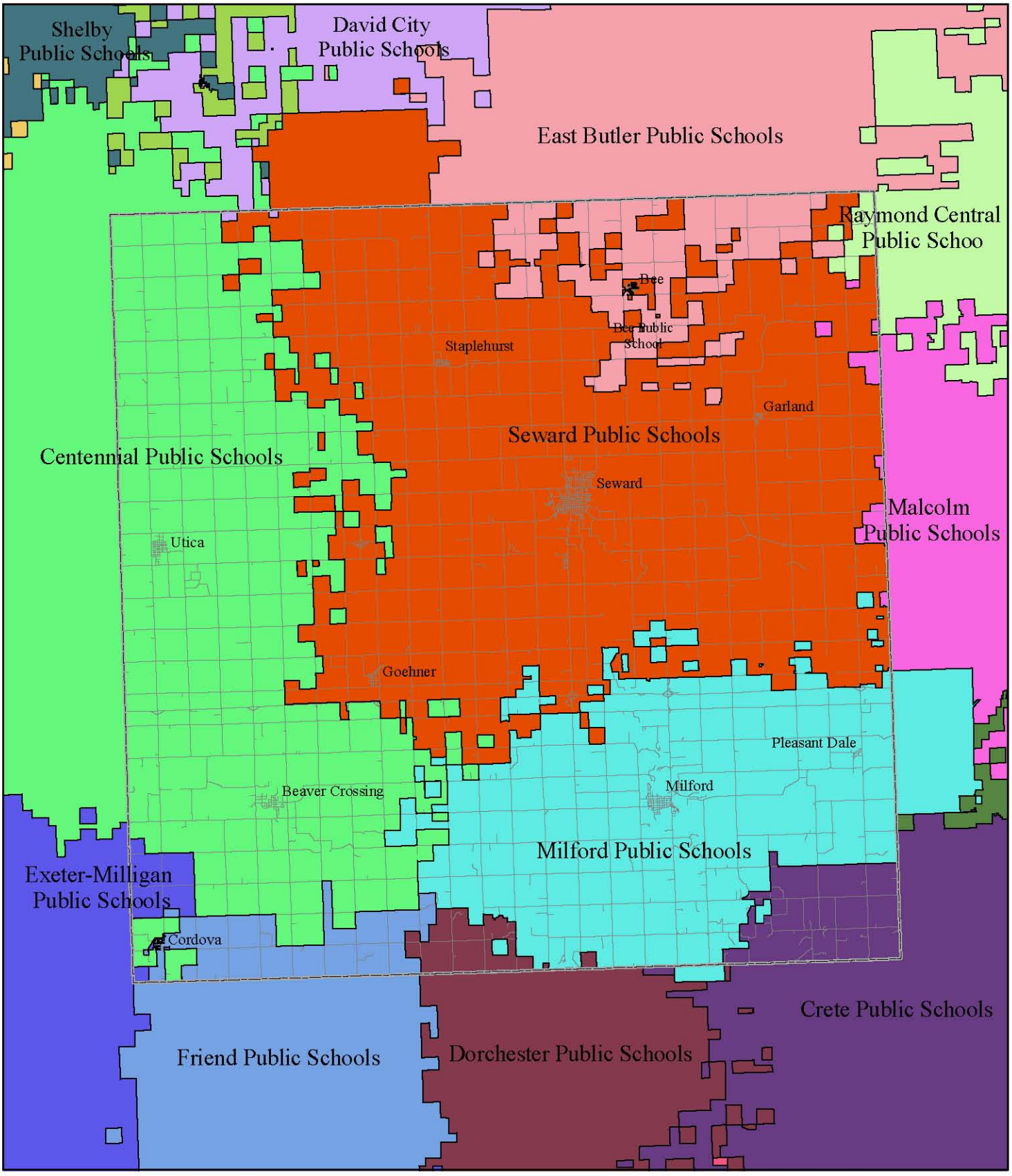
Post-Secondary Education

There are two post-secondary education schools in Seward County. Concordia University in Seward is a liberal arts and sciences school. Today, Concordia University in Seward is part of the Concordia University System and is part of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod. The second is a technical college located in Milford called Southeast Community School-Milford campus.

There are several other post-secondary level educational opportunities located near Seward County, which include:

• University of Nebraska	Lincoln, Curtis
• Nebraska Wesleyan	Lincoln
• Union College	Lincoln
• Southeast Community College	Milford, Lincoln, Beatrice
• Hamilton College	Lincoln
• York College	York
• University of Nebraska	Kearney
• University of Nebraska	Omaha
• Creighton University	Omaha
• University of Nebraska Medical Center	Omaha
• Clarkson College	Omaha
• College of St. Mary	Omaha
• Grace College of the Bible	Omaha
• Metropolitan Community College	Omaha
• Nebraska Methodist College of Nursing and Allied Health	Omaha
• Midland Lutheran College	Fremont

This is a short list of post-secondary institutions available to residents of Seward County. There are various other schools offering post-secondary education, such as vocational and business schools.



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N W E S

Seward County, Nebraska

School District Map

Figure 3

FIRE AND POLICE PROTECTION

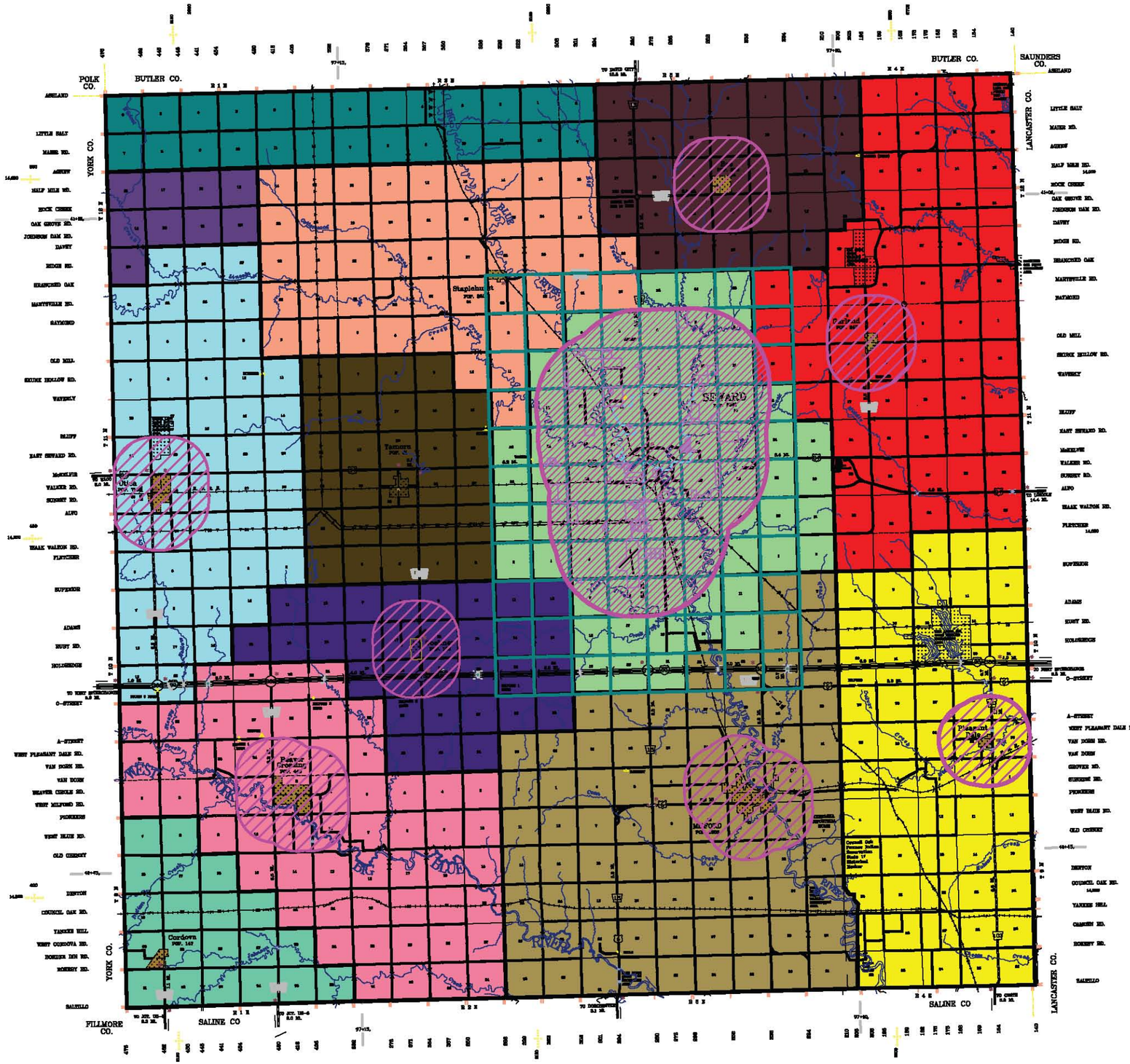
Fire and Rescue

Fire and Rescue is the responsibility of 13 different volunteer fire departments based in Seward County and adjacent counties. Figure 4 shows the layout of the initial response units and their territory. Each of the departments participates in a mutual aid program, which provides for backup of the initial respondent by the other departments including firefighters and equipment.

Figure 5 indicates the Rescue response districts. The layout of the rescue districts is slightly different than that of the fire districts. In all cases, a department from an adjacent county, with fire district jurisdiction, does not have a rescue district within Seward County. Within the rescue districts there is a dual respondent system setup in specific areas of Seward County. The dual respondent system is indicated on the map by a solid color on the base with a hatch pattern on top. This system has been established in order for smaller departments/districts to be covered in the event of an emergency.

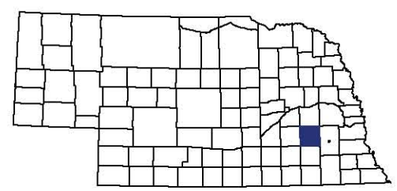
The following is a brief outline of each volunteer fire department:

Department	Coverage Area in Seward County (square miles)	Firefighters	EMT's
Beaver Crossing	58		
Bee	32.8		
Cordova	20		
Garland	65.2		
Goehner	32		
Gresham	10		
Milford	78.95		
Pleasant Dale	57.25		
Seward	69.8		
Staplehurst	49		
Tamora	29		
Ulysses	26		
Utica	50		
Total	**578**		



LEGEND

- Beaver Crossing
- Bee
- Cordova
- Garland
- Goehner
- Gresham
- Milford
- Pleasant Dale
- Seward
- Staplehurst
- Tamora
- Ulysses
- Utica



SEWARD COUNTY
NEBRASKA

Fire District Map
Figure 4

GRAPHIC SCALE
4000 0 2000 4000 8000 16000
(IN FEET)
Full Size: 1 inch = 8000 ft.

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REVISED: d.a.c. Feb. 2008

THIS MAP PREPARED USING INFORMATION FROM RECORD DRAWINGS SUPPLIED BY L.R.D. AND/OR OTHER APPLICABLE CITY, COUNTY, STATE, FEDERAL, OR PUBLIC OR PRIVATE ENTITIES. J.E.O. DOES NOT GUARANTEE THE ACCURACY OF THIS MAP OR THE INFORMATION USED TO PREPARE THIS MAP. THIS IS NOT A SURVEYED PLAT.

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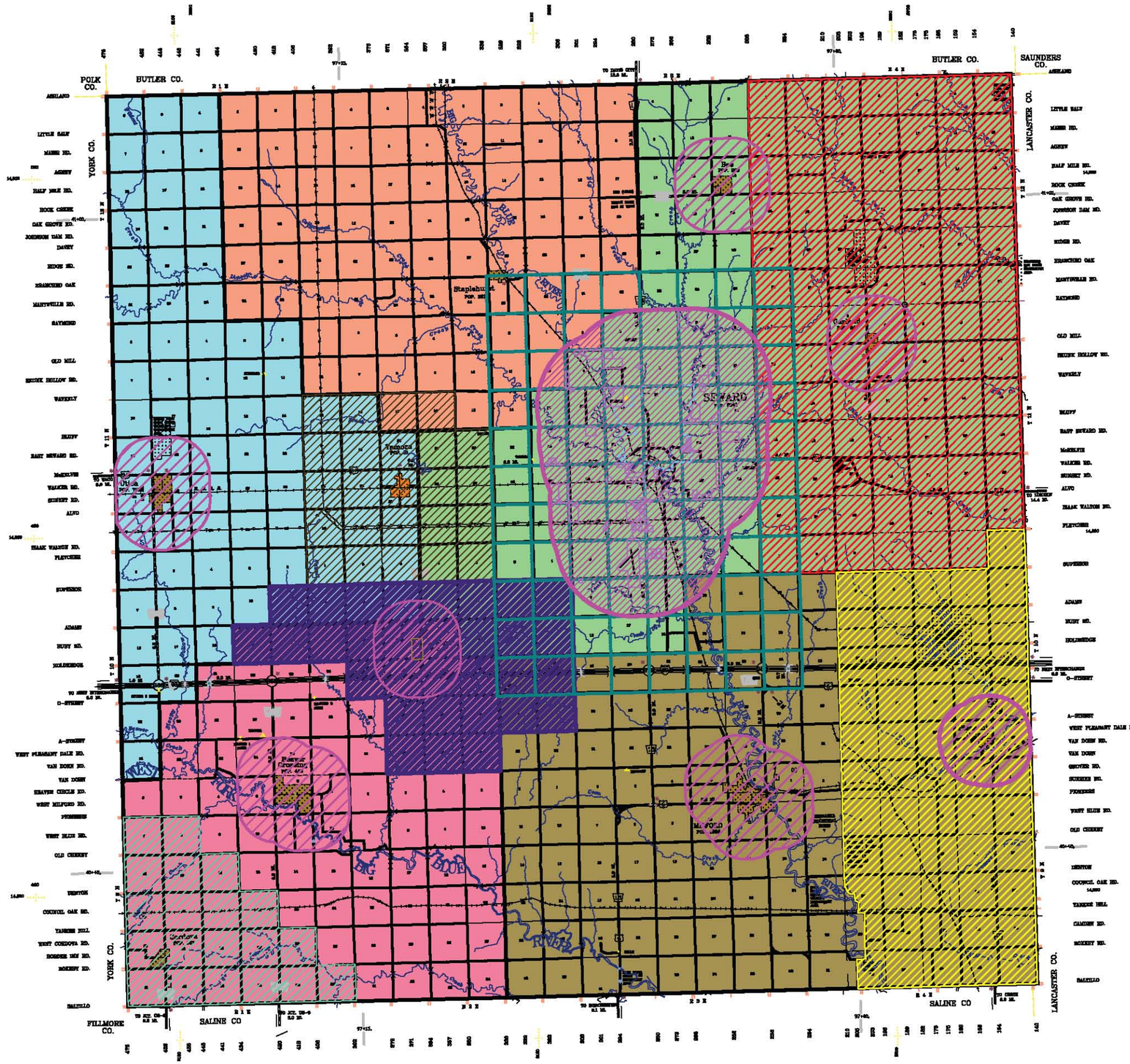
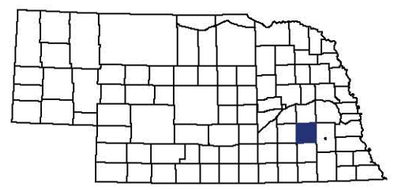


LEGEND

- Beaver Crossing
- Cordova
- Garland
- Goehner
- Milford
- Pleasant Dale
- Seward
- Staplehurst
- Tamora
- Utica

Note: Hatched areas indicate where there is Dual First Response.



SEWARD COUNTY
NEBRASKA

Rescue District Map
Figure 5

GRAPHIC SCALE
4000 0 2000 4000 8000 16000
Full Size: 1 Inch = 8000 ft.

N
W E
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REVISED: d.a.c. Feb. 2005

THIS MAP PREPARED USING INFORMATION FROM RECORD DRAWINGS SUPPLIED BY J.E.O. AND/OR OTHER APPLICABLE CITY, COUNTY, STATE, FEDERAL, OR PUBLIC OR PRIVATE ENTITIES. J.E.O. DOES NOT GUARANTEE THE ACCURACY OF THIS MAP OR THE INFORMATION USED TO PREPARE THIS MAP. THIS IS NOT A SCALED PLAT.

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Law Enforcement

Law enforcement in Seward County is the responsibility of the Seward County Sheriff. The office of the Seward County Sheriff is located at 261 S. 8th Street in Seward.

Based upon data in the Nebraska Databook maintained by the Nebraska Department of Economic Development, Seward County had 11 sworn officers in 2003, 11 in 2002, and 10 in 2001. With an average population of approximately 16,500 in those years, the numbers of sworn officers per 1,000 persons in the population were 1.4, 1.4, and 1.65 respectively. Table 29 shows the number of sworn officers per 1,000 persons in Seward County and the surrounding counties.

TABLE 29: SWORN OFFICERS, SEWARD AND SURROUNDING COUNTIES, 2001, 2002, AND 2003

County	2001		2002		2003	
	Sworn Officers	Officers per 1,000	Sworn Officers	Officers per 1,000	Sworn Officers	Officers per 1,000
Saline	12	1.2	10	2.0	10	2.0
Butler	5	1.8	5	1.8	7	1.1
Lancaster	71	3.5	70	2.8	70	2.8
York	8	1.8	9	1.6	9	1.6
Saunders	11	1.8	11	1.8	11	1.8
Seward	**10**	**1.7**	**11**	**1.4**	**11**	**1.4**

Source: Nebraska Department of Economic Development – Nebraska Databook 2004

The ratio of law enforcement officers per 1,000 persons in the population for any given area is influenced by many factors. The determination of law enforcement strength for a certain area is based on such factors as population density, size and character of the community, geographic location and other conditions that exist in the area. The data indicate that Seward County has been improving its ability to serve the residents in which it sworn to serve.

COUNTY BUILDINGS

Seward County Courthouse is located in Seward. The courthouse is built in the City Square of Seward. The courthouse holds the following county offices:

- Seward County Assessor
- Seward County Clerk
- Seward County Commissioners
- Seward County Court
- Seward County Treasurer

More detail on the courthouse is available in the Registered Historic Sites.

Seward County West Annex is located along Highway 34 west on the western edge of Seward. The building is the former USDA office. The new facility contains the following offices:

- Seward County Road Department
- Seward County Veteran Services
- Seward County Planning and Zoning

The **Seward County Fairgrounds** are located on the west edge of Seward, Nebraska. The fairgrounds contain livestock barns, a grandstand, and an Agricultural Pavilion. The Agricultural Pavilion is available for rental purposes during the year.

The **Seward County Extension Office** is located at 216 S. 9th Street in Seward.

The **Seward County Weed Control District** office is located at 2879 McKelvie Road. The facility houses the district offices, equipment and chemicals.

The **Seward County Communications** office is located at 261 South 8th Street in Seward. The office is the primary dispatch center for the Seward County Sheriff's Department, Seward Police Department, Milford Police Department, as well as all fire and rescue departments in Seward County.

Registered Historic Sites
The following information has been taken verbatim from the Nebraska Historical Society's website - http://www.nebraskahistory.org/histpres/nebraska/seward.htm

Deutsche Evangelisch Lutherische Zion Kirche [SW00-052]

Located near Staplehurst, the Deutsche Evangelisch Lutherische Zion Kirche was constructed in 1916-17 in the Late Gothic Revival style and is one of the state's finest examples of an auditorium planned church. The church's design is the result of the combined talents of two of Nebraska's leading early twentieth century architects, George Berlinghof and Ellery L. Davis.

Troyer Site [25-SW-24]

Located near Milford, the Troyer Site has the potential to address critical relationships between the Smoky Hill and Nebraska phases. The site contains materials that are comparable to items previously identified from these phases. The site is located in an area that is pivotal in understanding the full relationships between the Smoky Hill, Nebraska, and Loup River phases; this area is almost completely unknown for the Central Plains Villagers tradition, as well as for any other archeological unit.

States Ballroom [SW02-008]

Located in Bee, the States Ballroom is a twelve-sided reinforced concrete structure. It is a notable product of modernistic design conceived by a local architect-builder, Vladimir Sobotka. The building has played an important recreational, entertainment, and cultural role in the surrounding Czech and German community. It was constructed in 1938-40 as a relief project of the Works Progress Administration.

Germantown State Bank Building [SW04-001]

The Germantown State Bank was organized as an incorporated bank in 1904. Earlier, Germantown (as Garland was then known) supported a private banking house known as the Bank of Germantown. Shortly after the end of World War 1, bank president August Carl Beckman began plans to construct a new facility. The new bank building was opened in the summer of 1920. The building is an excellent example of a small town bank and is one of the state's finest products of the Neo-Classical Revival style.

Seward County Courthouse Square Historic District [SW09]

The Seward County Courthouse Square Historic District is one of the finest nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial districts. The district's focus is the three-story, limestone courthouse, constructed 1904-6, and designed in the County Capitol form by architect George A. Berlinghof. Other noteworthy buildings include the 1887 Tishue Block;

the J. F. Goehner Building, built in 1908; and the Zimmerer-Rolfsmeier Building, built about 1920. Public buildings and structures, such as the Carnegie Library, City Hall, and the Bandstand Park, are also found in the district.

Cattle-Hughes Mansion [SW09-006]

Located in Seward, the French Second Empire house was built in 1885 by Seward Banker John Cattle, Jr. Bankers since 1881, the Cattle family established the Cattle National Bank in 1930. John Cattle, Jr. also owned commercial and farming property in Seward County and was a stockholder in the Seward Cereal Mills.

Zimmerer House [SW09-013]

The John and Philomena Zimmerer House, located in Seward, is a three-story residence built in 1919-20. The exterior exhibits characteristics of the Jacobethan Revival-style. Side gables rise above the roof at several points and three chimneys tower over the building. The facades feature decorative brickwork patterns. A two-story brick carriage house, constructed at approximately the same time, is located directly northeast of the main house.

Harry T. Jones House [SW09-074]

Located in Seward, the Harry T. Jones House was constructed in 1889-90. It is a good example of a Free Classic Queen Anne-style house. Substantial in size and profuse in surface ornamentation, the dwelling is further enhanced by its location on a landscaped corner lot.

Seward County Courthouse [SW09-093]

Seward County was organized in 1865. Milford was selected as the first county seat, but Seward was awarded that distinction in an 1871 election. The first courthouse in Seward was a frame building that soon proved inadequate. In 1904 a bond issue passed to help finance a new courthouse. Construction began the following year and in 1907 the Classical Revival-style courthouse was completed.

COMMUNICATION FACILITIES

Telephone Services

Alltel provides the majority of the county with phone service.

Radio Stations

There is no radio stations located in Seward. The majority of the stations heard in the area originate out of Lincoln.

Television Stations

Presently there is no local television stations located in Seward County. The over the air stations that serve the area originate out of Lincoln and Omaha:

- KOLN/KGIN 10/11 CBS Affiliate (Lincoln and Grand Island)
- KLKN-TV 8 ABC Affiliate (Lincoln)
- KUON-TV 12 PBS (Lincoln)
- WOWT 6 NBC Affiliate (Omaha)
- KETV 7 ABC Affiliate (Omaha)
- KMTV 3 CBS Affiliate (Omaha)
- KPTM 42 FOX Affiliate (Omaha)

Internet/World Wide Web Service Providers (ISP)
Internet service for the residents of Seward County is provided by several companies including Alltel, Time Warner, and Dish Network.

Newspapers
There are various newspapers serving the residents of Seward County. Listed below are Newspapers in circulation in the Seward County area:

- Omaha World Herald
- Lincoln Journal Star
- Seward County Independent
- York News-Times
- Milford Times
- Crete News
- Friend Sentinel

PUBLIC UTILITIES

Electricity
Seward County Public Power District is the supplier of electrical service in rural Seward County. The District owns and maintains the power system. Seward County Public Power buys power wholesale from Nebraska Public Power District.

Natural Gas
Aquila supplies natural **g**as, where available, within Seward County.

Water Supply
There is not a centralized water system in Seward County, other than within the individual communities. The water supply in rural Seward County is via private individual consumption and irrigation wells.

Sanitary Sewer
There is not a centralized sanitary sewer collection or treatment facilities within rural Seward County, other than the areas controlled by the individual communities. Most sewage is dealt with via individual septic tanks and lateral fields and lagoons.

HEALTH FACILITIES

Hospitals
The primary medical facility in Seward County is located in Seward. In addition, there are several quality facilities within 30 to 45 miles of the county. Each of these facilities is serving a regional patient base.

The following are the hospitals and their location:

Hospital	Location
Memorial Health Care Systems	Seward
York General Hospital	York
Warren Memorial Hospital	Friend
Crete Municipal Hospital	Crete
Henderson Health Care Systems	Henderson
Bryan LGH Health System (West and East)	Lincoln
St. Elizabeth Regional Medical Center	Lincoln

Nursing Home Facilities

Nursing home facilities can range from fully staffed assisted-living arrangements to an apartment-like setting staffed by few persons, who may have only basic medical knowledge. These facilities accommodate persons in various health conditions in a setting that provides as much independence as possible to the resident.

The following is a listing of the facilities that are generally within 30 to 45 miles of Seward County residents:

Nursing Facility	Location
Anna Sundermann Homes	Seward
Crestview Care Center	Milford
Sunrise Manor	Milford
Utica Community Care Center	Utica
York General Hearthstone	York
Warren Memorial Hospital Ltc	Friend
Crete Area Medical Center Ltc	Crete
Crete Manor	Crete
Henderson Care Center	Henderson

Besides the facilities listed above, there are several nursing home operations of all types throughout the cities of Lincoln and Grand Island.

ENVIRONMENT, NATURAL AND MAN-MADE RESOURCES

Introduction

In order to formulate a truly valid and "comprehensive" plan for the future development of Seward County, it is first necessary to evaluate the environment and man-made conditions which currently exist to determine the impacts that these factors may have on limiting future land uses in the County. This component of the Seward County Comprehensive Development Plan provides a general summary of the environmental and man-made conditions, which are present in the County, and identifies and qualifies the characteristics of each which will directly or indirectly impact future land uses in the County.

Natural Environmental Conditions

- Climate and Topography
- Wildlife and Recreation
- Watersheds(Water Quantity and Quality
- Wetlands
- Soil Association
- Capability Grouping
- Prime Farmland
- Soil Limitations

Climate

(This information was taken from the Seward County Soil Survey by the United States Department of Agriculture – Soil Conservation Service – June 1974)

The climate in Seward County is typical of that found along its latitude in the United States. The summers are warm with thundershowers followed by brief periods of cooler temperatures. Winters are typically cold and dry. Precipitation early in spring is characterized by slow, steady snow or rain. Snow is common through early March. Thunderstorms during the spring months can be severe at times and may contain heavy rain, hail, high winds, and tornadoes.

Topography

(The following information was taken from the Seward County Soil Survey by the United States Department of Agriculture – Soil Conservation Service – June 1974)

Seward County lies within the Great Plains area. The majority of its relief slopes gently toward the southeast. Elevation ranges from 1,240 feet about one and one-half miles northeast of Pleasant Dale in the southeastern part of the county to 1,640 in the northwestern part of the county.

The county has two main physiographic areas; the uplands and the bottoms lands. The uplands are subdivided into the drift hills in the eastern one-fifth of the county and the loess plains that extend west of this area. The bottom lands are of two levels; the first, or low bottom lands, which are seldom to frequently flooded; and the stream terrace bottom lands, which are on slightly higher areas adjacent to the uplands.

The eastern part of the county, the drift hills, is drained by the Oak and Middle Creeks. Relief is moderate. The loess plains area is drained by the Big Blue River, Lincoln Creek, Plum Creek, and Johnson Creek. Relief is slight with

moderate slopes bordering the drainageways. Drainage is well developed, except on the nearly level depressional areas. Areas where natural drainage is lacking are mostly in the vicinity of Utica and Tamora.

Alluvial bottom lands border the major river and stream channels. The low bottom has old channels or oxbows that flood frequently. Slightly higher, nearly level areas, which are occasionally or seldom flooded, are more extensive on the bottom lands. A few areas are wet because of a high water table or because of poor surface drainage. The nearly level areas on stream terraces are well drained.

Wildlife and Recreation

The kinds and amounts of wildlife that can be produced and maintained in this county are largely determined by the kinds and amounts of vegetation the soils can produce, and by the manner in which this vegetation is distributed.

Wildlife is influenced by topography and by such soil characteristics as fertility. Fertile soils are capable of greater wildlife production, and waters that drain from such soils generally will produce more fish than waters that drain from infertile soils. Topography affects wildlife through its influence on land use. Extremely rough, irregular areas may present hazards to livestock and be unsuited to crop production. In such areas the undisturbed vegetation is often valuable to wildlife. If suitable vegetation is lacking in such areas, it can often be developed to improve conditions for desirable kinds of wildlife.

Wetness and water-holding capacity of the soils are important in selecting sites for constructing ponds for fish and in developing and maintaining habitats for waterfowl. Swampy and marshy areas can be used for the development of aquatic and semiaquatic habitats of value to waterfowl and to some species of furbearers.

The soils of Seward County provide suitable habitats for a number of wildlife species. Important species of game in the area are quail, pheasant, deer, cottontail rabbit, and squirrel. Opossum, raccoon, weasel, mink, badger, fox, and skunk are found in various areas throughout the county.

The wildlife resources of Seward County are important primarily for the opportunities for recreation they provide. Many species of wildlife, however, are also beneficial in the control of undesirable insects and rodents.

The combination of soils, topography, and vegetation in Seward County provides an opportunity for developing facilities for outdoor recreation. It is likely that fish and wildlife resources would be developed. Nevertheless, increased travel by the American public also provides other opportunities for using suitable soils for recreational purposes. Use of soils for overnight camping facilities or for picnic areas along main highways can provide a real convenience to travelers and an additional source of income to landowners.

Plant and animal life

Postglacial vegetation in the area that is now Seward County was probably forest until about 6,000 years ago when grass began to take over. Since then, tall prairie grasses dominated the nearly level and rolling uplands. Deciduous trees covered the alluvial soils along the streams and the steep upland slopes adjacent to the bottom lands. Several centuries of root growth in the soil and the accumulation of vegetative remains on the surface have added considerable organic matter

to the soil and have darkened the surface horizon. The soils developed under forest in this county apparently do not have any morphological features that set them apart. The upland soils developed under forest, however, usually have a thinner, darkened surface layer. Since many areas of these soils are on steeper slopes, the characteristics of this layer may not be due entirely to the type of vegetation. All forms of plant and animal life contribute to soil formation. The addition of organic matter and the mixing that takes place in the soil depend on the kinds of plants and animals present and the environment, which includes soil climate.

The trees that once covered parts of the county have been cut for fuel or timber, and the land has been cleared for cultivation. Most of the land in prairie grass has been plowed and is now cultivated. As a result of the activities of man, most of the sloping fields have lost from one-third to two-thirds or more of the surface horizon. If allowed to continue, soil erosion would lower the productive capacity of the soils in the county.

Wetlands

Wetlands are areas where water covers the soil, or is present either at or near the surface of the soil all year or for varying periods during the year, including during the growing season. Water saturation (hydrology) largely determines the soil development and the types of plant and animal communities living in and on the soil. Wetlands may support both aquatic and terrestrial species. The prolonged presence of water creates conditions that favor the growth of specially adapted plants (hydrophytes) and promote the development of characteristic wetland (hydric) soils. Wetlands vary widely because of regional and local differences in soils, topography, climate, hydrology, water chemistry, vegetation, and other factors, including human disturbance. Two general categories of wetlands are recognized: coastal or tidal wetlands and inland or non-tidal wetlands.

Inland wetlands found in Seward County are most common on floodplains along rivers and streams (riparian wetlands), in isolated depressions surrounded by dry land (for example, playas, basins, and "potholes"), along the margins of lakes and ponds, and in other low-lying areas where the groundwater intercepts the soil surface or where precipitation sufficiently saturates the soil (vernal pools and bogs). Inland wetlands include marshes and wet meadows dominated by herbaceous plants, swamps dominated by shrubs, and wooded swamps dominated by trees. Certain types of inland wetlands are common to particular regions of the country:

- wet meadows or wet prairies in the Midwest
- prairie potholes of Nebraska

Many of these wetlands are seasonal (dry one or more seasons every year). The quantity of water present and the timing of its presence in part determine the functions of a wetland and its role in the environment. Even wetlands that appear dry at times for significant parts of the year -- such as vernal pools-- often provide critical habitat for wildlife adapted to breeding exclusively in these areas.

The federal government protects wetlands through regulations (like Section 404 of the Clean Water Act), economic incentives and disincentives (for example, tax deductions for selling or donating wetlands to a qualified organization and the "Swampbuster" provisions of the Food Security Act), cooperative programs, and acquisition (for example, establishing national wildlife refuges). Beyond the federal level, a number of states have enacted laws to regulate activities in wetlands, and some counties and towns have adopted local wetlands protection ordinances or have changed

the way development is permitted. Few states, however, have laws specifically regulating activities in inland wetlands, although some states and local governments have non-regulatory programs that help protect wetlands.

Partnerships to manage whole watersheds have developed among federal, state, tribal, and local governments; nonprofit organizations; and private landowners. The goal of these partnerships is to implement comprehensive, integrated watershed protection approaches. A watershed approach recognizes the inter-connection of water, land, and wetlands resources and results in more complete solutions that address more of the factors causing wetland degradation.

The government achieves the restoration of former or degraded wetlands under the Clean Water Act Section 404 program as well as through watershed protection initiatives. Together, partners can share limited resources to find the best solutions to protect and restore America's natural resources. While regulation, economic incentives, and acquisition programs are important, they alone cannot protect the majority of our remaining wetlands. Education of the public and efforts in conjunction with states, local governments, and private citizens are helping to protect wetlands and to increase appreciation of the functions and values of wetlands. The rate of wetlands loss has been slowing, but we still have work to do. You can be a part. Approximately 75 percent of wetlands are privately owned, so individual landowners are critical in protecting these national treasures.

Wetlands play an important role in the ecology of Seward County. Wetlands are home to many species of wildlife, many of which live only in wetland areas. Wetlands also provide an important service to nearby areas by holding and retaining floodwaters. These waters are then slowly released as surface water, or are used to re-charge groundwater supplies. Wetlands also help regulate stream flows during dry periods.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) produce information on the characteristics, extent, and status of the Nation's wetlands and deepwater habitats. This information has been compiled and organized into the National Wetlands Inventory (NWI). At the time of this Plan, the FWS had mapped 89% of the lower 48 states, and the State of Nebraska had been entirely mapped. Maps produced by the NWI are available through their website or national office.

Wetlands are categorized in several classifications, each more detailed and specific than the previous. The NWI uses five systems; marine, estuarine, riverine, lacustrine, and palustrine. Within each system, there are subsystems, classes, subclasses, and dominance types to describe different wetland characteristics. The system classification refers to wetlands that share similar hydrologic, geomorphologic, chemical, or biological factors. Following are definitions and examples of three of the five systems used to describe wetlands. The Marine and Estuarine wetland systems are located in and near the open ocean; therefore, they do not occur in Nebraska. Further information, through NWI, on specific classifications is available.

Seward County experiences each of these three other wetland systems. They tend to occur most often in west central Seward County and in southwestern Seward County. However, wetlands of varying sizes and types are located throughout Seward County. The following figures depict common ways in which these three systems develop. These figures were produced by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and are taken from their 1979 publication entitled "Classification of Wetlands and Deepwater Habitats of the United States." Figures 6, 7, and 8 depict common examples

of the riverine, lacustrine, and palustrine wetlands, respectively. Figure 9 shows the occurrence of wetlands in Seward County.

FIGURE 6: RIVERINE WETLAND SYSTEM

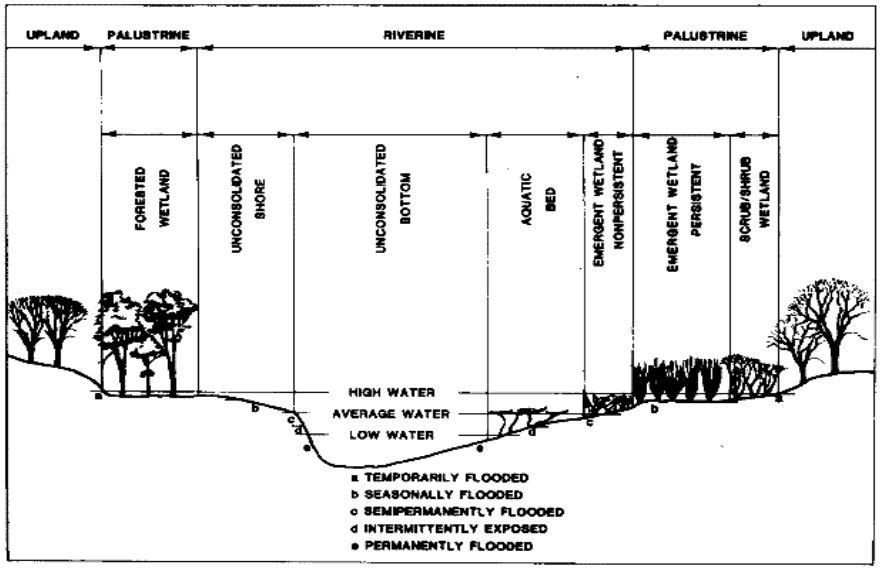
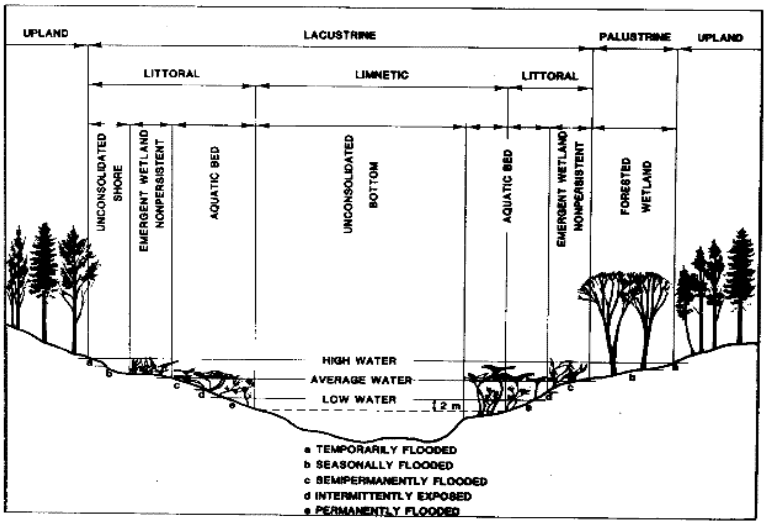


Figure 6 shows the riverine system includes all wetlands that occur in channels, with two exceptions: (1) wetlands dominated by trees, shrubs, persistent emergents, emergent mosses, or lichens, and (2) habitats with water containing ocean derived salts in excess of 0.5%. A channel is an open conduit either naturally or artificially created which periodically or continuously contains moving water, or which forms a connecting link between two bodies of standing water. Therefore, water is usually, but not always, flowing in the riverine system.

Springs discharging into a channel are also part of the riverine system. Uplands and palustrine wetlands may occur in the channel, but are not included in the riverine system. Palustrine Moss-Lichen Wetlands, Emergent Wetlands, Scrub-Shrub Wetlands, and Forested Wetlands may occur adjacent to the riverine system, often in a floodplain.

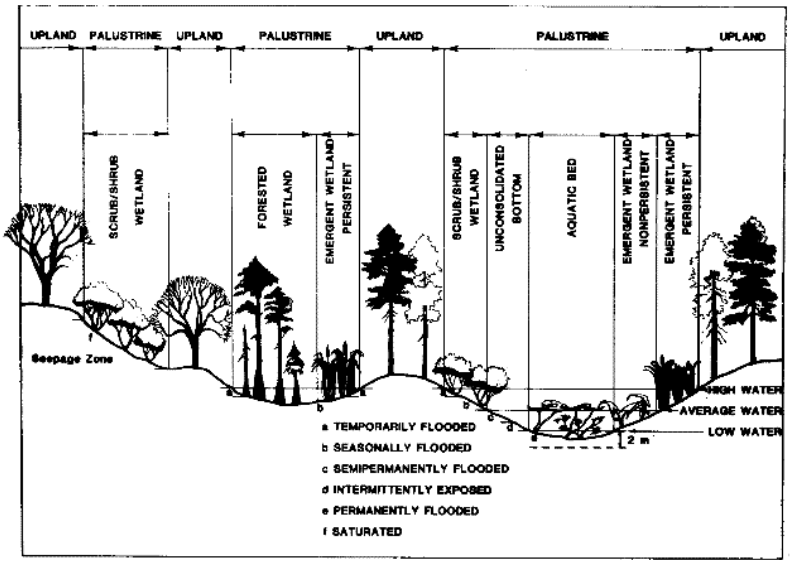
FIGURE 7: LACUSTRINE WETLAND SYSTEM



The Lacustrine System includes all wetlands with all of the following characteristics: (1) situated in a topographic depression or a dammed river channel; (2) lacking trees, shrubs, persistent emergents, emergent moss or lichens with greater than 30% area coverage; and (3) total area exceeds 20 acres. Similar wetland areas totaling less than 20 acres are also included in the Lacustrine System if an active wave-formed or bedrock shoreline feature makes up all or part of the boundary, or if the water depth in the deepest part of the basin exceeds 6.6 feet (2 meters) at low water.

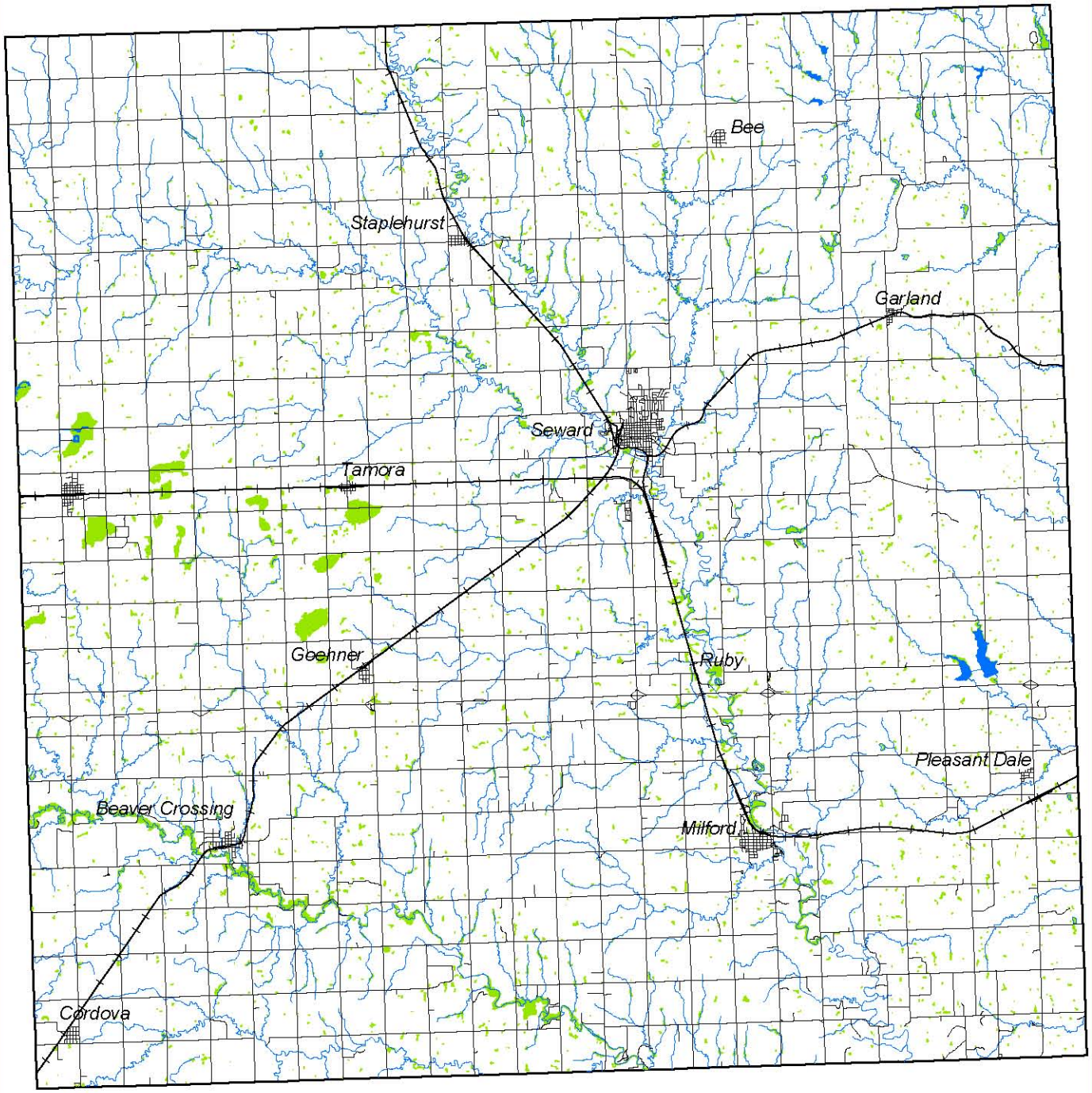
The Lacustrine System includes permanently flooded lakes and reservoirs (e.g. Lake Superior), intermittent lakes (e.g. playa lakes), and tidal lakes with ocean-derived salinities below 0.5% (e.g. Grand lake, Louisiana). Typically, there are extensive areas of deep water and there is considerable wave action. Islands of Palustrine wetlands may lie within the boundaries of the Lacustrine System.

FIGURE 8: PALUSTRINE WETLAND SYSTEM



The Palustrine System includes all nontidal wetlands dominated by trees, shrubs, persistent emergents, emergent mosses or lichens, and all such wetlands that occur in tidal areas where salinity due to ocean-derived salts is below 0.5%. It also includes wetlands lacking such vegetation, but with all of the following four characteristics: (1) area less than 20 acres; (2) lacking active wave-formed or bedrock shoreline features ; (3) water depth in the deepest part of basin less than 6.6 feet (2 meters) at low water; and (4) salinity due to ocean-derived salts less than 0.5%.

The Palustrine System was developed to group the vegetated wetlands traditionally called by such names as marsh, swamp, bog, fen, and prairie, which are found throughout the United States. It also includes the small, shallow, permanent, or intermittent water bodies often called ponds. These wetlands may be situated shoreward of lakes, river channels, or estuaries; on river floodplains; in isolated catchments; or on slopes. They may also occur as islands in lakes or rivers.



Wetlands: Figure 9

Seward County, Nebraska

Legend

Wetlands

0 0.5 1 2 3 4 Miles

Prepared By: JEO Consulting group, Inc
Soils Data Soils Survey Geographic (SSURGO) Data USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service
GIS Process: ArcView 9.0

THIS MAP PREPARED USING INFORMATION FROM RECORD DRAWINGS SUPPLIED BY J.E.O. AND/OR OTHER APPLICABLE CITY, COUNTY, STATE, FEDERAL, OR PUBLIC OR PRIVATE ENTITIES. J.E.O. DOES NOT GUARANTEE THE ACCURACY OF THIS MAP OR THE INFORMATION USED TO PREPARE THIS MAP. THIS IS NOT A SCALED PLAT

CREATED BY: J.J. FEB 2005

JEO Consulting Group, Inc.

SOIL FORMATION AND CLASSIFICATION

Factors of Soil Formation

Soil is produced through an interaction of materials that have been deposited or accumulated by geologic process. The characteristics of the soil at any given point are determined by (1) the physical and mineralogical composition of the parent material; (2) the climate under which the soil material has accumulated and existed since accumulation; (3) the plant and animal life on and in the soil; (4) the relief, or lay of the land; and (5) the length of time the forces of soil development have acted on the soil material.

Climate and vegetation are active factors of soil genesis. They act on the parent material that has accumulated through the weathering of rocks and slowly change it into a natural body with genetically related horizons. The effects of climate and vegetation are conditioned by relief. The parent material also affects the kind of profile that can be formed, and in extreme cases, determines it almost entirely. Finally, time is needed for the changing of the parent material into a soil profile. It may be much or little, but some time is always required for horizon differentiation. Generally, a long time is required for the development of distinct horizons.

The five factors of soil genesis are so closely interrelated in their effects on the soil that few generalizations can be made regarding the effect of any one factor unless conditions are specified for the other four. Many of the processes of soil development are unknown.

Soil Association

The Soil Association data where taken directly from the Seward County Soil Survey by the United States Department of Agriculture – Soil Conservation Service – June 1974.

Hastings – Fillmore-Butler Association

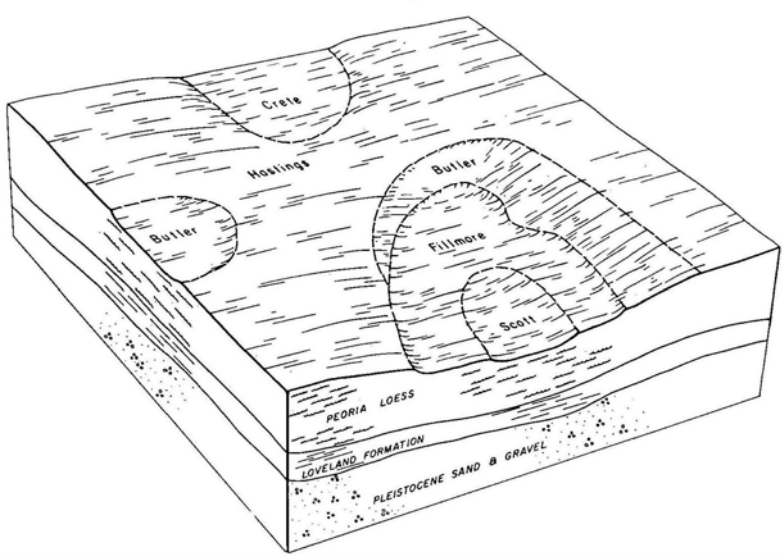
Nearly level to gently sloping soils that have a silty surface layer and a loamy to clayey subsoil; on uplands mantled with loess and in depressions

This association consists of uplands mantled with loess and of many depressions where water ponds after rains. Most areas are nearly level or very gently sloping, but a few small areas onside slopes of drainage ways are gently sloping.

This association covers an area of 144,065 acres, or about 39 percent of the county. Hastings soils make up about 72 percent of this association, Fillmore soils, 14 percent, and Butler soils, 9 percent. The remaining five percent is minor soils.

Hastings soils are well drained and nearly level to gently sloping. Their surface layer is thick, dark-gray silt loam or silty clay loam. The subsoil is dark grayish-brown silty clay loam that has moderately slow permeability. The underlying material is pale-brown silt loam.

Fillmore soils are in shallow depressions that are ponded for short periods. They have a gray silt loam surface layer and a light-gray silt loam subsurface layer. The subsoil is a dense, dark-gray clay pan. The underlying material is dark grayish-brown silt loam.



Typical formation of Hastings-Fillmore-Butler Association

Butler soils are nearly level and mainly border depressions of the uplands. Their surface layer is dark-gray silt loam, and the subsurface layer is think and gray. The subsoil is very dark gray clay that has strong blocky structure. The underlying material is light brownish-gray silt loam.

Minor soils of this association are mainly in the Crete and Scott series. Crete soils are nearly level and are slightly higher on the landscape than the Butler soils but not so high as the Hastings soils. The Scott soil is in large depressions that are frequently ponded.

Most of the acreage in this association is cultivated, and many of the nearly level soils are irrigated. Corn and grain sorghum are the main crops, but wheat, soybeans, and alfalfa are grown in small areas. Maintaining fertility is a management concern in irrigated areas and water erosion is a hazard on the gently sloping soils that are irrigated or dry farmed. In some areas better surface drainage is needed to reduce ponding.

On most of the farms in this association grain is grown for cash, but on a few farms most of the grain is fed to beef and dairy cattle. The potential for growing a wider variety of crops and for continued irrigation development is high, and crops suited to the climate can be grown if markets become available. Good gravel roads are on most of the section lines.

Hastings-Geary Association

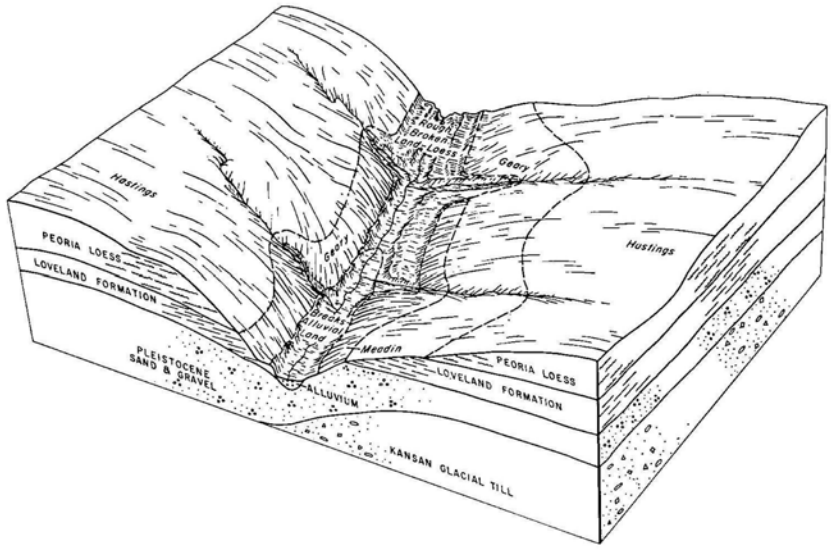
Moderately sloping to steep soils that are silty through-out; on uplands mantled with loess.

In this association are soils on uplands mantled with loess. Moderately sloping and strongly sloping soils are along the minor drainage ways. Moderately steep and steep soils of the uplands border the valley of the Big Blue River and its tributaries.

This association covers an area of 56,015 acres, or about 15 percent of the county. Hastings soils make up about 71 percent of this association, and Geary soils, 18 percent. The remaining 11 percent is minor soils.

Hastings soils are mainly on side slopes of the smaller tributaries and along the upper part of slopes that border stream valleys in the western and central parts of the county. Their surface layer is very dark brown silt loam or silty clay loam. The subsoil is dark grayish-brown silty clay loam. The underlying material is silt loam. The severely eroded Hastings soils are lighter in color than the uneroded ones, and they are lower in fertility and in content of organic matter.

Geary soils are mainly on the lower parts of side slopes that border stream valleys. Their surface layer is very dark brown silty clay loam. The subsoil is dark-brown to reddish-brown loess of the Loveland Formation. The severely eroded Geary soils have a lighter colored surface layer than the uneroded ones.



A typical formation of the Hastings-Geary Association

Minor soils of this association are in the Meadin series. The land types Breaks-Alluvial land complex and Rough broken land, loess, are also in this association. They are moderately steep to very steep and on breaks that border drainage ways and tributaries. Also in this association are narrow strips of soils on bottom lands that are occasionally flooded.

The soils in this association have a medium acid or slightly acid surface layer, but their subsoil and underlying material range from neutral to mildly alkaline. Runoff is medium to rapid. Most areas are severely eroded, and here fertility and content of organic matter are low.

About half of the acreage of this association is in tame pasture and native grasses, and grazing and mowing are needed to maintain a good cover of plants. The other half of this association, which consists mainly of moderately sloping soils, is cultivated. Grain sorghum, wheat, and alfalfa are the major crops. The moderate to strong slopes and many small gullies limit the use of large machinery. The main concern of management on cultivated fields is controlling sheet and gully erosion. Practices that help to maintain tilth, conserve moisture, and reduce erosion are needed in all areas.

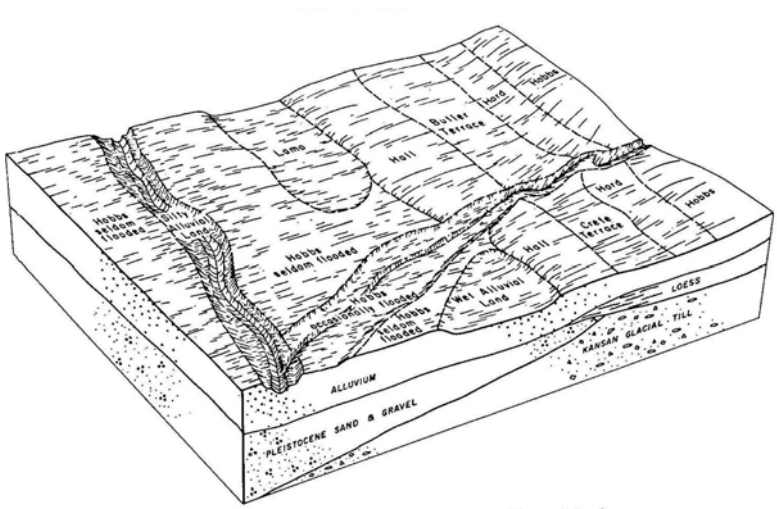
Most of the farms of this association are used both for growing cash-grain crops and for the raising of livestock. The areas have potential for improving the pasture and livestock program. Most section lines have good gravel roads, but a few have unimproved roads or trails.

Hobbs-Hall Association

Nearly level soils that are silty throughout; on bottom lands and stream terraces.

This association consists of soils on bottom lands and stream terraces of the major valleys and on adjacent valley foot slopes that border uplands. These soils are mainly nearly level, but in some areas they are gently sloping.

This association covers an area of 71,000 acres, or about 20 percent of the county. Hobbs soils make up about 56 percent of this association, and Hall soils, 10 percent. The remaining 34 percent consists of minor soils and land types.



A typical formation of the Hobbs-Hall Association

Hobbs soils are the most extensive soils in this association and are on the higher parts of the bottom lands and on foot slopes. Their surface layer is thick, grayish-brown silt loam. The underlying material ranges from silt loam to silty clay loam. Depth to the water table in these soils ranges from six to 15 feet.

Hall soils are on stream terraces. Their surface layer is dark-gray silt loam or silty clay loam. The subsoil is dark grayish-brown silty clay loam that is moderately slowly permeable. The underlying material is light-gray silt loam.

Minor soils of this association are mainly in the Butler, Crete, Hord, and Lamo series. The land types Silty alluvial land and Wet alluvial land are also in this association. The Butler, Crete, and Hord soils are on stream terraces, and the somewhat poorly drained Lamo soils are on bottom lands. Silty alluvial land is along drainage ways. It consists of deep channels, of oxbows, and of narrow level areas that are frequently flooded and the adjacent steep banks. Wet alluvial land is in pockets or depressions on bottom lands, where the water table is high. It is wet throughout the year.

The soils of this association are used for cultivated crops and for grazing. Drainage and flood control practices are needed to help reduce damage to crops in flooded areas. Soils on stream terraces, foot slopes, and bottom lands that are seldom flooded are used mostly for grazing. Corn, grain sorghum, soybeans, and alfalfa are the major crops. Some areas are irrigated with water pumped from creeks and rivers. The major concern of management in this association is wetness that limits crop growth. The main concerns in irrigated areas are maintaining fertility and managing water.

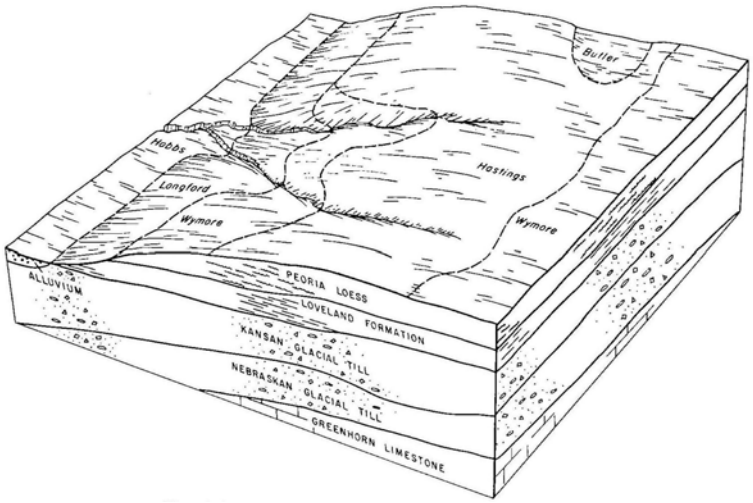
Most of the farms in this association are used both for the growing of crops and the raising of livestock. The acreage in crops can be increased by draining the wetlands. Irrigation can be developed in some places. Good roads are on most section lines.

Hastings-Wymore Association

Nearly level to moderately sloping soils that have a silty surface layer and silty or clayey subsoil; on uplands mantled with loess.

In this association are nearly level to moderately sloping soils on uplands mantled with loess. The areas are bordered by the Big Blue River on the west and by till mantled uplands on the east. Only a few depressions are in this association.

This association covers 40,000 acres, or about 11 percent of the county. Hastings soils make up about 80 percent of the association, and Wymore soils, eight percent. The remaining 12 percent is minor soils.



A typical formation of the Hastings-Wymore Association

Hastings soils are nearly level to moderately sloping. The surface layer generally is dark-gray silt loam or silty clay loam, but it is lighter colored in severely eroded areas. The subsoil is dark grayish-brown silty clay loam, and the underlying material is pale-brown silt loam. The Hastings soils in this association have slightly finer textured subsoil than the Hastings soils in the western part of the county.

Wymore soils are mainly in the south and central parts of this association. They formed in a thin mantle of loess that overlies glacial till and are nearly level to moderately sloping. These soils have a surface layer of gray silty clay loam. The subsoil is dark grayish-brown silty clay. The underlying material is light-gray silt loam that contains small amount of lime.

Minor soils of this association are in the Butler, Hobbs, and Longford series. Butler soils have a clay pan and are on flats. Hobbs soils are in the bottoms of narrow drainage ways on uplands. Longford soils formed in light-brown or reddish-brown loess, and they are on the lower part of the side slopes of drainage ways.

Corn, sorghum, wheat, alfalfa, and soybeans grow well on soils of this association. A few areas are irrigated, but the wells are at a considerable depth and contain a limited amount of water. Controlling erosion and conserving water are the major concerns of management. In irrigated areas maintaining fertility and controlling water are also concerns.

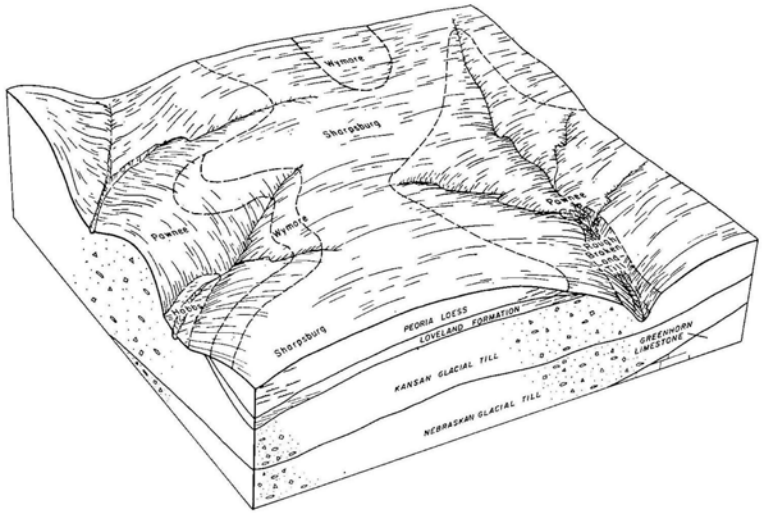
Most of the farms of this association are used for cash grain crops. On some of the farms, however, dairying and the raising of livestock are the main enterprises. Markets for all farm products are in Seward and nearby Lincoln. Crop growth can be increased if irrigation is further developed. Good gravel roads are on all section lines.

Pawnee-Sharpsburg Association

Gently sloping to moderately sloping soils that have a loamy or silty surface layer and clayey to silty subsoil; on uplands mantled with loess and glacial till.

This association consists of soils on uplands that have a mantle of glacial till and loess. The loess is mainly on the high ridge tops and the upper parts of the side slopes of drainage ways. The glacial till is on the lower part of the side slopes and on some of the lower lying ridges. The soils in this association are mainly gently sloping to moderately sloping, but some are steep. Gullies cut areas where the drainage pattern is deeply entrenched. Many trees grow along the drainage ways in this association.

This association covers 30,000 acres or about eight percent of the county. Pawnee soils make up about 50 percent of the association, and Sharpsburg soils, 46 percent. The remaining four percent is minor soils.



A typical formation for the Pawnee-Sharpsburg Association

Pawnee soils formed in glacial till. The surface layer is dark-gray and dark grayish-brown clay loam. The sub-soil is grayish-brown clay in the upper part and brown heavy clay loam in the lower part. The underlying material is yellowish-brown clay loam that contains pockets and seams of lime.

Sharpsburg soils formed in loess. Their surface layer is dark-gray silty clay loam. The subsoil is dark-brown and brown silty clay loam, and the underlying material is pale-brown silt loam.

Minor soils of this association are mostly in the Hobbs and Wymore series. Also in this association is the land type Rough broken land till. Hobbs soils are on the bottom of upland drainage ways. Wymore soils formed in a thick mantle of loess that overlies glacial till. These soils are on side slopes in the upper parts of the drainage ways. Rough broken land, till, is steep and is deeply gullied.

Runoff is medium to rapid on these soils. Available water capacity is moderate to high. In severely eroded areas these soils are difficult to till because of small gullies. The main concerns of management are maintaining the fertility and the content of organic matter, conserving moisture, and controlling sheet and gully erosion.

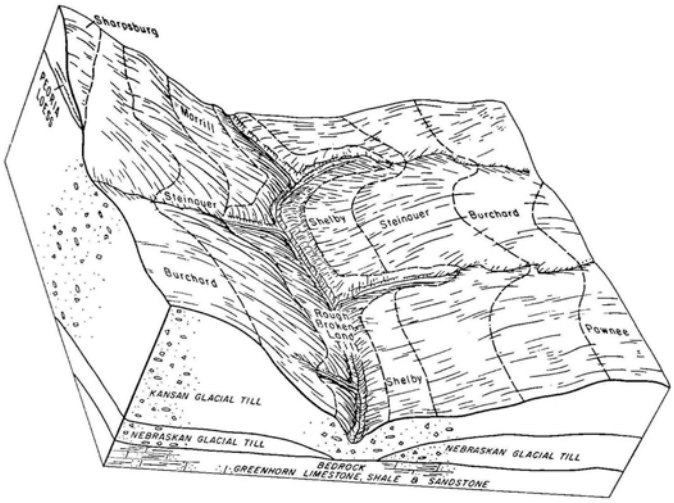
About three-fourths of the acreage in this association is cultivated. Most of the farms are used both for growing grain for cash and for the raising of livestock. The main crops are grain sorghum, wheat, and alfalfa, but corn and soybeans also are grown. Many of the severely eroded soils are seeded to perennial grasses, but some of the strongly sloping to steep

soils are in native range. The water supply from wells is limited in places, but it generally is adequate for domestic and wildlife use. Gravel roads are on most section lines.

Burchard-Steinauer Association

Moderately sloping to steep, loamy soils on uplands of glacial till.

This association consists of moderately sloping to steep soils on uplands of glacial till. The drainage system is deeply entrenched and is part of the Oak Creek and Middle Creek drainage basin.



A typical formation of the Burchard-Steinauer Association

This association covers an area of 25,000 acres, or about seven percent of the county. Burchard soils make up about 40 percent of the association, and Steinauer soils, 39 percent. The remaining 21 percent is minor soils.

Burchard soils are moderately sloping to strongly sloping, and have a few stones on their surface. The surface layer is dark-gray clay loam about 12 inches thick. The subsoil is brown clay loam, and the underlying material is glacial till that contains much lime, some small stones, and a few boulders.

Steinauer soils are moderately sloping to steep, and a few large boulders are scattered over the surface. The surface layer is grayish-brown clay loam that is about six inches thick. The underlying material is light brownish-gray and light yellowish-brown glacial till that contains many stains, pockets, and seams of soft lime.

Minor soils of this association are in the Morrill, Pawnee, Sharpsburg, and Shelby series. Also in this association is the land type, Rough broken land, till. Morrill soils generally occupy lower positions on the landscape than Burchard or Steinauer soils and have a reddish-brown subsoil. Sharpsburg soils are on the high ridges that are mantled with loess. Shelby soils are gently sloping to moderately sloping and are mostly on the lower parts of concave slopes. Pawnee soils are on the lower parts of ridge tops. Rough broken land, till, is steep and occupies breaks on till material along minor drainage ways of the Oak Creek and Middle Creek drainage system. Many trees and shrubs are in these steep areas.

Runoff is rapid on the soils of this association. The content of organic matter is medium to low. Because of the short, irregular slopes, the use of large machinery is limited. Grain sorghum, alfalfa, and wheat are suitable crops for the moderately sloping soils. The main concerns of management are preventing gully and sheet erosion, conserving moisture, and maintaining tilth and fertility. Most of the steeper areas are in native grasses or in pasture of tame grasses.

Most of the farms in this association are used both for growing cash grain crops and for the raising of livestock. In a few areas adequate water for livestock is difficult to obtain. Good gravel roads are on most section lines.

CAPABILITY GROUPS OF SOILS

The capability classification is a grouping that shows, in a general way, how suitable soils are for most kinds of farming. It is a practical grouping based on limitations of the soils, the risk of damage when they are used, and the way they respond to treatment.

In this system, all the kinds of soil are grouped at three levels, the capability class, subclass, and unit. The eight capability classes in the broadest grouping are designated by Roman numerals I through VIII. Class I soils have few limitations, the widest range of use, and the least risk of damage when they are used. The soils in the other classes have progressively greater natural limitations. In class VIII are soils and landforms so rough, shallow, or otherwise limited do not produce worthwhile yields of crops, forage, or wood products.

The subclasses indicate major kinds of limitations within the classes. Within most of the classes there can be up to four subclasses. The subclass is indicated by adding a small letter, e, w, s, or c, to the class numeral, for example, "Ie". The letter "e" shows the main limitation risk is erosion unless close-growing plant cover is maintained. A "w" means that water in or on the soil will interfere with plant growth or cultivation (in some soils wetness can be partly corrected by artificial drainage). An "s" shows the soil is limited mainly because of shallow, droughty, or stony. Finally, a "c" when used, indicates that the chief limitation is climate that is too cold or too dry.

In class I there are no subclasses, because the soils of this class have few or no limitations. Class V can contain, at the most, only subclasses "w", "s", and "c", because these soils have little or no susceptibility to erosion but have other limitations limiting their use largely to pasture, range, woodland, or wildlife.

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA, CONSERVATION AND SURVEY DIVISION

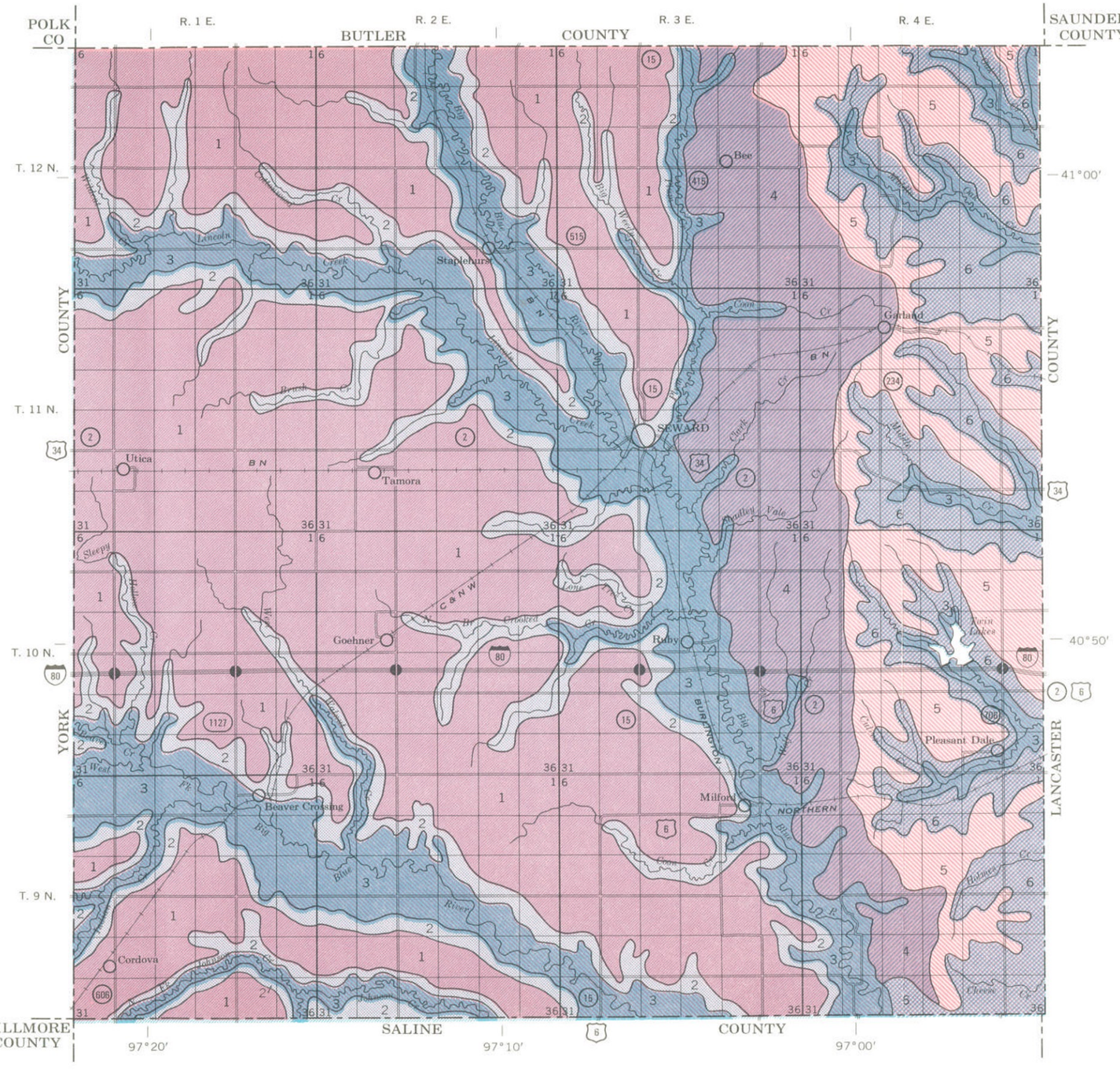
GENERAL SOIL MAP

SEWARD COUNTY, NEBRASKA

Scale 1:190,080

1 0 1 2 3 4 Miles

N



SOIL ASSOCIATIONS *

1 Hastings-Fillmore-Butler association: Nearly level to gently sloping soils that have a silty surface layer and a loamy to clayey subsoil; on uplands mantled with loess and in depressions

2 Hastings-Geary association: Moderately sloping to steep soils that are silty throughout; on uplands mantled with loess

3 Hobbs-Hall association: Nearly level soils that are silty throughout; on bottom lands and stream terraces

4 Hastings-Wymore association: Nearly level to moderately sloping soils that have a silty surface layer and silty or clayey subsoil; on uplands mantled with loess

5 Pawnee-Sharpsburg association: Gently sloping to moderately sloping soils that have a loamy or silty surface layer and clayey to silty subsoil; on uplands mantled with loess and glacial till

6 Burchard-Steinauer association: Moderately sloping to steep, loamy soils on uplands of glacial till

* Texture refers to the whole profile of the major soils unless otherwise stated.

Compiled 1972

Each area outlined on this map consists of more than one kind of soil. The map is thus meant for general planning rather than a basis for decisions on the use of specific tracts.

Within the subclasses, there are additional capability units. These groups of soils are enough alike to be suited to the same crops and pasture plants, to require similar management, and to have similar productivity and other responses to management. Thus, the capability unit is a convenient grouping for making many statements about management of soils. Capability units are generally identified by numbers assigned locally, for example, IIe-1 or IIIe-1.

Soils are classified in capability classes, subclasses, and units in accordance with the degree and kind of their permanent limitations. This is done without consideration to major and expensive land forming that would change the slope, depth, or other characteristics of the soil; and without consideration of possible but unlikely major reclamation projects.

The eight classes in the capability system and the subclasses and units in this county are described in the list that follows.

Soil Capability System, Seward County, Nebraska

Class I Soils that have a few limitations that restrict their use. These soils are suitable for intensive cultivation over long periods and do not require special practices other than those used for good farming. (No subclasses).

Class II Soils that have some limitations that reduce the choice of plants or require moderate conservation practices. They are suitable for tiled crops, pasture, or woodland.

Class III Soils that have severe limitations that reduce the choice of plants, or require special conservation practices, or both. These soils are suitable for tilled crops, pasture, woodland, or wildlife.

Class IV Soils that have very severe limitations that restrict the choice of plants, require very careful management, or both. They are suited to tilled crops, but need intensive management. They are also suited to pasture, woodland, or wildlife.

Class V Soils are not likely to erode but have other limitations, impractical to remove, that limit their use largely to pasture, range, woodland, or wildlife.

Class VI Soils have severe limitations that make them generally unsuited to cultivation and limit their use largely to pasture or range, woodland, or wildlife.

Class VII Soils have very severe limitations that make them unsuited to cultivation and that restrict their use largely to pasture or range, woodland, or wildlife.

Class VIII Soils and landforms have limitations that preclude their use for commercial plants and restrict their use to recreation, wildlife, or water supply, or to esthetic purposes.

TABLE 30: SOIL CAPABILITY TABLE – DRYLAND AND IRRIGATED

Map Symbol	Mapping Units	Capability unit	
		Dryland	Irrigated
BdC	Burchard Clay loam, 7 to 12 percent slope	IIIe	IVe
BdC2	Burchard Clay loam, 7 to 12 percent slopes, eroded	IIIe	IVe
BRD	Burchard – Steinaur clay loams, 12 to 17 percent slopes	IVe	-
BRD2	Burchard – Steinaur clay loams , 12 to 17 percent slopes eroded	IVe	-
BT	Butler – Slickspots complex	IIIs	IIIs
Bu	Butler silt loam	IIw	IIw
2Bu	Butler silt loam, terraced	IIw	IIw
By	Breaks – Alluvial land complex	VIe	-
Ce	Crete silt loam 0 to 1 percent slopes	IIs	IIs
CeA	Crete silt loam, 1 to 3 percent slopes	IIe	IIe
2CeA	Crete silt loam, 1 to 3 percent slopes	IIe	IIe
Fm	Fillmore silt loam	IIIw	IIs
GeB2	Geary silty loam, 3 to 7 percent slopes eroded	IIIe	IIIe
GeC2	Geary silty loam, 7 to 12 percent slopes eroded	IVe	IVe
GeC3	Geary silty loam, 7 to 12 percent slopes, severely eroded	IVe	-
GeE3	Geary silty loam, 12 to 31 percent slopes, severely eroded	VIe	-
Ha	Hall silt loam, 0 to 1 percent slopes	I	I
HaA	Hall silt loam, 1 to 3 percent slopes	IIe	IIe
2Hb	Hobbs silt loam, occasionally flooded	IIw	IIw
Hb	Hobbs silt loam, 0 to 1 percent slopes	I	I
HbA	Hobbs silt loam, 1 to 3 percent slopes	IIe	IIe
HbB	Hobbs silt loam, 3 to 7 percent slopes	IIIe	IIIe
Hc	Hobbs silty clay loam, o to 1 percent slopes	I	I
Hd	Hord silt loam, 0 to 1 percent slopes	I	I
HnA3	Hastings soils, 1 to 3 percent slopes, severely eroded	IIIe	IIe
Hsz	Hall – slickspot complex, 1 to 3 percent slopes	IIIs	IIIs
Hs	Hastings silt loam, 0 to 1 percent slopes	I	I
HsA	Hastings silt loam, 1 to 3 percent slopes	IIe	IIe
HtA2	Hastings silty clay loam, 1 to 3 percent slopes, eroded	IIe	IIe
HtB2	Hastings silty clay loam, 3 to 7 percent slopes, eroded	IIIe	IIIe
2HtB2	Hastings silty clay loam, terrace, 3 to 7 percent slopes, eroded	IIIe	IIIe
HtB3	Hastings silty clay loam, 3 to 7 percent slopes, severely eroded	IIIe	IIIe
HtC2	Hastings silty clay loam, 7 to 12 percent slopes, severely eroded	IVe	IVe
HtD3	Hastings silty clay loam, 12 to 17 percent slopes, severely eroded	VIe	-
Lb	Lamo silty clay loam	IIw	IIw
LonC2	Longford silty clay loam, 5 to 12 percent slopes, eroded	IVe	-
M	Marsh	VIIIw	-
MlD2	Meadin soils, 7 to 31 percent slopes, eroded	VIs	-
MrC2	Morrill clay loam, 7 to 12 percent slopes, eroded	IIIe	IVe
PaB3	Pawnee soils, 3 to 7 percent slopes, severely eroded	IVe	-
PaC3	Pawnee soils, 7 to 12 percent slopes, severely eroded	VIe	-
PwB	Pawnee clay loam, 3 to 7 percent slopes	IIIe	IIIe
PwB2	Pawnee clay loam, 3 to 7 percent slopes, eroded	IIIe	IIIe
PwD	Pawnee clay loam, 7 to 12 percent slopes	Ive	-
PwD2	Pawnee clay loam, 7 to 12 percent slopes, eroded	IVe	-
RB	Rough broken land, loess	VIIe	-
RBg	Rough broken ground, till	VIIe	-
Sc	Scott silt loam	IVw	IVw
ShB2	Sharpsburg silty clay loam, 3 to 7 percent slopes, eroded	IIIe	IIIe
ShB3	Sharpsburg silty clay loam, 3 to 7 percent slopes, severely eroded	IIIe	IIIe
ShD2	Sharpsburg silty clay loam, 7 to 12 percent slopes, eroded	IIIe	IVe
ShD3	Sharpsburg silty clay loam, 7 to 12 percent slopes, severely eroded	IIIe	IVe
ShE3	Sharpsburg silty clay loam, 12 to 17 percent slopes, severely eroded	IVe	-
SkC	Shelby clay loam, 7 to 12 percent slopes	IIIe	IVe
SkC2	Shelby clay loam, 5 to 12 percent slopes, eroded	IIIe	IVe
StC2	Steinauer clay loam, 7 to 12 percent slopes, eroded	IVe	-
StE	Steinauer clay loam, 12 to 31 percent slopes	VIe	-
StE2	Steinauer clay loam, 12 to 31 percent slopes, eroded	VIe	-
Sy	Silty alluvial land	VIw	-
Wt	Wymore silty clay loam, 0 to 1 percent slopes	IIs	IIs
WtA	Wymore silty clay loam, 1 to 3 percent slopes	IIe	IIe
WtB2	Wymore silty clay loam, 3 to 7 percent slopes, eroded	IIIe	IIIe
Wx	Wet alluvial land	Vw	-
WyC2	Wymore soils, 7 to 9 percent slopes, eroded	IVe	-

Source: Soil Survey of Seward County, Nebraska, United States Department of Agriculture, 1974

Table 30 indicates by soil classification as well as the capability unit, either dryland or irrigated. Each soil type is listed with the identified rating, as discussed previously. The data for dryland capability, in the Table, indicate that Seward County has 18 of the total 62, or 29.0%, soil types listed as a Class I or Class II. However, for those soils rated a Class V or greater, there were 12 of 62, or 19.4%, rated in these classes. The remaining 32 soil types or 51.6% were rate either a Class III or Class IV.

The data change slightly from dryland capability to irrigated capability. With only 40 total soils rated under irrigated capability, a total of 20 soil types, or 50%, were rated a Class I or Class II soil. The remaining 20 soil types fell into either a Class III or Class IV capability. When irrigated, there was no Class V or higher ratings. All of the soils rated as a Class V or higher in dryland capability were eliminated when irrigation was added to the soil.

SOIL SUITABILITY

The characteristics of soils play a major role in determining the potential compatibility of certain uses on the land. The ability to absorb certain liquids such as water and wastewater are different for certain types. In addition, as noted in the capabilities section, how sensitive an area is to erosion or how shallow the soils are in an area can have a major impact on the ability to develop a specific area of Seward County. These conditions and how they factor into a soils ability to support certain types of uses is referred to limitations.

Soil Limitations

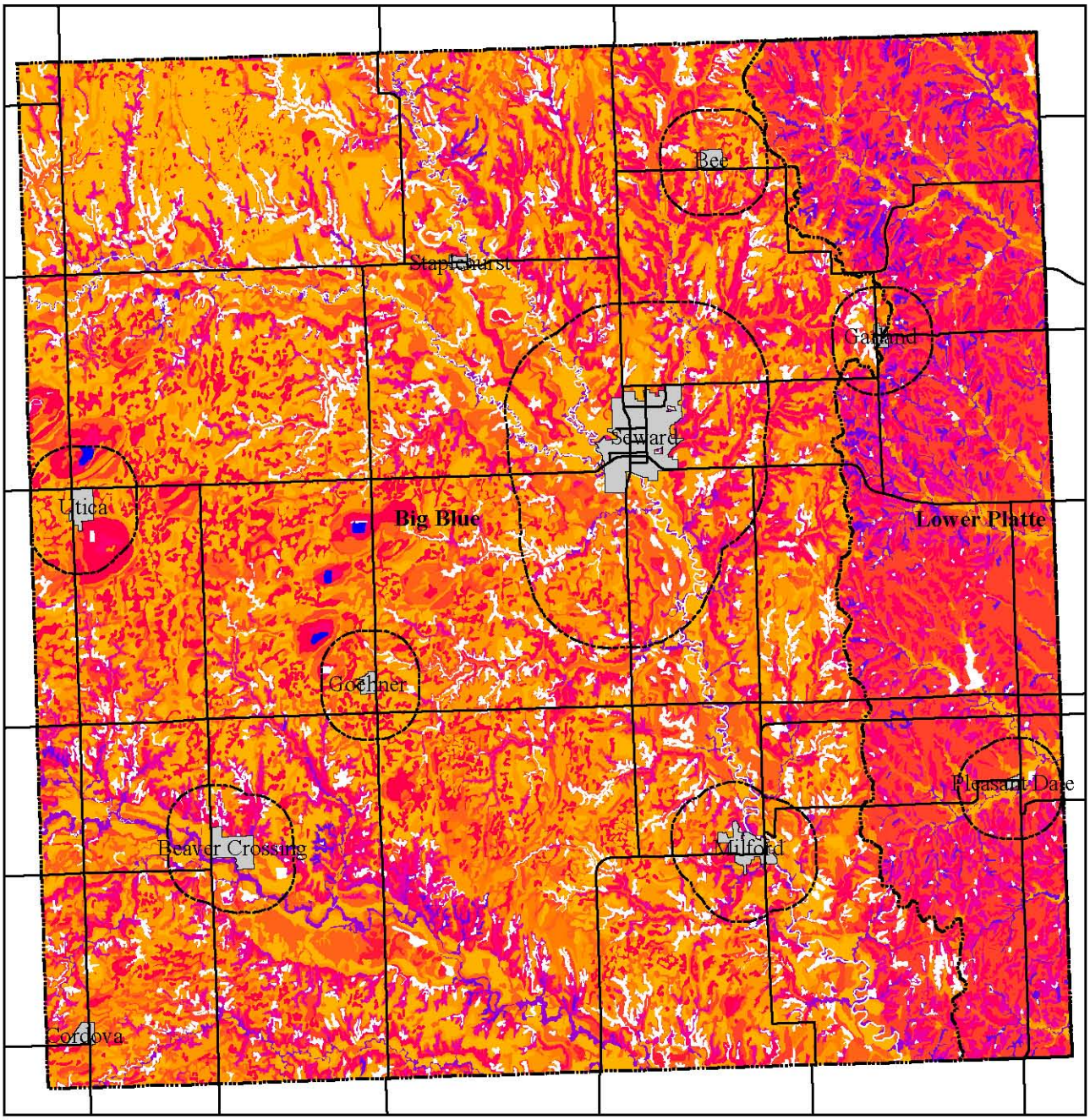
The interpretations are based on the estimated engineering properties of soils, on test data for soils in the survey area and others nearby or adjoining, and on the experience of engineers and soil scientists with the soils of Seward County. Ratings are used to summarize limitation or suitability of the soils for all listed purposes other than for drainage of cropland and pasture; irrigation; pond reservoir areas; embankments, dikes, and levees; and terraces and diversions.

Soil limitations are indicated by the ratings slight, moderate, and severe. Slight means that soil properties are generally favorable for the rated use, or in other words, that limitations are minor and easily overcome. Moderate means that some soil properties are unfavorable but can be overcome or modified by special planning and design. Severe means that soil properties are so unfavorable and so difficult to correct or overcome as to require major soil reclamation, special designs, or intensive maintenance. For some uses, the rating of severe is divided to obtain ratings of severe and very severe. Very severe means that one or more soil properties are so unfavorable for a particular use that overcoming the limitations is most difficult and costly and commonly is not practical for the rated use.

Conventionally, the septic tank-absorption field system has proven satisfactory for many areas when properly designed, installed, and maintained. However, conditions do exist where this system is not suitable. Areas of seasonal high groundwater tables, bedrock in close proximity to the soil surface, or soils having very fast or very slow percolation rates are not suited for the septic tank-absorption field system. Other limitations for this system include topography, small lot size and proximity to water supplies used for drinking or recreation.

TABLE 31: SOIL CAPABILITY TABLE

Soil Type	Drainage Class	Dwellings w/ Basements	Dwellings w/o Basements	Flooding Frequency	Hydric Soils	Hydric Group	Paths / Trails	Prime Farmland	Local Roads and Streets	Septic Tank Absorption	Sewage Lagoons
BdC	Well drained	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited	None	Not Hydric	B	Not Limited	Statewide Importance	Somewhat Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited
BdC2	Well drained	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited	None	Not Hydric	B	Not Limited	Statewide Importance	Somewhat Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited
BRD	Well drained	Very Limited	Very Limited	None	Not Hydric	B	Not Limited	Not prime	Very Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited
BRD2	Well drained	Very Limited	Very Limited	None	Not Hydric	B	Not Limited	Not prime	Very Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited
BT	Somewhat poorly drained	Very Limited	Very Limited	None	Partially Hydric	D	Very Limited	Not prime	Very Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited
Bu	Somewhat poorly drained	Very Limited	Very Limited	None	Not Hydric	D	Very Limited	All areas prime	Very Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited
2Bu	Somewhat poorly drained	Very Limited	Very Limited	None	Not Hydric	D	Very Limited	All areas prime	Very Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited
By	Well drained	Very Limited	Very Limited	Occasional	Not Hydric	B	Very Limited	Not prime	Very Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited
Ce	Moderately well drained	Very Limited	Very Limited	None	Not Hydric	C	Not Limited	All areas prime	Very Limited	Very Limited	Somewhat Limited
CeA	Moderately well drained	Very Limited	Very Limited	None	Not Hydric	C	Not Limited	All areas prime	Very Limited	Very Limited	Somewhat Limited
2CeA	Moderately well drained	Very Limited	Very Limited	None	Not Hydric	C	Not Limited	All areas prime	Very Limited	Very Limited	Somewhat Limited
Fm	Somewhat poorly drained	Very Limited	Very Limited	None	All Hydric	D	Very Limited	Not prime	Very Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited
GeB2	Well drained	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited	None	Not Hydric	B	Not Limited	All areas prime	Very Limited	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited
GeC2	Well drained	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited	None	Not Hydric	B	Not Limited	Not prime	Very Limited	Somewhat Limited	Very Limited
GeC3	Well drained	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited	None	Not Hydric	B	Very Limited	Not prime	Very Limited	Somewhat Limited	Very Limited
GeE3	Well drained	Very Limited	Very Limited	None	Not Hydric	B	Very Limited	Not prime	Very Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited
Ha	Well drained	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited	None	Not Hydric	B	Not Limited	All areas prime	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited
HaA	Well drained	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited	None	Not Hydric	B	Not Limited	All areas prime	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited
2Hb	Poorly drained	Very Limited	Very Limited	Occasional	All Hydric	D	Not Limited	All areas prime	Very Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited
Hb	Well drained	Very Limited	Very Limited	Rare	Not Hydric	B	Not Limited	All areas prime	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited
HbA	Well drained	Very Limited	Very Limited	Rare	Not Hydric	B	Not Limited	All areas prime	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited
HbB	Well drained	Very Limited	Very Limited	Rare	Not Hydric	B	Not Limited	All areas prime	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited
Hc	Well drained	Very Limited	Very Limited	Rare	Not Hydric	B	Not Limited	All areas prime	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited
Hd	Well drained	Not Limited	Very Limited	None	Not Hydric	B	Not Limited	All areas prime	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited
HnA3	Well drained	Very Limited	Very Limited	None	Not Hydric	B	Not Limited	Statewide Importance	Very Limited	Very Limited	Somewhat Limited
Hsz	Well drained	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited	None	Not Hydric	B	Not Limited	All areas prime	Somewhat Limited	Very Limited	Somewhat Limited
Hs	Well drained	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited	None	Not Hydric	B	Not Limited	All areas prime	Somewhat Limited	Very Limited	Somewhat Limited
HsA	Well drained	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited	None	Not Hydric	B	Not Limited	Not prime	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited
HtA2	Well drained	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited	None	Partially Hydric	B	Not Limited	All areas prime	Somewhat Limited	Very Limited	Somewhat Limited
HtB2	Well drained	Somewhat Limited	Very Limited	None	Not Hydric	B	Not Limited	All areas prime	Very Limited	Very Limited	Somewhat Limited
2HtB2	Well drained	Very Limited	Somewhat Limited	None	Not Hydric	B	Not Limited	All areas prime	Somewhat Limited	Very Limited	Somewhat Limited
HtB3	Well drained	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited	None	Not Hydric	B	Not Limited	Statewide Importance	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited
HtC2	Well drained	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited	None	Not Hydric	B	Not Limited	Not prime	Somewhat Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited
HtD3	Well drained	Somewhat Limited	Very Limited	None	Not Hydric	B	Very Limited	Not prime	Very Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited
Lb	Poorly drained	Very Limited	Very Limited	Occasional	All Hydric	C	Somewhat Limited	Not prime	Very Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited
LonC2	Well drained	Very Limited	Very Limited	None	Not Hydric	C	Not Limited	Not prime	Very Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited
M	Very poorly drained	Very Limited	Very Limited	None	All Hydric	D	Very Limited	Not prime	Very Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited
MlD2	Excessively drained	Very Limited	Very Limited	None	Not Hydric	A	Somewhat Limited	Not prime	Very Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited
MrC2	Well drained	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited	None	Not Hydric	B	Not Limited	Statewide Importance	Somewhat Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited
PaB3	Moderately well drained	Very Limited	Very Limited	None	Not Hydric	D	Very Limited	Not prime	Very Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited
PaC3	Moderately well drained	Very Limited	Very Limited	None	Not Hydric	D	Very Limited	Not prime	Very Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited
PwB	Moderately well drained	Very Limited	Very Limited	None	Not Hydric	D	Not Limited	Statewide Importance	Very Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited
PwB2	Moderately well drained	Very Limited	Very Limited	None	Not Hydric	D	Not Limited	Statewide Importance	Very Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited
PwD	Moderately well drained	Very Limited	Very Limited	None	Not Hydric	D	Not Limited	Not prime	Very Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited
PwD2	Moderately well drained	Very Limited	Very Limited	None	Not Hydric	D	Not Limited	Not prime	Very Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited
RB	Well drained	Very Limited	Very Limited	None	Not Hydric	B	Very Limited	Not prime	Very Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited
RBg	Well drained	Very Limited	Very Limited	None	Not Hydric	B	Very Limited	Not prime	Very Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited
Sc	Poorly drained	Very Limited	Very Limited	None	All Hydric	D	Very Limited	Not prime	Very Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited
ShB2	Well drained	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited	None	Not Hydric	B	Not Limited	All areas prime	Very Limited	Very Limited	Somewhat Limited
ShB3	Well drained	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited	None	Not Hydric	B	Not Limited	Statewide Importance	Very Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited
ShD2	Well drained	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited	None	Not Hydric	B	Not Limited	Statewide Importance	Very Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited
ShD3	Well drained	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited	None	Not Hydric	B	Very Limited	Statewide Importance	Very Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited
ShE3	Well drained	Very Limited	Very Limited	None	Not Hydric	B	Very Limited	Not prime	Very Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited
SkC	Well drained	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited	None	Not Hydric	B	Not Limited	Statewide Importance	Somewhat Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited
SkC2	Well drained	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited	None	Not Hydric	B	Not Limited	Statewide Importance	Somewhat Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited
StC2	Well drained	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited	None	Not Hydric	B	Not Limited	Not prime	Somewhat Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited
StE	Well drained	Very Limited	Very Limited	None	Not Hydric	B	Somewhat Limited	Not prime	Very Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited
StE2	Well drained	Very Limited	Very Limited	None	Not Hydric	B	Somewhat Limited	Not prime	Very Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited
Sy	Well drained	Very Limited	Very Limited	Frequent	Not Hydric	B	Somewhat Limited	Not prime	Very Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited
Wt	Moderately well drained	Very Limited	Very Limited	None	Not Hydric	D	Not Limited	All areas prime	Very Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited
WtA	Moderately well drained	Very Limited	Very Limited	None	Not Hydric	D	Not Limited	All areas prime	Very Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited
WtB2	Moderately well drained	Very Limited	Very Limited	None	Not Hydric	D	Not Limited	All areas prime	Very Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited
Wx	Very poorly drained	Very Limited	Very Limited	Occasional	All Hydric	D	Very Limited	Not prime	Very Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited
WyC2	Moderately well drained	Very Limited	Very Limited	None	Not Hydric	D	Very Limited	Not prime	Very Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited



Soil Capability - Dry Land: Figure 11

Seward County, Nebraska

Legend

Soil Capability Units

- No Data
- I
- IIe
- IIs
- IIw
- IIIe
- IIIs
- IIIw
- IVe
- IVw
- Vw
- VIe
- VIs
- VIw
- VIIe
- VIIIw

- Major Highways
- Incorporated Cities, Towns and Villages
- River Basins

N W E S

0 0.5 1 2 3 4 Miles

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Slope

The slope of the soil has a major impact on the ability to use a piece of land for specific uses. The natural slope is somewhat determined by the type of soil association. Slope is a major determining factor in soil suitability with regard to septic absorption, sewage lagoons, prime farmland, and dwelling units.

Figure 12 indicates the percent slope of the land within Seward County. The data were taken from the United States Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS). The map was generated using SSURGO soil data from this agency. The data are tied to actual soil types and associations and then map based upon the specific locations of these soil types.

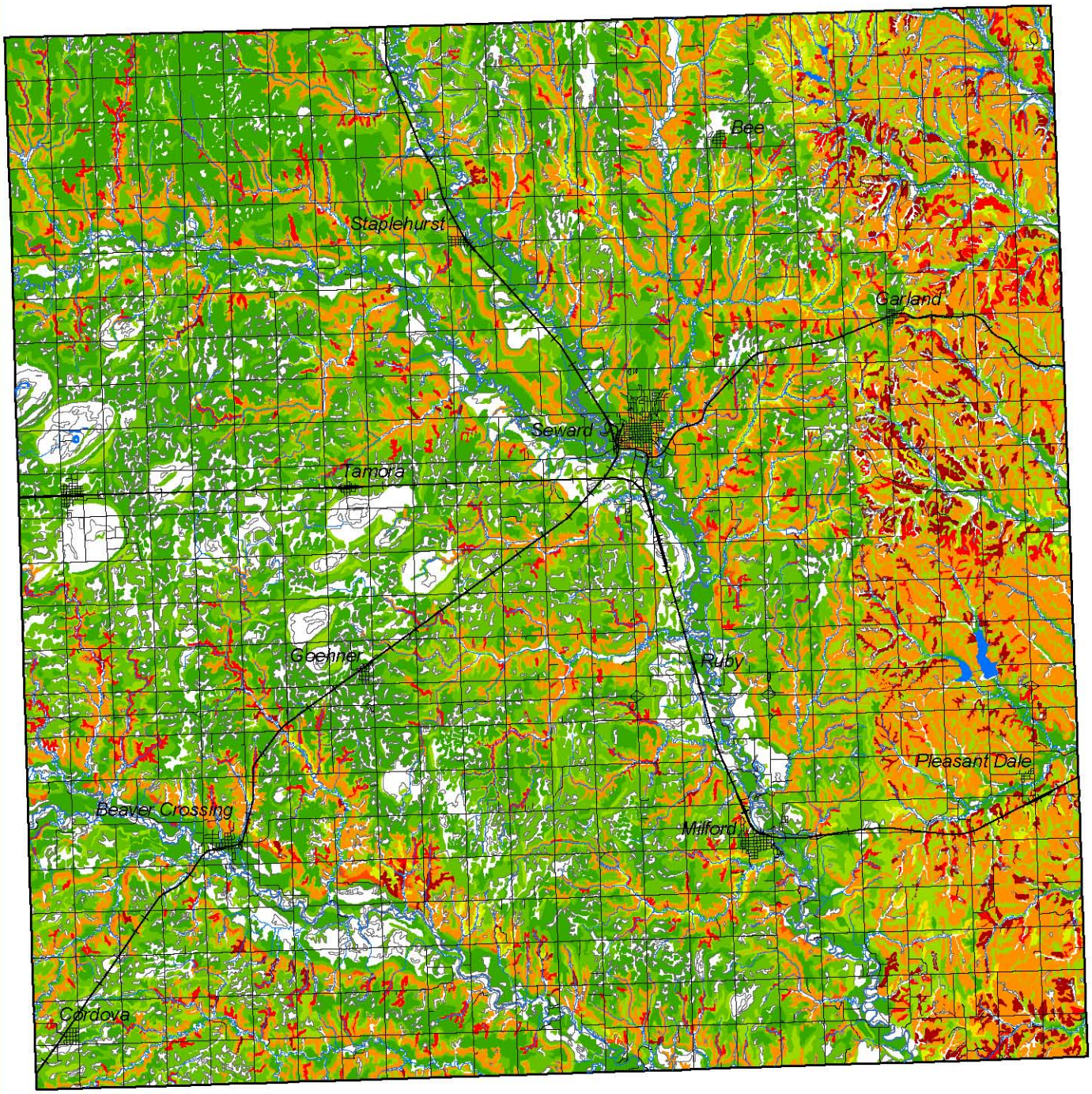
The map in Figure 12 indicates that approximately 75% of Seward County has slight slopes. However, slopes are steeper in the eastern 25% of the county and along the river and creeks of the county. The slopes on the eastern portion of Seward County range from 7 to 12% to 12 to 31%. The largest portion of the area is categorized as being within the 7 to 12% category. Not surprising, the greatest development pressures in Seward County, outside the communities, is in these steeper sloped areas.

Prime Farmland

The prime farmland **c**lassification identifies map units as prime farmland, farmland of statewide importance, or farmland of local importance. Farmland classification identifies the location and extent of the most suitable land for producing food, feed, fiber, forage, and oilseed crops (USDA, 2004)

In general, prime farmlands have an adequate and dependable water supply from precipitation or irrigation, a favorable temperature and growing season, acceptable acidity or alkalinity, acceptable salt and sodium content, and few or no rocks. They are permeable to water and air. Prime farmlands are not excessively erodible or saturated with water for a long period of time, and they either do not flood frequently or are protected from flooding.

Seward County has an abundance of prime farmland. This can be seen in Figure 13, with most of the prime farmland occurring in the western and central portions of the county. Due to the importance of prime farmland the county may want to add special protection to these areas identified.



Percent of Slope: Figure 12

Seward County, Nebraska

Legend

Slope

- 0 to 1 percent
- 1 to 3 percent
- 3 to 7 percent
- 5 to 12 percent
- 7 to 9 percent
- 7 to 12 percent
- 7 to 31 percent
- 12 to 17 percent
- 12 to 31 percent
- Not Rated

N W E S

0 0.5 1 2 3 4 Miles

Prepared By: JEO Consulting group, Inc
Soil's Data Soils Survey Geographic (SSURGO) Data USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service
GIS Program: ArcView 9.0

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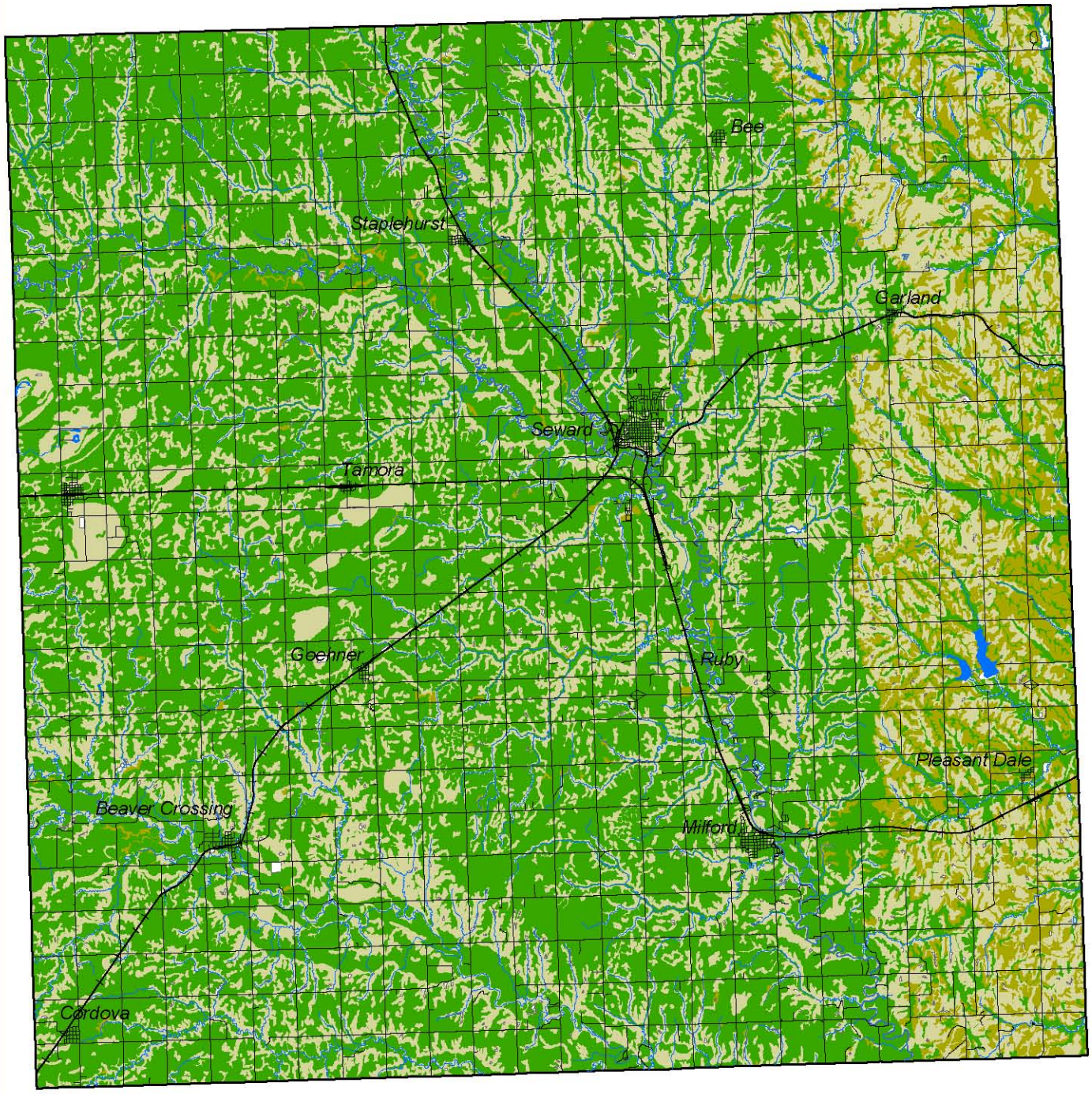

Prime Farmland: Figure 13

Seward County, Nebraska

Legend

- All areas are prime farmland
- Farmland of statewide importance
- Not prime farmland
- Not Rated

N
W E
S

0 0.5 1 2 3 4 Miles

Prepared By: JEO Consulting group, Inc
Soil Data Soil Survey Geographic (SSURGO) Data USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service
GIS Process: ArcView 9.0

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Dwellings without Basements and Dwellings with Basements

The ability for soils to handle different structural uses such as residential dwellings is dependant upon a number of conditions. It is these conditions that determine the level of suitability of the soil for this specific use. Based upon the data in the Soil Survey of Seward County, Nebraska, there are a number of factors that influence the suitability of the soil. These factors are:

- bearing capacity of the soil,
- shrink-swell capacity of the soil,
- how subject the soil is to ponding and/or flooding,
- the level of the water table, and
- moisture levels in the soil

The soils for this category are rated as Not Limited, Somewhat Limited, or Very Limited. Any one of these factors can play a significant role in the type of construction methods that will need to be employed in constructing a residence in Seward County. Thus, Very Limited suitability does not disqualify the use but merely indicates that special circumstances exist and these need to be accounted for in the design of the structure. Table 30 indicates the specific soil types and the level of suitability for this category; while, Figure 14 and 15 indicate the level of suitability for these uses throughout Seward County.

The majority of Seward County's soils are rated as Somewhat Limited. There are only small patches of area that indicate the soil is Not Limited. Finally, the Very Limited category can be found scattered throughout western Seward County, along the waterways of the county, and in the eastern 25% of the county. Again, the Very Limited category does not halt this use from occurring but indicates that special design considerations need to be implemented. This is true on the eastern side of Seward County where the greatest non-urban growth pressure exists.

Septic tank absorption fields

The typical septic tank-absorption field home sewage treatment system consists of three major components--the septic tank, absorption field, and the soil. In the septic tank, solids are separated from the liquid, undergo anaerobic digestion and are stored as sludge at the bottom of the tank. The liquid (septic tank effluent) flows to the absorption field where it percolates into the soil. The soil acts as a final treatment by removing bacteria, pathogens, fine particles, and some chemicals.

Septic tank absorption fields are subsurface systems of tile, perforated pipe, or plastic chambers that distribute effluent from a septic tank into natural soil. The soil material between depths of 18 inches and six feet is evaluated. The soil properties considered are those that affect both absorption of effluent and construction and operation of the system. Properties that affect absorption are permeability, depth to water table or rock, and susceptibility to flooding. Slope affects difficulty of layout and construction and also the risk of erosion, lateral seepage, and down slope flow of effluent. Large rocks or boulders increase construction costs.

The soils in Seward County, as found in Table 31 and shown in Figure 16, are defined as one of two ways; Somewhat Limit and Very Limited. The majority of Seward County is considered to be Very Limited. This condition is based upon a varying number of reasons including:

- Permeability,
- Slopes,
- Ponding,

- Flooding, and
- High water table

Again, these conditions will need to be addressed when designing and constructing a septic tank and absorption field. In a number of situations, these conditions may be overcome by special designs; however, some of the conditions impacting the construction of this system will completely halt the ability at certain sites.

Sewage Lagoons

The lagoon system is an effective method of home sewage treatment and is well-suited for larger lot areas having very slow soil percolation rates. This system generally discharges home sewage directly into the lagoon. Properly designed and sized lagoons use evaporation for dewatering. Both aerobic and anaerobic decomposition occur in lagoon treatment of home sewage. Anaerobic treatment generally occurs at and near the bottom of lagoons where settled solids and sludge accumulate. This treatment is similar to the anaerobic treatment that occurs in septic tanks. Aerobic treatment occurs in the presence of oxygen and usually occurs near the lagoon surface. Aerobic treatment aids in reducing the odors released during anaerobic treatment and also provides additional treatment of home sewage. Wind movement aids in mixing oxygen into the lagoon surface and helps to increase evaporation.

Proper lagoon sizing and construction is essential for holding and treating home sewage. The surface area of a lagoon must meet specific requirements of the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality's Title 124 and should be designed to meet the number of people living in the home.

In addition, these criteria can be applied to the development of livestock confinement facilities in Seward County. As with the residential uses, the lagoons must be designed for a specific capacity and waste management program. These standards have been established by the Environmental Protection Agency and the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality.

Seward County's ability to use sewage lagoons is better than septic systems. The majority of the county is rated as Somewhat Limited. However, the Very Limited areas are located along waterways and in the eastern 25% of the county (where the rural development pressures currently exist).

The soils in Seward County, as found in Table 31 and shown in Figure 17, are defined as one of two ways; Somewhat Limit and Very Limited. The majority of Seward County is considered to be Very Limited. This condition is based upon a varying number of reasons including:

- Permeability,
- Slopes,
- Ponding,
- Flooding, and
- High water table

Again, these conditions will need to be addressed when designing and constructing a sewage lagoon. In a number of situations, these conditions may be overcome by special designs; however, some of the conditions impacting the construction of this system will completely halt the ability at certain sites.

Local roads and streets

Local roads and street have an all-weather surface expected to carry automobile traffic all year. They have a subgrade of underlying soil materials; a base consisting of gravel, crushed rock, or soil material stabilized with lime or cement; and a flexible or rigid surface, commonly asphalt or concrete. These roads are graded to shed water and have ordinary provisions for drainage. They are built mainly from soil at hand. Soil properties that most affect design and the construction of roads and streets are the load supporting capacity, the stability of the subgrade, and the workability and quantity of cut and fill material available. Design and capacity of roads and streets should follow the AASHTO and Unified classifications of the soil materials.

The soils in Seward County, as found in Table 31 and shown in Figure 18, are defined as one of three ways; Not Limited, Somewhat Limit and Very Limited. The majority of Seward County is considered to be Somewhat Limited. This condition is based upon a varying number of reasons including:

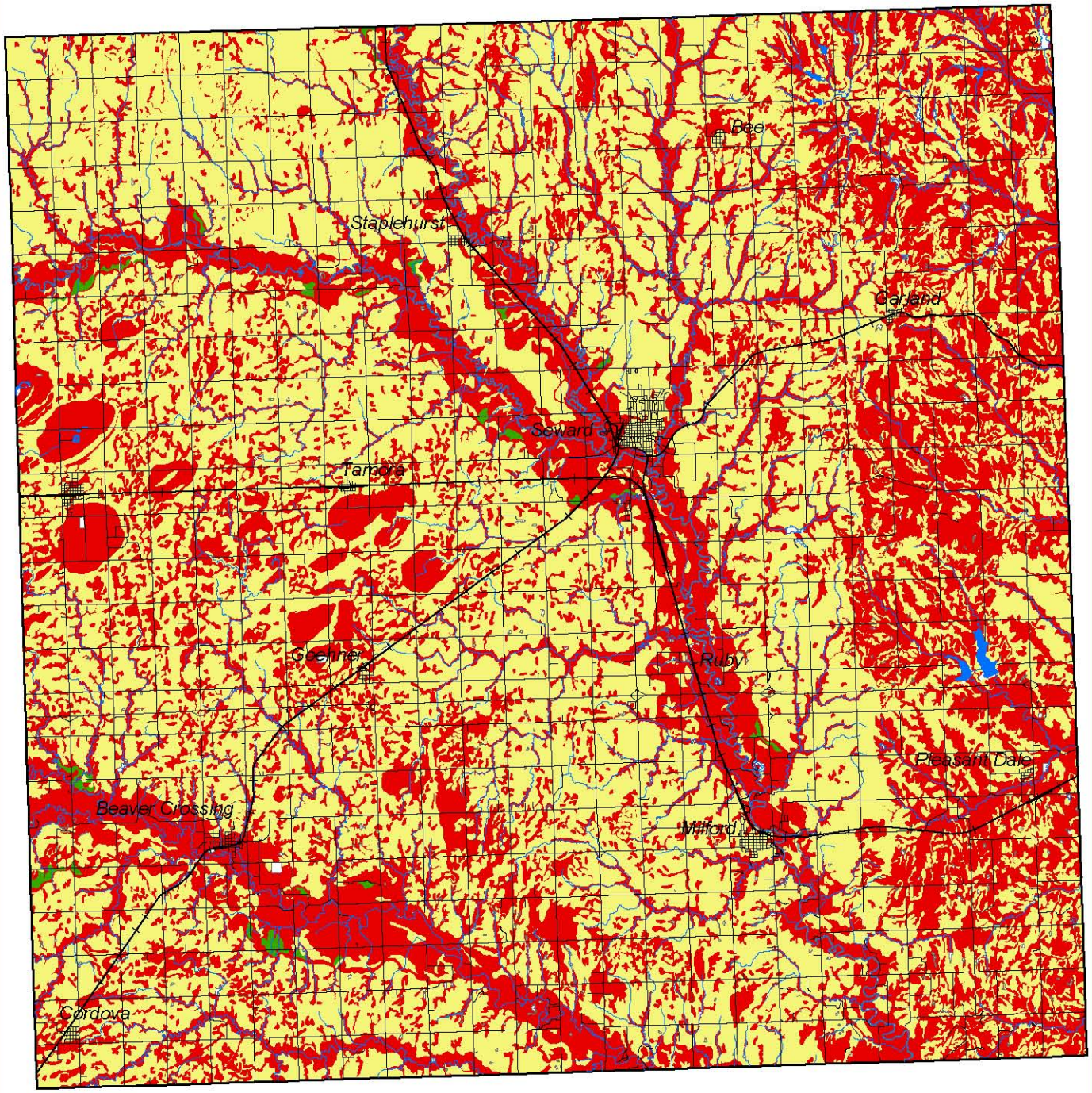
- Moisture,
- Compaction properties,
- Slopes,
- Shrink-swell properties,
- Erosion properties,
- Clay content,
- Frost heave potential, and
- High water table

Again, these conditions will need to be addressed when designing and constructing a roads and streets within Seward County. In a number of situations, these conditions may be overcome by special designs; however, some of the conditions impacting the construction will completely halt the ability at certain sites.

Paths and trails

Paths and trails are similar to local roads and streets; however, the overall design of the subgrade and surface are not nearly as critical. The lower design requirements are based upon the fact that paths and trails carry limited amounts of motorized vehicles; while, they primarily carry foot traffic and bicycles.

The soils in Seward County, as found in Table 31 and shown in Figure 19, are defined as one of three ways; Not Limited, Somewhat Limit and Very Limited. The majority of Seward County is considered to be Not Limited. There are no identified limitation issues identified in the Soil Survey of Seward County for these uses.



Dwellings without Basements: Figure 14

Seward County, Nebraska

Legend

Dwellings w/o Basements

- Not Limited
- Somewhat Limited
- Very Limited
- Not Rated

N W E S

0 0.5 1 2 3 4 Miles

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Soils Data Soils Survey Geographic (SSURGO) Data USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service
GIS Process: ArcView 9.0

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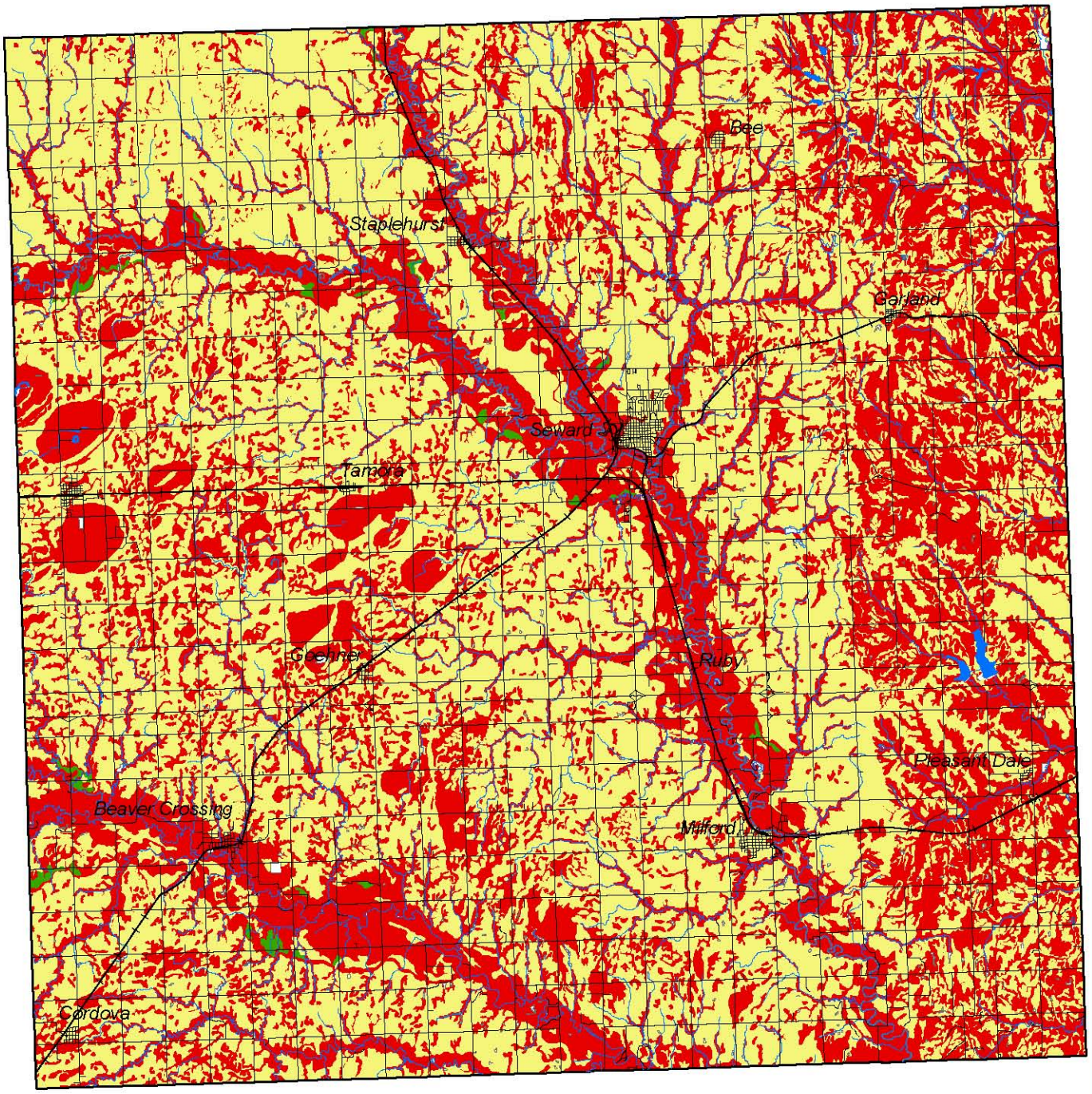

Dwellings with Basements: Figure 15

Seward County, Nebraska

Legend

Dwellings w/ Basements

- Not Limited
- Somewhat Limited
- Very Limited
- Not Rated

N W E S

0 0.5 1 2 3 4 Miles

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Soil Data Soils Survey Geographic (SSURGO) Data USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service
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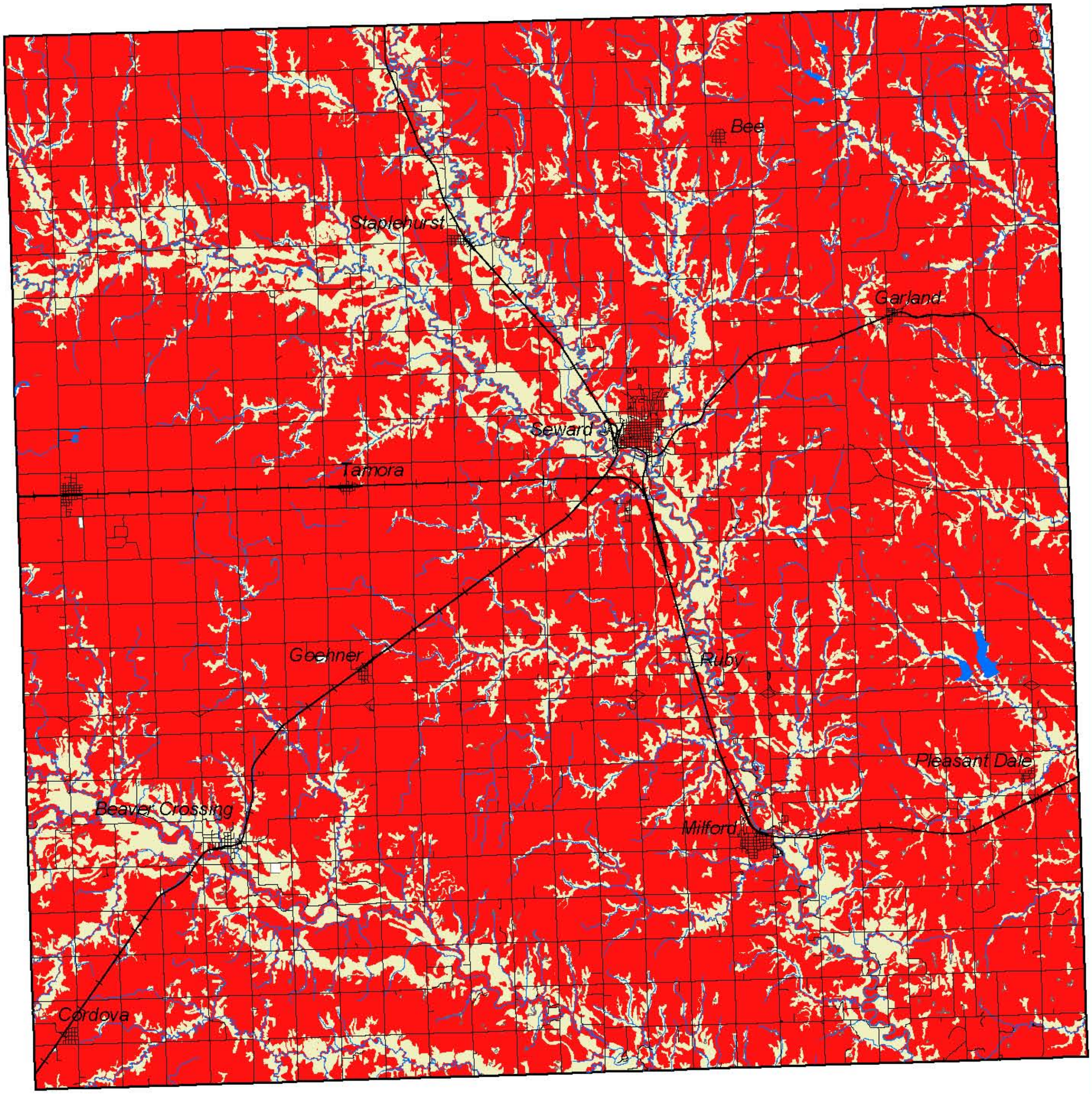

Septic Tanks: Figure 16

Seward County, Nebraska

Legend

Septic Tanks

- Not Limited
- Somewhat Limited
- Very Limited
- Not Rated

N W E S

0 0.5 1 2 3 4 Miles

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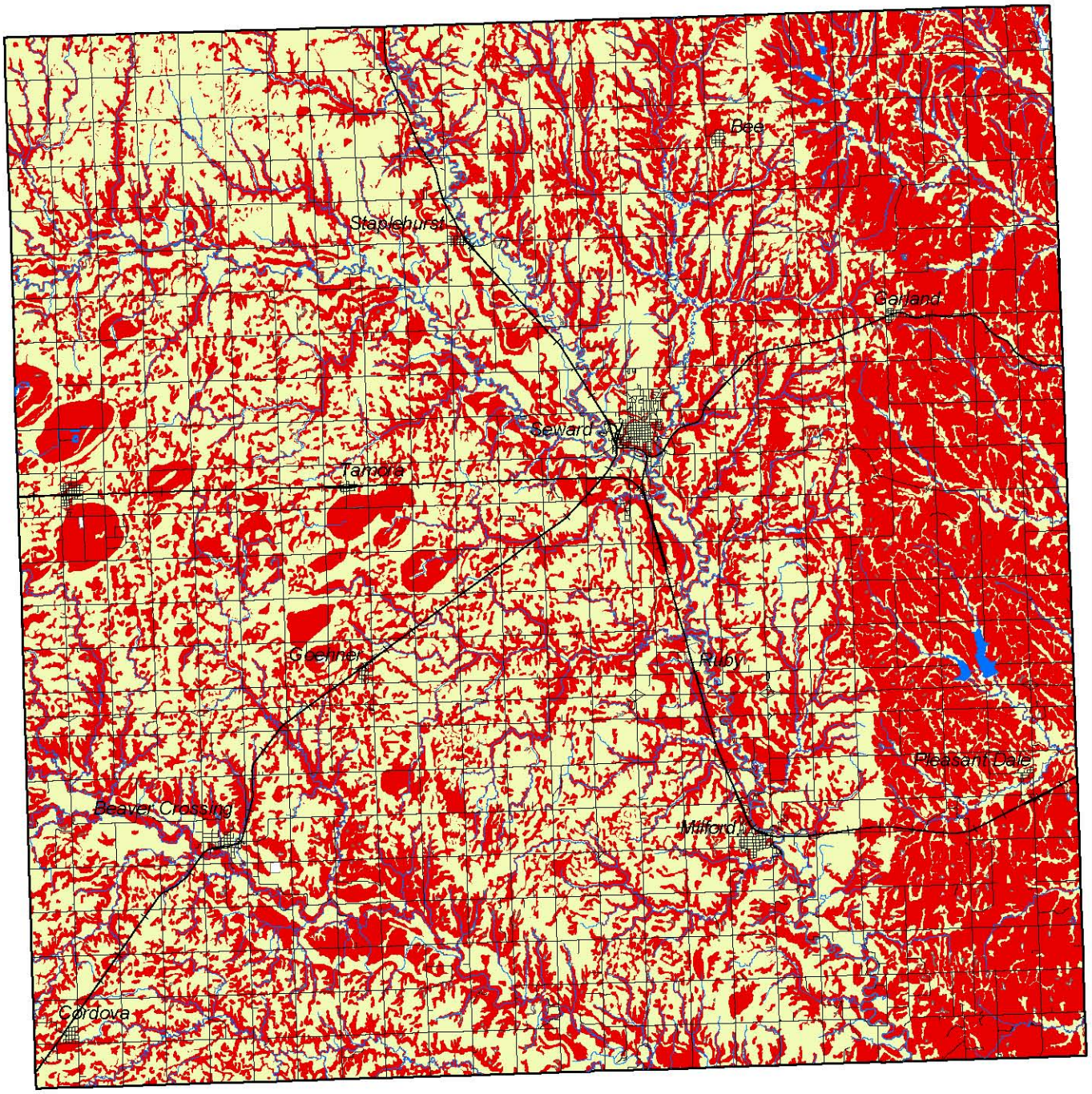

Sewage Lagoons: Figure 17

Seward County, Nebraska

Legend

Sewage Lagoons

- Not Limited
- Somewhat Limited
- Very Limited
- Not Rated

N W E S

0 0.5 1 2 3 4 Miles

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Soils Data Soils Survey Geographic (SSURGO) Data USDA- Natural Resources Conservation Service
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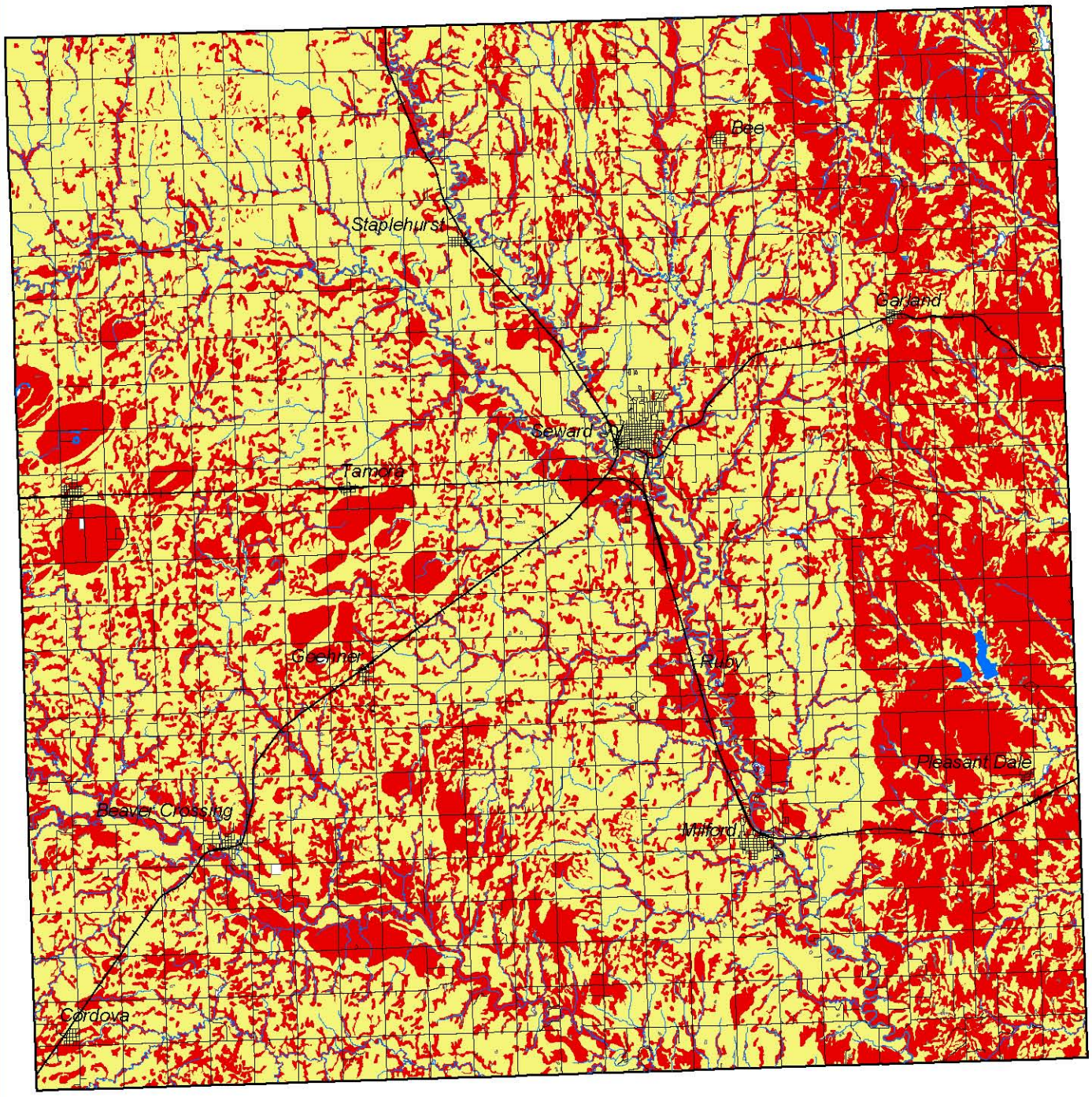

Local Roads and Streets: Figure 18

Seward County, Nebraska

Legend

Local Roads and Streets

- Not Limited
- Somewhat Limited
- Very Limited
- Not Rated

N W E S

0 0.5 1 2 3 4 Miles

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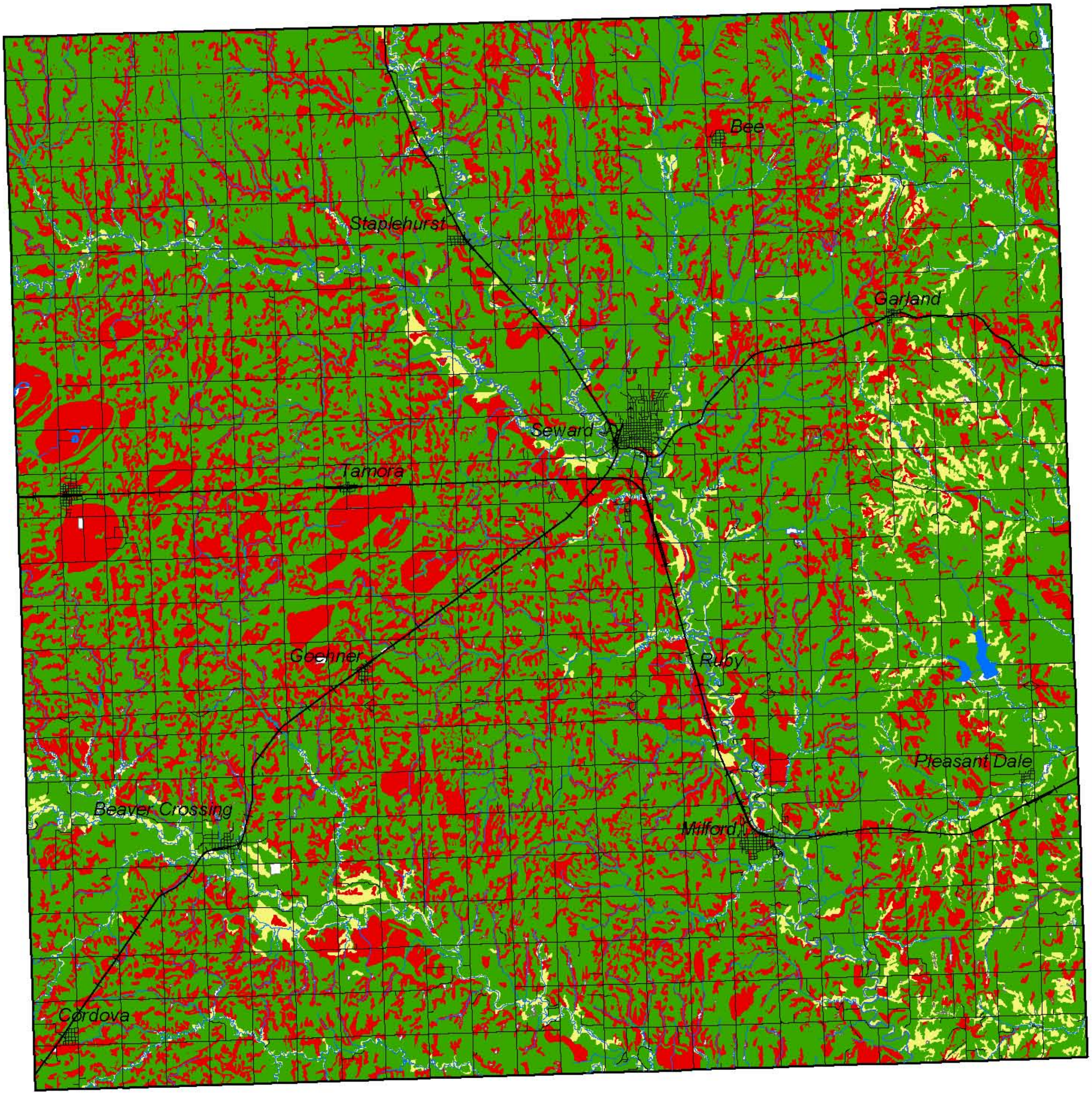

Paths and Trails: Figure 19

Seward County, Nebraska

Legend

Paths and Trails

- Not Limited
- Somewhat Limited
- Very Limited
- Not Rated

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WATER AND THE IMPACT ON SEWARD COUNTY

Water, along with the soil conditions discussed in this section are the two most restricting environmental conditions faced by Seward County. Damaging either one of these two elements will impact the residents of the county for years to come. As with the soil descriptions and conditions, it is important to discuss the water factors impacting Seward County during the present and the coming planning period. Water in this section will apply to two different topics, surface water and ground water.

Surface Water

Surface water applies to any water that runs across a surface and eventually runs into a minor drainage area; eventually ending up in a major waterway such as the Big Blue River. However, a certain portion of surface water can and is absorbed by the soil in order to support plant life including, corn, soybeans and grass lawns.

Figure 20 indicates the two main watersheds in Seward County. These are defined and the drainage areas controlled by the respective Natural Resource District. The two districts within Seward County are the Big Blue Natural Resource District and the Lower Platte South Natural Resource District.

Figure 21 and Table 31 indicate the ability of specific soils to drain. These areas are defined as:

- Excessively drained,
- Well drained,
- Moderately well drained,
- Somewhat poorly drained,
- Poorly drained, and
- Very poorly drained.

Seward County has a mixture of drainage levels throughout the county. The majority appears to be in the Well drained to Excessively drained categories.

Hydric Soils

Hydric soils are formed under conditions of saturation, flooding, or ponding. The process has to occur long enough during the growing season to develop anaerobic conditions in the upper part. Hydric soils along with hydrophytic vegetation and wetland hydrology are used to define wetlands. (USDA/NRCS, Fall 1996)

Figure 21 and Table 30 indicate where the different levels of hydric soils are located in Seward County. The soils are classified as the following:

- All Hydric,
- Partially Hydric, and
- Not Hydric

The majority of the soils in Seward County are considered as Not Hydric. The largest areas of Hydric soils is located in the Tamora and Utica vicinities.

The following data is compiled directly from USDA/NRCS descriptions.

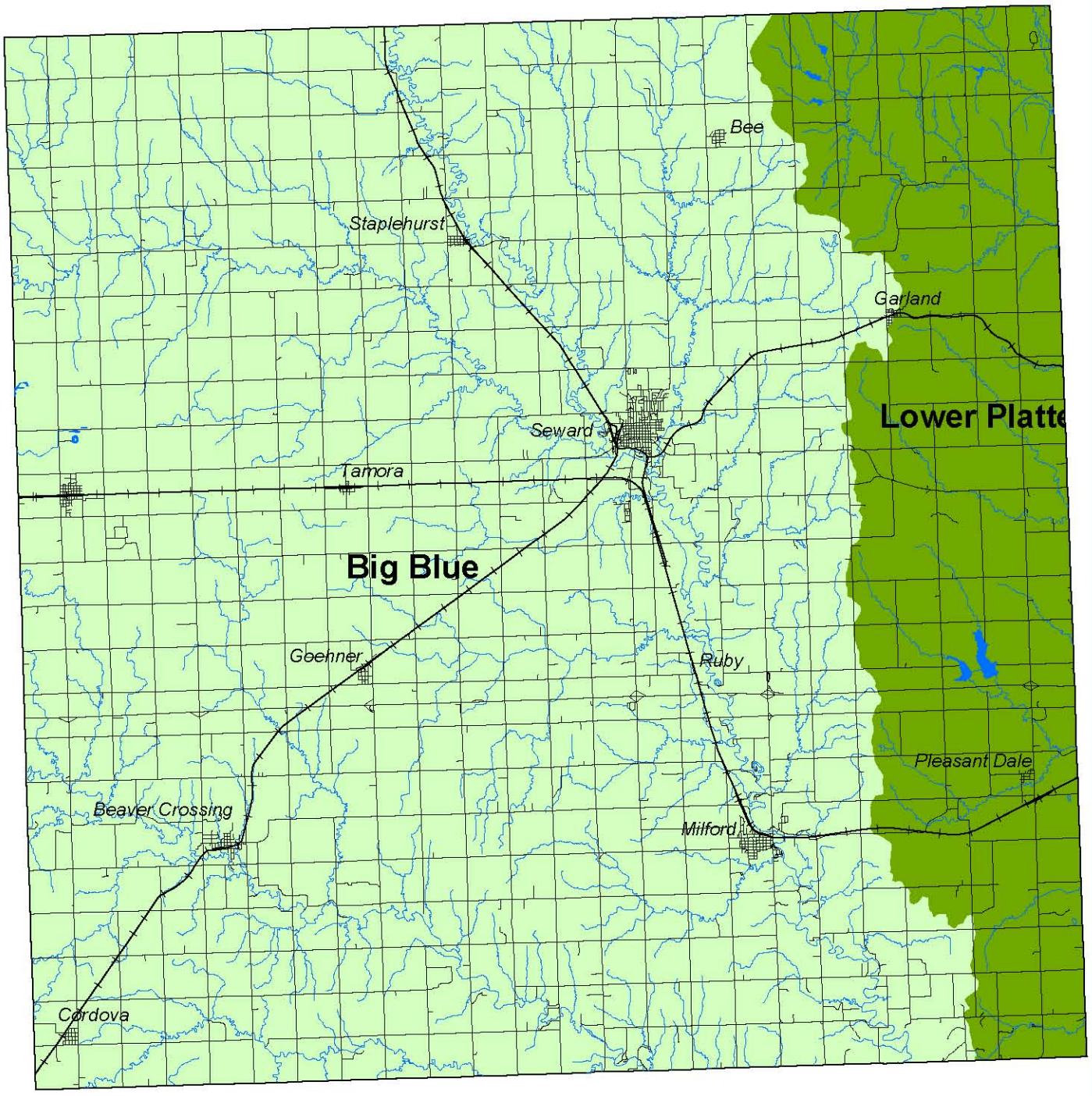
Hydrologic soil groups are based on estimates of runoff potential. Soils are assigned to one of four groups according to the rate of water infiltration when the soils are not protected by vegetation, are thoroughly wet, and receive precipitation

from long-duration storms. The classification by soil type can be found in Table 30.

The soils in the United States are placed into four groups A, B, C, and D, and three dual classes, A/D, B/D, and C/D. Definitions of the classes are as follows:

Hydric Soil Class	Description
A	Soils having a high infiltration rate (low runoff potential) when thoroughly wet. These consist mainly of deep, well drained to excessively drained sands or gravelly sands. These soils have a high rate of water transmission.
B	Soils having a moderate infiltration rate when thoroughly wet. These consist chiefly of moderately deep or deep, moderately well drained or well drained soils that have moderately fine texture to moderately coarse texture. These soils have a moderate rate of water transmission.
C	Soils having a slow infiltration rate when thoroughly wet. These consist chiefly of soils having a layer that impedes the downward movement of water or soils of moderately fine texture or fine texture. These soils have a slow rate of water transmission.
D	Soils having a very slow infiltration rate (high runoff potential) when thoroughly wet. These consist chiefly of clays that have a high shrink-swell potential, soils that have a high water table, soils that have a claypan or clay layer at or near the surface, and soils that are shallow over nearly impervious material. These soils have a very slow rate of water transmission.

Dual hydrologic groups, A/D, B/D, and C/D, are given for certain wet soils that can be adequately drained. The first letter applies to the drained condition, the second to the undrained. Only soils that are rated D in their natural condition are assigned to dual classes.



Watersheds: Figure 20

Seward County, Nebraska

Legend

Watershed

- Big Blue
- Lower Platte

N W E S

0 0.5 1 2 3 4 Miles

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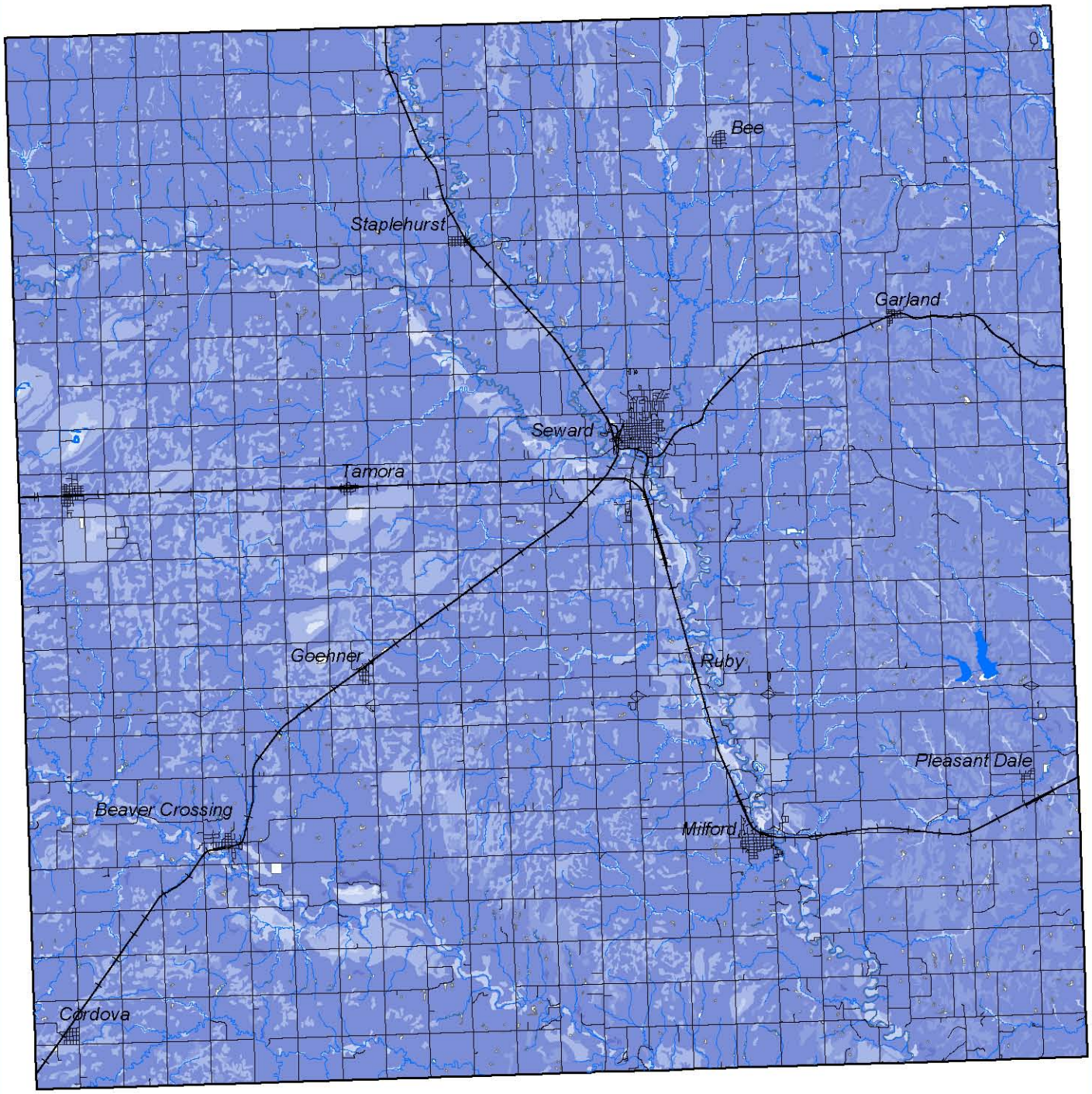

Drainage by Association: Figure 21

Seward County, Nebraska

Legend

- Excessively drained
- Well drained
- Moderately well drained
- Somewhat poorly drained
- Poorly drained
- Very poorly drained
- Not Rated

N W E S

0 0.5 1 2 3 4 Miles

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Soil Data Soils Survey Geographic (SSURGO) Data USDA - Natural Resource Conservation Service
GIS Process: ArcView 9.0

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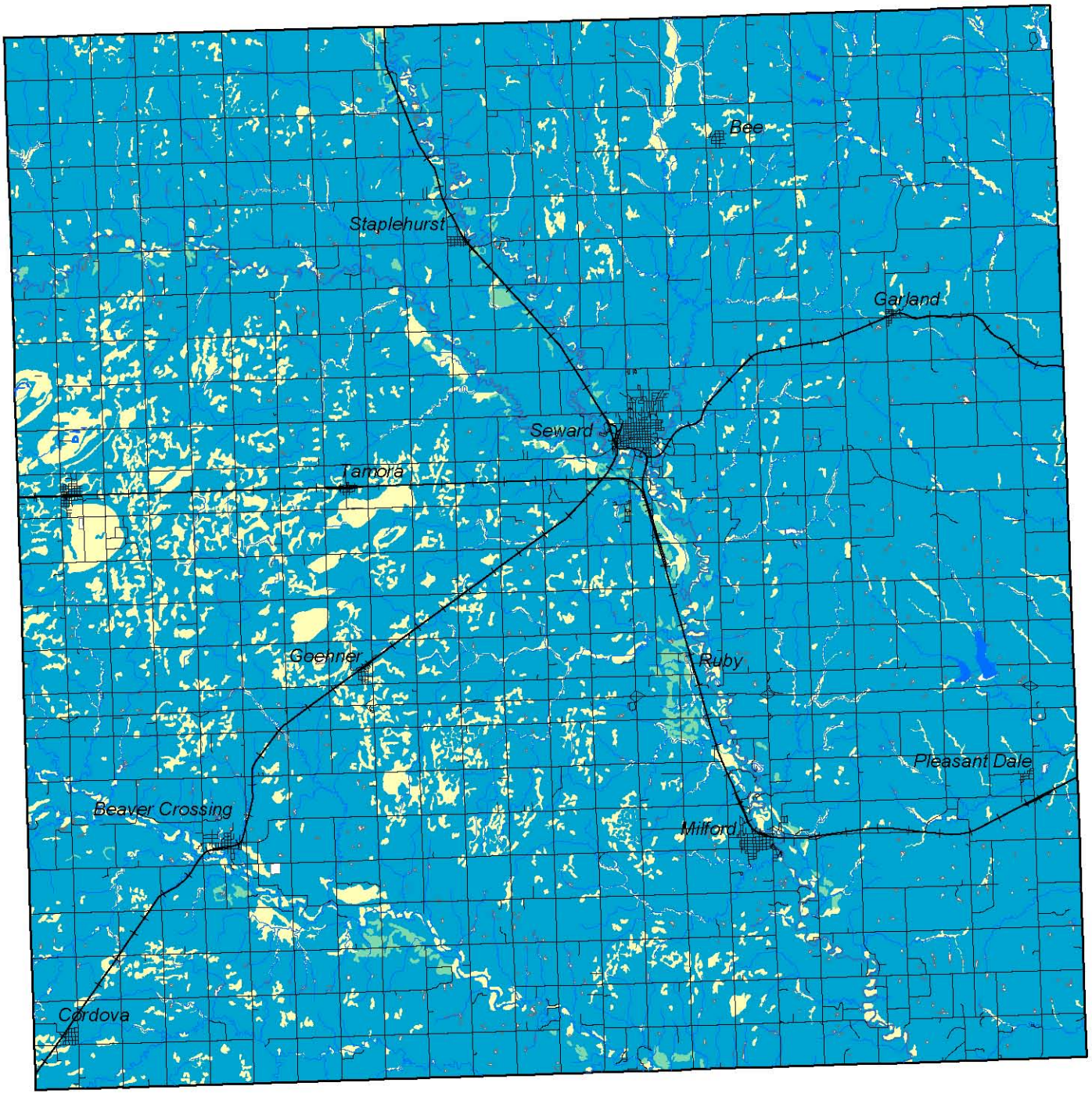

Hydric Soils: Figure 22

Seward County, Nebraska

Legend

- All Hydric
- Partially Hydric
- Not Hydric
- Not Rated

N
W E
S

0 0.5 1 2 3 4 Miles

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Soil Data Soil Survey Geographic (SSURGO) Data USDA- Natural Resource Conservation Service
GIS Source: ArcView 9.0

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GROUNDWATER/WATER TABLE ELEVATION

Groundwater refers to water found beneath the surface and includes smaller pockets of water as well as aquifers. This water source is where the residents of Seward County, city and rural, get their potable water for everyday living as well as the irrigation water for crops. The ability to find water that meets specific needs is critical to the placement of certain uses. These specific needs include water quantity, water quality, and water pressure. Seward County has areas that have problems getting one of these needs let alone all three.

Figure 23 indicates the approximate water table elevations. The water table elevation, in Seward County, varies from 1,300 feet above sea level to 1,500 feet above sea level. The ground elevations as noted on Figure 23 vary from 1,311 feet above sea level to 1,593 feet above sea level; these elevations are scattered throughout Seward County and were taken from USGS Quadrangle maps. Based upon data in "Water Resources of Seward County, Nebraska" by C.F. Keech and published in 1978, the depth to water in the county varies from 0 feet to over 90 feet.

The lack of groundwater, historically, has been in the eastern portion of Seward County. According to a data compiled within a study completed by Dr. Sanford Kaplan, PG (Groundwater Availability in Seward County, Nebraska), history has a great deal to do with the inability to find adequate groundwater supplies. As shown in Figure 26, Seward County was one of those areas where the extent of the Nebraska Glacial Period and the uplands plain that extends from this region of Nebraska west to the front range of the Rocky Mountain Range. The area east of this geological meeting point (covers approximately 30% of Seward County) is mostly comprised of glacial matter and very little loess material; while the Uplands Plain has a substantial quantity of loess material mixed into the soil composition. It is the availability, composition, and quantity of loess material that impacts the availability of groundwater in this specific region of Seward County. Figures 27 through 30 verify these facts due to the lack of wells in the eastern portion of Seward County, especially wells that can produce high flow rates. In addition, these wells typically are some of the deepest wells in the county.

Therefore, the issues seen in Seward County, regarding a lack of groundwater, are not going to come and go with years of drought or sufficient rainfall. This issue will continue and is one that cannot be resolved with Mother Nature. Eventually, if the growth pressures being seen from the direction of Lincoln continue, another source of water will need to be found, specifically a regional rural water system.

Use of Groundwater

Groundwater use in Seward County comes in the form of three categories, domestic and livestock supply, public water supplies, and irrigation. Each of these uses is important to the overall viability of Seward County. However, certain areas, at present, are not able to be abundantly supplied for all uses. During the planning period this issue will likely be a determining factor in how certain land uses and land use pressures are addressed within Seward County.

Domestic and Livestock supplies

Based upon the information in "Water Resources of Seward County, Nebraska" all domestic and most of the livestock water supply is obtained through the use of small diameter wells. Most of these wells are drilled only a few feet below the top of the water table. Most of these wells are low production wells, equipped with electric powered jet or submersible pumps. The water yield of this type of well is usually no more than five gallons of water per minute. The study also notes that some of the aquifers in Seward County are thin or the permeability of the soil is so low that

domestic and livestock wells cannot produce water in the desirable Quaternary deposits, but must be drilled into the Dakota Group aquifer to get sufficient water supplies. However, the Dakota Group aquifer is highly mineralized and requires special treatment for human consumption.

Public water supplies

The public water supply is one of the most critical uses of groundwater resources. This supply is obtained by those municipalities that supply water to its residents. In Seward County, all of the incorporated communities have a publicly owned water supply system.

The State of Nebraska places a great deal of value on these systems across the state. The value is so high that there is a Wellhead Protection Program available to municipalities through NDEQ. This program allows the municipalities, after a series of prescribed steps are completed, to designate special areas around their wells and well fields in order to protect the quality and quantity of the water within the underlying aquifers. Development of a community wellhead protection plan can help communities receive financial assistance to protect and secure the source of drinking water for the community.

Irrigation

The use of irrigation wells began in Seward County in late 1948. This process has become increasingly important to the production of crops within Seward County and Nebraska. The water demand for irrigation varies greatly from year to year and is dependant upon the amount of natural precipitation is received in the area. The use of irrigation is critical during the growing and finishing periods of the crops lifecycle. The demand for irrigation can have major impacts on the draw down of the aquifer and the aquifers ability to recharge itself in an appropriate time period.

Future growth pressure in Seward County will likely place the county into a difficult situation. The county during this planning period may see conflicts between the demand for domestic use on acreages and irrigation; especially along the eastern 25% of the county. Based upon data and discussions during this process, there is not enough water to support large scale acreage development and the continued demand by irrigators.

Conclusion

The demands currently being placed upon the groundwater in Seward County are going to continue to escalate during the planning period. How this issue is addressed and dealt with will have significant impact on a number of issues related to groundwater. Currently, the demand being seen in the eastern 25% of the county for domestic water use with regard to acreage development is increasing greatly. There are indications that new wells are negatively impacting the existing wells; while the ability to find suitable supplies or sources of groundwater is becoming more difficult.

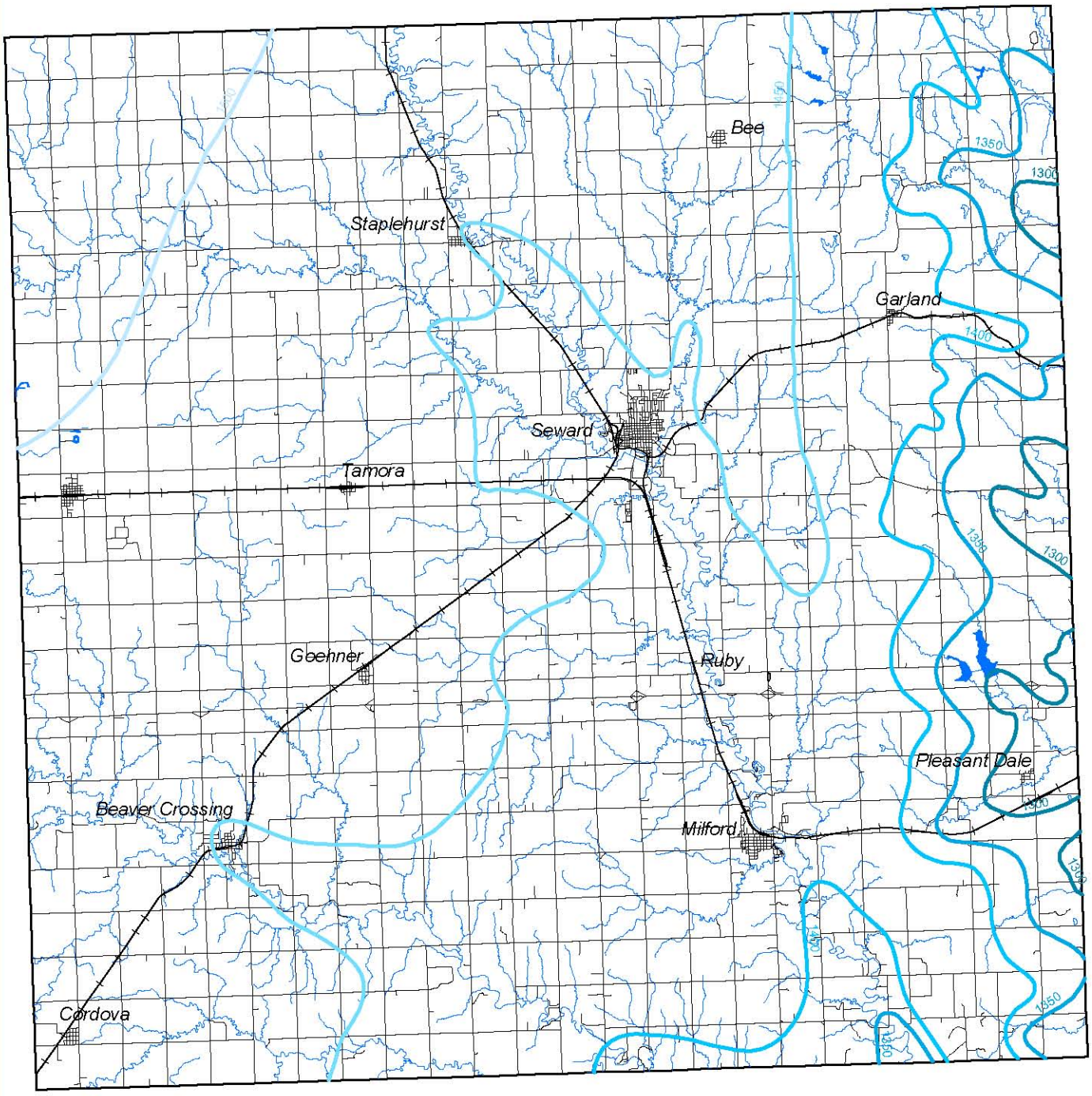
Eventually, the supply and location of quality groundwater pockets is going to severely impact the county's ability to approve permits within this eastern corridor. A reasonable solution to the issue would be the establishment of a rural water district in this demand corridor. Any new rural water district would need to be created and operated by the Lower Platte South Natural Resources District; since the State of Nebraska has given sole authority for rural water districts to the NRDs. The location and means for supplying this system will require a great deal of planning and investigation in order to adequately supply the area without negatively impacting other users of the areas groundwater.

Thickness of Principal Aquifer

The data shown in Figure 24 is the general contour map that indicates the thickness of the principal aquifer under Seward County. The thicknesses of the principal aquifer range from 0 feet to 300 feet. The thickest portions are near the city of Seward and in the western portion of the county; this area generally range from 250 feet to 300 feet. The shallowest area is in and around Pleasant Dale and east of Bee; where the depth is approaching 0 feet. The eastern portion of the county has the shallowest portions of the principal aquifer compared to the rest of the county. This supports the discussions centered on little or no groundwater along the eastern corridor of the county.

CONCLUSIONS

Seward County has an excellent quality of life and the quality is a direct result of the environmental aspects within the boundaries of the county. How the county chooses to address the growth pressures being seen from the east and what policies are adopted to protect the existing residents and environment of Seward County will drive the future outcome. This is not advocating that nothing should occur since it may negatively impact the environment; but what Seward County needs to do is determine where the balance is for protecting these interests while allowing appropriate growth in the county. This section of the Comprehensive Development Plan is not advocating pure environmentalism but is providing the County's governing body and commission, as well as the residents a tool box for making sound decisions during the planning period. How these issues are addressed during this planning period will greatly influence the future of Seward County.



Water Table Elevation: Figure 23

Seward County, Nebraska

Legend

Water Table Elevation

- 1300 ft
- 1350 ft
- 1400 ft
- 1450 ft
- 1500 ft

N
W
E
S

0 0.5 1 2 3 4 Miles

Prepared By: JEO Consulting group, Inc
Soil: Data Soils Survey Geographic (SSURGO) Data/USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service
GIS: Pictometry ArcView 9.0

THIS MAP PREPARED USING INFORMATION FROM RECORD DRAWINGS SUPPLIED BY JEO AND/OR OTHER APPLICABLE CITY, COUNTY, STATE, FEDERAL, OR PUBLIC OR PRIVATE ENTITIES. JEO DOES NOT GUARANTEE THE ACCURACY OF THIS MAP OR THE INFORMATION USED TO PREPARE THIS MAP. THIS IS NOT A SCALED PLAT

CREATED BY: J J FEB 2005

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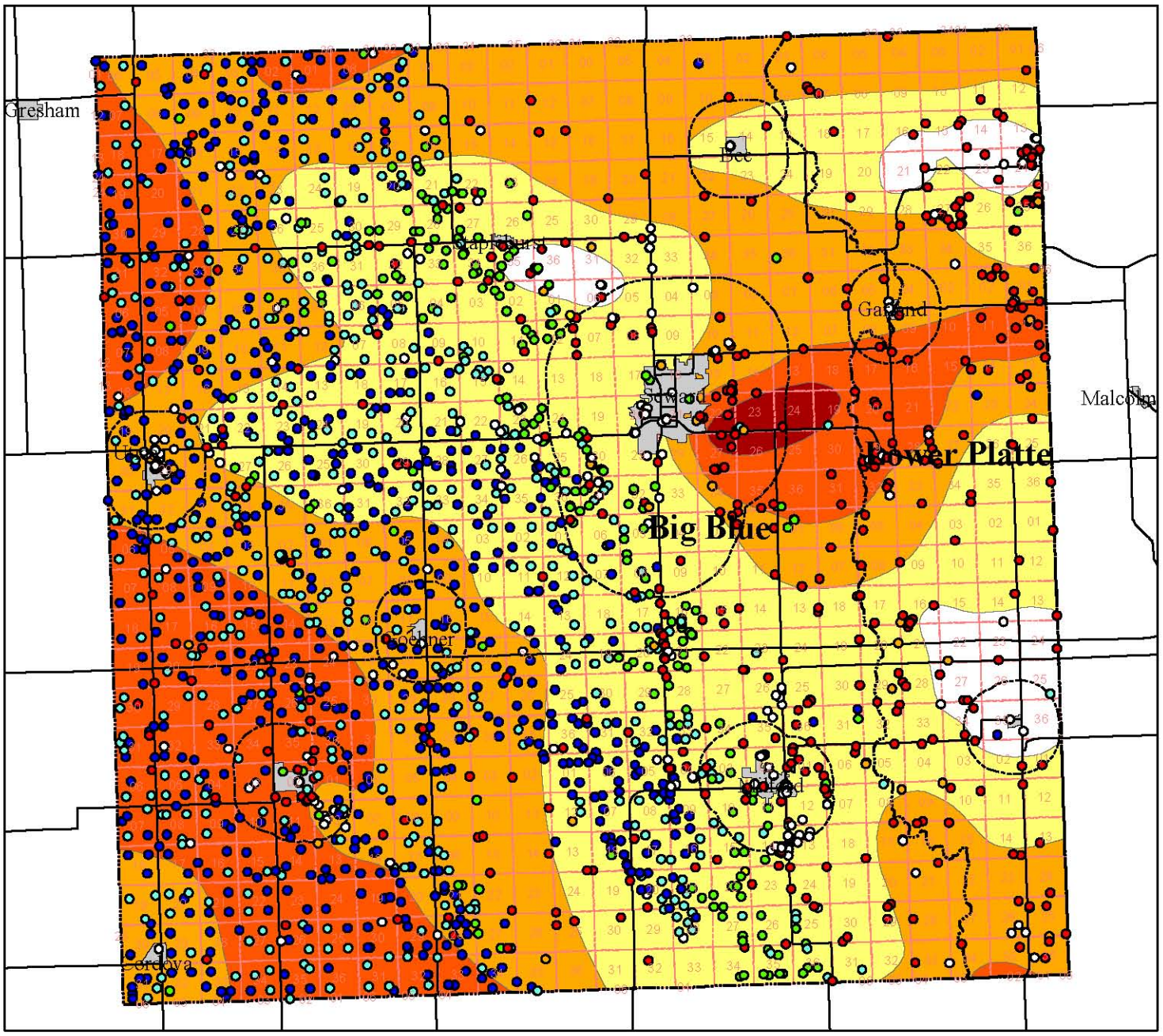


Water Table Thickness and Registered Wells (Gallons per Minute): Figure 24

Seward County, Nebraska

Legend

Water Table Thickness

- 0 feet
- 1 to 100 feet
- 100 to 200 feet
- 200 to 300 feet
- Greater than 300 feet

Registered Wells

Gallons Per Minute (GPM)

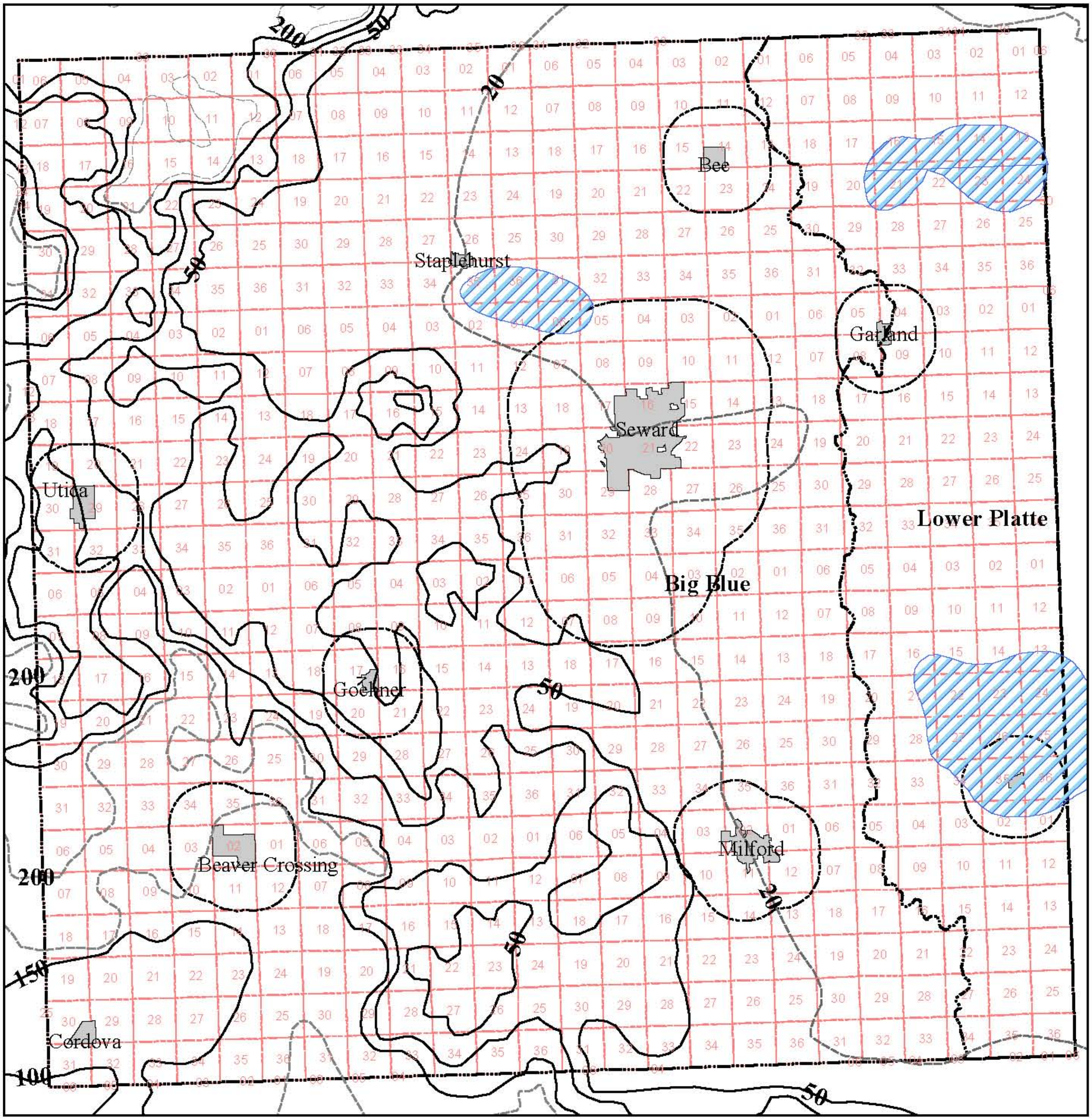
- 0 (No data)
- 1 - 30
- 31 - 60
- 61 - 100
- 101 - 500
- 501 - 800
- 801 - 2000

- Major Highways
- Incorporated Cities, Towns and Villages
- River Basins

N W E S

0 0.5 1 2 3 4 Miles

JEO Consulting Group, Inc.



Transmissivity and Areas of Little or No Acquifer: Figure 25

Seward County, Nebraska

00.51 2 3 4

Miles

Legend

20 / 50 Lines of Equal Transimissivity in Thousands of Gallons per Day per Foot (kGPD/ft)

Principal Acquifer Very Thin or Absent

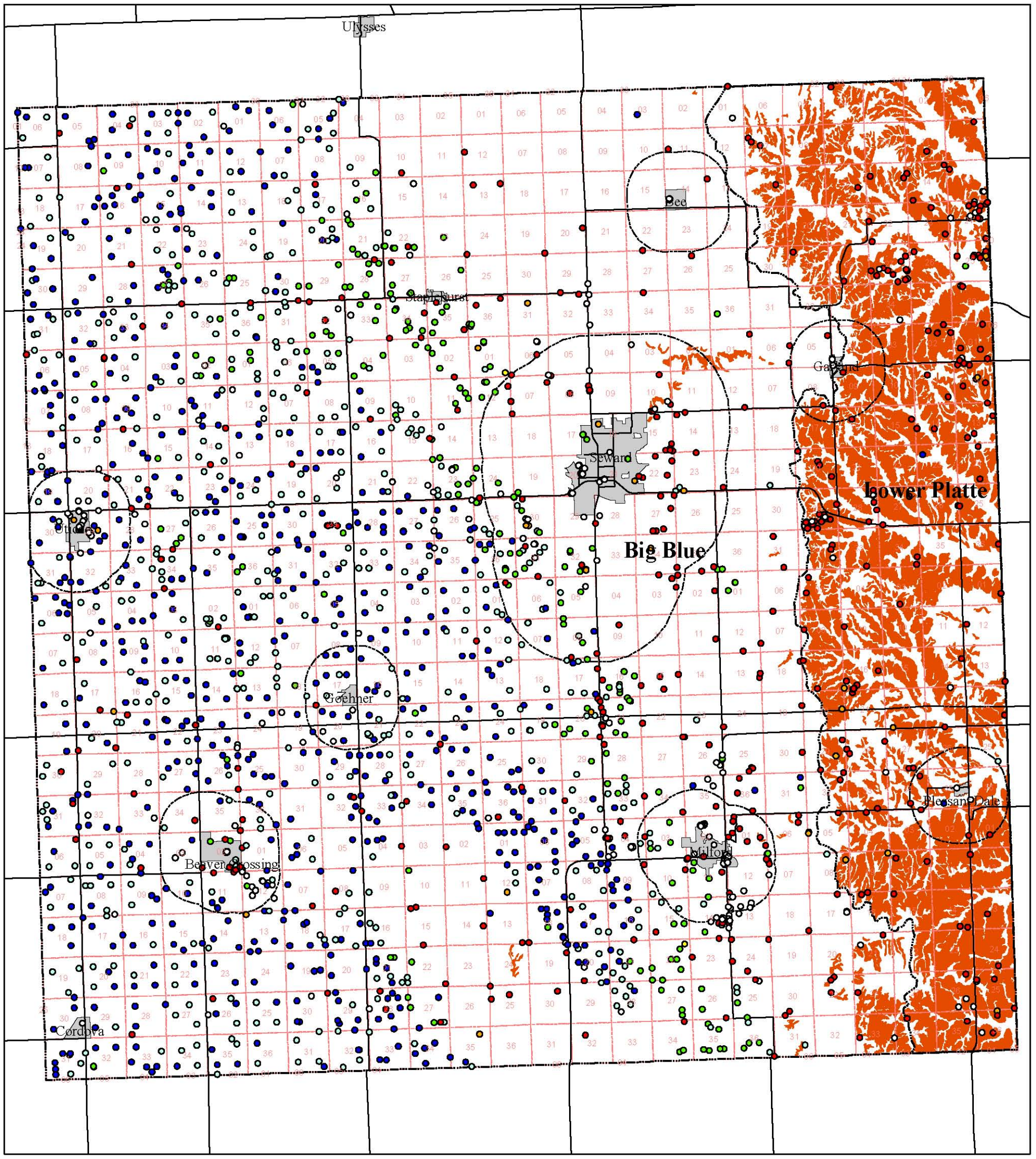
Incorporated Cities, Towns and Villages

Section Boundary

JEO Consulting Group, Inc.

Glacial Till Soils and Registered Wells (Gallons per Minute): Figure 26

Seward County, Nebraska



Legend

Registered Wells

Gallons Per Minute (GPM)

- 0 (No data)
- 1 - 30
- 31 - 60
- 61 - 100
- 101 - 500
- 501 - 800
- 801 - 2000

- Glacier Till Soils (Burchard, Morrill, Pawnee, Shelby and Steinauer Series)
- Roads
- Incorporated Cities, Towns and Villages
- River Basins

N W E S

0 0.5 1 2 3 4 Miles

JEO Consulting Group, Inc.

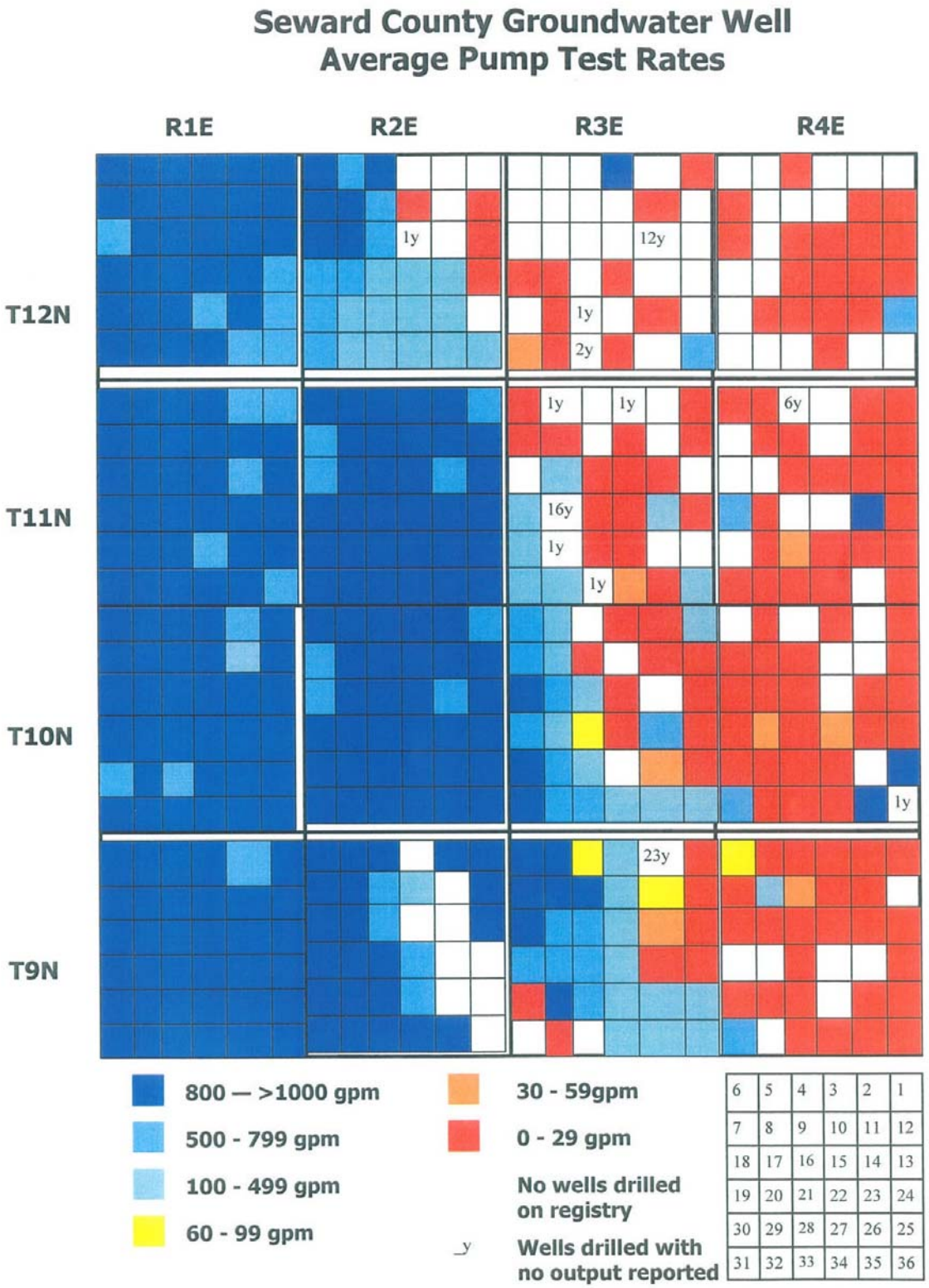


Figure 27
Source: Earthsource Consulting, Inc.

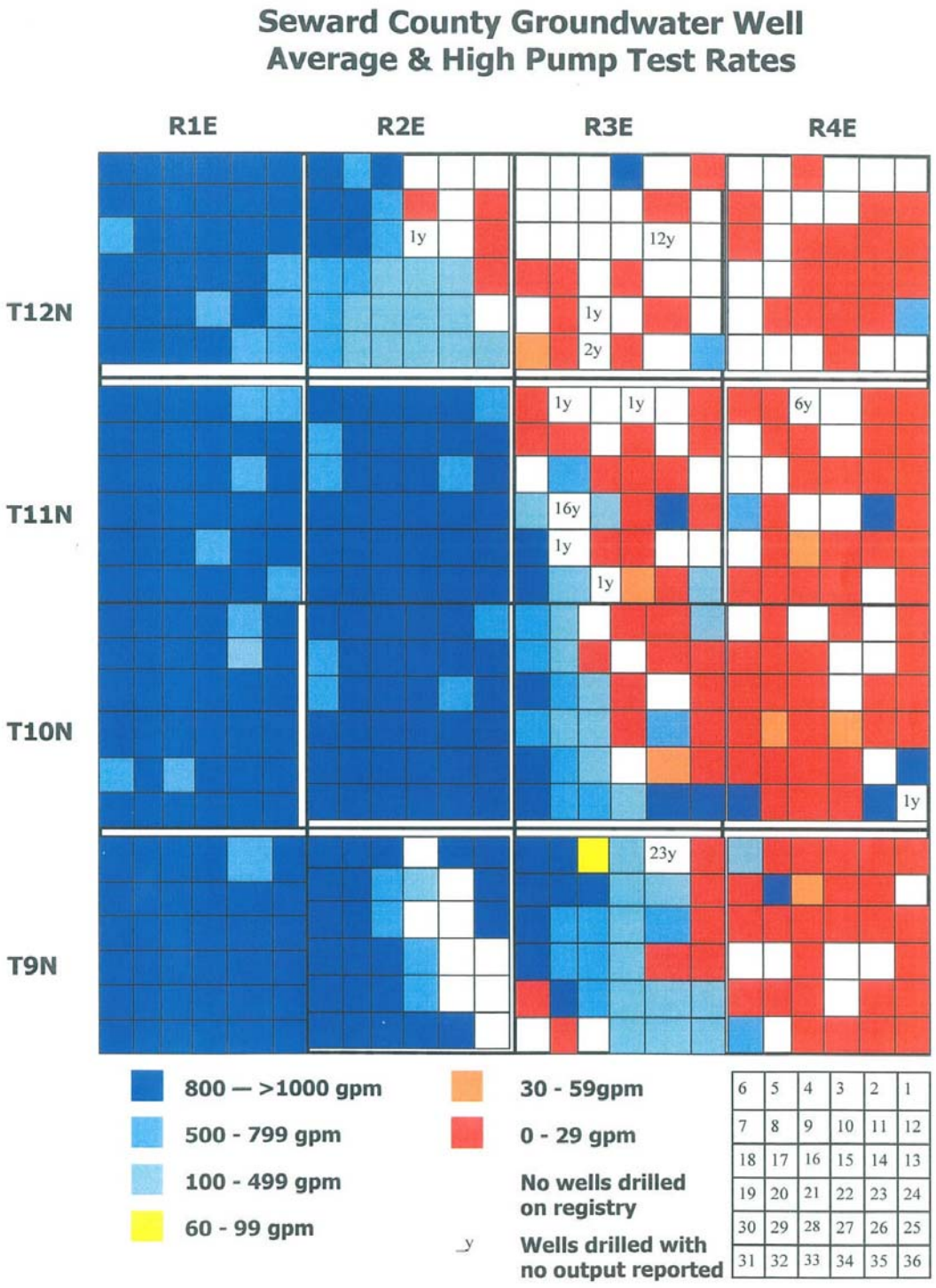


Figure 28
Source: Earthsource Consulting, Inc.

Registered Wells (Gallons per Minute): Figure 29

Seward County, Nebraska

Seward

Staplehurst

Garland

Utica

Lower Platte

Big Blue

Goehner

Pleasant Dale

Milford

Beaver Crossing

Cordova

Legend

Registered Wells

Gallons Per Minute (GPM)

- 0 (No data)
- 1 - 30
- 31 - 60
- 61 - 100
- 101 - 500
- 501 - 800
- 801 - 2000

Major Highways

Incorporated Cities, Towns and Villages

River Basins

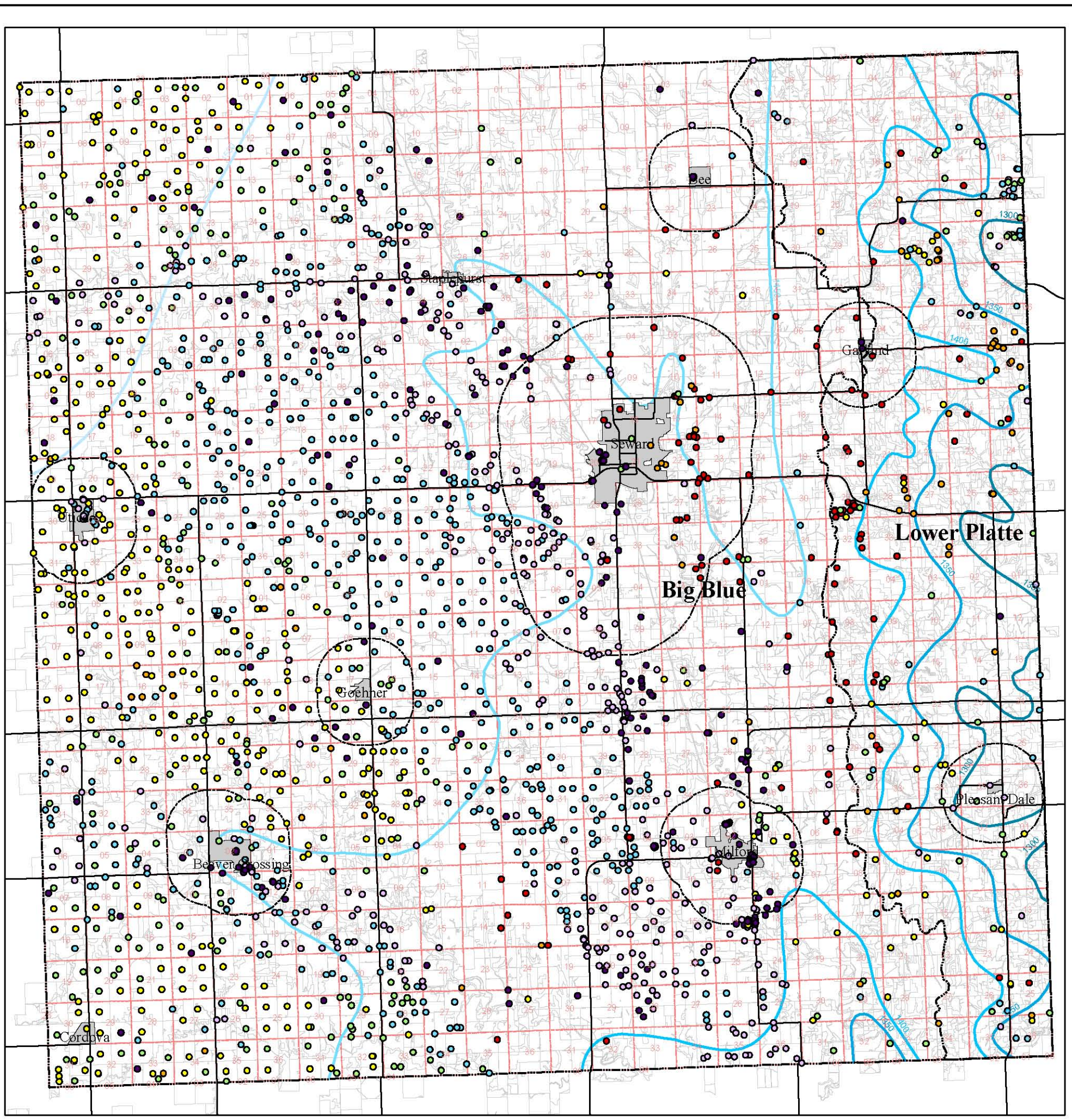
N W E S

0 0.5 1 2 3 4 Miles

JEO Consulting Group, Inc.

Total Depth of Registered Wells: Figure 30

Seward County, Nebraska



Legend

Registered Wells

Total Well Depth (Feet)

- 0 to 60 feet
- 60 to 120 feet
- 120 to 180 feet
- 180 to 240 feet
- 240 to 300 feet
- 300 to 360 feet
- Greater than 360 feet (Highest Value = 515 feet)

Major Highways

Incorporated Cities, Towns and Villages

River Basins

N W E S

0 0.5 1 2 3 4 Miles

JEO Consulting Group, Inc.

ENVISION SEWARD COUNTY

GOALS AND POLICIES

The Envision Seward County section is critical to soliciting public input as well as establishing goals and policies for the county. Planning for the future land uses of the county is an ongoing process of goal setting and problem solving aimed at encouraging and enhancing better communities and higher quality of life. Planning focuses upon ways of solving existing problems within the county, and providing a management tool enabling Seward County citizens to achieve their vision for the future.

Visioning is a process of evaluating present conditions, identifying problem areas, and bringing about consensus on how to overcome existing problems and manage change. By determining Seward County's strengths and weaknesses, the community can decide what it wants to be, and then develop a "roadmap" guiding decisions and ultimately fulfilling the vision of the county.

Change is continuous, therefore Seward County must decide specific criteria that will be used to judge and manage change. Instead of reacting to development pressures after the fact, the county along with their strategic vision, can better reinforce the desired changes, and discourage negative impacts that may undermine the vision. A shared vision permits Seward County to focus its diverse energies and minimize conflicts in the present, and in the future.

A key component of a Comprehensive Plan is the goals and policies. The issues and concerns of the citizens are developed into a vision. The vision statement can then be further delineated and translated into action statements, used to guide, direct, and base decisions for future growth, development and change within Seward County. Consensus on "what is good land use?" and "how to manage change in order to provide the greatest benefit to the county and its residents?" is formed. Seward County's goals and policies attempt to address various issues, regarding the questions of "how" to plan Seward County for the future.

Goals are desires, necessities and issues to be attained in the future. A goal should be established in a manner that allows it to be accomplished. Goals are the end-state of a desired outcome. Goals also play a factor in the establishment of policies within a county. In order to attain certain goals and/or policies within county government, they may need to be modified or changed from time to time.

Policies are concerned with defining and implementing the broad goals of the Comprehensive Development Plan.

Policies are a means to achieving the goals established by the county. They are specific statements of principle or actions that imply a clear commitment that is not mandatory. Policies are part of the value system linking goals with action. Policies have three different elements:

1. an end that needs to be achieved,
2. a means by which to achieve that end, and
3. an administrative mechanism by which the means are carried out

These policies will synthesize the information from the goals, as well as the responses from the participants of the Town Hall meetings in order to develop solutions that will achieve the goals of the Comprehensive Development Plan.

Therefore, policies play an important role in the Comprehensive Development Plan because they are the actions that need to be taken to meet the goals.

The goals and policies assure that the Comprehensive Development Plan accomplishes the desires of the residents in Seward County. This section of the Plan is therefore, a compilation of local attitudes collected through public meetings and workshops. When followed, development proposals in the county will be evaluated as to their relationship with the citizens' comments. Therefore, "goals and policies" should be referred to as diligently as the Future Land Use Map or any other part of the Comprehensive Development Plan, when reviewing and/or making recommendations on planning issues. Likewise, they should be current, in order to reflect the attitudes and desires of the County and its residents.

It is important for counties to establish their goals and policies in a manner that allows for both long-term and short-term accomplishments. The short-term goals and policies serve several functions:

- Allow for immediate feedback and success, which fuels the desire to achieve additional goals and better policies.
- Allow for the distribution of resources over time thus assuring a balanced use of public investment.
- Establish certain policies that need to be followed before the long-term goals can be accomplished.

Seward County Town Hall Meetings

On August 18 and 25, 2005, a total of four town hall meetings were held across the county in order to gather input on issues (both positive and negative) facing the residents of Seward County. The four town hall meetings were held in the following communities, dates and times:

August 18, 2005		**August 25, 2005**	
Utica	1:30 p.m.	Garland	1:30 p.m.
Seward	7:00 p.m.	Milford	7:00 p.m.

At each meeting the group in attendance was asked to identify negative and positive aspects of the County. The residents were also asked to identify issues that were affecting the County and needed action. Finally, the citizens in attendance were asked to identify specific projects they desired to see completed in the next 5, 10, or 20 years. The attendees then ranked their three top priorities for each question. The following information summarizes the results of each question and the corresponding percentage (i.e. importance) residents of Seward County indicated for each question.

Note the number of points for each question may differ due to the fact that not all residents prioritized three concerns for each question or they used all of their points to indicate one major problem that needed action. In addition, not every resident of Seward County will agree with the order of these issues or that these were all the aspects of the County that should have been listed, but this was taken from the participants at the town hall meetings. Another detail of note, not all issues indicated have goals and policies identified since they do not have bearing on the land use of the County. The County, through the appropriate governing bodies, should attend to the issues not addressed by the goals and policies due to their specific nature.

As stated before, during the town hall meetings the participants where asked four separate questions which included the following:

Negatives

"WHAT ARE THE NEGATIVE ASPECTS OR WEAKNESSES ABOUT SEWARD COUNTY?"

The participants in the Town Hall Meetings were asked to respond to this question as honestly as possible. They were told this was a brainstorming exercise, and that there was no wrong or bad response. Through brainstorming and listing every response, the participants are more likely to engage in a discussion that can lead to more responses. The reasoning behind this question is to identify what topics in the County are negative so that through comprehensive planning these negatives can be turned into positives.

Positives

"WHAT ARE THE POSITIVES OR STRENGTHS ABOUT SEWARD COUNTY?"

This question was presented to the participants just as the negative question was, as a brainstorming exercise. The reasoning behind this question is to identify topics in the County that are positives and through comprehensive planning these positives can remain as positives through the planning period.

Issues

"WHAT ARE THE ISSUES RELATING TO THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF SEWARD COUNTY?"

In order to respond to this question, participants were asked to think about past experiences, present concerns, and specific problems. This question attempts to raise issues that have been, may be, or will be topics that will affect the future of Seward County.

Projects

"WHAT ARE PROJECTS THAT SHOULD BE COMPLETED FOR SEWARD COUNTY DURING THE PLANNING PERIOD?"

This question asked participants to think of any potential project that they desired to see accomplished in Seward County. This gave the participants an opportunity to dream a little and express their desires for the county.

Town Hall Meetings

The following are the results of the four town hall meetings. The results are organized by meeting and by question. Not all of the items mentioned during the Town Hall meetings received a point or priority; however, all of those items identified are listed in this Comprehensive Development Plan.

Utica Town Hall Meeting, August 18, 2005

The first Town Hall meeting held in the County took place in Utica at the Senior Center. The attendance for this Town Hall meeting was 25 people.

TABLE 32: NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF SEWARD COUNTY, UTICA

Improvements	
Maintain Rural Atmosphere	7
Road Maintenance	5
Cedar Trees	5
More hard surfaced roads	4
Bindweed - No longer a noxious weed	3
Development forced to communities	3
Maintaining & Protecting Open Spaces	3
Livestock & Ag promotion & development	3
Rural Economic Development	2
User friendly Zoning Regulations	2
More snow fences along highways	2
Control of scenic roads	2
Overpasses at train crossings	2
Speed limits on 34 through towns	2
Lack of vision with the diversity of the County	2
Less Trees - Windbreaks & CRP	1
County-wide economic development not just Seward	1
Public Transportation – Handi-vans	1
Maintaining & Protective Natural Resources	1
Arts & Cultural Activities	0
Control Weeds & Trees along County Road	0
Road Labeling - method	0
County-wide sales tax	0
Better Zoning at I-80 Interchanges	0
Trains blocking crossings too long	0
County traffic plan for detours from I-80	0
Recreation Areas	0
Highway markings	0
Fire & Rescue in parts of the County	0
Milford landfill - Lincoln trash	0
Cellular signals	0
Totals	**51**

The group at the first Town Hall Meeting identified 31 items that they considered needing improvement in Seward County. Only 19 items received points, indicating a priority to someone at the meeting. The item receiving the most points focused on "Maintaining the Rural Atmosphere" of the county; this item received seven points of the 51 or 13.7% of the total points for this category. Other items needing improvement included "Road Maintenance", "Cedar Tree" removal, and "More hard surfaced roads" in the county. These four items accounted for 21 points or 41.2% of the total points.

TABLE 33: POSITIVE ASPECTS OF SEWARD COUNTY, UTICA

Positives	
Quality Of Life	6
Rural Character	5
Job Opportunities	4
Clean Air	3
Safety	3
Farming Community	3
Religious Background	3
Volunteerism	3
Location	2
Beer Garden Fence	2
Scenic	2
Fire & Rescue	2
Abandoned/Maintained Cemeteries	2
Open Space	2
Access to Other Health Care, If Needed	2
Natural Resources	2
Seward County Beautiful	1
People	1
Frankness Of The People	1
Good Families	1
County Wellness Programs	1
Proximity To Metro Areas	1
Work Ethic	1
National Poet Laureate	1
Education Systems	0
Irrigation West of Hwy 15	0
Good Fertile Ground	0
I-80	0
Free Advise Want It or Not	0
Flexibility of Some Zoning	0
Native Grass in Seward	0
Manners	0
Seasons	0
Youth Programs	0
4-H	0
County Fair	0
Transportation System	0
Technology Opportunities	0
Law Enforcement	0
Health Care	0
Secondary Education Opportunities	0
Post Secondary Education	0
Eating Opportunities	0
Pay By Check - No Fingerprints	0
Total	**54**

Table 33 identifies those items which the Utica group felt was positive about Seward County. There were a total of 44 items listed during the meeting. Of the 44, 24 items received points and were considered to be a priority in the county. The most important positive identified was the "Quality of Life" in Seward County, which received six points of the total 54 points or 11.1% of the total. Other positives identified were "Rural Character" (5 points), "Job Opportunities" (4 Points), "Clean Air", "Safety", "Farming Community", "Religious Background", and "Volunteerism" all with three points. These seven items accounted for 24 points or 44.4% of the total.

TABLE 34: ISSUES OF SEWARD COUNTY, UTICA

Issues	
Rural Growth vs. Preservation	12
Property Taxes, Values	8
Becoming a Lincoln Suburb	7
Acreages/Rural Development	4
Education - Costs, Numbers, Etc.	2
Total	**33**

Table 34 lists the Issues that were identified in the Utica meeting. Overall, there were five items mentioned and listed. However, unlike the previous two tables, this table only had a total of 33 points for all of the issues; this indicates that some distributed their points between other tables or simply did not use all of the points allocated. The item identified as the highest priority was "Rural Growth vs. Preservation" of the rural area; this issue received 12 points or 36.4% of the total. The second most important issue was "Property Taxes and Values", this issue received eight points or 24.2% of the total.

TABLE 35: FUTURE PROJECTS OF SEWARD COUNTY, UTICA

Projects	
Water Quality & Quantity	11
Zoning to Reflect Water Availability	9
Small Business Development Resource Center	6
Viaduct in Utica	6
Score Program	3
Sharing of Resources	2
Increased Promotional/Marketing Opportunities	2
A month deer season	2
Preserve Historical Structures	2
Schools Removing Litter From Roads	2
Develop Renewable Resources	2
Roadside Amenities	1
Business Development & Financing Opportunities	1
Water/Landscaping Restrictions	1
Incentive for Future Farmers	1
Utilize Outside Resources	1
Recreational Opportunities	0
Waverly Road Paved	0
Enforce Water/Other Guidelines/Regs	0
Less 911 Confusion	0
Utilize Available Local Resources	0
Total	**52**

Table 35 indicates the type of projects the citizens, present at the Utica meeting, wanted to see undertaken during the next planning period for the county. There were 21 projects identified during the Town Hall meeting. Only 16 projects were given a priority. The project that was most important was dealing with the "Water Quality and Quantity" of the county; this project received 11 points or 21.2% of the total. The next highest priorities were "Zoning to reflect Water Availability" (9 points or 17.3%), "Small Business Development Resource Center" (6 points or 11.5%), and a "Viaduct in Utica" (6 points or 11.5%). These four projects accounted for 61.5% of the total points used.

Seward Town Hall Meeting, August 18, 2005

A total of 41 people attended the second town hall meeting, which was held at the Seward County Extension Office in Seward.

TABLE 36: NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF SEWARD COUNTY, SEWARD

Improvements	
Lower Taxes	14
Control Growth vs. Rural/Ag Standards	11
Protect the Existing Quality of Life	9
Lack of Industrial Growth	8
Scaled Tax Base	7
Control Growth vs. Water Quality	7
Groundwater/River Recharge	5
Water Quality	5
Growth Policy that Supports the Small Towns	3
Education on Tax Dollar Expenses	2
Increased Assessed Value w/Neighbor Land Sale	1
Improve Statewide Tax System	1
Improve Amenities to County Seat	1
Knowledge on Growth vs. Tax Revenue	0
Telecommunication Infrastructure	0
Better Communication w/NRD's	0
User - Friendly Zoning Regs	0
Utilize Land in a Better Value	0
Road Paved Between Hwy 34 & Pleasant Dale	0
Commuters to Lincoln	0
Better Industrial Economic Development	0
Total	**74**

Table 36 identifies the negatives listed at the second Town Hall meeting in Seward. During this Town Hall meeting there were 21 items listed; only 13 items received any points and were considered a priority. The negative identified as being most in need of addressing was high taxes, which received 14 points or 18.9%. The next three priorities were "Control Growth vs. Rural/Ag. Standards" (11 points or 14.9%), "Protect the Existing Quality of Life" (9 points or 12.2%), and "Lack of Industrial Growth" (8 points or 10.8%). The four top priorities accounted for 56.8% of all the points.

TABLE 37: POSITIVE ASPECTS OF SEWARD COUNTY, SEWARD

Positives	
Rural Character	17
Ag-Based County	16
Population Density - Rural Areas	7
Utility - Electric	5
Quality of Life	4
Diverse Economy	4
People	4
Post-Secondary Education	3
Fire/EMS	3
Youth Activities	3
Irrigation - W 1/2 of County	2
Good Eats	2
College	1
Positive Growth & Retention	1
Low Pollution	1
Downtown Seward	1
Soil Fertility	1
Scenic Beauty	1
Road System	0
Location vs Lincoln	0
Hospital	0
Safety	0
Schools	0
Library	0
School Bus System	0
Low Unemployment Rate	0
I-80	0
Educated Work Force	0
Airport	0
Recreation Opportunities	0
Historic Society - Cultural Values	0
Religious Diversity	0
Lack of Traffic Congestion	0
Armory	0
Civic Center - Seward	0
Meeting Facilities	0
Senior Centers	0
Total	**76**

Table 37 indicates the positives identified during the Seward Town Hall meeting. In all there were 37 items listed during the meeting; however, only 18 received any points or 48.6% of the total. There were a total of 76 points distributed on these items. The most important item was "Rural Character" with 17 points or 22.4%. The next highest positives were "Ag. Based County" (16 points or 21.1%), "Population Density of Rural Areas" (7 points or 9.2%), and "Utility – Electric" (5 points or 4.6%). The top four positives accounted for 57.3% of the total points used.

TABLE 38: ISSUES OF SEWARD COUNTY, SEWARD

Issues	
Urban vs. Rural County	15
Water use	12
Livestock - Yes or No	9
Water Availability	8
Quality of Life	7
Economic Development	7
Multi families in one building	3
Infrastructure	3
Taxes Spending/Budget	3
Utilities	2
Water Quality	2
Ag. Based Econ vs. Comm / Service Based	1
Keep Money at Home	1
Turn Over of Property	1
Cellular Towers	1
Roads	0
Coordination with Surrounding Counties	0
Recreation	0
Services for Aged	0
Alternative energy sources	0
Car Pooling	0
Public Transportation	0
Chemical Contamination	0
Total	**75**

Table 38 indicates the issues identified during the Seward Town Hall meeting. In all there were 23 items listed during the meeting; however, only 15 received any points or 65.2% of the total. There were a total of 75 points distributed on these items. The most important item was "Urban vs. Rural County" with 15 points or 20.0%. The next highest issues were "Water Use" (12 points or 16.0%), "Livestock – Yes or No" (9 points or 12.0%), and "Water Availability" (8 points or 10.7%). The top four positives accounted for 58.7% of the total points used.

TABLE 39: FUTURE PROJECTS OF SEWARD COUNTY, SEWARD

Projects	
Manage & Protect Water Resources	19
Value - Added Ag	16
Work toward Solid Economy	11
Solidify Water Rights	8
Locate Areas of Water Shortage	6
Better Use of Public Resources	6
Superior Schools Maintained	6
Retain Seniors	6
Business Development/Expansion	6
Better Management of Public Works Projects	4
Improved Law Enforcement	3
Better Solid Waste Management	2
Traffic Management	1
Clean Up Old Properties	0
Retain "Brain Trust"	0
Total	**94**

Table 39 indicates the projects the attendees identified. In all there were 15 items listed during the meeting. Nearly all, 13 received points or 86.7% of the total. There were a total of 94 points placed on these items. The most important project was "Manage and Protect Water Resources" with 19 points or 20.2%. The next highest projects were "Value-added Ag" (16 points or 17.0%), "Work toward Solid Economy" (11 points or 11.7%), and "Solidify Water Rights" (8 points or 8.5%). The top four positives accounted for 57.4% of the total points used.

Garland Town Hall Meeting, August 25, 2005

There were 46 people in attendance for the third town hall meeting. The meeting was held in the at the American Legion Hall.

TABLE 40: NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF SEWARD COUNTY, GARLAND

Improvements	
Locate Subdivision within ETJ's	22
Too Easy to Appeal Zoning Regs	12
Term Limits on County Board	10
Ag Uses vs. Resident Uses	10
No Highway Corridor	7
Land Valuation for Farming - Due to Development	6
Future Water Needs/Supply	4
Res. Density Correlated to Water	3
No Massive Land Use Changes - Sin. To 1995 Tax Proposal	3
Notification of Neighbors on Zoning Changes	2
Acreage Restrictions/Rule - Not Alleys Fair	2
Cost Benefit of Pure Res vs Tax Revenue	2
Control of Water with Appropriation & NRDS	2
Population Density	1
Strip Zoning	1
Road Maintenance	0
The Tax Structure	0
Use of Land	0
Gov't Representation within ETJ's	0
Real Estate Taxes Too High	0
Schools in the Future	0
Min. Lot Size for Residences in Ag = 20 Ac	0
County Planning Commission - Mobile Meeting Sites	0
Ag First	0
Fire & Rescue & Law Enforcement with more People	0
Fewer External Forces	0
User - Friendly Regs	0
Total	**87**

Table 40 identifies the negatives listed during the third Town Hall meeting held in Garland. During the Town Hall meeting there were 27 items listed; only 15 items received points and were considered a priority. The negative identified as being most in need was "Locating Subdivisions within ETJ's", which received 22 points or 25.3%. The next three priorities were "Too Easy to Appeal Zoning Regs" (12 points or 13.8%), "Term Limits on County Board" (10 points or 11.5%), and "Ag Uses vs. Resident Uses" (10 points or 11.5%). The four top priorities accounted for 62.1% of all the points.

TABLE 41: POSITIVE ASPECTS OF SEWARD COUNTY, GARLAND

Positives	
1 House/Quarter Section Rule	20
Ag Community	18
Fresh Air	3
Small Businesses	3
Ag Production	3
Security	2
Rural Water	2
Fire/EMS/Police	2
Nature	2
Little Traffic on Side Roads	2
Churches	2
Ability of Youth to be involved w/Ag	2
Scenic Vistas	2
Rural Electric	1
No Noise Pollution	1
Cows Mooing	1
U.S. Postal Service	1
Helpful People	1
Roads	1
Proximity to Metro Areas	1
Medical Facilities	1
Community Faith	1
We ain't Lincoln	1
Civic Pride	1
Like The Neighbors	0
Small Local Government	0
Clear Skies	0
Schools	0
Villages	0
Swimming Pool	0
Road Grid System	0
Ability to Know Neighbors	0
Strong Economy	0
Higher Education	0
Recreation	0
Community Events	0
Love the Roads	0
Youth & Family Opportunities	0
Airport	0
Total	**74**

Table 41 indicates the positives identified during the Garland Town Hall meeting. In all there were 39 items listed during the meeting; however, only 24 received any points or 61.5% of the total. There were a total of 74 points distributed on these items. The most important item was the "1 House/Quarter Section Rule" with 20 points or 27.0%. The next highest positives were "Ag. Community" (18 points or 24.3%), "Fresh Air" (3 points or 4.0%), and "Small Businesses" (3 points or 4.0%). The top four positives accounted for 59.3% of the total points used.

TABLE 42: ISSUES OF SEWARD COUNTY, GARLAND

Issues	
Water Resources	22
Residential Development	14
Accountability on Tax Spending	12
Development Impact Fee	9
Hold the Line on Taxes	5
Ag Land Being Ag Land	4
Land Pollution	2
Road Improvements	1
County BD-At-Large Voting	1
Ted Turner Land Grab	1
Urban Blight	0
Don't take Lancaster County's Problems	0
Crime/Drugs	0
Total	**71**

Table 42 indicates the issues identified during the Garland Town Hall meeting. In all there were 13 items listed during the meeting with 10 receiving points or 76.9% of the total. There were a total of 71 points distributed on these items. The most important item was "Water Resources" with 22 points or 31.0%. The next highest issues were "Residential Development" (14 points or 19.7%), "Accountability on Tax Spending" (12 points or 16.9%), and "Development Impact Fees" (9 points or 12.7%). The top four positives accounted for 80.3% of the total points used.

TABLE 43: FUTURE PROJECTS OF SEWARD COUNTY, GARLAND

Projects	
Stay Ag First	23
Restrict Res Development	21
Adjust Ag Land Values	19
Preserve Ag Character	10
Conservation of Ag Land	2
Paved Road - Garland/Seward	1
Keep Lincoln in Lancaster County	0
Preserve Historic Areas	0
Bring Areas Back to Ag Use	0
Total	**76**

Table 43 indicates the projects identified during the Garland meeting. In all there were nine items listed during the meeting. Six of the projects received points or 66.7% of the total. There were a total of 76 points placed on these items. The most important project was "Stay Ag. First" with 23 points or 30.3%. The next highest projects were "Restrict

Residential Development" (21 points or 27.6%), "Adjust Ag. Land values" (19 points or 25.0%), and "Preserve Ag. Character" (10 points or 13.2%). The top four positives accounted for 96.1% of the total points used.

Milford Town Hall Meeting, August 25, 2005

The fourth and final town hall meeting was held at the Milford Fire Hall. The attendance for this Town Hall meeting totaled 69 people.

TABLE 44: NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF SEWARD COUNTY, MILFORD

Improvements			
Ground Water	30	More Public Forums	0
Taxes Too High	21	E-911 Respondents - Who	0
Waste Management Garbage	11	More Flexible Meeting Schedule	0
Acreage Developments	11	Accessible Zoning Regs	0
Road Maintenance	10	Unknowns - If Seward Co. Wants Livestock	0
Better Internet Service	8	Road Signs	0
Accountability of Tax Dollars	7	Special Group Control	0
Livestock Regs - More Clarity	7	Wildlife Management	0
Waste Management for Feedlots	7	More Scenic By Ways	0
Too Many Regulations	7	Strong Sustainable K-12 Schools	0
Bridges	5	I-80 Widening concern & NE Hwy 15	0
Cellular Service	5		
Define Ag. Production	5		
Friendlier Ag. Environment	5		
Road Ditches	4		
More Jobs	4		
Adult Entertainment Regs	4		
Need More Ag Focus	3		
Plan that Controls Dev. Density	3		
Wider County Roads	3		
Regs Based on Groundwater	3		
Junk	2		
User-Friendly Regs	2		
Econ. Dev. Industrial Dev. & Retention	2		
Hiking/Biking Trails - Connectivity	2		
More Public Fishing & Hunting Access	2		
Communication Between Cities & County	1		
Enforcement of Regs	1		
General Animal Control	1		
Water Usage for Ag	1		
Concern About Future Light Pollution	1		
Emissions From Ethanol Plants	1		
Total	**179**		

Table 44 identifies the negatives listed during the final Town Hall meeting held in Milford. During the Town Hall meeting, there were 43 items listed; 32 items received points and were considered a priority. In all, there were a total of 179 points distributed amongst the identified negatives. The negative identified as being most in need was "Ground Water", which received 30 points or 16.8%. The next three priorities were "Taxes Too High" (21 points or 11.7%), "Waste Management Garbage" (11 points or 6.1%), and "Acreage Developments" (11 points or 6.1%). The four top priorities accounted for 40.7% of all the points. The points were distributed evenly throughout the list.

TABLE 45: POSITIVE ASPECTS OF SEWARD COUNTY, MILFORD

Positives			
Quality of Life	12	Good Law Enforcement	0
Privacy	11	Access	0
Rural Preservation	11	People	0
Rural Electric	10	Lower Vehicle Taxes vs Lancaster Co.	0
I-80	8	Low Unemployment	0
Wildlife Areas	6	Schools	0
Small Towns	5	Some Minimum Maintenance Roads	0
Rural Fire Dept	4	Good RR Crossing Signals	0
Small Town Businesses	4	Consumer Goods	0
Little Traffic Congestion	4	Churches	0
Livestock	4	Underground Electric	0
Church Choice	4	Blue River	0
Space	3	4th of July/Public Events	0
Focus on Economic Dev.	3	Day Care	0
Melodrama	3	Blue Valley Community Action	0
Location	2	Senior Busing	0
Low Crime Rate	2	Artists	0
Good Water in Areas	2	Courthouse	0
Good Ag	2	Newspapers	0
County Fair	2	Rural Mail	0
Good soils	2	Local Pool	0
Private School Access	2	Airport	0
Youth Rec Opportunities	2	Historical Pres. Efforts	0
4-H	2	SP. Feed	0
Poet Laureate	2		
Central County Seat	2		
Small HS Class Sizes	2		
Start of Public Trails	1		
Civic Org's	1		
Health Care	1		
Scenic Landscapes	1		
No Noise	1		
Home Town Banks	1		
Colleges	1		
Cooperation of Cities	1		
Wal-Mart	1		
Adult Rec Opportunities	1		
Senior Centers	1		
Courthouse Chimes	1		
County Museum	1		
Total	**129**		

Table 45 indicates the positives identified during the Milford Town Hall meeting. In all there were 64 items listed during the meeting; however, 40 received points or 62.5% of the total. There were a total of 129 points distributed on these items. The most important item was the "Quality of Life" with 12 points or 9.3%. The next highest positives were "Privacy" (11 points or 8.5%), "Rural Preservation" (11 points or 8.5%), and "Rural Electric" (10 points or 7.8%). The top four positives accounted for 34.1% of the total points used. The points were distributed evenly throughout the list.

TABLE 46: ISSUES OF SEWARD COUNTY, MILFORD

Issues	
Control Pop. Density in Rural Areas	42
Adequate Groundwater	25
Livestock Density Controlled	16
Support Existing AG	16
Taxes	14
Land Value Pressures vs Ag	8
Econ. Development	7
Natural Resource Protection	7
Support Existing Businesses	7
Maintain County Roads/Improve	6
High-Tech Access - Communication Infrastructure	6
Better Road Access for Commuters	5
Seward County Not Lancaster County	4
Comprehensive Plans Needs Clarity	4
Maintain Quality of Life/Improve	1
Run Down/Abandoned Properties	0
Total	**168**

Table 46 indicates the issues identified during the Milford Town Hall meeting. In all there were 16 items listed during the meeting with 15 receiving points or 93.8% of the total. There were a total of 168 points distributed on these items. The most important item was "Control Population Density in Rural Areas" with 42 points or 25.0%. The next highest issues were "Adequate Groundwater" (25 points or 14.9%), "Livestock Density Control" (16 points or 9.5%), and "Support Existing Ag." (16 points or 9.5%). The top four positives accounted for 58.9% of the total points used.

TABLE 47: FUTURE PROJECTS OF SEWARD COUNTY, MILFORD

Projects	
Groundwater Protection & Conservation	26
Help Ag. Flourish	21
Improve Hwy Safety	20
Expanded Wireless Communications - Cellular/DSL	19
Housing Dev. Regs.	19
Rural Water	10
Use of Resources for Business Dev	10
Improve Fire Dist. Capabilities	8
Grassland (Native) Protection	6
Find Additional Resources $	6
Maintain Quality Education	5
Improve Law Enforcement	3
Remove Old, Dilapidated Buildings	1
Historic Area Protection	1
Total	**155**

Table 47 indicates the projects identified during the Milford meeting. In all there were 14 items listed during the meeting with all the items receiving points. There were a total of 155 points placed on these items. The most important project was "Groundwater Protection and Conservation" with 26 points or 16.8%. The next highest projects were "Help Ag. Flourish" (21 points or 13.5%), "Improve Highway Safety" (20 points or 12.9%), "Expanded Wireless Communications" (19 points or 12.3%) and "Housing Development Regs" (19 points or 12.3%). The top five positives accounted for 67.8% of the total points used.

OVERALL TABULATION

The Town Hall Meetings were tabulated together and the questions from each Town Hall Meeting were combined to determine an overall list of priorities. The total attendance for all four Town Hall meetings totaled 181 people. The combined tables are formatted in the same order as the Town Hall Meetings.

TABLE 48: NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF SEWARD COUNTY, OVERALL

Improvements	
Groundwater/River Recharge/Future Water needs/supply/groundwater	39
Lower Taxes/taxes too high	35
Development forced to communities/Growth Policies that support the Small Towns/Locate Subdivisions within ETJ's	28
Control Growth vs. Rural/Ag Standards/Ag uses vs. Res. Uses/plan that controls dev. Density	24
Road Maintenance	15
Control Growth vs. Water Quality Res. Density correlated to water/regs based on groundwater	13
Too Easy to Appeal Zoning Regs	12
Livestock & Ag promotion & development/friendlier ag. Environment/ need more ag focus	11
Milford landfill - Lincoln trash/Waste management garbage	11
Acreage Developments	11
Term Limits on City Board	10
Protect the Existing Quality of Life	9
Education on Tax Dollar Expenses/accountability of tax dollars	9
Lack of Industrial Growth	8
Better Internet Service	8
Maintain Rural Atmosphere	7
Scaled Tax Base	7
Increased Assessed Value w/Neighbor Land Sale Land Valuation for farming- due to development	7
No Highway Corridor	7
Livestock Regs - More Clarity	7
Waste Management for Feedlots	7
Too Many Regulations	7
Cedar Trees	5
Cellular signals	5
Water Quality	5
Bridges	5
Define Ag. Production	5
More hard surfaced roads	4
User friendly Zoning Regulations	4
Road Ditches	4
More Jobs	4
Adult Entertainment Regs	4
Communication between Gov't & Public	3
Bindweed - No long a noxious weed	3
Maintaining & Protecting Open Spaces	3
No Massive Land Use Changes - Sin. To 1995 Tax Proposal	3
Wider County Roads	3
Rural Economic Development	2
More snow fences along highways	2
Control of scenic roads	2
Overpasses at train crossings	2
Speed limits on 34 through towns	2
Lack of vision with the diversity of the County	2
Better Industrial Economic Development	2

Notification of Neighbors on Zoning Changes	2
Acreage Restrictions/Rule - Not Always Fair	2
Cost Benefit of Pure Res vs. Tax Revenue	2
Control of Water with Appropriation & NRDS	2
Junk	2
Hiking/Biking Trails - Connectivity	2
More Public Fishing & Hunting Access	2
Less Trees - Windbreaks & CRP	1
County-wide economic development not just Seward	1
Public Transportation – Handi-vans	1
Maintaining & Protective Natural Resources	1
Improve Statewide Tax System	1
Improve Amenities to County Seat	1
Population Density	1
Strip Zoning	1
Communication Between Cities & County	1
Enforcement of Regs	1
General Animal Control	1
Water Usage for Ag	1
Concern About Future Light Pollution	1
Emissions From Ethanol Plants	1
Arts & Cultural Activities	0
Control Weeds & Trees along County Road	0
Road Labeling - method	0
County-wide sales tax	0
Better Zoning at I-80 Interchanges	0
Trains blocking crossings too long	0
County traffic plan for detours from I-80	0
Recreation Areas	0
Highway markings	0
Fire & Rescue in parts of the County	0
Knowledge on Growth vs. Tax Revenue	0
Telecommunication Infrastructure	0
Better Communication w/NRD's	0
Utilize Land in a Better Value	0
Road Paved Between Hwy 34 & Pleasant Dale	0
Commuters to Lincoln	0
Use of Land	0
Gov't Representation within ETJ's	0
Schools in the Future	0
Min. Lot Size for Residences in Ag = 20 Ac	0
County Planning Commission - Mobile Meeting Sites	0
Ag First	0
Fewer External Forces	0
More Public Forums	0
More Flexible Meeting Schedule	0
Accessible Zoning Regs	0
Unknowns - If Seward Co. Wants Livestock	0
Special Group Control	0
Wildlife Management	0
Strong Sustainable K-12 Schools	0
I-80 Widening concern & NE Hwy 15	0
Total	**394**

Table 48 is the combined negatives or Improvements from all of the Town Hall Meetings. Overall, once everything was combined, there were 96 different negatives identified. There were a total of 65 items that received points during the process. In all, there were a total of 395 points distributed amongst the identified negatives. The most negative item identified dealt specifically with groundwater and future water needs in the County; this item received 39 points or 9.9% of the total. The next three priorities dealt with taxes with 35 points or 8.9%; the need to force development to the communities and control rural growth, the total for this item was 28 points or 7.1%; and Control Growth and preserve Ag, with 24 points or 6.1%. Overall, the negatives receiving the most points dealt predominately with rural development, controlled growth and growth vs. water availability. Over 33.0% of the points distributed dealt with these issues in some form or another.

TABLE 49: POSITIVE ASPECTS OF SEWARD COUNTY, OVERALL

Positives	
Farming Community/Ag. Based County	37
Quality Of Life	22
Rural Character	22
1 House/Quarter Section Rule	20
Utility – Electric	16
Fire & Rescue	11
Privacy	11
Rural Preservation	11
Religious Background/Churches/Religious Diversity/Community Faith/Church choice	10
Safety/Low Crime Rate/Security	9
Natural Resources/Wildlife areas	8
I-80	8
Population Density - Rural Areas	7
Small Businesses	7
Clean Air	6
Scenic	6
People/Helpful People	6
Lack of Traffic Congestion/Little Traffic on Side Roads	6
Open Space	5
Youth Programs/Activities/Youth and Family Opportunities	5
Post Secondary Education/College	5
Villages	5
Job Opportunities	4
Volunteerism/Civic Pride	4
Location/Proximity to Lincoln	4
Irrigation West of Hwy 15	4
4-H/Ability of Youth to be involved in Ag	4
Diverse Economy	4
Livestock	4
National Poet Laureate	3
Good Fertile Ground	3
Low Pollution/No noise pollution	3
Ag Production	3
Focus on Economic Dev.	3
Melodrama	3
Beer Garden Fence	2
Abandoned/Maintained Cemeteries	2
Access to Other Health Care, If Needed	2
Proximity To Metro Areas	2
County Fair	2
Health Care/Medical facilities	2
Eating Opportunities	2
Rural Water	2
Nature	2
Good Ag	2
Private School Access	2
Central County Seat	2
Nebraska Seward County Beautiful	1
Frankness Of The People	1
Good Families	1
County Wellness Programs	1
Work Ethic	1
Education Systems	1
Transportation System	1
Positive Growth & Retention	1
Downtown Seward	1
Recreation Opportunities	1
Senior Centers	1
Cows Mooing	1
U.S. Postal Service	1
We ain't Lincoln	1
Start of Public Trails	1
Civic Org's	1
Home Town Banks	1
Cooperation of Cities	1
Wal-Mart	1
Courthouse Chimes	1
County Museum	1
Free Advise Want It or Not	0
Flexibility of Some Zoning	0
Native Grass in Seward	0
Manners	0
Seasons	0
Technology Opportunities	0
Law Enforcement	0
Pay By Check - No Fingerprints	0
Library	0
School Bus System	0
Low Unemployment Rate	0
Educated Work Force	0
Airport	0

Historic Society - Cultural Values	0
Armory	0
Civic Center – Seward	0
Meeting Facilities	0
Like The Neighbors	0
Small Local Government	0
Clear Skies	0
Ability to Know Neighbors	0
Community Events	0
Good Law Enforcement	0
Access	0
Lower Vehicle Taxes vs. Lancaster Co.	0
Good RR Crossing Signals	0
Consumer Goods	0
Blue River	0
4th of July/Public Events	0
Day Care	0
Blue Valley Community Action	0
Senior Busing	0
Artists	0
Courthouse	0
Newspapers	0
Local Pool	0
SP. Feed	0
Total	**334**

TABLE 50: ISSUES OF SEWARD COUNTY, OVERALL

Issues	
Water use/water resources/water availability	67
Acreages/Rural Development/residential development/control pop. Density in rural areas	60
Property Taxes, Values/taxes spending/budget	30
Livestock Density Controlled	16
Support Existing AG	16
Urban vs Rural County	15
Economic Development	14
Rural Growth vs. Preservation	12
Accountability on Tax Spending	12
Livestock - Yes or No	9
Development Impact Fee	9
Quality of Life	8
Land Value Pressures vs. Ag	8
Becoming a Lincoln Suburb	7
Cellular Towers/high-tech access - communication infrastructure	7
Roads/road improvements	7
Natural Resource Protection	7
Support Existing Businesses	7
Better Road Access for Commuters	5
Ag Land Being Ag Land	4
Seward County Not Lancaster County	4
Comprehensive Plans Needs Clarity	4
Multi families in one building	3
Infrastructure	3
Education - Costs, Numbers, Etc.	2
Utilities	2
Water Quality	2
Land Pollution	2
Ag. Based Econ vs. Comm/Serivce Based	1
Keep Money at Home	1
Turn Over of Property	1
County BD-At-Large Voting	1
Ted Turner Land Grab	1
Coordination with Surrounding Counties	0
Recreation	0
Services for Aged	0
Alternative energy sources	0
Car Pooling	0
Public Transportation	0
Chemical Contamination	0
Urban Blight	0
Don't take Lancaster County's Problems	0
Crime/Drugs	0
Run Down/Abandoned Properties	0
Total	**347**

Table 49 is the combined Positives from all of the Town Hall Meetings. Overall, once everything was combined, there were 105 different positives identified. There were 68 items receiving points during the process. In all, there were a total of 334 points distributed amongst the identified positives. The most positive item identified dealt specifically with the fact that Seward County is seen as a Farming Community/Ag Based County; this item received 37 points or 11.1% of the

total. The next three positives dealt with the Quality of Life with 22 points or 6.6%; the overall rural character of the county, the total for this item was 22 points or 6.6%; and the 1 House per Quarter Section Rule, with 20 points or 6.0%. Overall, the positives receiving the most points dealt predominately with rural character and quality of life of the county at present.

Table 50 is the combined Issues from all of the Town Hall Meetings. Overall, once everything was combined, there were 44 different issues identified. There were 33 items receiving points during the process. In all, there were a total of 347 points distributed amongst the identified issues. The most important issue identified dealt specifically with water and water resources as well as water availability; this item received 67 points or 19.3% of the total. The next three issues dealt with the Acreage development and population density with 60 points or 17.3%; property taxes, the total for this items was 30 points or 8.6%; and Livestock density controls, with 16 points or 4.6%. Overall, the positives receiving the most points dealt predominately with water resources and acreage development in the county, these issues accounted for 46.7% of the total issues identified.

TABLE 51: FUTURE PROJECTS OF SEWARD COUNTY, OVERALL

Projects	
Water Quality & Quantity/maintain and protect water resources	56
Restrict Res Development/housing development regs	40
Value - Added Ag/help ag flourish	37
Stay Ag First	23
Improve Hwy Safety	20
Adjust Ag Land Values	19
Expanded Wireless Communications - Cellular/DSL	19
Business Development & Financing Opportunities	11
Work toward Solid Economy	11
Superior Schools Maintained	11
Preserve Ag Character	10
Rural Water	10
Zoning to Reflect Water Availability	9
Solidify Water Rights	8
Improve Fire Dist. Capabilities	8
Small Business Development Resource Center	6
Viaduct in Utica	6
Locate Areas of Water Shortage	6
Better Use of Public Resources	6
Retain Seniors	6
Business Development/Expansion	6
Improved Law Enforcement	6
Grassland (Native) Protection	6
Find Additional Resources $	6
Better Management of Public Works Projects	4
Score Program	3
Preserve Historical Structures	3
Sharing of Resources	2
Increased Promotional/Marketing Opportunities	2
A month deer season	2
Schools Removing Litter From Roads	2
Develop Renewable Resources	2
Better Solid Waste Management	2
Conservation of Ag Land	2
Roadside Amenities	1
Water/Landscaping Restrictions	1
Incentive for Future Farmers	1
Utilize Outside Resources	1
Traffic Management	1
Paved Road - Garland/Seward	1
Remove Old, Dilapidated Buildings	1
Recreational Opportunities	0
Waverly Road Paved	0
Enforce Water/Other Guidelines/Regs	0
Less 911 Confusion	0
Utilize Available Local Resources	0
Clean Up Old Properties	0
Retain "Brain Trust"	0
Keep Lincoln in Lancaster County	0
Preserve Historic Areas	0
Bring Areas Back to Ag Use	0
Total	**377**

Table 51 is the combined projects from all of the Town Hall Meetings. Overall, once everything was combined, there were 51 different projects identified. There were 33 items receiving points during the process. In all, there were a total of 377 points distributed amongst the identified projects. The most important project identified dealt specifically with water quantity, quality, and developing means to protect this resource; this item received 56 points or 14.9% of the total. The next three projects dealt with the restricting residential development and acreage development with 40 points or 10.6%; developing value added agricultural uses with 37 points or 9.8%; and finding ways to see Seward County stay ag. first, with 23 points or 6.1%. Overall, the positives receiving the most points dealt predominately with water resources and acreage development in the county.

The overriding issues seen during the Town Hall Meetings had to do with water availability and quality. In addition, tied to the water factor are rural residential developments in the County. These items are becoming more and more a factor in how Seward County will look and be perceived during and after the planning period. These items will not be simple to deal with and will likely create some divisions within Seward County. The remaining portion of the Envision Seward County section will establish specific goals and policies for dealing with these issues. Once this is completed, then the goals and policies will be translated into future land use policies and zoning and subdivision regulations.

GOALS AND POLICIES FOR SEWARD COUNTY

The goals and policies that have been generated for Seward County are organized into general categories. The categories are broad enough to allow many issues to fall within them, but narrow enough to allow a clear distinction and separation. These categories are used for a logical organization of goals and policies. The categories are:

- General Land Use
  - Agricultural Land Use
  - Commercial Land Use
  - Industrial Land Use
  - Residential Land Use
- Educational
- Environment
- Water Resources
- Economic Development
- Public Facilities and Taxes
- Public Works
- Transportation
- Health and Safety
- Parks and Recreation
- Implementation, Evaluation, and Review

When considering the following goals and policies, it may become evident that they may conflict with one another. In such cases, these conflicts should be discussed and the relative importance of one policy be weighed against another to determine the best course of action.

General Land Use
Goal 1

Seward County land use policies should manage the land in a manner that creates cost-effective and efficient uses while protecting the environment and natural resources.

General Policies

1.1.1 The Land Use Plan and zoning must address the anticipated future growth needs of the County.
1.1.2 Future uses within the county, which will not connect on to a municipal water system, shall be required to meet specific standards and requirements for using groundwater.
1.1.3 Future growth and development in Seward County will be guided towards a compact pattern of land uses.
1.1.4 Future growth areas will be based upon the efficient and economical expansion of public infrastructure, which will maintain and improve the quality of life for Seward County residents.
1.1.5 The County will discourage and minimize leapfrog development beyond the jurisdictions of the cities and villages.
1.1.6 The County will not compete with cities and villages regarding subdivision development and lot size.
1.1.7 The cost of required improvements, both on-site and off-site, to a subdivision that exclusively serve the property owners of the subdivision shall be borne by the developer or those property owners within said subdivision.
1.1.8 Develop zoning and subdivision regulations that promote efficient land usage and long-term adequacy, while avoiding land use conflicts and inefficient provision of public infrastructure.
1.1.9 Encourage the development of vacant lands located near cities and villages by providing regulatory incentives that promote appropriate land uses.

Agricultural Policies

1.2.1 Seward County will allow agricultural production in all areas where agricultural uses are appropriate.
1.2.2 Non-agricultural development within agricultural areas should be allowed only in specifically designated areas where the impact on agriculture is minimal.
1.2.3 Large confined livestock operations in Seward County will be regulated to ensure compliance with construction and operation regulations, permits, and environmental regulations. Operations should be located in areas where their impact on neighboring land uses will be minimal.
1.2.4 Regulations should be established and implemented that create setback and buffer requirements, as well as regulatory controls over solid, liquid, and gas emissions from livestock operations.
1.2.5 Criteria should be developed to designate areas of Seward County as “Prime Farmland”. Special consideration for preserving these areas through special land use controls and practices should assist in protecting these lands for traditional agricultural purposes.
1.2.6 Promote diversification of agricultural products and production through uses that generate additional value for existing products.
1.2.7 Encourage low to zero non-farm densities in prime farmland areas and other agricultural districts by providing residential lot size requirements, densities and separation distances between residential and agricultural uses.
1.2.8 Protect the quality of groundwater in agricultural areas of Seward County.
1.2.9 Work with livestock producers on a continual basis in evaluating regulations.
1.2.10 Establish adequate separation distances between livestock and residential uses. Under this policy, avoid locating new livestock operations next to communities and/or residential developments. In addition, provide adequate separation distances between residences and livestock operations that allow for potential expansion of livestock operations.

Commercial Policies

1.3.1 Encourage the location of commercial land uses at the intersections of major transportation networks.
1.3.2 Commercial uses shall be required to provide their own adequate water supply without negatively impacting existing neighboring properties.
1.3.3 Utilize frontage roads when locating along major roads/highways.
1.3.4 Require landscaping and architectural standards for all new commercial construction and expansion to existing operations.
1.3.5 Prohibit or discourage the construction of “strip” commercial developments in rural areas of the county.

Industrial Development Policies

1.4.1 Heavy industrial uses with a high water and/or waste disposal requirement are encouraged to locate or relocate only in or immediately adjacent to urban areas where all required services are available.

1.4.2 Prime heavy industrial sites will be identified and protected from encroachment of other urban uses pending acquisition and development.

1.4.3 Industrial areas are encouraged to be located within a community's extraterritorial jurisdiction.

1.4.4 Industrial areas located outside community's extraterritorial jurisdiction need to be compatible with the industrial development goal and will be located where adequate services, including major utility lines, electric power substations and transmission lines, trunk sewer lines, trunk water lines, and where appropriate, trunk gas lines are available.

1.4.5 Industrial uses compatible with surrounding residential development and are willing to bear the cost of maintaining high performance characteristics and attractive site and building layout and design, will be encouraged to locate or relocate in designated industrial areas.

1.4.6 Industrial uses will be located so that adequate buffer space is provided between incompatible land uses.

1.4.7 The County will develop appropriate performance, design and specification standards and requirements for all existing and future industrial uses to guide their location or relocation in the County.

1.4.8 Industrial development not utilizing rail transport will be discouraged from locating next to a railroad right-of-way.

1.4.9 The County will encourage industrial development that is energy efficient. Energy conservation measures that will be promoted include, but are not limited to, the following:

1) Efficient building, manufacturing, and heating practices;
2) Co-generation systems including the burning of wastes; and
3) Utilization of new and alternative systems.

1.4.10 The County will encourage industrial development that bases its products on renewable and indigenous raw materials.

1.4.11 The County will recognize and encourage small-scale industries as viable alternatives to larger, conventional enterprises.

Residential Land Use Policies

1.5.1 Residential developments should be separated from more intensive uses, such as agriculture, industrial, and commercial development, by the use of setbacks, buffer zones, or impact easements.

1.5.2 Residential development within Seward County may require various density levels within the county.

1.5.3 Work with community officials and developers on a continual basis to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of existing regulations, and to identify proper areas to locate new development.

1.5.4 Encourage low to zero non-farm densities in prime farmland areas and other agricultural districts by providing residential lot size requirements and proper separation distances between residential and agricultural uses.

1.5.5 Utilize information tools such as slopes, soil types, floodplain, road and bridge development and maintenance plans, when identifying areas for residential development.

1.5.6 Develop subdivision regulations that provide for a quality living environment while avoiding inefficient and expensive public infrastructure expansions.

1.5.7 Support housing options for all incomes and physical capabilities of Seward County's residents.

1.5.8 New residential developments will include a subdivision agreement, which provides for the maintenance of common areas, easements, groundwater, use of plant materials and drainage.

1.5.9 Encourage the establishment of a rehabilitation or demolition program to maintain and improve the existing housing stock.

1.5.10 Develop relationships and partnerships with housing professions in the public and private sector to establish a range of affordable housing options, ranging from a First Time Homebuyer program to rental assistance.

1.5.11 Encourage new residential development to locate near urban centers or areas identified for higher density growth, especially when direct access to existing, hard-surfaced roads or highways can be accomplished.

1.5.12 Establish zoning and subdivision design standards that require buffers, and screening standards and functional usable green space, for new developments.

1.5.13 Revise existing regulations to improve the review process for small-scale preliminary and final plats and site plans.

1.5.14 All proposed rural area developments shall be based on a reasonable expectation of supply and demand for said use or facilities and no large-scale development shall be approved without:

1) The submission and approval of a layout and design concept, with provision for the staging and servicing of all phases of the development.
2) Indication that all water wells will be able to provide an adequate supply and will not negatively impact properties in the immediate area.
3) The approval of all federal and state agencies relative in any applicable health, safety and environmental controls.
4) An adequate demonstration of the financial capacity (escrows, performance bonds, etc.) and responsibility of the applicants to complete the development and provide for operation and maintenance services.
5) Shall be appropriately, if not uniquely, suited to the area or site proposed for development.

6) Shall not be located in any natural hazard area, such as a floodplain or area of geologic hazard, steep slope, severe drainage problems or soil limitations for building or sub-surface sewage disposal, if relevant.
7) Shall be furnished with adequate access – when possible a minimum of two entrances and exits.
8) Shall not be justified solely or even primarily on the argument that the land is less costly than better alternative sites.

1.5.15 The planned unit development (PUD) concept provides a viable alternative to conventional urban development patterns, while providing a means to encourage creative yet responsible / sensitive developments.

1.5.16 Seward County will review and accommodate, wherever possible, any new or alternative development concepts or proposals, provided such concepts or proposals are consistent with and do not compromise in any way the established disposition of land uses on the Land Use Map or the goals and policies of the Plan.

Education
Goal 2

Quality education is a vital component of growth. Although the County's role is limited, policies will be followed in locating development to insure cost effective use of existing facilities. The County will coordinate with all school districts to insure adequate areas for future educational needs. Above all, the main goal is to encourage excellence in the public school curriculum and facilities.

Policies

2.1 Set development standards that coordinate reservation of land for future educational needs.
2.2 Cooperate with school systems in expanding public uses of educational facilities.

Environment
Goal 3

Seward County has a number of areas where the natural resources/environment needs to be protected and preserved. Natural resources (soils, groundwater, surface water and air) and the environment of Seward County is to be protected and managed to insure the quality, availability and sustainability for the current and future residents of Seward County.

Policies

3.1 Zoning regulations and design standards should be created to protect the environmental and natural resources of Seward County through the encouragement of preservation and conservation practices.
3.2 General land use regulations should require all development in the jurisdiction of Seward County to demonstrate a positive, or at least neutral, impact upon the soil, groundwater, surface water, and air.
3.3 Federal requirements and regulations shall be followed when land use regulations are being developed. Seward County regulations should, at a minimum, be as strict as federal standards, and where necessary, may be enforced in a manner stricter than federal guidelines.
3.4 Protect all water supplies and aquifers from development activities that may affect the quality and/or quantity of water. Development shall demonstrate a positive or, at least, a neutral impact on ground water supplies.
3.5 Identify with State and Federal agencies possible sediment control regulations to minimize potential soil loss and/or contamination problems in specific areas of Seward County.
3.6 Establish zoning and subdivision standards that support conservation of natural resources. This can be accomplished by the creation of Planned Unit Developments implementing the use of conservation easements and other tools.
3.7 Discourage conversion of designated prime agricultural land and soils to non-agricultural uses by targeting less productive agricultural soils (crops) for urban or non-farm uses. Establish a hierarchy of minimum lot sizes to encourage non-farm growth in the appropriate locations.
3.8 Encourage conservation of hillsides by establishing criteria and limiting development along specific slopes in the County.
3.9 Promote quality land management through the development of erosion control design standards for rural subdivisions and larger commercial and industrial developments.
3.10 Encourage the preservation of environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands, wooded areas, waterways (streams, ponds, lakes, rivers, etc.), and other amenities.
3.11 Seward County will preserve areas for agricultural uses, which exhibit Class I through IV soils as identified in the Capability Classification System of the U.S. Soil Conservation Service.

Water Resources
Goal 4

Efficient use of County water resources is a benefit to all citizens, as water is an essential part of the livability of an area. Conserve and manage water resources efficiently in order to sustain and enhance the quantity and quality for human consumption and to abate flood, erosion and sedimentation problems.

Policies

4.1 Seward County will continue participation in the FEMA National Flood Insurance Program to prevent flood-caused loss of life and property, by identifying and mapping the floodplains and floodways of the County.

4.2 Seward County will discourage land use development within the floodplains of the county.

4.3 Seward County will encourage improved watershed management practices and the construction of watershed storage projects for flood control.

4.4 Seward County will support soil and water conservation efforts to aid in erosion, sediment, and run-off control.

4.5 Seward County will coordinate with and support city, regional, state and federal water-quality plans and programs so that high water quality will be achieved in the cities and villages of the County, that sound watershed management practices will take place, and that improved treatment of point and non-point sources of water pollution will be achieved.

4.6 Seward County will encourage the prudent use of all County resources and support the development of water conservation techniques and practices.

4.7 Seward County will require the protection of riparian vegetation from damage that may result from development.

4.8 Seward County will review land use applications for development in riparian areas in an effort to mitigate or prevent damage to riparian vegetation that might result from the development.

4.9 Land use management practices and nonstructural solutions to problems of erosion and flooding are preferred to structural solutions.

4.10 Water erosion control structures, including riprap and fill, should be reviewed by the appropriate authorities to insure they are necessary, are designed to incorporate vegetation where possible, and designed to minimize adverse impacts on water currents, erosion, and accretion patterns.

4.11 Seward County will cooperate with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Department, the cities and villages in the County, and the U.S. Conservation Service to identify, conserve, and protect fish and wildlife habitat.

4.12 Seward County will consider the following in any public or private land use determination subject to county review:

1) The impact of filling or drainage of swamps or marshes;
2) The damming of rivers and streams;
3) The location and construction of highways and utility transmission lines; and
4) Any other land development activities which significantly interfere with the vegetation or soil cover or drainage patterns in critical habitat areas.

4.13 All identified sensitive wildlife areas will be classified as exclusively agricultural areas or open space. No major land use change will be approved. However, provisions for, but not limited to, road construction and recreational developments will be considered provided there are limited impacts on sensitive wildlife areas.

Economic Development
Goal 5

Seward County will promote a balanced economic development program that strives to add value to the agricultural base of the county, as well as, other commercial and industrial uses that will add to and create a diverse economic base in Seward County. Seward County should also maintain a rate and pattern of economic growth sufficient to balance the real property tax base of the various cities and villages, and strengthen local economic bases.

Policies

5.1 Agriculture and agricultural employment, including value-added agricultural businesses, are to be promoted throughout Seward County.

5.2 The youth of Seward County should be encouraged to remain in Seward County or return to Seward County after completion of their post-secondary education.

5.3 Economic development projects that cater to attracting Seward County youth back after graduation should be undertaken. The youth of Seward County should be involved in the identification and development of these projects.

5.4 Encourage, promote and develop economic development partnerships between local entities and private companies to assist existing and expanding business enterprises.

5.5 Support area historical, cultural and recreational activities. Seward County should continue to build upon the historical structures, cultural heritage and recreational assets located throughout the County including the incorporated and unincorporated areas.

5.6 Encourage and promote the development of home-based businesses and telecommuting based upon the available and future technological infrastructure within and near Seward County.

5.7 Seward County will encourage economic development projects, which do not conflict with the agricultural character of the County.

5.8 Economic Development activities should focus on growing local businesses, established by county residents, as opposed to pursuing the ultimate "smokestack(s)". Homegrown businesses and industries will contribute more to the local communities and county and will be a part of the community.

Public Facilities and Taxes
Goal 6

The County sees a need to integrate public facilities and services in an effort to eliminate costs and conserve energy. Coordination with all jurisdictions and affected agencies is essential in the development and maintenance of adequate public facility systems. The expansion of public facilities is a major factor in directing development.

Policies

6.1 Public facilities such as schools or churches should be located near populated areas.

6.2 Public facilities such as County yards and maintenance buildings shall be located in key areas of the County to serve the public more effectively and efficiently.

6.3 Support area historical and cultural activities.

6.4 Continually evaluate the staffing needs of the Sheriff's Department. Continued population growth will require the county to hire additional deputies and jailers in order to meet the level of protection desired by the public.

6.5 The County Board should consider the recommendation provided to them concerning a new jail facility including the potential for constructing a new or expanded jail facility.

6.6 The County should examine the need and feasibility of a rural water system within Seward County. The County Board of Supervisors shall not be the primary player in any future construction of such system.

6.7 Seward County will coordinate with the cities and villages within its jurisdiction to provide an orderly phasing of water, sanitary sewerage, storm drainage and other public services and facilities within the urban growth boundaries.

6.8 Public facilities and services for rural areas will be provided and maintained at levels appropriate for rural uses, unless a rural water system becomes feasible and desired within Seward County.

6.9 Seward County will coordinate with the cities, villages, and appropriate local, state, and federal agencies in providing for the health and service needs of the public, particularly the needs of the disadvantaged, including the young, the elderly and the handicapped.

6.10 Seward County will encourage the consolidation of municipal, county, and state administrative offices, public health, safety and welfare buildings, and community cultural facilities for purposes of energy conservation and convenient, centralized services.

6.11 Seward County will encourage, where practical, the consolidation of city, county, school district, utility and state works yards, shops, bus barns, and equipment and storage yards, in order to realize economies of scale in land acquisition, development, and operation and maintenance costs, and eliminate present facilities, which are incompatible with sensitive residential and commercial areas throughout the County.

6.12 Seward County will cooperate with other interested agencies to identify, acquire and/or reserve in advance through appropriate open space zoning designations suitable watershed areas and reservoir sites to serve the domestic water needs of the emerging urban and rural development areas of the County.

6.13 Seward County will encourage the dedication of major drainageways such as wetlands, swales, intermittent creek basins and roadside depressions for the purpose of stormwater collection.

6.14 The establishment of community water supply systems will be supported where such systems conform to all applicable water quality and engineering design criteria, in addition, the system's supply wells shall not negatively impact neighboring properties.

6.15 Groundwater supplies will be protected from critical draw-downs or disrupted flows where municipal watersheds exist.

6.16 Surface water supplies will be protected from unusual increases in sedimentation caused by farming, excavation or grading.

6.17 Both groundwater and surface water supplies will be protected from contamination by subsurface sewage disposal systems, sewage lagoons, and other sources of pollution.

6.18 The development of sanitary sewer systems will be supported where such systems conform to all applicable federal and state standards pertinent to the collection, treatment, and final disposal of effluent.

6.19 Seward County will support any consolidation of water and sewer facilities to secure the potential economies of scale and organization.

6.20 The Fire Districts and Emergency Management shall continue their cooperative relationship including the continual upgrading of the E911 system and other equipment used for Fire and Rescue purposes.

Public Works
Goal 7

Seward County shall pursue programs and facilities to insure adequate utilities will be considered and will be compatible with the County's land use policies. Goals include protecting current and future water well fields and aquifers; promote development that utilizes existing facilities and capacities; and develop new utility system facilities and capacities that support development goals.

Policies

7.1 Implement development / design standards that protect the area around municipal well fields located in the county.

7.2 Utilize soil suitability data from this plan and the Seward County soils survey when evaluating development proposals proposing septic system or lagoons for sewage treatment. Ultimately, decisions should be made based upon actual soil data collected by a professional engineer and certifying laboratory.

Transportation
Goal 8

Seward County shall provide a transportation system that improves access and circulation for vehicular traffic within Seward County. Development in Seward County shall be guided to safely utilize existing public investment in roads, and programs to reduce road development or maintenance costs. The transportation goal of Seward County is to develop and support an efficient road system to serve current and future circulation and access needs.

Policies

8.1 The interaction of existing transportation routes and drainage ways should be studied to determine the need for bridge and road improvements.

8.2 New development shall be reviewed with due consideration to the carrying capacity of the existing road system in the area, and development should be discouraged from occurring in areas where the road system is insufficient to handle any additional traffic load.

8.3 Improve, develop, and maintain well-traveled roads with hard surfacing.

8.4 Investigate the paving of several County roads to improve the connectivity of the County.

8.5 Right-of-way and pavements shall be sufficiently wide and of sufficient strength to accommodate anticipated future traffic loads.

8.6 Commercial signing is to be limited to major arterials and the total signs shall be minimized. In addition, signs shall be encouraged to be constructed in a low profile.

8.7 Encourage the on-going replacement of older, dilapidated bridges throughout the County

8.8 Continue working with Nebraska Department of Roads and provide public input on the upgrading of the Interstate, as well as State and Federal highways.

8.9 Develop land use policies that work strongly with existing and proposed transportation systems and upgrades.

8.10 All transportation-related decisions will be made in consideration of land use impacts including but not limited to adjacent land use patterns, both existing and planned, and their designated uses and densities.

8.11 Seward County will cooperate and establish close liaison with the Nebraska Department of Roads, Seward County municipalities within the county, the Lincoln/Lancaster County Metropolitan Planning Organization, the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad, the Federal Aviation Administration, the Federal Highway Administration, and private utility companies operating in the County, in respect to matters relating to the location, design and programming of roads, railroads, public transit facilities, airports, transmission lines, pipelines, waterways, energy corridors and communications facilities to guide and accommodate the emerging development patterns of the county.

8.12 Seward County will encourage bicycle and pedestrian traffic as an element of the transportation system by coordinating with the municipalities within the County to develop an integrated system of safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian ways to complement other modes of transportation.

8.13 Seward County will require new development to:

1) Limit access points on highways designated as arterials when alternative access points are feasible.

2) Minimize direct access points onto arterial right-of-ways by encouraging the utilization of common driveways.

8.14 Transportation needs for the disadvantaged, such as the low income, the handicapped, and the elderly, will be considered in the development of a County transportation system and program.

8.15 All transportation-related decisions will be made in support of the efficient and economic movement of people, goods, and services throughout the region, and will be based on the location and adequacy of facilities for such goods and services.

Health and Safety
Goal 9

Seward County's goal is to continue to support health care, fire protection and law enforcement programs by exploring programs and alternative services to insure optimum service levels and public costs.

Policies

9.1 Regulation of land use developments affecting the health, safety and general welfare of the public.

9.2 Clean and regulate nuisances and poorly maintained properties. This includes the continued efforts to regulate junk cars, junkyards and dilapidated/deteriorated residences/farm yards throughout the County.

9.3 Establish regulations that protect County residents from the secondary effects of adult entertainment.

9.4 The Fire Districts and Emergency Management shall continue their cooperative relationship including the continual upgrading of the E911 system and other equipment used for Fire and Rescue purposes.

Parks and Recreation
Goal 10

Seward County should provide adequate, park and recreation opportunities for the residents of Seward County and the State of Nebraska. These facilities should be a combination of municipal, county, and State facilities. The expansion of existing facilities and the establishment of newer facilities should be examined and encouraged by the county. .

Policies

10.1 Park and recreation facilities should be designed to accommodate the particular needs and interests of area residents while protecting, preserving, and conserving the environmental character and quality of the area.

10.2 Provide parks and recreational facilities that are reasonably accessible to residents of Seward County.

10.3 The parks and recreation section of the Comprehensive Development Plan shall be referred to when reviewing new, expansion, or redevelopment plans.

10.4 Promote recreation as a continuing means of economic development for Seward County.

10.5 Set standards that require or promote dedication of parks and open space.

10.6 Encourage recreational amenities offering year round enjoyment.

10.7 Work with developers of future rural subdivisions to create conservation areas through cluster subdivisions and conservation easements. These conservation areas should be connected from subdivision to subdivision when possible.

10.8 Seward County will cooperate with all governmental and recreation agencies within the region to identify open space and scenic resources, to determine resident and non-resident recreation needs, and to formulate and implement measures for open space preservation and use.

10.9 Seward County will encourage an appropriate amount of park and recreation development designed to meet the needs of the transient and regional population.

10.10 Seward County will recognize the development of an integrated bicycle and pedestrian trail system to provide recreational opportunities and to link open space, Seward County communities and park areas.

10.11 Seward County will explore the possibilities of placing a greater share of the burden of park acquisition on new residents of the County who generate an increased demand for parks and open space.

10.12 For the purpose of implementing recreation programs and development, Seward County will investigate funding alternatives such as tax levies, bonding grants in aid, user fees and subdivision ordinance stipulation.

Implementation, Evaluation, and Review

Goal 11

Changing needs and conditions will necessitate future review, evaluation, and updating of the Comprehensive Development Plan and its supporting documents. Intergovernmental coordination of all planning activities affecting land uses within the county is necessary to assure an integrated comprehensive plan for Seward County.

Policies

11.1 Seward County will continue to implement an ongoing citizen involvement program that provides county residents opportunity to be involved in all phases of the planning process.

11.2 Seward County will review any development concepts or proposals, which conflict with the Land Use Map, goals or policies in light of changing needs and conditions and in keeping with established procedures of Plan evaluation, amendment, and update.

11.3 Seward County will undertake a major update of the Comprehensive Development Plan and review of all supporting documents every ten years to ensure that an adequate factual basis for planning decisions is maintained.

11.4 Seward County will undertake a major review of the Future Land Use Plan at least every five years in order to measure and identify shifts in development and requirements for suitable use of the land within Seward County.

11.5 Seward County will encourage federal, state, and regional agencies and special districts to coordinate their planning efforts with those of the county.

DEVELOP SEWARD COUNTY

INTRODUCTION

Within any planning jurisdiction, whether a large growing urban area or a small declining rural county, there will be changes in land uses throughout the planning period. The purpose of the Development Chapter is to provide a general guide to direct changes in land use and transportation over time. The resulting changes in land uses and transportation networks should be capable of coexisting with a minimum number of conflicts. This Chapter must reflect the existing conditions and be flexible in order to meet the needs of its citizens as well as their vision for the county's future.

The Development Chapter provides the basis for the formulation of land use and the zoning regulations. For this reason, it is imperative to formulate a plan tailored to the needs, desires and environmental limitations of the planning area. The Development Chapter should promote improvements in all the components of the local economy with particular emphasis on agricultural growth, as the predominant component of the local economy.

LAND USE ELEMENTS

The elements of the Seward County Development Chapter include:

- **Existing Land Use**
- **Existing Transportation**
- **County Land Use Management Plan**
- **Future Land Use and Transportation**

All of these elements are integrated in some manner. Effective evaluations and decisions regarding development decisions require a substantial amount of information to be utilized.

Principles and Concepts of the Seward Development Chapter

- Private ownership of land is essential to the freedom of individuals, families and communities and to the economic interest of the citizens of the county.
- Existing agricultural uses, methods of agricultural production, property values and the quality of life of the County residents should be protected and preserved.
- Allow for changes in farming practices and the scale of agricultural production should be encouraged when the use is compatible with existing land uses. Negative impacts on incompatible land uses, environmentally sensitive areas and issues impacting property values or the quality of life in the rural areas of the county should be kept to a minimum.
- Land use regulations, which are to be implemented in the Future Land Use Plan, should be minimized and guided to address the specific issues of Seward County.
- This plan should effectively address the basic protection of the existing land uses, property values, the local environment and quality of life.
- Development of future land uses that are inconsistent with these basic protections should be discouraged.
- Decisions about land use affect transportation systems and vice versa.
- Protect an individual's right to use ***available*** groundwater, especially those that were existing prior to these policies.

EXISTING LAND USE

Introduction

Evaluating the land uses that presently exist within Seward County is critical to the formulation of the Comprehensive Development Plan. The analysis of land including location, size and characteristics is important in understanding the pattern of development, past land use trends and other significant factors shaping the existing layout of Seward County. This analysis is essential to the preparation of the Future Land Use Plan. In order to realistically plan for future growth and development in Seward County, the starting point is the existing shape, form and amount of land presently used to provide for county functions. It also assists in the formulation of workable zoning regulations to protect existing uses.

Land Use Categories

Evaluation of the existing land uses in Seward County required a Land Use Survey to be undertaken. The evaluation included a visual overview using recent color aerial photographs, input from the planning commission members and zoning administrator and visual review by driving certain areas to confirm specific uses. The location of each specific use of land is shown graphically on the Existing Land Use Map, Figure 31. The existing land uses of Seward County were classified under the following categories:

- Agriculture
- Livestock Confinement
- Agriculture Storage
- Farmstead
- Rural Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Public
- Quasi-Public
- Transportation and Utilities
- Parks, Recreation, and Open Space
- Communication Towers

The above land use categories may be generally defined in the following manner:

Agriculture- Row crop, alfalfa, pastureland and all grain crops are considered agriculture land uses. Seward County is largely an agricultural based county and the existing land use map verifies these uses.

Livestock Confinement- Feedlots and confinements of high production densities comprise the uses of livestock confinement areas. These uses may be large or small, a family operation, or a standard operation. Also included in this category are commercial kennels and hog/cattle confinements or feedlots that are no longer in operation. These operations are scattered throughout the county with the largest of the cattle feedlots being located within the extraterritorial jurisdiction of Seward and just north of Milford.

Agriculture Storage- This category consists of abandoned farmsteads and uses related to agricultural storage, including grain, livestock or mechanical storage. Storage buildings or structures can range from grain bins to abandoned buildings, with no human occupancy. These particular uses are scattered throughout the County.

Farmsteads- Uses in this category are residential dwellings that have adjacent agricultural operations, including agriculture buildings and/or family livestock operations. Residential units of this type are evenly distributed throughout the county.

Rural Residential- This use comprises residential dwellings that are not related to agriculture or feedlots and includes single residential dwellings located on county roads, highways, or private drives. A predominate number of these uses are scattered throughout the county with the majority of the locations being from Seward east to the Lancaster County boundary line.

Commercial- Uses in this category consist of convenience stores; feed, seed, automobile and machinery sales; petroleum sales, etc. Commercial uses tend to be located near urban areas or in proximity to the Interstate and other highways for accessibility.

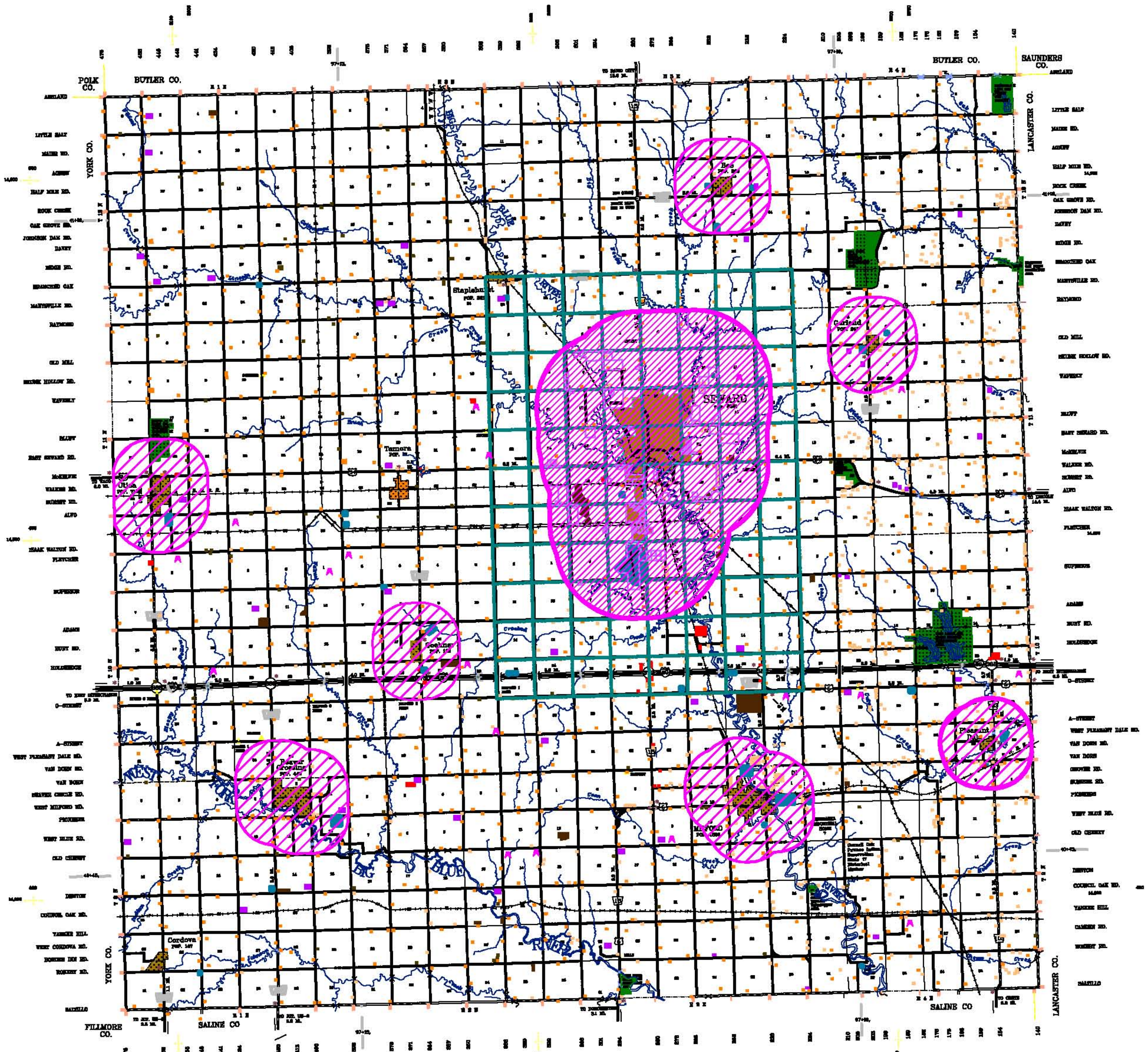
Industrial- Land uses of this nature may include communication plants, light manufacturing, commercial storage, industrial parks, large salvage yards, etc. These uses tend to be located near municipalities and major transportation routes for accessibility purposes.

Public- This category consists of all historical markers, nature preserves, school facilities, etc. and are scattered throughout the county. Many rural schoolhouses are abandoned or have other uses. Some of these current uses have been illustrated, while some have not been shown.

Quasi-Public- The quasi-public category includes rural churches and cemeteries. Cemeteries near churches or along roadsides range in size from several acres to a few graves. Included in this land use category are historical cemeteries.

Park, Recreation, and Open Space- This category includes State Recreational Areas and/or Wildlife Management Areas, camping areas, and private hunting/recreational areas or camps owned and operated by clubs or organizations.

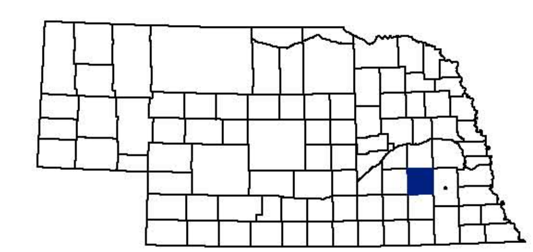
Communication Towers – This category deals with all types of telecommunication towers including cellular, county repeater towers and television towers. These uses are located throughout Seward County.



LEGEND

Existing Land Use Map

- Agriculture
- Ag Storage
- Livestock Confinement
- Farmstead
- Rural Residential
- Commercial
- Public
- Parks and Recreation
- Quasi-Public
- Corporate Limits
- Extraterritorial Jurisdiction



SEWARD COUNTY
NEBRASKA

Figure

GRAPHIC SCALE

Full Size: 1 inch = 5280 ft.

JEO Consulting Group, Inc.

EXISTING LAND USE ANALYSIS

Physical Character of Seward County

One of the most critical factors, concerning land use development in any area is the physical characteristics of the area. The physical character of Seward County is dominated at the eastern portion of the county by rolling hills with small areas of flatter ground. Historically, this area has seen a combination of some row crops and grazing; grazing has been located in areas where the slopes are too steep to plant and combine crops. Most of the development has been low density residential or commonly known as acreage development.

In contrast to the eastern portion of Seward County are the level plains of the western portion of the county. This for the most part has been untouched by urban development, except for the communities located in the area. Most of this area remains in agricultural production.

Rural Unincorporated Land Uses

Agriculture Development

The vast majority of the 368,448 acres of land within the County is used for agricultural production. The most prominent agricultural activities are crop production.

Livestock Confinements

Livestock operations of varying sizes, including confined livestock feeding operations, are minimal within Seward County. One of the two largest existing operations is located within the extraterritorial jurisdictions of Seward; while the other lot is located directly north of Milford along U.S. Highway 6. These uses are indicated as Livestock Confinement on the existing land use map, Figure 31. Generally, many of the livestock operations are located in areas where rural farmsteads are the predominant land use. The development of these uses in close proximity with farmsteads in the county has occurred for the same reasons original farmsteads were constructed; the availability of adequate water, supplies, higher crop production potentials and the desire to have the feeding facilities located near the producers' farming or ranching operations.

Agriculture Storage

Figure 31 shows the location of the agriculture storage in Seward County. As stated before, this land use could include vacant farmsteads, mechanical storage and agriculture storage such as grain. Usually this type of land use has a relatively low impact on the land. These storage facilities are evenly distributed throughout the county; usually close to a farmstead, with some existing as stand alone structures. Some of these uses could be seasonal, thus when locating future agriculture storage sites certain guidelines should be established.

Farmstead Development

As indicated in Figure 31, farmsteads are scattered throughout Seward County. Examination of the land use pattern, with regard to farmstead development, reveals no specific pattern aside from the fact that the majority of farmsteads were developed in areas where the soils are the most conducive to crop production and near a major transportation route. Limited farmstead development has occurred in areas of the county where the soils are not conducive to crop production, which, in most instances, is in areas where there are steeper slopes.

Rural Residential Development

Non-farm rural residential development has been a growing trend, throughout the state of Nebraska, over the past two or three decades. This has been driven by market demand for larger parcels of land and larger homes. In most instances, larger parcels of land are not available within the corporate limits of smaller cities or villages; as a result, the development has occurred in rural areas. Pressure should continue for this trend to occur throughout the county during the planning period. It is important for the governing body of Seward County to acknowledge the potential increase in non-farm residents in the future, and design regulations that adequately manage their impact on the existing uses within the county.

Non-farm rural residential development has occurred throughout the county; however, the majority of the growth pressure has been in the eastern portions of the county or around the city of Seward. The majority of the non-farm residential development has been on the eastern edge and north of Interstate 80, as indicated in Figures 30. This increase is due in part of Seward County's proximity to the Lincoln/Lancaster County area and the scenic nature of the region.

Commercial Development

Figure 31 indicates the amount of rural commercial development is limited in Seward County. The majority of most commercial operations and businesses are located within the corporate limits of the Seward County communities. However, there are several commercial developments located around the interchanges of Interstate 80.

Industrial Development

Figure 31 specifies different industrial sites located within Seward County. The major industrial uses in Seward County include the grain elevators in old Tamora and Ruby.

Public/Semi-Public Development

As shown in Figure 31, public/semi-public land uses are located throughout Seward County. These uses are generally located in close proximity to the major transportation routes of the County, including U.S. Highway 34, State Highway 15, and Interstate 80 and/or near the urban areas of the County. There are also several rural cemeteries scattered throughout the County.

Park, Recreation, and Open Space

Seward County currently has a substantial amount of land designated as State Recreational Areas and/or State Wildlife Areas. Details of these areas can be found in the County Facilities section of the Profile Seward County.

EXISTING RESIDENTIAL DENSITY

The Residential Density, Figures 32 to 34, was derived from the existing land use map depicting the density of residential development within Seward County. These maps were developed to examine three specific density issues, of which are: 1) The Acreage Density by Section in Seward County, 2) the Total Residential Density of Acreage/Rural Residential Development by Section, and 3) the Total Density of Residential Development by Quarter Section. These maps were developed in direct response to the growing concerns of rural residential growth. These maps display graphically where and how much rural residential development has been allowed to occur in the county. These maps can be utilized when making future land use decisions as well as future transportation decisions.

Acreage Density by Section

Figure 32, Acreage Density by Section examines only the density of those dwelling units determined to be defined as acreage and not farmsteads. The density is examined in terms of ranges per section, these ranges are:

- None or 0
- 1 to 2 Acreages per Section
- 3 to 5 Acreages per Section
- 6 to 10 Acreages per Section
- 11 or more Acreages per Section

The greatest densities are located within the eastern most Townships of Seward County. Within these townships there are five sections with 11 or more acreages per section. In addition, there are 14 sections with densities of 6 to 10 acreages per section. Finally, there are 36 sections with 3 to 5 acreages per section.

Total Residential Density by Section

Figure 33, Total Residential Density by Section examines the density of dwelling units, including farmsteads and acreages, by section. The density is examined in terms of ranges per section, these ranges are:

- None or 0
- 1 to 2 Acreages per Section
- 3 to 5 Acreages per Section
- 6 to 10 Acreages per Section
- 11 or more Acreages per Section

Again, the greatest densities are located within the eastern most Townships of Seward County. Within these townships there are six sections with 11 or more dwelling units per section. In addition, there are 28 sections with densities of 6 to 10 dwelling units per section. Finally, there are 60 sections with 3 to 5 dwelling units per section. The overall density per section in these 144 square miles is the greatest within Seward County.

Total Residential Density by Quarter Section

Figure 34, Total Residential Density by quarter Section examines the density of dwelling units, including farmsteads and acreage, by quarter sections. The density is examined in terms of ranges per quarter section, these ranges are:

- None or 0
- 1 Acreage per Section
- 2 Acreages per Section
- 3 Acreages per Section
- 4 or more Acreages per Section

The greatest densities are located within the eastern most Townships of Seward County, which equals 144 square miles. The remaining part of Seward County, or 432 square miles has a large number of quarter sections with no residential development of any kind.

The current density maps represent the basis for the development of future residential land use densities and policies throughout Seward County.

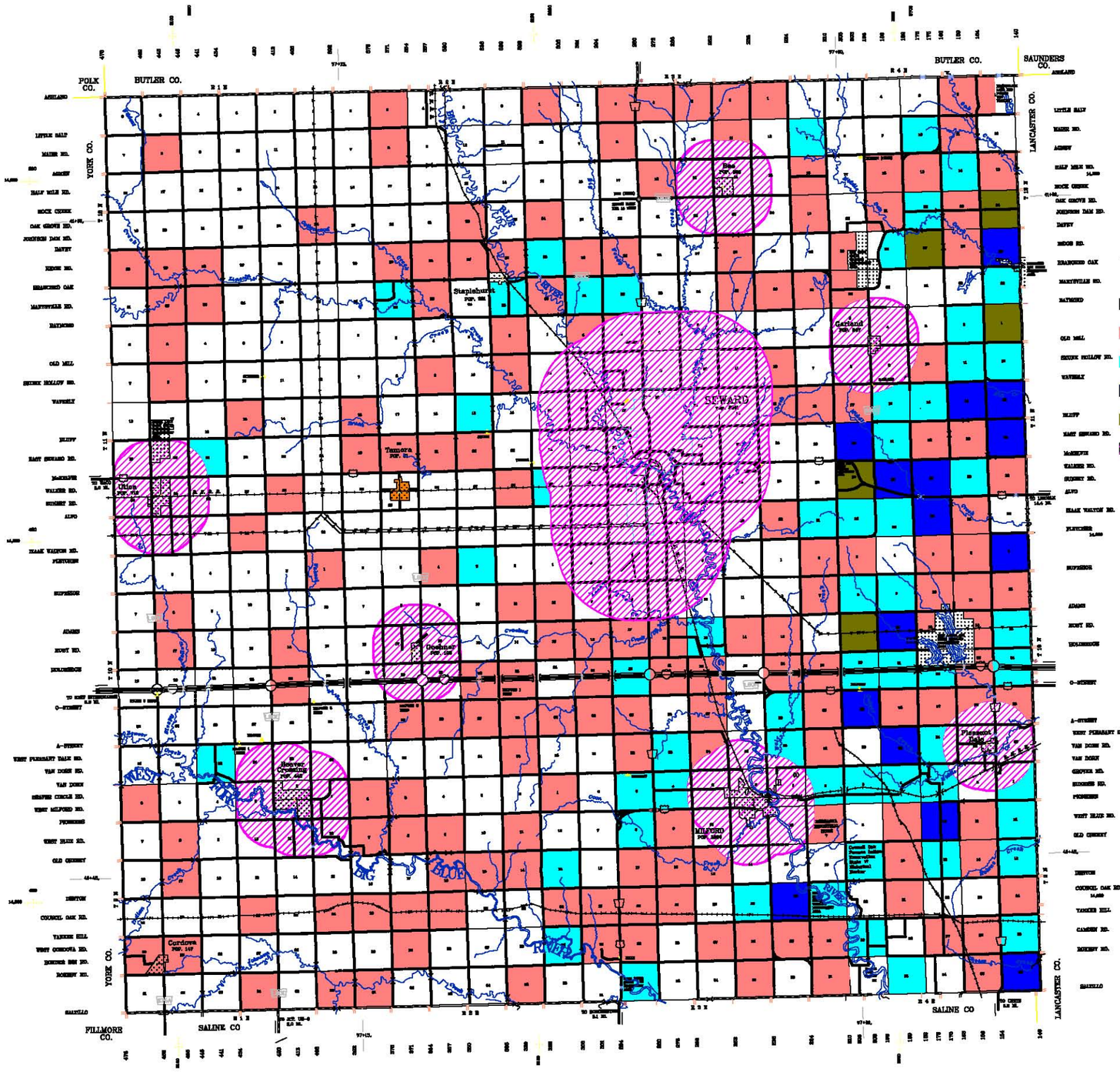
EXISTING LAND USE SUMMARY

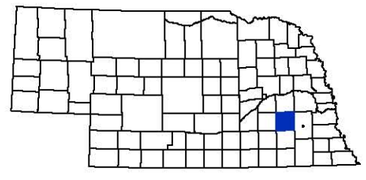
The existing land use pattern in the rural portions of the county should have implications with the development of land uses in the future. There should be a place for each type of development (i.e. farming, non-farm residents and confined

feeding operations) within the rural portions of Seward County, but locating these uses should be extensively evaluated. If Seward County is to encourage development within the rural areas of the county, it will be imperative to formulate a Future Land Use Plan and Zoning Regulation, which effectively balance development and minimize conflicting land uses.

Major issues that have been, or are currently impacting existing uses include:

- Groundwater availability
- Transportation issues ranging from the Interstate to minimum maintenance roads
- Natural resource areas
- Topography
- State owned wildlife and recreation areas
- Growth pressures from the east, specifically the city of Lincoln and Lancaster County



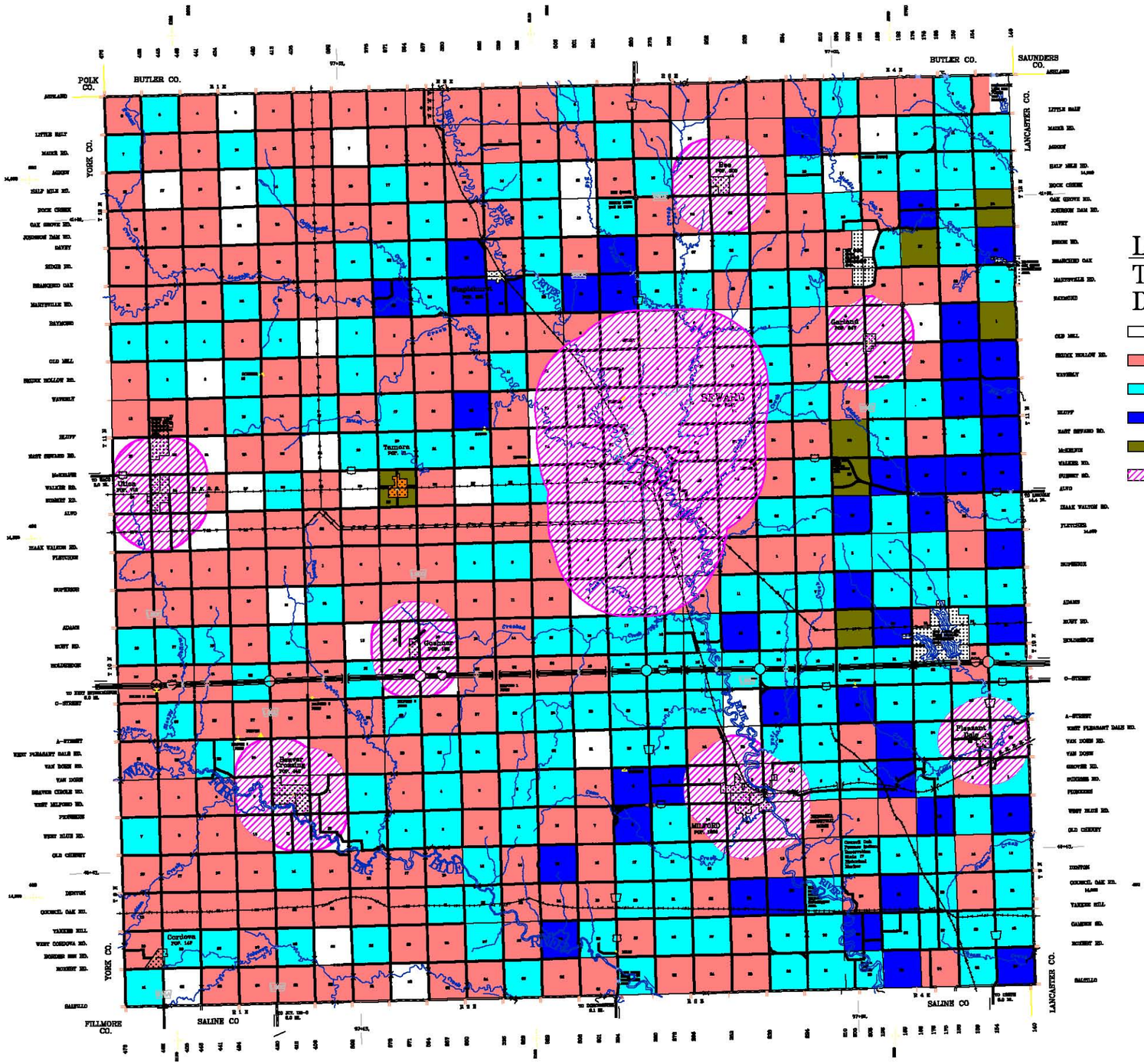


SEWARD COUNTY
NEBRASKA

Figure 32

GRAPHIC SCALE

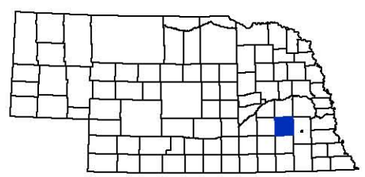
JEO Consulting Group, Inc.



LEGEND

Total Residential Density by Section

- 0
- 1 - 2
- 3 - 5
- 6 - 10
- 11 or More
- Extraterritorial Jurisdiction



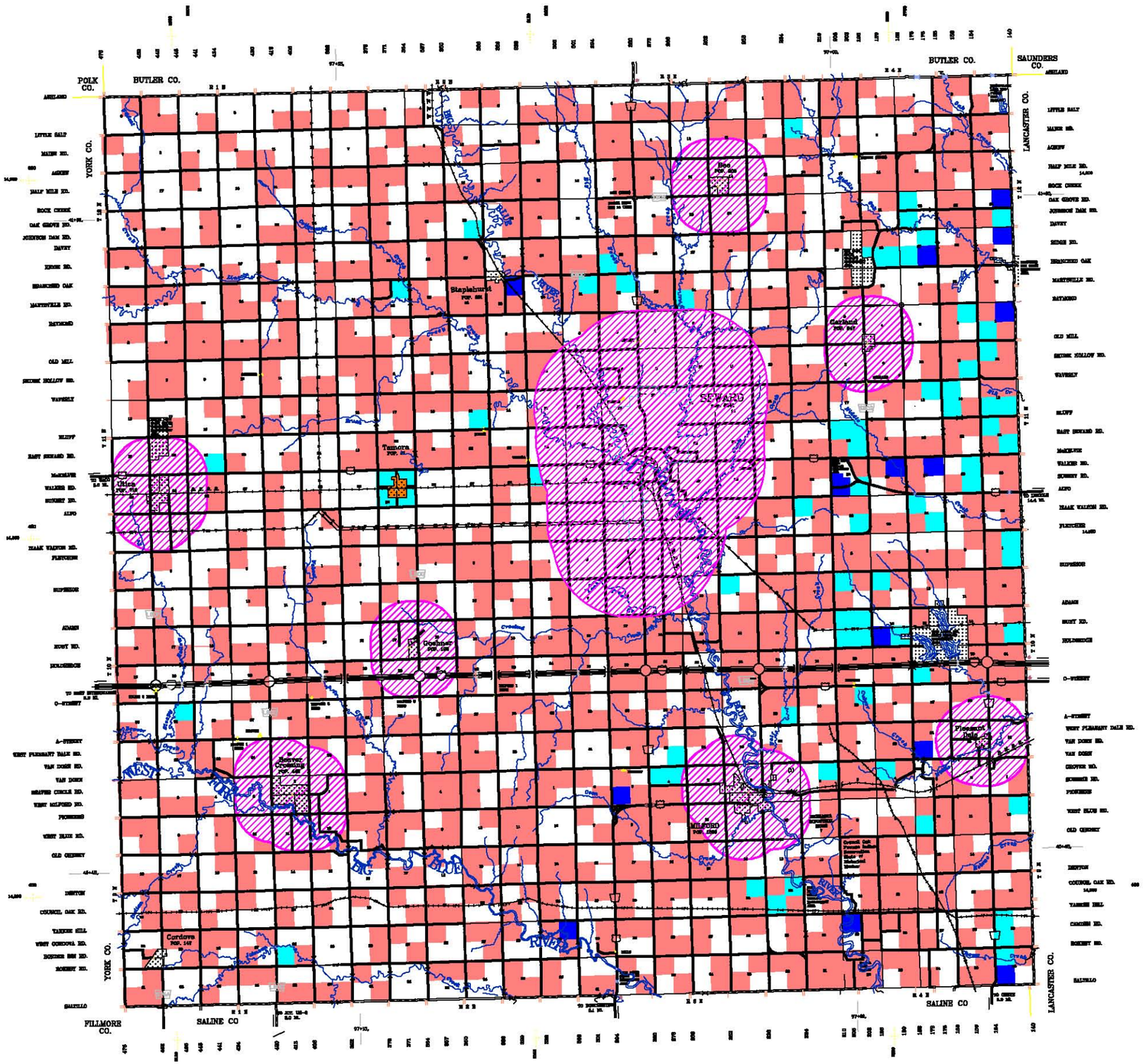
SEWARD COUNTY
NEBRASKA

Figure33

GRAPHIC SCALE

N

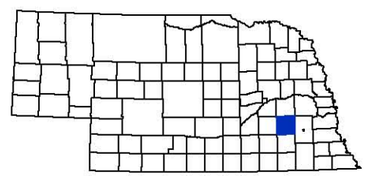
JEO Consulting Group, Inc.



LEGEND

Total Density
by 1/4 Section

- 0
- 1 - 2
- 3 - 4
- 5 - 10
- 11 or More
- Extraterritorial Jurisdiction



SEWARD COUNTY
NEBRASKA

Figure 34

GRAPHIC SCALE

Full Size: 1 Inch = 5280 ft.

N

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EXISTING TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Street and Road Classification System

All of the public highways, roads, and streets in Nebraska are divided into two broad categories, and each category is divided into multiple functional classifications. The two broad categories are Rural Highways and Municipal Streets. State statute defines Rural Highways as "all public highways and roads outside the limits of any incorporated municipality," and Municipal Streets as "all public streets within the limits of any incorporated municipality." Neb. Rev. Stat. § 39-2102 (RRS 1998)

The functional classifications are used to define typical traffic patterns and jurisdictional responsibility. The functional classifications for Rural Highways are defined by state statute as follows:

(1) ***Interstate***, which shall consist of the federally designated National System of Interstate and Defense Highways;

(2) ***Expressway***, which shall consist of a group of highways following major traffic desires in Nebraska which rank next in importance to the National System of Interstate and Defense Highways. The expressway system is one which ultimately should be developed to multilane divided highway standards;

(3) ***Major Arterial***, which shall consist of the balance of routes which serve major statewide interests for highway transportation. This system is characterized by high-speed, relatively long distance travel patterns;

(4) ***Scenic-Recreation***, which shall consist of highways or roads located within or which provide access to or through state parks, recreation or wilderness areas, other areas of geographical, historical, geological, recreational, biological, or archaeological significance, or areas of scenic beauty;

(5) ***Other Arterial***, which shall consist of a group of highways of less importance as through-travel routes which would serve places of smaller population and smaller recreation areas not served by the higher systems;

(6) ***Collector***, which shall consist of a group of highways which pick up traffic from many local or land-service roads and carry it to community centers or to the arterial systems. They are the main school bus routes, mail routes, and farm-to-market routes;

(7) ***Local***, which shall consist of all remaining rural roads, except minimum maintenance roads; and

(8) ***Minimum Maintenance***, which shall consist of (a) roads used occasionally by a limited number of people as alternative access roads for areas served primarily by local, collector, or arterial roads, or (b) roads which are the principal access roads to agricultural lands for farm machinery and which are not primarily used by passenger or commercial vehicles.

Neb. Rev. Stat. § 39-2103 (RRS 1998) (emphasis added).

The statute goes further by stating that certain rural highways classified under subdivisions (1) to (3) of section 39-2103 "should, combined, serve every incorporated municipality having a minimum population of one hundred inhabitants or sufficient commerce, a part of which will be served by stubs or spurs, and along with rural highways classified under subdivision (4) of this section, should serve the major recreational areas of the state." Sufficient commerce is defined in Neb. Rev. Stat. § 39-2103 as "a minimum of two hundred thousand dollars of gross receipts under the Nebraska Revenue Act of 1967." In other words, every incorporated municipality with a population of 100 or greater, or one that has sufficient commerce, should be served by either (1) an Interstate, (2) an Expressway, or (3) a Major Arterial.

The 10 communities including Seward, Bee, Staplehurst, Utica, Garland, Goehner, Beaver Crossing, Cordova, Milford, and Pleasant Dale would fall under this program and would adopt a "One and Six Year Programs" to effectively plan for future street improvement projects.

The functional classifications for Municipal Streets are defined by state statute as follows:

(1) ***Interstate***, which shall consist of the federally designated national system of interstate and defense highways;

(2) ***Expressway***, which shall consist of two categories: ***Extensions of Rural Expressways*** and some ***Additional Routes*** which serve very high volumes of local traffic within urban areas;

(3) ***Major Arterial***, which shall generally consist of extensions of the rural major arterials which provide continuous service through municipalities for long-distance rural travel. They are the arterial streets used to transport products into and out of municipalities;

(4) ***Other Arterial***, which shall consist of two categories***: Municipal Extensions of Rural Other Arterials***, and ***Arterial Movements Peculiar to a Municipality's Own Complex***, that is streets which interconnect major areas of activity within a municipality, such as shopping centers, the central business district, manufacturing centers, and industrial parks;

(5) ***Collector***, which shall consist of a group of streets which collect traffic from residential streets and move it to smaller commercial centers or to higher arterial systems; and

(6) ***Local***, which shall consist of the balance of streets in each municipality, principally residential access service streets and local business streets. They are characterized by very short trip lengths, almost exclusively limited to vehicles desiring to go to or from an adjacent property.

Neb. Rev. Stat. § 39-2104 (RRS 1998) (emphasis added).

The method by which streets and roads are classified depend upon their location and use. In the case of the incorporated communities, streets and roads are classified under the Municipal Streets functional category system.

The jurisdictional responsibility that municipalities have is defined in Neb. Rev. Stat. § 39-2105 as follows:
"(3) The various incorporated municipalities shall have the responsibility for the design, construction, reconstruction, maintenance, and operation of all streets classified as expressway which are of a purely local nature, that portion of municipal extensions of rural expressways and major arterials which exceeds the design of the rural portions of such systems, and responsibility for those streets classified as other arterial, collector, and local within their corporate limits."

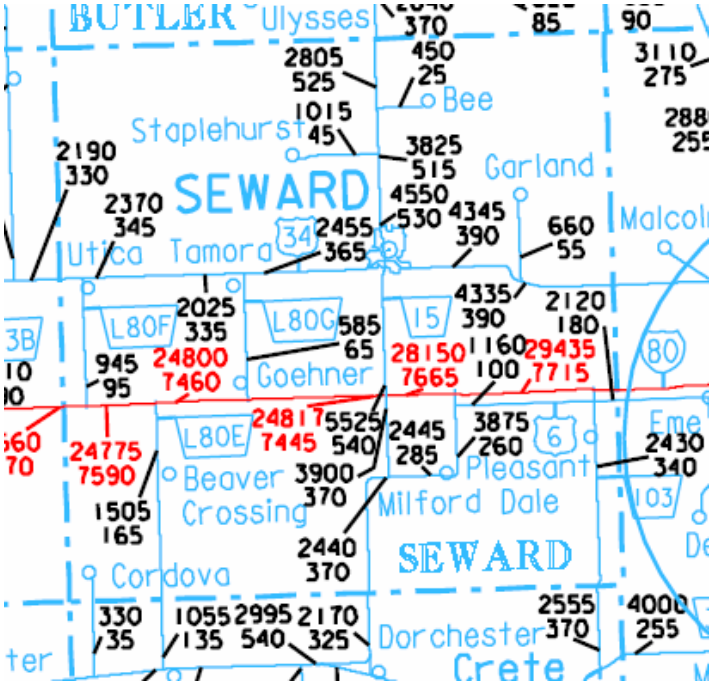
The State of Nebraska has jurisdictional responsibility for all roads classified as interstate, expressway, and major arterial under the Rural Highway classification, and all roads classified as interstate under the Municipal Streets system. The jurisdiction over any municipal extensions of these classifications transfers to the municipality whenever the road exceeds the design standards of the road leading into the municipality. Neb. Rev. Stat. § 39-2105 (1) (RRS 1998). When the design of a rural road differs at different points, the responsibility of the state is limited to the lesser of the two designs, and the municipality is responsible for the remainder of the design.

Scenic-Recreation roads remain under jurisdiction of the governmental subdivision that had jurisdiction prior to the time the road was designate as Scenic-Recreation. Neb. Rev. Stat. § 39-2105 (4) (RRS 1998).

Composition of Existing Transportation System

The transportation network within Seward County is well developed with Major U.S. Highways including Interstate 80, Nebraska State Highways, developed County arterials, and local roads. The majority of the highway system in Seward County is primarily in the southern half of the county. North of U.S. Highway 34 there is only the extension north of Nebraska Highway 15 and three State links (Garland, Bee, and Staplehurst)

FIGURE 35: 2002 TRAFFIC VOLUME MAP OF SEWARD COUNTY



Federal Highways

Interstate 80 runs east and west through Seward County nearly in the middle of the county; the total vehicles per day count on the Interstate ranged from 24,775 cars on the east, to 29,435 cars (peak), on the west. Figure 35 indicates the traffic volumes of I-80 and the other highways in Seward in 2002. U.S. Highway 34 runs east and west through Seward County and runs directly through the city of Seward and connects the community to Lincoln; the vehicular traffic counts for U.S. Highway 34 ranged from 2,370 cars on the west, to 4,345 cars (peak), on the east. U.S. Highway 6 runs somewhat east and west and in some areas actually runs north and south. U.S. Highway 6 connects Lincoln to Milford and points west; the vehicular traffic for U.S. Highway 6 ranged from 2,170 cars on the west/south, to 2,120 cars (3,875 cars was peak north of Milford) on the east.

State Highways

There is only one primary state highway running through Seward County and it is Nebraska Highway 15. Nebraska Highway 15 runs north and south and connects Seward County with communities across its entire route, which runs from Kansas to South Dakota. The traffic counts for Nebraska Highway 15 ranged from 2,805 cars, on the north to 2,170 cars on the south, with 5,525 being the peak at I-80.

Railroad Service

The closest rail freight service to Seward County is in Lincoln. Lincoln serves as one of the major switching yards for the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad. There is some service by Union Pacific Railroad in Lincoln but the largest part of their freight operations are in Omaha. The nearest passenger service is located in Lincoln through Amtrak.

Bus Service

The nearest commercial bus service is available in Lincoln, York and Grand Island. Greyhound offers only eastbound buses with connection in Omaha and points east. In addition, Burlington Trailways offers both eastbound and westbound service in Lincoln and Grand Island. Finally, Arrow Stages Lines/Black Hills Stage Lines offers eastbound to Omaha and westbound, as far as Denver, through Lincoln, York and Grand Island.

Commercial Airport Service

Lincoln Municipal Airport is the nearest point for commercial service. However, airlines and flight schedules are limited. The airport is served by Northwest Airlink with service to Minneapolis and Detroit. In addition, United Express provides service to Denver and Chicago.

Eppley Airport located in Omaha is a regional airport for the region including Seward County. In 1999 the airport served a total of 3.77 million passengers, 77 million pounds of mail, and 172 million pounds of cargo. The airport itself is located four miles northwest of downtown Omaha on a site encompassing approximately 2,650 acres. The terminal area includes 368,000 square feet with 21 boarding gates. The airport includes three runways, 9,502 feet x 150 feet, 8,152 feet x 150 feet, 4,060 feet x 75 feet. Adjacent to the airport is long and short term parking in the garage, surface parking as well economy parking located a short distance from the airport. Airlines serving Eppley include the following:

- America West Airlines
- American Airlines
- Continental Airlines
- Delta Air Lines
- Frontier Airlines
- Midwest Express Airlines
- Northwest Airlines
- Southwest Airlines
- Trans World Airlines
- United Airlines
- US Airways Express

Small craft Public Airports

Seward Municipal Airport is owned and operated by the City of Seward. There are two runways in use, the main runway is 3,601 feet long and 60 feet wide with a concrete surface and the second runway is turf and measures 3,400 feet long and 150 feet wide.

Flying V Airfield, outside of Utica. The Flying V is a privately owned and operated airfield.

Existing Transportation System Map

Figure 36

Seward County, Nebraska

LEGEND

- Expressway/Interstate
- Major Arterial
- Other Arterial
- Collector
- Interstate Interchange

GRAPHIC SCALE

1.25 0 .625 1.25 2.5 5

1 inch = 2.5 Mi.

N W E S

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CREATED BY: R.P.I. JANUARY, 2006

JEO Consulting Group, Inc.

COUNTY LAND USE MANAGEMENT POLICY (CLUMP)

Purpose of CLUMP

The purpose of the CLUMP system is to develop a broad policy that acknowledges existing land use patterns, existing and future market demands, and manages these factors in relation to one another. CLUMP establishes a long-range management policy that provides guidance for future development.

CLUMP Process

CLUMP was devised to identify and examine existing development trends within Seward County. The CLUMP process includes a review of two critical elements of the existing land use fabric within the County; which are:

- Existing Land Use patterns and locations, and
- The density of residential development within the unincorporated areas of the County.

These elements can be seen in Figures 31 through Figure 34 of this document.

CLUMP balances the demand for urban and non-urban development with the preservation and conservation of agriculture and the fiscal responsibilities to provide services either at the County or the municipal level. CLUMP utilizes principals found within the "Smart Growth" movement. According to the Urban Land Institute's publication **Smart Growth: Myth or Fact**, a ***major myth*** is that ***"Smart growth is a code word for no growth".*** However, as the ULI points out, a ***major fact*** is that ***"Smart growth recognizes that growth and development are both inevitable and beneficial"***.

> ***"The goal of smart growth is not "no growth" or even slow growth. Rather, the goal is sensible growth that balances our need for jobs and economic development with our desire to save our natural environment"***
>
> Parris Glendening, Governor State of Maryland

The development of CLUMP was premised on the belief that development pressures and demands exist and that the best approach is to acknowledge and accommodate these pressures through diligent planning. However, these pressures must be managed and channeled to areas that are in the process of developing, or areas that can accommodate this development over the long term.

CLUMP CONCEPT

The CLUMP concept centers on four policy areas. These areas are:

- Urban Transition
- Transitional Zone
- Agricultural
- Conservation District

These four policy areas are indicated on Figure 37 of this document. These areas generally identify different levels of development based upon proximity to existing urban centers or smaller developments; proximity to major transportation routes; existing land use densities; and potential land uses to be allowed in the future. The intent is to concentrate each of the different policy considerations into areas based upon these factors. In addition, intense development (major commercial centers, densely populated subdivisions, etc.) should be encouraged to locate within or adjacent to the

existing communities of Seward County. Ultimately, the CLUMP concept is to encourage growth and development within the unincorporated areas of Seward County using a well-considered management approach.

Policy Areas

Urban Transition Policy Area

The Urban Transition Policy Area is intended to accommodate the following policies:

- Higher density development generally near urbanized areas /communities
- Located along major transportation routes within the county, especially the interchanges of Interstate 80
- Location of higher intensity uses
- Potential growth areas adjacent to the smaller communities

The Urban Transition Policy Areas are generally located throughout Seward County. The locations are as follows:

- The old community of Tamora
- Interstate 80 interchange 366
- Interstate 80 interchange 369
- Interstate 80 interchange 379
- Interstate 80 interchange 382
- Interstate 80 interchange 388
- Around and including the Village of Staplehurst

An Urban Transition Policy Area was not included at Interstate 80 interchange 373 since the Village of Goehner controls the land uses and zoning at that location.

The proposed land uses for the Urban Transition policy areas are:

- Industrial
- Commercial
- Urban Residential
- Rural Residential
- Public
- Parks / Recreation

When making future land use and zoning decisions, the policy requires any of these use types to be located within an Urban Transition policy area. These areas, as well as the area within the extraterritorial jurisdictions of the communities should allow for ample development opportunities while allowing for a controlled growth policy. All future development of this type should be located in the designated areas in order to minimize future sprawl and haphazard development.

Transitional Zone Policy Area

The Transitional Development Zone policy area is intended to accommodate the following policies:

- Less dense types of developments generally within or near rural areas of the county that have already developed at a density of more than four residential dwelling units per section
- Near the smaller communities of the county

The Transitional Development Zone policy areas are basically located from Nebraska Highway 15 around Seward and Milford. The locations can be seen on Figure 37.

The proposed land uses for the Transitional Development Zone policy areas are:

- Rural Residential
- Transitional Agriculture
- Some small commercial uses
- Mixture of Agriculture and agri-businesses

- Public
- Parks / Recreation

When making future land use and zoning decisions, the policy requires any of these use types to be located within a Transitional Development Zone policy area unless overlap uses are allowed in another policy area. Future development, especially the smaller commercial uses and rural residential should be designed in ways to minimize impact on surrounding uses (i.e. cluster development, development away from environmentally sensitive conditions). One key factor determining the Transitional Development Zone locations was based upon the number of quality wells (flow rates), the general thickness of the aquifer, and the density of existing residential development. Due to the lack of water in these areas, any land use and zoning changes to the maps must consider the availability of groundwater on the site(s) and the impact on adjacent properties. All future development of this type should be located in the designated areas in order to minimize future sprawl and haphazard development.

Agriculture Policy Area

The Agriculture policy area is intended to accommodate the following policies:

- The preservation of agricultural uses
- Low density residential development, primarily farmsteads and residences connected to an existing farming operation

The Agriculture policy area is the remaining portions of Seward County not included in the Urban Transition, Conservation or Rural Acreage areas.

The proposed land uses for the Agriculture policy areas are:

- General Agriculture
- Transitional Agriculture
- Mixture of Agriculture and agri-businesses
- Public
- Parks / Recreation

When making future land use and zoning decisions, the policy would allow only these use types to be located within an Agriculture policy area. These areas have been identified based upon their lack of development and the ability to preserve the agricultural base of Seward County. All future development of this type should be located in the designated areas in order to minimize future sprawl and haphazard development.

Conservation District

The Conservation District is intended to accommodate the following policies:

- Provide requirements regarding the development of residential uses and uses which have an even greater demand for water due to the geological limitations and the availability of groundwater
- Low density residential development, primarily farmsteads and residences connected to an existing farming operation

The Conservation District primarily covers the eastern townships of Seward County. This area is currently seeing pressure for development of residential acreages. This pressure is due to growth in Lincoln and Lancaster County. However, this area of the county is dominated by glacial till and has little or very little quality of loess; thus the rationale for the lack of groundwater within the area. Future development of this area will be dominated by an ability to locate potable groundwater and not impact those that currently have wells in place.

CLUMP Base Map
Figure 37

Seward County, Nebraska

0 2 4 8

Scale in Miles

N W E S

Legend

- Groundwater Conservation District
- General Agricultural
- Transitional Zone
- Urban Transition

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DRAWN BY J.A.S. JULY 207
SOURCE: NE DNR, SEWARD CO

JEO Consulting Group, Inc.

FUTURE LAND USE

Based upon the land use concepts, the Future Land Use Plan for Seward County, Nebraska envisions land use categories to accommodate the expansion of existing and future development uses of the land. As described below, these land use areas are:

- Agricultural
- Transitional Agricultural
- Residential/Residential Estates
- Commercial
- Flex Space
- Industrial
- Public
- Village Development
- Conservation District (Overlay)

The basic guiding principle for this Plan is the preservation and protection of existing land uses and the environment in the county. This includes the protection of the residentially developed areas, while encouraging economic expansion in both the agricultural and non-agricultural sectors of the local economy. This expansion would occur through development of new and/or expanded land uses compatible with the existing uses, environmentally acceptable, and respects and supports the quality of life desired by the residents of Seward County.

Agricultural District

In order to abide by the principles and general land use concepts previously presented, the future land use lying in the rural portions of Seward County should continue to be predominately agricultural production. The use of land for crop production should be encouraged as a means of strengthening the local economy. Crop production is going to be greatly influenced by the county's topography. Where there are steep slopes, crop production will be minimized; except, where the topography has been terraced to accommodate production activity.

The use of land for livestock production should also be encouraged as a means of enhancing the economy; however, such production activity should be limited to where soil types and the landscapes have a limited risk of environmental degradation, including surface and groundwater contamination. Another consideration to be reviewed with regard to livestock production is air quality. These uses should be carefully located in order to avoid potential incompatibilities between land uses due to the production of odor, dust, or other characteristics. These incompatibilities can negatively affect the value and marketability of neighboring properties. Avoiding the degradation of natural resources including groundwater, surface water, air quality and soil productivity should also take a priority when looking at the placement of these uses.

Residential uses associated with agricultural production should continue to be supported; however they should be subordinate to agricultural production. These residential uses shall require a means of access through the continuation of roadway systems, public facilities and services.

Transitional Agricultural areas typically designate a buffer between the Agricultural, Rural Estates, major transportation corridors, and the extraterritorial jurisdictions of the communities within Seward County. However, as areas are rezoned, both the TA-Transitional Agriculture and the Rural Estates districts may be considered appropriate designations for this land use category; it will depend upon how the County Land Use Management Policy (CLUMP) has been adopted. It also recognizes an area that may be next in line to be developed within the rural areas of the County.

Transitional Agricultural areas are intended to protect existing crop production in the county; while providing an incentive area for more dense residential uses, as opposed to the Agricultural Use areas. Incentives for denser residential development are critical, especially along major transportation corridors that have paved roadways. Along these paved transportation corridors should be the highest priority area for residential uses within an agriculturally related district. The Transitional Agricultural areas cover approximately one-fourth of the total county land area.

Non-Farm Residential Development within the Agricultural and Transitional Agricultural Districts

Development of non-farm residences should be encouraged as an approach to economic and population growth. In addition, these uses provide additional residential choices for existing and future citizens. However, such development should avoid encroachment upon prime agricultural lands. These uses should be located in areas where proper access is available and where waste disposal systems can function properly without environmental degradation. In addition, non-farm residential development, in some portions of Seward County, must address the lack of groundwater. This type of development should also be in close proximity to existing communities to alleviate county costs on infrastructure and services.

Non-farm rural residential uses should be developed either as individual housing sites or as residential subdivisions. Such development should be evaluated in terms of environmental limitations of the land, availability of groundwater, impact on adjacent landowners, impact on prime farmland, marketability, and land use compatibility, as well as the impact on county services. Such uses, whether they occur as individual housing sites or as residential subdivisions in the rural areas of the county, should generally be limited to locations on or near improved county roads and/or major highways within the Seward County. Non-farm rural residential development should also be located along the county road corridors which are in close proximity to the urban areas within the county (development in such areas, in most cases, would not be under the jurisdiction of the County). Policies regarding non-farm rural development will allow the county to avoid the need for unnecessary improvements and expansion of the county road system, as well as, certain services impacted by said development.

Non-farm rural residential uses, in the eastern one third of Seward County, will need to deal with the lack of groundwater. Groundwater in this portion of Seward County is a scarce commodity due to the geological development of the state. Even where wells can be found that have reasonable flows for residential purposes, one new well may adversely impact the ability of a neighbor to maintain adequate flows. Specific criteria will need to be established and followed in order to allow these uses to exist where the resources are the most abundant and have the least impact on neighboring properties.

The following are the minimum lot standards for farm dwellings and non-farm dwellings within the Agricultural and Transitional Agricultural Districts.

Minimum Lot sizes in the Agricultural Land Use District will be 20 acres as a permitted use or five to 19 acres requires a Conditional Use Permit. In addition, there is a maximum density of one dwelling unit per 80 acres of ground or two dwelling units per quarter section of ground. Whenever possible the clustering of these units is encouraged.

Minimum lot sizes in the Transitional Agricultural Land Use District will be 10 acres as a permitted use or five to 9 acres requires a Conditional Use Permit. In addition, there is a maximum density of one dwelling unit per 40 acres of ground or four dwelling units per quarter Section. Whenever possible the clustering of these units is encouraged.

Once a quarter Section of ground has reached its maximum density that quarter will not be allowed any additional dwelling units unless the Future Land Use Plan and/or Map are amended, as well as the zoning text and/or map. The basis for a policy controlling the maximum density of dwelling units within the Agricultural and Transitional Agricultural District is to provide protection to the existing land use, agriculture. In order for agriculture to survive as a viable economic base for Seward County, there needs to be land use controls in place to accomplish the goal.

Residential Uses and Residential Estates

The residential development areas are built around a three tier process. The tier system has a direct connection to the zoning that may be applied to a specific piece of land or an entire residential subdivision. The primary principle that guides the tier system is the availability of infrastructure including water and roads. The following sections are a description of the three land use categories found within this tier system. These residential use areas are allowed only in areas indicated as Rural Estates on the Future Land Use Map.

In areas designated as "RE" on the Future Land Use Map, the designated density for these areas is one residential dwelling unit per 20 acres of ground or eight dwelling units per quarter section of ground. However, when a developer proposes a development that meets identified criteria such as adjacent to paved roads or highways; has a centralized water and sanitary sewer system constructed (including connection to a municipal or other public system); and others as identified, the density may be doubled to 16 dwelling units per quarter section of ground and the minimum lot size may be as small as one acre.

Standards within Rural Estates Developments

The following land use districts, as well as, the associated zoning districts are allowed within the Rural Estates land use district:

Rural Subdivision – 1 is a category that is centered on residential subdivisions of one acre to five acres per lot. The Rural Subdivision-1 district is designed to be more densely populated than other residential areas of the county, outside of the communities.

The Rural Subdivision-1 category, as policy, will require a number of key datum and/or design standards. These data and design standards include the following:

- A Traffic Study is completed by the County that will cover traffic control, turn lanes, and limited access points, all associated costs will be assessed to the developer
- Clustering of lots is recommended
- A completed Drainage Study completed by the developer
- Green Space equal to 10 percent of the land within the subdivision excluding roads and road rights-of-way. The green space will be owned by the residents and is to include views, trees, and preserve areas
- Connections to a public water system or a development owned and operated centralized water system will be required based upon the location of the development and its relationship to existing water services
- All internal roads shall be easement roads with a perpetual easement granted to the general public
- Adjacent maintained County Roads shall be dedicated to the general public
- Future access to adjacent developable land should be considered into the layout
- All County Roads along and adjacent to the development shall be hard surfaced from boundary line to boundary line of the subdivision

- Other factors and conditions that can be found in either the Zoning Resolution or the Subdivision Regulations of Seward County

Rural Subdivision – 2 is a category that is centered on residential subdivisions of five acres to ten acres per lot. The Rural Subdivision-2 district is designed to be less densely populated than other residential areas of the county.

The Rural Subdivision-2 category, as policy, will require a number of key datum and/or design standards. These data and design standards include the following:

- A Traffic Study is to be completed by the County that will cover traffic control, turn lanes, and limited access points, all associated costs will be assessed to the developer
- Clustering of lots is recommended
- A completed Drainage Study completed by the developer
- Green Space is not required in this subdivision category but encouraged in areas with drainageways, trees, slopes, and other natural amenities
- Connections to a public water system or a development owned and operated centralized water system may be required based upon the location of the development and its relationship to existing water services and the availability of groundwater to supply individual lots
- All internal roads shall be easement roads with a perpetual easement granted to the general public
- Adjacent maintained County Roads shall be dedicated to the general public
- Future access to adjacent developable land should be considered into the layout
- Other factors and conditions that can be found in either the Zoning Resolution or the Subdivision Regulations of Seward County

Rural Estates is a category that is centered on residential development/parcels over ten acres per lot. The Rural Estates category is designed to be the least densely populated area of the county.

The Rural Estates category, as policy, will require a number of key datum and/or design standards. These data and design standards include the following:

- A Traffic Study be completed by the County Highway Superintendent that will cover traffic control, turn lanes, and limited access points
- A completed Drainage Study is not required
- Green Space is not required in this subdivision category
- Connections to a public water system, community and/or private wells are all allowable
- All internal roads shall be easement roads with a perpetual easement granted to the general public
- Adjacent maintained County Roads shall be dedicated to the general public
- Other factors and conditions that can be found in either the Zoning Resolution or the Subdivision Regulations of Seward County

Commercial and Industrial Uses

Future commercial and industrial uses, not desiring to locate within or near the urban areas of Seward County, may be allowed to locate in the rural portions of the County. However, the location of these uses should be reviewed carefully. Uses that generate or attract substantial amounts of vehicular traffic, particularly heavy truck traffic, should locate along the major highway corridors in the County, including the interchanges along Interstate 80.

In addition, uses producing potentially hazardous materials or otherwise undesirable materials should be monitored. It is critical to properly locate such uses in the County. When and if they are proposed, limits on the potential risks to the environment, as well as, adjoining or nearby property owners should be considered in order to minimize the impacts now and in the future.

Uses within the Flex Space Areas

Future commercial and industrial uses, locating within the county's jurisdiction will likely locate along Nebraska Highway 15 and at the Interstate interchanges. However, it will not be likely that these areas will completely develop as all commercial or all industrial. Therefore, the Flex Space District is designed for the areas that may consist of a mixture of uses, specifically commercial and light industrial uses. As parcels are rezoned to accommodate specific uses within this district, compatibility between the new uses and existing uses will be critical and must be evaluated when granting or denying zoning requests.

Public including Recreational Development

The Public Use areas on the Future Land Use Plan are identified as the existing Nebraska State Recreation or Wildlife Areas located within Seward County. It is assumed that other public uses associated with the cities, county, state, or federal entities will either be in the communities or within their extraterritorial jurisdictions.

Future recreational use throughout the County should be actively pursued. It is important to add to the existing inventory of recreational uses. Furthermore, the creation of additional recreational areas should only increase the overall "image" of the County. These policies will aid in the enhancement of the quality of life for the citizens of Seward County. These policies will aid in developing tourism opportunities within Seward County.

Development of, as well as improvements upon the recreational areas within the County, should be an active land use goal throughout the planning period. It is important, however, to acknowledge the need to attract people, both local citizens and citizens from outside the County, to such recreational areas. Development of recreational uses should take into consideration the need for proper access to these areas, as well as proper advertisement to ensure proper utilization.

Village Development

The Village Development Land Use District is intended for areas of Seward County that were once an incorporated community or had a strong settlement pattern without being an incorporated community; this would include primarily Tamora and could include the Ruby area.

Conservation District

The Conservation District is considered an overlay land use district as well as an overlay zoning district. The area has been established based upon the special geological make-up of the area. It is this geological make-up that has been creating issues with a groundwater supply and availability. These groundwater issues will not become better, but only worse as more development crops up.

The overlay creates special development criteria that will need to be met in order to build; no matter if, it is one residence or an entire subdivision. These criteria will also impact the underlying land use districts and their policies. The policies of the underlying land use districts will become more restrictive and protective of this natural resource within the overlay.

These criteria include at a minimum:

- Increased lot areas
- Stricter density requirements
- Special requirements for xeriscaping
- Developments designed as a cluster

- Limitation of Confined Feeding Operations, even in Agricultural districts
- Subdivisions of four lots or more may be required to construct a community water system and/or central sanitary sewer system to serve the subdivision
- May be required to connect into a public water system when available
- Limitations on construction where slopes are greater than 15%
- Special requirements for testing groundwater capacity and impact
- Other requirements deemed appropriate and similar to those stated above

Future Land Use 2006-2030

Figure 38

Seward County, Nebraska

Legend

- AG — Agricultural
- TA — Transitional Agriculture
- RE — Residential Estates
- FLEX — Flex Space
- VDA — Village Development
- I — Industrial District
- P — Public
- Extraterritorial Jurisdiction
- Corporate Limits
- Groundwater Conservation District

0 2 4 8

Scale in Miles

DRAWN BY J.A.S. JULY 207
SOURCE: NE DNR, SEWARD CO

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LAND USE SUMMARY

Utilization of the Future Land Use Plan as a guide for future land development within Seward County will result in the protection of existing land uses throughout the County's jurisdiction, as well as protection of the citizens residing in or near the communities of the County. Adherence to the land use policies outlined will assist the County in avoiding conflicts between incompatible land uses. The concept of lessening the future impact upon the public infrastructure (roads) and tax base in the County will assist in preserving vital tax dollars and allowing for fiscally responsible developments in the County for years to come.

The Future Land Use Plan represents a generalized "County-wide" view of where future development should be. It is important to utilize the graphic data provided in the Environmental Chapter of this Plan (Figure 9 through Figure 29) and the CLUMP policies and map in conjunction with the Future Land Use Plan Map, in order to properly locate future uses. Furthermore, the need for on-site investigation will be necessary, especially when larger land use developments are scheduled for the rural areas of the County.

The information provided within this Comprehensive Plan, including the Future Land Use Plan Map, is meant to be a guide for the future development of the County, not a static document that serves to hinder development within the County. It is important, however, that references be made to the information provided within this document prior to making decisions about future land uses in Seward County, Nebraska.

TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM PLAN

Introduction

Transportation networks tie communities together as well as providing a link to the outside world. Adequate circulation systems are essential for the safe and efficient flow of vehicles and pedestrians, and accessibility to all parts of the county. The Transportation Plan will identify future improvements planned and those necessary to provide safe and efficient circulation of vehicles within the Seward County, including major projects that ensure implementation of the Land Use Plan.

Transportation Planning and Land Use

Land use and transportation create the pattern for future development. An improved or new transportation route generates a greater level of accessibility and determines how adjacent land may be utilized in the future. In the short term, land use shapes the demand for transportation and vice versa; one key to good land use planning is to balance land use and transportation. However, new or improved roads, as well as county and state highways may change land values, thus altering the intensity of which land is utilized.

In general, the greater the transportation needs of a particular land use, the greater its preference for a site near major transportation facilities. Commercial activities are most sensitive to accessibility since their survival often depends upon how easy a consumer can get to the use. Thus, commercial land uses are generally located near the center of their market area along highways or at the intersection of arterial streets.

Industrial uses are also highly dependent on transportation access, but in a different way. For example, visibility is not as critical for an industry as it is for a retail store. Industrial uses often need access to more specialized transportation facilities, which is why industrial sites tend to be located near railroad lines or highways to suit individual industrial uses.

Transportation Financing Issues

The primary sources of information utilized in the maintenance and development of the transportation and circulation system are (1) County "One and Six Year Road Plan" and (2) the State of Nebraska "One and Five Year Highway Program." These state and local improvement plans should only be viewed as a planning tool, which are subject to change depending on financing capabilities of the governmental unit.

The County's "One and Six Year Road Plan" is reviewed and adopted by the local unit of government to address the issues of proposed road and street system improvements and development. Upon approval of these plans by the Board of Public Road Classifications and Standards, the governmental units are eligible to receive revenue from the Nebraska Department of Roads and the State Treasurers Office, which must be allocated to county road improvement projects.

The "One and Five Year Highway Program", developed by the Nebraska Department of Roads, establishes present and future programs for the development and improvement of state and federal highways. The One-Year Program includes highway projects scheduled for immediate implementation, while the Five-Year Program identifies highway projects to be implemented within five years or sooner if scheduled bids and work for one-year projects cannot be awarded and constructed.

Seward County's One- and Six-Year Plan

Seward County's One- and Six-Year Plan is a vital tool that must be used concurrently with the comprehensive development plan. Every year Seward County is required by state law to complete and pass this document in order to distribute funds to various projects throughout the county. For specific details on these projects listed refer to the One- and Six-Year Plan filed with the county clerk and held by the highway superintendent. It is recommended that this element of the Comprehensive Plan is revisited every year as the One- and Six-Year Plan is revised. Changes to either document should occur concurrently.

Nebraska Department of Roads' Improvements

The Nebraska Department of Roads publishes an annual list of proposed projects for the current fiscal year, for fiscal years one to five years from the present, and six years and beyond. Seward County is in the Department of Road's District 1. Within the next five-years, Seward County will see a major allocation of Federal dollars spent. During this period, the State of Nebraska Department of Roads will be widening Interstate 80 from four lanes to six lanes. This project will include the demolition and reconstruction of five overpasses within Seward County.

In addition, during the 2006 Construction Program, the State will be rehabbing Nebraska Highway 15 from the Interstate into the city of Seward. Eventually, as a part of the Interstate 80 widening, Nebraska 15 will be widened to four lanes between Interstate 80 and Seward. Currently, the State of Nebraska has placed a Corridor Protection designation over this area in order to limit future improvements to property until construction has been completed.

Tables 52 and 53 indicate the major paving projects proposed by the Nebraska Department of Roads and Seward County during the planning period. These projects are not all inclusive and additional projects may be reviewed by examining the appropriate documents from the respective agency. These projects are also keyed to Figure 36 of this plan.

TABLE 52: PROPOSED TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS – NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF ROADS (1- AND 5- YEAR PLAN)

Proposed Projects by the Nebraska Department of Roads	
Project Number	
N1	FY2006 5.9 miles, along Nebraska Highway 15, of surface rehabilitation from Interstate 80 to Seward.
N2	FY2007-2011 5.4 miles, along Nebraska Highway 15, of 4-lane construction and other associated work.
N3	FY2007-2011 .9 miles, along Nebraska Highway 15, urbanization through Seward.
N4	FY2007-2011 1 mile, along Nebraska Highway 15, over Interstate 80 of 4-lane construction and other associated work.
N5	FY2007-2011 8.4 miles, along Interstate 80 from Pleasant Dale Interchange to N.W. 56th Street in Lancaster County, of 6-lane construction and other associated work.
N6	FY2007-2011 0 miles, along Nebraska Highway 15 within Seward, of 4-lane construction and other associated work.

Note these are not an all inclusive listing of proposed work. These are only the major paving projects currently proposed for the planning period

TABLE 53: PROPOSED TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS – SEWARD COUNTY, NEBRASKA (1- AND 6- YEAR PLAN)

Proposed Projects by Seward County	
Project Number	
S1	Six miles of hard surfacing and associated construction between Nebraska Highway 15 and Nebraska Spur 80D along Waverly Road
S2	Two miles of hard surfacing and associated construction from Seward east to 238th Street along Bluff Road.
S3	Two miles of hard surfacing and associated construction along 238th Street south from Waverly Road to McKelvie Road.
S4	One mile of hard surfacing and associated construction along 252nd Street from Bluff Road to McKelvie Road.
S5	One mile of hard surfacing and associated construction along Walker Road between Nebraska Highway 15 and 294th Street.
S6	Five and one-half miles of hard surfacing and associated construction along 462nd Street from Interstate 80 south to Denton Road.
S7	Two miles of hard surfacing and associated construction near Milford. The project begins at the intersection of U.S. Highway 6 and 252nd Street and proceeding south one mile and then east along Old Cheney Road for one mile
S8	One mile of hard surfacing and associated construction north of Milford along Grover Road to Van Dorn Road.
S9	One-half mile of hard surfacing and associated construction from Nebraska Highway 15 east along Fletcher Road.
S10	Five miles of hard surfacing and associated construction north from Utica and U.S. Highway 34 along 462nd Street.
S11	Five and one-half miles of hard surfacing and associated construction north from the Beaver Crossing Interchange (Exit 369) along 420th Street.
S12	Two and one-half miles of hard surfacing and associated construction south from the Goehner Interchange (Exit 373) along 364th Street.
S13	One mile of hard surfacing and associated construction south from the intersection of 252nd Street and Old Cheney Road along 252nd Street.
S14	Four and one-half miles of hard surfacing and associated construction north of the Pleasant Dale Interchange (Exit 388) along 154th Street.
S15	Two miles of hard surfacing and associated construction west of Staplehurst along Branched Oak Road.
S16	One mile of hard surfacing and associated construction between Waverly Road and Bluff Road along 252nd Street.

Note these are not an all inclusive listing of proposed work. These are only the major paving projects currently proposed for the planning period

Trails Development

Trails are becoming a larger part of people's lives. Trails are being used as a means of relaxation and physical fitness. The development of a trails system in Seward County will be a key to future transportation demands. A trails system is not meant for the communities within a county but now act as a means of connecting those communities. Seward County's efforts will need to be a coordinated effort between the communities, the Nebraska Department of Roads, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, developers, and the County.

Eventually, Seward County may be able to make a connection into the Lincoln-Lancaster County trails system, thus, opening connections throughout the entire Metropolitan Area. Once a connection is made with the Lincoln-Lancaster County trails system, Seward County will see additional recreational and economic development opportunities to spin from this connection. A trails system can be and typically is a means of economic development.

Future Transportation Improvements

Figure 39

Seward County, Nebraska

LEGEND

- 1-Year Improvements (Seward County)
- 6-Year Improvements (Seward County)
- 1-Year Improvements (State of Nebraska)
- 6-Year Improvements (State of Nebraska)

GRAPHIC SCALE

1.25 0 .625 1.25 2.5 5

1 inch = 2.5 Mi.

N

W E

S

THIS MAP PREPARED USING INFORMATION FROM RECORD DRAWINGS SUPPLIED BY J.E.O. AND/OR OTHER APPLICABLE CITY, COUNTY, STATE, FEDERAL, OR PUBLIC OR PRIVATE ENTITIES. J.E.O. DOES NOT GUARANTEE THE ACCURACY OF THIS MAP OR THE INFORMATION USED TO PREPARE THIS MAP. THIS IS NOT A SCALED PLAT.

CREATED BY: R.P.J. JANUARY, 2006

JEO Consulting Group, Inc.

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

ACHIEVING SEWARD COUNTY'S FUTURE

Successful community plans have the same key ingredients: "2% inspiration and 98% perspiration." This section of the plan contains the inspiration of the many county officials and residents who have participated in the planning process. However, the ultimate success of this plan remains in the dedication offered by each and every resident.

There are numerous goals and objectives in this plan. We recommend reviewing the relevant goals during planning and budget setting sessions. However, we also recommend the County select three elements of the plan for immediate action; the goals of highest priority. This is the Action Plan.

Action agenda
The Action Agenda is a combination of the following:

- Goals and Objectives
- Growth Policies
- Land Use Policies
- Support programs for the above items

It will be critical to earmark the specific funds to be used and the individuals primarily responsible for implementing the goals and policies in Seward County.

Support Programs for the Action Agenda
Four programs will play a vital role in the success of Seward County's plan. These programs are:

1. Zoning Regulations--updated land use districts can allow the community to provide direction for future growth.

2. Subdivision Regulations--establish criteria for dividing land into building areas, utility easements, and streets. Implementing the Transportation Plan is a primary function of subdivision regulations.

3. Plan Maintenance--an annual and five-year review program will allow the community flexibility in responding to growth and a continuous program of maintaining the plan's viability.

Plan Financing
The Implementation Plan is a reiteration of the Goals and Policies; however, the Goals and Policies have been prioritized by the importance to the community. This prioritization was undertaken during the comprehensive planning process with the Planning Commission and the Plan Review Committee.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MAINTENANCE

Annual Review of the Plan

A relevant, up to date plan is critical to the on-going planning success. To maintain both public and private sector confidence; evaluate the effectiveness of planning activities; and, most importantly, make mid-plan corrections on the use of community resources, the plan must be current. The annual review should occur during the month of January.

After adoption of the comprehensive plan, opportunities should be provided to identify any changes in conditions that would impact elements or policies of the plan. At the beginning of each year a report should be prepared by the Planning Commission, which provides information and recommendations on:

- Whether the plan is current in respect to population and economic changes; and
- The recommended policies are still valid for the County and its long-term growth.

The Planning Commission should hold a public hearing on this report in order to:

- Provide citizens or developers with an opportunity to present possible changes to the plan
- Identify any changes in the status of projects called for in the plan, and
- Bring forth any issues, or identify any changes in conditions, which may impact the validity of the plan.

If the Planning Commission finds major policy issues or major changes in basic assumptions or conditions have arisen which could necessitate revisions to the Comprehensive Plan, they should recommend changes or further study of those changes. This process may lead to identification of amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and would be processed as per the procedures in the next section.

Plan Amendment Procedures

It is anticipated that each year individuals and groups may come forward with proposals to amend the Comprehensive Plan. We would recommend that those proposals be compiled and reviewed once a year at the Annual Review. By reviewing all proposed amendments at one time, the effects of each proposal can be evaluated for impacts on other proposals and all proposals can be reviewed for their net impact on the Comprehensive Plan.

Unanticipated Opportunities

If major new, innovative development opportunities arise which impact several elements of the plan and which are determined to be of importance, a plan amendment may by proposed and considered separate from the Annual Review and other proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments. The County should compile a list of the proposed amendments received during the previous year; prepare a report providing applicable information for each proposal, and recommend action on the proposed amendments. The Comprehensive Plan amendment process should adhere to the adoption process specified by Nebraska law and provide for the organized participation and involvement of citizens.

Methods for Evaluating Development Proposals

The interpretation of the Comprehensive Plan should be composed of a continuous and related series of analyses, with references to the goals and policies, the land use plan, and specific land use policies. Moreover, when considering specific proposed developments, interpretation of the Comprehensive Plan should include a thorough review of all sections of the Comprehensive Plan.

If a development proposal is not in conformance or consistent with the policies developed in the Comprehensive Plan, serious consideration should be given to making modifications to the proposal or the following criteria should be used to determine if a Comprehensive Plan amendment would be justified:

- the character of the adjacent neighborhood
- the zoning and uses on nearby properties
- the suitability of the property for the uses allowed under the current zoning designation
- the type and extent of positive or detrimental impact that may affect adjacent properties, or the community at large, if the request is approved
- the impact of the proposal on public utilities and facilities
- the length of time that the subject and adjacent properties have been utilized for their current uses
- the benefits of the proposal to the public health, safety, and welfare compared to the hardship imposed on the applicant if the request is not approved
- comparison between the existing land use plan and the proposed change regarding the relative conformance to the goals and policies
- consideration of county staff recommendations