



# JOHNSON COUNTY PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

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## ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2018



# PDS 2018 ANNUAL REPORT

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## PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY DEPARTMENT

Johnson County Planning, Development and Sustainability (PDS) staff prepare annually a report, which is presented to the Board of Supervisors and the public. The report documents departmental activity and development patterns in unincorporated Johnson County. This report also describes staffing changes, building, rezoning, and platting activity in the county, departmental accomplishments, and more for the 2018 calendar year. Throughout the year, PDS maintained the same hours of operation, location (except for a brief time in August during an office remodeling project), phone number, fax number and website:

**Hours:** Monday–Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
**Location:** Johnson County Administration Building, 913 S. Dubuque Street, Suite 204, Iowa City, Iowa 52240  
**Phone:** (319) 356-6083  
**Fax:** (319) 356-6084  
**Website:** [www.Johnson-County.com/Planning](http://www.Johnson-County.com/Planning)

### PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY STAFF



### STAFFING CHANGES

The PDS Department had several staffing changes in 2018. In February, Kasey Hutchinson began as the Soil and Water Conservation Coordinator. Luke McClanahan began as an Assistant Planner in June 2018. Interns Emily Giovannetti and Kevin Englebert were hired in January and left the PDS Department the following June and August, respectively. Intern Lupe Munoz was hired in March. Also in 2018, the local foods position, which was vacant at the beginning of the year, was moved from the PDS Department to the Board of Supervisors Office.

## BOARDS COMMISSIONS AND COMMITTEES

The PDS Department works directly with the Board of Supervisors and in 2018 provided staff support to four other boards, commissions, or committees.<sup>1</sup> The Department would like to thank the volunteers who served on each board in the past year.

*Note: The following lists reflect service in 2018 and may not reflect current membership.*

### ***Board of Supervisors***

Mike Carberry – Chair  
Kurt M. Friese  
Lisa Green-Douglass – Vice Chair  
Royceann Porter  
Janelle Rettig  
Rod Sullivan

### ***Planning & Zoning Commission***

Mike Parker – Vice Chair  
Terry Dahms  
Christine Rohret – Chair  
Perry Ross  
Kathy Swenka

### ***Board of Adjustment***

William Leefers – Chair  
Dave Parsons – Vice Chair  
Dawn Terrell – Secretary  
Candi Evans  
Eric Christianson

### ***Building Code Board of Appeals***

Dave Clark – Vice Chair  
Mike Donohue  
Jane Hagedorn – Chair  
Doug Kohoutek  
George Swisher

### ***Comprehensive Plan Committee<sup>2</sup>***

Jerry Anthony	Lucie Laurian
Thomas Anthony	William Nusser
Barbara Beaumont	Paul Rasch
Lindsey Boerjan	Tim Ruth
Kathryn Dorsey	Sandra Steil
Eldon Fouчек	Dawn Terrell
Kevin Hochstedler	Miriam Timmer-Hackert
Jennifer Jordan	William Waldie
Michelle Kenyon	Jill Wenger
Aaron Klosterman	Kristin Wildensee
Brad Kunkel	

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<sup>1</sup> The Food Policy Council was moved to the Board of Supervisors Office in 2018.

<sup>2</sup> The Comprehensive Plan Committee's final meeting was in 2017, but it continued to serve until the Comprehensive Plan was adopted in May 2018.

## OVERVIEW: 2018 ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND HIGHLIGHTS

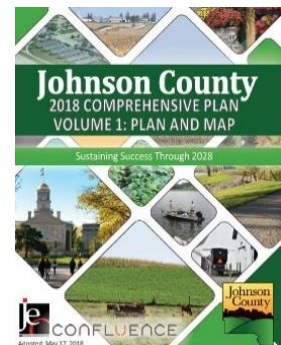
The PDS Department is responsible for the administration and regulation of development in the unincorporated parts of the county and integrates sustainability into County operations and the community at large.

- PDS enforces the Johnson County 2018 Comprehensive Plan and Unified Development Ordinance by reviewing and analyzing a variety of development applications including rezonings, subdivisions, conditional use permits, variances, and site plans. Code enforcement is conducted to investigate and resolve ordinance violations.
- Building staff reviews construction plans, processes building permit applications, conducts on-site inspections and assists county residents to ensure their plans comply with code requirements.
- Stormwater and soil erosion control measures are also part of the development application review and construction on subdivided lots when a building permit is applied for.
- Sustainability staff assist in green building initiatives, energy efficiency projects, and county programs to reduce vehicle miles travelled by employees. Staff also conduct programs or projects on renewable energy production, bicycle education and use, and resource use reduction.

### PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT HIGHLIGHTS

#### *Comprehensive Plan*

The Johnson County 2018 Comprehensive Plan was adopted via resolution on May 17, 2018. The plan will serve as guide for the physical development of land in the county over the next ten years, and also considers the local economy, agriculture, sustainability, infrastructure and amenities, and their interconnectedness to quality of life for county residents. The main goals of the plan aim to balance rapid growth and development with the county's agricultural traditions, all while ensuring the preservation of sensitive environmental areas. The Comprehensive Plan also provides the basis for the new development ordinance that is currently being drafted. Creating the plan involved an 18-month process that engaged residents, stakeholders, and leaders through the assistance of County staff and consultants. A 21-person Comprehensive Plan Committee and the Planning and Zoning Commission provided valuable input to the plan.



#### *Unified Development Ordinance*

Several ordinance amendments were adopted in 2018. These amendments updated regulations regarding campgrounds, retail orchards, seasonal homes and cabins, seasonal agricultural events, civil infractions, and erosion control requirements for new homes, outbuildings, and large dwelling additions. In summer 2018, the PDS Department began a comprehensive update and revision of the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) to better align with the new Comprehensive Plan. The project is expected to be completed in 2019. The current UDO was originally adopted in 2004 and was most recently codified in 2013.

### ***Building Services***

In calendar year 2018, the Building Services Division issued 503 building permits with a total value of nearly \$37.9 million. This is the largest number of permits issued since 2009. The 503 permits can be partly attributed to the number of solar array permits issued (65) in conjunction with the Solarize Johnson County program conducted in 2018.

Every three years, Johnson County adopts the most recent version of the International Building Code. In 2018, Building Services staff coordinated this process by collaborating with neighboring building departments, the Johnson County Building Code Board of Appeals, and the local Home Builders Association. Based on recommendations from these organizations, a draft of the Code was created with amendments to support local climate conditions and desired building practices. Subsequent public meetings were held, and the Board of Supervisors formally adopted the Code on January 1, 2019.

## **SUSTAINABILITY AND GREEN TEAM HIGHLIGHTS**

### ***Green Grants for Non-Profits Green***

The Sustainability Coordinator and the County's Social Services Department co-hosted the third year of the Sustainability Grants Program for Nonprofits. Projects by four social services organizations were approved for funding and technical assistance in July 2018.

### ***Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Gains***

In 2018, PDS led the successful Solarize Johnson County partnership with the Midwest Renewable Energy Association, the County's Public Health and Conservation departments, and six local cities. Through the program, nearly 700 area residents learned about solar, and 180 households added a total of 1.12 megawatts of discounted residential solar by Moxie Solar. The Sustainability Coordinator also coordinated the addition of a 69-kW solar array, built by Eagle Point Solar, to serve the Ambulance Service and Medical Examiner Facility.



### ***Greenhouse Gas Inventory***

In March 2018, the Sustainability Coordinator and intern Lupe Munoz began work on a greenhouse gas inventory for the County's operations. The inventory, which includes an analysis of building energy use and fleet fuel use, will help identify opportunities to reduce emissions.

### ***Soil and Water Conservation (SWC) External Efforts***

The Soil and Water Conservation Coordinator led the revision of County requirements that now include the erosion and sediment plan (ES&C) requirements noted above and new topsoil requirements for all site plans, subdivisions, and building permits subject to E&SC planning. The SWC Coordinator served on the Executive Committee of the English River Watershed Management Authority and participated in a water quality group consisting of area government staff.

### ***Additional Outreach and Engagement***

For the public and Johnson County staff, the Green Team hosted Earth Week, Bike to Work Month activities, a winter biking talk, a Bicycle Showcase. The team transformed a virtual Surplus Supply Store into an in-person store for County offices to share or reuse supplies and reduce expenses and waste.



### **Stormwater and Sustainable Landscaping**

Sustainability staff helped with education and maintenance related to the sustainable roof of the Ambulance Service and Medical Examiner Facility and the bioretention cell at the Administration Building. Sustainability staff also began to provide input on a variety of sustainable development aspects for the new behavioral health access building project the County and partners began in 2018.

## **BUILDING PERMITS AND HOUSING STARTS**

### **BUILDING PERMITS ISSUED**

Building Services Division issues building permits and conducts inspections on all non-agriculturally exempt properties throughout unincorporated Johnson County. The division also issues permits and inspects new buildings in the municipalities of Swisher, Shueyville, and Oxford via 28E intergovernmental agreements. In total, the Building Services' inspection area ([Appendix A](#)) includes approximately 24,224 residents.<sup>3</sup>

In 2018, Building Services issued a total of 503 permits. Permits include the three trades (electrical, plumbing, and mechanical), permits for new dwellings and accessory structures, and permits for remodels to existing dwellings or outbuildings, as well as other construction. Table 1 shows the number of permits, total value, and fees collected over the past 10 years. The number of permits issued in 2018 is the greatest amount issued over the past 10 years.

**Table 1: Number of Building Permits Issued, Estimated Value of Permits, and Fees Collected, 2009-2018**

Year	Permits Issued	Total Value (millions of \$)	Fees Collected (\$)	Total Value Adjusted* (millions of \$)	Fees Collected Adjusted* (\$)
2009	380	26.56	193,953	31.09	227,014
2010	319	24.20	188,546	27.87	217,124
2011	370	22.19	188,916	24.77	210,893
2012	458	37.17	316,317	40.65	345,956
2013	351	36.22	296,409	39.04	319,503
2014	386	34.15	266,026	36.22	282,175
2015	398	45.39	363,593	48.09	385,208
2016	459	37.42	307,535	39.15	321,758
2017	430	31.39	271,762	32.16	278,400
2018	503	37.87	333,397	37.87	333,397

\*Adjustments calculated using Consumer Price Index, US City Average, Housing

<sup>3</sup> United States Census Bureau, 2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Estimated population includes Oxford, Swisher, and Shueyville.



The total value of the 503 permits issued in 2018 was nearly \$37.9 million. In comparison, the average annual number of permits issued each year from 2009 to 2018 was 383, with an average total value of slightly less than \$33 million (before adjusting for inflation). The total value of building permits in calendar year 2018 was the second highest amount collected over the past 10 years, and accounting for inflation, it is the third highest amount. Total fees collected from permits in 2018 amounted to \$333,397, which represents a 22.7% increase from 2017.

## TYPES OF BUILDING PERMITS ISSUED

Electrical permits—89 of the 503 total permits—comprised the largest category of permits issued in 2018. A total of 122 permits were issued for the three trades: electrical, plumbing, and mechanical. Dwelling additions made up the second largest category, accounting for 72 permits.

Detached single-family houses accounted for the largest portion of total value among permits (60%), while accessory building permits accounted for the second largest portion of total value (9.9%). Table 2 shows the number of permits issued for each permit type and associated total and average value by permit type.

*Table 2: Building Permits by Permit Types, Total Estimated Value, and Fees Collected, 2018*

Permit Type	Count	Value (\$)	Average Value (\$)
Accessory Building (New or Addition)	69	3,756,427	54,441
Accessory Building Alteration/Repair	2	21,500	10,750
Commercial Alteration/Repair	9	247,250	27,472
Commercial Building (New or Addition)	16	2,318,291	144,893
Dwelling Addition	72	2,636,915	36,624
Dwelling Alteration/Repair	54	2,043,748	37,847
Dwelling, Multi-Family	4	1,262,254	315,564
Dwelling, Single Family (New)	49	22,892,584	467,196
Mobile Home	13	562,649	43,281
Pool or Hot Tub	14	863,151	61,654
Solar Array	65	1,012,736	15,581
Structure Other Than Buildings (All Others)	10	255,106	25,511
Special Inspection Permit	4	-	-
Electrical	89	-	-
Plumbing	15	-	-
Mechanical	18	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>503</b>	<b>37,872,611</b>	<b>75,293</b>

Of the 503 permits issued by Johnson County in 2018, 46 permits were issued in the cities of Oxford, Shueyville, and Swisher. Table 3 shows the types of permits issued for the three municipalities.

**Table 3: Type and Number of Permits Issued for Oxford, Shueyville, and Swisher, 2018**

City	Building	Plumbing	Electrical	Mechanical	Total (46)
Oxford	7	0	2	0	9
Shueyville	17	0	3	1	21
Swisher	12	1	3	0	16

## HOUSING STARTS

During the 2018 calendar year, 62 permits were issued for single-family and manufactured housing starts in the unincorporated areas of the county. These permits included 49 single-family homes and 13 manufactured homes.<sup>4</sup> The single-family and manufactured home permits for 2018 is the fifth largest number of permits issued for new housing units in a calendar year since 2009. The average number of new homes per year from 2009 to 2018 was 58.8. There were also four new multi-family dwelling unit starts in 2018. It is important to note that permits are not issued for agriculturally exempt farms (i.e. A-Agriculturally zoned parcels consisting of 40 acres or larger), and as such, permit data do not include construction of every new single-family home in unincorporated Johnson County. Table 4 shows the number of permits issued for new single-family and manufactured homes, their estimated construction value, and their values adjusted for inflation for 2009–2018. Inflation adjustments were calculated using the consumer price index for housing in the average U.S. city.

**Table 4: Permits Issued for Single-Family and Manufactured Dwellings, Total Estimated Value, and Average Value, 2009-2018**

Year	New Dwelling Units <sup>1</sup>	Total Value (millions of \$)	Total Value Adjusted <sup>2</sup> (millions of \$)	Average Value (\$)	Avg. Adjusted to Present Value <sup>2</sup> (\$)
2009	56	14.25	16.68	254,513	297,897
2010	41	14.12	16.26	344,307	396,494
2011	39	13.09	14.61	335,616	374,659
2012	65	21.83	23.87	335,818	367,284
2013	72	25.69	27.69	356,783	384,581
2014	50	18.59	19.71	371,702	394,267
2015	74	26.47	28.04	357,709	378,974
2016	81	24.76	25.90	305,665	319,801
2017	48	15.05	15.42	313,630	321,291
2018	62	23.45	23.45	378,310	378,310
<sup>1</sup> Includes both detached and attached single-family homes					
<sup>2</sup> Adjustments calculated using Consumer Price Index, US City Average, Housing					

<sup>4</sup> Four permits were also issued for multi-family dwelling units.

The total estimated value of permits issued for new single-family dwelling units in the county in 2018 was \$23.45 million, with an average value of \$378,310 per dwelling. This value is the highest average dwelling value since 2015. Excluding the 13 manufactured home permits, the 49 single-family dwelling units have an average value of \$467,196.

## REZONING AND PLATTING

### REZONING

In 2018, 24 rezoning applications were submitted to the PDS Department. The Board of Supervisors approved 17 of the rezoning applications and denied four applications, while three applications were withdrawn by the applicants. The approved rezoning requests in 2018 comprised a total of 148.74 acres, which is a significant increase from the 111 acres of property rezoned in 2017 and the 96 acres rezoned in 2016. Table 5 summarizes the acreages included in the 2018 rezoning applications, as well as the zoning designation changes for each property.<sup>5</sup>

Of the 17 approved requests, three were approved through a Conditional Zoning Agreement (CZA). CZAs are agreements between the Board of Supervisors and the applicant that place special conditions on the land being rezoned. The largest rezoning that did not correct for a zoning package was approved with a CZA and consisted of 20.87 acres of A-Agricultural land rezoned to R-Residential.<sup>6</sup> The second largest rezoning that was not a correction for a zoning package was also approved with a CZA and consisted of 14.72 acres of A-Agricultural land rezoned to R-Residential. The three rezoning applications approved with associated CZAs included conditions for minimum density and lot size requirements, dedicated preservation areas, and matching subdivision parcels in accordance with rezoning dimensions.

**Table 5: Acres and Classification of Rezoned Land, 2018 (aggregate zoning classification change)**

From	To	Acres
A-Agricultural	R-Residential	59.61
A-Agricultural	R3-Residential	6.19
A-Agricultural	R5-Residential	13.01
A-Agricultural	R10-Residential	18.23
A-Agricultural	R20-Residential	38.86
R-Residential	A-Agricultural	0.90
R-Residential	R3-Residential	3.96
R-Residential	R5-Residential	2.98
R-Residential	R10-Residential	2.00
R-Residential	R20-Residential	3.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>148.74</b>

<sup>5</sup> The total of acres rezoned does not include portions of properties that did not change due to rezoning, such as corrections to zoning packages (i.e. property with two or more zoning districts).

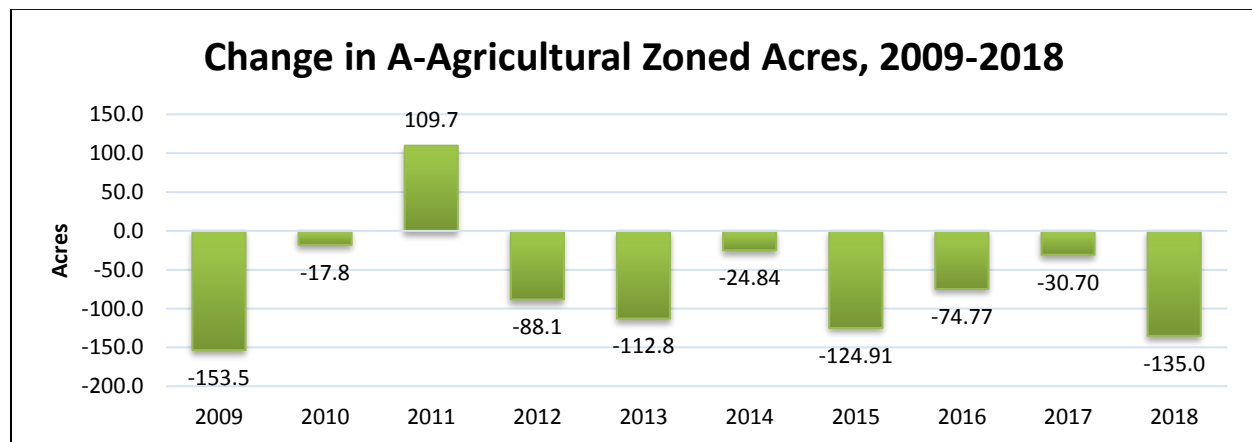
<sup>6</sup> Corrections to zoning packages are not discussed in depth in this analysis because they are typically approved to allow more flexibility for building structures on parcels.

Of the 17 approved rezoning requests in 2018, 12 either uniformly zoned a property that had multiple zoning designations or corrected a legal non-conforming use, thereby bringing the property into compliance with the Unified Development Ordinance. Four rezonings enabled future residential development and one enabled future development for public use.

With the adoption of the new comprehensive plan in May 2018, rezoning requests submitted during the calendar year but prior to adoption of the new plan were reviewed under the 2008 Land Use Plan. Under the 2008 Land Use Plan, eight rezoning requests were approved, while two were denied. Under the 2018 Comprehensive Plan, nine rezoning requests were approved, while two were denied.

A net total of 135 agriculturally zoned acres were rezoned to non-agricultural zoning districts in 2018, a large increase from the 30.7 acres rezoned in 2017. The 135-acre total is also significantly greater than the 10-year average of 58.7 acres rezoned (Figure 1). Of the 135 acres rezoned from the A-Agricultural district, only three approved rezoning applications increased the residential density of the affected parcels, consisting of 48.37 acres, while the majority of the rezonings corrected for zoning packages (i.e. dual zonings on property which were already legally being used residentially).

**Figure 1: Change in A-Agricultural Zoned Property, 2009-2018**



## PLATTING

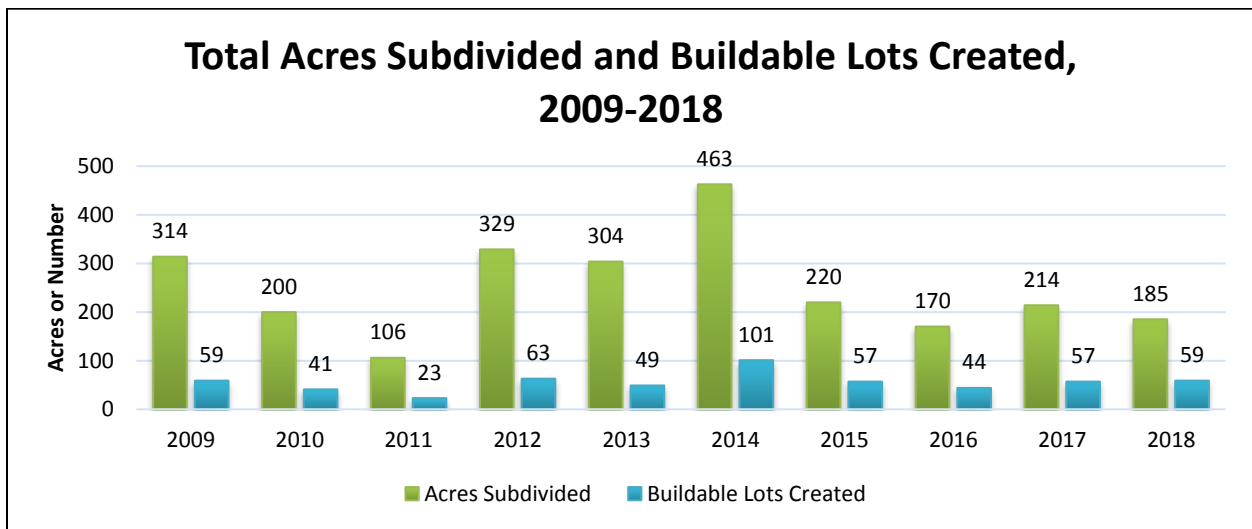
The Board of Supervisors heard and approved 30 applications for subdivisions in 2018. Of the 30 applications, 11 were farmstead splits, 16 were final plats or combined preliminary/final plats, and three were preliminary plats (Table 6 below). Two subdivision applications were submitted to the PDS Department and later withdrawn by the applicants. The 16 non-farmstead-split final plats that were approved consist of 34 buildable lots and eight non-buildable outlots. The farmstead splits that were approved consist of 11 buildable lots and zero non-buildable outlots. The preliminary plats that were approved propose 14 buildable lots and three non-buildable outlots; however, the new lots are not legally created until a final plat has been approved by the Board. Table 6 also summarizes the approved subdivisions, including the number of lots and acres. Of the 45 newly final platted lots in 2018, 44 are buildable for residential purposes, while one lot is for light industrial development.

**Table 6: Summary of Approved Plats in 2018, with Number of Lots, Outlots, and Acreage**

Subdivision Type	Count	Residential		Industrial		Outlots	
		Lots	Acres	Lots	Acres	Outlots	Acres
Farmstead Splits	11	11	40.5	0	0	0	0
Final/Combined Plats	16	33	91	1	11.78	8	62.3
Preliminary Plats	3	14	41.69	0	0	3	2.73
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>173.19</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>11.78</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>65.03</b>

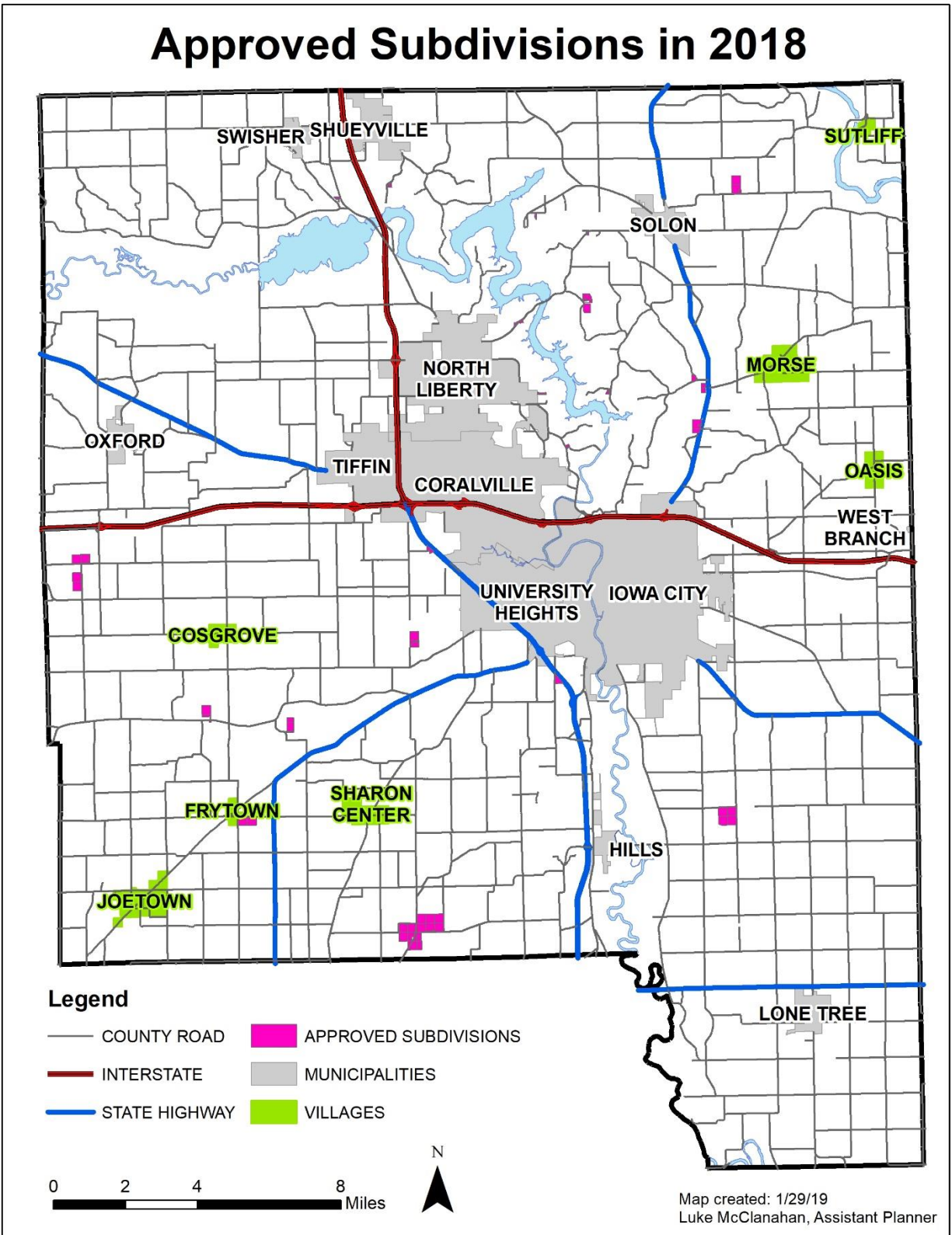
Three preliminary plats creating 14 new residential lots and three outlots were approved in 2018. As shown in Figure 2, the 59 preliminary and final platted lots consist of 185 total acres, which is lower than the median annual total of 250 acres in buildable lots created over the past 10 years. The average buildable lot size in 2018 was approximately 3.14 acres per lot, which is smaller than the average lot size of 4.54 acres from the past 10 years. The reduction in lot size may, once again, be partially attributed to increased sensitive areas and stormwater requirements for subdivision applications. Figure 2 shows the 10-year trend for total acres subdivided and buildable lots created.

**Figure 2: Total Acres and Buildable Lots Platted for all Subdivisions, 2009-2018**

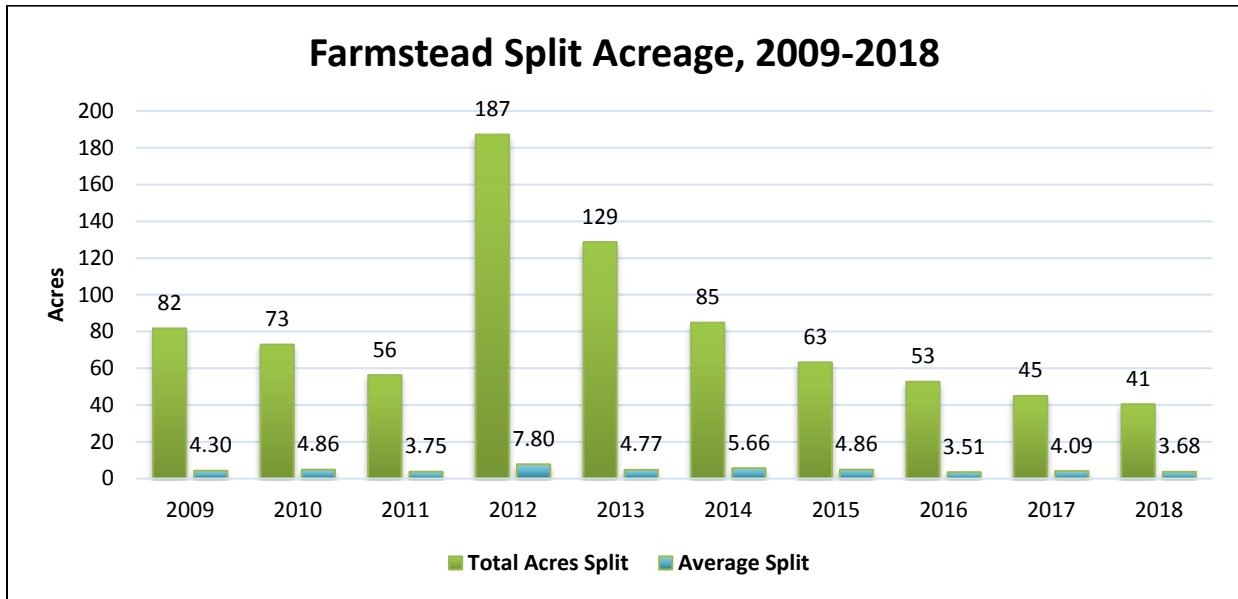


The total of 11 farmstead splits approved in 2018 is the same amount approved in 2017. Additionally, there were no outlots associated with the farmstead splits in 2018, which is a decrease from the two outlots that were platted in the 2017 farmstead splits. One effect of the fewer number outlots is that the average split size of 3.68 acres is the second smallest, and the total number of acres split is the fewest since the adoption of the current farmstead split ordinance in 2000? (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Subdivisions Approved in 2018, including Farmstead Splits



**Figure 4: Total and Average Acreage of Farmstead Splits, with Lots and Outlots, 2009-2018**



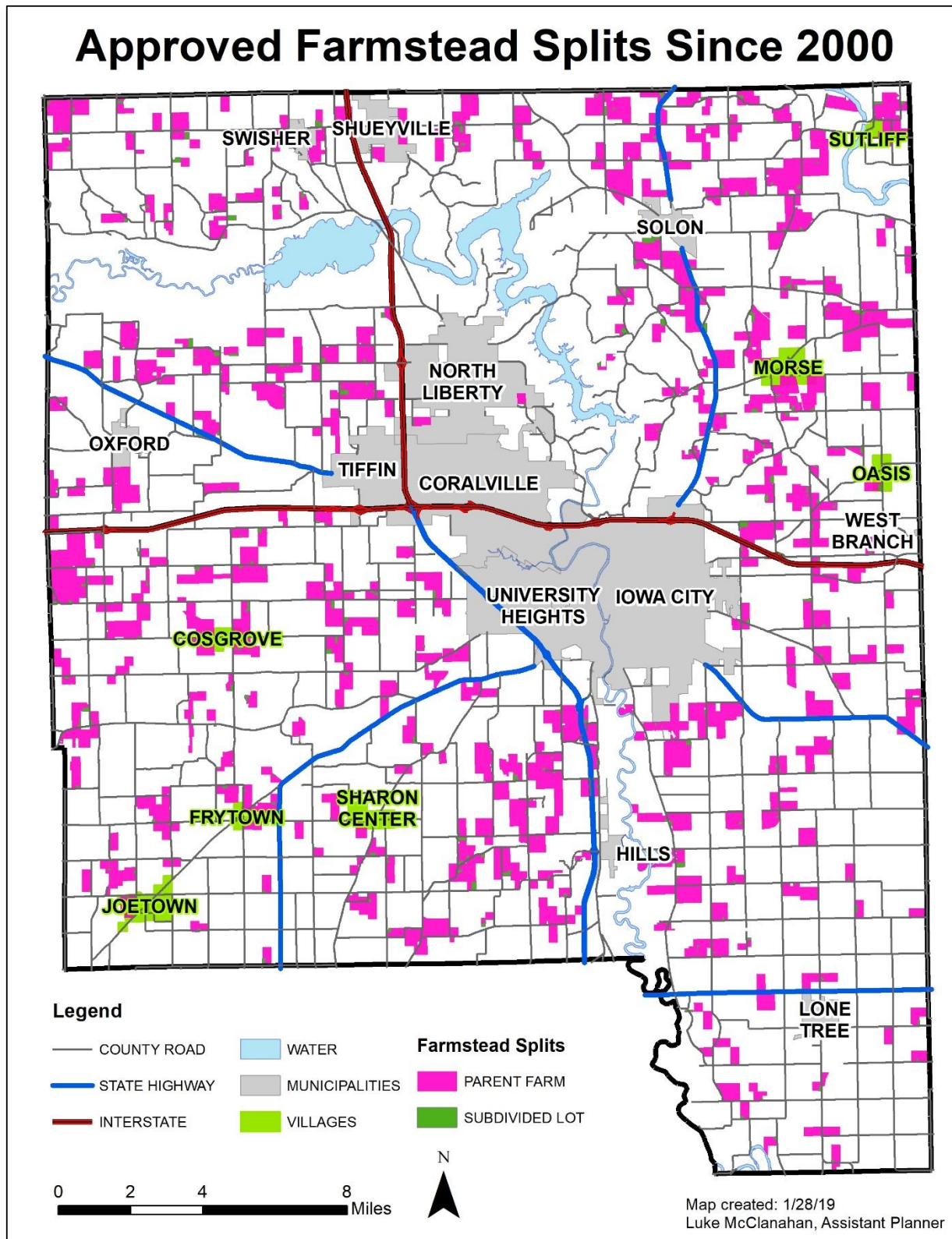
Over the past 10 years, 165 farmstead splits have been approved by the Board of Supervisors. Those splits contained 813 acres (both lots and outlots), which is an average of 4.93 acres per split.

Based on 2017 and 2018 data, it appears that the Board’s decision in 2016 to extend stormwater management and sensitive areas analysis requirements to all subdivisions, including farmstead splits, has contributed to the decreased number of outlots and the smaller farmstead split lot size since that time. Additionally, the number of farmstead splits appears to be decreasing. It is reasonable to assume that the decreasing number of parent farms eligible for the one-time split is contributing to the decrease in overall number farmstead split subdivision applications.

Figure 5 on the following page shows the locations of all farmstead splits that have been approved since December 2000. Since that time, 813 acres have been platted into buildable lots or outlots, while 47,094 acres have been placed in agricultural preservation as a result of farmstead splits.



Figure 5: All Farmstead Splits Approved Since the Adoption of the Farmstead Split Ordinance in 2000



## **OTHER APPLICATION APPROVALS**

In addition to issuing building permits and reviewing subdivision and rezoning applications for the unincorporated areas of Johnson County, PDS issues permits for floodplain development, approves boundary line adjustments, and oversees other development applications. The following section outlines other permit and development activities completed during 2018. Table 7 provides a summary of each application type and the fees collected.

### **VARIANCES**

The Board of Adjustment (BOA) makes determinations on all requests to vary bulk regulations such as yard setbacks. In 2018, the BOA received nine requests for setback variances. The Board approved six of these requests.

### **CONDITIONAL USE PERMITS**

The Board of Adjustment issues Conditional Use Permits (CUP) to allow uses such as home businesses, special events, and communication towers. In 2018, there were 21 CUPs submitted. Nineteen applications were approved by the Board, and two applications were withdrawn by the applicants. Among the 19 approved permits, six were for special events, five were for home businesses, and two were for wineries. Other approved permitted uses included an auxiliary dwelling unit, a cidery, a bed-and-breakfast, boat storage, a communications tower, and a revision to an existing dog kennel.

### **APPEALS OF THE ADMINISTRATOR**

There was one appeal of the Zoning Administrator's interpretation of an ordinance in 2018. The appeal, which was denied by the Board of Adjustment, involved the interpretation of the sensitive areas ordinance.

### **BOUNDARY LINE ADJUSTMENTS**

The PDS Director has the discretion to approve Boundary Line Adjustment (BLA) requests. BLAs transfer small portions of property between adjacent parcels without creating or eliminating platted lots. In 2018, 13 BLAs were approved by the Director and recorded. Four additional BLA applications are still pending approval.

### **SITE PLAN REVIEW**

Site Plan Review is required prior to issuance of any building permits to develop commercial, industrial, and residential mobile home park parcels. In 2018, the PDS Department received five applications for site plan review. Four applications were approved and one site plan was withdrawn by the applicant. The four site plans approved included two storage sites, a winery expansion, and an asphalt plant.

## FLOODPLAIN DEVELOPMENT PERMITS

The PDS Department issues permits for all development that occurs within the Special Flood Hazard Areas (commonly known as the 1% annual flood chance area or 100-year floodplain). In 2018, 24 floodplain development permits were issued in Johnson County. Unlike building permits, floodplain development permits regulate *all* development on a site, including grading, excavating, and filling, in addition to the construction or modification of structures.

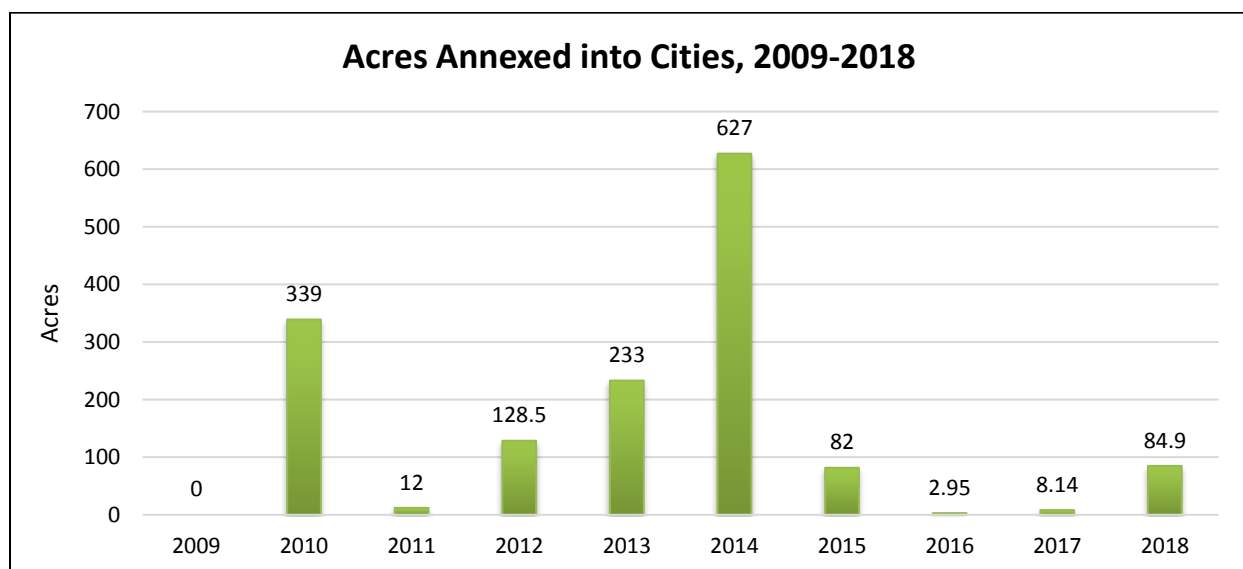
*Table 7: Other Permits Issued and Reviews Completed by PDS, with Fees Collected*

Type of Permit	Submitted	Approved	Fee (\$)	Total Fees Collected (\$)
Variance	9	6	175	1,575
Conditional Use Permit	21	19	250	5,250
Boundary Line Adjustment	17	13	75	1,275
Site Plan Review	5	4	250	1,250
Floodplain Development Permits	24	24	10	240

## ANNEXATIONS

In 2018, a total of 84.9 acres were annexed from the unincorporated areas of Johnson County into the various municipalities (Figure 6). The 84.9 acres consisted of four separate parcels, 77 acres of which were annexed by the City of North Liberty and 7.9 acres were annexed by the City of Iowa City. 84.9 acres more than 10 times the number of acres annexed in 2017, and represents the largest number of annexed acres since 2014. It is the fifth largest over the last 10 years.

*Figure 6: Total Acres Annexed per Year, 2009-2018*



## SUSTAINABILITY AND GREEN TEAM

Sustainability staff, including the Sustainability Coordinator and the Soil and Water Conservation Coordinator, works on policy and projects and helps carry out the Board of Supervisors' strategic goals on sustainability both externally and internally. Sustainability staff also collaborates with the County's Green Team to offer public education and works with other departments and offices to carry out projects.

### EXTERNAL FACING EFFORTS

#### *Helping Non-Profits Green Their Operations*



The Sustainability Coordinator and the County's Social Services Department co-hosted the third year of the Sustainability Grants Program for Nonprofits. Projects by four social services organizations were approved for funding and technical assistance in July 2018. Two organizations that had completed their projects by the end of the calendar year were the Crisis Center (outdoor LED lights) and the Free Medical Clinic (new energy-saving doors, *pictured*). Organizations completing building projects used existing MidAmerican Energy audits or undertook new ones.

#### *Renewable Energy Gains*

In 2018, the Sustainability Coordinator led the successful partnership with the Midwest Renewable Energy Association for Solarize Johnson County. Nearly 700 area residents learned about solar, and 180 households added a total of 1.12 megawatts of discounted residential solar. With city partners (Coralville, Iowa City, North Liberty, Shueyville, Solon and West Branch) and inter-department partners (Public Health, Conservation and Communications Coordinator Kelli Andresen), Sustainability staff hosted 22 educational Solar Power Hours (*April 2018 kickoff event pictured below*) across the county. North Liberty-based Moxie Solar, the competitively selected installer for the program, followed up on more than 800 leads. See [Appendix B](#) for a map showing the general distribution of the arrays.



## ***Soil and Water Conservation (SWC) External Efforts***

### **Development Projects**

The SWC Coordinator completed approximately 30 reviews of stormwater management plans and sensitive areas reports for development projects throughout the county. The SWC Coordinator also completed erosion and sediment control (E&SC) plans for approximately 15 building permits since new requirements for building permits were adopted in July 2018.

The SWC Coordinator led the revision of County requirements that now include the E&SC plan requirements noted above as well as new topsoil preservation requirements for all site plans, subdivisions, and building permits requiring an E&SC plan.

### **Watersheds**

The SWC Coordinator continued to serve as both a member of the Board and the technical team for the Clear Creek Watershed Coalition, providing guidance on stream corridor restoration projects and efforts related to the Iowa Watershed Approach. The SWC Coordinator also now serves on the Executive Committee of the English River Watershed Management Authority. In addition, she participates in a water quality group consisting of local government staff, focused on water quality monitoring of local surface waters, and ongoing water quality networking among local jurisdictions and stakeholders.



### **Additional Knowledge Sharing**

The SWC Coordinator presented at both the Central Iowa and Eastern Iowa Green Infrastructure conferences, highlighting Johnson County's stormwater ordinance, the parallels and differences between stormwater management in urban and rural development, and the importance of stormwater management in a rural setting.

### ***Additional Outreach and Engagement***

The Sustainability Coordinator presented on solar for Growing Sustainable Communities and on sustainability careers for the University of Iowa. The Sustainability Coordinator hosted quarterly [Sustainability Working Group of Johnson County](#) meetings.

The Green Team hosted many well-attended events and activities for the public and staff:

- Earth Week, which included the Solarize Johnson County kickoff;
- Bike to Work Month, including commuter breakfast for the public and an interdepartmental friendly "One Less Car" completion for employees to walk, bike, bus, or carpool to work; and



- Regular Bicycle Programming, including a Bicycle Showcase held in March with local shops (pictured), and a Winter Biking talk, with Think Bicycles of Johnson County / Iowa City Bike Library.
- Made the virtual Surplus Supply Store an actuality. County departments and offices can now more easily find gently used supplies and reuse them instead of buying new ones.



## SUSTAINABLE COUNTY OPERATIONS

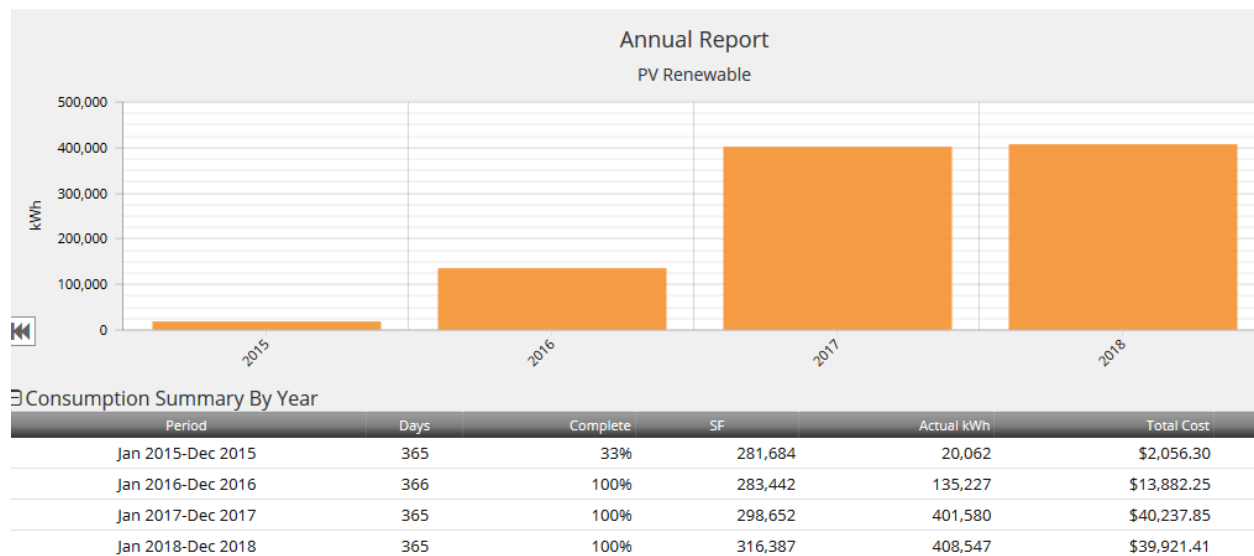
### Energy Efficiency and Renewables for County Buildings

The Sustainability Coordinator secured \$41,343 in rebates for energy efficiency measures at County facilities, bringing the total amount of MidAmerican Energy rebates earned by the County since 2013 to \$543,077. In 2018, the internal Sustainability and Energy Reinvestment Fund helped support several projects including a solar array for Ambulance and Medical Examiner facility, funding for a greenhouse gas inventory, and support for native or naturalized plantings. The Board of Supervisors created the fund in 2014 to use energy rebates, and occasionally seed money, to support green County projects.

Sustainability staff ensured that the 69-kW solar array at the new Ambulance Service and Medical Examiner Facility became operational in August 2018. An outright purchase from Eagle Point Solar, this array is the fifth to serve County buildings directly, bringing the total amount of direct solar power to 400 kW (equivalent to serving the annual electrical energy needs of about 55 average-sized homes). Adding solar is part of Johnson County’s commitment as a “Gold” SolSmart Community. See all five solar dashboards at [www.johnson-county.com/solar](http://www.johnson-county.com/solar). Figure 7 shows overall onsite solar by year.



**Figure 7: On-Site Solar Energy Generation for Johnson County Buildings since 2015 (from County data in Iowa B3 Benchmarking program)**



### ***Stormwater and Sustainable Landscaping***

Sustainability staff assisted in the maintenance of the sustainable roof of the Ambulance Service and Medical Examiner Facility. The succulents help keep the roof cooler and provide a pleasant green space adjacent to patio areas. Staff also advised on plantings for an area near the Courthouse.



Sustainability staff continued to provide guidance on the bio-retention cell at the Administration Building. The cell helps protect water quality by capturing and breaking down pollutants and reduces erosion by slowing down stormwater runoff. Sustainability staff also began to provide input on a new behavioral health access building project the County and partners began in 2018. PDS staff is currently working with the project manager and site design engineer on potential incorporation of stormwater quality practices and other sustainable development features.



## STAFF PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

All staff members in the Planning, Development and Sustainability Department completed training in diversity, computer safety, general safety, and sexual harassment during the calendar year.

### *Josh Busard, Director*

- Maintained three certifications, AICP, LEED-AP, CFM.
- Attended the American Planning Association National Conference in April 2018.
- Attended the American Planning Association Upper Midwest Conference in September 2018.
- Attended the Iowa State Association of Counties (ISAC) conference in August 2018.
- Attended Spring County Planning & Zoning Officials (CoZO) ISAC Conference in May 2018.
- Presented at Iowa City Chamber of Commerce Community Leadership Program Agricultural Day.
- Continued to serve as legislative liaison on the County Planning & Zoning Officials ISAC Affiliate executive committee.

### *Nate Mueller, Assistant Director*

- Earned American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) Certification.
- Maintained Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM) certification.
- Continued to serve as a district representative on the County Planning & Zoning Officials (CoZO) ISAC Affiliate executive committee.
- Attended Spring County Planning & Zoning Officials (CoZO) ISAC Conference in May 2018.
- Attended Community Rating System (CRS) training at the FEMA Emergency Management Institute.
- Attended the Iowa State Association of Counties (ISAC) conference in August 2018.
- Presented to the University of Iowa School of Urban and Regional Planning about county planning and public input collection.
- Attended the American Planning Association Iowa Chapter Conference in October 2018.

### *Mitchell Brouse, Assistant Planner*

- Earned American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) Certification.
- Maintained Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM) certification.
- Attended the Iowa Bike Summit in January 2018.
- Attended the Iowa Water Conference in March 2018.
- Attended the American Planning Association National Conference in April 2018.
- Attended the American Planning Association Iowa Chapter Conference in October 2018.
- Served as professional liaison and advisor to a graduate student group at the University of Iowa School of Urban and Regional Planning.
- Presented to the University of Iowa School of Urban and Regional Planning about county planning and public input collection, and served as a professional mentor for a project through the Iowa Initiative of Sustainable Communities.

### *Luke McClanahan, Assistant Planner*

- Attended the Eastern Iowa GIS User Group (EIOWAGIS) meeting on November 14, 2018.
- Attended conflict managing training (*Before it Comes to Blows – Managing Conflict from the High Road*) on September 19, 2018.
- Completed online safety training courses through the County.

### ***Becky Soglin, Sustainability Coordinator***

- Attended Iowa Bicycle Summit in January 2018.
- Completed a 15-credit, two-year renewal for LEED Green Associate credential.
- Completed first half of Community Leadership Program (August 2018+).
- Provided seminars to undergraduate and graduate students at the University of Iowa on group report writing, sustainability and planning, September and October 2018.
- Presented Solarize topic at and attended the Growing Sustainable Communities in October 2018.
- Attended Iowa Energy Summit and earned LEED credits in November 2018.

### ***Kasey Hutchinson, Soil and Water Conservation Coordinator***

- Attended the Iowa Water Conference in March 2018.
- Attended Introduction to Planning & Zoning for Local Officials Workshop in March 2018.
- Attended the APA Water and Planning Connect Conference in September 2018.
- Attended the Floodplain Management Workshop in September 2018.
- Presented at the Central Iowa (Ames) and Eastern Iowa (Cedar Rapids) Green Infrastructure Conferences in October 2018, on Johnson County stormwater ordinance and importance of stormwater management in rural settings.

### ***Neil Bombei, Lead Building Inspector***

- Attended several meetings for the Iowa Association of Building Officials and currently serves as Secretary on the IABO executive board.
- Attended the Third Annual ICC Chapter Leadership Academy in Denver.
- Registered a total of 33 hours of continuing education credits.
- Updated our building codes by adopting the 2018 International Building Code and International Residential Code.
- Served on the Johnson County Safety Committee.

### ***Bret McLaughlin, Senior Combination Inspector***

- Attended a full week of training from 2018 EduCode in Las Vegas.
- Attended a 2 day training in Cedar Rapids.
- Completed safety training through the County.
- Maintained 11 certifications.
- Logged 52 hours of continuing education.

### ***David Tornow, Building Inspector I***

- Attended a full week of training from the Colorado Chapter Educational Institute in Denver.
- Attended IABO Training for NEC Code update in Des Moines.
- Attended the Iowa Association of Electrical Inspectors spring meeting and serving as the IAIE Vice-President.
- Attended the Conflict Training.
- Attended the Iowa Association of Electrical Inspectors fall meeting.

## 2019 DEPARTMENT PLANS

This section highlights initiatives and new projects for 2019. The lists do not include all goals, tasks, and responsibilities PDS will maintain or pursue throughout the year.

### PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

#### *Unified Development Ordinance Rewrite*

After the adoption of the Johnson County 2018 Comprehensive Plan in May of 2018, PDS staff began rewriting the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). The UDO rewrite is intended to advance the goals of the Comprehensive Plan and modernize the language of the ordinance, which has not been codified since 2013, and has not had a thorough update since 2004. The project involves a comprehensive update to the sections of the UDO. The UDO rewrite began in the summer of 2018 and is expected to be completed in 2019.

### SUSTAINABILITY

#### *Energy/Renewables, Green Buildings, Resources and Transportation*

- The Sustainability Coordinator, with the assistance of an intern, will complete an operational Greenhouse Gas Inventory and begin resiliency studies.
- The Sustainability Coordinator is coordinating on LEED certification and energy efficiency for the behavioral health access building project.
- The Green Team and Wellness Program will coordinate on bicycle programming and projects.
- The PDS Department will continue to contribute to sustainability and stormwater elements of Historic Poor Farm Master Planning.

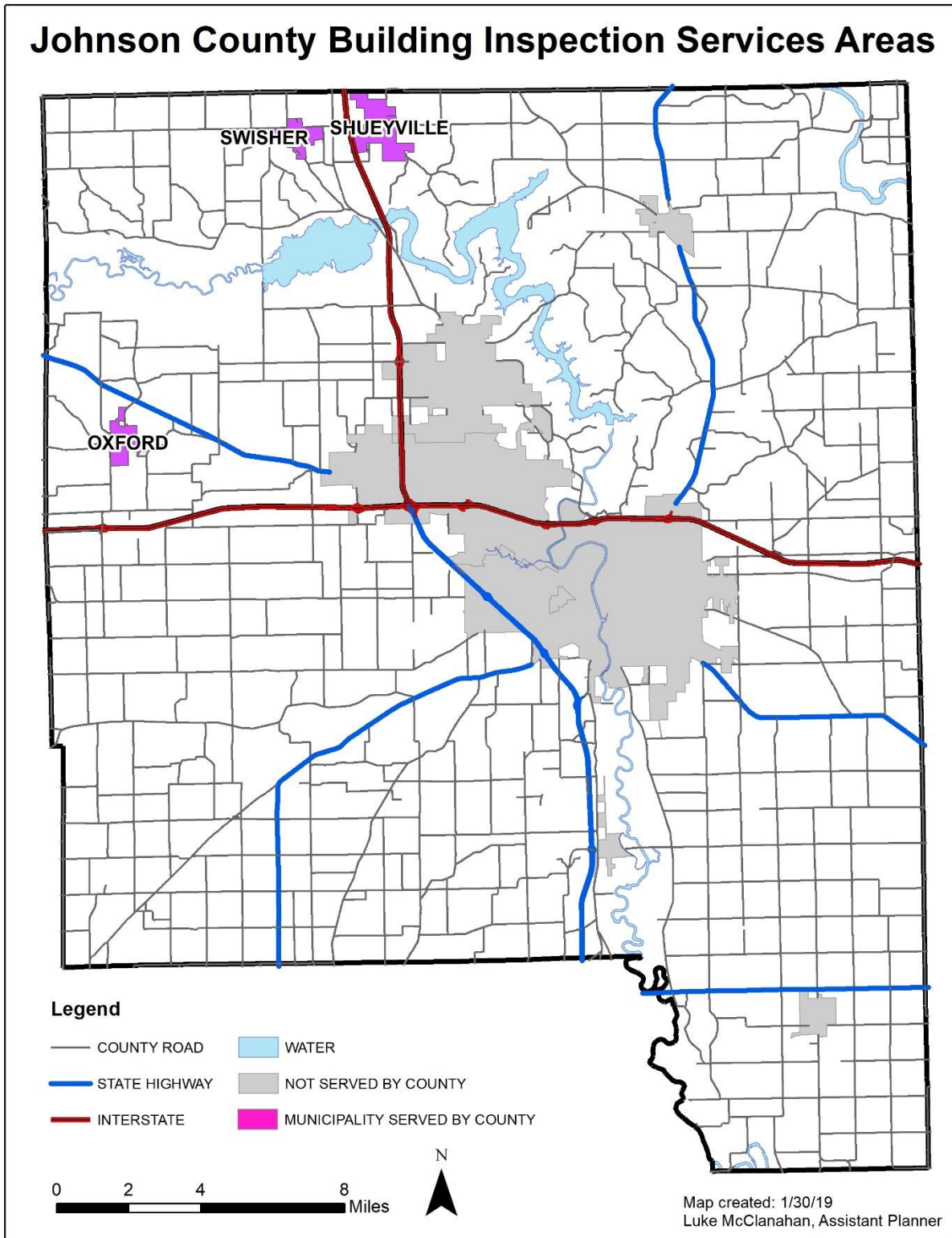
#### *Soil and Water Conservation*

The Coordinator will continue to do the following in 2019:

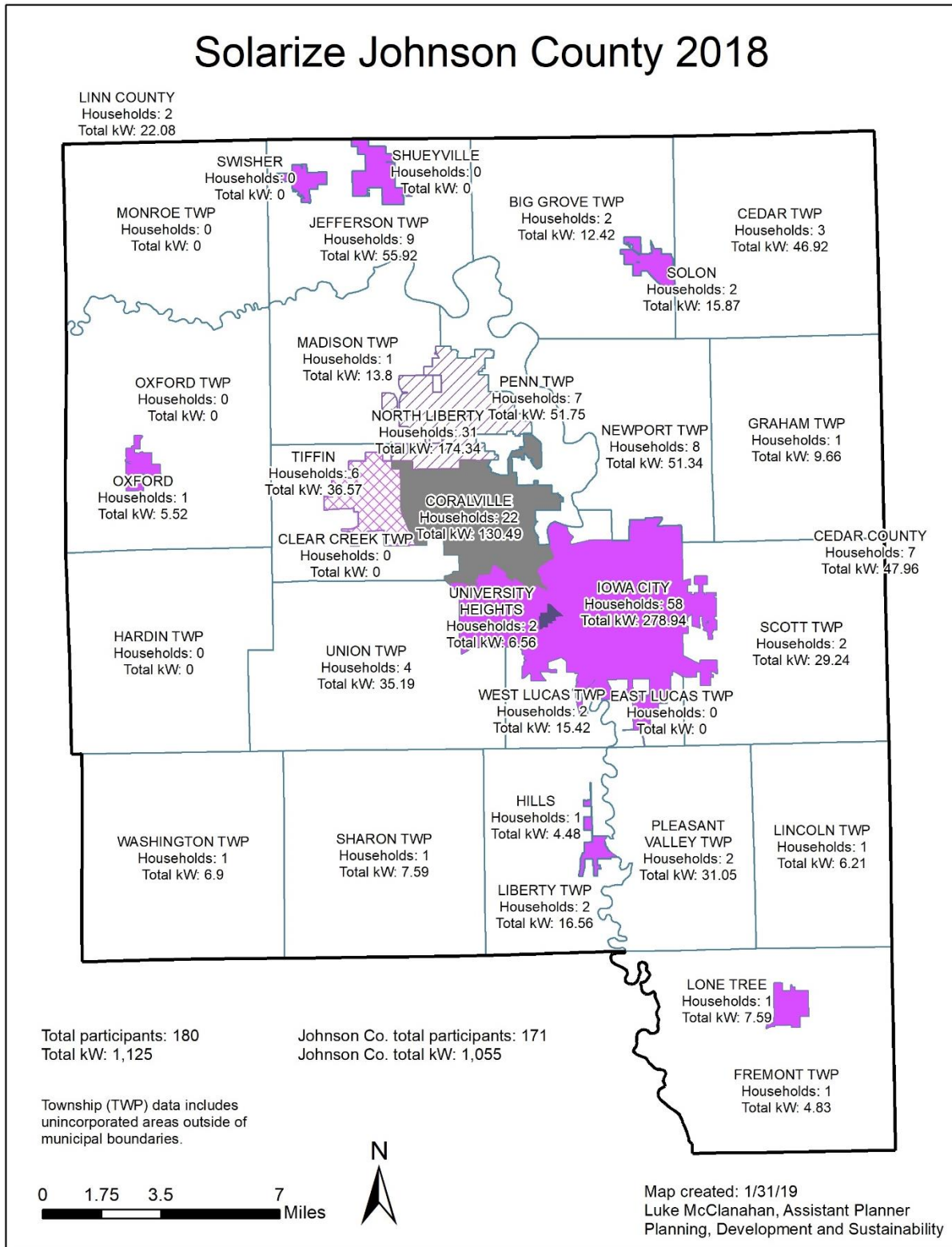
- Provide assistance with internal management of the HUD-Clear Creek Watershed Coalition.
- Help develop revisions to enhance the stormwater and sensitive areas sections of the Unified Development Ordinance. This involves researching parallel requirements of other jurisdictions, as well as discussing with various local experts.
- Look for opportunities to incorporate stormwater quality practices into County facilities and continue to seek grant opportunities to enhance stormwater efforts at County facilities.
- Develop a standard protocol for stormwater and E&SC inspections, as well as a mechanism for inventorying, tracking, and documenting both reviews and inspections.
- Develop stormwater and E&SC compliance and enforcement protocols. The SWCC will develop a maintenance program to ensure long-term success of stormwater practices that are part of an approved stormwater management plan. This program will include outreach/education material for private landowners with stormwater practices on their properties.

# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: BUILDING SERVICES INSPECTION AREAS



**APPENDIX B: SOLARIZE JOHNSON COUNTY 1.12 MEGAWATTS OF SOLAR ADDED**



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