



JOHNSON COUNTY PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

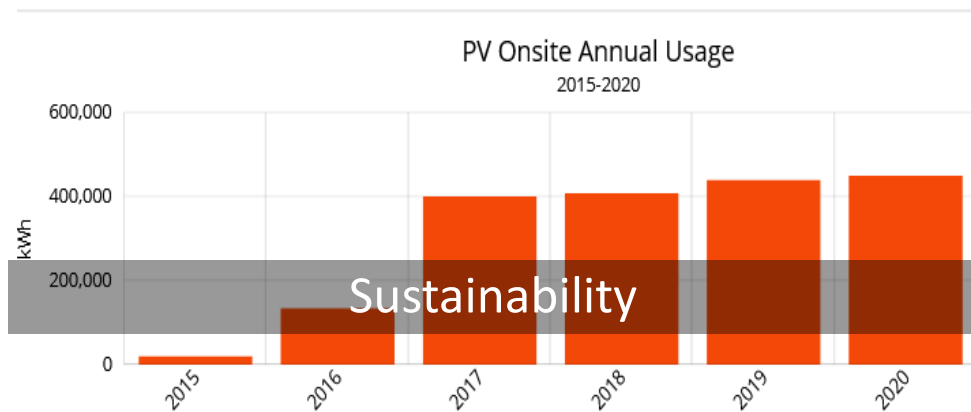
ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2020



Soil and Water



Planning and
Development



Report Prepared by the Johnson County (Iowa) PDS Department, February 2020

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PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY DEPARTMENT MISSION

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.
- Compliance with Environmental Regulations (stormwater, sensitive areas, and erosion control) is also reviewed as part of the development application review process. These measures are then inspected as part of the construction process for subdivided lots, building permits, and other permitted uses.
- Sustainability staff assist in sustainable building initiatives, energy efficiency and renewable energy projects. Staff also conduct programs or projects on reducing vehicle miles traveled by staff, bicycle education and use, and resource use reduction.

STAFFING AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Johnson County Planning, Development and Sustainability (PDS) staff annually prepare a report for 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 calendar year. Throughout the year, PDS maintained the same hours of operation, location, phone number, and fax number. In September, emails and the PDS website address were updated to reflect a new state requirement to use *johnsoncountyiowa.gov*.

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.johnsoncountyiowa.gov/planning

PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY STAFF

<p>Josh Busard, AICP, CFM, LEED-AP <i>Director</i></p>			
<p>Nathan Mueller, AICP, CFM <i>Assistant Director</i></p>			
<p>Neil Bombei <i>Lead Building Inspector</i></p>	<p>Luke McClanahan, AICP <i>Assistant Planner</i></p>	<p>Becky Soglin, CC-P, LEED Green Associate <i>Sustainability Coordinator</i></p>	<p>Nancy Rockensies <i>Secretary II</i></p>
<p>Bret McLaughlin <i>Senior Combination Inspector</i></p>	<p>Jeff Huff <i>Zoning Aide</i></p>	<p>Kasey Hutchinson <i>Soil & Water Conservation Coordinator</i></p>	<p>Julia Dodds <i>Clerk II</i></p>
<p>David Tornow <i>Combination Inspector</i></p>	<p>Brandon Davis <i>Code Enforcement Inspector</i></p>	<p>Gary Snetselaar <i>Zoning Assistant Aide</i> <i>(through August 2020)</i></p>	<p>Maya Simon <i>Planning Intern</i></p>

STAFFING CHANGES

The PDS Department had several staffing changes in 2020. Maya Simon started as Planning Intern in February 2020. In March 2020, Brandon Davis joined the department as the County’s first Code Enforcement Inspector. Gary Snetselaar, Zoning Assistant Aide, retired in August 2020 after 28 years with PDS. Gary is missed.

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

The PDS Department works directly with the Board of Supervisors, and in 2020 provided staff support to three other boards or commissions. The Department would like to thank the volunteers who served on each board or commission in the past year.

Note: The following lists reflect service in 2020 and may not reflect current membership.

Board of Supervisors

Lisa Green-Douglass
Pat Heiden – 2021 Chair
Royceann Porter
Janelle Rettig
Rod Sullivan – 2020 Chair

Planning & Zoning Commission

Thomas Swierczewski¹
Dave Parsons¹
Kathy Swenka
Mike Parker – Chair
Christine Rohret
Erin Hazen⁴
Dan Fuhrmeister⁴
David Roggy⁴

Board of Adjustment

Eric Christianson²
Candi Evans¹
Perry Ross
Dawn Terrell – Chair
Jim Martinek³
Kathleen Sluka⁴
Richard Donahue⁵

Building Code Board of Appeals

Doug Kohoutek – Chair
Wade Long – Vice Chair
Dave Clark
Mike Donohue
Tristan Gingerich

¹ These members were removed from their respective positions due to the passage of HF2512 by the State Legislature in June 2020. HF2512 requires all Commissioners and Board members to live in unincorporated areas of the county.

² Eric Christianson resigned in 2020 due to relocating for a professional opportunity.

³ Jim Martinek was appointed in August 2020 for a two-year term.

⁴ These members were appointed in October 2020 to fill the vacancies resulting from the state code change.

⁵ Richard Donahue was appointed in February 2020.

OVERVIEW: 2020 HIGHLIGHTS

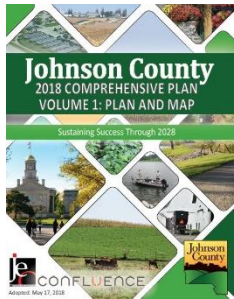
Navigating COVID-19

In mid-March 2020, PDS staff began working from home to slow the spread of COVID-19. Throughout the rest of the year, all Department work continued seamlessly in a largely virtual format. Planning and Zoning Commission and Board of Adjustment public meetings, run by PDS, were conducted over Zoom. Staff followed public health guidelines throughout the transition back to the office when the County partially reopened in June. PDS will continue to blend virtual and in-person work as needed in 2021.

Unified Development Ordinance

Johnson County's new Unified Development Ordinance (UDO), which contains the zoning code, subdivision regulations, building code, and environmental considerations of development for the County, went into effect on January 15, 2020. Through the rest of the year, PDS implemented the new UDO. Additionally, the Board of Supervisors approved several amendments to the UDO to conform with state code changes and clarify some aspects. Department staff uses the UDO to guide development decisions balancing agricultural preservation, environmental sensitivity, and development pressures.

Comprehensive Plan



The PDS Department continues to follow the vision of the 2018 Comprehensive Plan through staff actions and implementation of the new UDO. Plan goals that the UDO addresses, and were a focus of PDS work in 2020, include Sustainability goals 1 and 5, as well as Land Use goal 2 and Infrastructure and Amenities goal 3. PDS staff continued programs that support Sustainability goal 6 and laid the ground work for a newly created Economic Development Committee towards Local Economy goal 4. The Department is also making progress on updating or creating fringe area agreements with cities in (or near) Johnson County in accordance with Lan Use goal 4. In 2020, the County entered into an agreement with Shueyville and is working with Iowa City, Swisher, and Cedar Rapids.

- *Sustainability Goal 1* – Support and implement sustainability strategies that preserve natural resources.
- *Sustainability Goal 5* – Prioritize green building and sustainable development practices for existing and future residential, commercial, and industrial development.
- *Sustainability Goal 6* – Remain a leader in green facilities, operations, and infrastructure.
- *Local Economy Goal 4* – Provide opportunities for sustainable commercial and industrial activities that enhance livability and are compatible with surrounding land uses.
- *Infrastructure and Amenities Goal 3* – Make transportation, land use, and infrastructure decisions that encourage a reduction in auto-dependent travel.
- *Land Use Goal 2* – Direct future residential development based on location and then site-specific criteria outlined in the Future Land Use Development Guidelines.
- *Land Use Goal 4* – Coordinate land use planning with and between local governments to achieve mutually beneficial development policies.

Fee Schedule

After 12 and a half years, development application fees were updated, approved by the Board of Supervisors in December 2019, and went into effect on January 1, 2020. The new fee schedule better reflects costs and staff time spent reviewing each application. The updated schedule also includes fees for additional applications permitted by the new UDO.

Code Enforcement

The Code Enforcement Inspector had only a few weeks on the job before the pandemic began. Nevertheless, March 2, 2020 through December 2020, 71 enforcement cases had been opened, and 40 of those were resolved. For more information on code enforcement, see page 16.

Building Services

Building Services completed its first full year of an agreement to perform building inspections for the City of Lone Tree, which joined the communities of Oxford, Shueyville and Swisher already receiving inspection services by PDS. Building Services began to include other platforms of inspection submittals, such as pictures and video, as a way to reduce the number of visits inside occupied homes and help combat the spread of Covid-19. In addition, the well-timed transition to paperless application submittals and credit card fee payment, implemented in 2019, enabled Building Services to conduct business while the Administration Building was closed to the public.

Soil and Water Conservation

Processes continued to be finessed to facilitate environmental programming especially for tracking and documentation purposes. The SWC Coordinator completed 13 reviews of stormwater management plans and 37 sensitive areas reports for development projects. The SWC Coordinator also completed erosion and sediment control plan reviews for 41 building permit applications, and conducted regular erosion and sediment control inspections for compliance with approved plans.

Sustainability

Preparations began for online adaptation and resilience workshops for County operations to be hosted by EcoAdapt. In addition, PDS was again the local lead for a solar group buy. Solarize Johnson County 2020 involved the County, the Conservation Department, the Midwest Renewable Energy Association, nine cities, and an area installer. The solar group buy program educated 260 residents on solar energy through 15 online “Solar Power Hours.” In total, 41 households added 305 kW of discounted solar. Pictured at right, a homeowner in North Liberty stands in front his home with solar panels newly added through the Solarize 2020 program.



BUILDING PERMITS AND HOUSING STARTS

BUILDING PERMITS ISSUED

Building Services issues building permits and conducts inspections on all non-agriculturally exempt properties throughout unincorporated Johnson County. Building Services also issues permits and inspects new buildings in the municipalities of Lone Tree, Oxford, Shueyville, and Swisher through 28E intergovernmental agreements. The inspection area includes approximately 25,811 residents (all those in unincorporated areas and the towns just mentioned).⁶

In 2020, Building Services issued a total of 607 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 projects. Table 1 shows the number of permits, total value, and fees collected over the past 10 years. The 607 permits issued in 2020 represents the highest amount issued over the past 10 years and a 130% increase from the 464 permits issued in 2019.

Table 1: Number of Building Permits Issued, Estimated Value of Permits, and Fees Collected, 2011-2020

Year	Permits Issued	Total Value (millions of \$)	Total Value Adjusted ¹ (millions of \$)	Fees Collected (\$)	Fees Collected Adjusted (\$) ¹
2011	370	22.19	24.77	188,916	216,616
2012	458	37.17	40.65	316,317	356,819
2013	351	36.22	39.04	296,409	327,547
2014	386	34.15	36.22	266,026	286,582
2015	398	45.39	48.09	363,593	383,711
2016	459	37.42	39.15	307,535	316,684
2017	430	31.39	32.16	271,762	271,762
2018	503	37.87	38.56	333,397	339,438
2019	464	40.17	40.67	321,902	325,873
2020	607	37.73	-	353,428	-

¹Adjustments calculated using Consumer Price Index, US City Average, Housing

The total value of the 607 permits issued in 2020 was approximately \$37.7 million. In comparison, the average annual number of permits issued each year from 2011 to 2020 was 424, with an average total value of \$37.7 million (after adjusting for inflation). Total fees collected from permits in 2020 amounted to \$353,428, which is the third highest amount collected over the past 10 years, adjusting for inflation.

⁶ Calculated value based on United States Census Bureau, 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

TYPES OF BUILDING PERMITS ISSUED

Electrical permits—138 of the 607 total permits—comprised the largest category of permits issued in 2020. A total of 210 permits were issued for the three trades: electrical, plumbing, and mechanical. Dwelling additions made up the next largest category of permits, accounting for 74 permits, followed closely by accessory buildings with 71 permits. The value of new detached single-family houses accounted for the largest portion among permits, at nearly 50% of the total value, while commercial addition permits accounted for the second largest portion of total value (19%). 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, 2019

Permit Type	Count	Value	Average Value
Accessory Building (New or Addition)	71	2,857,117	40,241
Accessory Building Alteration/Repair	0	-	-
Commercial Alteration/Repair	3	527,000	175,667
Commercial Building (New or Addition)	24	7,029,500	292,896
Dwelling Addition	74	2,405,830	32,511
Dwelling Alteration/Repair	50	2,194,746	43,895
Dwelling, Multi-Family	0	-	-
Dwelling, Single Family (New)	43	18,776,402	436,661
Dwelling, Manufacture Home	30	1,056,165	35,206
Pool or Hot Tub	28	963,642	34,416
Solar Array	50	645,133	12,903
Structure Other Than Buildings (All Others)	15	1,275,196	85,013
Special Inspection Permit	1	-	-
Electrical	138	-	-
Plumbing	30	-	-
Mechanical	42	-	-
Demolition	8	-	-
Total	607	37,730,731	62,159

Of the 607 permits issued by Johnson County in 2020, 89 permits were issued in the cities of Lone Tree, Oxford, Shueyville, and Swisher. Table 3 shows the types of permits issued for the four municipalities.

Table 3: Type and Number of Permits Issued for Lone Tree, Oxford, Shueyville, and Swisher, 2020

City	Building	Plumbing	Electrical	Mechanical	Total (89)
Lone Tree	9	0	1	1	11
Oxford	7	0	3	0	10
Shueyville	7	2	3	18	30
Swisher	18	0	15	5	38

HOUSING STARTS

During the 2020 calendar year, 73 permits were issued for single-family and manufactured housing starts in the unincorporated areas of the county (Table 4). These permits included 43 single-family homes and 30 manufactured homes. The 73 total permits are the third largest number issued for new housing units in a calendar year since 2011. The average number of new homes per year from 2011 to 2020 was approximately 63. It is important to note that permits are not issued for agriculturally exempt farms, 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 (2011–2020). Despite manufactured dwellings typically having a lower average valuation, the PDS Department considers manufactured dwellings the same as traditional “stick-built” houses when counting new dwelling units added.

**Table 4: Permits Issued for Single-Family and Manufactured Dwellings,
Total Estimated Value, and Average Value, 2011-2020**

Year	New Dwelling Units ¹	Total Value (millions of \$)	Total Value Adjusted ² (millions of \$)	Average Value (\$)	Avg. Adjusted to Present Value ² (\$)
2011	39	13.09	14.88	335,616	381,448
2012	65	21.83	24.31	335,818	373,940
2013	72	25.69	28.19	356,783	391,549
2014	50	18.59	20.07	371,702	401,411
2015	74	26.47	28.55	357,709	385,841
2016	81	24.76	26.37	305,665	325,596
2017	48	15.05	15.70	313,630	327,112
2018	62	23.45	23.87	378,310	385,165
2019	67	25.03	25.34	373,509	378,117
2020	73	19.83		271,679	

¹Includes both detached and attached single family homes

²Adjustments calculated using Consumer Price Index, US City Average, Housing

The total estimated value of permits issued for new single-family dwelling units in the county in 2020 was \$19.83 million, with an average value of \$271,679 per dwelling. This value is the lowest average dwelling value in the last 10 years, in part due to the high number of manufactured homes. Excluding the 30 manufactured home permits, the 43 single-family dwelling units have an average value of \$436,661.

REZONING AND PLATTING

REZONING

In 2020, PDS received 19 rezoning applications, and all were approved by the Board of Supervisors. The approved rezoning requests comprised approximately 271 acres, a dramatic increase from the nearly 87 acres of property rezoned in 2019 and the 149 acres rezoned in 2018. Table 5 summarizes the acreages included in the 2020 rezoning applications and the zoning designation changes for each property. None of the 19 approved requests had a Conditional Zoning Agreement (CZA), which is an agreement between the Board of Supervisors and the applicant that places special conditions on the land being rezoned.

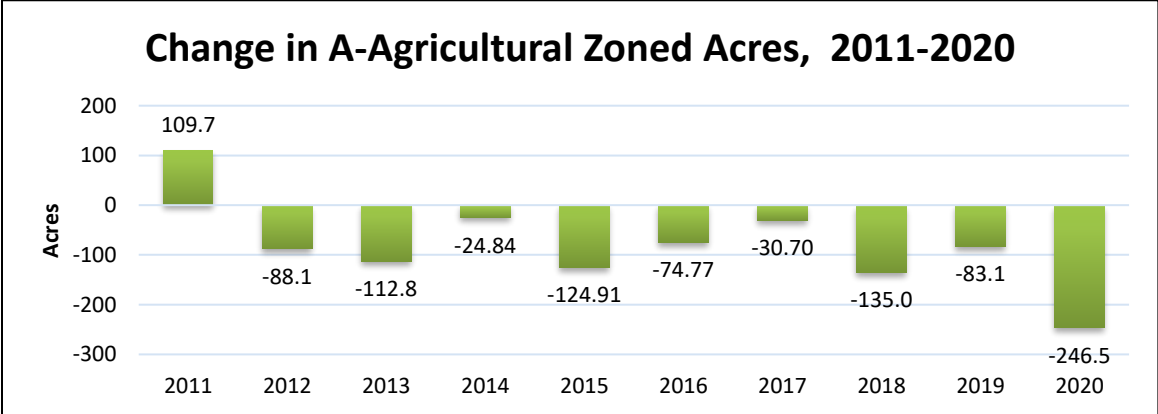
Table 5: Acres and Classification of Rezoned Land, 2020 (aggregate zoning classification change)

From	To	Acres
A-Agricultural	R-Residential	198.13
A-Agricultural	RUA-Urban Residential	9.55
A-Agricultural	C-AG-Agri-Business	4.42
A-Agricultural and R-Residential	C-Commercial	32.96
A-Agricultural and R-Residential	R2/R3/R5-Residential	10.22
A-Agricultural and ML-Light Industrial	P-Public	3.07
Total		271.3

Of the 19 rezonings in 2020, eight 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 UDO. Nine rezonings enabled increased residential development, one enabled future agri-business operations, and one corrected zoning around a fire station. No rezoning requests were denied.

A net total of 246.5 agriculturally zoned acres were rezoned to non-agricultural zoning districts in 2020, a large increase from the 83 acres rezoned in 2019. In fact, this number is the largest amount rezoned from agriculture in the last 10 years (Figure 1). Approximately 217 of these 246.5 acres rezoned allowed for residential development, while the majority of the remainder enabled commercial development.

*Figure 1: Change in A-Agricultural Zoned Property, 2011-2020**



*Each of these is less than 0.1% of the total agriculturally zoned land in the County.

PLATTING

The Board of Supervisors heard and approved 40 applications for subdivisions in 2020. Of the applications, 19 were farmstead splits, 15 were final plats or combined preliminary/final plats, and six were preliminary plats (Table 6 below). Approved subdivisions from 2020 are mapped in Figure 2 on the following page.

- The farmstead splits that were approved consist of 19 buildable lots and nine outlots. Farmstead splits are discussed in more detail later in this report.
- The 15 non-farmstead split final plats that were approved consist of 29 buildable lots and 11 outlots. Of the 29 buildable lots, 24 are buildable for residential purposes, while 5 lots are for commercial development.
- The six preliminary plats that were approved propose 50 buildable lots and 17 outlots; however, the new lots are not legally created until an associated final plat has been approved by the Board.

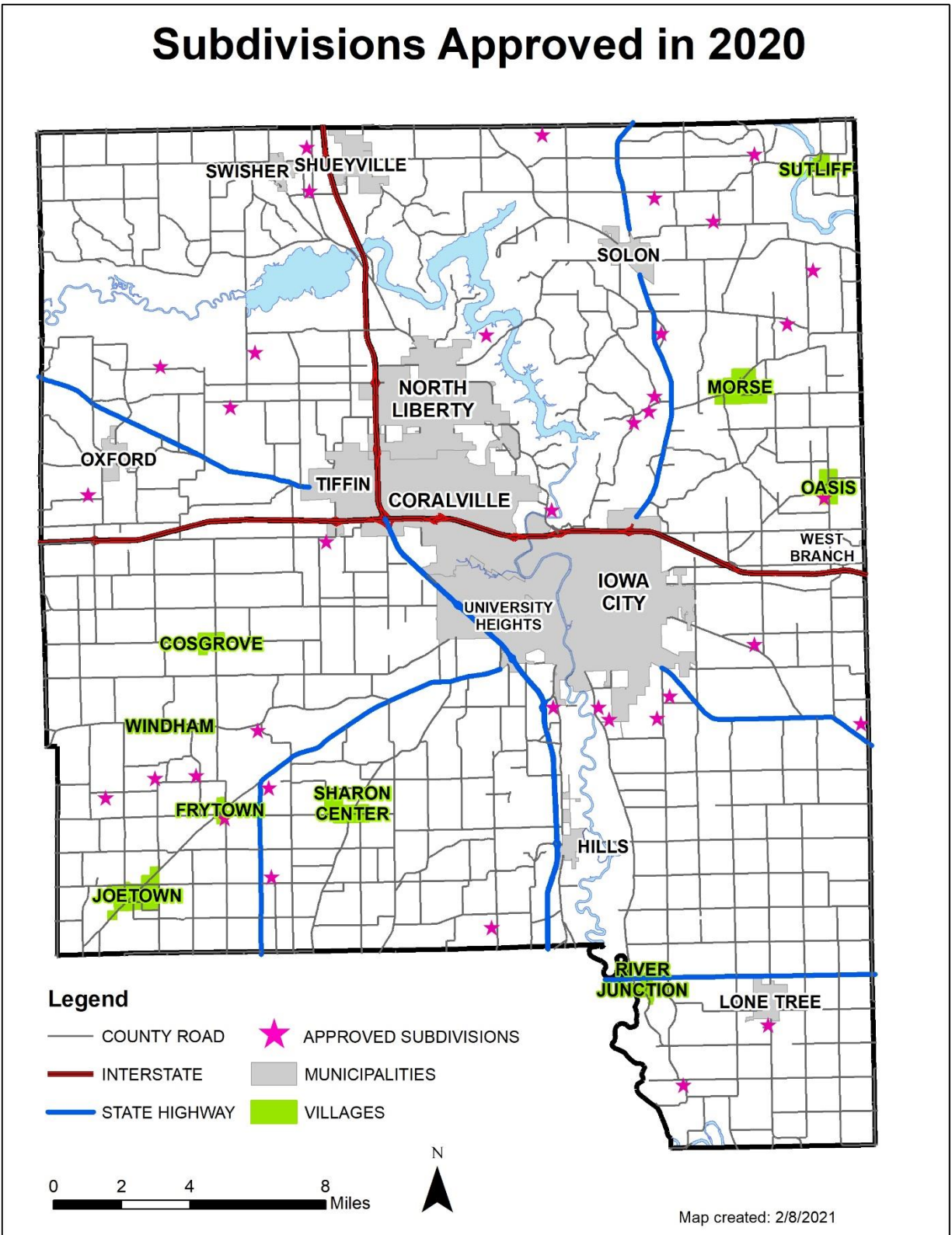
Table 6: Summary of Approved Plats in 2020, with Number of Lots, Outlots, and Acreage

Subdivision Type	Count	Residential		Commercial		Outlots	
		Lots	Acres	Lots	Acres	Outlots	Acres
Farmstead Splits	19	19	73.41	0	0	9	33.92
Final/Combined Plats	15	24	71.06	5	25.07	11	44.6
Preliminary Plats	6	68	68.06	8	25.39	20	70.3
Total¹	40	85	181.37	13	50.46	37	144.12

¹Lots and acreage that were submitted twice have been removed from totals

Figure 2: Location of Subdivisions Approved in 2020, including Farmstead Splits

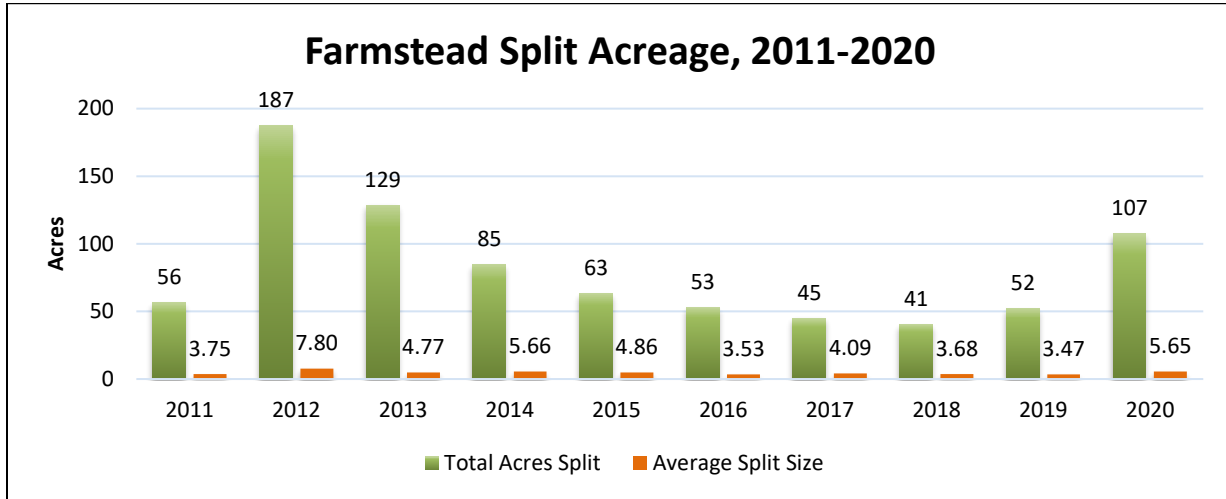
Subdivisions Approved in 2020



Farmstead Splits

In 2020, the 19 farmstead splits totaled approximately 107 acres (Figure 3). Over the past 10 years, 165 farmstead splits have been approved for a total of 891 acres (lots and outlots). The 10-year average split size is 5.40 acres, while the average split size in 2020 is slightly larger at 5.65 acres.

Figure 3: Total and Average Acreage of Farmstead Splits, with Lots and Outlots, 2011-2020



The 107 acres of farmstead splits approved in 2020 was the third highest number in the past 10 years. Nine outlots were created through splits in 2020 compared to two outlots in 2019. Figure 5 (next page) shows locations of all 423 farmstead splits approved since December 2000 (parent farms are in pink).

Buildable Lots

The 40 preliminary and final plats consisted of approximately 215 total acres, which is higher than the annual average of 242 acres in buildable lots created over the past 10 years (Figure 4). The total of 95 buildable lots created in 2020 is the highest since 2014. However, the average buildable lot size in 2020 was 2.26 acres per lot, which is smaller than the 10-year average lot size of 4 acres.

Figure 4: Total Acres and Buildable Lots Platted for All Subdivisions, 2011-2020

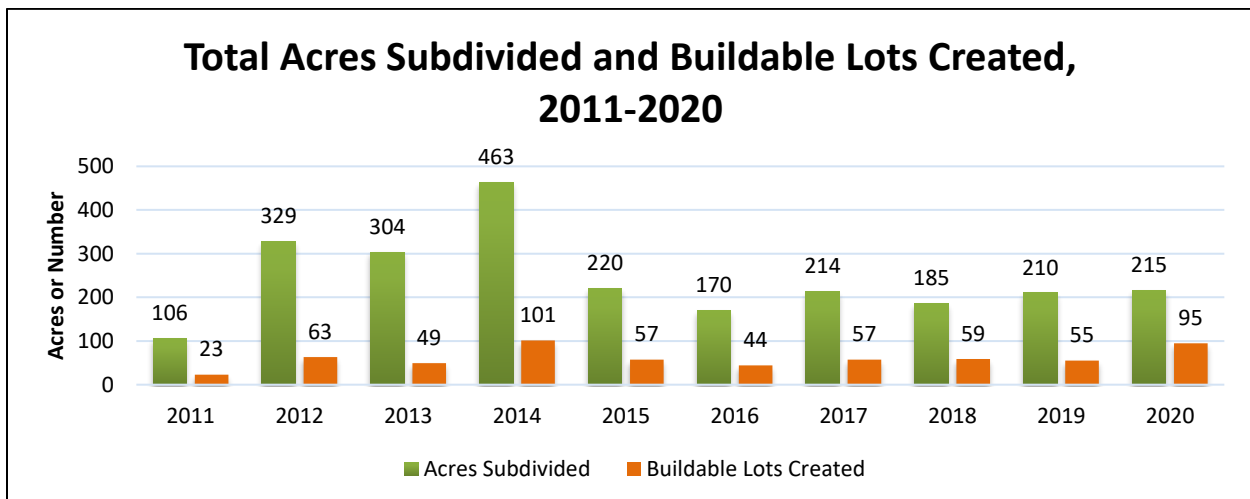
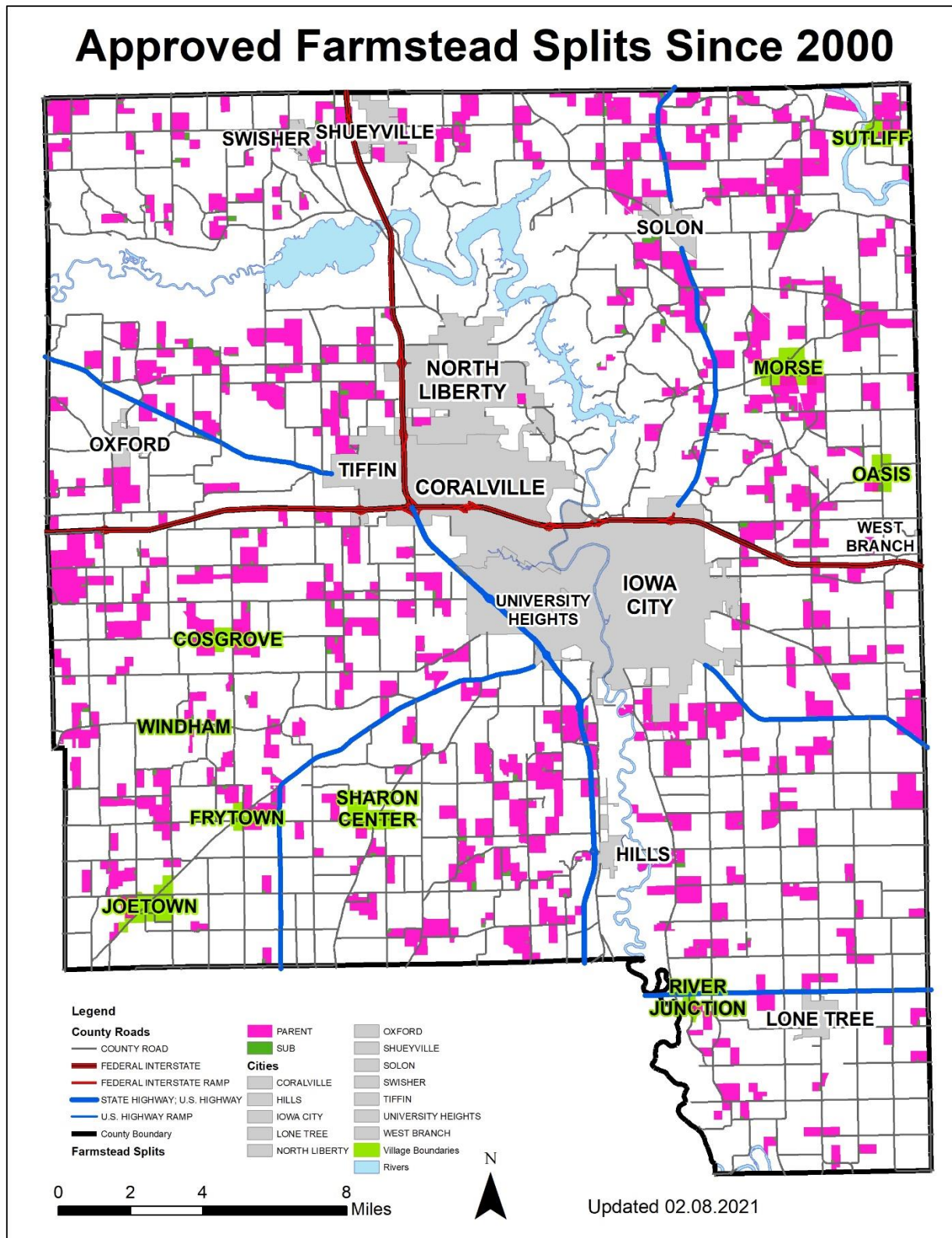


Figure 5: All Farmstead Splits Approved Since the Adoption of the Farmstead Split Ordinance in 2000



OTHER APPLICATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

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 new UDO, effective January 15, 2020, allows greater development flexibility by adding special exceptions and administrator-approved site plans. The following section and Table 7 on the next page outline other permit and development activities completed during 2020.

SPECIAL EXCEPTIONS

The Board of Adjustment (BOA) makes determinations on all requests to vary certain regulations, such as yard setbacks, that would create a practical difficulty to the owner. In 2020, the BOA received and approved 11 requests for special exceptions to setbacks. One request for a front and rear yard setback was received but later withdrawn by the applicant.

VARIANCES

A variance request, also determined by the BOA, has more flexibility than a special exception but stricter review criteria. In 2020, the BOA received and approved one setback variance for an existing dog kennel.

CONDITIONAL USE PERMITS

The BOA issues Conditional Use Permits (CUP) to allow uses such as home businesses, special events, and communication towers. In 2020, there were 30 CUPs submitted, of which 28 were approved by the BOA, one was denied, and one was withdrawn by the applicant. The 28 approved CUPs included 11 home industries and five auxiliary dwelling units. Special events, home businesses, a small private school, and a dog kennel (previously operated as a home business) were among other uses permitted.

APPEALS OF THE ADMINISTRATOR

One appeal of the Zoning Administrator's decision was heard by the Board of Adjustment. The appeal was related to a decision to deny an application for agricultural exemption, for which the Board supported the Administrator's decision to deny.

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 2020, 15 BLAs were approved by the Director, while four were denied.

SITE PLAN REVIEW

Site Plan Review is required prior to issuing building permits to develop commercial, industrial, rural recreational, agri-tourism, agri-business, and solid waste disposal zoned parcels. The updated UDO allows certain site plans in accordance with the UDO to be approved by the Zoning Administrator, while

all other site plans must be approved by the Board of Supervisors. In 2020, PDS received six site plan applications. The Board of Supervisors approved five site plans, including one for commercial storage, one for commercial condos, one for an animal slaughtering facility, and two for the same farm supply site. The Zoning Administrator approved one commercial storage facility site plan.

AGRICULTURAL EXEMPTIONS

In accordance with state code changes and the 2018 Comprehensive Plan goals, anyone significantly engaged in onsite agriculture may be exempted from PDS regulations. Exemption is decided by the Zoning Administrator. In 2020, 20 of 24 applications for agricultural exemption were approved.

ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS

Periodically, the UDO may be updated by the Board of Supervisors through an ordinance amendment. Amendments may be proposed by PDS staff or by an application from members of the public. In 2020, there were several amendments approved by the Board, two of which were initiated by staff to reflect state code changes.

FUTURE LAND USE MAP AMENDMENTS

Applications to amend the 2018 Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map (FLUM) are heard once a year by the Board of Supervisors. In 2020, one FLUM amendment application was approved and two were denied. In comparison, in 2019, four FLUM amendments were submitted and all were approved.

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 2020, 19 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.

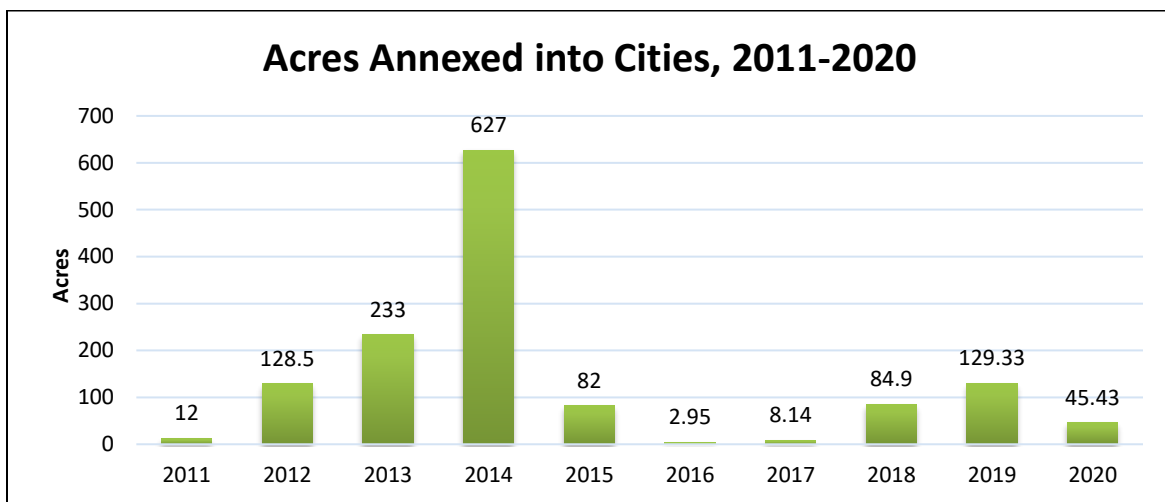
Table 7: Other Permits Issued and Reviews Completed by PDS in 2020, with Fees Collected

Type of Permit	Submitted	Approved	Fee (\$)	Total Fees Collected (\$)
Special Exception	11	10	175	1,925
Variance	1	1	175	175
Conditional Use Permit	30	28	250	7,500
Boundary Line Adjustment	19	15	100	1,900
Site Plan Review	5	5	250	1,250
Agricultural Exemptions	25	21	-	-
Ordinance Amendments	2	2	750	1,500
Future Land Use Map Amendment	3	1	750	2,250
Floodplain Development Permits	19	19	100 (grading) 500 (structure)	3,500
			Total	20,000

ANNEXATIONS

In 2020, a total of 45.43 acres were annexed from the unincorporated areas of Johnson County into the various municipalities (Figure 6). The annexations included three separate parcels, 32.67 acres of which were annexed by the City of Iowa City and 12.76 acres were annexed by the City of Tiffin. The 45.43 acres is a 35% decrease in the number of acres annexed in 2019, and represents the third smallest amount annexed since 2011.

Figure 6: Total Acres Annexed per Year, 2011-2020



CODE ENFORCEMENT

In March 2020, PDS hired their first ever Code Enforcement Inspector. This position fields complaints from the public, identifies code violations throughout the county, and works with property owners to bring the site into compliance with county regulation. Code Enforcement handles many unique situations and follows a case from investigating a potential violation to proper permitting or, where appropriate, legal action. From March 2, 2020 through December 2020, 71 cases had been opened and 40 of those were resolved. Many cases remain ongoing and can take several months to resolve. In some instances, resolution for violations that require legal action can take longer. Thirteen unpermitted home businesses were found, and nine of those now have a conditional use permit (CUP).

SUSTAINABILITY AND SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION

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

EXTERNAL FACING EFFORTS

Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

The 2020 Solarize Johnson County solar group buy led to 260 people learning about solar, and 41 households adding 305 kW of solar (see [Appendix](#) for map). The partnership included the Midwest Renewable Energy Association, PDS, Conservation, nine local cities and an area installer. In the 2018 program, 670 people learned about solar, and 180 households added 1.12 MW of solar. A new group buy program is planned for 2021.



Helping Others Advance Sustainability

While the Sustainability Grants Program for Nonprofits was put on hold due to the pandemic, the Sustainability Coordinator assisted students, other jurisdictions and local officials through one-on-one calls and presentations to the University of Iowa and the Johnson Clean Energy District. In addition, the Sustainability Coordinator and Soil and Water Conservation Coordinator presented online together on energy and natural resources to the American Planning Association Iowa Chapter. The Sustainability Coordinator hosted quarterly meetings of the [Sustainability Working Group of Johnson County](#) (SWGJC).

Iowa City Climate Action Commission

The Soil and Water Conservation Coordinator and the Sustainability Coordinator completed the first year of their three-year terms on the Iowa City Climate Action Commission and, respectively, served on the commission's Adaptation Working Group and Buildings Working Group.

Soil and Water Conservation (SWC) External Efforts

Development Projects

The SWC Coordinator continued to develop standard procedures and templates for maintenance of private stormwater facilities. These materials are intended to educate as well as facilitate homeowners in navigating stormwater facility maintenance responsibilities. The SWC Coordinator also continued to develop procedures and templates for performance agreements to facilitate an applicant with keeping their development projects on pace while still completing necessary improvement for final approval.

Watersheds

The SWC Coordinator continued to serve as both a member of the board and the technical team for the Clear Creek Watershed Coalition. The SWC Coordinator also serves on the Executive Committee of the English River Watershed Management Authority.

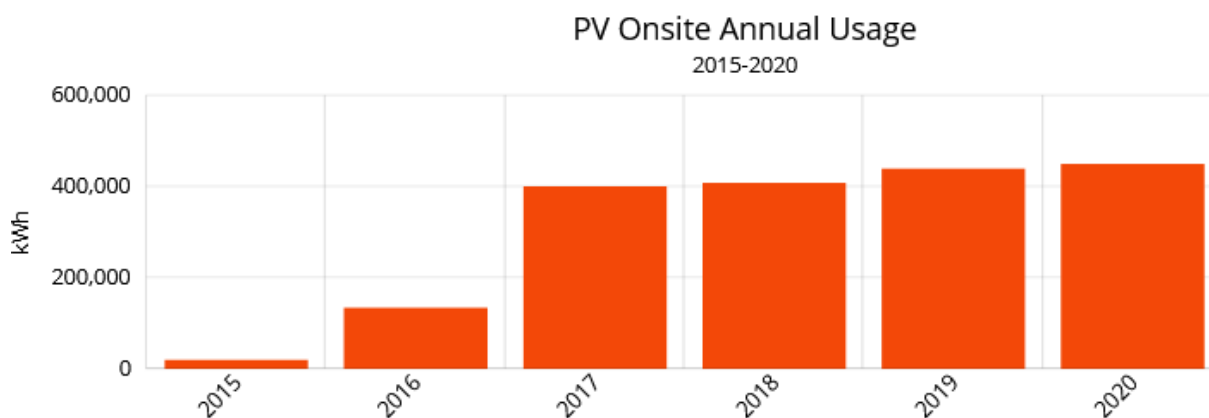


SUSTAINABLE COUNTY OPERATIONS

Energy Efficiency, Renewables and Leadership in Environmental Energy and Design

In 2020, the Sustainability staff provided support for the new GuideLink Center, which provides urgent care for mental health and substance use. The center is pursuing a MidAmerican Commercial New Construction program and LEED certification. Staff also gave input on energy use at the Historic Poor Farm, to help ensure sustainable operations. The Sustainability Coordinator did a preliminary survey and analysis to see if work-at-home arrangements decreased County energy use and vehicle miles traveled. In 2020, 450,709 kWh of solar energy was generated onsite at County buildings, more than any other prior year (Figure 8). In early 2021, a sixth solar array will begin operating at the new GuideLink Center.

Figure 8: Johnson County On-Site Solar Energy Generation since 2015 (Iowa B3 Benchmarking)



Sustainable Procurement

In 2020, the Sustainability Coordinator worked with the Finance Department to add sustainability guidelines to the County’s overall procurement policy. In addition, the internal Surplus Supply Store, where staff can share or get gently used items, had 84 visits by County staff. The reuse helps keep items out of the landfill, reduce costs by hundreds of dollars, and reduces natural resource and energy use.

Green Team Events and Activities

Prior to the pandemic, the team hosted the Winter Biking Challenge and a beekeeping talk by James Miller. The team hosted online activities on Earth Week, home energy efficiency, and waste reduction.

Stormwater and Sustainable Landscaping

Sustainability staff continued to provide guidance on the biocell at the Administration Building and contracted for services with experience in sustainable landscaping. The biocell helps protect water quality by capturing and breaking down pollutants and reduces erosion and flooding by slowing down stormwater runoff. The internal Sustainability and Energy Reinvestment Fund supported this upkeep of the biocell. Sustainability staff continued to consult with the design engineer on the stormwater management features that were installed at the new GuideLink Center. A site visit was conducted after install; additional visits will be made when the vegetation begins to establish in the spring of 2021.

STAFF PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

All staff members in the Planning, Development and Sustainability Department completed training in computer safety, general safety, and sexual harassment during the calendar year. Staff also continued to attend various diversity, equity, and inclusion workshops, including one held for the entire department in September 2020. Most activities took place virtually due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Josh Busard, Director

- Maintained three certifications: American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP), Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED-AP), and Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM) through self-study and webinars.

Nate Mueller, Assistant Director

- Maintained AICP and CFM Certifications.
- Continued to serve as a district representative on the CoZO ISAC Affiliate executive committee.
- Attended Spring CoZO Conference (virtual), May 2020.
- Attended the Iowa Floodplain and Stormwater Management Association annual conference (virtual), October 2020.
- Attended Iowa Geological Survey annual STATEMap Advisory Committee, October 2020.

Luke McClanahan, Assistant Planner

- Obtained AICP credential, September 2020.
- Attended FEMA's E0273 course: Managing Floodplain Development through the NFIP, Moline, Ill., January 2020.
- Attended IDNR's Workshop for Local Officials on Managing Development in Floodplains webinar, June 2020.
- Attended two online diversity and inclusion trainings, June and November 2020.
- Attended ICAP's Planning & Zoning Workshop for Iowa Counties, July 2020.
- Attended the Upper Midwest APA conference (virtual), October 2020.
- Attended the US Army Corps of Engineer's Inundation Mapping webinar, December 2020.

Becky Soglin, Sustainability Coordinator

- Earned Climate Change Professional credential from the Association of Climate Change Officers.
- Complete training to renew LEED Green Associate credential through October 2021.
- Completed numerous equity and social/racial justice webinars related to sustainability.
- Gave three online presentations on energy efficiency and renewables.
- Attended annual conferences (virtual) October through November: Upper Midwest APA Iowa Chapter; Iowa Ideas Conference; Iowa Energy Efficiency Association; Midwest Climate Summit.

Kasey Hutchinson, Soil and Water Conservation Coordinator

- Completed multiple webinars mostly concentrated on stormwater management, soil health, and climate resiliency including but not limited to:
 - State Nutrient Management Programs and Market-Based Approaches to Conservation through the North Central Climate Collaborative
 - Economic Impacts of Water Infrastructure through The Value of Water Campaign
 - Weather-Ready Farms and Crop Rotations Effects on Soil Health through the Soil Health Nexus Webinar Series

- Water Rising: Equitable Approaches to Urban Flooding, Infrastructure Innovations at Utility Headquarters and One Water Planning through the US Water Alliance

Neil Bombei, Lead Building Inspector

- Served as Second Vice President for the Iowa Association of Building Officials.
- Attended three-day training at the Southern Nevada EduCode Institute in Las Vegas, NV.
- Attended three-day training hosted by the Iowa Association of Building Officials in Des Moines.
- Registered a total of 69.5 hours of continuing education credits.
- Served on the Johnson County Safety Committee.

Bret McLaughlin, Senior Combination Inspector

- Attended a one-day training in Cedar Rapids on Blue Beam Plan Review Software.
- Attended a half-day training virtually on Civil Rights.
- Attended five days of training in Minnesota on various topics.
- Maintained 11 certifications.

David Tornow, Building Inspector I

- Attended an online class with Iowa Association of Building Officials (IABO) about 2020 NEC National Code Update.
- Attended an online IABO class on Manufactured Housing.
- Attended a webinar from McKeon titled Fire Door Systems: A Guide to Code Compliance.
- Attended a week-long plan review for IRC and IBC which included a class for Blue Beam Revu Software that we use in the office. The classes were held in Loveland, Colorado.
- The Iowa Association of Electrical Inspectors (IAEI) spring meeting was canceled and in a web meeting the new officers took their place. Now serving as the IAEI Iowa Chapter Past President.

Brandon Davis, Code Enforcement Inspector

- Obtained Zoning Inspector certification.
- Maintained International Property Maintenance certification.
- Completed 17 safety trainings offered by IMWCA.
- Attended Code Enforcement: Compliance Inspections: Safe and Proper Procedures on Contact training, August 2020.
- Attended Manufactured Housing: Rules and Regulations for the State of Iowa training, Nov. 2020.
- Attended three Diversity and Inclusion trainings.

Jeff Huff, Zoning Aide

- Attended Understanding White Privilege webinar.
- Completed Unlawful Harassment Prevention training online.
- Attended Leica data collection made easy, 2020 ESRI conference, July 2020.

Nancy Rockensies, Secretary II

- Attended the following webinars (in-person and virtual):
 - Customer Service Building Department 101
 - Highlights of the International Zoning Code
 - Basic Plan Review, Calculating Fees and IBC Required Inspections
 - IBS Occupancy Use Groups and Types of Construction
 - Highlights of IBC Chapter 1 and Legal Aspects of Code Administration
 - Permit Tech Career Path

2021 DEPARTMENT PLANS

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

Code Enforcement

The County's first ever Code Enforcement Inspector will have completed his first year of work in March 2021. Expectations are that we will continue upon the successes that we have earned from this first year.

Building Services

In addition to continue providing building services to four incorporated cities (Lone Tree, Oxford, Shueyville and Swisher) in the county, PDS will explore the possibility of extending building inspection services into the City of Solon. The Department will also begin researching a rental inspection and permitting program.

Village Planning

After being delayed by COVID-19, the Department intends to begin helping Windham complete its first ever plan after it is safe to do so. When that plan is completed, all villages in the county will have gone through a planning process and PDS can begin updating plans, beginning with the Village of Frytown.

Economic Development

A new Economic Development Plan is in the works that will complement the Johnson County 2018 Comprehensive Plan. PDS is taking the lead in developing the document, with the support of the Economic Development Committee. The plan will serve as a guiding document for attracting, developing, and retaining businesses located primarily in the unincorporated area of the county. It will also identify goals, strategies, and action items to help expand employment opportunities, diversify the local tax base, and improve quality of life in the county in line with County values and strategic goals.

Soil and Water Conservation

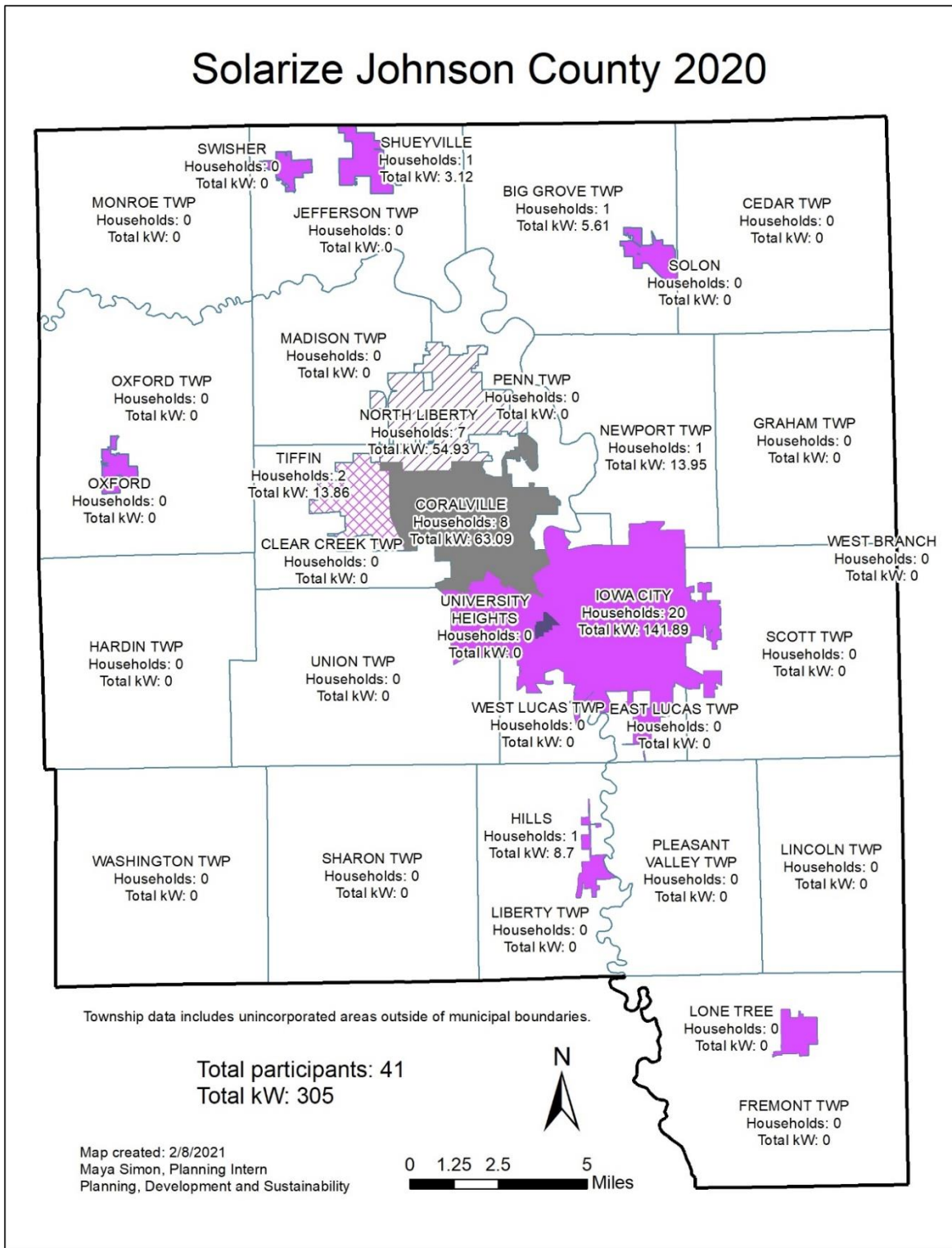
The Soil and Water Conservation Coordinator will continue to develop standard procedures for successful implementation of the environmental programs. She will also implement a new stormwater facilities maintenance program to ensure long-term effectiveness of post-construction stormwater management practices.

Sustainability

PDS will be the lead contact for a virtual 12-hour workshop on adaptation and resilience planning for County operations. EcoAdapt will provide the grant-funded training to representatives from the majority of County departments and offices. In addition, the Sustainability Coordinator will be the County's lead for a 2021 solar group buy and will renew the County's Bicycle Friendly Business recognition.

Appendix A: Solarize Johnson County 2020

305 kW ON 41 HOUSEHOLDS



Appendix A: Solarize Johnson County 2018 + 2020 Results

1,430.35 kW ON 221 HOUSEHOLDS

