



ADAPTIVE USE AND
REHABILITATION PLAN FOR THE

Johnson County Poor Farm

AND ASYLUM HISTORIC DISTRICT

MASTER PLAN - PHASE ONE 2017

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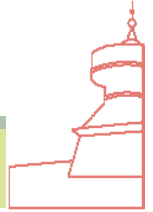


HBK Engineering
509 South Gilbert Street
Iowa City, Iowa 52240
319-338-7557

Iowa Valley RC&D
920 48th Avenue
Amana, Iowa 52203
319-622-3264

John F. Shaw Architect
437 South Summit Street
Iowa City, Iowa 52240
319-331-4348

Acknowledgements



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|---|---|--------------------------------------|
| • Johnson County Historic Preservation Commission | • Iowa Valley Global Food Project | Resources |
| • Johnson County Historical Society | • University of Iowa's Obermann Center for Advanced Studies | • SILT Land Trust |
| • Johnson County Conservation Board | • University of Iowa's Office of Outreach and Engagement | • Backyard Abundance |
| • Iowa City Historic Preservation Commission | • City of Iowa City Staff | • Bur Oak Land Trust |
| • State Historical Society of Iowa | • City of Coralville Staff | • Field to Family |
| • Office of the State Archaeologist | • Iowa City Parks and Recreation | • Johnson County Food Policy Council |
| • Johnson County Farm Bureau | • Johnson County Secondary Roads | • GROW: Johnson County |
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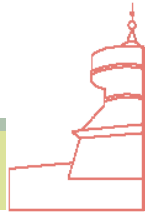
This report is respectfully submitted June 7th, 2017, to the Johnson County Board of Supervisors.

All mapping, surveying, and analysis conducted in ArcGIS and AutoCAD has been provided to the County in the digital and print format. The point cloud for the FARO Focus 3D S 120, a 3-dimensional laser scan, which is accessible through Computer-Aided Design (CAD) modeling, has also been provided to the County. This report was produced by:

HBK: Project Manager, Steve Long
HBK: Project Coordinator, Vanessa Fixmer-Oraiz
HBK: Engineer (EIT), Thomas Kalman
HBK: Project Manager, Michael Thomas
HBK: Engineer, Brian Boelk
HBK: Construction Manager, Robert Decker
HBK: Designer, Laura Roberts

HBK: Field Operations Manager, Tom Hagensee
HBK: Scan Technician, Matthew Arnold
HBK: Surveyor Matt Finley
John F. Shaw Architect
Iowa Valley RC&D: Executive Director, Jessica Rilling
Iowa Valley RC&D: Food Systems Director, Jason Grimm

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Equal Opportunity Acknowledgement:

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National Park Service
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.S. 20204

Project Background

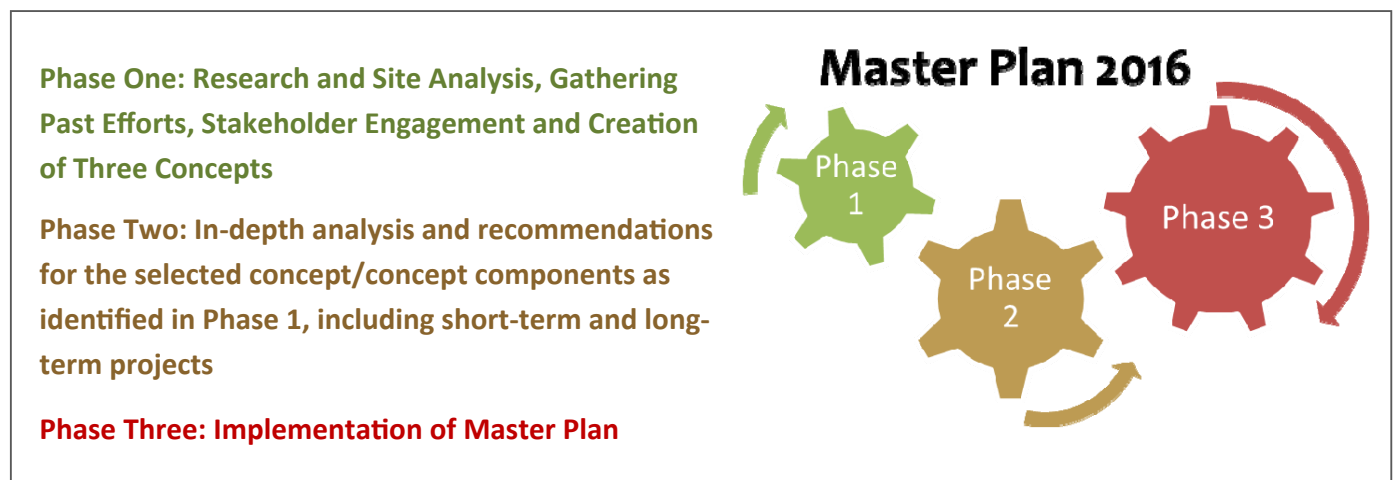


In the Spring of 2016, Johnson County was awarded a Certified Local Government grant to prepare an Adaptive Use and Rehabilitation Plan for the Johnson County Poor Farm and Asylum Historic District. Later that year, following a RFP process, the Johnson County Board of Supervisors selected HBK Engineering to complete the plan, herein known as Phase One of the Johnson County Poor Farm Master Plan. This Master Plan will guide preservation of and improvements to the property. Together with project partners Iowa Valley RC&D and John F. Shaw Architects/Douglas Steinmetz, AIA, HBK Engineering conducted a spatial analysis of the site, worked with historians and architects to understand the history, created a 3-dimensional scanned image of each of the historic buildings, facilitated focus groups, and hosted a public input session.

The Johnson County Poor Farm, referred to herein as the Poor Farm, was established in 1855 to create a centralized self-sustaining agricultural community to care for the poor, physically disabled, or chronically mentally ill. The Asylum was listed individually on the National Register of Historic Places in 1978 and in 2014 the property was listed as a historic district. Over one-hundred and sixty years later, the Poor Farm has seen a fair amount of change, and this Master Plan process seeks to provide context for preservation and improvements by:

- Recognizing the history of the Poor Farm
- Incorporating an analysis of the property (land use, topography, current uses, etc.)
- Examining the historic characteristics of buildings located within the historic district

The Johnson County Board of Supervisors identified five areas of interest for further study: Historic Preservation, Conservation, Local Food Production, Recreation/Trails, Housing and Education. These areas guided the project process, informed stakeholder engagement and, together with research and analysis, built the resulting three proposed concepts provided in this plan.



Introduction to Phase One



For Phase One, HBK completed a site analysis at the Poor Farm that included investigations of the three contributing historic buildings (the West Barn, the Asylum, and the Dairy Barn), review of current land uses, and review of previous planning efforts. Direction from the Johnson County Board of Supervisors was gathered via a comprehensive survey and follow-up work sessions. This information provided parameters for the HBK team to engage with a wide range of stakeholders through focus groups, interviews, web-based interaction, and a large public input open house event. The following are included in this Phase One Master Plan:

- To understand the characteristics of each contributing historic building, an in-depth architectural investigation of each was conducted by John F. Shaw, AIA, and Douglas Steinmetz, AIA. A previous Technical Advisory Network report was also conducted by Mr. Steinmetz providing additional historic architectural analyses.
- To preserve the integrity of each building into the foreseeable future, a 3D imaging scan of each historic building was completed.
- To understand the associated costs to upgrade each historic building for a potential use, a Level-of-Use analysis was undertaken.
- To understand the impact of adding potential future uses, we have included pertinent information regarding each of the current uses located on the Poor Farm site. This includes a mixture of practices and services that align with the history of the site.
- To make sure all ideas are considered, we have examined the plans of past efforts, which include documents from the City of Iowa City's Southwest District Plan, the Bicentennial Farm Project, the Johnson County Metropolitan Planning Organization, and the Johnson County Historical Society.
- To have a meaningful set of parameters to bring to stakeholders and the public, our team gathered 'Areas of Interest' to pursue from the Johnson County Board of Supervisors via a survey and follow-up work sessions.
- To ensure all potential stakeholders were brought to the table to discuss ideas, our team contacted interested individuals and organizations, then conducted focus groups and a large public input open house event.
- To provide the County with a consistent branding concept for the Poor Farm, preliminary design considerations are included.
- To visualize a synthesization of the information garnered from professionals in each of the areas of interest, the public, and the Board of Supervisors; our team has created three proposed future concepts. These concepts are designed to assist the Board of Supervisors in the decision-making process and to move the planning process into Phase Two of the Master Plan.

Property Location and Description

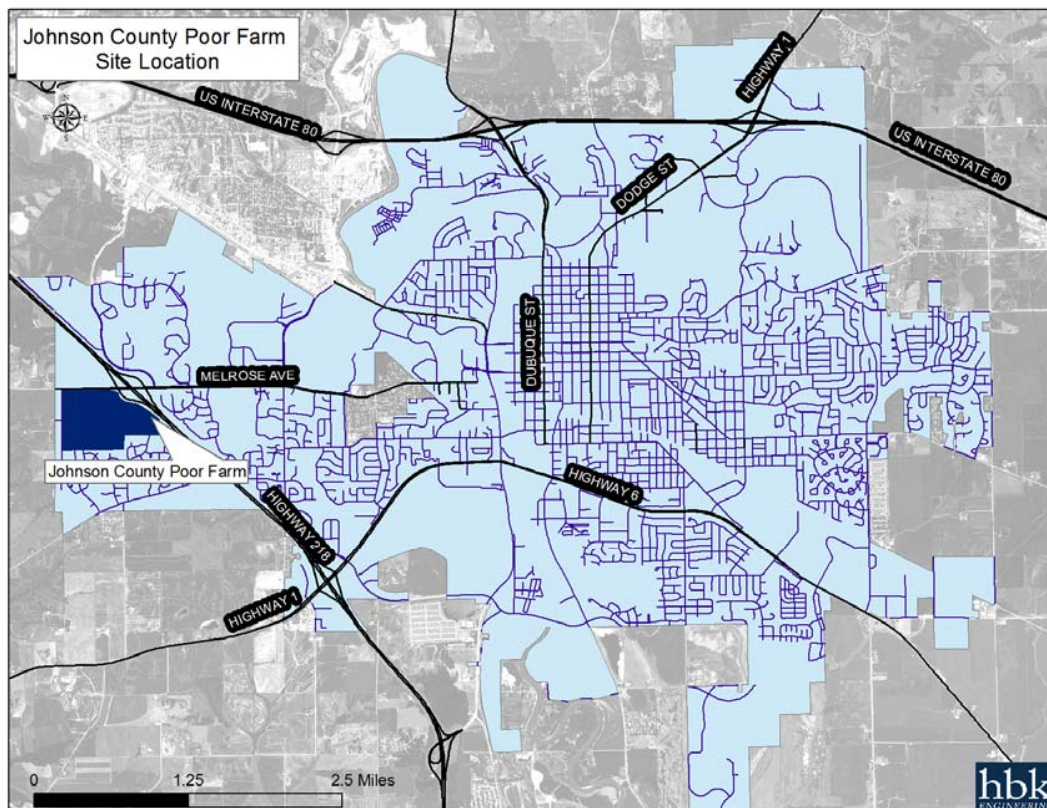


The 160-acre Poor Farm property is owned by Johnson County, Iowa, and resides within Iowa City limits. The Poor Farm is bordered on the north by Melrose Avenue and on the west by Slothower Road. To the south is a series of single-family residential subdivisions and Weber Elementary School. The Poor Farm is recognized as an asset by adjacent neighbors, the City of Iowa City, and Johnson County residents. A surveyed site plan is included in Appendix A

The Poor Farm was founded in 1855, and since then its boundaries have shifted to accommodate the County's needs. Historic maps are available to attest to these shifting boundaries, some of which are included with this report (1859 plat map, 1870 plat map, 1900 plat map, aerial imagery for 1930s, 1970s, and 1990s), showing changes occurring in the west and north areas.

The historical building complex includes a monitor-roof stock barn (West Barn), a gambrel-roof dairy barn (Dairy Barn), the Asylum, and several non-historic structures. These non-historic structures include the County shed located along Melrose Avenue, the two corn cribs located near the Dairy Barn, the recently constructed double-stall bathroom located adjacent to the County shed, and the machine shed currently being used by local organizations for food production purposes.

There is one recorded prehistoric Native American archaeological site on the property, a small lithic scatter (site number 13JH1150) discovered during the initial evaluation of the property done by Tallgrass Historians, LLC. Their work also identified two areas with high potential for the presence of prehistoric archaeological sites, but investigations of those areas was beyond the scope of the evaluation project.

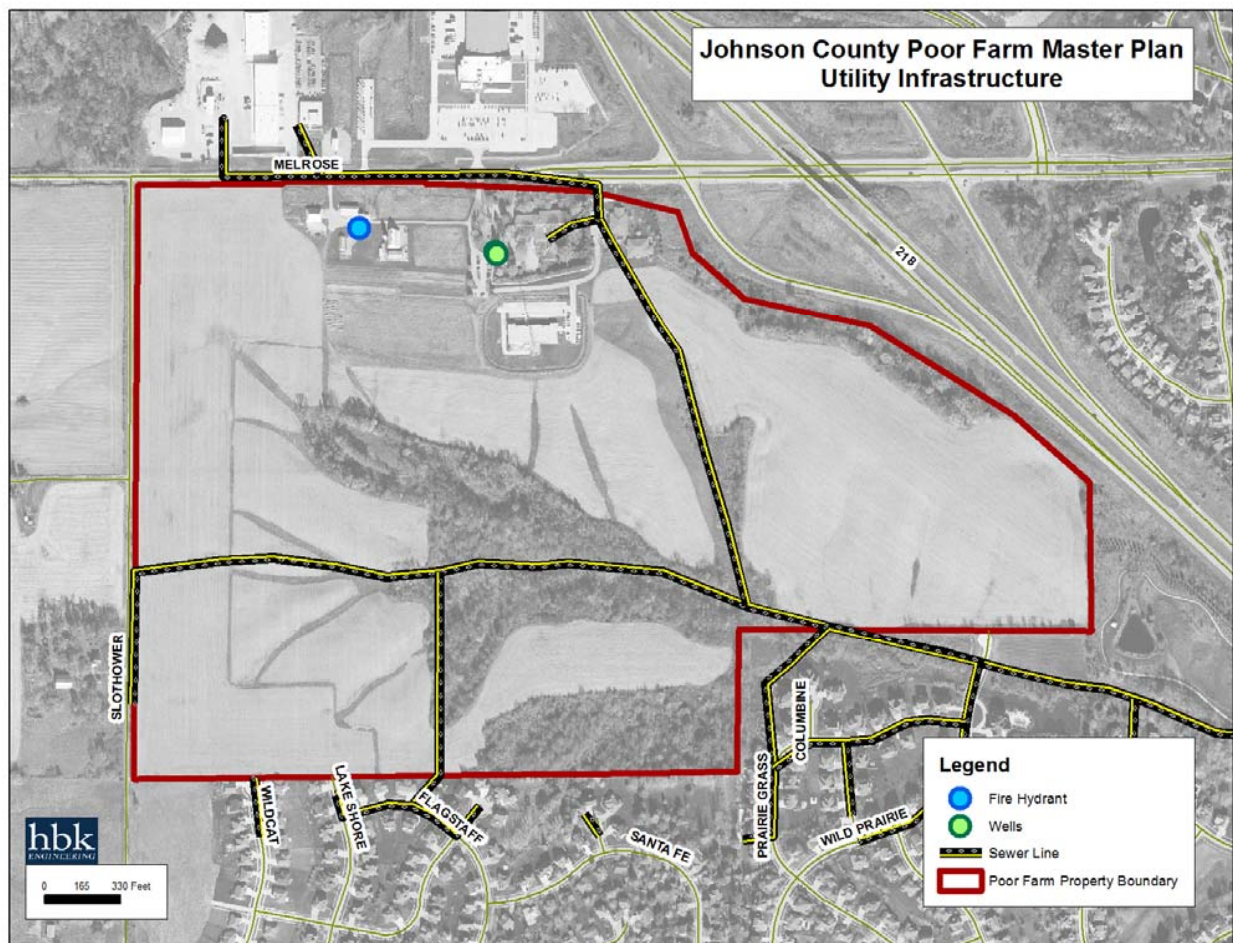


Utility Infrastructure



Any upgrades to the Poor Farm property need to take into consideration the existing utility infrastructure. Currently, there are City water and sewer services present on the site. There is a 12" sewer main that runs throughout the property. Updated City maps show sanitary sewer extension designs dated as far back as the 1980s. There are sewer connections to the residential housing sub-division to the south of the property, as well as north to Melrose Avenue. Municipal water services are also present, with a fire hydrant located across from the County shed that local food production groups have previously used for agricultural watering. Additionally, there are municipal water services being used for the double-stall restroom located adjacent to the County shed. These municipal water service lines are fed into the Poor Farm site from Melrose Avenue; however, due to public safety regulations, they are not shown on the map.

The County also has two wells located on the currently leased Chatham Oaks property, just east of the Dairy Barn. These wells are currently being investigated for repair opportunities, as there are certain disadvantages to using municipal water services for agricultural purposes, such as chlorine application to treat City water and the additional expense of using those services.



Historical Context



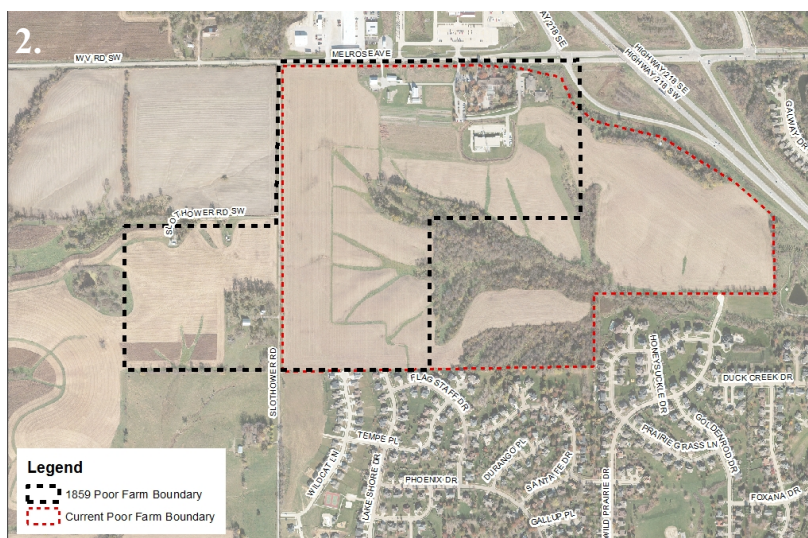
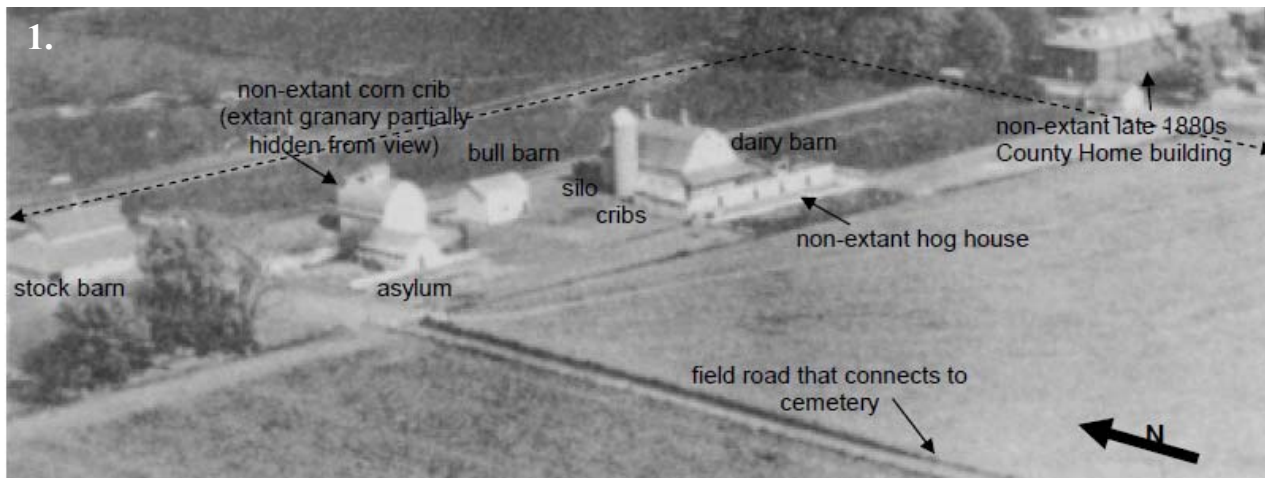
The Poor Farm opened its doors on February 25, 1855, to provide a “radical new way” of caring for the mentally ill and indigent residents by providing fresh air, a safe place to reside, and for those who were able, the dignity of “earning their keep” through meaningful work. It may be difficult to understand how such a shift in care was necessary, but the vision of the Poor Farm was borne out of the 1840s Era of Reform, when it became less acceptable to keep those considered insane chained in basements, locked away in jails, or simply put on a train to the next town. At that time, Johnson County and many counties throughout the state of Iowa purchased land to provide an option for those who had none. By 1911, all but four of Iowa’s 99 counties had County Homes or facilities similar to the Poor Farm (2014 Nomination, p.32). In 1909, a state law allowed for higher taxes to support county poorhouses and also changed the terminology from poor houses and poor farms to “county homes”; and thus, the Johnson County Home emerged (p.28).

At the time of this report in 2017, there are only a dozen Poor Farms in Iowa that have been inventoried and the extant buildings or remains are potentially eligible for the historic register or are already listed: Audubon, Carroll, Clayton, Hardin, Howard, Jackson, Jones, Story, Union, Wapello, Washington, Woodbury. Seven Iowa counties have remnants that do not have enough integrity to be eligible for the national register: Bremer, Clinton, Jasper, Madison, Marshall, Marion, Winneshiek. Nine counties have nothing left but the cemeteries associated with the former Poor Farms/County Homes: Boone, Buchanan, Butler, Cedar, Chickasaw, Dallas, Decatur, Hancock, Tama.

The original Poor Farm farming operations included livestock (horses, hogs, dairy cows). Agricultural crops included corn, oats, wheat, tobacco, sorghum, potatoes, hay, grapes, and a variety of fruits and vegetables. The stewards of the Poor Farm typically lived at the farm with their families, and when possible, a physician was on staff. In the very beginning, the Poor Farm was a four-room structure, with the steward and his family in one room, the kitchen in another, and the other two rooms for “poor and insane women in the third room; and poor and insane men in the fourth room” (p. 35). The overwhelming number of residents and their subsequently unhealthy conditions quickly resulted in expansions. By 1960, the farm totaled 310 acres and had nine employees, “the steward and his wife, a registered nurse, two cooks, one hired man, and three house attendants” (p.48).

The 2014 Nomination to the National Register of Historic Places provides a wealth of information on day-to-day life on the farm, as well as historical information on each of the buildings, personal testimonies from former residents, receipts from farming transactions, and newspaper articles on burials at the farm. To learn more about the Poor Farm and its rich history, we provided the full report in Appendix B.

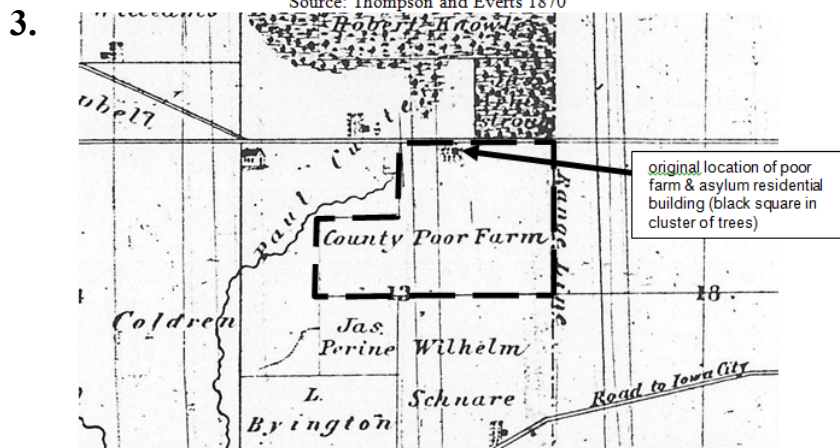
Historical Context - Mapping



Top to Bottom:

1. 1955 Aerial photograph of the Poor Farm, looking to the northeast. Dotted line is approximate property boundary. Source: 2014 National Register of Historic Places Report, Tallgrass Historians LLC, p.80
2. Map showing the original 1859 boundary (in black dashes) over the current 2017 property boundary (in red dashes).
3. 1870 Plat map showing "County Poor Farm" property (dashed outline) in Union Township, original source: Thompson and Everts 1870; Re-printed here from the 2014 National Register of Historic Places Report, Tallgrass Historians LLC, p.73

1870 Plat map showing "County Poor Farm" property (dashed outline) in Union Township
Source: Thompson and Everts 1870

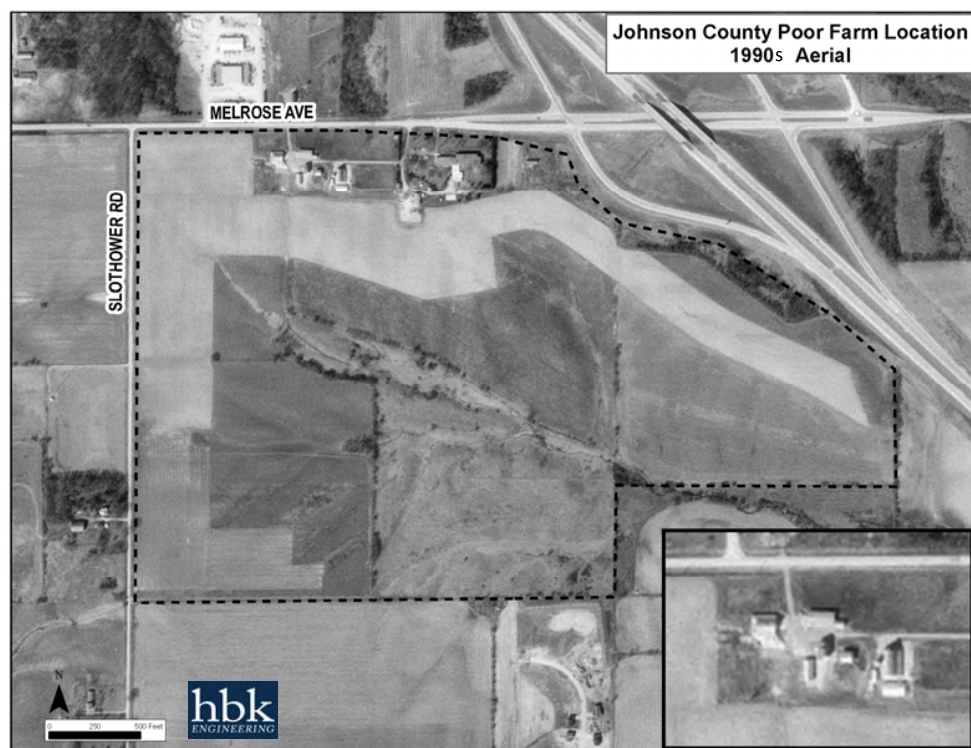


Source: 2014 Poor Farm and Asylum Historic District Nomination

Historical Context - Mapping



Historical Context - Mapping



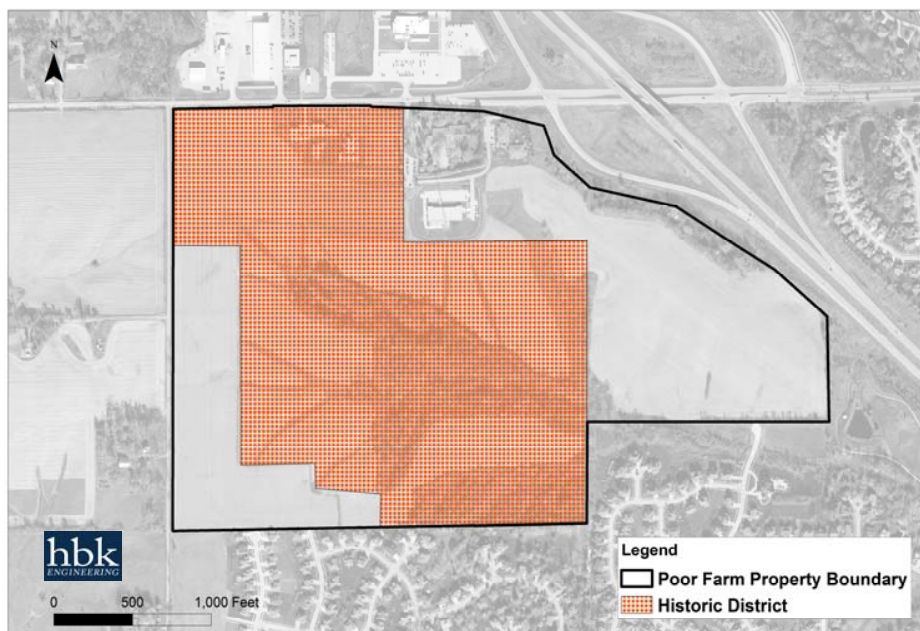
Historical Context - Historic District



There have been several historical investigations on the Poor Farm, including the comprehensive *2014 Poor Farm and Asylum Historic District Nomination* executed by Leah D. Rogers of Tallgrass Historians LLC, which resulted in a National Register-listed Historic District in September of 2014. As reported in this nomination form, the Historic District encompasses 110 acres of the Poor Farm agricultural production and natural areas, as well as the West Barn, the Dairy barn, the remaining wing of the Asylum, and the Cemetery. The boundaries of the Historic District do not include the entire original Poor Farm property, only the portion of the property that retains good historical integrity. The portion of the Poor Farm property to the north of Melrose Ave. has been built over and does not retain sufficient integrity to be part of the district. The same is true of the land around the Chatham Oaks building, which is also excluded from the Historic District. The portion of the property to the southwest (along Slothower Rd.) was excluded from the Historic District because surveying identified no significant historic elements.

Maintaining the National Register designation of the Johnson County Poor Farm and Asylum Historic District requires that the integrity of the property be preserved. Significant changes (alterations, demolitions, new construction, etc.) in the district may result in the district being delisted. However, the [Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties](#) provides guidance for the well-considered and sensitive rehabilitation of the historic property that respects its history while allowing for a compatible use in the future.

A general guideline for proposed development should be to minimize any potential impact to the viewshed of the historic district, such as a minimal scale and footprint for structures. New buildings should be historically compatible in design, yet still recognizable as new construction. Additional considerations must be taken to site buildings so they have the least impact on the public views of the historic buildings (generally considered from the public rights-of-way).



Historical Context - Cemetery

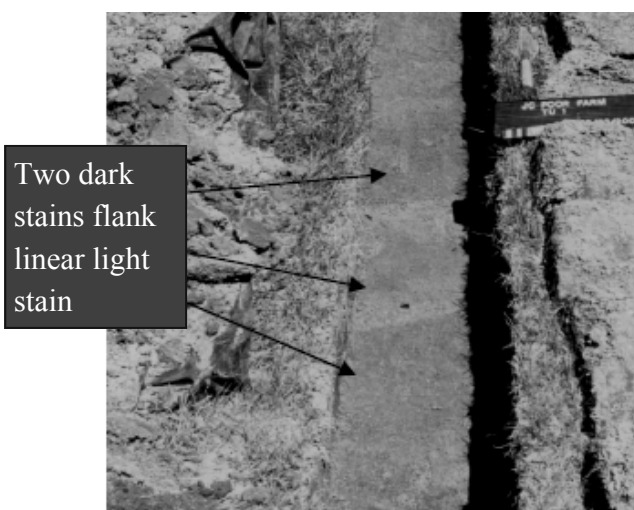


Cemeteries provide a deeply personal resting place where one can visit the site of a loved one. Often these spaces capture our imagination by telling the stories of those who have come before us. The Poor Farm cemetery is no exception. There are no markers for individual burial sites, but documented burial permits attest to at least 20 of the residents who died on the Poor Farm being buried in the cemetery. While such a small number are recorded, oral testimony has halted construction in the 1960s of a pond area near the nose slope of the cemetery due to the large presence of human remains (2014 Nomination, p.16).

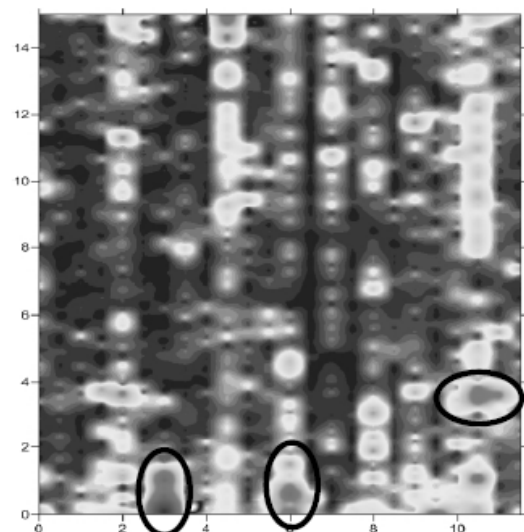
To investigate further, an archeological study was conducted by Leah D. Rogers from 2002-2004, which involved the excavation of a narrow trench at a suggested gravesite depression. This excavation exposed the lighter subsoil and revealed a cultural feature “that appeared to be historic in origin based on the amount of organics still in the soil of the fill and the straight edges of the feature stain” (2014 Nomination, p.18) .

In 2009 and in 2013, ground penetrating radar (GPR) studies were conducted by Dr. Glenn Storey from the University of Iowa. Ground penetrating radar equipment uses radar pulses to detect imagery of the subsurface. This is a non-destructive method that detects the reflected signals for subsurface structures, like the metal from a casket. Dr. Storey was assisted by Jason Thompson of Grinnell College, and together they felt confident that their analysis uncovered perhaps 350 grave features, with a “definite pattern of internments in about 8-10 rows running N-S...likely between 120-210 graves lying in 8-10 rows” (2014 Nomination, p. 20).

These archeological and GPR studies have validated the existence of the cemetery, and provided further insight into life and death on the Poor Farm site. To permanently protect the integrity and sanctity of this site, HBK has geo-located the boundaries of this site with the help of Leah D. Rogers and Dr. Storey. Further discussion of the cemetery appears throughout this plan.



Two dark stains flank linear light stain

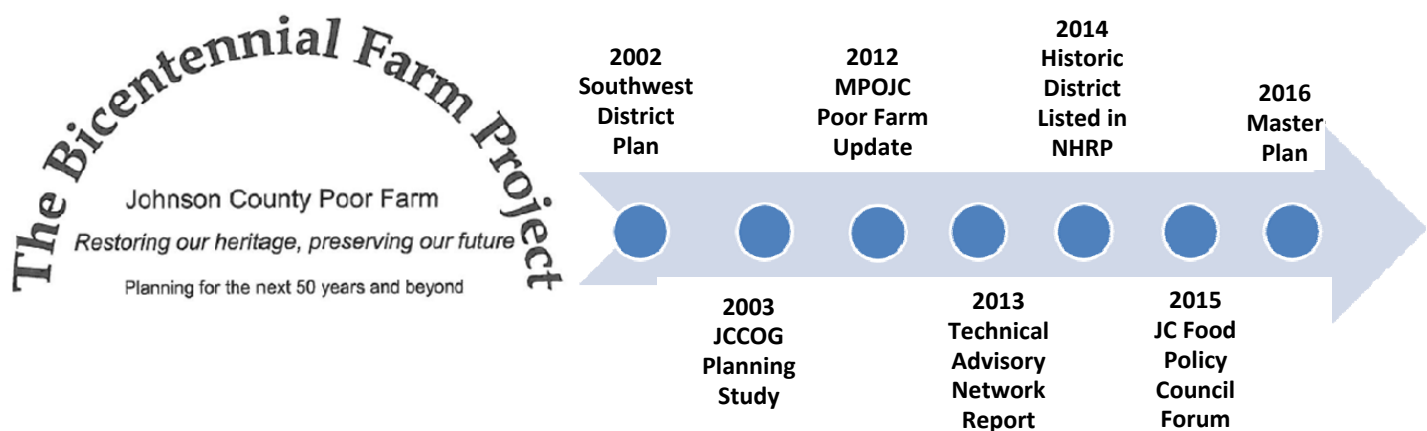


L-R: Test Trench excavation at Poor Farm Cemetery; GPR, Very high Amplitude features (circled) may indicate presence of metal caskets. Source: 2014 National Register of Historic Places Report, Tallgrass Historians LLC, p. 19, 22.

Historical Context - Past Planning Efforts



The Poor Farm has benefited greatly from past planning efforts that have informed decisions regarding the various uses located on the land. One of the first actions that set the tone for future planning efforts was the listing of the Asylum building in the National Register of Historic Places, (formally listed as the First Johnson County Asylum) in 1978 by Mr. and Mrs. Joe Miltner. This put the Poor Farm on the map and was recognized by local and state historians and the general public that the Poor Farm was an important site with historical features. There have been several planning efforts that followed suit and they are listed here with brief descriptions. Full documents are found in Appendix C.

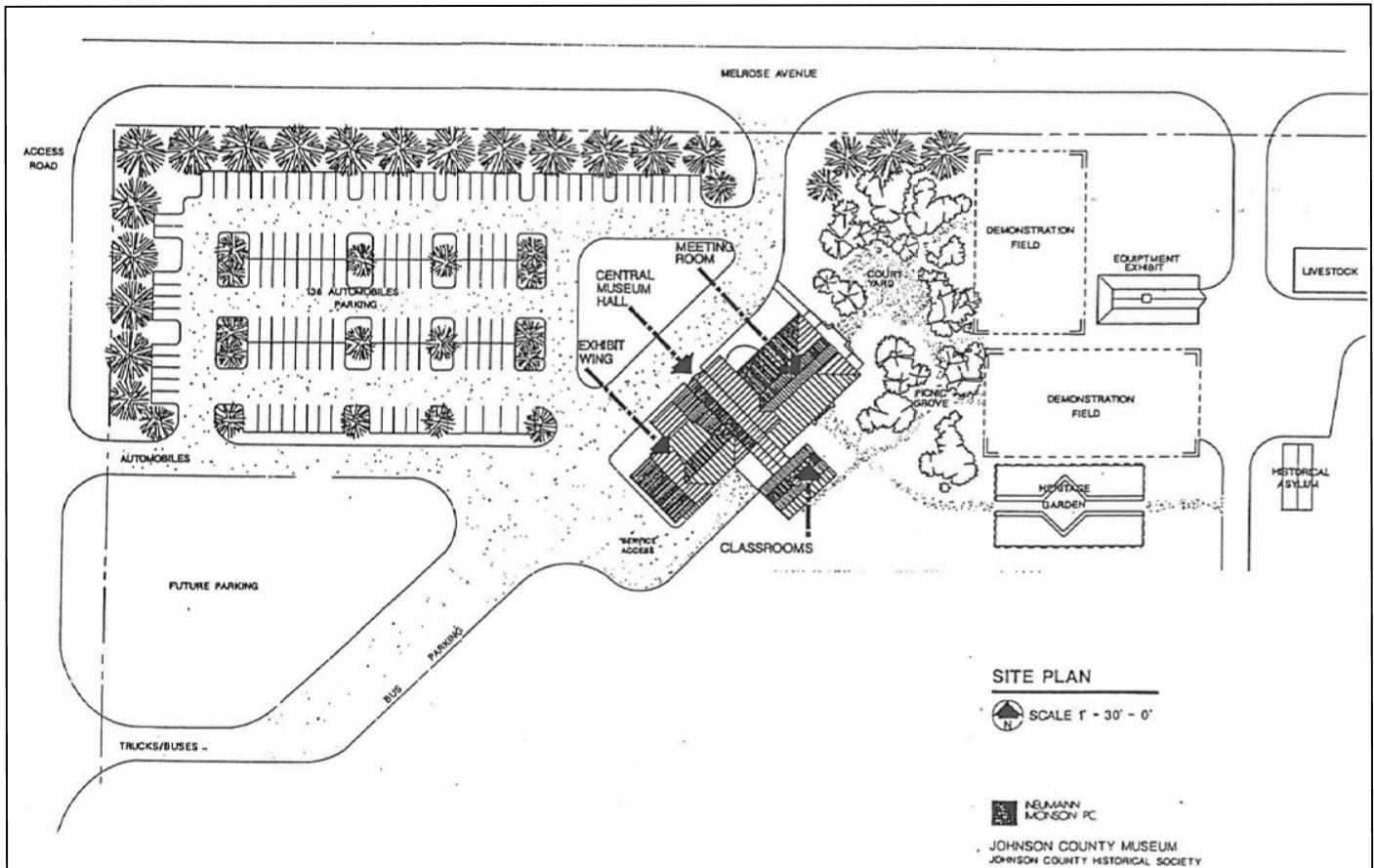


2001 *The Bicentennial Farm Project: Planning the Future of the Johnson County Poor Farm.*

A grassroots organization formed in the early 2000s to create a site plan for the Poor Farm. While it is difficult to determine exactly who was involved with this endeavor, we have procured documents from the Johnson County Historical Society (JCHS) that note several actors, including members from: the JCHS, University of Iowa, Johnson County Soil & Water Conservation District, Johnson County Secondary Roads, Johnson County Historic Preservation Commission, Chatham Oaks, Johnson County Board of Supervisors, and private citizens.

This planning process centered on historical and agricultural/conservation-related components of the site and included a site design for a Johnson County Museum to be located on the corner of Melrose Avenue and Slothower Rd. There is a detailed breakdown of proposed conservation practices and cost estimates that include prairie restoration, the creation of a wetland feature, and a maintenance plan for prescribed burning and tree removal for a ten-year timeline. There are also considerations for a trail network that aligns with the contours of the land. Interpretive signage was a high priority, and while this element is noted in several places, an interpretive signage plan was never located. The robust planning efforts did not result in an adopted plan that created any of the items listed above, as far as our team can tell; however, there may have been tangential impacts that are not accurately represented.

Historical Context - Past Planning Efforts



2001 Bicentennial Farm Project. Proposed “Johnson County Museum.”

2002 *Iowa City Comprehensive Plan: Southwest District Plan*

The Poor Farm site is located within Iowa City municipal limits and thus has been included in their long-range planning efforts. The Southwest District Plan is a part of the Iowa City Comprehensive Plan and includes a brief description of the site and its history, as well as transportation considerations, protections for the buildings and cemetery, regional park elements, and, if development occurs, provisions for a buffer between the development and Highway 218.

2003 *Johnson County Council of Governments: Johnson County Poor Farm Planning Study Final Report.*

This planning study was adopted by the Johnson County Board of Supervisors on June 12, 2003. The main components include:

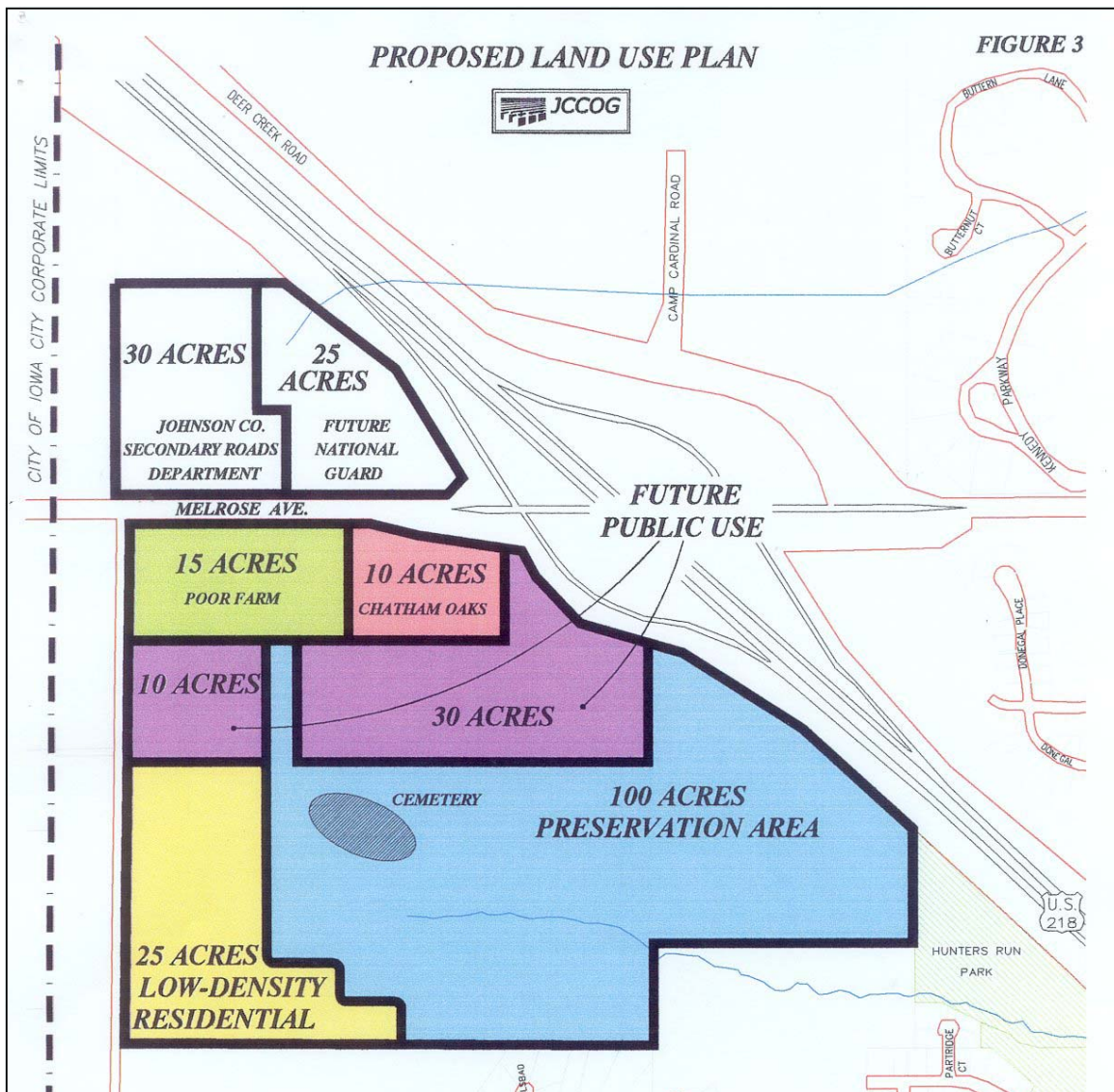
- An analysis of the Poor Farm as it relates to the Southwest Planning District of Iowa City’s Comprehensive Plan.
- Discussions on the municipal sanitary sewer and water services, as well as the changes in major roadways, such as the extension of Hwy 965 on the western boundary of the Southwest Planning District and improvements to Melrose Avenue and Rohrer Road.

Historical Context - Past Planning Efforts



- Interviews with the Executive Director of Chatham Oaks, Iowa City Public Works Director, Johnson County Board of Supervisors, and a former resident of the County Home.
- Public Meetings were conducted with the public and Board of Supervisors.
- Letter correspondence was also documented from several members of the public and the JCHS, the League of Women Voters, and educators.

A summary at the conclusion of the report indicates that education and open space was a common recommendation. Additionally, considerations for selling portions of the property in order to raise funds for other County projects and redevelopment was considered feasible, while still saving a majority of the property for open space and educational opportunities.



2003 JCCOG Proposed Land Use Plan Map.

Historical Context - Past Planning Efforts

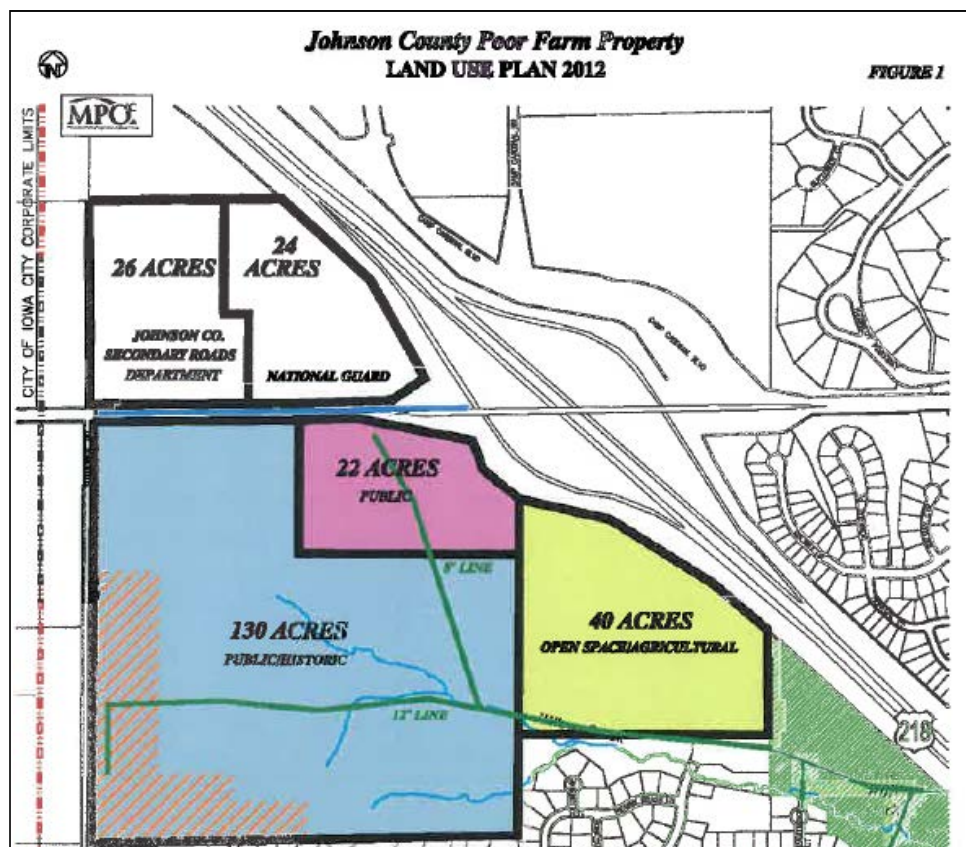


2012 Metropolitan Planning Organization of Johnson County. Update to the Johnson County Poor Farm Plan

This plan update was performed to address several developments that occurred on the Poor Farm since the 2003 plan was adopted:

- Construction of the Joint Emergency Communications Center south of Chatham Oaks
- Construction of the National Guard Facility, on the north side of Melrose Ave., east of the Secondary Roads Department
- Construction of two Melrose Ridge residential buildings, east of Chatham Oaks
- Construction of the Johnson County SEATS facility, on the Secondary Roads site

Additional recommendations included: Applying for the site to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places; performing a structural stability assessment and seeking assistance from the State Technical Assistance Network to secure grants for building restoration; Preparing a plan for interpretive signs for the historic resources on the property, and then pursuing grant funds for fabrication of the signs. Considerations for retaining open space and agricultural practices were discussed with the potential for adding residential subdivisions as a smaller portion of the site. Trail construction was also recommended to connect residential areas to the south of the property at Melrose Avenue and/or Slothower Road.



2012 MPOJC. Proposed Land Use Plan Map.

Historical Context - Past Planning Efforts



2013 *Technical Assistance Network (TAN) Report*

This report was prepared by Douglas Steinmetz, AIA, in July of 2013 to provide a “Master Plan for Rehabilitation” for four buildings: the Dairy Barn, West Barn, Bull Barn (gabled barn, no longer extant), and Granary/Crib. Each building has a separate report that recommends, “two critical paths forward: Building Stabilization or Building Rehabilitation.” These technical observations were successful in providing the County with a report that could be included in their 2016 Historical Resource Development Program grant, titled “Johnson County Poor Farm Barn Restoration.” This grant has been secured to assist in repairing several aspects of the West Barn and is in the beginning phases of this process.

2014 *National Register of Historic Places Nomination Report*

This Historic District nomination report was conducted and submitted by Leah D. Rogers of Tallgrass Historians LLC, and listed in the National Register in September of 2014. The purpose of this nomination was to designate a historic district on the Poor Farm site that encompasses the historic buildings and the surrounding areas that maintain the aesthetics of the original agricultural practices present on the site. The historic district is comprised of 110 acres and its listing in the National Register requires that any changes to the buildings follow the Secretary of the Interior Standards and further dictates the types of practices that can occur on the rest of the land located within the district. This report provides extensive research on the Poor Farm and is the basis for much of the historic information presented in this Phase One of the Master Plan.

2015 *Johnson County Food Policy Public Forum*

In 2015, members of the Johnson County Food Policy committee held a public forum that included discussions surrounding potential practices/elements for the Poor Farm site. Here are a few of their recommendations: Promote a development that preserves and improves soil and water quality, supports food production and allows for a live and work farm incubator; provide water source, water access, housing and public gatherings, provide electricity from renewable energy sources; commission an inventory on native plants on-site; ensure the site is accessible to the public, with clear signage, entrances and exits; space should be used to provide 2-10 acre plots to new growers; include educational workshops, classes and demonstration sites on sustainable food production and nitrate reduction; food production on-site should include farm plots, utilities, and the ability to add structures such as greenhouses, root cellars, and processing kitchens.

At the time of this Phase One Master Plan in 2017, there are only a dozen Poor Farms in Iowa that have been inventoried, and these extant buildings or remains are potentially eligible for listing in the National Historic Register or are already listed: Audubon, Carroll, Clayton, Hardin, Howard, Jackson, Jones, Story, Union, Wapello, Washington, Woodbury. Seven Iowa counties have remnants that do not have enough integrity to be eligible for the National Historic Register: Bremer, Clinton, Jasper, Madison, Marshall, Marion, Winneshiek. Nine counties have nothing left but the cemeteries associated with the former Poor Farms/County Homes: Boone, Buchanan, Butler, Cedar, Chickasaw, Dallas, Decatur, Hancock, Tama.

Survey

Survey—Area of Interest Ranked by Priority

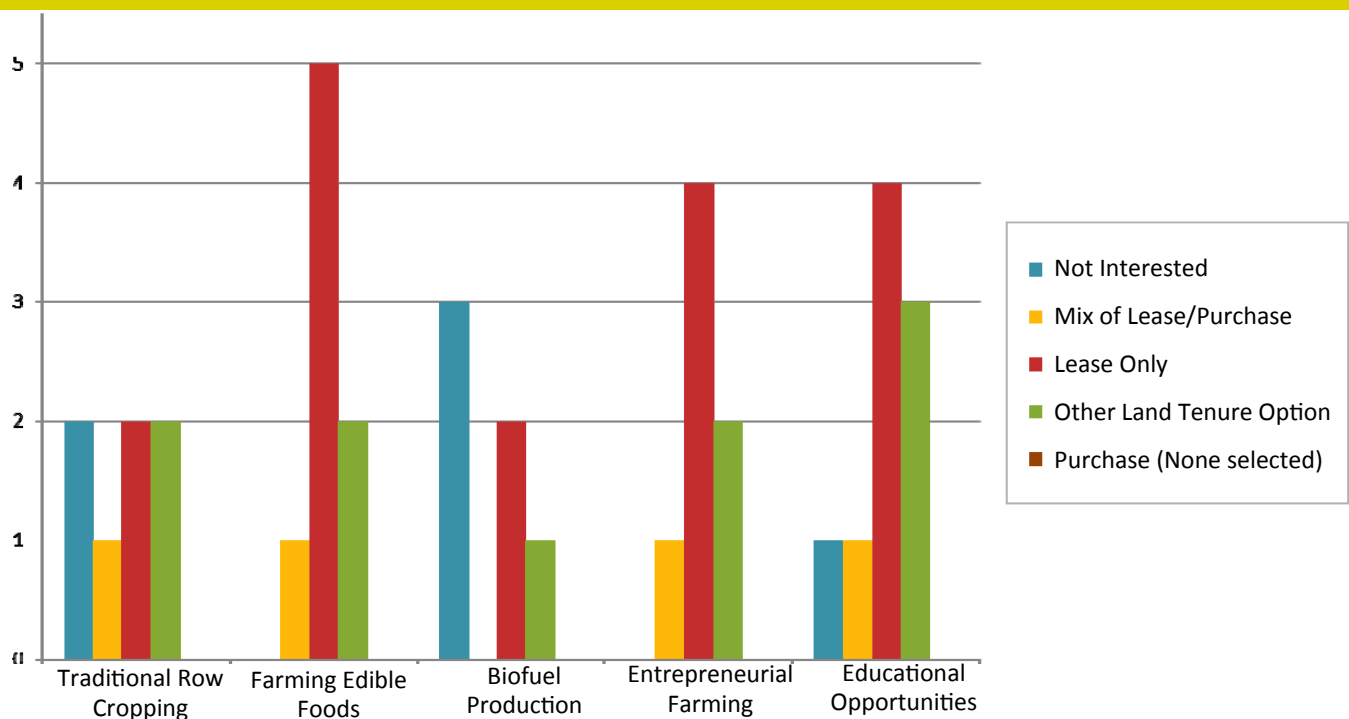
- Education** was so closely ranked to the top five priorities that it was considered an element that would be included as a programmatic feature throughout the Poor Farm. Some educational opportunities could include demonstration farm plots, historical exhibits, expansion of current guided tours, and deepening partnerships with education institutions, such as: The University of Iowa, Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture, the University of Northern Iowa Tallgrass Prairie Center, and local public, private, and home schools.

Johnson County Board of Supervisors - Input



Farming has long been an integral element of the Poor Farm. Supervisors were asked their preference regarding land tenure as related to traditional row cropping, farming edible foods, biofuel production, entrepreneurial farming, and educational opportunities. Purchased land was not preferred in any category. A majority of supervisors favored leasing only for farming edible foods, entrepreneurial farming, and educational opportunities. See bar graph below.

Survey—Land Tenure as Related to Farming Activities



The Supervisors also shared thoughts on what elements could be included to help make the planning process a success, and *communication* was mentioned often. Supervisors agreed that the most successful process would engage critical stakeholder groups in all areas of interest (especially those familiar with the site and past planning efforts). At this time, key partners were identified, such as the City of Iowa City; the University of Iowa; and conservation, local food, housing, and historical preservation groups/agencies; as well as County staff in various departments. Supervisors also expressed a desire to hear from a broad spectrum of the public sector.

Johnson County Board of Supervisors' Work Session

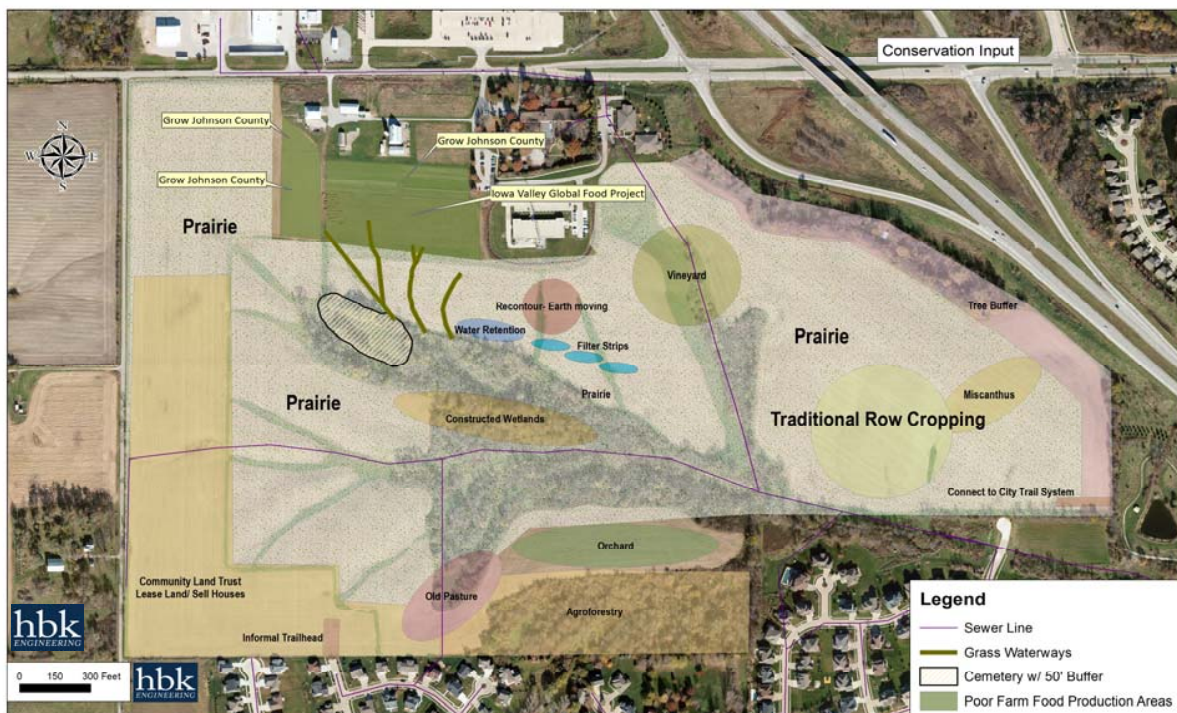
The work session with the Johnson County Board of Supervisors helped the team determine what areas were critical for research and narrowed the topics for focus groups. Supervisors were in agreement that the preservation and restoration of the historic buildings and associated site was paramount. There was also strong interest in conservation and education. Visions for the property's future varied, but the discussion helped our team direct limited time and resources to those topics of most interest/concern.

Stakeholder Engagement and Public Input



In order to effectively solicit ideas for future short-range/ long-range projects and garner public support and engagement, the team organized and facilitated four targeted focus group meetings, one neighborhood open house, and one public meeting/open house. The focus group sessions were held with experts in Local Foods, Conservation, Historical Preservation, and Housing. More than eighty professionals representing more than sixty local and state organizations/interests were contacted and extended invitations for four targeted focus group meetings in the areas of historic preservation, conservation/recreation, local foods, and housing. These sessions included a presentation on the master planning process, an active mapping exercise, and a facilitated discussion for target questions (Appendix D). The invitees (Appendix E) were encouraged to submit ideas and opinions to the team if there were unable to attend a meeting in person. Many of these professionals corresponded with the team throughout the planning process and provided valuable insight.

In summary, there was strong and unanimous support voiced for the preservation and restoration of the historic buildings. Attendees in the historic preservation focus group asked to emphasize that in addition to the structures, the *site* itself needed to be recognized. They also spoke specifically about respecting the “viewshed” by which they meant the geographical area that is visible from and within the historic district, including all surrounding points that are in line-of-sight. All focus groups were receptive to new community gathering space(s), whether that was simply a grassy area for seasonal, open-air events or a more fixed element like a wood-fired pizza oven or an indoor space (renovate existing structure or build new). There was also strong and unanimous support for the current initiatives on site that are growing fruits and vegetables to benefit Johnson County’s food insecure populations and improving access to farm land.



Focus group participants offered a range of practices that could be implemented. This map attempts to synthesize all of the proposed elements discussed at the Conservation focus group.

Stakeholder Engagement and Public Input



Neighborhood Open House

The neighborhood open house was held at Weber Elementary School. Here residents shared with our team that they valued the open space and that there was already informal recreational use of the Poor Farm by residents, children, and pets. Neighbors were the most adamant of any group about the benefits of expanding/creating a multi-use trail network and were eager to see connections/trailheads throughout the site.

Public Input Meeting/Open House

The public meeting/open house saw ~30 people turnout, and offered valuable feedback. Individuals that participated in the work board exercise (green stickers by ideas they liked, red stickers by ideas they opposed) did show distinct groupings of opinions. Support was strong for signage on the property that shared history. Support was also strong for the preservation of the viewshed, nonprofit food production, trails, and conservation efforts of every type (e.g. reconstructed prairie, constructed wetlands, perennial landscaping, agroforestry, greenhouse). There was noticeable support for some kind of specialized nonprofit housing/tiny houses/housing similar to Madison's Troy Gardens. The most notable opposition was to a disc golf course, a dog park, and market rate housing.



Conservation Focus Group Session, February 14, 2017



Neighborhood Meeting, February 15, 2017



Preservation Focus Group Session, February 17, 2017

Stakeholder Engagement and Public Input



Throughout the engagement process, opinions varied the most on the subject of housing. Housing in many forms was discussed including farm-incubator housing, tiny houses, affordable housing, and market-rate housing. Several historic preservation experts were open to the idea of housing in the southwest corner of the property/along Slothower Road if the historic district view shed was respected and the style of the dwelling was complementary (e.g. period architecture, gable front and wing houses). Some individuals who supported affordable housing cited the original intent of the Poor Farm being “to help those in need.” Some suggested that land sold for affordable housing could help finance the preservation and restoration urgently needed for the historic structures.



Example of affordable housing designs. Source: The Housing Fellowship

What do you want to see at the Poor Farm?

- I think it's important to have a variety of uses, so that more community members are drawn to the site, including education, historic preservation and the recreation, such as trails and disc golf.
- Children's education/activity center
- Farm incubation
- I've always envisioned an educational component here.
- Makerspace: Explore farming, technology opportunities
- Consider Farmer's Market
- Preserve access to cemetery.
- Food production fits historically.
- Prairie
- Educating our children on land usage, greenhouse, farming, composting, camping and appreciation of our land and nature
- Apiary
- Cooking classes
- Now that I have all this food...what do I do with it?
- Free/scholarship based classes for individuals who cannot afford other classes available
- Cooking w/ Weeds (Dandelion, lamb's quarters, plantain)
- Landfill Gas
- Affordable housing is a perfect fit, along with food production
- Classroom for kids, fiber arts, pottery, cub/girl scouts, art class, dance/yoga
- What is the Focus of JCPF...
- Another urban housing and recreational development and
- a place used for food producing...
- Maybe one permanent structure and a community of low impact tiny houses with camping for events
- Though I believe the focus MUST be in FOOD PRODUCTION I am not sure if JC has an established farm that supplies organic food

What do you Not want to see at the Poor Farm?

- I would like the focus to be mainly w/ the farming aspect...Not so much on recreational activities (trails are fine, though a disc golf course might detract from the purpose of the farm)
- Permanent housing...nice to have open spaces in Iowa City proper... maybe structures for people to stay for short periods of time.
- Housing – doesn't suit the history of park value of this area
- Initiatives that are not realistic for the Poor (lower income) to participate
- Huge parts of this land covered by cement. IF housing becomes a component out here, let's ensure that it is very contained.
- As little turf grass as possible, No dog parks/golf (keep historic feel – food production fits)

Stakeholder Engagement and Public Input



Website Input

Throughout Phase One, Johnson County administrative staff included information on and fielded questions through the county's existing website. Several website comments submitted suggested uses related to agriculture/local foods with mentions of "microfarms," "community gardens," efforts that improve "access to dark leafy greens" and "stimulate local food economy." Several submitted comments encourage considerations of a disc golf course. Disc golf was also mentioned at the public meeting/open house although preliminary feedback on work boards showed more opposition to disc golf than support. All comments are located in Appendix F.

"I think this would be a great way to encourage urban agriculture, microfarms; and green space for walking, biking, community gardening. Use this to create more health - by increasing access to growing our own food locally, being more physically active."

"The Johnson County Poor Farm has a rich history that has been demonstrated through work carried out there. The story of how we related to people with mental illness and financial indigence could be told through interpretive signs and occasional, scheduled tours, led by the Johnson County Historical Society."

The screenshot shows the Johnson County Iowa website. The header includes the county name and a logo. The navigation bar has links for Home, I Want To, Departments, Boards/Commissions/Councils, Calendar, and Search. The main content area is titled "Board of Supervisors" and "County Poor Farm". It features an aerial photograph of the farm buildings. Below the photo, there is text about a public input session for the Master Planning process, scheduled for Wednesday, March 1, 2017, at 5:30-7:30 pm. The text mentions that HBK Engineering is assisting with the process. At the bottom, there is a link to share thoughts or ideas about the Poor Farm and contact information for Mickey Miller.

Johnson County Iowa

Home I Want To Departments Boards/Commissions/Councils Calendar Search

Board of Supervisors

County Poor Farm

As part of the current Phase One of the Master Planning process for the Johnson County Poor Farm and Asylum Historic District, a public input session is scheduled for Wednesday, March 1, 2017, 5:30-7:30 pm, in conference room 203BC of the Johnson County Health and Human Services Building, 855 South Dubuque Street in Iowa City. Any interested person is welcome to attend.

This first phase of the Master Planning process will guide preservation of and improvements to the property for the next several years and beyond. Discussions with the Board of Supervisors and a number of stakeholder groups has begun. HBK Engineering is assisting Johnson County with this phase of the process, which will guide preservation of and improvements to the property for the next several years and beyond.

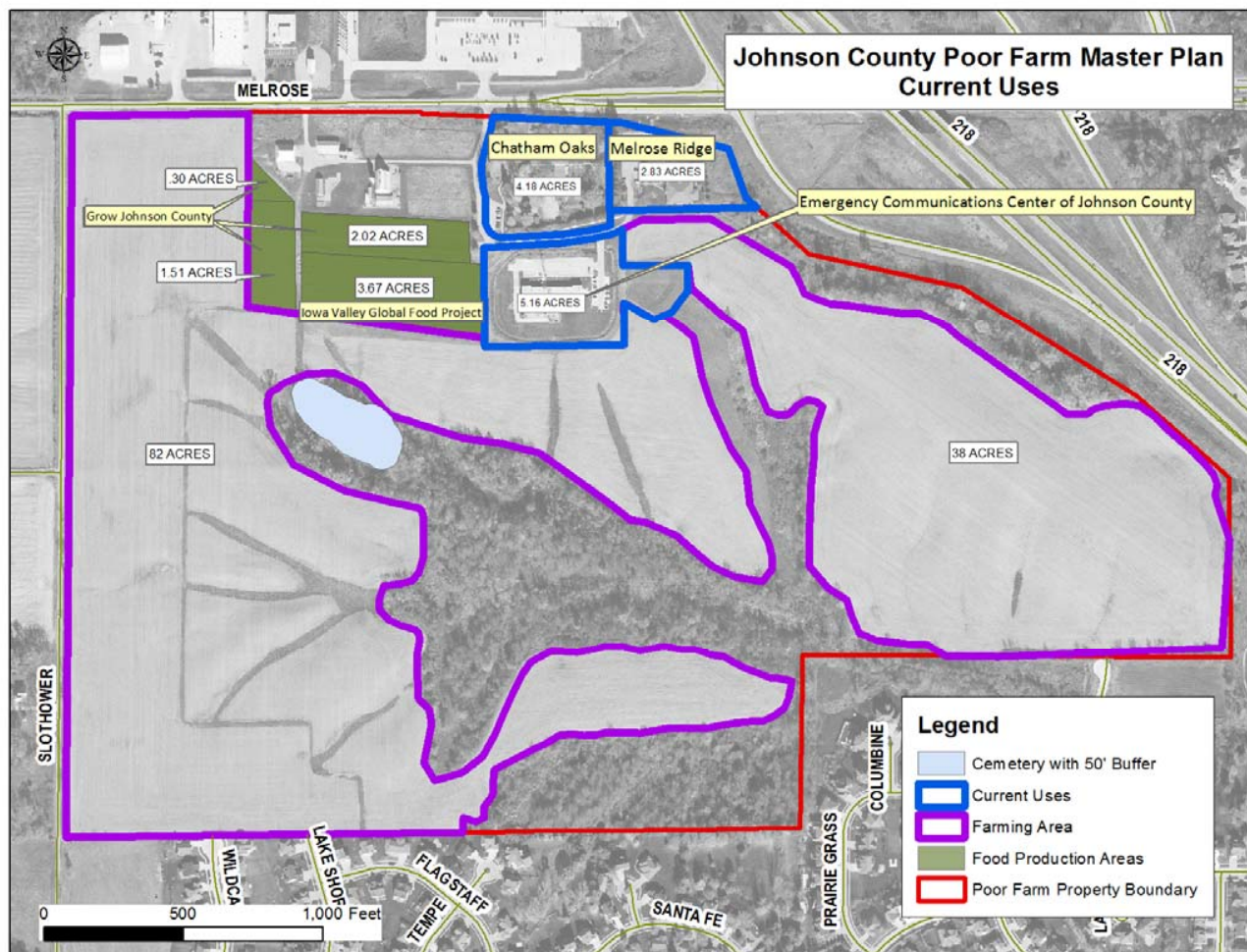
If you are unable to attend the meeting, [please share your thoughts or ideas about the Poor Farm.](#)

For additional information, please contact Johnson County Grants and Communications Specialist Mickey Miller at mmiller@co.johnson.ia.us or 319-356-6000.

Site Analysis - Current Uses



There was a shift in the late 1970s and early 1980s to the County Home system in Iowa and many of the facilities were closed, sending patients to nearby private hospitals. The impact on the Poor Farm resulted in two distinct changes: 1) The Johnson County Home was privatized and 2) While farming practices remain, the cropping systems have shifted from a multi-crop rotation for residents to sell or consume, to a private farmer using a single crop rotation of corn production for commercial profit. Melrose Ridge Apartments are located adjacent to Chatham Oaks and since 2007 have provided affordable independent living for persons with a mental illness. The Johnson County Historical Society currently provides tours of the site by appointment, walking visitors through each building and recounting stories that bring the history to life. More recently, the County has begun leasing acreage to local non-profits to grow a variety of vegetables for community benefit. One addition that falls outside of the historic context is the Joint Emergency Communications Center of Johnson County, which is the clearing house for all 9-1-1 calls and all Emergency Communications for Johnson County.



Site Analysis - Current Uses



Johnson County Historical Society Poor Farm & Asylum Tours

The Johnson County Historical Society offers free historical tours of the Johnson County Poor Farm upon request. Visitors learn about the history of the Poor Farm and tour the inside of the Asylum building.



Chatham Oaks & Melrose Ridge Apartments

In 1964 the main building of the Johnson County Home was torn down and a new facility was erected. In 1988 this facility was privatized and became Chatham Oaks, a private, non-profit agency that provides housing services to individuals with a chronic mental illness (<http://www.chathamoaks.org/>). The Melrose Ridge apartments are intended for persons with a disability and specifically designed for individuals with a mental illness (<http://www.chathamoaks.org/MelroseRidge>).

Agricultural Leases

Traditional Rowcrop

Farm Lease—Annual Lease

For the 2017 growing season, 114 acres are in rowcrop production. Johnson County works with John Yeomans of Farmers National Company to find a farm tenant. Terms for the lease are set on an annual basis.

GROW: Johnson County

The Grow: Johnson County initiative started in 2015. The first production year at the Poor Farm was 2016. This year, 2017, will be the second production year. The mission of this local initiative is to combat food insecurity and promote health through charitable food production and education. Four acres are leased for fruit and vegetable production. Website: www.growjohnsoncounty.org



Iowa Valley Global Food Project

Iowa Valley Global Food Project (IVGFP) is a coalition of eastern Iowa non-profits and community groups working together to make our local food system more inclusive by creating opportunities for immigrant community members, along with long-time residents, to obtain greater access to food, land, and educational resources. April 2017 marked the first year of a three-year contract to grow food on 3.7 acres of land. IVGFP has a [Facebook](#) page.



Site Analysis - Architectural Treatment Alternatives & Selection



John F. Shaw and Douglas Steinmetz completed the Architectural Treatment Alternatives and Selection report for Phase One of the Master Plan. This section of the plan provides a synopsis of their findings, and the full report is located in Appendix G for reference.

Professional Qualifications

John F. Shaw is a licensed architect with experience in the state of Iowa since 1986, and has won multiple awards for his architectural work on local Iowa City projects. He served first as a commissioner, and then as Chair of the Iowa City Historic Preservation Commission, and is a long time member and supporter of Friends of Historic Preservation, a locally active group of dedicated preservationists. John has considerable experience working with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

Doug Steinmetz is a preservation architect who authored a previous Technical Advisory Network report aimed at securing grant funding to repair damaged aspects of the historic buildings.

Together, Shaw and Steinmetz walked each of the historic buildings to identify which aspects of the buildings would need to be properly treated to protect their historic integrity. Their report discusses the available treatment approaches according to The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (Standards), which provide appropriate treatments for historic properties. It is important to note that the *Standards are intended to promote responsible preservation practices that protect our cultural resources, not to make definitive decisions about specific features that should be preserved and which should not*. The Standards provide more of a philosophical consistency to the work once a treatment approach is chosen.

The four treatment approaches are **Preservation**, **Rehabilitation**, **Restoration**, and **Reconstruction**. Each level of treatment has its unique set of Standards. The levels of treatment are outlined below in hierarchical order:

Preservation: Places a high premium on the retention of all historic fabric through conservation, maintenance and repair. It reflects a building's continuum over time, through successive occupancies, and the respectful changes and alterations that are made.

Rehabilitation: Emphasizes the retention and repair of historic materials, but more latitude is provided for replacement because it is assumed the property is more deteriorated prior to work. (Both Preservation and Rehabilitation standards focus attention on the preservation of those materials, features, finishes, spaces, and spatial relationships that, together, give a property its historic character.)

Restoration: Focuses on the retention of materials from the most significant time in a property's history, while permitting the removal of materials from other periods.

Reconstruction: Establishes limited opportunities to re-create a non-surviving site, landscape, building, structure, or object in all new materials.

Site Analysis - Architectural Treatment Alternatives & Selection



WEST BARN

(Monitor-Roof Stock Barn - Iowa Site Inventory Form No. 52-04416)

Considering the West Barn's importance in history, its physical condition, and its contribution to the existing Historic District, the suggested level of architectural treatment per the "Secretary of the Interior's Standards" is that of **Rehabilitation**. When the planned use of the building is defined, the level of treatment most appropriate to the West Barn should be finally determined, and all additions, modifications, alterations, repairs, or other changes to the building and its immediate grounds should be planned and executed in a manner consistent with that set of Standards specific to the relevant level of treatment.



West Barn: (L-R) South-facing side wall, North-facing side wall, Interior

DAIRY BARN

(Gambrel-Roof Dairy Barn - Iowa Site Inventory Form No. 52-04417)

If the use of the Dairy Barn is to change, final determination of the most appropriate level of architectural treatment should be made at that time. Recognizing the building's importance in history, its physical condition, and its contribution to the Poor Farm Historic District, at this time, the suggested level of architectural treatment per the "Secretary of the Interior's Standards" is **Rehabilitation**. Any expansion, alteration, repair or change to the building and its immediate grounds must adhere to the Standards.



Dairy Barn: (L-R) West-facing silo, Hay mow on second floor, Interior milking stanchions

Site Analysis - Architectural Treatment Alternatives & Selection



THE ASYLUM

(Asylum Building - Iowa Site Inventory Form No. 52-00135)

In 1978, the Asylum Building at the Johnson County Poor Farm was listed individually in the National Register of Historic Places.

A proposed use has not been determined for the Asylum Building. If its current use should change, final determination of the most appropriate level of architectural treatment should be made at that time. At this time the suggested level of architectural treatment is **Rehabilitation** — reflecting efforts to reverse alterations made to accommodate intervening uses. It is difficult to imagine an addition or expansion to the building that would comply with the Secretary's Standards. It is equally difficult to imagine a method of climate control that would not detrimentally alter the historic character and fabric of this building. When the level of architectural treatment is determined the Standards specific to that level of treatment should inform and guide any repair or change to the Asylum and its immediate grounds.



Asylum: (L-R) Interior hallway, North face of exterior, Interior confinement areas

Site Analysis - Architectural Treatment Alternatives & Selection



In conclusion, the report recommends using the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for **Rehabilitation** as a basis for future work on each of these buildings. These standards include:

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Site Analysis - Level of Use Estimates



The Poor Farm's historic buildings comprise roughly 6.5 acres of the entire 160 acres, however, they are integral to the character and potential future uses of the site. Shaw and Steinmetz's Architectural and Alternatives Report provides a baseline of parameters for rehabilitating each building; however, there have been several proposals for ways in which these buildings could be used. To understand the costs associated with altering the use of these buildings within the guidelines outlined by the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, HBK provided a Level-of-Use report that is predicated upon a structural analysis they conducted. This report is written in two sections and is available in Appendix H.

The first section is the structural investigation, which included site visits and references to previous architectural reports. There are specific notes for each building with pictures to document various challenges and recommended structural repairs.

The second section takes the building assessments one step further and uses a "Level-of-Use" framework to justify a range of cost estimates for three potential levels of use:

- **Mothballing**
Structural Stability as defined by U.S. Department of Interior standards
- **Open Air Public Use**
e.g. Farmer's Market, Auction, Flea Market, etc.
- **Climate Controlled Public Use**
Performance Venue, Multi-Purpose Public Facility

It is the intention of the report to provide a general understanding of the potential costs associated with upgrades or alterations to the use of each building.

These cost estimates are cumulative in nature as considerations for structural stabilization must be completed prior to construction for other uses. They also do not include additional costs for facility supplies for events, such as chairs and tables.





ASYLUM

INFRASTRUCTURE DETAILS

Foundation Wall Settings: Assumed to be Limestone (size and depth unknown)

Interior Walls: dimensional lumber (2" x 4" assumed)

Subflooring: Wood planking

Roof Framing: Dimensional rafters (assumed 2x4)

Roof Sheathing: Plywood (Recently replaced.)

Roof Material: Asphalt shingles (Recently replaced)



Synopsis of Structural Findings

- Interior flooring structure appears well maintained and in good condition.
- Water damage marks on ceiling throughout. Not wet at time of inspection, water damaged appears to have occurred before current roof was installed.
- Hole in ceiling from apparent fire (Date unknown), hasn't been repaired likely for historical reasons.
- Inadequate drainage away from the foundation.
- Siding in serviceable condition but in need of repairs in some areas.
- Windows appear to be recently replaced and are in good condition.

It should be noted that the Asylum is in the National Register of Historic Places and will not change in use.

LEVEL-OF-USE COST ESTIMATES

	Item	Unit	Quantity	\$/Unit	Subtotal
Mothballing	Gutters & Downspout	LF	175	\$8-\$10	\$1,400-\$1,750
Open Air	Path of travel, lighting, power, ventilation, etc.				\$8,000 - \$12,000



DAIRY BARN

INFRASTRUCTURE DETAILS

Column Bearing: Limestone footings assumed (unknown size).

Wall Bearing: Various, trench footings (unknown size).

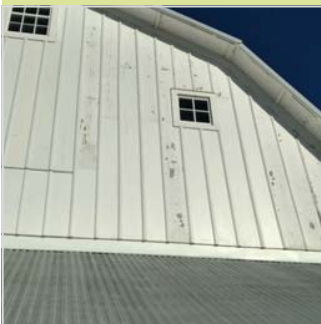
Walls: Dimensional lumber and other likely recycled from other projects at the time.

Roof Framing: approx. 2x4 rafters with dimensional lumber spanning between and cedar shingles

Roof Material: Covered by a standing seam metal roof

Floor: Concrete along main level, wood joists for Hay Loft.

Framing: Main level is framed with wood columns and beams throughout that support second level loft.



Synopsis of Structural Findings

- Siding is in serviceable condition and in several spots has recently been repaired or replaced.
- Drainage of water away from building and foundation is not adequate.
- Shed roof/overhang is in serviceable condition and appears that repairs were recently made to the Southwest corner. Appears that certain members were replaced and others had new members sistered to them.
- Barn should be tested for lead paint and asbestos.
- Wood member near connection along the east side of the hayloft showing signs of water damage; water damage is believed to be from a leak that has been previously fixed.

DAIRY BARN COST OPINION						
		Item	Unit	Quantity	\$/Unit	Subtotal
1	Mothballing					
		Stabilization				
		Gutters & Downspout	LF	250	\$8.00 - \$10.00	\$2,000 - \$2,500
		Ventilation (Fans)	each	2	\$350	\$700
		Lightning Protection	allowance			\$2,000 - \$4,000
		Electric Service, Lighting, Outlets	allowance			\$5,000
		Subtotal				\$9,700 - \$12,200
2	Open Air Public Use					
		Applicable Code Upgrades	allowance			\$3,000 - \$6,000
		Power & Lighting Upgrades	allowance			\$3,000 - \$6,000
		Ventilation Upgrades (Fans)	each	4	\$350	\$1,400
		Floor Leveling or Replacement	Sf	2,500	\$5 - \$15	\$12,500 - \$37,500
		Water/Drain	allowance			\$5,000 - 8,000
		ADA Upgrades	allowance			\$4,000 - 7,000
		Hazardous Material Abatement	Not Included in this cost opinion			\$4,000 - 7,000
		Subtotal				\$34,400 - \$82,400
3	Climate Controlled Public Use					
		Insulating walls, insulated ceiling, Interior finishes, power, lighting, heating, ventilation, air conditioning, site improvements, structural enhancements	sf	2,500	\$175 - 300	\$437,500 - \$750,000
		Subtotal				\$435,000 - \$750,000



WEST BARN

INFRASTRUCTURE DETAILS

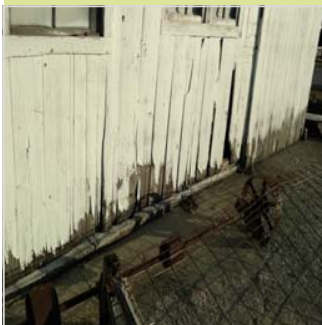
Column Bearing: Limestone footings (depth unknown)

Wall Bearing: Trench footings (unknown size & depth)

Walls: Dimensional lumber and other likely recycled from other projects at the time.

Roof Framing: Approx. 2x4 rafters with dimensional lumber spanning between.

Roofing Material: Cedar shingles have been covered by a standing seam metal roof.



Synopsis of Structural Findings

- Metal roof leaking in multiple spots allowing water infiltration into building.
- Drainage of water away from building and foundation is not adequate due to lack of gutters and downspouts.
- Footings supporting exterior walls have heaved, buckled and failed in multiple locations, has caused lateral shifting and racking of the structure.
- Footings under the main center columns are not adequate and should be replaced.
- Beam structure or possible hay loft in the center of the building has been removed compromising the structure's lateral system and structural integrity.
- Siding has failed in many areas around the building and should be replaced.
- Barn should be tested for lead paint and asbestos.

Site Analysis - Level of Use Estimates



This report identifies costs associated with potentially upgrading each building, either to provide structural integrity or a different use that could serve other practices on the site. One example would be turning the Dairy Barn into a place where a farm stand market could sell produce that was grown and sold on the farm. Another idea is turning the West Barn into a music venue as a showcase event center for the Poor Farm, attracting visitors who necessitate upgraded parking areas, heating and cooling mechanisms, running water, sprinklers, ADA access, etc. Upgrades to these buildings could serve potential expansion of the current vegetable farming leases by providing areas for processing foods into other uses, such as tomatoes into salsa for local markets.

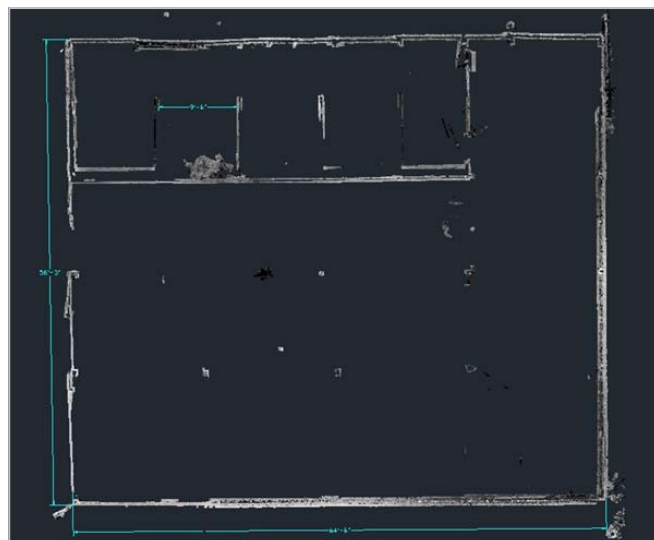
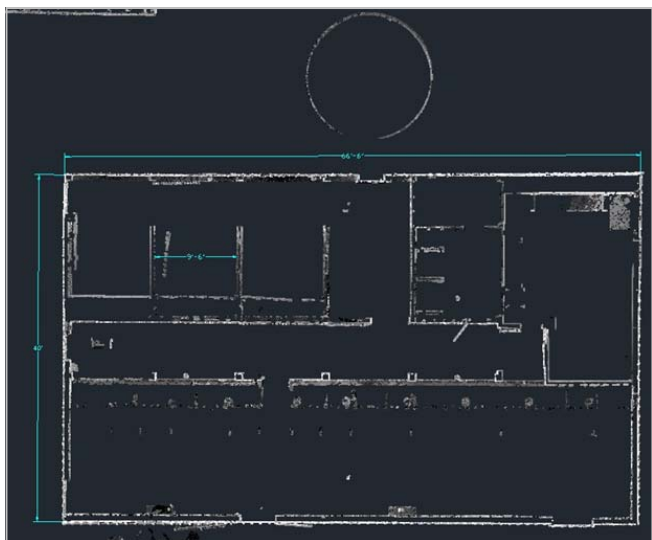
All of these ideas come with a price tag, and based on the Level-of-Use Analysis provided above, it is HBK's recommendation that all buildings receive attention for Rehabilitation purposes, and in fact each of them have had previous improvements. The West Barn and Dairy Barn could also fulfill the Open Air Venue level-of-use category. However, once discussions move into the realm of Climate Controlled Public Use, upgrades result in creating a "building within a building" and the historic nature of these buildings could be negatively impacted.

This report was brought before the Johnson County Board of Supervisors and after a lengthy discussion of the breakdown of costs and assumptions, it was determined that the Climate Controlled Public Use did not support their vision of the Poor Farm. Therefore, the Phase One Master Plan does not include any concept involving a major event center.



WEST BARN COST OPINION							
			Item	Unit	Quantity	\$/Unit	Subtotal
1			Mothballing				
			Stabilization				
			Structural Underpinning	Cubic Yard	75-100	\$1,200- \$2,000	\$90,000 - \$200,000
			Lateral Systems	Per beam	5-10	\$2,800 - \$3,175	\$14,00 - \$31,750
			Repair/Replace damaged members	allowance			\$5,000 - \$10,000
			Roofing	SC (100sf)	35-40	\$187 - \$213	\$15,000 - \$20,000
			Siding	Sf		\$5.70 - \$8.45	\$2,500 - \$4,000
			Lightning Protection	Allowance		\$5,000 - \$7,000	\$5,000 - \$7,000
			Gutters and Downspouts	Lf	350	\$22.85 - \$28.57	\$5,000 - \$10,000
			Mothballing				
			Locks on doors	Each	4	\$70	\$280
			Ventilation (Fans)	Each	2	\$350	\$700
			Electric Service, Lighting, Outlets	Allowance		\$5,000	\$5,000
			Subtotal				\$145,480 - \$288,730
2			Open Air Public Use				
			Applicable Code Upgrades	allowance			\$3,000 - \$6,000
			Power & Lighting Upgrades	allowance			\$3,000 - \$6,000
			Ventilation Upgrades (Fans)	each	4	\$350	\$1,400
			Floor Leveling or Replacement	Sf	3635	\$5 - \$15	\$18,000 - \$54,000
			Water/Drain	allowance			\$5,000 - 8,000
			ADA Upgrades	allowance			\$4,000 - 7,000
			Hazardous Material Abatement	Not Included in this cost opinion			\$4,000 - 7,000
			Subtotal				\$34,400 - \$82,400
3			Climate Controlled Public Use				
			Insulating walls, insulated ceiling, Interior finishes, power, lighting, heating, ventilation, air conditioning, site improvements, structural enhancements	sf	3635	\$175 - 300	\$636,125 - \$1,090,500
			Subtotal				\$635,000 - \$1,090,500

Site Analysis - FARO Focus 3D S 120 (3-D Laser Scan)



On a crisp fall day in October of 2016, an HBK survey team conducted a 3-D laser scan of the West Barn, Dairy Barn and Asylum buildings. The interior and exterior of each building was scanned using a state-of-the-art scanner that sends out laser beams that bounce off the building and measures millions of points to create a “point cloud” of information. The point cloud can then be turned into a Computer-Aided Design (CAD) model and from there a professional architect or engineer can measure objects within the building, create a foundation plan and wall cross sections/elevations. This data can also be used to create floor plans, which have been provided to the County for future reference. See Appendix I.



The accuracy of the laser scanner provides the ability to measure the width of doorways, window handles, and even nail heads. This technology also ensures that all aspects of the historic buildings will be preserved for the foreseeable future, as this data can be used for reference if any changes or repairs were necessary.

Site Analysis - Land Characteristics



Together with onsite survey work, information about the property's soils, topography, hydrology, and Corn Suitability Rating can help inform agricultural practices, conservation efforts, and ecological restoration. Please see Appendix J for maps.

Soils

Colo Ely Complex Soil Type (11B)

This soil type is typically found along small streams or upland drainage ways. On the Poor Farm, this soil correlates with the intermittent upland drainage of a nearby tributary (Soil and Water Conservation District is confirming stream order level). To evaluate potential wetlands on the property (hydric soils, hydrophytic vegetation, hydrology), a Wetland Delineation would need to be conducted by a National Resources Conservation Service Soil Scientist or qualified private consultant. If tiling is being considered on the property, a Wetland Delineation would identify species present and determine any necessary mitigation that is needed.

Fayette Silt Loam Soil Type (163C2, 163E2, 163E3, 163F, 163F2)

These soils are common in Johnson County, Iowa, and are often found in woodland or drainage areas. The Fayette Silt Loam soils are diverse in their characteristics (percentage of clay versus sand content) which is why soil boring or a soil pit would be needed to accurately record the composition. On the Poor Farm, this group varies in slope with 163C2 being a 5-9% slope and 163F and 163F2 being significantly steeper slope and highly erodible at 18-25%.

Givin Soil Type (75)

This soil type is found on flat, loess-covered, poorly drained land.

Ladoga Soil Type (76B)

This soil type is a silt loam with little slope (2-5% slope) and is moderately well-drained.

Clinton Soil Type (80B, 80C2, 80D2, 80D3)

This soil is a silty clay loam that is moderately well-drained and is found on slide slopes and ridgetops.

Topography + Hydrology

The Poor Farm site is comprised of a series of sloped areas. These ridges are accompanied by lower valleys that contribute to the presence of hydric soils. Wet areas are present in several areas of the site, particularly at the confluence of ridges. An intermittent stream is located to the south of the cemetery site. Map in appendix is provided by Johnson County SWCD.

Corn Suitability Rating (CSR)

Corn suitability rating is a proxy measurement for understanding high-quality soils and flat topography that support producing corn. The Poor Farm has fairly low CSR throughout the central part of the site, with higher CSR occurring on the western and northern areas.

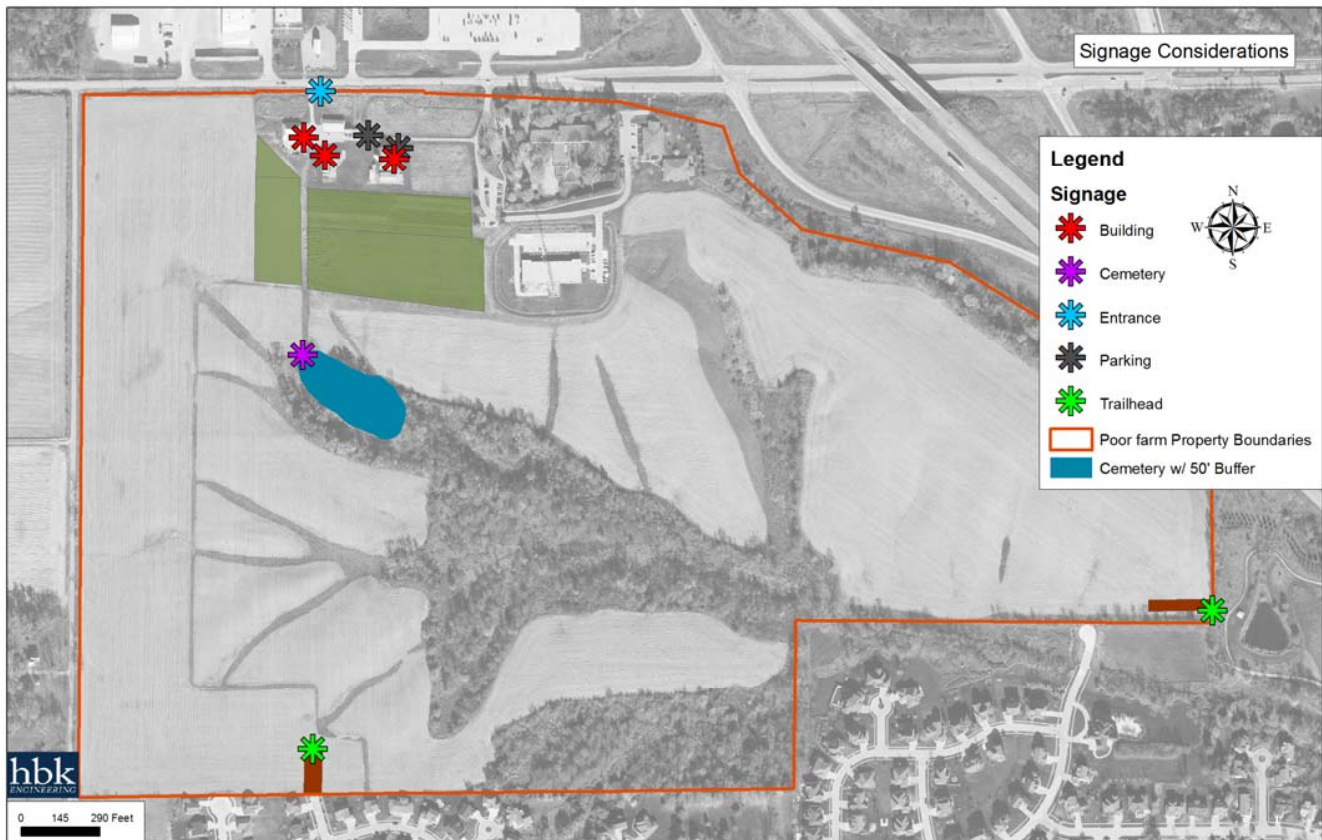
Site Analysis - Signage Considerations



The inclusion of signage on the Poor Farm site has been documented in previous planning efforts dating back to 2001 and is an element that was continually discussed at each focus group session and in conversations with the public. While interpretive signage considerations were not completed in Phase One, the location of signage was determined via researching previous plans and through feedback from focus groups and public input event.

A priority sign for the site is an entrance sign that communicates the presence of the Poor Farm. Additional suggestions for signage included: placards for the contributing buildings, the cemetery, parking, and trails. Discussions also included an interactive element that could be interpretive in nature, such as exhibits located on the site that displayed items from the Poor Farm or from a similar period.

While signage for trails and parking could be more modern, it was strongly recommended that the signage for the cemetery should be developed in conjunction with staff assistance from the Office of the State Archaeologist's Burial Program. There was discussion surrounding the need to protect the site by using discrete signage, and at the same time, it was noted that individuals seeking to find their relatives or loved ones might need more apparent signage to direct them to the site. This particular aspect will need to be carefully vetted by professionals who have experience in designing this type of signage to protect the sanctity of the



cemetery.







Branding



There are several ways to approach marketing and branding (color palette, logo, fonts, etc.) for the Johnson County Poor Farm. In Phase Two of the planning process, with a concept(s) and elements selected, there can be a strategic approach to the marketing and branding effort. The suite of design elements can reflect the goals for the site and be tailored to the target audience, be complementary to the signage selected for the site, and be compatible with internal and external stakeholder vision.

The Johnson County Poor Farm as a whole could be branded or branding could be done for a signature project or a series of small projects. Considerations could be made to market efforts already encouraged on the site, such as the production of charitable food.

The color palette, font, and logo in this Phase One report are included as an example of what considerations could be made.

	R48, G48, B25
	R77, G97, B44
	R96, G121, B53
	R211, G220, B120
	R164, G35, B35
	R216, G216, B192

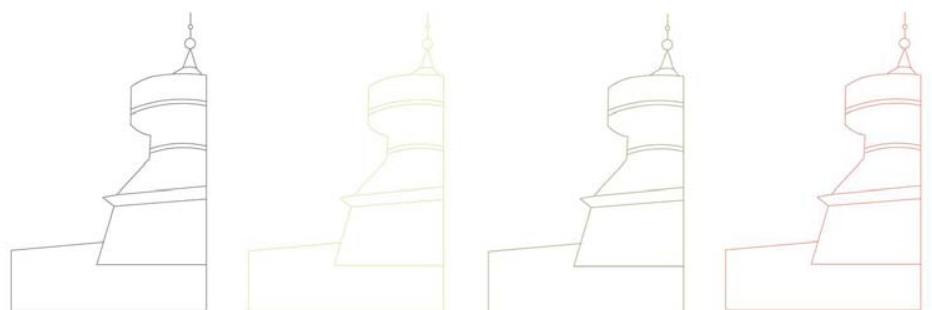
Johnson County Poor Farm

Johnson County Poor Farm

Johnson County Poor Farm

Johnson County Poor Farm

JOHNSON COUNTY POOR FARM



Proposed Future Concepts



The final synthesis of the site analysis, focus groups, and historical documentation has culminated in the creation of three proposed concepts for the Johnson County Board of Supervisors to consider. The intention of these concepts is to provide a base concept that outlines park and conservation-type amenities and the subsequent concepts increase in intensity of use.

We do want to make note that there were several initial conversation with Supervisors about the desire to include an analysis of green technologies that could be showcased on the site and potentially used for farm practices. These technologies include solar panels, wind turbines, and piping methane from the landfill to use as a heat source for greenhouses. Our team did not perform an analysis on incorporating these items on the Poor Farm site, however, they should be further investigated with dedicated studies to determine their feasibility.



Proposed Future Concepts - County Park



Road map for Concept One -- *County Park*

This concept is focused on historic preservation, conservation, recreation, and charitable food production. It includes improvements to the historical building complex to better suit public use. It includes permanent perennial vegetation and acres that are in farm production with the current leasing structure. After initial investments to achieve the concept elements, the intent is that this model is a passive, lower-maintenance, public, open space. It is assumed that the buildings in the historic complex be updated to reflect Rehabilitation standards for open-air public use.

This concept includes:

Short-Term Projects (1-5 years)

- Leased farm land (two large parcels with field entrances on Slothower Road and Melrose Avenue)
- Leased land for fruit and vegetable production (approx. 10 acres) located adjacent to the farm buildings delineated onsite with attractive, low profile fencing
- Install drainage practices to improve crop production areas
- Identify and mark public parking areas
- Community garden plots east of the Dairy Barn
- After stabilization, the West Barn would be used as an open-air pavilion
- Landscaped park setting adjacent to Melrose Avenue within the historical building complex
- A new public picnic area at the location of the former bull barn
- Small exhibit in the Dairy Barn that educates the public on Poor Farm history
- 4 cast metal signs (Dairy Barn, West Barn, Asylum, Cemetery)
- Entrance sign and parking sign installed
- Rehabilitate the two corn cribs to allow for crop storage by farm tenants
- Collaborative efforts for education that include on-site farm demonstrations, guided tours, and agricultural interpretation

Long-Term Projects (5-20 years)

- New pavement surrounding the Dairy Barn to allow for an outdoor farmers market or outdoor events
- Multi-Use Trail network with trailhead connections at both the southwest corner (at Lake Shore Drive), southeast corner (Hunter's Run Park/Wild Prairie Drive), and off Melrose Avenue at the historical building complex where public restrooms are available
- Reconstructed prairie (approx. 60 acres) with seed mix, which includes forb-dense strips along trail segments
- Timber stand improvement and management of natural areas informed by species inventory and a wetland delineation
- Constructed wetland or pond located in the center of the property to capture water runoff and improve water quality

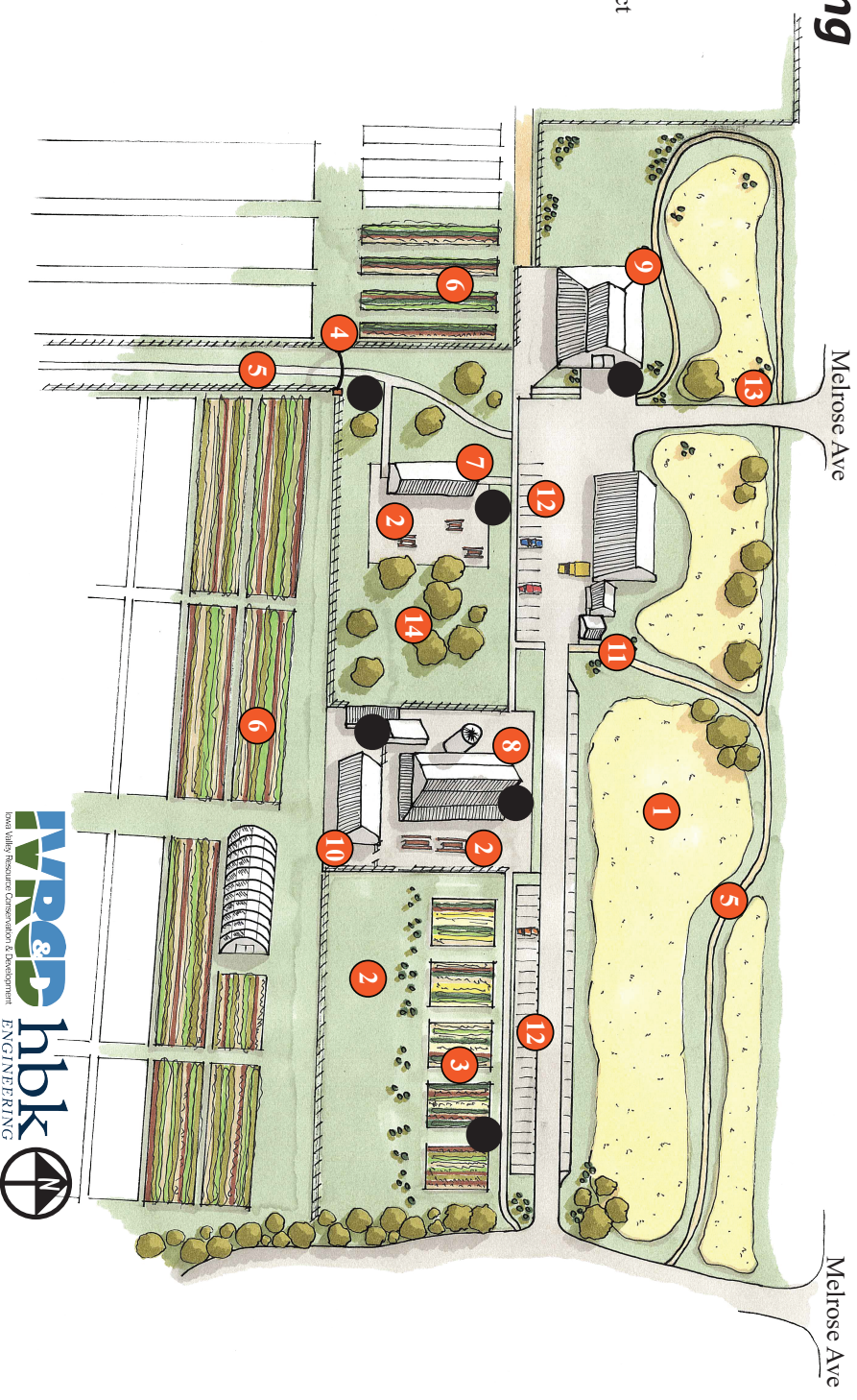
Phasing & Prioritized Recommendations:

Many of the short-term projects can be implemented within the first and second year. Long-term projects listed, like reconstructed prairie and a multi-use trail network, are high-cost elements that can be implemented in phases as funding is secured and resources for management are available.

Johnson County Poor Farm - Proposed Future Concept

Concept Historical Building Complex

- 1 Reconstructed Prairie
- 2 Public Picnic Area
- 3 Coloring the Landscape Project
- 4 Trailhead
- 5 Multi-Use Trail
- 6 Charitable Food Production
- 7 Historical Asylum
- 8 Historical Dairy Barn
- 9 Historical West Barn
- 10 Newly Constructed Pole Barn
- 11 Public Restrooms
- 12 Parking
- 13 Entrance Sign
- 14 New Tree Plantings
- Signage

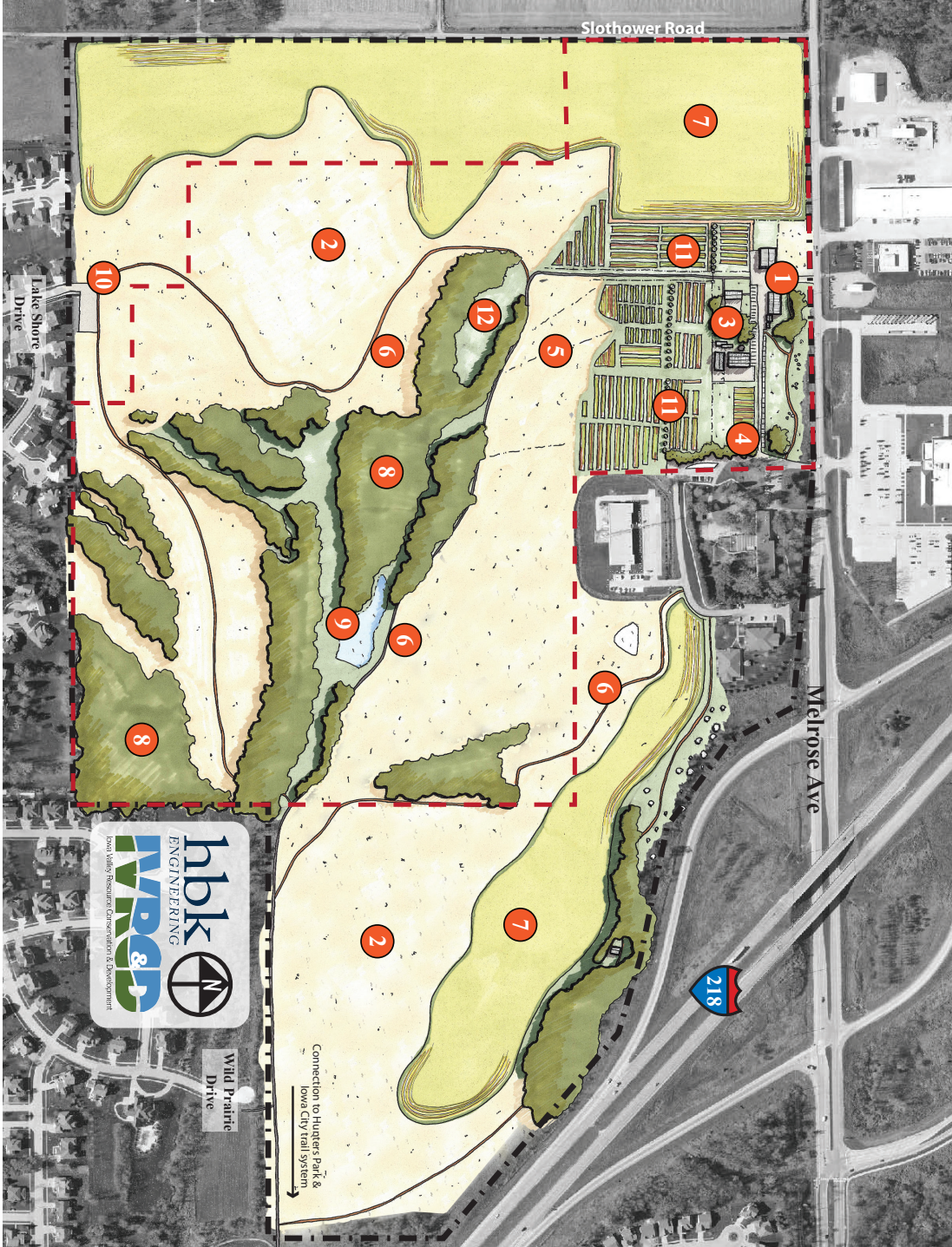


Johnson County Poor Farm - Proposed Future Concept

Concept One County Park

- 1 Historical Building Complex
- 2 Reconstructed Prairie
- 3 Public Picnic Area
- 4 Community Gardens
- 5 Reconstructed Waterways
- 6 Multi-Use Trail
- 7 Leased Cropland
- 8 Timberstand Improvement
- 9 Constructed Wetland or Pond
- 10 Multi-Use Trailhead
- 11 Charitable Food Production
- 12 Cemetery

- - Johnson County Poor Farm & Asylum Historic District
- - - Property Boundary



Proposed Future Concepts - A Collaborative Landscape



Road map for Concept Two -- *A Collaborative Landscape*

Similar to Concept One, Concept Two focuses on historic preservation, conservation, recreation, and charitable food production. This concept differs in its allocation and location of farmed parcels and the approach to permanent vegetation. It includes local food production, innovative agroforestry and keyline swales, biofuel production, and a more complex trail network. This concept's approach is moderately higher maintenance in regards to both the natural and agricultural areas, but is more collaborative and visually diverse.

This concept includes:

Short-Term Projects (1-5 years)

- All short-term projects from Concept One except for two large leased parcels are included in Concept Two
- Newly constructed pole barn that is enclosed and insulated for year-round equipment and crop storage to serve the charitable food production adjacent to the building complex.
- Enclose and insulate the machine shed (former secondary roads storage building) to serve the tenants with parcels along Slothower Road
- A series of leased parcels (5-acre to 8-acre parcels) with multiple field accesses off of Slothower Road to provide access to land for local food producers

Long-Term Projects (5-20 years)

- New pavement surrounding the Dairy Barn to allow for an outdoor farmers market or outdoor events
- Multi-Use Trail network with trailhead connections at both the southwest corner (at Lake Shore Drive), southeast corner (Hunter's Run Park/Wild Prairie Drive), and off Melrose Avenue at the historical building complex where public restrooms are available
- Timber stand improvement and management of natural areas informed by species inventory and a wetland delineation
- Constructed wetland or pond located in the center of the property to capture water runoff and improve water quality
- Keyline swales (combination of agroforestry and reconstructed prairie) improving infiltration and water storage on site. Tree selection in collaboration with partner organizations
- Lease with the University of Iowa on the east upland parcel for biofuel production of miscanthus
- Wind break along Slothower Road

Phasing & Prioritized Recommendations:

Many of the short-term projects can be implemented within the first and second year. Long-term projects listed, like keyline swales and a multi-use trail network are high-cost elements that can be implemented in phases as funding is secured and resources for management are available.

Johnson County Poor Farm - Proposed Future Concept

Concept Two A Collaborative Landscape

- 1 Historical Building Complex
- 2 Community Garden Plots
- 3 Public Picnic Area
- 4 Leased Farmland
- 5 Newly Constructed Pole
- 6 Barn Reconstructed Prairie
- 7 Keyline Swales Timberstand
- 8 Improvement Constructed
- 9 Wetland or Pond Specialty
- 10 Crop
- 11 Multi-Use Trailhead
- 12 Multi-Use Trail
- 13 Charitable Food Production
- 14 Cemetery

- - Johnson County Poor Farm
& Asylum Historic District
- - - Property Boundary



Improved Water Infiltration with Use of Swales

Water collects in swales and small detention basins and slowly saturates subsoil layers while increasing soil formation. Swales are designed to only hold water for a brief amount of time after a rainfall.

- 1 Keyline Swales
 - 2 Water Storage Basin
 - 3 Keyline Swale with Fruit/Nut Crop
- Direction of Water Flow
- Ridge



Proposed Future Concepts - New Century Farm



Road map for Concept Three -- *New Century Farm*

This concept builds on Concept One and Concept Two. It features a “New Century Farm” managed by a contracted organization. Located along Slothower Road, the farm would have new construction (small livestock facilities, equipment storage, crop storage, greenhouses/hoop houses) and the contracted organization would be responsible for managing multiple food production parcels. This concept has permanent residential structures on the southwest corner, outside the historic district. These structures could be single-family residences, a mix of market and affordable housing, tiny houses, or on-site housing that could be leased to beginning farmers that are working/apprenticing on the New Century Farm. This concept includes a small park shelter and larger trailheads at Lake Shore Drive and Wild Prairie Drive. This concept includes historical demonstration plots reflecting the Bicentennial Farm Project’s concept “Coloring the Landscape” (See Appendix C). This concept, the most complex of the three proposed concepts, has a new farmstead, a housing development, and requires intensive land management in addition to conservation, recreation, charitable food production, historical building complex preservation and improvements. This concept has the highest level of visitor engagement.

This concept includes:

Short-Term Projects (1-5 years)

- All short-term projects from Concept Two except small series of leased parcels along Slothower Road
- Identify and contract with a partner organization to manage and operate the New Century Farm
- Coloring the Landscape project
- Identify developers for housing

Long-Term Projects (5-20 years)

- All long-term projects from Concept Two except the lease with University of Iowa for miscanthus
- Trailheads at Lake Shore Drive and Wild Prairie Drive
- Picnic shelter on trail network
- Construction of new farmstead
- Housing Development

Phasing & Prioritized Recommendations:

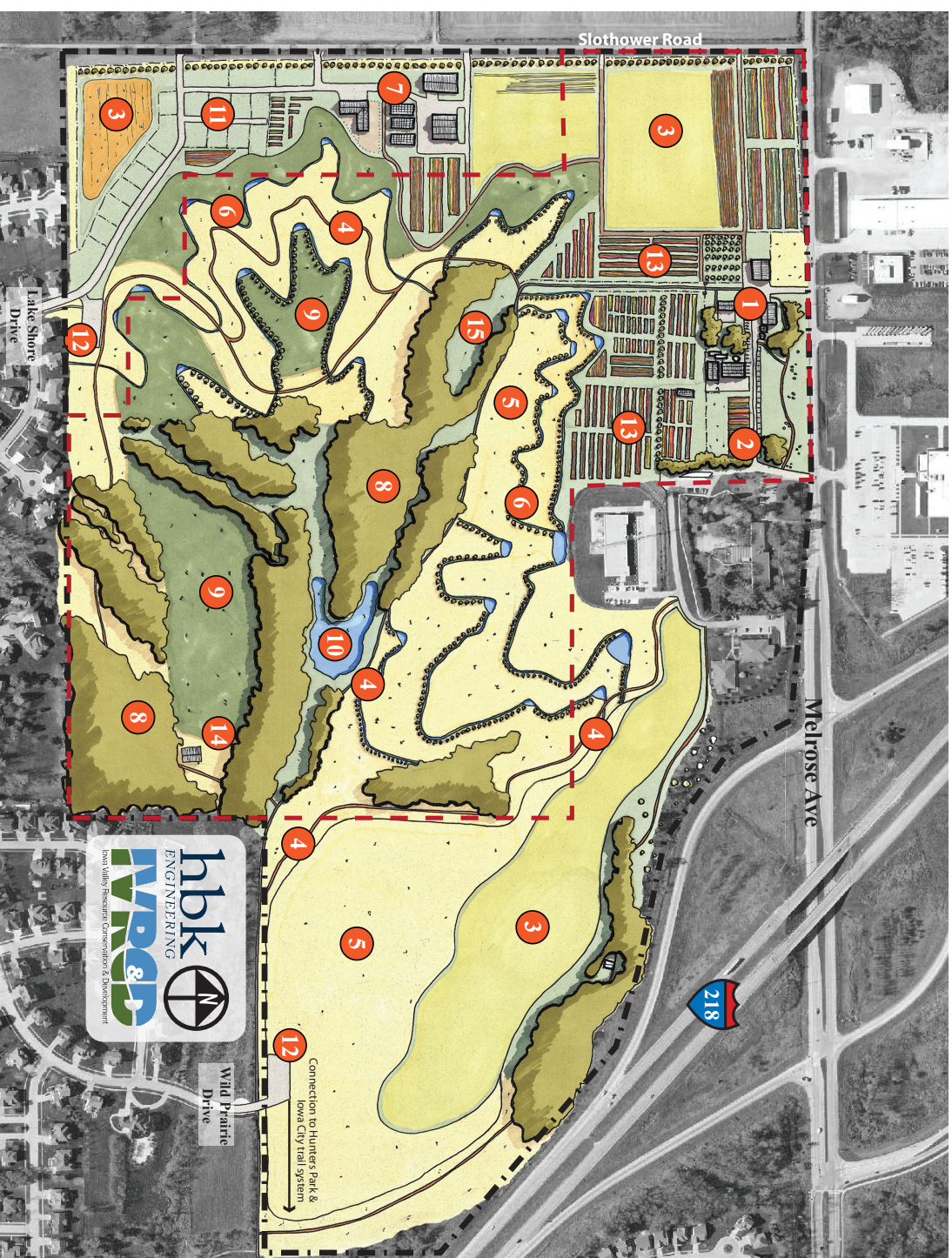
The first phase of this concept should focus on establishing the historical building complex elements. The following phase should begin the process of reaching out to potential farm management organizations and discussions with local developers that would fit well with this concept. These aspects will take a considerable amount of time, communication, legal advice, and coordination with stakeholders, the Johnson County Historic Preservation Commission, and the Iowa City and Johnson County planning departments; and thus it is recommended that this phase span both short-term and long-term goals to be successful.

Johnson County Poor Farm - Proposed Future Concept

Concept Three New Century Farm

- 1 Historical Building Complex
- 2 Coloring the Landscape Project
- 3 Cropland (Managed by New Century Farm)
- 4 Multi-Use Trail
- 5 Reconstructed Prairie
- 6 Keyline Swales
- 7 New Century Farm
- 8 Timberland Improvement
- 9 Rotational Grazing
- 10 Constructed Wetland or Pond
- 11 Housing Development
- 12 Multi-Use Trailhead
- 13 Charitable Food Production
- 14 Park Shelter
- 15 Cemetery

- - Johnson County Poor Farm & Asylum Historic District
- - - Property Boundary

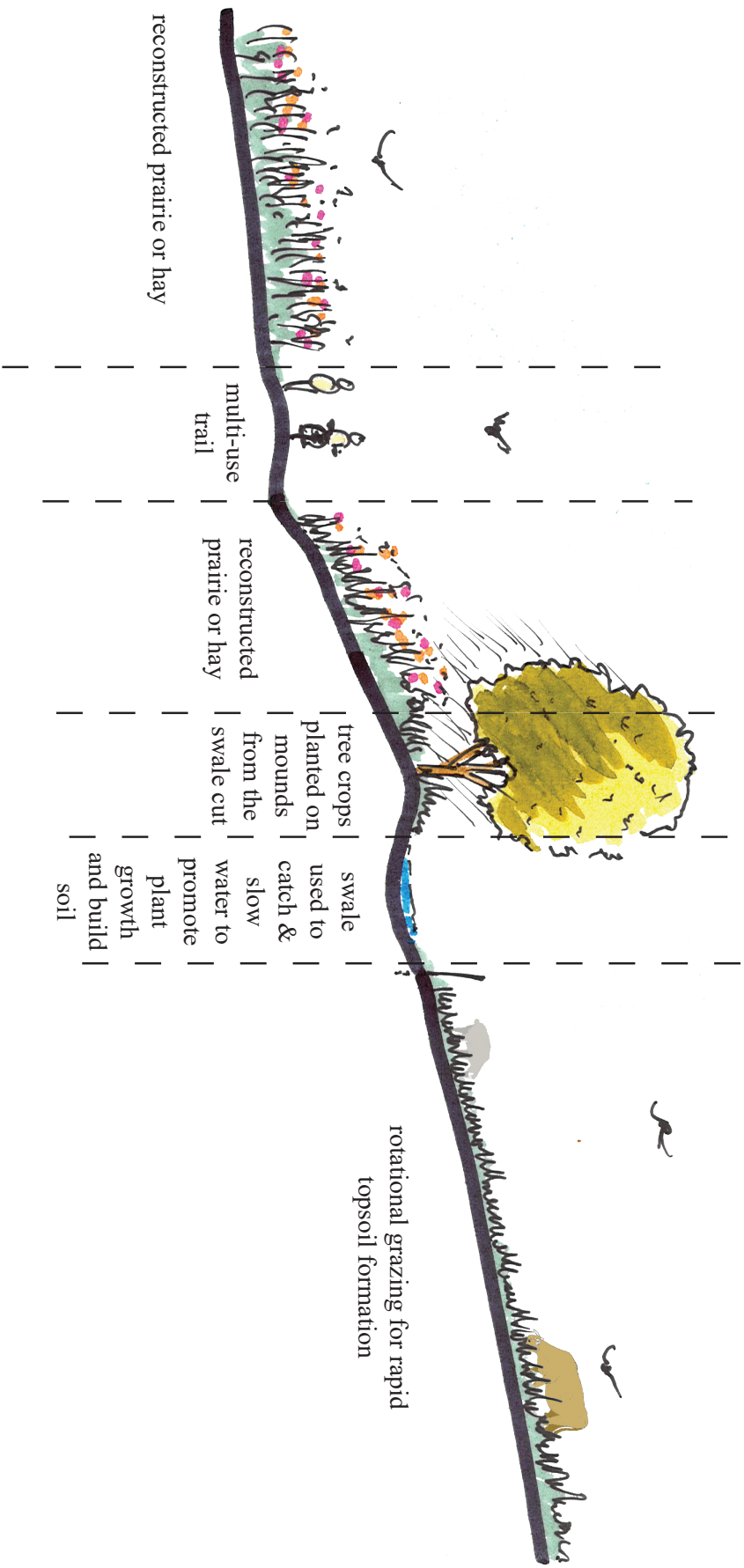


Rotational Grazing

Rotational grazing is integrated between swales, tree crops and trails. Livestock and poultry are moved to subsequent paddocks (1,2,3,4 & 5) every 12 - 24 hours, using temporary fencing. Rotational grazing results in rapid topsoil formation from continual root dieback and regrowth below surface while animal manure is spread above surface.



Typical Section of Multi-use Trail, Reconstructed Prairie, Keyline Swales, and Rotational Grazing



Phase Two: Recommendations for future action and planning activities



Based on the elements provided here in Phase One of the Poor Farm Master Plan, our team has the following recommendations for Phase Two:

- Once the Board of Supervisors has chosen a concept or a compilation of conceptual elements, further analysis will include: a joint work session with professional experts and the Johnson County Board of Supervisors, meetings with Iowa City staff, and more a detailed analysis of resultant short-term and long-term projects.
- The completed design of a brand for the Poor Farm property
- A species inventory of the forested area to inform any potential conservation/recreation/restoration practices.
- Research and design of interpretive signage for the site.
- Final site design that includes a suite of color drawings.
- Final plan document that is complementary and conclusive to Phase One.

In Phase Two of the master planning process it is recommended that expertise be garnered from representatives from the Johnson County Historical Society, the State Historical Society, and the State Historic Preservation Office, to discuss potential impact to the Historic District designation.

As members of the Bicentennial Poor Farm Project noted,

“Sometimes historical perspective on where we have been lets us see more clearly our progress towards where we would like to be, and when people get involved with the past, they begin to see themselves as connected to others.”

Our team believes in this concept of engaging our communities in the history that surrounds us, and the time for the Johnson County Poor Farm to make this ideal a reality is upon us. It is our hope that this Phase One of the Master Plan assists the Johnson County Board of Supervisors in making informed decisions moving forward.

