

Land Use

Current Land Use

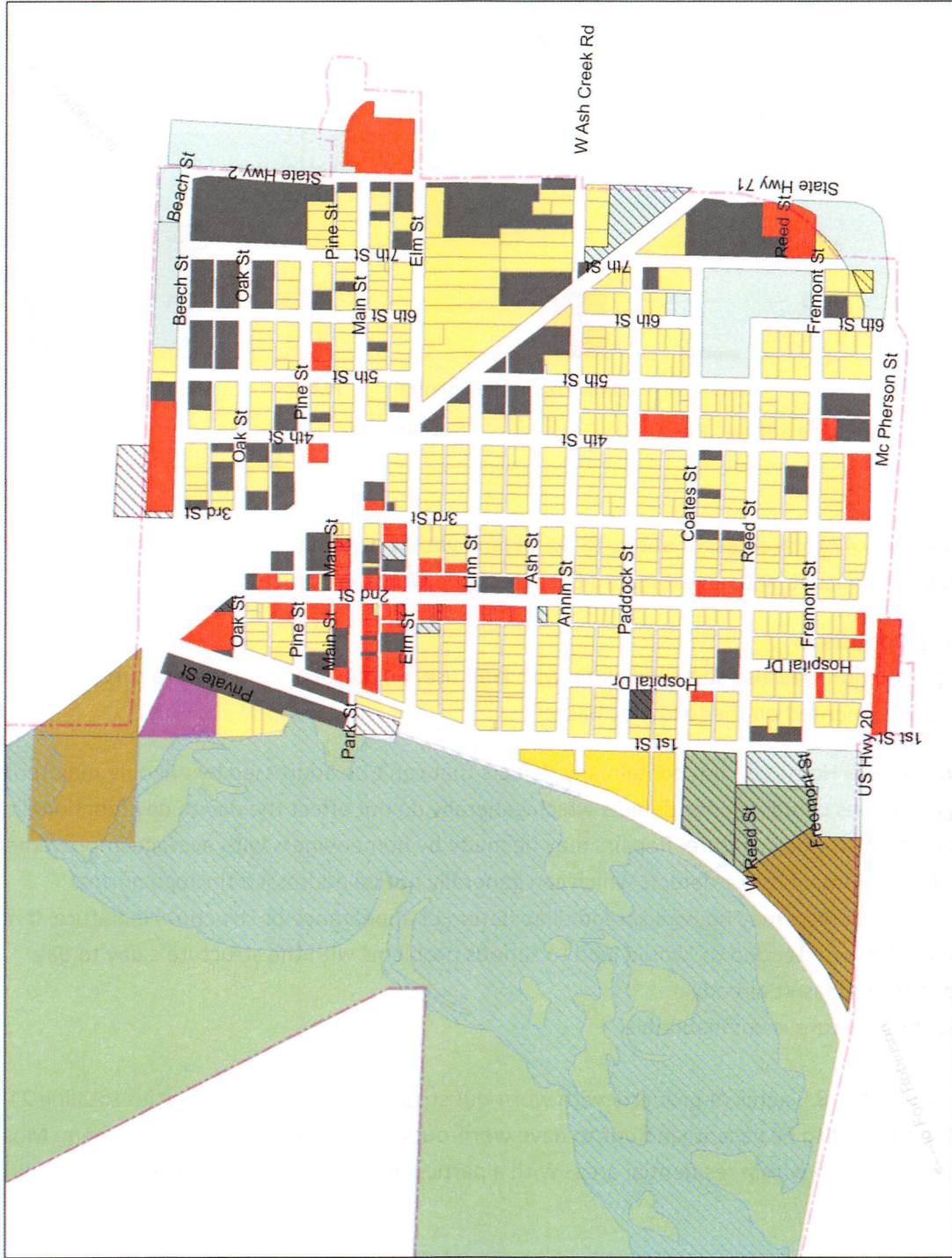
Crawford’s land use survey reveals the immense recreational land resources the community has within its jurisdiction. Taking out recreational uses, the community generally has a fairly typical land use composition for its size, with single family residential making up roughly half of the land use in town, commercial comprising roughly 9%. Crawford does have an unusually small amount of industrial land when not factoring in the railroad. Several of Crawford’s major employers historically have been the railroad, uranium mine, or Fort Robinson, which are all located outside of city limits or do not have an industrial site in town serviced by city utilities and infrastructure.

Table 5: Crawford existing land use within City Limits, 2017

Crawford Existing Land Use Composition			
Use	Acres	Percent of Total	Percent of Total without Recreation
Agricultural	24.1	3.9%	9.3%
Commercial	23.6	3.8%	9.2%
Industrial	3.0	0.5%	3.8%
Multi-Family Residential	4.9	0.8%	1.9%
Public	27.6	4.4%	8.0%
Recreational	365.7	58.6%	x
Single-Fam Residential	127.1	20.4%	49.3%
Vacant	47.5	7.6%	18.4%
Total	623.6		

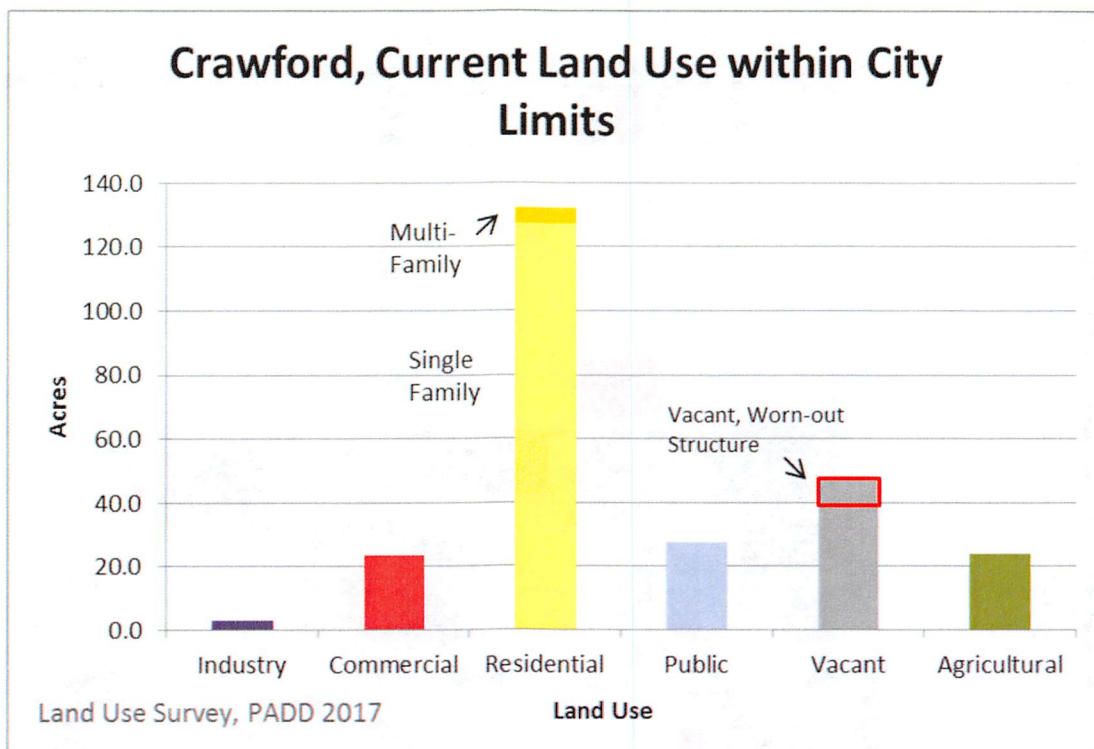


Crawford, NE Current Land Use Map



PADD Land Use Survey 2016 0 0.125 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 Miles

Figure 11: Current Land Use within City Limits



Approximately 47 total acres, or about 18.4% of land within city limits in Crawford is estimated to be vacant. Of this vacant land, an estimated 8.5 acres have worn-out structures.

Building Condition

Building condition was also surveyed along with land use. Building conditions were surveyed in the study area and documented on the following basis:

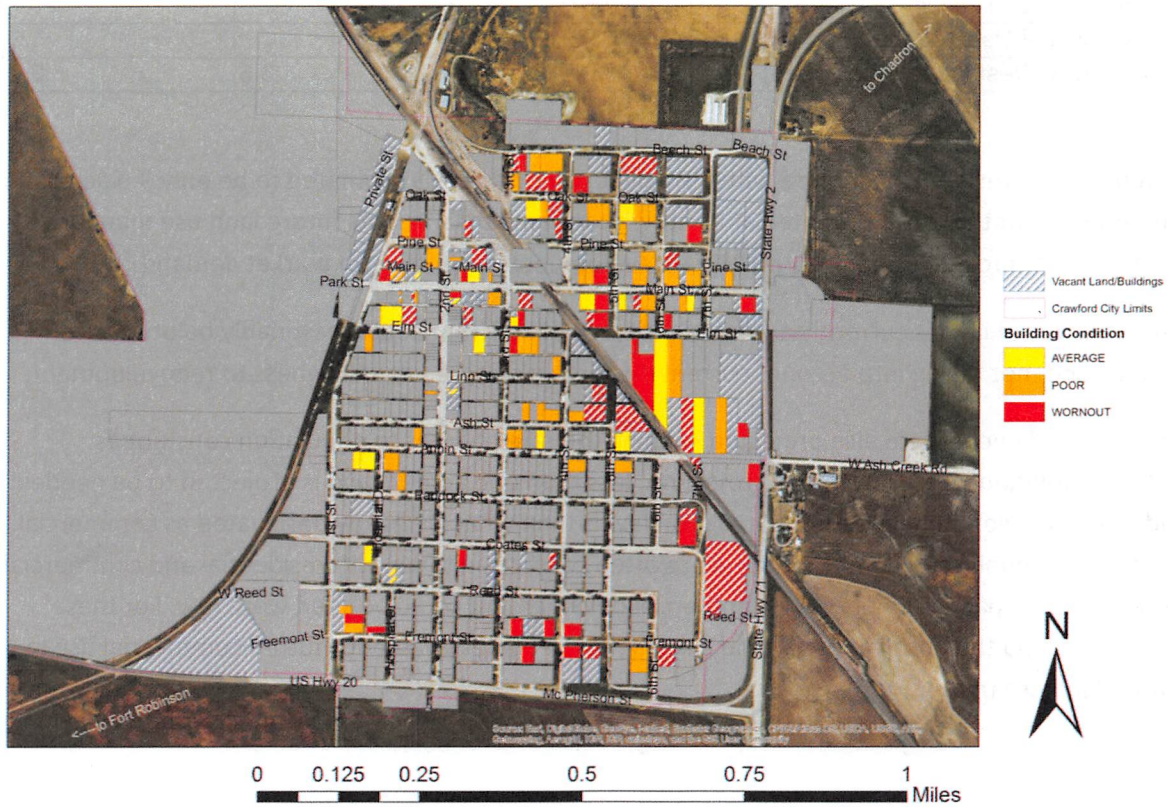
- Good or better**– Homes do not contain any defects that can’t be addressed by ongoing maintenance.
- Average**- Homes contain minor defects which generally do not affect the day to day functionality of the home or are aesthetic in nature. Repairs may be made by homeowners with average improvement skill
- Poor**– Homes contain major defects which can generally not be addressed through normal maintenance. Defects may be widespread dilapidation of appearance or structural in nature. If major defects are left unattended to, would lead to serious problems with the structure’s day to day functionality if it hasn’t already.
- Worn-out**– Structure is uninhabitable.

In addition to the 8.5 acres of property with worn-out structures, 80 other properties totaling 21 acres are estimated not to be vacant land but to have worn-out or poor rated structures on them. Most of these properties lie within residential areas with a particularly high concentration of poor condition

structures and vacant land along the railroad tracks and in the part of Crawford north and east of the railroad tracks.

Figure 12: Substandard buildings and vacant properties

City of Crawford Substandard Buildings and Vacant Properties



It should be noted that several properties which are vacant or have worn-out structures or both do not likely have much development potential either because of their proximity to the railroad tracks, lack of street frontage, or lack of accessibility to utilities. Park land or land adjacent to the state park was not regarded as vacant.

Projected Land Needs

Future land use needs can be projected based on projected future population. For this plan, designated land to be set aside for future land use needs are based on the high population scenario of 0.25% annual growth or a 2030 projected population of 1,024. Future needs are based on the assumption that the current level of service (acres per 100 persons) is desired to be maintained.

Projected Residential Land Use

Population proportion method	2010	2030	Residential Land Need (acres)	Additional Designated Land (2x Need)
Projected population	997	1,024		
Residential Use/100 res	13.3	13.3		
Projected Residential Use (acres)	132.4	136.0	3.6	7.2

Projected needed residential land use with a small population gain is estimated to be only 3.6 acres. It is recommended that the City designated at least twice that much land in its future land use map for residential use to provide options for potential development depending on market demand.

Roughly 13 acres of land is currently available within city limits that could reasonably be utilized for residential land, not taking into account current ownership’s degree of willingness to redevelopment.

Commercial land needs were also projected keeping the rate of acres to population constant as projected population increases. In this projection, less than one acre of land is projected to be needed for additional development at future population levels than what is already designated as commercial. It was indicated in public comment that there are often conflicts in town with residential and commercial type uses and that parcels where new commercial development could be sited were few. For these reasons, more land than projections would suggest has been designated for future commercial use in the future land use map.

Utilities and Infrastructure

It is critical that when assessing future land use needs and possible patterns, utilities are also assessed for feasibility of particular growth scenarios. Crawford's topography presents many challenges for development outside of the area already developed. High hilltops, undulating land, private ownership, and city limits surrounded nearly entirely by a state highway, railroad, or state park makes land available for development relatively scarce. While there is much vacant land available in city limits, the topographic challenges and uncompleted infrastructure makes its development difficult, if not sometimes unfeasible.

Water & Wastewater Facilities

Crawford's current wastewater capacity is 640,000 gallons/day with a current estimated daily wastewater flow of 166,000. Its capacity is well above its peak wet-weather flow of 216,000 gallons/day.

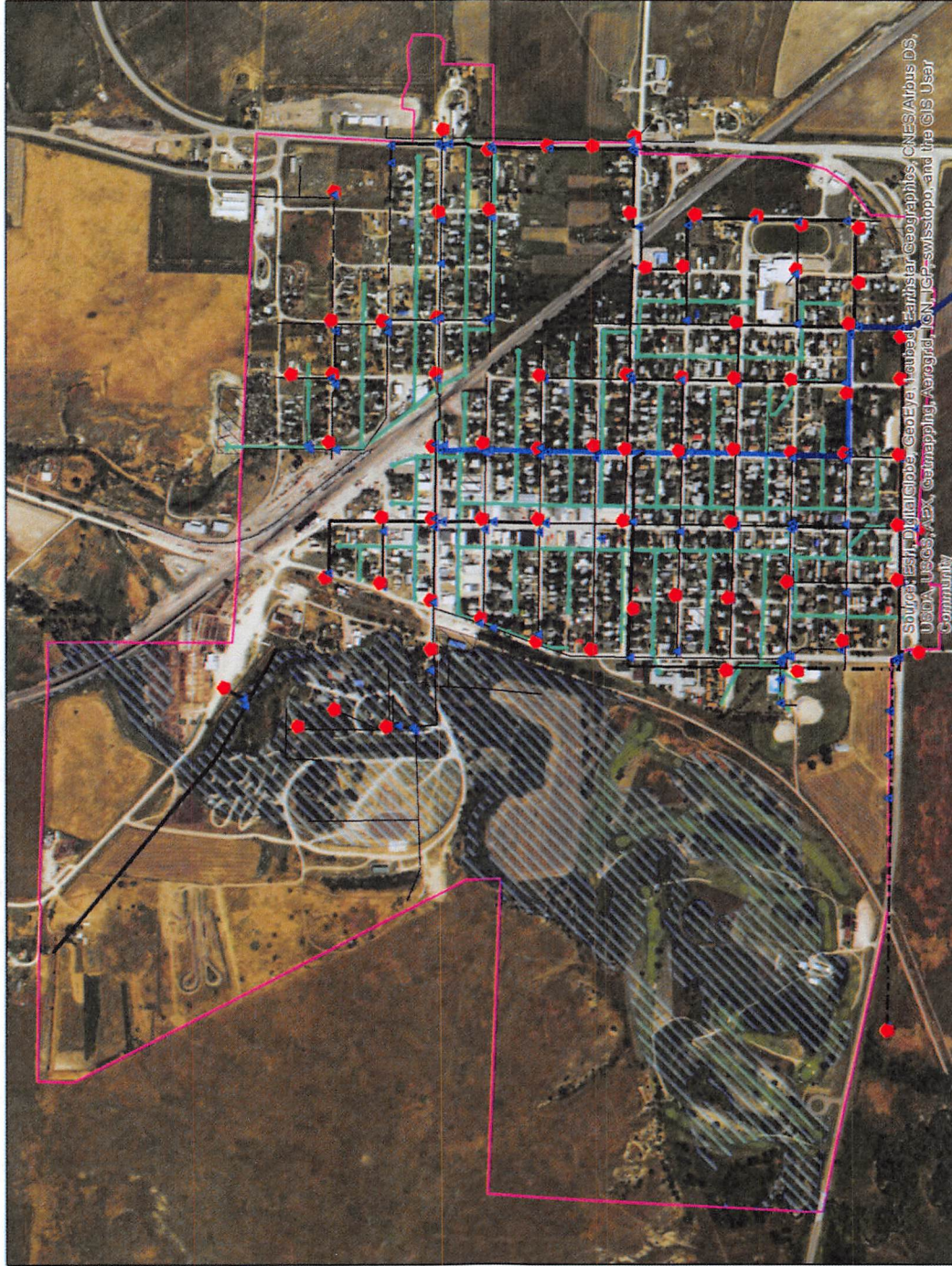
Crawford, NE Wastewater System Capacity	
Current wastewater facility capacity (gallons/day)	640,000
Peak estimated wastewater facility flow	216,000
Estimated current daily wastewater flow (gallons/day)	166,000
Remaining capacity (capacity- peak flow) (gallons/day)	424,000

Source: Baker and Associates, Study 2012

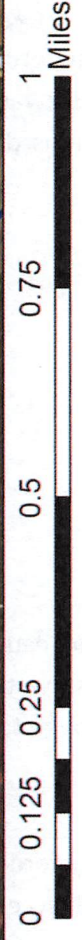
At an estimated per person maximum of 154 gallons/day, this remaining capacity equates to being able to serve the equivalent of roughly 3,600 additional average residents. This capacity should be more than enough to meet Crawford's long-term needs.

Crawford's primary opportunities for infill are highlighted in the image below which notes vacant lots with access to both sewer and water.

City of Crawford Water and Sewer



- Valves and Hydrants**
- Fire Hydrant
 - ▲ Pre-1981
 - ▲ After 1981
- Water Mains**
- 10-inch Water Main
 - 12-inch Water Main
 - 4-inch Main (Cast Iron)
 - - - 4-inch Main (PVC)
 - 6-inch Main (Cast Iron)
 - - - 6-inch Main (PVC)
 - 8-inch Main (Cast Iron)
 - - - 8-inch Main (PVC)
 - Water Main (3" & Smaller)
 - Sewer Mains
- ▨ Flood Zone
- ▭ Crawford City Limits
- ▨ City Owned Land

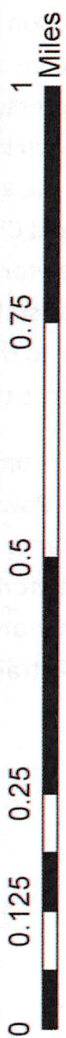


Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar, Earthstar, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, Aero, GeoMapping, AeroGRID, IGN, ICF, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community

Infill Lots (vacant, accessed by utilities)



- Infill Lots
- Fire Hydrant
- Pre-1981
- After 1981
- Water Mains**
- 10-inch Water Main
- 12-inch Water Main
- 4-inch Main (Cast Iron)
- 4-inch Main (PVC)
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- Flood Zone
- Crawford City Limits

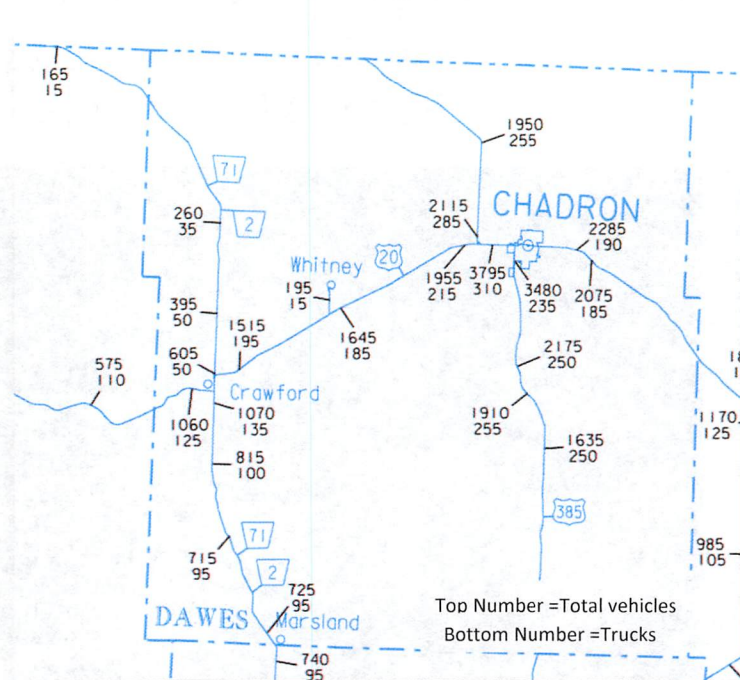


Source: Aerial photography, Google Earth, Esri, DeLorme, GeoEye, IGN, Aerotech, Earthstar, CNES, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, Sina, Swire, etc. © 2010 Esri. All rights reserved. Crawford, Missouri, is a registered trademark of Esri. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.

Transportation

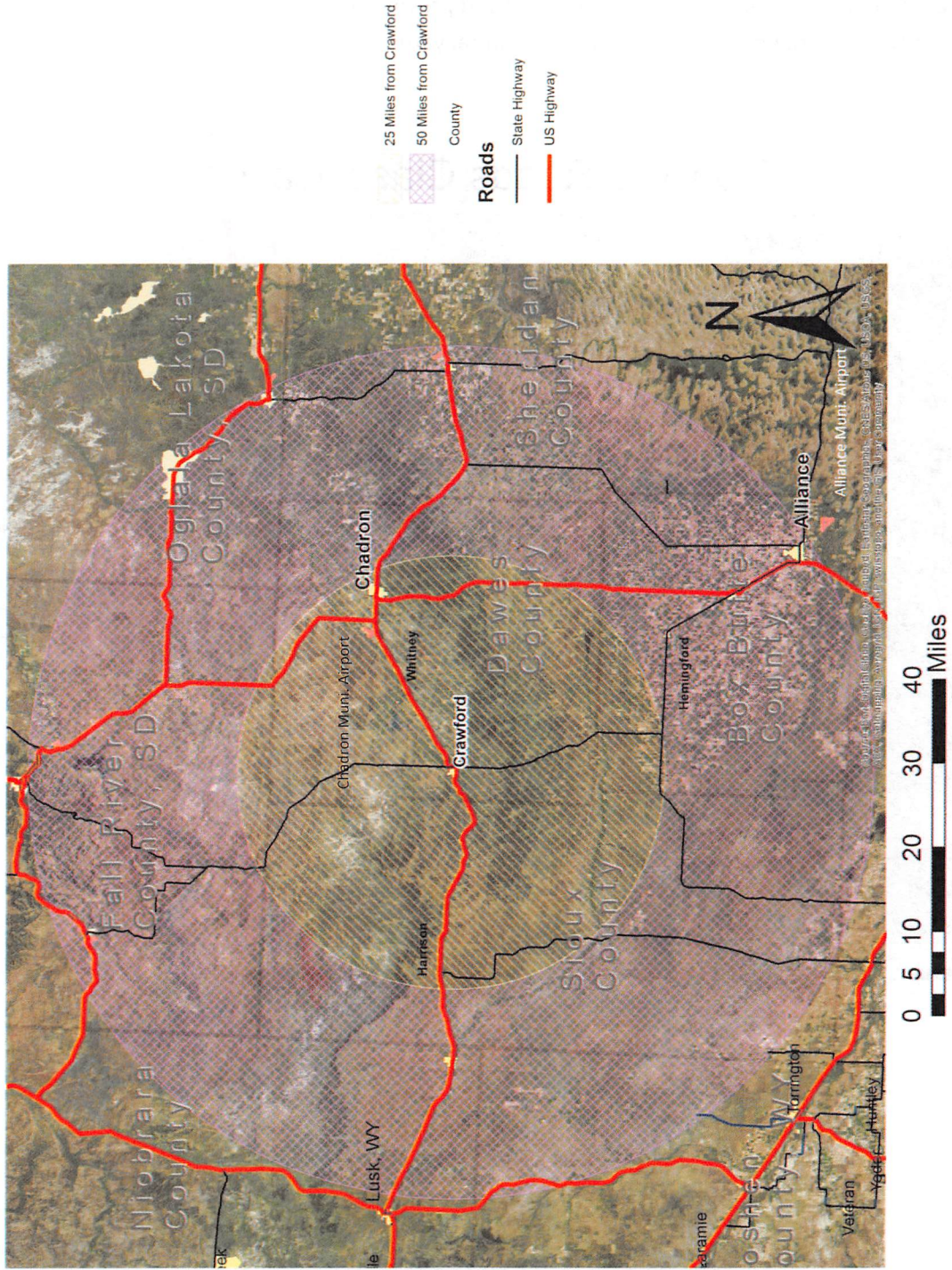
Crawford sits at the intersections of US Highway 20 and Nebraska state highways 71 and 2. The map of average daily vehicle counts shows up to 1515 total vehicles and 195 trucks out of Crawford on highway 20 east of Crawford. Chadron is just over 20 miles to the northeast and is home to a municipal airport with public service to Denver, CO. Chadron also lies along a portion of US Highway 385, known as the Heartland Expressway, to provide Super-2 (two lanes + passing lanes) or 4-lane access to markets in Rapid City when completed. Crawford is 100 miles from Interstate (I)-25 access at Orin, WY to the west, 120 miles from Rapid City and I-90 to the north, and 75 miles from Scottsbluff which has access to 4-lane highway connecting to I-80.

Figure 13: Average daily vehicles, Crawford Area Highways



An estimated 54 trains per day travel through Crawford, most on the BNSF line which brings coal from the Powder River Basin near Wright, WY, through town towards Alliance. Trains traveling towards Alliance must negotiate Crawford Hill, a scenic stretch of track rising from 3,678 feet elevation in Crawford to 4,499 feet at Belmont with an average 1.1% grade. Manned helper engines based in Crawford are used to help heavy loads up the Pine Ridge escarpment. The Belmont Tunnel, Nebraska's only train tunnel, was abandoned in the 1980s in a major capacity improvement project.

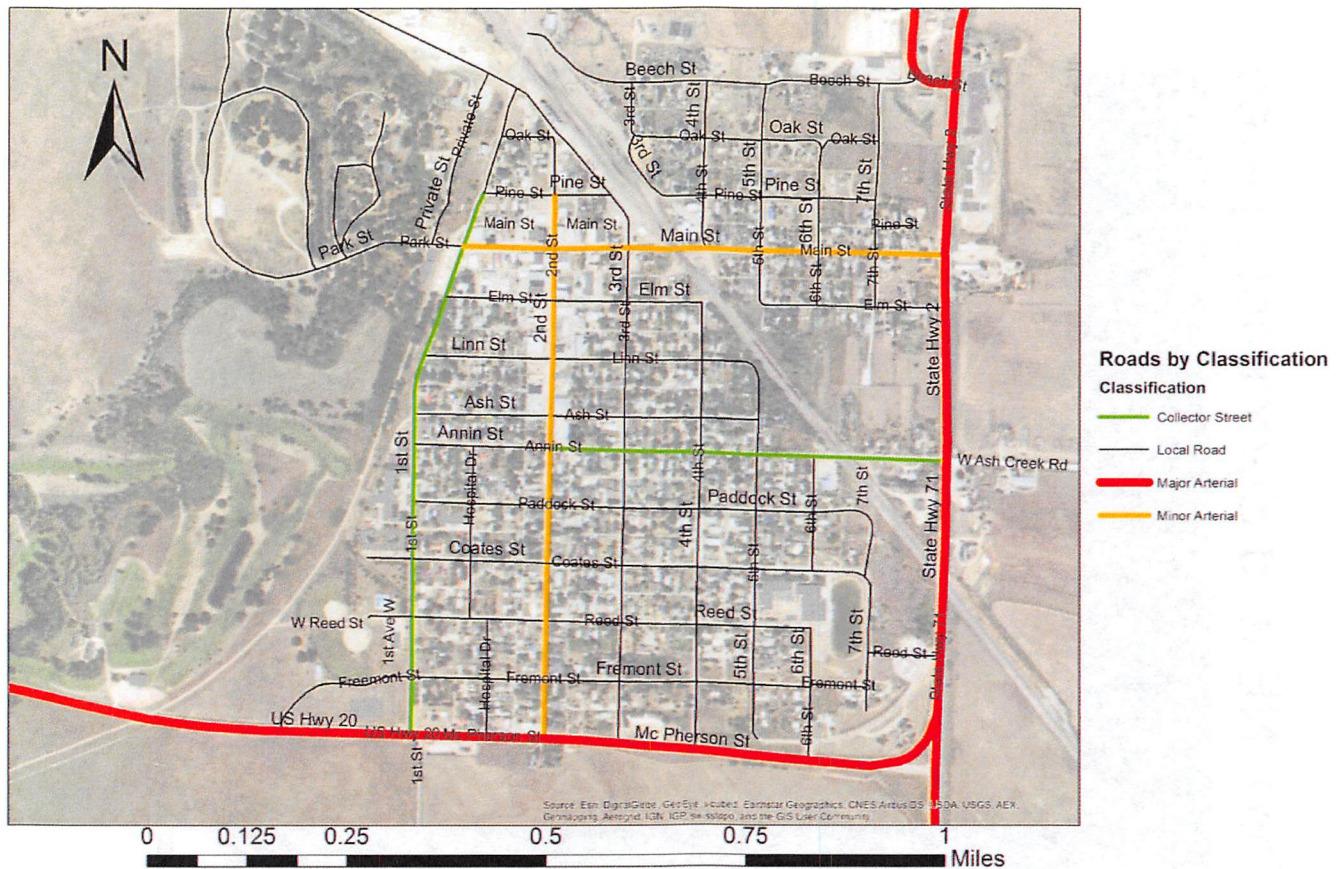
Crawford, NE and Surrounding Area



Classification

Crawford’s roads are generally laid out in a traditional grid with Second Street and Main Street serving as the two major thoroughfares through the community from the highways. Second Street serves as the community’s major street for commerce in the downtown district, rather than Main Street. 1st Street on the west side of town serves as a collector road and provides through traffic to the highway from the community park, Crawford Livestock Market, and railyard.

Crawford Roads Classification



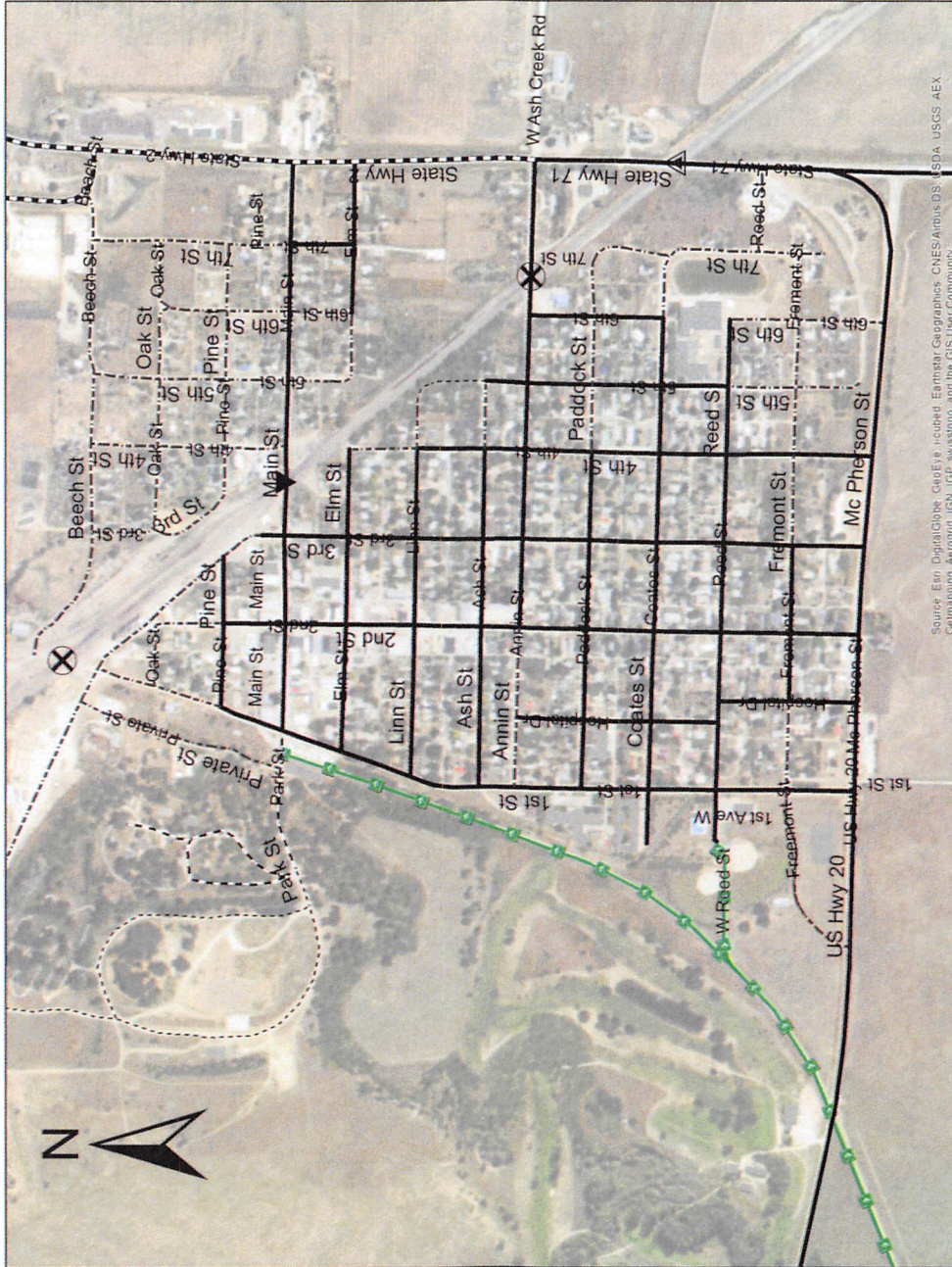
Road Surfacing

Crawford's local roads are a mix of concrete and gravel with a majority of roads in northeast Crawford and the southeast corner closest to the highway being gravel. Gravel roads in areas with higher traffic volumes and more activities are the most problematic and should be prioritized for paving if the City decides to pave additional streets.

Rail Crossings

Crawford has four rail crossings. Of these four crossings, two of them are 'at grade' crossings, on 1st Street and Annin Street. An underpass carries Main Street traffic from downtown to the highway and Highways 2/71 continue over the tracks on the east side of town. One of the priorities from the grassroots 'Kickstart Crawford' planning group has been the quieting of train horns and increase in safety at crossings. Crawford currently sees an estimated 54 trains per day, or just over two trains every hour. The crossing at First Street does not have crossing arms and is considered a one-lane crossing. A 1993 study, which provides the most recent numbers on file with the Federal Railroad Administration, recorded only 30 vehicles per day at this First Street crossing. The Annin Street crossing by contrast had an estimated 400 vehicles per day and has a crossing guard arm in each direction. Quieting train horns often requires the closing of one crossing and several relatively costly safety improvements at other at-grade crossings. Recommendations for improvements and crossing closings should follow a thorough and objective usage and engineering study on different alternatives.

Crawford Roads Surface Type



Railroad Crossing

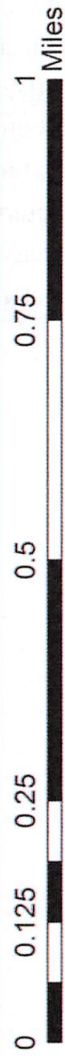
- ⊗ At grade
- ▲ Vehicle Overpass
- ▼ Vehicle Underpass

Crawford Roads

Surface Type

- - - - - Asphalt
- Concrete
- · - · - Gravel/Crushed Rock
- · - - - State Hwy - Asphalt
- State Hwy - Concrete
- · - · - Unimproved or primitive surface
- Walk/Bike Path

Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, iGP, Swirebird, and the GIS User Community



Sidewalks and Pedestrian Infrastructure

Crawford has a fairly well connected sidewalk network in the core of the community. The grid from Second Street to Fourth Street and Coates Street to Main Street generally has all sidewalks installed though the condition of these sidewalks is sometimes poor or broken up. Sidewalks in these parts of the community are generally set back from the road except in the Central Business District where the sidewalk is right next to the road on the property line. These patterns should be maintained within these areas when sidewalks are repaired or newly constructed.

While traffic is low enough that the absence of sidewalks does not create pedestrian/vehicle conflicts all the time, the community should try to connect its sidewalk network within the existing grid south and west of the railroad, prioritizing routes which connect to the school, park, clinic, or other important destinations used often by children or elderly people.

Notable gaps in the sidewalk network include the following and are shown on the map below:

- First Street
- East-West Streets west of Second Street
- Reed Street
- Northeast Crawford

Crawford Sidewalks, Park and School Walking Distance



Major Transportation Issues

Unpaved Roads

The streets to the south and east of the school are not paved and have been noted as desired to be paved by students and residents in the town during the planning process. Reed Street and the street encircling the football field were noted as the primary entrance to the school from out of town. These roads also contribute to dust which could affect outdoor activities at the school. 6th and 7th Street are also unpaved and provide access to the school from the highway. Without much development potential on other properties fronting these streets, these would be good candidates for grant funding as their redevelopment could not likely be tied into some other kind of project.

Northeast Crawford is home to several vacant lots often seen as holding potential for housing or other kinds of redevelopment. Though the redevelopment potential exists, drainage problems, partially completed blocks of utilities, and ambiguous right-of-ways pose challenges to revitalization. Gravel streets here on steep grades are prone to erosion issues and a deterrent to new development. Paving of roads in northeast Crawford is such a massive undertaking that doing so would almost necessarily need to be tied to a redevelopment project or have some kind of public assistance via grants or other financing mechanisms like Tax Increment Financing (TIF). It is recommended that paving of these roads be done through multiple avenues of financing to potentially include special paving district, tax increment financing, public works grants, and private investment by the developer.

Commercial Truck Accommodations

At the intersection of Highways 71, 20, and 2, Crawford sees substantial truck traffic, estimated at 125 to 195 trucks per day on the highways surrounding the city by a Nebraska Dept. of Transportation 2014 study. While this traffic poses opportunity for business, residents noted the dislike for large trucks coming through Main Street or Second Street downtown. Providing designated routes for large commercial vehicles to access parts of the community off the highway, and accommodating trucks at highway businesses can take advantage of traffic related opportunities while minimizing conflicts with non-commercial traffic. First Street provides a natural option for a formalized truck route into and out of Crawford with wide streets and direct access from Highway 20 to the Crawford Livestock Market and other lots appropriate for heavy commercial development.

Surface Improvements to Streets

One of the top needs identified by community members was surfacing improvements to streets and sidewalks in neighborhoods and downtown. It was noted by several citizens associate with groups such as the schools, downtown businesses, rodeo, and tourism that the roads which were most often utilized by visitors and which may leave a first impression on people from out of town should be prioritized for maintenance. These roads included Main Street, 6th Street by Highway 20, 2nd Street and the downtown streets.

Sidewalk Improvements

In a small, dense community like Crawford, a quality and connected sidewalk network contributes to the community's quality of life not just through availability to recreational walkers or joggers, but through

accessibility to the community's children and people with limited mobility. Adequate sidewalks also contribute to how desirable a place like downtown Crawford is for visitors to spend time. Crawford residents noted that sidewalk improvement downtown was one of the highest priorities for improvements. It was also noted that key connections for more frequent sidewalk users like limited mobility and children should be prioritized to be well maintained.

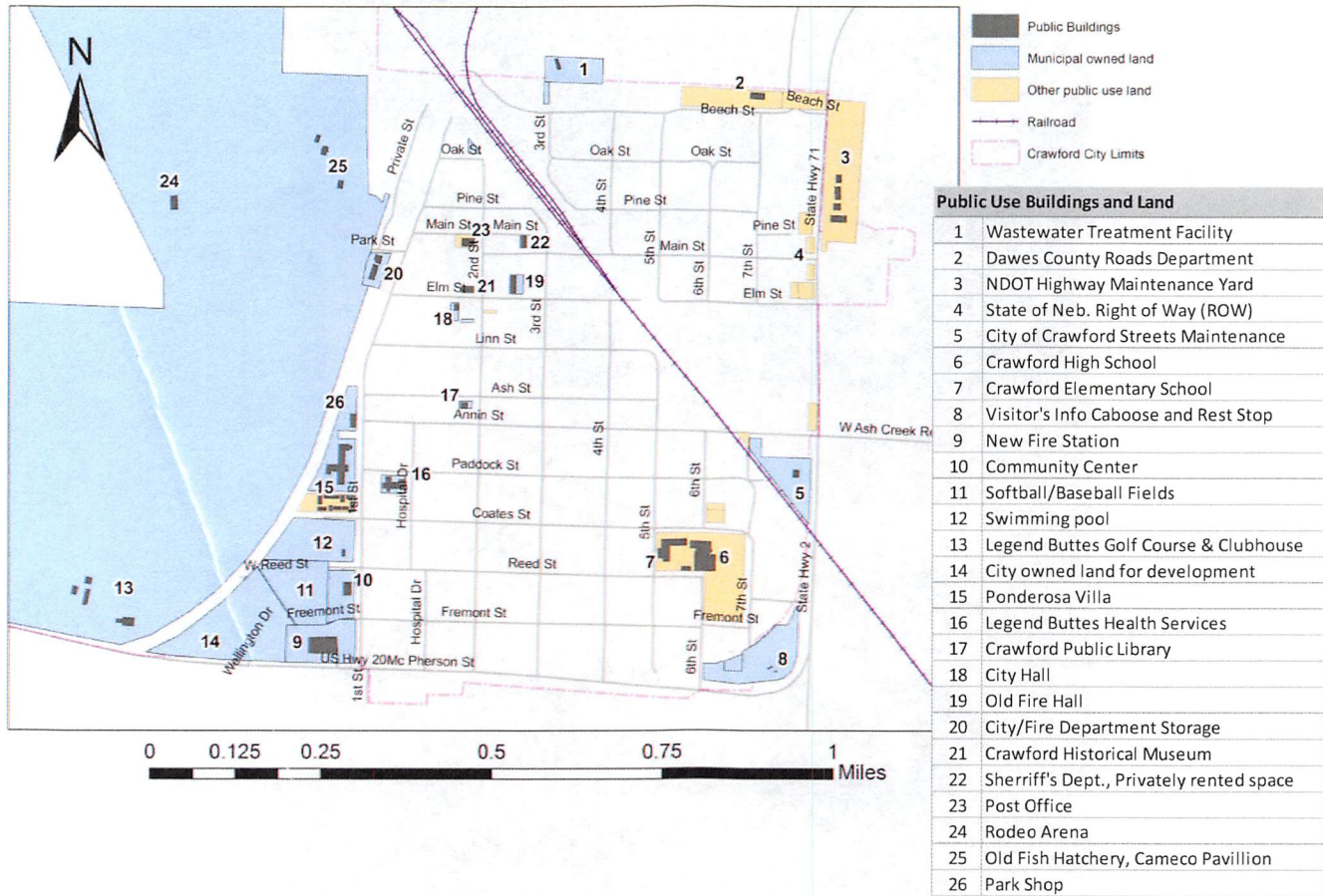


Sidewalk breakup and missing sidewalks not only look unattractive but are a barrier to people accessing the places they want to go if they have limited mobility or rely on wheelchairs or scooters to get around.

Public Facilities

Planning the current capacity and adequacy of public facilities in Crawford helps to plan for the future capital investments as well as additional land use needs that may be required. Parks and recreation account for most of the city owned land and are some of the communities most cherished assets. The park and rodeo grounds are used several times a year and bring visitors from out of town

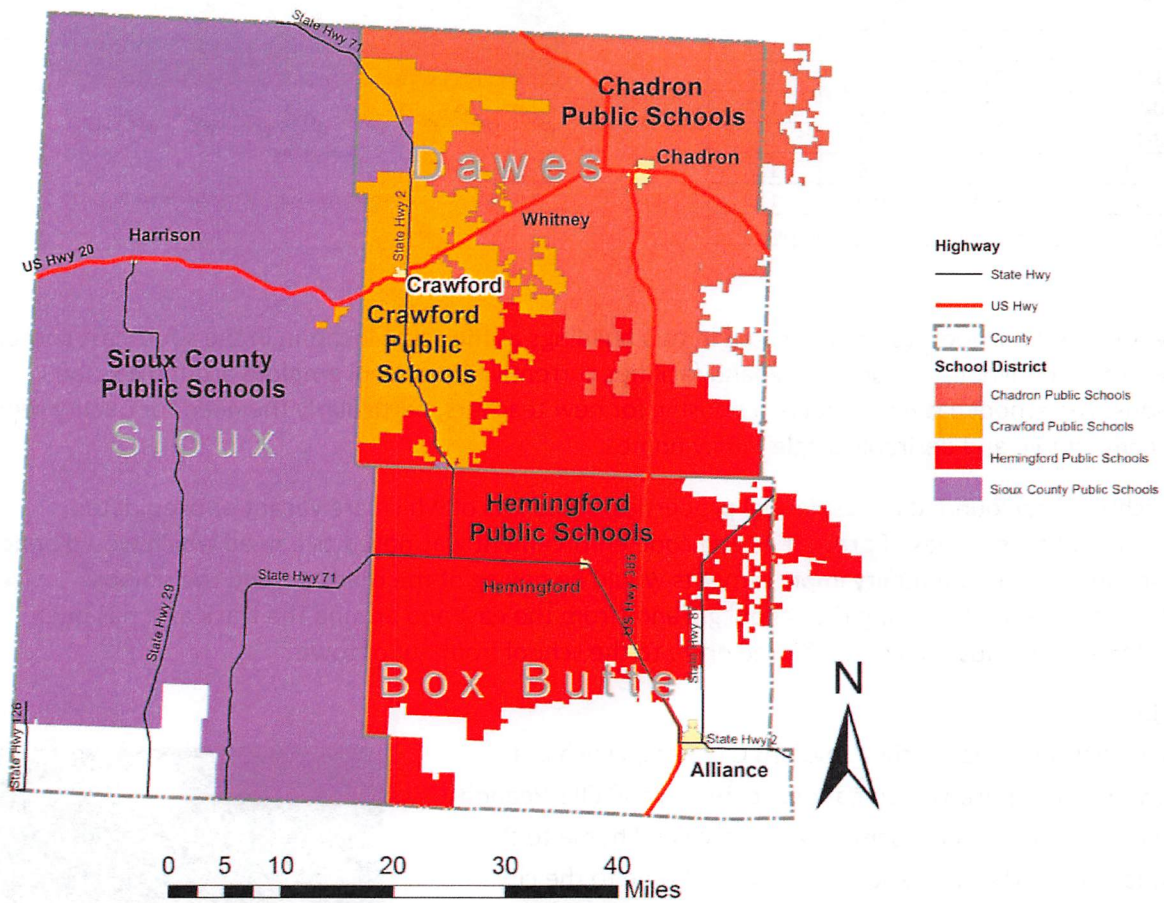
Crawford, NE Public Land and Buildings



Schools

Crawford’s school district spans from the western county border to near Whitney and from the southern Box Butte County border to just south of the Nebraska-South Dakota border on Highway 71. Chadron and Hemingford Public Schools cover the majority of Dawes County with nearly all of neighboring Sioux County comprising its own school district with schools based in Harrison. Crawford High School competes in Class D for state athletics which is in the same class as schools such as Garden County, Hemingford, and Mullen.

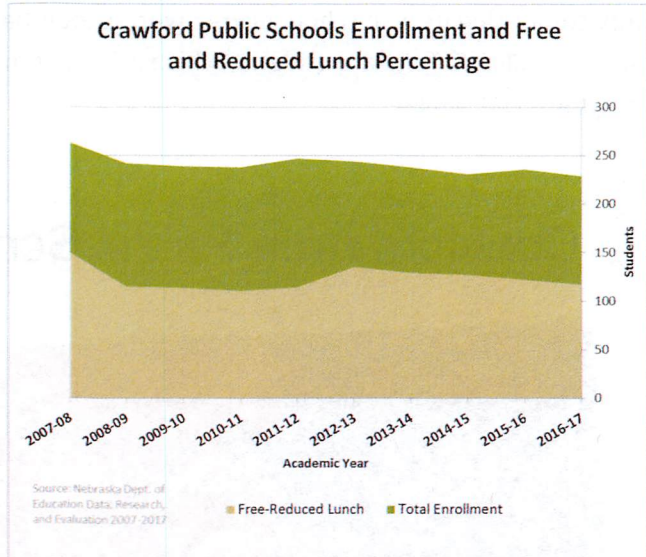
Crawford Area Public School Districts



Enrollments in Crawford Public Schools have been relatively stable over the past 10 years with a slight trend of decline. The tentative 2017-18 academic year enrollment of 219 is about 62 children fewer, or 22% lower than 1997-98 when the comprehensive plan was last updated.

Academic Year	Total Enrollment	Free/Reduced Lunch	Other students
2017-18	219	(x)	(x)
2016-17	229	117	112
2015-16	236	122	114
2014-15	231	127	104
2013-14	238	129	109
2012-13	244	135	109
2011-12	247	114	133
2010-11	238	111	127
2009-10	239	114	125
2008-09	242	115	127
2007-08	263	150	113

Source: NE Dept. of Education; Data, Research, and Evaluation



Crawford’s K-12 school system is located in two buildings at the same location in the southeast corner of town. The school does not plan to expand facilities currently. The school employs around 45 staff persons. The school has noted need in housing for new teachers, particularly the need for quality rentals and competitive and desirable single family homes.

The school is surrounded by residential properties, some lots of which are vacant or dilapidated. Reduction of these types of properties and code enforcement was noted as a need which would benefit the school. Other community improvements would be paving of the roads around the school, particularly the road entering the school grounds from the east and around the track as it has been noted this is the most heavily trafficked entry to the school from out of town.

Parks

Crawford has two parks, the Crawford City Park, which is a sprawling multi-purpose recreational complex and Ellis Peabody Hale Park, located on the same side of town and home to the city’s baseball fields. The recreational complex is home to the city’s rodeo grounds, shooting range, picnic shelters, recreational vehicle (RV) pads with electric hookups, bathrooms, and playground



equipment. In addition, the White River and mature trees provide and scenic backdrop for walking and the area is directly adjacent to Fort Robinson State Park. Crawford’s City Park is also home to a former fish hatchery, built in 1927 by the WPA, which worked with numerous kinds of fish before focusing exclusively on trout in the 1980s.



In May of 1991, 7 inches of rain fell in Sioux County in the span of an hour and sent a 10-15 foot wall of water through the Crawford City Park, destroying the hatchery, historical society museum, other structures and trees. The hatchery was not rebuilt though a building and fishing pond remain.

Today Crawford has several facilities for youth recreation including an outdoor swimming pool, tennis court, which is currently used as a basketball court, Frisbee golf, and two baseball fields. Despite these assets, residents noted the desire to have more opportunities and places for youth to be active.



Legend Buttes Golf Course

From April to October, the City of Crawford operates a 9-hole municipal golf course with quiet fairways and scenic views of the Red Cloud Buttes. Opened in 1992, the course features 3,178 yards of golf for a par of 36, a course rating of 35.2 and a slope rating of 125. The golf course is also home to the club house and pro shop. While the golf course is one of the City's most attractive facilities and is popular with tourists, golf has lost some popularity in general in recent years and Crawford, like other small towns in the Panhandle, may need to find new ways of sustaining and justifying the course's expense like tournaments, more aggressive marketing, or adding additional uses to the land.



View of the Red Cloud Buttes from the first hole.

Crawford Rodeo Arena

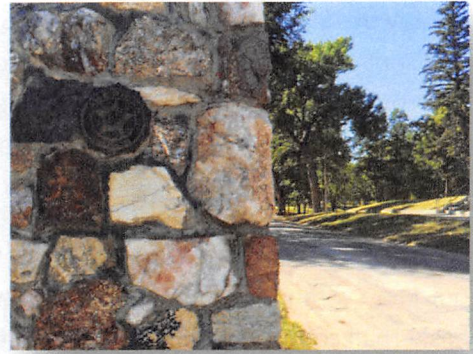
The rodeo grounds have been a part of the culture and entertainment of Crawford since the mid-1940s and continue to draw thousands of spectators and participants over the course of the year's events which include the Old West Trails Rodeo at the Fourth of July, and the senior and high school rodeos. The Old West Trail Rodeo is sanctioned by the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association (PRCA). New sewer to the grounds was recently put in. Residents noted the Rodeo as their second most important park feature improvement item.



Needs for the rodeo grounds include:

- Roads improvements around the arena
- Safety fencing in place for rodeos
- Grand stand renovation or replacement

Continued cooperation between rodeo event organizers, city officials and staff, the business community and regional tourism leaders will be important for continued success and improvement of the rodeo grounds and events. These events add to quality of life and bring business opportunity from out of town visitors.



Ponderosa Villa and Settlement

Built in 1972, Ponderosa Villa sits on city owned land on the west side of town, neighboring the Hale Peabody Park and the recreational path leading to Fort Robinson. The facility has 35 skilled nursing beds as a part of the original facility and 18 assisted living apartment units built in 2000, known as Ponderosa Settlement. Most residents of Ponderosa Villa don't come until they need skilled nursing and demand is not as high for assisted living. The Villa usually has a waitlist and the community noted that demand may exist additional units for independent or assisted living. Land to the south of the facility in what is official Ellis Peabody Hale Park may provide opportunities for expansion of the nursing home and related senior living facilities.



The Villa has an old, 2000 model transportation bus which can be made available to residents when the Handibus for the county is not available.



Library

The Crawford Public Library is located at the intersection of Ash and Second Street. The Library and its Board of Trustees are fully accredited by the Nebraska Library Commission and maintains membership in the Nebraska Library Association. The library's collection includes a wide variety of non-fiction works, periodicals and newspapers, a separate children's collection and young people's section as well as DVD's and books-on-tape. Wireless internet and 5 computers connected to broadband provide public internet access. The Library maintains minimal staff and operations maintenance is assisted by volunteer and donations. Members of the Crawford Library have access to e-books through the Nebraska OverDrive borrowing program and Kindle or KindleFire.¹



¹ Information obtained through Crawford Library webpage; crawfordpubliclibrary.com

Crawford Historical Society and Museum

Crawford's Historical Society, a 501(c)3 non-profit with active membership, operates a local history museum out of a city owned property on the corner of Elm Street and Second Street in downtown. The museum is operated from May until October from 10 am-4 pm and attracts a few thousand visitors per year. The museum is currently run strictly on volunteers, donations, and memberships in addition to City support. The current building was given to the Crazy Horse Cultural Society in 1972 before being turned over to the Crawford Historical Society. The City of Crawford has supported the museum at its current



Inside the Crawford Museum

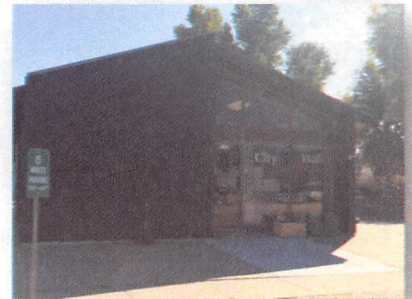
location to be able to keep up with repairs and owns the property. The museum is in need of more space and a heating system to remain open year round and display all of the museums articles. The museum currently works with local businesses to display some of its articles and has informational materials at the highway visitor stop. The museum currently shares a building with the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP). Creative use of space and other opportunities for expansion in existing underutilized or vacant space in Crawford may be able to meet the long term needs of the museum and RSVP. Currently the upper story of the museum and RSVP building is unused and in disrepair.

Major upgrades to the buildings heating, plumbing, and electricity may be able to be funded partially through tourism grants and the City and Historical Society should pursue those options to decrease the burden on local funds while improving the long term sustainability of the museum.

City Government Buildings and Facilities

City Hall

Crawford City Hall moved from its historic building to its current, more economical location at 135 Elm Street. Crawford's City Hall hosts the City Clerk, Mayor, and other staff offices and is the location of Crawford's commission, board, and council meetings. The current building is currently meeting the city's general needs.



Storage and Maintenance

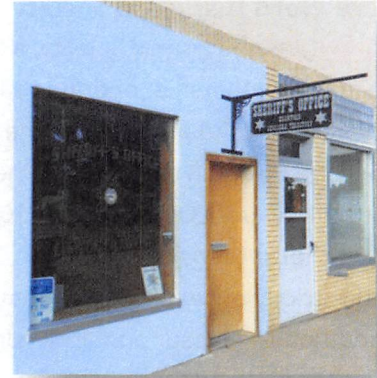
The city also owns two properties for storage, roads, and maintenance needs: one at the east entrance of the city park ('20' on the map) which is for general storage for the City and fire department and the other off of Annin Street for street and other maintenance. These properties should be well-maintained and be good neighbors to other properties in the area, following the same intensity, screening, and storage guidelines expected of other properties in the same area.

Law Enforcement

Law enforcement is under contract with the Dawes County Sherriff department, which has an office located on Main Street in a building split with two other private renters. The Sherriff's department runs a regular patrol both day and night in Crawford in addition to responding to regular calls.

Fire Hall

As of the writing of this plan Crawford's new Fire Hall will be completed fall of 2017, moving from its downtown location on Elm Street to a new building on Highway 20. The building features seven vehicle bays along with increased additional storage and office area to better protect equipment and increase efficiency for volunteers.



The Dawes County Sherriff's Crawford office is in a city-owned building with two other rent-paying tenants.



Crawford's new fire hall nearing completion in September 2017