



# Johnson County

## 2018 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

### VOLUME 1: PLAN AND MAP

Sustaining Success Through 2028



CONFLUENCE

Adopted: May 17, 2018



# Acknowledgments

Special thanks to the residents of Johnson County, Iowa, who participated in the comprehensive planning process through public meetings, surveys, and hearings. This plan could not have been created without your interest and dedication.

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*\*No longer serving as a board/commission/staff member at the time of plan adoption, but was part of the comprehensive plan process.*

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RESOLUTION No. 05-17-18-04

**RESOLUTION APPROVING THE JOHNSON COUNTY 2018 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, AN UPDATE TO THE EXISTING COMPREHENSIVE PLAN KNOWN AS THE 2008 LAND USE PLAN.**

WHEREAS, pursuant to Iowa Code Section 335.5 (2017), county zoning regulations must be made in accordance with a comprehensive plan; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors adopted the current comprehensive plan – known as the 2008 Land Use Plan – on May 15, 2008; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors finds that it is in the public interest to update said comprehensive plan.

WHEREAS, the County Planning and Zoning Commission having studied said plan recommends that the Johnson County 2018 Comprehensive Plan dated January 29, 2018 be approved with certain changes; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF JOHNSON COUNTY, IOWA, that the Johnson County 2018 Comprehensive Plan, dated May 17, 2018 and included in the online agenda packet for the meeting of the Board of Supervisors held on May 17, 2018, copies of which can be obtained at the Johnson County Planning, Development and Sustainability Office, the Johnson County Auditor’s Office, or at www.johnson-county.com, is hereby adopted.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Johnson County 2018 Comprehensive Plan dated May 17, 2018 (hereafter, the “Johnson County 2018 Comprehensive Plan”) shall replace all previously adopted comprehensive plans, including but not limited to the 2008 Land Use Plan and all subsequent amendments thereto; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Johnson County 2018 Comprehensive Plan shall become effective upon adoption of this Resolution.

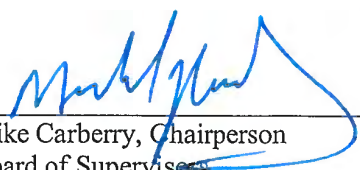
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that those complete development applications submitted to the Zoning Administrator prior to adoption of the Johnson County 2018 Comprehensive Plan shall be reviewed under the 2008 Land Use Plan.


It was moved by Sullivan and seconded by Friese the Resolution be adopted this 17 day of May, 2018.

Roll Call

	<u>AYES</u>	<u>NAYS</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>
Carberry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Friese	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Green-Douglas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rettig	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sullivan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

ATTEST:

  
Mike Carberry, Chairperson  
Board of Supervisors

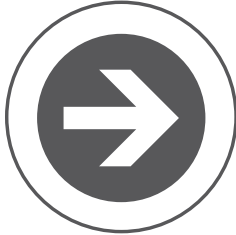
  
Travis Weipert, Auditor  
Johnson County, Iowa



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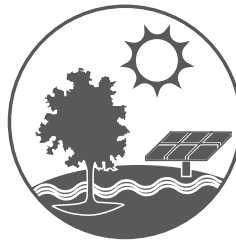
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# WELCOME & PLAN OVERVIEW

Welcome to Johnson County's 2018 Comprehensive Plan: Sustaining Success Through 2028. Creating the plan involved a 18-month process that engaged residents, stakeholders, and leaders through the assistance of staff and consultants. As the plan's title indicates, it will help guide the county's future for the next 10 years.

Previously, Johnson County adopted a land use plan in 1998 and updated it in 2008—plans that helped guide the physical development of the county's unincorporated areas. The **2018 comprehensive plan is a more all-encompassing document**, considering not just land use but also sustainability, local economy including agriculture, and infrastructure and amenities—and their interconnections to quality of life.

**Johnson County is the second fastest-growing county in Iowa** with consistent double-digit growth every decade over the past 100 years. The comprehensive plan provides a basis for balancing this growth with preservation of agricultural and environmentally sensitive areas.

The **Plan-at-a-Glance** and **Goals Overview** that follow this overview will help orient you to using this plan. The Introduction (Chapter 1), as well as each chapter, details **key issues** that affect what the County must consider and address for a successful future. Notably, these issues include land preservation, development areas, fringe area development, farming and agricultural exemption, and tourism in the unincorporated areas. In addition, this new plan follows the guidance of the **Iowa Smart Planning Act** in order to make the plan truly comprehensive in principle and in action. Information in the Appendices (Volume 2) provide a deeper look at county demographics and resources and the process that brought this plan to fruition.

All priorities, goals, strategies, and action steps were developed based on public input, comments from the Comprehensive Plan Committee, and feedback from the Board of Supervisors.

The success of the plan will include making updates to the **Johnson County Unified Development Ordinance**—changes that will involve more opportunities for public input—and initiating or expanding **collaboration, projects, programs, or services**. County staff will periodically report on progress, and this plan can be updated in the future.

Thank you for your interest in the Johnson County 2018 Comprehensive Plan and the goals, strategies, and action steps of Sustaining Success Through 2028!

# PLAN-AT-A-GLANCE

The Iowa Smart Planning Act prescribes the inclusion of various elements in any comprehensive plan. For this plan, those elements have been translated into individual chapters and are organized using the following format:

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The introduction outlines demographics, housing, and socioeconomics; identifies past trends; and makes predictions about future growth. Population projections are useful tools for planning; however, these provide only informed estimates, and projections may change due to unforeseen factors.

## CHAPTER 2: SUSTAINABILITY

Chapter 2 highlights the sustainability initiatives currently implemented in Johnson County and new practices to be encouraged. Environmental concerns (flooding, drought, soil and water quality, and natural resource protection) are included in this discussion.

## CHAPTER 3: LOCAL ECONOMY

Chapter 3 focuses on the strategies to ensure that Johnson County develops in an economically sustainable manner. Healthcare and education are two of the top employment sectors in Johnson County with the University of Iowa, UI Health Care, and the regional Veterans Health Administration. Growth must be matched with the county's ability to accommodate new economic opportunities while preserving the existing agricultural economy that is so vital to rural Johnson County. Local food production and distribution issues and challenges are included in this discussion.

## CHAPTER 4: INFRASTRUCTURE & AMENITIES

Chapter 4 focuses on the accessibility to services (i.e. roads and public safety), a well-connected transportation network including trails and sidewalks, parks and recreational amenities, and well and wastewater facilities. Alternative transportation modes, existing and planned, are discussed.

## CHAPTER 5: LAND USE

Chapter 5 guides future residential, commercial, and industrial activity by informing development and zoning decisions within the county's jurisdiction, that is, the areas outside the incorporated cities. This section contains the Future Land Use Map (page 111) and identifies the ideal strategy to balance growth with the protection of the agricultural and environmental integrity of Johnson County. A high level of cooperation among local jurisdictions is key to the success of this approach.

## CHAPTER 6: IMPLEMENTATION

This chapter summarizes into one table the various action steps to achieve the plan goals of each chapter. The implementation table outlines the responsible departments or parties, and sets a general timeframe to achieve each task.

## APPENDICES A & B (VOLUME 2)

Appendix A provides a detailed profile of Johnson County. Appendix B describes the public participation process and includes a summary of feedback and all survey responses.

# GOALS OVERVIEW

## Sustainability

- SUST 1:** Support and implement sustainability strategies that preserve natural resources.
- SUST 2:** Develop and/or coordinate with local and regional hazard mitigation, resiliency, and climate change planning.
- SUST 3:** Support affordable and equitable access to quality housing.
- SUST 4:** Support and advance energy efficiency, resource conservation, and renewable energy programs.
- SUST 5:** Prioritize green building and sustainable development practices for existing and future residential, commercial, and industrial development.
- SUST 6:** Remain a leader in green facilities, operations, and infrastructure.

## Local Economy

- ECON 1:** Foster a diverse and resilient local economy.
- ECON 2:** Ensure that new and expanding commercial and industrial uses follow the county's adopted Economic Development Plan.
- ECON 3:** Encourage sustainable agricultural activities.
- ECON 4:** Provide opportunities for sustainable commercial and industrial activities that enhance livability and are compatible with surrounding land uses.

## Infrastructure & Amenities

- INF 1:** Develop well-connected recreational parks, public open/natural spaces, and trails throughout the county.
- INF 2:** Utilize existing infrastructure and adopt green infrastructure practices.
- INF 3:** Make transportation, land use, and infrastructure decisions that encourage a reduction in auto-dependent travel.
- INF 4:** Support environmental, cultural, and historic elements in the planning and design of future infrastructure.
- INF 5:** Support amenities that enhance livability and quality of life.

## Land Use, Map & Tools

- LND 1:** Promote and protect sustainable agricultural land uses in rural Johnson County.
- LND 2:** Direct future residential development based on location and then site-specific criteria outlined in the Future Land Use Development Guidelines.
- LND 3:** Direct future commercial and industrial development based on location and then site-specific criteria.
- LND 4:** Coordinate land use planning with and between local governments to achieve mutually beneficial development policies.
- LND 5:** Continue to protect and improve Johnson County's natural resources: land, water, and air.

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