City of Carl Junction
2020 Comprehensive Plan
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**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**CHAPTER 1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Introduction 4  
Focus Areas & Planning Summary 5  
Long-Term Community Goals 7  
Planning Period Project Priorities 8

**CHAPTER 2: BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Mission & Vision Statements 10  
History 10  
Governance 15  
Natural & Manmade Physical Features 17  
Demographics 23  
Capital Improvement Programming 24

**CHAPTER 3: PARKS & RECREATION**

Current Community Condition 25  
Priority Project Goals 26  
Objectives 26

**CHAPTER 4: LAND USE & TRANSPORTATION**

Current Community Condition 30  
Priority Project Goals 35  
Objectives 35

**CHAPTER 5: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Current Community Condition 38  
Priority Project Goals 41  
Objectives 41

**CHAPTER 6: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

Current Community Condition 43  
Priority Project Goals 48  
Objectives 48

**APPENDIX**

Attachment #1: Demographics  
Attachment #2: Prioritization Survey Results  
Attachment #3: Current Zoning Map  
Attachment #4: Future Land Use Map
CHAPTER #1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The intent of a comprehensive plan is to guide a specific city in an organized and efficient manner of growth. As with any plan it is dynamic and meant to be periodically reviewed and adapted to meet the current needs of the City and its citizens. The process by which it was developed and its final content helps validate its usefulness to the community and meet the standards for comprehensive plans outlined in Missouri statutes. The value of any public policy plan is measured by three criteria: first, to what degree was the process open and accessible; second, the rationality of the document; and, third, its use.

This comprehensive plan is a guide to the physical development of the community of Carl Junction. It includes:

- Long-term goals outlining the overall needs and desires of the community for at least the next 20 years, based on ongoing public outreach and citizen input;
- Project priorities that can reasonably be implemented within the next five years;
- A brief history and background of the community;
- An examination of the community’s physical and demographic features that makes it unique, such as geology, geography, population growth, and economic profile;
- An inventory of existing public facilities related to the City’s identified project priorities;
- Project specific objectives that will help guide the City’s implementation of the Plan; and
- A map of the City’s current zoning map to be used as a future reference for community leaders to assess change and progress over the next five-year planning period.

Carl Junction’s 2020 Comprehensive Plan Update is the product of the City’s continued effort to make proactive informed decisions for the continued improvement of the community. The plan is evidence of the City’s concern for proactive public policies. These policies will enable the community to maintain a quality environment in which to live, work, and invest. This plan was updated through a classic planning process used by city staff, the City’s Planning and Zoning Commission, their consultants hired for the project, and the public as a whole through available input methods.

The City originally created the plan by contracting with the Missouri Southern State College, Department of Social Science, to assist with its development in 1998. The City’s Planning and Zoning Commission, who are charged by the City Code and the Board of Aldermen to do periodic reviews, also led revisions of the plan in 2003, 2010, and 2015.
FOCUS AREAS & PLANNING SUMMARY

The Carl Junction Comprehensive Plan primarily includes four focus areas that are based on identified high priorities of the community. They include Parks & Recreation, Land Use & Transportation, Economic Development, and Community Development. The City continuously evaluates the need for engineering and planning related reports that support these community priorities. The City proactively hires consultants and participates in other regional planning efforts to produce these resources and document the needs. Some of the most recent products of this ongoing effort include:

- The Carl Junction Transportation Plan completed in June of 2009;
- The Roundabout Conceptual Plan completed in July of 2010;
- The Fir Road Traffic Study completed in October of 2018;
- The Joplin Area Transportation Study Organization’s 2020 – 2023 Transportation Improvement Program and 2018 Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan;
- The Stormwater Management Criteria (December 2009);
- The Water System Comprehensive Plan (June 2001); and
- The Facility Plan Wastewater Treatment Facilities (April 2012).

The planning process for this 2020 Comprehensive Plan relied heavily on these documents to update and build upon the 2015 plan. Revisions to the plan include the identification of measurable objectives that can be realistically achievable within the five-year planning period (2021 – 2025). Chapters Three through Six will provide the primary content for the focus areas and ultimate implementation of this plan.

Figure 1. The Pavilion at Memorial Park
As most people who are familiar with the community know, Carl Junction has been growing at a relatively rapid pace for over 50 years. Many factors have been involved in influencing this growth, including high quality residential subdivisions such as the Briarbrook neighborhood, one of the most desirable housing developments in the region. The R-1 School District’s reputation for excellence and expansive buildable land areas for accommodating growth have also been major factors. The community’s primary concern with this plan has been to ensure that this growth not only is beneficial for the existing residents, but that necessary and adequate infrastructure and services, such as parks and recreational opportunities, are provided to all residents in a timely manner at a reasonable cost.

Land use is a critical component of all comprehensive plans. It’s impact on, and relationship to, transportation infrastructure is a key component to balancing quality of life and cost of living. Like most land development in America over the past 50 years, Carl Junction has mostly grown in an auto oriented suburban form. Recent planning trends across the country have been focused on quality of life improvements through added amenities, such as improving the walkability of neighborhoods by adding more sidewalks and recreational trails. The City of Carl Junction believes these are high priorities as well.

Economic development is a key focus area of the plan in order for the community to continue to improve their quality of life while keeping their costs of living low. While housing and schools have played a major role in the development of the community, there has not been a large employment base in town to support its residents. Most of the community’s residents commute to surrounding employment centers, such as Joplin, Missouri and Pittsburg, Kansas. It is anticipated that over the life of this planning period that trend will continue. The community does however emphasize, promote, and support the expansion and attraction of existing and new businesses in town.

While it is still at a relatively high rate when compared to surrounding communities, Carl Junction’s rapid growth has slowed slightly over the past 10 years (from approximately 40% to 11% per decade). This easing of growth has been, and could potentially continue to be, a good opportunity for the community to focus on improvements to facilities and services rather than having to primarily focus their efforts on trying to keep up with basic infrastructure needs. The city has made some big advances in its facilities and services over the past few years in an attempt to keep up with existing growth, such as the construction of a new police station and multi-use community center. The Center houses City Hall, the Senior Center, a gym, and other community assets. Other potential projects that are high priorities, such as improvements to parks and other
recreational amenities, will enhance community growth. As the city continues to grow, its residents will continue to expect amenities to expand to mirror those found in comparable sized cities.

Overall, Carl Junction has been an attractive and vibrant small community for many years. It is the intent of this plan to ensure that as it becomes a larger city its growth is sustainable. The plan’s purpose is to make sure that the community continues to be an attractive place for people, whether they’re moving in for the first time or their family has been here for multiple generations and are proud to call Carl Junction “home”.

**LONG-TERM COMMUNITY GOALS**

Since a comprehensive plan’s primary purpose is to consider what the community wants to look like long into the future, it is important for this plan to identify Carl Junction’s long-term goals. The following long-term community goals are based on many years of public input and community-oriented work towards improving quality of life in the City of Carl Junction. They include:

1. To enrich the lives of community and regional residents by preserving, protecting, maintaining and improving natural resources, parkland, and, public facilities that will optimize recreational and healthy lifestyle opportunities.
2. To maintain and improve access to, mobility through, and safety of all modes of transportation within the community and connections to the surrounding region.
3. To improve the economic wellbeing of community residents through efforts that entail job creation, job retention, and tax base enhancement.
4. To ensure the health, safety, and welfare of community residents through proper infrastructure development and maintenance necessary for continuous preservation and expansion.
PLANNING PERIOD PROJECT PRIORITIES

The City of Carl Junction has routinely updated this comprehensive plan approximately every five years. The “planning period” referred to in the rest of the document will be for the years leading up to the next update (from 2021 to 2025). In order to effectively implement the community’s long-term goals, it is important for the community to show measurable achievements within this predefined planning period.

Chapters three through six of this Comprehensive Plan include priority project goals and SMART objectives for each of the four focus areas. The goals describe what the City should focus on during the planning period. Each SMART objective describes how the City will proceed with each project and are designed to strategically lead the City towards project progress. The SMART acronym stands for Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant (or Realistic), and Time-bound. It is sometimes easy to create goals and objectives that become too generic or overly ambitious for a community to implement. By using these SMART objectives, the City of Carl Junction can more easily use this document as a guide or blueprint to take one step at a time towards showing progress on proposed projects that address each priority. The City should review and revise this plan on at least an annual basis to determine which objectives have been completed and reflect the progress that is being made on an ongoing basis.

Community Priorities

The City of Carl Junction has identified the following as the community’s highest priorities as they relate to the previously mentioned focus areas and long-term community goals. The goals and objectives in chapters three through six are directly tied to each priority.

1. Parks and Recreation Priorities
   a. Expand parks and other recreational opportunities by developing new amenities and/or facilities that promote and encourage healthy lifestyles.
   b. Improve and/or develop new outdoor and/or indoor parks and facilities for baseball, softball, and other team sports.
   c. Complete bicycle and other recreational trails that are designed or planned for in the community; and promote or support other efforts to expand and develop a trail system that connects to exist local and regional trails.

2. Land Use and Transportation Priorities
   a. Increase the number of sidewalks that serve residential and commercial areas that are unsafe for pedestrians.
b. Develop bicycle and pedestrian trails that function as an alternate mode of transportation and connect residential, commercial and recreational uses.

c. Improve road design and increase road capacities to promote safety, accessibility, and mobility based on engineering design standards.

3. Economic Development Priorities
   a. Increase the amount of property and sales tax revenue collected by the city.
   b. Support a business environment that will promote an average increase in personal income for residents.

4. Community Development Priorities
   a. Expand and maintain adequate infrastructure capacities for water, sewer, and all other city owned facilities and services that support growth.
   b. Ensure an adequate number of housing units are developed that are affordable to all income levels in the community.

Figure 3. Foyer of Community Center
 CHAPTER 2: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

MISSION & VISION STATEMENTS

Mission Statement
The City of Carl Junction will represent our citizens, provide high level services and plan for the future of our community.

Vision Statement
The City of Carl Junction will strive to offer a wide variety of opportunities, amenities and services to all its citizens, businesses and guests. Its ambition is to be regarded as the leader in the region for developing activities designed for all ages and for creating a friendly and supportive environment where its businesses and citizens can thrive and grow.

The City of Carl Junction will continue to be known as the community:
Where all feel safe, warm and welcomed...Where all care for one another and show pride in where they choose to live...Where "hometown" refers to a sought-after lifestyle rather than a fond memory from one's past.

The City of Carl Junction, standing tall among its peers, will:
Open its arms to all who seek fellowship...Provide a safe environment in which to live, to work and to play...Make itself easily accessible and always inviting to those who seek us out or who may simply happen our way...Provide for cultural and recreational opportunities that reflect the interests and values of our people...Offer attractive and desirable housing...Provide solid, dependable city services to each and every resident...Pledge to do everything within its powers to help nurture the "home" in "hometown".

HISTORY

Carl Junction is situated in Western Jasper County, upon land that is rich in history. Native American Indians of many cultures settled this region for hundreds of years. Artifacts and arrowheads found at these ancient campsites near Center Creek and Spring River show evidence of Osage, Omaha, Ponca, Kickapoo and Delaware influence. White settlers began arriving in this area between the 1830s and 40s. Frontier explorer Edmund Jennings called this the “Land of the Six Boils (springs).” Due to his long stay with the Indians, he nearly forgot his English tongue, so
that by time he returned to his native Tennessee, his countrymen misunderstood him, thinking that he was calling it the “Land of Six Bulls.” Today, both phrases are used in our lexicon.

In 1848, pioneer Daniel Hunt moved from Pipgras, Cooper County, Missouri, to the area just south of Center Creek, presently about three miles southwest of Carl Junction. There, he opened a trading post on the mound. He bartered with the Indians for horses and pelts. From a portion of his 4,000 acre estate he platted the town of Rural in 1858. Two years later, he filed a second plat and renamed the town, “Sherwood.” Sherwood became a hog butchering and pork salting industry town of 250 people, of whom 20 to 30 were employed in the preservation and shipping of pork in barrels. Because its people showed allegiance to the Confederate cause during the Civil War, Sherwood was burned to the ground by the Union army in May of 1863. Once the third largest town in the county, it was never rebuilt. At least one massacre occurred in this area, when bushwhackers led by Confederate Major Thomas Livingston ambushed a Union foraging party at Captain Rader’s farmhouse, the site now located halfway between Fir Road and Fountain Road, on the west side Lone Elm Road (1 mile S. E. of Carl Junction,) which precipitated in the Yankee burning of the town for revenge. There were 15 African-American infantrymen and three officers killed in the raid. In the late 1880s, Carl Junction had a Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) post with membership only for Union veterans of the Civil War, which they named in honor of Cameron Garrett, one of the officers killed in the ambush. Lead ore was discovered near there in the 1880s, but an attempt at starting New Sherwood failed to lure many settlers.

Lead mining was carried out here before the war, but no large deposits were found until 1870, one of which led to the founding of the city of Joplin, Missouri. A second set of railroad spur lines was built to connect the boom town to pre-established rail lines, and to the Kansas coal mines, which fueled the smelters for separating the metal from the ore. Several towns arose as way stations for the new spurs, including the creation of Carl Junction. In April of 1877, Miami County, Kansas merchant Charles L. Skinner platted Carl Junction with 81 lots, seven streets and four alleys. Skinner chose the name Carl, after his original German first name, which he had changed when he immigrated to America. The town was situated to take advantage of the junction being created by E. R. Moffett and John B. Sergeant’s proposed Joplin & Girard Railway where it crossed the Kansas City, Fort Scott & Gulf line nine miles northwest of Joplin. Later, both lines were taken over by the Frisco. The first train ran through Carl Junction on the newly completed line was made July 20, 1879. A railroad section facility, switching yard, coal and water chute, a depot and an office were constructed about a decade later and employed 42.

In 1880, Mr. Skinner’s former business partner, James Lillie, found lead ore along Center Creek near the outskirts of town. Keeping the location to himself, he told the curious that he had
found his samples in “skeeterville.” Mosquitoes notwithstanding, his discovery soon got out, and Skeeterville erupted into a mining boom town. Later, as so much “blende,” or zinc ore, was found, the new town became known as Blende City. The mineral discovery there was determined to be the richest in the district at that time. Blende City was enlarged with a residential addition known as Knight’s Addition, which was renamed “Lehigh” when they applied for a post office in 1890. Lehigh was Carl Junction’s rival for many years, until the ore ran out and most of the people moved to Carl Junction or elsewhere. By 1912, Lehigh and Blende City were ghost towns.

Carl Junction was given village status on April 8, 1884, and then on May 10, the town was incorporated as a city of the 4th class. The new community grew rapidly between 1890 and 1910, going from 699 to 1,177 in population. Several additions were made to the city limits, but with Sweede’s Addition, the town earned the nickname “Dollar Town” because lots there sold for one dollar down, and a dollar a month until they were paid off. A national recession in 1892, followed by extremely wet weather which flooded and kept many of the richest mines closed for as long as two years, cast doubt on the new town’s future for a time. Thanks to Carl Junction’s diverse economy, they weathered these storms and indeed many growing pains after that, to emerge confident and ready for the future.

Carl Junction got the nation’s attention in August of 1892, when the fossilized remains of two adult and two infant elephants were discovered at the 20 foot level of a mine belonging to Silas A. Stuckey, on the south end of town. These bones of the extinct species, Elephas Americanus, were purchased by St. Louis businessmen and displayed at the Columbian Exposition of the Chicago World’s Fair in 1893, and one of the skeletons was reputed to have been the largest ever found for the species up to that time. Carl Junction was also known through some of its citizens. A former Carl Junction youth, inventor Albert C. Webb possessed a genius with internal combustion engines, and created what was said to be America’s first automobile fire truck, which the city of Joplin bought and nicknamed “the goat,” pressing it into service in 1906.

Over the years, Carl Junction has been served by numerous newspapers and periodicals, including The Sunbeam (started in 1882), The Carl Junction Standard, the Jasper County World (1900), The Carl Junction Democrat, The Carl Junction Times (1913), The Plaindealer (1914), The Socialist News (1907), The Carl Junction Courier (1995), all weeklies except for a short-lived daily, The Carl Junction Evening Graphic. Of these, only one survived more than a few years, The Carl Junction Standard, which was started by H. C. Routzong in April of 1890 (1890-1982). The Courier changed its name to the Standard in November of 1999 to revive the 92-year-old paper. The City is currently being served by the weekly newspaper, the Jasper County Citizen.
By 1903 Carl Junction boasted two banks. The Bank of Carl Junction was organized in 1891 by T. W. Cunningham and William Carter, and was later owned by the Chitwood Family. The Citizen's Bank was then organized in 1902 by a board of directors including Harve Chitwood and Dr. H. L. Isherwood. Both banks merged in 1930. Various hotels were opened, including the Stroud Hotel, the Carl Junction Hotel, the Carlton, the Nilson, the Marr and the Rock Haven, but only one lasted beyond two decades. Boarding houses and apartments proved more lucrative with nearly 100% occupancy.

Carl Junction made numerous improvements during the early 1900s, which kept the town abreast of the times. Electricity was introduced when a franchise was granted to W. G. Sergeant’s power company in 1904, which he later sold to Empire District Electric Company. Natural gas was introduced in 1905, with a franchise shared by Oronogo, Missouri. Voters approved a $9,300 bond for the start of a water works system and water tower. Before 1902, the Home Telephone Company started serving the city, which was joined by rival Bell Telephone to provide phones to more than 300 residences. Telegraph the Frisco R. R. office at their depot provided service. By 1922, Main Street was curbed and paved, and by 1938 electric lighting replaced the old gas mantles that once illuminated it.

Though the mines began to close down around 1920, other tracts were opened at nearby Smithfield and at Waco around 1915-1925. The need for explosives launched a marketing company in 1908 at Carl Junction, known as the Home Powder Company. Manufacture of dynamite began here in 1916, when General Explosives took over the company. After a series of fatal blasts, the financially embarrassed company sold their operations to E. I. DuPont De Nemours & Company in 1924. They expanded the plant to 600 acres, added safety features and employed several hundred people. DuPont paid the city $8,500 annually, in school taxes alone. The Carl Junction plant was closed in April 1960 after the company changed from nitroglycerin production to improved pril-nitrate ammonia explosives, and nitro manufacture was turned over to the company’s larger plants. Carl Junction businessmen organized the Carl Junction Development Association to purchase on August 1, 1961, the entire 600 acres of land from the company for commercial development. Unable to attract business to such large acreage, the Association turned toward community development and the Briarbrook Country Club with its residential development is the result. The Briarbrook area was annexed into the city on June 27, 1967.

Carl Junction survived numerous boom and bust years, with the loss of mining production following World War I (the town’s mining boom was mainly between 1899 and 1922), the Great Depression (throwing 224 Carl Jct. residents out of work), the closing of the railroad yards during
the 1940s, World War II and the reopening of abandoned mines for the war effort, a new housing boom begun in 1950, and the rapid growth that came in the 1970s. Carl Junction’s most progressive years (barring the present) were between 1950 and 1980, when the population tripled according to the US Census, from a low of 1,005 in 1950, to 3,936 by 1980.

Transportation, arduous at first, over dirt roads, gave way to passenger train service to other cities six times daily by 1902, with 25 freight schedules per day. Electric trolley service began with the Joplin & Girard Electric Railway in July of 1907, but this line discontinued passenger service in January, 1929. In 1924, the Red Bird Bus Company also failed due to poor ridership, but William Cook ran a reliable automobile taxi service out of Carl Junction 16 times a day for many years beginning in 1946.

Some of Carl Junction’s most productive industries at one time or another was DuPont Explosives, the Elder Manufacturing Company shirt factory, Surgi Manufacturing (nationally known maker of pony carts), Hinkley’s Royal Crown-Nehi Cola Bottling Company, Lee Products Corporation (makers of lawn mowing machines) and Unitech (industrial sanitary products). All have contributed to the stability of the community. However, because most of Carl Junction’s citizens lived here and worked outside her limits, Carl Junction was referred to as a “bedroom city.” The Carl Junction Lions Club, organized in 1946 with Wilson Gilbert as its first president, was largely responsible for the drives to entice industry to resettle here. They raised the capital to erect a $30,000 factory building for the Elders Company, which employed 225.

Of all that her people are proud of, Carl Junction’s school system is foremost. The first school was a one-room frame house southeast of town. In 1887, a two story, six-room brick building was built west of town on land donated by Augustus Knight. A second school house known as the East Town School was built a few years later, followed by the modern, twelve-room West Town School built in 1914 on the site of the old Knight School. The new school burned in 1928 and was replaced by another that eventually served as the high school until it was razed during the mid 1980s. School enrollment went from 375 in 1902, to over 3,000 before the century was out. A $9.5 million high school was built and opened for the Year 2000 - 2001 classes.

Carl Junctionites use to hold a unique celebration known as “Bingville” in July. The gala was created by Nellie and Lenore Vance to earn money for their Methodist evangelist league, the Epworth, but soon became a celebration secularly enjoyed by the entire district. Based on a comic strip that once appeared regularly in a Joplin newspaper, the town transforms into the “hick” village of Bingville, where procrastinators celebrate the 4th of July a little late. The event included music, carnival-like booths, food and a parade. It was popular every year from 1910 to the early 1990’s.
Since the 1960s, Carl Junction has experienced its first sensation of what boom town growth is like and finds itself struggling with the increasing demands on its infrastructure caused by its growing population. At the end of the century Carl Junction took steps for major capital improvements. A waste water study and a water study were completed identifying needs with the voters then passing two significant bond issues; a $860,000 waste water treatment plant expansion to go online mid 2003, and a $1.76 million water system expansion including 2 new wells, 2 new towers and main line construction that is scheduled to begin mid 2003. A storm water master plan was adopted, and a $199,000 grant was applied for and received for storm water abatement to the original plat of Carl Junction. To improve the quality of life for residents in the original plat area a $500,000 housing rehabilitation grant was applied for and received in 2002. An additional $200,000 was added to that amount the following year due to the devastating May 4th tornado that damaged or destroyed many homes in and around the community.

With an eye to the future, improvements to administration and development have also taken place. Carl Junction has gone from individual departments; streets, water, wastewater, to a more inclusive Public Works Department. Land has been annexed and zoned for specific purposes. Over 170 acres were annexed and zoned for an Industrial Park. Several high traffic areas were also targeted for commercial and retail business development. As one of the fastest growing cities in Jasper County, with much to offer in the way of high-quality services and amenities, the City completed a comprehensive city evaluation and now holds annual retreats with its citizens to get their input and plans. These activities lead to the City receiving awards from the State’s Missouri Community Betterment Program from 2001 – 2003. The late Carl Junction mayor, Frank Dean, may have summed it up best in a 1976 newspaper interview stating, “Carl Junction’s success is due to ‘bread and butter’ reasons.”

GOVERNANCE

Three distinct governing bodies make up the governance of the community of Carl Junction. They are the City of Carl Junction, the Carl Junction Special Fire District, and the Carl Junction R-1 School District. The City is split between the 162nd and 163rd State Legislative Districts, the 32nd State Senatorial District, and the 7th Missouri Congressional District. The City is part of the Eastern District of Jasper County.

City of Carl Junction

Carl Junction is a fourth-class municipality incorporated under Missouri law. The City government is organized under a Mayor, City Administrator and eight-member Board of Aldermen. The Board is elected from four wards on an alternating basis. The Mayor is elected at-
large for a two-year term. Other municipal officials include the City Administrator, City Attorney, City Judge, City Prosecutor, City Collector, City Treasurer, and City Clerk in addition to the administrative heads of the city departments.

Recommendations for planning and zoning issues are made by the City Planning and Zoning Commission to the Board of Aldermen. The Board of Adjustment deals with code variances and zoning appeals. Both of these groups are made up of volunteers appointed by the Mayor with the consent of the Board of Aldermen.

Carl Junction is divided geographically into four neighborhoods: central Carl Junction, Briarbrook, Country Club Estates, and the area east of High 171 commonly known as Oscie Ora Acres. Generally speaking, the four wards are divided similarly. The central part of the city is split north and south into two wards along Pennell Street. Briarbrook makes up a third ward, and Country Club Estates and the area east of Highway 171 is the fourth ward.

The City receives funding from a levy at a rate of $.9108 per $100 assessed valuation, and a 2.5 cent city sales tax. The City's fiscal year 2020-2021 budget expects total revenue of approximately $6.9 million.

**Carl Junction Fire Protection District**

The Carl Junction Fire Protection District provides fire protection for the entire city and a significant portion of the surrounding area as well. The boundaries, as shown in the below map, are south to Newton County line, west to State line, north to Nutmeg Rd. (one mile north of Waco), and east to Highway 43 to Joplin City limits excluding Airport Drive. The volunteer-based firefighters serve as emergency response personnel. Most are cross-trained as first responders, with some being certified Emergency Medical Technicians. They also employ one full time secretary.

The Fire District Board is composed of three members elected at large. Board members serve six-year, staggered terms. The annual budget of the Fire District is over $1 million. It is funded by a levy at the rate of $0.50 per $100 assessed valuation.

**Carl Junction R-1 School District**

The District is governed by the Carl Junction R-1 School Board, consisting of nine members who are elected at large and staggered on three-year terms. The Carl Junction R-1 School District had an enrollment of 3,193 students, as of 2019, from grades Kindergarten through 12. The high school (grades 9-12) had 978 students, while the elementary level (grades K-8) had 2,215 students. The District estimates its fiscal year 2020-2021 spending at $32,961,000. The
District derives its local funding from a levy at the rate of $3.0206 per $100 assessed valuation for operations, and another $0.9924 levy for debt service.

There are six schools that are all located on the northwest side of town within the city limits. The campus was expanded when the high school was completed in July 2000 and then the junior high was added on to the high school in 2008. The other buildings include a lower primary for kindergarten and first grade; an upper primary for second and third grade; an intermediate school for grades four through six; and, an alternative school for high school aged students that are “at-risk.”

The City’s understanding is that the school system intends to continue to maintain the campus atmosphere by only expanding in its core geographic area for the foreseeable future. The community supports this strategy for future growth of the school system.

**NATURAL & MANMADE PHYSICAL FEATURES**

**Location**

Carl Junction is located in southwestern Jasper County, Missouri. The City is located north and west of Joplin and the Village of Airport Drive. It is approximately 140 miles south of Kansas City, 295 miles southwest of St. Louis, 85 miles west of Springfield, 12 miles west of Carthage, and 5 miles east of the Kansas state line. Carl Junction is 27 miles Southeast of Pittsburg Kansas and Columbus, Kansas is straight west approximately 22 miles.

**Climate**

Carl Junction is located in a humid continental climate characterized by warm summers, cold winters, and maximum rainfall in early summer. The climate is affected by cold air masses moving southward from Canada, by warm, moist air masses moving northward from the Gulf of Mexico, and by dry air masses moving eastward.

Temperatures range widely. Winters are often cold; summers are very hot. Prolonged periods of either extreme however are rare. On an average, the temperature reaches 90 degrees (F) fifty days per year, and fall below 0 degrees (F) only two to three days per year. Normally, the last freeze each spring is in mid-April and the first freeze each fall is in late September or early October.

The mean annual rainfall is about 41 inches. The winter months are comparatively dry, with most precipitation occurring during the spring and summer months. Summer rains generally come as thunder showers of high intensity and of short duration, while winter precipitation is in the form of gentle rain, mist, snow and sleet. May is usually the single wettest month. Forty percent
of the total annual precipitation occurs in April, May, and June. Only fourteen percent of the total annual precipitation is received during December, January, and February.

The winds in the area vary from gentle breezes to high velocity tornado-like winds. The high velocity winds have been estimated at ninety to one hundred miles per hour. The prevailing winds are from the south and southwest at approximately twelve miles per hour. Wind velocities are slightly higher in March and April and slightly lower in July and August. Tornado strength winds are fairly common in the area and have been observed in every month of the year. The overwhelming majority, seventy percent of the storms, has occurred during the period from March through June. August has proven to be the month with the least tornado activity.

**Geology and Mining**

The discovery of lead ores in the Joplin area during 1848 marked the beginning of mining in the Tri-State District. The associated zinc ores were originally discarded for lack of an efficient, economical technology for recovery of the zinc. About 1870, however, the extension of railway lines into southwest Missouri and the development of new milling and smelting techniques led to profitable production of zinc in the area. By 1875, Missouri had become the leading zinc producer in the nation. Early mining tracts were small, some leases measuring as little as 200 feet square or about one-acre. Mining was confined to the upper-ground ore zone within the first 100 feet or so of the surface. Due to the “broken” nature of this ore zone, drifting operations were limited; therefore, many shafts were sunk at close intervals. In fact, Missouri laws required two shafts for each property. As a result, thousands of production and prospect shafts were sunk in the district. In Carl Junction there were 1,163 prospects and 229 shafts.

The major ore minerals of the Tri-State District are sphalerite (zinc sulfide) and Galena (lead sulfide). Marcasite pyrite (iron sulfide) and chalcopyrite (copper-iron sulfide) are of minor importance. Small amounts of greenockite (cadmium sulfide) are also present. Near surface oxidation of these sulfides has produced commercially important amounts of smithsonite (zinc carbonate), cerussite (lead carbonate) and hemimorphite (zinc silicate). Gangu minerals include quartz, calcite, and dolomite. Quartz occurs as chert and secondary jasperoid. A coloring agent in the jasperoid is a dark, opaque material, bitumen, and a residual organic matter that appears throughout the mining district, usually in tar-like or hardened masses coating rock surfaces. It is believed to have been instrumental in the chemical reduction of some of the sulfide ores. The zinc-lead ore deposits of the Tri-State region are in cherty Mississippian limestone, the chert occurs as nodular in limestone and as interbedded layer. From oldest to youngest, the Peirson (Fern Glen), Reeds Spring, Elsey (Grand Falls), Burlington, Keokuk, Warsaw, and Carterville
Formations were the host rocks for most of the zinc-lead mineralization. Their total thickness in the area exceeds 400 feet. Small outlays of the Pennsylvanian Cherokee Formation (shale and sandstone) uniformly overlay the Mississippian rock in some localities. Rich ore bodies are associated with these Pennsylvanian sediments where they have filled dissolution structures such as sinkholes and collapses in the Mississippian strata.

Throughout the Tri-State District, extensive chemical dissolution of carbonite rock produced horizontal and vertical channels, porous breccia zones of insoluble cherts and other surface cavities. These voids proved excellent repositories for ore precipitation and concentration from mineralized fluids. Structure in the area is limited to gentle folding, the axis generally plunging northwest. The regional one-degree dip of the sedimentary formations is also northwestward, away from the Ozark uplift. Open mine shafts, subsided areas having steep unstable slopes and open pits containing deep pools of water exist throughout the region. Damage to buildings and roads above shaft areas and underground mine workings have been reported throughout the Tri-State region. Accidents to people and livestock frequenting or wandering into abandoned mining sites in rural areas have also occurred. In addition, in some areas water quality problems result from artesian flow of mine waters from open shafts and rainwater runoff and seepage from tailings piles and settling ponds.

**Topography**

Topography is an important characteristic when considering development suitability. There are many features within and around the City, primarily Center Creek, which, at least to some people, is perceived to be a barrier or nuisance to its residents. The creek and other topographic features have the potential to be used as attractions that give the community a unified look and feel.

The south side of Center Creek has, at many points, steep slopes with high bluff ridges. North of the creek is primarily a floodplain area that covers many acres through (and outside of) town. If and when these areas are developed, the design and form of development should take into consideration these special features. The floodplain areas of any community, including Carl Junction, are best left in their natural state, which will be discussed more in-depth further in this chapter. The high bluff areas could potentially provide opportunities for more urban forms of development, taking advantage of what could be amazing views.

**Soils**

Although not often considered by many planning documents today, soils are an important component of development suitability and one that should be considered thoroughly. Soils that
are generally well suited for urban development typically are level to moderately sloping soils on the uplands that are generally well drained. These soils provide slopes of less than ten percent. Other less suitable soils for development include moderate to well drained soils with a fragipan, i.e., compact or dense subsoil which is resistant to penetration by air, water, and plant roots. The major problem associated with these is the water that is held in the soil above the fragipan could cause cracked foundations. Another soil that’s even less appropriate for development is the mostly level, somewhat poorly drained soils with fragipans. Alluvial soils include stream deposits that occur along streams and drainage courses. These soils are subject to occasional flooding which make them poorly suited for most urban and/or suburban uses.

Mining areas common around Carl Junction also have their limitations for development. These are waste areas including chat piles, tailing piles, sump ponds, and mill sites, composed mostly of finely broken chert and limestone. These areas have been virtually destroyed by mining and often contain heavy metal contaminants including lead, zinc and cadmium. These areas should be extensive reclaimed prior to their development. Reclamation of these areas to residential standards is generally considered to be cost prohibitive.

**Urban/Suburban Environment**

The urban environment is one that has many universal design characteristics. The American urban form of development can typically be found in neighborhoods built prior to the 1940’s. The streets form a grid pattern. Commercial buildings are often multi-level and closer to the street. Residential areas are smaller lot, higher density neighborhoods. Industrial buildings were typically found in downtown, core areas that provided the base employment for communities.

The urban form was created prior to the use of automobiles. The neighborhoods were compact and functionally walkable by design out of necessity. All of the land uses connected in ways that easily flowed from one to another. There has been a modern resurgence of the urban form in community design, that is often referred to as New Urbanism or Neotraditional Design, that continues to grow in popularity across the United States. Initially this movement met resistance in some communities as the additional infrastructure necessary for its proper implementation was perceived to be cost prohibitive. However in recent years, with the increase in auto oriented congestion and transportation costs, these development costs have been considered to be more acceptable. The theory is that investments in housing will be a better value than the rising costs of transportation. Other direct benefits of walkable neighborhoods include the overall improved health and wellness of its users and its promotion of face-to-face social interaction that continues to decrease in today’s information age.
Carl Junction’s urban area is relatively small, but like most communities is still an important part of the community. The corner of Main Street and Pennell Avenue is considered to be the core downtown area. The community would like to preserve and expand as its core downtown and central business district. The implementation of most of the goals and objectives of this plan should substantially support the improved development of this key area.

The suburban form of development was born soon after the end of World War II. Suburbs sprung up across the country as a building boom resulted from soldiers coming home from overseas, with expectations to get a stable job, have a family and live the American dream. A large majority of developments in America today continue to be built in the suburban form. The suburbanization of America has led to sprawl and effectively resulted in a large dependence on the automobile. Carl Junction’s growth has primarily happened during the modern, suburban era. Many of the community’s neighborhoods were built at a lower density with relatively large lots and segregated land uses. The neighborhoods have few to no sidewalks and have other characteristics emphasizing the use of the automobile such as large garages that are dominant design features of the homes.

The Natural Environment

The natural environment includes those areas least suitable for urban/suburban forms of development. These areas include floodplain and wetland areas, steep slopes of 15% or greater, and lands of prime agricultural capacity. It is the US Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) policy to “…avoid wherever possible the long- and short-term impacts associated with the destruction of wetlands and the occupancy and modification of floodplains and wetlands, and avoid direct and indirect support of floodplain and wetlands development wherever there is a practicable alternative.” The City of Carl Junction agrees this policy should be followed to the extent practical to help preserve these natural features.

Planned Growth

Planning for the physical growth of a community is a fundamental element to the successful implementation of a comprehensive plan, especially for a town with a history of rapid growth like Carl Junction. Appropriate locations and densities for new development should be carefully considered when determining what areas are appropriate for residential, recreational, and commercial uses that would be in the best interest of the public as a whole. For example, the floodplain is a dominant feature through the community along Center Creek and Highway 171. Parks and other recreational uses are typically a better option for these areas rather than allowing
residential or commercial construction that may provide a higher health or safety risk to future users.

**The Growth Pattern**

The growth pattern of Carl Junction is also an important factor to consider when future infrastructure needs are assessed as the community continues to grow. The transportation system has had the most significant impact on determining where and how the community has historically grown. This influence has led to the suburban form commonly found across the country in neighborhoods developed since the 1940s, which is when most of the community’s growth has taken place. Current trends in planning and community development across the country include the encouragement of walkable neighborhoods where other modes of transportation are considered (such as sidewalks and bike lanes) along with those for the automobile.

**Anticipated Growth Areas**

The existing developed areas of Carl Junction mostly stretch from the northwest side of town near Highways JJ and Z to the southeast near Fir Road and Highway 171. Recent and short-term future annexations into the City have been and are anticipated to be toward the northeast and southwest of town. These locations are encouraged for a more compact geographic development pattern that will support a more efficient use of infrastructure and support services. Other areas that will be encouraged to continue its current growth pattern will be northwest of town near the high school around Highways JJ and Z. This area has potential for commercial growth with its access to Highway 96 and the long-term planned “West Bypass” project.

The City has three primary areas that are geographically segmented. The primary features that act as barriers are Center Creek, with a significant elevation change, from east to west, and steep topography, the Kansas City Southern Railroad, a floodplain, and Highway 171 that all run parallel from north to south. The first area includes the original portion of town lying north of Center Creek and west of Highway 171. The second predominant area is south of Center Creek and west of Highway 171 and primarily includes the Briarbrook and Country Club Estates subdivisions. The third area lies east of Highway 171 and mostly includes the subdivisions Oscie-Ora Acres and Dogwood Trails. Even with these barriers, Carl Junction has many unique characteristics that, if utilized properly, could be used to pull the community together and considerably add to its physical appeal.

An analysis of development suitability is important for a community with the unique physical features that exist in and around Carl Junction. The determination of where and how to
locate appropriate forms of development, such as urban/suburban or natural environments, is key to guiding growth of the community.

**DEMOGRAPHICS**

An understanding of population characteristics and trends provide a basis for preparing future population projections. It is also an essential factor in the establishment of the future requirements for expansion of public utilities and community facilities. The existing and future population within an urban area naturally influences the physical size of the community and aids in determining requirements for housing, business, industry, and other development needs such as transportation expansion projects. The table in Attachment #1 of this plan shows demographic comparisons for Carl Junction, Jasper County, the State of Missouri, and the United States with highlights of those demographics that should be considered during most decision-making processes by community leaders.

The below table shows the population of the City of Carl Junction has more than doubled over the past 30 years, according to the US Census Bureau, almost tripling Jasper County’s growth (34.1%) over the same period. The City’s higher than average population of people under 18 years old (33.7%) also supports the common assumption the community is attractive to young families seeking their quality school system. The community also retains and attracts families with relatively higher educational attainment and incomes, likely due to quality amenities such as the parks system with trails and a community golf course.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population Trends of Jasper County and its Largest Cities</th>
<th>1990 - 2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carl Junction</td>
<td>4,125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carthage</td>
<td>10,747</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joplin</td>
<td>37,032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oronogo</td>
<td>595</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Webb City</td>
<td>7,449</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jasper County</td>
<td>90,465</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


While the county as a whole has grown by approximately 34.1% percent over the past 29 years, the northern “suburban fringe” has seen a significantly higher growth rate. Oronogo
experienced the highest percentage as it more than tripled in size; however, the City of Carl Junction also more than doubled with a higher total population growth over that period of time. From 2000 to 2010, Carl Junction’s total population growth was second only to that of the City of Joplin’s.

There may be many reasons these areas are growing faster than the rest of the county; however, the availability and relative affordability of land is known to be a major factor. While many other communities, including Joplin and Webb City, are mostly restricted by other jurisdiction’s boundaries, Carl Junction still has a great deal of room to grow. When this factor is compounded with other positive attributes of the community, it is safe to assume the growth of the past will continue into the future. It is possible and probable the community will have a population that is approaching, if not exceeding, 10,000 people by 2030.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMMING

Capital improvement programming is one of the most critical components of the proper implementation of this plan. As a result, one of the primary first steps the community should take after the adoption of this plan will be the creation of a Capital Improvement Program Committee. This committee will be tasked with the responsibility of developing a capital improvement program document focused on identifying specific, high priority projects the community should fund within its resources over a 10-year period. It is recommended the selection of those projects are based on this plan (and its future revisions) and are updated on an annual basis as projects are completed, concurrent with the City’s fiscal budget.
CHAPTER 3: PARKS & RECREATION

CURRENT COMMUNITY CONDITION

The City of Carl Junction boasts an impressive variety of parks, recreational facilities, schools, and public buildings that provide recreational opportunities for local and regional residents. There are now six public parks. Facilities within these parks include: baseball and softball fields, basketball courts, sand volleyball, horseshoe pits, tennis courts, playground areas, a swimming pool, a walking trail, barbecue grills, and pavilions. Seasonal soccer and football are also available. All of these facilities are open to the public. The existing parks, their size, and specific features are described in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Park Name</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Memorial Park</td>
<td>1.5 acres</td>
<td>Baseball field, playground area, and a pavilion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center Creek Park</td>
<td>2.5 acres</td>
<td>Bulldog Beach outdoor swimming pool, tennis courts, playground area, and three pavilions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frank Dean Ball Complex</td>
<td>1.5 acres</td>
<td>Two baseball fields, two softball fields, and two tee ball fields.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country Club Park</td>
<td>1.5 acres</td>
<td>Basketball courts, playground area, soccer fields, and a pavilion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four Oaks Park</td>
<td>.89 acre</td>
<td>A playground area and a pavilion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lakeside Park</td>
<td>80+ acres</td>
<td>Walking trails, Bulldog Lake for fishing, and an 18-hole disc golf course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skate Park</td>
<td>&lt;1 acre</td>
<td>Skateboard, bicycle, and scooter ramps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mammoth Prairie Park</td>
<td>3.25 acres</td>
<td>Walking trail, butterfly and pollinator natural flowers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Community Center also includes many physical fitness and recreational opportunities through the basketball court, pickle ball court, and exercise gym that offers fitness classes. Other privately owned recreational facilities in town currently include a roller-skating rink and the Briarbrook Community Improvement District that has an eighteen-hole golf course, practice greens, a driving range, a swimming pool, and two tennis courts.

Carl Junction has an excellent natural feature in the Center Creek bottoms and surrounding floodplain area. Center Creek Park borders the creek to the north. This existing
public access to the creek gives the community the opportunity to add enhanced recreational amenities such as hiking trails and wildlife habitat preservation improvements and observation structures. There are also over 100 acres of privately owned bottomland on the south side of the creek in the floodplain area that make up most of this natural feature.

**Carl Junction R-1 School District**

Recreational facilities located at the schools include a football field, basketball courts, playground areas, baseball and softball diamonds, soccer fields, and a track. The schools are located on the northwest side of the city. The alternative school is located on Main Street and the rest of the schools are located on a campus bounded by South Broadway, Wells and Highway Z.

**PRIORITY PROJECT GOAL**

To provide planning, design, and implementation of improvements and expansions of parkland, park amenities, and recreational services provided by the City.

Thoughtful and careful planning is the key first step towards showing progress in any project, but it is especially true for park and recreation projects. A quality plan with at least a preliminary design can help promote community buy-in for a project by inspiring broad public support. It is also a critical step in receiving funding approval for bonds, loans, and grants at the local, state, and federal levels. Many resources are available to help with this effort from student led design teams at regional universities to professional architects and engineers. The next steps for implementation should closely follow when the preliminary design is complete for a conceptual project.

**OBJECTIVES**

1. **By the year 2022, the City will attempt to obtain funding for the implementation of planned park improvement projects in Lakeside Park that are “shovel ready”**.

   The City has prepared project specific proposal and design plans for a pavilion and other improvements for the further development of the City’s newest park. The proposal will be used to apply for funding through the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) through the Missouri Department of Natural Resources. The LWCF offers grant programs for outdoor recreation and is available to Missouri cities for related projects. The program requires that the local community provide 55% of the funding for the project. Eligible costs include land; recreational facilities (ball fields, picnic shelters, amphitheaters, boating or fishing facilities, etc.); support facilities (parking, lighting, walkways, restrooms, etc.); planning/design costs; labor, equipment, supplies and other construction costs (grading, etc.).
2. By the year 2023, the City will develop a project specific plan to relocate the Frank Dean Sports Complex out of the floodplain to improve its functionality and accommodate higher use.

The community has multiple youth baseball and softball travel teams who complete throughout the region in multiple states most weekends during the spring and summer. The development of an adequate ballpark that would support these types of tournaments would not only provide better facilities for local teams to practice, but would also provide an opportunity to attract other youth travel teams to the community on a regular basis. This type of project will likely also support other priorities in this plan including the increase in sales tax for economic development.

The land to the northeast of the Community Center has been identified in the past to be an opportunity area for the expansion and development of additional parks and recreation space. Other potential locations need to also be identified to provide multiple options to improve the likelihood of near term implementation. The preferred use of this area includes, at a minimum, the construction of new baseball, softball, and tee ball fields. The new ballpark would serve as a supplement and/or eventual replacement for the existing fields in the Frank Dean Ball Complex that are often damaged by flooding since they are located in the floodplain. The new location will also provide easier access to the fields. If the new ball park is not developed, limited access to the existing ball fields will worsen congestion problems for the neighborhoods that access them as the community grows. The development of new ball fields is a high priority of the community. Investments in these areas will help to further the appeal of the community to new and prospective residents and in turn businesses, especially if they are located near commercial areas of town.

3. By the year 2025, the City will initiate a project specific development plan for the expansion of Center Creek Park in the floodplain to preserve natural areas.

Carl Junction has significant natural features that have the potential to enhance the community if they were preserved as natural areas and utilized for additional public recreational use. Center Creek is the premiere natural feature of the community. Its preservation and new access as a public use nature area is a high priority to the community. Many natural features of a
community, such as Carl Junction’s floodplain bottoms along Center Creek and Highway 171, can either be viewed as an asset or a liability to a community. The city would like to focus on their potential and use these features to their advantage rather than treat them as a liability— or barrier in the case of the community’s floodplain. If and when the City is successfully able to replace the Frank Dean Sports Complex, its flood prone land will be available for the creative design of more appropriate mountain biking trails and other recreational uses. The city boundary is anticipated to naturally expand to the west toward Kansas. As it does, and even before it does, the City plans to find opportunities to acquire as much land as possible to allow for the expansion of these prime recreational areas.

The City plans to use the LWCF program to help acquire land for the expansion of the parks system. Land donations are eligible to be counted toward the 55% required match for each project. One technique the City is able to use to encourage the voluntary sale or donation of land for this cause is to offer public and lasting recognition to current landowners for their participation. They can name appropriate new parks and/or facilities in their honor in exchange for their willingness to sell their land if not provide it through a generous donation to the City.

4. **By the year 2025, the City will develop a project specific plan to expand and improve services at the Community Center.**

The City will develop a needs assessment and design plans for the expansion of the Community Center to accommodate growth and demand as needed. The future expansion of the Senior Center portion of the project will include efforts to obtain Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding to help finance its construction. A CDBG program project must typically serve at least 51% low- or moderate income residents. If the Senior Center were to exclusively serve persons 62 years old and older, it would automatically qualify for the program. The community facility activity for CDBG allows a maximum grant amount of $500,000.
that may be used for the project. This funding source will be considered while developing its preliminary design.

Due to high demand, it is a priority for new space and equipment for exercise facilities to be planned for and developed within the City. The costs for the City to provide all or part of these expanded facilities should be compared to the costs to residents if an outside organization such as the Family Y or another private gym were to open in the community. It may be most beneficial to continue to provide basic exercise services with minimal expansion at the Community Center, but also encourage another gym to open in the community.

5. **By the year 2025, the City will plan for overall future growth of the Parks and Recreation Department by developing a Parks Master Plan.**

A parks and recreation master plan should be developed in the near future in order to further define potential expansion and improvement projects. The City should hire an independent firm or consider contracting with a college or university landscape architecture program to develop the plan. Students at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville or Drury University in Springfield should be able to provide a quality product at an economical price for the community.
CHAPTER 4: LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION

CURRENT COMMUNITY CONDITION

The location and relationship of one land use type to another type (such as residential, commercial, and industrial) directly affects the land values, the transportation needs, and the public service needs of every community. The City of Carl Junction has been able to rapidly grow with minimal need to significantly expand its roads for vehicle capacities. For example, all of the arterial and collector streets in town are still two lanes and there are not any stop lights. That will not always be the case as the City continues to grow into the future.

Land Use

The right of a community to guide its development and control the use of land within its jurisdiction has long been upheld by the courts. The courts do find it necessary for a community to determine the use of all land within its jurisdiction and give consideration to conditions in areas contiguous in order to determine properly the appropriate uses and provide a basis for the control of land use prescribed in zoning ordinances. For the courts to have assurances that zoning districts are objectively determined, an up-to-date existing land use map is essential.

Existing Land Use

A land use inventory provides a record of the existing types of land use in the City. A parcel of land may be suitable for a variety of uses; however, it is the relationship between these uses that requires the attention of planning. Some uses are favorable to each other, whereas some uses, if adjacent, become detrimental to each other. Recognizing these land uses, the relationship between them, and the determination of what development controls should be in place to create favorable land use decisions are major components of the planning process. Consequently, a plan must begin with an inventory of the City, as it exists.

A land use inventory of Carl Junction was conducted in May 2001 and slightly modified with the 2010 update. Land use categories were: Residential – including single-family, two-family, multi-family, planned unit residential development and manufactured homes; commercial; industrial; institutional – specifically the public-school property; recreational; and vacant – open property either unsuitable for development or awaiting development.

Existing Zoning Controls

When most people hear about city planning, they typically think about zoning first. While planning is much more than zoning, zoning is a critical tool used to implement the plan’s strategies for land use changes and controls. The City of Carl Junction has eight zoning classifications
including single family residential, multi-family residential, commercial, and light industrial uses. There is also an “undeveloped land” district. Higher intensity uses such as multi-family residential and commercial also allow lower intensity uses to be used in those districts. This method of zoning is effective at preventing certain areas from being “over developed”, but it is not conducive to ensuring that areas intent for higher levels of development are restricted for that use. This could be problematic for future economic development efforts of the community. Single family dwellings are all contained in one zoning classification even though there are 3 distinct types of single family lots within the city, this has the potential to create a conflict in the case of housing development and should be corrected or it will create more conflict as certain types of development are proposed by developers.

**Future Land Use**

Property developers and owners request zoning changes when they feel current zoning is no longer appropriate for a parcel’s land use, such as when a residential corridor transitions into commercial. Community leaders need to make proper decisions for approval or denial of those requests. This plan is an important reference to support those decisions.

**Transportation**

The City of Carl Junction developed and adopted a “Transportation Plan” (CJTP) in June 2009 that was prepared by TranSystems. The plan addresses “the operational needs and opportunities for the City’s roadway system and consider(s) the desire to balance the movement of people through the City to best serve the community.” There are four main priorities the plan addresses. They include improvements to Fir Road, improvements to Pennell Street, the development of non-motorized corridors, and the development of a new north-south connector. In July of 2010, the City also decided to create conceptual plans for roundabouts at strategic locations to assist with traffic flow across the community.

The City has 41 miles of streets. Streets are classified based on the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) outlined hierarchy of roadways. They include Principal Arterials, Minor Arterials, Collector Streets, and Minor Streets. For more information on these types of classifications, please refer to the CJTP.

**Principal Arterials**

Principal arterials are those that carry most trips to and from an urban area and are primary routes for trips to bypass the city. The principal arterials that serve Carl Junction are Missouri Highway 171 and Highway 43. In addition, the City is 13 miles north of Interstate 44. The Highway 249 bypass is five miles east of the city and gives improved access to the Interstate. Kansas
Highway 400 is a super 2-lane from Wichita that ends at the state line 12 miles north of the City and is accessed from Route 171. Long range state and regional plans are in the early stages of focusing on expansion of Highway 171 and the development of a new “West Bypass” corridor between the city limits of Joplin and the Kansas state line. This route would give much improved connectivity to the hospitals and medical centers. The alignment of this corridor will inevitably have a tremendous impact on the City of Carl Junction and shift much of the traffic away from the Route 171 and Z intersection.

**Minor Arterials**

Minor arterials provide connectivity between areas and the principal arterials. Route JJ, Route Z (Pennell Street), Fir Road, and Joplin Streets are minor arterials in and around Carl Junction. While Route Z is the only road considered a minor arterial by the JATSO, according to their 2016 Plan, the other corridors are functioning as such and have been submitted to JATSO for revising their classifications on their map. These roads are the backbone of the City and are the areas that are best suited for commercial growth along with Route 171.

The City has been implementing a long-term project that includes adding curb and gutter, sidewalks, resurfacing, and appropriate signage along the entire route of Pennell Street. This ongoing project is a major upgrade and improves the commercial viability of this route.

Access to Pennell Street from Highway 171 is a concern as it is often blocked by rail traffic due to its close proximity to the KCS railroad. The City encourages and supports improvements to this intersection. This auto-oriented primary access into town becomes congested, especially when a train is actively crossing Pennell during rush hour. This situation has continued to worsen as traffic increases with new housing growth on the north side of town. Designs for improving this intersection should begin with the cooperation of the Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT), since both roadways are designated state routes. Increasing the capacity of Highway 171 has been identified as a high priority by the state in recent years. The potential project for the improvement to the intersection of Highway 171 and Pennell should be presented as a safety concern due to traffic congestion and emergency vehicles are also at the mercy of this busy crossing.

**Collector Streets**

Collector Streets in and around Carl Junction include Briarbrook Drive, Lone Elm and Gum Road. These provide circulation within neighborhoods and collect from local streets to arterials. At Briarbrook and Fir a roundabout would assist the flow of traffic. See later in the plan for that discussion. Copper Oaks is overburdened and is hampered by limited access to Fir Road from
Marie Lane and Briarbrook Drive from Sunnybrook and West Briarbrook Lane. Marie Lane was never designed to be an access point to Copper Oaks or West Briarbrook Lane. Any new development in that area needs to include better access to either Fir Road to the south or Joplin Street to the west.

**Local Streets**

The remaining streets in town are local streets. Most of the local city streets are 20 feet wide and do not include curbs or gutters. Approximately 18 miles are curbed to aid in drainage control. All curbed streets are 30 feet wide. Many locally maintained streets are considered to be in less than acceptable condition. It was the consensus of the planning committee that a major effort should be made to upgrade the quality of the minor streets in Carl Junction. The improvements should also include curbing and guttering streets where they do not currently exist. This would improve the water drainage as well as improve property values.

**Roundabout Conceptual Plans**

In July of 2010, Tri-State Engineering completed for the City conceptual plans for roundabouts at key locations in town in order to alleviate anticipated congestion as suggested by the City’s Transportation Plan. The intersections included in the study were at Fir Road and Lone Elm, Fir Road and Briarbrook Drive, Fir Road and Joplin Street, Walnut Street and Harley Street, and Pennell Street and North Roney Street. Each intersection was designed with one, 18 foot, circular lane. They vary in diameter from 150’ to 170’. The estimated construction cost for each intersection at the time varied from $393,000 to $500,000. The design and cost estimates did not include utility, right-of-way, drainage, or multi-modal design features such as sidewalks.

**Non-Motorized Facilities**

Carl Junction is a residential community with many families. Improved walking trail structures throughout the city helps pull together the otherwise disconnected subdivisions. Most subdivisions have been built with limited egress and ingress road access. While it may not be possible or feasible to add roads to connect some of these subdivisions, it may be possible to create a system of walking/biking trails. The current distance and road size prohibits older children from riding their bikes from their homes to their schools, parks, and other desirable locations. To
help this, the City successfully pursued grants to build Safe Routes to Schools and a walking trail from Briarbrook north across Center Creek to the downtown area. Further expansion of the Thom’s Station trail north to the Ruby Jack Trail and an improved sidewalk system to connect to these trails will further enhance a trail network that is well developed north to south and east to west. Additionally, these two trails have multi-city connectivity, giving bicyclists a safe route through Oronogo to Carthage.

The Oscie-Ora Lake is mostly hidden but still a longtime local attraction to community residents. The acquisition of land and development of walking trails along Center Creek could open up the back side of the lake to recreational use by pedestrians and bicyclists from the other side of Highway 171. City leaders have the potential to work with the owners of the privately owned lake to determine what would be an appropriate approach to developing such a project.

**Land Use Coordination with Natural Features**

It is a high priority for the City to preserve the Center Creek area for public use. This area is substantially in the floodplain which should be protected from development for environmental benefits including improved stormwater runoff. The area is also attractive for the expansion of recreational uses as described in the Chapter 3: Parks & Recreation section of this plan.

The land acquisition should be a planned project that is phased in over multiple years. Initial phases should focus on acquiring at least the floodplain area from Center Creek Park to Joplin Street. A large majority of this area is currently owned by a single entity. Part of the Fall Creek Estates development, which is currently undeveloped land, also lies in the floodplain. It is recommended the City add at least a portion of this area to their acquisition efforts before it is fully developed.

Long-range future phases could expand eastward south of Center Creek toward Oscie-Ora Lake and westward to the north and south of the creek toward Highway JJ and beyond. These
areas have experienced very limited development pressure and would be a significant asset to the community as it grows to the west.

Developers of new neighborhoods should design subdivisions to provide access to adjoining developable land. The lack of connectivity in a community has many disadvantages including the potential to force automobile drivers to drive excessive distances to locations that are geographically close to their location. Emergency services may also have a substantial negative affect by limited access. Primary access roads may also become inundated with excessive traffic over time as additional connected land is developed without additional access points.

Social Space Promotion and Development

It is recommended the City analyze its land use policies to identify potential barriers to social interaction and create new policies that would encourage and promote social gathering points of interest. Modern segregated land uses typically require people to travel from place to place in cars, limiting their contact with other people. Pedestrian oriented forms of development allow people to “meet on the street”. The corner coffee shop is a good example of how people interact face-to-face and are willing to pay a premium for basics, such as coffee, in order to satisfy this human desire. This effort will also support economic and community development efforts.

PRIORITY PROJECT GOAL

To provide analysis, planning, design, and implementation of the improvement and expansion of all modes of transportation and land use impacts throughout the City.

Transportation projects typically take many years to implement. The City of Carl Junction has allocated a lot of time and resources to ensure they keep up with capacity needs and evolving desires of the community as it continues to grow.

OBJECTIVES

1. By the year 2025, the City will promote the planning and future design of priority expansion projects planned for principal arterials that provide mobility throughout the region.

Highway 171 Expansion Project – The City will continue to support and promote proposed improvements from the Kansas state line to the intersection with Highway 43 as a high priority for State funding. The Joplin Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and the regional Transportation Advisory Council (TAC) have both identified the expansion of this corridor as a high priority for the region. Transportation projects on this scale typically take many years to
materialize. The State of Missouri continues to focus on maintenance and safety projects as funding for expansion projects is highly limited, however this particular need could also be considered a safety project through the Carl Junction city limits due to the extreme banking along the side of the highway. The City of Carl Junction will continue to stay persistent with this priority during regional planning processes to keep it on the State’s priority list as well.

**Regional West Bypass Project** – The City will continue to support and promote the project being planned to connect Highway 171 to Interstate 44 along the west side of the Joplin urban area in Missouri. The anticipated alignment of the new corridor near Highway JJ will have a significant positive effect on the community for access to southern Joplin, especially the regional medical district. Additional auto traffic in the area will also provide new opportunities for economic growth that will potentially have a significant positive impact on Carl Junction.

2. **By the year 2025, the City will finalize design and pursue funding for the first phases of the expansion of Fir Road, based on the design recommendations in the Fir Road Corridor Study completed in 2018.**
   
   This corridor should be expanded before congestion from new residential growth increases much more. The study for this long-range transportation project recommends the expansion of Fir Road to three lanes from Airport Drive to Joplin Street. It also includes recommended roundabouts at Fir Road and Lone Elm; Fir and Briarbrook Drive; and Fir and Joplin Street, which could be developed in multiple phases. Coordination with MoDOT and the Village of Airport Drive will be sought while planning for this expansion.

3. **By the year 2025, the City will pursue funding for project scoping of the expansion of State Highway Z, which is also known as Pennell Street locally.**
   
   The City will pursue the scoping process with MoDOT regarding necessary expansion improvements to Pennell Street. Current traffic justifies its expansion to include curb and gutter, plus a third lane and sidewalks from 171 Hwy and continue along Hwy Z to YY. This has been named a priority by the Regional Transportation Advisory Council (TAC) and was recommended by JATSO in 2010 with an estimated cost of $739,200 at the time.

4. **By the year 2025, the City will develop and implement a formal City Street Maintenance Program to provide a more efficient long-term program.**
   
   Existing collector and minor roads should continue to be maintained and improved for ease of transportation and enhanced walkability, which will ultimately provide a safer city. Joplin Street and Main Street, in addition to the roads around all of the city parks should be improved to allow easier transit access, whether by walking or vehicle, to the parks.
5. **By the year 2025, the City will develop and begin implementing plans for mountain biking trails that connect to the Thom Station and/or Ruby Jack trails.**

   The City supports the development of hike and bike trails that will link with the Thom's Station and Ruby Jack trails. Bike lanes should also be included in designs for expanded roadways such as Pennell and Fir Road to support these trail linkages with residential areas. In 2007 Carl Junction implemented a Safe Routes to School Program, worth $18,000, to generate safer accessibility for students walking to school. The City plans to develop more biking and walking trails throughout the city and especially along Center Creek to support his effort.

6. **By the year 2025, the City will analyze the need and feasibility of expanding transit services to the community.**

   The City of Joplin has a fixed route, mass transit “Sunshine Lamp Trolley” system that has experienced a high rate of success since its implementation over 12 years ago. The City of Carl Junction intends to promote the inclusion of one or more transit stops in the community in future expansion plans of the system. The corner of Pennell and Main Street is a potential location for a single transit stop that would be in walking distance of the Community Center, City Government, Police, Post Office, and downtown businesses, as well as a few key residential neighborhoods and schools. Additional stops may be located closer to the high school and Prairie Hills Neighborhood; commercial areas on Pennell; and possible locations on Fir Road.

![Figure 9. Sunshine Lamp Trolley in Joplin](image)
CHAPTER 5: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

CURRENT COMMUNITY CONDITION

Several factors are used to assess a community’s economic vitality and potential. For the purposes of this plan, education attainment, income, poverty levels, and employment levels are included in Attachment #1 and examined in this chapter. Related data for Jasper County, the State of Missouri and the United States are included for perspective purposes.

Educational Attainment

The US Census provides data on residents who are at least 25 years of age living in Carl Junction regarding their education attainment. The data indicate that 93.1% of Carl Junction residents over the age of 25 have completed high school, which is higher than the County, State, and Country; and 3.5% higher than the next highest (the State). Likewise, Carl Junction residents with a college degree is comparatively higher than the other levels of government. The percentage of people age 25 years and over with a bachelor’s degree or higher is 35.9% for Carl Junction, 22.9% for the County, 28.6% for the State, and 31.5% for the Country.

The significance of the measure is the strong correlation between educational attainment and economic opportunity. Generally accepted studies indicate that high school graduates earn a third to a half more in a lifetime than do non-high school graduates. And, further, that college graduates earn almost double in a lifetime than do high school graduates. Certainly, continued emphasis by the community on its public education carries with it a strong incentive.

Income

Two measures of economic vitality regarding income used are the Per Capita Income (PCI) and Median Household Income (MHI). The former is a result of total community income divided by the number of individuals in the community. Its utility is limited to relative comparison with other jurisdictions as an indicator of economic activity. The MHI figure is the exact middle of the income distributions of all families in Carl Junction. The result means that half of all families in Carl Junction earn more than the median and half earn less than the median. Again, the measure is a comparative measure when viewed with MHI of other jurisdictions. The MHI for Carl Junction is $67,034, which is 11% to 34% higher than the other levels of government.

Poverty

The term poverty has a statistical, not sociological, definition. It is determined by total family income and the number of people in the family. Thus, the poverty line varies with
circumstance. Carl Junction’s poverty rate of 8.7% is lower than the other levels of government and roughly half of Jasper County’s.

**Labor Force**

Carl Junction is not a wholly contained city, no city is. This is especially true when examining a labor force. Transportation allows workers to live in a different jurisdiction than they work. The average commute time for workers in the Joplin MSA is 15.1 minutes which indicates a high incidence of separation of workplace and residence. For analysis of labor force to be meaningful, it should indicate the types of labor force arrayed within a reasonable commuting area. Those workers classified in the professional, management, and technical fields are highly trained, many with college degrees. This is the traditional “white collar” job. Over a fifth of Jasper County and Joplin MSA workers fall into this category. Precision production and crafts workers included skilled jobs, especially in the construction trades. The region has a strong manufacturing element with almost a quarter of the work force involved in the manufacture of goods. Finance, insurance, and real estate are a small portion of the work force. Service industry jobs account for about 15% of all jobs in the 2000 Census of the region. This is considerable smaller than the one-fifth of the work force reported in the State. Farming, an ever-decreasing segment of the labor force, comprises approximately 1% of the total work force for Carl Junction. Included in farming are some non-manufacturing elements of agriculture.

**Local Economic Base**

The number of Carl Junction residents employed within Carl Junction is quite small. Of the 7,445 people in the labor force, only 289 (7%) are employed in the City.

There are numerous businesses in Carl Junction that can be divided into three main categories: service, retail, and industry. Over half of Carl Junction’s companies are service businesses. Predominant among these are construction companies and lawn care providers. Beauty salons and day care providers are also common. There are three manufacturing businesses in Carl Junction. They include New-Aire Manufacturing, Midwest Doors & Interiors and Surgi Manufacturing. Carl Junction may not a retail hub like Joplin, but it does have almost 30 retail businesses. Common among these are collectibles and crafts shops as well as convenience stores and a Dollar General. As a residential community, Carl Junction has a responsibility to provide retail availability and convenience to its residents. An increase in the advertising and signs of Carl Junction businesses along Route 171 where it borders the City would provide visibility to the traffic that travels between Pittsburg, KS and Joplin.
The community also has a small core downtown that offers residents the convenience of local shopping. Added to this convenience is the historic nature of the original buildings in the downtown area. Redevelopment of the area, especially the restoration of privately owned historic buildings, is a worthwhile investment for the community. The recently remodeled CJ Pharmacy building (pictured on the right) is an excellent example of this type of effort.

**MOKAN Partnership**

The MOKAN Partnership (MKP), formerly known as the Joplin Regional Partnership and Southwest Missouri Development Alliance before that, has evolved to expand its regionalism to include Southeast Kansas. This effort is intended to have a significant benefit to the City of Carl Junction, as the region shifts focus to include Pittsburg, Columbus, and other communities located in Kansas near our community. The MKP’s mission is to provide the necessary resources to attract businesses, office space or retail to the region. They will work with our community to assist with the promotion of specific locations and buildings on a national scale.

**Current Commercial Space Inventory**

There is very little open commercial or retail space available in town. The former Deems Family Market store and the CJ Stop convenience store are the only available space. Commercially zoned vacant property is available along Fir Road.

**Current Economic Synopsis**

Due to the relatively higher income of residents of the community, residential land and personal property values are a staple component of the local economy. However, planners across country have determined residential growth is not typically able to sustain its own long-term community costs. According to Attachment #1, the community’s retail sales per capita of $1,898 in 2012 was substantially lower than those of the other levels of government ($13,443 - $17,244). Additional commercial real estate development that will add stable retail sales tax and long-term revenue for the community is a high priority.
PRIORITY PROJECT GOAL
To provide analysis of economic development needs and potential investment incentive options that will attract interest in new development in the community and ultimately diversify and increase the community’s tax base and personal income.

The City of Carl Junction does not have an ideal location or high traffic areas that most commercial real estate developers look for to attract retail business, making it necessary to consider other ways of attracting new development that will help increase tax revenues for the community. The cost of offering incentives to draw in more commercial development and business activity in the community will likely be worth its short-term costs to the City in order to realize this long-term gain.

OBJECTIVES

1. By the year 2025, the City of Carl Junction will work with an economic development consultant Carl Junction Chamber, Joplin Area Chamber, and/or other local partner who will help the City develop a plan for an increase in new development.

The city would like to encourage the redevelopment and/or expansion of its core downtown retail and service area. The preservation and restoration of existing historic buildings will add to the attractiveness and appeal of downtown. The existing buildings that form the core downtown retail district are essentially along the west side of the 100 block of South Main Street. There might be potential for this block’s designation as a federal historic district through the Missouri DNR’s State Historic Preservation Office. If the block is considered by the state to be potentially eligible, then federal and state historic tax credits may be available for their rehabilitation. If it is not considered an historic district, then the creation of other incentives would be worthwhile to ensure their appropriate restoration and/or new infill development. One example of how this may be applied would be the creation of a bank consortium with the purpose of offering low interest loans to property owners. An example of appropriate infill development includes building that align with the existing buildings, are two to three stories in height, and require street level retail space with upper floor office and/or residential space. Socially active retail districts have been key components of many successful downtown redevelopment plans in recent years. New buildings, if appropriately designed, will allow a critical mass to occur and promote downtown as a place of interest that will attract new businesses and ultimately new customers.

The cost of this form of development is often a limiting factor in its effective implementation. Many developers are reluctant to assume the risks involved with this “new urban” form without adequate logistical and financial community support. Financial incentives supporting
these new retail commercial areas should also be created to assist with the costs of additional infrastructure typical of new urban developments. Such incentives could potentially come from the creation of Community Improvement Districts (CIDs), Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts, and/or other similar forms of government sponsored financing allowed by state and federal law. The City could also use these incentives for other retail developments outside of the downtown district, such as at the entrance to Briarbrook, to encourage a higher level of development in those locations too.

2. **By the year 2025, the City will analyze the potential for attracting more professionals to the community, including small business startups and those who are able to freelance and/or work remotely.**

The city's strong presence of professionals is a key strength of the community and can be used as a catalyst to encourage more professionals to locate here. The City and/or Chamber of Commerce will survey local residents in various professional fields to help determine the potential of attracting more people in their industry to the community, especially those who work in the information and technology fields. The City may also invest in appropriate market studies to determine what the supply of (and demand for) basic professional services are here in the City. This proactive step will help the community market itself to those groups and prepare for those services to support future population growth and demand.

The city could also create a small business development program that provides financial and professional support to new innovative business entrepreneurs. The Carl Junction Chamber of Commerce would take the lead in the creation and implementation of this effort, and likely be supported with the help of the MKP, and potentially provide shared office space if needed.

The City will encourage the development of professional office space and buildings. Carl Junction is home to many professionals who work in surrounding communities. There is a strong desire for the community to keep their trades and services local. As the community grows, so will its need for financial, legal, medical, and other professional services.

The city could create a niche market for itself in the agri-business field that could be promoted and marketed by the MOKAN Partnership. Its rural character and surrounding amenities could be used as assets of the community to encourage entrepreneurs to locate and establish their new agri-business company in the community.
CHAPTER 6: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

CURRENT COMMUNITY CONDITION

There are a wide variety of community owned facilities and services that range from necessities, such as water systems, to wants, which could be as extravagant as high capacity arenas found in some of the country’s largest cities. A community the size of Carl Junction, that is experiencing our kind of growth, may have many levels of expectations of what facilities and services should be provided by the community. While some families still perceive Carl Junction as a small town of around 4,000 people that provides relatively few services, others (who may mostly be new to the area) may desire and expect services typically found in cities closer to 10,000 to 15,000 in population.

Carl Junction has come a long way from its 4,000 population in 1990. New improvements over the past 40 years have included wastewater plant improvements, drinking water expansions and improvements, and the construction of multiple new public buildings. As Carl Junction continues to grow from a population of approximately 8,300, to potentially 10,000 over the next few years, it is important to carefully consider in the current planning process what new services will be required and expected to adequately sustain this growth.

Wastewater Treatment

Wastewater treatment is handled by a mechanical treatment system originally constructed in 1988 and expanded several times in response to the growth of the city and changes in regulatory requirements. Originally constructed at a cost of $3.2 million, a $1 million expansion was undertaken in 1996 to keep pace with growth of the community. An $860,000 upgrade and expansion was completed and went on line in May, 2003, and a $4.1 million addition was completed in 2015, funded by $2.05 million SRF loan and $2.05 million Department of Natural Resources Grant. The facilities are currently designed to treat up to an average of 1.6 million gallons per day of wastewater flow, and a peak flow of up to 5.7 million gallons per day. Treatment utilizes three oxidation ditches, three clarifiers, aerobic digesters, and ultraviolet light. The effluent is discharged into Center Creek south of the plant at the city limits. The original lagoon system serves as a storm water run-off and holding basin, while the twin cells are utilized for sludge holding with alternate year emptying and cleaning.

Along with Carl Junction, the wastewater treatment facility also provides treatment for the Village of Airport Drive and several other smaller entities. The Village pays costs and fees in compliance with the terms of the bond agreement used to construct the facility. Wastewater is carried to the plant via approximately 55 miles of 8” to 18” pipe within the City of Carl Junction,
plus the sewers serving the Village of Airport Drive. Seven lift stations are required: Karen Drive, Quail’s Nest; Oscie-Ora Acres, Well Street, Z Highway, Nicholas Lane, Rocky Lane and two to serve Airport Drive.

The wastewater treatment plant currently has two full-time employees, one with a Class “B” license and one a Class “A” license. Testing is conducted in compliance with guidelines set forth by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources.

**Drinking Water**

Seven wells and six water towers serve the City. All wells currently meet Missouri Department of Natural Resources’ (MoDNR) guidelines, with all wells adding chlorine and fluoride. The tower for well #1 and #2 was replaced in May 1997, to increase volume from 50,000 gallons to 200,000 gallons. Wells #5 and #7 serve the Briarbrook and Oscie-Ora subdivisions. Well #5 is in use with well #7 coming on line in 1997. Abandoned well #4 was replaced by well #6, but it is a low-volume well. The cost of bringing well #6 on-line was $41,000. Well #3 is tested every five years for radon 226 per order of the MoDNR. Levels are currently acceptable. Table #4 provides details of the depth of each well, storage capacity of the towers, depth of casing, as well as providing data on the linear feet of water pipe within the City. A $1.76 million dollar expansion was approved by the voters for a bond issuance in August 2002, which added two wells and two towers. Iron, calcium, and hydrogen sulfide are present in local water but not at contamination levels. The City of Carl Junction supports the Tri-States Water Coalition in searching for a regional fresh water reservoir to provide a secondary source of water.

**Community Center**

In April 2008, voters approved a $4.4 million bond issue to finance a new community center. The center accommodates City Hall, the Senior Center, the Chamber of Commerce office, a gymnasium, an exercise room and meeting rooms. It is located on Main Street. The Community Center has already proven to be a significant asset to the community since its opening in 2009. Demand for services and accommodations provided by the Center has already spurred discussion of its future expansion. Some of the highest demand amenities that are anticipated to need expansion in the near future are the exercise facilities. A walking track around the gym and more room for exercise equipment, such as aerobic and weight lifting machines, should be well used and worth their investment to the community. The exceptional amenities provided for the Senior Center should also induce more demand for this service. Additional space to accommodate more users may be needed in the near future.

**Other Public Buildings**

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Carl Junction Comprehensive Plan – 2020 Update
Across the street from the Community Center is the new Police Station and City Court, that were completed in 2010. Other public buildings include the Alva “Curly” Donham Public Works Complex on Joplin Street, which houses the water, sewer, and street services. This facility is in need of renovation to include upgrading heating, air conditioning and office space. The United States Post Office is also located in the 100 block of South Main Street.

**Police Protection**

The primary mission of the Carl Junction Police Department is to coordinate and lead the efforts with the community to preserve the public peace, protect the rights of persons and property, prevent crime and generally provide assistance to citizens in urgent situations. The department is responsible for the enforcement of all Federal, Missouri State and City Codes within the boundaries of the City of Carl Junction. To fulfill the Police Department mission they employee 12 full time officers plus dispatch and code enforcement and utilize 6 cruisers, 2 four wheel drive SUV’s, a code enforcement pick up and an off-road utility vehicle.

**Fire Protection**

The Carl Junction Fire Protection District covers the City and surrounding areas. Its headquarters is located on Pennell Street. Three substations are located within the city limits. Its service is considered more than adequate for the community’s current needs. It is also anticipated to provide sufficient service well into the future, especially for the 20 year period covered by this plan.

**Code Enforcement**

Coupled with planning and zoning is the City’s effort to enforce building codes. The idea of having building codes is to ensure safety. Enacting them but not enforcing them, however is as dangerous as not having them at all. The residential development of the City is sufficient reason to vigorously enforce codes that are designed to protect lives and property.

**Cemetery**

Howard Cemetery is located on South Grimes. Carl Junction Cemetery is located on North Grimes. The Masonic Lodge is located next to the Police Station on North Main Street. There are nine churches in the city limits, which represent a wide range of religious preferences.

**Residential Care Facilities**

Carl Junction has two adult residential facilities. Carl Junction Residential Care is located at 210 Fir Road; the Carl Junction Housing Authority is located on Karen Drive. The Senior Citizens Center is also located downtown in Community Center.
Telephone Service

The City of Carl Junction is served by AT&T with DMS-10, a digital switch located within the City. The integrated service digital network (ISDN) provides high-speed service to residential and business lines. This service includes all call-control features such as call-waiting, forwarding, and caller ID. Fiber optic lines connect Carl Junction to the main phone system in Joplin, which will allow any and all future upgrades.

Internet Service Providers

The City is primarily served by Wisper Internet, Rise Broadband, Mediacom, and AT&T internet service providers.

Solid Waste

The City currently contracts with Republic Services for city residents. The residents are billed monthly for the service through the City in conjunction with water and sewer fees. Commercial sites contract separately for direct billing. The City does not have a waste disposal site within the corporate limits.

Paper and cardboard recycling bins are available at the community center and public works facility. The City offers leaf pick-up along city streets during the fall. There is also a city compost area at the Public Works Facility on Joplin Street where residents may discard natural yard waste. Carl Junction is also a member of the Region M Solid Waste District. The purpose of the District is to assist local governments in meeting increasingly stringent waste stream reduction goals mandated by the State.

Electricity

Liberty Utilities, via a 12,000-volt capacity sub-station, provides electricity for the City. This nine-year-old facility is sufficient to handle projected needs and growth for the next ten to fifteen years. Delivery of electrical service is carried out in compliance with Missouri regulations, as interpreted by the Public Service Commission.

Natural Gas

Natural gas is provided to Carl Junction by Spire Inc.

Housing and Neighborhoods

Carl Junction is a highly desirable suburban community. The rapid increase in population demonstrates this assertion. The population numbers are supported by the increase in housing stock, and the age of the units. While the City is not a housing developer, nor should it be, it does have a civic responsibility to ensure that housing is safe, adequately serviced by infrastructure
amenities, constructed in compliance with legally imposed building standards, and contributory to the betterment of the community.

Carl Junction has experienced a remarkable increasing in its housing inventory. The City has taken on a strong residential quality, proving to be an attractive community to would-be homeowners. The increase in the housing inventory has been brought about by at least three factors: 1) Carl Junction is geographically close to Joplin, the major employment center in the region; 2) the City offers an excellent public school system; and, 3) private developers have aggressively pursued new housing subdivision developments that offer affordable, up-scale single family dwellings.

The housing data in Attachment #1 indicates that the City has a high rate of owner-occupied units, 79.4%, when compared to the other levels of government that range from 63.8% to 66.8%. The median value of owner-occupied housing units ($142,100) and monthly owner costs with a mortgage ($1,163) are higher than Jasper County’s as a whole ($115,900 and $1,031 respectively). The median gross rent of $954 is also higher than the County’s ($773) and State’s ($809), and is not much lower than the Country’s ($1,023), which indicates there may still be a lack of affordable rental property in the community.

Clearly, Carl Junction is a dynamic residential community. To ward off future concerns regarding housing, however, the City will take specific steps.

- Building Codes: The City, having enacted building and construction codes must continue to vigorously enforce them.
- Planning and Zoning: The City enacts and vigorously enforces, appropriate planning, zoning, and land use regulations.

Briarbrook Community Improvement District

The Briarbrook neighborhood has formed a new community improvement district (CID) in order to obtain ownership of the golf course and its amenities. The CID has a special assessment tax on the neighborhood of approximately 1,100 residences surrounding a newly renovated Briarbrook Golf and Fitness center. A brochure for the CID states that it will feature a variety of items when fully developed including: family membership packages, a fully renovated 18-hole championship course with three tee boxes, a fully renovated pool with a sun deck and wading pool, two tennis courts, a pro shop, a new fitness center, event and conference rooms, and new locker rooms.

Affordable Housing Stock

The affordable housing stock has improved over recent years as for-profit and non-profit developers have built government subsidized housing. (Redwood Development, Zimmerman
Properties, Harry S Truman CDC, etc). The Carl Junction Housing Authority also has 20 government subsidized housing units for low income elderly residents.

**Joplin Consortium**

In 2005 the City of Joplin approached communities in Jasper County about creating a local consortium in order to become eligible for housing grant funds through the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) HOME Partnership and Investment Program (HOME). The Consortium was formed, including Carl Junction, in 2006 and funded by HUD in 2007. It received $462,214 in its 2019 fiscal allocation from HUD. The programs created by the Consortium include owner-occupied rehabilitation grant assistance, homeownership assistance, and an acquisition and rehabilitation project where the redeveloped homes are sold to low and moderate income (LMI) families.

**PRIORITY PROJECT GOAL**

To ensure adequate infrastructure for anticipated development and support affordable housing development for all income levels in the community.

**OBJECTIVES**

1. **By the year 2025, the City will complete a Comprehensive Water Study to plan for the next 20 years of water usage in the community.**
   
   The City will continue to assess its water system to keep up with capacity needs and prepare for future expansion projects.

2. **Until the year 2025, the City will continue to analyze and address needs for other infrastructure capacity and expansion.**

   The City will continue to expand other infrastructure systems, such as sewer, with enough capacity for long term needs of the community. It is a priority of the community to see that the cost of new residential growth is paid for by the new residents. The most appropriate approach to objectively implement this strategy is to create reasonable impact fees. It’s important that these fees are carefully calculated in order to keep development costs at or below that of comparable surrounding communities. The impact fees should be charged as a part of the building permit process and be based on anticipated need for future system expansions.

   Carl Junction will also ensure that the needs of its residents are met ahead of serving any outside areas. Appropriate rates should be charged to nonresident users including any premiums above and beyond in-town rates necessary to cover their costs. If and when a system that has nonresident users reaches its maximum limit, those users should be dropped from the system until adequate capacity is available to continue their service.
The City will maintain an adequate police presence as the community grows, including the consideration of a satellite police station in the future. Response times for emergency personnel may be negatively affected as increased population results in increased congestion in town. The City will also continue its relationship with, and support of, the Carl Junction Fire Protection District. It was agreed that services of the district will be more than adequate for at least the five-year planning period covered by this plan. The City will encourage the District to expand services to include housing an ambulance from the Metro Emergency Transport System.

The City will explore options to improve periodic updates to inform its residents of new activities going on in the community. The updates will be posted and available on the City’s website and social media outlets. The Chamber may also assist the City with this effort.

3. **By the year 2025, the City will support the completion of a housing market study, promote the development of affordable housing based on the study, and enforce its maintenance codes to protect its diversity and quality housing stock.**

The City will support and promote assistance to low-moderate income (LMI) homeowners through available resources, including low-interest loan and grant programs. Local non-profit groups, such as the Joplin Area Habitat for Humanity and the Economic Security Corporation, participate in affordable housing development and housing rehabilitation programs funded by the state and federal governments.

The City will encourage the development of additional market rate rental housing in the community. A target of 25 – 30% of the housing stock should be available to residents as rentals. This amount was considered in the planning process to be an adequate amount to meet Carl Junction’s needs for the foreseeable future. A mix of rental units from single-family homes to garden style apartment complexes are encouraged to be built in the community. The development of additional government subsidized rental housing in the community for LMI families will also be encouraged by the City. There are multiple local non-profit groups who participate in subsidized rental development programs funded by the state and federal governments who will be supported.

The City will also encourage developers to build housing units with entry level market values. The City will consider amending their subdivision regulations to allow for higher density, smaller lot developments as an incentive, if necessary. Developers will need to provide evidence that the cost of land or other community development restrictions are prohibitive to achieve targeted price range to help determine the necessity. Homeownership in the form of higher density condominium developments might also be a good way to increase the level of housing stock that is more affordable and/or easier to maintain for certain populations including the elderly.
The City will support government grant funded projects that provide homeownership assistance to eligible LMI families. Funding might be available through the Joplin Consortium for this particular need, which is designed to assist families with 50% of the required down payment and 100% of closing costs. Local lenders should be encouraged to contact the organization regarding the assistance and work with potential homebuyers to obtain the funding.

The City will also ensure the Code Compliance Officer(s) positions is adequately staffed and trained. Compliance enforcement should be fair yet firm with owners. In addition, the city should look to update and make sure that its code is compliant with State regulations.

Overall, the City will implement a clear and comprehensive housing strategy that encourages rational private development and prevents the following conditions:

1. Improper Land Use Arrangement: Inadequate or poorly enforced regulations permitting a poor intermix of incompatible land uses.
2. Conversion of Structures: Use of structures not originally intended for residential use or current densities. There are no historic structures in Carl Junction such as those that are often found in other cities that are appropriate for converting from commercial/industrial uses to residential uses.
3. Overbuilding: Lack of open space.
4. Absentee Ownership of Rental Property: Non-responsive and non-accountable ownership in property being held for maximum income with minimum investment (both residential and commercial property).
5. Poor Traffic Conditions: Careful attention to the use of existing streets and developing traffic patterns.
6. Abuse of Property: Poor maintenance is a primary cause of deteriorating neighborhoods.
7. Ineffective Code Enforcement: The entire range of building codes, adopted by the City, must be firmly but fairly administered. The City must invest in the necessary training of its code enforcement officials and ensure that the code enforcement effort is adequately staffed.