

2024

# City of Wahoo Downtown Area Blight Study



JEO Consulting Group, Inc.

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## **Introduction**

### ***Purpose of the Study***

This Wahoo Downtown Area blight and substandard study of the designated study area is intended to give the Community Development Agency and City Council the basis for considering the existence of blight and substandard conditions within the delineated study area. Through this process, the City of Wahoo's Community Development Agency may employ and exercise the power authorized in Nebraska Community Development Law to eliminate and prevent blighted and substandard conditions that are detrimental to the future public health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the entire community as well as the surrounding region. If the City of Wahoo finds and determines, based on substantial evidence in the record before it, that the recommended Blight and Substandard Area (detailed below and referred to herein as "Wahoo Downtown Area Blight Study Area") meets the statutory conditions for an area that is blighted, substandard, and in need of redevelopment, the designated study area will become a Redevelopment Area under the Community Development Law (Neb. Rev. Stat. §§ 18-2101 to 18-2155).

This blight and substandard study examines the existing conditions of land use, physical and other constraints, buildings, and structures within the designated study area in the City of Wahoo to determine its eligibility for redevelopment activities. Potential opportunities for redevelopment exist throughout the designated study area, which would allow the City of Wahoo to overcome blighted and substandard conditions and avoid issues that could lead to blight and substandard conditions. When evaluating blight and substandard conditions, the City of Wahoo must adhere to Nebraska Community Development Law.

**Nebraska Revised State Statutes**

The Community Development Law provides guidelines under which municipalities may address concerns and develop strategies for the rehabilitation and redevelopment of deteriorating area, as well as the prevention and elimination of substandard and blighted area. The Legislature has declared, in pertinent part:

*It is hereby found and declared that there exist in cities of all classes and villages of this state area which have deteriorated and become substandard and blighted because of the unsafe, insanitary, inadequate, or overcrowded condition of the dwellings therein, or because of inadequate planning of the area, or excessive land coverage by the buildings thereon, or the lack of proper light and air and open space, or because of the defective design and arrangement of the buildings thereon, or faulty street or lot layout, or congested traffic conditions, or economically or socially undesirable land uses...These conditions are beyond remedy and control solely by regulatory process in the exercise of the police power and cannot be dealt with effectively by the ordinary operations of private enterprise without the aids herein provided...It is further found and declared that the prevention and elimination of blight is a matter of state policy, public interest, and statewide concern and within the powers and authority inhering in and reserved to the state, in order that the state and its municipalities shall not continue to be endangered by area which are focal centers of disease, promote juvenile delinquency, and consume an excessive proportion of their revenue. §18-2102*

Consistent with these findings, municipalities have been granted the power to address deterioration, substandard conditions, and blight through any number of means, including “the formulation of a workable program, the approval of community redevelopment plans consistent with the general plan for the development of the city, the exercise of its zoning powers, the enforcement of other laws, codes, and regulations, relating to the use of land and the use and occupancy of buildings and improvements, the disposition of any property acquired, and the providing of necessary public improvements.” Neb. Rev. Stat. §18-2104.

Nebraska Revised Statute §18-2104 enables a municipality to declare that blight and substandard conditions exist. The statute reads,

*The governing body of a city, to the greatest extent it deems to be feasible in carrying out the provisions, shall afford maximum opportunity, consistent with sound needs of the city, to the rehabilitation or redevelopment of the community redevelopment area by private enterprises. The governing body of a city shall give consideration to this objective in exercising its powers, including the formulation of a workable program, the approval of community redevelopment plans consistent with the general plan for the development of the city, the exercise of its zoning powers, the enforcement of other laws, codes, and regulations relating to the use and occupancy of buildings and improvements, the disposition of any property acquired, and providing of necessary public improvements.*

The process of improving an area begins with the creation of a municipality-wide workable program for utilizing appropriate private and public resources to address the specific conditions to be improved. Such workable programs may include “provision for the prevention of the spread of blight into areas of the municipality which are free from blight through diligent enforcement of housing, zoning, and occupancy controls and standards; the rehabilitation or conservation of substandard and blighted area or portions thereof by re-planning, removing congestion, providing parks, playgrounds, and other public improvements by encouraging voluntary rehabilitation and by compelling the repair and rehabilitation of deteriorated or deteriorating structures; and the clearance and redevelopment of substandard and blighted area or portions thereof.” Neb. Rev. Stat. §18-2105.

The statutes provide a means for the governing body of a municipality to address and develop strategies for rehabilitation and redevelopment of the community. Nebraska Revised Statute §18-2105 also grants authority to the governing body to formulate a redevelopment program. The statute reads:

*The governing body of a city or an authority at its direction for the purposes of the Community Development Law may formulate for the entire municipality a workable program for utilizing appropriate private and public resources to eliminate or prevent the development or spread of urban blight, to encourage needed urban rehabilitation, to provide for the redevelopment of substandard and blighted area, or to undertake such of the aforesaid activities or other feasible municipal activities as may be suitably employed to achieve the objectives of such workable program. Such workable program may include, without limitation, provision for the prevention of the spread of blight into area of the municipality which are free from blight through diligent enforcement of housing, zoning and occupancy controls and standards; the rehabilitation or conservation of substandard or blighted area or portions thereof by replanning, removing congestion, providing parks, playgrounds, and other public improvements by encouraging voluntary rehabilitation and by compelling the repair and rehabilitation of deteriorated or deteriorating structures; and the clearance and redevelopment of substandard and blighted area or portions thereof. §18-2105*

Prior to the adoption of a redevelopment plan, a municipality must have an adopted comprehensive plan (§18-2110) and shall have declared the redevelopment area to be a substandard and blighted area in need of redevelopment (§18-2109).

The important community development terms are defined in Nebraska Revised Statute §18-2103, several of which are shown below (organization and emphasis added):

**Substandard area** means an area in which there is a predominance of buildings or improvements, whether nonresidential or residential in character, which, by reason of dilapidation, deterioration, age or obsolescence, inadequate provision for ventilation, light, air, sanitation, or open spaces, high density of population and overcrowding, or the existence of conditions which endanger life or property by fire and other causes, or any combination of such factors, is conducive to ill health, transmission of disease, infant mortality, juvenile delinquency, and crime, (which cannot be remedied through construction of prisons), and is detrimental to the public health, safety, morals, or welfare;

**Blighted area** means an area, which

(a) by reason of the presence of a substantial number of deteriorated or deteriorating structures, existence of defective or inadequate street layout, faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness, unsanitary or unsafe conditions, deterioration of site or other improvements, diversity of ownership, tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land, defective or unusual conditions of title, improper subdivision or obsolete platting, or the existence of conditions which endanger life or property by fire and other causes, or any combination of such factors, substantially impairs or arrests the sound growth of the community, retards the provision of housing accommodations, or constitutes an economic or social liability and is detrimental to the public health, safety, morals, or welfare in its present condition and use; and,

(b) in which there is at least one of the following conditions:

- (i) Unemployment in the designated area is at least one hundred twenty percent of the state or national average;
- (ii) the average age of the residential or commercial units in the area is at least forty years;
- (iii) more than half of the plotted and subdivided property in an area is unimproved land that has been within the city for forty years and has remained unimproved during that time;
- (iv) the per capita income of the area is lower than the average per capita income of the city or village in which the area is designated; or

*(v) the area has had either stable or decreasing population based on the last two decennial censuses.*

*In no event shall a city of the metropolitan, primary, or first class designate more than thirty-five percent of the city as blighted, a city of the second class shall not designate an area larger than fifty percent of the city as blighted, and a village shall not designate an area larger than one hundred percent of the village as blighted;*

## **Substandard and Blight Eligibility Analysis**

### **Designated Study Area**

The designated study area is property within the corporate limits for evaluation pursuant to the Community Development Law. The area is a commercial and residential district. The designated study area was selected for a number of reasons, including:

1. The area was previously studied and declared Blighted and Substandard.
2. The presence of blighted and substandard characteristics within the study area.
3. The potential for private development and redevelopment activities within the study area.
4. The need for improvements in infrastructure due to specific existing conditions.
5. The economical and functional obsolescence of certain properties within the study area.
6. The need for public intervention to stimulate the development and redevelopment of vital infrastructure systems and housing to support these private redevelopment efforts.

Once declared substandard and blighted, the City of Wahoo can stimulate and manage future development in this area by creation and use of the redevelopment plan and its statutory authority to provide financial incentives for private development.

Through the redevelopment process, the City of Wahoo can guide future development in the community and provide financial incentives for development. The use of the Nebraska Community Redevelopment Law by the City of Wahoo is intended to improve the community and enhance the quality of life for all residents by eliminating conditions that contribute to the spread of blight and hinder private reinvestment in the area due to these factors. Using the Nebraska Community Development Law, Wahoo can eliminate negative factors and implement programs and/or projects identified to improve conditions, thereby removing, or preventing blight and substandard conditions.

### **Substandard and Blight Conditions**

As set forth in section 18-2103(31), **substandard area** shall mean an area in which there is a predominance of buildings or improvements, whether nonresidential or residential in character, which by reason of the following:

1. **Dilapidation/deterioration\***  
Exterior inspection of buildings to note deficiencies (sound, minor, major, dilapidated)
  - Examples include structural (walls, foundation, roof), building systems (gutters, roof surface, chimney), and architectural systems (fire escapes, weatherization, steps, exterior paint, site conditions).
2. **Age or obsolescence**  
Estimate age of structures (40+ years criteria)
3. **Inadequate provision for ventilation, light, air, sanitation, or open spaces**  
Overall sight conditions
  - Examples include junked cars or debris, cluttered alleyways, antiquated infrastructure systems (overhead power lines), outdoor storage/sanitation facilities, unpaved parking/outdoor storage.
4. **Other substandard conditions**
  - (a) High density of population and overcrowding (census); or
  - (b) The existence of conditions which endanger life or property by fire and other causes as unsanitary and unsafe conditions which endanger life or property by fire and other natural causes floodplain; or
  - (c) Any combination of such factors is conducive to ill health, transmission of disease, infant mortality, juvenile delinquency, and crime; is detrimental to the public health, safety, morals, or welfare (includes sanitation concerns, inadequate infrastructure systems (sewer, water service mains, storm sewers), poor lighting, crime statistics, floodplain area, outdoor storage, site clutter).

As set forth in the Community Development Law, a **blighted area** shall mean an area, which by reason of the presence of:

1. **A substantial number of deteriorated or deteriorating structures\***  
Exterior inspection of buildings to note deficiencies (sound, minor, major, dilapidated)
  - Examples include structural (walls, foundation, roof), building systems (gutters, roof surface, chimney), and architectural systems (fire escapes, weatherization, steps, exterior paint, site conditions).
2. **Existence of defective or inadequate street layout**  
Condition of streets/inadequate access including sidewalks
  - Examples include street conditions, dead ends, railroad crossings, linear downtown, narrow alleyways, blind crossings, and sidewalk condition.
3. **Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness**  
Conditions associated with accessibility/usefulness of the lots
  - Examples include land locked parcels, odd shaped lots, undersized lots, lots with accessibility concerns.
4. **Unsanitary or unsafe conditions**  
Conditions which pose a threat to public health and safety
  - Examples include age and physical condition of structures, floodplain, lack of public infrastructure systems, unsanitary conditions, ventilation concerns.
5. **Deterioration of site or other improvements**  
Field observation of age and condition of public utilities, debris, and inadequate public improvements
  - Examples include lack of off-street parking, storm drainage, junk cars, dilapidated structures, debris, on-site storage, congested overhead power lines.
6. **Diversity of ownership**  
The total number of unduplicated owners
  - Examples include the necessity of to acquire numerous lots is a hindrance to redevelopment. However, land assemblage of larger proportions necessary for major developments, is more economically feasible and will attract financial support, as well as public patronage required to repay such financial support. Such assemblage is difficult without public intervention.
7. **Tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land**  
Examination of public records to determine the status of taxation of properties
  - Examples include delinquent taxes, real estate taxes or special assessments exceeding the fair market value.
8. **Defective or unusual conditions of title**  
Examine public records to determine any defective or unusual title defects
  - Examples include improper filings, liens, defective titles, etc.
9. **Improper subdivision or obsolete platting**  
Examine public records to determine improper subdivision and obsolete platting
  - Examples include undersized lots, improper zoning, lot configuration, easement concerns, never recorded vacated streets, accessibility concerns.
10. **The existence of conditions which endanger life or property by fire or other causes**  
Examine conditions which endanger life or property

- Examples include inadequate, undersized, or inoperative public infrastructure systems, floodplain, building materials, site access, on-site storage (cars), secluded area for pests and vermin to thrive, inadequate surface drainage, street/sidewalk conditions, etc.
11. **Any combination of such factors, substantially impairs or arrests the sound growth of the community, hinders the provision of housing accommodations, or constitutes an economic or social liability**  
Economic and/or socially undesirable land uses
- Examples include incompatible land uses, economic obsolescence, functional obsolescence which relates to the property’s ability to compete in the marketplace.
12. **Is detrimental to the public health, safety, morals, or welfare in its present condition and use; and in which there is at least one of the following conditions:**
- (a) Unemployment in the designated blighted area is at least one hundred twenty percent of the state or national average (Census statistics);
  - (b) The average age of the residential or commercial units in the area is at least 40 years (Public Records);
  - (c) More than half of the plotted and subdivided property in the area is unimproved land that has been within the city for 40 years and has remained unimproved during that time (Public records);
  - (d) The per capita income of the designated blighted area is lower than the average per capita income of the city or village in which the area is designated (Census); or
  - (e) The area has had either stable or decreasing population based on the last two decennial censuses (Census).

\*Where structural conditions are evaluated, individual structures are rated in accordance with the following rating schedule as defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development: no problem, adequate condition, deteriorating condition, or dilapidated condition. The following descriptions define the rating schedule used to assess and evaluate building and structure conditions:

**No Problem**

No structural or aesthetic problems are visible.

**Adequate Condition**

- Slight damage to porches, steps, roofs, etc. is present on the structure,
- Slight wearing away of mortar between bricks, stones, or concrete blocks,
- Small cracks in walls or chimneys,
- Cracked windows,
- Lack of paint, and
- Slight wear on steps, doors, and door and window frames.

**Deteriorating Condition**

- Holes, open cracks, rotted, loose, or missing materials in parts of the foundation, walls, (up to one-quarter of the wall), or roof (up to one-quarter of roof),
- Shaky, broken, or missing steps or railings,
- Numerous missing and cracked windowpanes,
- Some rotted or loose windows or doors (no longer wind- or waterproof),
- Missing bricks or other masonry of chimney, and
- Makeshift (un-insulated) chimney.

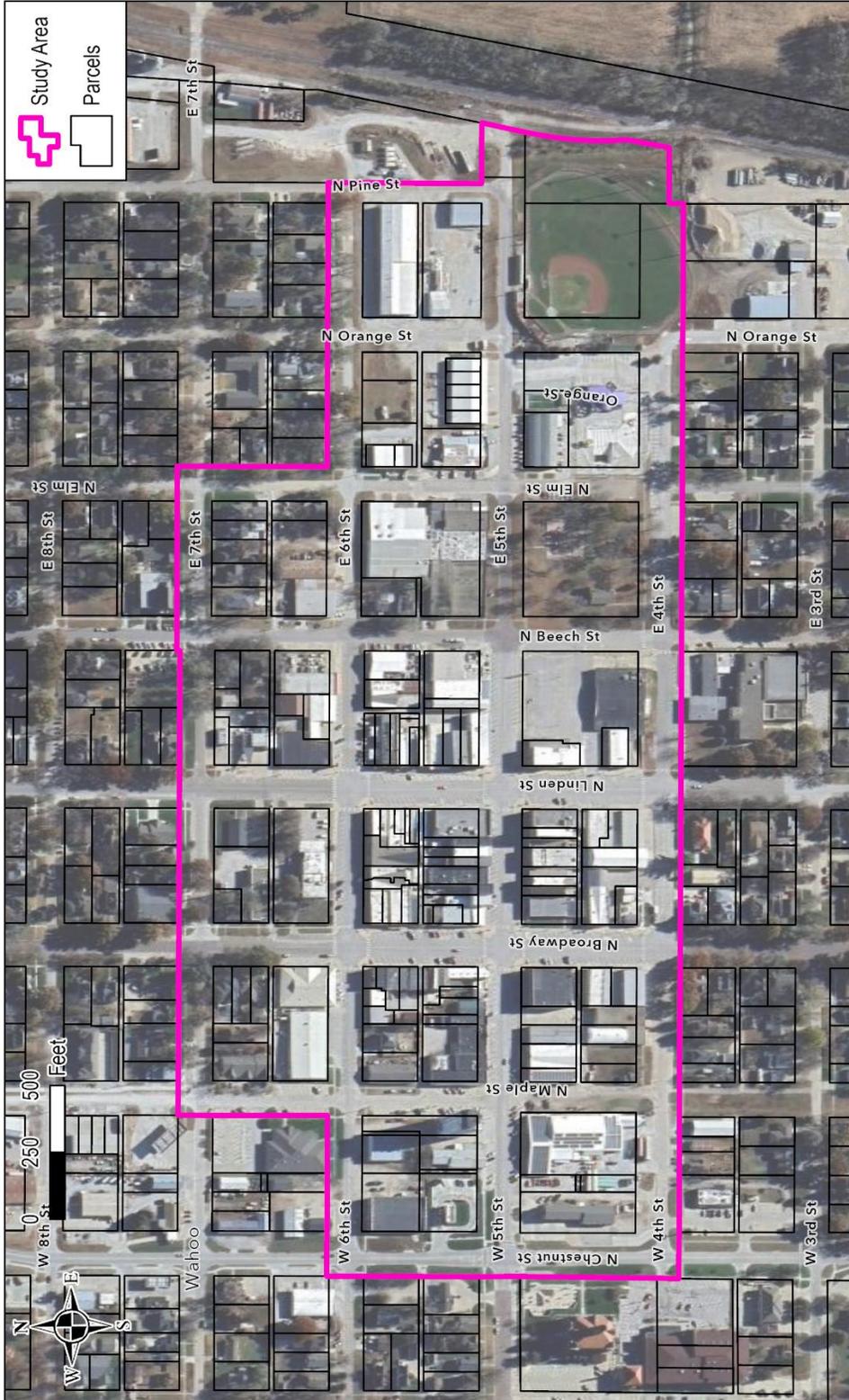
**Dilapidated Condition**

- Holes, open cracks, or rotted, loose or missing material (siding, shingles, brick, concrete, tiles, plaster, floorboards) over large area of foundation, on walls or on roof,
- Substantial sagging of roof, floors, or walls,
- Extensive damage by fire, flood, or storm, and
- Inadequate original construction such as makeshift walls, roofs made of scrap materials, foundations or floors lacking, or converted barns, sheds, and other structures not adequate for housing.

## **Designated Study Area**

The study area as identified can be found in Figure 1. For this study, the study area will be known as the “Designated Study Area” which was reviewed for substandard and blight characteristics.

Figure 1: Designated Study Area



Created By: J. Ray, N. Schroeder  
Date: February 2024  
Software: ArcGIS Pro 3.2.1  
File: R232011.00



This map was prepared using information from record drawings supplied by JEO and/or other applicable city, county, federal, or public or private entities. JEO does not guarantee the accuracy of this map or the information used to prepare this map. This is not a scaled plot.

# **City of Wahoo, NE**

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## **Wahoo Downtown Blight Study Area**

## **Recommended Blight and Substandard Area**

Based upon the review of the designated study area, and its context with the community, JEO Consulting Group recommends the designated study area be recommended as a Blight and Substandard Area. This area consists of approximately 60.07 acres or 3.22% of the City of Wahoo Corporate Limits. The following boundary description delineates the Recommended Area:

A TRACT OF LAND LOCATED IN THE CITY OF WAHOO, SAUNDERS COUNTY, NEBRASKA, BEING MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS:

BEGINNING AT THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF LOT 1, BLOCK 6, ORIGINAL TOWN OF WAHOO ADDITION; THENCE EAST 100 FEET, MORE OR LESS TO THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF LOT 7, BLOCK 136, COUNTY ADDITION TO WAHOO; THENCE EAST ON THE NORTH RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF EAST 6<sup>TH</sup> STREET, A DISTANCE OF 268 FEET, MORE OR LESS, TO THE WEST RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF NORTH MAPLE STREET; THENCE NORTH ON THE WEST RIGHT OF WAY LINE AND ITS NORTHERLY EXTENSION OF NORTH MAPLE STREET, A DISTANCE OF 345 FEET, MORE OR LESS, TO THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF LOT 12, BLOCK 135, COUNTY ADDITION TO WAHOO; THENCE EAST ON THE NORTH RIGHT OF WAY LINE AND ITS EASTERLY EXTENSION OF EAST 7<sup>TH</sup> STREET, A DISTANCE OF 1500 FEET, MORE OR LESS, TO THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF LOT 7, BLOCK 130, COUNTY ADDITION TO WAHOO; THENCE SOUTH ON THE EAST RIGHT OF WAY LINE AND ITS SOUTHERLY EXTENSION OF NORTH ELM STREET, A DISTANCE OF 345 FEET TO THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF LOT 7, BLOCK 141, COUNTY ADDITION TO WAHOO; THENCE EAST ON THE NORTH RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF EAST 6<sup>TH</sup> STREET AND ITS EAST EXTENSION 670 FEET, MORE OR LESS, TO THE EAST RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF NORTH PINE STREET; THENCE SOUTH ON THE EAST RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF NORTH PINE STREET, A DISTANCE OF 345 FEET, MORE OR LESS, TO THE EASTERLY EXTENSION OF THE NORTH RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF EAST 5<sup>TH</sup> STREET; THENCE EAST ON THE EASTERLY EXTENSION OF THE NORTH RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF EAST 5<sup>TH</sup> STREET, A DISTANCE OF 138 FEET, MORE OR LESS, TO THE WESTERLY RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF THE UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD; THENCE SOUTHWESTERLY ON SAID WESTERLY RIGHT OF WAY LINE, 435 FEET, MORE OR LESS, TO A LINE BEING 35 FEET, MORE OR LESS, NORTH OF THE EASTERLY EXTENSION OF THE SOUTH RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF EAST 4<sup>TH</sup> STREET; THENCE WEST ON SAID LINE BEING PARALLEL TO AND 35' NORTH OF THE EASTERLY EXTENSION OF THE SOUTH RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF EAST 4<sup>TH</sup> STREET, A DISTANCE OF 126 FEET, MORE OR LESS TO THE NORTHERLY EXTENSION OF THE EAST LINE OF BLOCK 161, COUNTY ADDITION TO WAHOO; THENCE SOUTH ON THE NORTHERLY EXTENSION OF THE EAST LINE OF BLOCK 161, COUNTY ADDITION TO WAHOO, A DISTANCE OF 35 FEET, MORE OR LESS, TO THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF LOT 1, BLOCK 161, COUNTY ADDITION TO WAHOO; THENCE WEST ON THE SOUTH RIGHT OF WAY LINE AND ITS WESTERLY EXTENSION OF EAST 4<sup>TH</sup> STREET, A DISTANCE OF 2478 FEET, MORE OR LESS, TO THE WEST RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF CHESTNUT STREET; THENCE NORTH ON WEST RIGHT OF WAY LINE AND ITS NORTHERLY EXTENSION OF CHESTNUT STREET, A DISTANCE OF 811 FEET, TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING.

## **Findings and Contributing Factors**

The intent of this study is to determine whether the Wahoo Downtown Area Blight Study Area within the community has experienced structural and site deterioration or if there are other negative factors which are decreasing the development potential for the area. The field survey conducted on Monday, January 29, 2024, indicated the study area has such deterioration or lack of municipal infrastructure, thus the study area warrants further examination regarding blighted and substandard conditions. The following factors were evaluated to determine if there is a reasonable presence of blight and substandard conditions within the Wahoo Downtown Area Blight Study Area.

This section reviews the building and structure conditions, infrastructure, site conditions and land use found within the Wahoo Downtown Area Blight Study Area based upon the statutory definitions, planning team observations during the field survey, and explains the identified contributing factors. *Appendix A* provides a visual description and documents examples of the different conditions that led to each factor's determination. See *Appendix A* for a visual description of the site conditions, debris, condition of public infrastructure, deteriorating structures and other observed conditions within the Wahoo Downtown Area Blight Study Area.

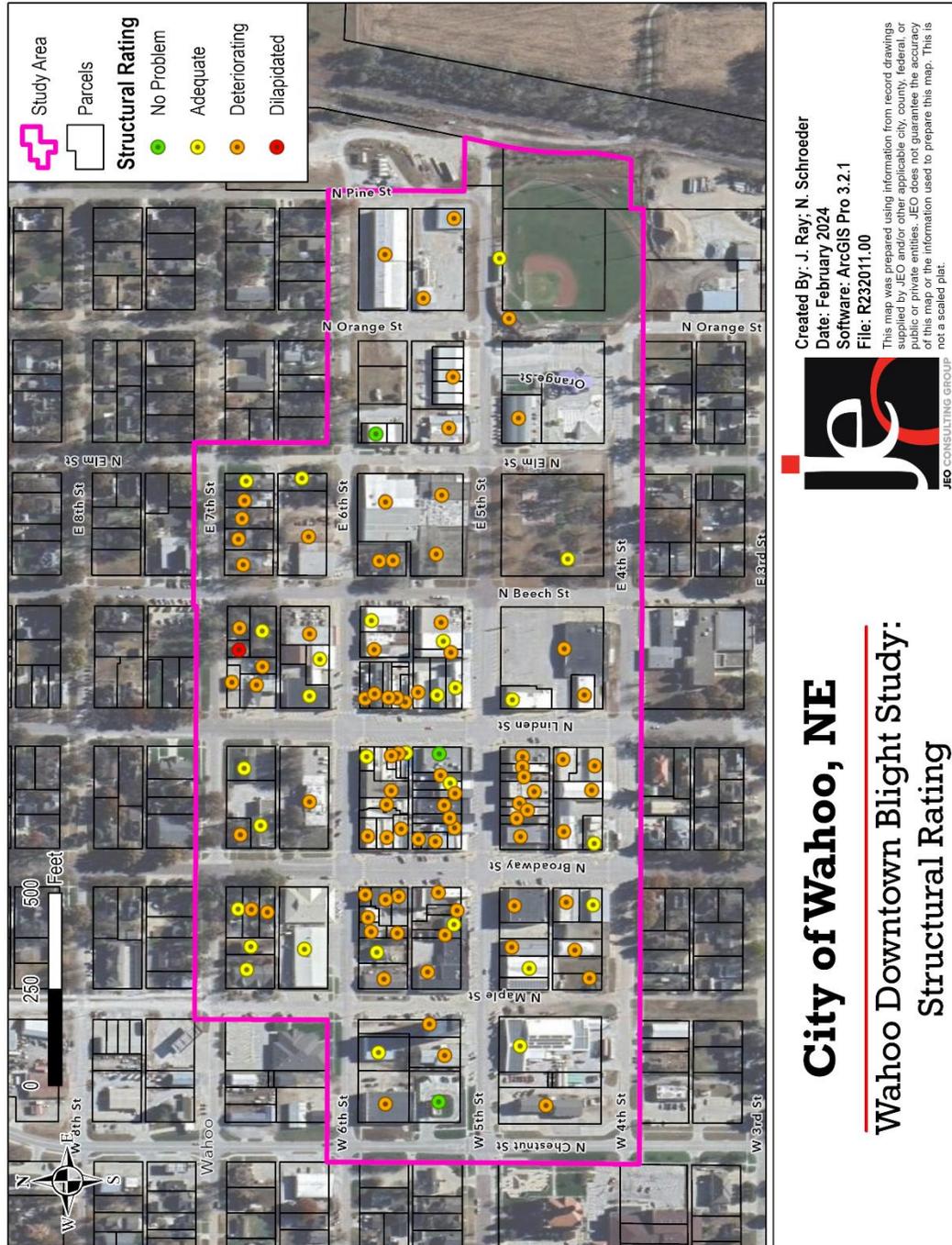
## **BLIGHTED CRITERIA CONDITIONS**

As set forth in the Nebraska legislation, a **blighted area** shall mean an area, which by reason of the presence of the following.

### **Substantial Number of Deteriorated or Deteriorating Structures**

As a rule, the primary structure for each parcel within the Wahoo Downtown Area Blight Study Area was examined. A total of 79 structures or 73% of the structures within the designated study area were graded as deteriorating or dilapidated. Figure 2 illustrates the distribution of the structural ratings within the study area. This is considered a significant contributing factor.

Figure 2, Structural Rating

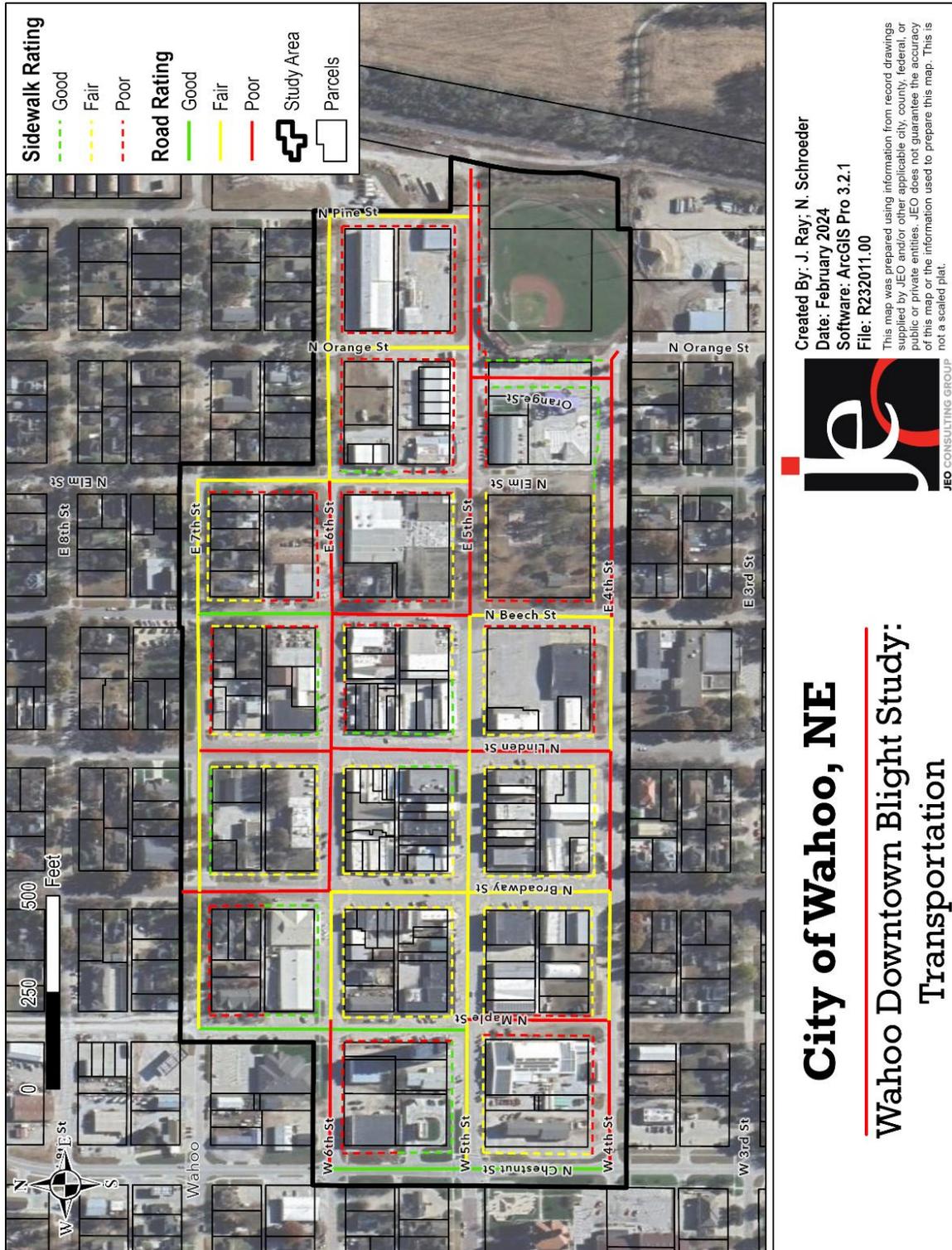


**Defective or Inadequate Street Layout**

**Street Conditions and Accessibility**

Street and sidewalk conditions within the Wahoo Downtown Area Blight Study Area were evaluated in relation to the provision of safe and efficient public circulation and access, and with regard to ease of travel and appearance. The transportation infrastructure conditions are illustrated on Figure 3.

Figure 3, Transportation



Over half of the streets and sidewalks were graded as poor due to deteriorating materials, uneven surface, or lack of hard surface.



Overall, the Wahoo Downtown Area Blight Study Area has good connectivity with the adjacent streets and only minor obstructions of the grid network. However, poor rating of over half of the transportation infrastructure is considered defective and/or inadequate. This is considered a contributing factor.

**Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness**

Throughout the Wahoo Downtown Area Blight Study Area, the lot sizes and shapes vary. Most commercial lots in the area are too narrow to adequately accommodate modern commercial building standards. Several buildings have been constructed on more than one lot and straddle property lines. Two lots were noted as “landlocked” and lacked legal access to a public Right of Way. In addition, some lots are “L” shaped or odd shaped diminishing the usefulness of the area.

Overall, this factor is considered to be a contributing factor.



**Unsanitary or unsafe conditions**

*Conditions which pose a threat to public health and safety*

**Debris**

Debris piles of used tires, building materials, tree limbs, barrels, unsecured outdoor storage of materials were noted in the field analysis in 10 locations. This can contribute to harboring rodents and vermin as well as pose a potential mosquito breeding area to spread disease. In addition, the debris piles could pose a fire hazard to nearby structures and residents.

**Drainage**

The eastern portion of the area is within the 100-year flood plain and has the potential to create unsafe localized flooding. In addition, many streets contained broken or missing curb and gutter which can hinder the storm drainage causing erosion and creating unsafe conditions.

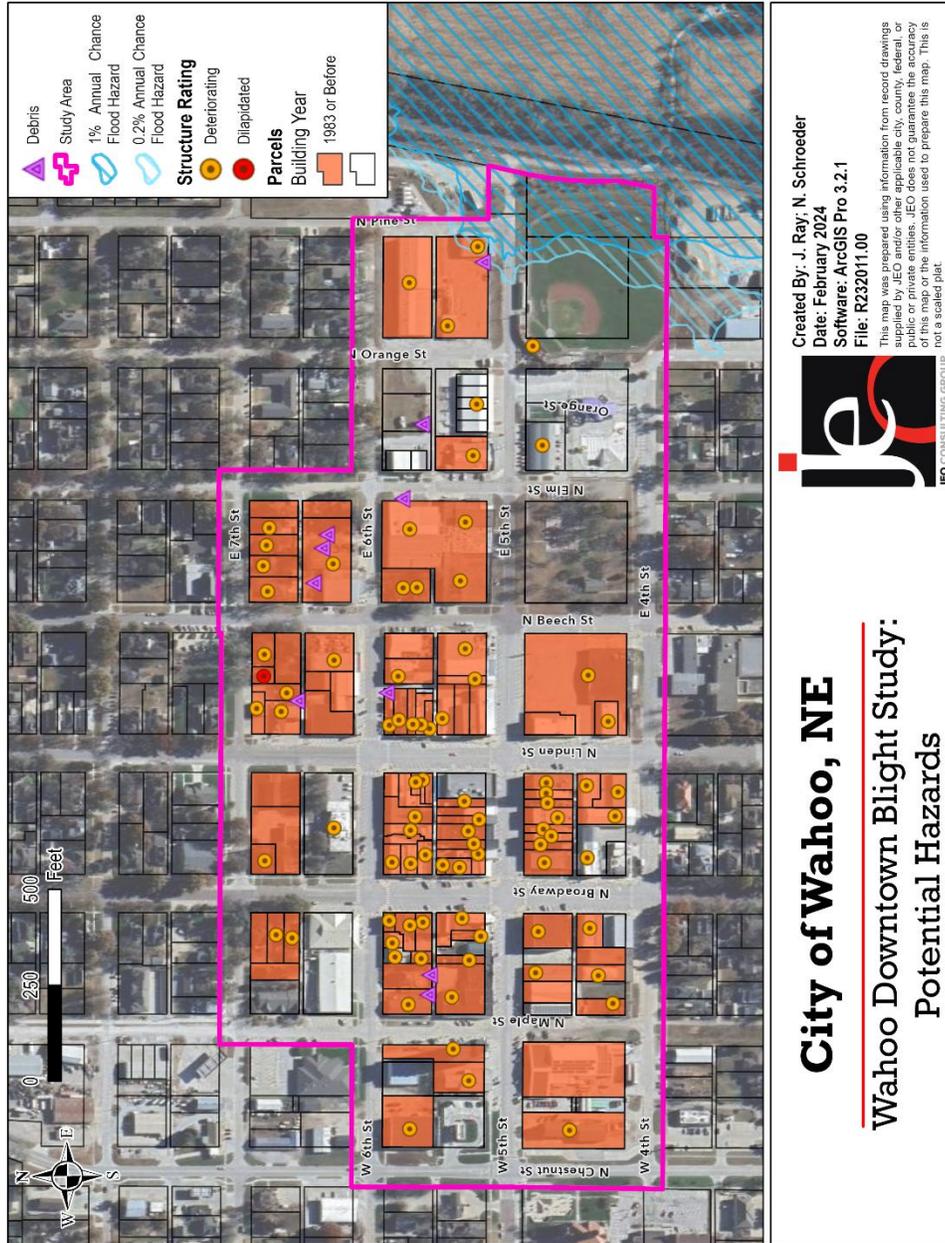
**Age of Structure**

Structures constructed prior to 1978 may contain lead-based paint which can pose health and human development risks to children with chipping or peeling. The average of residential and commercial structures in area is 115 years (1909) and 105 years (1919), respectively.

As a result, this factor is considered to be contributing the recommended blight designation.



Figure 4: Potentially Hazardous Conditions



**Deterioration of site or other improvements**

The age of the structures and condition of public utilities, debris, and inadequate public improvements.

**Parking and driveways**

The field analysis noted numerous parking lots, driveways and outdoor storage areas that lacked hard surfaces or were in poor condition.

**Debris**

Debris piles of used tires, building materials, tree limbs, barrels, unsecured outdoor storage of materials were noted in the field analysis in 10 locations. This can contribute to harboring rodents and vermin as well as pose a potential mosquito breeding area to spread disease. In addition, the debris piles could pose a fire hazard to nearby structures and residents.

**Drainage**

The eastern portion of the area is within the 100-year flood plain and has the potential to create unsafe localized flooding. Erosion and standing water were noted on multiple properties. In addition, many streets contained broken or missing curb and gutter which can hinder the storm drainage causing erosion and creating unsafe conditions.

**Age of Structure**

Structures constructed prior to 1978 may contain lead-based paint which can pose health and human development risks to children with chipping or peeling. The average of residential and commercial structures in area is 115 years (1909) and 105 years (1919), respectively.

As a result, this factor is considered to be contributing the recommended blight designation.



**Diversity of ownership**

The diversity of ownership is evident in the Wahoo Downtown Area Blight Study Area. There are 96 unique private property owners in the Wahoo Downtown Area Blight Study Area.

As a result, this factor is considered to be contributing to the recommended blight designation.

**Tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land**

There was no evidence identified of taxes or special assessments exceeding the fair market value of the parcels in the study area.

**Defective or unusual conditions of title**

There was no evidence identified of defective or unusual conditions of title of the parcels in the study area.

As a result, this factor is not considered to be contributing to the recommended blight designation.

**Improper subdivision or obsolete platting**

**Obsolete platting**

Throughout the Wahoo Downtown Area Blight Study Area, the lot sizes and shapes vary. Most commercial lots in the area are obsolete by being too narrow to adequately accommodate modern commercial building standards. Several buildings have been constructed on more than one lot and straddle property lines. In addition, some lots are “L” shaped or odd shaped diminishing the usefulness of the area.

**Improper Subdivision**

A review of the Saunders County Assessors records revealed numerous buildings constructed across property lines and 2 landlocked parcels.

As a result, this factor is considered to be contributing the recommended blight designation.

**The existence of conditions which endanger life or property**

*Conditions which pose a threat to public health and safety*

**Debris**

Debris piles of used tires, building materials, tree limbs, barrels, unsecured outdoor storage of materials were noted in the field analysis in 10 locations. This can contribute to harboring rodents and vermin as well as pose a potential mosquito breeding area to spread disease. In addition, the debris piles could pose a fire hazard to nearby structures and residents.

**Drainage**

The eastern portion of the area is within the 100-year flood plain and has the potential to create unsafe localized flooding. In addition, many streets contained broken or missing curb and gutter which can hinder the storm drainage causing erosion and creating unsafe conditions.

**Age of Structure**

Structures constructed prior to 1978 may contain lead-based paint which can pose health and human development risks to children with chipping or peeling. The average of residential and commercial structures in area is 115 years (1909) and 105 years (1919), respectively.

As a result, this factor is considered to be contributing the recommended blight designation.

**Any combination of such factors that substantially impairs or arrests the sound growth of the community, retards the provision of housing accommodations, or constitutes an economic or social liability.**

The combination of deterioration of the structures, site improvements and debris are factors observed in the field analysis that could impair sound growth or redevelopment of the community.

As a result, it is considered a substantial contributor to the Wahoo Downtown Area Blight Study Area to be considered blighted.

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**Is detrimental to the public health, safety, morals, or welfare in its present condition and use;  
and in which there is at least one of the following conditions:**

The average age of the residential structures in the area is at least 40 years. The average age of the residential structures is 115 years (1909). In addition, the average age of the commercial structures 105 years (1919). This is considered a substantial contributor to the Wahoo Downtown Area Blight Study Area to be considered blighted.

## **SUBSTANDARD CRITERIA**

A **substandard area** shall mean an area in which there is a predominance of buildings or improvements, whether nonresidential or residential in character, which by reason of the following:

### **Dilapidation/deterioration**

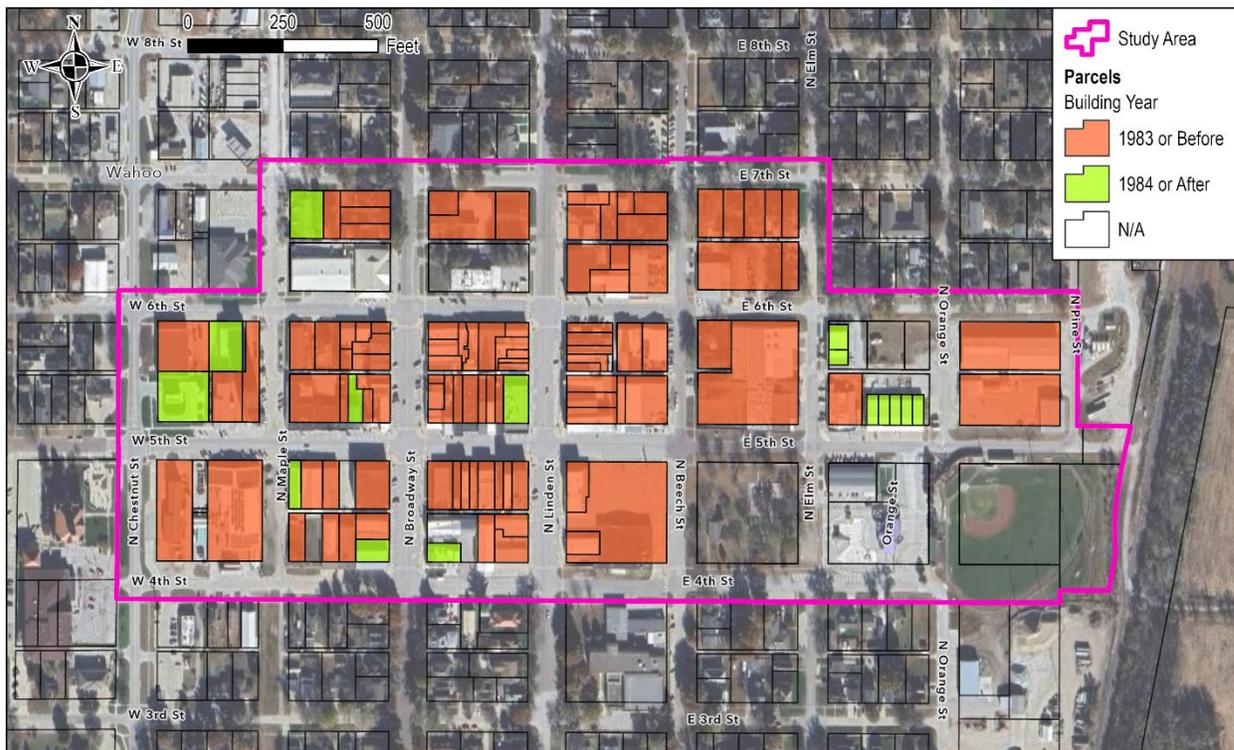
As part of the Blight and Substandard Study, a Structural Conditions Survey was completed along with an analysis of the land-use patterns in the Wahoo Downtown Area Blight Study Area.

A total of 79 structures or 73% of the structures within the designated study area were graded as deteriorating or dilapidated. Figure 2 illustrates the distribution of the structural ratings within the study area. This is considered a significant contributing factor.

### **Age or obsolescence**

Information regarding the age of the permanent structures within the Wahoo Downtown Area Blight Study Area was provided by the Saunders County Assessor's Office.

The average age of the residential structures in the area is at least 40 years. The average age of the residential structures is 115 years (1909). In addition, the average age of the commercial structures 105 years (1919). This is considered a substantial contributor to the Wahoo Downtown Area Blight Study Area to be considered blighted. Note: The data containing the age of the public and quasi-public structures was not available and was not included in the age of structures analysis.



<p><b>City of Wahoo, NE</b></p> <hr style="border: 1px solid red;"/> <p><b>Wahoo Downtown Blight Study: Age of Structures</b></p>		<p>Created By: J. Ray; N. Schroeder                  Date: February 2024                  Software: ArcGIS Pro 3.2.1                  File: R232011.00</p> <p><small>This map was prepared using information from record drawings supplied by JEO and/or other applicable city, county, federal, or public or private entities. JEO does not guarantee the accuracy of this map or the information used to prepare this map. This is not a scaled plot.</small></p>
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**Inadequate provision for ventilation, light, air, sanitation, or open spaces**

**Poor Drainage and Sanitation**

The Wahoo Downtown Area Blight Study Area contains areas of trash and debris as well as some inadequate drainage . However, this alone is not considered significant to be considered a contributing factor.

**Other Substandard Conditions**

The existence of conditions which endanger life or property.

**Debris**

Debris piles of used tires, building materials, tree limbs, barrels, unsecured outdoor storage of materials were noted in the field analysis in 10 locations. This can contribute to harboring rodents and vermin as well as pose a potential mosquito breeding area to spread disease. In addition, the debris piles could pose a fire hazard to nearby structures and residents.

**Drainage**

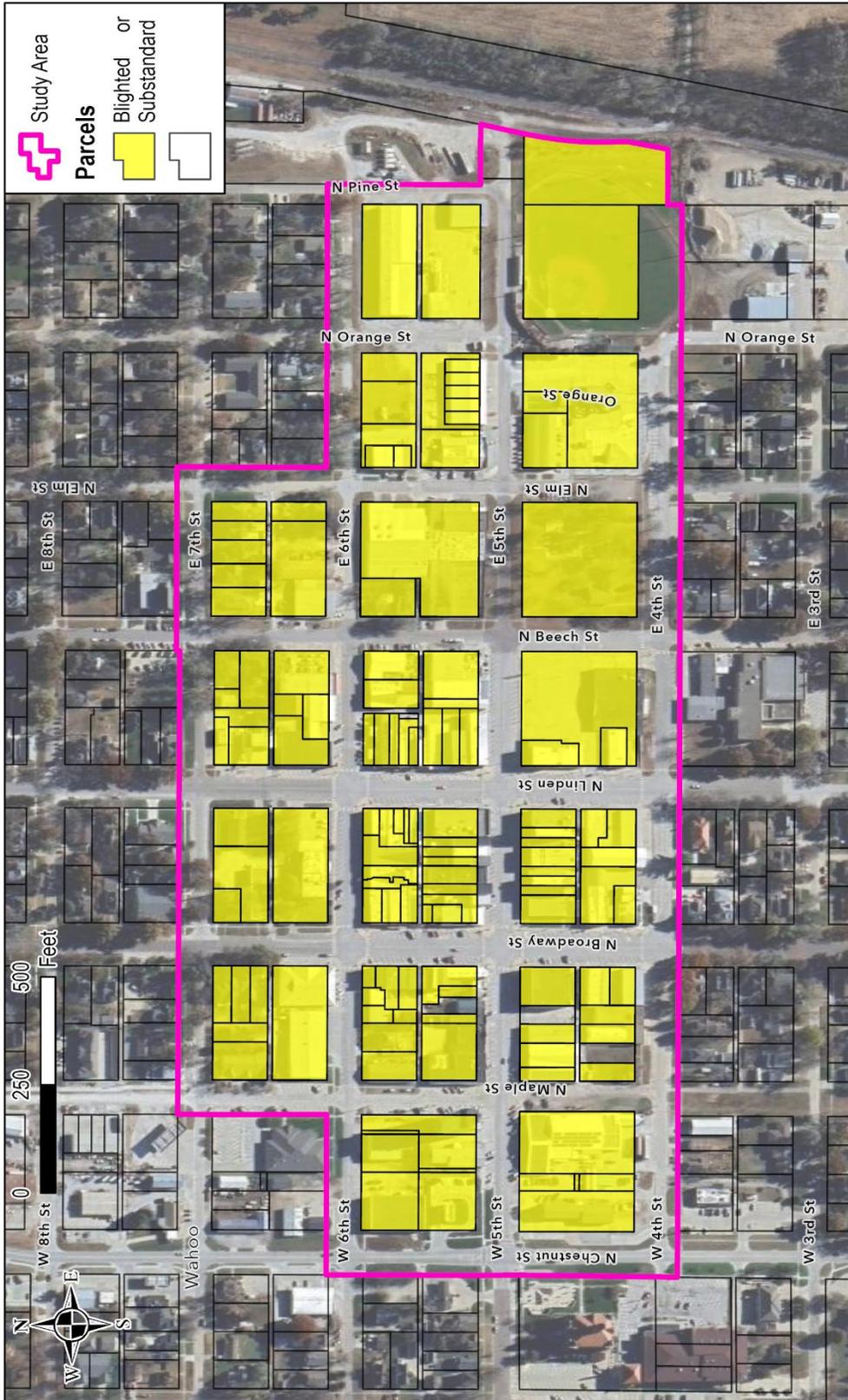
The eastern portion of the area is within the 100-year flood plain and has the potential to create unsafe localized flooding. In addition, many streets contained broken or missing curb and gutter which can hinder the storm drainage causing erosion and creating unsafe conditions.

**Age of Structure**

Structures constructed prior to 1978 may contain lead-based paint which can pose health and human development risks to children with chipping or peeling. The average of residential and commercial structures in area is 115 years (1909) and 105 years (1919), respectively.

The existence of conditions which endanger life or property are considered a contributing factor.

Figure 5: Parcels Showing Blight and Substandard Criteria



**City of Wahoo, NE**

**Wahoo Downtown Blight Study:**  
**Characteristics of Blight & Substandard Area**

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 Date: February 2024  
 Software: ArcGIS Pro 3.2.1  
 File: R232011.00

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## **Blighted and Substandard Findings**

The Wahoo Downtown Area Blight Study Area has many items contributing to the blight and substandard conditions. Based on the information collected and analyzed pursuant to Nebraska Revised Statutes, the area has a myriad of items that were considered beyond the remedy and control of the normal regulatory process of the City of Wahoo or impossible to reverse through the ordinary operations of private enterprise. These conditions include:

**Table 1: Summary Matrix**

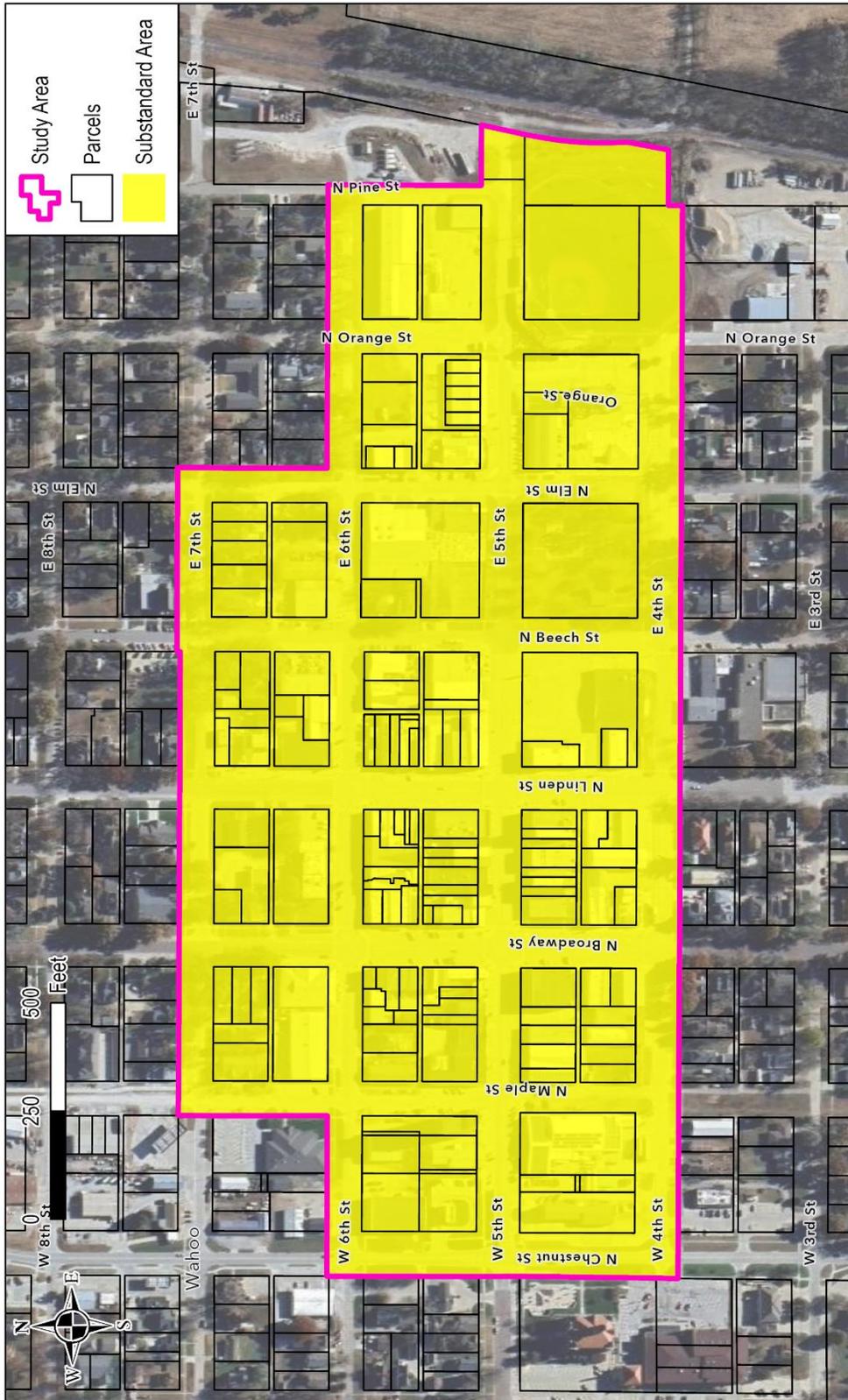
<b>Criteria</b>	
Structure condition	Yes
Street layout	Yes
Faulty lot layout	Yes
Unsanitary or unsafe conditions	Yes
Deterioration of site	Yes
Diversity of owners	Yes
Tax special assessment	No
Titles conditions	No
Obsolete platting	Yes
Endanger life/property	Yes
Any combination	Yes
Age of structure	Yes
<b>BLIGHT TOTALS</b>	<b>10/12</b>
Exterior inspection of structures	Yes
Age of structures	Yes
Inadequate provision for ventilation, sanitation	No
Other Substandard – (conducive to ill health, floodplain, endanger life)	Yes
<b>SUBSTANDARD TOTALS</b>	<b>3/4</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>13/16</b>

## **Conclusion**

Several conditions within the Wahoo Downtown Area were observed during the field survey which warrant a designation as blighted and substandard. The conditions showing evidence of blight are interspersed throughout the Wahoo Downtown Area Blight Study Area, and as such, parcels within the boundaries of the Wahoo Downtown Area Blight Study Area are recommended for further action.

It is the professional opinion of the consultant, based on the information collected and analyzed pursuant to Nebraska Revised Statutes, that the Wahoo Downtown Area Blight Study Area contains the required conditions that would warrant a designation as blighted and substandard by the City of Wahoo and the Community Development Agency. The City of Wahoo should review this Blight and Substandard Study, and if satisfied with the findings contained in this study, may, by resolution, designate the Wahoo Downtown Area Blight Study Area as “Blighted and Substandard” as provided for in the Community Development Law.

Figure 6 Recommended Blight and Substandard Designation



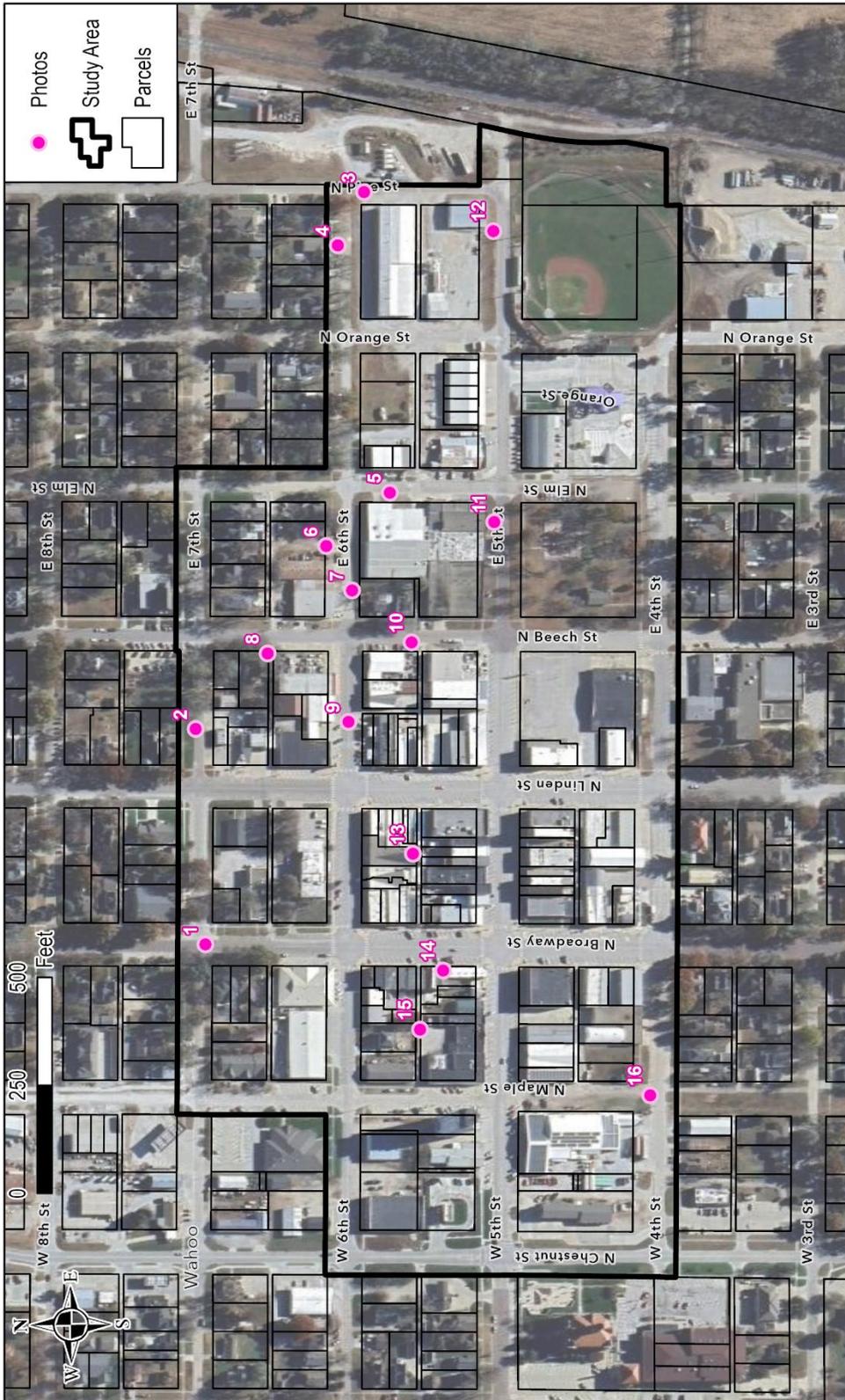
Created By: J. Ray; N. Schroeder  
 Date: February 2024  
 Software: ArcGIS Pro 3.2.1  
 File: R232011.00



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**City of Wahoo, NE**  
**Wahoo Downtown Blight Study:**  
**Recommended Blight & Substandard Area**

Appendix A  
Photo Exhibit



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# City of Wahoo, NE

## Wahoo Downtown Blight Study:

### Photo Guide

Location 1



Location 2



Location 2



Location 3



Location 4



Location 5



Location 5



Location 5



Location 6



Location 6



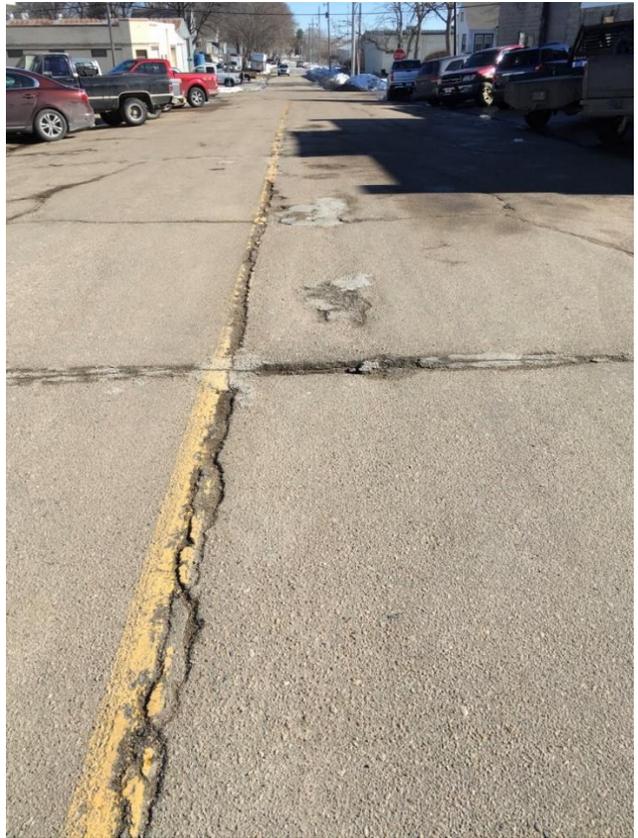
Location 7



Location 8



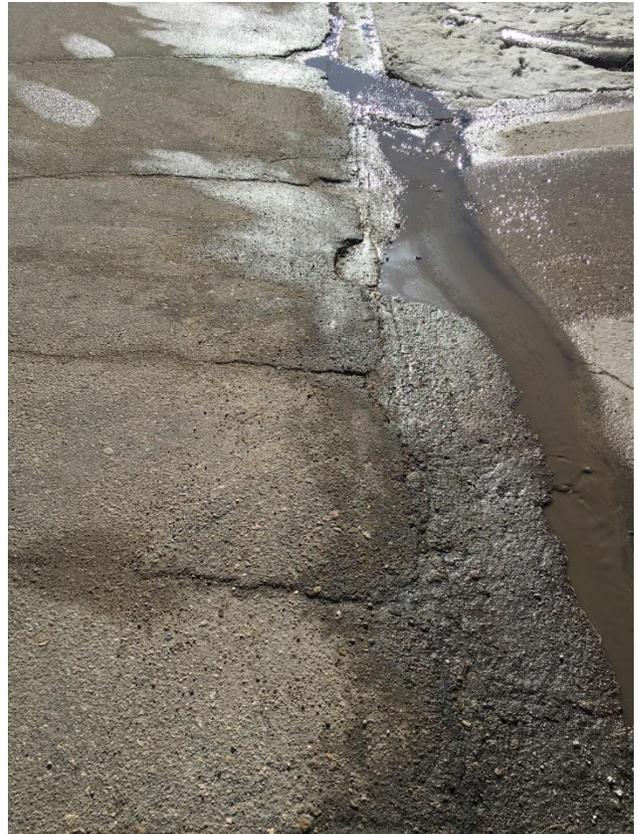
Location 9



Location 9



Location 10



Location 10



Location 10



Location11



Location11



Location 12



Location 13



Location 13



Location 13



Location 14



Location 14



Location 14



Location 15



Location 15



Location 16



Location 16

