

# Chapter 1 – Introduction

*“Let us put our minds together and see what life we can make for our children.” – Sitting Bull*

## Plan Origin

In May of 2011, the City of Osceola authorized the Southern Iowa Council of Governments (SICOG) to guide the city in undertaking and completing a comprehensive planning process, the direct result of which would be a comprehensive plan for the community. It was made clear early on that the City of Osceola wanted this document to:

- Guide current and future policymakers when making land use decisions;
- Provide a framework for other policy documents and plans to be incorporated into a unifying set of goals, objectives, and policies;
- Ensure that the community’s vision is an important part of the city’s decision-making process and includes a thorough and inclusive public participation process; and
- Promote the city to developers, businesses, and people for the continued growth of the community.

## Previous Comprehensive Plan

The former Comprehensive Development Plan was adopted by the city in 1998 and was itself an update of the 1969 Comprehensive Development Plan and supplements the city’s Growth Management Plan. As part of the creation of the Comprehensive Development Plan, a survey was conducted by the Osceola Long Range Planning Committee in order to

identify the principle concerns, issues, and needs of the citizenry. This survey was conducted during November 1996 through January 1997. A separate Business and Industrial Survey was completed during March 1997. Many priorities outlined within the plan were adopted and or implemented.



**Figure 1-1: Clarke County Law Enforcement Center Completed in 2001, a Priority in the 1998 Comprehensive Plan.**

The information contained within the previous comprehensive plan was utilized when applicable. Objectives and policies that were unaccomplished or are important were also included in this plan as appropriate.

## Purpose of Planning

Planning provides a coordinated effort amongst community and government officials to direct change and growth within a defined area. Through planning, a community can save money to pay for roads, water lines, and other city services in areas where growth is planned. On a less noticeable level, planning

affords a city or town a way to create a vision of what the community wants to be in the future and helps identify ways to achieve the desired goal. However, without a dedicated effort to identify and prioritize goals, objectives, and policies, achieving the future vision will be all but impossible.

## **A Blueprint For the Future**

It was identified early in the planning process that this plan's purpose is to make the community a better place. Therefore, the overall unifying vision and goal of this plan is "To provide the best quality of life by preserving the small town atmosphere, providing ample recreational opportunities, recognizing Osceola's past, and pursuing responsible growth opportunities within the constraints of a fiscally accountable government." This is a very broad statement, so to more narrowly define what goals and objectives Osceola should adopt, every major aspect of the plan has its own vision and goals, all of which support the central unifying theme of making Osceola a better place.

## **Smart Planning Defined**

The State of Iowa passed Smart Planning Legislation in 2010 that created ten smart planning principles that state agencies and local governments "shall consider and may apply during deliberation of all appropriate planning, zoning, development, and resource management decisions." Additionally, in an effort to more accurately define what a comprehensive plan should include, this legislation created 13 smart planning elements that jurisdictions "shall consider" and "may include" if applicable when "developing or amending a comprehensive plan... or other local land development regulations."

These smart planning principles and elements served as the basis on which this plan was created. A full list of the smart

planning principles and elements with descriptions of each can be found in the Appendix.

## **Legality**

According to the Code of Iowa, Chapter 414.3 – Regulations and comprehensive plan — considerations and objectives — notice, adoption, distribution. "The regulations shall be made in accordance with a comprehensive plan and designed to preserve the availability of agricultural land; to consider the protection of soil from wind and water erosion; to encourage efficient urban development patterns; to lessen congestion in the street; to secure safety from fire, flood, panic, and other dangers; to promote health and the general welfare; to provide adequate light and air; to prevent the overcrowding of land; to avoid undue concentration of population; to promote the conservation of energy resources; to promote reasonable access to solar energy; and to facilitate the adequate provision of transportation, water, sewerage, schools, parks, and other public requirements." In all, the comprehensive plan must be used when city regulations are created. In particular, the zoning ordinance must be based upon an up-to-date comprehensive plan. Several goals and objectives have been included in this plan to give policymakers a guide for decision-making.