

Chapter 2
Community Profile

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PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Geography

The City of Huxley is located in central Iowa, specifically south central Story County midway between Ames and Des Moines. The City lies on a plateau at 1040 feet in elevation, and is surrounded by agricultural land to three sides, and Ballard Creek and its tributaries to the northeast. The City is also in close proximity to other rural communities with Slater/Sheldahl to the west, Kelley to the northwest, Cambridge to the east, and Alleman to the south. All of these smaller communities are within a 4-mile radius of Huxley. A Federal and State highway system feeds City traffic to and from Interstate Highway 35.



View of agricultural land with Blue Sky development in background

Natural History

The natural history of the Huxley area is such that warm shallow seas once covered it. A constantly shifting shoreline left sedimentary layers of bedrock, which underlie the City today. Later, glaciers covered the site of Huxley, leaving in their wake some of the most fertile soil on the North American continent. When the last glacier retreated some 11,000 years ago, prehistoric animals returned, followed by Native American Indians, who used the area as a hunting ground for approximately 10,000 years.

The Ballard family first settled in the Huxley area in 1848. Known as “Ballard Grove”, it was the first settlement in Story County. Rebecca McDaniel was the first person to buy land on the actual site of Huxley today. A large group of Norwegian immigrants made a second settlement in the Huxley area in 1855. Huxley was platted and given its present name in 1881 by S.S. Merrill, a surveyor for the Milwaukee Railroad. He named the City after his uncle, Henry Huxley, a well-known British biologist and writer. In 1882, the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad was constructed through the town. Huxley grew into a farm services community and a shipping point for the surrounding farm area, and was incorporated on August 28, 1902.

Soils

The bedrock underlying Huxley is an interbedded sequence of shale, siltstone, sandstone, clay, coal and limestone. The fertile soil covering the bedrock is comprised of loess, which is wind-deposited silt, and glacial till, which is pebbly clay deposited by glaciers. Virtually all the soil underlying and immediately surrounding Huxley is rated by the U.S. Soil Conservation Services as Classes I and II – the very best agriculture soils. Some of these soils have development constraints, ranging from slight to severe. The most common constraint is wetness, followed by shrink-swell, ponding, low strength and slope. The highest soils with the most severe development constraints are located to the south. Another area with severe development constraint is the low lying land locked area between E. 1st Street and E. 3rd Street and also between US Highway 69 and Circle Drive. Areas containing the fewest constraints are located to the east and northwest of the City.

Wildlife Habitat

White-tailed deer, raccoons, fox and other small wild birds and animals populate the Ballard Creek area, including portions within the City limits. Because there are relatively few such wooded areas in Iowa, it is important that this habitat be protected. One method of protection is to require new developments, both within the City and within the two-mile jurisdictional boundary, which are located along the creek, to include structural and vegetative setbacks, which would allow for a wildlife corridor or greenbelt.



Other Natural Resources

According to state officials and the City, Huxley and the area immediately surrounding it have no other known natural resources in need of documentation or protection, such as mineral or aggregate deposits, scenic or natural areas, or historic buildings or sites. If the existence of any such natural resources becomes known, the City will amend its plan and implement measures appropriate to document and protect these resources.

Energy Use

The City of Huxley conserves energy by virtue of its compact size and shape, which minimizes the need to travel. However, because of many of its residents commute to work in Ames and the Des Moines areas, it uses energy for this purpose. The City conserves energy through the recent development of a number of multifamily dwellings, by allowing smaller lots for some residences, by encouraging new industrial uses in the City, by encouraging compact and orderly urban growth, by adopting solar access provisions, and by encouraging energy audits and education.

Certain recent single family subdivisions such as Trailridge and Northview Heights have developed larger lots, which encourage larger homes. Energy consumption in those areas may appear above the average for the remaining parts of the City.

Pollution

The only significant source of air pollution and noise in Huxley is vehicular traffic, particularly US Highway 69 and Interstate Highway 35. No industries in the City contribute in any significant way to pollution. Water drawn from the City's wells must be demineralized, softened and chlorinated before use. The City's new sewer facility uses an oxidation ditch to treat sewage and dumps the effluent into a tributary to Ballard Creek. There are no solid waste disposal sites in or around Huxley. The City meets all state and federal air and water quality standards.

POPULATION TRENDS

Historical Population

The City of Huxley, located in Story County, Iowa; had a population of 336 at the time of its first census in 1910. The community grew fairly steadily until 1970 when the population of the city nearly doubled. This very high rate of growth continued thru 1980. As a result, the city saw a nearly 200% increase population through the 1960’s and 1970’s.

Reflective of the national recession in the real estate industry in the mid 1980’s, Huxley’s growth rate slowed but remained reasonably steady for two the next two decades. Beginning in 2000, the City has experienced a period of robust growth. It is important to note that this rapid growth has occurred in spite of the recent downturns in the real estate market both in Iowa and in the nation.

Year	Population	% Increase for Decade
1910	336	-
1920	366	8.9
1930	362	-1.1
1940	392	8.3
1950	422	7.7
1960	486	15.9
1970	937	92.8
1980	1884	101.1
1990	2047	8.7
2000	2316	13.1
2006*	2959	*
2010	3317	43.2
		*Special Census
Source: United States Census Bureau: factfinder2. Census.gov		

As of 2010 Census, there were 3,317 people residing in Huxley. Historical census data, including special census, and the percentage of increase per decade is listed in Table 2-1 above.

Table 2-2 below contrasts Huxley’s growth since 1980 with that of Story County and the State of Iowa, based on information provided by the US Census Bureau.

Table 2-2 – Population, 1980 – 2010

	Population				Percent Change			
	1980	1990	2000	2010	'80-'90	'90-'00	'00-'10	'80-'10
Huxley	1,884	2,047	2316	3,317	8.7	13.1	43.2	76.1
Story County	72,326	74,252	79,981	89,542	2.7	7.7	11.9	23.8
State of Iowa	2,913,808	2,776,755	2,926,324	3,046,355	-4.9	5.4	4.1	4.5

*Source – US Census Bureau

As the table above indicates, Huxley has consistently achieved higher growth rates than Story County and the State of Iowa over the last three decades. Location, amenities, services, ease of travel, and affordability all play key roles in attracting new people. For a city of its size, Huxley ranks high in all of the areas previously listed making Huxley an attractive place to live and work. The growth potential of a City is largely a function of its current population, size, composition, characteristics and spatial distribution. Many outside factors also influence growth especially in smaller towns, such as Huxley. Factors such as; commuting traffic, neighboring cities employment rates and job facilities affect the growth potential of every community.

Future Population

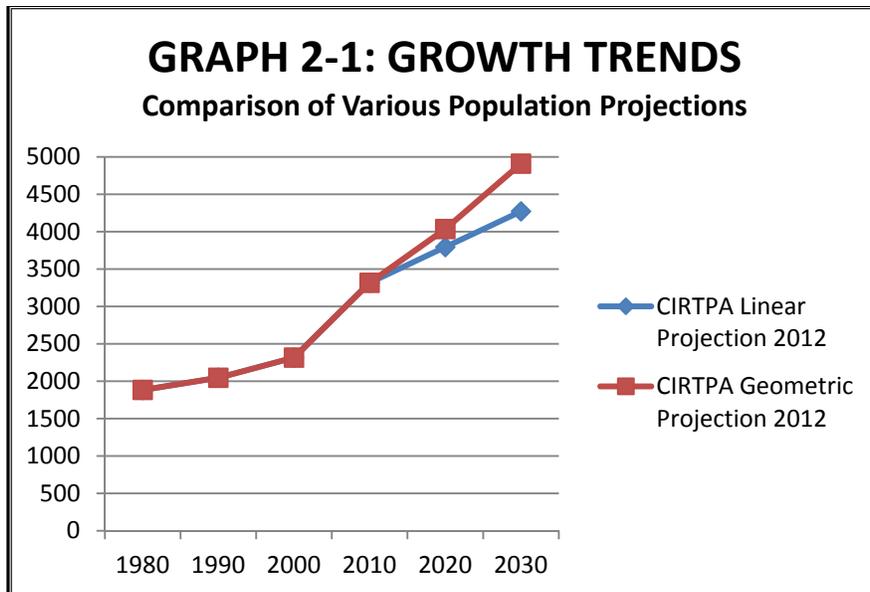
This Comprehensive Plan is intended to create a framework for the planned growth of the community. This means the future growth areas designated in the Growth Management Plan should reflect development the city can reasonably expect within the timeframe of the plan. While population projections are an inexact science, they are important in helping a city establish priorities.

This plan includes two projections for future growth provided by the Central Iowa Regional Transportation Planning Alliance (CIRTPA), prepared by transportation planners with the Des Moines Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and based on demographic changes seen between 1980 and 200. The geometric projection simply projects the most recent rate of change per decade forward. The linear projection instead utilizes the average rate of change per decade. The geometric project is more aggressive, due to the recent high growth ratet the city experienced. Both population projections are included in the table below.

Table 2-3 – Population, CIRTPA Population Projections 2012

Huxley Population Projections						
	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	2030
Linear	1,884	2,047	2,316	3,317	3,795	4,272
Geometric	1,884	2,047	2,316	3,317	4,036	4,910

*Source – CIRTPA and Des Moines Area MPO



*Source – CIRTPA and Des Moines Area MPO

The growth potential of a City is largely a function of its location, population, and characteristics. Outside factors also influence growth especially in smaller towns like Huxley. Factors such as commuting distance and ease to neighboring cities, employment rates and opportunity, and amenities such as parks and recreation affect the growth potential of every community.

EMPLOYMENT

Huxley’s workforce, according to the 2000 Census, consists of 1,641 employed citizens over 16 years of age. This is up 24.2% from 1,321 workers employed in 2000. Below, Table 2-4 illustrates the breakdown of the workforce of the community. Of the employed citizens, 32.1% are in educational services and public administration and 7.37% are in other service related occupations. 15.4% are in finance, insurance, professional, and related occupations.

Table 2-4 – Huxley Residents Employed by Industry, 2010

Occupation	Total
Employed civilian population 16 years and over	1,641
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	115
Construction	153
Manufacturing	178
Wholesale trade	26
Retail trade	194
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	55
Information	20
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	112
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	141
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	441
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	42
Other services, except public administration	79
Public administration	85

*Source – US Census Bureau

Without possessing a high number of jobs located inside the City, Huxley’s close proximity to Ames and Des Moines allows for a high percentage of citizens to commute to work located outside of the community. As evidenced in the 2007 plan, the number of commuters has increased to the point that over 85% of workers living in Huxley drive more than 10 minutes to work. That indicates there may be a need for additional jobs within the community of Huxley in order to adequately balance different land uses as the community grows.

Given the percentage of commuters living in Huxley, the City needs to maintain a continued focus on generating jobs within the community. Too high of a percentage of residential land use burdens the City from a revenue perspective. The City is required to maintain more infrastructure using residential taxable valuations as compared to commercial/retail or industrial uses. Thus, user rates may be higher for services such as water, sewer and possibly storm sewer in order for the City to complete an adequate maintenance program or Capital Improvements Program.

HOUSEHOLD SUMMARY

Based on the 2010 Census, the City of Huxley was comprised of 1,194 households. Of these, 43.5% had children under the age of 18 living with them. The average household size was 2.78 persons while the average family size was 3.25.

Given the number of households with children, it is not surprising the median age of the city was relatively young, at 31.2 years of age. As a breakdown, 34.1% of residents were under the age of 18; 7.2% were between the ages of 18 and 24; 29.4% were from 25 to 44; 20.4% were from 45 to 64; and 9% were 65 years of age or older. The gender makeup of the city was 48.6% male and 51.4% female.

The median household income in Huxley for the year 2010 is \$65,492. For comparison, the household income for 2000 was \$48,068; while 1990 was \$29,924; and 1980 was \$18,864.

Table 2-5 – Huxley Household Income Levels, 2010

INCOME AND BENEFITS (IN 2010 INFLATION-ADJUSTED DOLLARS)	
Total households	1,011
Less than \$10,000	49
\$10,000 to \$14,999	46
\$15,000 to \$24,999	29
\$25,000 to \$34,999	74
\$35,000 to \$49,999	145
\$50,000 to \$74,999	252
\$75,000 to \$99,999	207
\$100,000 to \$149,999	145
\$150,000 to \$199,999	32
\$200,000 or more	32
Median household income	\$65,492
Mean household income	\$78,568

*Source – US Census Bureau

Public Library

Huxley is served by a local library, located on the second floor of the 3C's facility, which also houses Parks and Recreation, City Hall, and a workout center. As of 2005/2006 the total number of volumes owned is 39,340 with the number of audio/video volumes totaling 2,580 and the number of reference volumes totaling 120. The number of checkouts during the 2005/2006 fiscal year was 74,565 as compared to 18,465 in 1995/1996, which computes to a 404% increase in library usage.

Volunteerism from Public

The City of Huxley is blessed with a fairly active contingent of volunteers throughout the City. Volunteers have donated time, talent, and materials for projects such as concession stand in Centennial Park and similar projects. Organizations and civic groups volunteer their time and effort to make improve the quality of life in Huxley. Focusing on opportunities presented by these active groups for smaller type projects that make the City a stronger place to live is something the City should continue to encourage.