



Hastings, Nebraska Area 1 Blight and Substandard Study

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Prepared for: City of Hastings, Nebraska CRA

Prepared by: 
MARVIN PLANNING CONSULTANTS
Specializing in Municipal, County and Neighborhood Planning


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PURPOSE OF THE BLIGHT AND SUBSTANDARD STUDY

The purpose of completing this Blight and Substandard study is to examine existing conditions within a specific part of Hastings. This study has been commissioned by Hastings CRA in order to analyze the possibility of declaring the area as blighted and substandard.

The City of Hastings, when considering conditions of Blight and Substandard, will be looking at those issues and definitions provided for in the Nebraska Community Redevelopment Law as found in Chapter 18, Section 2104 of the Revised Nebraska State Statutes, as follows:

"The governing body of a city, to the greatest extent it deems to be feasible in carrying out the provisions of Sections 18-2101 to 18-2144, shall afford maximum opportunity, consistent with sound needs of the city as a whole, 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 under sections 18-2101 to 18-2144, 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 Nebraska Revised Statutes §18-2105 continues by granting authority to the governing body for formulation of a workable 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 areas, 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 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 areas 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 areas or portions thereof."

Blight and Substandard are defined as the following:

"Substandard areas 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;"

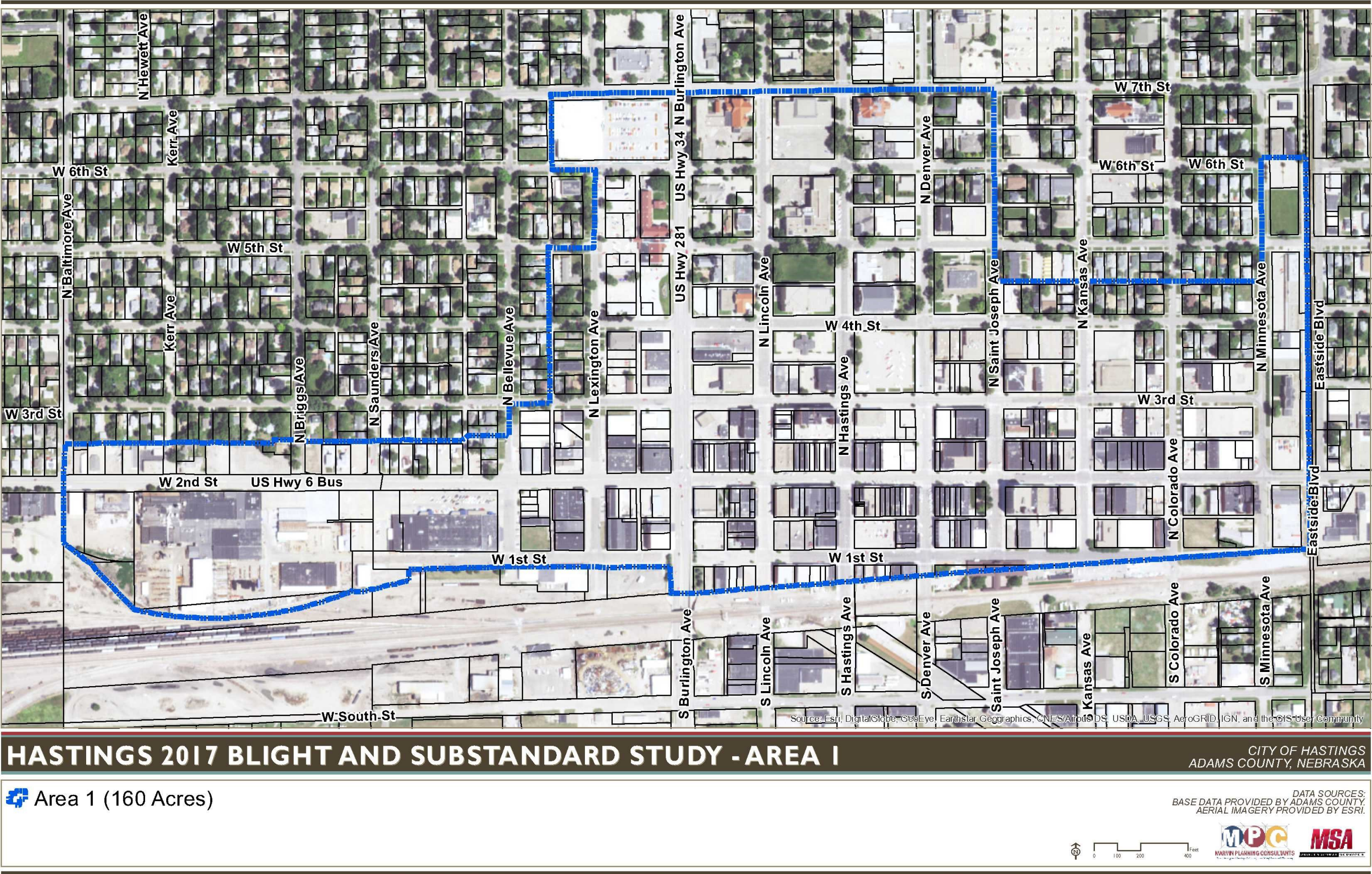
"Blighted area means an area, which (a) by reason of the presence of a substantial number of deteriorated or deteriorating structures, existence of defective or inadequate street layout, faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness, insanitary or unsafe conditions, deterioration 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 shall not designate an area larger than one hundred percent of the as blighted;"

The Study is intended to give the Hastings CRA, Hastings Planning Commission and Hastings City Council the basis for identifying and declaring Blighted and Substandard conditions existing within the City's jurisdiction and as allowed under Chapter 18, Section 2123.01. Through this process, the City and property owners will be attempting to address economic and/or social liabilities which are harmful to the well-being of the entire community.

The study area can be seen in Figure 1 of this report. A Redevelopment Plan to be submitted in the future containing, in accordance with the law, definite local objectives regarding appropriate land uses, improved traffic, public transportation, public utilities and other public improvements, and the proposed land uses and building requirements in the redevelopment area and shall include:

- The boundaries defining the blighted and substandard areas in question (including existing uses and conditions of the property within the area), and
- A list of the conditions present which qualify the area as blighted and substandard.

Study Area
Figure 1: Study Area Map



BLIGHT AND SUBSTANDARD ELIGIBILITY STUDY

This study targets a specific area within an established part of the community for evaluation. The area is indicated in Figure 1 of this report. The existing uses in area include residential uses, commercial uses, industrial uses and public uses including accessory uses within the corporate limits of Hastings.

Through the redevelopment process the City of Hastings can guide future development and redevelopment throughout the area. The use of the Community Redevelopment Act by the City of Hastings is intended to redevelop and improve the area. Using the Community Redevelopment Act, the City can assist in the elimination of negative conditions and implement different programs/projects identified for the City.

The following is the description of the designated area within Hastings.

The study area is defined as follows: the Point of beginning is located at the intersection of the centerlines of 7th Street and North St. Joseph Avenue; thence, southerly along the centerline of North St. Joseph Avenue to the intersection with the centerline of the alley between 5th Street and 4th Street; thence, easterly along said centerline to the intersection with the centerline of North Minnesota Avenue; thence, northerly along said centerline to the extended north property line of a lot referred to Lots 1 and 2 & adjacent 6th Street Block 8 Johnsons Addition; thence, easterly along said property line to the centerline of Eastside Blvd.; thence, southerly along said centerline to the intersection with the northern right-of-way of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad; thence southwesterly along said northern property line until it intersects with the western right-of-way line of North Burlington Avenue; thence northerly along said right-of-way line until it intersects with the southern right-of-way line of West 1st Street; thence, westerly along said line to intersection with the northeast corner of a lot referred to as Tax Lot 4; thence; southerly along the east property line of Tax Lot 4 to the southeast corner of Tax Lot 4; thence southwesterly along the southern property line of Tax Lot 4 until said property line intersects with a sidetrack; thence, continuing on said sidetrack until intersecting with the east property line of a lot referred to as Tax Lot 11; thence, northerly along said property line and continuing to the centerline of North Baltimore Avenue to the intersection with the north property line of the southern half of the block situated between West 2nd Street and West 3rd Street; thence, easterly along said northern property lines extended northwest corner of Lot 2, Sidlo's Subdivision; thence, continuing along the northern property line of said lot to the intersection with the centerline of North Briggs Avenue; thence southerly along said property line to the extended centerline of an alley contained within McIntyre's Addition; thence easterly along said alley centerline and continuing along the alley centerline between GT Hutchinson's Addition, Birderup's 2nd Addition and Benjamins Addition to the intersection with the alley centerline west of N Bellevue Avenue; thence, northerly to the intersection with the extended south property line of Lot 1, Block 18 of Moore's Addition; thence, easterly along said south property line to the intersection with the centerline of N. Bellevue Avenue; thence, northerly along said centerline to the intersection with the centerline of W. 3rd Street; thence, easterly along said centerline top the intersection with the extended centerline of the alley between N. Bellevue Avenue and N. Lexington Avenue, thence, northerly along said centerline and extending along alley centerlines to the intersection with the centerline of W. 5th Street; thence, easterly along said centerline to the intersection with the centerline of N. Lexington Avenue; thence, northerly along said centerline to the intersection with the centerline of W. 6th Street; thence, westerly along said centerline to the extended centerline of an alley located between N. Lexington Avenue and N. Bellevue Avenue; thence, northerly along said centerline to the intersection of W. 7th Street; thence, easterly to the point of beginning.

EXISTING LAND USES

The term "Land Use" refers to the developed uses in place within a building or on a specific lot of land. The number and type of uses are constantly changing within a community, and produce a number of impacts either benefitting or detracting from the community. Existing patterns of land use are often fixed in older communities and neighborhoods, while development in newer areas is often reflective of current development practices.

Existing Land Use Analysis within Study Area

As part of the planning process, a survey was conducted through both in-field observations, as well as data collection online using the Adams County Assessors website. This survey noted the use of each lot of land within the study area. These data from the survey are analyzed in the following paragraphs.

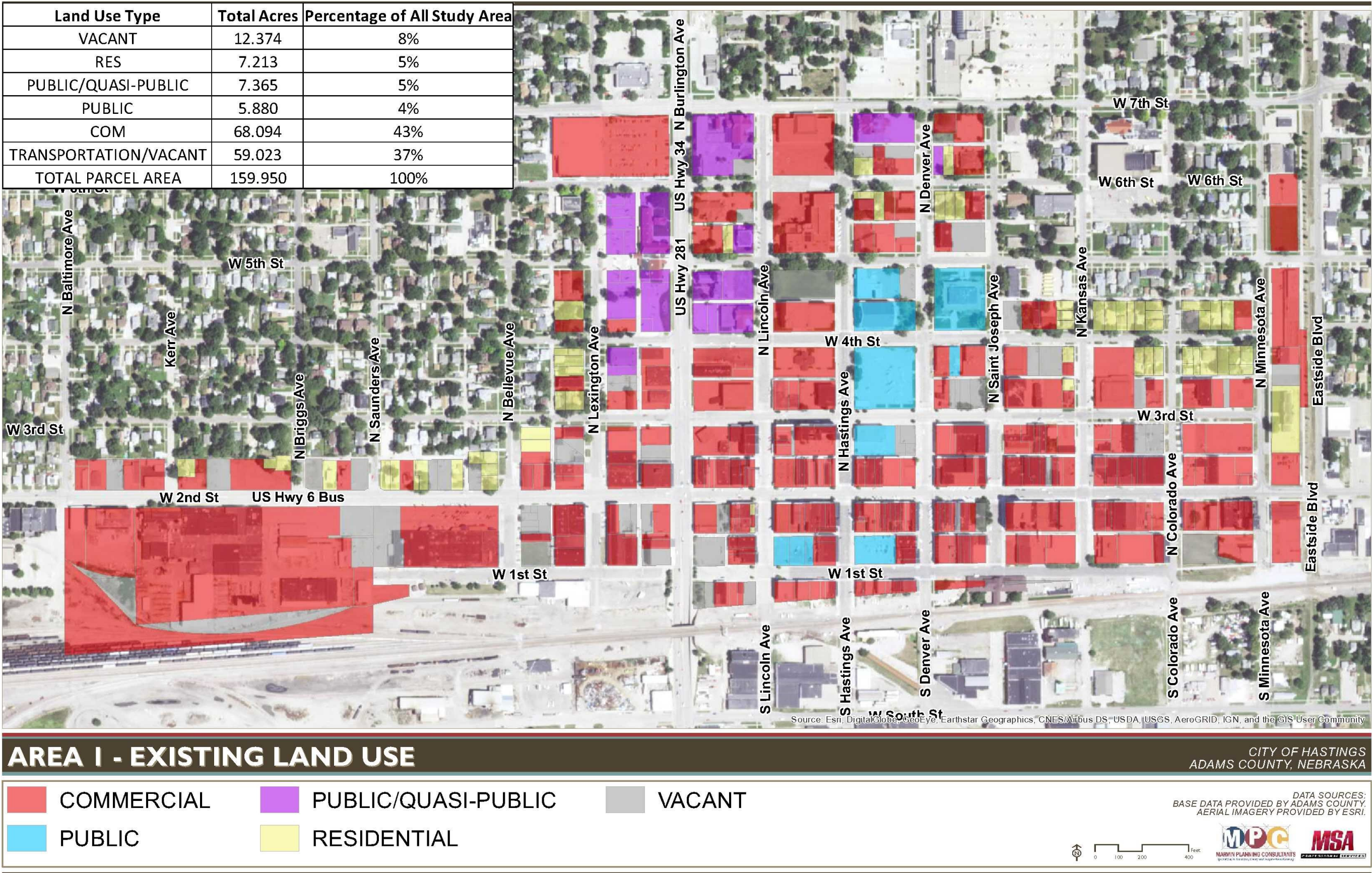
TABLE 1: EXISTING LAND USE, HASTINGS - 2017

Type of Use	Acres	Percent of Developed land within the Study Area	Percent of Study Area
Residential	7.21	4.9%	4.5%
Commercial	68.10	46.1%	42.6%
Quasi-Public/Public	13.25	9.0%	8.3%
Transportation	59.02	40.0%	36.9%
Total Developed Land	147.58	100.0%	92.3%
Vacant/Agriculture	12.37		7.7%
Total Area	159.95		100.0%

Source: Marvin Planning Consultants 2017

Table 1 includes the existing land uses for the entire study area. The table contains the total acres determined per land use from the survey; next is the percentage of those areas compared to the total developed land; and finally, the third set of data compare the all land uses to the total area within the Study Area. The Study Area is predominately made up of commercial and transportation (including rights-of-way). Commercial uses, according to the Assessor's methods includes all industrial uses. In addition to the Assessor's methods, the definition of Blighted and Substandard only refer to residential and commercial uses. Therefore, 42.6% of the entire area is considered to be commercial uses; while, 36.9% is made up of transportation (streets, alleys, and rights-of-way). Residential uses only make up 4.5% of the entire study area; however, this does not include any above ground level residential dwellings in the downtown area.

Figure 2
Existing Land Use Map



FINDINGS OF BLIGHT AND SUBSTANDARD CONDITIONS ELIGIBILITY STUDY

This section of the study examines the conditions found in the study area. The Findings Section will review the conditions based upon the statutory definitions.

CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

There were a number of conditions examined and evaluated in the field and online. There are a number of conditions that will be reviewed in detail, on the following pages, while some of the statutory conditions are not present.

Structural Conditions

Structural conditions were evaluated, structures were either rated as: Excellent, Good, Average, Fair, and Poor. The data and rating system comes from the Adams County Assessor's database and is the same database used to value properties in the area.

Based upon the data provided to the planning team, the following is the breakdown for structures in the study area:

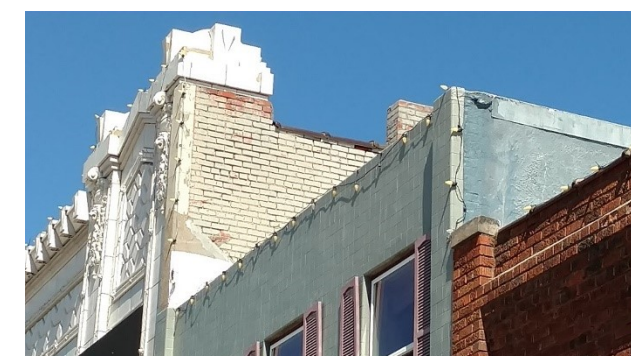
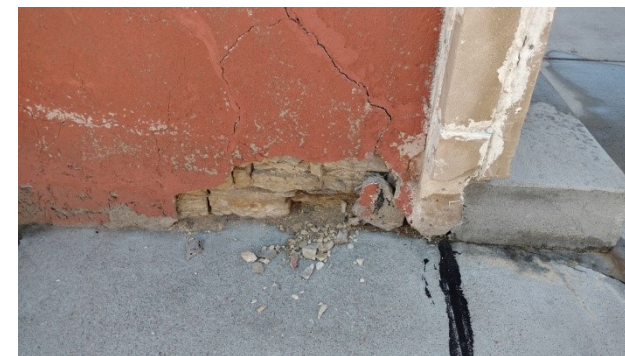
- 2 (0.8%) structures rated as Excellent
- 25 (8.8%) structures rated as Good
- 216 (76.0%) structure rated as Average
- 33 (11.6%) structures rated as Fair
- 8 (2.8%) structure rated as Poor

The different rating terms used in this section are defined as follows:

- Excellent:** Typically newer construction or property that recently has been completely upgraded.
- Good:** Typically no major defects or aging conditions showing up in the physical analysis.
- Average:** Typically minor defects may be showing up, including: degrading roof materials (limited to 25%), masonry joints needing tuckpointed (25% or less), painted surfaces beginning to peel and flake, small cracks in the foundation, broken glass, and other similar conditions.
- Fair:** Similar to Average but conditions are worsening and covering a greater percentage of the structure.
- Poor:** Represents structures likely showing several of the conditions mentioned above as well as the extent of the aging and deterioration is at a point where demolition may be necessary to eliminate the conditions.

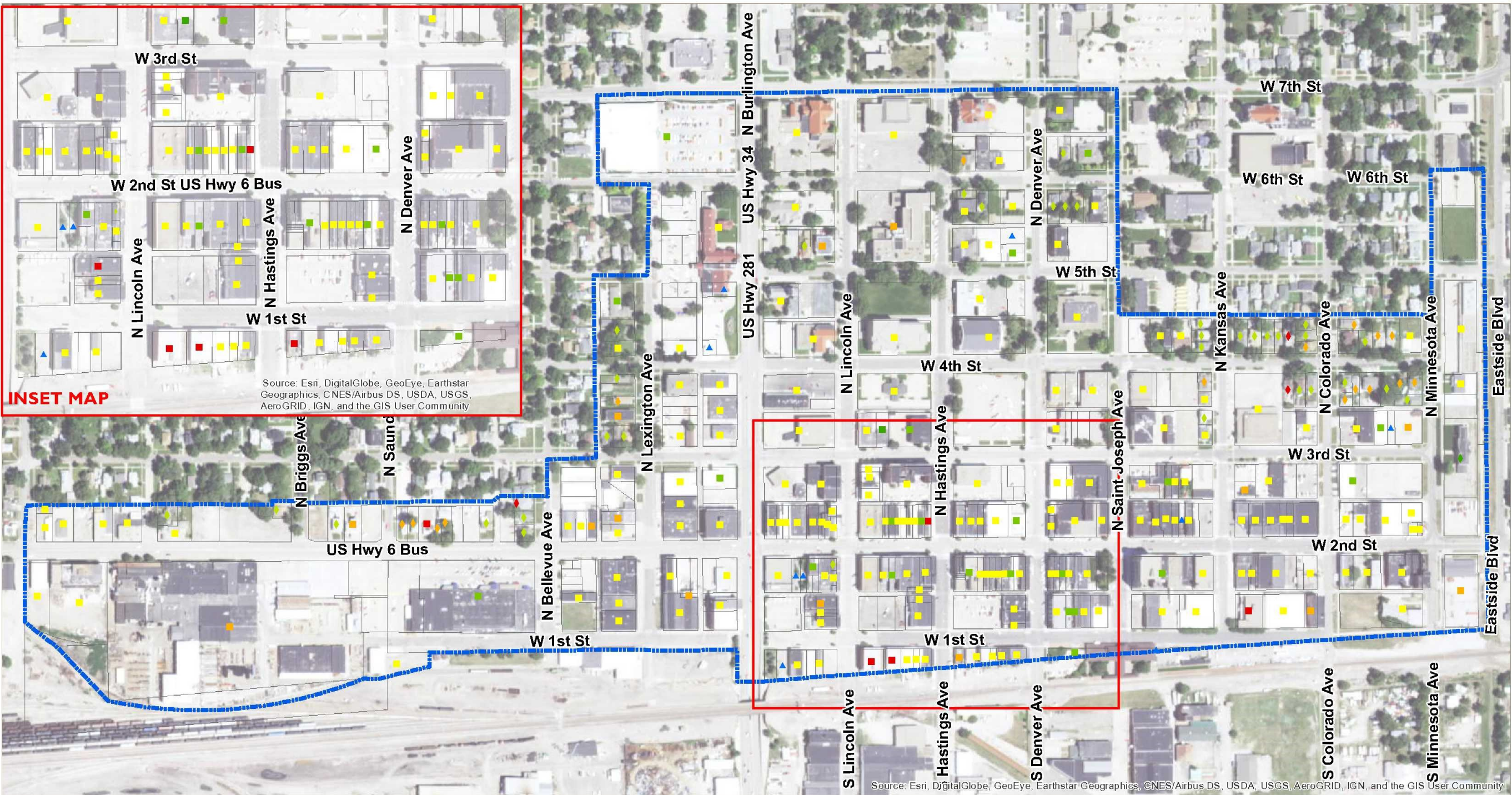
Based upon these data, an assumption has been made that average condition and less would constitute less than desirable conditions due to age and conditions. It is common for older structures to get more maintenance and upkeep in order to maintain a good or higher condition. Even an average structure will show some signs of deteriorating which in turn can become a dilapidated structure in the future if it is not addressed over time. Overall, 90.4% of the structures in this study area are average condition or worse.

Due to the stated conditions found in the Adams County Assessor's data, the condition of the structure is a contributing factor.



Examples of Structural Conditions within the Study Area

Figure 3
Structure Conditions



AREA I - CONDITION OF STRUCTURES

CITY OF HASTINGS
ADAMS COUNTY, NEBRASKA

Vacant Buildings

▲ Average (9 Structures)

Residential Buildings

◆ Good (1 Structure)

◆ Average (34 Structures)

◆ Fair (17 Structures)

◆ Poor (3 Structures)

Commercial Buildings

■ Excellent (2 Structures)

■ Good (24 Structures)

■ Average (173 Structures)

■ Fair (16 Structures)

■ Poor (5 Structures)

DATA SOURCES:
BASE DATA PROVIDED BY ADAMS COUNTY.
AERIAL IMAGERY PROVIDED BY ESRI.



Deterioration of Site or Other Improvements

Sidewalk Conditions

Sidewalks, regardless of the area and uses within a community, should provide a safe means of movement for pedestrians. Sidewalks become increasingly more important along transportation routes considered to be arterials and highways. A sidewalk allows for pedestrian movement while keeping people off of heavily traveled streets.

The sidewalk conditions were analyzed in the Study Area. The sidewalks were rated on four categories; good, average, poor, and missing completely. In most cases, if a few panels were showing signs of deterioration and the remaining sections were not newer, than an entire run was deemed to match the areas of concern. Again, average and lower are considered to be undesirable conditions. As with the structural conditions, once a sidewalk begins to deteriorate they will continue to get worse unless specific maintenance or replacement steps are undertaken.

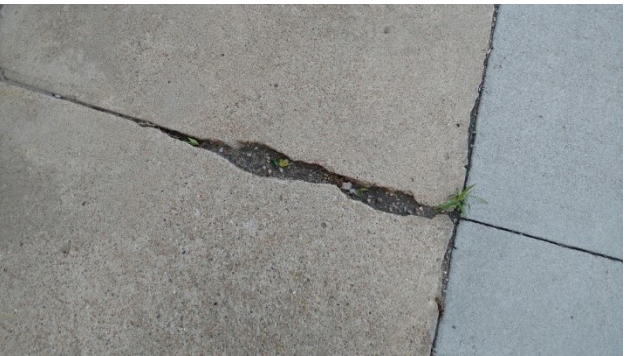
The different rating terms used in this section are defined as follows:

- Good:** Typically no major defects or aging conditions showing up in the physical analysis.
- Average:** Typically minor defects may be showing up, including: stress cracks, slight chipping of concrete edges, small amount of spawling, and slight heaving of a panel.
- Poor:** Represents a sidewalk with considerable issues and is in need of replacement in the near future.
- Missing:** Just as it implies, there is no sidewalk present at that location.

Within the study area there is approximately 56,650 lineal feet of area where sidewalk could or should be located. The lineal feet were determined through some on-site analysis s well as using the 2016 Hastings aerals and Google Earth with Street View. The following is how the sidewalk conditions breakdown within the study area:

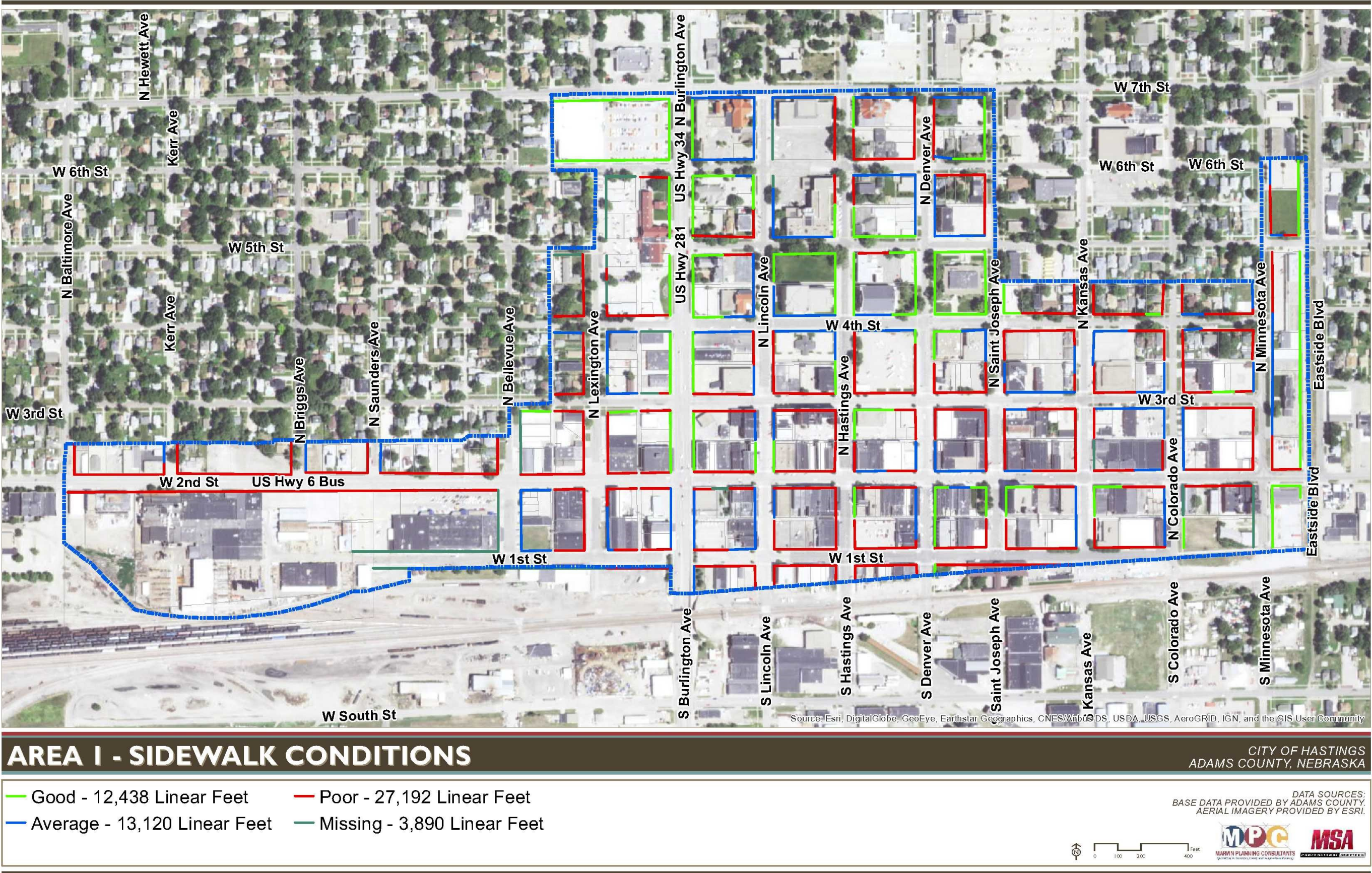
- 12,438 (21.9%) lineal feet of good sidewalk
- 13,120 (23.2%) lineal feet of average sidewalk
- 27,192 (48.0%) lineal feet of poor sidewalk
- 3,890 (6.9%) lineal feet of no sidewalk.

There is only one area which is lacking sidewalk, along 1st Street. Most of the area is directly behind Allen’s but continues around the east side of the stores parking lot. Overall, over 78% of the sidewalk in this study area is considered to be average, poor or completely missing. Even if the average sidewalk condition was factored out of the overall calculation, there would be 54.9% of the sidewalk considered poor or missing. Due to this the sidewalk conditions in the Study Area are considered a contributing factor to a condition of Blight.



Examples of Sidewalk Conditions within the Study Area

Figure 4
Sidewalk Conditions



Deterioration of Site or Other Improvements, continued

Street Conditions

Streets are our primary means for getting from place to place, if they are in a bad state then an area is difficult to access. Streets in the Study Area were examined similarly to sidewalks. The streets were graded as either good, average, poor, or closed.

The street conditions, similar to the sidewalks, were analyzed in the Study Area. The streets were rated on four categories; good, average, poor, and closed. In most cases, if a few panels of concrete were showing signs of deterioration and the remaining sections were not newer, than an entire run was deemed to match the areas of concern. In addition, where there were streets with an asphalt overlay, any spawling, breakups, or other noticeable issues, these were rated accordingly. Again, average to lower conditions were considered to be undesirable. As with the sidewalks conditions, once a street begins to deteriorate it will continue to get worse unless specific maintenance or replacement steps are undertaken.

The different rating terms used in this section are defined as follows:

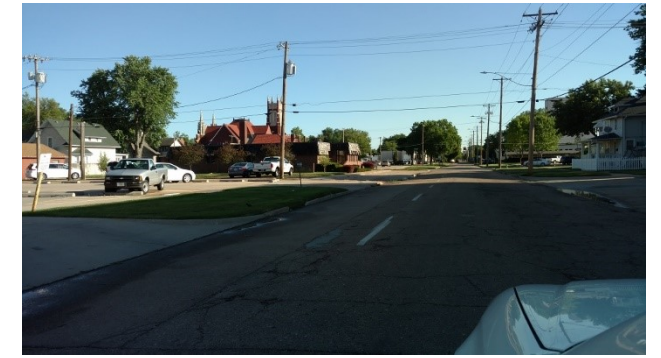
- Good:** Typically no major defects or aging conditions showing up in the physical analysis.
- Average:** Typically minor defects may be showing up, including: stress cracks, slight chipping of concrete edges, small amount of spawling, and slight heaving of a panel.
- Poor:** Represents a streets with considerable issues and is in need of an overlay or complete replacement in the near future.
- Closed:** Just as it implies, there is no street present at that location.

Within the study area there is approximately 50,765 lineal feet or 9.6 miles of streets and alleys possible. After reviewing the conditions in the field, the following is how the street conditions breakdown within the study area:

- 3,308 (6.5%) lineal feet of good street
- 13,934 (27.5%) lineal feet of average street
- 30,514 (60.1%) lineal feet of poor street
- 3,009 (5.9%) of closed streets

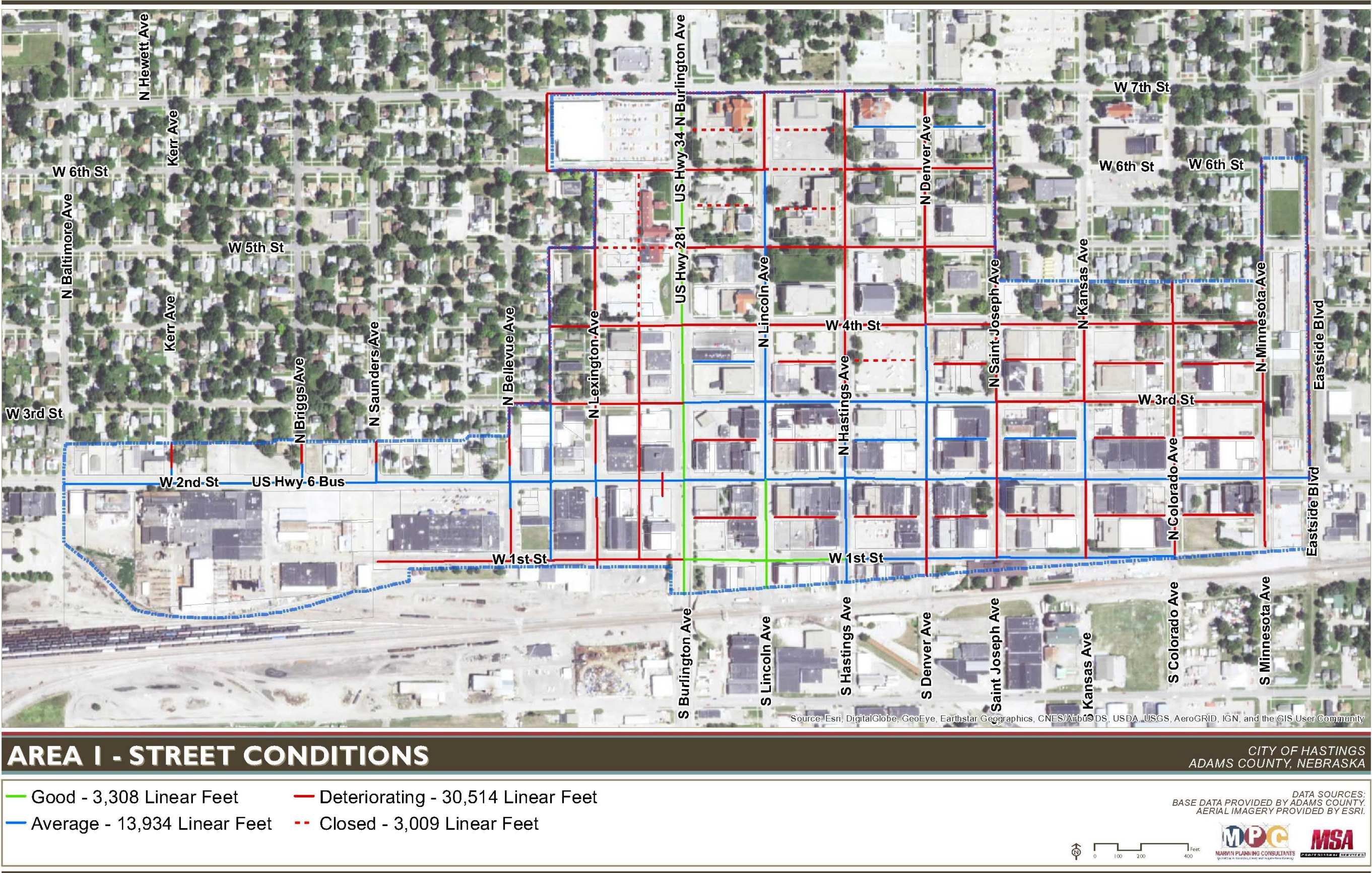
In total, 93.5% of the streets are in a average condition or worse, thus making them in a deteriorating state. However, if you remove the average condition streets from the calculation, Area 1 still has 66.0% of the streets in a state of deterioration. See Figure 5 for the locations of these streets.

Due to the large amount of deteriorating streets, the street conditions would be a direct contributing factor.



Examples of Street Conditions within the Study Area

Figure 5
Street Conditions



Deterioration of Site or Other Improvements, continued

Curb and Gutter

Curb and Gutters have a number of direct and indirect roles in neighborhoods. Their primary functions is to be a barrier and a collection and direction system for moving water to storm drains or other drainage systems so the storm water can be drained away. On a secondary level, they can help define where the streets start and stop, and they act as a physical barrier between pedestrian and vehicular traffic.

The curb and gutter conditions, similar to the others, were analyzed throughout the Study Area. The curb and gutter were rated on the same four categories; good, average, poor, and missing. In most cases, if a few panels/sections of curb and gutter were showing signs of deterioration and if the remaining sections were not newer, than an entire run was deemed to match the areas of concern. In addition, where there were streets and curb and gutter meet, any spawling, breakups, or other noticeable issues, these were rated accordingly. Again, average to lower conditions were considered to be undesirable. As with the streets and sidewalks conditions, once a curb and gutter section begins to deteriorate it will continue to get worse unless specific maintenance or replacement steps are undertaken.

The different rating terms used in this section are defined as follows:

- Good:** Typically no major defects or aging conditions showing up in the physical analysis.
- Average:** Typically minor defects may be showing up, including: stress cracks, slight chipping of concrete edges, small amount of spawling, and slight heaving of a section.
- Poor:** Represents curbs and gutter with considerable issues and is in need of a complete replacement in the future.
- Missing:** Just as it implies, there is no curb and gutter present at that location.

Within the study area there is approximately 56,230 lineal feet or 10.6 miles of curb and gutter possible. If comparing the total lineal feet of curb and gutter to streets, the numbers do not match due to the fact alley ways were included in the street section. After reviewing the conditions in the field, the following is how the curb and gutter conditions breakdown within the study area:

- 5,705 (10.1%) lineal feet of good curb and gutter
- 3,762 (6.7%) lineal feet of average curb and gutter
- 38,381 (68.3%) lineal feet of poor curb and gutter
- 8,383 (14.9%) of missing curb and gutter

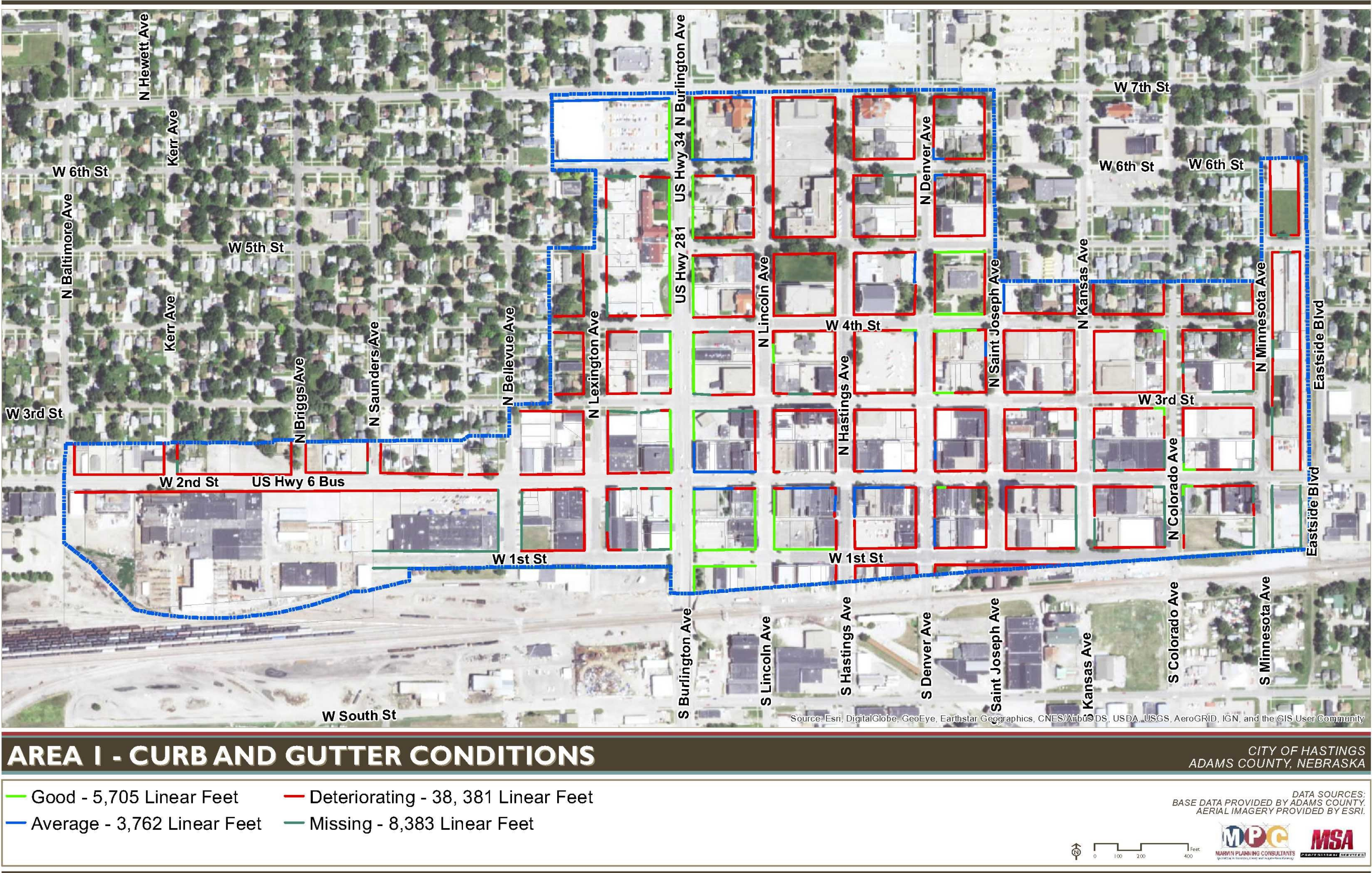
In total, 89.9% of the curb and gutter are in a average condition or worse, thus placing them in a deteriorating state. However, if you remove the average condition curb and gutter from the calculation, Area 1 still has 83.2% of the curb and gutter in a state of deterioration. See Figure 6 for the locations of these curb and gutter.

Due to the large amount of deteriorating curb and gutter, the curb and gutter conditions are a direct contributing factor.



Examples of Curb and Gutter Conditions within the Study Area

Figure 6
Curb and Gutter Conditions



Deterioration of Site or Other Improvements, continued

Drainage Conditions

Hastings, especially in Area 1, is relatively flat. No matter how well the stormwater system is designed there is a point where water will have difficulty draining. The City within the past 30 years has rebuilt key pieces of the downtown infrastructure, including the stormwater system. Typically, the stormwater system will not deteriorate nearly as fast as the streets, curb and gutter, and sidewalks due to a lack of direct exposure.

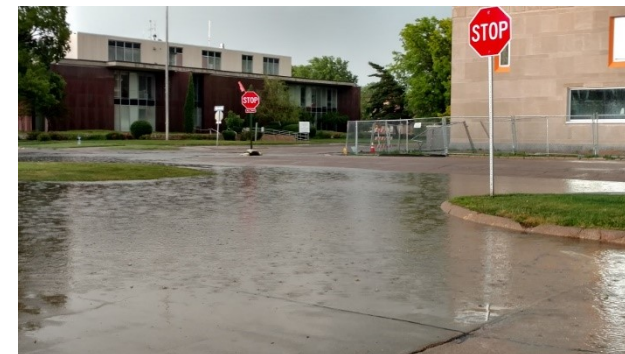
The study area was observed during an evening thunderstorm on June 13th. The storms that evening allowed a direct observation of how the drainage system handled a larger than normal storm. Due to the above average rainfall, the stormwater system had a short term failure to keep pace with the rain accumulations, resulting in short-term flash flood/urbanized flooding incident.

Observations the next morning indicated a number of areas where standing water was still present in the study area. Most of the standing water was due to deterioration of the curb and gutter system in the area. Over time, several key locations in the actual gutter flowline have settled and created a failure in the ability to drain water completely. Therefore, the drainage conditions in Area 1 is impacted directly by the deteriorating/poor curb and gutters throughout.

The study area drops 20 feet west to east along 2nd and 3rd Streets (approximately 6,470 feet), or approximately a 0.3% slope over the west to east length of the study area. In addition, the basic north to south slope is essentially flat along Burlington Avenue. Standing water within the study area is likely to continue in the future.

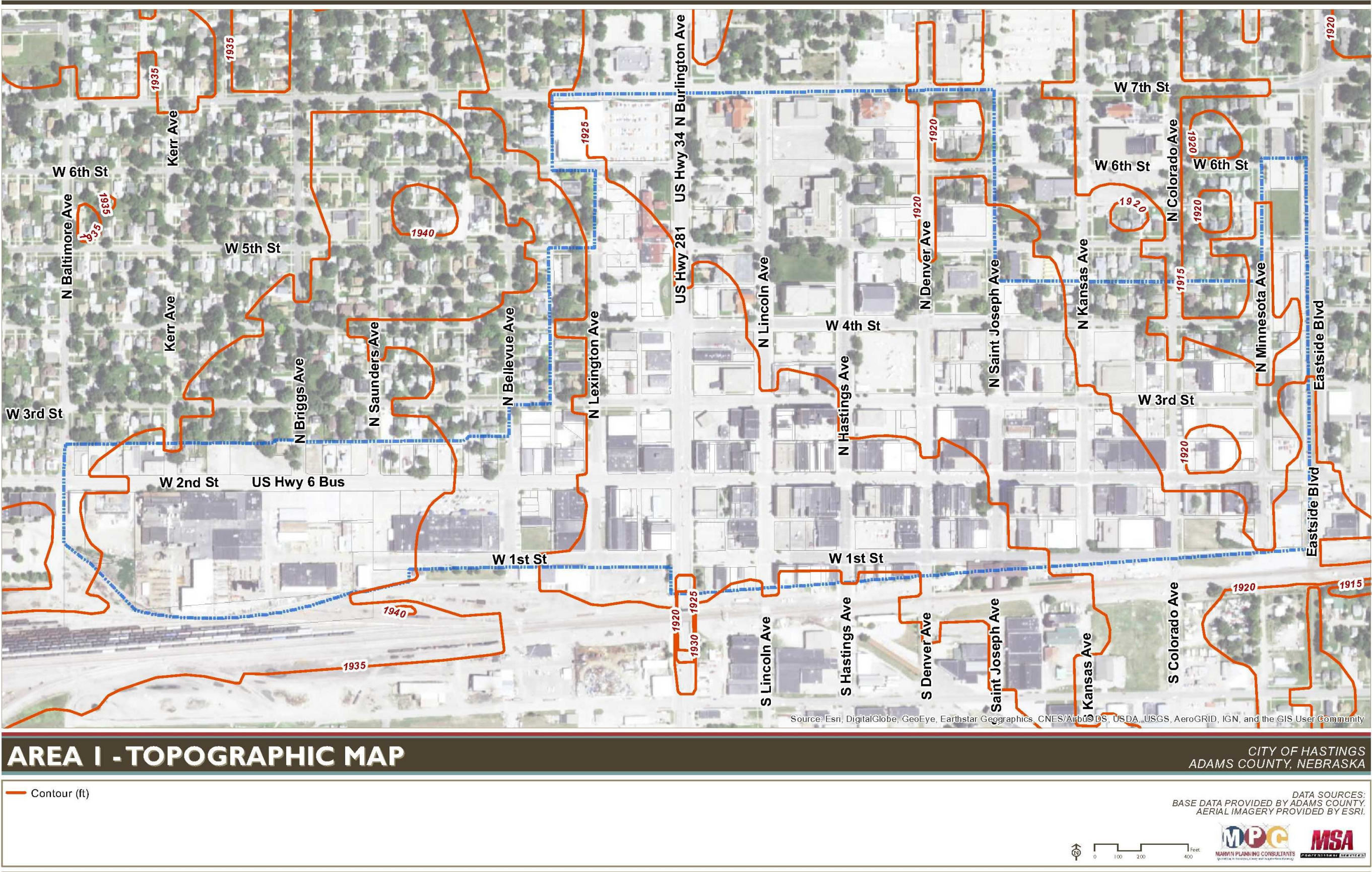
Standing water from poor drainage can be a catalyst for health issues like West Nile and other diseases due to the potential mosquito breeding during the summer months. It is important that drainage is adequate to rid the area of standing water, thus eliminating potentials for these diseases.

Due to the drainage issues and in combination with the curb and gutter conditions, drainage issues are a direct contributing factor towards blighting the area.



Examples of Drainage Conditions within the Study Area

Figure 7
Drainage/Contours



Deterioration of Site or Other Improvements, continued

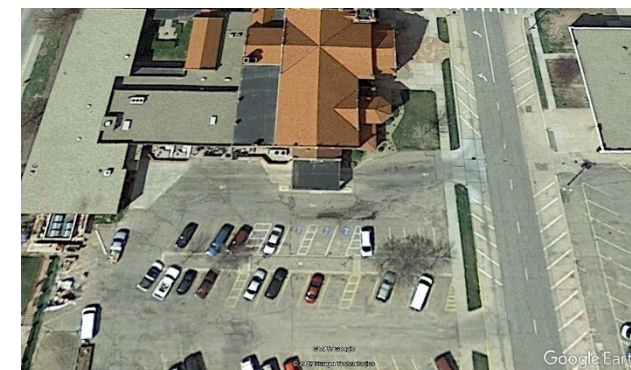
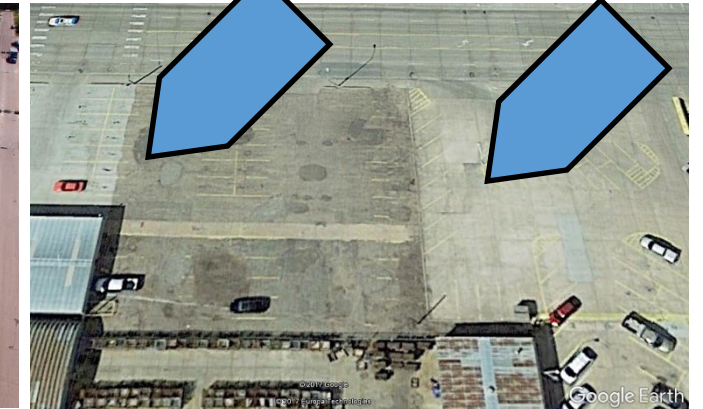
Site Improvement Conditions

Throughout Area 1 there are a number of public parking lots and private parking areas for the various commercial entities in the area. One of the keys to creating a positive image of an area is how well the exterior portions of the lots are maintained. Even a perfectly maintained structure can be seen as a deteriorating part of the community if the exterior or curb appeal is less than desirable.

Part of developing a blight study for any community centers around how well different site improvements are maintained and what type of image these improvements create of the property and study area. Part of this analysis examines the actual condition of the site improvements; plus, the drainage issue if they exist.

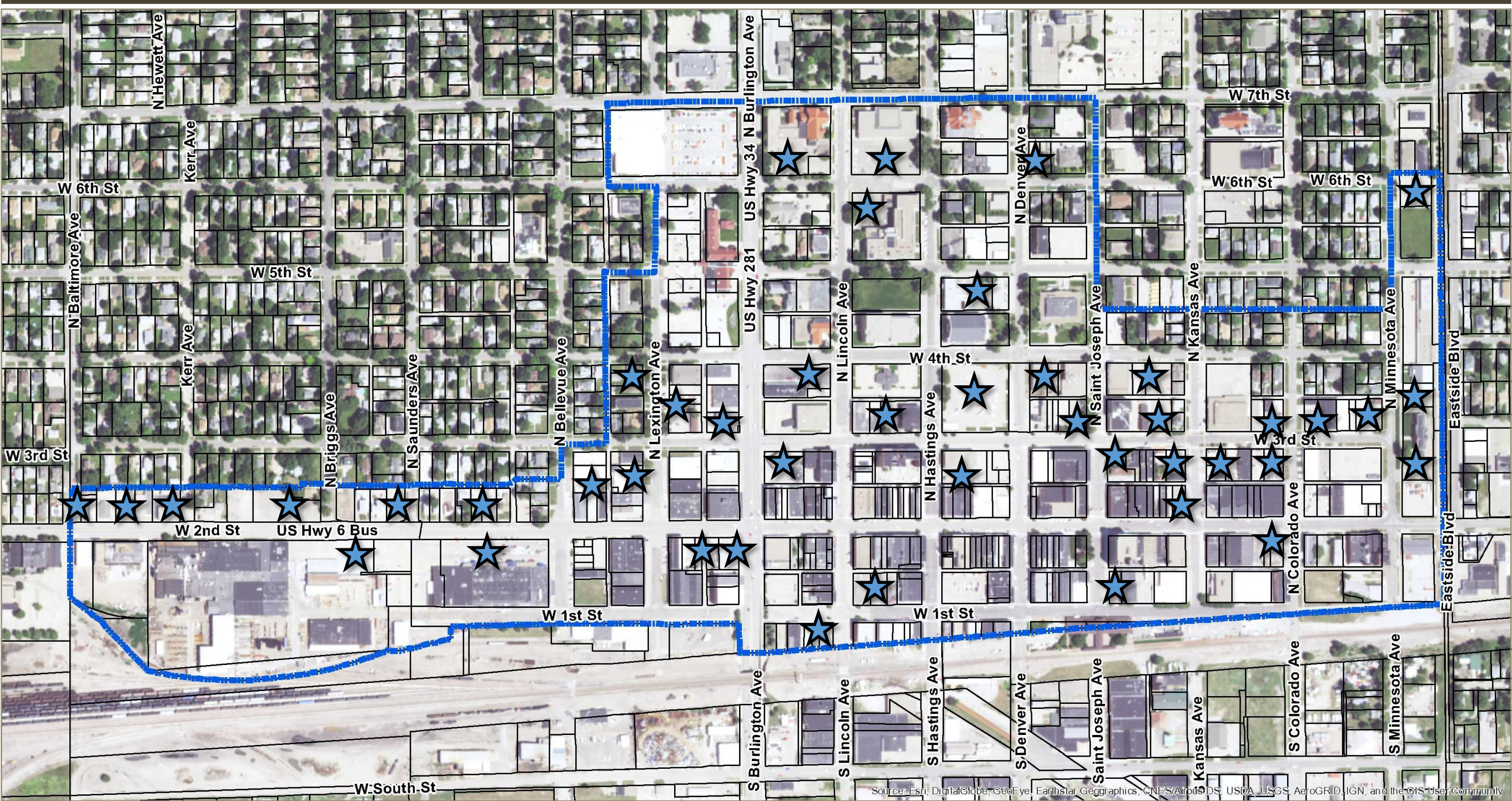
Within Area 1 there are 44 areas where the site improvements were deemed to be in poor condition. Some of these areas are far worse than others and should be improved. One of the most visible locations is the City Parking Area immediately north of City Hall (site of old Adams County Courthouse). The City parking area is seeing surface breakup in places and the photo to the right shows the drainage issues on the site from the June 13th rain event.

Due to the condition of multiple sites and the lack of improvements, specifically the condition and type of the paving, Site Improvements issues are a direct contributing factor towards blighting the area.



Examples of Site Improvement issues within the Study Area

Figure 8
Site Improvements—Deterioration



HASTINGS 2017 BLIGHT AND SUBSTANDARD STUDY - AREA I

CITY OF HASTINGS
ADAMS COUNTY, NEBRASKA

Area 1 (160 Acres) Site Improvements showing deterioration and/or not hard-surfaced

DATA SOURCES:
BASE DATA PROVIDED BY ADAMS COUNTY
AERIAL IMAGERY PROVIDED BY ESRI.



Faulty Lot Layout

Size of Lot and Configuration

Area 1 contains the heart of Hastings, the downtown area. In most communities, downtowns are comprised of numerous lots with minimal lot frontages; therefore, those items are not the basis for the discussion on Size of Lot and Configuration (Faulty Lot Layout). The issue behind this discussion is the odd configurations which may have been done initially or at some point between the founding of the downtown area and now.

Overall, there have been 37 areas within the study area that have this type of issue. The following listing coordinates with Figure 9 and details specifically what caused the inclusion.

1. Area 1 is on the far west side of the study area and has two lots. This area is substantially narrow and may not be buildable or capable of being redeveloped in future without being part of another lot.
2. Number 2 is similar to 1, but is substantially small in both its width and depth and be difficult to redevelop on its own.
3. Another narrow and shallow lot, but in this case, it is also an odd shaped lot.
4. This area has an extremely small sliver lot cut in between two standard lots; however, the shape of the sliver lot has created two odd shaped lots.
5. Area 5 has allowed two lots to be platted out of one normal lot (it appears). This type of subdivision creates lots that are extremely shallow and difficult to redevelop in the future.
6. Area 6 includes a portion of Allen's and neighboring properties. The overall layout of this area is oddly divided and there are, technically, two landlocked lots/pieces in this configuration.
7. This area is smaller, but one lot is wrapping around the neighboring lot. It appears this can be attributed to the sidetracks from the BNSF Railroad.
8. Area 8 is along W. 2nd Street just west of N. Burlington Avenue. This set of lots appear to be subdivided lots from an older lot configured in an opposite manner than today. These lots are extremely shallow and narrow, even by downtown standards.
9. Area 9 has a number of smaller divisions, as well as one diagonal division.
10. Area 10 also appears to have two narrow and shallow lots divided out of a larger more typical lot in the past.
11. Area 11 is a combination of issues including, smaller lots used as parking and a closed street. This is one large use covering two blocks and a closed street right-of-way. With the smaller lots still in place, it opens up opportunities for these to be sold away; thus, creating potential conflicts.
12. Area 12 is the new Russ' Supermarket site. The primary note here is the street closure which dead ends neighborhood traffic.
13. This area is similar to the other sites, several small, narrow, and shallow lots, creating potential redevelopment issues.
14. Area 14 is similar to Area 12, a closed street which diverts neighborhood traffic.
15. This area contains several narrow, shallow and oddly configured lots.
16. Area contains a shallow and narrow lot.
17. Area contains a shallow and narrow lot.
18. Appears one normal lot divided into two shallow and narrow lots.
19. Appears one normal lot divided into two shallow and narrow lots.
20. Several lots which are very narrow and laid out in an odd configuration
21. Several lots which are very narrow and laid out in an odd configuration

22. Several lots which are very narrow and laid out in an odd configuration. Some lots only have direct access along the alley way.
23. Several lots which are very narrow and laid out in an odd configuration.
24. Several lots which are very narrow and laid out in an odd configuration.
25. Several lots which are very narrow and shallow manner and laid out in an odd configuration.
26. Several lots which are very narrow and laid out in an odd configuration
27. Several lots which are very narrow and laid out in an odd configuration
28. Several lots which are very narrow and laid out in an odd configuration
29. Several lots which are very narrow and laid out in an odd configuration
30. Appears one normal lot divided into two shallow and narrow lots.
31. Appears one normal lot divided into two shallow and narrow lots.
32. Appears one normal lot divided into two shallow and narrow lots.
33. Appears two lots were divided into three smaller narrow and shallow lots.
34. Appears two lots were divided into three smaller narrow and shallow lots.
35. Several lots which are very narrow and shallow manner and laid out in an odd configuration.
36. Area 36 is similar to Area 12 and 14, a closed street which diverts neighborhood traffic.
37. Area 36 is similar to Area 12 and 14, a closed street which diverts neighborhood traffic.

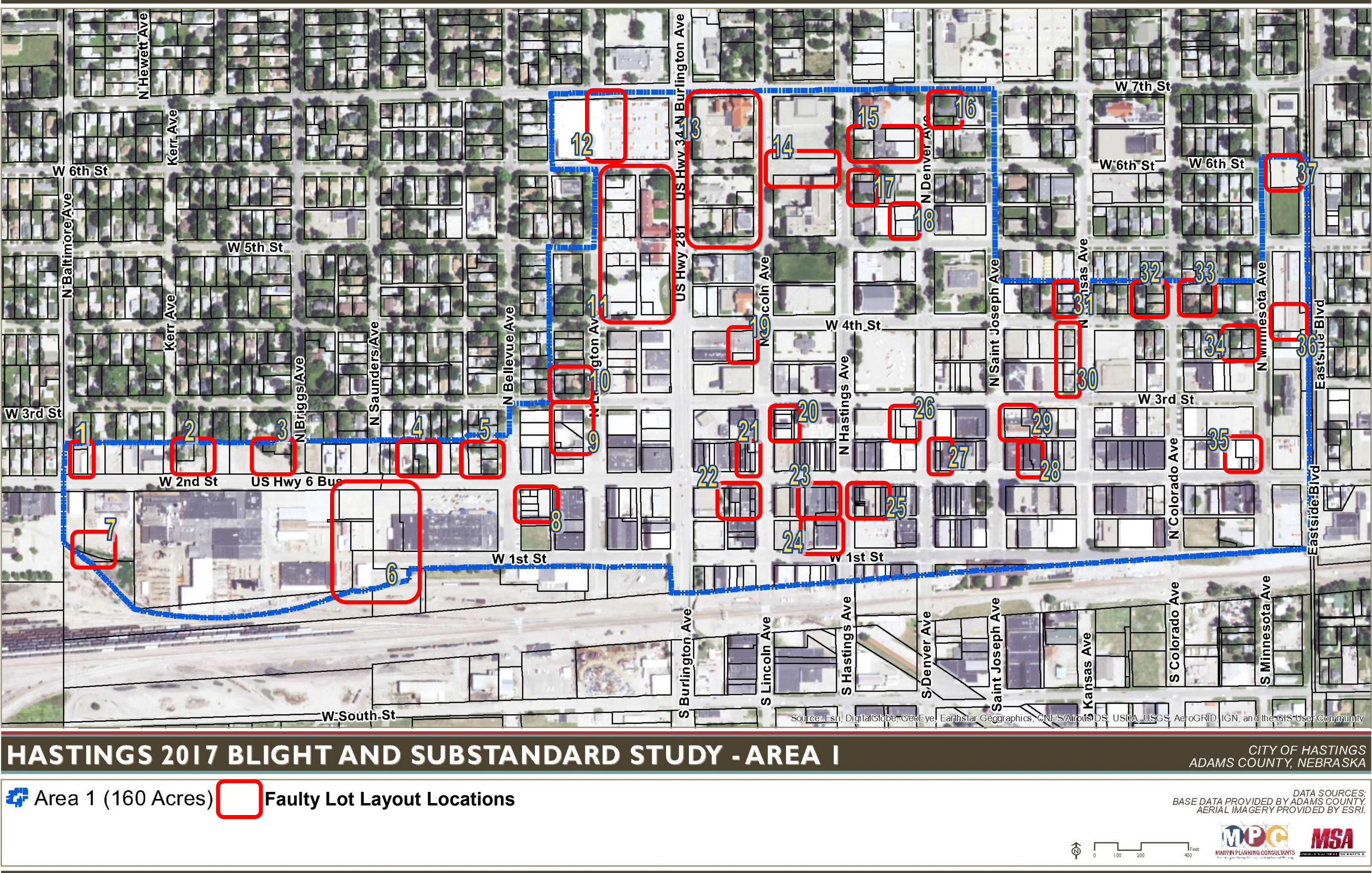
A number of these platted lots have a single use built over the top of the lot lines. However, as long as some of these lot lines continue into the future, there could become a point where someone may attempt to build on these individual lots. Two things of note:

- Where buildings are built over lot lines, these lots could be and should be combined; and
- This practice should be discontinued if it is currently used.

Due to the number of blocks containing different platting conditions, Fault Lot Configuration is a direct contributing factor towards blighting the area.



Figure 9
Faulty Lot Layout



Insanitary and Unsafe Conditions

Standing Water

As discussed in the drainage section, the study area was observed during a major thunderstorm on June 13, 2017. In addition, the area was observed the next morning. The observations during the next morning included numerous areas of standing water within the study area.

The remaining water, in the morning, is a good indicator as to where standing water can be found throughout the spring and summer months. Although it is likely the standing water along the curb and gutters will dry up and disappear in a day or so, this is still a solid indicator of possible areas in the study area which may not dry up and go away. It is important to eliminate standing water since it has a direct bearing on mosquito breeding. Mosquito in this part of the country can carry and transmit West Nile.

Standing water and its ability to attract mosquitoes, which could be carrying known diseases is a direct contributing factor towards Insanitary and Unsafe Conditions of the area.

BNSF Railroad Mainline

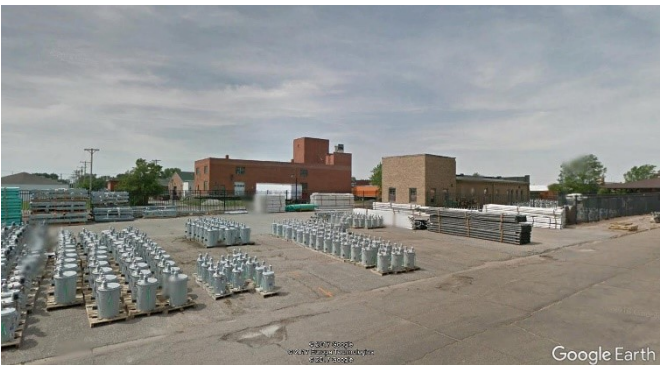
The BNSF Railroad's mainline runs the entire southern boundary of Area 1. In a large number of locations, the railroad right-of-way is not separated from the public rights-of-way by any sort of fencing. The lack of fencing and security allows people to gain direct access to the rails in places other than the rail crossings. The lack of security fencing is an unsafe situation. The only security fencing along the railroad R.O.W. is east of the Burlington Depot, some of which is encloses materials owned by Dutton Lainson.

The BNSF Railroad line is a direct contributing factor towards Insanitary and Unsafe Conditions of the area.

Dutton Lainson Storage Areas

Another issue considered to be Insanitary and Unsafe is the unsecured storage of transformers from Dutton Lainson along 1st Street, east of the BNSF Depot. Transformers when they are ready for use contain numerous chemicals which can be hazardous. The unsafe part of this centers on the need for these to be secured inside an area with a gate. As of the present time, anyone could drive up and begin messing with the transformers.

The Dutton Lainson open transformer storage is a direct contributing factor towards Insanitary and Unsafe Conditions of the area.



Examples of Insanitary and Unsafe Conditions within the Study Area

Diversity of Ownership

Within the Area 1, there are 386 total properties, based upon the Adams County Assessors data. Within the area these properties are owned by a total of 221 different property owners. Included in these property owners, are several public entities, including the City of Hastings and Adams County; plus, several different religious denominations. Completing and continuing with future redevelopment efforts in this study area will require a coordinated effort. It is necessary that some organization similar to the Hastings Community Redevelopment Authority continue to lead efforts in redeveloping the Area 1 within the corporate limits of Hastings.

Based upon the number of different properties and property owners within the study area, it is determined that the Diversity of Ownership within Area 1 is a barrier to redevelopment.

Existence of Conditions endangering life or property due to fire or other causes

Located within the study area there are factors present that are a danger to life or property due to fire or other causes. A number of these factors have been previously discussed in this report.

These factors include:

- Unsecured materials
- The BNSF Railroad corridor is unsecured along most of the study area and enables someone to walk along the tracks of one of the busiest railroad corridors in the United States.
- Standing water

Based upon the review of the study area, there are sufficient elements present to meet the definition of dangerous conditions within the area.

Combination of factors which are impairing and/or arresting sound growth

Impairing and/or arresting sound growth can be an element in the study area that is positive but has a major impact on how uses develop or properties are redeveloped in the future. Within Area 1 there are two factors have a major impact on the development and redevelopment opportunities., thus impairing and/or arresting some growth.

These elements are:

- The BNSF Railroad corridor lies on the southern edge of the study area and acts as a major wall for further growth south from the traditional downtown area.
- In addition to safety concerns, the railroad also produces considerable noise. The noise levels within the corridor can be heard throughout the study area and is a an impairment toward sound growth.
- Even though it is a positive influence on the community, since it pulls the majority of traffic through the community, US Highway 281/Burlington Avenue impairs growth. The primary issue involving sound growth is the number of lanes along the route, the State and Federal regulations for driveways, and the setbacks required from the thoroughfare.

Based upon the review of the study area, there are sufficient elements present to meet the definition of combination of factors which are impairing and/or arresting sound growth within the study area.

Part B of the Blight Definition

Age of Units

Age of units is a contributing factor to the blighted and substandard conditions in an area. The statute allows for a predominance of units 40 years of age or older to be a contributing factor regardless of their condition. The following paragraphs document the structural age of the units within the Study Area. Note the age of units came from the Assessors data within the Adams County website data.

Within the study area, there are 277 units in some form or another. The age of structure has been determined by researching the structural age on the Adams County Assessor's websites and reviewing older documents, as well as, a land survey completed on the entire site.

The following breakdown was determined:

- 253 (91.3%) units were determined to be 40 years of age or older
- 24 (8.7%) units were determined to be less than 40 years of age

Table 1:
Age of Units

	Number of Units	Year Built	Total Age	Total Cumulative Age
	1	1875	142	142
	13	1880	137	1,781
	1	1881	136	136
	1	1883	134	134
	1	1884	133	133
	8	1885	132	1,056
	1	1889	128	128
	17	1890	127	2,159
	1	1895	122	122
	1	1899	118	118
	35	1900	117	4,095
	1	1901	116	116
	1	1903	114	114
	2	1904	113	226
	3	1905	112	336
	2	1906	111	222
	1	1907	110	110
	1	1908	109	109
	15	1910	107	1,605
	1	1911	106	106
	1	1912	105	105
	3	1914	103	309
	12	1915	102	1,224

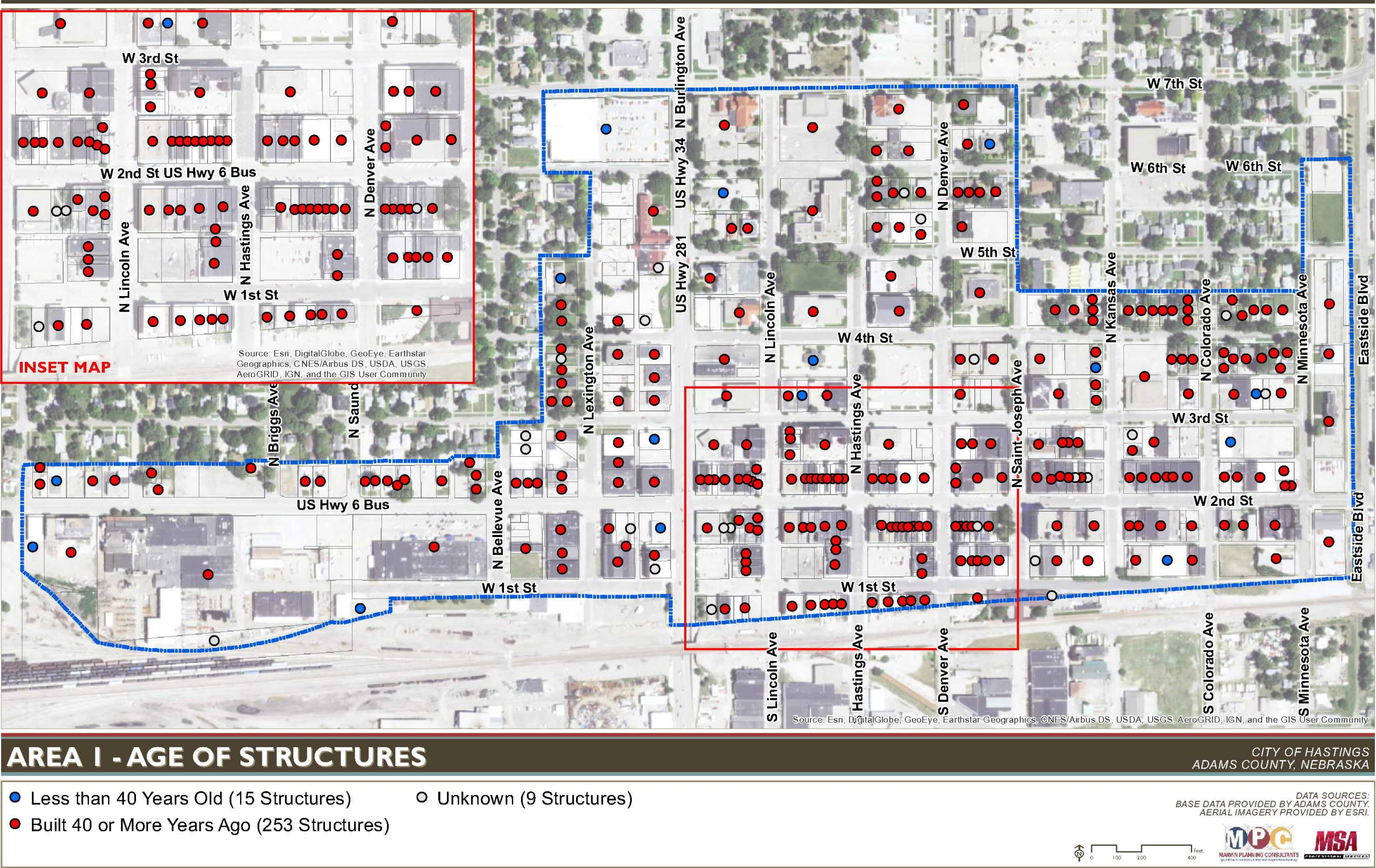
	Number of Units	Year Built	Total Age	Total Cumulative Age
	3	1916	101	303
	1	1917	100	100
	2	1918	99	198
	1	1919	98	98
	21	1920	97	2,037
	1	1921	96	96
	5	1922	95	475
	2	1923	94	188
	11	1925	92	1,012
	3	1926	91	273
	2	1928	89	178
	2	1929	88	176
	10	1930	87	870
	2	1932	85	170
	7	1935	82	574
	1	1936	81	81
	1	1938	79	79
	1	1939	78	78
	4	1940	77	308
	1	1942	75	75
	1	1945	72	72
	3	1946	71	213
	1	1947	70	70
	1	1949	68	68
	9	1950	67	603
	2	1951	66	132
	1	1954	63	63
	4	1955	62	248
	7	1956	61	427
	1	1957	60	60
	1	1958	59	59
	6	1960	57	342
	3	1961	56	168
	5	1962	55	275
	3	1965	52	156
	2	1968	49	98
	1	1969	48	48
	1	1970	47	47
	2	1971	46	92
	1	1972	45	45
	1	1973	44	44

	Number of Units	Year Built	Total Age	Total Cumulative Age
	2	1975	42	84
	1	1977	40	40
	1	1981	36	36
	1	1982	35	35
	1	1984	33	33
	1	1985	32	32
	1	1989	28	28
	1	1990	27	27
	1	1995	22	22
	1	1996	21	21
	1	1999	18	18
	1	2001	16	16
	1	2002	15	15
	1	2003	14	14
	1	2005	12	12
	1	2008	9	9
	1	2010	7	7
	2	2011	6	12
	1	2012	5	5
	1	2013	4	4
	1	2014	3	3
	2	2015	2	4
Total Cumulative	285			25,762
Average Age				90.39

Source: Adams County Assessor

Also, Table 1, above, examined the units within the study area and calculated a cumulative age and divided by the total number of commercial units to get a mean age. The mean age of all of the commercial units in the study area is 90.39 years.

Figure 9
Faulty Lot Layout



Blighting Summary

These conditions are contributing to the blighted conditions of the study area.

Substantial number of deteriorating structures

- Based upon the review of Adams County Assessor data, field observations, drone observations and other aerals there are a substantial number of deteriorating structures within the Study Area:
 - ◊ 2 (0.8%) structures rated as Excellent.
 - ◊ 25 (8.8%) structures rated as Good.
 - ◊ 216 (76.0%) structures rated as Average.
 - ◊ 33 (11.6%) structures rated as Fair.
 - ◊ 8 (2.8%) structures rated as Poor.

Deterioration of site or other improvements

- Large amounts (78%) of sidewalk in an Average to Poor condition; 54.9% in a Fair to Poor condition.
- Large portions (93.5%) of the street network in an average to poor condition; 66% in a Fair to Poor condition.
- Majority (89.9%) of Curb and Gutter is in an Average to Poor condition; 83.2% in a Fair to Poor condition.
- Drainage is an issue during larger spring and summer storm events.
- Standing water remains after storm events occur in certain places throughout the Study Area.
- There are considerable number of private and public parking lots either in a deteriorating state or simply are not hard-surfaced.

Faulty Lot Layout

- There are 38 locations in the Study Area where the lots were originally platted in a faulty manner or have been replatted over time.

Insanitary or Unsafe Conditions

- Standing water in various locations after storm event.
- BNSF Railroad is not secure along most of the southern boundary of the Study Area.
- Dutton Lainson has unsecured storage along the south side of 1st Street including transformers.

Diversity of Ownership

- The Study Area contains 386 different Property Identification Number (PIN) on the Assessor's website; within the 386 different properties there are a total of 221 different property owners including different governmental and religious entities.

Existence of Conditions endangering life or property due to fire or other causes

- Unsecured materials within the Study Area.
- The BNSF Railroad corridor is unsecured along most of the study area.
- Standing water in part of the study area.

Combination of factors which are impairing and/or arresting sound growth

- The BNSF Railroad corridor lies on the southern edge and is a major deterrent to further downtown growth to the south. In addition, the trains create considerable noise when passing through the corridor.

- US Highway 281/Burlington Avenue splits the study area and due to its control by State and Federal departments and the volume of vehicles impairs the development and redevelopment of the area.

Criteria under Part B of the Blight Definition

Average age of units is over 40 years of age

- Within the Study Area 91.3% of the units meet the criteria of 40 years of age or older.
- Based upon the county assessor's assessment records, the average age of the units within the study area is 90.39 years.

Other criteria for Blight not present in the area include:

- Improper Subdivision or Obsolete Platting
- Defective/Inadequate street layouts
- Tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding fair value of the land.
- Defective or unusual condition of title
- Unemployment in the designated area is at least 120% of the state or national average.
- Over one-half of the property is unimproved and has been within the City for over 40 years.
- 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.

These issues were either not present or were limited enough as to have little impact on the overall condition of the study area.

Substandard Conditions

“Substandard areas 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

Predominance of Deteriorating Buildings or Improvements

Structural conditions were evaluated, structures were either rated as: Excellent, Good, Average, Fair, and Poor. The data and rating system comes from the Adams County Assessor's database and is the same database used to value properties in the area.

Based upon the data provided to the planning team, the following is the breakdown for structures in the study area:

- 2 (0.8%) structures rated as Excellent
- 25 (8.8%) structures rated as Good
- 216 (76.0%) structure rated as Average
- 33 (11.6%) structures rated as Fair
- 8 (2.8%) structure rated as Poor

The different rating terms used in this section are defined as follows:

- Excellent:** Typically newer construction or property that recently has been completely upgraded.
- Good:** Typically no major defects or aging conditions showing up in the physical analysis.
- Average:** Typically minor defects may be showing up, including: degrading roof materials (limited to 25%), masonry joints needing tuckpointed (25% or less), painted surfaces beginning to peel and flake, small cracks in the foundation, broken glass, and other similar conditions.
- Fair:** Similar to Average but conditions are worsening and covering a greater percentage of the structure.
- Poor:** Represents structures likely showing several of the conditions mentioned above as well as the extent of the aging and deterioration is at a point where demolition may be necessary to eliminate the conditions.

Based upon these data, an assumption has been made that average condition and less would constitute less than desirable conditions due to age and conditions. It is common for older structures to get more maintenance and upkeep in order to maintain a good or higher condition. Even an average structure will show some signs of deteriorating which in turn can become a dilapidated structure in the future if it is not addressed over time. Overall, 90.4% of the structures in this study area are average condition or worse.

Due to the stated conditions found in the Adams County Assessor's data, the condition of the structure is a contributing factor.

Age of Units

Age of units is a contributing factor to the blighted and substandard conditions in an area. The statute allows for a predominance of units 40 years of age or older to be a contributing factor regardless of their condition. The following paragraphs document the structural age of the units within the Study Area. Note the age of units came from the Assessors data within the Adams County website data.

Within the study area, there are 277 units in some form or another. The age of structure has been determined by researching the structural age on the Adams County Assessor's websites and reviewing older documents, as well as, a land survey completed on the entire site.

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	1	1996	21	21
	1	1999	18	18
	1	2001	16	16
	1	2002	15	15
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Total Cumulative	285			25,762
Average Age				90.39

Source: Adams County Assessor

Also, Table 1, above, examined the units within the study area and calculated a cumulative age and divided by the total number of commercial units to get a mean age. The mean age of all of the commercial units in the study area is 90.39 years.

Substandard Summary

Nebraska State Statute requires that “...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;”

This Study Area meets the definition of Substandard as defined in the Revised Nebraska State Statutes.

FINDINGS FOR HASTINGS BLIGHT STUDY AREA #1

Blight Study Area #1 has several items contributing to the Blight and Substandard Conditions. These conditions include:

Blighted Conditions

- **Substantial number of deteriorated or deteriorating structures**
- **Deterioration of site or other improvements**
- **Faulty Lot Layout**
- **Insanitary and Unsafe Conditions**
- **Diversity of Ownership**
- **Dangerous conditions to life or property due to fire or other causes**
- **Combination of factors which are impairing and/or arresting sound growth**
- **Average age of structures is over 40 years of age**

Substandard Conditions

- **Predominance of structures meeting the dilapidation or deterioration criteria**
- **Average age of the structures in the area is at least forty years**