

COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT PLAN PLANNING TOWARDS 2028

Prepared For
ALTA, IOWA
BUENA VISTA COUNTY

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

LOCATION

Alta, the second largest community in Buena Vista County, is located in southwest Buena Vista County and has a 2000 census population of 1,865. The flat horizon around Alta is dominated by wind turbines. The City is northwest of the City of Storm Lake. Alta is located on Highway 7 and is only two hours away from Omaha, Nebraska, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Des Moines, Iowa.

HISTORY OF ALTA (Taken from www.altaiowa.com/history.htm)

Founded because of the expansion of the Chicago-Illinois Railroad, Alta is the highest town in the state of Iowa. While some claim that the town was named for this altitude, the true origin of the name Alta is still disputed. It is known that railroad President John I. Blair named the depot Alta in 1870, but his reasons for choosing the name are unclear. While Mr. Blair may have named the town for its high altitude, it is also possible that he named it in honor of his daughter Altai Blair.

Settlers began to take residence in Alta in 1869. One of the first commercial structures in the town was the railroad depot, followed by a post office. In 1872, a land company laid out town of Alta. The original plat consisted of four blocks. Hearing of this new settlement, P.G. Peterson of Chicago moved to Alta to start a hotel and help establish a good town. Soon after, a group of tradesmen and businessmen followed from the Chicago area bringing several businesses to the rapidly growing community. These new businesses included an elevator, a blacksmith shop, a hardware store, a general mercantile, a medical practice, and a law firm.

The Incorporation papers were filed for "Incorporated Town of Alta, Buena Vista County, Iowa" on November 11, 1878 at the State Land Office at the Capitol in Des Moines.

THE PURPOSE OF COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

The Alta Comprehensive Development Plan is designed to promote orderly growth and development for the city. The Comprehensive Development Plan will provide policy guidelines to enable citizens and elected officials to make informed decisions about the future of the city.

The Plan acts as a tool to “Develop a road map that guides the community through change”



The Comprehensive Development Plan will provide a guideline for the location of future developments within the planning jurisdiction of Alta. The Comprehensive Development Plan is intended to encourage a strong economic base for the city so the goals of the city are achieved.

The Plan will assist Alta in evaluating the impacts of development (i.e. economic, social, fiscal, service and amenity provision, health, safety and general welfare) and encourage appropriate land uses throughout the jurisdictional area of the Alta. The objective of planning is to provide a framework for guiding the community—whether a city or county, toward orderly growth and development. The Plan assists Alta in balancing the physical, social, economic, and aesthetic features as it responds to private sector interests.

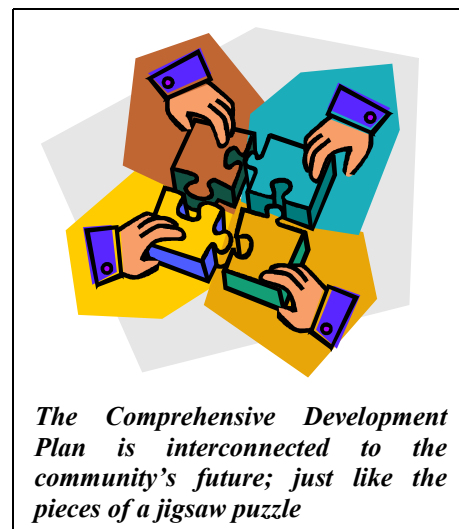
Planned growth will make Alta more effective in serving residents, more efficient in using resources, and able to meet the standard of living and quality of life every individual desires.

THE COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING PROCESS

Comprehensive planning begins with the data collection phase. Data is collected that provides a snapshot of the past and present city conditions. Analysis of data provides the basis for developing forecasts for future land-use demands in the city.

The second phase of the planning process is the development of general goals and policies, based upon the issues facing the city. These are practical guidelines for improving existing conditions and guiding future growth. The Comprehensive Development Plan is a vision presented in text, graphics and tables that represent the desires of Alta for the future.

The Comprehensive Development Plan represents a blueprint designed to identify, assess, and develop actions and policies in the areas of population, land use, transportation, housing, economic development, community facilities, and utilities. The Comprehensive Development Plan contains recommendations that when implemented will be of value to the residents of Alta.



Implementation is the final phase of the process. A broad range of development policies and programs are required to implement the Comprehensive Development Plan. The Plan identifies the tools, programs, and methods necessary to carry out the recommendations. Nevertheless, the implementation of the development policies contained within the Comprehensive Development Plan is dependent upon the adoption of the Plan by the governing body, and the leadership exercised by the present and future elected and appointed officials of the city.

The Plan was prepared under the direction of the Buena Vista County Planning Commission, with the assistance and participation of the Alta City Council, the Plan Review Committee and citizens of Alta. The time period for achieving goals, programs, and developments identified in the Alta Comprehensive Development Plan is approximately 20 years. However, Alta should review the Plan annually and complete an update of the document every five to ten years. Updating the Comprehensive Development Plan will allow Alta to incorporate ideas and developments that were unknown at the time of the present process.

COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT PLAN COMPONENTS

Iowa Code permits cities to regulate land use by ordinance. All citations to the Iowa Code in this Plan are from the Iowa General Assembly website, www2.legis.state.is.us/IACODE/1999SUPPLEMENT. Pursuant to Iowa Code, the Alta City Council has the authority to:

“For the purpose of promoting the health, safety, morals, or the general welfare of the community or for the purpose of preserving historically significant areas of the community, any city is hereby empowered to regulate and restrict the height, number of stories, and size of buildings and other structures, the percentage of lot that may be occupied, the size of yards, courts, and other open spaces, the density of population, and the location and use of buildings, structures, and land for trade, industry, residence, or other purposes.” (Iowa Code Ann § 414.1).

However, the Board is limited in their authority; their “powers exercised only with reference to land and structures located within the city limits.” (Iowa Code Ann § 414.23).

Pursuant to Iowa Code:

“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.” (Iowa Code Ann § 414.3).

The Iowa Code defines factor regulations as follows:

“Such regulations shall be made with reasonable consideration, among other things, as to the character of the area of the district and the peculiar suitability of such area for particular uses, and with a view to conserving the value of buildings and encouraging the most appropriate use of land throughout such city.” (Iowa Code Ann § 414.3).

The Alta Comprehensive Plan is comprised of the following chapters and sections:

- Profile Alta
 - Demographic Analysis – Conditions and Trend Analysis
 - City Facilities
 - Existing Land Use
- Envision Alta
 - Town Hall Meeting Results
 - Goals and Objectives
- Achieve Alta

- Future Land Use Plan
- Transportation Plan
- Alta Plan Implementation

Analyzing past and existing demographic, housing, economic, and social trends permits the projection of likely conditions in the future. Projections and forecasts are useful tools for planning the community's future; however, these tools are sometimes lacking in accuracy and may change due to unforeseen factors. In addition, past trends may be skewed or the data may be inaccurate, creating a distorted picture of past conditions. It is important for Alta to closely monitor population, housing, and economic conditions that may influence the city. Through periodic monitoring, the City can adapt and adjust to changes at the local level. Having the ability to adapt to socio-economic change allows the City to maintain an effective Comprehensive Development Plan for the future, to enhance the quality of life, and to raise the standard of living for all residents.

The Comprehensive Development Plan records where Alta has been, where it is now, and where it likely will be in the future. Having this record in the Comprehensive Development Plan will serve to inform City officials as much as possible. The Comprehensive Development Plan is an information and management tool for City leaders to use in their decision-making process when considering future developments. The Comprehensive Development Plan is not a static document; it should evolve as changes in the land-use, population or local economy occur during the planning period. This information is the basis for Alta's evolution as it achieves its physical, social, and economic goals.

GOVERNMENTAL AND JURISDICTIONAL ORGANIZATION

The Alta government consists of a five member City Council and the mayor who perform the governmental functions for the City. The planning and zoning jurisdiction of Alta, pursuant to Iowa Code Ann. § 335.3, includes all land and uses within the corporate limits of the city. There is one limitation, however, on the power to regulate land use, which is the regulation of agriculture or agricultural structures as long as they are being used for agricultural purposes. (Iowa Code Ann. § 335.2)

Iowa Code also dictates how county and city zoning efforts interact in areas where they overlap. When cities enact zoning, they are empowered to extend their authority over any unincorporated areas within two miles of the city's limits, unless the County has already zoned the area. (Iowa Code Ann § 414.23). However, "Whenever a county in which this power is being exercised by a municipality adopts a county zoning ordinance the power exercised by the municipality and the specific regulations and districts there under shall be terminated within three months of the establishment of the administrative authority for county zoning, or at such date as mutually agreed upon by the municipality and county." (Iowa Code Ann. § 414.23)

Also, pursuant to Iowa Code Ann. § 335.24, if more than one statute, ordinance, or regulation conflict, the one that imposes the highest standards governs. However, there is one caveat to this general rule. Where a city has zoning regulations pertaining to subdivisions, those regulations can be authorized over the area within two miles of the city, even when the county has general jurisdiction over the area pursuant to Iowa Code Ann. § 414.23. Under authority of Iowa Code Ann. § 354.9, the city may pass an ordinance clearly establishing the area over which it will exercise subdivision review. In which case, the city must use the same standards it uses within its limits, and the city and county may enter into a 28E intergovernmental agreement on standards and conditions for review.

In essence, according to the Code of Iowa, counties and cities have the power to regulate land use through zoning ordinances. When a county adopts a zoning ordinance, agricultural land is generally exempt, and the ordinance extends to the corporate limits of cities. In the case of a city that has zoning at a time when the county does not, that city has zoning authority over the unincorporated area within two miles of its corporate limits. However, when a county enacts zoning, the county authority extends over that two mile area, and the city authority is then limited to land within its corporate limits. The only exception to this rule is the city may still exercise subdivision review powers within the two-mile area if they do so pursuant to a specific city ordinance clearly defining the two-mile limit.

PROFILE ALTA

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Population statistics aid decision-makers by developing a broad picture of the City of Alta. It is important for the community to understand where it has been, where it is, and where it appears to be going. Population is the driving force behind housing, local employment, economic, and fiscal stability of the City. Historic population conditions assist in developing demographic projections, which in turn assist in determining future housing, retail, medical, employment, and educational needs within the City. Projections provide an estimate for the City to base future land-use and development decisions. However, population projections are only estimates and unforeseen factors may effect projections significantly.

POPULATION TRENDS AND ANALYSIS

Table 1 indicates the population for the City of Alta and other incorporated and unincorporated areas within Buena Vista County, between 1980 and 2004. This information provides an understanding of the past and present population trends and changes. Alta's population in 2000 was 1,865 persons, which was an increase of 45 persons, or 2.5%, from 1990. The City's population in 2004 was estimated to be 1,852, a decrease of 13 persons, or -0.7%, over 2000. Overall, the table indicates the City of Alta had a net increase of 132 persons, or 7.7%, between 1980 and 2004. Only two other communities in Buena Vista County experienced an increase in population during this period: Storm Lake and Linn Grove.

TABLE 1: POPULATION TRENDS, BUENA VISTA COUNTY & COMMUNITIES, 1980 TO 2004

Community	1980	1990	% Change 1980 to 1990	2000	% Change 1990 to 2000	2004	% Change 2000 to 2004	% Change 1980 to 2004
Albert City	818	779	-4.8%	709	-9.0%	691	-2.5%	-15.5%
Alta	1,720	1,820	5.8%	1,865	2.5%	1,852	-0.7%	7.7%
Lakeside	589	522	-11.4%	484	-7.3%	496	2.5%	-15.8%
Linn Grove	205	194	-5.4%	211	8.8%	213	0.9%	3.9%
Marathon	442	320	-27.6%	302	-5.6%	297	-1.7%	-32.8%
Newell	913	1,089	19.3%	887	-18.5%	870	-1.9%	-4.7%
Rembrandt	291	229	-21.3%	228	-0.4%	222	-2.6%	-23.7%
Sioux Rapids	897	761	-15.2%	720	-5.4%	703	-2.4%	-21.6%
Storm Lake	8,814	8,769	-0.5%	10,076	14.9%	9,981	-0.9%	13.2%
Truesdale	128	132	3.1%	91	-31.1%	88	-3.3%	-31.3%
Incorporated Areas	14,817	14,615	-1.4%	15,573	6.6%	15,413	-1.0%	4.0%
Unincorporated Areas	5,957	5,350	-10.2%	4,838	-9.6%	4,743	-2.0%	-20.4%
Buena Vista County	20,774	19,965	-3.9%	20,411	2.2%	20,156	-1.2%	-3.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population and Housing, 1980 - 1990, 2000, 2004

Alta exhibited its greatest population gain, both in terms of total number of persons and in percentage, within Table 1, between 1980 and 1990, when it recorded an increase of 100 persons, or 5.8%. During this period, the unincorporated areas of Buena Vista County experienced a decrease in population of 607 persons, or -10.2%, while the incorporated areas experienced less of a decrease losing only 202 persons, or -1.4%. With the exception of Lakeside and Linn Grove, estimates for Buena Vista County since 2000 show population is decreasing slowly overall.

AGE STRUCTURE ANALYSIS

Age structure is an important component of population analysis. By analyzing age structure, one can determine which age groups (cohorts) within the City of Alta are being affected by population shifts and changes. Each age cohort affects the population in a number of different ways. For example, the existence of larger young cohorts (20-44 years) means that there is a greater ability to sustain future population growth than larger older cohorts. On the other hand, if the large, young cohorts maintain their relative size, but do not increase the population as expected, they will, as a group, tend to strain the resources of an area as they age. Understanding what is happening within the age groups of the City's population is necessary to effectively plan for the future.

TABLE 2: AGE-SEX CHARACTERISTICS, CITY OF ALTA, 1990 TO 2000

Age	1990		2000		1990-2000		1990-2000	
	Male and Female	% of Total	Male and Female	% of Total	Net Change	% Change	Cohort Change	% Change
0-4	160	8.8%	122	6.5%	-38	-23.8%	122	-
5-9	148	8.1%	150	8.0%	2	14%	150	-
10-14	136	7.5%	177	9.5%	41	30.1%	17	10.6%
15-19	138	7.6%	156	8.4%	18	13.0%	8	5.4%
20-24	111	6.1%	92	4.9%	-19	-17.1%	-44	-32.4%
25-29	145	8.0%	111	6.0%	-34	-23.4%	-27	-19.6%
30-34	137	7.5%	121	6.5%	-16	-11.7%	10	9.0%
35-44	244	13.4%	295	15.8%	51	20.9%	13	4.6%
45-54	153	8.4%	203	10.9%	50	32.7%	-41	-16.8%
55-64	145	8.0%	142	7.6%	-3	-2.1%	-11	-7.2%
65-74	175	9.6%	133	7.1%	-42	-24.0%	-12	-8.3%
75 & older	128	7.0%	163	8.7%	35	27.3%	-140	-46.2%
Total	1,820	100.0%	1,865	100.0%	45	2.5%	45	2.5%
Selected Characteristics	1990		2000		Total Change			
	Under 18 years of age		535		Under 18 years of age		554	
	%of total population		29.4%		%of total population		29.7%	
	%change						3.6%	
	Total 65 yrs and older		303		Total 65 yrs and older		296	
	%of total population		16.6%		%of total population		15.9%	
	%change						-2.3%	
	Median Age		32.6		Median Age		35.1	
	Total Females		925		Total Females		947	
	Total Males		895		Total Males		918	
Total Population		1,820	Total Population		1,865		Total Change	
							45	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population and Housing, STF-1A, 1990; DP-1 2000

Table 2 exhibits the age cohort structure for the City of Alta in 1990 and 2000. Population age structure may indicate significant changes that are affecting the different population segments within the City. Understanding the number of persons in each age cohort, and at what rate the age cohorts are changing in size, will allow for informed decision-making in order to maximize the future use of resources. As shown in Table 2, changes between 1990 and 2000 occurred within a number of different age group cohorts.

One method of analyzing cohort movement in a population involves comparing the number of persons aged between 0 and 4 years in 1990 with the number of persons in the same age cohort 10 years later, or aged between 10 and 14 years in 2000. For example, in the City of Alta, there were 160 children between the ages of 0 and 4 in 1990, and in 2000 there were 177 children between the ages of 10 and 14, an increase of 17 children. A review of population by this method

permits one to undertake a detailed analysis of the cohorts moving in and out of the City. The positive change in this cohort indicates in-migration.

The City of Alta experienced growth in many of its age cohorts. The 0 to 4 and 5 to 9 cohorts always indicate an increase, since the persons in that group were not born when the previous census was completed. Note the cohorts represented in Table 3 differ from those listed below due to the consolidation of the 25-29 and 30-34 cohorts from 1990 into a 35-44 cohort in 2000. Besides the first two categories, increases occurred in four other age groups between 1990 and 2000, these cohort shifts were:

1990 Age Cohort	Number	2000 Age Cohort	Number	Change
NA	NA	0-4 years	122 persons	+ 122 persons
NA	NA	5-9 years	150 persons	+ 150 persons
0-4 years	160 persons	10-14 years	177 persons	+ 17 persons
5-9 years	148 persons	15-19 years	156 persons	+ 8 persons
20-24 years	111 persons	30-34 years	121 persons	+ 10 persons
25-34 years	282 persons	35-44 years	295 persons	+ 13 persons
Total Change				+ 320 persons

Outside of the 2000 age groups of 0-4 and 5-9 years, the greatest increases included the 10-14 (2000) and 35-44 (2000) age groups. An important trend to note in the City of Alta is the increase into the 2000 cohort of 15-19. Typically, in the more rural Midwestern areas, these cohorts decrease due to the movement to secondary education locations. Finally, the increases seen in the 2000 cohorts of 10-14 and 35-44 indicate in-migration of family populations between 1990 and 2000.

While the City's population increased during this ten year span, an analysis of where the changes took place can lead to an understanding of what services will be needed in the future. Six of the age-cohorts that existed in 1990 and 2000 declined in number. They are as follows:

1990 Age Cohort	Number	2000 Age Cohort	Number	Change
10-14 years	136 persons	20-24 years	92 persons	- 44 persons
15-19 years	138 persons	25-29 years	111 persons	- 28 persons
35-44 years	244 persons	45-54 years	203 persons	- 41 persons
45-54 years	153 persons	55-64 years	142 persons	- 11 persons
55-64 years	145 persons	65-74 years	133 persons	- 12 persons
65 years +	303 persons	75 years +	163 persons	- 140 persons
Total Change				- 276 persons

The three age cohorts, from 2000, representing the most negative change, are the 20-24, 45-54 and 75 years and older age cohorts. The changes in the 75 years and older age cohort were most likely due to deaths or people moving into elderly care facilities located in other counties. The changes in the 20-24 and 25-29 age cohorts in 2000 is most likely

related to persons completing their secondary education and moving onto new careers outside of the City. This indicates that the City may need to focus economic development strategies on attempts to capture a larger share of that age group as they finish their college education.

The median age in the City of Alta increased from 32.6 years in 1990 to 35.1 years in 2000. The proportion of persons less than 18 years of age increased by 3.6% in total population between 1990 and 2000, while those aged 65 years and older changed by -2.3% overall. The 10-14 and 15-19 year old age groups of 2000 showed a total increase of 25 persons, which leads to the assumption that people with young families may be drawn to Alta because of its quality of life and proximity to the Des Moines, Sioux City and Omaha metropolitan areas.

The number of persons aged 45-74 changed by 64 persons. In order to accommodate a growing number of elderly, especially as the baby boomers move into retirement age, the City of Alta, in cooperation with Buena Vista County, should be involved in developing facilities that can house those that need assistance and allow them to feel safe and comfortable.

These senior citizens often have strong connections to the community, thus resulting in a desire to remain in the community as they age. To encourage the return of the younger and middle age groups, the City should be involved in economic development activities, including housing options and the continued maintenance and improvement of infrastructure to accommodate new growth, making the City of Alta an attractive place to live and work. Commuters living in Alta are fine for increasing the population base, but the City needs a plan to also develop its economic base as well. With a larger, secure economic base, the City of Alta would be better positioned to plan for and meet its future service needs.

POPULATION PROJECTIONS

Population Projections are estimates based upon past and present circumstances. Population projections allow Alta to estimate what the population will be in future years by looking at past trends. By analyzing population changes in this manner, the City will be able to develop a baseline of change from which they can create different future scenarios. A number of factors (demographics, economics, social, etc.) may affect projections positively or negatively. At the present time, these projections are the best crystal ball Alta has for predicting future population changes. There are many methods to project the future population trends; the four projections used below are intended to give Alta a broad overview of the possible population changes that could occur in the future.

Trend Line Analysis

Trend Line Analysis is a process of projecting future populations based upon changes during a specified period of time. In the analysis of Alta, three different trend lines were reviewed: 1960 to 2004, 1980 to 2004, and 1960 to 2004. A review of these trend lines indicates the City is likely to experience an increase in population through 2030. The following projections summarize the decennial population for Alta through 2030.

Alta Trend Analysis

Year	Trend: 1960 to 2004	Trend: 1980 to 2004	Trend: 1990 to 2004
2010	1,932 persons	1,901 persons	1,881 persons
2020	2,032 persons	1,962 persons	1,905 persons
2030	2,136 persons	2,024 persons	1,929 persons

Cohort Survival Analysis

Cohort Survival Analysis reviews the population by different age groups and sex. The population age groups are projected forward by decade using survival rates for the different age cohorts. This projection model accounts for average birth rates by sex and adds the new births into the future population, but excludes migration factors.

The Cohort Survival Model projection indicates Alta's population will decrease slightly through year 2010, followed by increases during the two decades through 2030.

Alta Cohort Survival Analysis

Year	Cohort Survival Model
2010	1,865 persons
2020	2,028 persons
2030	2,210 persons

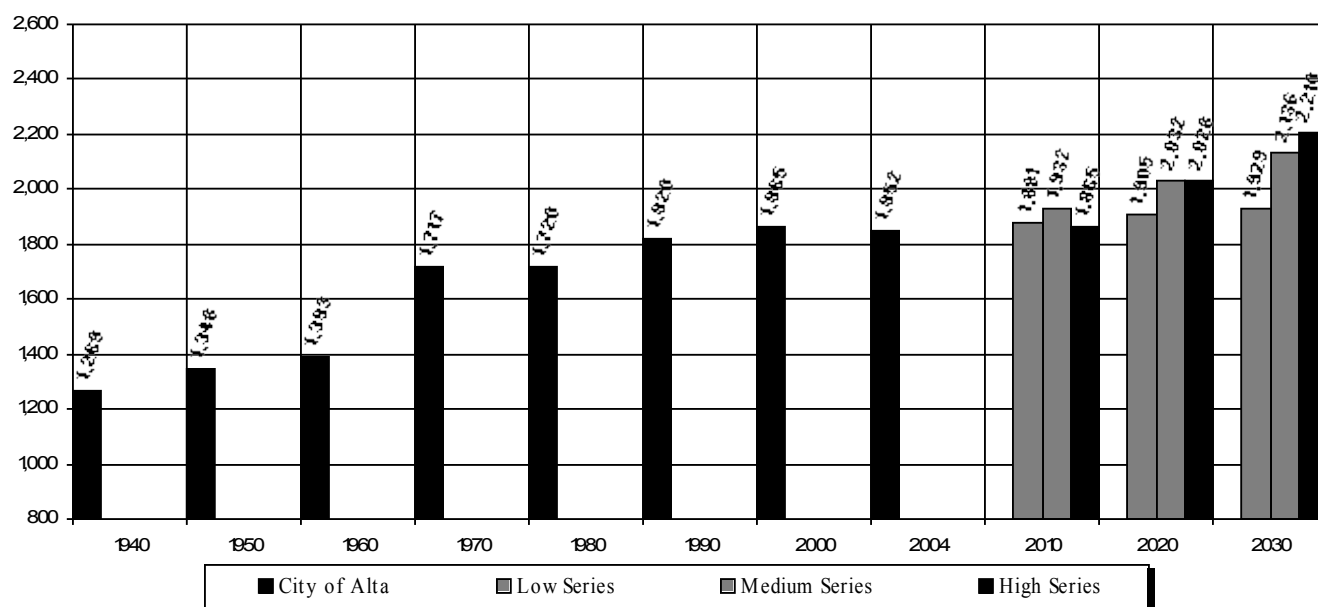
Summary of Population Projections

Using the modeling techniques discussed in the previous paragraphs, a summary of these population projections for Alta through the year 2030 is shown in Figure 1. These population projection scenarios were assigned and included as (1) a Low Series; (2) a Medium Series; and, (3) a High Series. All of the projections forecast an increase in Alta population through the year 2030. The following population projections indicate the different scenarios that may be encountered by Alta through the year 2030.

Year	Low Series = 1990-2004	Medium Series = 1960-2004	High Series = Cohort
2010	1,881 persons	1,932 persons	1,865 persons
2020	1,905 persons	2,032 persons	2,028 persons
2030	1,929 persons	2,136 persons	2,210 persons

Figure 1 reviews the population history of Alta between 1940 and 2004, and identifies the three population projection scenarios into the years 2010, 2020, and 2030. Figure 3 indicates the peak population for Alta occurred in 2000 with 1,865 people. Beginning in 1940, Alta has had an overall steady population. Since 1940 the population has slowly increased.

FIGURE 1: POPULATION TRENDS AND PROJECTIONS, CITY OF ALTA, 1940 TO 2030



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population and Housing, 1940-2000, 2004

As stated previously, the projections have been developed from data and past trends, as well as present conditions. A number of external and internal demographic, economic, and social factors may affect these population forecasts. Alta should monitor population trends, size, and composition periodically in order to understand the direction their community is heading. Alta appears to be on a positive trend line. The community needs to monitor this growth and make sure that adequate facilities and services can be maintained during the planning period.

TABLE 3: POPULATION PROJECTION SERIES, BUENA VISTA COUNTY AND COMMUNITIES, 2000 TO 2030

Community	2000 Census	Low Series			Medium Series			High Series		
		2010	2020	2030	2010	2020	2030	2010	2020	2030
Albert City	709	913	918	922	934	969	1,004	933	986	1,042
Alta	1,865	2,403	2,414	2,425	2,458	2,548	2,641	2,454	2,594	2,740
Lakeside	484	624	627	629	638	661	685	637	673	711
Linn Grove	211	272	273	274	278	288	299	278	294	310
Marathon	302	389	391	393	398	413	428	397	420	444
Newell	887	1,143	1,148	1,154	1,169	1,212	1,256	1,167	1,234	1,303
Rembrandt	228	294	295	297	300	311	323	300	317	335
Sioux Rapids	703	906	910	914	926	960	996	925	978	1,033
Storm Lake	9,981	12,860	12,920	12,980	13,153	13,634	14,134	13,134	13,884	14,664
Tuesdale	88	113	114	114	116	120	125	116	122	129
Incorporated Areas	15,458	19,916	20,010	20,103	20,370	21,116	21,890	20,341	21,503	22,711
Unincorporated Areas	4,953	6,382	6,411	6,441	6,527	6,766	7,014	6,518	6,890	7,277
Buena Vista County	20,411	26,298	26,421	26,544	26,897	27,882	28,904	26,859	28,393	29,988

Source: Population projections, JEO Consulting Group, 2005

Table 3 shows the population projection by series for each of the communities within Buena Vista County. The population projections for the communities were found by determining the proportion of the total population that each community had in 2000 and calculating that percentage for each series. This method of projection is helpful and gives

an idea of where people are likely to live. This method does not consider the social issues that people use when choosing a place to live, which have the potential to alter population projections in any direction.

HOUSING PROFILE

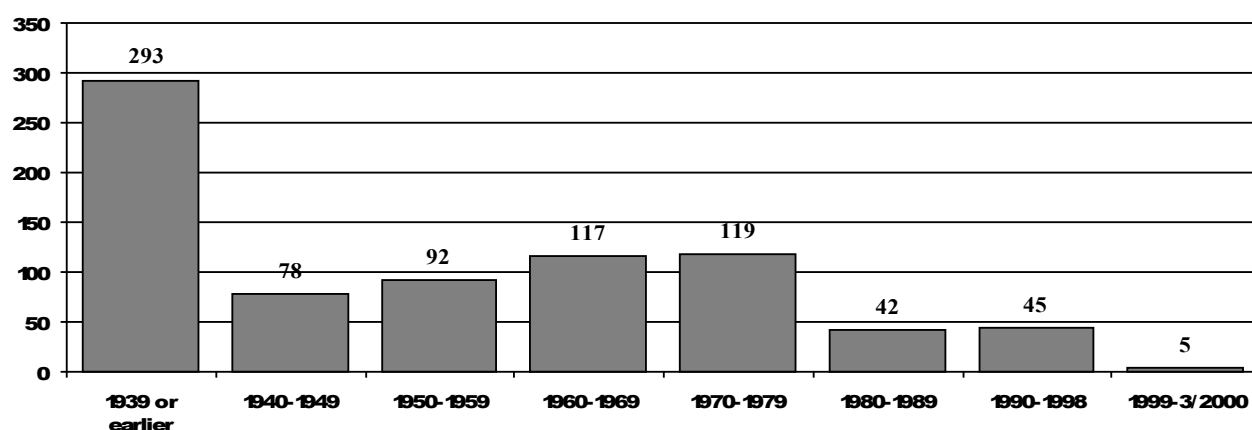
The Housing Profile in this Plan identifies existing housing characteristics and projected housing needs for residents of the City of Alta. The primary goal of the housing profile is to supply the City with the appropriate data, allowing them to determine specific steps for providing safe, decent, sanitary, and affordable housing for every family and individual residing within the City. The housing profile is an analysis that aids in determining the composition of owner-occupied and renter-occupied units, as well as the existence of vacant units. It is important to evaluate information on the value of owner-occupied housing units, and monthly rents for renter-occupied housing units, to determine if housing costs are financial burden for Alta residents.

Projecting future housing needs requires several factors to be considered. These factors include population change, household income, employment rates, land use patterns, and residents' attitudes. The following tables and figures provide the information to aid in determining future housing needs and develop policies designed to accomplish the housing goals for the City of Alta.

AGE OF EXISTING HOUSING STOCK

An analysis of the age of Alta's housing stock reveals a great deal about population and economic conditions of the past. The age of the housing stock may also indicate the potential for rehabilitation efforts, or new construction within the City. Examining the housing stock is important in order to understand the overall quality of housing and the quality of life in the City of Alta.

FIGURE 2: AGE OF EXISTING HOUSING STOCK, CITY OF ALTA, 2000



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population and Housing, SF3, 2000

Figure 2 indicates 293, or 37.0% of the City of Alta's 791 total housing units, were constructed prior to 1940. Alta experienced steady housing development from 1940 to 2000, with the peak decades being 1960-1969 and 1970-1979

when 236 units or 29.8% of the total housing stock was constructed. This indicates there was a strong economy during this time. Because nearly 40 percent of the City's housing units were built prior to 1940, there may be a need for a housing rehabilitation program to improve the quality and energy efficiency of these older homes. Additionally, demolition of units that are beyond rehabilitation may be necessary.

Housing Trends

An analysis of housing trends can reveal a great deal about the different sectors of the population in the City of Alta. Housing trends may also indicate the potential demand for additional owner- or renter-occupied housing. Examining housing trends is important in order to understand the overall diversity of the population and their quality of life within Alta.

TABLE 4: COMMUNITY HOUSING TRENDS, CITY OF ALTA, 1990 AND 2000

Selected Characteristics	1990	2000	Change	% Change 1990-2000
Population	1,820	1,865	45	2.5%
Persons in Households	1,815	1,860	45	2.5%
Persons in Group Quarters	5	5	-	0.0%
Persons per Household	2.57	2.56	-0.01	-0.4%
Total Housing Units	761	791	30	3.9%
Occupied Housing Units	706	726	20	2.8%
Owner-Occupied units	499	526	27	5.4%
Renter-Occupied units	207	200	7	-3.4%
Vacant Housing Units	55	65	10	18.2%
Owner-Occupied vacancyrate	-	3.3%	-	-
Renter-Occupied vacancyrate	-	9.9%	-	-
Median Contract Rent - 1990 and 2000				
City of Alta	\$235	\$335	\$100	42.6%
Buena Vista County	\$218	\$320	\$102	46.8%
Iowa	\$261	\$383	\$122	46.7%
Median Value of Owner-Occupied Units - 1990 and 2000				
City of Alta	\$40,500	\$66,700	\$26,200	64.7%
Buena Vista County	\$41,400	\$65,900	\$24,500	59.2%
Iowa	\$45,900	\$82,100	\$36,200	78.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population and Housing, STF-1A, 1990, DP-4 2000

Table 4 indicates the number of persons living in households increased between 1990 and 2000 by 45 persons, or 2.5%; however, the number of persons in group quarters remained the same. During this period, the number of persons per household showed relatively no change, decreasing only marginally from 2.57 to 2.56 persons. Nationally, the trend has been towards a declining household size, and Alta appears to be consistent with this trend.

Table 4 also indicates the number of occupied housing units increased slightly from 706 in 1990 to 726 in 2000, or 2.8%. However, vacant housing units had a major increase going, from 55 units in 1990 to 65 units in 2000, or 18.2%. The increase in the number of housing units was likely due to new home construction, and potentially the rehabilitation and use of vacant housing in the City.

Median contract rent in the City of Alta increased from \$235 per month in 1990 to \$335 per month in 2000, or 42.6%, while Buena Vista County and the State of Iowa's median monthly contract rent increased by 46.8% and 46.7%, respectively. This indicates Alta has seen contract rent grow at a rate similar to both the County and State. Comparing changes in monthly rents between 1990 and 2000 with the Consumer Price Index (CPI) enables the local housing market to be compared to national economic conditions. Inflation between 1990 and 2000 increased at a rate of 32.1%, indicating Alta's rents increased at a rate nearly a third faster than the rate of inflation. Thus, City tenants were paying higher monthly rents in 2000, in terms of real dollars, than they were in 1990, on average.

The median value of owner-occupied housing units in the City of Alta increased from \$40,500 in 1990 to \$66,700 in 2000, representing an increase of 64.7%. The median value for owner-occupied housing units in Buena Vista County and the State of Iowa showed increases of 59.2% and 79.7%, respectively. The values of owner occupied units in Alta increased at nearly twice the rate of the CPI. This indicates housing values within Alta, Buena Vista count and the State of Iowa exceeded inflation and were valued considerably higher in 2000, in terms of real dollars, than in 1990, on average.

In terms of real dollars, tenants in the City of Alta were paying significantly higher contract rent. In addition, the residents in the City saw a substantial increase in housing costs. This trend is consistent with the County and State, as data show housing costs in these areas have exceeded inflation. Some of the increases with in Alta may be due to the housing market being under valued in 1990 and the 2000 figures are representing a correction in the market. This trend has created a seller's market, which can act as an incentive to property owners to update and rehabilitate housing units.

TABLE 5: HOUSING UNITS BY COMMUNITY, BUENA VISTA COUNTY AND COMMUNITIES - 2000

	Housing Units	Occupied Housing Units	Vacant Units	Owner- Occupied	Renter- Occupied	Persons per Household
Community	2000	2000	2000	2000	2000	2000
Albert City	312	284	28	233	51	2.38
Alta	791	726	65	526	200	2.56
Lakeside	211	184	27	152	32	2.63
Linn Grove	99	89	10	75	14	2.37
Marathon	162	138	24	109	29	2.19
Newell	381	361	20	295	66	2.32
Rembrandt	102	96	6	73	23	2.38
Sioux Rapids	338	306	32	239	67	2.28
Storm Lake	3,706	3,466	240	2,215	1,251	2.57
Truesdale	47	39	8	34	5	2.33
Incorporated Areas	6,149	5,689	460	3,951	1,738	2.40
Unincorporated Areas	1,996	1,810	186	1,328	482	2.62
Buena Vista County	8,145	7,499	646	5,279	2,220	2.54

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population and Housing, SF1 – DP1 2000

Table 5 examines housing characteristics for each of the communities and the unincorporated areas in Buena Vista County in the year 2000. The table indicates that the majority of the housing units are located in the communities. More specifically, 9.7% of the County's housing stock was located in Alta in 2000. However, Alta has 10 or 1.0% of the vacant units in Buena Vista County. Based upon Table 5, 24.5% of the housing units were located within the unincorporated portion of Buena Vista County. The unincorporated areas of the County also had 28.8% of the vacant units

TABLE 6: TENURE OF HOUSEHOLD BY SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS, CITY OF ALTA, 1990 TO 2000

	1990				2000				O.O.	R.O.
Householder Characteristic	Owner-Occupied	% O.O	Renter-Occupied	% R.O	Owner-Occupied	% O.O	Renter-Occupied	% R.O	Percent Change	
Tenure by Number of Persons in Housing Unit (Occupied Housing Units)										
1 person	117	23.4%	56	27.1%	107	20.3%	80	40.0%	-8.5%	-42.9%
2 persons	184	36.9%	65	31.4%	204	38.8%	45	22.5%	10.9%	-30.8%
3 persons	61	12.2%	28	13.5%	69	13.1%	31	15.5%	13.1%	10.7%
4 persons	82	16.4%	40	19.3%	89	16.9%	30	15.0%	8.5%	-25.0%
5 persons	37	7.4%	15	7.2%	35	6.7%	8	4.0%	-5.4%	-46.7%
6 persons or more	18	3.6%	3	1.4%	22	4.2%	6	3.0%	22.2%	100.0%
TOTAL	499	100.0%	207	100.0%	526	100.0%	200	100.0%	5.4%	-3.4%
Tenure by Age of Householder (Occupied Housing Units)										
15 to 24 years	8	1.6%	38	19.0%	9	1.7%	30	15.0%	12.5%	-21.1%
25 to 34 years	78	15.6%	71	35.5%	63	12.0%	43	21.5%	-19.2%	-39.4%
35 to 44 years	94	18.8%	38	19.0%	121	23.0%	51	25.5%	28.7%	34.2%
45 to 54 years	70	14.0%	13	6.5%	99	18.8%	24	12.0%	41.4%	84.6%
55 to 64 years	69	13.8%	13	6.5%	67	12.7%	10	5.0%	-2.9%	-23.1%
65 to 74 years	99	19.8%	17	8.5%	72	13.7%	11	5.5%	-27.3%	-35.3%
75 years and over	81	16.2%	17	8.5%	95	18.1%	31	15.5%	17.3%	82.4%
TOTAL	499	100.0%	207	103.5%	526	100.0%	200	100.0%	5.4%	-3.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population and Housing, STF-1A, 1990 / SF4 2000

Table 6 shows tenure (owner-occupied and renter-occupied) of households by number and age of persons in each housing unit. Analyzing these data allows the City of Alta the ability to determine where there may be a need for additional housing. In addition, the City could target efforts for housing rehabilitation and construction at those segments of the population exhibiting the largest need.

The largest section of owner-occupied housing in the City of Alta in 2000, based upon number of persons, was two-person households, with 204 units, or 38.8% of the total owner-occupied units. By comparison, the largest household size for rentals was the single-person households which had 80 renter-occupied housing units, or 40.0% of the total renter-occupied units. Alta was comprised of 436 1- or 2-person households, or 60.0% of all households. Households having 5 or more persons comprised only 10.9% of the owner-occupied segment, and 7.0% of the renter-occupied segment. Citywide, households of 5- or more persons accounted for only 71 units, or 9.8% of the total.

When compared to 1990, four of the six owner-occupied household groups grew. The owner-occupied household groups of six persons or more grew by the greatest percentage, increasing by 4 units, or 22.2%, contrasted by the fact that units with one person decreased by 10 units, or -8.5%. Three of the six renter-occupied housing unit groups increased, with 1-person units showing the greatest numerical change, 24 units, or 42.9%. Renter-occupied units with two persons experienced the greatest numerical decrease, losing 20 units or -30.8% from 1990.

According to the 2000 data in Table 6, the largest groups of the owner-occupied units were the 35 to 44 and 45 to 54 years categories. The age groups accounted for 23.0% and 18.8% of the total, respectively, for a combined total of

41.8%. Tenure by age indicates 63.3% of owner-occupied housing units were comprised of persons aged 45 years and older, while 62.0% of renter-occupied units were comprised of persons aged 45 years and younger. The largest category of renter-occupied units was the 35 to 44 age group, with 25.5% of the renter-occupied total; this was followed closely by the 25 to 34 age group with 21.5%.

TABLE 7: SELECTED HOUSING CONDITIONS, ALTA AND BUENA VISTA COUNTY, 1990 AND 2000

Housing Profile	City of Alta		Buena Vista County	
	Total	% of Total	Total	% of Total
1990 Housing Units	761		8,140	
1990 Occupied Housing Units	706	92.8%	7,515	92.3%
2000 Housing Units	791		8,145	
2000 Occupied Housing Units	726	91.8%	7,499	92.1%
Change in Number of Units 1990 to 2000				
Total Change	30	3.9%	5	0.1%
Annual Change	3	0.4%	0.5	0.0%
Total Change in Occupied Units	20	2.8%	-16	-0.2%
Annual Change in Occupied Units	2	0.3%	-16	0.0%
Characteristics				
1990 Units Lacking Complete Plumbing Facilities	3	0.4%	61	0.7%
1990 Units with More Than One Person per Room	10	1.3%	100	1.2%
2000 Units Lacking Complete Plumbing Facilities	6	0.8%	81	1.0%
2000 Units with More Than One Person per Room	23	2.9%	248	3.0%
Substandard Units				
1990 Total	13	1.7%	161	2.0%
2000 Total	29	3.7%	329	4.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population and Housing, STF-3A, 1990, DP-4 2000

Table 7 indicates changes in housing conditions and includes an inventory of substandard housing for the City of Alta. The household occupancy rate in Alta decreased slightly from 92.8% of all housing in 1990 to 91.8% of all housing in 2000. Between 1990 and 2000, the number of housing units in Alta increased by 30, or an average of 3 units per year. Similarly, there was an increase of 20 occupied housing units.

According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) guidelines, housing units lacking complete plumbing or which are overcrowded are considered substandard housing units. HUD defines a complete plumbing facility as hot and cold piped water, a bathtub or shower, and a flush toilet. HUD defines overcrowding as more than one person per room. When these criteria are applied to the City of Alta, 29 housing units, or 3.7% of the total units, were considered substandard in 2000. It should be noted, however, that this figure was reached by adding together the number of housing meeting one criterion to the number of housing units meeting the other criterion. However, the largest amount of substandard units was based on overcrowding.

What these data fail to consider are housing units that have met both criterion and any such housing units were counted twice, once under each criterion. Even so, the City should not assume that these data overestimate the number of substandard housing. Housing units containing major defects requiring rehabilitation or upgrading to meet building, electrical or plumbing codes should also be included in an analysis of substandard housing. A comprehensive survey of the entire housing stock should be completed every five years to determine and identify the housing units that would

benefit from remodeling or rehabilitation work. This process will help ensure that a community maintains a high quality of life for its residents through protecting the quality and quantity of its housing stock.

ECONOMIC AND EMPLOYMENT PROFILE

Economic data are collected in order to understand area markets, changes in economic activity and employment needs and opportunities within the City of Alta. In this section, employment by industry, household income statistics, transfer payments, and basic/non-basic analyses were reviewed for Alta and Iowa.

INCOME STATISTICS

Income statistics for households are important for determining the earning power of households in a community. The data presented here show household income levels for Alta in comparison to the state. These data were reviewed to determine whether households experienced income increases at a rate comparable to the State of Iowa and the Consumer Price Index (CPI). Note that income statistics may exhibit different numbers than housing statistics due to the fact that the data was derived from different census survey formats.

TABLE 8: HOUSEHOLD INCOME, ALTA AND STATE OF IOWA, 1990 AND 2000

Household Income Ranges	1990				2000			
	City of Alta	% of Total	State of Iowa	% of Total	City of Alta	% of Total	State of Iowa	% of Total
Less than \$10,000	126	17.9%	173,098	16.2%	70	9.4%	93,783	8.2%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	92	13.1%	111,561	10.5%	62	8.4%	77,333	6.7%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	170	24.1%	221,213	20.8%	130	17.5%	165,122	14.4%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	149	21.2%	194,997	18.3%	134	18.1%	168,713	14.7%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	115	16.3%	191,863	18.0%	147	19.8%	218,204	19.0%
\$50,000 and over	52	7.4%	172,511	16.2%	198	26.7%	427,042	37.1%
Total	704	100.0%	1,065,243	100.0%	741	100.0%	1,150,197	100.0%
Median Household Income	\$23,043		\$26,229		\$31,941		\$39,469	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population and Housing, STF-3A, 1990 / DP-3 2000

Table 8 indicates the number of households in each income range for the City of Alta for 1990 and 2000. In 1990, the household income range most commonly reported was \$15,000 to \$24,999, which accounted for 24.1% of all households. By 2000, the income range reported most was the \$50,000 and over, which accounted for 26.7% of the total. Those households earning less than \$15,000 had a decrease from 17.9% in 1990 to 9.4% in 2000.

The median household income for Alta was \$23,043 in 1990, which was \$3,186 less than the State. By 2000, the median household income increased to \$31,941 or an increase of 38.6%, but the difference between the City and the State increased to over \$7,500. The CPI for this period was 32.1%, which indicates incomes in the City did exceed inflation,

indicating Alta households were earning more, in real dollars, in 2000 than in 1990, but were earning less than the State average.

TABLE 9: HOUSEHOLD INCOME BY AGE OF HOUSEHOLDER (55 YEARS & OLDER), CITY OF ALTA, 2000

Income Categories	55 to 64 years	65 to 74 years	75 years and over	Householders age 55 and over	Householders age 55 and over	Total Households in Alta	% of Total Households with Householders age 55 and over
Less than \$10,000	10	2	16	28	10.1%	70	40.0%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	2	7	26	35	12.6%	62	56.5%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	12	9	36	57	20.6%	130	43.8%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	10	14	29	53	19.1%	134	39.6%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	16	16	15	47	17.0%	147	32.0%
\$50,000 or more	33	14	10	57	20.6%	198	28.8%
Total	83	62	132	277	100.0%	741	37.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population and Housing, SF4 2000

Table 9 indicates household income for Alta householders aged 55 years and over in 2000, these age groups accounted for 37.4% of the entire population in Alta. The purpose for this information is to determine the income level of Alta's senior households. The table indicates these were 277 households meeting this criterion. Of the 277 households in Table 10, 120 or 43.3% had incomes of less than \$25,000 per year. Furthermore, 63 of these households, or 22.7% of the total households, had incomes less than \$15,000 per year. This information indicates many of these households could be eligible for housing assistance to ensure they continue to live at an appropriate standard of living. The number of senior households could easily continue to grow during the next twenty years. As the size of the 55 and over age cohort increases, these typically fixed income households may be required to provide their entire housing needs for a longer period of time. Also, the fixed incomes, in terms of real dollars, that support seniors generally decline at a faster rate than any other segment of the population.

The last two columns of Table 9 indicate the total number of households in each income level and the proportion of those households that were age 55 years and older. Note that in the income levels of \$10,000 to \$14,999, 56.5% of all households were over the age of 55. By contrast, only 32.0% of all households in the \$35,000 to \$49,999 income range are over 55 years of age; while only 28.8% of all households in the \$50,000 or more income range were over 55 years of age. This indicates that those who are over 55 years of age in the City of Alta account for a strong part of those households earning in the lower income groups. As noted above, the over 55 age group may increase faster than any other cohort in the next twenty years, thus this situation needs to be monitored to determine the future needs and issues as these senior populations grow and have an ever greater fixed income.

TABLE 10: HOUSING COSTS AS A PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME, CITY OF ALTA, 2000

Income Categories	Owner-Occupied Households	% O.O. Households	Renter-Occupied Households	% R.O. Households	Total Households	% of Total Households
Less than \$10,000						
Less than 30% of income	2	0.3%	8	4.6%	10	1.3%
More than 30% of income	8	13%	29	16.7%	37	4.6%
\$10,000 to \$19,999						
Less than 30% of income	45	7.2%	13	7.5%	58	7.2%
More than 30% of income	9	14%	39	22.4%	48	6.0%
\$20,000 to \$34,999						
Less than 30% of income	106	16.9%	51	29.3%	157	19.6%
More than 30% of income	18	2.9%	2	1.1%	20	2.5%
\$35,000 to \$49,999						
Less than 30% of income	103	16.4%	23	13.2%	126	15.7%
More than 30% of income	2	0.3%	0	0.0%	2	0.2%
\$50,000 or more						
Less than 30% of income	334	53.1%	9	5.2%	344	42.8%
More than 30% of income	2	0.3%	0	0.0%	2	0.2%
TOTAL	629	100.0%	174	100.0%	803	100.2%
Housing Cost Analysis						
Less than 30% of income	590	93.8%	104	59.8%	694	86.4%
More than 30% of income	39	6.2%	70	40.2%	109	13.6%
TOTAL	629	100.0%	174	100.0%	803	100.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population and Housing, SF 3 Table H73 and H97, 2000

Table 10 shows owner-occupied and renter-occupied housing costs as a percentage of householder income in 2000. In addition, the table identifies the number of households experiencing a housing cost burden. Note the total number of households is different, due to the use of a different survey form. A housing cost burden, as defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), occurs when gross housing costs, including utility costs, exceed 30% of gross household income, based on data published by the U.S. Census Bureau.

Table 10 shows 694 households, or 86.4% of total households, paid less than 30% of their income towards housing costs. This means the remaining 109 households, or 13.6% of the total, were experiencing a housing cost burden. Of the total households with a housing cost burden 39 households were owner-occupied households while the 70 households remaining were renter-occupied households.

Table 11 shows owner and renter costs for householders age 65 and over. Similar trends are shown in Table 11 as were shown in Table 10. A housing cost burden affects 32 households age 65 and over. In 2000, there were 16 owner-occupied households age 65 and over with a housing cost burden or 9.8%. Similarly, 16 renter-occupied households age 65 and over experienced a housing cost burden, however this accounted for 38.2% of the household 65 years and over. The owner-occupied households 65 years and over that had a housing cost burden made up 41.0% of the total owner occupied household in Alta. Renter-occupied households, 65 years and older accounted for 22.9% of all renter-occupied households with a cost burden.

TABLE 11: AGE 65 AND OLDER COSTS AS PERCENTAGE OF INCOME, CITY OF ALTA, 2000

Income Categories	Owner-Occupied Households	% O.O. Households	Renter-Occupied Households	% R.O. Households	Total Households age 65 and Over	% of Total Households
Housing Cost Analysis						
Less than 30% of income	147	90.2%	24	60.0%	171	84.2%
More than 30% of income	16	9.8%	16	40.0%	32	15.8%
TOTAL	163	100.0%	40	100.0%	203	100.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population and Housing, SF 3 Table H71 and H96, 2000

REGIONAL BASIC/NON-BASIC ANALYSIS

The following data examine six occupational areas established by the U.S. Census Bureau to evaluate trends in employment and the area economy. Basic employment and non-basic employment are defined as follows:

- Basic employment is business activity providing services primarily outside the area through the sale of goods and services, the revenues of which are directed to the local area in the form of wages and payments to local suppliers.
- Non-Basic employment is business activity providing services primarily within the local area through the sale of goods and services, and the revenues of such sales re-circulate within the community in the form of wages and expenditures by local citizens.

This analysis is used to further understand which occupational areas are exporting goods and services outside the area, thus importing dollars into the local economy. The six occupational categories used in the analysis are listed below:

- Management, professional, and related occupations
- Service occupations
- Sales and office occupations
- Farming, fishing and forestry occupations
- Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations
- Production, transportation, and material moving occupations

A related concept to the basic/non-basic distinction is that of a Base Multiplier. The base multiplier is a number, which represents the number of non-basic jobs supported by each basic job. A high base multiplier means that the loss of one basic job will potentially have a large impact on the local economy if changes in employment occur. The rationale behind this analysis is that if basic jobs bring new money into a local economy, that money becomes the wages for workers in that economy. Finally, the more money generated by basic jobs within a community; the more non-basic jobs that maybe supported.

Table 12 indicates the occupation category, the percent of Alta residents employed in each category, the percent of State residents employed in each category, and the basic and non-basic employment for that category in the City of Alta. The formula for determining the basic or non-basic nature of an occupation entails subtracting the State's percentage of workforce in a particular occupation from the percentage of the workforce in that occupation in the City. If the City has

a lower proportion of its workforce employed in an occupation than the State as a whole, then that occupation is non-basic.

TABLE 12: BASIC/NON-BASIC EMPLOYMENT BY OCCUPATION, CITY OF ALTA, 2000

Occupation Category	Number of City of Alta Workforce	% of City of Alta Workforce	% of State Workforce	City of Alta minus State of Iowa	Basic	Non-Basic
Management, professional, and related occupations	221	24.7%	31.3%	-6.6%	0.0%	24.7%
Service occupations	145	16.2%	14.8%	1.4%	1.4%	14.8%
Sales and office occupations	230	25.7%	25.9%	-0.2%	0.0%	25.7%
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	21	2.3%	1.1%	1.2%	1.2%	1.1%
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	82	9.2%	8.9%	0.3%	0.3%	8.9%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	196	21.9%	18.1%	3.8%	3.8%	18.1%
TOTAL	895	100%	100%		6.7%	93.3%
Economic base multiplier	14.93					

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population and Housing, DP-3, 2000

In the City of Alta, there were four basic occupation industries: 1) Production, transportation, and material moving occupations, 2) Service occupations, 3) Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations, and 4) Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations. Goods and services from these occupations are exported to markets outside of Iowa, which in turn generates an infusion of dollars into the local economy. Table 12 shows that 93.3% of the jobs in Alta are non-basic, while 6.7% provide these goods and services outside of the City. With four of the six categories indicating exports, this is not a bad balance; however, a majority of the exports are within one of the categories. If an economic downturn occurred in this area, it could have a major impact on the City's economy.

The base multiplier for Alta is 14.93. This number indicates that 14.93 non-basic jobs are supported by every one basic job in the City. Every time the City loses a job in any of the four basic occupation industries, here could potentially be a loss of 14.93 non-basic jobs. In order to decrease this potential, the City of Alta needs to accentuate the basic jobs by diversifying the employment base even further. Communities need a balance of basic and non-basic employment in their economy to ensure future economic stability.

TABLE 13: BASIC/NON-BASIC EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY, CITY OF ALTA, 2000

Industry Categories	City of Alta		State of Iowa		City of Alta minus State of Iowa	Basic	Non- Basic
	2000	% of Total	2000	% of Total			
Agriculture, forestry, hunting and mining	46	5.1%	65,903	4.4%	0.7%	0.7%	4.4%
Construction	45	5.0%	91,824	6.2%	-1.1%	0.0%	5.0%
Manufacturing	172	19.2%	253,444	17.0%	2.2%	2.2%	17.0%
Wholesale Trade	50	5.6%	53,267	3.6%	2.0%	2.0%	3.6%
Retail Trade	119	13.3%	179,381	12.0%	13%	13%	12.0%
Transportation and warehousing and utilities	36	4.0%	73,170	4.9%	-0.9%	0.0%	4.0%
Information	6	0.7%	41,970	2.8%	-2.1%	0.0%	0.7%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate and rental and leasing	32	3.6%	100,395	6.7%	-3.2%	0.0%	3.6%
Professional, scientific, management, administration, and waste management service	36	4.0%	90,157	6.1%	-2.0%	0.0%	4.0%
Educational, health, and social services	195	21.8%	324,142	21.8%	0.0%	0.0%	21.8%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	81	9.1%	98,819	6.6%	2.4%	2.4%	6.6%
Other services (except public administration)	53	5.9%	66,286	4.4%	15%	15%	4.4%
Public Administration	24	2.7%	51,058	3.4%	-0.7%	0.0%	2.7%
Total	895	100.0%	1,489,816	100.0%		10.1%	89.9%
Base Multiplier	9.89						

Source: US Census – 2000 DP-3

Table 12 shows that one of the non-basic occupation categories, Sales and office occupations, is very close to the same percentage as the State. Therefore if this category could become basic, additional jobs could be created within the community. If these occupational areas were to surpass the State percentage, they would start to contribute to the basic employment of the City, which in turn would lower the base multiplier. However, as jobs are added to one occupation category, the percentages for all of the industries will change. This makes forecasting future basic and non-basic occupations complex and difficult.

Table 13 offers another basic/non-basic analysis. This approach is based upon Industry Categories instead of Occupation Categories. With the data presented in this Table, the City of Alta will have more detailed information to define where job growth needs to occur. Note that the total percentage of basic and non-basic employment is calculated in this Table.

According to Table 13, the following industries are strong in the City:

- Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting and mining
- Manufacturing
- Wholesale trade
- Retail trade
- Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services
- Other services (except public administration)

These industries are providing many of the basic jobs that are supporting non-basic employment. The industries having the most room for growth are Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate; Information; and Professional, scientific,

management, administration, and waste management services; and Construction. These industries fail to meet the State average by 3.2%, 2.1%, and 2.0% respectively.

Tables 12 and 13 combine to give the City of Alta a picture of its employment conditions. In order to boost the economy of Alta, there must be a flow of money into the City from other regions. To do that, the City of Alta needs to offer goods and services to those other areas. The City could also diversify its economic structure, which will add strength and stability.

Commuter Trends

Travel time to work is a factor used to gauge where Alta's labor force is working. However, the data may be skewed when comparing the travel time to the actual miles traveled to work due to potential traffic issues during certain times of the day. Table 14 shows the number of residents of Alta that travel to work in each of several time categories.

Table 14 indicates the workforce spent more time traveling to work in 2000 than in 1990. The average travel time increased from 13.0 minutes in 1990 to 16.1 minutes in 2000. When looking at travel time categories, the largest percentage increase occurred in the 45 to 59 minutes category, which grew by 10 persons, or 166.7%. The next largest increase occurred in the 20 to 29 minutes category, which grew by 56 persons, or 103.7%. These increases in time traveled are most likely due to a growing number of people commuting to jobs outside of Alta.

TABLE 14: TRAVEL TIME TO WORK, ALTA, 1990 TO 2000

Travel Time Categories	1990	% of Total	2000	% of Total	% Change
Less than 5 minutes	112	13.2%	112	12.8%	0.0%
5 to 9 minutes	111	13.1%	138	15.8%	24.3%
10 to 19 minutes	491	58.0%	401	46.0%	-18.3%
20 to 29 minutes	54	6.4%	110	12.6%	103.7%
30 to 44 minutes	30	3.5%	36	4.1%	20.0%
45 to 59 minutes	6	0.7%	16	1.8%	166.7%
60 minutes or more	16	1.9%	32	3.7%	100.0%
Worked at home	27	3.2%	27	3.1%	0.0%
Total	847	100.0%	872	100.0%	3.0%
Mean Travel Time (minutes)	13.0		16.1		23.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population and Housing, STF-3A, 1990 – SF 3 Table PCT56 and DP3, 2000

One category showed a decrease in the number of people commuting and one category had no change. The 10 to 19 minutes category decreased by 90 people, or -18.3%. The less than 5 minute category remained at 112. The reason for this decrease may be a result of a decrease in the number of well-paying jobs in the City, coupled with more lucrative opportunities in other places. The number of persons working at home remained the same at 27 persons.

CITY FACILITIES

State and local governments provide a number of goods and services for their citizens. The people, buildings, equipment and land utilized in the process of providing these goods and services are referred to in the public facilities inventory.

Public facilities represent a wide range of buildings, utilities, and services that are built and maintained by the different levels of government. Such facilities are provided to insure the safety, well being, and enjoyment of the residents of a jurisdiction, in this case, Alta. These facilities and services provide City residents with social, cultural, educational, and recreational opportunities, as well as law enforcement and fire protection services designed to meet area needs. It is important for all levels of government to anticipate the future demand for their goods and services if they are to remain strong and vital.

An important step is to establish a list of services and facilities that are currently provided to citizens of the city. In some instances, there are a number of goods and services that are not provided by the local or state governmental body and thus are provided by non-governmental private or non-profit organizations for the city. These organizations are important providers of goods and services, especially in sparsely populated rural areas.

ALTA FACILITIES INVENTORY

The Facilities Inventory component of a Comprehensive Development Plan lists all available services and facilities in Alta. This inventory provides a resource for decision makers to evaluate future demands. Information was gathered by JEO Consulting Group, Inc. staff, Buena Vista County staff, and City of Alta staff.

The Facilities Inventory for Alta is divided into the following categories:

- Recreational Facilities
- Educational Facilities
- Fire and Police Protection
- County Buildings
- Transportation Facilities
- Communication Facilities
- Public Utilities
- Health Facilities

RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

STATE RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Although the parks listed below are located outside Alta, these resources offer a variety of recreational opportunities to the residents of the City. A general distance of 30 miles was used when determining what sites to include in the following table.

TABLE 15: STATE PARKS

Name	City	Size	Features	Amenities
Black Hawk State Park	Sac	86 Acres	957 acre glacier-formed lake	Modern campsites (68 electric, 108 non-electric), open picnic shelters, hiking and interpretive trails, swimming, fishing, boating, Frisbee golf course, volleyball courts, and playground
Wanata State Park	Clay	160 Acres	Overlooks the scenic Little Sioux River Valley, picnic shelter listed on the National Register of Historic Places	Hiking, fishing, and picnicking

Source: Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 2005



A view of the historic shelter within Wanata State Park

COUNTY RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

The Buena Vista County Conservation Board is responsible for twelve facilities within the County. These include Brooke Wildlife Area, Buena Vista County Conservation Park, Bur Oak Wildlife Area, Elk Wildlife Area, Gabrielson Park/Gustafson Lake, Linn Grove Dam Area, Linn Grove Wildlife Area, Pheasant Ridge Wildlife Area, Raccoon River Heritage Wildlife Corridor, South Cove Park, Sturcker Pit Area, and Three Waters Wildlife Area. The features of each location are outlined below in Table 27. Most County parks have places designated for passive recreation such as camping, hiking, and picnicking, which do not have an intense impact on the environment. However, some areas provide more specialized recreational activities including hunting, fishing, and boating.

TABLE 16: COUNTY PARKS AND FACILITIES

Name	Location	Size	Features	Activities
Brooke Wildlife Area	5 miles west of Linn Grove	60 acres	Maintained as wildlife area	Hunting and trapping allowed
Alta Conservation Park	5 miles west of Linn Grove	308 acres	Prairie grass area, arboretum, and nature trails	Modern and primitive camping facilities, picnicking, basketball, playground, hiking, cross country skiing, snowmobiling, and tubing
Bur Oak Wildlife Area	2 miles south of Peterson	40 acres	Maintained as wildlife area	Hunting allowed
Elk Wildlife Area	8 miles north of Alta	65 acres	Maintained as wildlife area	Hunting and trapping allowed
Gabrielson Park/ Gustafson Lake	South edge of Sioux Rapids on Highway 71	36 acres	7.5-acre man-made lake, 7 acres of native prairie grasses and wildflowers, and enclosed heated shelter house	Fishing, swimming, boating, picnicking, and playground
Linn Grove Dam Area	Linn Grove	12 acres	Located on the Little Sioux River	Primitive camping, fishing, boating, picnicking, and playground
Linn Grove Wildlife Area	Southeast edge of Linn Grove	9.5 acres	Wildlife refuge	No hunting allowed
Pheasant Ridge Wildlife Area	3 miles south of Newell	6 acres	Maintained as wildlife area	Hunting allowed
Raccoon River Heritage Wildlife Corridor	Starts 2 miles west of Newell	330 acres	Maintained as wildlife area	Hunting, trapping, fishing, and boating
South Cove Park	South edge of Storm Lake	3 acres	Located along bank of 3,000-acre Storm Lake	Fishing, boating, picnicking, and playground
Sturchler Pit Area	1 mile north and west of Newell	120 acres	5-acre gravel pit located along the Raccoon River, prairie grass areas	Fishing, boating, picnicking, and playground
Three Waters Wildlife Area	5 miles northwest of Newell	85 acres	Maintained as wildlife area, prairie grass areas, three water bodies (creek, small lake and the Raccoon River)	Hunting, trapping, fishing, and boating

Source: Alta Conservation Board, 2005

CITY PARKS AND RECREATIONAL AREAS

Alta's City Park has recently been updated with a 'castle' playground. In addition to the modern park facility, Alta has recently built a new sports complex with both softball and baseball fields. Alta has one public course and two private courses. Storm Lake is only 4 miles away which offers fishing, boating, and picnicking opportunities.

Buena Vista raceway is located on the east side of town. The raceway offers racing fans nearly 20 days of races annually featuring IMCA sanctioned racing, hobby stock, modified, BVR bombers, and non-sanctioned racing.

OTHER RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Golf Courses

There are currently two golf courses in and around the City of Alta: the Alta Golf & Country Club and the West Links Estates Golf Course. In addition, there are six golf courses in other parts of the county. A brief description of each is given in Table 17.

TABLE 17: AREA GOLF COURSES

Name	Location	Type of Facility	Number of Holes	Season
Alta Golf & Country Club	Alta	Private	9	April 1 to November 1
West Links Estates Golf Course	Alta	Public	10	April 1 to October 31
Aurelia Golf Club	Aurelia	Semi-Private	9	April 1 to November 1
Cherokee Country Club	Cherokee	Private	9	April 15 to October 15
Lake Creek Country Club	Storm Lake	Semi-Private	18	April 1 to November 1
Little Sioux Golf & Country Club	Sioux Rapids	Semi-Private	9	April 15 to October 21
Newell Golf Course	Newell	Public	9	April 1 to October 31
Storm Lake Municipal Golf Course	Storm Lake	Public	9	March 25 to November 1

Source: www.golfable.com

Buena Vista County Raceway

There are five different classes of stock car racing every Wednesday night from late March till the end of August. The different race classes include Bombers, IMCA Hobby Stocks, B-Modifieds, IMCA Stock Cars, IMCA Modifieds.

Buena Vista County Wind Farm

This region of Iowa is home to one of the largest wind farms in the world on “Buffalo Ridge.” A self-guided tour of the world’s largest generating wind power project with 259 operating windmills is available.

EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

There are a total of ten school districts that serve the residents of Buena Vista County, as depicted in Figure 3. Of these, the residents of Alta are served by the Alta Community School District (0171), which has one elementary school, one middle school, and one high school, all located in Alta. Alta Elementary School, which consists of Pre-kindergarten to 4th grade, had a total enrollment of 194 students during the 2004-2005 school year. Alta Middle School consists of grades 5 through 8 and had an enrollment of 187 students in 2004-2005. Alta High School, with grades 9 through 12, had 198 students in 2004-2005.

FIGURE 3: SCHOOL DISTRICT MAP

TABLE 18: BUENA VISTA COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS BY SCHOOL DISTRICT

School District/ District Number	School Name/Type & Location	Grades	2000-2001 Enrollment	2004-2005 Enrollment	Percent Change 2000-01 to 2004-05
Albert City-Truesdale (0072)	Albert City-Truesdale Elementary (Alta)	PK-5	111	104	-6.3%
	Albert City-Truesdale High (Alta)	6-12	149	*	---
Alta (0171)	Alta Elementary (Alta)	PK-4	219 **	194	-11.4%
	Alta Middle (Alta)	5-8	200 ***	187	-6.5%
	Alta High (Alta)	9-12	204	198	-2.9%
Aurelia (0423)	Aurelia Elementary (Aurelia)	PK-4	136	106	-22.1%
	Aurelia Middle (Aurelia)	5-8	109	73	-33.0%
	Aurelia High (Aurelia)	9-12	116	145	25.0%
Galva-Holstein (2376)	Galva-Holstein Elementary (Holstein)	PK-4	173	183	5.8%
	Galva-Holstein Middle (Holstein)	5-8	184	143	-22.3%
	Galva-Holstein High (Holstein)	9-12	202	196	-3.0%
Laurens-Marathon (3537)	Laurens-Marathon Elementary (Laurens)	PK-5	194 **	177	-8.8%
	Laurens-Marathon Middle (Laurens)	6-8	123	116	-5.7%
	Laurens-Marathon High (Laurens)	9-12	268	165	-38.4%
Newell-Fonda (4644)	Newell-Fonda Lower (Newell)	PK-3	104 **	129	24.0%
	Newell-Fonda Higher (Fonda)	4-5	72	66	-8.3%
	Newell-Fonda Middle (Fonda)	6-8	113	111	-1.8%
	Newell-Fonda High (Newell)	9-12	180	169	-6.1%
Schaller-Crestland (5823)	Schaller-Crestland Middle-Elementary (Schaller)	PK-8	332 **	291	-12.3%
	Schaller-Crestland High (Early)	9-12	166	159	-4.2%
Sioux Central (6035)	Sioux Central Elementary (Sioux Rapids)	PK-5	205	145	-29.3%
	Sioux Central Middle (Sioux Rapids)	6-8	137	144	5.1%
	Sioux Central High (Sioux Rapids)	9-12	230 †	231	0.4%
	Buffalo Ridge Charter (Sioux Rapids)	1-6	---	59	---
South Clay (6092)	South Clay Elementary (Gillett Grove)	PK-6	112	74	-33.9%
Storm Lake (6219)	North Elementary (Storm Lake)	2-4	108 ††	115	6.5%
	South Elementary (Storm Lake)	K-4	239 ††	246	2.9%
	East Elementary (Storm Lake)	PK-1	109 ††	125	14.7%
	West Elementary (Storm Lake)	K-4	246 ††	197	-19.9%
	Storm Lake Middle (Storm Lake)	5-8	554	619	11.7%
	Storm Lake High (Storm Lake)	9-12	630	641	1.7%
	Storm Lake Alternative (Storm Lake)	---	---	2	---

Note: Grade levels shown in table are those which were offered in 2004-2005

* No data available for Alta-Truesdale High School in 2004-2005 as students now are attending Sioux Central Middle and High schools

** Schools did not offer PK classes in 2000-2001

*** Enrollment figure comprised of numbers for two middle schools in 2000-2001; one with grades 5 and 6, and the other with grades 7 and 8

† 2000-2001 enrollment figure for Sioux Central High School includes special education students for grades 6 through 12.

†† All elementary schools in Storm Lake Community School District had grades K through 4 in 2000-2001

Source: Iowa Department of Education, 2005

Private Schools

In addition to the education provided to residents of Alta via the public school system, the residents also have the availability of private schools within Buena Vista County. The private schools closest to Alta are St. Mary's Grade School, St. Mary's High School and Concordia Lutheran School, all of which are religion-based. School enrollments for the 2004-2005 school year are shown in Table 19 below.

TABLE 19: PRIVATE SCHOOLS

School Name/Type & Location	Grades	2004-2005 Enrollment
St. Mary's Grade School (Storm Lake)	PK-4	147
St. Mary's High School (Storm Lake)	5-12	145
Concordia Lutheran School (Storm Lake)	K-6	38

Source: Iowa Department of Education, 2005.

Postsecondary Schools

There are several postsecondary institutions that serve the residents of the Alta area. The following are some of the main facilities:

- Bellevue University, WIT Campus (Sioux City, Iowa)
- Briar Cliff University (Sioux City, Iowa)
- Buena Vista University (Storm Lake, Iowa)
- Des Moines Area Community College (Carroll, Iowa)
- Dordt College (Sioux Center, Iowa)
- Iowa Central Community College (Fort Dodge, Webster City, Storm Lake, Iowa)
- Iowa Lakes Community College (Emmetsburg, Iowa)
- Iowa State University (Ames, Iowa)
- Morningside College (Sioux City, Iowa)
- Northwest Iowa Community College (Sheldon, Iowa)
- Northwestern College (Orange City, Iowa)
- St. Luke's College (Sioux City, Iowa)
- Western Iowa Tech Community College (Cherokee, Iowa)

FIRE AND RESCUE

TABLE 20: FIRE AND RESCUE EQUIPMENT

Vehicle	Gallons Per Min	Gallon Capacity
Tanker	250	2000
Pumper	1250	1000
Pumper	1000	1200
Quick-Attack	350	250
Equipment Van	na	na
Additional Items		
1000 gal porta tank	Jaws of Life	
1000 gal porta tank	2 units to pump foam (30gal on hand)	

Source: Buena Vista County, 2006

FIGURE 4: RESCUE DISTRICT MAP

FIGURE 5: FIRE DISTRICT MAP

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Law enforcement in the City of Alta is the responsibility of the Alta Police Department and the Buena County Sheriff. The Police Department is located next to City Hall at 221 South Main Street, and the office of the Sheriff and the County Jail are located in the County Courthouse, 215 East 5th Street, in the City of Storm Lake. Currently there are three sworn officers serving the community, in addition to 10 with the County.

CITY BUILDINGS

Alta City Hall is located at 223 South Main Street East 5th in downtown Alta. In addition to housing the City Clerk and serving as the meeting place for the City Council, the facility also contains the offices of the Alta Municipal Utilities, also known as Altatec.

The **Alta Community Library** is part of the Alta Middle School property, located at 1009 Main Street. In addition to holdings that include over 25,000 books, magazines, local newspapers, and audio and video materials, the library participates in a statewide borrowing and interlibrary loan program. All residents that are kindergarten age or older may receive a library card.

COMMUNICATION FACILITIES

RADIO

There are several radio stations that provide music, entertainment, and information to Alta residents. Among these radio stations are:

KASI-1430 AM	KAYL-990 AM/101.7 FM	KBGG-1700 AM	KBVU-97.5 FM
KCCO-105.1 FM	KCHE-1440 AM/92.1 FM	KCIM-1380 AM	KDCR-88.5 FM
KDFR-91.3 FM	KDSN-1530 AM/107.1 FM	KFGQ-1260 AM/99.3 FM	KGGO-94.9 FM
KGLI-95.5 FM	KILR-1070 AM/95.9 FM	KHKI-97.3 FM	KICB-88.1 FM
KIOA-93.3 FM	KICD-1240 AM/107.7 FM	KJAN-1220 AM	KJJY-92.5 FM
KJMC-89.3 FM	KKBZ-99.3 FM	KKDM-107.5 FM	KKEZ-94.5 FM
KKIA-92.9 FM	KKRL-93.7 FM	KLGA-1600 AM/92.7 FM	KLKK-103.7 FM
KLLT-104.9 FM	KLTI-104.1 FM	KMNS-620 AM	KMXD-100.3 FM
KNOD-105.3 FM	KPSZ-940 AM	KRKQ-98.3 FM	KRNT-1350 AM

TELEVISION

Alta residents are served by several regional television stations, including:

WOI-Channel 5 (ABC)-Ames/Des Moines	WHO-Channel 13 (NBC)-Des Moines
KCAU-Channel 9 (ABC)-Sioux City	KDSM-Channel 17 (Fox)-Des Moines
KMEG-Channel 14 (CBS)-Sioux City	KPWB-Channel 23 (WB)-Ankeny
KCCI-Channel 8 (CBS)-Des Moines	KDIN-Channel 11 (PBS)-Des Moines
KELO-Channel 3 (CBS)-Sioux Falls, SD	KSIN-Channel 27 (PBS)-Sioux City
KTIV-Channel 4 (NBC)-Sioux City	

NEWSPAPERS

There are several newspapers serving the residents of Alta. These include the Storm Lake Times, Sioux City Journal, Des Moines Register, and Ames Tribune. Other regional newspapers from nearby communities include the Spencer Daily Reporter, Ida County Courier, Fort Dodge Messenger, and Humboldt Independent.

PUBLIC UTILITIES

Utility services, including power, water, telephone, and waste disposal, are essential factors in the development of residential, commercial, and industrial areas. One of Alta's goals should be to provide adequate services to its residents. The following sections identify and discuss certain utilities found in Alta.

ELECTRICAL SERVICE

Alta's citizens receive electricity from the Alta Municipal Electric Utility. The utility purchases its power from Western Area Power Administration (hydro power) and Northwest Iowa Municipal Electric Cooperative Association. The utility owns and operates the power plant in Alta that consists of two diesel generators. The two diesel generators provide emergency backup power supplies. In the near future, Alta will also receive electricity from a coal powered plant due for completion in 2007 in addition to receiving renewable power from wind generation. Alta residents will be able to decrease dependence on fossil fuels in the future by consuming power generated from the wind.

NATURAL GAS

There are three main natural gas providers that have pipelines in Alta. These include Alliant Energy, MidAmerican Energy, and Altatec (Alta Municipal Utilities).

TELEPHONE SERVICES

Altatec provides phone services to the citizens of Alta.

CABLE TELEVISION PROVIDERS

Altatec provides cable services to the citizens of Alta.

MUNICIPAL WATER SYSTEMS

Alta Municipal Utilities obtains its water from two deep wells. The latest addition to the well field was in 1988. Water treatment is currently through a new Electrodialysis Treatment Plant which replaced an old Reverse Osmosis Treatment Plant. The Utility is working on the development of a wellhead protection program to reduce the risk of contamination to the water supply. Currently, the Utility is serving 845 customers with an average daily usage of 235,000 gallons.

SANITARY SEWER SERVICES

Alta Municipal Utilities provides sanitary sewer to the residents of Alta. The average range of the gravity sewer is eight to 15 inches. The treatment facility started operation in 1951 and is located on the southwest part of town. The treatment

facility was averages inflows of 710,000 gallons per day and serves 1850 people. There are no planned expansions or future upgrades anticipated at the time of the planning process.

SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL FACILITIES

Two solid waste disposal facilities currently the residents of Alta, the County's Sanitary Landfill and the Harold Rowley Material Recovery Center. Both sites are located off of 630th Street, approximately two miles southeast of the communities of Lakeside and Storm Lake. While the Iowa Department of Natural Resources indicates the landfill is permitted to operate through November 2006, the facility is slated for closure (permitted to be completed by year 2017). The material recovery center performs recycling and composting services and is located at the landfill location.

Buena Vista County is part of a comprehensive solid waste planning area with two other counties, Plymouth and Cherokee, and the City of Fonda in Pocahontas County. This means that the County's facilities accept waste from and can send waste to facilities in these other jurisdictions. Currently, the only municipal facility outside of the County that accepts general waste is the Cherokee County Landfill. The Plymouth County Landfill was converted to a construction and demolition debris only facility in Fiscal Year 2000-2001.

Since Fiscal Year 1999-2000, the Buena Vista County Sanitary Landfill has accepted an average of more than 6,000 tons of waste annually, ranging from 4,633 tons in FY 2002-2003 to 9,191 tons in FY 1999-2000.

HEALTH FACILITIES

Health care facilities are critical to the quality of life and safety of a community and its residents. The facilities include hospitals, clinics, and elderly care facilities. These facilities need to be located in key areas in order to provide efficient and cost effective health care.

Medical care services are of particular importance to the large number of elderly residents in Alta. In addition to the Buena Vista Regional Medical Center, there are three medical clinics in the County. Additional medical facilities can be found in the following adjacent counties: Cherokee (Cherokee Regional Medical Center), Clay (Spencer Hospital), Ida (Horn Memorial Hospital), O'Brien (Baum Harmon Mercy Hospital and Northwest Iowa Health Center), Palo Alto (Palo Alto County Health System), and Pocahontas (Pocahontas Community Hospital).

HOSPITAL

The Buena Vista Regional Medical Center, located in Storm Lake, is a full-service healthcare facility with 49 staffed beds, which provides general medical and surgical care for inpatient, outpatient, and emergency room patients. Some of the services the facility is equipped to handle include surgery/endoscopy, prenatal care and labor/delivery, cardiac and pulmonary rehabilitation, hospice, oncology, specialty physicians, and a laboratory.

MEDICAL CLINICS

The County has three primary medical clinics serving the residents. These clinics are the Buena Vista Clinic and Storm Lake Family Health Center in the City of Storm Lake, and the Sioux Rapids Family Care clinic in Sioux Rapids.

The Buena Vista Clinic and Storm Lake Family Health Center are closely associated with the Buena Vista Regional Medical Center and Iowa Health System (IHS), based in Des Moines. The Buena Vista Clinic facility offers family practice, internal medicine, and orthopedic services, and is staffed by seven physicians and a nurse practitioner. The Storm Lake Family Health Center also offers services in family medicine and orthopedics, and is staffed with five physicians. Both clinics offer care by medical professionals with a variety of specialized clinical interests.

The third facility is Sioux Rapids Family Care in Sioux Rapids. This clinic, affiliated with Avera McKennan Hospital and University Health Center in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, is staffed by three physicians whose primary specialty is family medicine, supported by two nurse practitioners and two physicians' assistants.

NURSING HOME FACILITIES

Nursing home facilities can range from fully staffed assisted-living arrangements to an apartment-like setting staffed by few persons, who may have only basic medical knowledge. These facilities are designed to accommodate persons in various health conditions in a setting that provides as much independence as possible to the resident. There are two long-term care facilities in Storm Lake, approximately six miles to the east including Methodist Manor Retirement Community and Buena Vista Manor Care Center.

EXISTING LAND USE

Land Use can be defined as the way a specific parcel of land is utilized. Land use can include pastureland, cropland, recreational areas, and any type of developed land. The number and type of uses constantly changes, and can impact the community. Consequently, the short and long-term success and sustainability of the community is directly contingent upon available resources utilized in the best manner given the constraints the city faces during the course of the planning period.

Existing land use patterns are often fixed in older communities or within established neighborhoods, while development in newer areas is often reflective of current development practices. Overall, development patterns in and around Alta have been influenced by manmade features such as water, railroads and highways, and will likely continue to influence development patterns throughout the course of the planning period. Topography is not a limiting factor in Alta.

Existing Land Use Categories

The utilization of land is best described in specific categories that provide broad descriptions the location and grouping of numerous businesses, institutions, and structures. For the purposes of the Comprehensive Development Plan, the following land use classifications are used:

- Single Family Residential (including Townhouses)
- Multi-Family Residential (includes Duplexes and Apartments)
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Civic (includes churches and schools)
- Recreation (including Open Space)
- Vacant/Agricultural

These land use classifications are used throughout the existing land use analysis and will be used to generate the Future Land Use Plan.

EXISTING LAND USE ANALYSIS WITHIN CORPORATE LIMITS

For use in the development of the Plan, a survey was conducted using field observations completed by Buena Vista County staff. Mapping was completed by JEO with mapping review completed by Buena Vista County staff and representatives from Alta City. This survey noted the use of each parcel of land within the city of Alta. The data from the survey are analyzed in the following paragraphs.

Table 21 includes four different columns of data. The first set are the total acres determined per land use from the survey; next is the percentage of those areas compared to the total developed land; the third set of data compares the land uses to the total area within the corporate limits of Alta; finally, the last column examines the data in terms of acres per 100 persons. The acres per 100 persons establishes a baseline from which land use numbers can be equally compared from one community to another as well as to projecting future land use needs due to population change. The results of the land use survey are presented graphically on Figure 6.

TABLE 21: EXISTING LAND USE, ALTA, 2005

Type of Use	Acres	Percent of Developed Area	Percent of Total Area	Acres per 100 persons
Residential	200.1	36.1	29.4	11.6
Single-family	184.3	33.2	27.0	10.7
Multi-family	15.8	2.8	2.3	0.9
Manufactured Housing	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Commercial	16.5	3.0	2.4	1.0
Industrial	32.4	5.8	4.8	1.9
Civic	47.3	8.5	6.9	2.8
Parks	129.6	23.4	19.0	7.5
Transportation	129.1	23.3	18.9	7.5
Total Developed Land	555.0	100.0	81.4	32.3
Vacant/Agriculture	126.9	-	18.6	7.4
Total Area	681.7	-	100.0	39.6

Source: 2006 Alta Comprehensive Development Plan, JEO Consulting Group, Inc.

Note: Acres per 100 is based upon the 2004 population estimates of 1720 persons.

Residential land use covers the largest part of Alta at 200.1 acres total, or 36.1% of the developed area. The majority of residential area is comprised of single family residential, which accounts for 33.2% of the developed area in Alta and 27.0% of the entire area. Multi-family residential accounts for 7.8% of the residential coverage and 2.3% of the total area in Alta. Manufactured housing uses were not recorded as part of the survey.

Commercial areas comprise 3.0% of the developed area or 2.4% of the total area of the community. These uses include retail establishments such as restaurants, taverns, and convenience stores, in addition to services such as professional offices. Alta has very little land dedicated to industrial uses within the corporate limits: only 32.4 acres, or 5.8% of the total developed area.

Civic uses include municipal buildings and churches. Overall, these uses comprise 8.5% of the developed acreage in the community. Additionally, park uses accounted for 23.4% of the developed land in Alta.

Transportation related uses, such as streets and alleys comprised the remaining 23.3% of the developed area in the community. It is also important to note that this use constitute 18.9% of total land area in the corporate limits.

Overall, the land use types mentioned above account for 81.4% of the total land area within the community, with the remaining 18.6% reported as vacant/agriculture. This statistic is important as it represents opportunities for future growth and development within the existing municipal boundary.

The number of acres per 100 persons is provided in Table 21 in order to see how the community has developed with regard to density. Examining the density of the community in this manner, allows Alta to better plan for services such as community facilities and programs by comparing itself against other similar communities.

Figure 6 indicates a typical development pattern as compared to other Midwestern communities. The commercial areas are located in the center of the community with some public/quasi-public uses mixed into the area, usually, municipal

facilities and churches. From the center of the community out there is a mixture of residential and civic uses. In addition, this pattern shows commercial development branching out along major thoroughfares.

TABLE 22: ACRES PER 100 PERSONS COMPARISON, BUENA VISTA COUNTY COMMUNITIES

	Alta	% of Total	Marathon	% of Total	Sioux Rapids	% of Total	Albert City	% of Total	Community Averages
Land Use Category									
Residential	11.6	29.2%	26.9	17.0%	12.3	28.8%	16.2	35.0%	26.9%
Single-family	10.7	27.0%	25.7	16.3%	12.0	28.1%	15.5	33.5%	25.9%
Multi-family	0.9	2.3%	1.2	0.8%	0.4	0.9%	0.7	1.5%	1.1%
Manufactured Housing (NA)	0.0	0.0%	0.0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0%	0.0%
Commercial	1.0	2.5%	1.8	1.1%	1.7	4.0%	1.3	2.8%	2.6%
Industrial	1.9	4.8%	21.9	13.9%	1.2	2.8%	9.6	20.7%	12.5%
Civic	2.8	7.1%	3.6	2.3%	2.1	4.9%	1.6	3.5%	3.6%
Recreation	7.5	18.9%	2.9	1.8%	1.7	4.0%	4.8	10.4%	5.4%
Transportation	7.5	18.9%	16.2	10.3%	13.4	31.4%	7	15.1%	18.9%
Total Developed Land	32.3	81.4%	73.3	46.4%	32.6	76.1%	40.5	87.5%	70.0%
Vacant/Agriculture	7.4	18.6%	84.7	53.6%	10.1	23.7%	5.8	12.5%	29.9%
Total Area	39.7	100.0%	158.0	100.0%	42.7	99.8%	46.3	100.0%	99.9%

Source: 2006 Alta Comprehensive Development Plan, JEO Consulting Group, Inc.

Note: Acres per 100 is based upon the 2000 US Census

Table 22 shows the acres per 100 persons comparison of three Buena Vista communities and the City of Alta. This comparison uses both the number of acres and size of population to analyze the existing land use for the community. This comparison creates a base standard that allows a more accurate comparison between the various communities.

Alta and Sioux Rapids are relatively similar in nearly every land use category; however when compared to Marathon and Albert City there are some dramatic differences. For instance Alta only has 11.6 acres/100 persons for residential land but Marathon has 26.9 and Albert City has 16.2. When comparing Industrial numbers, Alta has only 1.9 acres/100 persons and Marathon has 21.9. Alta has significantly more recreation land than all the other communities with 7.5 acres/100 persons, while the next closest is Albert City with 4.8.

Land Use Comparative Analysis

Table 23 compares the land use make-up of Alta to three other similar communities in Buena Vista County. The table shows that there are varying levels of uses in each community.

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TABLE 23: LAND USE COMPARISONS (IN ACRES), 2006

	Alta	% of Total	Marathon	% of Total	Sioux Rapids	% of Total	Albert City	% of Total	Community Averages
Land Use Category									
Residential	200.1	29.3%	81.1	17.0%	153.6	28.8%	114.8	35.0%	26.9%
Single-family	184.3	27.0%	77.5	16.2%	149.2	28.0%	110.1	33.5%	25.9%
Multi-family	15.8	2.3%	3.6	0.8%	4.4	0.8%	4.7	1.4%	1.0%
Manufactured Housing	0.0	0.0%	0.0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0.0	0.0%	0.0%
Commercial	16.5	2.4%	5.5	1.2%	21.4	4.0%	9.1	2.8%	2.6%
Industrial	32.4	4.8%	66.1	13.9%	15.4	2.9%	68.4	20.8%	12.5%
Civic	47.3	6.9%	10.9	2.3%	26.4	5.0%	11.3	3.4%	3.6%
Recreation	129.6	19.0%	8.9	1.9%	21.7	4.1%	33.7	10.3%	5.4%
Transportation	129.1	18.9%	48.9	10.2%	167.6	31.5%	49.6	15.1%	18.9%
Total Developed Land	555.0	81.4%	221.4	46.4%	406.1	76.3%	286.9	87.4%	70.0%
Vacant/Agriculture	126.9	18.6%	255.7	53.6%	126.4	23.7%	41.4	12.6%	30.0%
Total Area	681.9	100.0%	477.1	100.0%	532.5	100.0%	328.3	100.0%	100.0%

Source: 2006 Buena Vista County Community Comprehensive Development Plans

The data in Table 23 compares the existing land use of Alta against the communities of Marathon, Sioux Rapids, and Albert City. These communities are similar in size, both in land area and population. In addition, the consultant, ensuring similar methodology, conducted the land use surveys for each of the communities in the table.

The land use comparison shows Alta has more civic and recreational space than the other three communities. The three comparison community's civic land use average is 3.6%, compared to 6.9% for Alta. The recreational average is 5.4% for the three other communities compared to Alta's 19.0%. Alta, much like Albert City, has a significantly smaller amount of land as vacant/agriculture within the city boundary. Alta has 18.6% of its total area vacant/agriculture compared to the 30.0% vacant/agriculture average for the other three communities.

FIGURE 6: EXISTING LAND USE MAP, ALTA



TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM AND FACILITIES

Regardless of size, residents of any community have specific transportation needs. These include rail service, bus service, air transportation, as well as vehicular transportation. All of the transportation facilities present are not available within the community and require residents to travel to the nearest location. This portion of the Comprehensive Development Plan examines those services with regard to the closest proximity for residents of Alta.

Railroad Service

Rail freight service in the Alta area is provided by Union Pacific Railroad. Rail passenger service in Iowa is currently provided by the California Zephyr from Chicago, Illinois, to Oakland, California, and the Southwest Chief from Chicago, Illinois, to Los Angeles, California. The California Zephyr operates over the Burlington Northern-Santa Fe (BNSF) tracks in southern Iowa, providing daily trips in both directions. Stations include Burlington, Mount Pleasant, Ottumwa, Osceola, and Creston. The Southwest Chief also operates daily in both directions over the BNSF tracks in extreme southeast Iowa, with one stop in Fort Madison (IDOT, 2006).

Bus Service

The nearest commercial bus service, operated by Greyhound, is available in Mason City. This route runs north and south across central Iowa connecting Des Moines, Ames, and Mason City. Another Greyhound route travels along Interstate 80 from Council Bluffs, Iowa to Davenport, Iowa. A third route runs from the Mason City area to Waterloo, Cedar Rapids, and Davenport.

Commercial Airport Service

The Sioux Gateway, located in Sioux City, Iowa, is the closest commercial service airport. Northwest Airlines operates six daily flights with service to Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Fort Dodge Airport, located in Webster County, is the closest regional airport. Located 70 miles southeast of Alta, the airport is primarily used for general aviation. The two runways also support commercial flights to Minneapolis/St. Paul provided by Northwest Airlink.

Eppley Airport, located 130 miles away in Omaha, is another regional airport. In 1999 the airport served a total of 3.77 million passengers, 77 million pounds of mail, and 172 million pounds of cargo. The airport itself is located four miles northwest of downtown Omaha on a site encompassing approximately 2,650 acres. The terminal area includes 368,000 square feet with 21 boarding gates. The airport includes three runways, 9,502 feet x 150 feet, 8,152 feet x 150 feet, 4,060 feet x 75 feet. Adjacent to the airport is long and short term parking in the garage, surface parking as well economy parking located a short distance from the airport. Airlines serving Eppley include the following:

- America West Airlines
- American Airlines
- Continental Airlines
- Delta Air Lines
- Frontier Airlines
- Midwest Express Airlines
- Northwest Airlines
- Southwest Airlines

- Trans World Airlines
- United Airlines
- US Airways Express

Small craft Public Airports

The closest small craft public airport facility is located in Storm Lake. This airport has three runways, two are constructed of concrete, and one is situated on turf.

Surface Transportation

The surface transportation system for Alta is based primarily upon the system of local streets that are connected to the state highway system, which allows the community access to the surrounding region. These roadways are an essential aspect of community development for the residents of Alta as they provide for movement of goods and services into and through the city.

State and Federal Highways

The city of Alta is located at the intersection of State Highway 7 and paved highway M31, and near paved Highway C49. State Highway 3, which runs east and west, is a connection to US Highway 59 to the west, and US Highway 169 to the east.

Community Street System

The street system in Alta is comprised of a network of collectors, local streets, and one cul-de-sac that provide access to locations within the community. The street system in the community is a typical rectangular grid pattern throughout the original part of the community. The grid is greatly influenced on the north by the location of the Union Pacific Railroad right-of way and State Highway 7. Alta's roadway development is typical of communities located adjacent to a railroad.

ENVISION ALTA

ENVISION THE FUTURE

The following Chapter of the Comprehensive Development Plan includes information obtained through public participation. The main form of public participation during the Alta plan was a town hall meeting held in the community. Other portions of this chapter will review the results of the town hall meeting, develop a vision statement for the community, and set goals, objectives and policies that will guide the future.

ALTA'S TOWN HALL MEETING

This section of the Plan is the beginning of the ongoing process of visioning. The Town Hall meeting was held with the public in order to gather their input toward the creation of a future vision of Alta. From their input, goals and policies were developed. These goals and policies become the foundation upon which the future will be built. From here, the City can develop action statements and benchmark criteria to monitor its progress. On Tuesday, February 7, 2006, a Town Hall Meeting was held at the Alta Council Chambers to gather input on issues (both positive and negative) facing the community. The meeting included a brainstorming session. There were between 10 and 15 residents in attendance, who were asked a series of questions designed to stimulate discussion and feedback on their perception of the City. The group was asked what they like about Alta and what needs to be improved in Alta. Then the group was asked to identify major issues within Alta and what projects need to be completed in the next twenty years. The group was asked to vote for each topic discussed for each of the questions asked. The four questions, in order, are:

1. What do you like about Alta?
2. What needs to be improved in Alta?
3. What is your vision of Alta?
4. What needs to be done to achieve this vision for Alta?

After each question was posed, the participants were encouraged to brainstorm and respond with as many answers as possible. Participants were told that any answer was fair game, and that they were not allowed to evaluate the merits of any answer until the end of the meeting. The approach encourages participants to offer responses without apprehension. In addition, responses that appear outlandish or unreasonable may spark ideas in other participants that may not have been raised otherwise. Brainstorming sessions were allowed to continue as long as participants had responses, and previous questions could be re-visited at any time if any participant wanted to add a response.

Once the four questions had been posed, and the four brainstorming sessions were concluded, the participants were given the opportunity to vote for the three responses to each question they felt most strongly about. All responses have remained on the list, and will be presented in this Plan, whether they received votes or not. The point totals were tabulated to determine the top three responses to each question. Note that point totals for each question within one meeting may differ, as participants may not have voted for three responses. The results of the tabulations follow.

ALTA'S TOWN HALL MEETING RESULTS

TABLE 24: WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT ALTA, 2006

	Positive Aspect	Total Points	% of Total Points
1.	City-Owned Utilities	6	30.0%
2.	Safety- Lower Crime Rate	4	20.0%
3.	Schools (IE-New/Middle School)	4	20.0%
4.	Growing Community	2	10.0%
5.	Churches	1	5.0%
6.	Clean Community	1	5.0%
7.	Emergency Services	1	5.0%
8.	Paved Streets	1	5.0%
9.	2 Golf Courses	0	0.0%
10.	Good Leadership/Gov't	0	0.0%
11.	Perception is it's a Progressive City	0	0.0%
12.	Proximity to Larger Cities	0	0.0%
	Total	20	100.0%

Source: Alta Town Hall Meeting, February 7, 2006, JEO Consulting Group, Inc.

TABLE 25: WHAT NEEDS TO BE IMPROVED IN ALTA, 2006

	Improvements	Total Points	% of Total Points
1.	Shortage of Residential Property	8	33.3%
2.	Get More Local Manufacturing/Industrial Jobs	5	20.8%
3.	Lack of Business on Main Street	5	20.8%
4.	Landlocked/Prevents Residential Development	4	16.7%
5.	Lack of Recreational Opps. For Older Youth	2	8.3%
6.	Attitudes of Citizens on Cleanliness of Residences	0	0.0%
7.	Recreational Trails	0	0.0%
	Totals	24	100.0%

Source: Alta Town Hall Meeting, February 7, 2006, JEO Consulting Group, Inc.

TABLE 26: WHAT IS YOUR VISION IN ALTA, 2006

	Issues	Total Points	% of Total Points
1.	More Jobs/Businesses	7	28.0%
2.	Main Street Repair/Rehab/Beautification	6	24.0%
3.	More Affordable Housing	5	20.0%
4.	New Fire Station	2	8.0%
5.	Sewer/Water Line Maintenance	2	8.0%
6.	Positive Attitude Towards Local Education Needs (Support Local Schools)	2	8.0%
7.	Hwy 7 Corridor Clean-up	1	4.0%
8.	Double in Size/Population	0	0.0%
9.	More Efficient Infrastructure	0	0.0%
	Total	25	100.0%

Source: Alta Town Hall Meeting, February 7, 2006, JEO Consulting Group, Inc.

TABLE 27: WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE TO ACHIEVE THIS VISION IN ALTA, 2006

	Achieve the Vision	Total Points	% of Total Points
1.	Empower Young People To be Active In Community	8	44.4%
2.	Cooperation Between Landowners	6	33.3%
3.	Shared Vision Among Stakeholders	4	22.2%
	Total	18	100.0%

Source: Alta Town Hall Meeting, February 7, 2006, JEO Consulting Group, Inc.

ALTA'S VISION

Planning for future land uses within Alta is an ongoing process of goal setting and problem solving. The focus of the process is to continually gauge public perceptions and desires so that the City is able to monitor the quality of life it provides. Planning focuses on ways to solve existing problems within the City, and provides a management tool to help the residents achieve a desired future vision.

Developing future goals is accomplished through a process called visioning. Visioning allows the City to evaluate present conditions, identify problem areas, and build a consensus among City residents for the best way to manage future change. The result of the visioning process is a picture of how the residents of Alta would like to see the community evolve over the next twenty or so years. The next step is an evaluation of strengths and weaknesses in the City. Once identified, the City will be able to determine specific items that need to change in order to achieve its vision. This provides the City with a "roadmap" to the future.

Change is a continuous process. By changing one characteristic in the community it may impact another and another. Change does not occur in a vacuum. The chain reaction can continue for several steps before particular changes are noticed. Because of this dynamic, Alta should develop specific benchmarks which can help monitor change, thus Creating a means by which development can be measured. Armed with a set of benchmark criteria, the City can monitor the effects of change at a specific level.

VISION STATEMENT

"The City of Alta will motivate the community to work together to achieve positive economic growth for its future generations. Alta will motivate young people to become progressively more active in the development of the community. Alta will encourage new business to join in the development of the community. Encourage citizen cooperation in the establishment of adequate housing and Main Street rehabilitation."

ALTA'S GOALS

This section will examine specific goals and policies for Alta in the future. These are essential to the future and need to be monitored on a regular basis. As specific goals, objectives and policies are achieved, the community needs to establish additional goals, objectives, and policies to tackle new issues. In order to be successful in the use of goals, objectives, and policies, it is critical to define what is meant by these terms.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goals are desires, necessities and issues which should be attained in the future. A goal should be established in a manner that can be accomplished. Goals are the end state of a desired outcome. Goals also play a factor in the establishment of policies within a community. In order to attain certain goals, certain policies within local government may need to be modified or changed.

Objectives are steps, which are performed in order to attain specific goals. Objectives must be action oriented, must be measurable through both specific degree of achievement and in terms of time. Objectives can be established in a way which assigns specific individuals.

The following sections have been established in order to group specific actions into categories.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Goal 1

Through the Alta Development Cooperation, work to promote and encourage specific industrial, manufacturing, retail, and service based businesses that will add to the economic base of Alta.

Objectives

- 1.1 Work with the Storm Lake Area Development Corporation to recruit an industrial based business to Alta.
- 1.2 Work with residents and businesses in the community to determine what additional retail and service businesses need to be recruited to Alta.
- 1.3 Complete a Blighted and Substandard Study and the corresponding General Redevelopment Plan for the community. These studies will enable the City to use Tax Increment Financing for certain economic development efforts.

Goal 2

Promote and encourage economic development activities that will support existing local businesses.

Objectives

- 2.1 Establish or enhance a regional economic development effort with Buena Vista County and the communities in Buena Vista County.
- 2.2 Identify those business owners that might be retiring in the near future. Work with these individuals to set up a business development program to recruit future business owners into the community.
- 2.3 The youth of Alta should be encouraged to remain in the community or return after completion of their post-secondary education. Economic development projects should be established to provide such encouragement. The youth of Alta should continue to be involved in the identification and development of these projects.
- 2.4 Encourage, promote and develop economic development partnerships between local entities and private companies to assist existing and expanding business enterprises on Main Street.
- 2.5 Work with existing home owners that are 55 years of age or older to develop a program that will assist them in selling their home to a younger family in the future.

LAND USE GOAL

Goal 3

The City of Alta should manage the land in a cost-effective and efficient manner while protecting the environment and natural resources, and maintaining and increasing land values. Guiding future growth and development in the City

towards a compact pattern of land uses based on the efficient and economical expansion of public infrastructure will maintain and improve the quality of life for all residents.

Objectives

- 3.1 The City should work to increase communication between property owners and stakeholders to focus on the development of residential properties.
- 3.2 Alta should encourage future development in areas that can be properly served by utilities.
- 3.3 As development attempts to move into areas that are not easily served by utilities, the City should establish policies for shared costs of utility extensions.
- 3.4 Then developments propose to develop along the hillsides of the area, special criteria should be used that will allow creative platting of lots into clusters.
- 3.5 Future developments should be encouraged to preserve tree groves and natural drainage ways as part of the development.

HOUSING GOAL

Goal 4

Affordable housing should be distributed throughout the community providing various housing choices. In addition, existing housing stock in the community should be maintained as well as preserved.

Objectives

- 4.1 Work with existing home owners that are 55 years of age or older to develop a program that will assist them in selling their home to a younger family in the future.
- 4.2 The City needs to establish a rehabilitation and renovation program for the community. This program will become critical in the future, if not already in demand, to improve the housing stock of Alta. This based upon the fact that nearly 40% of the existing housing stock was constructed prior to 1940.
- 4.3 Complete a Blighted and Substandard Study and the corresponding General Redevelopment Plan for the community. These studies will enable the City to use Tax Increment Financing for certain housing projects such as assisted living and other senior housing.
- 4.4 The City needs to work with state officials to identify substandard/deteriorating housing units and develop a program for the rehabilitation or demolition of the units.
- 4.5 Support housing options for all incomes and physical capabilities of Alta's residents.
- 4.6 New residential developments should be accompanied by covenants when appropriate, which provide for the maintenance of common areas, easements and drainage.

PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY GOAL

Goal 5

The City of Alta will continue to support health care, fire protection, and law enforcement programs by exploring programs and alternative services to insure optimum service levels and public costs.

Objectives

- 5.1 The City will work toward structurally improving Main Street.
- 5.2 The City will work with the youth of the community to increase the beautification of Main Street
- 5.3 The City Council will continue to support the efforts of the Fire Department through equipment upgrades and training.
- 5.4 The City will work toward improving the quality of the water in the community.
- 5.5 The City will work to update the existing sanitary sewer system within the community as necessary.
- 5.6 Future development in Alta should remain out of any designated 100-year flood plain.

TRANSPORTATION GOAL**Goal 6**

The City of Alta will provide a transportation system that improves access and circulation for vehicular traffic within the community.

Objectives

- 6.1 Development in Alta shall be guided to safely utilize existing public investment in roads, and programs to reduce road maintenance.
- 6.2 The City will work with property owners of odd lots and improperly platted lots to replat the tracts into a more reasonable configuration that will allow for better transportation access.
- 6.3 The City Council will work to develop a main street repair, rehabilitation, and beautification program for the community. The program could be undertaken through the use of Community Development Block Grant funds, Tax Increment Financing (if the appropriate project were proposed) and/or through the creation of paving districts.
- 6.4 The City will work on developing a future recreational trails plan and system.

RECREATION GOAL**Goal 7**

Alta should provide adequate, park and recreation opportunities for the residents of the community of all ages. These facilities should be a combination of expanding of existing facilities and the establishment of newer facilities.

Objectives

- 7.1 The City should work to increase recreational opportunities for older youth.
- 7.2 Establish policies and guidelines for the development of new park facilities as new subdivisions are proposed and approved.
- 7.3 Work with the development regulations to establish the means for the creation of clustered developments that will allow the community to see creative layouts while preserve open spaces for natural, environmental, and recreational purposes.
- 7.4 Work on developing a future recreational trails plan and system.

ENVIRONMENTAL GOAL**Goal 8**

The City of Alta has a number of environmental conditions surrounding the community including floodplain, hillsides, and natural drainage ways. The City will work towards a balance of protecting these assets while encouraging development on the community's perimeter.

Objectives

- 8.1 Work with the development regulations to establish the means for the creation of clustered developments that will allow the community to see creative layouts while preserve open spaces for natural, environmental and recreational purposes.
- 8.2 Future developments should be encouraged to preserve tree groves and natural drainage ways as part of the development.
- 8.3 Federal requirements and regulations shall be followed when land use regulations are being developed. The City regulations should at a minimum be as strict as federal standards, and where necessary, may be enforced in a manner stricter than federal guidelines.
- 8.4 A Surface Water Protection Area should be established to protect the unique character and environmental quality of the area.
- 8.5 A Wellhead Protection Area should be established to protect the domestic supply of drinking water for Alta.
- 8.6 Promote quality land management through the development of erosion control design standards for larger commercial and industrial developments.
- 8.7 Consideration will be given to adopting an resolution requiring environmental impact review of all major public and private development proposals and the social and economic costs and benefits associated with any particular development proposal will be properly evaluated prior to public endorsement or approval.
- 8.8 The City of Alta will cooperate with Iowa Department of Natural Resources in enforcing state and federal regulations designed to achieve high air quality.
- 8.9 The City of Alta will, in making land use decisions relative to industrial or other uses likely to pose a threat to air quality, consider proximity of the proposed use to residential areas and meteorological factors such as prevailing wind direction and velocity.

IMPLEMENTATION, EVALUATION, AND REVIEW GOAL**Goal 9**

Changing needs and unforeseen conditions and opportunities will necessitate future review, evaluation, and updating of the Comprehensive Development Plan and its supporting documents. Intergovernmental coordination of all planning activities affecting land uses within the City is necessary to ensure an integrated comprehensive plan for City of Alta.

Objectives

- 9.1 Adopt an updated zoning and subdivision regulation that supports and enforces the goals and objectives of this Comprehensive Development Plan.
- 9.2 Adopt a procedural manual and application process for addressing the enforcement of the Plan and regulations.

- 9.3 Develop a Blighted and Substandard Study as well as the accompanying General Redevelopment Plan. These implementation studies will allow the City to expand its opportunities for economic development and will allow the City to use Tax Increment Financing, if the opportunity presents itself.
- 9.4 The Planning Commission and the City Council should hold a joint meeting annually to assess any major changes in the community (unforeseen opportunities). The meeting should evaluate potential changes to the Comprehensive Development Plan and development regulations.
- 9.5 The Planning Commission shall meet a least once every three months or more often if needed.

ACHIEVE ALTA

FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

The Land Use Plan assists the community in determining the type, direction, and timing of future growth. The criteria established in this Land Use Plan reflect several things, including:

- Current existing use of land within and around the community
- Desired types of growth including location of growth
- Physical characteristics and strengths and constraints to future growth
- Current population and economic trends affecting the community

Alta should review and understand the above criteria when making decisions about the future use of land within open spaces within the corporate boundary and the land immediately surrounding. While monitoring past trends and analyzing growth trends in the community is important, they must be coupled with substantial, achievable goals and policies in order to provide the City of Alta with a blueprint for growth that allows the community to prosper throughout the planning period.

Less arbitrary and more efficient allocation of land recognizes the forces of the private market and the limitations of the capital improvement budget. This Future Land Use Plan acknowledges that these factors play an important role in the growth and development of a community. The Future Land Use Plan section is intended to be a general guide to future land use that will balance private sector development, the critical growth element in any community, with the concerns, interests, and demands of the overall local economy.

The following future land use objectives, along with the more specific objectives listed in the Envision Alta section, need to be reviewed whenever there is a proposed modification to the Plan. These items need to be balanced with the possibility that an ‘unforeseen opportunity’ may present itself in a given proposal. Weighing all of these factors will allow the community to make solid land use decisions in the future.

- Identify past trends in demand for various land use categories (residential, commercial, industrial, public/semi-public)
- Combine community goals with estimated future demands to project future land use needs.
- Establish policies and land use suitability standards to:
 - a. Protect and enhance current and future buildings and land use;
 - b. Provide reasonable alternatives and locations for various land uses;
 - c. Promote efficient use of public facilities and utilities.

FUTURE LAND USE CLASSIFICATION

An analysis of the existing land uses is important in understanding potential needs for the future. Existing land uses were determined through visual survey of the community, maps and aerial photographs. An analysis is provided in the Profile Alta section. This analysis, used in combination with the population projections, public input, and the future land use forecast, forms the foundation for the future land use plan. This plan is based on the following classifications:

- Agriculture (AG)
- Transitional Agriculture(TA)
- Low Density Residential (LDR)
- Medium Density Residential (MDR)
- High Density Residential (HDR)
- Commercial (C)
- Industrial (I)
- Public/Quasi Public (P)
- Parks/Recreation (P/R)

Each of these Future Land Use categories will be discussed in full detail in the following paragraphs.

Agriculture (AG)

This land use designation intends for the continued use of cropland, farmsteads, livestock areas, animal services, crop services, horticulture, community supported agriculture and tree farms. At some point in the future this designation may transition into an urbanized area. Typically agricultural land use is located outside of the corporate boundary and will be regulated by Buena Vista County.

Transitional Agriculture (TA)

The Transitional Agriculture area is intended for traditional agriculture uses around the perimeter of the community. These areas are identified on the Future Land Use map based upon locations determined by Buena Vista County. Types of allowable uses within this area include:

- Agricultural uses
- Limited residential uses, non-farm related development on acreages
- Based upon specific design criteria and proper location Mobile Home Parks may be allowed in this district.

RESIDENTIAL LAND USES

Residential development is the backbone of a community. These areas are where the residents live and spend their quality time. The three land use designations are intended for single-family dwellings, townhouses, duplexes, multifamily dwellings, apartments, group homes and elderly homes. The difference among the various groups is the density of development in each land use category.

Low Density Residential (LDR)

Low Density Residential is intended to accommodate large-lot residential development including acreage development. The recommended density for this land use designation is a minimum of three to five acres per unit. This type of land use would not be recommended in prime developable areas near Alta due



A typical large-lot development on the edge of a city.

to the amount of land consumed. An example of a typical Low Density Residential land use area would be a cluster development that works to incorporate the natural amenities of the area. A portion of the development site would allow single family residential and the remaining area of the site would be left undeveloped. City services may or may not be provided within these areas but are not likely. Accommodations for the placement of onsite wastewater treatment systems are required. Types of allowable uses within this area include:

- Single-family dwellings, including accessory uses. Lot size is dependent upon how sanitary wastewater is treated and the method of disposal. The use of central disposal systems in subdivisions may also lower the minimum lot size.
- Public and quasi-public uses.
- Based upon specific design criteria and proper location Mobile Home Parks may be allowed in this district.

Medium Density Residential (MDR)

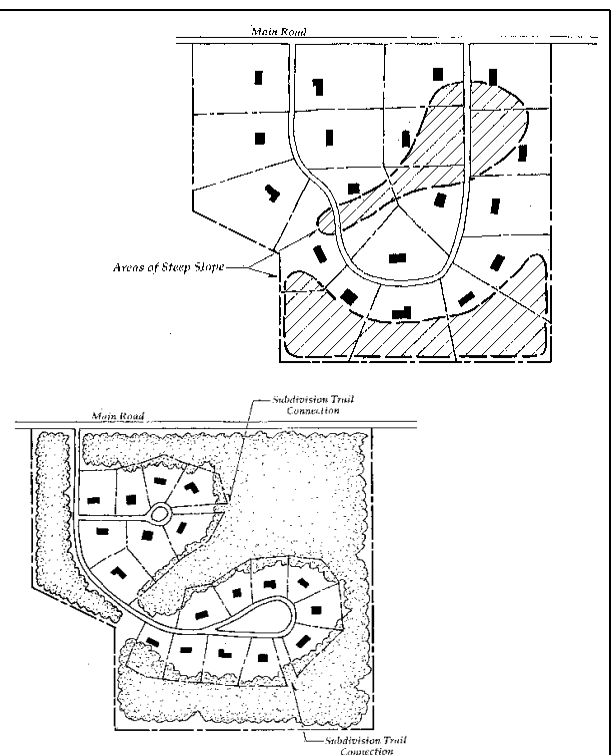
The next residential level is medium density residential with a density that ranges from three to ten units per acre. This density would allow land for single family on lots ranging from 7,500 square feet to 15,000 square feet. City services such as water and sewer would be required.

The Medium Density Residential district allows for a greater number of homes than the Low Density Residential District, by providing more useable open space or specific amenities as a tradeoff. This density is intended to encourage variations to the standard detached single-family environment. The single-family detached dwellings, with some occasional townhouse and condominium developments are included in this District. In addition, two to four family dwellings may be mixed into a subdivision. This land use category allows for some limited multi-family developments in conjunction with developments that are predominately single-family in nature. These areas can provide opportunities for affordable housing to be mixed into an overall residential neighborhood concept. Most dwellings will be one or two story, and will maintain a typical residential scale and character.

Subdivisions should be designed using principles of environmental conservation and clustering, when appropriate. When clustering is used in subdivision design, the same number of dwelling units can be realized while natural features are preserved. The areas being protected can be used



A traditional single family residential street.



An example of a Cluster Subdivision with the typical approach above.

Source: Randall Arendt

as natural open spaces, linear parks, or trails. This will add to property values in a positive way as people are drawn to live in areas that provide natural amenities.

The district is intended to provide the opportunity to establish a number of alternative housing opportunities within a neighborhood setting. Because of the higher concentration of residents in some of these areas, open space and linear parks should be used in conjunction with this area to provide visual interest and contrast with the more densely developed residential form.

Another beneficial result accompanying cluster development is an overall increase in open space without an increase of the park system. Density bonuses can be used to encourage developers to preserve natural space within their developments, while still developing approximately the same number of lots.

High Density Residential (HDR)

The High Density Residential area is intended to accommodate denser residential development, such as apartments. As development pressure increases in Alta, new areas of High Density Residential development will need to be identified.

It is anticipated that this land use district will accommodate large scale developments, specifically apartment complexes. These areas should be located to:

- Act as a buffer between more intensive uses, (i.e. Commercial and Industrial) and the Low Density and Medium Density Residential Areas
- Create a buffer between low density residences and intensive transportation residences.
- Be located along a collector or arterial street, as indicated on the Transportation Plan Map.
- The developed density of these areas should be 10-35 or more housing units per acre.



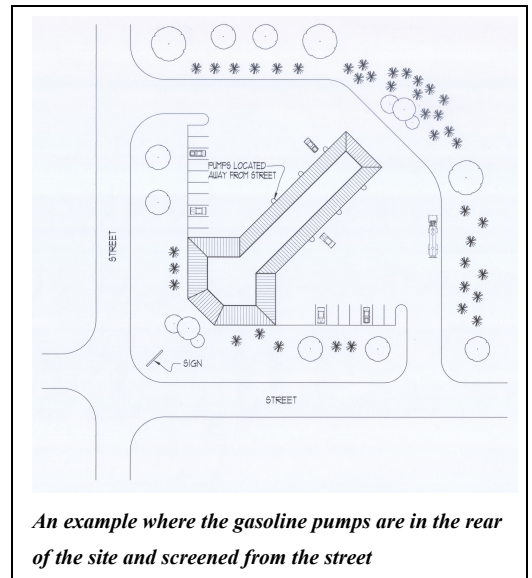
An example of a multi-family unit that has a good residential scale.

COMMERCIAL

Commercial development is critical to the future stability of the community. Commercial uses account for one of two non-residential uses that aid in balancing the tax receipts of a community. More importantly is the fact that commercial uses provide the various goods and services required by local residents. The Alta Future Land Use Plan only identifies areas as Commercial, but the land uses area is typically divided into three categories for purposes of zoning:

- General Commercial
- Downtown Commercial
- Highway Commercial

General Commercial and Downtown Commercial uses contain shops and service-oriented businesses that provide goods and services to those living locally, while Highway Commercial Uses are those that are typically located in an area that meets the needs of the traveling public; local residents will often benefit from these uses as well.



INDUSTRIAL

This land use district is intended to designate areas in and around the community that are suitable for industrial uses. This district is typically located where existing industrial uses are present and near major interchanges of the expressway or near railroad tracks. Uses within these areas need to be compatible with the residents of the community. Highly hazardous and odorous uses are not encouraged.

Uses that are encouraged in these locations are:

- Warehouses and self storage facilities
- Manufacturing uses where water and waste demands are minimal
- Manufacturing uses that have low levels of emissions and odors
- Service oriented repair businesses
- Agricultural uses including agricultural processing facilities

PUBLIC/QUASI-PUBLIC

This land use district is intended for existing publicly owned and semi-publicly owned and operated facilities, such as City Hall, churches, publicly owned utilities, etc. These areas are based upon the location of existing uses and no new areas have been identified. The public/quasi-public land use district is a general area that can be utilized anywhere within the community. These uses are intended to accommodate existing public facilities, and to allow the flexibility to add more facilities within the community as needed.

PARKS/RECREATION

These land use districts are intended for parks, green space, trails, recreational areas, and areas protected for environmental reasons including open space. The Open Space land use designation is not intended to be an extension of the City's existing park system. These areas are intended to be used to preserve natural features, as well as a buffer between different levels of development. The City supports the retention of natural open space within developments. This land use designation can be used as a tool to encourage environmentally sensitive development. To encourage the appropriate use of open space in this manner, the City should work with developers to identify areas worthy of protection rather than allow individual developers to designate the open areas.



An example of Open Space

FIGURE 7: FUTURE LAND USE MAP



FUTURE LAND USE PLAN MAP

There are nine future land use districts overall, shown in Figure 7. A larger number of land use types will give Alta more control and development more options for the location of different uses and the appearance of the community, while promoting the health, safety, and general welfare of the public. These future land use areas will then become the basis for developing Zoning and Subdivision Regulations.

The Future Land Use Plan has been developed through input from citizens, city leaders, planning and zoning commission members, and elected officials of Alta with assistance from Buena Vista County staff. Figure 7 is a representation of future land uses in Alta. Each land use category addresses the purpose of the district and the general development guidelines that should be applied to such land use area(s) in the future.

LAND USE SUITABILITY CRITERIA

This section of the Plan begins to address the question “How will this plan be implemented?” The major assumption of this plan is:

“Specific development criteria will be adopted to help guide builders, investors, and community leaders in making good decisions concerning Alta’s future.”

Based upon that assumption, the implementation criteria will be specific statements that describe the relationship between or among land uses and establish criteria or design standards that new development must meet.

LAND USE TRANSITIONS

New development should provide, if needed, any screening, buffers, or additional setback requirements when located next to existing uses. Screening or buffers may be plant material, low earthen berms, solid fences, or any combination of the above. Boundaries between different land uses are done along streets, alleys or natural features (streams, railroads, etc.) whenever possible.

COMMUNITY GROWTH

New development should, to the greatest extent possible, be contiguous to existing development or services. This will allow for the logical and cost effective extension of streets and utility services. The City may authorize non-contiguous development if:

- The developer pays for the “gap” costs of extending services from the existing connections to the proposed development, or
- The extension would open up needed or desirable areas of the community for additional growth, and
- Issues are related to adjacent/transitional agriculture uses.

The Future Land Use Plan, along with the Transportation Plan, provides the necessary tools to direct future development in Alta. The Future Land Use Plan is based upon existing conditions and projected conditions for the community.

COMMUNITY ENTRANCES

First impressions of the community are made at the entrances. These impressions are critical to a community's overall image and identity. An emphasis to establish a quality impression should be given to both new and existing developments located near community entrances. Larger setbacks, landscaping standards, and development codes are ways Alta can achieve these positive impressions.

ANNEXATION

As the City grows in size it must look for opportunities to extend its borders to provide a superior quality of life for its residents. To do this, the State of Iowa has established a process for communities to expand their municipal boundary into areas that are contiguous to the community, provided such actions are justified. According to the Code of Iowa, property may be annexed into a City either through a voluntary or involuntary petition, although the affected City as well as the State of Iowa's City Development Board must take action upon both types of petitions.

Annexation of urban/suburban areas adjacent to existing municipal boundaries can be driven by many factors. The following are reasons for annexation to be considered:

- Create a more uniform and orderly municipal boundary.
- Provide municipal services. Municipalities are created to provide the governmental services essential for sound urban development and for the protection of health, safety and well being of residents in areas that are used primarily for residential, industrial, and commercial purposes.
- Better ensure orderly growth pursuant to housing, land use, building, street, sidewalk, sanitary sewer, storm sewer, water, and electrical services.
- Provide more equitable taxation to existing property owners for the urban services and facilities that non-residents in proposed annexation areas use on a regular basis such as parks, streets, public infrastructure, emergency services, retail businesses, and associated support.
- Ensure ability to impose and consistently enforce planning processes and policies.
- Ability of residents of urban areas adjacent to the village to participate in municipal issues, including elections, that either do or will have an impact on their properties.
- Anticipate and allocate resources for infrastructure improvements to affected annexed areas.
- Increase number of street and lane miles while increasing dollars received from the State Department of Transportation.
- Provide long term planning abilities as it relates to growth and provision of services.

Concerning a petition for Involuntary Annexation, Section 378.11 of the Code of Iowa states:

“A petition for incorporation, discontinuance, or boundary adjustment may be filed with the board by a city council, a county board of supervisors, a regional planning authority, or five percent of the qualified electors of a city or territory involved in the proposal. Notice of the filing, including a copy of the petition, must be served upon the council of each city for which a discontinuance or boundary adjustment is proposed, the board of supervisors for each county which contains a portion of a city to be discontinued or territory to be incorporated, annexed or severed, the council of a city if an

incorporation includes territory within the city's urbanized area, and any regional planning authority for the area involved.”

“Within ninety days of receipt of a petition, the board shall initiate appropriate proceedings or dismiss the petition. The board may combine for consideration petitions or plans which concern the same territory or city or which provide for a boundary adjustment or incorporation affecting common territory. The combined petitions may be submitted for consideration by a special local committee pursuant to section 368.14A.”

The petition must substantially include the following information as applicable:

1. A general statement of the proposal.
2. A map of the territory, city or cities involved.
3. Assessed valuation of platted and unplatted land.
4. Names of property owners.
5. Population density.
6. Description of topography.
7. Plans for disposal of assets and assumption of liabilities.
8. Description of existing municipal services, including but not limited to water supply, sewage disposal, and fire and police protection”

TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES AND SYSTEM FUTURE

Transportation networks tie communities together and provide a link to the outside world. Adequate circulation systems are essential for the safe and efficient flow of vehicles and pedestrians, and accessibility to all parts of the city. The Transportation Plan will identify future improvements planned and those necessary to provide safe and efficient circulation of vehicles within Alta, including major projects that ensure implementation of the Future Land Use Plan.

STREET AND ROAD CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

Chapter 306.4 of the Code of Iowa provides for the necessary jurisdiction of municipalities over their street systems. The chapter states, “Jurisdiction and control over the municipal street system shall be vested in the governing bodies of each municipality; except that the department and the municipal governing body shall exercise concurrent jurisdiction over the municipal extensions of primary roads in all municipalities. When concurrent jurisdiction is exercised, the department shall consult with the municipal governing body as to the kind and type of construction, reconstruction, repair, and maintenance, and the two parties shall enter into agreements with each other as to the division of costs thereof.”

There are five function classifications of highways, roads, and streets in Iowa according to the level of service provided. The classification of streets and roads in each community is periodically updated to be current with city boundary changes and the function of the streets. The classification system serves as a basis for determining future priorities, funds distribution, and jurisdiction over the various highways, roads, and streets in the State. These classifications are as follows:

Expressways/Interstate

Expressways are restricted access, free-flow roads designed to carry high traffic volumes at high speeds with minimum friction. All traffic movement is lane separated by flow direction and all intersections with local and regional roads are made with grade separated interchanges.

At the time of the planning period, Alta did not have an expressway or interstate located within its corporate limits.

Principal Arterials

Principal arterials are roads that serve regional needs and connect major activity centers. Principal arterials usually serve the highest traffic corridors and are designated to accommodate relatively high speeds. Special traffic control devices, such as traffic signals, raised medians, and special turn lanes are usually used in controlling and separating traffic flows.

At the time of the planning period, Alta had two principal arterials located within its corporate limits. Highway 197, also classified as County Road N 14 or 230th Avenue, runs north and south into Alta from Iowa Highway 3 and Iowa Highway 10. Highway 3 is located one and one-half miles to the south while Highway 10 is located four miles north. The second principal arterial is County Road N29 or 510th Street which runs through Alta east and west.

Minor Arterials

Minor arterials are streets that connect and support the principal arterials within a community. These streets aid in connecting major activity centers with other parts of the city. Minor arterials typically allow access onto the adjacent properties while accommodating numerous left-turn movements and curb cuts. These streets are typically designed for speeds of 40 miles per hour or less.

Collectors

The collector street system links neighborhoods together and connects these neighborhoods with arterials, expressways, and activity centers. Collectors are usually designed for low speeds of 30 miles or less. Collectors are designed to connect the motoring public from the arterials to their ultimate designations, especially within residential neighborhoods.

Local

The remaining streets are classified as local service streets that provide access to adjoining properties within the city and connect to the collector and arterial street system.

Land use and transportation create the pattern for future development. An improved or new transportation route generates a greater level of accessibility and determines how adjacent land may be utilized in the future. In the short term, land use shapes the demand for transportation. However, new or improved roads, county roads and highways may change land values, thus altering the intensity of which land is utilized.

The adequacy of a community's transportation and circulation system will have a substantial impact on the rate and pattern of its future growth and development. Ensuring the circulation system is able to expand efficiently and remains consistent with the Future Land Use Plan requires careful, long-range planning efforts. The transportation and circulation needs depend upon how closely the street network can be matched to the existing land use patterns. With the

development of an agricultural processing facility, Alta can expect future growth to increase the demand made on the street network. It is important that the future land use pattern be considered along with the existing pattern when decisions regarding street classification are determined. The street system is based upon factors such as traffic demand and trip generation, which in turn forms the basis for a classification system and appropriate design standards.

FIGURE 8: FUTURE TRANSPORTATION PLAN MAP

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

ACHIEVING ALTA'S FUTURE PLAN

Successful city plans have the same key ingredients: consensus, ideas, hard work, and the application of each of these things in solving community problems. This section of the plan contains the inspiration of the many City officials and residents who have participated in the planning process. Nevertheless, the ultimate success of this plan remains in the dedication offered by each and every resident.

There are numerous goals and objectives in this plan. It is recommended to review the relevant goals during planning and budget setting sessions. However, it is also recommended that the City select elements of the plan for immediate action; the goals of highest priority which are described below as the Action Plan.

ACTION AGENDA

The Action Agenda is a combination of the following:

- Goals and Objectives
- Growth Policies
- Land Use Policies
- Support programs for the above items

It will be critical to earmark the specific funds to be used and the individuals primarily responsible for implementing the goals and policies in Alta.

SUPPORT PROGRAMS FOR THE ACTION AGENDA

Four programs will play a vital role in the success of Alta's plan. These programs are:

1. Capital Improvements Financing--an annual predictable investment plan that uses a six to ten-year planning horizon to schedule and fund projects integral to the plan's implementation.
2. Zoning Regulations--updated land use districts can allow the City to provide direction for future growth.
3. Subdivision Regulations--establish criteria for dividing land into building areas, utility easements, and streets. Implementing the Transportation Plan is a primary function of subdivision regulations.
4. Plan Maintenance--an annual and five-year review program will allow the City flexibility in responding to growth and a continuous program of maintaining the plan's viability.

PLAN MAINTENANCE

ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE PLAN

A relevant, up to date plan is critical to the on-going planning success. To maintain the confidence of both public and private sector, evaluate the effectiveness of planning activities, and, most importantly, to make mid-plan corrections on the use of City resources, the plan must be current. Thus, an annual review should occur when the City Council, residents, and staff are able to review the plan and recommend necessary changes.

After adoption of the comprehensive plan, opportunities should be provided to identify any changes in conditions that would impact elements or policies of the plan. At the beginning of each year a report should be prepared by the Planning and Zoning Commission that provides information and recommendations on whether the plan is current in respect to population and economic changes and if the recommended policies are still valid for the City and its long-term growth.

The Planning and Zoning Commission should hold a public hearing on this report in order to:

1. Provide citizens or developers with an opportunity to present possible changes to the plan;
2. Identify any changes in the status of projects called for in the plan; and
3. Bring forth any issues, or identify any changes in conditions that may impact the validity of the plan.

If the Commission finds major policy issues or major changes in basic assumptions or conditions have arisen which could necessitate revisions to the plan, they should recommend changes or further study of those changes. This process may lead to identification of amendments to the plan that would be processed as per the procedures in the next section.

UNANTICIPATED OPPORTUNITY

If major, new, innovative development opportunities arise that impact several elements of the plan and that are determined to be of importance, a plan amendment may be proposed and considered separately from the annual review and other proposed plan amendments. The City Council or Planning and Zoning Commission shall compile a list of proposed amendments received during a year in preparation for a report to provide pertinent information on each proposal, and recommend action on the proposed amendments. The comprehensive plan amendment process should adhere to the adoption process specified by the Code of Iowa and should provide for organized participation and involvement of interested citizens.

METHODS FOR EVALUATING DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

The interpretation of the plan should be composed of a continuous and related series of analyses, with references to the goals and policies, the overall land use plan, and specific land use policies. Moreover, when considering specific proposed developments, interpretation of the plan should include a thorough review of all sections of the plan.

If a development proposal is not consistently supported by the plan, serious consideration should be given to making modifications to the proposal, or the following criteria should be used to determine if a comprehensive plan amendment would be justified:

- The character of the adjacent neighborhood
- The zoning and uses on nearby properties
- The suitability of the property for the uses allowed under the current zoning designation
- The type and extent of positive or detrimental impact that may affect adjacent properties, or the City at large, if the request is approved
- The impact of the proposal on public utilities and facilities
- The length of time that the subject and adjacent properties have been utilized for their current uses
- The benefits of the proposal to the public health, safety, and welfare compared to the hardship imposed on the applicant if the request is not approved

- Comparison of the existing land use plan and the proposed change regarding the relative conformance to the goals and policies
- Consideration of professional staff recommendations

IMMEDIATE RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Adopt the Comprehensive Development Plan
2. Establish an updated zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations

SHORT TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Update and adopt building codes that consider hazard mitigation, improved building technology, and environmentally sensitive factors
2. Work with property owners and residents to develop methods and strategies to redevelop the downtown
3. Develop methods to provide for ongoing maintenance and replacement of facilities and equipment
4. Work with businesses in the City to develop an economic development strategy

LONG TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Begin working with area stakeholders to identify and utilize programs and strategies to maximize housing opportunity in the City
2. Work with residents, businesses, and property owners to develop methods and policies that reduce the amount of runoff, erosion, and other pollutants

CONTINUING RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Develop a public education program for residents, businesses, and property that will provide information about the ongoing planning process and how they can be involved.

PUBLIC EDUCATION

Finally, broad public support and involvement is necessary for the development and use of nearly any implementation policy or program. If adequate support is to be developed, a permanent program educating residents is necessary. People who understand the methods and priorities of meeting the needs of the community must take the initiative to stimulate the interest and the understanding required to ensure action is taken. The governing body of Alta should strive to implement an active public participation process by creating an educational process on land use issues annually.

Some of the objectives of the comprehensive plan cannot be achieved unless the actions of two or more public agencies or private organizations can be coordinated. Frequently constraints prevent organizations from working with one another (i.e. financial resources, legal authority, restriction of joint uses of facilities, etc). Efforts should be made to bridge this gap with open communication, cooperation, and the realization that the issue at hand could benefit the health, safety, and general welfare of the residents in Alta.