



Johnston

Community Development Annual Report 2008



City of Johnston Community Development Annual Report 2008

Thank you for your interest in the City of Johnston's Community Development Department. This report is a summary of building, construction, and other accomplishments the department was involved with in 2008. As you'll see by the data in the report, 2008 saw a significant decline in residential permits and development consistent with the national trends. However, you'll also see that the valuation of new commercial development shattered the city's previous record set in 2000, totaling over \$54 million among twelve new structures.



David Wilwerding, AICP

The city also completed its largest annexation since the city's incorporation in 1969; nearly 840 acres north of NW 70th Avenue on either side of NW 100th Street. Additionally, work began on a watershed assessment and storm water management plan. It will be the city's first storm water master plan developing policies and principles to guide future development and developing priority projects for the city's Capital Improvement Plan. Work on this plan is anticipated to be completed in 2009.

This year also brought challenges to the department as the flooding that occurred throughout the state of Iowa significantly affected the Johnston community. The emergency situation required rapid deployment of the department's geographic information systems (GIS) equipment and staff resources. The building inspection department was also called upon to act quickly as the water receded to assist those properties that sustained flooding and damage.

We enjoyed the opportunity to work with all of you in 2008 and look forward to continuing to serve you in 2009. As always, should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact any member of the Community Development Department, our contact information is contained at the end of this report.

-David Wilwerding, AICP, Director of Community Development

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Commercial Plats and Site Plans

This year saw a record-breaking amount of commercial development in the City of Johnston. Refer to the tables below for a summary of commercial plat and site plan activity.

Plats	Total Acres	Total Lot Acres Excluding Outlots	Outlot Area	Total Lots	New Lots Created	Average Lot Size	Zoning
Green Meadows West Commercial Plat 2	7.26	7.26	0.00	2	1	3.63	PUD
Johnston Station Plat 3	39.09	39.09	0.00	1	0	39.09	PC
Beaver Drive Business Park Final Plat	16.31	7.92	8.40	5	4	1.98	M-1

Site Plans	Location	Building Area	Zoning
Kum & Go Convenience Store	5800 Northglenn Drive	3,392	PUD
Jimmy John's Restaurant	5249 Merle Hay Road	2,798	C-3
Pioneer Office	8850 NW 62nd Ave	41,080	PUD
Lot 2 Beaver Drive Business Park Site Plan	5750 NW Beaver Dr	22,517	M-1
John Deere Credit Expansion	6400 NW 86th Street	144,939	PC
Pioneer Mendel Greenhouse North Expansion	7200 NW 62nd	46,565	A-R
Casey's General Store	6417 Northglenn Drive	3,950	PUD
Ontuet Site Plan	5435 NW 100th Street	33,800	PUD
Hy-Vee Wine and Spirits Expansion	5750 Merle Hay Road	4,589	PUD
Thomas Avenue Enterprises Office Building	8711 Windsor Parkway	6,500	PUD
Johnston Public Works Addition and Site Improvements	6400 NW Beaver Drive	9,100	M-1
Generation Next Daycare Expansion	6109 Merle Hay Road	2,839	ROC-1
The Concrete Company Site Plan	5128 NW Beaver Drive	5,000	M-1
Pioneer Conditioning Sizing and Warehouse Expansion	7200 NW 70th Avenue	55,000	A-R
Pioneer Crescent Chase Office Park Lot 2	8700 Crescent Chase	30,000	PUD
Casey's General Store Addition	6110 Merle Hay Road	540	ROC-1
Dairy Queen Remodel	6150 Merle Hay Road	n/a	ROC-1
Prairie Engineering Expansion	5008 NW 57th Avenue	850	M-1

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Commercial Building Activity & Valuation



Ontuet office building in West Park Office Park.



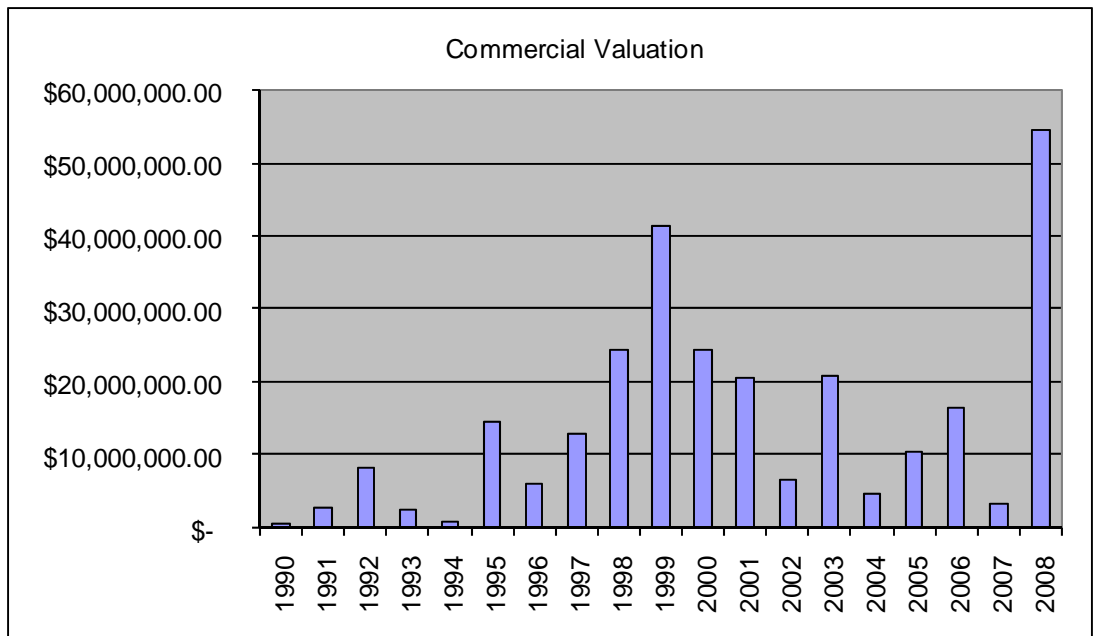
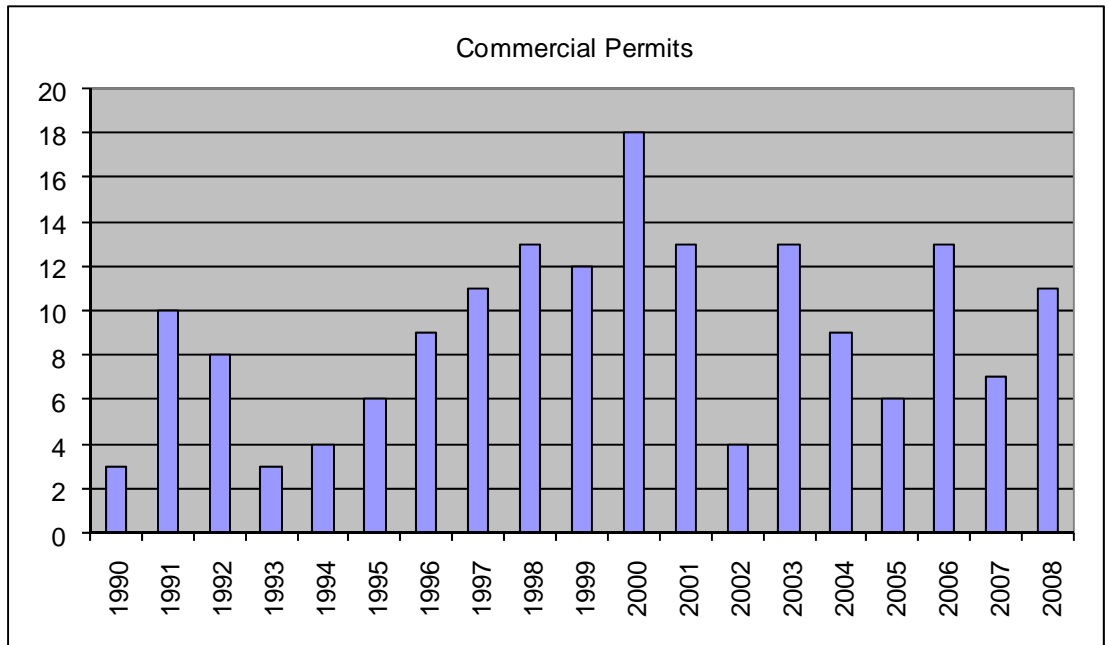
John Deere Credit expansion at their corporate headquarters.



A new Casey's General Store location in NorthGlenn.



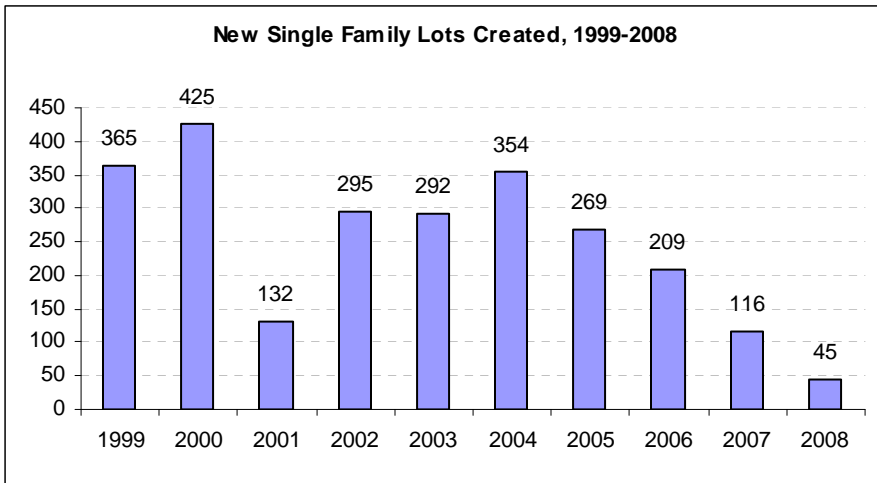
Veridian Credit Union's new building along NW 86th Street.



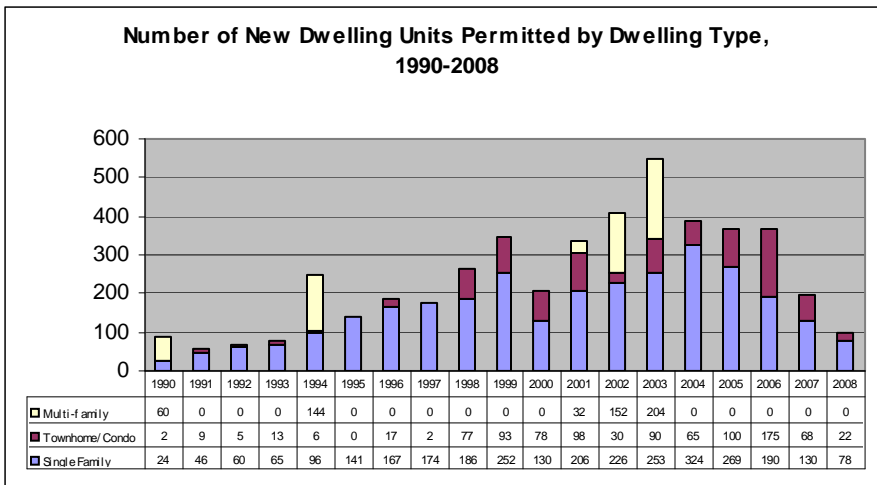
Residential Plats and Building Activity

Not unlike much of the country, the City of Johnston saw a decline in residential housing activity in 2008. See the table and graphs below for a summary of residential activity for the year.

Plats	Total Acres	Total Lot Acres Excluding Outlots	Outlot Area	Total Lots	New Lots Created	Average Lot Size	Zoning
Pinewood Glen Plat 3 Final Plat	26.98	24.52	0.17	36	36	0.25	R-1(60)
Northwood Estates Plat 2 Final Plat	8.53	8.53	0.00	8	8	0.99	R-1(100)
Harlan Estates	1.52	1.52	0.00	3	1	0.50	R-1(75)



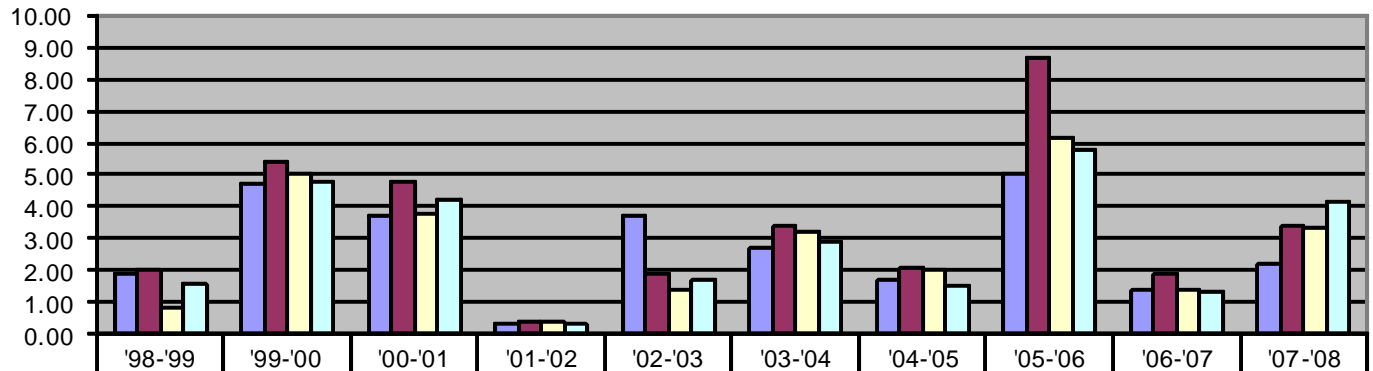
Above and below: Residential development occurring in various stages around Johnston.



Public Infrastructure

In order to support the growth of the community, the City accepts new public infrastructure that is constructed by developers. The following is a summary of new infrastructure by fiscal year (July-June).

Public Infrastructure in Miles Accepted by Fiscal Year



	'98-'99	'99-'00	'00-'01	'01-'02	'02-'03	'03-'04	'04-'05	'05-'06	'06-'07	'07-'08
Streets	1.90	4.70	3.70	0.30	3.70	2.70	1.70	5.00	1.36	2.20
Water	2.00	5.40	4.80	0.40	1.90	3.40	2.08	8.69	1.91	3.39
Storm Sewer	0.80	5.00	3.80	0.40	1.40	3.20	2.04	6.16	1.36	3.35
Sanitary Sewer	1.60	4.80	4.20	0.30	1.70	2.90	1.51	5.79	1.29	4.17

Rezoning, Board of Adjustment, and Ordinance Amendments

Rezoning	Action	Area (Acres)
7395 NW 100th Street	Change R-E to A-R	25.79
A Overlay for NW Annexation (various properties)	Add Animal Keeping Overlay	103.49
8533 NW Beaver	Add Animal Keeping Overlay	11.80
Silver Birch	R-1(150) and R-3 to R-1(75)	3.02
Crosshaven Conservation Subdivision	A-R to PUD	277.00
Iowa Heritage Village (Senior Residential)	R-1(A) to R-4 Restricted	3.80

Board of Adjustment: The Board of Adjustment met in regular session four times in 2008. One variance application was denied and one special exception was granted.

Ordinance Amendments: Ordinance 785 amended section 166.23 of the City Code to allow accessory structures in the R-2 Zoning District.

Flooding in Johnston: 2008

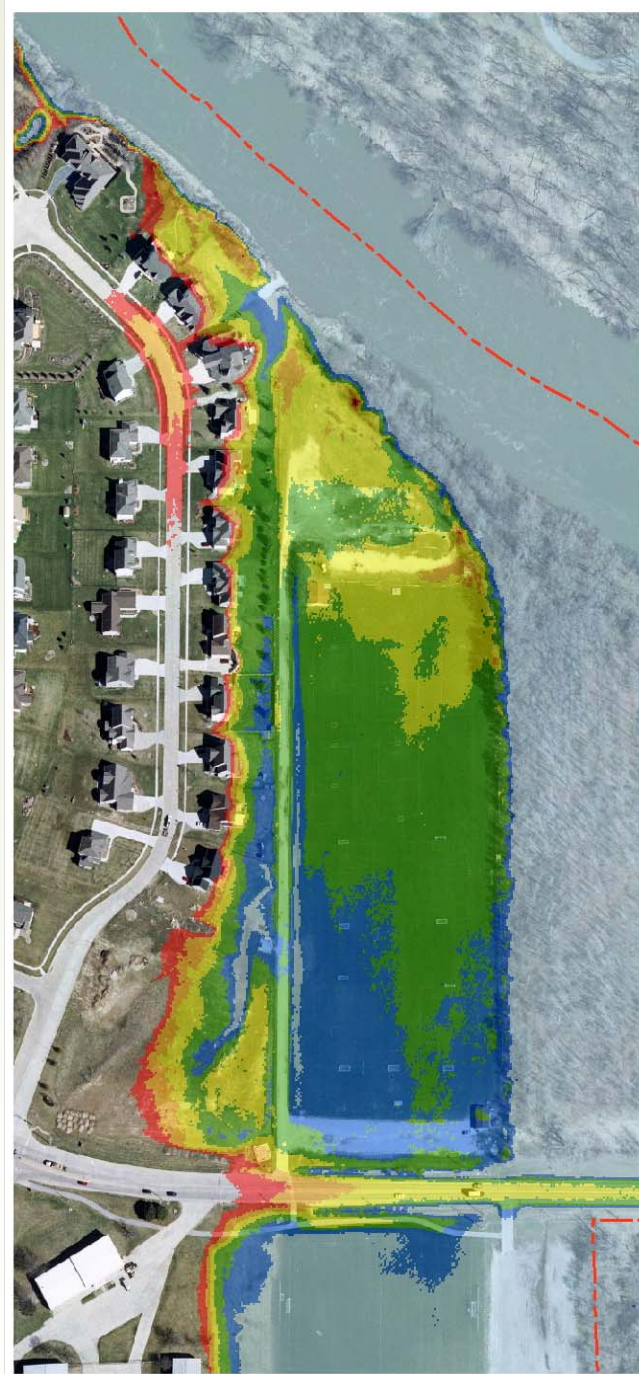
In June 2008, along with many other cities in Iowa, Johnston experienced devastating flooding across the community as both Beaver Creek and the Des Moines River came out of their banks. As the flood waters rose, the Community Development staff, in particular the GIS staff, was very involved in monitoring the US Army Corp of Engineers and National Weather Service forecasts and determining how the flooding would affect properties in Johnston.

The outcome of this effort is shown in maps to the right, which staff used to determine where remediation methods should be deployed as the flood waters continued to rise. This effort also led to the engineering and construction of a temporary sand bag levy in the Eagle Ridge neighborhood, pictured below, which prevented damage to numerous single family homes.

In addition, staff members of the department represented Johnston at the Polk County Emergency Operation Center, to coordinate responses to the flooding across the county.



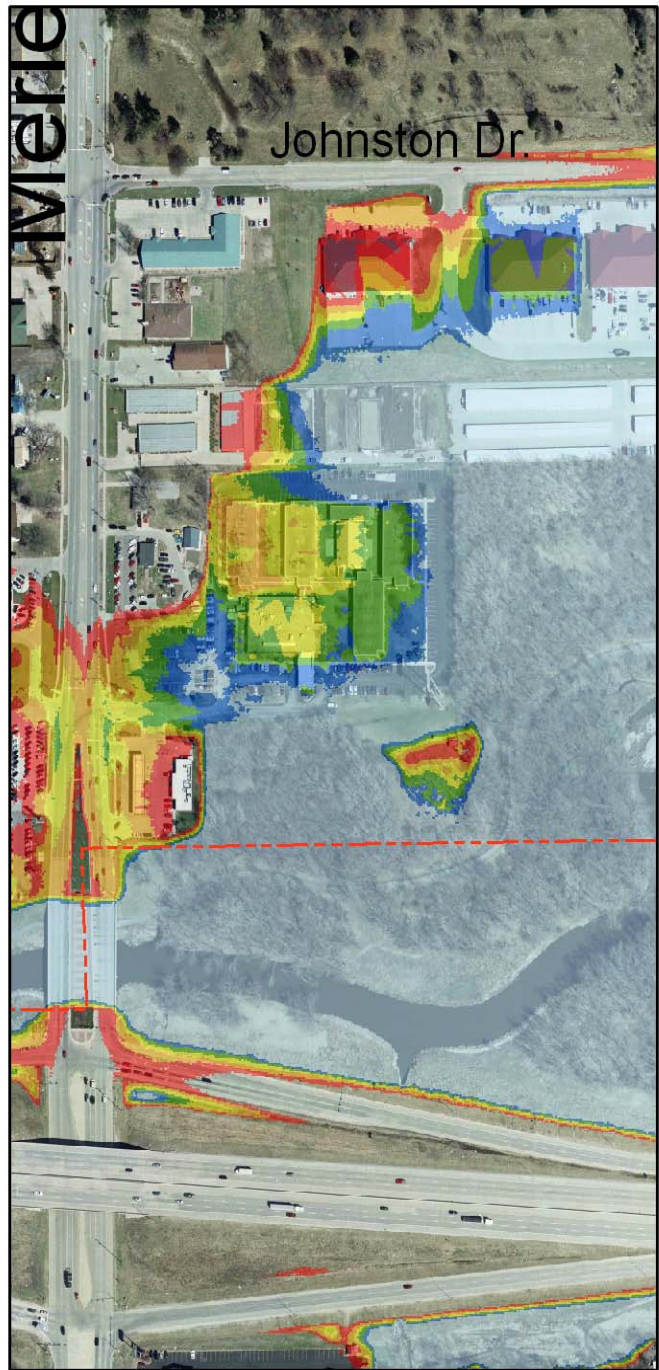
A sandbag levy was constructed by city staff, volunteers, and neighbors in the Eagle Ridge subdivision to prevent flooding damage to multiple homes located along the Des Moines River bank.



The above aerial photograph was prepared by community development staff to illustrate differing elevations which might be affected by flood waters.

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Another aerial photograph prepared by staff. This picture features the area along Merle Hay Road just north of Interstate 35 and Beaver Creek.

In total, forty-three structures within Johnston's city limits sustained some level of flood damage, all of which were commercial or industrial buildings; no residential buildings were directly damaged by the flood waters. Of those structures which sustained damage, none were required to be torn down.

As the floodwaters receded, the Building Department staff became very involved in working directly with the property owners and tenants of the structures damaged by flood waters. Building staff members supervised and inspected for appropriate cleanup and remediation methods to ensure the buildings were safe for re-occupancy. To assist in this process, the City Council waived all building permit fees for the necessary flood repair work.



Above: Two property owners chat at the intersection of NW Beaver Drive and Johnston Drive and flood waters in Beaver Creek rose to levels which nearly closed the Merle Hay Road Bridge.

Neighborhood Improvement Grant Program

The Johnston Neighborhood Improvement Grant Program has been in place since July 2003. To date, the City Council has approved more than 25 projects which have been completed by volunteers for a total value of more than \$93,000 in permanent improvements.

By providing up to \$2,000 in matching grant funds per project, the Neighborhood Improvement Program is designed to encourage citizens to join together and improve the appearance of their Johnston neighborhoods. Matching funds from neighborhoods include monetary contributions and in-kind labor necessary to complete permanent improvements. Applications are reviewed by a volunteer group of Johnston citizens and city staff, with final approval by the City Council.

A summary of the four projects approved and worked on during 2008 is provided on the following page.



Pictured above are two volunteers with the Johnston Girls Softball Association. The group completed an improvement project at Lew Clarkson Park by planting trees around the outfield fence.



Above are three photographs taken during the completion of a neighborhood improvement project at Wallace Elementary School. The finished sculpture was dedicated in memory of Karen Coaldrake.

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<u>Applicant</u>	<u>Project Description</u>	<u>Neighborhood Contribution</u>	<u>Grant Awarded</u>
Johnston Girls Softball Association (JGSA)	<p>Johnston Girls Softball Association (JGSA) supports girls age 5-15 years who play recreational and competitive softball. In February, 2008, JGSA had more than 430 girls signed up to play.</p> <p>JGSA is currently working to construct 4 additional softball fields at Clarkson (formerly Creekside) Park in Johnston. The total value of the project is estimated at over \$90,000.</p> <p>For this grant, JGSA obtained and planted 13 overstory trees at the park in the area of the new fields.</p>	<p>\$4,871.00</p> <p>plus \$923 in materials and \$390 in volunteer labor</p>	<p>\$2,000.00</p> <p>completed</p>
NorthGlenn Neighborhood	<p>Street tree planting project: 14 overstory deciduous and 5 evergreen trees along the east side of Merle Hay Road, in the right-of-way adjacent to their neighborhood.</p> <p>From the application: <i>“With the completion of the widening of Merle Hay Road and the elimination of the drainage ditch on our S.W. neighborhood corner, we feel we need to replace and improve the existing landscape. All the people who live in NorthGlenn and all the citizens of Johnston who use the bike trails or drive-by on Merle Hay Road will benefit from the planting of these trees.”</i></p>	<p>\$2,108.40</p> <p>plus volunteer labor</p>	<p>\$2,000.00</p> <p>completed</p>
Rittgers Oaks Townhomes Neighborhood	<p>Street and recreational trail landscaping project, to install 20-25 trees and shrubs in the areas north (NW Beaver Drive) and East (Oak Crest Blvd.) of the Neighborhood.</p> <p>From the application: <i>“These areas also border on public sidewalks and trails, we have been slowly adding landscaping (some with a previous grant), but there is work left to do – particularly with shrubs. We want to continue to add to the number and diversity of plantings.”</i></p>	<p>\$1,465.46</p>	<p>\$1,459.78</p> <p>in progress</p>
Wallace Elementary School	<p>All 495 students at Wallace Elementary School participated in this project by working with Iowa artist-in-residence Pam Dennis. The sculpture was placed in the outdoor classroom garden, and was dedicated in memory to Karen Coaldrake.</p> <p>From the application: <i>“The use of terracotta clay combined with willows, seeds, copper and other natural elements for multi-textures, reflects the Johnston community and its tree status.”</i></p>	<p>\$2,200.00</p> <p>plus volunteer labor from students, school staff and parents</p>	<p>\$2,000</p> <p>completed</p>

Watershed Assessment and Storm Water Management Plan Development

In order to improve water quality in the Beaver Creek Watershed, the City of Johnston hired Nilles Associates, a firm based out of Ankeny, to conduct the City's first comprehensive Watershed Assessment and Storm Water Management Plan in 2008. This assessment will study the sub-watersheds within the city and provide recommendations and guidance on how to improve water quality and future development decisions.

As part of this study, all of the drainage ways, creeks, streams, and detention facilities within the city and immediately adjacent have been physically walked and inspected, with any needed improvements or deficiencies noted. From this inspection, a list of priority improvement projects will be developed which can be programmed into the City's Capital Improvement Plan.

This study is currently ongoing and being led by the Stormwater Master Plan Steering Committee, a committee made up of stakeholders from the community and larger Beaver Creek Watershed. It is anticipated that the Steering Committee will be making recommendations to the City Council in early 2009 and a series of public meetings will be held to discuss the plan's findings and to seek input on the future policies and recommendations.

In addition to this study, other storm water initiatives occurred in 2008. Led by the volunteer Beaver Creek W.A.V.E. committee a number of other events occurred including:

- An informational booth at Johnston's Green Day's celebration, providing education about storm water quality.
- Construction of a residential rain garden education event in Green Meadows West (made possible through grant funding from Tree's Forever).
- Due to flooding along Beaver Creek, a planned creek clean up was replaced with a volunteer trail clean up along the Beaver Creek corridor.

Additionally, staff assisted Daniel Ratekin with the design and construction of a rain garden at Timber Ridge Elementary school, a project he undertook to receive his Eagle Scout recognition.



Volunteers and staff sit in on a Watershed Action and Visioning Efforts (W.A.V.E.) meeting.



A rain garden project near the parking lot at Johnston City Hall. The rain garden was designed and installed by Community Development staff .



Bill Northey, Iowa Secretary of Agriculture, is interviewed by WHO 1040 Radio at a rain garden public demonstration in the Northglenn Neighborhood.

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Geographic Information Systems (G.I.S.)

To date, the city's G.I.S. contains base mapping data including aerial photography, parcel information, streets network, and underground utilities. The most common way that G.I.S. is often distributed to the public is through maps and other printed visual exhibits.

During the Floods of 2008, a new technology made its debut in the City of Johnston. Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) data provided by the state was used extensively with survey data to aide the city's department directors in making timely decisions about where flooding was going to occur and to what extent. LiDAR will also be used for the storm water study, urban tree mapping, and to generate contours for future maps.

In addition to the City's infrastructure mapping needs, the city's G.I.S. staff also aides many other departments with various mapping projects. Some examples of G.I.S.'s applications across departments are as follows:

Administration

Deer Management Exhibits
Garbage Collection
TIF (Tax Increment Financing maps)

Community Development

Comprehensive Plan
Zoning
Corporate Boundaries

Public Works

Sanitary Sewers
Water System
Storm Sewer System
Low Pressure Sewer System
Snow Removal Route Maps
Street Maps

Parks

Parks and Trails
Street Trees

Police and Fire

Streets Mapbooks
ERS Mapping for Mobile Units

At right: A GIS map highlights priority areas of concern from the watershed assessment and storm water management plan initial report.

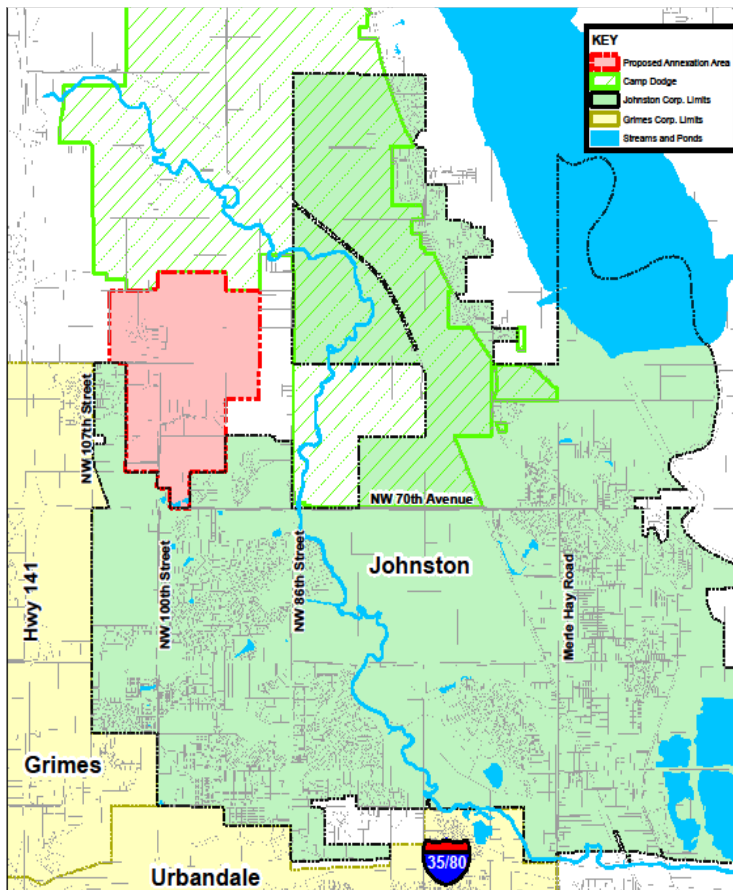


Above : GPS technology is used to gather data for the City's GIS.

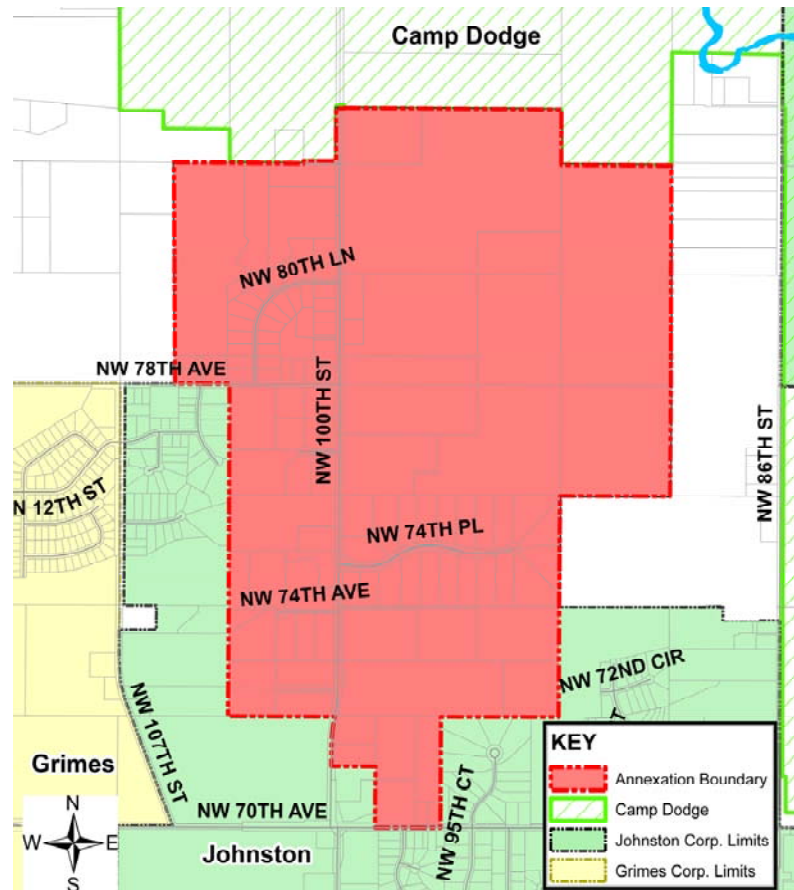
Northwest Annexation

In 2008, the City received approval from the State of Iowa City Development Board for an 837.52 acre annexation for an area north of NW 70th Avenue on the east and west sides of NW 100th Street, as shown in maps below. This area contained 88 existing single family homes that were previously constructed in unincorporated Polk County. Many of the existing properties were already being served by the City of Johnston water service. As part of the annexation, water service was also extended into the Elmerodo Estates subdivision.

In addition to the previously developed areas, there is a significant amount of developable land within this annexation area, including the 277-acre Crosshaven development noted in the rezoning section of this report. Plans are under development to extend sanitary sewer to the Crosshaven area to support future development and the existing development.



The Northwest Annexation Area relative to the existing City of Johnston Corporate limits.



A closer snapshot of the Northwest Annexation Area.



Community Development Staff Directory

David R. Wilwerding, AICP
Community Development Director
Phone: (515) 727-7775
E-mail: dwilwerding@ci.johnston.ia.us

Planning Department

Rezoning, annexation, platting, subdividing, land use, mapping, long range community planning

Aaron Wolfe
Senior Planner
Phone: (515) 727-7766
E-mail: awolfe@ci.johnston.ia.us

Debra Schiel-Larson, AICP
Planner II / Landscape Architect
Phone: (515) 727-7763
E-mail: dlarson@ci.johnston.ia.us

David Croll
GIS Coordinator
Phone: (515) 727-7780
E-mail: dcroll@ci.johnston.ia.us

Steven Witmer
Planning Assistant
Phone (515) 727-7765
E-mail: switmer@ci.johnston.ia.us

Building Department

Building permits, building inspections, building code inquiries, city code enforcement

Douglas J. Sandvig
Building Official / Code Enforcement Officer
Phone: (515) 727-7767
dsandvig@ci.johnston.ia.us

John Taylor
Building Inspector II
Phone: (515) 727-7773
E-mail: jtaylor@ci.johnston.ia.us

Eric Rehm
Building Inspector
Phone (515) 727-7779
E-mail: erehm@ci.johnston.ia.us

Pat Capen
Building Permit Technician
Phone (515) 727-7778
E-mail: pcapen@ci.johnston.ia.us

**City of Johnston
Community Development Department
6221 Merle Hay Road
PO Box 410
Johnston IA 50131
Telephone: (515) 727-7765
Fax: (515) 727-7776
www.cityofjohnston.com**