

The Beaver Ridge Area is an addition to the City of Johnston Comprehensive Plan adopted by the City Council via Resolution No. 03-145 adopted July 7, 2003.

BEAVER RIDGE AREA

Beaver Ridge follows the ridge of NW Beaver Drive from NW 66th Avenue to the north city limits. The area of study is loosely defined as the Low Density Residential designation in the Comprehensive Plan that follows the ridge of NW Beaver Drive from NW 66th Avenue on the south and north to the north city limits. (See excerpt of the current land use plan.)

The area is more specifically defined as follows:

North: Johnston corporate limits and any contiguous undeveloped land.

South: NW 70th Avenue, NW Beaver Avenue and NW 66th Avenue

East: Des Moines River and Lake Saylorville

West: The historical Interurban railway right of way

The area is further defined by its proximity to Saylorville Lake and Camp Dodge. The public ownership and the remaining private property determine the extent of the study. Several small "islands" are in unincorporated Polk County.

Physical Description of the Area.

- Site of original incorporation of Johnston (established as a city in 1969).
- Camp Dodge. Its historic formal entrance on NW Beaver Drive was permanently closed when security increased after the World Trade Center attack on September 11, 2002.
- Saylorville Lake, a Corps of Engineers flood control project. There are a number of access roads from NW Beaver Drive to recreational facilities associated within the Saylorville Lake boundaries.
- Headquarters, State Area Command (STARC) Armory, which includes the staff sections of the Headquarters, Iowa National Guard, seven Iowa Army National Guard units, the State of Iowa Emergency Operations Center, the Department of Public Safety's primary communications Center and central hub of the Iowa Communications Network, and designed to backup the state's seven computer centers.
- Geologic and topographical significance. Most of Johnston is relatively level, on a terrace plain that includes the floodplain of Beaver Creek. The Beaver Ridge area includes bluffs that are 130 feet above the Des Moines River to the east.
- Ridge with drainage courses that flow into Saylorville Lake.
- Earlier development included the Y-Camp, now Youth Home of Mid-America.
- Location of Hyperion Field Club featuring golf and social events for members.
- Doppler radar tower on the north city limits with National Weather Service local office immediately north of tower.
- Prairie-Style Contemporary designed homes.
- Historical InterUrban railroad right of way.

Existing Development Patterns.

Current land use consists of enclaves of single-family dwellings overlooking Camp Dodge and Saylorville Lake. A sizable part of the area is developed in lots ranging from 1/3rd acre to 1 acre in size. The other component of development are large wooded lots. Many also take advantage of the natural setting of Camp Dodge and Saylorville Lake.

The natural features of the area have influenced where development has occurred and limit where it can occur in the future. Wooded areas have been an asset to the area and residents have taken advantage of this feature. Historic erosion has created steep ravines that are wooded and limit building sites and also limit the construction of infrastructure. Therefore, access is often via dead-end roadways that further limit development potential. The steep slopes also increase the potential for further erosion if ground is disturbed or runoff from development increases the concentration and amount of run-off during storm events. (See illustrations of tree cover, slopes, and soil erodibility as naturally occurring limitation on development.)

The current zoning for the residential area is primarily R-1 (100), Single-family Residential District that permits lots of 1/3rd acre (15,000 square feet). Another residential area, Hyperion Place, includes bi-attached units and is zoned Planned Unit Development (PUD), and allowed parcels smaller than 1 acre in size. All of the public lands for Saylorville Lake and Camp Dodge are zoned GF, Government Facility, and have no restrictions in recognition of the higher governmental entities. Other zoning classifications that exist to a lesser extent are CD, Conservation District and C-1, Neighborhood Commercial District.

As noted previously, sanitary sewer service was not anticipated previously, however, monitoring in the area and directives from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) appear to make that service inevitable. The city is attempting to secure funding, which would be followed by design and construction.

Beaver Ridge Area Residential (LDR & MDR)

A combination of designations is being used to address existing and desired future land use patterns along this NW Beaver Drive Corridor. They contain both designations with the intent to maintain the area as a place for single-family homes similar to those currently in the area. The designation is general, to express intent, and should receive additional analysis and public input in conjunction with any amendment to the Official Zoning Map. The natural features of the area are paramount to the quality of the area and must be retained. This includes the woods, the natural ravines, and the vistas that exist from the natural ridge. Because of the imminent construction of sanitary sewer service, the area will experience additional pressure for growth. Further growth should be limited to only the lower density within the MDR density range and some areas are better suited for lower density, consistent with LDR designation. The designations on the proposed land use plan have taken into consideration the items noted above and proximity to NW Beaver Drive, creation of non-conforming uses, capacity of dead-end streets.

The area would include parcels of 15,000 square feet or larger, with some on 1 acre or more. With the availability of sanitary sewer, all new development should be served by sanitary sewer.

Beaver Ridge Area Policies

- BRP.1.** Maintain the wooded character of established neighborhoods.
- BRP.2.** Accommodate infill development that is consistent with existing development patterns and density on appropriate existing topography and soils.
- BRP.3.** Develop the design and obtain funding for a sanitary sewer service to the area. New development shall be served by sanitary sewer service.
- BRP.4.** Create a quality living environment that is adapted to the natural environment.

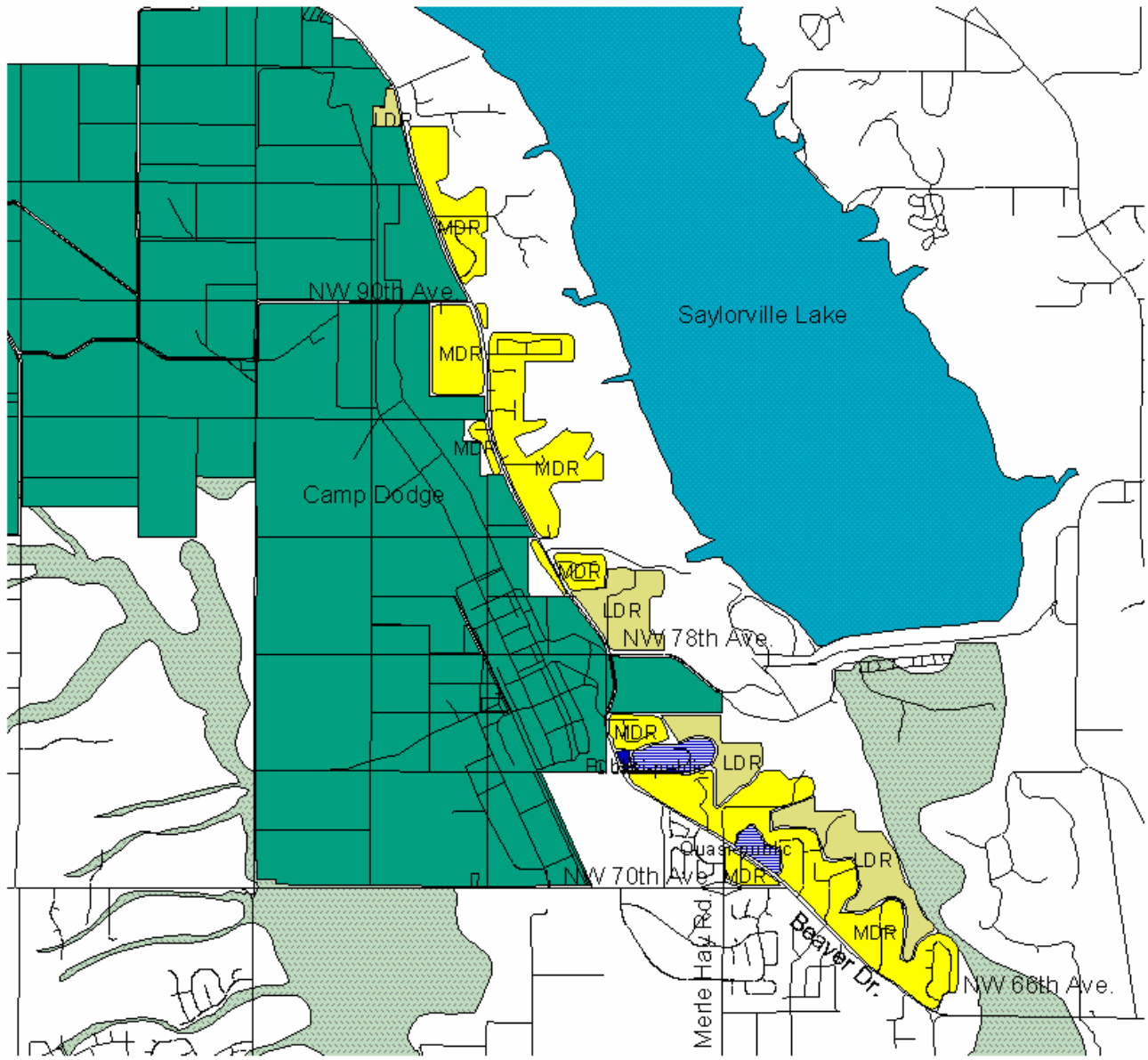
Beaver Ridge Area Action Steps

Within the LDR and MDR residential areas in Beaver Ridge, the City will:

- BRA.1.** Limit development in the area until sanitary sewer service is extended to the area. This will be done as the design and funding allow, with a high priority.
- BRA.2.** Limit development in the LDR to a minimum of 40,000 square foot lots if it is determined that the site conditions and access can support that density.
- BRA.3.** Consider amending the Zoning Ordinance to provide for 40,000 urban lots that do not allow for accessory buildings, animal keeping and other characteristics of the agriculture zoning district.
- BRA.4.** Limit development in the MDR to a minimum 1/3rd acre lot size if it is determined that the site conditions and access can support that density.
- BRA.5.** Limit housing to single-family, detached homes.
- BRA.6.** The subdivision of lots in steeply sloping areas or areas prone to erosion should be discouraged. The review of subdivisions shall take into consideration the building pad and insure that sufficient lot area exists with reasonable soils and slopes to limit disturbance to the natural environment.
- BRA.7.** The area is proliferated by small drives or streets that extend access along the ridges like tentacles reaching to Saylorville Lake. The number of lots established in these areas shall be limited in accordance with current city policies regarding dead-end streets and cul-de-sacs. Due to public ownership (Corps of Engineers) and topographical conditions it is not *practical* to create streets that intersect with other streets. Therefore, the city shall cautiously approve new lots that potentially overcrowd local streets.
- BRA.8.** Encourage the placement of housing units in a manner that preserves significant natural resources through the encouragement of cluster practices and other mechanisms.
- BRA.9.** Prohibit commercial or industrial uses in residential
- BRA.10.** Work with the county to establish periodic monitoring requirements for on-site sewage treatment systems.
- BRA.11.** Cooperate with Camp Dodge to encourage compatible land use development.



Johnston Comprehensive Plan Beaver Ridge



- Beaver Ridge Proposed Land Use
- LDR
 - MDR
 - Public
 - Quasi-public



City of Johnston, P.O. Box 410, 6221 Merle Hay Road, Johnston, IA 50131-0410
(515) 278-2344, (515) 278-2033, www.ci.johnston.ia.us