

Imperial

2022

CITY SQUARE

CCCF FEASIBILITY STUDY



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INTRODUCTION

Acknowledgements

A special thanks to the community of Imperial for the participation and input provided during this planning process. This plan was partially funded by the Nebraska Department of Economic Development (NDED) – Civic & Community Center Financing Fund (CCCCF).



City Council

- Dwight Coleman, Mayor
- Charlesa Kline, Council President
- Chad Yaw, Councilmember
- Craig Loeffler, Councilmember
- Douglas Gaswick, Councilmember

City Staff

- Jo Leyland, City Administrator, Clerk, and Treasurer
- Tyler Pribbeno, Community Development Director

Consultant Team



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Funding Program

This Feasibility Study was completed as part of the planning phase for the Civic and Community Center Financing Fund (CCCFF) program, funded through the Nebraska Department of Economic Development. The City of Imperial's City Square project qualifies for the CCCFF program as a public space. The program defines a public space as a "property located within the traditional center of a community, typically comprised of a cohesive core of residential, civic, religious, and commercial buildings, arranged around a main street and intersecting streets. Public space may be bound by or otherwise spatially defined by multiple buildings with both internal and external elements." The proposed project location covers a full city block on the northern end of Imperial's Downtown District. The block also hosts the public library, city offices, and city gym. The proposed City Square will offer both internal and external public spaces for community use.

The Planning Phase establishes short and long-term goals for the funded project. These goals are prioritized and put into feasible development phases to assist City leaders with implementation. The Feasibility Study will be used to guide development and provide recommendations for the use of Capital Construction grant funds through CCCFF.



Following the Planning Phase, the City will apply for Capital Construction funds through the CCCFF program. Construction of and upgrades to public spaces are both included as eligible project types for CCCFF Capital Construction funds. These funds help the City implement many of the goals outlined in this Study. More detailed information regarding Capital Construction funding through the CCCFF grant program, as well as other funding sources, can be found in the "Implementation" section of this Study.

Data Sources

The following paragraphs outline the key data sources utilized during data gathering and analysis. Additional data and local sources were also used during the development of this Study. A portion of the data was accessed through mySidewalk, an online data platform; this data analysis tool brings information together from several data sources into a common platform, allowing for comparisons and strategic analysis. To normalize the data from multiple sources, mySidewalk harmonizes, or recalculates, historic data to fit up-to-date geographical boundaries. Additional data and local sources were also used during the development of this Study.



Decennial Census

Since 1790, the US Census has counted each resident of the country and where they live on April 1st during years ending in zero. This mandatory survey determines the number of seats each state has in the House of Representatives. While the decennial census reports basic gender, age, and race data, there is not enough data collected to elaborate on a community's demographic and economic condition. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the U.S. Census Bureau adjusted 2020 Census operations and delayed follow-up with nonresponding households; this, in turn, delayed release dates of the 2020 Census data. This plan uses 2020 and 2010 data.

LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (LODES)

The US Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies reports Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) data through several products. The LEHD program combines federal, state, and Census Bureau data on employers and employees to produce information for public use. LODES data is used to compare where people work with where people live. LODES Version 7.5 data was published in November 2021 for 2019.

American Community Survey (ACS)

Conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau, the ACS supplements the decennial census. This ongoing survey supplies data about the nation and its people on a yearly basis. In contrast to the decennial census, the ACS is only sent to a sample of addresses. The sample size is about 3.5 million addresses, in the 50 states, District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico every year. This survey also asks about topics which are not included in the decennial census including, but not limited to, education, employment, internet access, and transportation. The survey compiles data and reports in 5-year estimates (2015-2019) with a margin of error. The estimates produced through this survey help determine the annual distribution of more than \$675 billion in federal and state funds.



Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI)

ESRI reports data similar to the U.S. Census Bureau but also allows each community to enter additional information regarding commercial properties, including vacant lots and buildings. This helps each community and the State of Nebraska market and promote economic development opportunities. ESRI data is reported as estimates utilizing 2010 Census data and marketing forecasts for the associated year. Data in this plan includes 2019 estimates.

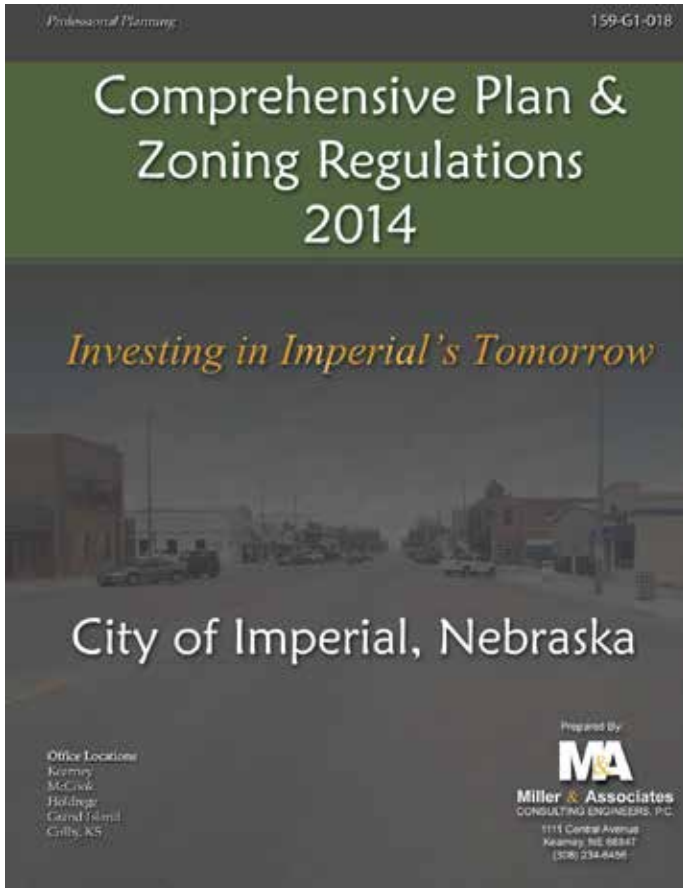
Survey of Public Participation in the Arts (SPPA)

The SPPA is produced jointly by the National Endowment of the Arts' Office of Research and Analysis and the U.S. Census Bureau. The SPPA is conducted every five years and features a variety of questions pertaining to participation in the arts. It displays the number and share of U.S. adults who attended performing and visual arts events, read books and literature, and personally performed or created art. The current report spans 2002-2017, reporting from the 2002, 2008, 2012, and 2017 survey years. Information is provided at both the national and state level.

Project Need

The City of Imperial and its residents would like to improve the city block which hosts several annual events and two important public amenities – the City Offices and the Lied Imperial Public Library. There is great potential for redevelopment of this area into a strong community amenity. Well-maintained parks and other recreational amenities are located throughout Imperial, but the community would benefit from additional public green space in the heart of Imperial.

The existing parking lot located south of Imperial’s City Offices and west of the Lied Imperial Public Library is in disrepair and needs to be replaced. The City of Imperial has undertaken previous design efforts, but to no avail. The lot continues to age and deteriorate with poor drainage and cracked surfaces. This parking lot is the site for many community events and is currently underserving a community need.



Cover of Imperial’s 2014 Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Regulations completed by Miller & Associates.

2014 Comprehensive Plan

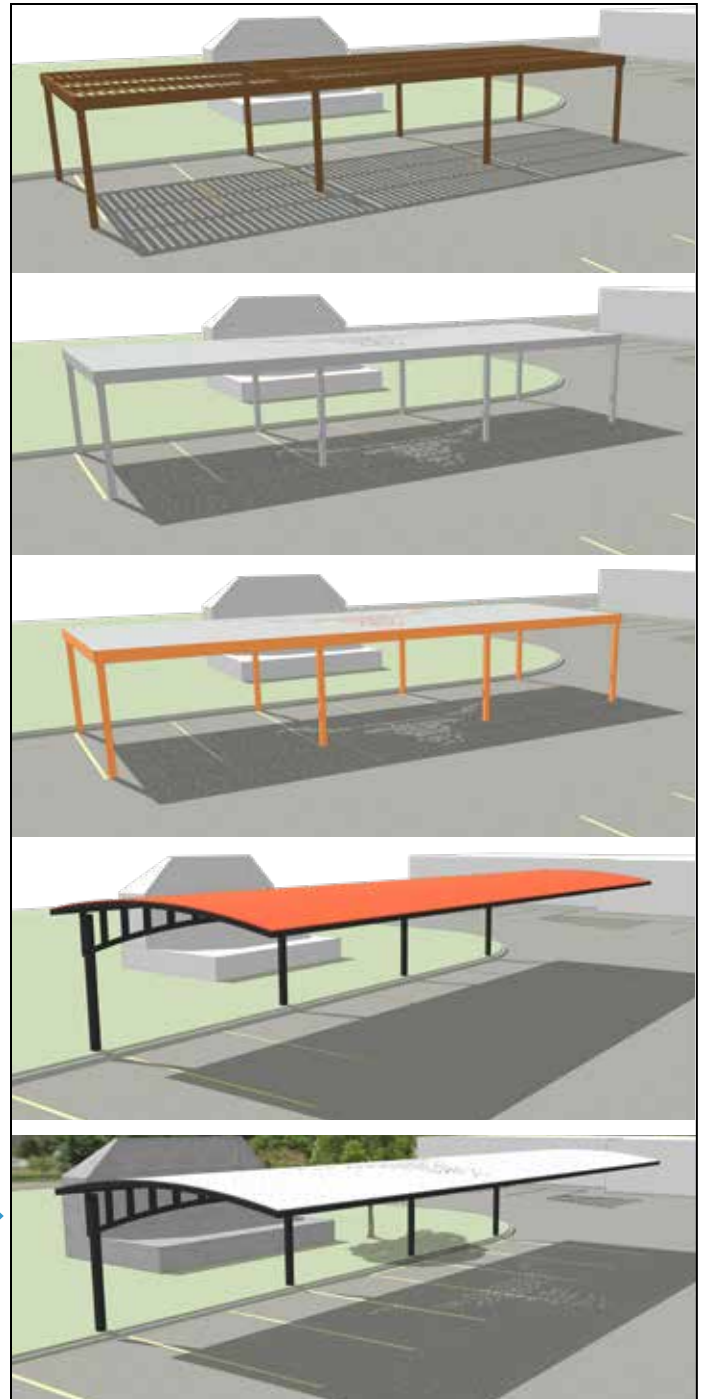
In 2014, Miller & Associates Consulting Engineers, P.C. completed a Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Regulations for the City of Imperial. The Comprehensive Plan is a long-range plan for development in the community. It includes a snapshot of Imperial in 2014, with general demographic data and community amenities. Imperial’s residents were also engaged during the creation of the Comprehensive Plan. The public input process included discussions about community needs and goals. Goals and priorities were formed by pairing information from public input with research and demographic data. The following are general community goals outlined in Imperial’s Comprehensive Plan:

- Improve Public Infrastructure
- Promote Commercial Development
- Improve the Existing Housing Market
- Expand Recreational Attractions & Amenities
- Enhance Gateway Entrances & Community Beautification
- Develop Marketing Campaign

The City Square project relates to many of the goals outlined in Imperial’s Comprehensive Plan. The primary goal this project will help achieve is to “Expand Recreational Attractions & Amenities”. This project could include a community garden and act as a cultural center for the community. These are both items listed in Imperial’s goals from the 2014 Comprehensive Plan.

2017 Paving Project

Repaving the existing parking lot was examined by Miller & Associates Consulting Engineers, P.C., and the City of Imperial in 2017. The design project also included improving drainage, adding shade structures, and potentially building a small stage in the existing greenspace on the southwest corner of the block. Design drawings, conceptual images, and Engineer’s Opinion of Probable Construction Costs were completed. The City did not move forward with the project. Excerpts of the design drawings and conceptual images from this previous design project are included in “Appendix A: Past Project Drawings”.



Conceptual study of shade structure options for Imperial’s potential parking lot improvement project completed by Miller & Associates in 2018. →

← *Conceptual image of potential parking lot improvement project with shade structures completed by Miller & Associates in 2018. Perspective from south, looking north toward the project site.*



INTRODUCTION



Existing condition looking southeast, toward Lied Imperial Public Library, from the west parking lot entry.



Existing condition looking north, toward the City Offices, from the south parking lot entry.



Flag memorial and mural wall on east side of City Offices.



Front entry to Lied Imperial Public Library on east side of building.



Existing condition looking south-southwest, toward Lied Imperial Public Library, from northeast corner of the site.



Front entry to Imperial City offices on west side of building.



View of Imperial's Downtown District looking south from the proposed project site.

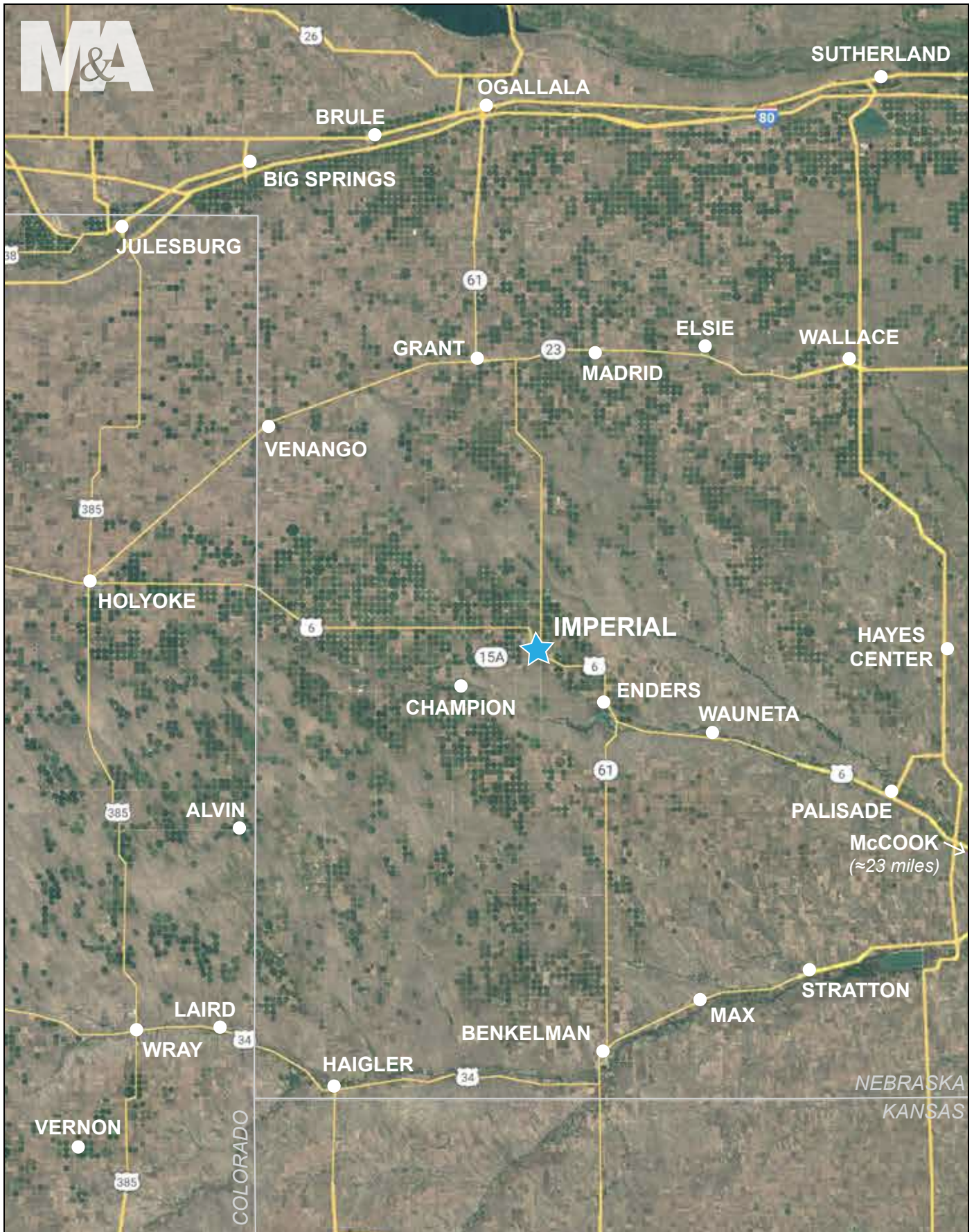
COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

Geography

Imperial is located at the convergence of Nebraska Highway 61 and U.S. Highway 6 in Southwest Nebraska. The community is approximately 20 miles east of the Nebraska-Colorado border and 35 miles north of the Nebraska-Kansas border. Centrally located in Chase County, Imperial serves as the County Seat and is the home of the Chase County Courthouse. Other communities in Chase County include Champion, Enders, Lamar, and Wauneta.

Imperial is approximately 200 miles east of Denver, Colorado, a major metropolitan city in the region. A smaller regional hub, McCook is approximately one hour southeast of Imperial, following U.S. Highway 6. McCook acts as a hub for the southwest section of Nebraska. A smaller regional hub is Ogallala, located 50 minutes north of Imperial on Interstate 80. Additional points of interest in the area include Enders Reservoir State Recreation Area, 10 miles southeast of Imperial.





Background aerial from Google Earth.

Community Location Map Imperial, Nebraska

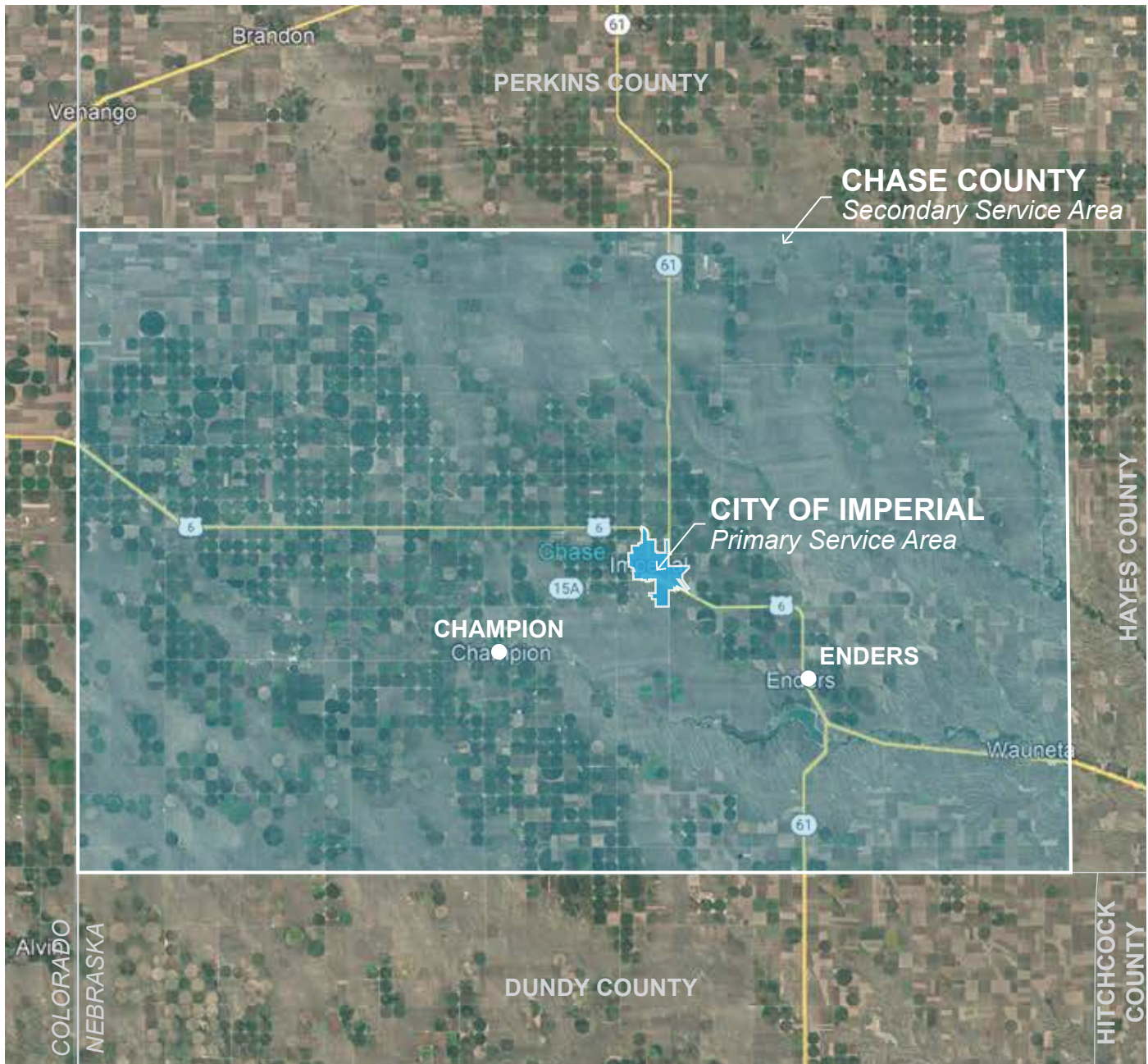
Service Area

Primary Service Area

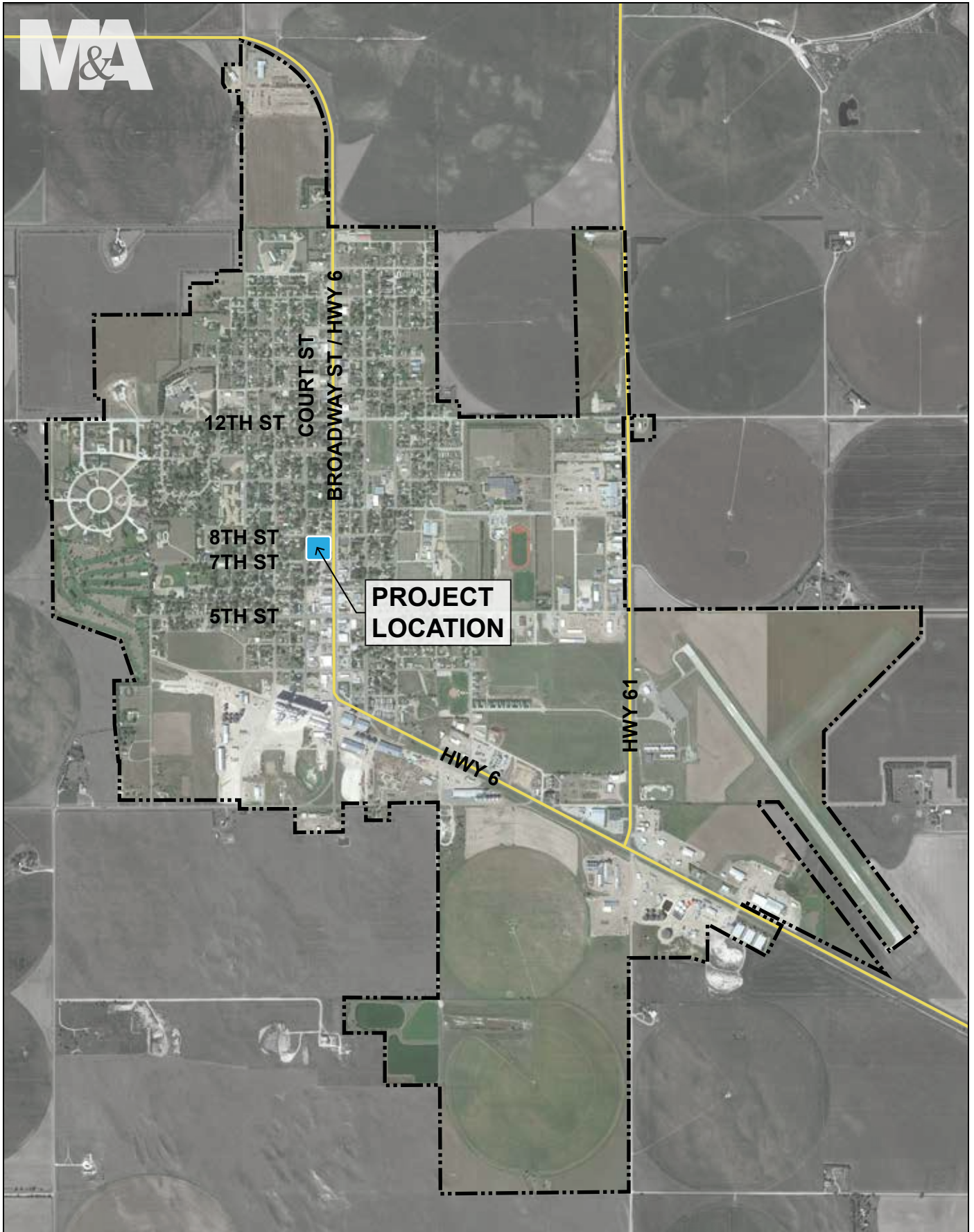
For the purposes of this study, the Primary Service Area is the City of Imperial's corporate limits. The City Square will be owned and maintained by the City; therefore, the primary decision makers and beneficiaries should be the residents within the corporate limits. According to ACS Estimates, the total population for the City of Imperial is approximately 2,008 residents. The 2020 Census reports Imperial's population a little higher at 2,055 residents.

Secondary Service Area

The Secondary Service Area is delineated by Chase County's borders. As the County Seat, Imperial serves residents across the county with services. It is also the largest community located in Chase County. Both of these characteristics help draw people from outside the corporate limits into the City. The ACS estimates Chase County's total population as 3,783 residents. This is supported by the 2020 Census report of 3,893 residents.



Service Areas Map
Imperial, Nebraska



Background aerial from Google Earth.

Corporate Limits Map Imperial, Nebraska

Community Amenities

Imperial’s residents enjoy many community services, events, and amenities. The existing parks and recreational opportunities also add to the quality of life enjoyed in the community. The City continues to update and add amenities because residents understand the power of quality services and amenities in a community. These amenities give residents a place to gather for shared experiences. This helps strengthen the bonds in the community, which keep people in Imperial. A variety of quality amenities located throughout Imperial will help the City maintain its population into the future.

1 Lied Imperial Public Library

The Lied Imperial Public Library is located at 703 Broadway Street. It provides Imperial’s residents with a balance of books and other materials. According to the Nebraska Library Commission, the library has a collection of 80,287 with an annual circulation of 21,141. The library is open Monday and Friday from 10:00 am to 4:30 pm; Tuesday through Thursday from 9:30 am to 5:30 pm; and Saturday from 9:00 am to noon. The library offers thirteen public internet computers, wireless internet, a large meeting room, and other public services.



2 City Offices and City Gym

The City Offices and City Gym occupy the old public-school building at 740 Court Street. The City Offices are open Monday through Friday from 7:30 am to 4:30 pm. Several monthly meetings are held in the building during the evening hours. Additionally, the City Gym is available for recreational use and event rental.



3 Imperial Community Center

The Imperial Community Center provides services to the community’s senior residents. The goal of the center is to enable seniors to thrive in all stages of life. The center serves daily meals at noon on Monday through Friday. The Meals on Wheels program is also available. The Center’s Thrift Shop is also located onsite. The center is located at 900 Wellington Street with meeting rooms accommodating 10 to 150 people available for rent.

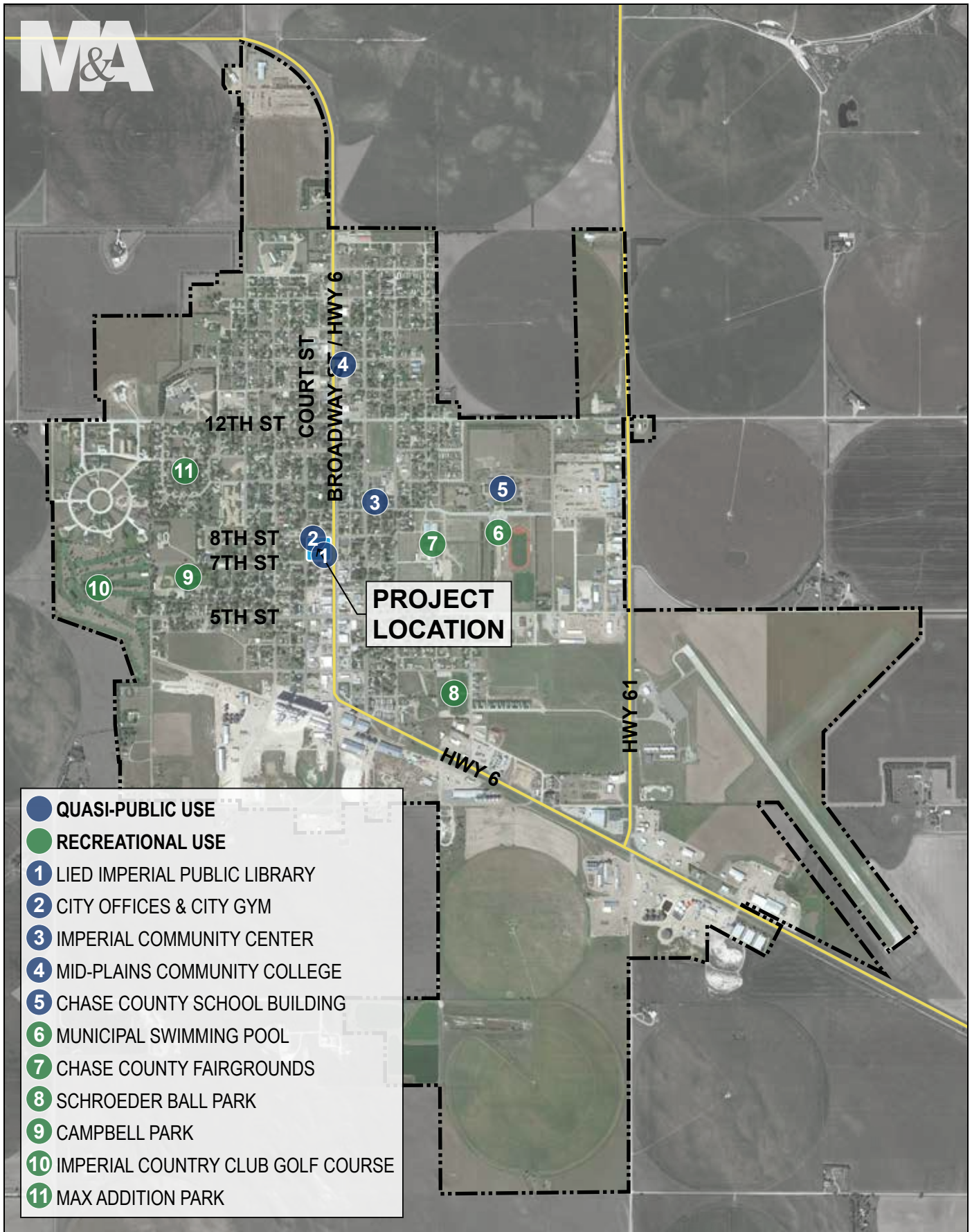


4 Mid-Plains Community College

Mid-Plains Community College has seven campuses throughout central and western Nebraska. The Community College offers courses on-site, online, and by distance learning. The Imperial campus is located at 1324 Broadway Street. The campus offers a variety of services and community education opportunities. Imperial’s residents can choose from an array of subjects including arts and crafts, lifestyle, youth classes, wellness and recreation, business and professional, and technology.



Image of Mid-Plains Community College’s Campus in Imperial from The Imperial Republican’s website.



Background aerial from Google Earth.

Community Amenities Map
Imperial, Nebraska

COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

5 Chase County Schools

The Chase County Schools building opened in fall of 1991 at 520 East 9th Street. It hosts students in kindergarten through twelfth grades. Great school districts are one of the leading factors related to population growth. New families with young children want to live near a great school where their children can attend. The residents of Imperial and the surrounding area support Chase County Schools because they understand the impact the school district has on the quality of life in the area.



6 Municipal Swimming Pool

The Municipal Swimming Pool was built through a cooperative effort between the City and Chase County Schools in 2009. The facility features a 5,218 square foot bathhouse; 5,441 square foot surface area pool; zero-depth entry with play features; a 1-meter diving board; a drop slide; and six 25-meter swim lanes. The bathhouse also serves as the school's locker room and concession stand for outdoor sports. The pool is open from Memorial Day to Mid-August each year.



7 Chase County Fairgrounds

The Chase County Fairgrounds hosts the annual week-long event known as "Western Nebraska's State Fair". The event is full of activity, bringing thousands of people from several states. Past years have hosted top name performers including Lonestar, Ted Nugent, and more.





8 Schroeder Ball Park

Schroeder Ball Park is located at the intersection of Holland Street and East 3rd Street. The ballpark offers three lighted ballfields, playground equipment, and public restrooms. The summer Baseball/Softball Program is sponsored by the City. Leagues are available for children ages six through high school.



9 Campbell Park

Located at 800 West 6th Street, Campbell Park serves as Imperial's main city park. The park offers an array of recreational amenities including a ballfield, pitching, and batting cages, lighted tennis/basketball court, public restrooms, a picnic shelter, and playground equipment. The City of Imperial continues to make improvements and additions to the park. The Imperial Skate Park was built at Campbell Park in 2018. It is described as one of the best skate parks in Nebraska. Campbell Park also hosts a 9-hole short pitch and putt disc golf course recognized by the Professional Disc Golf Association. The course was established in 2015.



10 Imperial Country Club Golf Course

The Imperial Country Club is located west of Campbell Park. This is 9-hole, par thirty-five golf course boasts reasonable rates and lush fairways. The club house and golf carts are available for rent.



11 Max Addition Park

Max Addition Park is a neighborhood park located in west Imperial, on West 11th Street. The Park offers a basketball court, a picnic shelter, and playground equipment with an expression swing.

History

The following historic information was accessed through the University of Nebraska – Lincoln’s Virtual Nebraska Program. The original narrative, quoted below, is available at <https://casde.unl.edu/history/counties/chase/imperial/>.

Legend has it that Thomas Mercier, the founder of Imperial, was walking west from McCook when he met two cow-punchers on the brow of a hill overlooking a broad valley east of what is now our town. In passing the time of day, Mercier told them he was going “to build a town.” One of them said, and the other agreed, “If I were going to start a town, I would do it in the middle of that big valley down there.” Mercier did just that. His grandson said he was often told how Grandpa laid out the streets of Imperial with a hatchet, level, and stakes.

Mercier arrived early in 1885 and the “Imperial” post office was established in December of that year, named either for his home in Canada or the British imperial government. The city celebrated its centennial in 1985.

One of the first problems encountered by putting a town on the level plain was that they had to haul water from Frenchman River several miles south until a well could be dug.

The town was platted on land claimed by Mercier and Melville J. Goodrich. Twelfth Street is the dividing line between the two homesteads. In the summer of 1886, after three elections, Imperial was named the Chase County seat.

In order to get things started, Goodrich and Mercier gave a lot to anyone who would put up a building. On one corner was a bank, on another corner, a two-story double building. C.N. Cottrell had his hardware store in one side of the building and Otto Fliesbach had general merchandise on the other. The families lived upstairs over the stores. Cottrell’s Hardware remained in the family for 100 years, his grandson, Willard Rouze, retiring in May 1986.

On the other corners were two more general stores, Brittell’s and Mercier’s. There was also a lumber yard owned by H.H. Whitman, a drug store, a livery stable owned by Smith Brothers, and the important blacksmith shop.

For some time there was no church, but Sunday School was held regularly in Fliesbach’s store.

They were quick in establishing newspapers. “The Chronicle” with D.G. Hines as editor, was the first newspaper. It was noted the temporary county board met in the Chronicle office April 4, 1886. By July 1887 it was reported that Imperial was to have another paper, “The Imperial Republican,” and by September 1887, a third paper, the “Chase County Reporter,” was established.

The most important news of 1887 was that the railroad construction work was to begin May 1, 1887. As the year went by no track was laid. This was a long, agonizing delay for the settlers who had to freight all their supplies in from Benkelman, a distance of 40 miles.

The railroad grade went through in 1888. As soon as this happened, the Lincoln Land Company, a subsidiary of the railroad company, gave lots to those who would move their buildings to “Railroad Addition.” Their property began at the courthouse and extended south to the railroad grade. Nearly all of the buildings moved southward that May, hoping for an ideal location when the trains came, but again, no tracks were laid.

Imperial’s first courthouse, a gift of the Lincoln Land Company, was built in 1889. It was a two-story, white-frame building on the land where the present brick courthouse is located. The courthouse was not only the place where people paid taxes and sat on the jury, but also where they played and prayed. It was used for all kinds of social events, entertainments, and church services.

It was not until August 15, 1892, seven years after the town was established, that the first train steamed into Imperial. At last the dream of Thomas Mercier was realized. He had built a town that was “here to stay.”

After the turn of the century, brick structures began to enhance the main street. In 1910, two brick banks were built and one hotel. During the Depression in the thirties, the main street of Imperial was paved using WPA labor, and the park was begun. [WPA stood for Works Progress Administration originally, and changed to Work Projects Administration in 1939.]

Imperial’s population has remained relatively stable, with the highest count, 1,941, in the 1980 census. The recent economic situation has resulted in the closing of some businesses relating to the building industry, irrigation, and one garage.

On the plus-side the city has gained two new businesses, two more doctors and a new clinic building. The Imperial Chamber of Commerce sponsors five or six activities a year, and funds an Economic Development Corporation.

By Anoma Hoffmeister, Imperial, NE 69033



West side of Main Street, Imperial, Nebraska.



Imperial, Nebraska 1910.



Imperial 1988 serving the citizens of Chase County and southwest Nebraska.

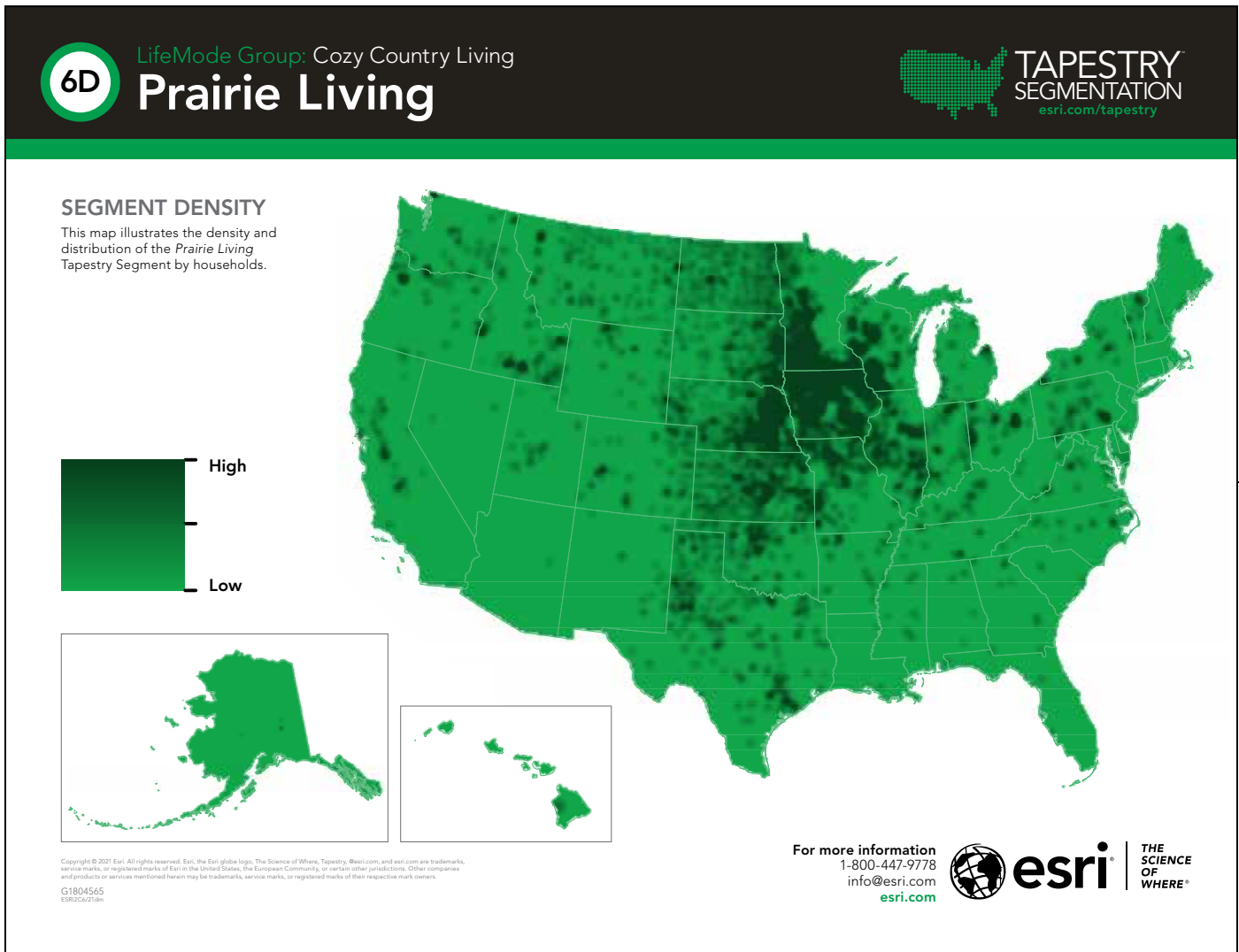
Community Profile

Basic demographic data paints a picture of who is living in Imperial, the Primary Service Area for this study. Examining who will be primarily served by the City Square will highlight which improvements will have the greatest impact. This will help prioritize amenities and design decisions.

Tapestry Segmentation

Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI) created Tapestry Segmentation System which divides U.S. residential areas into sixty-seven distinctive segments based on socioeconomic and demographic characteristics to provide an accurate, detailed description of U.S. neighborhoods. Tapestry Segmentation can help people identify the best markets, find the most profitable consumer types, tailor marketing messages, and define product and service performances. This information is also helpful in identifying what might be the predominant uses for a city square.

The Primary and Secondary Service Areas, along with most of the surrounding region are all classified under the Prairie Living segmentation. The following description depicts the generalities of this tapestry segment as classified by ESRI. Members of this segmentation are community oriented, supporting local businesses and participating in community activities. People in this segmentation are also likely to utilize recreational amenities and support local events. These general classifications show a population who would support and use a new City Square.





LifeMode Group: Cozy Country Living

Prairie Living



Households: 1,323,200

Average Household Size: 2.51

Median Age: 44.4

Median Household Income: \$54,300

WHO ARE WE?

Prairie Living is Tapestry Segmentation’s most rural market, comprising about 1.2 percent of households, located mainly in the Midwest, with a predominance of self-employed farmers. These agricultural communities are not diverse, dominated by married-couple families that own single-family dwellings and many vehicles. Median household income is similar to the US, and labor force participation is slightly higher. Faith is important to this hardworking market. When they find time to relax, they favor outdoor activities.

OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

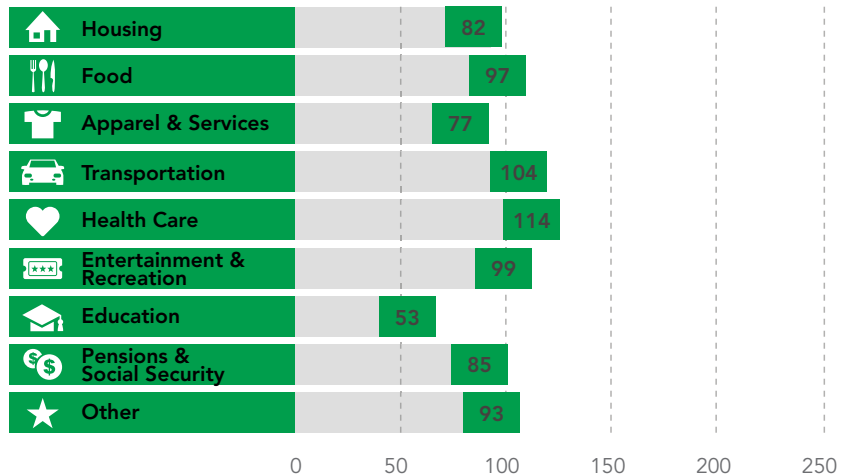
- About four-fifths of households are owner occupied.
- Dominant household type is married-couples with no children.
- Most are single-family homes (87%) built before 1980; a higher proportion were built before 1940 (Index 218).
- Higher percentage of vacant housing units is at 16.5% (Index 146).
- Most households own 2 or 3 vehicles; this is the highest ranked market for owning 4 or more vehicles.

SOCIOECONOMIC TRAITS

- More than half have completed some college education or hold a degree.
- At 2.9%, the unemployment rate is almost less than half the US rate.
- Labor force participation rate slightly higher at 65%.
- Wage and salary income for 72% of households plus self-employment income for 23% (Index 217).
- Faith and religion are important to these residents.
- Tend to buy things when they need them, rather than when they want them or to be trendy.
- Somewhat resistant to new technology.
- Creatures of habit when purchasing food items.

AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD BUDGET INDEX

The index compares the average amount spent in this market’s household budgets for housing, food, apparel, etc., to the average amount spent by all US households. An index of 100 is average. An index of 120 shows that average spending by consumers in this market is 20 percent above the national average. Consumer expenditures are estimated by Esri.



Note: The Index represents the ratio of the segment rate to the US rate multiplied by 100. Consumer preferences are estimated from data by GfK MRI.

COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

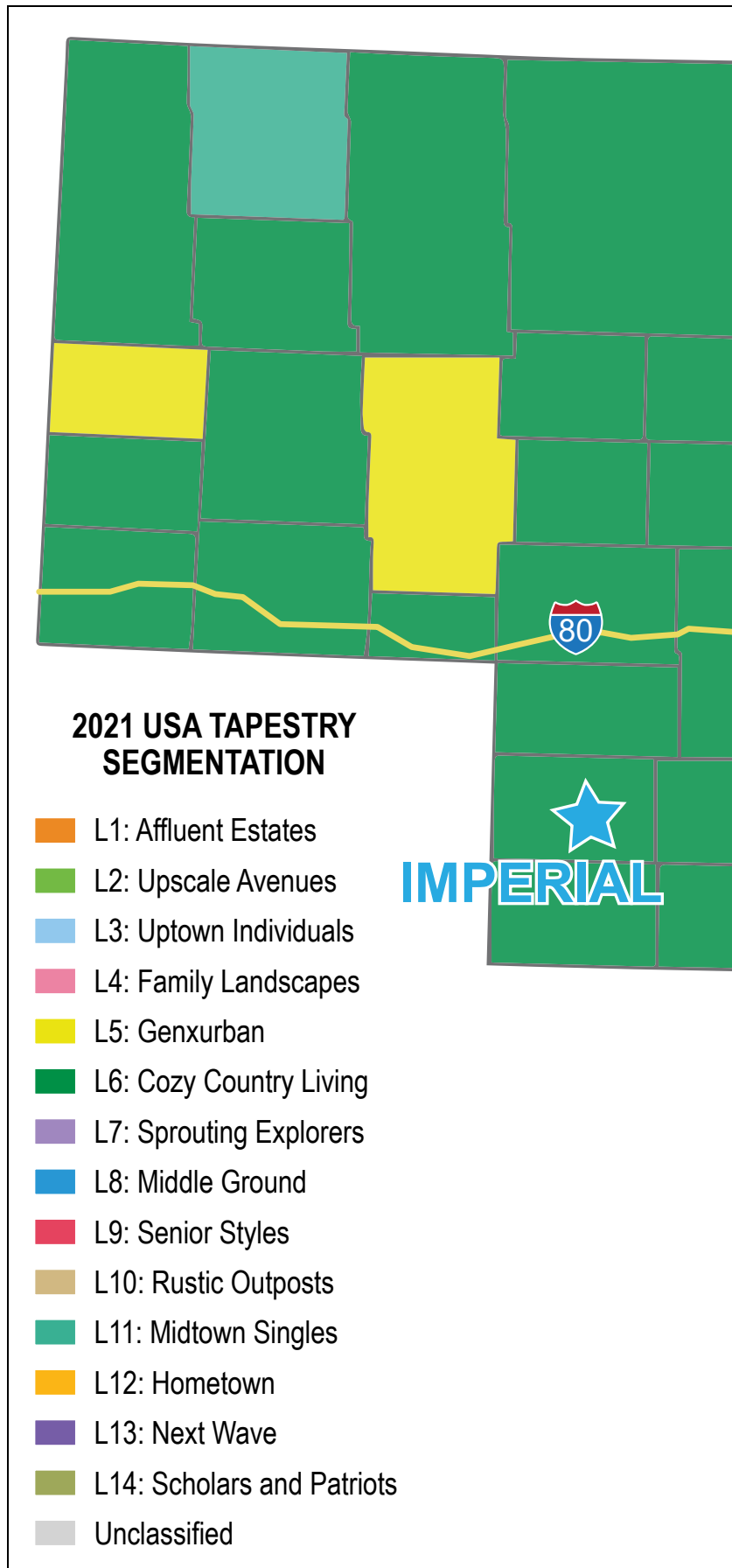
Prairie Living is part of the “Cozy Country Living” LifeMode Summary Group – Tapestry Segmentation’s most rural market, comprising 1.2% of all US households. This segmentation is located mainly in the Midwest, with a predominance of self-employed farmers. These agricultural communities are dominated by married-couple families who own single-family dwellings and many vehicles. Median household income is similar to the US, and labor force participation is slightly higher. Faith is important to this hardworking market. When they find time to relax, they favor outdoor activities.

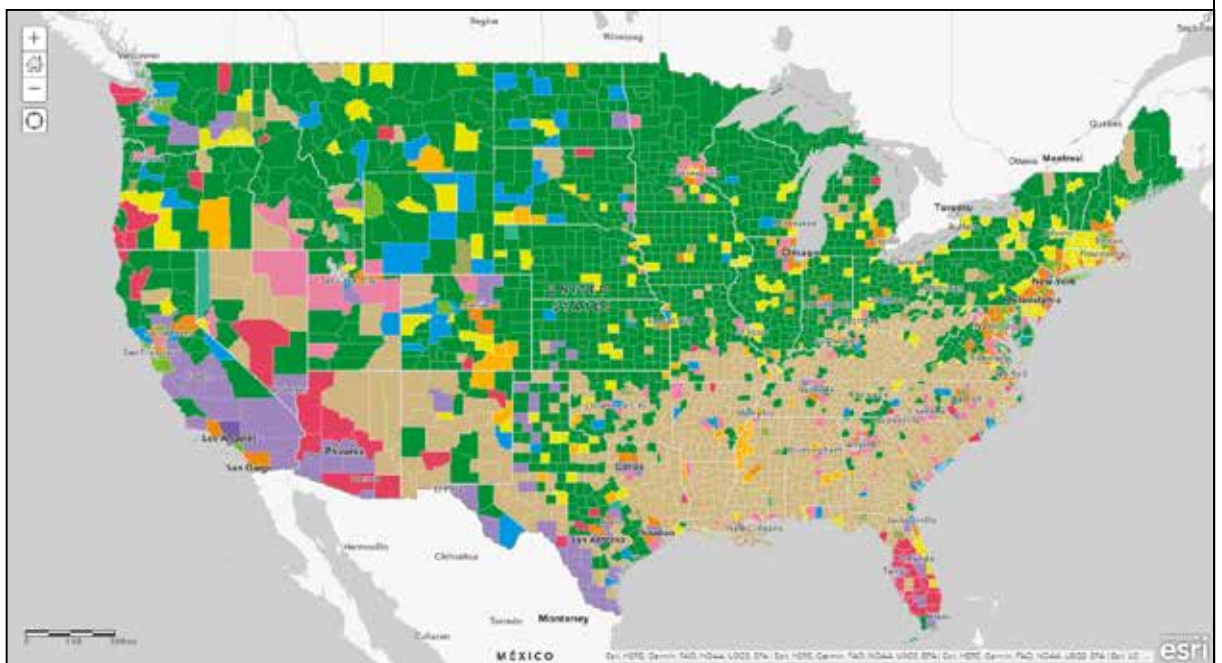
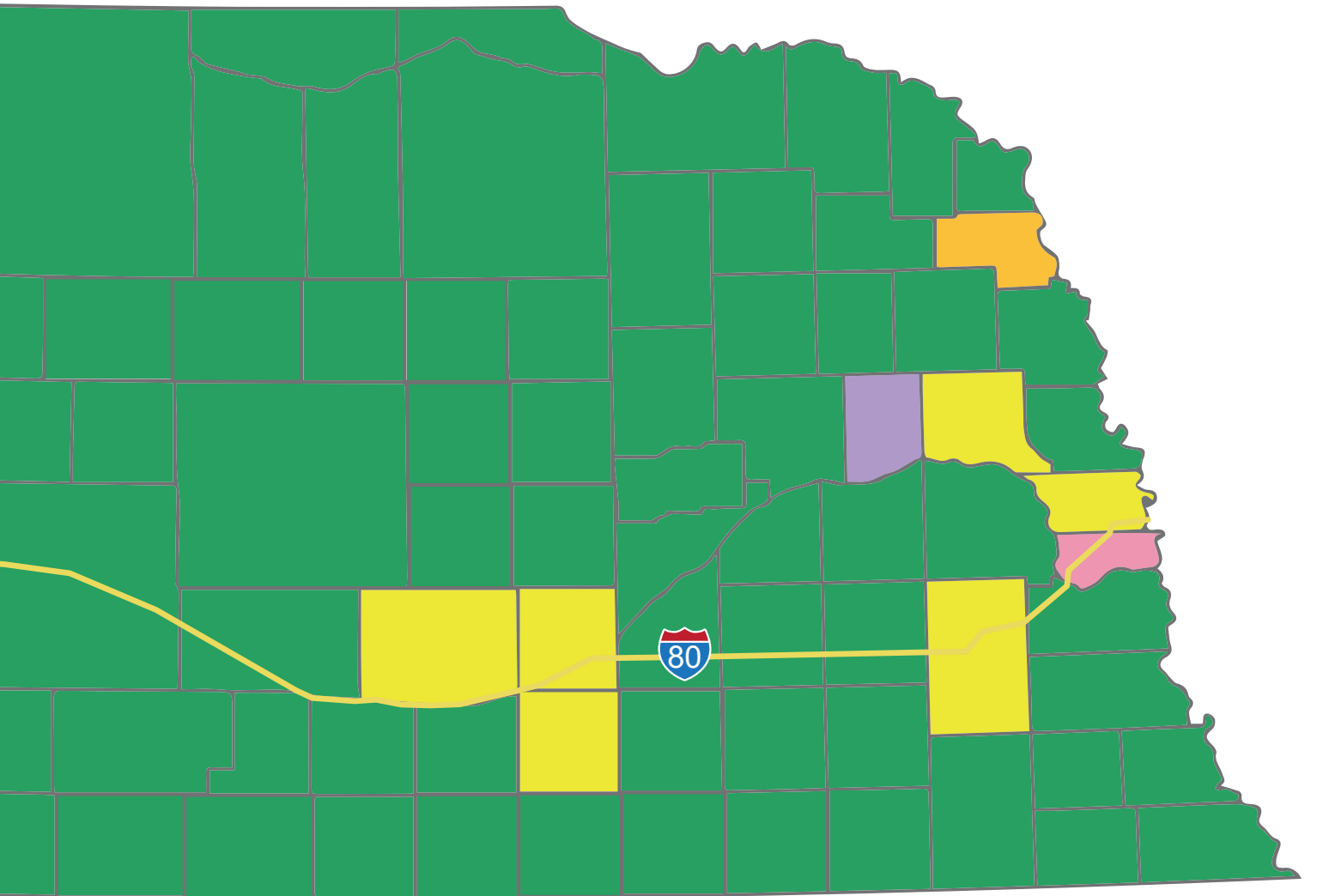
Tapestry Segmentation delineates to the Block Group level. Imperial is comprised of two main Block Groups; the Prairie Living (6D) tapestry segment dominates both Block Groups. NE Block Group 310299619004 encompasses the northeastern portion of Imperial’s corporate limits. The southwestern portion is in NE Block Group 310299619002. Key characteristics for these Block Groups are in the boxes below:

NE Block Group 310299619004
 Total Population: 1,206
 Median Age: 38
 Diversity Index: 67
 Median Household Income: \$53,102
 Median Disposable Income: \$42,640

NE Block Group 310299619002
 Total Population: 998
 Median Age: 51
 Diversity Index: 18
 Median Household Income: \$68,204
 Median Disposable Income: \$54,451

Overall, the northeastern area of Imperial is younger and more diverse, while the southwestern area has a higher Median Household Income and Median Disposable Income. These may be key factors when placing amenities in the community to ensure accessibility for all residents.



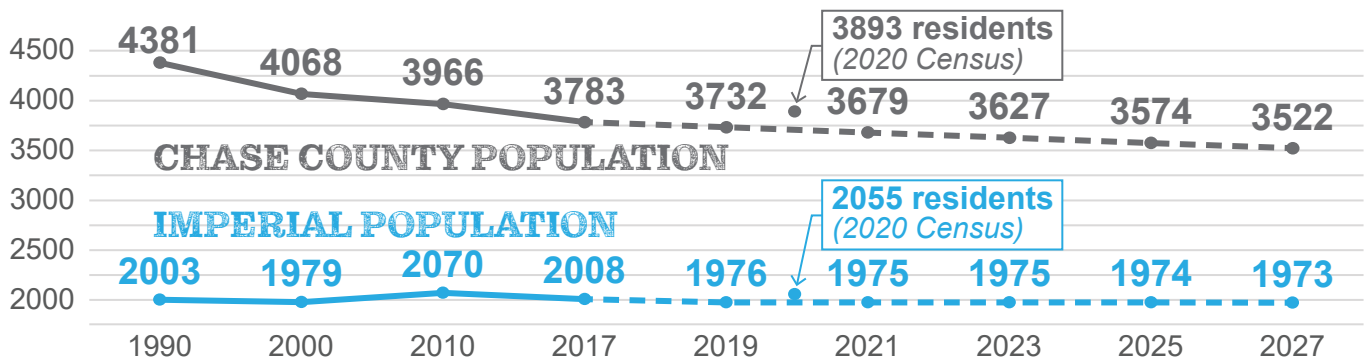


Tapestry Segmentation *Imperial, Nebraska*

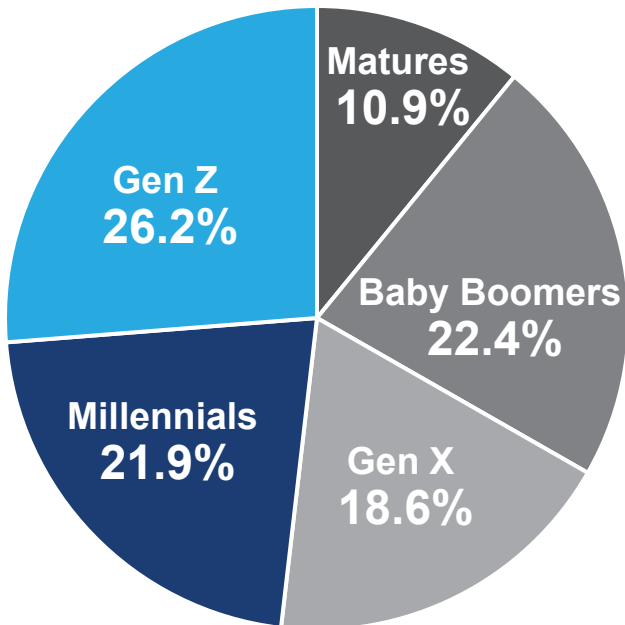
Population

Population data in this section is from the 1990 through 2020 decennial censuses and 2015-2019 ACS estimates. MySidewalk harmonizes the data to fit the current corporate limits boundary. The City of Imperial stayed consistent over the past three decades, hovering around 2,000 residents. In contrast, Chase County experienced a population decline over the same period. According to decennial census data, Chase County lost over one-tenth of its population decreasing from 4,381 residents in 1990 to a reported 3,893 residents in 2020. To understand the City’s development needs, decision makers should continue to monitor the City’s population trends.

The population projections above show a decline for both the primary and secondary service areas. However, the 2020 Census reported higher population totals for both areas than the 2019 ACS Estimates. According to these numbers, Chase County may experience a slower decline than projected. Imperial will remain a stationary population if current trends continue. To effectively maintain and grow the population base, the City should make development decisions based on the needs of its residents. People’s needs and expectations from a community change relative to their age, experiences, and station in life.



Source: MySidewalk; US Census 1990, 2000, 2010; US Census ACS 5-year.



Source: MySidewalk; US Census ACS 5-year.

Generational Composition Imperial, Nebraska

Shared experiences, especially during developmental years, help define generational groups. The largest generational group in Imperial is Gen Z at 26.3% of the total population, followed closely by Baby Boomers and Millennials, at 22.4 and 21.9% respectively. These are also the three largest generations in the United States, but rural communities tend to have a larger portion of Baby Boomers. Larger percentages of the younger generations are encouraging for community growth and development. Understanding the different age groups present in a community along with these groups’ general needs will help decision makers prioritize improvement goals.

Matures (10.9%) Born 1945 or Earlier

Also known as the Silent Generation, members of the Matures generation lived through World War II and/or the Great Depression. These experiences instilled traditional values including hard work, loyalty, and thriftiness on this generation. There is also a great sense of patriotism and desire for economic comfort with this group. This can lead to a tendency toward frugality with money matters. A majority of this generation is retired. Those who are not retired, are typically employed for mental stimulation or social interaction more than for a main source of income.

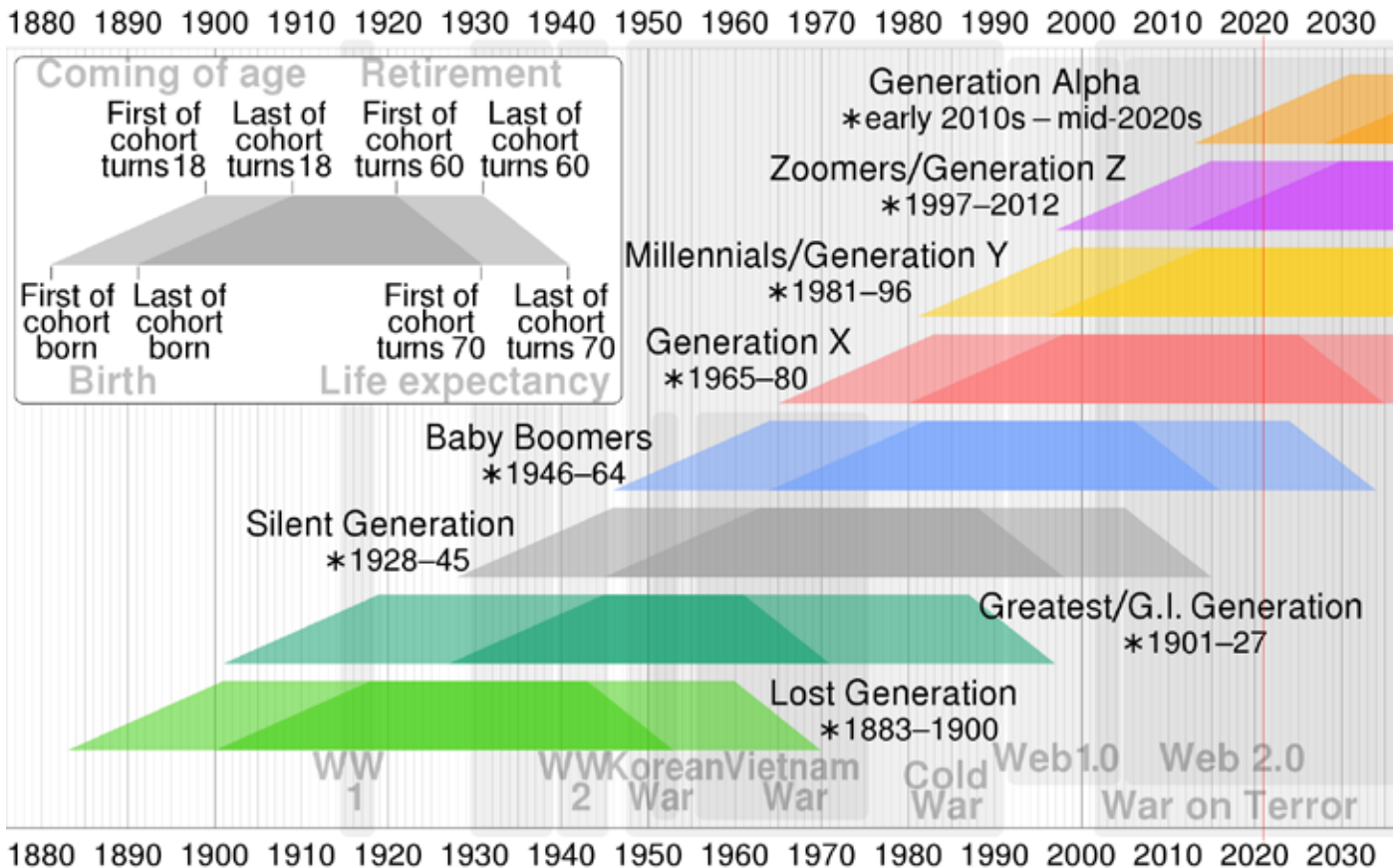


Image Source: Cmglee - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=91612069>

Baby Boomers (22.4%) **Born about 1946 – 1964**

The Baby Boomer generation is a direct result of the economic prosperity which followed the end of World War II. Members of this generation often have a strong work ethic – they are disciplined and focused. The strong work ethic seen in Baby Boomers means they are very career oriented and are not quick to retire. Overall, Baby Boomers continue to be in good health and choose to remain in the workforce past retirement age. However, the Covid-19 pandemic seems to have sped the process up for many people in this generational group.

Generation X (18.6%) **Born about 1965 – 1981**

Generation X grew up during the transition from analog to digital. With more parents in the workforce, they experienced minimal adult supervision. This promoted a value for independence and work-life balance. In general, this group appreciates informality and is more technologically adept, flexible, and educated than the preceding generations. They value a strong balance between personal time and time spent at work. Their independence and desire for life balance manifests in a strong entrepreneurial spirit.

Millennials (21.9%) **Born about 1982 – 2000**

Millennials were the first generation to be born into the technological world and come of age in a new millennium. They are again more educated than preceding generations and appreciate tasks which allow them to grow and use their creative skills. Millennials value results over the amount of effort expended. They are motivated by creative work, sharing their gifts, and making an impact in their community. Millennials are often team players and value opportunities for collaboration and social interaction.

Generation Z (26.2%) **Born 2001 or Later**

Members of Generation Z are characterized as the first demographic to most likely not remember the events of September 11th, 2001. They have also grown-up around modern technology and expect it to be a part of their daily lives. Members of this generation are typically flexible and embrace change. They value authenticity, truth, and connectivity in their relationships and often prefer face-to-face interactions.

COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

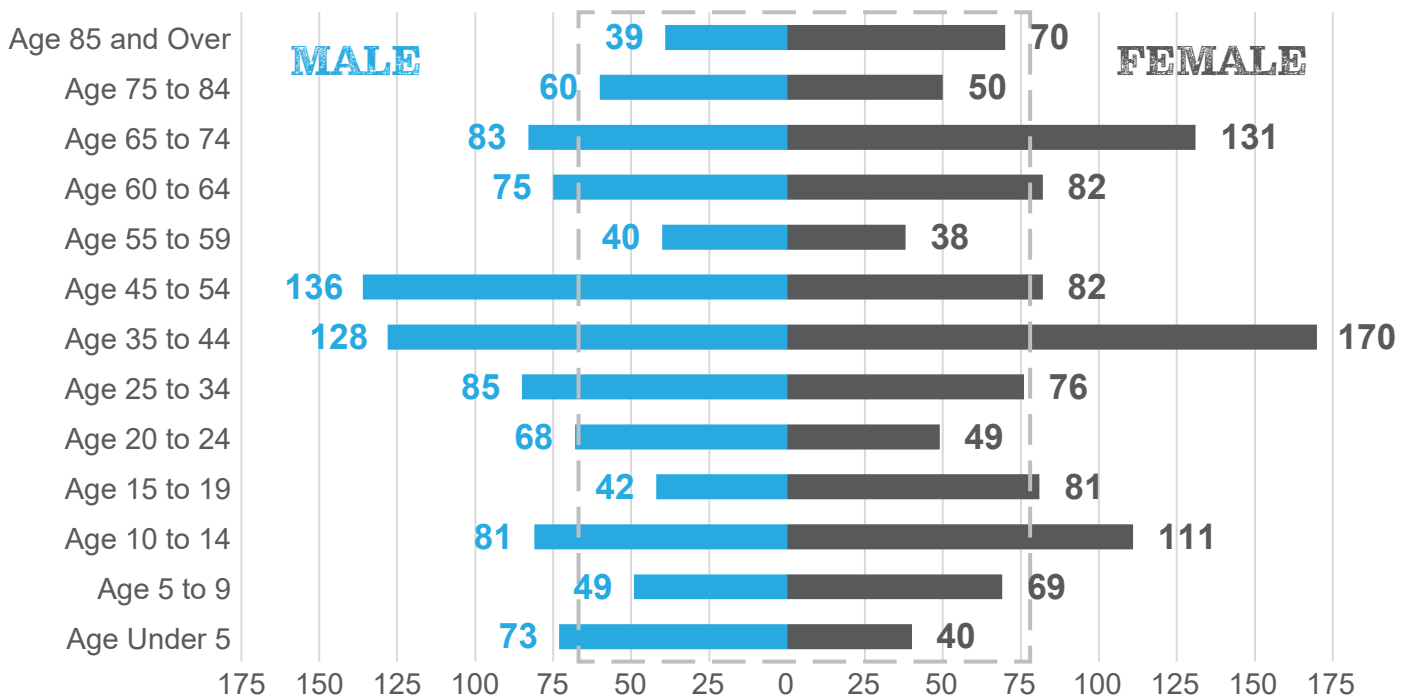
A further breakdown of the age cohorts is shown in the Population Pyramid for male and female residents in the Primary Service Area. A self-sustaining population will have a large base of children and young adults with a much smaller number of older adults; a stationary population will show a relatively even distribution of all age cohorts; and a constrictive population will appear as an inverted triangle with more older adults than the younger cohorts. Most rural Nebraska communities have a stationary or constrictive population pyramid. It is much easier for a community to grow with a strong base of younger residents because those residents are more likely to stay in the community and add to the population over time.

The Population Pyramid for the Primary Service Area shows an overall stationary population composition, leaning toward self-sustaining. The community should consider ways to attract additional young families and grow the base of the Population Pyramid. The City Square should be able to host a variety of events and enhance the sense of community in Imperial. This will help attract the younger generations to the community.

While a primary focus should be on attracting younger generations, the 65- to 74-year-old population is expected to increase in Imperial. It is important to consider the needs of residents who are retired or semi-retired. These individuals still comprise a substantial portion of Imperial's population and a larger percentage of the Secondary Service Area. They also typically have more time to be active and involved in the community. According to American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), an interest group focused on adults over the age of fifty, the needs of this age group align well with the younger age groups, which help sustain a population:

The great news is that many of the community characteristics older adults seek are the same ones that attract younger adults and make communities more economically vibrant and successful. Boomers and millennials alike share an affinity for places that offer a shorter commute, proximity to shops and services, a mix of homes, a mix of incomes, and robust public transit options.

These pull factors are not all feasible in a community of Imperial's size. However, it is possible to supplement these services with other attractions like a variety of arts and entertainment options. There are many great resources, including AARP, which help communities prepare and build for people of all ages. Age-based programming for this older generation will encourage high attendance numbers at events and strong community support.



Source: MySidewalk; US Census ACS 5-year.

Population Pyramid
Imperial, Nebraska

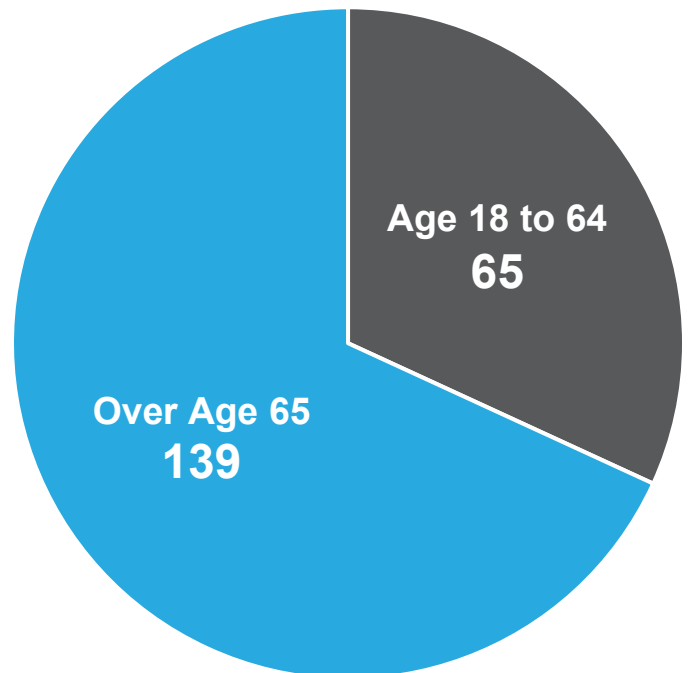


Sidewalk ramp located on west side of Lied Imperial Public Library

Accessibility

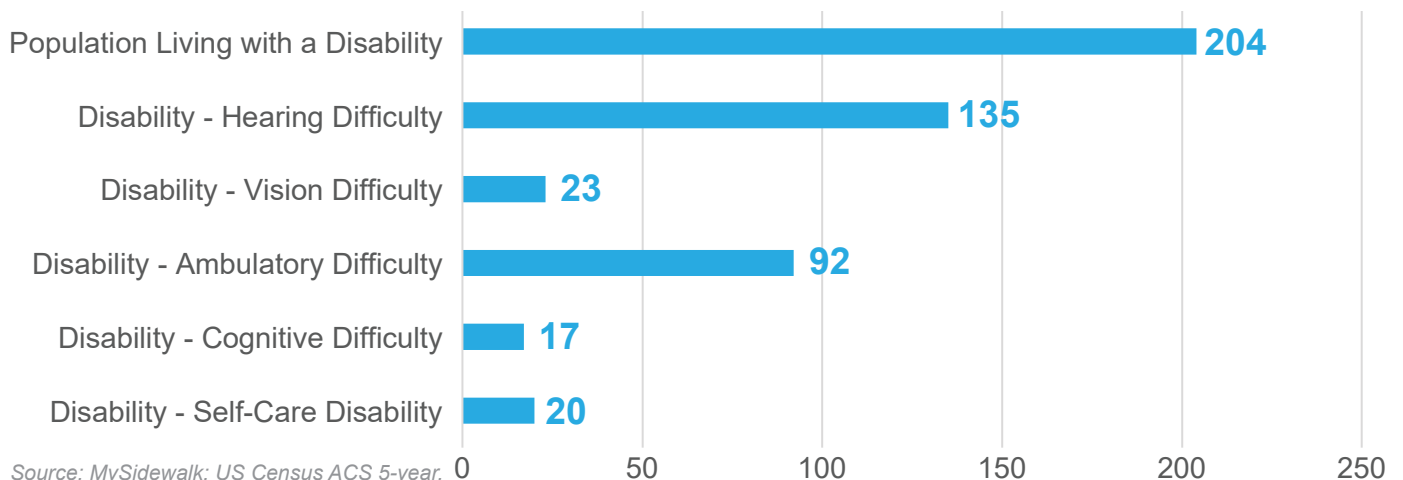
In addition to programming, accessibility concerns should also be considered for all age groups. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 56.7 million adults in the United States live with a disability; this accounts for 19% of the population. These disabilities have far-reaching impacts on the design, development, and maintenance of community amenities. An estimated 204 residents currently live with a disability. Over 68% of those individuals are older than 65 years.

Nearly half of the residents living with a disability report ambulatory difficulty. This can severely impact a person's ability to walk or climb stairs. As a public space, the City Square should accommodate persons with disabilities. This includes building ADA compliant ramps and amenities whenever possible.



Source: MySidewalk; US Census ACS 5-year.

Persons Living with a Disability by Age Imperial, Nebraska



Source: MySidewalk; US Census ACS 5-year.

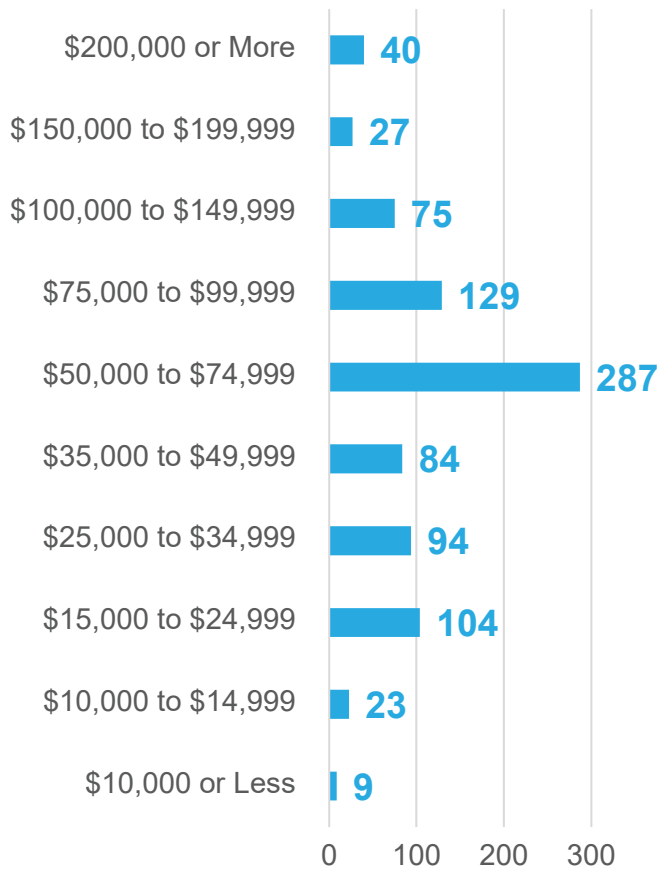
Persons Living with a Disability by Type Imperial, Nebraska

Household Characteristics

Household income levels can also impact residents' access to community amenities. The Primary Service Area's Median Household Income is \$59,145, which is slightly higher than the Secondary Service Area at \$57,009. Both median incomes are slightly lower than the Nebraska Median Household Income, \$61,439. While the Median Household Incomes in the area are lower than that of the State, 74% of residents in the Primary Service Area and 72% of residents in the Secondary Service Area have an income over 200% of the poverty level.

Approximately 12% of residents in the Primary Service Area live below the poverty level. This is a slightly higher portion than the 10% of residents in the Secondary Service Area living below the poverty level. When planning for future development, it is important to consider the needs of these residents and their access to amenities in the community.

Racial/Ethnicity breakdowns can also shape the types of community amenities needed. Different cultures may celebrate events in diverse ways or enjoy alternative types of entertainment. The Primary and Secondary Service Areas are both predominately "White (Not Hispanic or Latino);" all other race/ethnicity totals account for nearly 20% in the Primary Service Area and less than 15% in the Secondary Service Area. The nation continues to become more diverse. This is also a reflected trend for the State of Nebraska, though it is slower in rural communities. City leaders should consider the needs of minority groups when planning for future development of community amenities.



Source: MySidewalk; US Census ACS 5-year.

Household Income Imperial, Nebraska

Market Orientation

Business and Employment

ACS estimates report a total of 1,009 employed people and 32 unemployed people in Imperial. This accounts for a 3.1% unemployment rate in the Primary Service Area. This unemployment rate is slightly higher than Chase County's unemployment rate of 2.5% and Nebraska's rate of 1.9%. All these unemployment rates are lower than the 4.2% reported in November of 2021 for the United States.

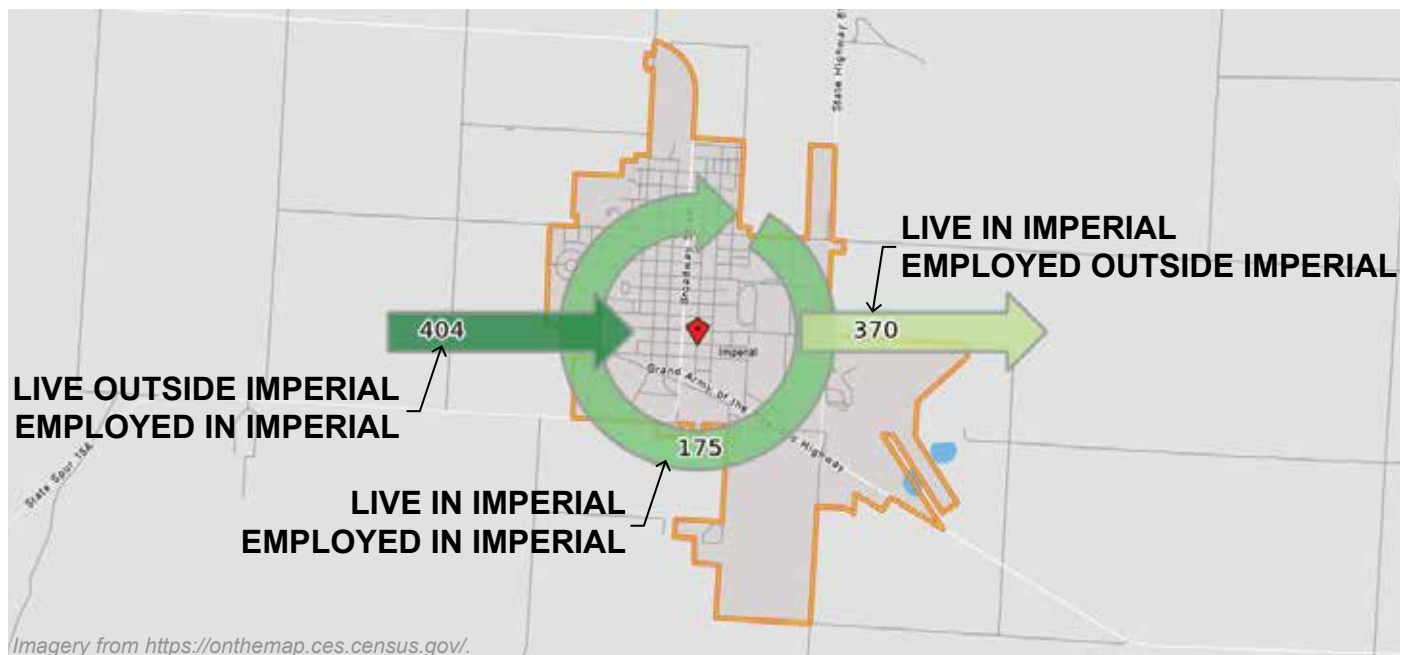
The Natural Unemployment Rate is projected around 5% for the United States. This refers to a phase in the economy when there is flexibility for employees to quit jobs and search for new employment. It also allows employers to staff businesses with qualified applicants. When actual unemployment rates are less than the Natural Unemployment Rate, the condition is Negative Cyclical Unemployment. This brings the economy to a phase where the real GDP is valued higher than the potential GDP. This also leads to a more stagnant labor market with less flexibility for employees and employers.

The total "Working Population Age 16 and Over" in Imperial is 988 residents. The total number of employed people in Imperial is higher than the number of Imperial residents who are of "Working Age." This means there are people who work in Imperial, but do not reside in the corporate limits. OnTheMap, by the US Census Bureau, provides inflow and outflow job counts for different geographies.

According to 2019 reports from OnTheMap, there are approximately 949 employed people in Imperial, Nebraska. There are 579 people employed within Imperial's corporate limits. This includes 175 people who live and work in Imperial and 404 people who are employed in Imperial but live outside the corporate limits. This is common but does mean that not everyone may be able to easily travel home during their lunch breaks. A City Square area could give people a place to enjoy their lunch breaks during temperate weather.

Additionally, there are 370 people who live in Imperial, but are employed outside of the corporate limits. While working outside of Imperial may make it difficult for some people to enjoy programming at the City Square during the week. The people who live in Imperial but work outside of the corporate limits may use the City Square more in the evenings or on the weekends.

The highest percentage of employed people work in the Education and Healthcare and Retail industries for the Primary Service Area. The Secondary Service Area leans toward the Agriculture, Fishing, and Mining industry as well as the Retail industry. These industries do not typically follow the eight to five workdays of office and administrative occupations. Alternative work schedules should be considered when planning events in the City Square. Programming at the City Square should accommodate a range of work schedules.



Imagery from <https://onthemap.ces.census.gov/>.

Imagery from <https://onthemap.ces.census.gov/>

Inflow / Outflow Job Counts Imperial, Nebraska

Supporting Services

A new City Square and the events hosted in the space will not only accommodate residents of Imperial. Smokin' On Broadway is an annual event hosted in the existing parking lot, which draws visitors from the surrounding region. Improving the event space will help this and other community events attract an even larger pool of visitors from outside of the Primary and Secondary Service Areas. If the community wants to successfully host large events at the City Square, strong supporting services must also exist in Imperial. This includes quality lodging, retail, and dining options. While the events at the City Square will help draw people to Imperial, it will be the community and amenities that keep visitors coming back.

The City of Imperial maintains a helpful and informative website with information about different community amenities. The following lodging is included on Imperial's website (<https://www.imperialne.com/lodging>) with descriptions for potential visitors:

Lodging Options

Balcony House
1006 Court Street, Imperial, NE 69033
(866) 882-5597

The Guest House
1026 Douglas Street, Imperial, NE 69033
(308) 414-1426

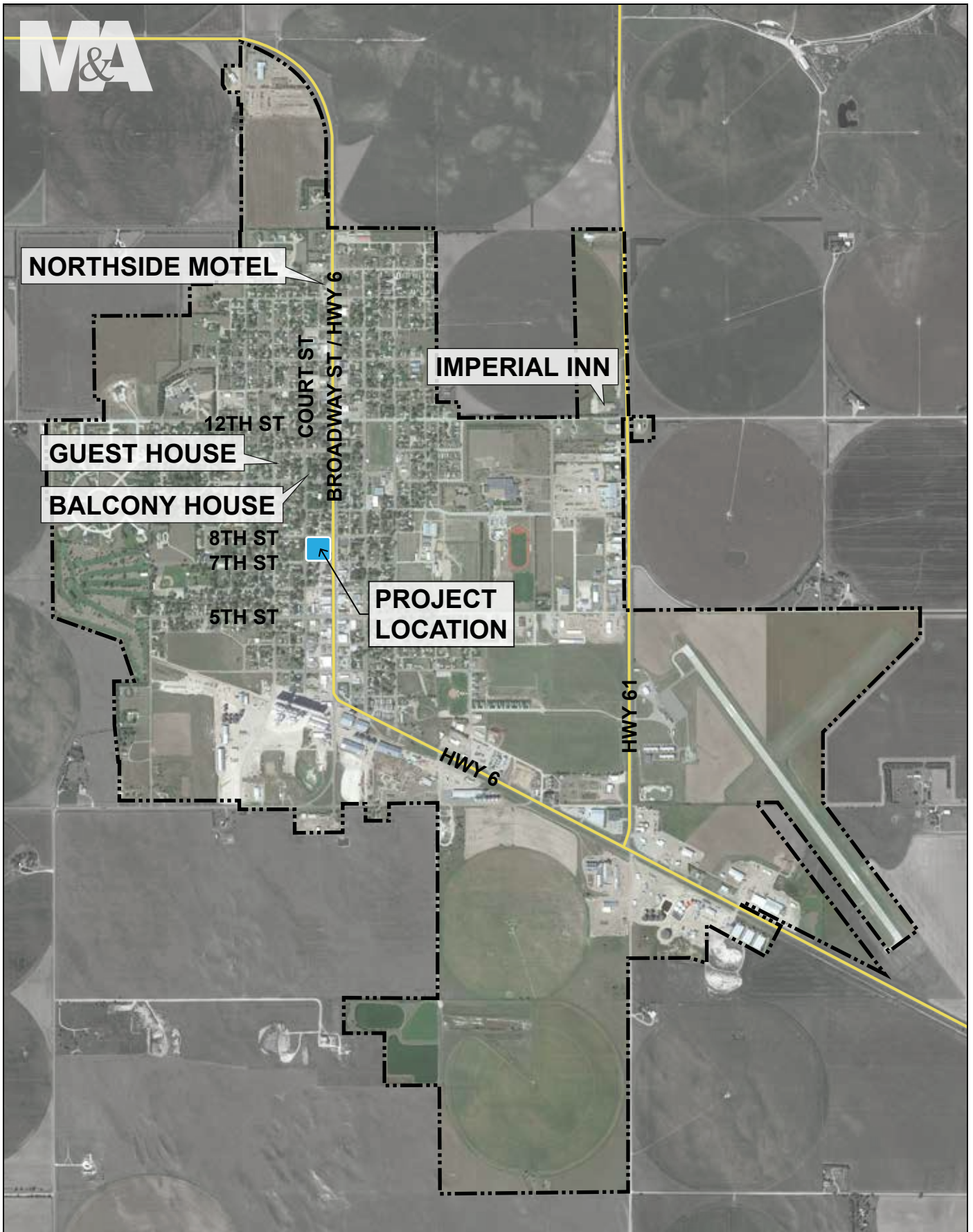
Imperial Inn
788 East 12th Street, Imperial, NE 69033
(866) 711-5994

Northside Motel
1627 Broadway Street, Imperial, NE 69033
(308) 882-4361

There are also options for short-term rentals on vacation rental sites like Airbnb and Vrbo. These accommodations can support a large number of visitors in the area for potential programming at the City Square.



Imagery on this page from the City of Imperial website.



Background aerial from Google Earth.

Lodging Options Imperial, Nebraska



Play equipment could provide an opportunity for non-scheduled use of the City Square (stock.adobe.com).



Areas of the City Square could also be reserved for weddings and other special events (stock.adobe.com).



The City Square should continue to be a place for community gatherings like Smokin' on Broadway. (Image from the event's facebook page.)

Use Types

Based on the demographic makeup of the Primary Study Area and feedback provided by the community, a City Square would serve several needs in Imperial. A few of the different types of uses for the City Square are listed below:

Drop-in Use

The availability for drop-in use by the public is a cornerstone operation of any civic space. The City Square will serve as a small park in the heart of the community. It should be available for general use during normal park hours. The City Square should have a balance of flexible space for free play and general use as well as a mix of amenities to accommodate different activities.

Special Events

While the City Square should be available for general use, there are also opportunities for the community to use the space for specific events. There is a need for an outdoor venue to host birthday parties, family reunions, wedding receptions, and community organization functions. A reservation process should be defined and followed to avoid conflicts in scheduling and to ensure these events do not negatively impact everyday operations of the City Square.

Community Gatherings

This project for a new City Square reimagines the “leftover” areas of the city block which hosts the Imperial City Offices, City Gym, and Lied Imperial Public Library. All of these buildings provide public services to Imperial’s residents. The outdoor civic space on this block should be an expansion of the services already provided by the Imperial City Offices, City Gym, and Lied Imperial Public Library including children’s activities through the library, outdoor movie projection, and community festivals. The City Square should also be conducive to new community gatherings like a farmers’ market. Substantial interest was shown for a farmers’ market during the public input process for this Feasibility Study.

Arts & Culture

According to the Survey of Public Participation in the Arts (SPPA), higher percentages of adults recently attended visual arts events than attended performance arts events across the United States. One of the top reported attendance percentages for visual arts was visiting a craft fair or visual arts festival (24%). This is the same percent of adults who attended at least one outdoor festival that featured performing artists. There was significant growth between 2012 and 2017 in adults' rates of attendance at outdoor performing arts festivals. The Smokin' on Broadway festival already capitalizes on this interest by hosting various musicians and artists at the existing project site every summer during the event.

Several events could be hosted at a new City Square to encourage community engagement. Events like First Friday Art Walks allow communities to highlight local and regional artists' work and provide entertainment. Such events are often treated as a night out, including dining out, viewing the art exhibits, and shopping in the targeted area. The City Square could be the nexus of such activities and stimulate both residential engagement and visitor interest. Pop-up museums or sculptural walks could also be established in the City Square. These temporary exhibits are created to spark conversation and interaction with the site.

Potential Revenue

As a public space, the primary uses of the City Square will most likely be free-of-charge. However, there is an opportunity for rental fees to reserve certain amenities at the City Square for use. This practice is common for many park shelters and amphitheater spaces. A rental fee is not required to use the space, but to reserve use of the space and ensure a certain amenity will be available at a certain time. This could be a useful strategy to reserve gathering spaces for weddings, birthdays, or family reunions.

The community may also consider small admission fees for certain events. Events like food truck rallies, beer gardens, or concerts could require an admission fee to help cover operational and maintenance costs. These fees will need to be weighed against attendance goals as they could be a deterrent to potential visitors.



*Residents expressed interest in farmer's markets and craft fairs at the City Square.
(Image from Kearney Hub - Kearney's Art in the Park.)*



*The Charles Horn Oconto Sculpture Garden gives residents and visitors an opportunity to experience unique sculptures in the sandhills of Nebraska.
(Image from theoffbeatpath.net.)*



*Park shelters are often available for special event reservation. This concept could be applied at the City Square to introduce a small revenue source.
(Image from pinterest.)*



Existing condition from southwest corner of proposed project site, looking northeast.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The City Square project in Imperial includes a one-block area at the heart of the community. The block is located on the west side of U.S. Highway 6 between 7th Street and 8th Street. Court Street forms the west boundary of the site. Imperial’s City Offices and the Lied Imperial Public Library are both located on this block and will remain unchanged during this project. The existing sidewalk running along the east and north periphery of the block will also remain unchanged.



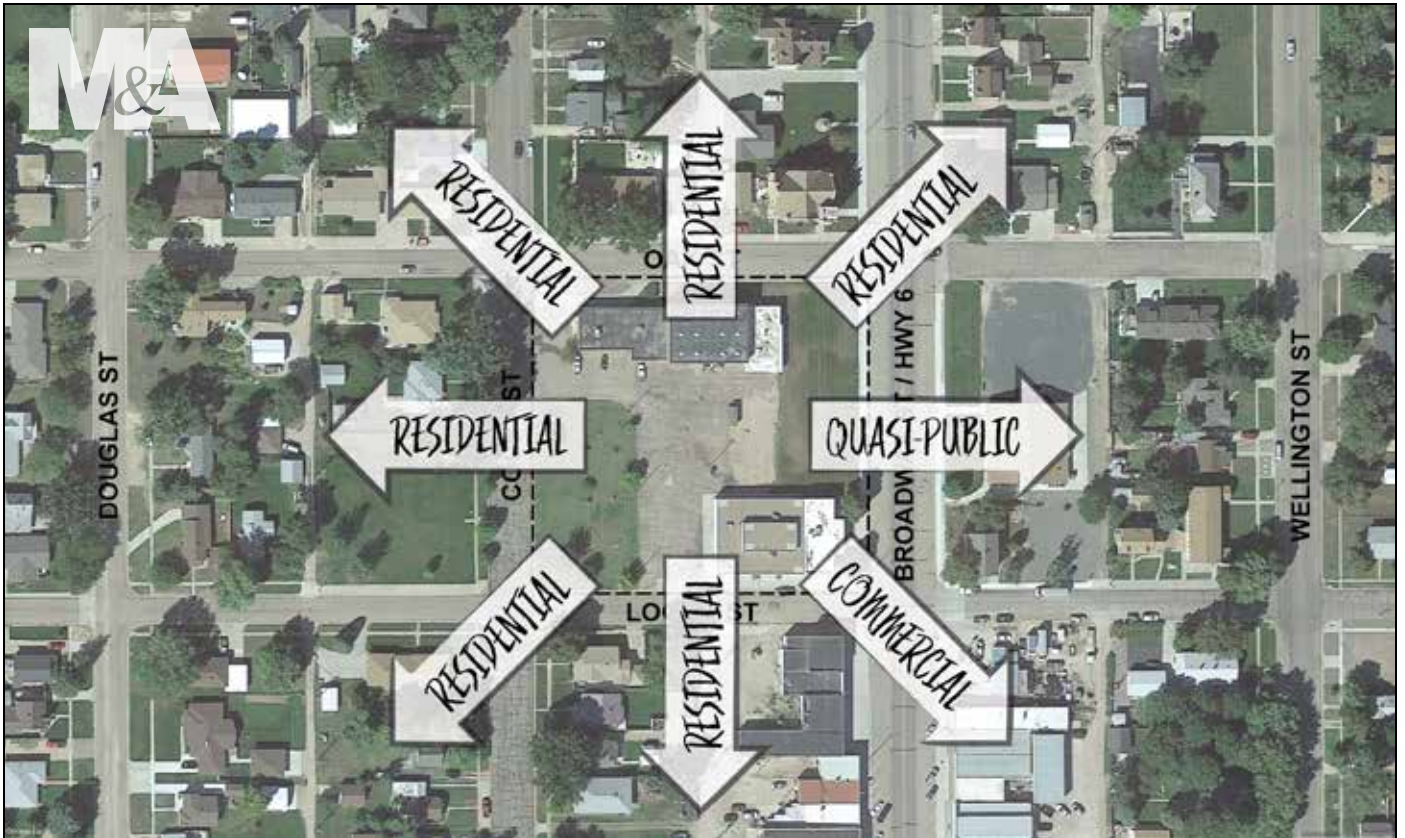
A powerline runs north-south through the middle of the proposed project site.

Various use types surround Imperial’s City Square. Residential uses border the City Square to the north, west, and southwest. Commercial uses extend south from the southwest corner of the block to form the Downtown District. There are also commercial and quasi-public uses located north adjacent to the site on Broadway Street.

Broadway Street is an extension of Highway 6 through Imperial. Therefore, this is one of the busiest streets in the community. The traffic load is most intense on the eastern border of the City Square. The opportunity for interaction between pedestrians and vehicular traffic should be limited when possible.

The existing block is currently underutilized. A parking lot runs through the center of the project site. Environmental conditions, wear and tear, and poor drainage have all contributed to the uneven and cracked surface of the parking lot. The parking lot’s placement also splits the block into two parts with green space on either side.

The grassy areas of this block are largely blank canvases. Trees and a picnic table punctuate the southwest area to encourage another use for the space. The northeast area feels empty and blank. During the summer, an above-ground sprinkler bisects this space. The large open area is used for musical performances during the annual Smokin’ on Broadway event. In the winter, a Christmas display is installed which adds character to the area.



Background aerial from Google Earth.

Adjacent Land Use
Imperial, Nebraska



Background aerial from Google Earth.

Street Activity
Imperial, Nebraska

Existing Uses

The site examined for Imperial’s City Square Project has been used for a number of events over the past several years. A few examples of reoccurring uses are the following:

City Building Activities

A Food Pantry is operated out of the City Offices building and available for Imperial’s residents. Residents access the food pantry through the south side of the building.

The existing parking lot is also used during events in the City Gym. These events include Ducks Unlimited, fundraisers, weddings, and more.

Library Activities

The Lied Imperial Public Library has hosted several events outside the building’s walls. Past programming has included science experiments and launching rockets for Imperial’s younger residents. The Library Director also expressed interest in having outdoor sports equipment available for check-out through the library.

During warmer weather, the library offers outdoor movies for Imperial’s residents. Movies are projected on the north exterior wall of the building and residents are invited to spread out across the lawn to enjoy the entertainment.

Smokin’ on Broadway

Smokin’ on Broadway is an annual event held every summer in the existing parking lot. During this event, vendors are set up throughout the parking lot and various bands play on a flatbed semi-trailer, which serves as a temporary stage. The block is packed with people and around-the-clock entertainment.



Sign located along Broadway Street to announce when the food pantry is open.



South entrance to the Lied Imperial Public Library.



Concert during Smokin’ on Broadway event. Image from the City website.

Imperial Chamber of Commerce

Proudly Presents

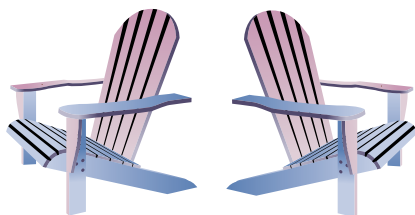
5th Annual



Saturday
June 26, 2021
7th and Broadway
(starting at 9:30 a.m.)

**“Taste of Talents you won’t
want to miss!”**

It’s fun, it’s goofy, it’s
for all ages,
and it is very much
Imperial.



Bring your own chair.

For all details and to register for activities and contests go to the website:

www.smokinonbroadway.com



2021 Schedule of Events

9 a.m. Paint out
Pre-Painted entries due for judging
Pick up your supplies by Wednesday, June 9 4 p.m. at the City of Imperial Office (740 Court Street)
Sponsored by the Chase County Area Arts Council

9:30 a.m. Bike Parade
Sponsored by Imperial Lions

10 a.m. - to 4 p.m. Inflatables
Sponsored by Imperial Community Foundation Fund

10 a.m. Pickle-ball Open Games
(Tennis Court at Campbell Park)

11 a.m. Hot Wing Contest
Sponsored by Imperial Auction Market and Pizza Hut

11 a.m. Magic Show - Adam White
Sponsored by Imperial Community Foundation Fund

11:30 a.m. Taco Making Contest sponsored by Trinidad Benham

12:00 Salsa Making Contest - Entries due
Sponsored by Wine Glass Ranch

1 p.m. Author/photographer Jeff Barnes shares the images and stories of Nebraska’s lesser known historical monuments
Imperial City Theatre
Sponsored by Lied Imperial Library, program is funded by Humanities Nebraska

1 p.m. Cornhole Tournament (Imperial City Gym)
Noon - Registration and practice, organized by Cornhole Club C2 Baggers

1 p.m. Baked Bean (sponsored by Nebraska Dry Bean Commission) and Meat Judging Begins

1- 4 p.m. Lego Building Competition
Sponsored by Boy Scouts Pack 199

2:30 p.m. Public Sampling & Voting for Peoples’ Choice of Salsa Entries

3 - 4:30 Thirsty Painter
For info text Sara 308-883-1505
Sponsored by Sara Stretesky

4 p.m. Magic Show - Adam White
Sponsored by Imperial Community Foundation Fund

5 p.m. Presentation of Awards for all events

6 p.m. FREE Community BBQ Meal
Sponsored by Imperial Chamber of Commerce

All Day: L & L Ready Mix Sandbox, Organizational Booths, Food Vendors and more!

FREE • OUTDOOR CONCERT

7:00 – 8:00 p.m. – Cole Scheifele
8:00 – 9:15 p.m. – Roka Hueka
9:30 – 11:00 p.m. – Jomo & the Possum Posse

BBQ Contest Wood Fired, Baked Beans and Preliminary Activities

For info **contact Jack 308-882-4363**

Perceived Deficiencies

The existing site is kept clean and maintained, but deterioration is apparent in the paved areas of the block. Other portions of the block lack character and use. Substantial improvements are necessary for the site to function at its full potential.



Hardscape

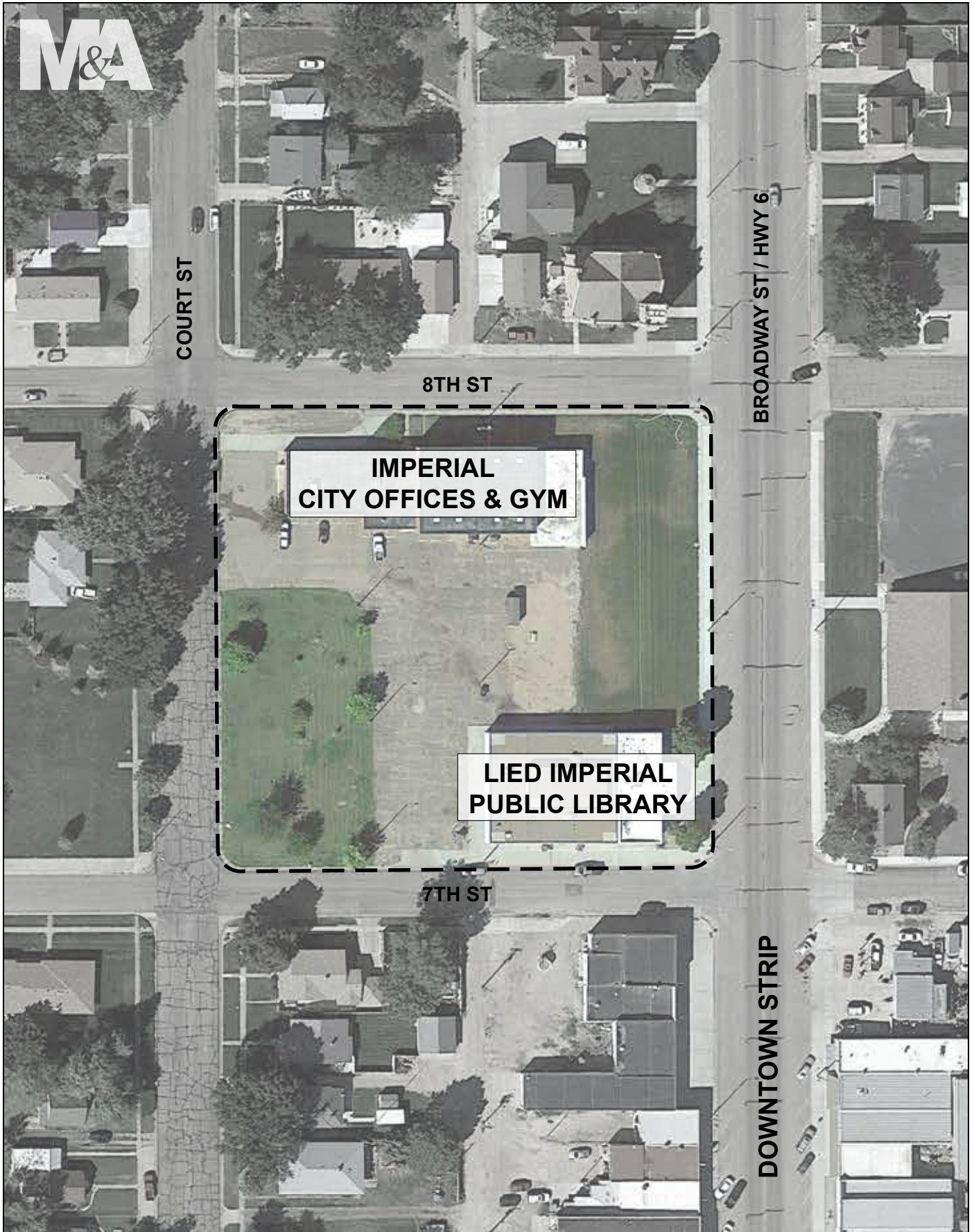
The paved parking area, located between the City Building and the Lied Imperial Public Library, is cracked and riddled with potholes. Drainage was also discussed as a major concern during public input sessions. The current condition of the parking lot makes it harder to navigate for both vehicular traffic and pedestrians using the site. It is also difficult to maintain during winter months, leaving patches of snow and ice on the uneven surface.

The current parking lot is also at a similar elevation to the finished floor of the existing buildings. This can cause drainage concerns inside the buildings as well. Any new impervious surface may need to be placed at a lower elevation to help direct surface drainage away from the buildings. There is a difference of approximately four feet in total elevation change over the 300-foot square block. Surface water drains from the southwest to the northeast on the site, toward Highway 6/Broadway Street. As impervious surfaces are added and subtracted to the site, drainage will need to be addressed.

Large cracks exist in the existing parking lot.



Existing condition of the parking lot from the City Offices, looking south.



Background aerial from Google Earth.

Existing Site Plan
Imperial, Nebraska



Existing sprinkler system on northeastern portion of site.



Existing sprinkler system on northeastern portion of site.

Softscape

The current grass areas of the City Square are trimmed and watered during warmer weather. They appear clean and well-maintained. The softscape also gives reprieve from the ample pavement along the highway and in the downtown district. The grass functions well as an open space for large stage performances and the movies projected on the library wall. However, the softscape lacks any real character or point of interest.

All current sprinklers on the city block are located above ground. This was described as an eyesore during public input sessions. The above-ground sprinklers are also an obstacle when the grass is mown, causing extra time to mow, and requiring the maintenance staff to trim around the bases of the sprinklers. Besides the sprinklers, the large open space lacks elements of human scale. This gives an overall impression of an expansive, empty space.



Existing condition from west parking lot entry, looking southeast toward Lied Imperial Public Library.



Existing ramp on west site of Lied Imperial Public Library.

Accessibility

In addition to its poor condition, the parking lot interrupts the main pedestrian areas on the site. The green space in the southwest corner of the block and the parking lot are currently used for children's activities programmed by the library. While the parking lot is not overly busy, this still creates an unnecessary interaction between pedestrians and vehicular traffic.

As a public space, the City Square needs to be accessible to all residents. A full ADA Compliance Assessment was not completed at the time of this study. However, many accessibility concerns were visually noted on the existing site. Poor condition of pavement increases challenges for residents with ambulatory difficulties. There is also a lack of handrails on stairs and ramps.



Elevation changes and lack of railings outside of both buildings on the site present accessibility concerns.

PUBLIC INPUT

Public input and support are key aspects of any community-based improvement project. The public input process transforms community members from spectators to invested creators. The public input meeting provides a forum for community members to voice their concerns, provide ideas, and discuss goals and objectives. It is important for the community to take ownership of the issues and goals highlighted during this process.

The planning process for this Feasibility Study heavily emphasizes the public input process to gain champions within the community for the ongoing maintenance and development of the City Square. The public input meetings during this planning process are the spine of this Study, informing the types of improvements proposed, the goals developed, and the priorities for the City Square project. Additional notes from the public input meetings are provided in “Appendix B: Notes from Input Meetings”.

The City of Imperial and Miller & Associates present

Imperial **2022**
CITY SQUARE
CCCFF FEASIBILITY STUDY

PUBLIC INPUT MEETING

TUES. JULY 13 | 6:30pm
@ Lied Imperial Public Library

Community Vision • Desired Amenities • Potential Improvements

First Public Input Meeting

The First Public Input Meeting was a town hall-style meeting held in the Lied Imperial Public Library on July 13th, 2021. This meeting introduced community members to the project and the project team. The meeting began with a brief presentation outlining the general scope of the project. The presentation included the following topics – Introductions, Grant Basics, Project Approach, Community Profile, and the City Square.

At the end of the presentation, attendees participated in a discussion about the upcoming project. The 2018 paving design project was reviewed. Attendees felt the conceptual images of the pavement improvements were sterile and that parking could be downsized on the site. The shade structures shown in the conceptual images were well-liked. Shade structures were included as an amenity the community would like to see in the new City Square project. Finally, attendees discussed the need to move parking to the periphery of the site to avoid splitting the block in two like the existing parking.

Next, discussion focused on existing and future programming for the City Square. The parking lot was again a main concern. Access to the City Gym on the south side of the building and the use of the parking lot during events were both mentioned as design priorities. While attendees wished to see a reduction in parking, they recognized the need for events and access to public buildings.

The deficiencies of the existing parking lot are a driving force for the City Square project. Stormwater drainage, potholes, aesthetics, and bright highway lighting were all listed as problem items by attendees. The proximity to U.S. Highway 6 was also a safety concern mentioned during the meeting. A lot of the programming for the library revolves around Imperial's youngest population. The importance of separation from the highway and considering safety during design was a big priority mentioned by the community.

The First Public Input Meeting was wrapped up with the creation of a "Wish List" for the City Square. Participants were invited to dream big and list the amenities they wanted included in the new City Square. The First Public Input Meeting functioned as a catalyst for the City Square project. Residents were invited to discuss their vision for the space and hear other community members' ideas. The project team was provided with a better understanding of the desires of the community and the priorities for this improved community amenity.

City Square Wish List

Pedestrian Focused

Quiet Activities (Residential Area)

Flexibility (High Priority)

Open Green Space

Flower Garden

Accessible Restrooms

Fountain

Public Art

Vehicle Charging Stations

Electrical Hookups

Outdoor Movies

Farmers' Market

Big Events

Statement Piece (Draw People into Space)

Gateway Entry/Wayfinding

Walking Path

Garden

Stormwater Drainage (Maybe More Natural Solutions)

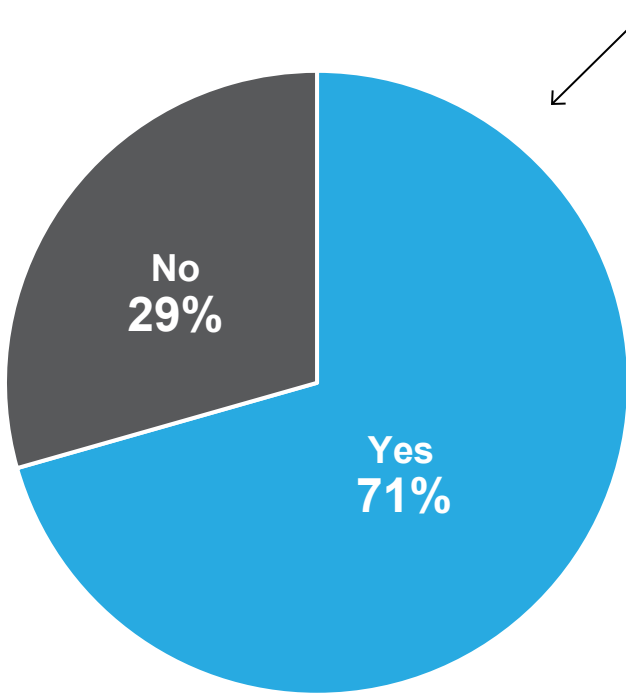
Connection with Library (Programming)

Rentable toys to use space

Small Play Features

On-line Public Input Survey

An online survey was conducted mid-June to early-August of 2021, as part of the planning process for this Feasibility Study. Hard copies of the survey were available at the City Office to increase accessibility for residents. Flyers were used to market the survey in prominent locations around Imperial and at the annual Smokin' on Broadway event. A total of 224 respondents participated in the public input survey, accounting for over 10% of the Primary Service Area's total population. The survey logged the following results:



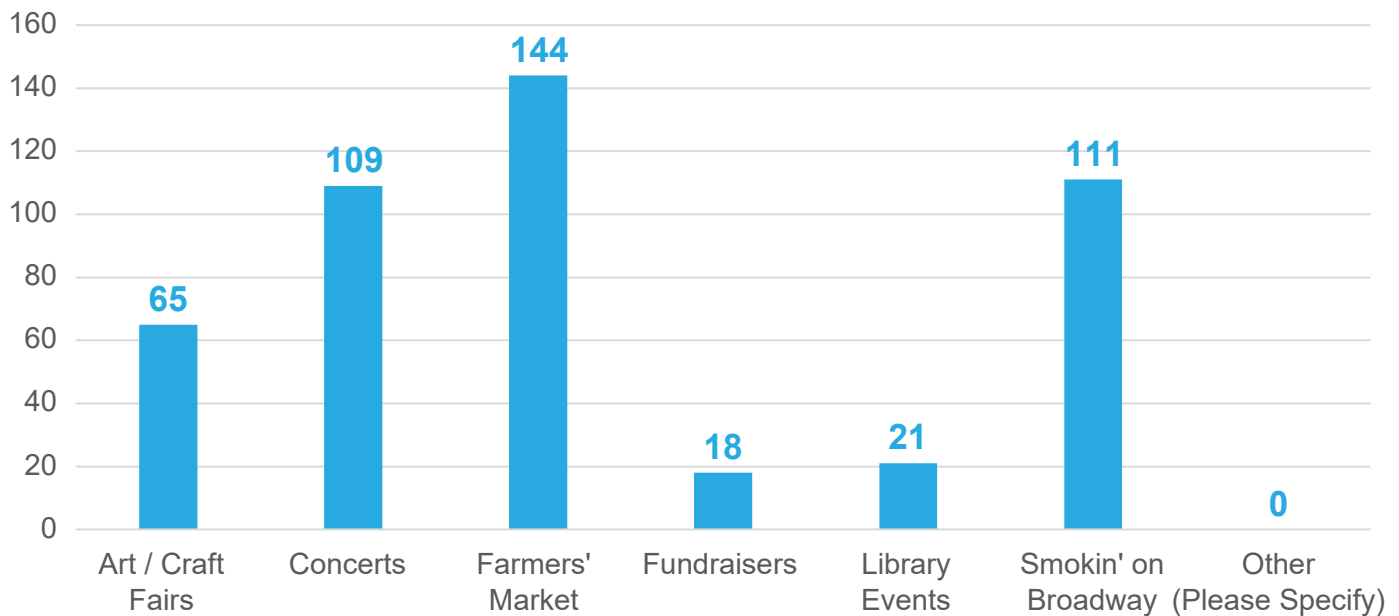
Have you attended an event at the City Square in the past year?

A majority (71%) of respondents attended an event at the City Square in the past year. This shows the space is well-used, which means improvements will directly benefit members of the community. It also most likely increases the residents' understanding of the site's improvement needs. If people have attended recent events at this location, they have first-hand experience of how the space functions and its current condition.

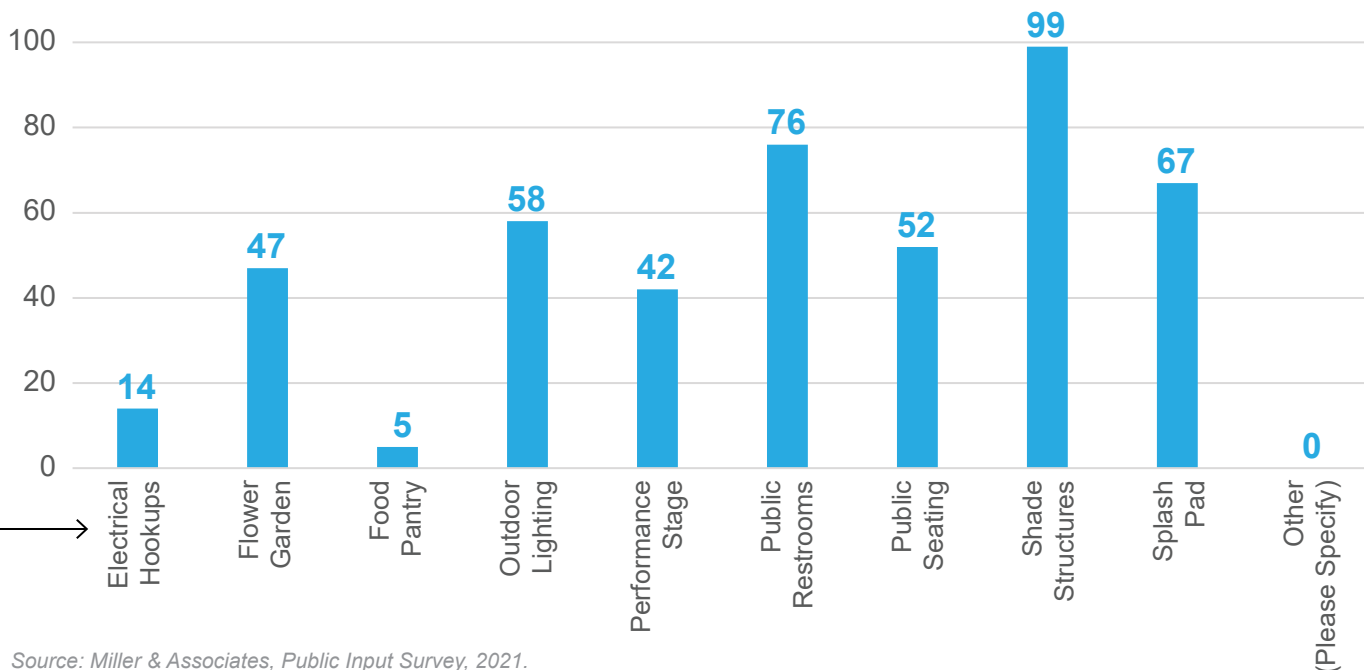
What are the top 3 events you would like to see at the City Square in the future?

Farmers' Market was the highest-ranking event category which residents would like to see hosted at the City Square in the future. This was followed by Smokin' on Broadway and Concerts. While these are all scheduled events, they may require different amenities in the City Square. For example, covered parking could benefit a farmers' market while a concert would require a stage and area for the audience.

Source: Miller & Associates, Public Input Survey, 2021.



Source: Miller & Associates, Public Input Survey, 2021.

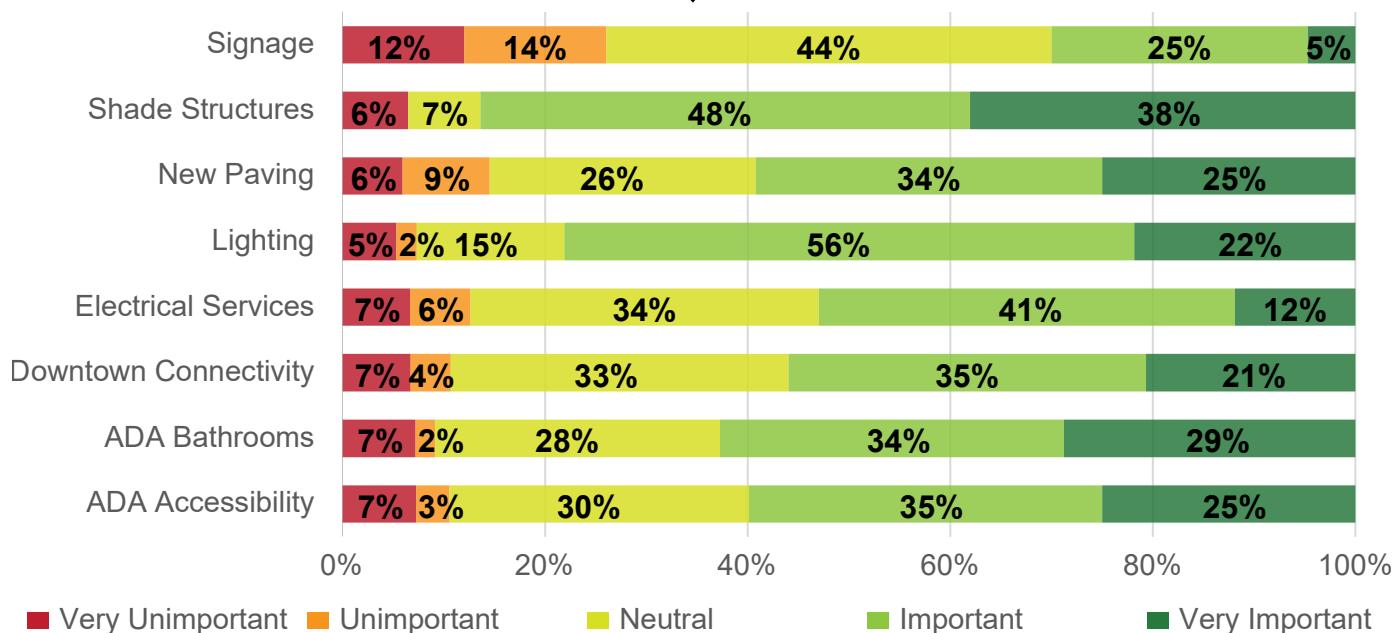


What are the top 3 amenities you would like to see at the City Square in the future?

Shade structures were the highest-ranking amenity respondents wished to see at the future City Square. This amenity was selected by 59% of respondents as a top 3 priority. Shade structures were followed by public restrooms (45%) and a splash pad (40%) as prioritized amenities. The least selected amenity was the food pantry (3%).

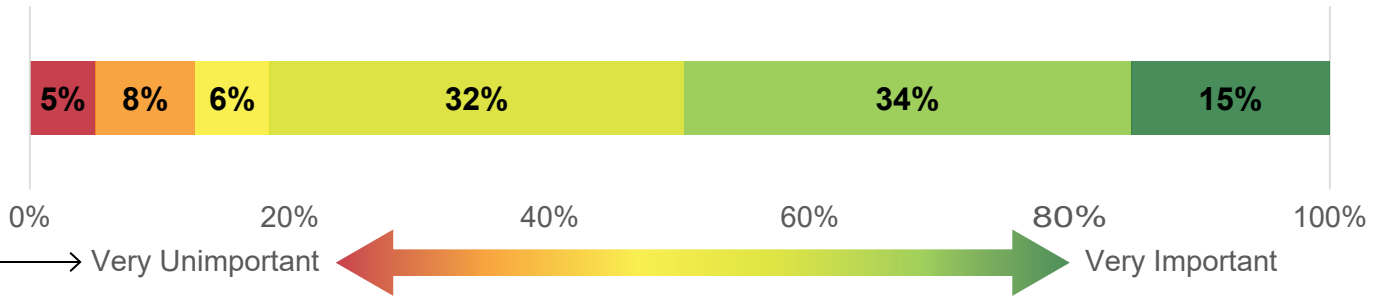
Please rate the importance of the following improvements in the City Square.

Respondents were also asked to rank other design characteristic by importance. “Very Unimportant” items received a rating of 1; “Neutral” items were given a 3; and “Very Important” items were rated with a 5. Shade structures (4.12) and lighting (3.87) received the highest ratings. While signage (2.97) was considered the least important item, it still received a “Neutral” rating.



Source: Miller & Associates, Public Input Survey, 2021.

PUBLIC INPUT



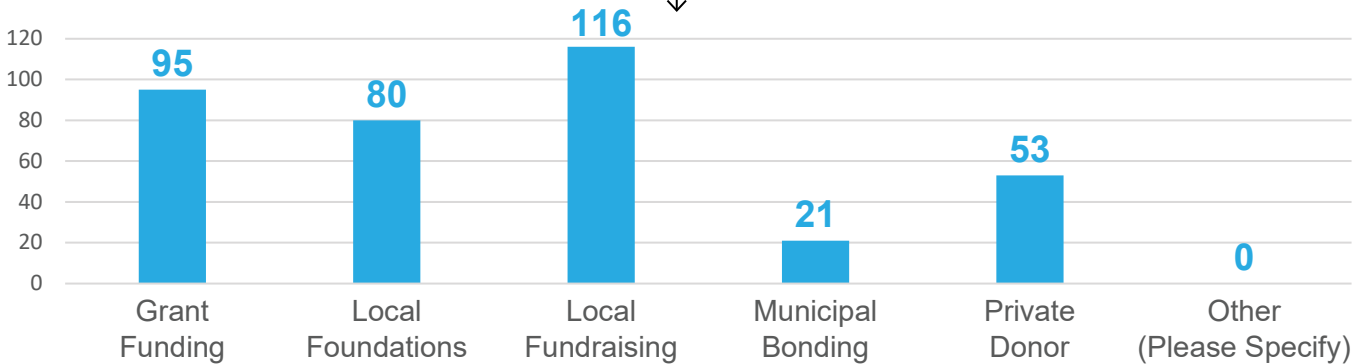
Source: Miller & Associates, Public Input Survey, 2021.

The City Square serves as an outdoor gathering space in Downtown Imperial. How important is the City Square to the quality of life for Imperial’s residents?

Respondents believed the City Square was an important space for residents’ quality of life. Only 19% of respondents believed the City Square was not important to the quality of life experienced in Imperial.

Which funding opportunities are you most willing to support? Please check all that apply.

Local fundraising (74%) was the top response to this question, followed by grant funding (61%), local foundations (51%), private donors (34%), municipal bonding (13%), and other (3%). The top response shows there is community support for this project. It also speaks to residents’ willingness to build the community they want to call home.



Source: Miller & Associates, Public Input Survey, 2021.

Would you support a minor tax increase to fund on-going maintenance costs?

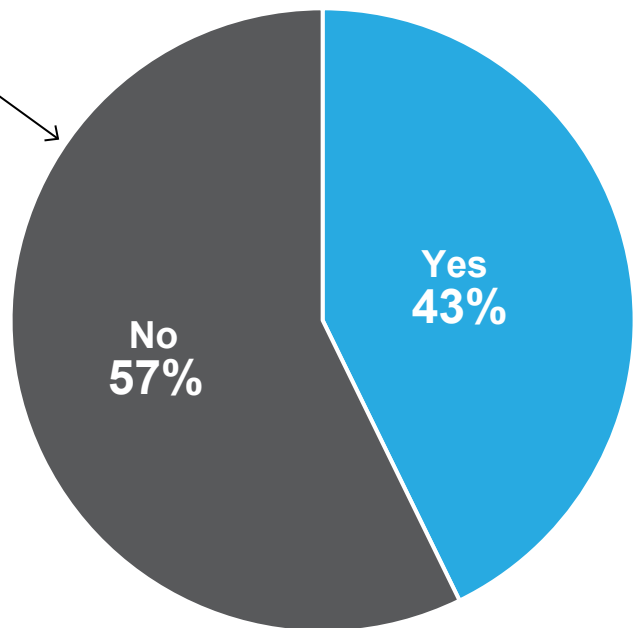
Over half (57%) of respondents were not willing to support a tax increase for on-going maintenance. The City may need to examine other funding options for these costs.

Tell us a little about yourself.

The final questions in the survey were designed to provide the project team with a general understanding of who completed the survey. Specific information was not tied to individual community members. Most respondents lived and worked within Imperial’s zip code. Approximately two-thirds of respondents were female and nearly one-third was male, with a small portion not identifying a gender. A majority of respondents were 20-39 years old (40%) and 40-59 years old (39%).

Anything else?

An area was included at the end of the survey for additional comments about the City Square project. The comments are included in “Appendix C: Public Input Survey and Results”.



Source: Miller & Associates, Public Input Survey, 2021.

Second Public Input Meeting

The Second Public Input meeting was held on November 16th, 2021. A brief recap of the first public input meeting and results from the Online Public Input Survey were presented. Attendees confirmed the survey results supported their priorities for the City Square. In addition to the main events and amenities desired, the roles as an anchor for the downtown area and as a recreational amenity in the heart of the community were also presented.

Next, the presentation walked through the design process, explaining the key points for design – creating a space, drawing people in, and keeping them there. Three conceptual design options were presented. The design options were developed from the existing conditions analysis and public input findings. Attendees discussed their opinions about the three designs, highlighting pros and cons for the final conceptual design.

The discussion favored a variety of amenities in the City Square over focusing on one main amenity. There was concern an amphitheater or fountain would not have enough use to justify taking a majority of the space. An alternative location for an amphitheater was also mentioned. A naturally existing portion of Campbell Park was described as the perfect place for an amphitheater.

Attendees leaned toward the traditional midwestern town square with several opportunities for different functions and gatherings. This idea was thought to have the biggest impact and serve the most needs when considering the location of the City Square. With this idea in mind, attendees weighed the pros and cons of different amenities for the City Square. This discussion helped highlight important design decisions for the project.

A key desired amenity was a stage or bandstand big enough to host bands for the annual Smokin' on Broadway celebration. In past years, the community has utilized a flatbed semi-trailer for the stage. This was the desired size for a future stage space in the City Square. Though attendees felt a large stage was important, they did not want the stage to monopolize the development. The felt it should be a cohesive element in the overall design, not the primary focus for the City Square.

The City of Imperial and Miller & Associates present

Imperial **2022**
CITY SQUARE
CCCF FEASIBILITY STUDY

PUBLIC INPUT MEETING

TUES. NOV 16 | 6:30pm
@ Lied Imperial Public Library

Survey Results • Conceptual Designs

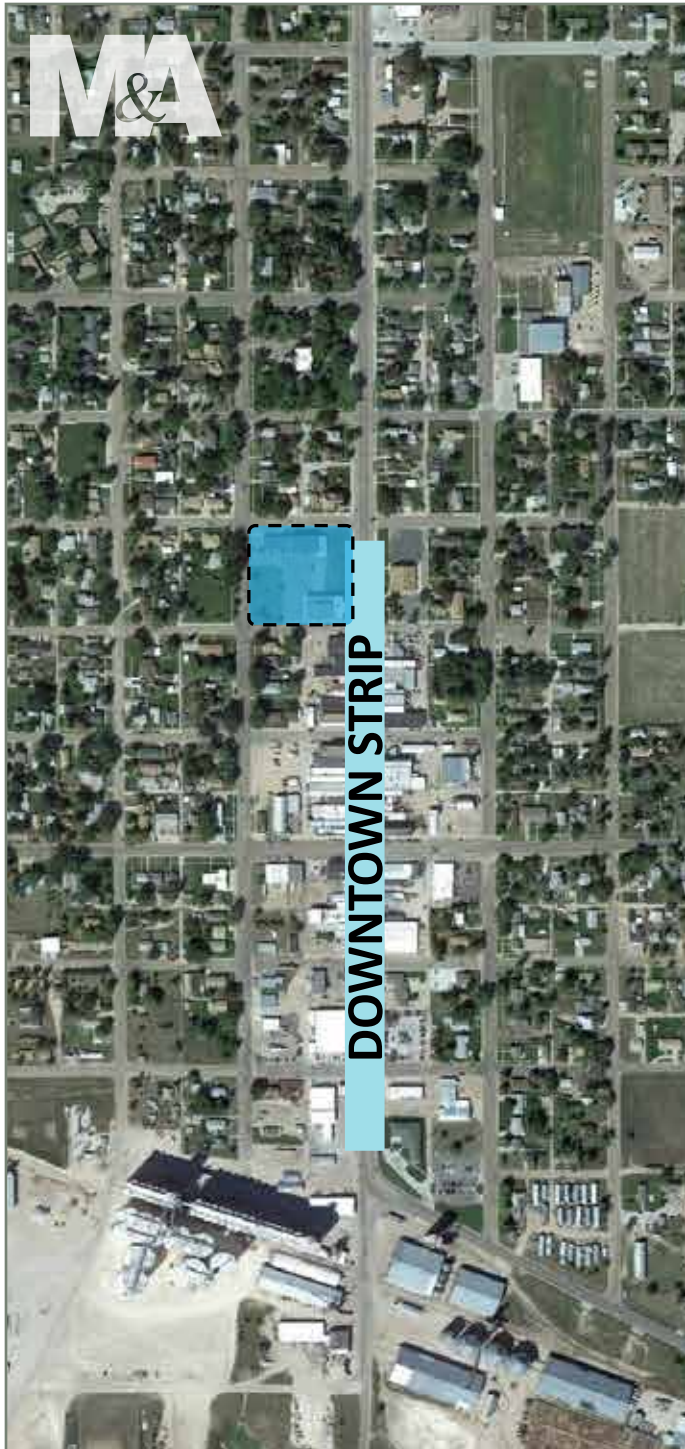
Consistent with survey results, attendees prioritized a children's play area as a particularly important amenity in the City Square. The proximity to the library and discussion of past youth programming in the existing parking lot or greenspace also supported the need for a children's play area. The benefits of distinct types of play areas were further analyzed.

While a splash pad is a top desired amenity by Imperial's residents, the proximity to the library was a concern. Wet children in the library with paper books could be problematic. A small playground or a musical play feature were brought forth as alternatives to a splash pad for this specific location. Attendees also questioned the difference in cost of these amenities compared to a splash pad. A need for open green space was logged for library programming and free play during events.

Overall, the second public input meeting had healthy discussion which highlighted many questions, concerns, and desires for Imperial's City Square. These comments along with the other opinions recorded throughout the public input process are instrumental in developing the final conceptual design for this project.

CREATING A SPACE

The area surrounding Imperial's City Offices and the Lied Imperial Public Library should function as more than open greenspace punctuated by a parking lot. The project's location in the community creates an opportunity for a more substantial and intentional design. Imperial's City Square should be an anchor on the northern end of the Downtown District, a gateway entrance into the heart of the community. Creating a sense of place in the City Square will highlight the block as the Civic Center for Imperial. It will also provide residents with a centrally located public gathering space.



Background aerial from Google Earth.

Downtown Anchor Imperial, Nebraska

Elements of Design

The designed City Square functions as parts to a whole. The block can be divided into four main areas:

- Existing City Offices and City Gym
- Existing Lied Imperial Public Library
- Highway 6 / Broadway Street Frontage
- Southwest Square

While all these areas have distinct functions, they must work together to form a cohesive City Square. This will help create the sense of place for the area. It will also help people recognize the City Square as a destination point in the community.

The existing buildings form strong anchors on opposite corners of the site. The Imperial City Offices and City Gym (northwest) and the Lied Imperial Public Library (southeast) will help bring people to the City Square. These buildings have distinct stylistic differences which will inform the rest of the design to create a cohesive and unified space.

The Highway 6 / Broadway Street frontage area will function as a gateway entry to the site. Pulling potential visitors in from the highway and welcoming visitors to the community. This area will also act as a buffer zone between vehicular traffic and the pedestrian-focused areas.

The southwest quadrant of the City Square will be the hub for pedestrian activities and amenities. This area is removed from the main vehicular thoroughfare increasing safety for its users. It should be designed to encourage pedestrian interaction with the City Square. The children's programming through the library will benefit strongly from separation of pedestrian and vehicular zones.

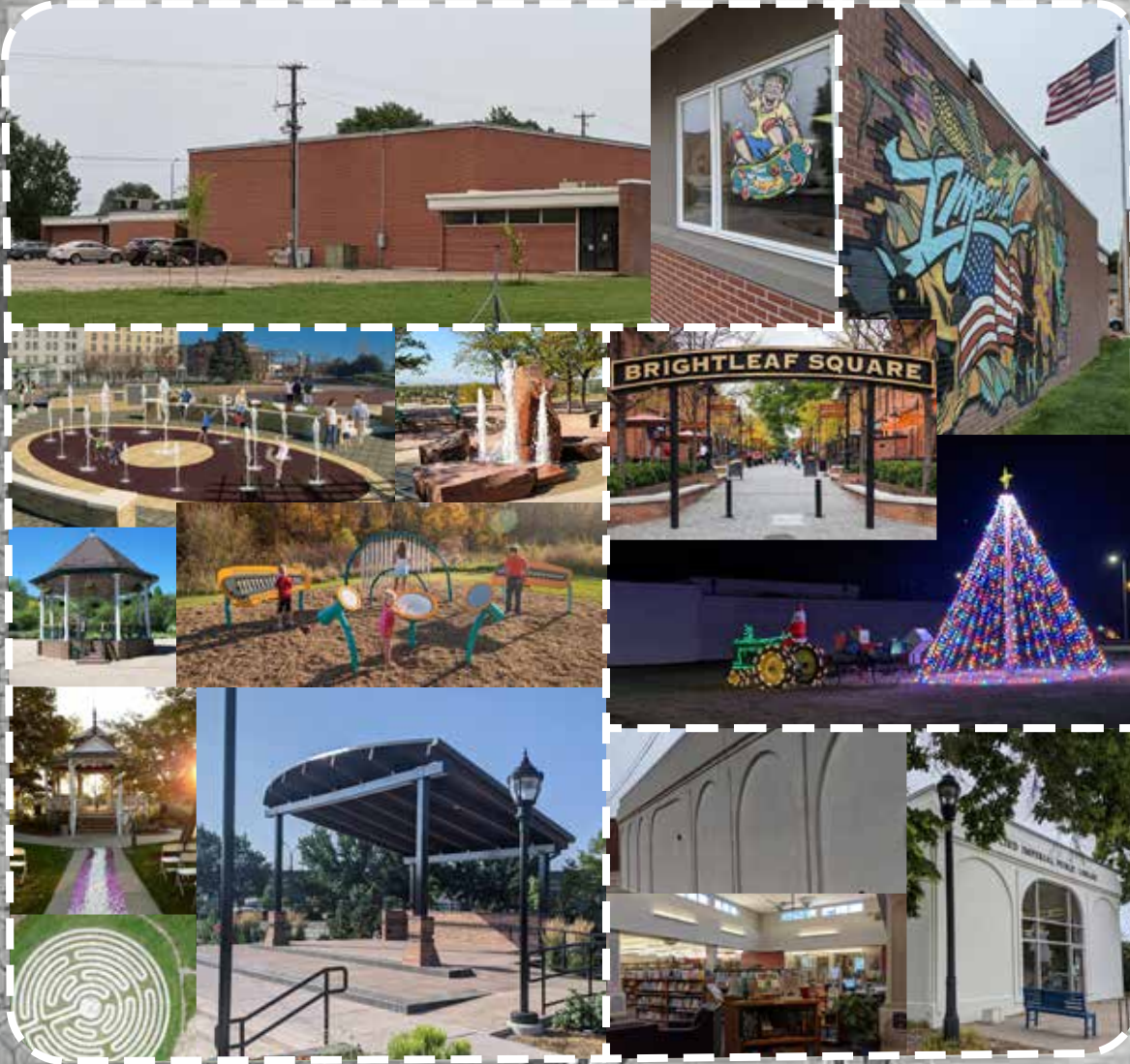
While this distance from the highway alleviates safety concerns, it also creates a challenge in attracting people to the site. It will be important to draw interest through the City Square to this southwest quadrant. Strong attention grabbers on the eastern portion of the block, paired with glimpses of the activities and amenities beyond will add dimension to the City Square.

M&A

COURT ST

8TH ST

BROADWAY ST / HWY 6



7TH ST

Background aerial from Google Earth.

Design Inspiration
Imperial, Nebraska



Conceptual Design Options

Three conceptual design options were initially developed to explore the potential of the City Square project. The three designs shared a common framework.

The Highway 6 / Broadway Street frontage is similar for all three designs. The purpose of this area is to attract potential users while also buffering the main vehicular and pedestrian zones. The winding pathway acts as a promenade, drawing users through the space to the southwest portion of the City Square.

The pathway is designed to control movement and promote interaction with other points of interest in the frontage area. The existing mural on the east side of the City Building adds character to the City Square. A sitting area along the path highlights this piece of public art without limiting its visibility from passing vehicular traffic.

The path also travels under the gateway entry signage. A gateway entry sign helps announce the space to potential visitors. It also provides an opportunity for interaction with the space as pedestrian pass through the gateway to enter the main pedestrian zone. Finally, the gateway entry sign shown combines characteristics of the two existing buildings located on the City Square.

Grass berms are located along the path to further control the sense of place and movement throughout the frontage area. This manipulation of the landscape adds interest to the flat site. It also alters the pedestrian's perception as they travel along the path. The height and proximity of the berms to the path condenses then expands the sense of space as the path travels into the southwest portion of the City Square.

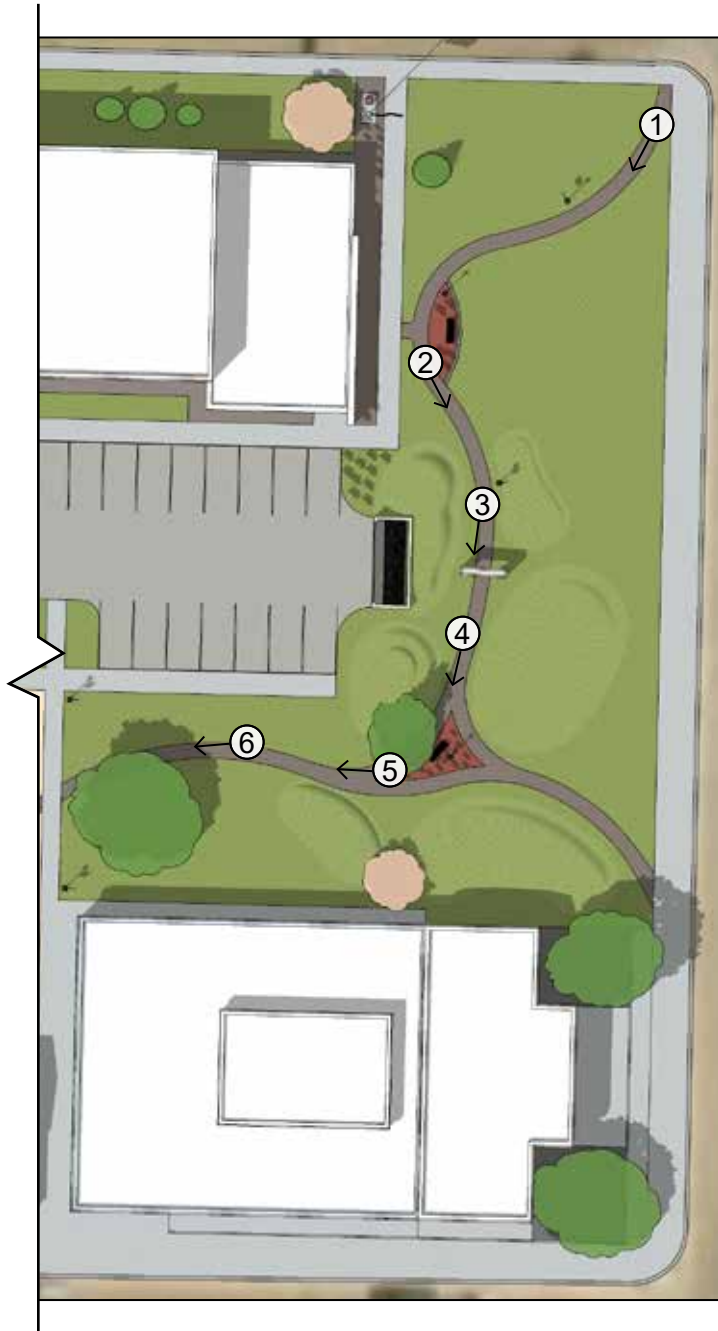
The southwest portion is where most of the differences are found between the three initial conceptual design options. Each design option follows a theme to achieve a specific purpose within the space. The three conceptual design options are listed below and described on the subsequent pages:

The Fountain Plaza

The Main Event

Gathering Spaces

The three designs perform contrasting functions through an array of amenities. While the frontage promenade and points of interest work to bring people into the space, the southwest portion works to keep them there.





Conceptual Design Option 1 - The Fountain Plaza: elevated perspective from southwest.



Image of Water Journey 2 Play Feature from Commercial Recreation Specialists online catalogue.

The Fountain Plaza

In this design, the southwest portion of the City Square pays homage to traditional European plazas. Bringing people together with an element everyone needs - water. The design examines the nature of water. How we can shape it, how we can interact with it, and how we can become it.

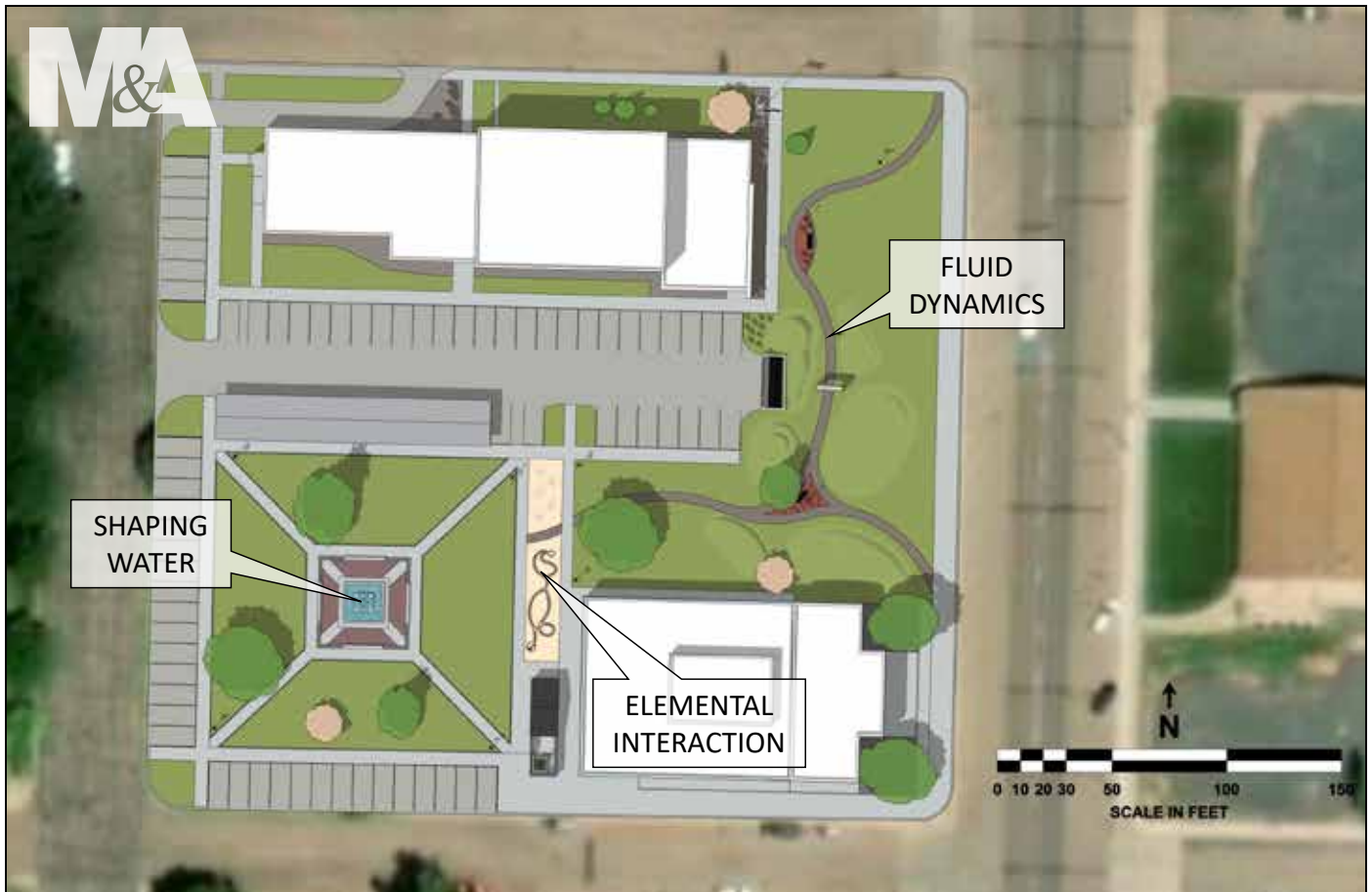
The central fountain is very geometric and symmetrical, forcing water into a controlled volume. The winding path on the eastern portion of the block gives the opposite effect, winding users through a constricting and expanding space as if they were water themselves. The buffer between the two space offers a secondary fountain element through a splash pad and another water play feature. This buffer area acts as the kids' zone and provides the community with a highly desired amenity.



Perspective of conceptual fountain from the southwest.



Conceptual Design Option 1 - The Fountain Plaza: perspective of splash pad and fountain from walkway.



Conceptual Design Option 1 - The Fountain Plaza
Imperial, Nebraska



Conceptual Design Option 2 - The Main Event: elevated perspective from southwest.



Amphitheater in Gering, Nebraska

The Main Event

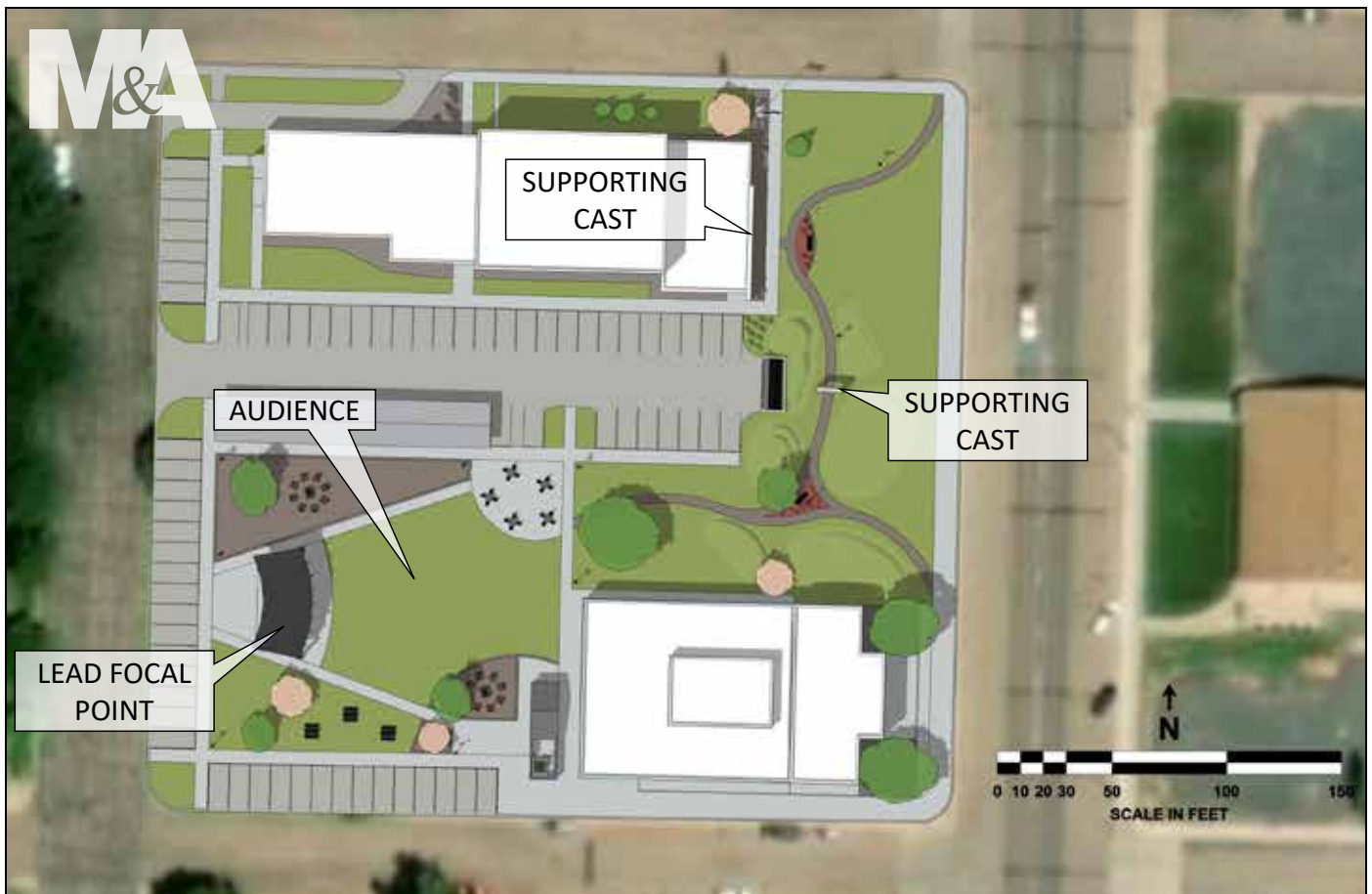
This design focuses on a main amphitheater stage with secondary amenities serving the needs of the audience. In this concept, everything is oriented toward the stage area. The amphitheater would serve the need for an outdoor conference venue in the community.

Imperial had an active community theater in the past. If the amphitheater was constructed it could be used for theater performances, weddings, and other special events besides concerts. The surrounding amenities on the City Square are designed to provide different methods of enjoying outdoor performances.

The central green space is void of terraces and remains flat. While the function of the City Square is more limited with this design option, this open green space allows for free play when the amphitheater is not in use. It is also an open space for the library to continue outdoor programming and children's activities.



Conceptual Design Option 2 - The Main Event: perspective of amphitheater and patio seating.



Background aerial from Google Earth.

Conceptual Design Option 2 - The Main Event Imperial, Nebraska



Conceptual Design Option 3 - Gathering Spaces: elevated perspective from southwest.



Conceptual Design Option 3 - Gathering Spaces: view of covered parking and raised bandstand.



Conceptual Design Option 3 - Gathering Spaces: view from southwest corner looking northeast.

Gathering Spaces

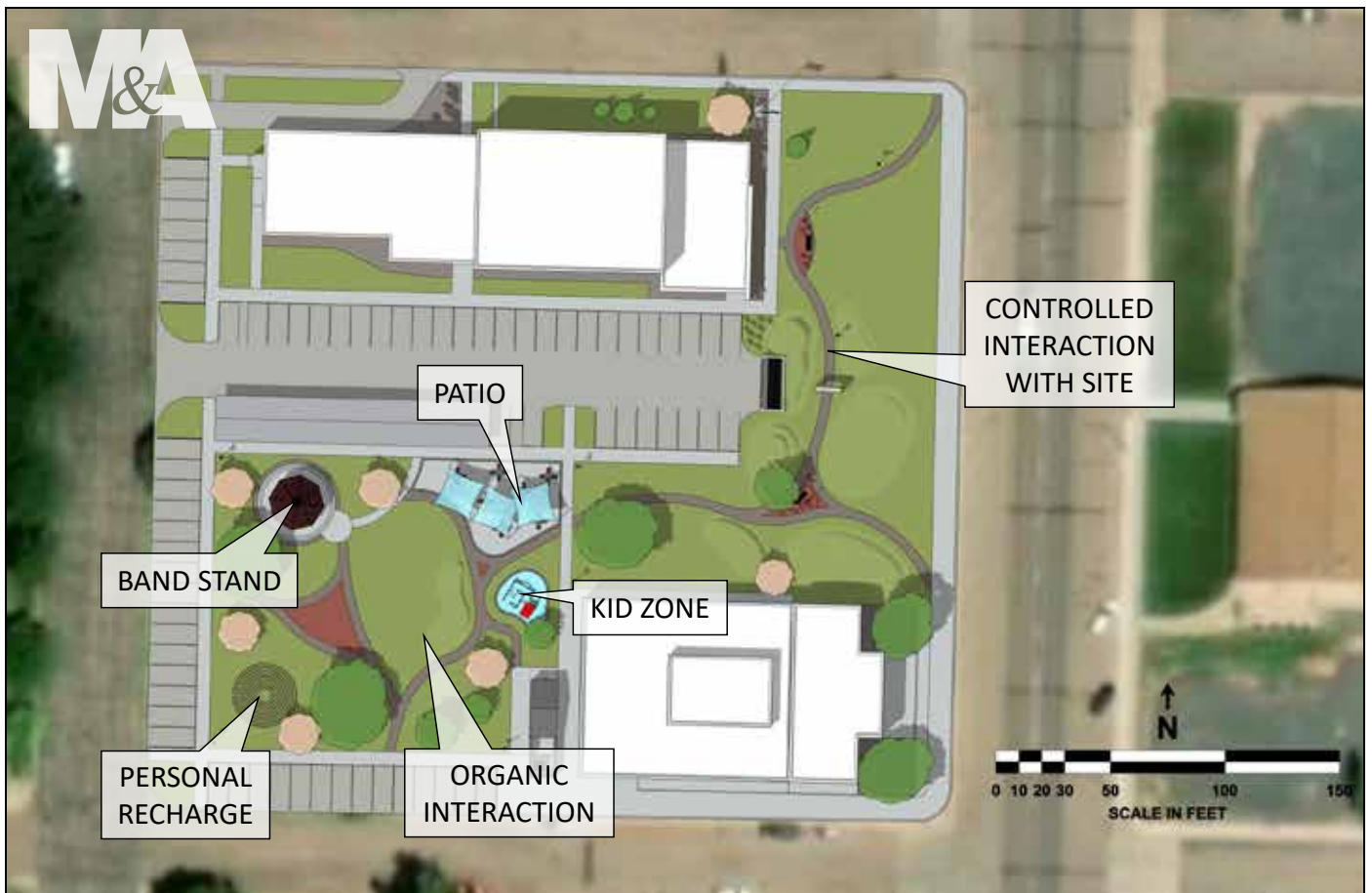
In opposition to “The Main Event,” the third conceptual design option offers a variety of amenities, providing several opportunities for gathering and interaction with the City Square. “Gathering Spaces” is about people coming together in the City Square to reinforce Imperial’s keen sense of community.

Different amenities offer varying degrees of interaction with the site and other people. The controlled interaction with the highway frontage portion of the site is balance by a labyrinth. The labyrinth controls movement and provides an opportunity for personal recharge.

Other amenities include a band stand, covered patio, free play, and a kid zone. The kid zone is in the heart of the City Square, adjacent to the library. The musical play equipment located in the kid zone creates a balance with the band stand in the southwest portion of the City Square. These areas provide unique opportunities for musical creation in the City Square.



Conceptual Design Option 3 - Gathering Spaces: perspective of playground and patio seating with shade structures.



Background aerial from Google Earth.

Conceptual Design Option 3 - Gathering Spaces Imperial, Nebraska



Final Conceptual Design

Portions of each design option appealed to Imperial's residents during public input sessions. The final conceptual design for Imperial's City Square is a hybrid of these designs. It resulted from discussions during the public input process, responses from the public input survey, and analysis of existing conditions. Existing conditions of the community and the site itself were considered.

The highway frontage portion of the City Square acts as a promenade to the main hub of activity, located in the southwest quadrant of the site. The grass berms from the original conceptual designs are not included in the final conceptual design due to maintenance concerns. Other amenities and focal points are used to create a sense of place. Landscaping draws attention to the existing flagpole with memorial and the existing mural on the east wall of the City Offices building. A bench and lighting are also used to highlight the public art.

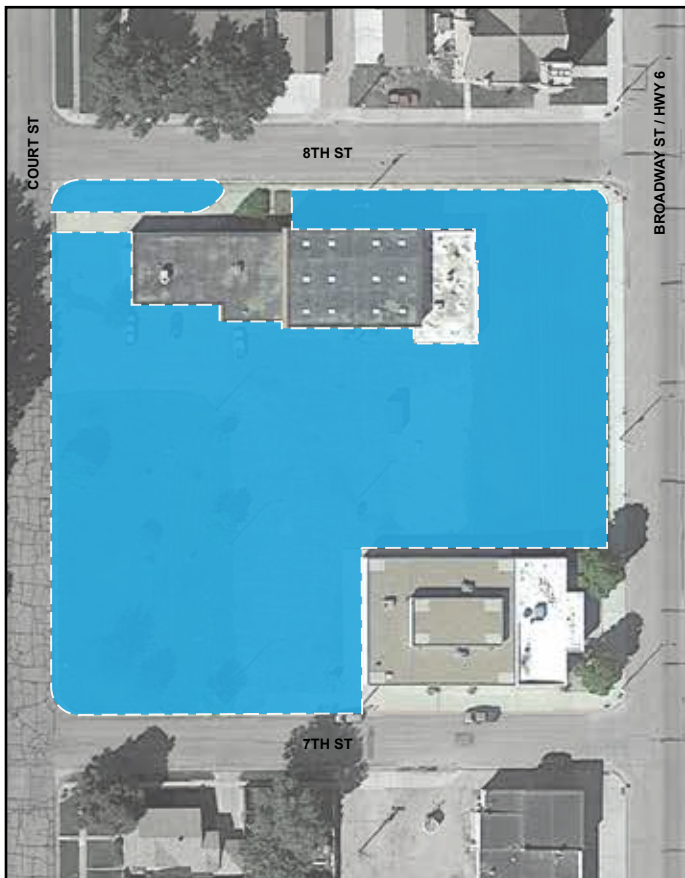
An enlarged gateway entry sign makes a stronger impact to passing vehicular traffic. The sign announces the Imperial City Square to potential visitors and helps bring people to the site. It also allows for more interaction with pedestrians. Multiple pathways converge at the gateway entry sign to mark the entrance to the City Square. The sign combines new and existing characteristics from the site into one object. This helps bring the separate elements of the City Square together into one cohesive design.

A temporary ice rink sits north of the library building for use during freezing weather. This rink can be constructed, filled, and frozen each winter. It gives the City Square additional use during the colder months. During warmer months, the ice rink can be removed and stored. The resulting flat, open space will be available for people to gather and project movies on the north exterior wall of the library. Outdoor movies were mentioned as a favorite existing use for this space during public input.





Final Conceptual Design: elevated perspective from southwest looking northeast.



Background aerial from Google Earth.

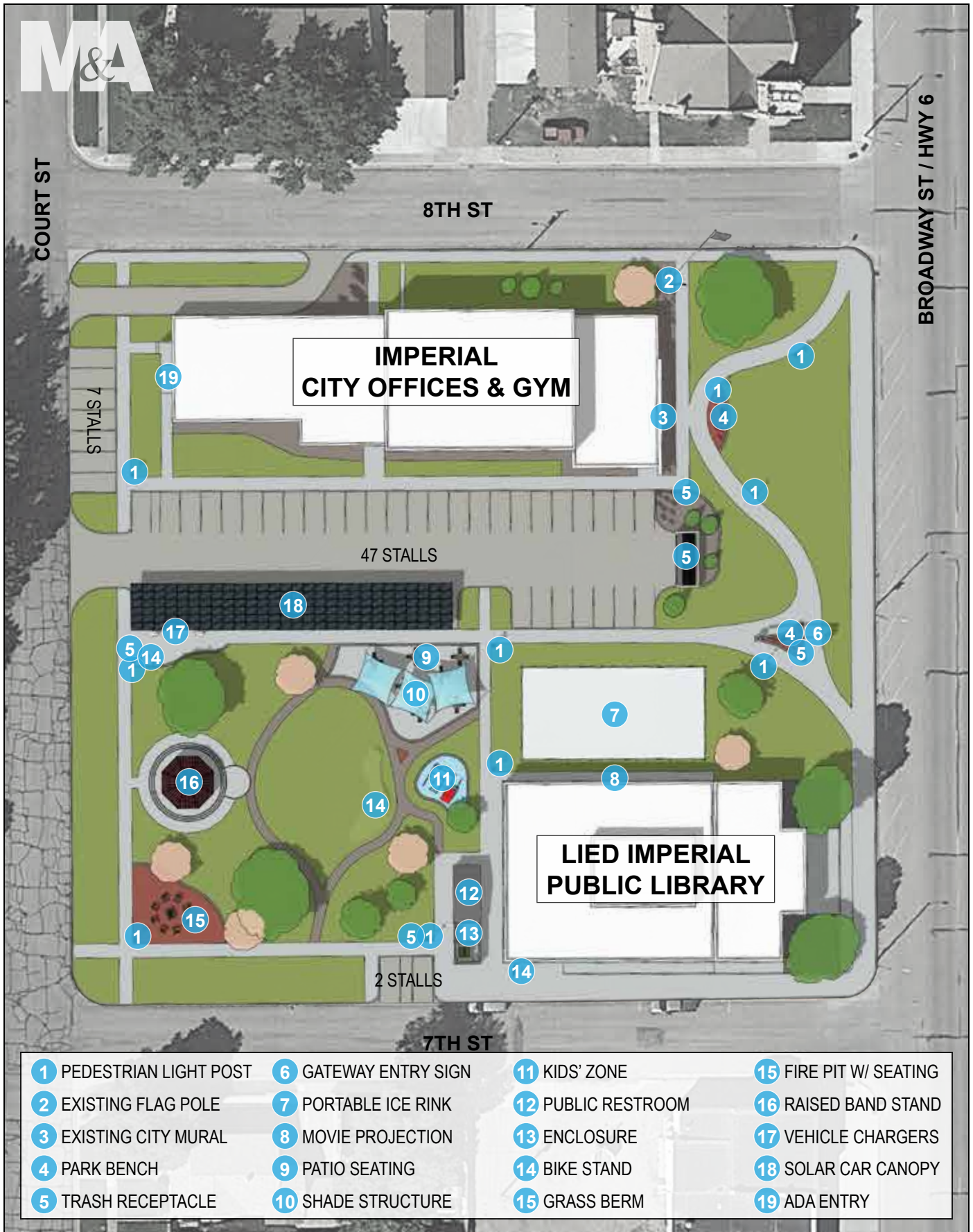
Conceptual Demolition Plan
Imperial, Nebraska

As users enter the southwest portion of the City Square, they are presented with an array of amenities. These amenities share a centralized theme; they are all diverse types of gather spaces. The options for large and small groups of all ages help enforce the sense of community imbued by the City Square.

The amenities surround an open, green space. This area maintains flexibility on the site. It provides an audience space for bigger performances or events at the bandstand. It is also an excellent location for youth programming through the library. The primary areas designated for children are in the interior of the site, with a buffer area between the vehicular zone and the activity areas.

The paved parking area in the City Square is reduced, but still designed to serve both existing buildings. It also includes a covered parking structure with proposed solar panels and electric vehicle charging stations. This area would help support a farmers' market at the City Square.

The existing buildings and some paving on the site's periphery will remain unchanged. Alterations are proposed in the area highlighted in the "Conceptual Demolition Plan" in blue. This helps reduce the scope and potential cost for the City Square project but could adjust slightly during the design engineering phase to best fit the City's needs.



Background aerial from Google Earth.

Conceptual Site Plan
Imperial, Nebraska



Final Conceptual Design: The gateway entry signage announces the Imperial City Square to potential visitors.



*Final Conceptual Design:
The play area is located in the center of the City Square to limit interaction with vehicular traffic.*



Final Conceptual Design: The walkway directs users to enjoy multiple amenities, including the colorful mural.



*Final Conceptual Design:
The firepit offers a casual small group space for evening hours.*

Sitework

A quality design must have a solid foundation. Initial sitework will help shape the City Square into a well-functioning community amenity. The current parking lot has poor drainage which will need to be corrected during the project. Substantial work will be necessary to create a “blank slate” before adding surface finishes and amenities. The Engineer’s Opinion of Probable Construction Costs include clearing the site, drainage and grading improvements, burying the overhead powerline, increasing ADA accessibility, landscaping, paving, and more.

Sitework should be more than utility improvements and dirt work. The amenities added to the site should help shape the overall atmosphere experienced in the City Square. Imperial’s residents were drawn to the traditional small-town square at the heart of many midwestern communities. These squares offer several amenities and opportunities for gathering. Providing additional public gathering spaces would reinforce the powerful sense of community already apparent in Imperial.



Existing pedestrian light post in front of Lied Imperial Public Library.

Public Furniture

A consistent atmosphere throughout the different portions of the City Square will strengthen the sense of place experienced by users. Public furniture refers to the often-unnoticed amenities like lighting, benches, and trash receptacles, which will all shape the environment of the City Square.

Additional pedestrian light posts are located throughout the City Square. The proposed lights echo the design and character of the existing light posts in front of the library building. This will help the new areas of the City Square tie into the existing areas, which will create a more cohesive design for the City Square. The light posts could also include banners to help brand the City Square or welcome visitors to the community. The light posts will also increase safety in the City Square by providing adequate lighting during evening and nighttime hours.

Benches, trash receptacles, and bike racks are also located throughout the site. These items incorporate clean lines and a traditional black iron look. They are placed on the site to increase pedestrian comfort in the space. The City Square covers a full city block and has two large, existing buildings. Adding details to the site that are human scale will help make the City Square more inviting, encouraging the use of its amenities.



Existing bench in front of Lied Imperial Public Library.

Sitework					
Engineer's Opinion of Probable Construction Cost City Square - Imperial, Nebraska					
ITEM NO.	ITEM DESCRIPTION	ESTIMATED QUANTITY	UNIT	UNIT PRICE	TOTAL PRICE
1	Mobilization	1	L.S.	\$30,000.00	\$30,000.00
2	Tree Removal	12	EA.	\$250.00	\$3,000.00
3	Strip/Replace Topsoil	700	C.Y.	\$15.00	\$10,500.00
4	Remove Curb and Gutter	620	L.F.	\$5.00	\$3,100.00
5	Pavement Removal	3,950	S.Y.	\$8.00	\$31,600.00
6	Lighting Removal	3	EA.	\$750.00	\$2,250.00
7	Relocate OHP	1	L.S.	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
8	4" Sidewalk	12,000	S.F.	\$7.00	\$84,000.00
9	6" PCCP	2,000	S.Y.	\$65.00	\$130,000.00
10	Fillets	1,250	S.F.	\$15.00	\$18,750.00
11	Curb and Gutter	620	L.F.	\$35.00	\$21,700.00
12	Asphalt Patching	200	S.Y.	\$70.00	\$14,000.00
13	Irrigation	1	L.S.	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00
14	Landscaping	1	L.S.	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
15	Landscape Rock and Fabric (4")	600	S.Y.	\$16.00	\$9,600.00
16	Trees	15	EA.	\$1,000.00	\$15,000.00
17	Sod	54,000	S.F.	\$1.25	\$67,500.00
18	Electrical	1	L.S.	\$7,500.00	\$7,500.00
19	Street Lights	10	EA.	\$3,500.00	\$35,000.00
20	Bike Rack	2	EA.	\$1,300.00	\$2,600.00
21	Benches	4	EA.	\$2,200.00	\$8,800.00
22	Trash Bins	4	EA.	\$1,300.00	\$5,200.00
23	Trash Enclosure	1	L.S.	\$25,000.00	\$25,000.00
SUBTOTAL					\$565,100.00
Contingency (15%)					\$84,800.00
Construction Subtotal					\$649,900.00
Design Engineering, Construction Services (20%)					\$130,000.00
SITWORK TOTAL					\$780,000.00

Source: Miller & Associates 1/2022.



This existing fence showcases additional public artwork in Imperial.

Existing Focal Points

A flagpole and memorial are located near the northeast corner of the City Office building. This will remain intact in the new City Square. The flag pole was donated in honor of two longtime Imperial Residents. It is an important part of Imperial’s history and an example of the strong community bonds felt by residents. Additional landscaping and an adjacent pathway will increase access to this memorial, making it more of a focal point in the City Square.

The existing mural on the east wall of the City Office building will also be a focal point for Imperial’s City Square. The design of the highway frontage area was shaped to call attention to these two features. A bench was added as a resting point for pedestrians, but also to sit and enjoy the public art available in the space. Landscaping and a change in ground cover also help call attention to these focal points.

Imperial has several examples of public art and murals throughout the community. Highlighting these features in the City Square will help connect the City Square with the surrounding community. The winding pavement also provides an opportunity for a future sculpture walk with the existing mural as the backdrop.



The mural on the east wall of the City Office building adds color and interest to the surrounding space. The flag pole provides an alternative height and scale in the space. Both focal points are a testament to community pride.



Memorial plaque from the existing flag pole.



These mosaic planters are another existing form of art located outside the Lied Imperial Public Library.



Gateway entry signage interacts with both the vehicular and pedestrian zones.

Gateway Entry Sign

A gateway entrance sign informs visitors they are entering a specific place. It is an effective method of attention grabbing and space making for a City Square. The sign incorporates the materials of the existing buildings and dark metal to complement the proposed site furniture. The new gateway entry sign should incorporate the branding for the City Square and fit the overall design theme.

Adding signage on any highway can be difficult as there are many design and placement regulations to protect visibility for vehicular traffic. The final conceptual design proposes a gateway entry sign which is slightly removed from the highway. It can still attract the attention of vehicular traffic, but also interacts with the pedestrian pathway in the frontage zone. This locates the sign on the City’s property, not in the highway right-of-way. This placement gives more flexibility for sign design and size, which results in cost savings.

Gateway Entry Sign						
Engineer’s Opinion of Probable Construction Cost						
City Square - Imperial, Nebraska						
ITEM NO.	ITEM DESCRIPTION	ESTIMATED QUANTITY	UNIT	UNIT PRICE	TOTAL PRICE	
1	Mobilization	1	L.S.	\$4,000.00	\$4,000.00	
2	Foundation	1	L.S.	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	
3	Columns	1	L.S.	\$8,000.00	\$8,000.00	
4	Sign	1	L.S.	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00	
SUBTOTAL					\$37,000.00	
Contingency (15%)					\$5,600.00	
Construction Subtotal					\$42,600.00	
Design Engineering, Construction Services (20%)					\$8,500.00	
GATEWAY ENTRY SIGN TOTAL					\$52,000.00	

Source: Miller & Associates 1/2022.



Ice rink shown in design is based on an EZ Ice Pro Home Arena System product. (Image from <https://ezicerinks.com/>)

Portable Ice Rink

A concern was raised during public input sessions that the City Square would only be usable for a portion of the year. City staff suggested the addition of a seasonal ice rink. The ice rink would be installed and filled by the City in the winter months to add a cold weather function to the City Square. The existing Christmas display and additional lights could be used throughout the Square to enhance the ice-skating experience.

In the warmer months, the ice rink would be removed and stored. The open space where the rink was located would be available for “Movies in the Square” and “Smokin’ on Broadway” activities. This is a continuation of a preexisting use for this area. In the summer, movies are projected on the north exterior wall of the library building to create an outdoor theater.

Portable Ice Rink						
Engineer’s Opinion of Probable Construction Cost						
City Square - Imperial, Nebraska						
ITEM NO.	ITEM DESCRIPTION	ESTIMATED QUANTITY	UNIT	UNIT PRICE	TOTAL PRICE	
1	Mobilization	1	L.S.	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	
2	Gravel Pad	400	S.Y.	\$15.00	\$6,000.00	
3	Ice Rink	1	L.S.	\$7,500.00	\$7,500.00	
4	Initial Installation	1	L.S.	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	
5	Nets	1	L.S.	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	
SUBTOTAL					\$17,000.00	
Contingency (15%)					\$2,600.00	
Construction Subtotal					\$19,600.00	
Design Engineering, Construction Services (10%)					\$2,000.00	
PORTABLE ICE RINK TOTAL					\$21,600.00	

Source: Miller & Associates 1/2022.



Patio furniture shown in design is based on a DuMor product. (Product image below from <https://dumor.com>)

Patio Seating with Shade Structures

The patio seating and shade structures are located in the heart of the City Square. This area provides opportunity for both small and large group gatherings permanent table and chairs. It also provides highly desired shade during the hotter months. This would be a great amenity for the annual Smokin' on Broadway event.



Patio Seating with Shade Structures						
Engineer's Opinion of Probable Construction Cost						
City Square - Imperial, Nebraska						
ITEM NO.	ITEM DESCRIPTION	ESTIMATED QUANTITY	UNIT	UNIT PRICE	TOTAL PRICE	
1	Mobilization	1	L.S.	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	
2	Foundations	1	L.S.	\$7,500.00	\$7,500.00	
3	Colored Concrete Sidewalk (4")	1,800	S.F.	\$10.00	\$18,000.00	
4	Shade System	1	L.S.	\$35,000.00	\$35,000.00	
5	Tables/Chairs	7	EA.	\$4,500.00	\$31,500.00	
SUBTOTAL					\$97,000.00	
					Contingency (15%)	\$14,600.00
					Construction Subtotal	\$111,600.00
					Design Engineering, Construction Services (15%)	\$16,700.00
PATIO SEATING WITH SHADE STRUCTURES TOTAL					\$129,000.00	

Source: Miller & Associates 1/2022.

Kids' Zone

The City Square fulfills a need for public green space in the heart of Imperial. The need for an amenity focused on the younger residents of the community was a consistent theme during the public input process. The following three options were discussed and examined for the kids' zone:



*Example of splash pad in Mount Vernon, Ohio.
(Image from <https://www.nbcnews.com>)*

Splash Pad

The proposed splash pad would serve dual purpose as a fountain and interactive element. It would be a minimal design, utilizing ground spray features. The desire for a splash pad in Imperial was a reoccurring theme throughout the public input process. It received the third highest rating during the public input survey for amenities respondents wished to see in the City Square. However, other types of play areas were not an option for selection during the survey. There was concern during public input meetings about the cost of installing and maintaining a splash pad. Concern was also raised about wet children being around paper books in the library. A splash pad may be better suited for a different location in Imperial.



*Example of small playground feature.
(Image from <https://crs4rec.com>)*

Playground

A small playground would provide an amenity in the City Square which was focused on the younger residents of Imperial. The playground would help the City Square serve as a neighborhood park in the community. It would also promote interaction with the site. The playground would be compact, with limited features. This may limit the age group served by this amenity.

A cushioned surface is highly recommended underneath the playground area. This will help alleviate safety concerns due to the fall risk from playground equipment.



*Example of outdoor music play feature.
(Image from <https://crs4rec.com>)*

Music Play Feature

There are also options available for outdoor musical play features. Some of these products are even designed and tuned to function as quality musical instruments. A music feature in this location creates a balance with the bandstand proposed for the City Square. It adds an interactive element to the City Square which may appeals to multiple age groups. While the primary target for this amenity would be children, other age groups could also utilize the space for impromptu performances. This play feature is located at ground level which means there is no fall risk. A special ground material is not necessary with this feature.

Kids' Zone Option 1 - Splash Pad

Engineer's Opinion of Probable Construction Cost
City Square - Imperial, Nebraska

ITEM NO.	ITEM DESCRIPTION	ESTIMATED QUANTITY	UNIT	UNIT PRICE	TOTAL PRICE
1	Mobilization	1	L.S.	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
2	Colored Concrete Sidewalk (4")	400	S.F.	\$10.00	\$4,000.00
3	Splash Park Equipment	1	L.S.	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00
4	Installation	1	L.S.	\$30,000.00	\$30,000.00
5	Plumbing	1	L.S.	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
6	Electrical	1	L.S.	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00
SUBTOTAL					\$66,500.00
Contingency (15%)					\$10,000.00
Construction Subtotal					\$76,500.00
Design Engineering, Construction Services (20%)					\$15,300.00
SPLASH PAD TOTAL					\$92,000.00

Source: Miller & Associates 1/2022.

Kids' Zone Option 2 - Playground

Engineer's Opinion of Probable Construction Cost
City Square - Imperial, Nebraska

ITEM NO.	ITEM DESCRIPTION	ESTIMATED QUANTITY	UNIT	UNIT PRICE	TOTAL PRICE
1	Mobilization	1	L.S.	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
2	Equipment	1	L.S.	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00
3	Installation	1	L.S.	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00
SUBTOTAL					\$45,000.00
Contingency (15%)					\$6,800.00
Construction Subtotal					\$51,800.00
Design Engineering, Construction Services (15%)					\$7,800.00
PLAYGROUND TOTAL					\$60,000.00

Source: Miller & Associates 1/2022.

Kids' Zone Option 3 - Music Play Feature

Engineer's Opinion of Probable Construction Cost
City Square - Imperial, Nebraska

ITEM NO.	ITEM DESCRIPTION	ESTIMATED QUANTITY	UNIT	UNIT PRICE	TOTAL PRICE
1	Mobilization	1	L.S.	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
2	Colored Concrete Sidewalk (4")	400	S.F.	\$10.00	\$4,000.00
3	Outdoor Music Equipment	1	L.S.	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
4	Installation	1	L.S.	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
SUBTOTAL					\$29,000.00
Contingency (15%)					\$4,400.00
Construction Subtotal					\$33,400.00
Design Engineering, Construction Services (20%)					\$6,700.00
OUTDOOR MUSIC TOTAL					\$41,000.00

Source: Miller & Associates 1/2022.



Public restroom shown in design is based on a prefabricated building option for general size and design. Cost estimate assumes build-in-place for financial savings. (Spec below from <https://publicrestroomcompany.com/>)

Public Restroom

The need for a public access restroom was expressed during public input. A prefabricated design was used for precedent on this feature. This size of building would accommodate two, single stall restrooms and a storage/mechanical area. A CMU building constructed in place may be more financially feasible for the City. The Engineer’s Opinion of Probable Construction Cost shows a build-in-place option. It also includes an extension of the building to enclose the existing transformer on the site.



Public Restroom						
Engineer’s Opinion of Probable Construction Cost						
City Square - Imperial, Nebraska						
ITEM NO.	ITEM DESCRIPTION	ESTIMATED QUANTITY	UNIT	UNIT PRICE	TOTAL PRICE	
1	Mobilization	1	L.S.	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	
2	Foundation	1	L.S.	\$17,500.00	\$17,500.00	
3	CMU Building (550 SF)	1	L.S.	\$70,000.00	\$70,000.00	
4	Install	1	L.S.	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00	
5	Plumbing	1	L.S.	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00	
6	Electrical	1	L.S.	\$7,500.00	\$7,500.00	
SUBTOTAL					\$140,000.00	
Contingency (15%)					\$21,000.00	
Construction Subtotal					\$161,000.00	
Design Engineering, Construction Services (25%)					\$40,300.00	
PUBLIC RESTROOM TOTAL					\$202,000.00	

Source: Miller & Associates 1/2022.



Fire Pit with Seating

A small fire pit with seating provides a use for the evening hours in the City Square. The City will need to weigh liability concerns and determine when the fire pit would be in operation before installing this amenity. The Civic Plaza in Gering includes fire features and may be a good precedent for how the amenity functions.

This area could also be a small group gathering space with no fire element.



Fire feature at Civic Plaza in Gering, Nebraska.

Fire Pit with Seating						
Engineer's Opinion of Probable Construction Cost						
City Square - Imperial, Nebraska						
ITEM NO.	ITEM DESCRIPTION	ESTIMATED QUANTITY	UNIT	UNIT PRICE	TOTAL PRICE	
1	Mobilization	1	L.S.	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	
2	Landscape Rock and Fabric (4")	100	S.Y.	\$16.00	\$1,600.00	
3	Concrete Edger	550	L.F.	\$15.00	\$8,250.00	
4	Fire Pit	1	L.S.	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	
5	Furniture (Adirondack Chairs)	8	EA.	\$2,000.00	\$16,000.00	
6	Installation	1	L.S.	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00	
				SUBTOTAL	\$35,350.00	
				Contingency (15%)	\$5,300.00	
				Construction Subtotal	\$40,650.00	
				Design Engineering, Construction Services (10%)	\$4,100.00	
				FIRE PIT TOTAL	\$45,000.00	

Source: Miller & Associates 1/2022.



*Bandstand in Telford, England.
(Image from <https://www.tripadvisor.com>)*



*Gazebo on University of Utah's campus.
(Image from <https://www.tripadvisor.com>)*

Raised Bandstand

Bandstands are a staple in town square across the Midwest. Their historical significance extends even farther back to public parks in Europe. For these reasons, bandstands and gazebos are tied to ideas of gathering and community. This will help shape the atmosphere of Imperial's City Square.

A bandstand placed on a raised platform will function as a focal point, drawing people from the highway frontage area to the main activity hub in the City Square.

A raised bandstand would provide a permanent stage area for events at the City Square like Smokin' on Broadway or a farmers' market. This would allow for concerts and outdoor entertainment throughout the summer. In addition to outdoor concerts, a bandstand would be an additional shade structure in the City Square. Shade structures were a highly desired amenity throughout the public input process. The bandstand could also be rented out for other events like weddings and reunion gatherings.

Raised Bandstand						
Engineer's Opinion of Probable Construction Cost						
City Square - Imperial, Nebraska						
ITEM NO.	ITEM DESCRIPTION	ESTIMATED QUANTITY	UNIT	UNIT PRICE	TOTAL PRICE	
1	Mobilization	1	L.S.	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	
2	Concrete Foundation/Slab	80	S.Y.	\$200.00	\$16,000.00	
3	Concrete Sidewalk (4")	700	S.F.	\$7.00	\$4,900.00	
4	Gazebo	1	L.S.	\$35,000.00	\$35,000.00	
5	Furniture	1	L.S.	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	
6	Electrical	1	L.S.	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	
SUBTOTAL					\$70,900.00	
Contingency (15%)					\$10,600.00	
Construction Subtotal					\$81,500.00	
Design Engineering, Construction Services (25%)					\$20,400.00	
RAISED BANDSTAND TOTAL					\$102,000.00	

Source: Miller & Associates 1/2022.



*Car Canopy shown in design is based on a Carport Structures Corporation product.
(Image from <https://www.carportstructures.com>)*

Electric Vehicle Chargers and Solar Power Car Canopy

As the population moves toward more sustainable energy practices and technology advances, the number of electric vehicles (EV) rises. The Global EV Outlook is an annual publication released by the International Energy Agency (IEA). It combines historical analysis with projections to 2030 to examine key aspects of EVs. The 2020 report states “Electric Cars, which accounted for 2.6% of global car sales and about 1% of global car stock in 2019, registered a 40% year-on-year increase.

The number of charging stations is growing along with the number of vehicles owned in Nebraska. Charging stations are needed in more locations to increase accessibility for these vehicles. A level 2 EV charging station reaches full charge in 8 hours but requires less power than stronger models. The City could explore the installation of solar powered charging stations to increase accessibility for EV owners while limiting the energy burden for the City. Smaller scale electrical outlets powered with solar energy should also be examined by the City.

Electric Vehicle Chargers and Solar Power Car Canopy

Engineer's Opinion of Probable Construction Cost
City Square - Imperial, Nebraska

ITEM NO.	ITEM DESCRIPTION	ESTIMATED QUANTITY	UNIT	UNIT PRICE	TOTAL PRICE
1	Mobilization	1	L.S.	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
2	Foundation	1	L.S.	\$7,500.00	\$7,500.00
3	Carport	1	L.S.	\$65,000.00	\$65,000.00
4	Installation	1	L.S.	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
5	Solar Panels and Battery Bank Station	1	L.S.	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00
6	Electrical	1	L.S.	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00
7	Level 2 EV Charging Station (240V)	3	EA.	\$5,000.00	\$15,000.00
SUBTOTAL					\$177,500.00
Contingency (25%)					\$44,400.00
Construction Subtotal					\$221,900.00
Design Engineering, Construction Services (20%)					\$44,400.00
EV CHARGERS AND SOLAR POWER CAR CANOPY TOTAL					\$267,000.00

Source: Miller & Associates 1/2022.

IMPLEMENTATION

Engineer's Opinion of Probable Construction Cost Summary

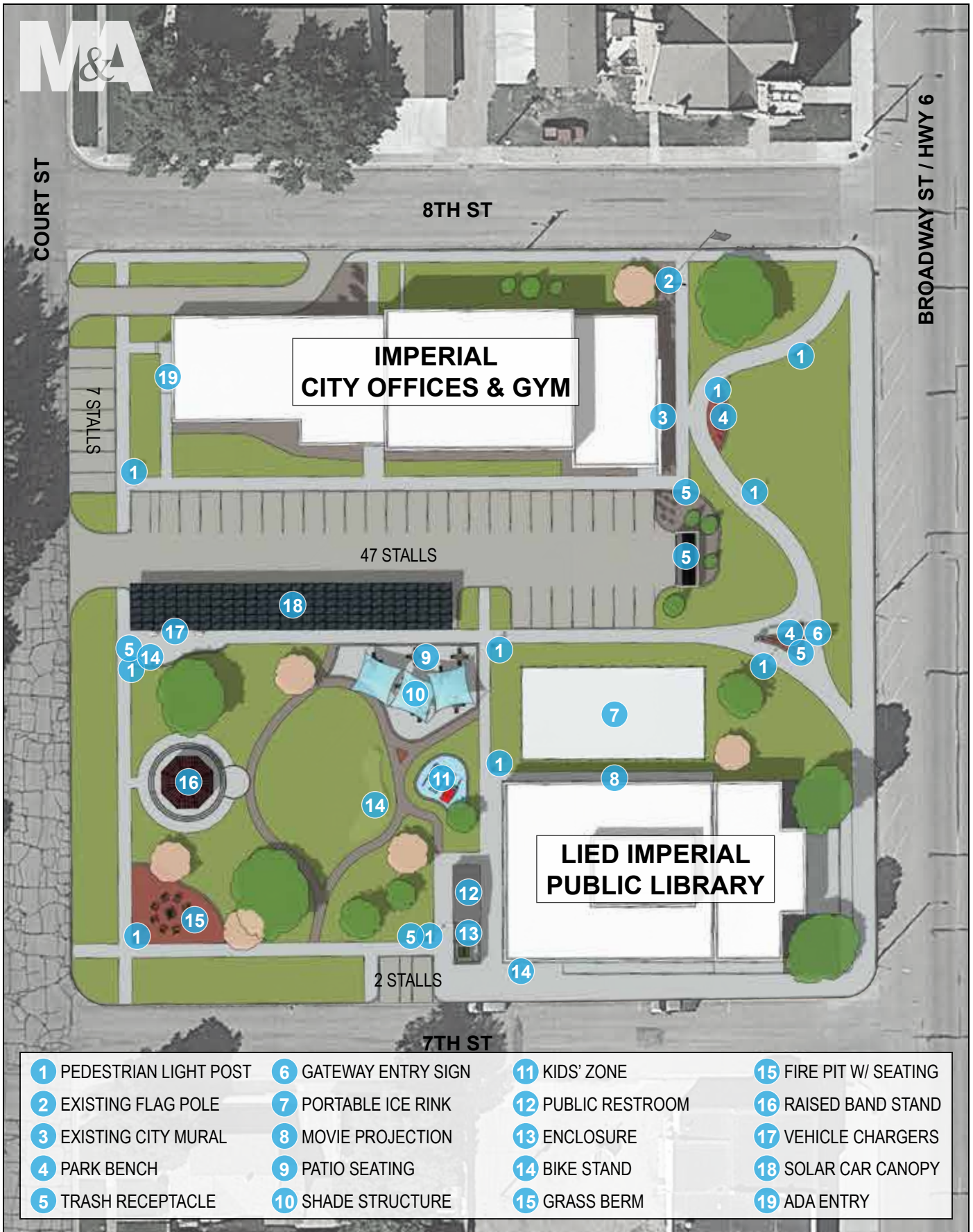
The final conceptual design for Imperial's City Square includes many different opportunities for gathering and entertainment. While the most economical approach is to complete the entire project in one phase, this may not be financially feasible for the City. Therefore, the Engineer's Opinion of Probable Construction Costs divides the estimates into smaller portions shown on the "Conceptual Site Plan". The following estimates were completed in January 2022. Cost estimates may alter as construction prices increase and decrease over time.

The Engineer's Opinion of Probable Construction Cost for Imperial's City Square project is based on the proposed improvements outlined in this feasibility study. These improvements were shaped directly from public input and analysis of the existing site conditions. Based on current construction costs, the Engineer's Opinion of Probable Construction Cost is approximately \$1.64 million. This amount may vary according to changing construction prices.

Engineer's Opinion of Probable Construction Cost City Square - Imperial, Nebraska		
ITEM NO.	ITEM DESCRIPTION	TOTAL PRICE
1	Sitework	\$780,000.00
2	Gateway Entry Sign	\$52,000.00
3	Portable Ice Rink	\$21,600.00
4	Patio Seating with Shade Structure	\$129,000.00
7	Kids' Zone Option 3 - Music Play Feature	\$41,000.00
8	Public Restroom	\$202,000.00
9	Fire Pit with Seating	\$45,000.00
10	Raised Bandstand	\$102,000.00
11	Electric Vehicle Chargers and Solar Power Car Canopy	\$267,000.00
GRAND TOTAL		\$1,639,600.00

Source: Miller & Associates 1/2022.

The cost may also vary with the addition and subtraction of different amenities. For example, the above total includes the installation of a Music Play Feature. If the City determines a playground or splash pad is better suited for the City Square project, this will raise the overall project cost. There will also be fiscal benefit to completing more portions of the project in one phase. This will help lower mobilization costs and other costs associated with the projects.



Background aerial from Google Earth.

Conceptual Site Plan
Imperial, Nebraska

Funding Opportunities

The following is a list of specialized funding sources related to Imperial's City Square project. Many of these funding sources have applicability requirements as well as guidelines for the types of projects. The funding sources and techniques found on the following pages are examples of funding options related to the City Square project. Pairing different funding sources may be necessary to meet the City's goals. Not all of these options will fit the current City Square project; therefore, funding sources should be analyzed to determine feasibility for the project and for the City.

Community Development Civic and Community Center Financing Fund

<https://opportunity.nebraska.gov/programs/community/cccff/>

The Civic and Community Center Financing Fund (CCCFF) is awarded to Nebraska municipalities and administered by the Nebraska Department of Economic Development (NDED). The competitive, CCCFF grants are awarded annually to help communities improve the quality of life for the residents they serve. Applicable projects must be available for the public and located within the official boundaries of the community. Community facilities including libraries, recreation and wellness centers, gathering spaces, convention centers, town squares, and cultural centers may be constructed or improved with CCCFF funds.

Nebraska municipalities must own at least fifty percent of the facility and may apply for one of two grant types in a single program year – Planning or Construction. CCCFF grant funds cannot account for more than fifty percent of the total project costs. The Planning grant is available for \$3,000 to \$15,000. The planning process includes data gathering and analysis, a building evaluation, citizen participation, concept development, and short- and long-term goals. The planning process helps municipalities determine how the funds will be spent.

Construction grants are available for a minimum \$15,000. The grant maximum varies by year. The current grant maximum for Capital Construction projects is either \$375,000 (Schedule A) or \$562,000 (Schedule B). The CCCFF Program is funded through "turnback taxes" associated with large arenas and convention centers in Omaha, Lincoln, and Ralston. Due to the decreased revenue caused by the coronavirus pandemic, the CCCFF program did not award Construction grants during the 2021 grant cycle. The 2022 funding cycle will follow Schedule A, with a maximum award of \$375,000 for municipalities with less than 10,000 residents.

A municipality may only receive one of each grant type in a two-year period. Given the competitive nature of the CCCFF program, a municipality can apply for the Construction grant more than once for a single project but may not be awarded both times.

Community Development Assistance Act

<https://opportunity.nebraska.gov/programs/community/cdaa/>

The Community Development Assistance Act (CDAA) is a state tax credit program administered through NDED. CDAA makes a forty percent tax credit available to businesses, corporations, insurance firms, financial institutions, and individuals who contribute cash or provide services and materials to an approved community betterment project. This includes employment training; human and medical services; physical facility and neighborhood development services; recreational and educational activities; and crime prevention projects.

Municipalities, Counties, Tribal Authorities, or Non-Profit Organizations are eligible to apply for CDAA tax credits through NDED. Upon approval, the organization can notify donors about the available tax credits. A maximum of \$50,000 in state tax credits can be approved per approved project, per fiscal year.

Deconstruction Grant

<http://deq.ne.gov/NDEQProg.nsf/OnWeb/DGP>

Deconstruction grants are administered by NDEQ. It is funded through Waste Reduction and Recycling Incentive Grant. There is an online application process found on the NDEQ website. The reimbursement is based on the percentage of materials reused or recycled.

General Revenue

General revenues, appropriated through the City's annual budget, can finance services, improvements, facilities, and development/improvement projects. These appropriations are separate from general revenues devoted to debt service on bonds. Common uses of general revenues in downtown development programs include funding staff and organizational expenses or funding projects that can be divided into smaller phases, such as streetscape improvements.

LB 840

<https://opportunity.nebraska.gov/programs/community/lb-840/>

The Local Option Municipal Economic Development Act (LB840, 1991) authorizes incorporated cities and villages to collect and appropriate local tax dollars, including sales and/or property taxes, for local economic development purposes. The Act requires a local economic development program plan, which outlines the basis for how the municipality's program operates. This includes the collection and expenditure of local tax dollars for economic development. Local voters must approve the plan.

Litter Reduction and Recycling Grant

<http://deq.ne.gov/NDEQProg.nsf/OnWeb/LRRGP>

The Litter Reduction and Recycling Grant program is administered by NDEQ. It has been in existence since 1979. Its purpose is to provide funds to support programs to reduce litter, provide education, and promote recycling in Nebraska.

Land and Water Conservation Fund

<http://outdoornebraska.gov/lwcf/>

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) was established in 1965 as a federal grant program through the National Parks Service within the Department of the Interior. The program is administered by Nebraska Game and Parks Commission. It has provided funding for numerous outdoor recreation projects in communities across the State. Cities, Villages, Counties, Natural Resource Districts, and other political subdivisions are eligible to apply for funding through the LWCF program.

The projects must be public outdoor recreation facilities. Examples of past projects include ballfields, swimming pools, playgrounds, picnic shelters, and natural areas. LWCF is a reimbursement program. At least 50 percent of the project must be secured and paid for by the applicant. The required match may derive from cash, private donations, taxes, bequests, or from other political subdivisions. The maximum time-period for an LWCF grant is five years, with the recommended initial project period being three years from the time of approval.

Revenue Bonds

Revenue bonds are debt instruments which are repaid fully or in part from revenues generated by the project or by other associated revenue sources. Revenue bonds are not typically secured by community credit.

USDA Community Facility Programs

<http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/all-programs/community-facilities-programs>

Public bodies, non-profit organizations and federally recognized American Indian Tribes can use the funds to construct, expand or improve facilities that provide health care, education, public safety, and public services. Projects include fire and rescue stations, City and town halls, health care clinics, hospitals, adult and childcare centers, assisted living facilities, rehabilitation centers, public buildings, schools, libraries, and many other community-based initiatives. Financing may also cover the costs for land acquisition, professional fees, and purchase of equipment. Funding types include loans and grants (direct and/or guaranteed), tribal college grants, economic impact initiative grants, and rural community development initiative grants.

IMPLEMENTATION

Electric Vehicle Charging GoEV Incentive

<https://nppd.energywisenebraskagoev.com/commercial-incentives/>

Nebraska Public Power District offers its commercial and wholesale utility customers a reimbursement program for the installation of electric vehicle (EV) chargers. The GoEV Incentive offers a 50 percent reimbursement for installation of the equipment necessary for an electric vehicle public charging station. Preapproval is required for verification of a benefit vs cost analysis. Additional conditions and considerations are included on the website.



*Example of Level 2 EV Charging Station (240V).
(Image from <https://www.ncelectriccooperatives.com>)*

Hike/Bike Trails Recreational Trail Program

<http://outdoornebraska.gov/rtp/>

The Recreational Trail Program (RTP) is a grant funded through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and is administered through the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission. Funding is specified for land acquisition for motorized and non-motorized trails, trail development, trail related facilities, and trail maintenance.

STBG

<https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/fastact/factsheets/transportationalternativesfs.cfm>

The Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) program funds transportation alternatives through set-aside dollars from the FAST Act. This funding source replaced the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). The Surface Transportation Block Grant helps fund smaller-scale transportation projects like pedestrian and bicycle facilities, recreational trails, safe routes to school projects, community improvements like historic preservation and vegetation management, and environmental mitigation related to stormwater and habitat connectivity.

Private and Foundation Philanthropy

Private philanthropy can be a critical component to a public improvement project. Opportunities for appropriate recognition or commemoration should be available. An online catalog could be created with wish list items for different amenities. Donors could purchase benches, trees, or portions of larger amenities like play equipment. The City could also consider an area for engraved pavers to thank donors for their contributions.

Beyond local resources, there are many financial resources available throughout the State of Nebraska. The Foundation Resource Directory is available through the Nebraska Department of Economic Development. It contains contact information and application requirements for potential grants available in Nebraska. Many of the projects outlined in this Feasibility Study may be eligible for funding through these resources.



Example of hike/bike trail in Kearney, Nebraska.



*“Life Still” by Michael Fluent. Part of the 2021 Sculpture Walk in Norfolk, Nebraska.
(Image from <https://visitnorfolkne.com>)*

Public Art

Nebraska Arts Council

<https://www.artsCouncil.nebraska.gov/>

There are several grants available through the Nebraska Arts Council to help communities increase public access to the arts. Grants for the general public provide funding for exhibitions, performances, poetry readings, or development of new artworks. The Nebraska Creative District Program treats the arts as an economic driver for urban and rural communities alike. Micro grants are also available to assist community- or artist-led art projects for the benefit of the community.

Nebraska Cultural Endowment

<https://nebraskaculturalendowment.org/>

The Nebraska Cultural Endowment is a nonprofit corporation aimed at sustaining Nebraska as a vibrant and culturally significant state. The corporation raises private endowment contributions, matched by public investment, to support arts & humanities programming statewide.



*Example of car canopy with solar panels.
(Image from <https://preformed.com>)*

Solar Power

Green Watts for Good

<https://www.nebraskansforsolar.org/green-watts-for-good/>

Nebraskans for Solar sponsors a program called “Green Watts for Good”. Through this program, Nebraskans for Solar partners with Nebraska food pantries, homeless shelters, children’s homes, and other nonprofit organizations that focus on food and housing security to support the installation of photovoltaic (PV) projects for these organizations.

We partner on the installation of photovoltaic (PV) projects with Nebraska food pantries, homeless shelters, children’s homes, and other nonprofit organizations that focus on food and housing security in our communities.

Public Power Incentives

<https://mean.nmppenergy.org/>

There are many incentives available for installing a photovoltaic (PV) system. Many incentives depend on system size and customer type. Consulting with the local electric utility representative and potential PV contractor will help take advantage of any federal, state, or local incentives.

The City of Imperial purchases power from Imperial Public Power District, which is a member of the Municipal Energy Agency of Nebraska (MEAN). Nebraska Municipal Power Pool (NMPP) Energy is a coalition of four organizations, MEAN included, serving nearly 200 Midwest and Rocky Mountain communities. NMPP offers funding for innovative energy projects through their Energy Research & Development Fund (ERDF).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The proposed City Square project is in the heart of Imperial, on the northern end of the Downtown District. The proposed project would fill a need for public green space in this portion of the community. While Imperial has a strong recreation system with an array of amenities, the recreational amenities are primarily located on the outer edges of the community.

The City Square would enhance existing civic services and better serve residents' needs. Many of the amenities proposed for the City Square project are in direct response to desires voiced during the public input process. People want to live in a place where they feel heard, understood, and valued. They also want to know the money they are spending in their community is making the community a better place to live. Building the City Square to fit the community's vision will prove the City's support for its residents. It will also help city leaders continue to improve the quality of life in Imperial. This will not only help retain existing residents, it will also help attract new residents to the community.

According to population trends, the City of Imperial currently has a stationary population. To continue growing the community, the City should focus on attracting young families. Imperial's strong school system is a great way to attract young families. An additional outdoor play feature in the middle of the community would also help these efforts.

A powerful sense of community is apparent in Imperial. Existing events give community members a chance to strengthen these bonds. Smokin' on Broadway is an annual event hosted at the proposed project site. The event attracts many visitors from outside of the community with big-name musical performances and all-day entertainment. With a new City Square, this event could expand beyond the constraints of the current site. It could also be used to highlight the community's assets to potential residents and visitors.

After reviewing the content of this Feasibility Study, community leaders should review the future growth and development goals found in the City of Imperial Comprehensive Plan to help drive any decisions. The City Square project would improve an eyesore in the community and provide a desired amenity to Imperial's residents. The project area is already being used in various ways throughout the year. It is time for the space to become more functional and support these existing uses.

This Feasibility Study proves the ongoing use of the project area and the public support for developing a City Square. The Capital Construction grant through Nebraska Department of Economic Development's (NDED's) Civic and Community Center Financing Fund (CCCFF) can help make the conceptual designs proposed in this Study a reality. However, the grant does require a one-to-one match. If the City chooses to apply for funds, the local matching funds will need to be in place before the application is submitted; this can be in the form of pledges if necessary.

Based on the selected conceptual designs, the Engineer's Opinion of Probable Construction Costs estimates a total project budget of \$1.64 million for the City Square project. Imperial's total population is less than 10,000 residents. Therefore, the maximum Capital Construction grant funds available through CCCFF for the 2022 application cycle is \$375,000.

It is possible that the available funds per project for future cycles will increase. The CCCFF program uses two schedules for available Capital Construction funds – Schedule A is \$375,000; Schedule B is \$562,000. The available funds depend on the overall balance of the CCCFF program, which is funded through "turnback taxes". If more concerts and events are scheduled and attended at the large venues that feed the fund, then more funds should be available for applicants.

With the larger schedule, the maximum amount available through the CCCFF program is \$562,000 with a one-to-one match. This funds a \$1.1 million dollar project. If they wish to complete the full project, city leaders will need to secure more than 50% of the estimated project cost. The project can be divided into phases and postponing the installation of certain amenities.

While it is possible to apply for the Construction grant multiple times for the same project, if the applications are not within the same two-year cycle, the competitive nature of the program makes the award of multiple CCCFF Construction grants for the same project highly unlikely. If possible, it is recommended to apply for the maximum funds available through the CCCFF program. The City may also need to examine other options for funding assistance to make the vision for Imperial's City Square a reality.

APPENDIX A: PAST PROJECT DRAWINGS

8TH STREET

CP
N: 76827.701
E: 126406.626
ELEV. = 3284.56

CITY HALL

N: 76795.91
E: 126357.26

N: 76795.63
E: 126399.02

41.59'

101.23'

60' R.O.W.

N: 76694.66
E: 126357.59

78.79'

N: 76694.53
E: 126436.37

N: 76664.53
E: 126436.32

N: 76664.48
E: 126466.32

CP
N: 76687.788
E: 126354.215
ELEV. = 3285.91

COURT STREET

A47.12'
R30.00'

9' TYP.

18'

9' TYP.

20'

20'

24'

152.01'

N: 76600.45
E: 126534.55

81.62'

6' TYP.

18'

72.37'

N: 76527.98
E: 126534.55

N: 76527.94
E: 126520.86

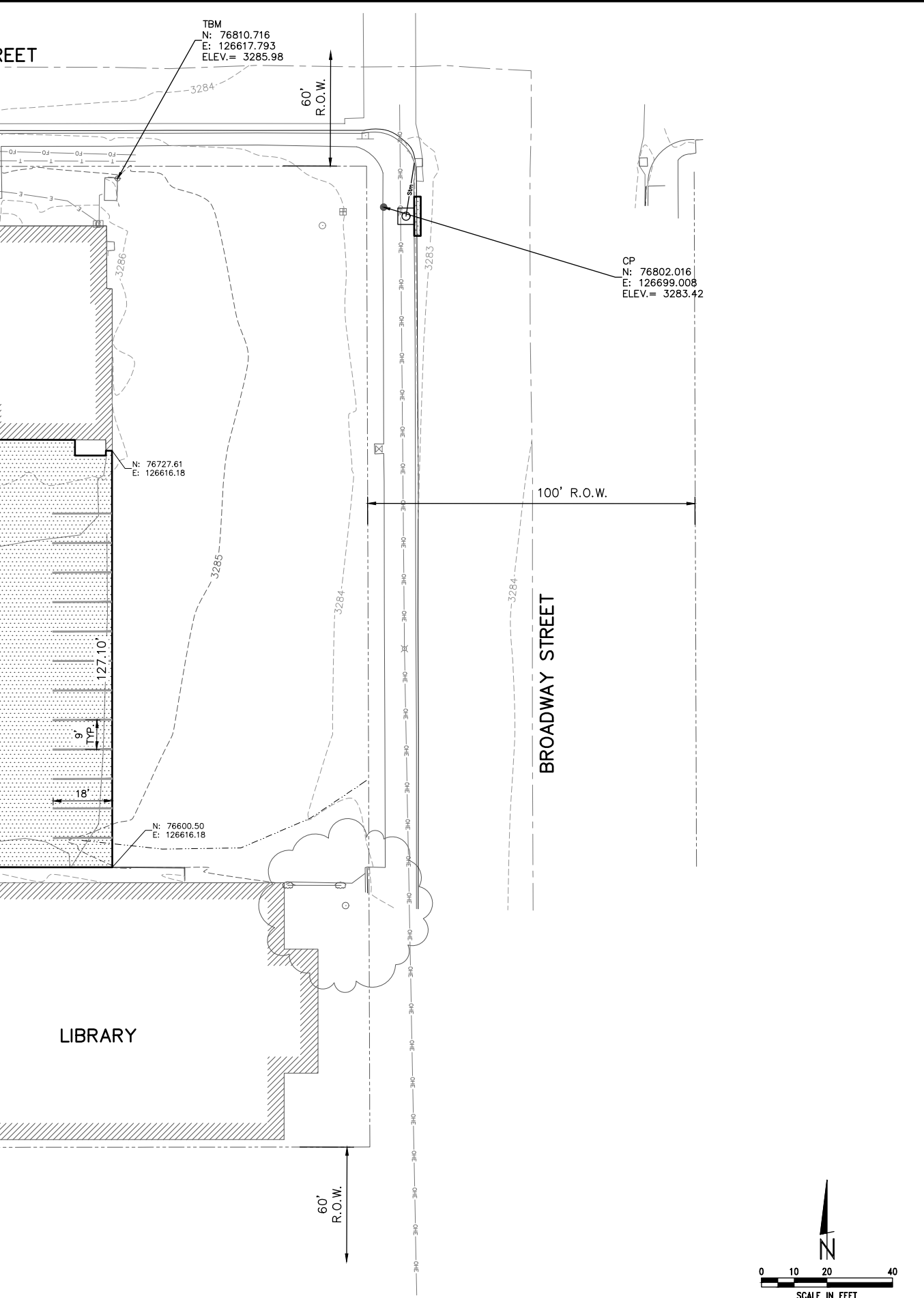
N: 76512.46
E: 126466.07

N: 76512.56
E: 126513.21

47.14'

17.18'

7TH STREET



REVISIONS	BY



Miller & Associates
 Consulting Engineers, P.C.
 Kearney, NE (308) 234-6456
 McCook, NE (308) 345-3710

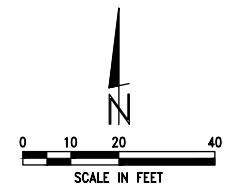
IMPERIAL CITY HALL PARKING LOT IMPROVEMENTS
GEOMETRICS PLAN
 IMPERIAL, NEBRASKA

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VERIFY SCALES

BAR IS ONE INCH ON ORIGINAL DRAWING
 0 1"
 IF NOT ONE INCH ON THIS SHEET, ADJUST SCALES ACCORDINGLY.

SCALE:	
PROJECT NO.	159-A1-012-17
DATE:	NOVEMBER, 2017
FIELD BOOK	M&A DWG NO. 33208
DRAWN BY:	APRVD BY:
ILS	
SHEET	



CP
N: 76827.701
E: 126406.626
ELEV. = 3284.56

8TH STREET

N: 76795.91
E: 126357.26

N: 76795.63
E: 126399.02

CITY HALL

60' R.O.W.

N: 76694.66
E: 126357.59

N: 76694.53
E: 126436.37

CP
N: 76687.788
E: 126354.215
ELEV. = 3285.91

N: 76664.53
E: 126436.32

N: 76664.48
E: 126466.32

COURT STREET

N: 76600.45
E: 126534.55

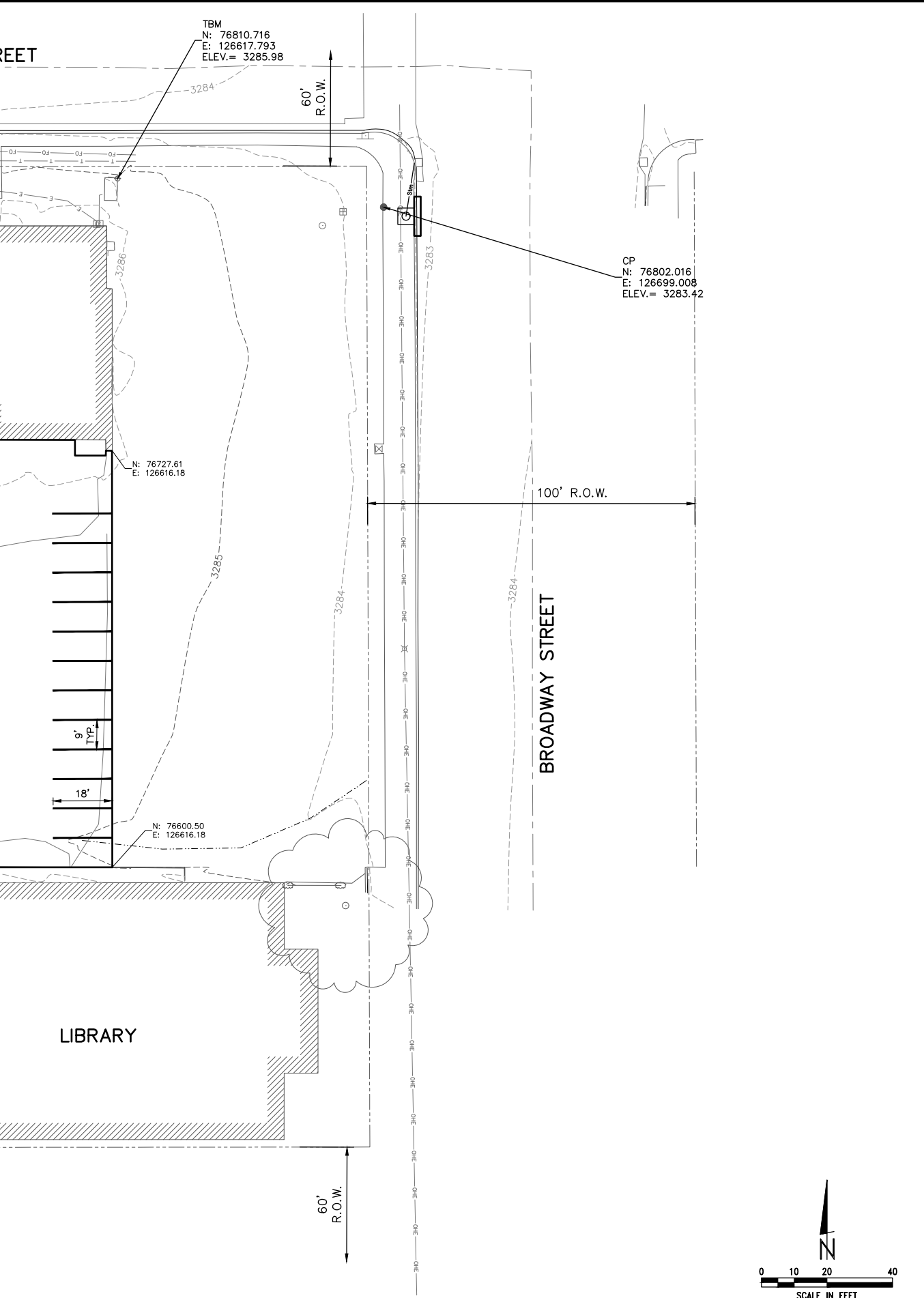
N: 76527.98
E: 126534.55

N: 76527.94
E: 126520.86

N: 76512.46
E: 126466.07

N: 76512.56
E: 126513.21

7TH STREET



REVISIONS	BY




Miller & Associates
 Consulting Engineers, P.C.
 Kearney, NE (308) 234-6456
 McCook, NE (308) 345-3710

IMPERIAL CITY HALL PARKING LOT IMPROVEMENTS
STRIPING PLAN
 IMPERIAL, NEBRASKA

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VERIFY SCALES

BAR IS ONE INCH ON ORIGINAL DRAWING
 0  1"
 IF NOT ONE INCH ON THIS SHEET, ADJUST SCALES ACCORDINGLY.

SCALE:	
PROJECT NO.	159-A1-012-17
DATE:	NOVEMBER, 2017
FIELD BOOK	M&A DWG NO. 33208
DRAWN BY:	APRVD BY:
SHEET	

Engineer's Opinion of Probable Construction Cost

City Hall Parking Lot

Imperial, Nebraska

M&A Job No. - 159-A1-012

Item No.	Item Description	Estimated Quantity	Unit	Unit Price	Total Price
1	Mobilization	1	L.S.	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00
2	Remove and Haul Pavement	3400	S.Y	\$ 8.00	\$ 27,200.00
3	Remove and Haul Inlet	1	Each	\$ 400.00	\$ 400.00
4	Construct P.C. Concrete Pavement, 7" Thick, Type 47B-3500	4100	S.Y	\$ 50.00	\$ 205,000.00
5	Construct Integral Curb and Gutter	300	L.F.	\$ 3.00	\$ 900.00
6	Overexcavate Unsuitable Subgrade Material and Replace with Crushed Concrete (if required)	150	C.Y.	\$ 60.00	\$ 9,000.00
7	Earthwork Measured As Excavation, Established Quantity (E.Q.)	200	C.Y.	\$ 15.00	\$ 3,000.00
8	Construct Curb Inlet	1	Each	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 4,000.00
9	Furnish and Install 15" RCP Storm Pipe	50	L.F.	\$ 45.00	\$ 2,250.00
10	Furnish and Install Erosion Control	1	L.S.	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
11	Furnish & Apply Seeding, Mulch, & Fertilizer	0.2	Acres	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 800.00
SUBTOTAL					\$ 263,550.00
Misc & Contingency (20%)					\$ 52,710.00
TOTAL ESTIMATED CONSTRUCTION COST					\$ 316,260.00
Design and Construction Engineering (15%)					\$ 47,439.00
TOTAL ESTIMATED CONSTRUCTION COST					\$ 363,699.00

Prepared By: Miller & Associates, Consulting Engineers P.C., 12/27/2017



Conceptual Shade Structures and Bandshell
Perspective from South
Imperial, Nebraska

Proposed by:

Miller & Associates
 CONSULTING ENGINEERS, P.C.



**Conceptual Shade Structures and Bandshell
Elevated Perspective from Northeast**
Imperial, Nebraska

Proposed by:
MA
Miller & Associates
CONSULTING ENGINEERS, P.C.



**Conceptual Shade Structures and Bandshell
Elevated Perspective from Southeast**
Imperial, Nebraska

Proposed by:
MA
Miller & Associates
CONSULTING ENGINEERS, P.C.

APPENDIX B: NOTES FROM INPUT MEETINGS

The City of Imperial and Miller & Associates present

Imperial

2022

CITY SQUARE

CCCF FEASIBILITY STUDY

PUBLIC INPUT MEETING

TUES. JULY 13 | 6:30pm

@ Lied Imperial Public Library

Community Vision • Desired Amenities • Potential Improvements

City of Imperial
Public Input Meeting
City Square CCCFF Feasibility Study
July 13th, 2021

Name

Tyler Ribbens
Craig Loeffler
Jenna
Jan Graham
Jim GRAHAM
Elena Johnson
Beth Fella
Paul Elliott
Jul Krueger
Dana Archibald
Doug Gaswick
Russ Perkinson
Alan Strand

City of Imperial
NOTES – Public Input Meeting
City Square CCCFF Feasibility Study
July 13th, 2021

Date: 7/13/2021

Time: 6:30 – 7:30 pm

Location: Lied Imperial Public Library

Presenter: Jennie Kozal, Community Planner at Miller & Associates

Attendees: See Attached Sign-In Sheet

Presentation:

- Grant Basics
- Project Approach
- Community Profile
- City Square
- Discussion
- Moving Forward

Discussion:

2018 Proposed Improvements

- Paved Parking Lot
- Added Shade Structure and Stage
- Attendees' Reactions:
 - Feels Sterile
 - Parking should be downsized
 - Parking currently cuts space in two
 - Liked the shade structures

Current Use

- Library Events
 - Launch Rockets
 - Science Experiments
 - Outdoor Movie Theater
- Parking Lot
 - Full During Events at Library and City Gym
 - Weddings
 - Fundraisers
 - Ducks Unlimited
 - Only access to gym is on south side of building
 - Smokin' on Broadway
 - Vendors are all set up in parking lot
 - Farmers' Market

Current Deficiencies

- Stormwater Drainage
- Potholes
- Aesthetics
- Bright Highway Lighting
- Proximity to Highway (Safety)

Wishlist for City Square

- Pedestrian Focused
- Quiet Activities (Residential Area)
- Flexibility (High Priority)
- Open Green Space
- Flower Garden
- Accessible Restrooms
- Fountain
- Public Art
- Vehicle Charging Stations
- Electrical Hookups
 - Outdoor Movies
 - Farmers' Market
 - Big Events
- Statement piece to draw people into space
 - Gateway Entry/Wayfinding
 - Walking Path
 - Garden
- Stormwater Drainage (maybe more natural solutions)
- Connection with Library (programming)
 - Rentable toys to use space
 - Small Play Features

Action Items:

M&A

- Send presentation to the newspaper
- Conceptual Designs and Draft Study
- Add Recreation System Connectivity to Next Meeting's Discussion

City of Imperial

- Steering Committee
- Market Survey

The City of Imperial and Miller & Associates present

Imperial

2022

CITY SQUARE

CCCCFF FEASIBILITY STUDY

PUBLIC INPUT MEETING

TUES. NOV 16 | 6:30pm
@ Lied Imperial Public Library

Survey Results • Conceptual Designs

City of Imperial
Public Input Meeting
City Square CCCFF Feasibility Study
November 16th, 2021

Name

Jan Strand
Julie Malm
Jan Graham
~~Becky Kuntze~~
Julie Gull
Cathy
Shawn Jaeger
Abby Cyboran
Avery Cyboran
Jim GRANHAM
Ed Dwyer
Jan Elliott
Rick Elliott
Carol Kunnemann
Danielle Haarberg

City of Imperial
NOTES – Public Input Meeting
City Square CCCFF Feasibility Study
November 16th, 2021

Date: 11/16/2021

Time: 6:30 – 8:30 pm

Location: Lied Imperial Public Library

Presenter: Jennie Kozal, Community Planner at Miller & Associates

Attendees: See Attached Sign-In Sheet

Presentation:

- 1st Meeting and Project Recap
- Public Input Survey Responses
- Existing Conditions
- Creating a Space
- Design Options
 - The Fountain Plaza
 - The Main Event
 - Gathering Spaces
- Discussion

Discussion:

The Fountain Plaza

- Main square with fountain is boring
- Liked the kids' water play area
 - This is great for families with young children
 - Older children don't really use
 - Liked the river play idea
 - Concern of having water play with the library
 - How does cost compare to other play options
 - Recirculating system or flow-through system
 - Looked at splash pad by pool previously and decided against it
- Could a water feature be by the highway to act as focal point?
- Is there seating? Add more seating areas throughout

The Main Event

- Concerned that the amphitheater would not have enough use to be worth it
- Park already has a natural area set up for an amphitheater
- Amphitheater seems massive and expensive
- Can't picture other events there besides concerts
- A tiered grass area would not accommodate free play
- Like the fire pit areas

APPENDIX C: PUBLIC INPUT SURVEY AND RESULTS

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Imperial **2022**
CITY SQUARE
CCCF FEASIBILITY STUDY

Please take our online survey
about Imperial's City Square.



<https://kwiksurveys.com/s/Sglz5ARc>

PUBLIC INPUT SURVEY – CITY SQUARE

The City of Imperial wishes to further develop the block containing the city offices and the Lied Imperial Public Library. This parking lot and green space is already used for several events throughout the year including the Chamber's Smokin' on Broadway event. The City was awarded a Civic and Community Center Financing Fund (CCCFF) grant through Nebraska Department of Economic Development to complete a Feasibility Study for improvements to the City Square.



The goals for this survey are to gauge public support for the project, plan for future use, and prioritize improvement goals. Please share your ideas about potential improvements to Imperial's City Square. You can also take the survey online at <https://kwiksurveys.com/s/Sglz5ARc> or using the QR code.

1. **Have you attended an event at the City Auditorium in the past year?** Yes No

If yes, please list the event(s) you have attended in the past year. _____

2. **What are the top 3 events you would like to see at the City Square in the future?**

- Art / Craft Fairs
- Concerts
- Farmers' Market
- Fundraisers
- Library Events
- Smokin' on Broadway
- Other (Please Specify) _____

3. **What are the top 3 amenities you would like to see at the City Square in the future?**

- Electrical Hookups
- Flower Garden
- Food Pantry
- Outdoor Lighting
- Performance Stage
- Public Restrooms
- Public Seating
- Shade Structures
- Splash Pad
- Other (Please Specify) _____

4. **Please rate the importance of the following improvements in the City Square by placing an 'x' in the corresponding box.**

	Very Unimportant	Unimportant	Neutral	Important	Very Important
ADA Accessibility					
ADA Bathrooms					
Downtown Connectivity					
Electrical Services					
Lighting					
New Paving					
Shade Structures					
Signage					



5. The City Square serves as an outdoor gathering space in Downtown Imperial. How important is the City Square to the quality of life for Imperial's residents?

- Very Unimportant
 Unimportant
 Neutral
 Important
 Very Important

6. Which funding opportunities are you most willing to support? Please check all that apply.

- Grant Funding
 Local Foundations
 Local Fundraising
 Municipal Bonding
 Private Donor
 Other (Please Specify) _____

7. Would you support a minor tax increase to fund on-going maintenance costs?

- Yes
 No

8. What is your home zip code? _____

9. What is your work zip code? _____

10. What is your gender? _____

11. What is your age?

- 19 years or younger
 20-39 years
 40-59 years
 60 years or older

12. Please indicate the number of people in each age group, who live in your home.

	1	2	3	4+	No People in Age Group
0 – 9 years	1	2	3	4+	-
10 – 19 years	1	2	3	4+	-
20 – 29 years	1	2	3	4+	-
30 – 39 years	1	2	3	4+	-
40 – 49 years	1	2	3	4+	-
50 – 59 years	1	2	3	4+	-
60 – 69 years	1	2	3	4+	-
70 years or older	1	2	3	4+	-

13. Do you have any additional comments regarding improvements to Imperial's City Square?

Thank you for completing this survey.

Your input is a valuable contribution to Imperial's Civic and Community Center Financing Fund (CCCCF) Feasibility Study. Please return your responses to the Imperial City Office by July 23rd, 2021.



RESPONSES

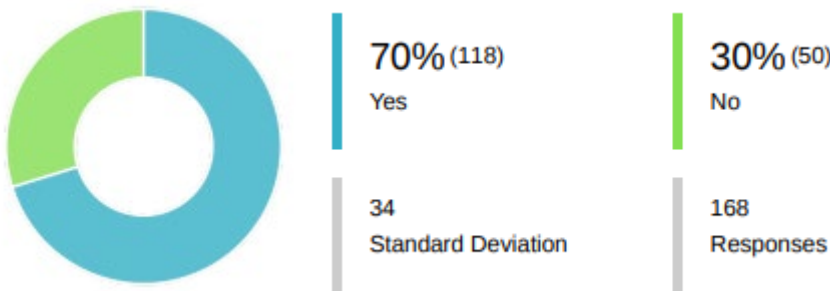
PUBLIC INPUT SURVEY – CITY SQUARE

The City of Imperial wishes to further develop the block containing the city offices and the Lied Imperial Public Library. This parking lot and green space is already used for several events throughout the year including the Chamber's Smokin' on Broadway event. The City was awarded a Civic and Community Center Financing Fund (CCCFF) grant through Nebraska Department of Economic Development to complete a Feasibility Study for improvements to the City Square.

The goals for this survey are to gauge public support for the project, plan for future use, and prioritize improvement goals. Please share your ideas about potential improvements to Imperial's City Square. You can also take the survey online at <https://kwiksurveys.com/s/Sglz5ARc> or using the QR code.



1. Have you attended an event at the City Auditorium in the past year?



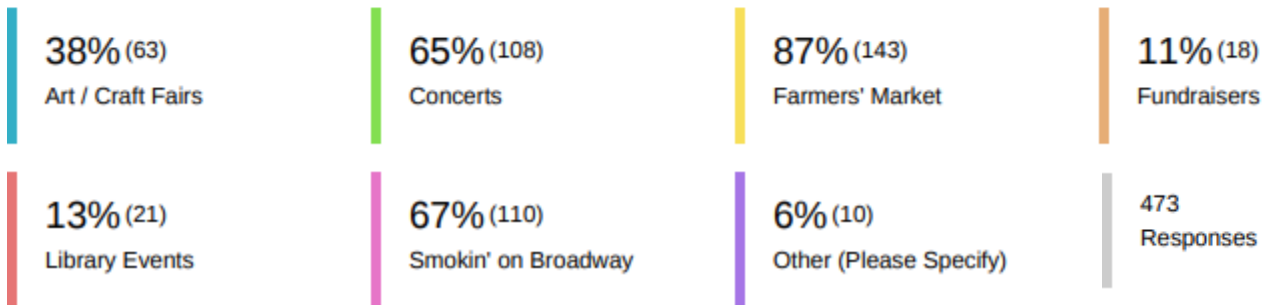
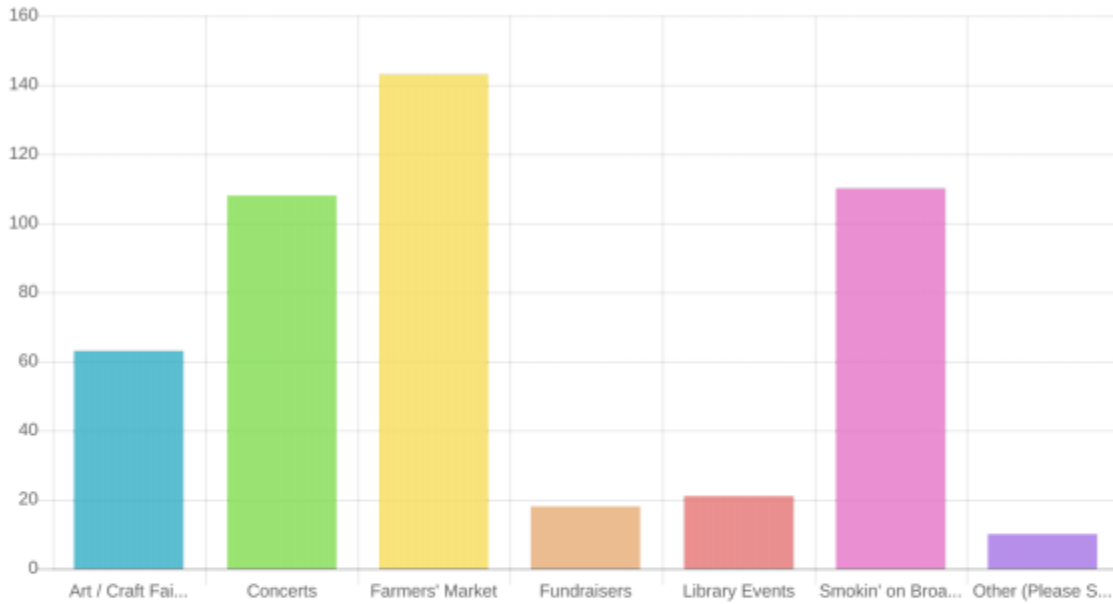
If yes, please list the event(s) you have attended in the past year.

- chili cookoff, blood drive, smokin', probably more
- chili cookoff
- Smokin on Broadway
- Meetings, Dinners
- Smokin on Broadway
- Smoking on Broadway
- Smokin on Broadway
- Smokin' on Broadway
- softball practice
- Smoking on Broadway
- country christmas
- Smokin on Broadway
- Smokin on B'dway
- Smokin on Broadway
- Smokin' on Broadway
- Smokin on Broadway, Farmers Markets
- Farmer market
- Smokin' on Broadway
- Smokin on Broadway
- Farmers Market
- Smoking on Broadway and Farmers Market
- Smokin in Broadway
- Smoking on Broadway
- Smoken on Broadway.
- Smokin' on Broadway
- Smokin on Broadway
- Smoking on Broadway. Farmers market.
- Smokin on broadway
- Smokin on Broadway and concert
- Smoking on Broadway
- Farmers market
- Smoke on Broadway
- Farmer's market
- Flea market, bbq, concerts



- Smokin on Broadway and Food for the Heartland food giveaways
- Farmers market
- Smokin on Broadway
- Farmers market
- Smokin on Broadway
- Farmer's market, Smokin' on Broadway
- Smokin on Broadway
- Smokin On Broadway
- Smoking on Broadway
- Smokin on Broadway
- Smokin' on Broadway, Chili Cook-off.
- Craft fair
- Smokin' on Broadway
- Smokin on Broadway, little boys bball, farmers market
- Smokin' on Broadway
- Farmers Market
- Smokin on Broadway , farmers market
- Smokin on Broadway
- would have but Covid year....
- Smokin' on Broadway
- Smoking on Broadway, Farmer's Market.
- Smokin on Broadway
- Little kids sports practice and smokin in Broadway
- Smoking on Broadway
- Smoking on Broadway
- Smoking on Broadway
- Smokin on Broadway Christmas tree (lights) Crafts
- Smokin on Broadway
- Smoking on Broadway, chili cookoff
- Smokin on Broadway
- Smokin on Broadway
- Smokin on Broadway
- Smoking on Broadway, Farmers Market
- Smokin on Broadway, Farmers Market
- Farmers Market
- Memorial Day Event
- Smokin on Broadway
- Smoking on Broadway, Farmers Market
- Chili cook off, Smokin on Broadway
- Smoking on Broadway
- Smoke on Broadway
- Smoking on Broadway
- Smokin on Broadway
- Smokin on Broadway Vendor fair
- Smokin on Broadway, Farmers Market
- Smokin on Broadway
- Smoking on Broadway
- Smoking on Broadway
- Smokin on Broadway
- Smoking on Broadway, Memorial Day Statue Dedication
- smokin on Broadway
- Farmers market, smoking on Broadway
- Smokin on Broadway
- Craft day
- Smoking on Broadway every year
- Smokin on Broadway, farmers market
- Smoking on Broadway, farmers market, art in the park
- Smokin on Broadway, Farmer's Market
- Smokin On Broadway
- Smokin on Broadway & movie night from the library
- Smoking on Broadway
- Smoking on Broadway
- Smokin' on Broadway, Parade of Lights
- Smokin on Broadway
- smokin on Broadway
- Smoking on Broadway
- Smokin on Broadway, Christmas event
- Smokin' on Broadway
- Smokin' On Broadway
- Smokin' on Broadway
- Magic show at Smokin on Broadway
- Smokin on Broadway
- N/A
- Smokin' on Broadway, Free Outdoor Movie at the Library

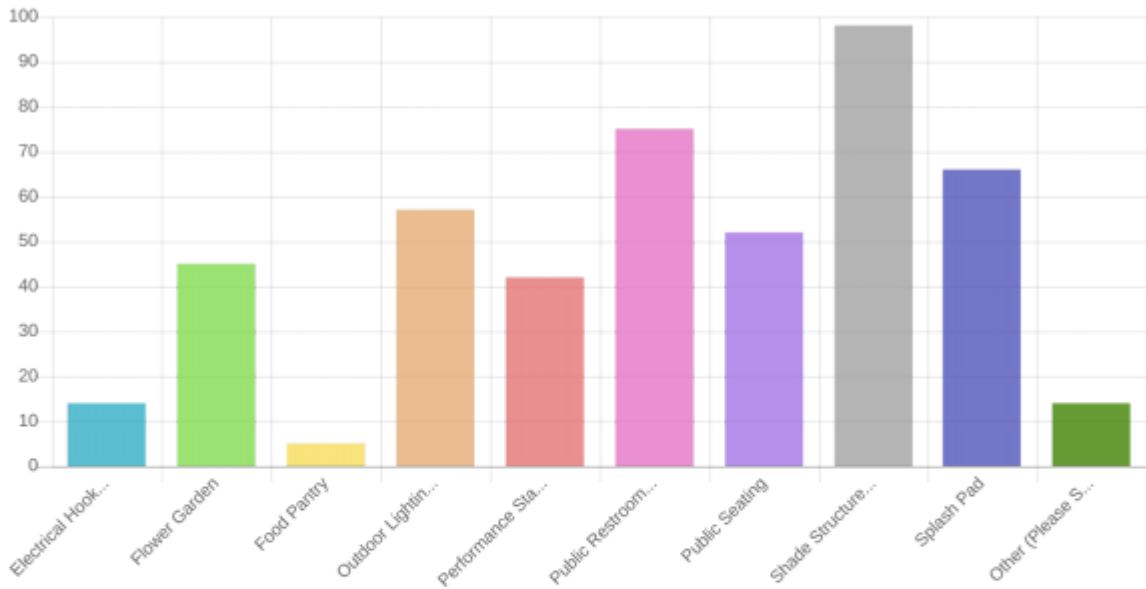
2. What are the top 3 events you would like to see at the City Square in the future?



Other (Please Specify)

- Possibly movies in the summer but not to compete with theatre.
- Splash pad
- Swap meet, different topics throughout the year
- Stuff for kids
- Community Events that highlight the City itself.
- None
- Don't care
- Fun events for kids!
- Comedy, Theatre, and other live performances.

3. What are the top 3 amenities you would like to see at the City Square in the future?



8% (14) Electrical Hookups	27% (45) Flower Garden	3% (5) Food Pantry	34% (57) Outdoor Lighting
25% (42) Performance Stage	45% (75) Public Restrooms	31% (52) Public Seating	59% (98) Shade Structures
40% (66) Splash Pad	8% (14) Other (Please Specify)	468 Responses	

Other (Please Specify)

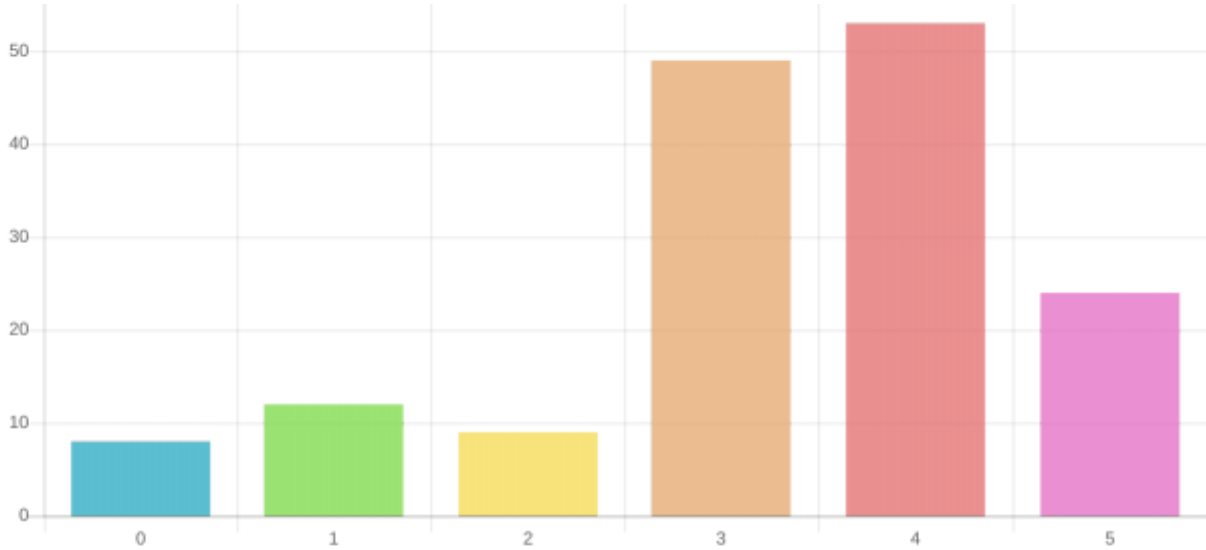
- I enjoyed seeing kids just playing and having fun at event during the concert going on to the east.
- Community garden plots!
- Shade structures would be my 3rd pick although anything built permanently could potentially limit how the area could be used. I don't think this is the best space for a splash pad, although I think it would be an awesome asset to the community possibly at the city park.
- More stuff for kids like a splash pad
- Splash pad!!!!
- more climate friendly grass being planted.
- Just a nice public space maybe with done table and a covered area... splash pad would be fun as would easy access to the

- gym/community space. We had the movie but how fun would it be to have an actual screen to maybe even have community events running on it throughout the week or fun messages.
- Large Gazebo. Can be used as a stage for music, weddings, family photos, announcers booth during city events or even visits with Santa after the light parade.
- None
- Underground sprinklers. Good grass that is weed free. Nice trees. Matching buildings.
- None
- Don't care
- None
- More casual seating

4. Please rate the importance of the following improvements in the City Square by placing an 'x' in the corresponding box.

	Very Unimportant	Unimportant	Neutral	Important	Very Important	Standard Deviation	Responses	Weighted Average
ADA Accessibility	11 (7%)	5 (3%)	44 (29%)	53 (35%)	37 (25%)	18.76	150	3.67 / 5
ADA Bathrooms	11 (7%)	3 (2%)	43 (28%)	51 (34%)	43 (28%)	19.33	151	3.74 / 5
Downtown Connectivity	9 (6%)	6 (4%)	50 (34%)	52 (35%)	31 (21%)	19.5	148	3.61 / 5
Electrical Services	10 (7%)	9 (6%)	51 (34%)	61 (41%)	18 (12%)	21.85	149	3.46 / 5
Lighting	8 (5%)	3 (2%)	22 (15%)	83 (56%)	33 (22%)	28.62	149	3.87 / 5
New Paving	9 (6%)	13 (9%)	38 (25%)	52 (35%)	38 (25%)	16.38	150	3.65 / 5
Shade Structures	10 (7%)	0 (0%)	11 (7%)	73 (48%)	59 (39%)	29.49	153	4.12 / 5
Signage	18 (12%)	19 (13%)	66 (45%)	38 (26%)	7 (5%)	20.75	148	2.98 / 5
								3.64 / 5

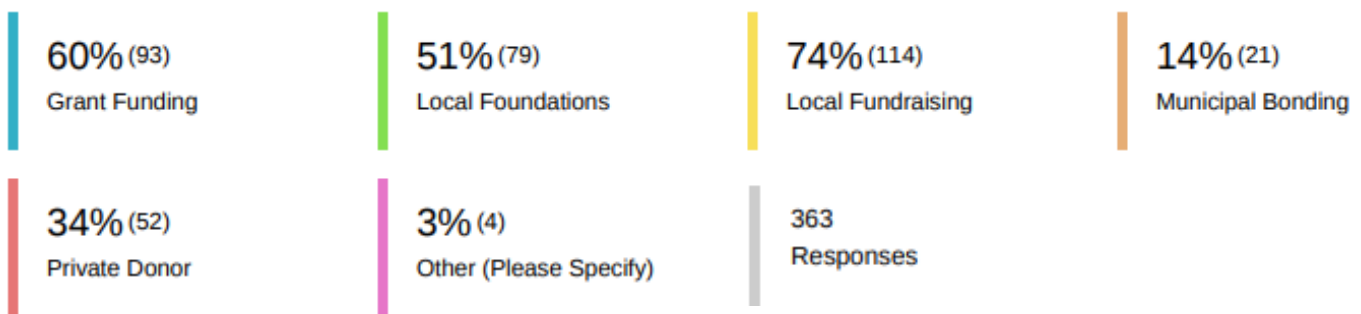
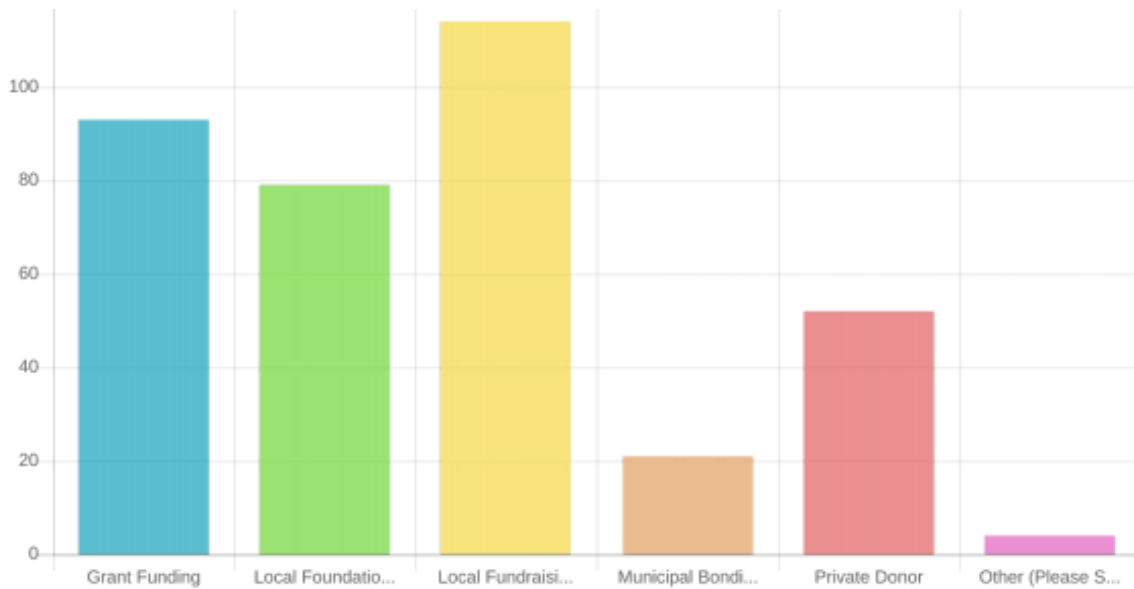
5. The City Square serves as an outdoor gathering space in Downtown Imperial. How important is the City Square to the quality of life for Imperial's residents?



	0	1	2	3	4	5	Standard Deviation	Responses	Weighted Average
Very Unimportant - Very Important	8 (5%)	12 (8%)	9 (6%)	49 (32%)	53 (34%)	24 (15%)	18.58	155	3.28 / 5
									3.28 / 5

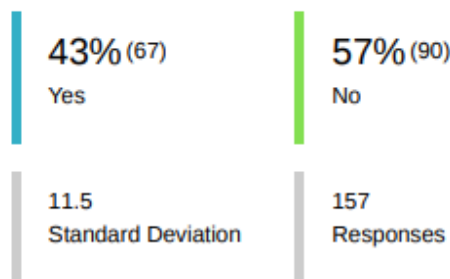


6. Which funding opportunities are you most willing to support? Please check all that apply.

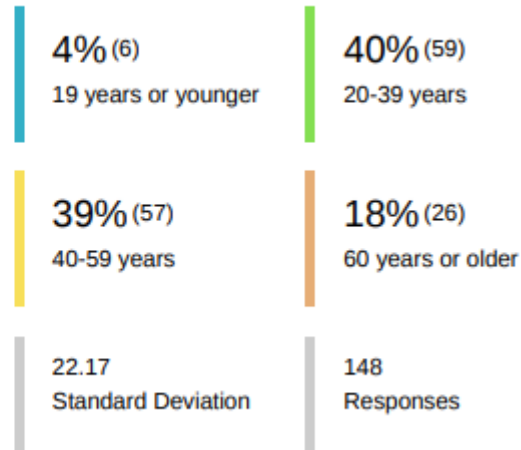
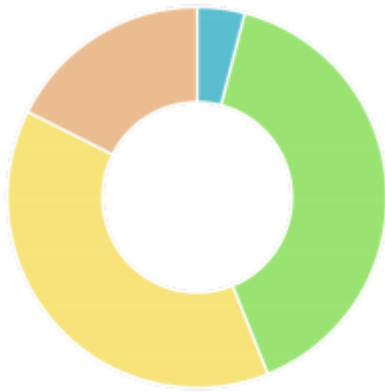


- I would be least likely to support bonding/taxes. I feel like the space can benefit our community with minimal cost, but rather more personal time investment (ie: If it was a community garden/farmers market, everyone would take a part to make it happen). Make it a community project! At some point, lighting/seating could be added but a solid plan for use needs to be formed first.
- Taxes are already too high.
- none
- None

7. Would you support a minor tax increase to fund on-going maintenance costs?



11. What is your age?



12. Please indicate the number of people in each age group, who live in your home.

↕	1	2	3	4+	No People in Age Group	Standard Deviation	Responses	Weighted Average
0 - 9 years	16 (21%)	15 (19%)	9 (12%)	3 (4%)	35 (45%)	10.76	78	1.98 / 4
10 - 19 years	20 (26%)	15 (19%)	6 (8%)	0 (0%)	37 (47%)	12.75	78	1.66 / 4
20 - 29 years	20 (30%)	9 (14%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	37 (56%)	13.99	66	1.31 / 4
30 - 39 years	17 (23%)	22 (30%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	34 (47%)	13.14	73	1.56 / 4
40 - 49 years	15 (23%)	18 (28%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	31 (48%)	11.75	64	1.55 / 4
50 - 59 years	16 (27%)	16 (27%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	26 (44%)	9.93	59	1.55 / 4
60 - 69 years	17 (29%)	10 (17%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	32 (54%)	11.97	59	1.37 / 4
70 years or older	9 (19%)	2 (4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	37 (77%)	14.09	48	1.18 / 4

1.55 / 4

13. Do you have any additional comments regarding improvements to Imperial's City Square?

- It would be a great "hometown" gathering place for community activities, holidays (Christmas), talent shows, fundraisers, a friendly show to visitors and highway traffic of community "togetherness", patriotism, Godly values, a community where people come together in unity and strength for a healthy, happy life. This is what America is!
- Property is in a residential area so I would like to see a quiet, not harshly lit area happen.
- Be a connection to a future hike-bike trail. Do decorative concrete instead of any asphalt. Have some art sculptures. Have a wide sidewalk all the way around the block. Lots of hardscapes, benches, shade structures.



- Would love to see something that embraces the close knit, strong, farming community that we live in. Maybe pull from some of the historical events of Chase County to maintain a small town atmosphere that works together, serves together and has fun as a community
- Automatic sprinkler would be nice
- Picnic tables or something may be a nice addition. Or some sort of gathering area. This area should be maintained under the other city parks budget.
- Would like to see more grass area and less pavement, maybe sidewalk or walk way, also a splash pad /ice skating rink if that was possible .
- No
- i think a large gazebo type structure with landscaping along Broadway would be used and welcoming to passerbys. it could be used for concerts and also private events
- So pleased to live in a town where we continue to strive toward both excellence and connectivity! Thanks for using pre-existing funds (like the community sales tax) to fund these wonderful plans!
- Splash Pad
- A splash pad would a great community addition I
- Personally I love the water feature at Holyoke, CO's event center. I feel like the property should either be sold for a small business because of the location OR more green space and better watering of trees should happen. We could use a beautiful shade structure that's not old and dated. There is a lack of nice shade on public property in this community. I feel like using some water for trees would be a great asset to the community and makes it more inviting and useable. There are a lot of sustainable options now for green spaces and trees that are not water hogs.
- Car shows, motorcycle shows could be held there. Weekend flea markets(from garden produce to garage sales with food trucks on site.). Walk-in movie nights(City has the screen from the drive in movie)
- Bring a splash pad to the square
- I would not support increase in taxes because surely there is a way to use the one cent we are already collecting for economic development. I also do not feel the city does a very good job with upkeep on the city parks so adding another space with any amount of maintenance could turn into a Main Street eyesore.
- having weekend events to have something to look forward too would be great for this town instead of having to travel for outside entertainment
- Make it awesome and functional
- Would love to see all the worship teams of each church get together and have a Christian community jam fest with food truck/ vendors / activities for kids. BBQ. Blow up obstacles for kids Face painting. Farmers market. Fireworks in one event all day/ night event. Invite other local musics talents and also those from out of town Come together as one
- Add trees, don't get rid of the grass. Get rid of the telephone pole/tree. Transplant a pine tree & make a garden spot around it. Use the local art and garden clubs to help design & select plants suitable for our area. Then add lights to the tree just for the Christmas season. Have grade school kids make biodegradable ornaments to decorate it before the lighting of the tree.
- Thanks for looking into these ideas. I appreciate you putting in the time and effort. I will support whatever you decide. Thank you!
- One comment, you better make sure the city is ready to take on the commitment. The city park is a good example of city commitment. It needs to be better taken care of. Weeds need to be trimmed and taken care of . Trees need to be trimmed around, sidewalks need to be fixed. I have been in smaller towns and their parks are pristine and well groomed. The baseball fields are sometimes in better shape than our city park just saying.

- Splash pad!
- i think its important to keep plenty of parking for meetings in the city council room area. would like to see more of a native grass planted instead. my opinion is between swimming pool, city park and all the ball fields we spend enough money on upkeep and maintain what parks we already have.
- this is exciting! love improvements!
- None
- I just think that something fun in that space could start a wave downtown. Chappell has a grant program where they pay 90% of any out door upgrades to businesses. All of there businesses have updated paint, doors, awning, flowers...it just looks like they have pride....maybe this space could be the start.
- Our focus needs to be on the Schroeder Ball Field. We have hundreds of kids who play soccer, baseball & softball every year.... Hundreds of parents, grandparents, family & friends there to support their athletes. We need to focus our time, energy & money into making the facility better. We have an amazing community. It is an eye sore and needs upgraded. Even if you can start with one field. Bathrooms/concessions/fences/fields... the list goes on. All needs updated! While I think a city square would be nice I don't believe that is where we need to be spending money at this point. Regardless of a 14k grant.
- I would love to see flowers and shade in part but the other open area for Smokin Crafts and more Community Events.
- I feel that we should be able to use existing bathrooms at City Gym and Library for events.
- I think it would be great to add splash pad & outdoor seating...more taxes, no way. What about using some of the sales tax money we are already receiving or have received. I guess I fail to see where that money has been spent. Enough is enough...
- Tax increases, especially minor, can be very beneficial if people really feel they are getting what they paid for. Currently that is not the case. Our city boasts such large income from sales tax in the paper often, yet we have a very ugly town square. Other cities have nice buildings that match, not a brick building that is completely run down and a white stucco building that has needed power washed or redone for years. Having some symmetry and buildings that complement each other, not contrast, can go a long way. We also have a large number of city employees that are seen to be driving around often but doesn't appear much is done. The lawn on both sides of city square is sub par at best, full of weeds, half dead, and trees that need replaced or planted in the first place. Take a look at the court house for good reference. The trees are beautiful and when there was a problem old were removed and replaced in a timely manner. The lawn is lush and beautifully manicured, has underground sprinklers instead of old pipes that barely work doing an inadequate job of watering, don't get moved for mowing, and have two foot tall grass surrounding it. If we want people to enjoy our town and take it seriously and want to move here we need to start with things looking very nice and being in top shape at all times. As a lifelong resident that does not always appear to be the case especially in reference to city properties like city square and the city utility department.
- no
- I hope tax money will not be used.....city property tax is too high
- None
- Who is going to take care of it?? Every time Pat is "Short Handed" the parks and open spaces get neglected.
- In ground sprinklers are a necessity.
- Find more things / activities to do/grow imperial
- Absolutely needs put on the back burner until Schroeder park is updated or completely rebuilt, regardless of grant monies.



- No
- Seating, flowers
- You need to apply the same effort into up keep and improvements for the other parks and open spaces as you are for this one. They all need better care than what they are currently receiving.
- Love the idea of expanding it's use and making it more inviting. Redoing the paving is essential. Would love to see some raised flower beds/window boxes along the south side of the building to make it look attractive.
- I think this is very important to our town as you drive through many towns and they have a welcoming, pretty area, which we lack.
- I do not know why this is a priority for the city. We have so many other infrastructure and technology needs to fill before looking at this. If outdoor recreation is the priority can we explore bike paths or something that can be utilized by all residents year round.
- I think something unique, something that will make people stop and think "wow that's cool". I think we need to tear out almost all of the concrete/parking lot behind there. It's not a good fit if we want the spaces to work well together
- I think it is important to keep the city square free of vehicles. New parking lines could be painted around the block to designate acceptable parking spots. Some kind of barrier should be placed to prevent unwanted vehicles to drive through the square, but with secure and removable poles, or something similar, to allow vehicles for maintenance. Also, it was difficult to choose the top three events that I would like to see at the city square. I believe all of the choices were great and my addition simply adds to the potential. Any opportunity to get people together at the square would be welcome!
- Would love to see monthly events, weekly farmer's markets, and attractive/interesting art to make the space friendly for even casual use.

Thank you for completing this survey.

Your input is a valuable contribution to Imperial's Civic and Community Center Financing Fund (CCCFF) Feasibility Study. Please return your responses to the Imperial City Office by July 23rd, 2021.