

**RESOLUTION NO. 17-08**  
**(SYRE ADDITION - BLIGHTED AND SUBSTANDARD AREA)**

*WHEREAS*, it is necessary, desirable, advisable, and in the best interests of the City of Alliance, Nebraska (the “City”), for the City to undertake and carry out redevelopment projects in certain areas that are determined to be blighted and substandard and in need of redevelopment; and

*WHEREAS*, the Community Development Law, Chapter 18, Article 21, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, as amended (the “Act”), prescribes the requirements and procedures for the planning and implementation of redevelopment projects; and

*WHEREAS*, Section 18-2109 of the Act requires that, prior to the preparation of a redevelopment plan for a redevelopment project, the Mayor and City Council shall, by resolution, declare the area to be blighted and substandard; and

*WHEREAS*, on Tuesday, January 17, 2017 the Mayor and City Council of the City held a public hearing (the “Public Hearing”) to determine whether the following described area (the “Redevelopment Area”) should be declared blighted and substandard and in need of redevelopment as required by the Act:

An area of land located in Box Butte County, Nebraska, more particularly described as follows:

Syre Addition to the City of Alliance, in the North Half of the Southwest Quarter (N½SW¼) of Section 31, Township 25 North, Range 47 West of the 6<sup>th</sup> P.M., Box Butte County, Nebraska.

*WHEREAS*, notice of the Public Hearing was published according to law, which notice described the time, date, place and purpose of the Public Hearing and the legal description of the Redevelopment Area; the last publication of such notice being at least ten days prior to the time of the Public Hearing; and

*WHEREAS*, on or before 10 days prior to the time of the Public Hearing, the City mailed notice of the Public Hearing by United States Mail, sufficient postage affixed, to all registered neighborhood associations whose area of representation is located in whole or in part within a one-mile radius of the Redevelopment Area and to the president or chairperson of the governing body of each county, school district, community college, educational service unit, and natural resources district with real property in the Redevelopment Area, which notice included the time, date, place, and purpose of the Public Hearing and included a map of sufficient size to show the Redevelopment Area; and

*WHEREAS*, the Public Hearing was conducted and all interested parties were afforded a reasonable opportunity to express their views respecting the declaration of the Redevelopment Area as blighted and substandard and in need of redevelopment, and the Mayor and City Council reviewed and discussed a *Blighted and Substandard Area Determination Analysis – Syre*

*Addition Area* prepared by the City of Alliance Community Development Department (the “Blight Study”); and

*WHEREAS*, the Mayor and City Council desire to determine whether the Redevelopment Area is blighted and substandard and in need of redevelopment in accordance with the Act.

*NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ALLIANCE, NEBRASKA AS FOLLOWS:*

Section 1. The Redevelopment Area is declared to be substandard and in need of redevelopment pursuant to the Act, in that conditions now exist in the Redevelopment Area meeting the criteria set forth in Section 18-2103(10) of the Act, as described and set forth in the Blight Study. The Blight Study is attached as Attachment 1.

Section 2. The Redevelopment Area is further declared to be blighted and in need of redevelopment pursuant to the Act, in that conditions now exist in the Redevelopment Area meeting the criteria set forth in the Act, including, without limitation, (a) one or more of the factors set forth in Section 18-2103(11)(a) of the Act and (b) at least one of the factors set forth in (i) through (v) of Section 18-2103(11)(b) of the Act, as described and set forth in the Blight Study.

Section 3. The blighted and substandard conditions existing in the Redevelopment Area are beyond remedy and control solely through the regulatory process and the exercise of police power and cannot be dealt with effectively by the ordinary operations of private enterprise without the aids provided by the Act, and the elimination of the blighted and substandard conditions under the authority of the Act is hereby found to be a public purpose and declared to be in the public interest.

Section 4. The Redevelopment Area is in need of redevelopment and is or will be an eligible site for a redevelopment project under the provisions of the Act at the time of the adoption of any redevelopment plan with respect thereto.

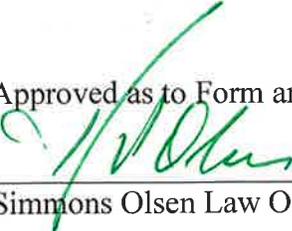
PASSED AND APPROVED this 17<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2017.

(SEAL)

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Ralph Yeager, Mayor

Attest:   
\_\_\_\_\_  
Linda S. Jines, City Clerk

Approved as to Form and Legality:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Simmons Olsen Law Office, Legal Counsel

**ATTACHMENT 1  
BLIGHT STUDY**

**Blight and Substandard Study**  
**Syre Addition**  
**City of Alliance, Nebraska**

**November 11, 2016**

# **Introduction**

## **Background**

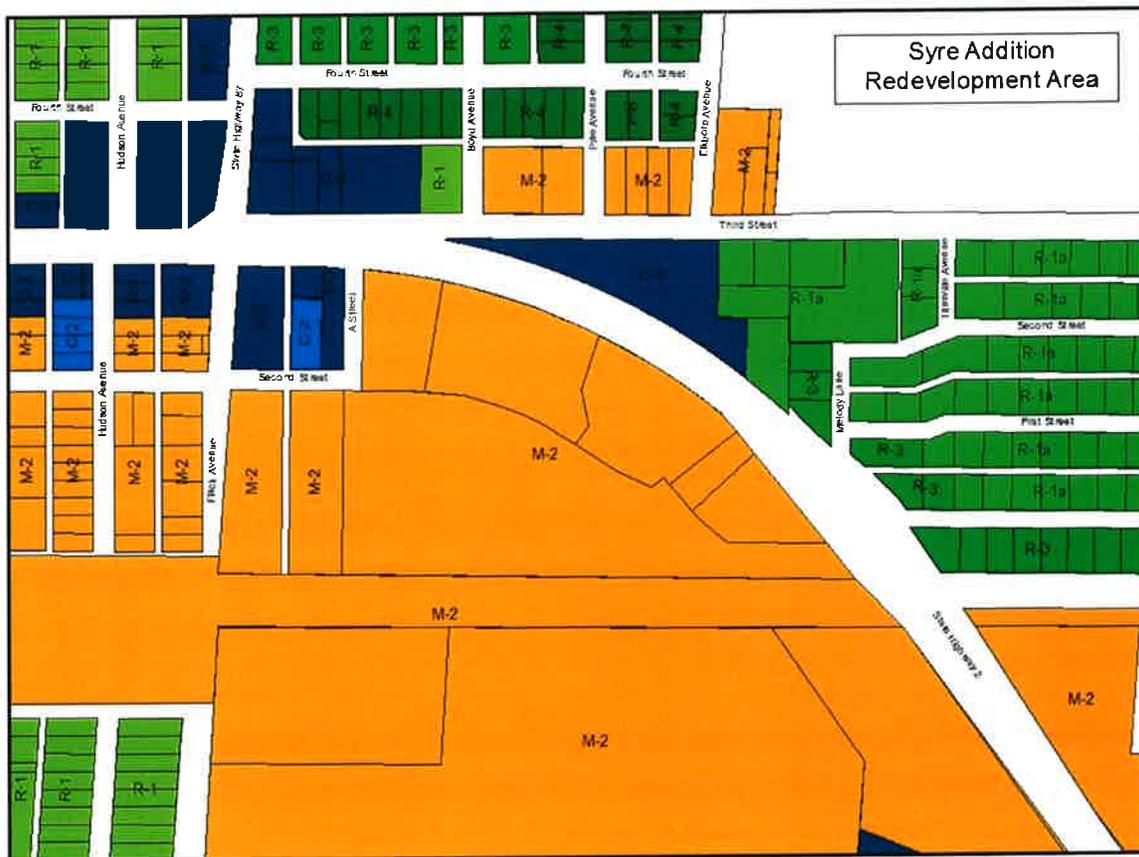
The term “blighted and substandard” is a legal definition and not a label placed on a neighborhood. For example the entire downtown in Alliance is a Blighted and Substandard area. Why these terms were used is unclear. What is clear is that the designation opens the door for stimulating new development, redevelopment, and allowing developers, in fact all citizens, the ability to make significant public improvements related to their projects. The mechanism allows property owners the use of real estate property taxes (normally paid to other government agencies) for improvements including land acquisition and site preparation. Tax money can be used up to 15 years for this purpose.

This designation allows the use of most of the new taxes generated by way of redevelopment. An owner pays the property tax but it is “refunded” for the purpose of land acquisition, site preparation, and placing public improvements on the site. The program has worked well in Alliance with it most recently being used for the Pepsi Cola distribution warehouse and the West Plains Grain loading facility. So while the term may seem objectionable the results can be very positive for the entire community.

The Nebraska Unicameral enacted legislation which addressed the existence of areas within communities that needed incentives to redevelop. These areas tended to be older and out of date. Oftentimes, spotty improvements have been made but the general condition is not conducive to the expansion of existing businesses or attractive to new development and investment. On its face this appears to be true of Syre Addition so a decision was made to give the area a closer look.

Like other areas designated as Blighted and Substandard, certain parts of the Study Area have not kept pace with overall community standards. Portions of the area have declined to a point where some added incentives are needed to recover. The Community Development Law enables cities to take steps to address these forms of decline through acquisition, clearance, and disposition of property for redevelopment, or through the conservation and rehabilitation of property.

This study examines existing conditions of land use, buildings, infrastructure, development patterns, and general health and safety welfare aspects within the designated study area in the City of Alliance. This has been done in an effort to determine its eligibility for redevelopment activities. The area for analysis is the proposed Study Area which is generally in the east portion of the city along the Nebraska Highway 2 corridor. A number of opportunities for redevelopment exist along and adjacent to this corridor allowing the community to overcome some of the challenges in the proposed Study Area.



Generally the corridor has some long standing, successful businesses. However reinvestment has been scattered and extremely slow. It is not on par with the overall community's growth and level of private investment. Much of the corridor is dominated by older buildings and structures in need of heavy rehabilitation or demolition. The corridor is adjacent to BNSF Railroad yards which over the past decade have seen limited new investment and rehabilitation however even in these already improved areas structures remain in need of upgrading and redevelopment. There appears to be an excellent opportunity to provide incentives triggering new activity where adequate market forces are not present to move development in a positive direction.

### Nebraska Revised State Statutes

Nebraska's Community Development Law clearly provides guidelines for communities to address concerns and develop strategies for the rehabilitation and redevelopment of deteriorating areas as well as the prevention and elimination of substandard and blighted areas. This tool is provided in Neb Rev Stat §§18-2101 to 18-2154.

The law states that there are a number of reasons an area goes beyond remedy and control *solely by the regulatory process and cannot be dealt with effectively by ordinary police powers*

*or ordinary operation of private enterprise* without aid. Such things as overcrowding, unsafe, unsanitary conditions, inadequate planning, lack of proper light, air and open space, defective design and arrangement of buildings, faulty street layout and economically undesirable land uses are among the reasons.

The law goes on to provide the city with the ability to declare an area blighted and substandard then create a workable program to utilize private and public resources to address specific conditions to be improved. The statute provides a means for the governing body to address and develop strategies for rehabilitation and redevelopment of the community. The main substance of a workable program is an adopted redevelopment plan for the defined area based in part on an adopted comprehensive plan.

The statute is contained in Appendix "A" of this report.

### **Purpose of the Study**

Implementing this strategy for the designated Study Area is intended to give the Community Redevelopment Authority and City Council a basis for determining the existence of blight and substandard conditions within the delineated Study Area. The general area considered for inclusion in the Study Area is shown on the *Syre Addition Redevelopment Area* map on page 3 of this report. The area can generally be described to include land bounded by "A Street" on the west, BNSF Railroad to the south, and Nebraska Highway 2 on the north and east.

The study looks at existing land-uses, platting, structures and infrastructure systems to determine whether the study area or a part thereof meets the statutory requirements for the designation as a Blighted and Substandard Area. With the growing interest and use of this valuable tool the State has taken an increased interest in assuring all using the tool to use it in accordance with the statutes. For this reason it is imperative the City of Alliance closely adhere to the provisions set forth in the Nebraska Revised State Statutes.

The findings of this study will serve to guide the general redevelopment. The approved Comprehensive Plan and the companion Blighted and Substandard Study will present appropriate land uses, strategies for improved traffic circulation, economic development activities, utilities, and other improvement in accordance with the law. The requirements for detailed planning beyond the Comprehensive Plan treatment include but should not be limited to:

1. Boundaries of the area, existing land use, and condition of improvements
2. A land-use plan
3. A map showing population density, land coverage, and building concentrations
4. An outline of proposed changes in ordinance, layout, or other related ordinances
5. A site plan of the area
6. A statement outlining any additional public facilities or utilities required to support new land uses after redevelopment.

The Blighted and Substandard study highlights locations and opportunities for improvement and revitalization.

Once the area is designated the City can guide future development in this area and provide financial incentive for development. Using the Nebraska Community Development Law, the city can reduce or eliminate factors impeding redevelopment and implement programs or projects to improve conditions and minimize the negative impacts of blight and substandard conditions.

## **Substandard and Blight Eligibility Analysis**

### **Alliance Designated Study Area**

The City selected the Designated Study Area for evaluation to be within the corporate limits. The area is primarily industrial. This particular area was selected for several reasons:

1. The area was once an active industrial corridor.
2. There is a need to improve infrastructure due to substandard existing conditions.
3. There is obvious economic decline and functionally obsolete uses within the area.
4. There was the presence of blighted and substandard characteristics within the area.
5. A need was apparent for public intervention to stimulate the development and redevelopment of vital infrastructure systems to support private redevelopment efforts.

The City is in a position to remove negative factors and implement programs and projects to improve conditions thereby removing the blighted and substandard conditions. This not only benefits the corridor/study area but the entire community through private reinvestment and enhanced quality of life.

## **Substandard and Blight Conditions Definition and Explanation**

### **Blighted and Substandard are Statutorily Defined in §18-2103 as:**

(10) Substandard areas means an area in which there is a predominance of buildings or improvements, whether nonresidential or residential in character, which, by reason of dilapidation, deterioration, age or obsolescence, inadequate provision for ventilation, light, air, sanitation, or open spaces, high density of population and overcrowding, or the existence of conditions which endanger life or property by fire and other causes, or any combination of such factors, is conducive to ill health, transmission of disease, infant mortality, juvenile delinquency, and crime, (which cannot be remedied through construction of prisons), and is detrimental to the public health, safety, morals, or welfare;

(11) Blighted area means an area, which (a) by reason of the presence of a substantial number of deteriorated or deteriorating structures, existence of defective or inadequate street layout, faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness, insanitary or unsafe conditions, deterioration of site or other improvements, diversity of ownership, tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land, defective or unusual conditions of title, improper subdivision or obsolete platting, or the existence of conditions which endanger life or property by fire and other causes, or any combination of such factors, substantially impairs or arrests the sound growth of the community, retards the provision of housing accommodations, or constitutes an economic or social liability and is detrimental to the public health, safety, morals, or welfare in its present condition and use and (b) in which there is at least one of the following conditions:

(i) Unemployment in the designated area is at least one hundred twenty percent of the state or national average;

(ii) the average age of the residential or commercial units in the area is at least forty years;

(iii) more than half of the plotted and subdivided property in an area is unimproved land that has been within the city for forty years and has remained unimproved during that time;

(iv) the per capita income of the area is lower than the average per capita income of the city or village in which the area is designated; or

(v) the area has had either stable or decreasing population based on the last two decennial censuses. In no event shall a city of the metropolitan, primary, or first class designate more than thirty-five percent of the city as blighted, a city of the second class shall not designate an area larger than fifty percent of the city as blighted, and a village shall not designate an area larger than one hundred percent of the village as blighted. A redevelopment project involving a formerly used defense site as authorized under section 18-2123.01 shall not count towards the percentage limitations contained in this subdivision;

### **Substandard Area Designation Criteria**

By statute a substandard area means one where a predominance of building or improvements (residential or nonresidential) having one or more of the following characteristics:

1. Dilapidating or deteriorated
  - a. Unacceptable standard for walls, foundation, roof, gutters, roof, surface, chimney, fire escapes, weatherizing, steps, exterior paint and site conditions. Chipping, cracks, loose components, missing pieces, sags and other signs of substandard condition all qualify for this condition.
2. Age (obsolescence)
  - a. A 40 plus year criteria was used for estimate
3. Inadequate ventilation, light, air, sanitation, or open spaces

- a. Things like junked cars and other accumulated debris, antiquated infrastructure, unpaved parking, outdoor storage
4. Other conditions
- a. High density population or overcrowding (census)
  - b. Other conditions which could be unsafe or unsanitary endangering life or property.
  - c. Any combination of factors conducive to poor health, disease, mortality, delinquency or crime. Any combination that is detrimental to public health, safety, morals or welfare. This may include inadequate infrastructure as well as statistical data.

### **Blighted Area Designation Criteria**

The area designation is based on a number of criteria or indicators of substandard conditions. These are specified in the law and outlined here:

1. The presence of a substantial number of deteriorated or deteriorating structures. This takes the form of structural problems, exterior paint, cracks, chimney, site conditions, roof and similar problems with the building.
2. Existence of a defective or inadequate street layout. This includes dead ends, railroad crossings, linear downtown, narrow alleys and blind crossings.
3. Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness. Such things as landlocked parcels, odd shaped lots, undersized lots and accessibility problems.
4. Unsanitary or unsafe conditions. Examples here include age and physical condition of structures, flood plain, and lack of public infrastructure, unsanitary conditions, and ventilation.
5. Deterioration of site or other improvements. Such things as off street parking, storm drainage, junk cars, dilapidated structures, debris and on-site storage are examples.
6. Diversity of ownership. This condition exists when numerous lots are needed to develop to up to date standards. Assemblage is difficult without some form of public assistance.
7. Tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land.
8. Defective or unusual conditions of title. Liens, improper filings
9. Improper subdivision or obsolete platting. Examples include undersized lots, improper zoning, lot configuration, easements and accessibility are problems that often are present.
10. The existence of conditions which endanger life or property by fire or other causes. Such things as inoperative infrastructure, site access, on-site storage, secluded areas for pests to thrive, poor surface drainage, and poor street and sidewalk condition are examples.
11. Any combination of such factors, substantially impairs or arrests the sound growth of the community, retards the provision of housing accommodations or constitutes

an economic or social liability. Here incompatible land uses, obsolescence and inability for a property to compete in the market place.

12. Is detrimental to the public health, safety, morals, or welfare in its present condition and use; and in which there is at least one of the following conditions:
- a. Unemployment in the area at least 100% of state or national average census data
  - b. The average age of residential and commercial units is over 40 years as determined by field observations
  - c. More than half of the plotted/subdivided property has been unimproved for 40 years using public record
  - d. Per capita income of the area is lower than the average of the city from census data.
  - e. The area has a stable or declining population based on the last two decennial censuses.

## **Structural Condition**

Structural conditions were evaluated using the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development standard definitions:

### **No Problem**

- No structural or aesthetic problems are visible

### **Adequate Condition**

- Slight damage to porches, steps, roofs
- Slight wearing of mortar between bricks/stone/block
- Small cracks in walls or chimneys
- Cracked windows
- Lack of paint
- Slight wear on steps, doors and frames

### **Deteriorating Conditions**

- Holes, open cracks, rotted, loose, or missing material in parts of the foundation, walls (1/2 of the wall) or roof (1/4 of the roof)
- Shaky, broken, or missing steps or railings
- Numerous missing and cracked window panes
- Rotted or loose windows or doors no longer water-proof

### **Dilapidated Condition**

- Holes, open cracks, rotted, loose or missing material over a large area of the foundation, on wall or on roof
- Substantial sagging of roof, floors, or walls
- Extensive fire, flood, or storm damage
- Inadequate original construction such as building elements made of scrap materials or conversion of structures not adequate for housing.

## Street Conditions

Street Conditions were graded using the following criteria:

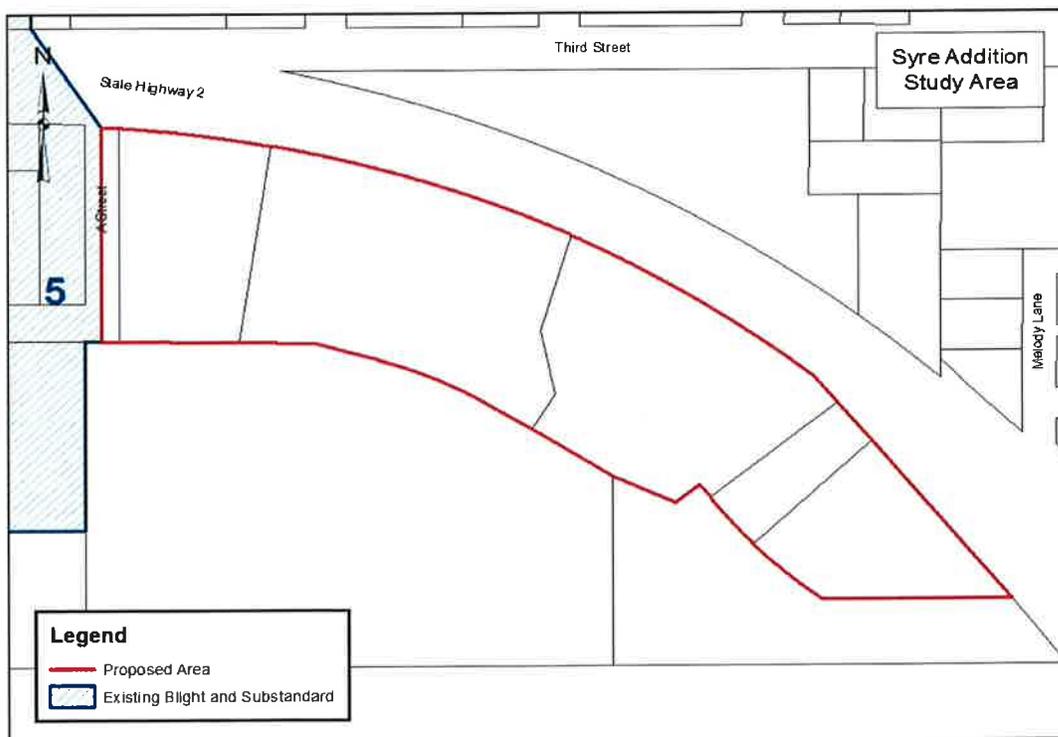
1. Excellent-No visible deformations of the roadway surface, like new.
2. Good-Shows signs of slight aging. Small cracks that have been filled. No or very little patching.
3. Fair-Isolated cracks are beginning to spread and connect, cracks and potholes are requiring patching. Minor ruts in the wheel paths are forming.
4. Poor-Alligator cracks are forming in the wheel paths, extensive number of pothole or patch repairs. Ruts in the wheel paths have formed.
5. Failure-The road surface is disintegrating, is very rough, full of patching.

The criteria are applied as accurately as possible for the entire stretch of road surface, usually between two intersecting streets. There may be many different conditions present but efforts were made to pick the best representation of the road surface as a whole.

## Analysis of Study Area

### Proposed Blighted Area

The following map delineates the Study Area and will by reference apply to this entire report. Solid red lines are the Study Area boundary. This Study Area's west border co-terminates with an existing Blighted and Substandard area (the Flack Avenue and East 3<sup>rd</sup> District). A portion of that area is illustrated in blue hatch lines on the map.



The total acreage within the City of Alliance corporate limits is 3137 acres. Currently the city has 621 acres designated as “Blighted and Substandard” which is slightly less than 20% of the City’s total acreage. The proposed additional “Blighted and Substandard” area consists of 9 acres. Adding this proposed area to the existing “Blighted and Substandard” area brings the total Blighted and Substandard area to 630 acres or 20.1% of the total area of the City of Alliance. This remains well within the allowed 30% providing future opportunity to add more.

## Findings and Contributing Factors

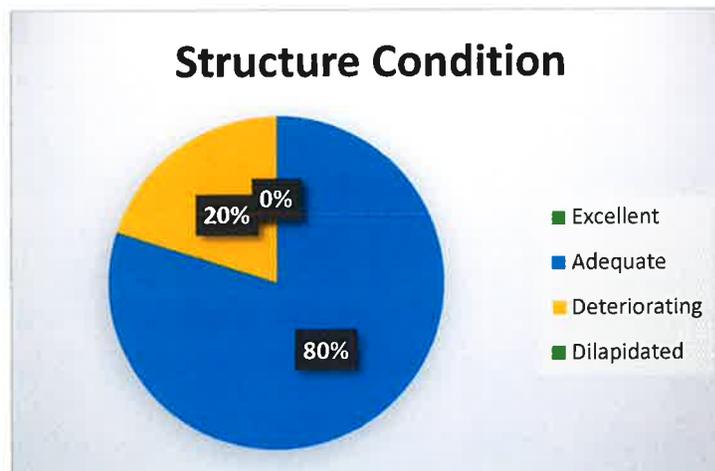
The intent of this study is to determine if the subject area has experienced structural and site deterioration or if there are other negative factors which are decreasing the potential to develop. The field survey work was done in October of 2016 and strongly supported initial impressions that the area had in generally declined below community standards. What follows are the factors evaluated to determine if there is a reasonable presence of blight and substandard conditions within the designated area. This section reviews the building and structure conditions, infrastructure and land use found in the area based on statutory definitions, observations and explains the identified contributing factors.

As set forth in Nebraska legislation a blighted area means an area which by reason of the presence of:

### Substantial Number of Deteriorated or Deteriorating Structures

#### Exterior Inspection of Buildings

There were a total of 10 structures evaluated using the Blighted and Substandard criteria as described on page 8 of this report. Only the primary structures were evaluated under the Blighted and Substandard definition. If outbuildings or other structures were present they were not included in the survey. Thus the boundary for the Blighted and Substandard designation includes 10 buildings and structures. Field surveys concluded that none of the total structures had no problems, 80% were acceptable, 20% were deteriorating and 0% were dilapidated.



## Defective or Inadequate Infrastructure

Inadequate infrastructure, street conditions and accessibility as well as inability to safely move traffic through an area is a contributing factor to the blight and substandard conditions.

### Public Utilities

Water is provided by the City with an 8" cast iron water main laid in 1948. The main has 4 fire hydrants located along the frontage of all the properties. Sanitary sewer does not exist in this subdivision. Properties ran sewer services to existing City sewer main several hundred feet away, or are doing without. Natural gas is supplied by Black Hills Energy and electric is supplied by the City. Storm sewer infrastructure does not exist and relies solely on ditches to carry the water away from the buildings and roads.

### Street Conditions and Accessibility

The surface condition of roads in the study area vary from good to poor. The surface of Highway 2 has been maintained to Nebraska Department of Road standards and is generally good. However, the existing curb and gutter has deteriorated to the point where water pools adjacent to the road surface. "A Street" is a gravel street without curb and gutter. The street is in poor condition and has several places where water accumulates. The standing water combined with the heavy truck traffic from the railroad causes ruts to form in the road surface. The study area is not serviced by alleys. Syre Addition was developed adjacent to rail yards and a service track was laid at the rear of the properties.

Syre Addition exhibits several traffic safety issues that need be addressed.

1. Access to the east four lots of Syre addition is shared between Lots 2 and 3 with no turning lane on the highway to allow safe traffic flow during heavy use of the properties.
2. Access to the east two lots is derived from an access easement shared with Lots 2 and 3 as grade differences between the highway approach to the overpass and the east lots is too great for a driveway off the highway. This easement terminates at the railroad yards at southeast end of Lot 5 without provisions for traffic to turn around.
3. Gravel streets are present.
4. Street widths are not consistent with the community's overall standard development pattern.



“A Street” looking north from its intersection with East 2<sup>nd</sup>. Deep ruts have been caused by the combination of poor runoff and trucks entering and leaving railroad property.



Grade separation between the approach to the highway overpass and the east lots necessitating the access easement through Lots 2 and 3.



Poorly maintained road located in the access easement.

**Faulty Lot Layout in Relation to Size, Adequacy, Accessibility, or Usefulness**

Most of the structures in the Study Area predate the plat of Syre Addition (1999) and BN Addition (1977). In the past, it was typical practice, for a business that heavily used the railroad to ship their commodity, to build a business on railroad property and lease the footprint the building occupied. The lot lines, as they are now, were platted in 1999 and were drawn based off the locations of the buildings and the approximate area they would need to effectively use the lot. This resulted in poor access, no room for business expansion, and crooked lot lines. Any growth of these facilities would require the acquisition of the neighboring lots as they are bordered to the south by the railroad yards and to the north by Nebraska Highway 2.

## **Deterioration of Site or Other Improvements**

### **Debris**

Debris accumulates on and adjacent to abandoned buildings and unused lots. Two of the lots in Syre Addition contain abandoned structures and demolition debris left behind when the businesses that occupied them moved to other locations in town. This debris included piles of rock and dirt with weeds growing out of them, broken concrete, partially destroyed building foundations and weed piles. Numerous (somewhat less severe) additional instances are present as well suggesting the problem is growing.



Partially destroyed foundation for a concrete batch plant.



Abandoned building with debris accumulating next to it.



Accumulation of broken concrete with weeds growing out of it.



Storage in front of and next to the building.

## Dilapidated and Deteriorating Structures

Twenty percent (20%) of the structures were visually found to be deteriorating. The deteriorating structures have been abandoned by their owners and will become dilapidated if left to the elements. These structures are visually unpleasing, present themselves as an attractive nuisance, and present a challenge to redevelopment as well as an opportunity as a means to redevelop.



Abandoned warehouse building showing signs of deterioration. The ground has been built up around the structure to the point where water runs into the building.



Abandoned scale house showing signs of deterioration.



Abandoned warehouse showing water runoff issues.

## **Diversity of Ownership**

Looking at the property ownership records underscores the fact that numerous owners would need to participate in a meaningful redevelopment plan. Businesses will be faced with the problem of accumulating enough land area to build an up to date industrial enterprise within the existing boundaries of Syre Addition and providing adequate access to said development.

Any redevelopment in Syre Addition will likely require the acquisition of additional parcels of land as businesses are currently confined to the area between Nebraska Highway 2 and the railroad yards. The City land use map shows that many of these parcels are owned by similar types of businesses that may not be willing to sell to a potential competitor.

## **Improper Subdivision or Obsolete Platting**

### **Improper Subdivision of Land**

The land where the lots are currently was developed before being platted. The first subdivision of land was a single lot subdivision called “BN Addition to the City of Alliance” platted in 1977. The second subdivision came in 1999 and is called “Syre Addition to the City of Alliance.” Platting in 1999 meant that the lot lines would have to be placed with respect to existing structures. This led to lot lines that are crooked and poor access to the entire subdivision.

The platting of lots in an entire subdivision based on the location of preexisting structures is not a good planning practice as it typically binds the City to accept whatever subdivision the developer has prepared. This is why the City of Alliance has adopted subdivision requirements for parcels 10 acres in size and under.

## The Existence of Conditions which Endanger Life or Property

### Sidewalk Conditions

The Study Area is not served by any sidewalks. City code requires that sidewalks be installed as part of the development or improvement of a property unless the owner shows that there is a hardship not generally shared by other properties within the City. The grade difference between the highway and lots along the southeast properties and the dead end at the railroad yards may be considered a hardship as currently platted, but there is opportunity along the west property to install sidewalk along "A Street" as it is a part of the grid system of streets prevalent in the older parts of town which have been developed with sidewalk.

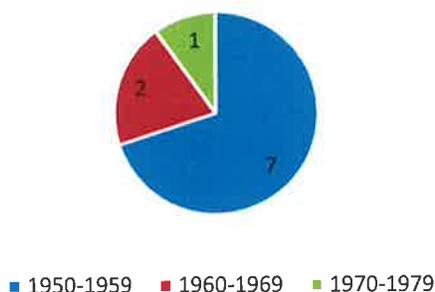
### On Site Storage

The Study Area has numerous sites and types of outdoor storage. A few of these locations show storage of outdated or abandoned items as well as the abandonment of materials once used as part of the business. These findings point to an impediment for development or upgrades in the neighborhood and should be evaluated for removal.

### Structure Age

The average age of the structures in the area is 56.5 years. Age of the structures within the Designated Study Area is provided through data derived from the Box Butte County Assessor's Office, City of Alliance Community Development Permit Records, Aerial photographs, and field verification. While it was not possible to verify every structure there was an adequate sample of known ages to determine age through comparison and proximity to other like structures and appearance. Those structures built before 1976 qualify for the 40 years and older structures designation in the State of Nebraska laws.

Number of Structures



Analysis using the City of Alliance Community Development permit tracking information was inconclusive as all of the structures except one predated detailed file keeping by the City. Other permits like plumbing, electrical, or general construction were found for each property, however, the buildings would have been in place when such permits were issued. Many of the dates were derived from or confirmed using aerial photographs taken in 1939, 1954, 1955, 1960, 1966, and 1975. Therefore, the project ages reflect a minimum age of each structure and not the actual age.

## **Conclusion of Blighted and Substandard Analysis**

Based on this analysis the Study Area meets the criteria of both blighted and substandard conditions. The area displays the presence of criteria required for the findings of a blighted and substandard condition as defined by the State of Nebraska Legislature.

The primary conditions leading to this conclusion include:

### **Blighted and Substandard Conditions:**

- Two of the total ten buildings evaluated for the Study Area were deteriorating or dilapidated.
- The street system does not meet acceptable engineering standards.
- The area has numerous lot layout faults in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility or usefulness.
- Obsolete platting exists in the entire area.
- Conditions exist which endanger life or property by fire and other causes.
- Conditions exist which are detrimental to the public health, safety, morals and welfare in the present condition with a majority of structures in excess of 40 years old and the population is either stable or declining.
- Diversity of ownership is present with nearly all parcels independently owned. Accumulation of parcels is not occurring.

### **Blighted conditions that do not appear to be present:**

- There are not more than half of the plotted and subdivided property that is unimproved, within the city for forty years and has remained unimproved during that time.

### **Blighted conditions not evaluated:**

- Tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land.
- Defective or unusual conditions of title.
- Stable or decreasing population.
- Median Household Income below the rest of the City and unemployment more than 100% of the City average.

**Substandard conditions not present:**

- There did not appear to be areas of excessively high density of population and overcrowding.

**Comprehensive Plan**

A declaration of blighted and substandard conditions in the Study Area conforms to the City of Alliance Comprehensive Plan. The Study Area is located in an area that qualifies for this declaration. The Comprehensive Plan identifies this area as an employment focused corridor, supporting industrial activity, and an area served by existing infrastructure albeit very poorly. While identified as an industrial corridor in the Comprehensive Plan a sub-area plan will be undertaken following completion of this Study Area analysis to investigate other possible uses of the property.

**Blighted and Substandard Area Declaration**

**Based on the findings in this report the Study Area may be declared blighted and substandard in keeping with and conforming to the Nebraska Community Development Law. This finding will make this area available for redevelopment activities. The General Redevelopment Plan, when prepared, shall be composed in a manner consistent with the City of Alliance Comprehensive Plan.**

**ATTACHMENT 2  
PLAT OF SYRE ADDITION**



**Blight and Substandard Study**  
**Syre Addition**  
**City of Alliance, Nebraska**

**November 11, 2016**

# **Introduction**

## **Background**

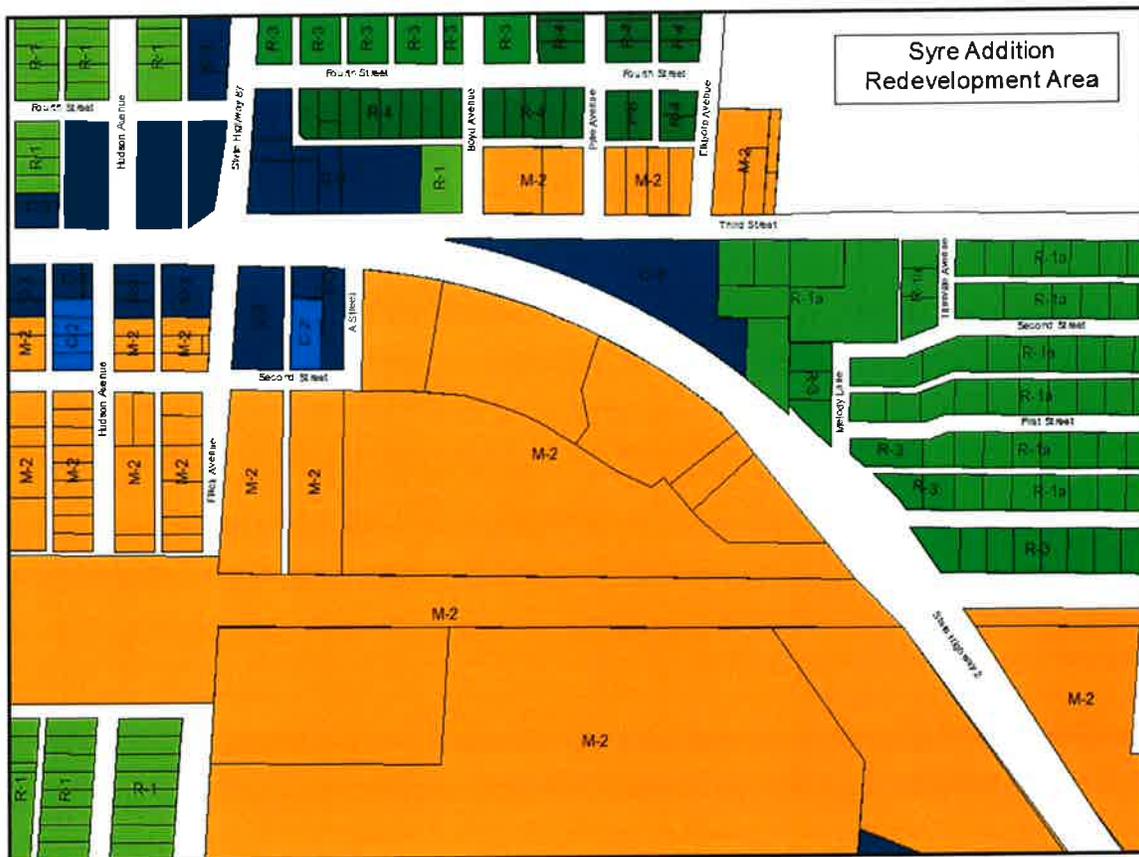
The term “blighted and substandard” is a legal definition and not a label placed on a neighborhood. For example the entire downtown in Alliance is a Blighted and Substandard area. Why these terms were used is unclear. What is clear is that the designation opens the door for stimulating new development, redevelopment, and allowing developers, in fact all citizens, the ability to make significant public improvements related to their projects. The mechanism allows property owners the use of real estate property taxes (normally paid to other government agencies) for improvements including land acquisition and site preparation. Tax money can be used up to 15 years for this purpose.

This designation allows the use of most of the new taxes generated by way of redevelopment. An owner pays the property tax but it is “refunded” for the purpose of land acquisition, site preparation, and placing public improvements on the site. The program has worked well in Alliance with it most recently being used for the Pepsi Cola distribution warehouse and the West Plains Grain loading facility. So while the term may seem objectionable the results can be very positive for the entire community.

The Nebraska Unicameral enacted legislation which addressed the existence of areas within communities that needed incentives to redevelop. These areas tended to be older and out of date. Oftentimes, spotty improvements have been made but the general condition is not conducive to the expansion of existing businesses or attractive to new development and investment. On its face this appears to be true of Syre Addition so a decision was made to give the area a closer look.

Like other areas designated as Blighted and Substandard, certain parts of the Study Area have not kept pace with overall community standards. Portions of the area have declined to a point where some added incentives are needed to recover. The Community Development Law enables cities to take steps to address these forms of decline through acquisition, clearance, and disposition of property for redevelopment, or through the conservation and rehabilitation of property.

This study examines existing conditions of land use, buildings, infrastructure, development patterns, and general health and safety welfare aspects within the designated study area in the City of Alliance. This has been done in an effort to determine its eligibility for redevelopment activities. The area for analysis is the proposed Study Area which is generally in the east portion of the city along the Nebraska Highway 2 corridor. A number of opportunities for redevelopment exist along and adjacent to this corridor allowing the community to overcome some of the challenges in the proposed Study Area.



Generally the corridor has some long standing, successful businesses. However reinvestment has been scattered and extremely slow. It is not on par with the overall community's growth and level of private investment. Much of the corridor is dominated by older buildings and structures in need of heavy rehabilitation or demolition. The corridor is adjacent to BNSF Railroad yards which over the past decade have seen limited new investment and rehabilitation however even in these already improved areas structures remain in need of upgrading and redevelopment. There appears to be an excellent opportunity to provide incentives triggering new activity where adequate market forces are not present to move development in a positive direction.

### Nebraska Revised State Statutes

Nebraska's Community Development Law clearly provides guidelines for communities to address concerns and develop strategies for the rehabilitation and redevelopment of deteriorating areas as well as the prevention and elimination of substandard and blighted areas. This tool is provided in Neb Rev Stat §§18-2101 to 18-2154.

The law states that there are a number of reasons an area goes beyond remedy and control *solely by the regulatory process and cannot be dealt with effectively by ordinary police powers*

*or ordinary operation of private enterprise* without aid. Such things as overcrowding, unsafe, unsanitary conditions, inadequate planning, lack of proper light, air and open space, defective design and arrangement of buildings, faulty street layout and economically undesirable land uses are among the reasons.

The law goes on to provide the city with the ability to declare an area blighted and substandard then create a workable program to utilize private and public resources to address specific conditions to be improved. The statute provides a means for the governing body to address and develop strategies for rehabilitation and redevelopment of the community. The main substance of a workable program is an adopted redevelopment plan for the defined area based in part on an adopted comprehensive plan.

The statute is contained in Appendix "A" of this report.

### **Purpose of the Study**

Implementing this strategy for the designated Study Area is intended to give the Community Redevelopment Authority and City Council a basis for determining the existence of blight and substandard conditions within the delineated Study Area. The general area considered for inclusion in the Study Area is shown on the *Syre Addition Redevelopment Area* map on page 3 of this report. The area can generally be described to include land bounded by "A Street" on the west, BNSF Railroad to the south, and Nebraska Highway 2 on the north and east.

The study looks at existing land-uses, platting, structures and infrastructure systems to determine whether the study area or a part thereof meets the statutory requirements for the designation as a Blighted and Substandard Area. With the growing interest and use of this valuable tool the State has taken an increased interest in assuring all using the tool to use it in accordance with the statutes. For this reason it is imperative the City of Alliance closely adhere to the provisions set forth in the Nebraska Revised State Statutes.

The findings of this study will serve to guide the general redevelopment. The approved Comprehensive Plan and the companion Blighted and Substandard Study will present appropriate land uses, strategies for improved traffic circulation, economic development activities, utilities, and other improvement in accordance with the law. The requirements for detailed planning beyond the Comprehensive Plan treatment include but should not be limited to:

1. Boundaries of the area, existing land use, and condition of improvements
2. A land-use plan
3. A map showing population density, land coverage, and building concentrations
4. An outline of proposed changes in ordinance, layout, or other related ordinances
5. A site plan of the area
6. A statement outlining any additional public facilities or utilities required to support new land uses after redevelopment.

The Blighted and Substandard study highlights locations and opportunities for improvement and revitalization.

Once the area is designated the City can guide future development in this area and provide financial incentive for development. Using the Nebraska Community Development Law, the city can reduce or eliminate factors impeding redevelopment and implement programs or projects to improve conditions and minimize the negative impacts of blight and substandard conditions.

## **Substandard and Blight Eligibility Analysis**

### **Alliance Designated Study Area**

The City selected the Designated Study Area for evaluation to be within the corporate limits. The area is primarily industrial. This particular area was selected for several reasons:

1. The area was once an active industrial corridor.
2. There is a need to improve infrastructure due to substandard existing conditions.
3. There is obvious economic decline and functionally obsolete uses within the area.
4. There was the presence of blighted and substandard characteristics within the area.
5. A need was apparent for public intervention to stimulate the development and redevelopment of vital infrastructure systems to support private redevelopment efforts.

The City is in a position to remove negative factors and implement programs and projects to improve conditions thereby removing the blighted and substandard conditions. This not only benefits the corridor/study area but the entire community through private reinvestment and enhanced quality of life.

## **Substandard and Blight Conditions Definition and Explanation**

### **Blighted and Substandard are Statutorily Defined in §18-2103 as:**

(10) Substandard areas means an area in which there is a predominance of buildings or improvements, whether nonresidential or residential in character, which, by reason of dilapidation, deterioration, age or obsolescence, inadequate provision for ventilation, light, air, sanitation, or open spaces, high density of population and overcrowding, or the existence of conditions which endanger life or property by fire and other causes, or any combination of such factors, is conducive to ill health, transmission of disease, infant mortality, juvenile delinquency, and crime, (which cannot be remedied through construction of prisons), and is detrimental to the public health, safety, morals, or welfare;

(11) Blighted area means an area, which (a) by reason of the presence of a substantial number of deteriorated or deteriorating structures, existence of defective or inadequate street layout, faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness, insanitary or unsafe conditions, deterioration of site or other improvements, diversity of ownership, tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land, defective or unusual conditions of title, improper subdivision or obsolete platting, or the existence of conditions which endanger life or property by fire and other causes, or any combination of such factors, substantially impairs or arrests the sound growth of the community, retards the provision of housing accommodations, or constitutes an economic or social liability and is detrimental to the public health, safety, morals, or welfare in its present condition and use and (b) in which there is at least one of the following conditions:

(i) Unemployment in the designated area is at least one hundred twenty percent of the state or national average;

(ii) the average age of the residential or commercial units in the area is at least forty years;

(iii) more than half of the plotted and subdivided property in an area is unimproved land that has been within the city for forty years and has remained unimproved during that time;

(iv) the per capita income of the area is lower than the average per capita income of the city or village in which the area is designated; or

(v) the area has had either stable or decreasing population based on the last two decennial censuses. In no event shall a city of the metropolitan, primary, or first class designate more than thirty-five percent of the city as blighted, a city of the second class shall not designate an area larger than fifty percent of the city as blighted, and a village shall not designate an area larger than one hundred percent of the village as blighted. A redevelopment project involving a formerly used defense site as authorized under section 18-2123.01 shall not count towards the percentage limitations contained in this subdivision;

### **Substandard Area Designation Criteria**

By statute a substandard area means one where a predominance of building or improvements (residential or nonresidential) having one or more of the following characteristics:

1. Dilapidating or deteriorated
  - a. Unacceptable standard for walls, foundation, roof, gutters, roof, surface, chimney, fire escapes, weatherizing, steps, exterior paint and site conditions. Chipping, cracks, loose components, missing pieces, sags and other signs of substandard condition all qualify for this condition.
2. Age (obsolescence)
  - a. A 40 plus year criteria was used for estimate
3. Inadequate ventilation, light, air, sanitation, or open spaces

- a. Things like junked cars and other accumulated debris, antiquated infrastructure, unpaved parking, outdoor storage
4. Other conditions
- a. High density population or overcrowding (census)
  - b. Other conditions which could be unsafe or unsanitary endangering life or property.
  - c. Any combination of factors conducive to poor health, disease, mortality, delinquency or crime. Any combination that is detrimental to public health, safety, morals or welfare. This may include inadequate infrastructure as well as statistical data.

### **Blighted Area Designation Criteria**

The area designation is based on a number of criteria or indicators of substandard conditions. These are specified in the law and outlined here:

1. The presence of a substantial number of deteriorated or deteriorating structures. This takes the form of structural problems, exterior paint, cracks, chimney, site conditions, roof and similar problems with the building.
2. Existence of a defective or inadequate street layout. This includes dead ends, railroad crossings, linear downtown, narrow alleys and blind crossings.
3. Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness. Such things as landlocked parcels, odd shaped lots, undersized lots and accessibility problems.
4. Unsanitary or unsafe conditions. Examples here include age and physical condition of structures, flood plain, and lack of public infrastructure, unsanitary conditions, and ventilation.
5. Deterioration of site or other improvements. Such things as off street parking, storm drainage, junk cars, dilapidated structures, debris and on-site storage are examples.
6. Diversity of ownership. This condition exists when numerous lots are needed to develop to up to date standards. Assemblage is difficult without some form of public assistance.
7. Tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land.
8. Defective or unusual conditions of title. Liens, improper filings
9. Improper subdivision or obsolete platting. Examples include undersized lots, improper zoning, lot configuration, easements and accessibility are problems that often are present.
10. The existence of conditions which endanger life or property by fire or other causes. Such things as inoperative infrastructure, site access, on-site storage, secluded areas for pests to thrive, poor surface drainage, and poor street and sidewalk condition are examples.
11. Any combination of such factors, substantially impairs or arrests the sound growth of the community, retards the provision of housing accommodations or constitutes

an economic or social liability. Here incompatible land uses, obsolescence and inability for a property to compete in the market place.

12. Is detrimental to the public health, safety, morals, or welfare in its present condition and use; and in which there is at least one of the following conditions:
- a. Unemployment in the area at least 100% of state or national average census data
  - b. The average age of residential and commercial units is over 40 years as determined by field observations
  - c. More than half of the plotted/subdivided property has been unimproved for 40 years using public record
  - d. Per capita income of the area is lower than the average of the city from census data.
  - e. The area has a stable or declining population based on the last two decennial censuses.

## **Structural Condition**

Structural conditions were evaluated using the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development standard definitions:

### **No Problem**

- No structural or aesthetic problems are visible

### **Adequate Condition**

- Slight damage to porches, steps, roofs
- Slight wearing of mortar between bricks/stone/block
- Small cracks in walls or chimneys
- Cracked windows
- Lack of paint
- Slight wear on steps, doors and frames

### **Deteriorating Conditions**

- Holes, open cracks, rotted, loose, or missing material in parts of the foundation, walls (1/2 of the wall) or roof (1/4 of the roof)
- Shaky, broken, or missing steps or railings
- Numerous missing and cracked window panes
- Rotted or loose windows or doors no longer water-proof

### **Dilapidated Condition**

- Holes, open cracks, rotted, loose or missing material over a large area of the foundation, on wall or on roof
- Substantial sagging of roof, floors, or walls
- Extensive fire, flood, or storm damage
- Inadequate original construction such as building elements made of scrap materials or conversion of structures not adequate for housing.

## Street Conditions

Street Conditions were graded using the following criteria:

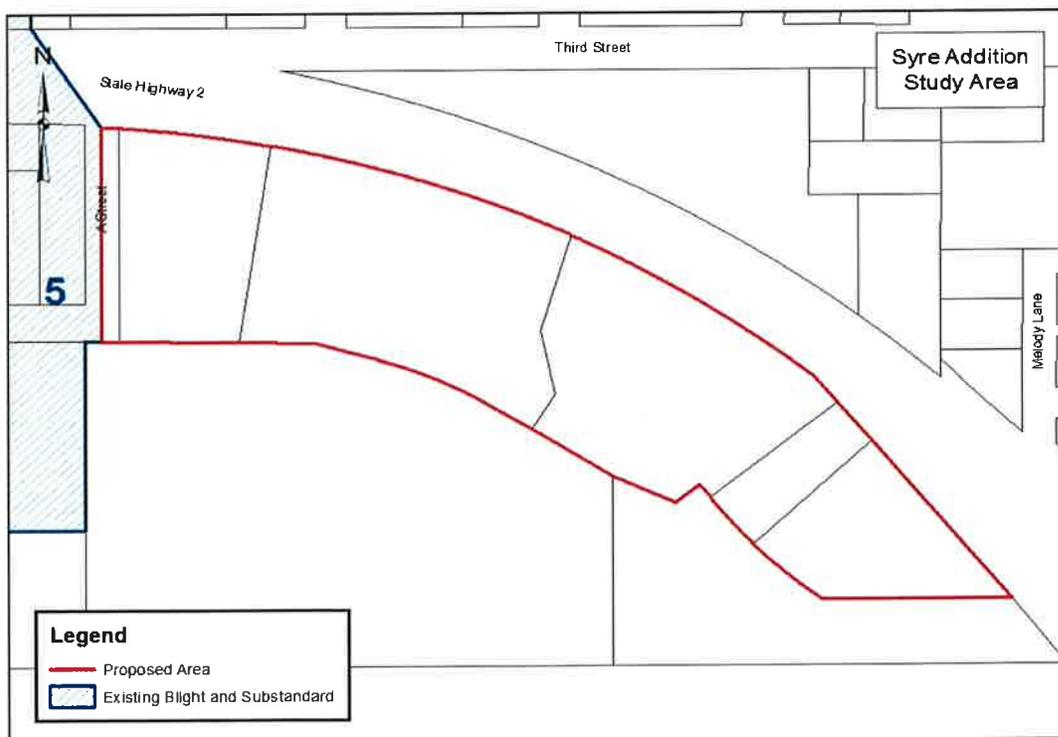
1. Excellent-No visible deformations of the roadway surface, like new.
2. Good-Shows signs of slight aging. Small cracks that have been filled. No or very little patching.
3. Fair-Isolated cracks are beginning to spread and connect, cracks and potholes are requiring patching. Minor ruts in the wheel paths are forming.
4. Poor-Alligator cracks are forming in the wheel paths, extensive number of pothole or patch repairs. Ruts in the wheel paths have formed.
5. Failure-The road surface is disintegrating, is very rough, full of patching.

The criteria are applied as accurately as possible for the entire stretch of road surface, usually between two intersecting streets. There may be many different conditions present but efforts were made to pick the best representation of the road surface as a whole.

## Analysis of Study Area

### Proposed Blighted Area

The following map delineates the Study Area and will by reference apply to this entire report. Solid red lines are the Study Area boundary. This Study Area's west border co-terminates with an existing Blighted and Substandard area (the Flack Avenue and East 3<sup>rd</sup> District). A portion of that area is illustrated in blue hatch lines on the map.



The total acreage within the City of Alliance corporate limits is 3137 acres. Currently the city has 621 acres designated as “Blighted and Substandard” which is slightly less than 20% of the City’s total acreage. The proposed additional “Blighted and Substandard” area consists of 9 acres. Adding this proposed area to the existing “Blighted and Substandard” area brings the total Blighted and Substandard area to 630 acres or 20.1% of the total area of the City of Alliance. This remains well within the allowed 30% providing future opportunity to add more.

### Findings and Contributing Factors

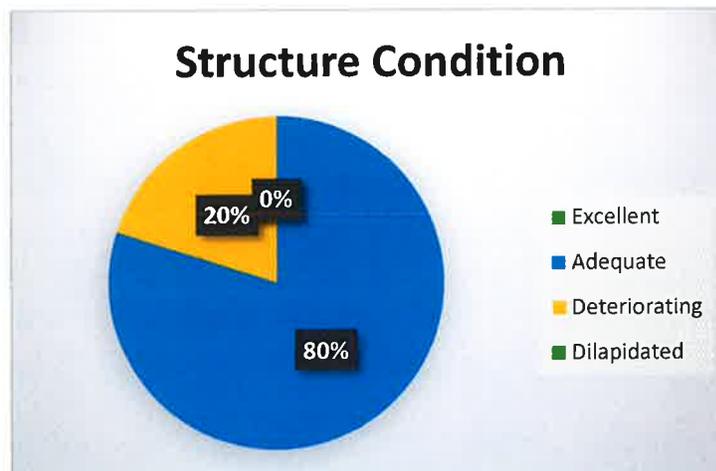
The intent of this study is to determine if the subject area has experienced structural and site deterioration or if there are other negative factors which are decreasing the potential to develop. The field survey work was done in October of 2016 and strongly supported initial impressions that the area had in generally declined below community standards. What follows are the factors evaluated to determine if there is a reasonable presence of blight and substandard conditions within the designated area. This section reviews the building and structure conditions, infrastructure and land use found in the area based on statutory definitions, observations and explains the identified contributing factors.

As set forth in Nebraska legislation a blighted area means an area which by reason of the presence of:

### Substantial Number of Deteriorated or Deteriorating Structures

#### Exterior Inspection of Buildings

There were a total of 10 structures evaluated using the Blighted and Substandard criteria as described on page 8 of this report. Only the primary structures were evaluated under the Blighted and Substandard definition. If outbuildings or other structures were present they were not included in the survey. Thus the boundary for the Blighted and Substandard designation includes 10 buildings and structures. Field surveys concluded that none of the total structures had no problems, 80% were acceptable, 20% were deteriorating and 0% were dilapidated.



## **Defective or Inadequate Infrastructure**

Inadequate infrastructure, street conditions and accessibility as well as inability to safely move traffic through an area is a contributing factor to the blight and substandard conditions.

### **Public Utilities**

Water is provided by the City with an 8" cast iron water main laid in 1948. The main has 4 fire hydrants located along the frontage of all the properties. Sanitary sewer does not exist in this subdivision. Properties ran sewer services to existing City sewer main several hundred feet away, or are doing without. Natural gas is supplied by Black Hills Energy and electric is supplied by the City. Storm sewer infrastructure does not exist and relies solely on ditches to carry the water away from the buildings and roads.

### **Street Conditions and Accessibility**

The surface condition of roads in the study area vary from good to poor. The surface of Highway 2 has been maintained to Nebraska Department of Road standards and is generally good. However, the existing curb and gutter has deteriorated to the point where water pools adjacent to the road surface. "A Street" is a gravel street without curb and gutter. The street is in poor condition and has several places where water accumulates. The standing water combined with the heavy truck traffic from the railroad causes ruts to form in the road surface. The study area is not serviced by alleys. Syre Addition was developed adjacent to rail yards and a service track was laid at the rear of the properties.

Syre Addition exhibits several traffic safety issues that need be addressed.

1. Access to the east four lots of Syre addition is shared between Lots 2 and 3 with no turning lane on the highway to allow safe traffic flow during heavy use of the properties.
2. Access to the east two lots is derived from an access easement shared with Lots 2 and 3 as grade differences between the highway approach to the overpass and the east lots is too great for a driveway off the highway. This easement terminates at the railroad yards at southeast end of Lot 5 without provisions for traffic to turn around.
3. Gravel streets are present.
4. Street widths are not consistent with the community's overall standard development pattern.



“A Street” looking north from its intersection with East 2<sup>nd</sup>. Deep ruts have been caused by the combination of poor runoff and trucks entering and leaving railroad property.



Grade separation between the approach to the highway overpass and the east lots necessitating the access easement through Lots 2 and 3.



Poorly maintained road located in the access easement.

**Faulty Lot Layout in Relation to Size, Adequacy, Accessibility, or Usefulness**

Most of the structures in the Study Area predate the plat of Syre Addition (1999) and BN Addition (1977). In the past, it was typical practice, for a business that heavily used the railroad to ship their commodity, to build a business on railroad property and lease the footprint the building occupied. The lot lines, as they are now, were platted in 1999 and were drawn based off the locations of the buildings and the approximate area they would need to effectively use the lot. This resulted in poor access, no room for business expansion, and crooked lot lines. Any growth of these facilities would require the acquisition of the neighboring lots as they are bordered to the south by the railroad yards and to the north by Nebraska Highway 2.

## **Deterioration of Site or Other Improvements**

### **Debris**

Debris accumulates on and adjacent to abandoned buildings and unused lots. Two of the lots in Syre Addition contain abandoned structures and demolition debris left behind when the businesses that occupied them moved to other locations in town. This debris included piles of rock and dirt with weeds growing out of them, broken concrete, partially destroyed building foundations and weed piles. Numerous (somewhat less severe) additional instances are present as well suggesting the problem is growing.



Partially destroyed foundation for a concrete batch plant.



Abandoned building with debris accumulating next to it.



Accumulation of broken concrete with weeds growing out of it.



Storage in front of and next to the building.

## Dilapidated and Deteriorating Structures

Twenty percent (20%) of the structures were visually found to be deteriorating. The deteriorating structures have been abandoned by their owners and will become dilapidated if left to the elements. These structures are visually unpleasing, present themselves as an attractive nuisance, and present a challenge to redevelopment as well as an opportunity as a means to redevelop.



Abandoned warehouse building showing signs of deterioration. The ground has been built up around the structure to the point where water runs into the building.



Abandoned scale house showing signs of deterioration.



Abandoned warehouse showing water runoff issues.

## **Diversity of Ownership**

Looking at the property ownership records underscores the fact that numerous owners would need to participate in a meaningful redevelopment plan. Businesses will be faced with the problem of accumulating enough land area to build an up to date industrial enterprise within the existing boundaries of Syre Addition and providing adequate access to said development.

Any redevelopment in Syre Addition will likely require the acquisition of additional parcels of land as businesses are currently confined to the area between Nebraska Highway 2 and the railroad yards. The City land use map shows that many of these parcels are owned by similar types of businesses that may not be willing to sell to a potential competitor.

## **Improper Subdivision or Obsolete Platting**

### **Improper Subdivision of Land**

The land where the lots are currently was developed before being platted. The first subdivision of land was a single lot subdivision called “BN Addition to the City of Alliance” platted in 1977. The second subdivision came in 1999 and is called “Syre Addition to the City of Alliance.” Platting in 1999 meant that the lot lines would have to be placed with respect to existing structures. This led to lot lines that are crooked and poor access to the entire subdivision.

The platting of lots in an entire subdivision based on the location of preexisting structures is not a good planning practice as it typically binds the City to accept whatever subdivision the developer has prepared. This is why the City of Alliance has adopted subdivision requirements for parcels 10 acres in size and under.

## The Existence of Conditions which Endanger Life or Property

### Sidewalk Conditions

The Study Area is not served by any sidewalks. City code requires that sidewalks be installed as part of the development or improvement of a property unless the owner shows that there is a hardship not generally shared by other properties within the City. The grade difference between the highway and lots along the southeast properties and the dead end at the railroad yards may be considered a hardship as currently platted, but there is opportunity along the west property to install sidewalk along "A Street" as it is a part of the grid system of streets prevalent in the older parts of town which have been developed with sidewalk.

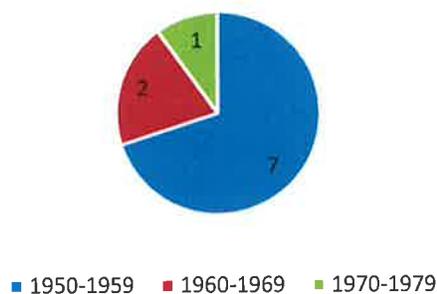
### On Site Storage

The Study Area has numerous sites and types of outdoor storage. A few of these locations show storage of outdated or abandoned items as well as the abandonment of materials once used as part of the business. These findings point to an impediment for development or upgrades in the neighborhood and should be evaluated for removal.

### Structure Age

The average age of the structures in the area is 56.5 years. Age of the structures within the Designated Study Area is provided through data derived from the Box Butte County Assessor's Office, City of Alliance Community Development Permit Records, Aerial photographs, and field verification. While it was not possible to verify every structure there was an adequate sample of known ages to determine age through comparison and proximity to other like structures and appearance. Those structures built before 1976 qualify for the 40 years and older structures designation in the State of Nebraska laws.

Number of Structures



Analysis using the City of Alliance Community Development permit tracking information was inconclusive as all of the structures except one predated detailed file keeping by the City. Other permits like plumbing, electrical, or general construction were found for each property, however, the buildings would have been in place when such permits were issued. Many of the dates were derived from or confirmed using aerial photographs taken in 1939, 1954, 1955, 1960, 1966, and 1975. Therefore, the project ages reflect a minimum age of each structure and not the actual age.

## **Conclusion of Blighted and Substandard Analysis**

Based on this analysis the Study Area meets the criteria of both blighted and substandard conditions. The area displays the presence of criteria required for the findings of a blighted and substandard condition as defined by the State of Nebraska Legislature.

The primary conditions leading to this conclusion include:

### **Blighted and Substandard Conditions:**

- Two of the total ten buildings evaluated for the Study Area were deteriorating or dilapidated.
- The street system does not meet acceptable engineering standards.
- The area has numerous lot layout faults in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility or usefulness.
- Obsolete platting exists in the entire area.
- Conditions exist which endanger life or property by fire and other causes.
- Conditions exist which are detrimental to the public health, safety, morals and welfare in the present condition with a majority of structures in excess of 40 years old and the population is either stable or declining.
- Diversity of ownership is present with nearly all parcels independently owned. Accumulation of parcels is not occurring.

### **Blighted conditions that do not appear to be present:**

- There are not more than half of the plotted and subdivided property that is unimproved, within the city for forty years and has remained unimproved during that time.

### **Blighted conditions not evaluated:**

- Tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land.
- Defective or unusual conditions of title.
- Stable or decreasing population.
- Median Household Income below the rest of the City and unemployment more than 100% of the City average.

**Substandard conditions not present:**

- There did not appear to be areas of excessively high density of population and overcrowding.

**Comprehensive Plan**

A declaration of blighted and substandard conditions in the Study Area conforms to the City of Alliance Comprehensive Plan. The Study Area is located in an area that qualifies for this declaration. The Comprehensive Plan identifies this area as an employment focused corridor, supporting industrial activity, and an area served by existing infrastructure albeit very poorly. While identified as an industrial corridor in the Comprehensive Plan a sub-area plan will be undertaken following completion of this Study Area analysis to investigate other possible uses of the property.

**Blighted and Substandard Area Declaration**

**Based on the findings in this report the Study Area may be declared blighted and substandard in keeping with and conforming to the Nebraska Community Development Law. This finding will make this area available for redevelopment activities. The General Redevelopment Plan, when prepared, shall be composed in a manner consistent with the City of Alliance Comprehensive Plan.**

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