



Public Facilities And Services

CHAPTER 3

Local Governments and Their Structure

Davison County utilizes the customary form of government as provided for in South Dakota Codified Law (SDCL) Title 7. These state statutes describe the election process and requirements for all elected county officials. Davison County has a five member commission with all members elected at large. The county instituted a process where three commission seats are elected in the same year as the Governor of South Dakota with the remaining two seats filled at the time of the United States presidential election.

Davison County is relatively small in land area, 437 square miles, when compared to other counties within the State of South

Dakota. The geographic size of an area does not necessarily dictate the variety, number, or type of further subdivisions. There are several entities with taxing authority within Davison County. They include:

- Twelve townships
- Two cities
- One town
- Six fire districts
- Seven school districts
- One special district

The taxing entities of Davison County and their levies and valuations are listed in **Table 3.1**. The townships of Davison County are shown in **Figure 3.1**

TABLE 3.1
Taxing Authorities, Levies, and Revenues -Davison County; 2018-2020

Name	2018		2020	
	Levy	Valuation	Levy	Valuation
Davison County	3.928	\$1,716,156,539	4.002	\$1,740,345,588
Municipalities				
Town of Ethan	6.156	\$11,770,847	6.503	\$11,449,518
City of Mitchell	5.605	\$921,596,513	5.758	\$928,803,682
City of Mount Vernon	7.480	\$16,602,543	7.761	\$16,481,798
Townships				
Badger	0.141	\$68,304,859	0.093	\$68,097,789
Baker	0.083	\$51,507,575	0.082	\$55,072,145
Beulah	0.257	\$68,685,034	0.045	\$73,421,610
Blendon	0.097	\$49,353,255	0.097	\$51,447,240
Lisbon	0.111	\$44,597,348	0.111	\$46,934,025
Mitchell	1.438	\$120,011,053	1.328	\$135,582,020
Mount Vernon	0.105	\$52,484,315	0.018	\$55,776,233
Perry	0.272	\$53,306,622	0.266	\$57,622,835
Prosper	0.363	\$77,136,757	0.322	\$87,170,512
Rome	0.105	\$51,560,227	0.100	\$55,721,636
Tobin	0.040	\$50,055,300	0.038	\$53,198,055
Union	0.084	\$41,690,860	0.084	\$43,566,490
School Districts				
Mitchell 17-2	7.775	\$620,986,555	7.764	\$682,843,505
Mount Vernon 17-3	8.723	\$25,575,435	8.617	\$29,428,525
Ethan 17-1	7.699	\$20,621,755	7.694	\$24,049,060
Parkston 33-3 *	6.405	\$1,729,730	6.252	\$1,863,225
Corsica/Stickney 21-3	7.021	\$1,173,885	7.106	\$1,439,590
Plankinton 01-1	8.076	\$0	7.924	\$0
Sanborn Central 55-5	7.127	\$347,315	6.817	\$428,255
Special Districts				
James River Water Development District	0.061	\$1,614,105,985	0.061	\$1,739,655,014
Rural Fire Districts	0.280	\$552,109,702	0.224	\$723,899,465

Source: South Dakota Department of Revenue, 2020

Mitchell Township is a former township, now primarily overlaid by the city of Mitchell. Due in part to (1) rising road expenditures; (2) a declining tax base resulting from

annexations of portions of Mitchell Township by the city of Mitchell a majority of Mitchell Township residents affirmatively voted to abolish their political subdivision in 2001.

Due to various continuing issues relating to road maintenance, accountability for tax assessments and expenditure of tax revenues, fire protection, and a general desire for local control, a special election was held in 2009 on the question of reestablishing Mitchell Township. The result of the election was positive and Mitchell Township was subsequently reorganized as a political subdivision of the State of South Dakota. Mitchell Township regained independent taxing authority and, following reorganization, is governed by an elected board of township supervisors.

Table 3.2 details the property tax income payable to the county for 2020. The data is divided by region or entity.

TABLE 3.2
County Revenues by District - 2020

Property Tax Sources	Taxes	Percent of Total
County	\$ 6,964,915.89	22.17%
Cities	\$ 5,550,423.01	17.66%
Schools	\$14,407,458.97	45.83%
Townships	\$ 260,059.79	0.83%
Rural Fire Districts	\$ 161,980.72	0.52%
Water Development Districts	\$ 106,119.12	0.34%
Other Districts	\$ 0	0.00%
Special Assessments	\$ 3,983,280.43	12.67%
Total Annual Revenues	\$31,437,654.21	

Source: South Dakota Department of Revenue, 2020

Municipalities have many powers listed in South Dakota law. Although a municipality has many powers, there are almost always

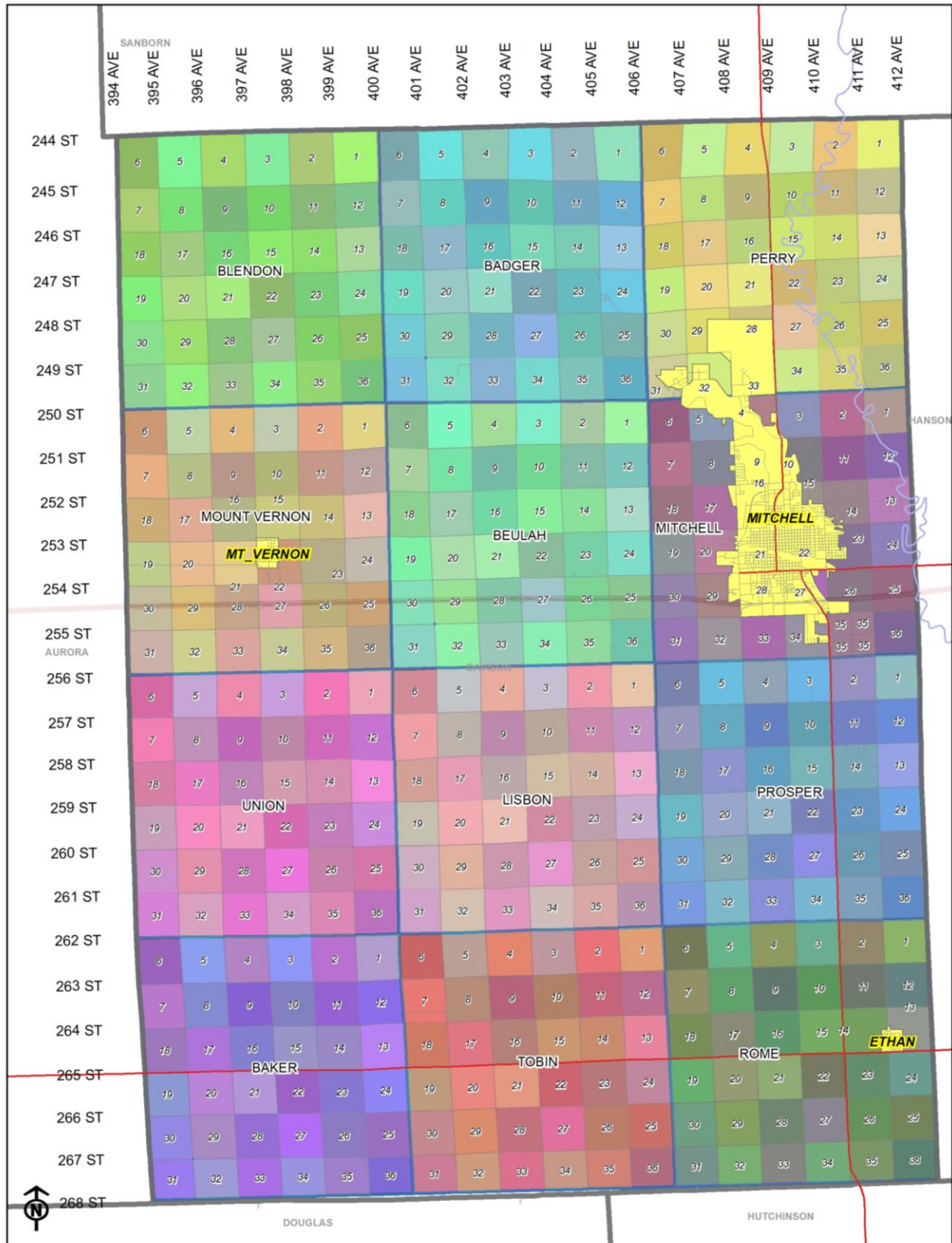
conditions and restrictions on the use of those powers. Municipal government is primarily governed by the provisions of Title 9 of South Dakota Codified Law, but several other chapters of law apply to municipalities.

Mitchell and Mount Vernon utilize the aldermanic form of local government. They are governed by a common council, which consists of a strong mayor who is elected at-large and two aldermen from each ward. Terms of office are traditionally two years but may be set by ordinance for up to five years. Ethan is set up as a trustee form of government. Between three and five board members are elected at-large for three year terms. The Trustees elect one of their own members to serve as the president of the board for a one year term.

In 2014, the Mitchell City Council established a City Administrator position to help manage City operations and coordinate planning efforts for the City's future. The City Administrator is under the direct supervision of the Mayor and the City Council and is responsible for:

- Planning, organizing, directing and coordinating activities in city departments.
- Ensuring compliance with state and federal laws.
- Overseeing the long range planning for the City of Mitchell.
- Administrative oversight and accountability of departmental functions.

Figure 3.1
Towns and Townships in Davison County



Transportation

The Davison County Commission retained an engineering firm to prepare a long-range transportation plan for the County in 2015. The engineer worked with the County Highway Department and County Commission to review the needs of the County with regards to the county road network and plan for future improvements.

The primary transportation element within Davison County is the road network. The network includes roads maintained by numerous entities including:

- State of South Dakota;
- Davison County;
- Organized Townships;
- Municipalities; and
- Private Individuals.

The existing road network and identification of jurisdictional ownership or responsibility is illustrated in **Figure 3.2**.

The issue of roads is complex and requires an understanding of basic terminology. One of the first steps in reviewing a road network is to break the system into subcategories. These groups identify the role of each road section and the impact upon the overall grid. For the purposes of this plan, an overview of the county's system will be undertaken by focusing on a rural system versus small or large urban systems and shall be further divided into four classifications:

- **Rural Principal Arterial System** - Provide corridor movement with trip length and density suitable for substantial statewide or interstate travel and will carry the majority of traffic movements between virtually all urban areas with populations over 50,000 and a large majority of those with populations over 25,000;
- **Rural Minor Arterial System** - Serve as a linkage of cities, larger towns, and other traffic generators such as major resort or recreation areas that are capable of attracting travel over similarly long distances;
- **Rural Collector System** - Serve as primary intra-county rather than

statewide travel and constitute those routes on which predominant travel distances are shorter than on arterial routes; and

- **Rural Local Road System** - Primarily provides access to the collector network and serves travel over relatively short distances. All roads not meeting the criteria of the first three are placed in this category.

A map of the functional classifications, as described above, of roads within the County is illustrated in **Figure 3.3**. A secondary township road includes roads within unorganized townships.

The elements of a traffic needs study include the following data:

- Examination of the road system;
- Comparison of the existing system to an estimated future demand;
- Traffic counts;
- Traffic inventories;
- Trip generation models and calculations; and
- Preservation of road corridors.

A process of addressing and providing for a future road network may be completed in conjunction with a detailed traffic study or through establishment of road corridor preservation regulations within a zoning or subdivision ordinance. Road preservation corridors are generally sited on the full, one quarter (1/4) and one sixteenth (1/16) lines within township sections. Preserving these corridors protects the governmental body from inflated expenditures such as road realignments or utility relocation, condemnation of buildings, or purchase of lands.

There are areas within the County that may never see an additional road constructed due to geography, topography, and/or population density. Yet, the preservation of transportation corridors enables the County to review construction activities within these designated areas and consider the proposed project's potential impact upon the County and master road plan or comprehensive plan.

FIGURE 3.2
Road Base Layer with Jurisdictional Control

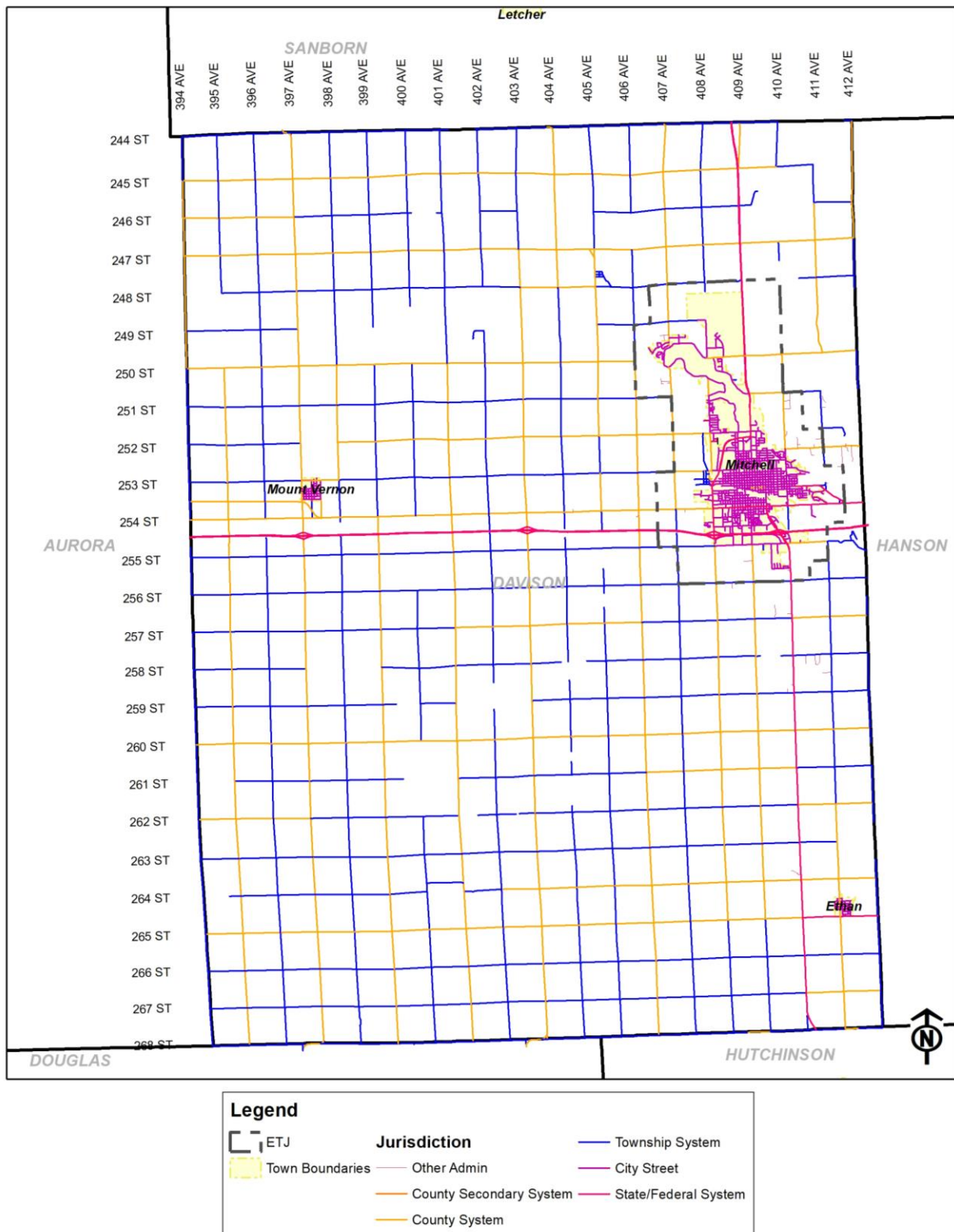
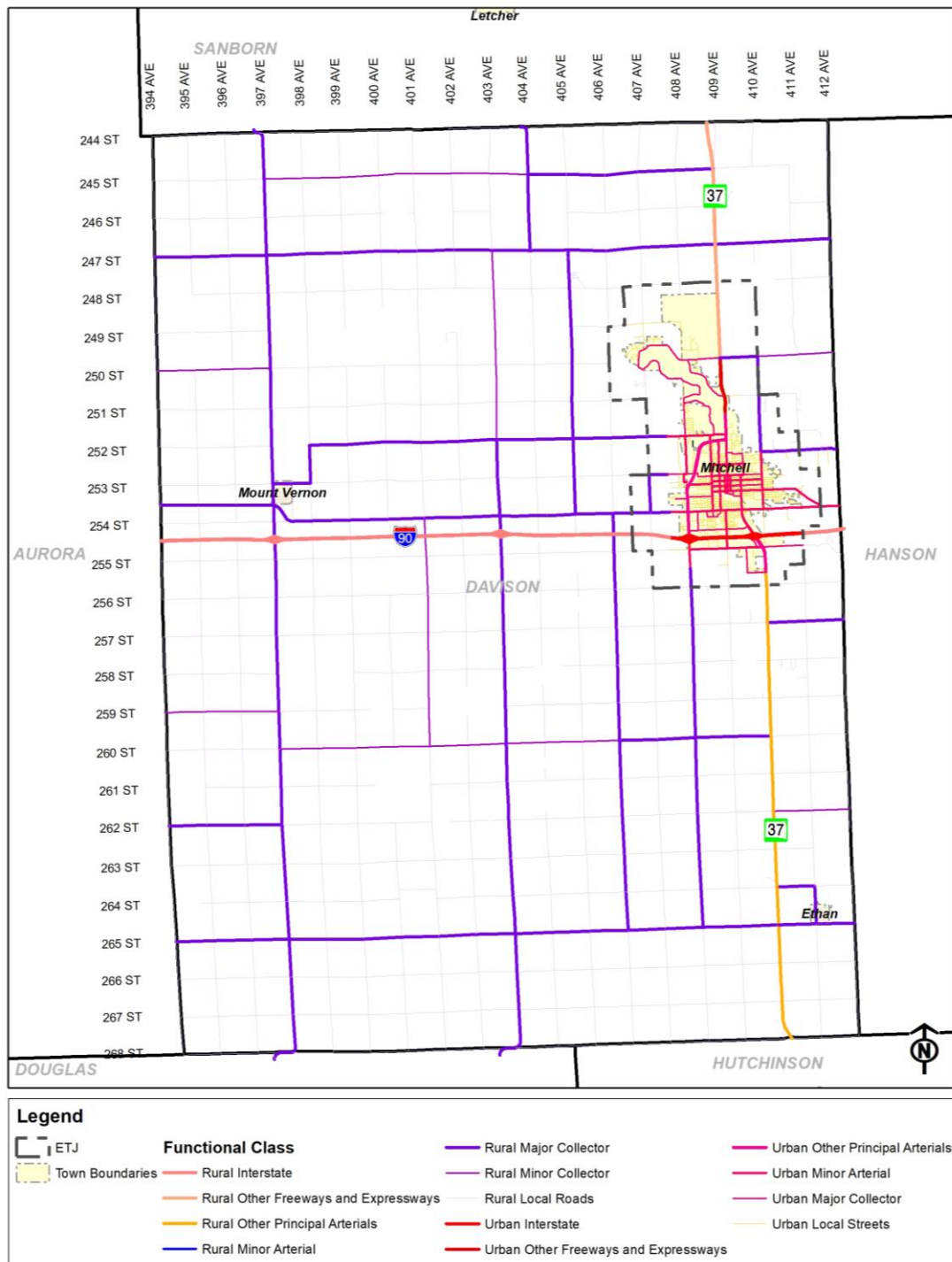


FIGURE 3.3
Functional Classification



When preparing a road development, improvement, or maintenance plan, one of the initial steps includes a review of the following data:

- Map of the Existing Road System;
- Identification of Ownership or Responsibility;
- Delineation of Functional Classification; and
- Average Daily Traffic Counts.

While these items may provide a starting place there are times or conditions when it may be necessary to further subdivide the four base items into more specific categories. Some of these subcategories may include:

- Road Surface Type: Dirt - Gravel - Asphalt - Concrete;
- Road Width: Driving Surface - Shoulders - Ditch;
- Road Condition: Smooth - Rough - Pot Holes;
- Service Area: Residential - Commercial - Agricultural; and
- Expected Traffic Flows: Trip Generation Modeling - Land Development Potential.

The South Dakota Department of Transportation drafts and presents an annual Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The STIP identifies the proposed transportation improvements for the next five years. As stated earlier, the State drafts a five year plan, yet updates the document annually. An annual revision is needed to account for the frequent changes in priority and revenues. While the STIP examines air, rail, surface, and public transit, a county plan will usually focus on

surface or road improvements. All of these elements will provide the County with a detailed road database on which it will be able to develop policies. **Table 3.3** lays out issues concerning safety on Davison County roads. The table reports the number of crashes and the crash rates for major corridors in the County. **Figures 3.4, 3.5, and 3.6** highlight areas of need, existing roadways of concern, proposed road upgrades, improvements, and the Major Road and Street Plan for the County.



Bridge in Davison County

Table 3.3 - Safety Concerns

North-South County Corridors		Miles	Total Crashes	Crash Rate (Crashes/HMVMT)
Roadway Corridor	Limits			
397 th Avenue	255 th St to 265 th St	10	29	391
403 rd Avenue	252 th St to 255 th St	3	8	329
403 rd Avenue	255 th St to 265 th St	10	18	349
406 th Avenue	255 th St to 265 th St	10	11	231
408 th Avenue	255 th St to 265 th St	10	28	175
409 th Avenue	255 th St to 260 th St	5	12	272

East-West County Corridors		Miles	Total Crashes	Crash Rate (Crashes/HMVMT)
Roadway Corridor	Limits			
252 nd Street	398 th Ave to 408 th Ave	10	26	234
253 rd Street	406 th Ave to 408 th Ave	2	7	267
254 th Street	403 rd Ave to Mitchell Limits	5	44	197
Sub-corridor:	406 th Ave to Mitchell Limits	2	26	242
Spruce Street	East of SD 37 to Dakotafest Drive	1.15	10	200

FIGURE 3.4
Road Improvements and Areas of Concern

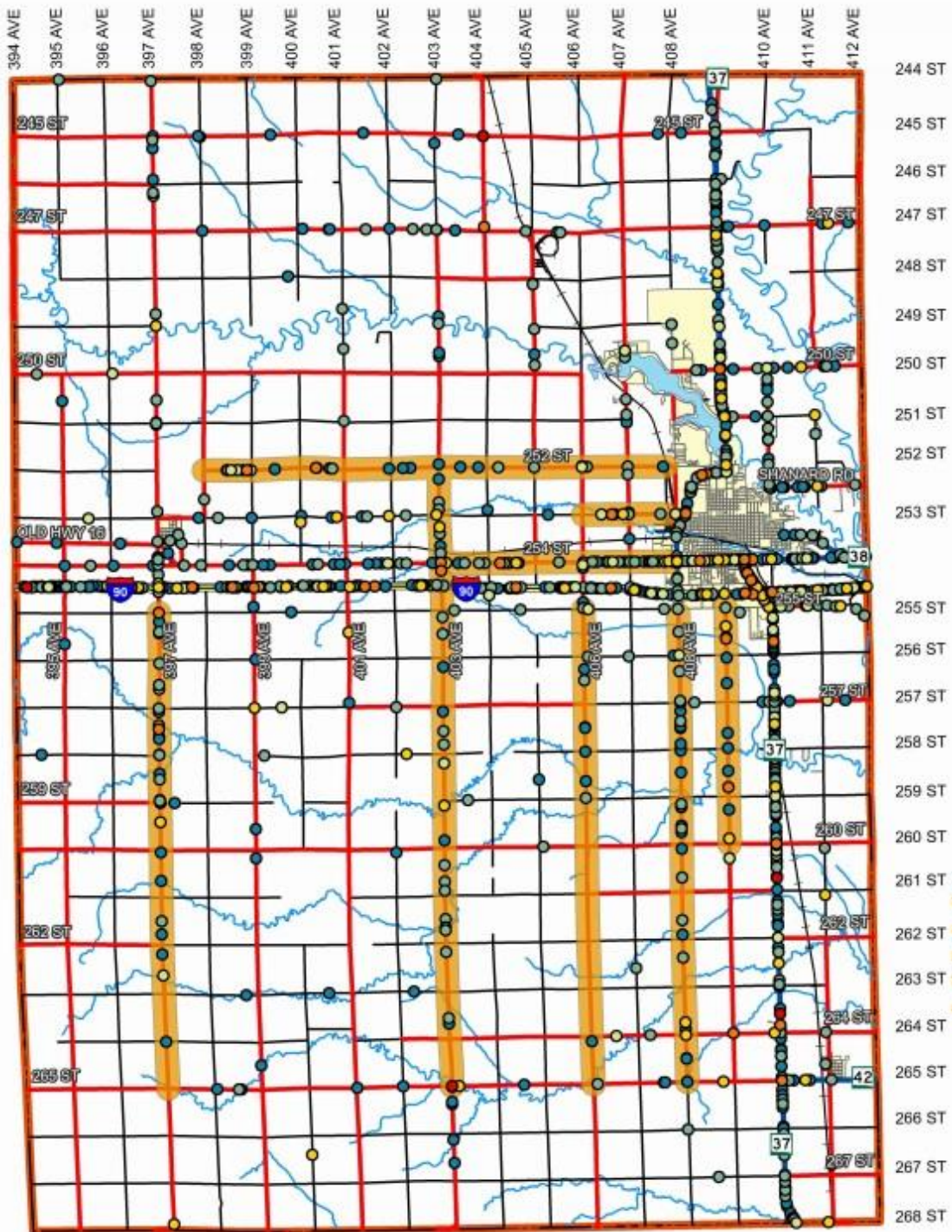
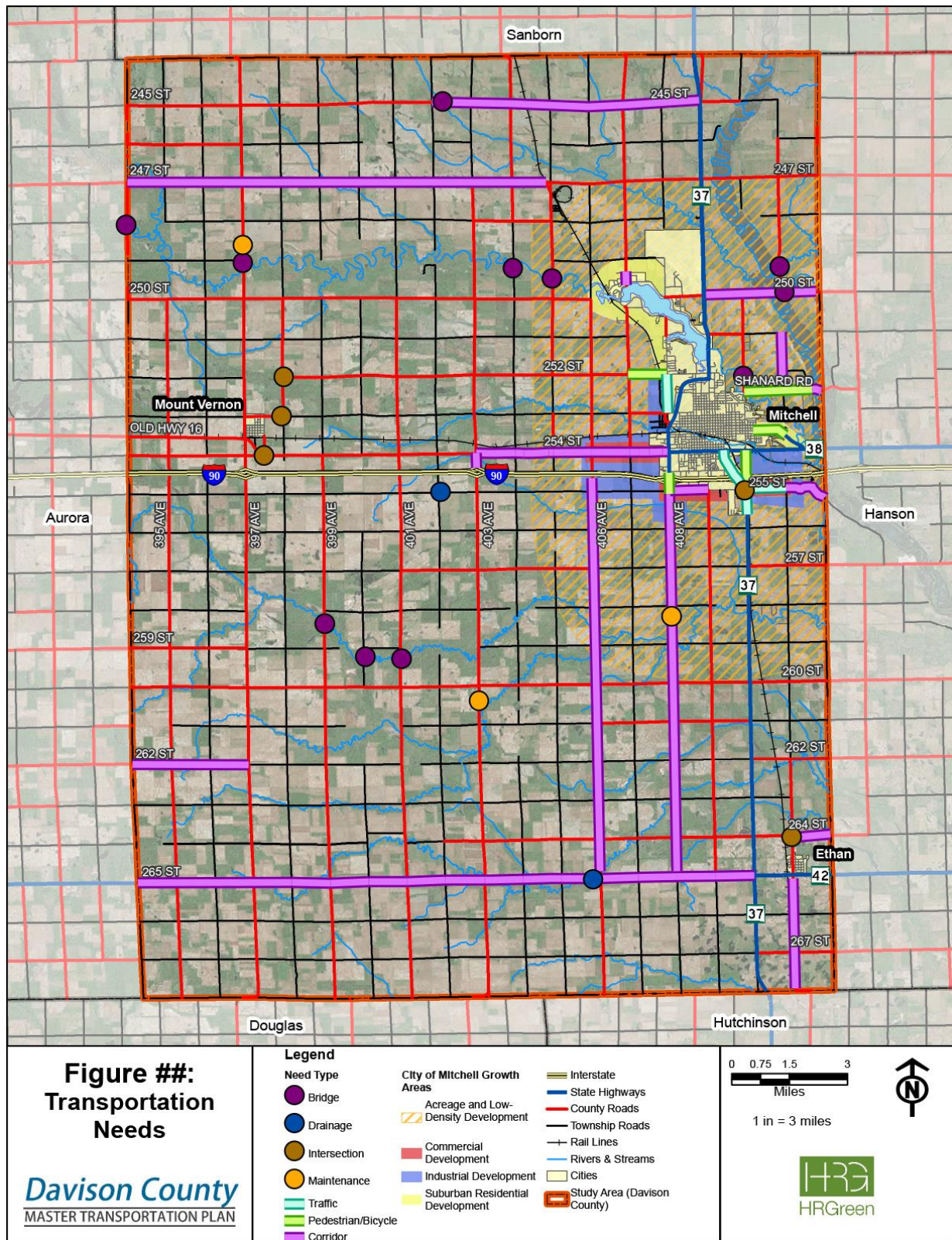


Figure 3.5
Transportation Needs



Bus Service:

Jefferson Lines offers bus stops in South Dakota that include passenger stops, ticket sales, and package shipping options. A stop is located along Havens Avenue in Mitchell. There are specialized transportation needs addressed throughout the county by Palace Transit, which operates curb to curb public transportation to anyone of any age in Mitchell seven days per week. Palace Transit also serves Mount Vernon and Ethan.

Air Service/Airport:

The Mitchell Municipal Airport is classified by the South Dakota Department of Transportation as a **Large General Aviation** facility. These airports support all general aviation aircraft and accommodate corporate aviation activity, including business jets, helicopters, and other general aviation activity. These airports' primary users are business related and service a large geographic region or they experience high levels of general aviation activity. Airports in this category typically have a minimum runway length of 5,000 feet, with non-precision approaches, weather reporting equipment, minor repair service, and at least 100LL fuel available 24 hours.

The airport was constructed in 1945 by the United States Military and was to be the home of the Norden bomb targeting system. It was also considered to be top secret.



Mitchell Municipal Airport

Civilians were allowed on the base. When WWII ended the base was closed, and the airport was turned over to the city of Mitchell. The airport has had many small air

carriers through the years, but none have been successful for long-term service.

Currently the airport hosts a wide range of private aircraft with estimated enplanements of 4,000 plus. The Mitchell airport has one fixed base operator, Wright Brothers Aviation. Mitchell's two runways 13-31, 6,700 ft. and 18-36, 5,512 ft. are capacity rated at 120,000 pounds. Runway 13-32 has ILS instrument landing.

Aberdeen, Pierre, Rapid City, and Sioux Falls are eligible for direct federal assistance due to their annual usage. These airports enplane or pick-up a minimum of 10,000 passengers a year, which qualifies them for direct funding status. In fiscal year 2018, these airports received the following amount of federal funds:

▪ Aberdeen	\$1,000,000
▪ Pierre	\$1,000,000
▪ Rapid City	\$2,358,049
▪ Sioux Falls	\$3,418,864

Since the Mitchell Airport does not qualify for direct federal funding, it must compete with the remaining 64 public use airports within the State for financial assistance. In addition to the direct or entitlement funding, the federal government with some State assistance, provides grants for up to 90% of the total project costs.



Mitchell Municipal Airport, Aerial View

Rail Freight Service:

The South Dakota agricultural sector depends heavily on export of crops, feed, animal products, ethanol and other products to U.S. and global markets. Agricultural production in the state has been increasing,

MOST SOUTH DAKOTA RAIL SHIPPERS DO NOT HAVE DIRECT ACCESS TO THE NATIONAL RAIL CORRIDORS, AS DEFINED BY THE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN RAILROADS. THE STATE'S RAILROAD SYSTEM IS PRIMARILY ORIENTED TO CONNECT SHIPPERS TO THIS NETWORK VIA CONNECTIONS OUTSIDE THE STATE.

SOUTH DAKOTA STATE RAIL PLAN, 2014

and export markets for the state's agricultural products are expected to grow steadily over the next decades.

Railroads are particularly critical to the state's agricultural industry, which, in turn, is critical to the overall economy. Railroads are the primary means of moving South Dakota agricultural exports, including ethanol, to U.S. and global markets. Trucks are generally not cost effective for the long-haul transport of these heavy and bulky commodities, and barge service down the Missouri River is no longer a viable option because of the variability in water levels and declining funding for lock and channel maintenance.

There are two rail lines existing in Davison County. The first line is a line owned by the State of South Dakota and operated by the Dakota Southern Railway headquartered in Chamberlain. The other line is owned and operated by the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railroad. The southern tier of the region is served by the Dakota Southern Railway's (DSRC) Mitchell to Rapid City (MRC) and Napa to Platte lines. The DSCR MRC line serves shippers west of Mitchell, providing connections at Mitchell to the BNSF Aberdeen and Mitchell Subdivisions to Sioux City.



Burlington Northern Santa Fe Engine

The major improvement to the rail system in Davison County includes a connection between the Dakota Southern-operated line and the BNSF-owned line.

The project includes the construction of a northbound connection from the MRC to the BNSF west of Mitchell, South Dakota. The MRC connection to the BNSF currently is through the yard in Mitchell. Long 110-plus-car trains, such as those traveling to and from the large grain elevator in Kimball, are required back the train beyond the northbound switch in the yard, blocking road crossings in order to proceed northbound to Aberdeen. A northbound connection from the MRC, originating just east of 407th Avenue and connecting just south of West 23rd Avenue would provide a direct route for northbound commodities and empty trains southbound. This connection would require construction of approximately 1.75 miles of new track and two switches, along with the acquisition of about 20 acres right-of-way and two new road crossings.

Figure 3.7, Rail Facilities



Water Supply

Davison County is served by several rural water systems to supply communities and properties with drinking water. Davison Rural Water System has the largest geographic service area in Davison County. It has more than 3,130 customers an average of 403,000 gallons of water per day. Davison's water is surface water that is purchased from another water system. Hanson Rural Water serves more than 2,463 customers an average of 588,000 gallons of water per day. Hanson serves a small area in the eastern-most areas of Davison County.

The Water Division of the Public Works Department is responsible for the maintenance of water mains, water towers and other water service throughout the City of Mitchell. The City of Mitchell provides water service to 5,650 connections through approximately 660,000 feet of distribution piping with an average pressure of 60 lbs. The City has the storage capacity for 2.7 million gallons of water. Mitchell has an extensive water distribution system which consists of PVC, Ductile and AC pipe. Pipe sizes range from 4"- 12" for mains.



Mitchell Water Tower

There are two water sources for the City. The first supplier is the B-Y Water District. The City's connection to the B-Y Water District is on the south side of the City adjacent to the Mitchell Technical College's (MTC's) campus. The B-Y Water District has a meter pit at this location which is used to measure the flow of water to the City. The City serves more than 12,448 customers an average of 6,308,000 gallons of water per day. The second water source is Lake Mitchell. The water from Lake Mitchell must

be treated to meet EPA and DANR regulations for the treatment of surface water. The City's treatment plant is capable of treating this water to required standards.

Approximately 29,000 feet of 24-inch ductile iron pipe (DIP) was installed in 2003 on the eastern side of the City from the PRV vault to the water treatment facility. The City has three connections to the distribution system along the route to the water treatment plant. These connections are located at the intersections of Spruce Street and MTI Drive, the intersection of East First Avenue and South Maddie Street, and at the end of East Eighth Avenue. These connections have seldom been used since installment but would be used in the case of water main breaks or maintenance within the water treatment facility.



Mitchell Water Treatment Plant

The Town of Ethan serves 331 customers an average of 18,000 gallons of water per day. The City of Mount Vernon serves 462 customers an average of 34,000 gallons of water per day.



Ethan Water Tower

Distribution Systems

Figure 3.8 identifies the water distribution systems in Davison County. As of today, there are between 200 and 300 residential taps available within the lake area, dependent on location. Property adjacent to or in close proximity of a municipality may be able to obtain city service. While

there is available capacity within the City of Mitchell's system, there are no formal plans to expand service to properties outside the City's corporate limits.

FIGURE 3.8
Rural Water

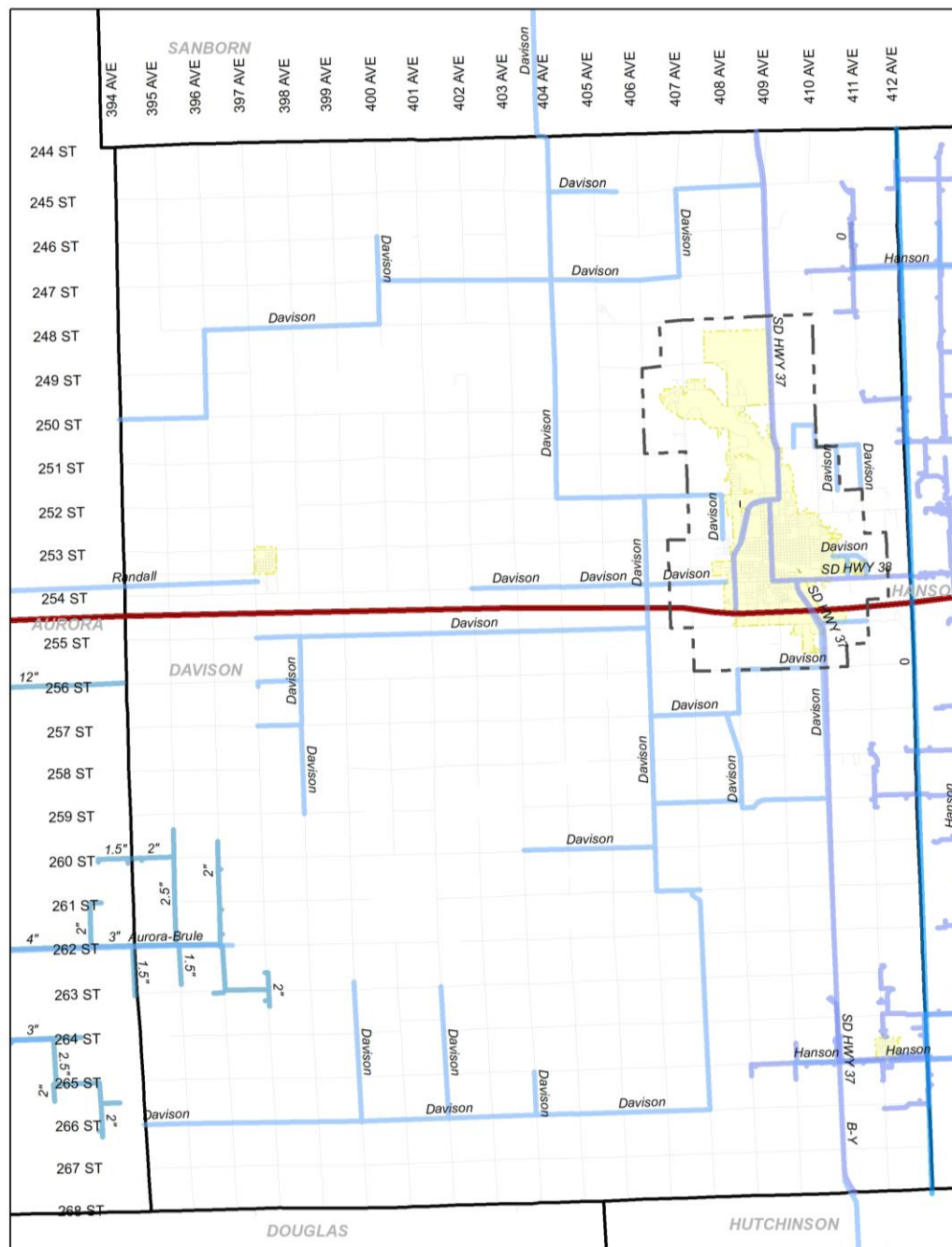
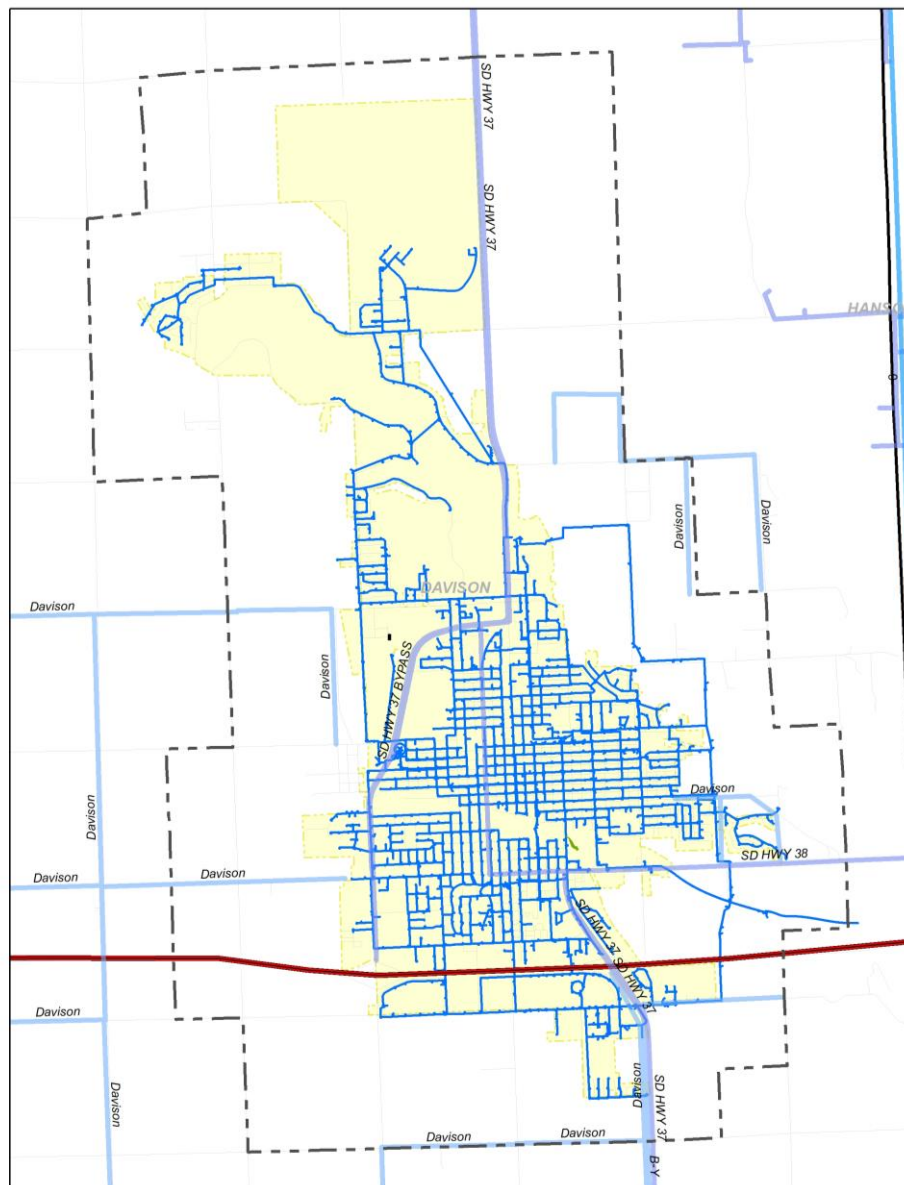


FIGURE 3.9
Mitchell Water Distribution System



Sanitary Sewer

All of the municipalities have wastewater collection and treatment systems. The unincorporated community of Loomis and rural residences utilize individual septic tanks and drainfields. The density of septic systems and their potential for water contamination is an environmental concern. New sub-divisions are expected to add to this problem. Therefore, new developments need to be controlled through siting and development guidelines.



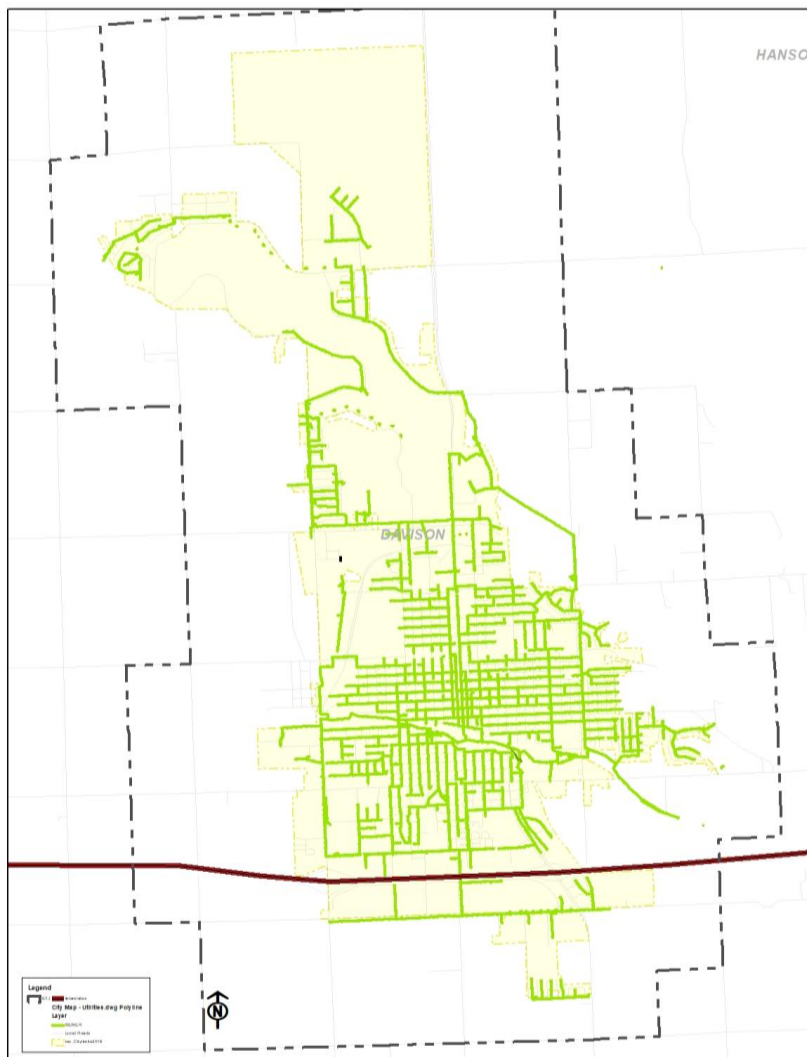
Mitchell Wastewater Treatment Facility

There is very little central sanitary sewer service in the county, other than those systems within municipalities.

The remainder of the County consists of farmsteads, small commercial properties, and rural residential homes of varying types and sizes. This type of scattered development does not make a central sewer system cost effective thus the reliance on septic systems. An exact number of

individual septic systems within the County is difficult to calculate yet a reasonable estimate of no less than 95% or 3,016 of the 3,175 homes have individual systems. The impact of these systems upon neighboring properties, environment, and water quality is unknown. The issue is not the number of systems but rather the concentration of many systems within certain areas of the County.

Figure 3.10 Mitchell Sewer System



Solid Waste

Davison County and its respective communities became subject to federal solid waste regulations, under Subtitle D of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (P.L. 94-580) as amended on January 1,

1992. These regulations required the closure of “dumps”. As a result of “Subtitle D” and the accompanying environmental protection language, the dump or landfill business became extremely regulated and much more costly to operate.

In addition to its traditional garbage collection service, the City of Mitchell initiated a recycling program. City sanitation crews collect recyclables every other week in different areas of the City. Recycling containers are collected on Monday-Tuesday garbage collection days in the first week and Wednesday-Friday collection days in the second week.

The Mitchell Landfill is located about two miles south and east of Mitchell. The facility is permitted for 160 acres of use and it can accept up to 150,000 tons of waste per year. The landfill receives an average of about 30,000 tons of waste per year.



Mitchell Landfill Facility

The City also operates a restricted use site near the eastern border of Davison County along Dry Run Creek. Restricted use sites are permitted to accept construction and demolition debris waste materials, furniture, tree branches, yard waste, waste tires and recyclable metals and appliances. A construction debris site is operated by a private operator along East Havens Avenue near the BNSF rail line. Construction debris sites are permitted to accept concrete, brick, stonework, asphaltic concrete, concrete block, asphaltic or fiberglass shingles, painted or stained wood, attached insulation, pipe, and similar wastes.

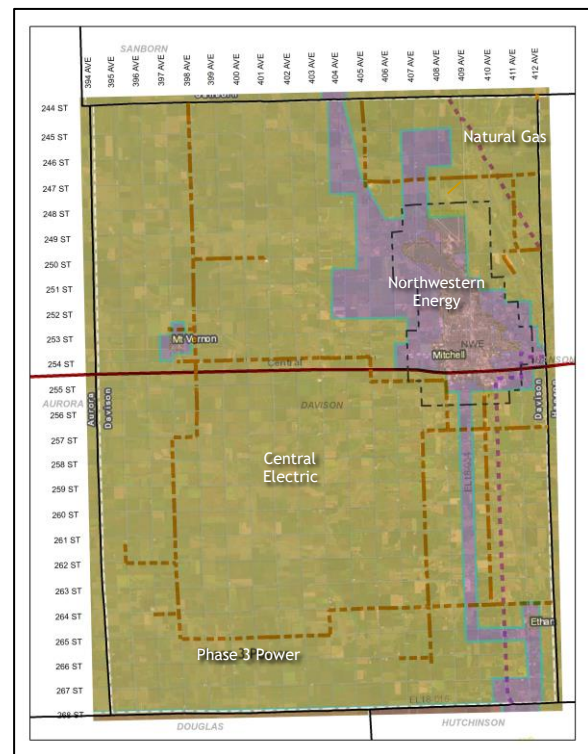
The City of Ethan operates a restricted use site 1.5 miles north and one half mile west of town. The City of Mount Vernon operates a restricted use site $\frac{3}{4}$ mile east of town.

Electrical and Natural Gas Service

Northwestern Energy provides electrical and natural gas service to the City of Mitchell (including the Lake Mitchell area) and the Towns of Ethan and Mount Vernon. The

rural areas of Davison County are served by Central Electric.

Figure 3.11 - Electric and Gas Service Providers



Telecommunication Systems

Mitchell Telecom provides telecommunications service in the City of Mitchell. Qwest Corporation, doing business as CenturyLink is an Incumbent Local Exchange Carrier (ILEC) and provides telecommunications services to the areas in around Mitchell. Santel Communications Cooperative of Woonsocket is a Cooperative telephone company and provides services in the remainder of Davison County.

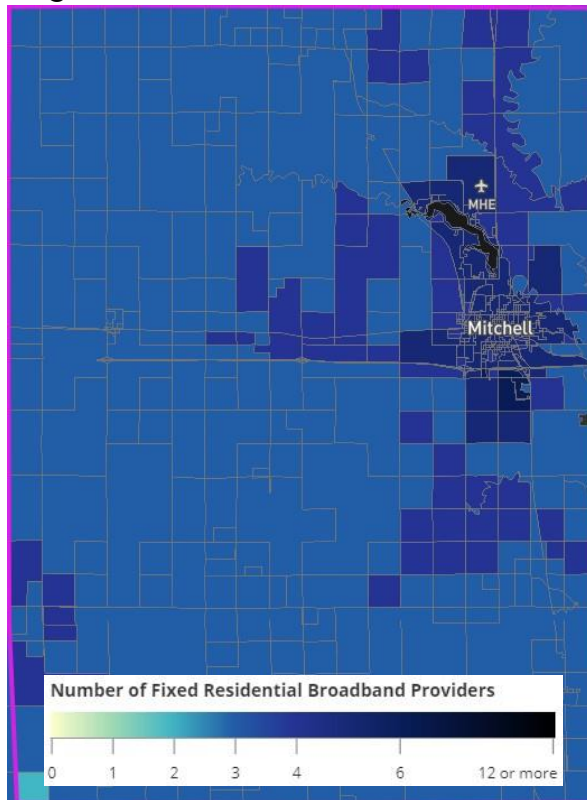
Coverage for cellular and mobile telephone service in Davison County is generally good for 4G networks. 5G service is available along the Interstate and certain corridors in Mitchell. Verizon, AT&T, T-Mobile, Cricket, and Straight Talk, and Sprint all have mobile coverage in the County.

The area of internet service is very similar to long distance service with numerous service providers and the fluctuation of market share and technology. There are two providers of higher speed service via a

cable modem “Midcontinent Communications” and “Mitchell Telecom”.

The advent of wireless and broadband services has resulted in a significant shift amongst internet service providers. **Figure 3.12** illustrates the number of fixed broadband providers in Davison County by Census block.

Figure 3.12 - Fixed Broadband Providers



Medical Services

Davison County residents have access to a diverse and comprehensive medical community along with the accompanying support facilities. An attempt to compare the region’s medical capacity to similarly sized counties or cities would be difficult, at best due to the current level of services available to the region’s residents.

HRSA data shows the current levels of medical service within the County. Personnel data was derived from numerous sources including interviews with individual facilities. Data on both facilities and personnel are detailed below:

Hospitals:

Avera Queen of Peace - 67 Certified Beds

FTE Physicians: 26.20

FTE Physician Assistants: 4.00

FTE Nurse Practitioners: 6.50

Other FTE Personnel: 267.79



Avera Queen of Peace Hospital



Avera Grasslands

Clinics:

Mitchell Clinic, Ltd
 Sanford Health Mitchell
 Dakota Women's Clinic
 Prairie Family Healthcare

Drug and Alcohol Treatment Facilities
 Stepping Stones

Long-term Care Nursing Facilities:

Avera Brady Health and Rehab - 84 beds
 Firesteel Healthcare Center - 76Beds

Assisted Living Facilities:

Edgewood Prairie Crossings- 37 active beds
 Avera Brady Assisted Living- 25 active beds
 Countryside Living - 50 active beds
 Rosewood Court - 24 active beds
 Edgewood Mitchell - 62 active beds

Residential Living Centers

Countryside Living - 60 total beds

Home Health Care Providers:

Avera at Home

Mental Health Treatment Facilities

Dakota Counseling Institute
 Lutheran Social Services
 Abbott House - 45 total beds



Abbott House

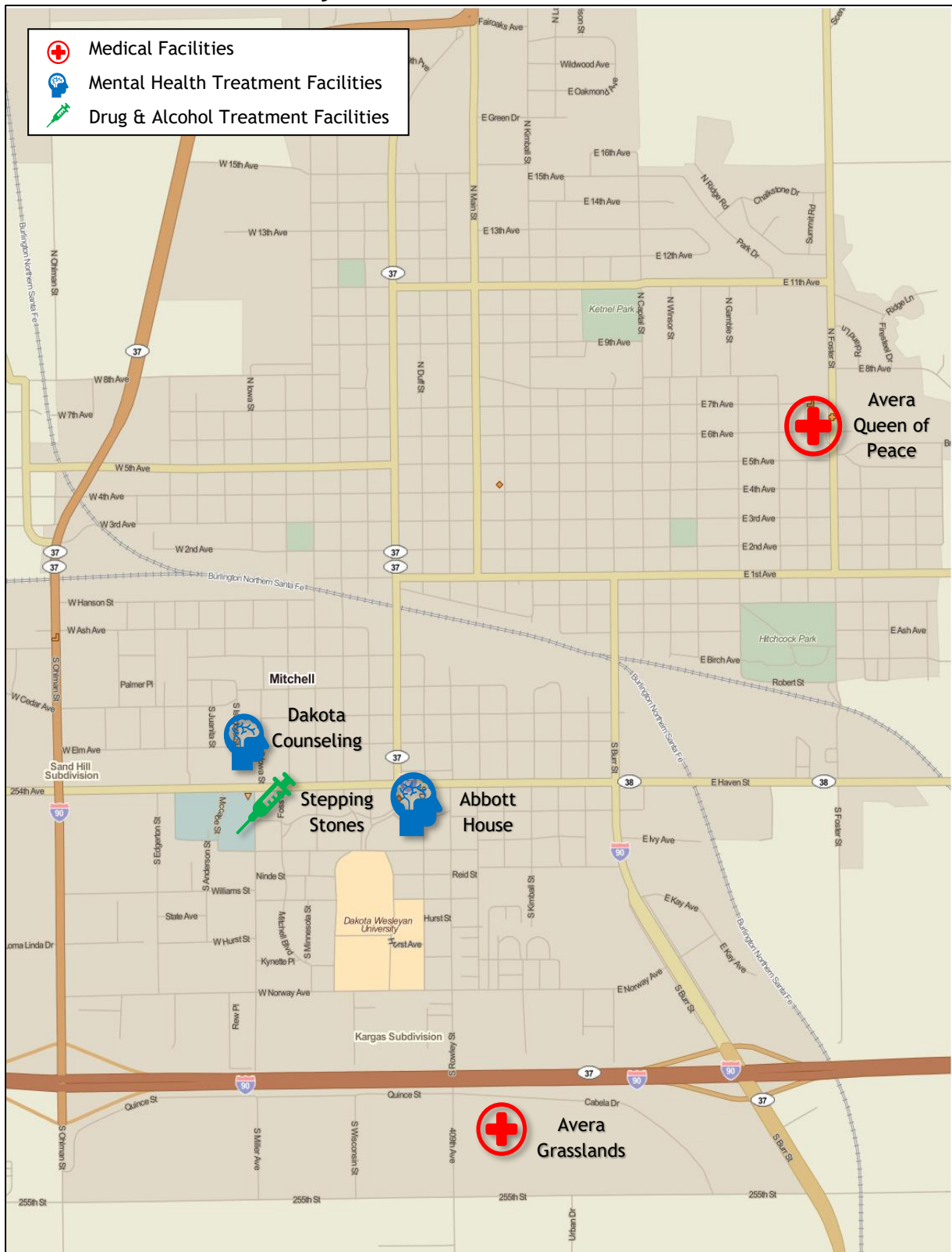
The various health and longer term care providers identified above include what may be described as primary caregivers versus non-primary or secondary. The County is also home to numerous dentists, chiropractors, physical and occupational therapists, optometrists, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, psychologists, counselors, and various alternative medicine providers.

These professionals are in addition to the extensive pool of medical support staff employed within the County. The importance of medical care to the community and region extends beyond health care. Economic development and

housing opportunities are linked to both the quality and variety of medical service. Business investment and retirement decisions are based, in part, on medical resources.

Figure 3.13 on the following page depicts the location of key medical facilities in Mitchell.

Figure 3.13
Major Medical Facilities & Services



Emergency Services

The Mitchell Regional 911 Center is a public safety answering point serving as the community's first-line of contact with the public safety authorities of the City of Mitchell, Davison, Aurora, Brule, Hanson, Hutchinson and McCook Counties. The communications system serves a population of over 45,000 people and is designed to cover nearly 3,900 square miles, 125 miles of which is the I-90 corridor.

Law Enforcement:

There are two local law enforcement agencies operating within the County; the Davison County Sheriff's Office and the City of Mitchell Police Department.



Davison County Law Enforcement Vehicle



Davison County Public Safety Center

The Davison County Public Safety Center is located in Mitchell and includes the County Jail, the States Attorney's Office, and the Sheriff's Office. The Davison County Sheriff's Office fulfills law enforcement duties for the rural areas of the County and

the Towns of Ethan, Loomis, and Mount Vernon.

The City of Mitchell's Police Department includes two divisions: The Police Division, and the Emergency Response Unit.



City of Mitchell Police Vehicle

Ambulance Services:

Ambulance services are dispatched from Mitchell. Avera Queen of Peace Hospital in Mitchell contains 67 beds and serves Mitchell and the surrounding area.

Mitchell Regional Ambulance Service:

- 4 Ambulances
- 4 medical units staffed 24 hours
- 900 square mile coverage area
- 15 paramedics providing advanced life support ambulance service



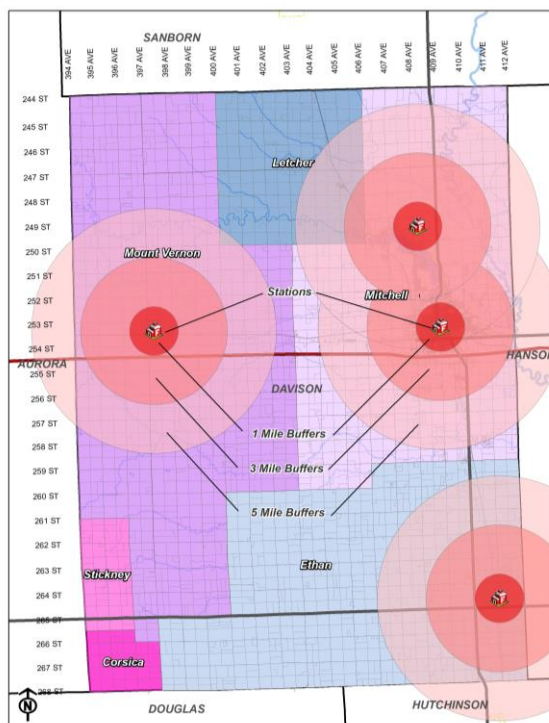
City of Mitchell Fire & Rescue Vehicle

Fire Protection:

Davison County is served by three different fire departments including the Mitchell Fire Department, the Ethan Fire Department, and the Mount Vernon Fire Department. A map illustrating each entity's service area as well as response times is shown in **Figure 3.14**.

There is an array of fire department formats within Davison County including districts with taxing authority with the remainder operating as city departments. Rural service is funded through either taxes or associations with volunteer memberships. All fire agencies within the county are staffed by volunteers. Mitchell employs 24 full time and 3 part time employees.

FIGURE 3.14
Fire Districts



The Mitchell Fire Department has a fleet of apparatus to assist its emergency service efforts:

- 3 Engines
- 1 Ladder
- 1 Hazmat
- 2 Grass rigs
- 2 Tankers
- 1 Rescue boat
- 2 Support vehicles



City of Mitchell Fire Truck



Ethan Fire Hall



Mount Vernon Fire & Rescue Vehicle

Cultural Amenities

The county's residents are offered a diverse array of cultural amenities and events. There is a very active arts association as well as theatre, dance, and music groups within the County. These entities offer both local shows along with national and international entertainment. Cultural amenities in Davison County include thirty-seven churches, two senior citizens centers, three libraries, and several museums.

The Mitchell Corn Palace is more than the home of the festival or a point of interest for tourists. It is a practical structure adaptable to many purposes. Included among its many uses are industrial exhibits, dances, stage shows, meetings, banquets, proms, graduations arena for Mitchell High School and Dakota Wesleyan University as well as district, regional and state basketball and volleyball tournaments.



Mitchell Corn Palace

The Mitchell Performing Arts Center is a 65,000-sq. ft. performance venue located on the Mitchell High School campus. Building features include a 1,200-seat, 3-tier auditorium, rooms for choral, instrument and performing arts, and a smaller black box theater.



Mitchell Performing Arts Center

At Dakota Discovery on the campus of Dakota Wesleyan University, art and artifacts blend to tell the story of the rich culture of the Great Plains tribal residents and settlers alike.

The Prehistoric Indian Village on the shores of Lake Mitchell is the only active archaeological site in South Dakota that is open to the public. Inside the Thomsen Center Archeodome, summer visitors can watch archaeology students and interns uncover clues about the people who lived here 1,000 years ago.



Thomsen Center Archeodome, Lake Mitchell

After the closing of the Catholic churches in Ethan and Mount Vernon, residents in both communities banded together to purchase the church buildings and convert them into community centers. Both include ample meeting space and kitchen facilities. Ethan's community center includes a fitness center in the lower level. Mount Vernon's center includes an area museum.



Ethan Community Center

Mount Vernon Community Center



Mount Vernon Community Center

Recreational Amenities

The Mitchell Parks and Recreation Department consists of 7 Recreation Facilities, Lake Mitchell Campground, 14 City Parks, and 29 Lakeside Parks/Access areas. These areas consist of 577 acres of parks and 693 acres of surface water in Lake Mitchell.



Mitchell Aquatic Center at Hitchcock Park

The City of Mitchell has 8.5 miles of paved bike trails and 8.2 miles of unpaved bike trails within the city. In addition, the city has 13 miles of hiking and biking trails around Lake Mitchell.



Lake Mitchell



Cadwell Park, Mitchell

Ethan has a multipurpose park that includes a softball field, basketball courts, a court for net sports, a playground, and a paved walking path encircling the property.



Playground in Ethan Ball Park

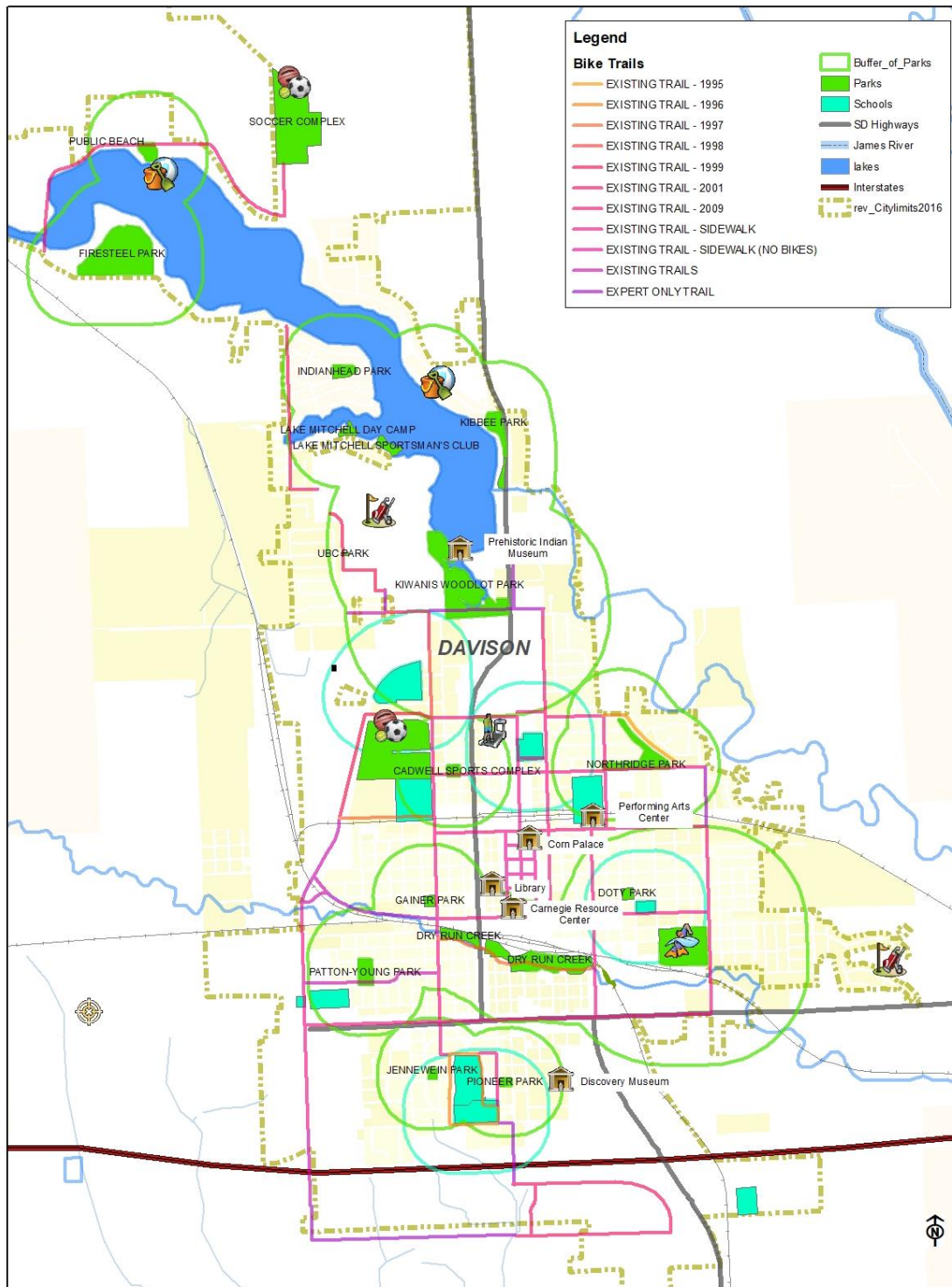
Mount Vernon features a park that includes a baseball field, a softball field, and a playground.



Playground in Mount Vernon Ball Park

Figure 3.15 illustrates the recreational and cultural amenities located in Mitchell.

FIGURE 3.15
Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Amenities



Parks and Recreation Planning

The City of Mitchell Parks, Recreation & Forestry retained Confluence, a landscape architecture firm, to develop a Parks and Recreation Master Plan in 2017 as part of its commitment to providing high quality parks and recreation programs and amenities to the community. The goal of the plan is to guide the Department's investment in parks, programs, and facilities that will serve as a community roadmap to ensure that parks remain a vital community resource, now and into the future.

This inventory and assessment considers the capacity of each amenity found within the system as well as the functionality, accessibility, condition, comfort, and convenience of each. Each amenity within the system is classified according to its key attributes. These classifications consider size, population served, length of stay, and amenity or service types. Classifications are assigned a corresponding level of service standard. These standards are informed by national best practice, regional practices and trends, and tailored to the local community support and desires.

A **neighborhood park** should be three to 10 acres; however, some Neighborhood Parks are determined by use and facilities offered and not by size alone. The service radius for a neighborhood park is one half mile or six blocks. Neighborhood Parks should have safe pedestrian access for surrounding residents; parking may or may not be included but if included accounts for less than ten cars and provides for ADA access. Neighborhood parks serve the recreational and social focus of the adjoining neighborhoods and contribute to a distinct neighborhood identity. Mitchell has eight parks that are classified as neighborhood parks: Doty Park, Gainer Park, Jennewein Park, Kibbee Park, Lions Point Park, Monroe Park, Northridge Park, and Pioneer Park.

Community Parks are generally larger in scale than neighborhood parks, but smaller than regional parks and are designed typically for residents who live within a three mile radius. When possible, the park may be developed adjacent to a school. Community Parks provide recreational opportunities for the entire family and often contain facilities for specific recreational purposes. Mitchell currently has nine parks that are classified as Community Parks: Camp Arroya, Day Camp, Dry Run Creek Park, Hitchcock Park, Kiwanis Woodlot Park, Patton Young Park, Public Beach, Sandy Beach, and Sportsman's Club.

A **regional park** serves a large area of several communities, residents within a town, city or county, or across multiple counties. Depending on activities within a regional park, users may travel as many as 60 miles for a visit. A common size for a regional park is 100 to 1,000 acres but some parks can be 2,000 to 5,000 acres in size. A regional park focuses on activities and natural features not included in most types of parks and often based on a specific scenic or recreational opportunity. Currently, Mitchell has just one park that is classified as a Regional Park: Lake Mitchell Campground.

Sports complexes at Community Parks, Regional Parks, and stand-alone Sports Complexes are developed to provide four to 16 fields or courts in one setting. A sports complex may also support extreme sports facilities, such as BMX and skateboarding. Sports Complexes can be single focused or multi-focused and can include indoor or outdoor facilities to serve the needs of both youth and adults. There are currently two Sports Complexes in Mitchell, both of which are of have the number of fields and level of quality usually found in a much larger city. These are: Cadwell Sports Complex and Pepsi Soccer Complex.

Overall, the City of Mitchell Parks, Recreation, & Forestry Department provides a higher than typical level of service to its residents that the national and regional standard.

In terms of total park acreage, current levels are adequate. However, within that total acreage, more acreage dedicated to Neighborhood Parks is needed (4 acres) and Community Parks (4 acres). With some additional acreage dedicated to Special Use Facilities, and Nature Areas (1 acre each). This can be accomplished through working with the land already in place. By 2021, these same areas will need slightly more acreage, and additional lakeside access or greenspace will also be needed to meet the standards (3 acres). A summary of parks and recreation needs is shown in **Table 3.4**.

In general, the upper Midwest region tends to have trail mileage that is higher than the national average. Trail mileage is separated into paved and unpaved trails, and each can have slightly different uses. Currently, the City falls slightly short of the standard, with three additional miles of paved trail needed, and one additional mile of unpaved trails. Current projects underway may bring Mitchell up to the standard.

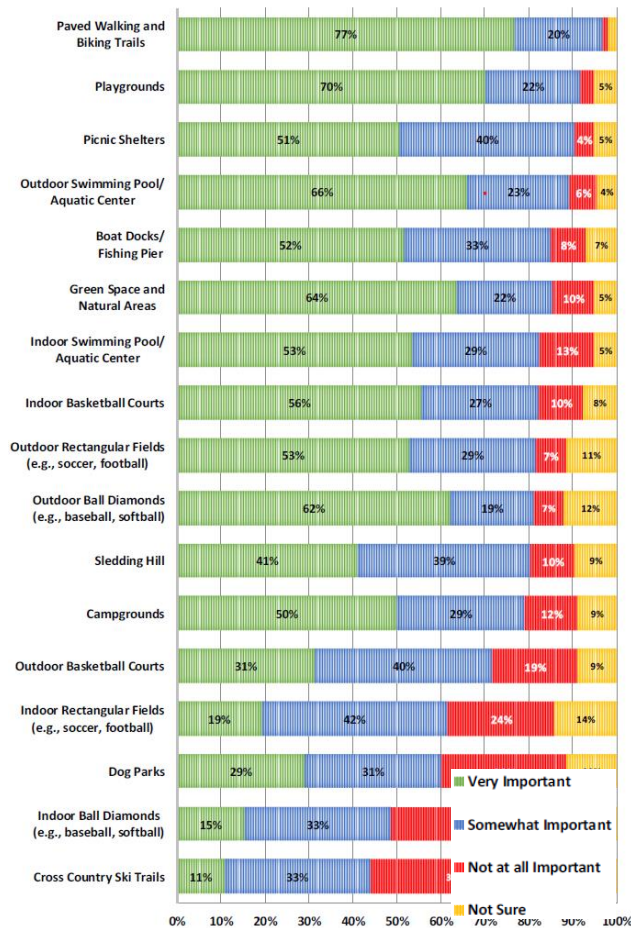
As noted previously, the City of Mitchell generally has outstanding outdoor facilities, and indeed has triple the number of ball fields needed, and double the number of rectangular fields. The only current and future areas for improvement here include the addition of a splash pad and 2-4 basketball courts.

The current indoor recreation center, rental, and arena spaces meet the standard for current and near future needs of the City of Mitchell. However, as noted in the assessments, improvements are needed to update and improve the quality of the current recreation center space.

Table 3.4, Parks and Recreational Facilities Analysis

Facility Type	Current			2040 Facility Needs				
	Value	Unit	Recommended Service Level Standards			Meets Standard/ Need Exists	Additional Needed	
Parkland								
Neighborhood Parks	31.55	acres	2.25	acres per	1,000	Need Exists	6.0	acres
Community Parks	139.50	acres	9.00	acres per	1,000	Need Exists	10.6	acres
Sports Complex	151.00	acres	9.00	acres per	1,000	Meets Standard	NA	acres
Special Use Facilities	14.50	acres	1.00	acres per	1,000	Need Exists	2.2	acres
Natural Areas	58.80	acres	3.75	acres per	1,000	Need Exists	3.7	acres
Lakeside Access Areas and Greenspace	85.15	acres	5.50	acres per	1,000	Need Exists	6.6	acres
Total Park Acres	480.50	acres	30.5	acres per	1,000	Need Exists	29.1	acres
Trails								
Paved Trails	8.50	miles	0.75	miles per	1,000	Need Exists	4.0	miles
Unpaved Trails	8.20	miles	0.60	miles per	1,000	Need Exists	1.8	miles
Total Trails	16.7	miles	1.35	miles per	1,000	Need Exists	5.8	miles
Outdoor Facilities								
Picnic Shelter	27.00	sites	1.00	site per	2,000	Meets Standard	NA	sites
Ball Fields	16.00	fields	1.00	field per	3,000	Meets Standard	NA	fields
Multi-Purpose Field (Soccer, Lacrosse, Rugby, Football)	12.00	fields	1.00	field per	3,000	Meets Standard	NA	fields
Basketball Courts	2.00	courts	1.00	court per	4,000	Need Exists	2	courts
Tennis Courts	12.00	courts	1.00	court per	4,000	Meets Standard	NA	courts
Playgrounds	21.00	sites	1.00	site per	2,500	Meets Standard	NA	sites
Dog Parks	1.00	sites	1.00	site per	40,000	Meets Standard	NA	sites
Skate Park	1.00	sites	1.00	site per	40,000	Meets Standard	NA	sites
Sand Volleyball	3.00	sites	1.00	site per	10,000	Meets Standard	NA	sites
Splash Pad	-	sites	1.00	site per	20,000	Need Exists	1	sites
Outdoor/Indoor Pool	2.00	sites	1.00	site per	15,000	Meets Standard	NA	sites
Indoor Facilities								
Indoor Recreation/Gymnasium	34,800.00	sq. ft.	2.00	sq. ft. per	person	Meets Standard	NA	sq. ft.

Figure 3.16



As part of the community involvement process, a consultant and the Mitchell's Parks and Recreation Department conducted an online community opinion survey for a better understanding of the characteristics, preferences, and satisfaction levels of Mitchell's residents in relation to parks and recreation activities.

Figure 3.16 at the left contains a variety of park and recreation amenities. Some are currently found in Mitchell while others could be added. Respondents were asked to indicate how important it is for them to have each amenity in Mitchell.

In combining ratings of *Very Important* and *Somewhat Important*, respondents indicated the highest level of support with *paved walking and biking trails* (97%), *playgrounds* (92%), and *picnic shelters* (91%). The lowest level of support among respondents included *cross country ski trails* (44%), *indoor ball diamonds* (49%), and *dog parks* (60%).

As part of the master planning process for Davison County's transportation infrastructure, opportunities for non-motorized services and paths were evaluated

by HDR, Inc. The consultant reviewed existing and planned bicycle connections around the City of Mitchell and continuity with County roadways. Commonly traveled bicycle routes were identified through public participation. The recommended improvements in **Figure 3.17** below shows the balance between the needs of both recreational and non-recreational facility users.

The plan also outlines design standards and guidance for implementing two types of pedestrian and bicycle facilities throughout the County; which include Shared Use Paths and Shoulder Bikeways. Sections of these facilities are shown below.

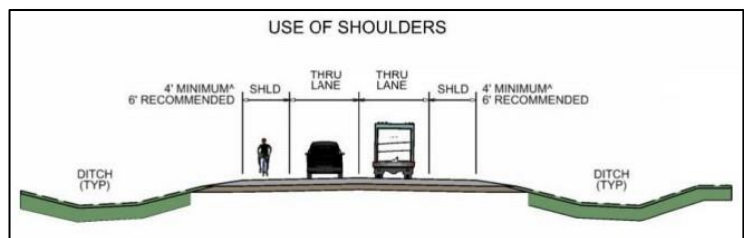
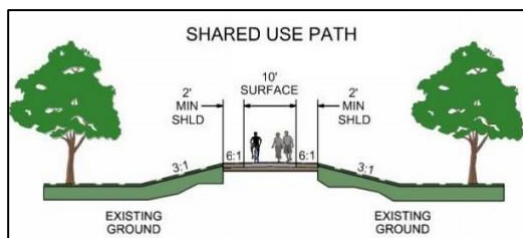
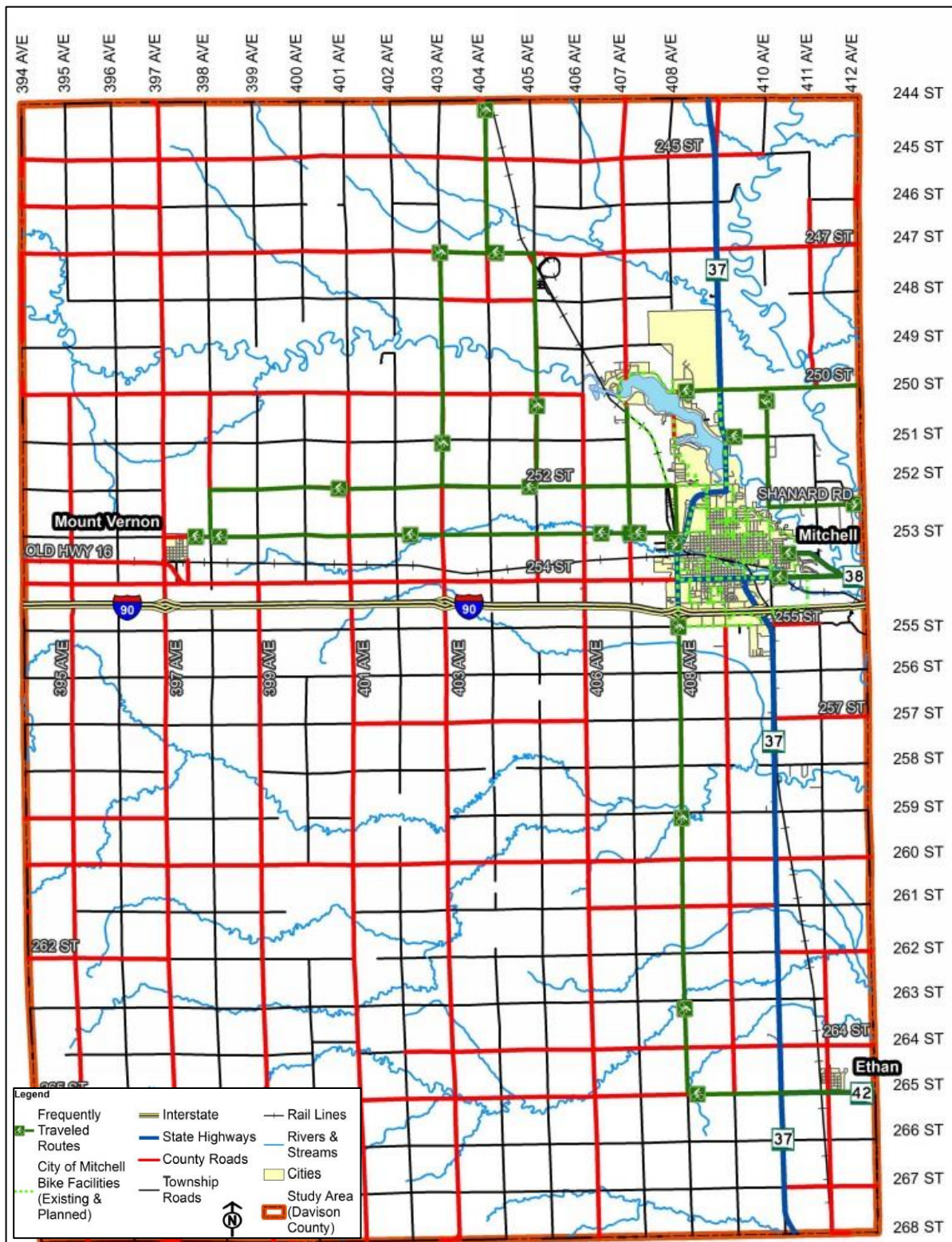


Figure 3.17
Pedestrian and Bicycle Routes



PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**County Planning Challenges**

The following community facility related challenges are expected to be encountered by Davison County over the next 10 years.

- ✓ Continued pressure to increase public services, without raising taxes or fees;
- ✓ Increasing trend toward special purpose taxing entities (example: road districts) which could further complicate service relationships and lower county revenues;
- ✓ Perceived availability of additional rural water service capacity throughout the county, without consideration of specific project areas and cost factors;
- ✓ Establishment of a road plan that considers both financial limitations and county system needs;
- ✓ Identification of alternative sources of support which will enhance public air service;
- ✓ Controlling the location of telecommunication and power generation facilities to minimize negative impacts;
- ✓ Coordinating county-wide law enforcement, ambulance, and disaster response services in a cost effective manner; and
- ✓ Maintaining unique recreational assets, such as Lake Mitchell and its surroundings.

Policy Recommendations

In addressing the challenges, the Davison County Commission should consider the following recommendations.

- ✓ Include the consideration of public facility impacts in evaluating development proposals;
- ✓ Discourage development proposals that would significantly strain or exceed infrastructure capacities;
- ✓ Encourage development proposals that comply with or exceed public facility design standards;
- ✓ Reconsider road construction and maintenance policies and practices with regards to current development situations and future growth expectations;
- ✓ Ensure that public rights of way are protected and represented in development proposals;
- ✓ Seek additional information from utility companies about their energy service plans and system capacities; and
- ✓ Continue to explore multi-jurisdictional approaches in delivering emergency services.