



CITY OF GERING PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING AGENDA

A REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY OF GERING PLANNING COMMISSION WILL BE HELD ON **TUESDAY OCTOBER 20, 2026 AT 6:00 P.M.** IN THE GERING CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 1025 P STREET, GERING, NEBRASKA.

All agenda items are for discussion and action will be taken as deemed appropriate.

Call to Order and Roll Call

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Open Meetings Act - Neb. Rev. Stat. Chapter 84, Article 14, As required by State Law, public bodies shall make available copies of the current Open Meetings Act in the meeting room. There are printed versions of the Open Meetings Act on the counter by the press corps. Agenda items may be moved up or down on the agenda at the discretion of the Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson. Additions may not be made to this agenda less than 24 hours before the beginning of the meeting unless they are considered under this section of the agenda and the Planning Commission determines that the matter requires emergency action.
3. Approval of Minutes of the October 6, 2026 regular Planning Commission meeting
4. Current Business:

- A. Public Hearing to consider whether the area described below is substandard and blighted according to the Nebraska Community Development Law:

A PARCEL OF LAND LOCATED IN THE NORTHEAST QUARTER OF SECTION 34, TOWNSHIP 22 NORTH, RANGE 55 WEST OF THE SIXTH P.M., SCOTTS BLUFF COUNTY, NEBRASKA, BEING DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS: BEGINNING AT THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF PAPPAS NORTHWEST ADDITION, AS PLATTED IN THE CITY OF GERING, SCOTTS BLUFF COUNTY, NEBRASKA; THENCE WESTERLY ON THE NORTH LINE OF SAID PAPPAS NORTHWEST ADDITION TO THE NORTHERLY EXTENSION OF THE WEST LINE OF BLOCK 2 OF SAID PAPPAS NORTHWEST ADDITION; THENCE SOUTHERLY ON THE WEST LINE OF SAID BLOCK 2 AND IT'S NORTHERLY EXTENSION TO THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF SAID BLOCK 2; THENCE SOUTHERLY ON THE SOUTHERLY EXTENSION OF SAID WEST LINE TO THE NORTH LINE OF MONUMENT SHADOWS-CCR SUBDIVISION AS PLATTED IN SAID CITY OF GERING; THENCE EASTERLY ON SAID NORTH LINE TO THE NE CORNER OF SAID MONUMENT-CCR SUBDIVISION; THENCE NORTHERLY TO THE SE CORNER OF SAID BLOCK 2; THENCE NORTHERLY ON THE EAST LINE OF SAID BLOCK 2 TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING, AND ADJACENT PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY

- i. Recommendation to the City Council regarding the declaration of the redevelopment area as substandard, blighted, and in need of redevelopment.
5. City Engineer Report
 6. OPEN COMMENT: Discussion or action by the Planning Commission regarding unscheduled business will not take place. This section is for citizen comment only.
 7. Adjourn

THE OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE CITY OF GERING PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING, OCTOBER 6, 2026

A regular meeting of the City of Gering Planning Commission was held in open session on October 6, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. in the Gering City Hall Council Chambers at 1025 P Street, Gering, NE. Present were Commissioners Crews, Miles, Taylor, Hauck, C. Kaufman, T. Kaufman, Keener, Waterman. Absent: Commissioner Alvazar. Notice of the meeting was given in advance by publication in the Star-Herald on September 24, 2026 and the agenda was posted on the City's website on October 1, 2026, pursuant to the designated method of giving notice by the Planning Commission. All proceedings hereafter were taken while the meeting was open to the attendance of the public.

Call to Order and Roll Call:

Chair Keener called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and noted that a quorum of the Planning Commission was present and business could be conducted.

1. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Open Meetings Act - Neb. Rev. Stat. Chapter 84, Article 14

Chair Keener stated that as required by State Law, public bodies shall make available copies of the current Open Meetings Act in the meeting room. There are printed versions of the Open Meetings Act on the counter by the press corps. Agenda items may be moved up or down on the agenda at the discretion of the Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson. Additions may not be made to this agenda less than 24 hours before the beginning of the meeting unless they are considered under this section of the agenda and the Planning Commission determines that the matter requires emergency action.

3. Approval of Minutes of the September 15, 2026, regular Planning Commission meeting

Chair Keener noted one correction to the minutes of the September 15, 2026, Regular Planning Commission meeting. On page 2, in the third paragraph, Commissioner Miles was incorrectly listed among the "Nays" but had been absent from the meeting. The correction was made. Chair Keener then entertained a motion to approve the minutes as corrected.

A motion was made by Commissioner C. Kaufman to approve the minutes of the September 15, 2026 regular Planning Commission meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Miles. There was no discussion. The Secretary called the roll. "AYES": Keener, T. Kaufman, Miles, Taylor, Hauck, Waterman, C. Kaufman and Crews. "NAYS": None. Abstain: None. Absent: Alvazar. Motion carried.

4. Current Business:

- A. Public Hearing to consider a Conditional Use Permit for a Boutique Wedding and Events Venue to be located at Lot 12 & 13, Block 23, Gardners Addition Replat, City of Gering, Scotts Bluff County, Nebraska.**
 - i. Approve, deny or table Resolution PC 10-26-1 granting a Conditional Use Permit**

Chair Keener opened the public hearing at 6:03 p.m. to consider a conditional use permit for a boutique wedding and events venue at Lots 12 and 13, Block 23, Gardners Addition Replat, City of Gering, Scotts Bluff County, Nebraska. City Engineer Annie Folck presented the staff recommendation and reviewed the applicable criteria for consideration of the request.

Ms. Folck explained that the applicant did not yet own the property but was in the process of purchasing it contingent upon approval of the conditional use permit. The property contains a former church building located near the edge of the RM residential zoning district, across Q Street from the middle school. Because the zoning code does not specifically define an event center as a land use, staff classified the proposed use as an indoor recreation and entertainment facility, which requires a conditional use permit in the RM district. This classification allows the City to establish conditions to address potential impacts and ensure compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood.

Ms. Folck reviewed the property's access, parking, refuse and service areas, utilities, screening, signage, required yards, and compatibility with the surrounding area.

Regarding access, Ms. Folck stated that the property has no off-street parking but provides adequate pedestrian access from the sidewalk, including ADA-accessible ramps and access to public rights-of-way. Parking was identified as the primary consideration for the proposed use, which could accommodate weddings and other events with approximately 150 or more attendees. Although parking is available across the street, those lots are privately owned, and the owners have indicated that they do not permit others to use them. Under the zoning code, an assembly use requires one parking space for every four seats. The code also allows one-third of the on-street parking spaces within 600 feet of the property to count toward the parking requirement. Ms. Folck reported that approximately 285 on-street parking spaces were available within that distance, including diagonal parking and parallel parking throughout the surrounding neighborhoods. Accordingly, approximately 95 spaces could be counted toward the parking requirement, providing sufficient capacity for an estimated 380 people under the code's calculation. Ms. Folck noted that parking could become a concern when events coincide with school activities, particularly football or basketball games, but otherwise believed adequate parking was available in the area.

Regarding refuse and service areas, Ms. Folck identified an existing alley behind the property where dumpsters are currently located. The applicant would be responsible for obtaining commercial trash service and paying for any additional dumpsters or pickups as needed. The application also indicated that refuse and service areas would be maintained in a clean and orderly condition.

Ms. Folck stated that the property was already served by water, gas, sewer, and electricity, and no new utility connections were anticipated. She did not recommend additional screening because the existing building, setbacks, and lawn were consistent with the character of the surrounding neighborhood. Regarding signage, she recommended that the applicant reuse the existing monument sign or install a replacement of the same dimensions in the same location. She noted that the existing sign was appropriately positioned on the corner property without obstructing traffic visibility. A citizen attendee noted that the sign was illuminated, and Ms. Folck acknowledged the information. She further stated that the required yards and setbacks were satisfied and that the property was compatible with the surrounding residential neighborhood. Ms. Folck added that an appropriate new use could help ensure the building remained well maintained.

Ms. Folck reviewed the Comprehensive Plan and explained that the area was identified primarily as a neighborhood district. Although the property was zoned residential, staff believed the proposed use could be compatible with the neighborhood if appropriate conditions were established to preserve its residential character.

Ms. Folck then presented staff's recommended conditions for the conditional use permit, noting that the Planning Commission could modify the proposed conditions or add others based on concerns raised during the public hearing.

The first recommended condition was to limit events to 200 people or fewer. Ms. Folck explained that, although discussions with the applicant suggested that events would generally be smaller, establishing a maximum occupancy would provide a clear limit for future events. In response to a question about the building's maximum capacity, Ms. Folck stated that she was unsure of the exact limit under fire code. The applicant indicated that the capacity was approximately 200 people. Commissioners discussed whether a larger gathering would require standing room. The applicant stated that the business was intended to focus on smaller, boutique-style weddings, with a preferred maximum attendance of approximately 150 to 175 people rather than large events.

Ms. Folck reiterated the recommendation that any replacement sign maintain the existing sign's size, dimensions, and location, noting that a large billboard was not necessary for the proposed business.

The final recommended condition was that no events take place between 1:00 a.m. and 7:00 a.m., with all events concluded and attendees departed by 1:00 a.m. Ms. Folck clarified that this time restriction was her recommendation rather than a requirement established in the Comprehensive Plan. She noted that 1:00 a.m. was a typical closing time for bars and other establishments, and suggested that an earlier cutoff could be considered because the property was located in a residential zone. She further explained that the restriction would apply to events and would not prohibit staff from being on-site before or after those hours for setup, cleaning, or other preparations.

Ms. Folck concluded by inviting the Planning Commission to consider additional conditions or modifications to the staff recommendations in response to concerns raised during the public hearing. She noted that the applicant was present and could provide further information about the intended use of the property. Chair Keener then invited Planning Commission members to ask Engineer Folck questions.

Commissioner Waterman asked whether noise restrictions would apply to events at the proposed venue. Engineer Folck stated that no specific noise condition had been proposed but that one could be added if the Planning Commission deemed it necessary. She explained that noise restrictions could be difficult to measure but suggested using a standard under which noise from the venue, measured at the property line, could not exceed the sound of passing traffic. This approach would allow staff to evaluate compliance using a noise meter. Chair Keener noted the proximity of the football stadium and questioned whether additional noise restrictions would be appropriate given the existing noise associated with stadium events. Ms. Folck acknowledged the concern but noted that the venue's proximity to neighboring residences could warrant consideration of noise impacts. Ms. Folck also noted that the City's existing nuisance ordinances would address excessive noise.

Commissioner Hauck asked whether alcohol would be served or permitted at events. Ms. Folck deferred the question to the applicant, who would be better able to describe the proposed operations.

With no further questions for Engineer Folck, Chair Keener invited the applicant to approach the podium. Applicant Hilary Strom introduced herself, her husband, Randy Strom, and their daughters, Ella and Emma. She requested approval of a conditional use permit for the property at 1650 9th Street in Gering, where the family planned to establish a business called The Little Chapel at 1650. Mrs. Strom explained that their vision was to preserve the character and history of the former church while giving the building a new purpose as a place for people to gather.

Mrs. Strom stated that the idea developed while her family was searching for a chapel-style wedding venue for their engaged daughter. Recognizing the limited availability of such venues, the family saw an opportunity to create a space where their daughter and other community members could hold weddings in the chapel and receptions in the fellowship hall. She emphasized that the business would focus on smaller, more intimate weddings, generally accommodating approximately 100 people in the chapel and no more than 175 people overall. The intent was not to establish a large entertainment facility or high-traffic commercial operation, but rather to host scheduled private events, primarily weddings on evenings and weekends, as well as birthday parties and other small gatherings.

Mrs. Strom acknowledged the property's location in a residential neighborhood and stated that the family understood the importance of being good neighbors. They would oversee parking, noise, guest arrivals and departures, lighting, and trash service, and would comply with conditions established by the City. As a Gering native with family in the community, she viewed the project as an investment in the area that would preserve the existing structure and provide a gathering place for residents. She thanked the Planning Commission for considering the application.

Randy Strom, 2920 Applewood Road, addressed the Commission. In response to the earlier question about alcohol, he noted they had not yet fully considered whether alcohol would be part of the business. Hilary Strom explained that she had contacted the Nebraska Liquor Control Commission for information but had not applied

for any permits. Mr. Strom clarified that serving alcohol would not be a primary component of their business model but that they wanted to allow it as an option for customers.

Commissioner Waterman asked whether the City would have authority over alcohol use or whether the matter would be governed by the State. Ms. Folck explained that the applicants would need to comply with all applicable Nebraska Liquor Control Commission requirements, but the Planning Commission could establish additional or more restrictive conditions regarding alcohol if desired. Commissioner T. Kaufman observed that this would apply if the applicants intended to serve alcohol and questioned whether allowing customers to bring their own alcohol would fall under the Commission's authority.

Commissioner Hauck then asked about the building's seating arrangements. Mr. Strom stated that the purchase agreement requested that the existing pews, round tables, and chairs remain in the building. Hilary Strom confirmed that the existing seating was intact, including the seating in the fellowship hall. When asked about food preparation, the applicants explained that the property contained a large, well-maintained kitchen that could be made available for customers to use or for outside caterers. The applicants did not intend to prepare or serve food themselves but hoped to work with local caterers, florists, and other businesses to support the community. They indicated that customers could arrange their own food service or catering.

Parking was raised as a concern by Commissioner Miles, particularly when school activities or other community events like Oregon Trail Days coincided with weddings. Hilary Strom acknowledged the potential for conflicts and noted that parking near the junior high school might provide additional options, although she recognized that certain events could create congestion. She believed that significant parking conflicts would not occur frequently but had considered the issue.

Commissioner Crews asked whether the applicants might consider providing valet parking or having a staff member assist guests with parking farther from the venue during particularly busy periods. Hilary Strom stated that they had not previously considered that option but would be willing to explore it if needed.

Commissioner Taylor expressed additional concern about parking availability if plans for a new middle school were approved, noting that parking currently available along the existing school grounds could be affected. Ms. Folck responded that the school plans also included a substantial new parking lot. Commissioner Taylor reiterated concerns about the loss of parking previously used by the church and noted that the surrounding area was already experiencing parking difficulties following changes in property ownership.

Commissioner T. Kaufman asked how long the building had been used as a church. A response indicated that it had been a church for approximately 100 years, including its former use as St. Timothy's Episcopal Church.

Commissioner Hauck asked whether the applicants anticipated hosting potentially controversial events, such as political gatherings involving Republican or Democratic groups. Hilary Strom responded that the venue could be available for business events or conferences, depending on the nature of the event. Ms. Folck noted that the Planning Commission could not regulate the use of the venue based on the political nature of an event.

Chair Keener then asked whether anyone else in the Council Chambers wished to speak regarding the application and invited those wishing to comment to approach the podium and state their name and address.

Linda Landrigan, 190497 Highway 92, Scottsbluff, addressed the Commission in support of the application. Ms. Landrigan stated that her husband had started the church more than 20 years earlier and that the building had hosted numerous showers, parties, funerals, weddings, and graduation parties. She noted that she had never received complaints about parking difficulties at those events and questioned whether parking would be as significant a concern as anticipated. Ms. Landrigan described the building as quaint and appropriately sized for smaller weddings, noting that a family from another large church had chosen the venue for their daughter's wedding because of its intimate character. She also highlighted the rooms available for wedding parties to prepare and change clothes and the large kitchen capable of accommodating events. She stated that the proposed use would be a unique addition to Gering and the surrounding area, benefiting both local residents and visitors from outside the community.

Mary Jane Dishman, 1315 O Street, Gering, also spoke in support of the application. She agreed with the previous speaker and stated that the proposed venue would offer a smaller, quieter alternative to other event facilities in the area. Ms. Dishman expressed support for preserving the building's longstanding wholesome, family-oriented atmosphere and emphasized the importance of finding an operator who would continue to care for the property responsibly. She stated that the building had been owned by the church since 2007 and had served the community through weddings, funerals, and other gatherings. She noted that funerals had accommodated more than 200 people, with meals served on-site, demonstrating the building's capacity to host larger gatherings when needed. She further commented that weddings bring visitors from other communities and out of state, benefiting the local economy. Ms. Dishman concluded that the proposed venue would provide a valuable place for families and community members to gather and would be a positive addition to Gering.

With no further public comments, Chair Keener closed the public hearing at 6:33 p.m. and entertained a motion to approve, deny, or table Resolution PC10-26-1, granting a conditional use permit for a boutique wedding and events venue at Lots 12 and 13, Block 23, Gardner's Addition Replat, City of Gering, Scotts Bluff County, Nebraska.

Commissioner T. Kaufman made a motion to approve granting a Conditional Use Permit including staff recommended conditions for a Boutique Wedding and Events Venue to be located at Lots 12 & 13, Block 23, Gardners Addition Replat, City of Gering, Scotts Bluff County, Nebraska. The motion was seconded by Commissioner C. Kaufman. There was no further discussion. The Secretary called the roll. "AYES": Crews, Taylor, Waterman, Miles, Keener, C. Kaufman, T. Kaufman and Hauck. "NAYS": None. Abstain: None. Absent: Alvazar. Motion carried.

5. City Engineer Report

City Engineer Folck provided the engineer's report and apologized for previously indicating that the Commission would not need to meet again for several weeks. She explained that a new item had been submitted, requiring another meeting in two weeks to consider a blight study for the property at the corner of Five Rocks Road and Country Club Road, where a physical therapy facility was being proposed. Ms. Folck stated that the blight study would be the first step toward making the property eligible for tax increment financing (TIF), with a TIF application expected to follow. She encouraged commissioners to mark their calendars and noted that the blight study would be the only item on the next meeting's agenda. She added that the City continued to accept applications for future meetings.

6. OPEN COMMENT: Discussion or action by the Planning Commission regarding unscheduled business will not take place. This section is for citizen comment only.

Chair Keener opened the public comment period, noting that no discussion or action on unscheduled business would take place and that the period was for citizen comments only.

Mary Jane Dishman, 1350 O Street, Gering, addressed the Commission regarding the middle school. Ms. Dishman stated that she had worked at the school approximately eight or nine years earlier and believed the building had been in poor condition at that time and may have deteriorated further since. She expressed concern about potential safety hazards, overcrowded classrooms, and insufficient parking, noting that she had experienced the parking difficulties while working with special education students. Ms. Dishman encouraged community members to support the proposed school improvements, emphasizing the importance of investing in children and providing them with adequate and safe facilities. She acknowledged concerns about public spending, particularly among senior citizens, but stressed that investing in schools was necessary because future generations would continue to need them. She concluded by encouraging the community to support the school proposal.

7. Adjourn

A motion was made by Commissioner C. Kaufman to adjourn. Seconded by Commissioner Miles. There was no discussion. The Secretary called the roll. "AYES": Crews, Miles, Taylor, C. Kaufman, Keener, T. Kaufman, Hauck, Waterman. "NAYS": None. Abstain: None. Absent: Alvazar. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 6:38 p.m.

ATTEST:

Levi Keener, Chairman

Karen Heins, Administrative Secretary

DRAFT

CITY OF GERING
PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION AND REPORT

To:	Planning Commission	Date:	10/20/2026
From:	Planning & Community Development	Zoning:	C-1 Neighborhood Commercial
Subject:	Recommendation & Report – Blighted and Substandard Designation	Property Size:	4.67 Acres
Location:	Northwest Corner of Five Rocks Road and Country Club Road	#Lots/Parcels:	1
Owner:	N/A	City Council Public Hearing:	November 9, 2026

Public Notice: This Public Hearing was noticed according to Nebraska State Statutes.

Agenda Item Summary

This is a report and recommendation to consider the Five Rocks Blight and Substandard Study. The area encompassed in the study includes approximately 4.67 acres located north of Country Club Road and west of Five Rocks Road (see map on page 9 of the Study). The Study has found that the area meets the requirements of state statute to be designated as blighted and substandard.

In order for Planning Commission to make the determination of whether or not the area meets the requirements to be designated as blighted and substandard, it must first be considered whether or not the area meets the definition of substandard, as defined by state statute. State statute defines a substandard area as one in which there is a predominance of buildings or improvements which is conducive to ill health, transmission of disease, conditions which endanger life or property by fire and other causes, or other criteria (see page 5 of the Study for complete definition). The Study found that the combination of factors such as inadequate vehicle access, debris, and the age of the structure were considered significant and contributing factors to substandard conditions.

Additionally, state statute provides a list of conditions that can qualify an area as blighted, and at least one of these conditions must be met in order for the area to be designated as such. The Study found the following factors that could contribute to the property being designated as blighted:

- Defective or inadequate street layout. There is a lack of direct access to the adjacent streets, so access would most likely have to go through a neighboring property.
- Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness. The lot is about three times as deep as it is wide, which makes it challenging to accommodate circulation and building standards.
- Improper subdivision or obsolete platting. The state-controlled highway access severely limits access to the site, rendering it a regulatory land locked site.
- Age of structures. One structure on the property is approximately 43 years old.

Legal counsel has reviewed the Study and feels that the Study does identify the requisite conditions for the area to be designated as blighted and substandard. The Council may, but does not have to, designate the area as such.

One other criterion to consider before designating an area as blighted and substandard is the extent of the City that is already so designated. State statute limits the area that may be designated as blighted

and substandard to 35% of the area within City limits. Currently, 1,158.88 acres out of the City's total 3,578.71 acres are so designated, representing 32.4% of the City's area within City limits. With the addition of the area in the Study, the percentage would increase to 32.5%, which remains within the statutory limit.

Motion:

Approve

Recommend approval of PC Resolution 10-26-2, designating the redevelopment area in the Five Rocks Blight Study as Blighted and Substandard for the following reasons:

Deny

Recommend denial of PC Resolution 10-26-2, designating the redevelopment area in the Five Rocks Blight Study as Blighted and Substandard for the following reasons:

Table

Table consideration of PC Resolution 10-26-2, designating the redevelopment area in the Five Rocks Blight Study as Blighted and Substandard for the following reasons:

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October 13, 2026

Sent via email to: afolck@gering.org
City of Gering, Nebraska
c/o Annie Folck, City Engineer

Re: Opinion Letter regarding Five Rocks Blight Study

Dear Annie:

I reviewed the City of Gering Five Rocks Blight Study (the “Study”). In my opinion, the Study identifies the requisite conditions for the Council to determine that the analyzed area is blighted and substandard as those terms are defined in Section 18-2103(4) and (32) of the Nebraska Community Development Law* (the “Act”). I did not conduct an independent assessment or inspection of the area—my opinion is based solely on my application of the conditions cited in the Study to the Act.

If an area meets the standards for being blighted and substandard as set forth in the Act, then the Council has discretion, but is not required, to designate the area as blighted and substandard. The Council has the discretion to choose which qualifying areas that it wants to declare blighted and substandard for purposes of encouraging development (up to 35% of the city and city’s extraterritorial zoning jurisdiction).

*Please note that the definitions of blighted and substandard as set forth in the Act have been revised from the definitions set forth in the Study. I have attached the updated definitions. The revisions do not affect the elements discussed in the Study or my opinion set forth above.

Sincerely,
/s/ John L. Selzer

Attachments: Neb. Rev. Stat. § 18-2103(4) and (32)

Neb. Rev. Stat. § 18-2103. Terms, defined.

(4) Blighted area means an area (a) which, 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, obsolete or no platting, the existence of conditions which endanger life or property by fire and other causes, or the existence of underdeveloped parcels that have been within the extraterritorial zoning jurisdiction of the city for more than twenty-five years, 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; (v) the area has had either stable or decreasing population based on the last two decennial censuses; or (vi) less than twenty percent of the housing in the area is affordable housing. In no event shall a city of the metropolitan, primary, or first class designate more than thirty-five percent of the city and the city's extraterritorial zoning jurisdiction as blighted, a city of the second class shall not designate an area larger than fifty percent of the city and the city's extraterritorial zoning jurisdiction as blighted, and a village shall not designate an area larger than one hundred percent of the village and the village's extraterritorial zoning jurisdiction as blighted. A redevelopment project involving a formerly used defense site as authorized under section 18-2123.01, any area which is located within a good life district established under the Good Life Transformational Projects Act, and any area declared to be an extremely blighted area under section 18-2101.02 shall not count towards the percentage limitations contained in this subdivision.

(32) Substandard area means (a) an area in which less than twenty percent of the housing is affordable housing, (b) 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, or (c) an area within the city's extraterritorial zoning jurisdiction that contains underdeveloped parcels that have been underdeveloped for more than twenty-five years.

2025

City of Gering Five Rocks Blight Study

Adopted XXX, XX, 2025 – Resolution XX-XXXX



JEO Consulting Group, Inc.

Introduction

Purpose of the Study

This Five Rocks Blight and Substandard Study of the designated study area is intended to give the Community Development Agency and City Council the basis for considering the existence of blight and substandard conditions within the delineated study area. Through this process, the City of Gering's Community Development Agency may employ and exercise the power authorized in Nebraska Community Development Law to eliminate and prevent blighted and substandard conditions that are detrimental to the future public health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the entire community as well as the surrounding region. If the City of Gering finds and determines, based on substantial evidence in the record before it, that the recommended Blight and Substandard Area (detailed below and referred to herein as "Five Rocks Blight Study Area") meets the statutory conditions for an area that is blighted, substandard, and in need of redevelopment, the designated study area will become a Redevelopment Area under the Community Development Law (Neb. Rev. Stat. §§ 18-2101 to 18-2155).

This blight and substandard study examines the existing conditions of land use, physical and other constraints, buildings, and structures within the designated study area in the City of Gering to determine its eligibility for redevelopment activities. Potential opportunities for redevelopment exist throughout the designated study area, which would allow the City of Gering to overcome blighted and substandard conditions and avoid issues that could lead to blight and substandard conditions. When evaluating blight and substandard conditions, the City of Gering must adhere to Nebraska Community Development Law.

Nebraska Revised State Statutes

The Community Development Law provides guidelines under which municipalities may address concerns and develop strategies for the rehabilitation and redevelopment of deteriorating area, as well as the prevention and elimination of substandard and blighted area. The Legislature has declared, in pertinent part:

It is hereby found and declared that there exist in cities of all classes and villages of this state area which have deteriorated and become substandard and blighted because of the unsafe, insanitary, inadequate, or overcrowded condition of the dwellings therein, or because of inadequate planning of the area, or excessive land coverage by the buildings thereon, or the lack of proper light and air and open space, or because of the defective design and arrangement of the buildings thereon, or faulty street or lot layout, or congested traffic conditions, or economically or socially undesirable land uses...These conditions are beyond remedy and control solely by regulatory process in the exercise of the police power and cannot be dealt with effectively by the ordinary operations of private enterprise without the aids herein provided...It is further found and declared that the prevention and elimination of blight is a matter of state policy, public interest, and statewide concern and within the powers and authority inhering in and reserved to the state, in order that the state and its municipalities shall not continue to be endangered by area which are focal centers of disease, promote juvenile delinquency, and consume an excessive proportion of their revenue. §18-2102

Consistent with these findings, municipalities have been granted the power to address deterioration, substandard conditions, and blight through any number of means, including “the formulation of a workable program, the approval of community redevelopment plans consistent with the general plan for the development of the city, the exercise of its zoning powers, the enforcement of other laws, codes, and regulations, relating to the use of land and the use and occupancy of buildings and improvements, the disposition of any property acquired, and the providing of necessary public improvements.” Neb. Rev. Stat. §18-2104.

Nebraska Revised Statute §18-2104 enables a municipality to declare that blight and substandard conditions exist. The statute reads,

The governing body of a city, to the greatest extent it deems to be feasible in carrying out the provisions, shall afford maximum opportunity, consistent with sound needs of the city, to the rehabilitation or redevelopment of the community redevelopment area by private enterprises. The governing body of a city shall give consideration to this objective in exercising its powers, including the formulation of a workable program, the approval of community redevelopment plans consistent with the general plan for the development of the city, the exercise of its zoning powers, the enforcement of other laws, codes, and regulations relating to the use and occupancy of buildings and improvements, the disposition of any property acquired, and providing of necessary public improvements.

The process of improving an area begins with the creation of a municipality-wide workable program for utilizing appropriate private and public resources to address the specific conditions to be improved. Such workable programs may include “provision for the prevention of the spread of blight into areas of the municipality which are free from blight through diligent enforcement of housing, zoning, and occupancy controls and standards; the rehabilitation or conservation of substandard and blighted area or portions thereof by re-planning, removing congestion, providing parks, playgrounds, and other public improvements by encouraging voluntary rehabilitation and by compelling the repair and rehabilitation of deteriorated or deteriorating structures; and the clearance and redevelopment of substandard and blighted area or portions thereof.” Neb. Rev. Stat. §18-2105.

The statutes provide a means for the governing body of a municipality to address and develop strategies for rehabilitation and redevelopment of the community. Nebraska Revised Statute §18-2105 also grants authority to the governing body to formulate a redevelopment program. The statute reads:

The governing body of a city or an authority at its direction for the purposes of the Community Development Law may formulate for the entire municipality a workable program for utilizing appropriate private and public resources to eliminate or prevent the development or spread of urban blight, to encourage needed urban rehabilitation, to provide for the redevelopment of substandard and blighted area, or to undertake such of the aforesaid activities or other feasible municipal activities as may be suitably employed to achieve the objectives of such workable program. Such workable program may include, without limitation, provision for the prevention of the spread of blight into area of the municipality which are free from blight through diligent enforcement of housing, zoning and occupancy controls and standards; the rehabilitation or conservation of substandard or blighted area or portions thereof by replanning, removing congestion, providing parks, playgrounds, and other public improvements by encouraging voluntary rehabilitation and by compelling the repair and rehabilitation of deteriorated or deteriorating structures; and the clearance and redevelopment of substandard and blighted area or portions thereof. §18-2105

Prior to the adoption of a redevelopment plan, a municipality must have an adopted comprehensive plan (§18-2110) and shall have declared the redevelopment area to be a substandard and blighted area in need of redevelopment (§18-2109).

The important community development terms are defined in Nebraska Revised Statute §18-2103, several of which are shown below (organization and emphasis added):

Substandard area 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;

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, unsanitary 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.

Substandard and Blight Eligibility Analysis

Designated Study Area

The designated study area is property within the corporate limits for evaluation pursuant to the Community Development Law. The area is underutilized agricultural site. The designated study area was selected for a number of reasons, including:

1. The presence of blighted and substandard characteristics within the study area.
2. The potential for private development and redevelopment activities within the study area.
3. The need for improvements in infrastructure due to specific existing conditions.
4. The economical and functional obsolescence of certain properties within the study area.
5. The need for public intervention to stimulate the development and redevelopment of vital infrastructure systems and housing to support these private redevelopment efforts.

Once declared substandard and blighted, the City of Gering can stimulate and manage future development in this area by creation and use of the redevelopment plan and its statutory authority to provide financial incentives for private development.

Through the redevelopment process, the City of Gering can guide future development in the community and provide financial incentives for development. The use of the Nebraska Community Redevelopment Law by the City of Gering is intended to improve the community and enhance the quality of life for all residents by eliminating conditions that contribute to the spread of blight and hinder private reinvestment in the area due to these factors. Using the Nebraska Community Development Law, Gering can eliminate negative factors and implement programs and/or projects identified to improve conditions, thereby removing, or preventing blight and substandard conditions.

Substandard and Blight Conditions

As set forth in section 18-2103(31), **substandard area** shall mean an area in which there is a predominance of buildings or improvements, whether nonresidential or residential in character, which by reason of the following:

1. **Dilapidation/deterioration***
Exterior inspection of buildings to note deficiencies (sound, minor, major, dilapidated)
 - Examples include structural (walls, foundation, roof), building systems (gutters, roof surface, chimney), and architectural systems (fire escapes, weatherization, steps, exterior paint, site conditions).
2. **Age or obsolescence**
Estimate age of structures (40+ years criteria)
3. **Inadequate provision for ventilation, light, air, sanitation, or open spaces**
Overall sight conditions
 - Examples include junked cars or debris, cluttered alleyways, antiquated infrastructure systems (overhead power lines), outdoor storage/sanitation facilities, unpaved parking/outdoor storage.
4. **Other substandard conditions**
 - (a) High density of population and overcrowding (census); or
 - (b) The existence of conditions which endanger life or property by fire and other causes or unsanitary and unsafe conditions ; or
 - (c) Any combination of such factors which is conducive to ill health, transmission of disease, infant mortality, juvenile delinquency, and crime; is detrimental to the public health, safety, morals, or welfare (includes sanitation concerns, inadequate infrastructure systems (sewer, water service mains, storm sewers), poor lighting, crime statistics, floodplain area, outdoor storage, site clutter).

As set forth in the Community Development Law, a **blighted area** shall mean an area, which by reason of the presence of:

1. **A substantial number of deteriorated or deteriorating structures***
Exterior inspection of buildings to note deficiencies (sound, minor, major, dilapidated)
 - Examples include structural (walls, foundation, roof), building systems (gutters, roof surface, chimney), and architectural systems (fire escapes, weatherization, steps, exterior paint, site conditions).
2. **Existence of defective or inadequate street layout**
Condition of streets/inadequate access including sidewalks
 - Examples include street conditions, dead ends, railroad crossings, linear downtown, narrow alleyways, blind crossings, and sidewalk condition.
3. **Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness**
Conditions associated with accessibility/usefulness of the lots
 - Examples include land locked parcels, odd shaped lots, undersized lots, lots with accessibility concerns.
4. **Unsanitary or unsafe conditions**
Conditions which pose a threat to public health and safety
 - Examples include age and physical condition of structures, floodplain, lack of public infrastructure systems, unsanitary conditions, ventilation concerns.
5. **Deterioration of site or other improvements**
Field observation of age and condition of public utilities, debris, and inadequate public improvements
 - Examples include lack of off-street parking, storm drainage, junk cars, dilapidated structures, debris, on-site storage, congested overhead power lines.
6. **Diversity of ownership**
The total number of unduplicated owners
 - Examples include the necessity to acquire numerous lots is a hindrance to redevelopment. However, land assemblage of larger proportions necessary for major developments, is more economically feasible and will attract financial support, as well as public patronage required to repay such financial support. Such assemblage is difficult without public intervention.
7. **Tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land**
Examination of public records to determine the status of taxation of properties
 - Examples include delinquent taxes, real estate taxes or special assessments exceeding the fair market value.
8. **Defective or unusual conditions of title**
Examine public records to determine any defective or unusual title defects
 - Examples include improper filings, liens, defective titles, etc.
9. **Improper subdivision or obsolete platting**
Examine public records to determine improper subdivision and obsolete platting
 - Examples include undersized lots, improper zoning, lot configuration, easement concerns, never recorded vacated streets, accessibility concerns.
10. **The existence of conditions which endanger life or property by fire or other causes**
Examine conditions which endanger life or property

- Examples include inadequate, undersized, or inoperative public infrastructure systems, floodplain, building materials, site access, on-site storage (cars), secluded area for pests and vermin to thrive, inadequate surface drainage, street/sidewalk conditions, etc.
- 11. Any combination of such factors, substantially impairs or arrests the sound growth of the community, hinders the provision of housing accommodations, or constitutes an economic or social liability**
- Economic and/or socially undesirable land uses
- Examples include incompatible land uses, economic obsolescence, functional obsolescence which relates to the property's ability to compete in the marketplace.
- 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 designated blighted area is at least one hundred twenty percent of the state or national average (Census statistics);
 - (b) The average age of the residential or commercial units in the area is at least 40 years (Public Records);
 - (c) More than half of the plotted and subdivided property in the area is unimproved land that has been within the city for 40 years and has remained unimproved during that time (Public records);
 - (d) The per capita income of the designated blighted area is lower than the average per capita income of the city or village in which the area is designated (Census); or
 - (e) The area has had either stable or decreasing population based on the last two decennial censuses (Census).

*Where structural conditions are evaluated, individual structures are rated in accordance with the following rating schedule as defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development: no problem, adequate condition, deteriorating condition, or dilapidated condition. The following descriptions define the rating schedule used to assess and evaluate building and structure conditions:

No Problem

No structural or aesthetic problems are visible.

Adequate Condition

- Slight damage to porches, steps, roofs, etc. is present on the structure,
- Slight wearing away of mortar between bricks, stones, or concrete blocks,
- Small cracks in walls or chimneys,
- Cracked windows,
- Lack of paint, and
- Slight wear on steps, doors, and door and window frames.

Deteriorating Condition

- Holes, open cracks, rotted, loose, or missing materials in parts of the foundation, walls (up to one-quarter of the wall), or roof (up to one-quarter of roof),
- Shaky, broken, or missing steps or railings,
- Numerous missing and cracked windowpanes,
- Some rotted or loose windows or doors (no longer wind or waterproof),
- Missing bricks or other masonry of chimney, and
- Makeshift (un-insulated) chimney.

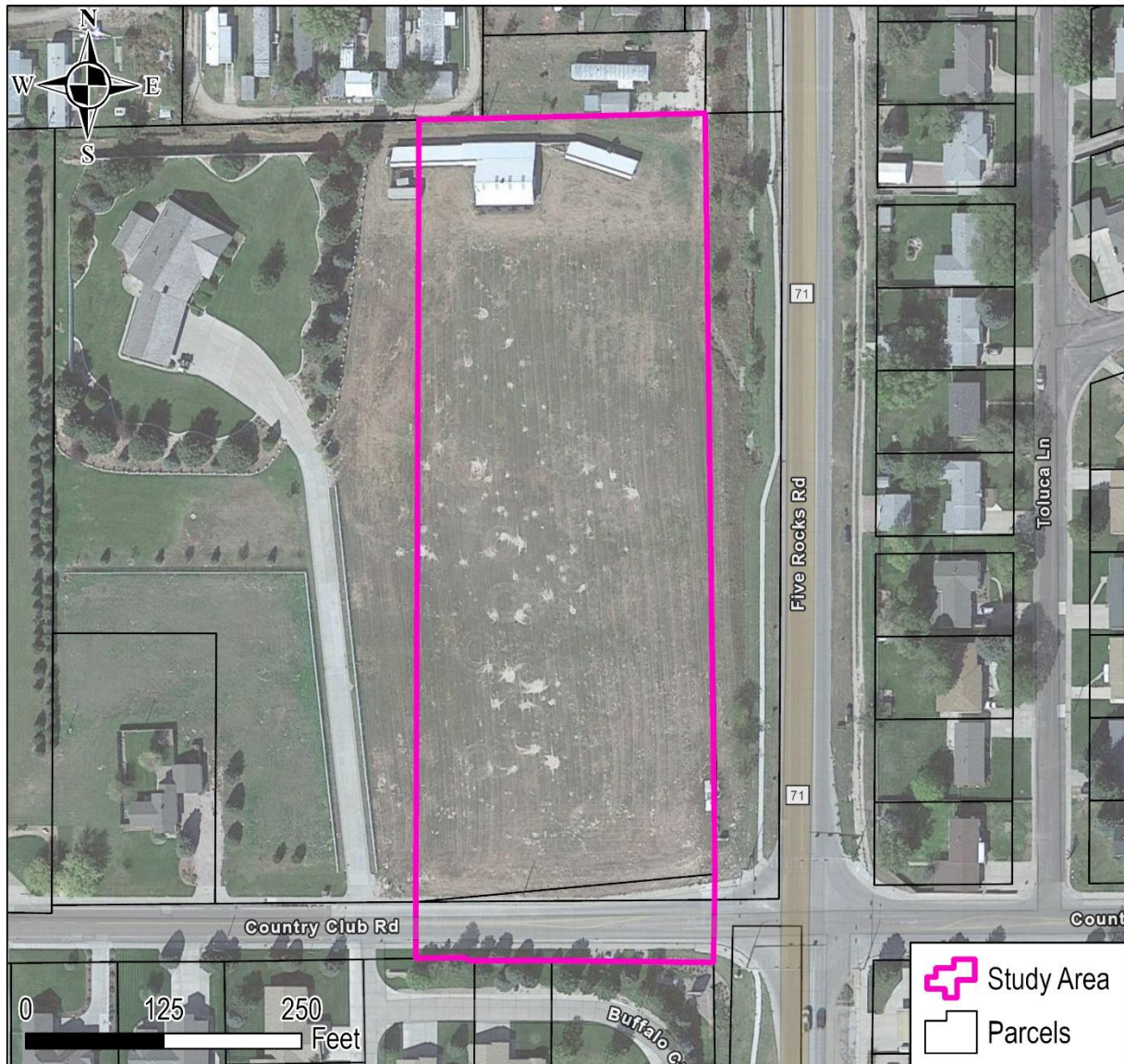
Dilapidated Condition

- Holes, open cracks, or rotted, loose or missing material (siding, shingles, brick, concrete, tiles, plaster, floorboards) over large area of foundation, on walls or on roof,
- Substantial sagging of roof, floors, or walls,
- Extensive damage by fire, flood, or storm, and
- Inadequate original construction such as makeshift walls, roofs made of scrap materials, foundations or floors lacking, or converted barns, sheds, and other structures not adequate for housing.

Designated Study Area

The study area as identified can be found in Figure 1. For this study, the study area will be known as the “Designated Study Area” which was reviewed for substandard and blight characteristics.

Figure 1: Designated Study Area



Created By: J. Ray; N. Schroeder
 Date: February 2025
 Software: ArcGIS Pro 3.4
 File: R250769.00

City of Gering, NE

Gering Blight Study Area

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Recommended Blight and Substandard Area

Based upon the review of the designated study area, and its context with the community, JEO Consulting Group recommends the designated study area be recommended as a Blight and Substandard Area. This area consists of approximately 4.67 acres. The following boundary description delineates the Recommended Area:

BLIGHT STUDY LEGAL DESCRIPTION GERING NEBRASKA (FEBRUARY 25, 2025)

A PARCEL OF LAND LOCATED IN THE NORTHEAST QUARTER OF SECTION 34, TOWNSHIP 22 NORTH, RANGE 55 WEST OF THE SIXTH P.M., SCOTTS BLUFF COUNTY, NEBRASKA, BEING DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS: BEGINNING AT THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF PAPPAS NORTHWEST ADDITION, AS PLATTED IN THE CITY OF GERING, SCOTTS BLUFF COUNTY, NEBRASKA; THENCE WESTERLY ON THE NORTH LINE OF SAID PAPPAS NORTHWEST ADDITION TO THE NORTHERLY EXTENSION OF THE WEST LINE OF BLOCK 2 OF SAID PAPPAS NORTHWEST ADDITION; THENCE SOUTHERLY ON THE WEST LINE OF SAID BLOCK 2 AND IT'S NORTHERLY EXTENSION TO THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF SAID BLOCK 2; THENCE SOUTHERLY ON THE SOUTHERLY EXTENSION OF SAID WEST LINE TO THE NORTH LINE OF MONUMENT SHADOWS-CCR SUBDIVISION AS PLATTED IN SAID CITY OF GERING; THENCE EASTERLY ON SAID NORTH LINE TO THE NE CORNER OF SAID MONUMENT-CCR SUBDIVISION; THENCE NORTHERLY TO THE SE CORNER OF SAID BLOCK 2; THENCE NORTHERLY ON THE EAST LINE OF SAID BLOCK 2 TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING.

Findings and Contributing Factors

The intent of this study is to determine whether the Five Rocks Blight Study Area within the community has experienced structural and site deterioration or if there are other negative factors which are decreasing the development potential for the area. The field survey conducted on Monday, February 17, 2025, indicated the study area has such, thus the study area warrants further examination regarding blighted and substandard conditions. The following factors were evaluated to determine if there is a reasonable presence of blight and substandard conditions within the Five Rocks Blight Study Area.

This section reviews the building and structure conditions, infrastructure, site conditions, county assessor's records and land use found within the Five Rocks Blight Study Area based upon the statutory definitions, planning team observations during the field survey, and explains the identified contributing factors.

BLIGHTED CRITERIA CONDITIONS

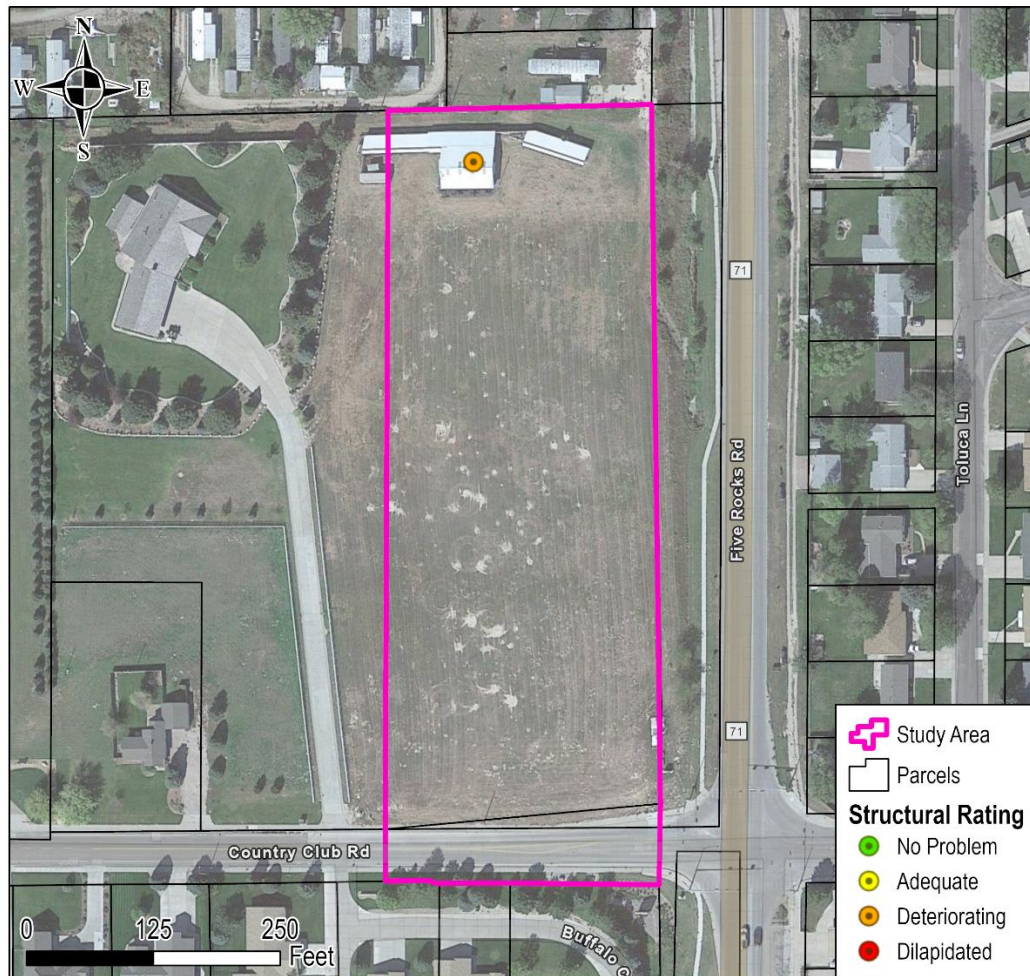
As set forth in the Nebraska legislation, a **blighted area** shall mean an area, which by reason of the presence of the following.

Substantial Number of Deteriorated or Deteriorating Structures

The structures for each parcel within the Five Rocks Blight Study Area were examined. One structure was within the designated study area were graded as deteriorating. Figure 2 illustrates the distribution of the structural ratings within the study area

This is not considered a significant contributing factor due to the limited number of structures.

Figure 2, Structural Rating





City of Gering, NE

**Gering Blight Study:
Structural Rating**

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Date: February 2025
Software: ArcGIS Pro 3.4
File: R250769.00

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Defective or Inadequate Street Layout

Street Conditions and Accessibility

Street and sidewalk conditions within the Five Rocks Blight Study Area were evaluated in relation to the provision of safe and efficient public circulation and access, and with regard to ease of travel and appearance. The transportation infrastructure conditions are illustrated on Figure 3.

While the surface of the streets is generally in good condition, the site lacks safe vehicular access to the street grid with restricted access from Highway 71 and driveway setbacks from the intersection. Access will likely be required from an adjacent property. As a result, the transportation infrastructure is considered defective and/or inadequate for an urban environment.

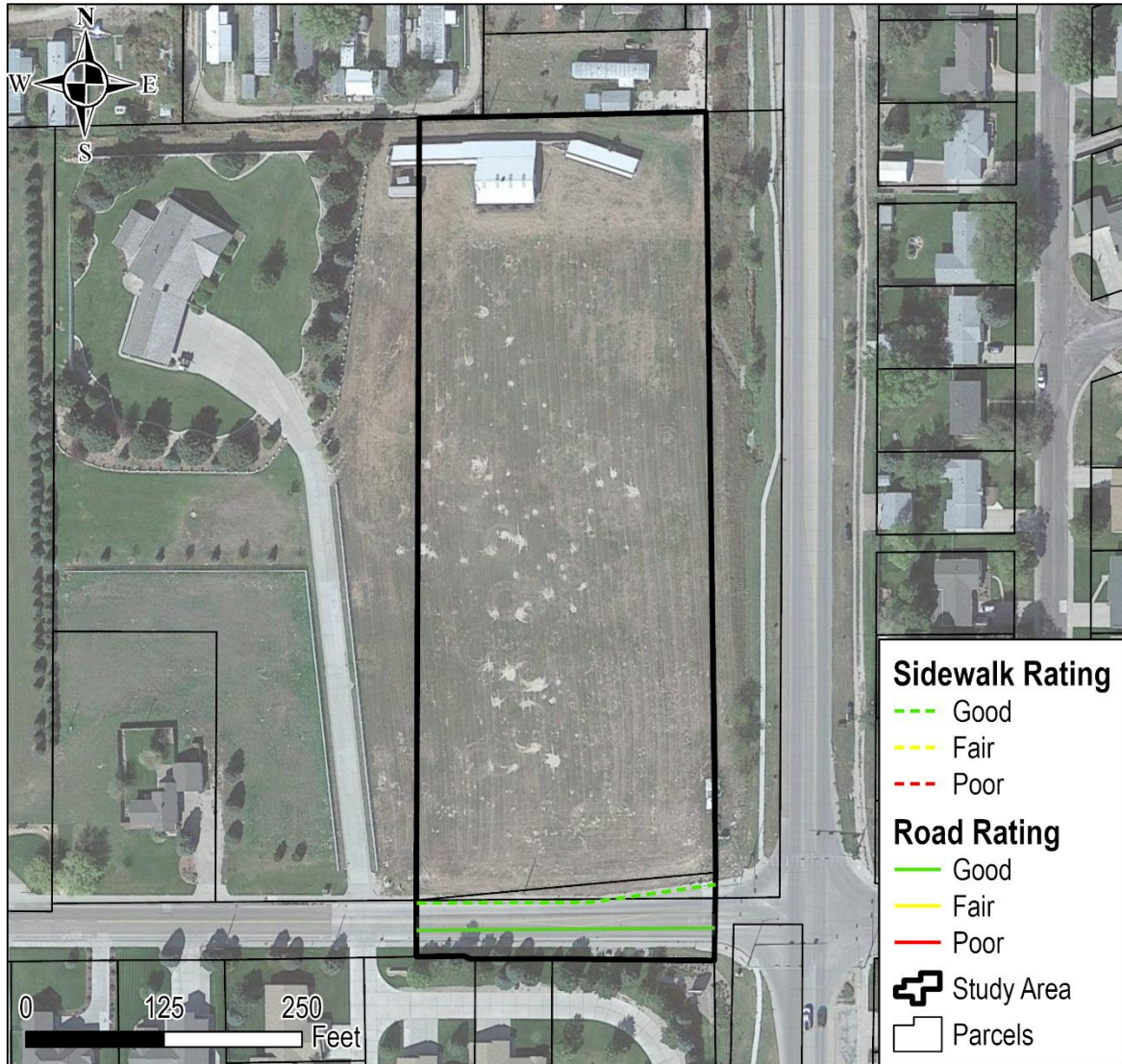
This is considered a contributing factor.

Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness

The Five Rocks Blight Study Area contains one large lot that is generally three times deeper than wider. In addition, the parcel lacks useful access as detailed above. These characteristics diminish the usefulness to adequately accommodate circulation and building standards.

Overall, this factor is considered to be a contributing factor.

Figure 3, Transportation



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City of Gering, NE

Gering Blight Study: Transportation

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Unsanitary or unsafe conditions

Conditions which pose a threat to public health and safety

Debris

Piles of debris were noted during the visual analysis. These conditions can create a potential fire threat as well as an area to harbor vermin and rodents.

As a result, this factor is not considered to be contributing the recommended blight designation.



Deterioration of site or other improvements

The age of the structures and condition of public utilities, debris, and inadequate public improvements.

Parking and driveways

The field analysis noted lack of direct vehicular and outdoor storage areas that lacked hard surfaces or were in poor condition.

Debris

Piles of debris were noted during the visual analysis. These conditions can create a potential fire threat as well as an area to harbor vermin and rodents.

As a result, this factor is considered to be contributing the recommended blight designation.



Diversity of ownership

The diversity of ownership is not evident in the Five Rocks Blight Study Area. There is one unique private property owner for the Five Rocks Blight Study Area. As a result, this factor is not considered to be contributing to the recommended blight designation.

Tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land

There was no evidence identified of taxes or special assessments exceeding the fair market value of the parcels in the study area.

Defective or unusual conditions of title

There was no evidence identified of defective or unusual conditions of title of the parcels in the study area. As a result, this factor is not considered to be contributing to the recommended blight designation.

Improper subdivision or obsolete platting

Obsolete platting

The existing parcel boundaries are obsolete and do not reflect the current urban size and shape desired for efficient land development.

Improper Subdivision

A review of the Scotts Bluff County Assessor's records did not reveal any improper subdivisions. However, the state-controlled highway access severely limits access to the site rendering it a regulatory land locked site.

As a result of the obsolete platting, this factor is considered to be contributing to the recommended blight designation.

The existence of conditions which endanger life or property

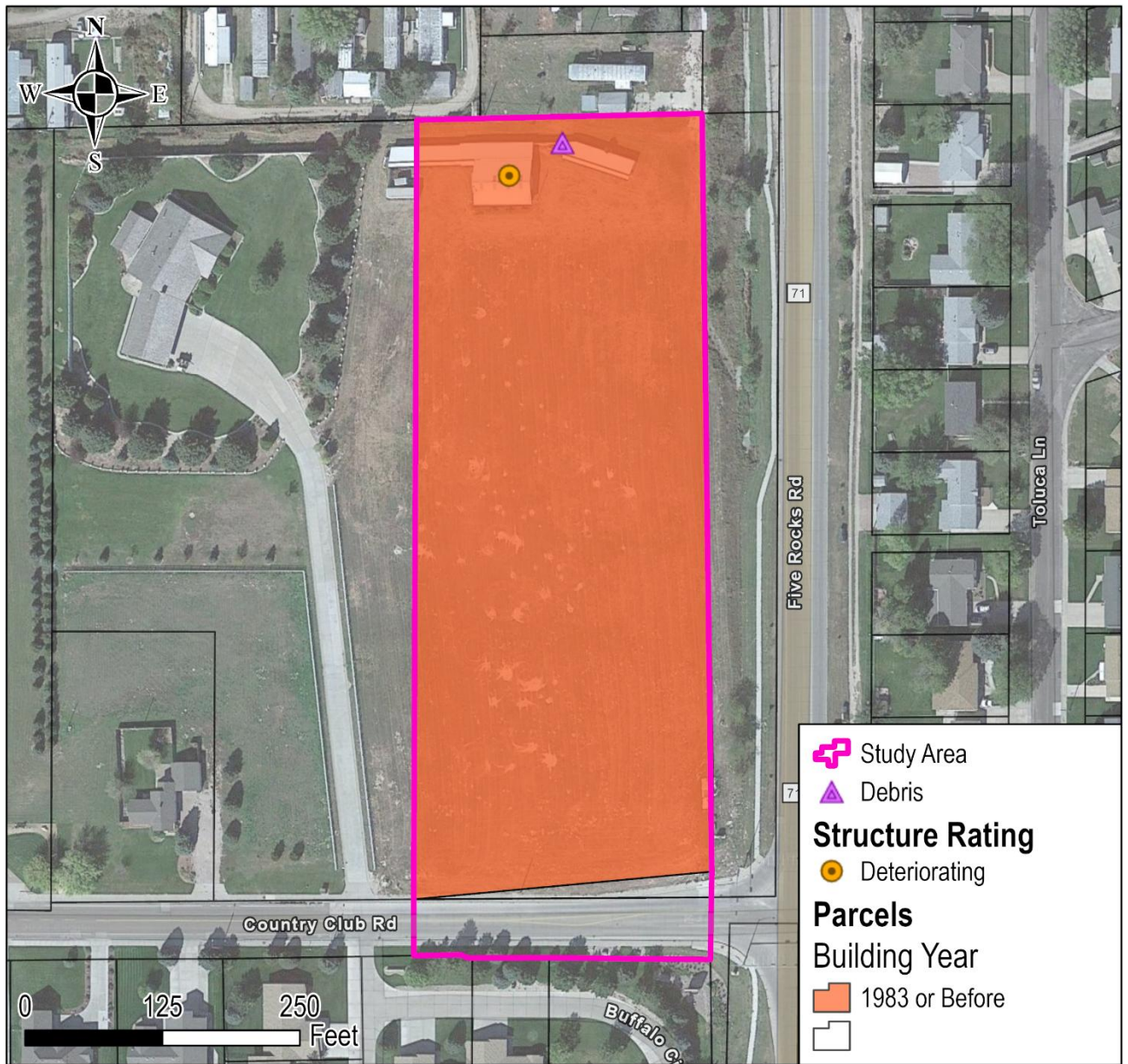
Conditions which pose a threat to public health and safety

Debris

Piles of debris were noted during the visual analysis. These conditions can create a potential fire threat as well as an area to harbor vermin and rodents.

As a result, this factor is not considered to be contributing the recommended blight designation.

Figure 4: Potentially Hazardous Conditions



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City of Gering, NE

Gering Blight Study: Potential Hazards

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Any combination of such factors that substantially impairs or arrests the sound growth of the community, retards the provision of housing accommodations, or constitutes an economic or social liability.

The combination of deterioration of the structures, the condition of site improvements, debris piles and the regulatory restrictions on vehicular access are factors observed in the field analysis that could impair sound growth or redevelopment of the community and is a significant factor impacting growth.

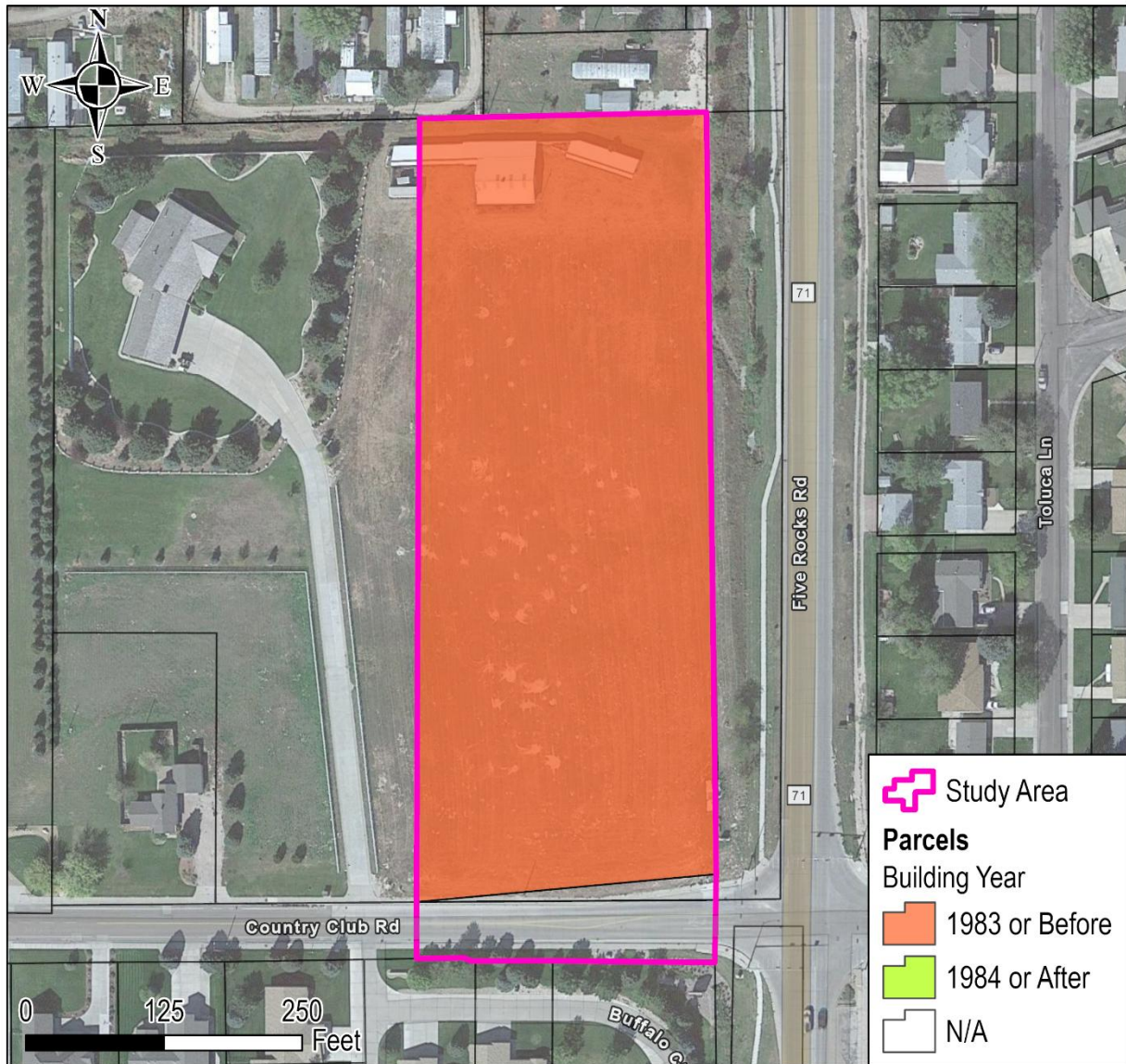
As a result, it is considered a substantial contributor to the Five Rocks Blight Study Area to be considered blighted.

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:

The average age of the structures in the area is 43 years of age. This is considered a substantial contributor to the Five Rocks Blight Study Area to be considered blighted.



Figure 5: Age of Structures



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 Date: February 2025
 Software: ArcGIS Pro 3.4
 File: R250769.00

City of Gering, NE

Gering Blight Study: Age of Structures

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SUBSTANDARD CRITERIA

A **substandard area** shall mean an area in which there is a predominance of buildings or improvements, whether nonresidential or residential in character, which by reason of the following:

Dilapidation/deterioration

As part of the Blight and Substandard Study, a Structural Conditions Survey was completed along with an analysis of the land-use patterns in the Five Rocks Blight Study Area. The structures for each parcel within the Five Rocks Blight Study Area were examined. One structure was within the designated study area was graded as deteriorating. Figure 2 illustrates the distribution of the structural ratings within the study area

This is not considered significant contributing factor.

Age or obsolescence

Information regarding the age of the permanent structures within the Five Rocks Blight Study Area was provided by the Scotts Bluff County Assessor's Office. The age of the structures in the area is 43 years.

Thus, Age and obsolescence is considered a contributing factor.

Inadequate provision for ventilation, light, air, sanitation, or open spaces

Debris

Piles of debris were noted during the visual analysis as well as a heavily overgrown area near a residential structure. These conditions can create a potential fire threat as well as an area to harbor vermin and rodents.

However, this alone is not considered significant to be considered a contributing factor.

Other Substandard Conditions

The existence of conditions which endanger life or property by fire or other unsanitary conditions including inadequate infrastructure systems.

Site Access

The restricted vehicular access points may increase danger to life or property by limiting emergency vehicles access.

Debris

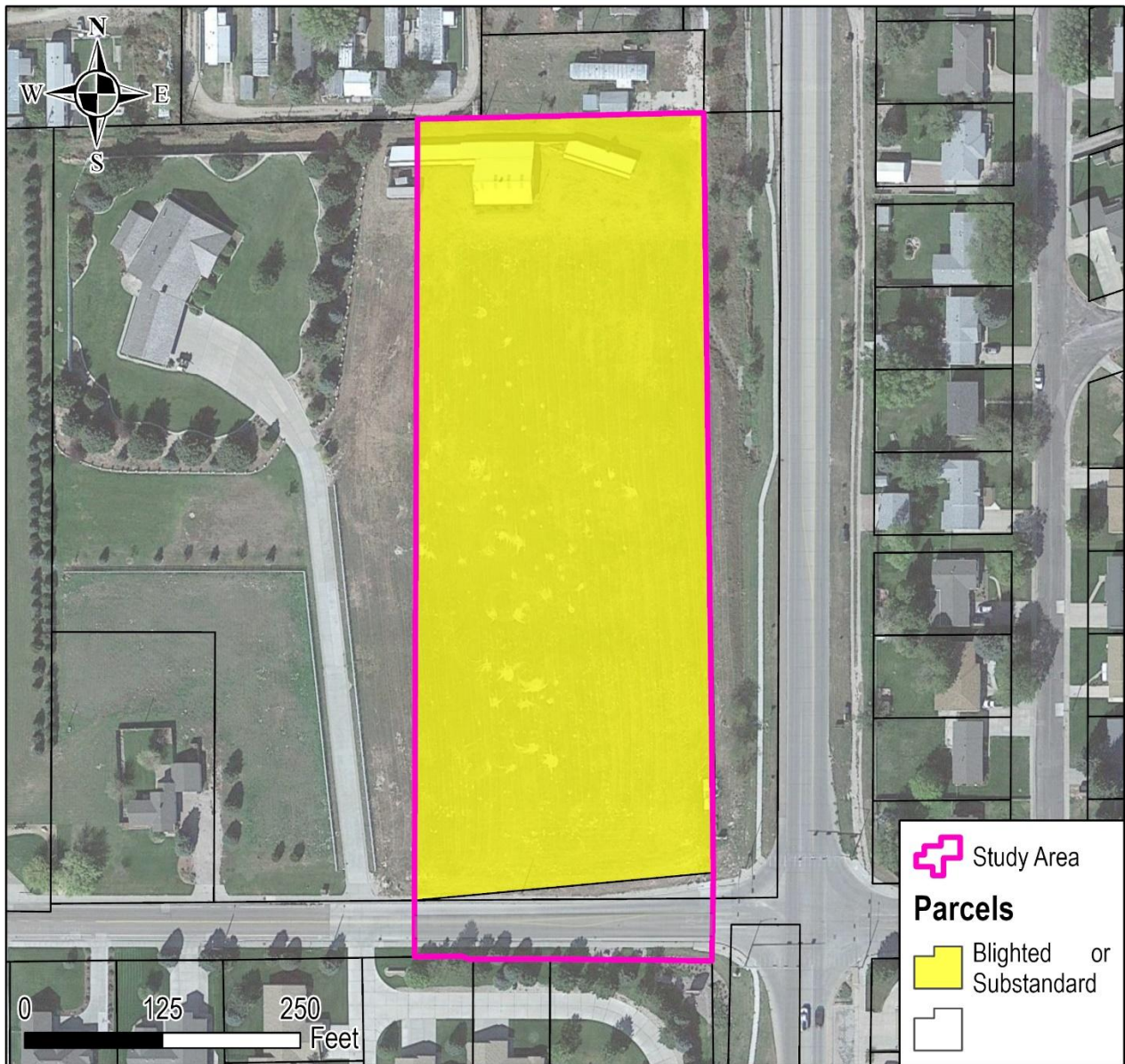
Piles of debris were noted during the visual analysis as well as a heavily overgrown area near a residential structure. These conditions can create a potential fire threat as well as an area to harbor vermin and rodents.

Age of Structure

Structures constructed prior to 1978 may contain lead-based paint which can pose health and human development risks to children with chipping or peeling.

The combination of these factors is considered significant and a contributing factor.

Figure 5: Parcels Showing Blight and Substandard Criteria



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Date: February 2025
Software: ArcGIS Pro 3.4
File: R250769.00

City of Gering, NE

Gering Blight Study: Characteristics of Blight & Substandard Area

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Blighted and Substandard Findings

The Five Rocks Blight Study Area has many items contributing to the blight and substandard conditions. Based on the information collected and analyzed pursuant to Nebraska Revised Statutes, the area has a myriad of items that were considered beyond the remedy and control of the normal regulatory process of the City of Gering or impossible to reverse through the ordinary operations of private enterprise. These conditions include:

Table 1: Summary Matrix

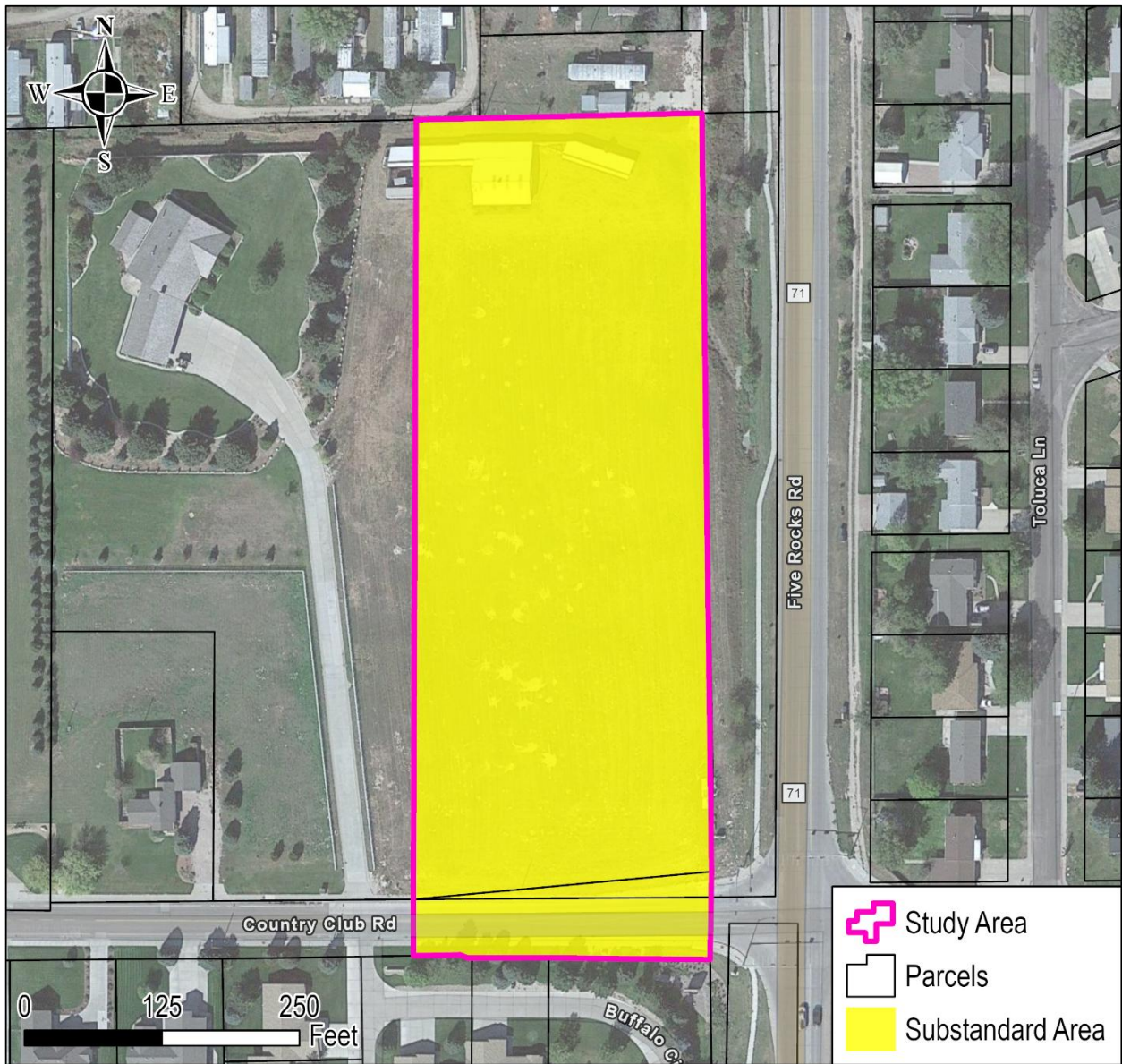
Criteria	
Structure condition	No
Street layout	Yes
Faulty lot layout	Yes
Unsanitary or unsafe conditions	No
Deterioration of site	Yes
Diversity of owners	No
Tax special assessment	No
Titles conditions	No
Obsolete platting	Yes
Endanger life/property	Yes
Any combination	Yes
Age of structure	Yes
BLIGHT TOTALS	7/12
Exterior inspection of structures	No
Age of structures	Yes
Inadequate provision for ventilation, sanitation	No
Other Substandard – (conducive to ill health, Infrastructure, endanger life)	Yes
SUBSTANDARD TOTALS	2/4
TOTALS	9/16

Conclusion

Several conditions within the Five Rocks were observed during the field survey which warrant a designation as blighted and substandard. The conditions showing evidence of blight are interspersed throughout the Five Rocks Blight Study Area, and as such, the area within the boundaries of the Five Rocks Blight Study Area is recommended for further action.

It is the professional opinion of the consultant, based on the information collected and analyzed pursuant to Nebraska Revised Statutes, that the Five Rocks Blight Study Area contains the required conditions that would warrant a designation as blighted and substandard by the City of Gering and the Community Development Agency. The City of Gering should review this Blight and Substandard Study, and if satisfied with the findings contained in this study, may, by resolution, designate the Five Rocks Blight Study Area as “Blighted and Substandard” as provided for in the Community Development Law.

Figure 6 Recommended Blight and Substandard Designation



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Date: February 2025
Software: ArcGIS Pro 3.4
File: R250769.00

City of Gering, NE

Gering Blight Study: Recommended Blight & Substandard Area

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RESOLUTION PC 10-26-2

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF GERING, NEBRASKA:

Recitals:

- a. The question of whether the “Redevelopment Area,” as defined below, is substandard and blighted as those terms are defined in the Nebraska Community Development Law (the “Act”) has been submitted to the Planning Commission.
- b. The “Redevelopment Area” encompasses the following area in Gering, Nebraska:

A PARCEL OF LAND LOCATED IN THE NORTHEAST QUARTER OF SECTION 34, TOWNSHIP 22 NORTH, RANGE 55 WEST OF THE SIXTH P.M., SCOTTS BLUFF COUNTY, NEBRASKA, BEING DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS: BEGINNING AT THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF PAPPAS NORTHWEST ADDITION, AS PLATTED IN THE CITY OF GERING, SCOTTS BLUFF COUNTY, NEBRASKA; THENCE WESTERLY ON THE NORTH LINE OF SAID PAPPAS NORTHWEST ADDITION TO THE NORTHERLY EXTENSION OF THE WEST LINE OF BLOCK 2 OF SAID PAPPAS NORTHWEST ADDITION; THENCE SOUTHERLY ON THE WEST LINE OF SAID BLOCK 2 AND IT'S NORTHERLY EXTENSION TO THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF SAID BLOCK 2; THENCE SOUTHERLY ON THE SOUTHERLY EXTENSION OF SAID WEST LINE TO THE NORTH LINE OF MONUMENT SHADOWS-CCR SUBDIVISION AS PLATTED IN SAID CITY OF GERING; THENCE EASTERLY ON SAID NORTH LINE TO THE NE CORNER OF SAID MONUMENT-CCR SUBDIVISION; THENCE NORTHERLY TO THE SE CORNER OF SAID BLOCK 2; THENCE NORTHERLY ON THE EAST LINE OF SAID BLOCK 2 TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING, AND ADJACENT PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY.

- c. The Planning Commission has received and reviewed the City of Gering Five Rocks Blight Study of the Redevelopment Area prepared by JEO Consulting Group, Inc. (the “Study”).
- d. The Planning Commission conducted a public hearing on October 20, 2026 for the purpose of making a recommendation to the City Council as to whether the Redevelopment Area is and should be determined as substandard and blighted as those terms are defined in the Act.
- e. The Planning Commission considered the Study and the comments at the public hearing in formulating its recommendation to the City Council.

Resolved:

1. The Redevelopment Area meets the criteria set forth in Sections 18-2103(4) and (32) of the Act, as described and set forth in the Study, and the inclusion of all property in the Redevelopment Area is necessary to create a unified redevelopment area sufficient to encourage developers and redevelopment and to carry out the purposes of the Act.
2. The Planning Commission recommends to the City Council that the City Council declare the Redevelopment Area as substandard and blighted and in need of redevelopment.
3. All prior resolutions of the Planning Commission in conflict with the terms and provisions of this Resolution are repealed to the extent of such conflicts.

4. This Resolution shall become effective immediately upon its adoption.

PASSED and APPROVED on October 20, 2026

**PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY
OF GERING, NEBRASKA**

ATTEST:

By: _____
Chair

By: _____
Recording Secretary