



*Johnston*  
THRIVE. EVERY DAY.

2018 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
ANNUAL REPORT AND  
DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY

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# INTRODUCTION

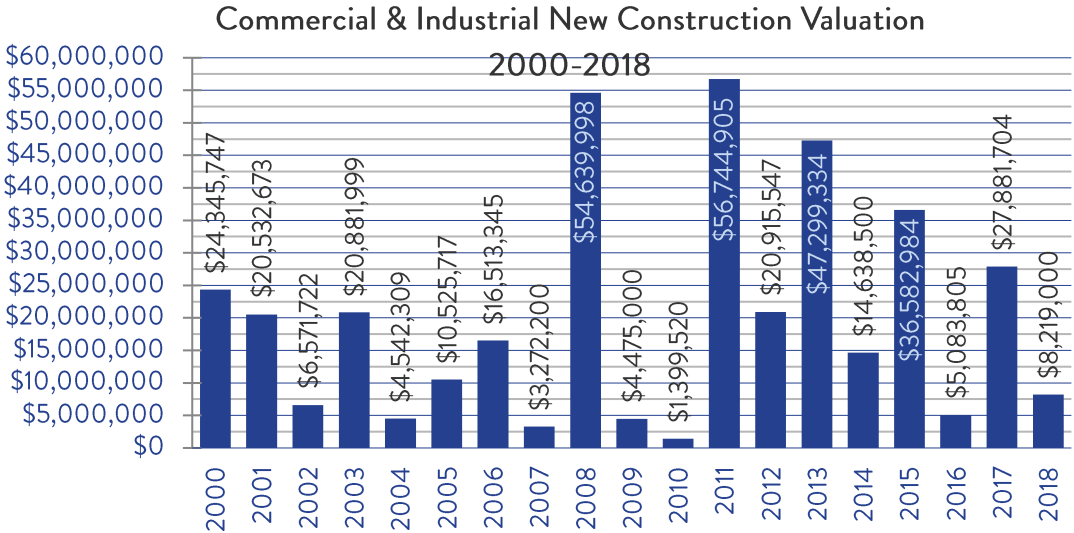
The Johnston Community Development Department is responsible for a wide range of services, including but not limited to:

- Development and implementation of various long-range plans, the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances
- Staff support to the Planning and Zoning, Board of Adjustment and City Council
- Reviewing development proposals for new construction and issuing building permits
- Conducting inspections, code enforcement and rental housing inspections
- Economic development
- Management of the City’s Stormwater Utility

2018 was another year of growth for the City of Johnston, with \$58,391,000 in total new valuation permitted. This level of investment in Johnston continues a tradition of a steady and sustainable growth pattern experienced over the last 15-20 years. On top of managing the day to day development activities of the City, the department undertook two major initiatives in 2018 which have set the stage for long term prosperity for the community. These projects include the NW Saylorville Drive Annexation area which provides a new and exciting opportunity for growth to continue long into the future, at the same time the Johnston Town Center project shows the City’s commitment to reinvesting and redeveloping the core of our community by creating the City’s first “downtown” destination area. This annual development summary of the department’s activities offers a summary of the development activity that occurred in 2018, highlights key projects and initiatives completed and identifies trends we might expect into 2019 and beyond.

# COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

In 2018, eight new commercial permits were issued totaling an assessed valuation of \$8,219,000; additionally, thirteen commercial remodel permits were issued totaling an investment of \$7,095,000. A summary of commercial valuations by year, is provided below:



An overview of the projects included in the valuation noted above is contained in the following summary of site plans which were reviewed and approved in 2018.

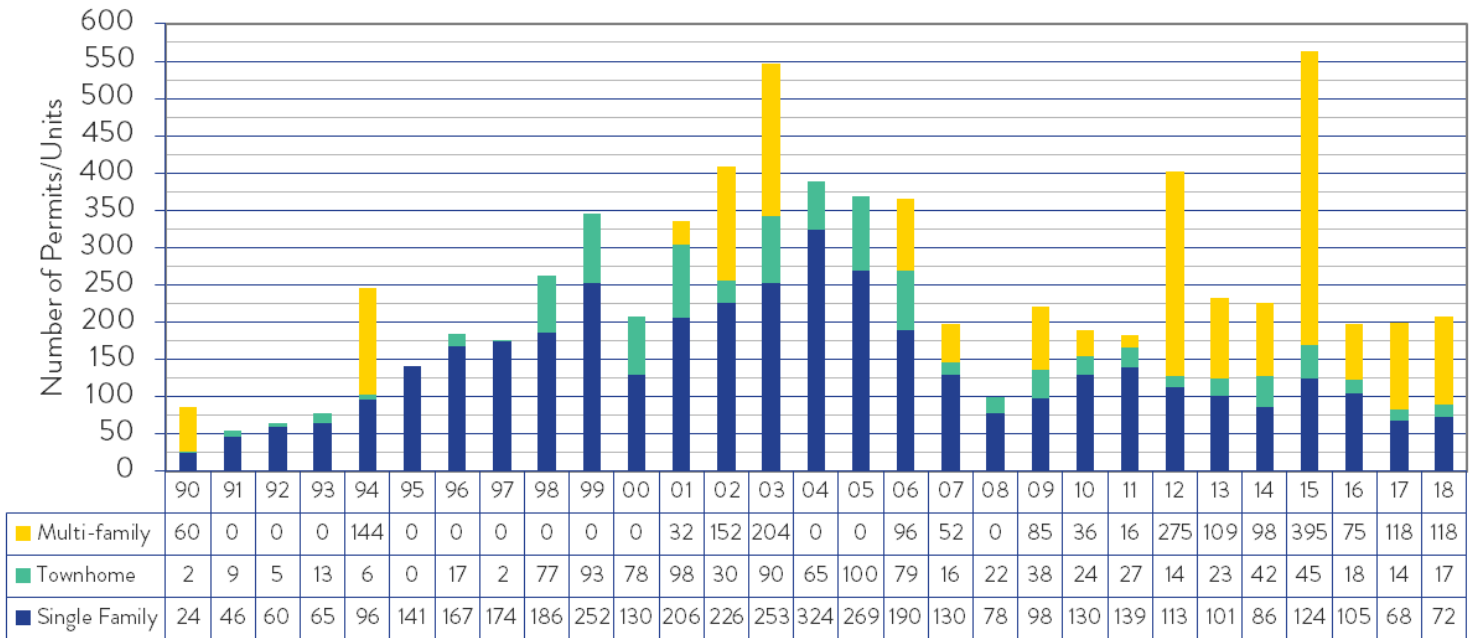
Project	Square Footage	Description
GT Holdings – 4801 NW 55th Avenue	4,500	Warehouse
ACCO Expansion – 5105 NW Johnston Drive	10,800	Warehouse
Dental Studios of Iowa – 5495 NW 100th Street	3,900	Dental Office
New Horizon’s Daycare – 8633 Crescent Chase	12,778	Daycare
Adam Ridge Commercial – 10200 NW 62nd Avenue	8,394	Retail
NW Beaver Office Park – 5421 NW Beaver Drive	37,200	Office/Warehouse
Birchwood Crossing – 7901 Birchwood Court	72,000	Flex Office
Scooters Coffee – 6005 Merle Hay Road	557	Coffee Drive-Thru
5501 NW Beaver Drive	5,879	Office/Warehouse
Shops at Roughwood – 5370 NW 86 <sup>th</sup> Street	16,400	Retail

## RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

The most common measure of development activity is the number of residential permits issued during the year. In total, 207 new residential units were permitted in 2018, a slight increase from the last couple of years and on par with the average over the past five years. Of these new residential units, single family detached homes accounted for 72 new units and \$22,752,000 in valuation. Townhomes/duplex permits remained consistent with 17 permits totaling \$2,760,000 in valuation. Based upon approved/pending projects, it is anticipated growth will continue at a similar pace in both single family and townhome developments in 2019.

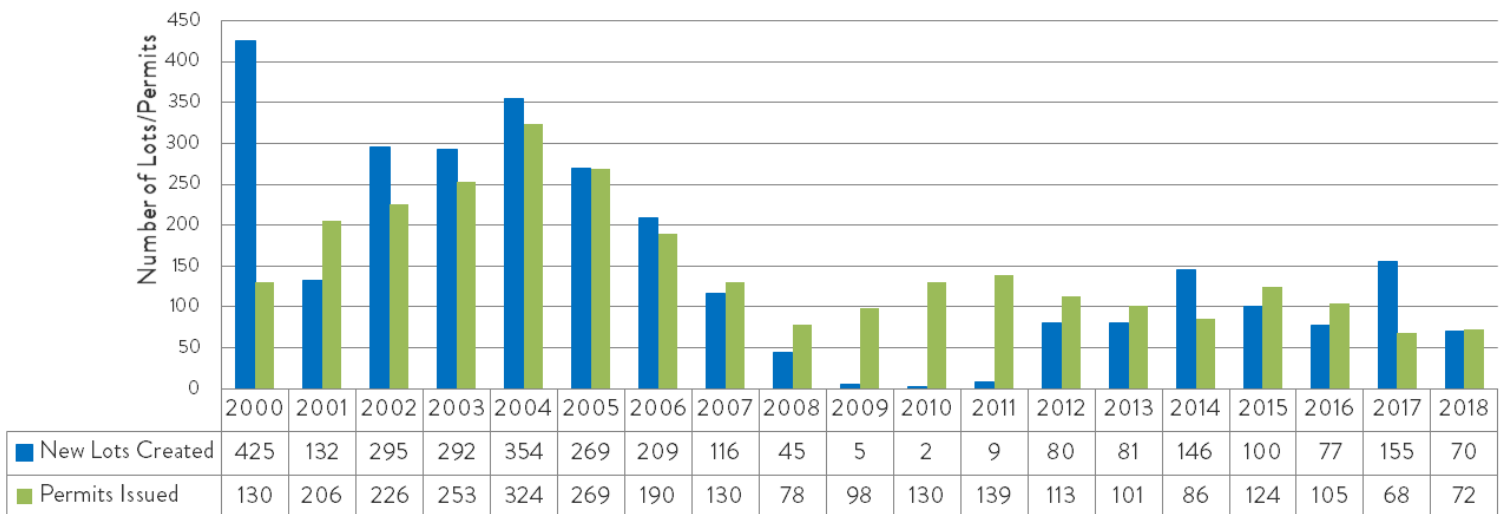
Consistent with 2017 multifamily residential apartments accounted for 1 permit totaling 118 residential units with a \$14,181,000 investment. While growth has slowed across the metro due to the number of new units brought online in the last couple of years, interest remains, particularly for senior oriented multifamily residential apartments, and local, regional and national trends point to the continued need for multiple housing style choices. Based upon site plan approvals, it is anticipated this slower steady growth will continue for the next few years, but will be somewhat limited due to a lack of available land for such development. A summary of residential building permit history from 1990-2018 is provided below:

## New Dwelling Units Permitted 1990-2018



One of the concerns noted over the last several years has been the lack of available lots for single family detached residential, which has been the result of fewer and smaller subdivisions being developed as the area emerged from the recession. 2017 reversed the trend with more than double the amount of lots being platted versus permits issued and 2018 remained consistent with 70 newly platted lots, versus 72 single family permits being issued.

## Single Family Lots Created and Permits Issued 2000-2018



The following table summarizes the residential rezonings and preliminary plats/site plans, and final plats approved in 2018 with development and/or home construction expected in 2019. In total, plans have been approved to accommodate an additional 87 single family residential lots and 120 multifamily residential units, which are not accounted for in the table of newly platted lots above.

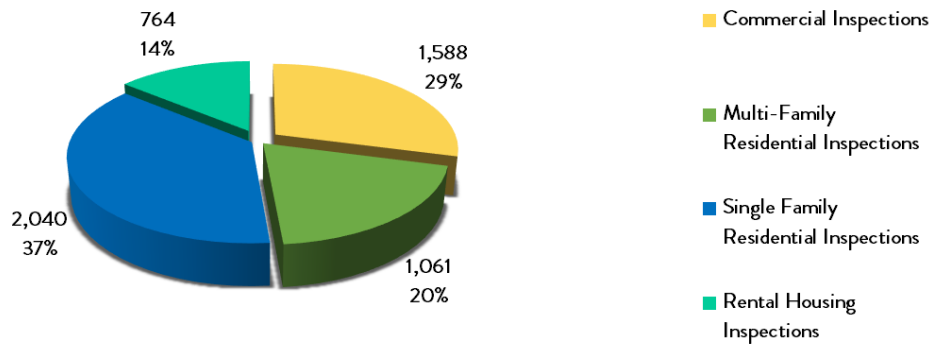
Residential Plats/Rezonings	Number of Units/Lots
Lakeview at Silver Birch Final Plat	1
Hidden Valley Estates Plat 2 Final Plat	25
Bricktowne Plat 2 Final Plat	2 Lots / 120 Apartment Units
Myra Lynn Plat 2 Final Plat	2
Adam Ridge Plat 9 Final Plat	42 Townhomes Lots
Hyperion Woods Preliminary Plat	9
Silkwood Point Preliminary Plat	39
Enclave Plat 4 Preliminary Plat	14
Birchwood Crossing Plat 8 Preliminary Plat	11
Wright Fields Preliminary Plat	14

## BUILDING AND RENTAL HOUSING INSPECTIONS

The Building Department is housed within the Community Development Department, and oversees compliance with the City’s adopted building codes. Many projects require the inspection staff to visit multiple times to verify the work as it progresses through to a completed state. These inspection aspects typically include: footing/foundations; structural framing; electrical, plumbing, and mechanical materials, systems and equipment; final inspections for occupancy, and several others. Many accessory items such as fencing, detached buildings, pool construction, and deck improvements also require inspections.

During 2018, three building inspection staff members completed a total of 5,453 inspections, a more than 20% increase over 2017. The growth in inspections was a result of increases in commercial and rental inspections, a slight increase in single family inspections and a decrease in multifamily inspections. These inspections encompass the landscape of commercial, single-family residential, multi-family residential, and rental housing as depicted in the chart below:

## Total Building Inspections by Classification



In 2013, the City adopted a rental housing inspection program, which requires all rental property in the city to be registered and inspected every two years by the Building Department. Rental properties are required to meet the minimum standards established by the Johnston Residential Rental Code. During the inspection, owners are notified of any necessary repairs and given a compliance schedule to make repairs. As noted, during 2018 Building Department Staff completed 764 inspections on rental dwelling units, totaling 14% percent of the department's inspections. During these inspections, staff noted the following items as the most common issues needing to be resolved: missing or malfunctioning smoke detectors; malfunctioning GFCI outlets; missing handrails or other blockages to building exiting.

## ENCODE 360 SOFTWARE

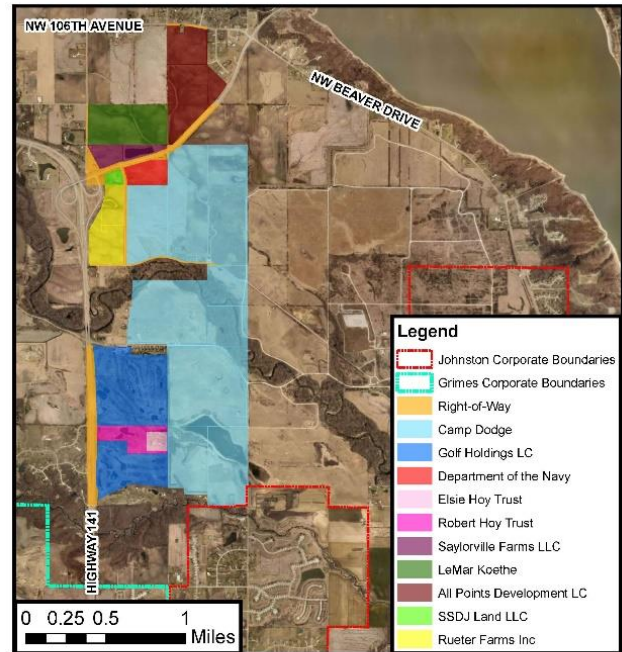
To assist property owners, engineers and developers, the City developed an online tool allowing the Zoning Ordinance to be easily searched, an online interactive Zoning Map, helpful calculators to determine the required amount of parking, buffers landscaping and other useful tools. In addition, applicants for development projects are able to upload their applications, site plans and other documents electronically through the new "Application Upload" tool. In early 2019, the entire City Code will also be available on this website. To utilize these valuable resources, please visit [cityofjohnston.com/encode](http://cityofjohnston.com/encode).

# ANNEXATIONS

In 2018 the City of Johnston completed two significant annexations. These will support the long-term growth of the City of Johnston as envisioned in the Johnston 2030 Comprehensive Plan. This annexation opens up the opportunity for long term growth into this new part of the community.

The first and most significant annexation was the NW Saylorville Drive Expansion. This totaled 1,461 acres in size, including 531 acres of private property and 929 acres of public land and right-of-way. This growth to NW Saylorville Drive (Highway 415) has long been seen as the next logical growth area for the City. Planning for growth into this area began as early as 1992. The City worked with numerous landowners to consolidate a significant growth region and is working on the extension of utilities needed to service this area. A comprehensive plan update for the NW Saylorville Drive growth area is anticipated to begin in early 2019.

NW Saylorville Drive Expansion  
Proposed Annexation



Created by City of Johnston Department of Community Development  
6221 Merie Hay Road, P.O. Box 410, Johnston, IA, 50131-0410 (515)278-2344 Fax:(515)278-2033

Hubbell Realty Company  
Wright Fields Incorporated  
Johnston Community School District  
Voluntary Annexation



Created by City of Johnston Department of Community Development  
6221 Merie Hay Road, P.O. Box 410, Johnston, IA, 50131-0410 (515)278-2344 Fax:(515)278-2033

The second annexation of 2018 was the Hubbell Realty Company, Wright Fields Incorporated, and Johnston Community School District annexation. This area encompassed two private properties south of NW 54th Avenue and Timber Ridge Elementary School. This annexation facilitates the long-awaited extension of Birchwood Court to NW 54th Avenue allow for the completion of the Birchwood Crossing Business Park with construction anticipated to begin in early 2019. This is paired with the creation of 25 new residential lots for single family homes, two new commercial lots, and the construction of one 71,074 square foot flex commercial / office building on one of the two new commercial lots.



## JOHNSTON TOWN CENTER

In 2018 the City of Johnston continued moving forward implementation of the [Johnston Town Center Plan](#), an envisioned 18.5-acre public-private Main Street Style redevelopment project at the Northeast corner of Merle Hay Road and NW 62nd Avenue.



Building on the public input and master planning undertaken in 2017, the City selected the Hansen Company as the developer for the Town Center and began detailed design work on the project in 2018. In addition, five properties within the Town Center area were acquired by the City and three buildings were demolished making room for redevelopment. Four

additional structures are planned for demolition in 2019 and an agreement with Hansen Company is currently being negotiated to break ground on the project in early 2020. As part of the initial development, a new City Hall will be constructed, and the existing outdated City Hall demolished to make room for the anticipated Town Center Courtyard. The first commercial building(s) are expected to open alongside a rebuilt Merle Hay Road and NW 62nd Avenue intersection towards the end of the year 2020.

## CHANGES TO CITY'S TAX INCREMENT FINANCING POLICY

Several updates were made to the City's Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Policy in 2018. The Base TIF incentive package, open to many small-medium commercial or industrial projects, continues to provide a five-year 50% rebate of the available incremental property taxes. However, the Expanded TIF incentive package, available to projects of significant size and generating substantial employment, was altered to provide five years of rebate for up to 100% of the available incremental property taxes generated by the project. Additionally, a new Targeted Area

TIF Incentive Package	Percentage of Available Increment	Length of Rebate
Base Package	50%	Five Years
Expanded Package	100%	Five Years
Targeted Area Package	75%	Up to Ten Years

TIF program was enacted with two target areas identified. The first area is comprised of the Johnston Town Center properties at the NE intersection of Merle

Hay Road and NW 62nd Avenue, the second area includes the Merle Hay Road Gateway Redevelopment Area which encompasses the properties along Merle Hay Road immediately north of Interstate 35/80. Qualified projects within these targeted areas can receive a TIF incentive package of up to 75% of the available project generated increment for up to 10 years. Additional information on the Johnston [TIF Policy](#) is available on the City's website.

## STORMWATER UTILITY HOMEOWNER GRANT PROGRAM

On July 1, 2016, the City of Johnston established a Stormwater Homeowner Grant Program funded by revenue from the City's stormwater utility. This program allows homeowners to incorporate stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs) on their property to aid in the improvement of water quality and decrease the water quantity entering our streams, ponds, and storm sewers. The program is intended to help cover the cost of materials and/or contractor labor to install such practices. The City provides up to a fifty percent match on BMPs constructed, with a maximum reimbursement amount of \$1,250. Rain barrels are being funded at a maximum of \$75.



The 2017-2018 fiscal year saw 12 projects completed. Completed projects included seven rain barrels, three erosion control projects, and two soil quality restoration projects. These projects were awarded \$3,924.90 in grant funds, resulting in investments over \$36,900 in stormwater best management practices.

Through the first six months of 2018-2019 fiscal year, eight applications have been approved, and the associated projects have been installed throughout the City. Completed projects include five rain barrels and three erosion control projects. These eight projects have been awarded \$3,571.62 in grant funds, resulting in investments over \$7,590 in stormwater best management practices. Information about the grant program can be found at [cityofjohnston.com/homeownergrants](http://cityofjohnston.com/homeownergrants).

## STORMWATER UTILITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

The Community Development Department managed several key stormwater improvement projects in 2018, including:

The Timberwood Drive Trail Stabilization project located west of Longmeadow Drive and south of Timberwood Drive. There were several locations where erosion was down cutting the existing pedestrian trail. The project included stabilization of this area and reconstruction of a portion of the trail impacted during construction.



Beaver Creek Bank Stabilization Adjacent to Augustine Subdivision project located along the northern edge of the Augustine subdivision on the west bank of Beaver Creek, where bank erosion was occurring. The height of the bank is over 20 feet and this area has seen active erosion since the flooding of 2008. This project involved the armament of an existing storm sewer outlet to correct erosion and the installation of a Longitudinal Peak Stone Tow Protection (LPSTP) with stone tie backs. This method is intended to stabilize the banks at the normal flow elevations and allows for the banks to rebuild themselves over time as the area behind the LPSTP will fill with silt deposited during high water events.



Green Meadows West Central Channel Stabilization Project involved streambank stabilization on a stream that flows generally in a northeasterly direction to Beaver Creek between Tiburon Place and Heather Bow within the Green Meadows West subdivision. This stream channel had experienced significant erosion over time threatening properties and the City's sanitary sewer trunk main which runs parallel to the stream. The project stabilized approximately 2,200 lineal feet of the drainage way utilizing toe protection and soil lifts at select locations, ten riffle dams for grade control and two stilling basins constructed at the outlets of two existing storm sewer mains.



## WATER QUALITY MONITORING PROGRAM

2018 represents the sixth year of collection and analysis of water samples from surface waters at selected locations in Johnston. Samples are taken three times a year in April, July and October from ten sites throughout the community to allow for an analysis of changes to water quality over time. These locations have been identified as key locations for drainage in/through Johnston, and many represent locations up or downstream from planned construction projects.



The purpose of this monitoring is to monitor water quality in key locations around the community and their changes over time. Additionally, this regular monitoring allows tracking of pre, during and post construction activities related to stormwater improvements being made throughout the community with funding the City's Stormwater Utility. All data collection and analysis is completed by the University of Iowa Hygienic Laboratory. To view the results of this water quality monitoring program, visit [cityofjohnston.com/waterquality](http://cityofjohnston.com/waterquality).

## ORDINANCE UPDATES

Two significant Zoning Ordinance updates were completed in 2018:

**Chapter 174 Floodplain Management:** To ensure all Johnston properties are able to purchase flood insurance for their properties, the City of Johnston participates in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). As part of this program, the City is required to maintain ordinance requirements limiting/controlling development within designated flood hazard areas which are determined by the FEMA FIRM maps. In 2018, FEMA provided notice they were moving forward with the adoption of amended FIRM maps effective February 1, 2019. To continue participating in the NFIP, the City is required to officially adopt these updated maps, make sure all of its ordinances are updated to current standards and amend the Zoning Map to reflect the updated FIRM boundaries. As a result of this effort, [Chapter 174, Floodplain Management](#) was adopted in late 2018 to update regulations and consolidate them into one location in the ordinance. Residents interested in learning more about the FEMA FIRM maps, or the NFIP should contact the Community Development Department.

**Chapter 173 Temporary Uses – Fireworks:** In May 2017, the Iowa Legislature passed Senate File 489 to legalize the use and sale of consumer fireworks in the State of Iowa. One of the most popular forms of fireworks sales has been through the use of temporary tents installed in commercial areas. As a result, amendments to Chapter 173 were approved in late 2018 to create a fireworks sales category that would allow for an administrative review/approval of the temporary use permit, regulating the maximum size, setbacks, allowed zoning districts and other considerations/condition in which the sales would be permitted.

## CONCLUSIONS AND TRENDS

As documented in this report, several trends have emerged, providing insight into what growth expectations we anticipate for 2019.

- Continued steady and consistent single family residential and townhome development as a result of new and pending developments.
- Interest in multi-family construction has begun to recede as recent projects continue to lease-up and multi-family zoned property in Johnston becomes scarce.
- The City in partnership with Hansen Companies will continue the aggressive planning and implementation of the first phases of the Johnston Town Center project, including City Hall with construction beginning in late 2019/early 2020.
- The City will continue implementation efforts to spur commercial redevelopment within the Merle Hay Road Gateway area.
- The City will continue to expand utility services to the newly annexed NW Saylorville Drive Annexation Area to prepare that area for future development.
- As Corteva continues toward their June 1st, 2019 spinoff from Dow-Dupont into its own separately traded company, employee realignments will continue. Overall, Cortevas' net employment within Johnston is not expected to substantially change.

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STAFF

The accomplishments highlighted in this report would not be possible without the dedicated work of the Community Development team.

Congratulations are in order this year to Clayton Ender, Planner, who earned the prestigious AICP Candidate designation during 2018.



Please don't hesitate to contact any member of our team:

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