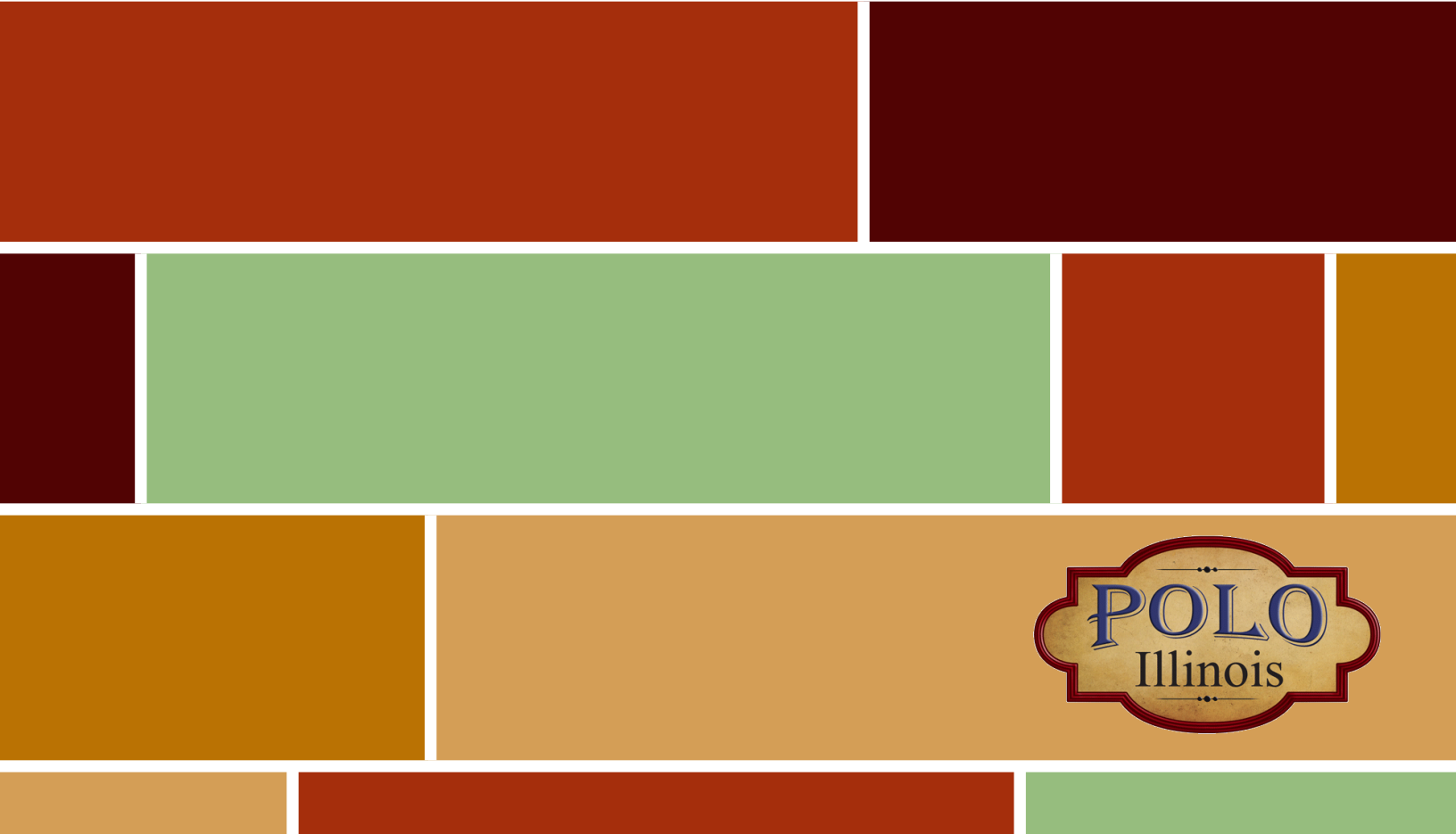




2014-2024 | CITY OF POLO, OGLE COUNTY, IL

Comprehensive Plan Update



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

About

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About*



Historical photo of Polo's central business district

Polo's Beginnings

Founded in 1857 by Zenas Aplington, Polo was named after the Venetian diplomat, merchant, and explorer, Marco Polo.

Historically, there were at least two major drivers that placed Polo on the map and helped contribute to its growth:

*1) Lead mining in Galena, Illinois: Numerous passers-through decided to stay in the Polo/Ogle County region before reaching Galena; others returned to the Polo/Ogle County region after working in Galena's lead mines.

*2) Railroad expansion through Polo: North-south tracks in the eastern

portion of the city (which, as of today, are no more) helped drive the local economy and support growth in the community.

Industries of Yesteryear

Through the decades, Polo has been home to a number and variety of industries. Historical businesses or enterprises have included:

- *Cooling and heating equipment production
- *Dress making
- *Flour milling
- *Metal appliance manufacturing
- *Prefabricated housing construction
- *Quicklime production
- *Sash, door, and blind fabrication
- *Other more or less successful manufacturing operations

Some of the above businesses remain in operation- in one form or another- even today.

**This information is compiled from the publication "1857-1957: Voice of the Prairie, A Brief History of Polo, Illinois."*

INTRODUCTION

Vision Statement

5

Vision Statement

The City of Polo, known for its rich history, agricultural heritage, and spectacular attractions, offers modern educational, entrepreneurial, and recreational opportunities for its citizens, businesses, and visitors. Residents enjoy well-kept community facilities, professional public safety, healthcare and human services, and engaging cultural programming. The community provides a safe, welcoming environment for young families and retirees, as well as meaningful fraternal and volunteer activities. Local government places special emphasis on:

Economic Development

Including incentives to retain and attract commerce and industry, marketing and tourism outreach, and investments to improve municipal infrastructure.



Henry School



White Pines State Park

Health, Safety, & Welfare

Including compassionate, well-equipped, and well-trained police, fire, emergency medical (EMS), and healthcare services.

Quality of Life

Including efforts to protect air and water quality, preserve historic landmarks and Midwestern rural character, support high-quality K-12 education, encourage responsible land use, and maintain local parks and green spaces. Local community facilities and infrastructure – including sidewalks and trails – are accessible and available to all individuals and groups.

INTRODUCTION

Goals

6

1. Communication

Promptly communicate municipal and community news and updates, using a mix of outreach tools capable of reaching multiple generations.

Elements: Communication

2. Housing

Support maintenance of existing and encourage, where appropriate, new residential and commercial housing development, especially housing that is accessible, affordable, and well-maintained.

Elements: Housing, Land Use

3. Local Shopping

Encourage business retention, expansion, and attraction that provides access to goods, services, and jobs near and within the city.

Elements: Economic Development

4. Industrial & Commercial Development

Carefully and deliberately incentivize new and existing commerce and industry.

Elements: Economic Development, Transportation

5. Infrastructure

Improve existing water, sewer, transportation, and telecommunications networks to better serve residents and businesses, while identifying and prioritizing short, medium, and long-term infrastructure needs.

Elements: Economic Development, Telecommunications Infrastructure, Transportation

6. Community Identity & Marketing

Establish a community-wide marketing plan that highlights local amenities, existing businesses, development opportunities, and infrastructure availability.

Elements: Communication

7. Corridor Development

Support existing economic, transportation, and tourism corridors, including those connecting White Pines State Park, multi-use trails, and business/industrial parks.

Elements: Economic Development, Land Use, Natural Resources

8. Historic Preservation

Preserve historic structures and districts, including those on the National Register of Historic Places, and other noteworthy or unique sites.

Elements: Community Facilities, Economic Development

9. Special Events, Festivals, & Tourism Activities

Promote existing activities and amenities, consider fresh programming, recruit new leaders and organizers, and expand participation opportunities in arts, culture, sports, recreation, theatre, and civic festivals.

Elements: Communication

10. Transportation & Transit Systems

Develop and maintain a functional, efficient, and safe surface transportation system; establish close links with and improve access to county transit.

Elements: Transportation

12. Public Safety

Maintain superior police, fire, and EMS services, while employing proactive approaches to address community challenges and man-made/natural disasters.

Elements: Community Facilities

13. Natural Resources & Rural Character

Address supply and demand issues and ensure that land uses are consistent with modern sustainability practices, while also supporting development, as designated in the city's future land use plan.

Elements: Land Use, Natural Resources

14. Economic Development

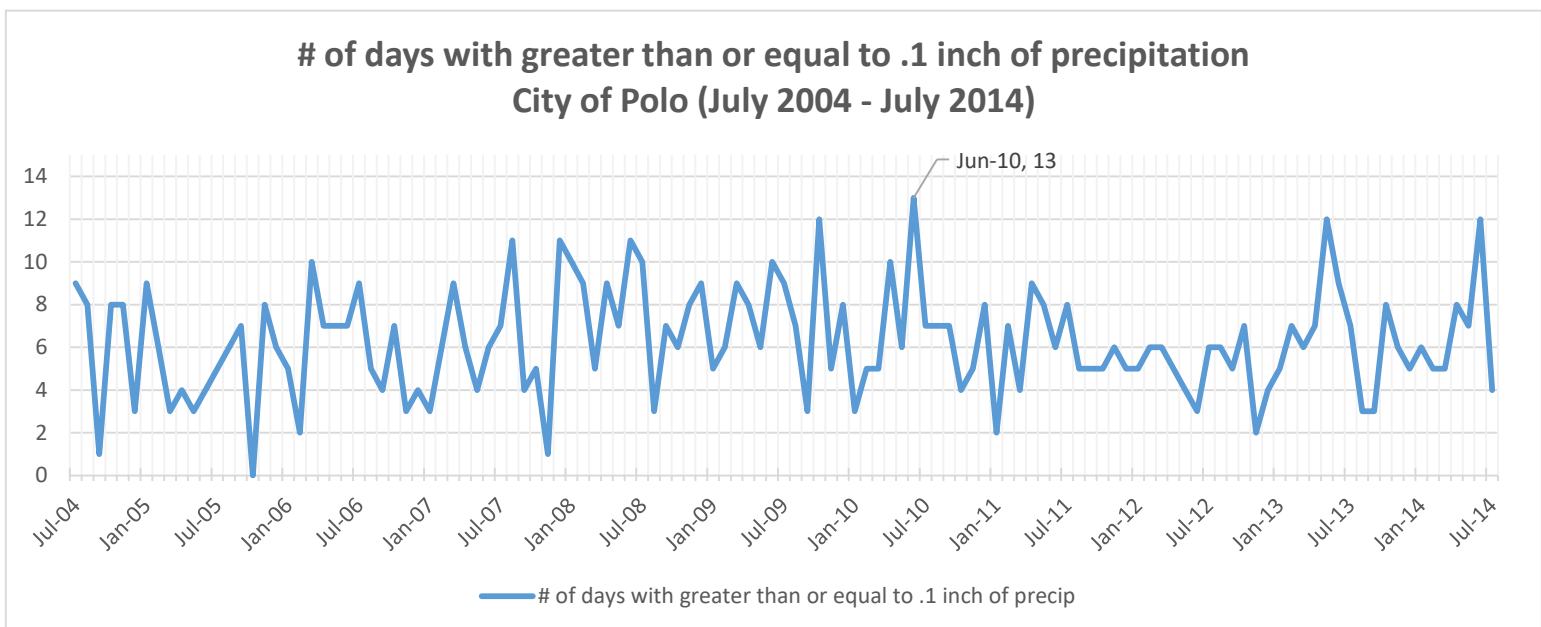
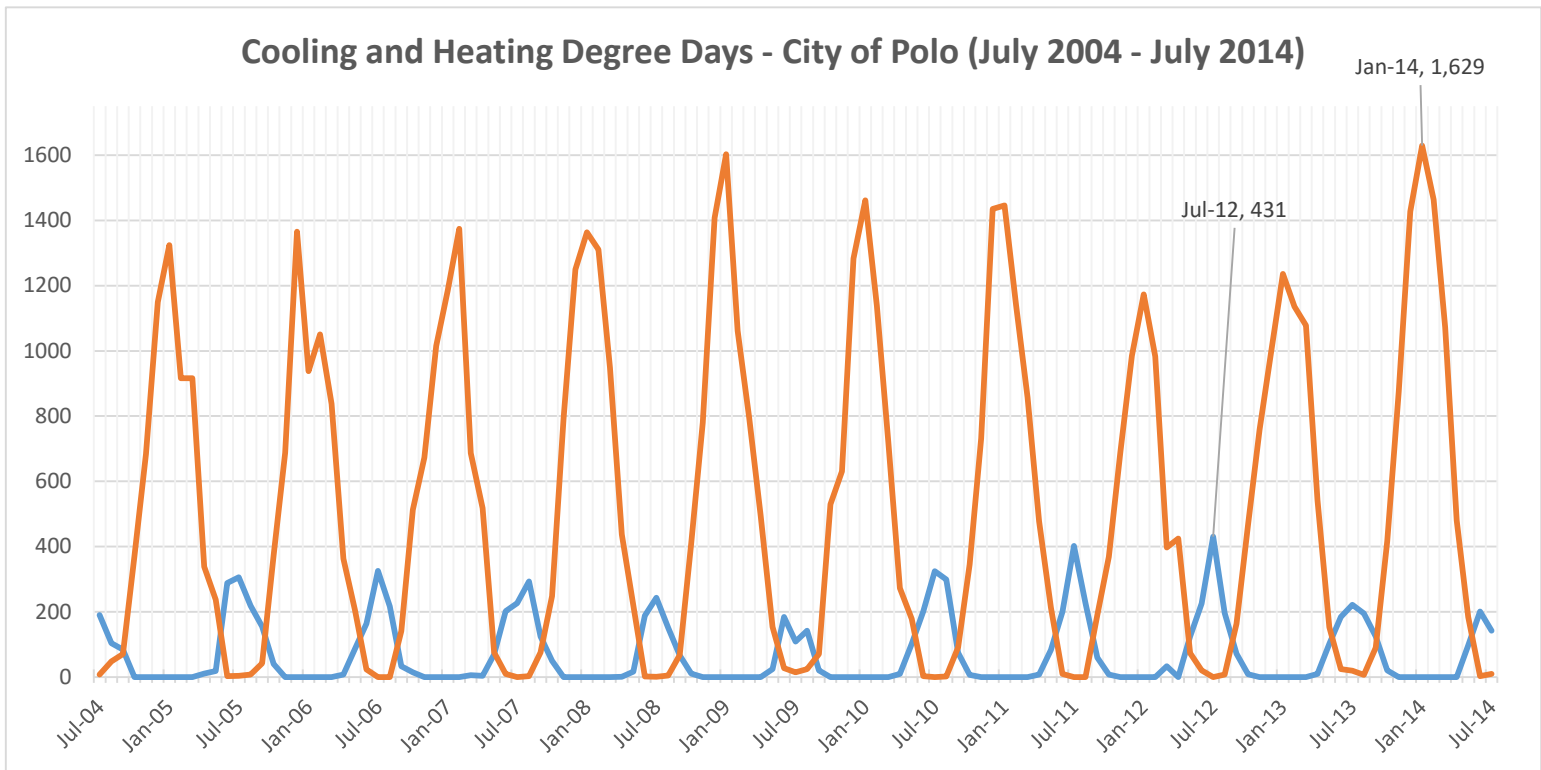
Encourage re-investment in existing businesses and attract investments in commercial, manufacturing, transportation, and tourism industries.

Elements: Economic Development

1. Issues & Opportunities

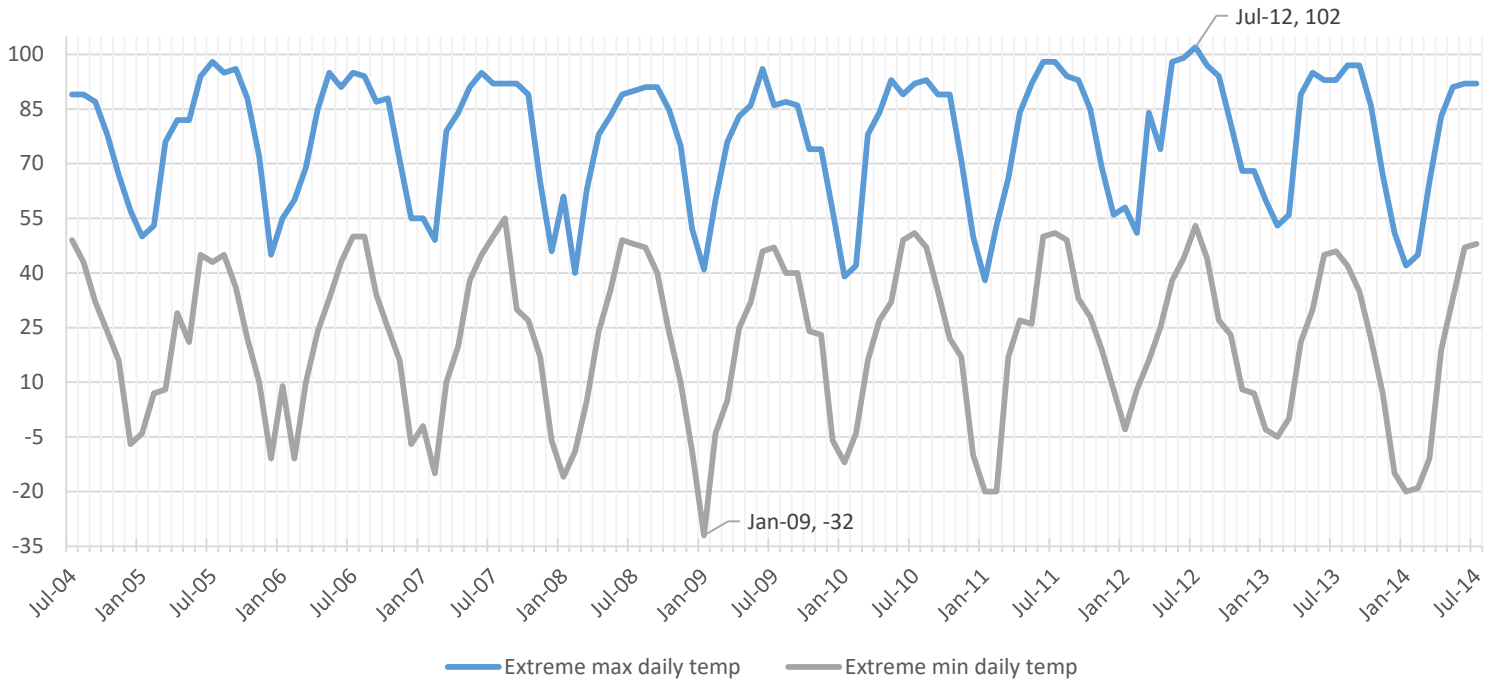
Climate & Weather

The following measures are included: cooling and heating degree days, number of days with greater than or equal to .1 inch of precipitation, extreme temps, monthly precipitation, and 30-year normals.

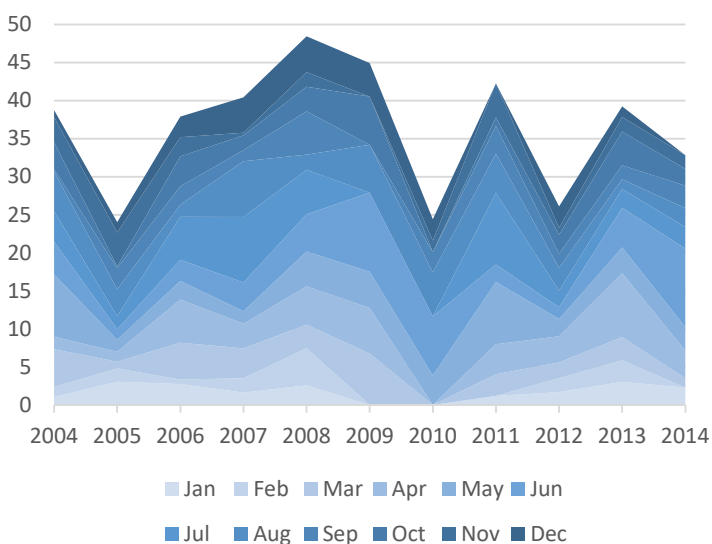


Additional datasets and further details are available through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Climate Data Online website, www.ncdc.noaa.gov/cdo-web and the National Weather Service Regional Office Central Region Headquarters website, www.crh.noaa.gov.

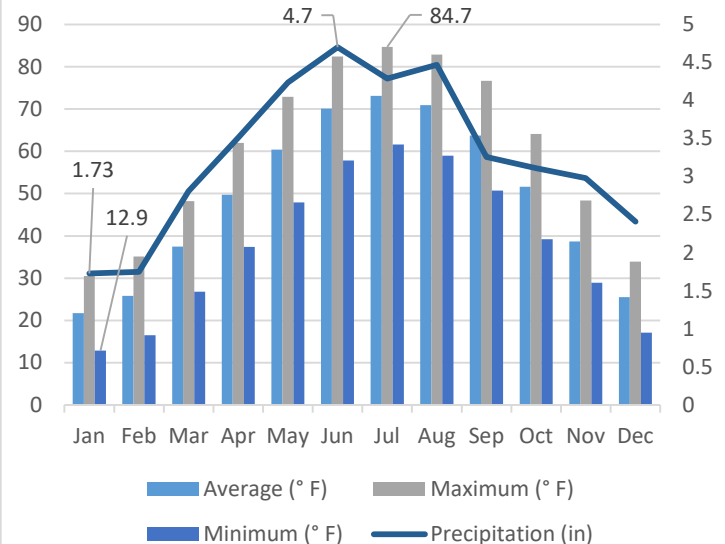
Extreme Temperatures - City of Polo (July 2004 - July 2014)



Monthly Precipitation (inches)



30-Year Normals (1981-2010)



1. Issues & Opportunities, cont'd.

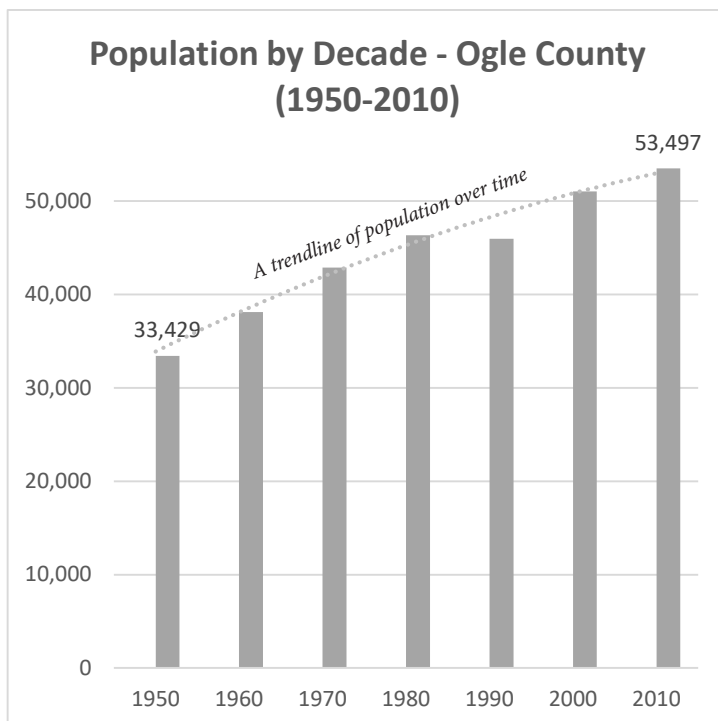
Demographics, Housing, & Households

| Population by Decade | 1950 | 1960 | 1970 | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 | 2010 |
|----------------------|-----------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Polo, City of | 2,242 | 2,551 | 2,542 | 2,643 | 2,514 | 2,477 | 2,355 |
| Ogle County | 33,429 | 38,106 | 42,867 | 46,338 | 45,957 | 51,032 | 53,497 |
| Illinois | 8,712,176 | 10,081,158 | 11,110,285 | 11,427,409 | 11,430,602 | 12,419,293 | 12,830,632 |

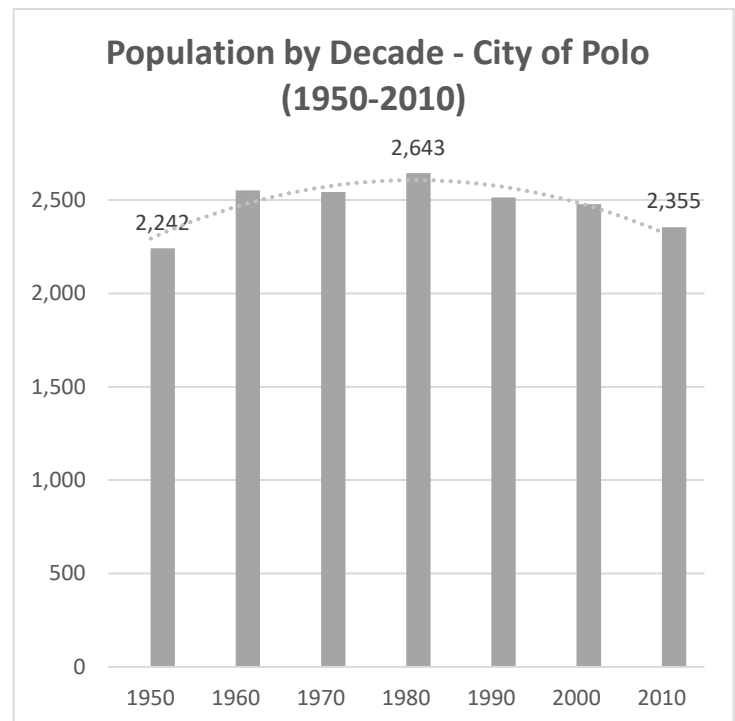
Source: Historic Decennial Censuses

With few exceptions, Ogle County's total population has steadily increased, from 33,429 people in 1950 to 53,497 people in 2010. Since 1950, Polo's population has remained relatively stable, although it has since decreased continually from its peak of 2,643 people in 1980 to its present day population of 2,355.

Given current trends, local officials should account for population decline and stagnation when implementing the community's comprehensive plan and considering development opportunities.



Source: Historic Decennial Censuses



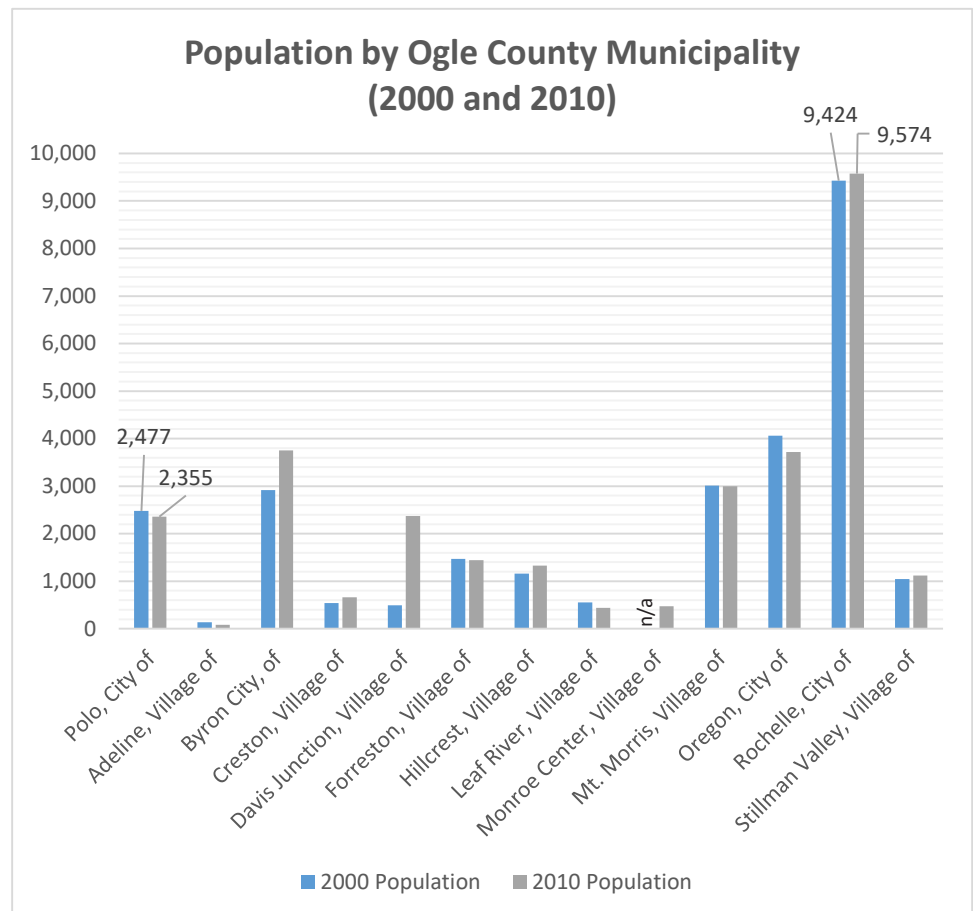
Source: Historic Decennial Censuses

| Population and Median Age by Ogle County Municipality | <i>2000 Population</i> | <i>2010 Population</i> | <i>Median Age</i> |
|--|------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| Polo, City of | 2,477 | 2,355 | 41.4 |
| Adeline, Village of | 139 | 85 | 44.3 |
| Byron City, of | 2,917 | 3,753 | 35.3 |
| Creston, Village of | 543 | 662 | 33.0 |
| Davis Junction, Village of | 491 | 2,373 | 31.1 |
| Forreston, Village of | 1,469 | 1,446 | 39.3 |
| Hillcrest, Village of | 1,158 | 1,326 | 34.4 |
| Leaf River, Village of | 555 | 443 | 40.8 |
| Monroe Center, Village of | n/a | 471 | 36.6 |
| Mt. Morris, Village of | 3,013 | 2,998 | 43.8 |
| Oregon, City of | 4,060 | 3,721 | 43.5 |
| Rochelle, City of | 9,424 | 9,574 | 36.0 |
| Stillman Valley, Village of | 1,048 | 1,120 | 35.6 |

Source: Historic Decennial Censuses

Unlike Polo, Davis Junction experienced considerable population growth, in part because of the community's easy access to I-39 and close proximity to job centers in and/or near the City of Rockford (Boone/Winnebago counties) and the City of Rochelle (Ogle County).

When compared, Polo is consistent with other western communities in Ogle County - with places such as Leaf River and Oregon in the west having experienced population decline and places such as Forreston and Mt. Morris in the east maintaining relative stability.



Source: Historic Decennial Censuses

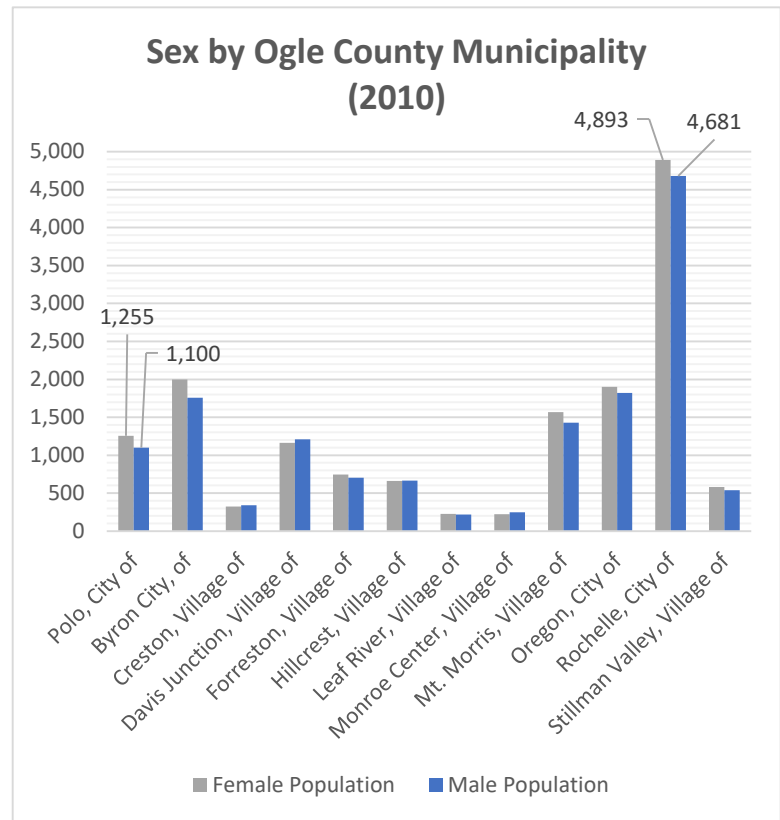
1. Issues & Opportunities, cont'd.

Demographics, Housing, & Households

| Sex by Ogle County Municipality | Female Population | Male Population |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Polo, City of | 1,255 | 1,100 |
| Byron City, of | 1,997 | 1,756 |
| Creston, Village of | 323 | 339 |
| Davis Junction, Village of | 1,162 | 1,211 |
| Forreston, Village of | 744 | 702 |
| Hillcrest, Village of | 659 | 667 |
| Leaf River, Village of | 227 | 216 |
| Monroe Center, Village of | 224 | 247 |
| Mt. Morris, Village of | 1,569 | 1,429 |
| Oregon, City of | 1,899 | 1,822 |
| Rochelle, City of | 4,893 | 4,681 |
| Stillman Valley, Village of | 581 | 539 |

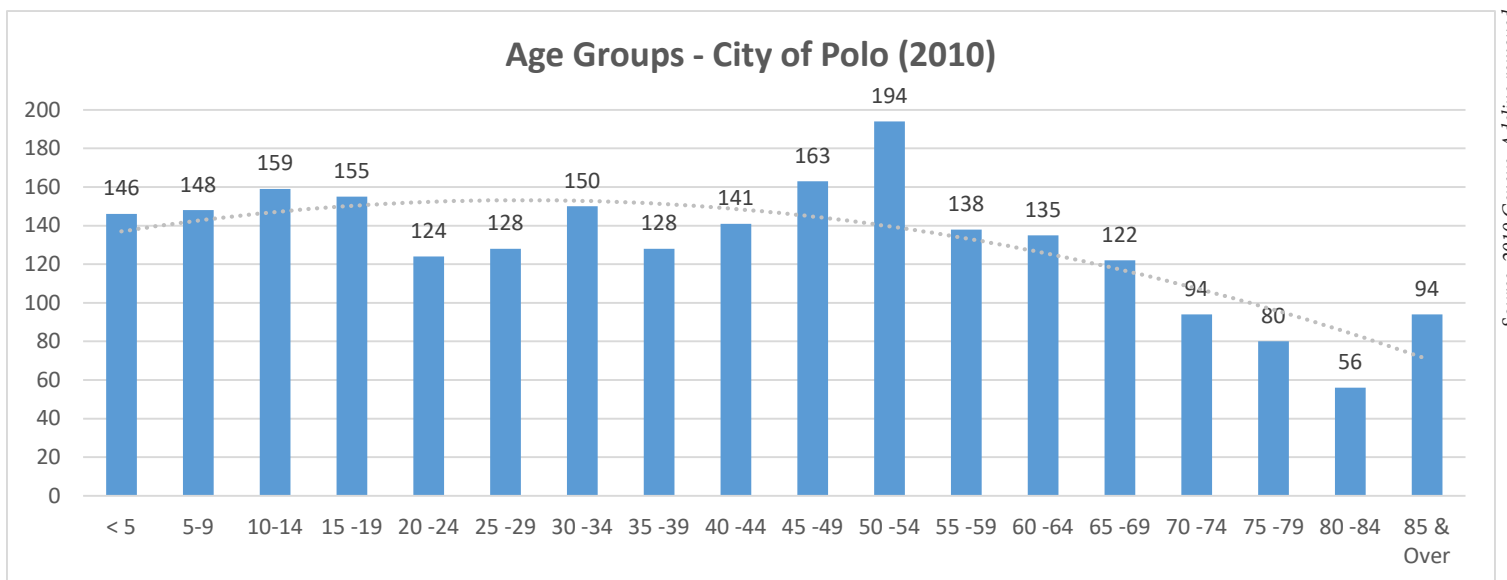
Source: 2010 Census, Adeline removed

As of the 2010 Census, more females than males lived in Polo. This is consistent with most communities in Ogle County, excepting for the villages of Creston, Davis Junction, and Hillcrest.



Source: 2010 Census, Adeline removed

Each age group represents an interval of five years. The 50-54 age group included 194 people, the largest of the 18 age groups. The number of people in each age group following the 50-54 interval declined steadily (with an uptick in occurring in the 85 years and over interval).



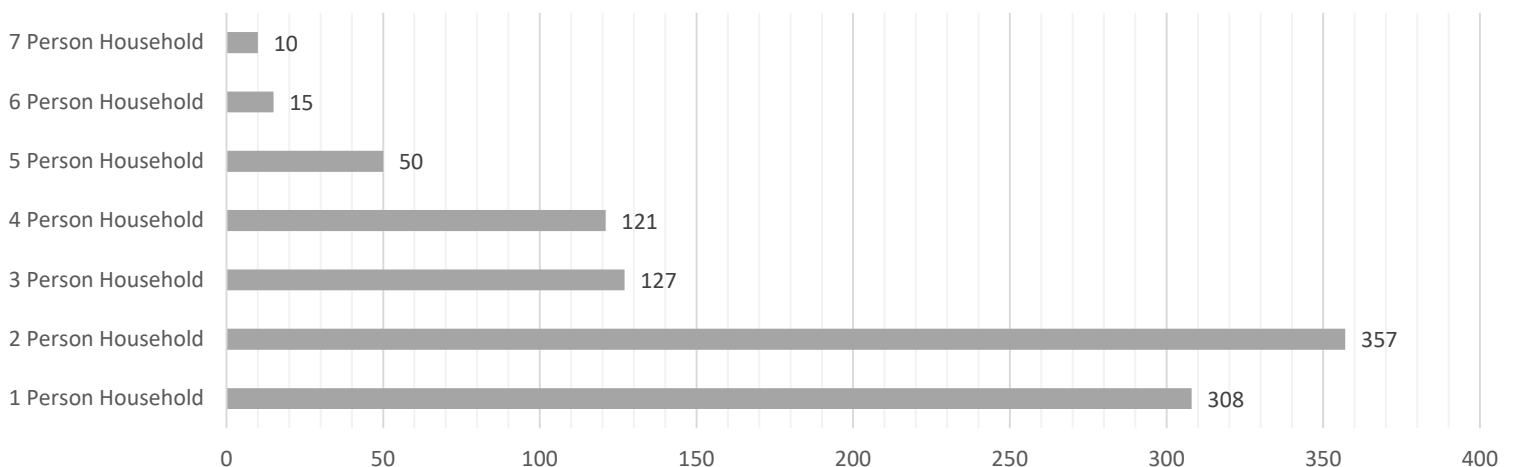
Source: 2010 Census, Adeline removed

| Housing and Households - Ogle County | Housing Units | Households | Household Size | | | | | | |
|---|------------------|------------|----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | | | 1 Person | 2 Person | 3 Person | 4 Person | 5 Person | 6 Person | 7 Person |
| Polo, City of | 1,091 | 988 | 308 | 357 | 127 | 121 | 50 | 15 | 10 |
| Byron, City of | 1,508 | 1,433 | 405 | 425 | 240 | 213 | 90 | 42 | 18 |
| Creston, Village of | 267 | 243 | 49 | 82 | 52 | 30 | 17 | 9 | 4 |
| Davis Junction, Village of | 787 | 744 | 101 | 185 | 144 | 167 | 96 | 38 | 13 |
| Forreston, Village of | 633 | 578 | 156 | 200 | 88 | 69 | 46 | 15 | 4 |
| Hillcrest, Village of | 422 | 411 | 56 | 128 | 64 | 68 | 53 | 23 | 19 |
| Leaf River, Village of | 219 | 193 | 69 | 60 | 22 | 30 | 9 | 2 | 1 |
| Monroe Center, Village of | 185 | 175 | 31 | 68 | 27 | 31 | 14 | 1 | 3 |
| Mt. Morris, Village of | 1,410 | 1,295 | 475 | 428 | 161 | 139 | 61 | 23 | 8 |
| Oregon, City of | 1,796 | 1,630 | 591 | 564 | 221 | 140 | 88 | 16 | 10 |
| Rochelle, City of | 4,143 | 3,834 | 1,192 | 1,200 | 572 | 471 | 228 | 105 | 66 |
| Stillman Valley, Village of | 447 | 430 | 94 | 141 | 85 | 74 | 26 | 7 | 3 |

Source: 2010 Census, Adeline removed

There were 1,091 housing units (defined as a house, apartment, mobile home, group of homes, or an occupied single room as separate living quarters) in Polo as of the 2010 Census. Two-person households in Polo accounted for approximately 36% of all households, followed by 1-person households at 31% of all households (for a total of 67% combined). Households are defined as all the persons who occupy a housing unit as their usual place of residence.

Household Size - City of Polo (2010)



Source: 2010 Census, Adeline removed

1. Issues & Opportunities, cont'd.

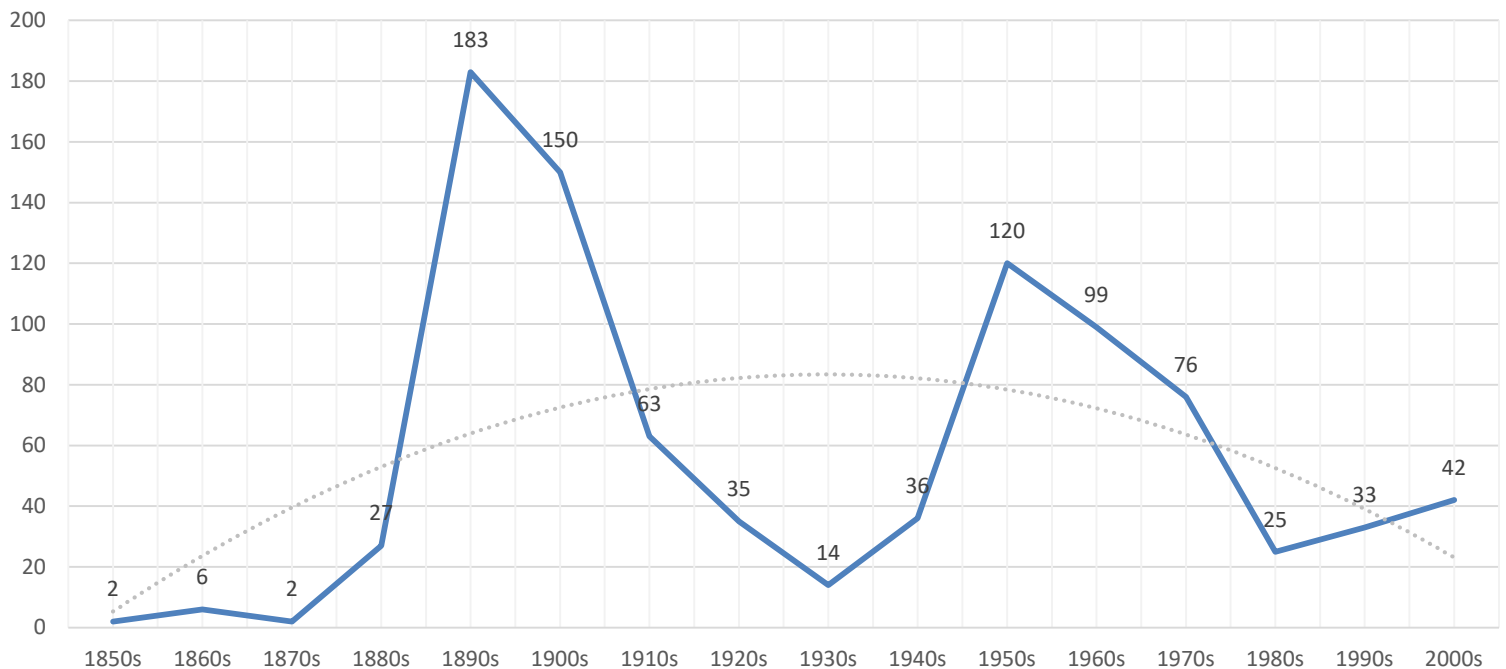
Demographics, Housing, & Households

According to 1855- 2009 Buffalo Township Assessor data (collected in 2014), most housing structures in Polo today were constructed before the 1960s. Significant periods of construction occurred in the 1890s, 1900s, and 1950s, with notable lulls in the 1930s and 1980s. Please note: it is likely that additional homes existed in earlier decades but are no longer present in 2014 (whether due to demolition, conversion, etc.).

| Number of Housing Structures by Year Built - City of Polo | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1850s | 1860s | 1870s | 1880s | 1890s | >>> | | | | | |
| 2 | 6 | 2 | 27 | 183 | | | | | | |
| 1900s | 1910s | 1920s | 1930s | 1940s | 1950s | 1960s | 1970s | 1980s | 1990s | 2000s |
| 150 | 63 | 35 | 14 | 36 | 120 | 99 | 76 | 25 | 33 | 42 |

Source: Buffalo Township Assessor, collected in 2014

Number of Housing Structures by Year Built - City of Polo



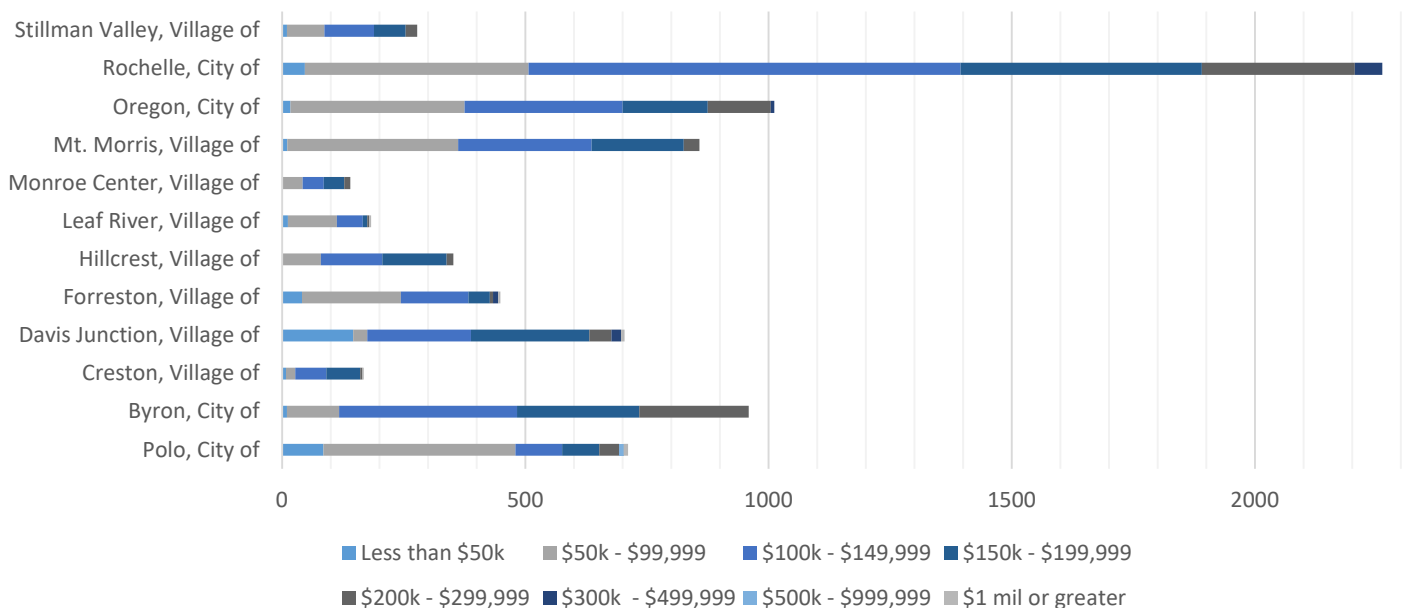
Source: Buffalo Township Assessor, collected in 2014

The median home value in Polo is estimated at \$89,000, which is the lowest in Ogle County (excepting for Leaf River). Most housing values in the community range from between \$50,000 to \$99,999; a handful exceeded \$500,000.

| Housing Age and Values - Ogle County | Median Year Built | Median Value | Values | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|-------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
| | | | Less than \$50k | \$50k - \$99,x | \$100k - \$149,x | \$150k - \$199,x | \$200k - \$299,x | \$300k - \$499,x | \$500k - \$999,x | \$1 mil or greater |
| Polo, City of | 1939* | \$89,000 | 85 | 395 | 96 | 76 | 41 | 0 | 9 | 9 |
| Byron, City of | 1953 | \$149,600 | 10 | 107 | 366 | 251 | 225 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Creston, Village of | 2000 | \$145,100 | 8 | 19 | 64 | 70 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| Davis Junction, Village of | 1953 | \$142,900 | 146 | 29 | 213 | 244 | 45 | 20 | 0 | 7 |
| Forreston, Village of | 1977 | \$97,400 | 41 | 203 | 139 | 44 | 7 | 10 | 0 | 5 |
| Hillcrest, Village of | 1939* | \$138,300 | 0 | 80 | 126 | 132 | 14 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Leaf River, Village of | 1954 | \$86,700 | 12 | 101 | 53 | 9 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| Monroe Center, Village of | 1951 | \$126,500 | 1 | 41 | 44 | 42 | 12 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Mt. Morris, Village of | 1953 | \$115,500 | 11 | 351 | 274 | 190 | 32 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Oregon, City of | 1941 | \$115,400 | 17 | 358 | 325 | 175 | 130 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| Rochelle, City of | 1967 | \$132,900 | 47 | 460 | 888 | 496 | 314 | 57 | 0 | 0 |
| Stillman Valley, Village of | 1966 | \$127,300 | 10 | 77 | 102 | 65 | 24 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Source: ACS 2013, Adeline removed

Housing Values by Ogle County Municipality (ACS 2013)



Source: ACS 2013, Adeline removed

1. Issues & Opportunities, cont'd.

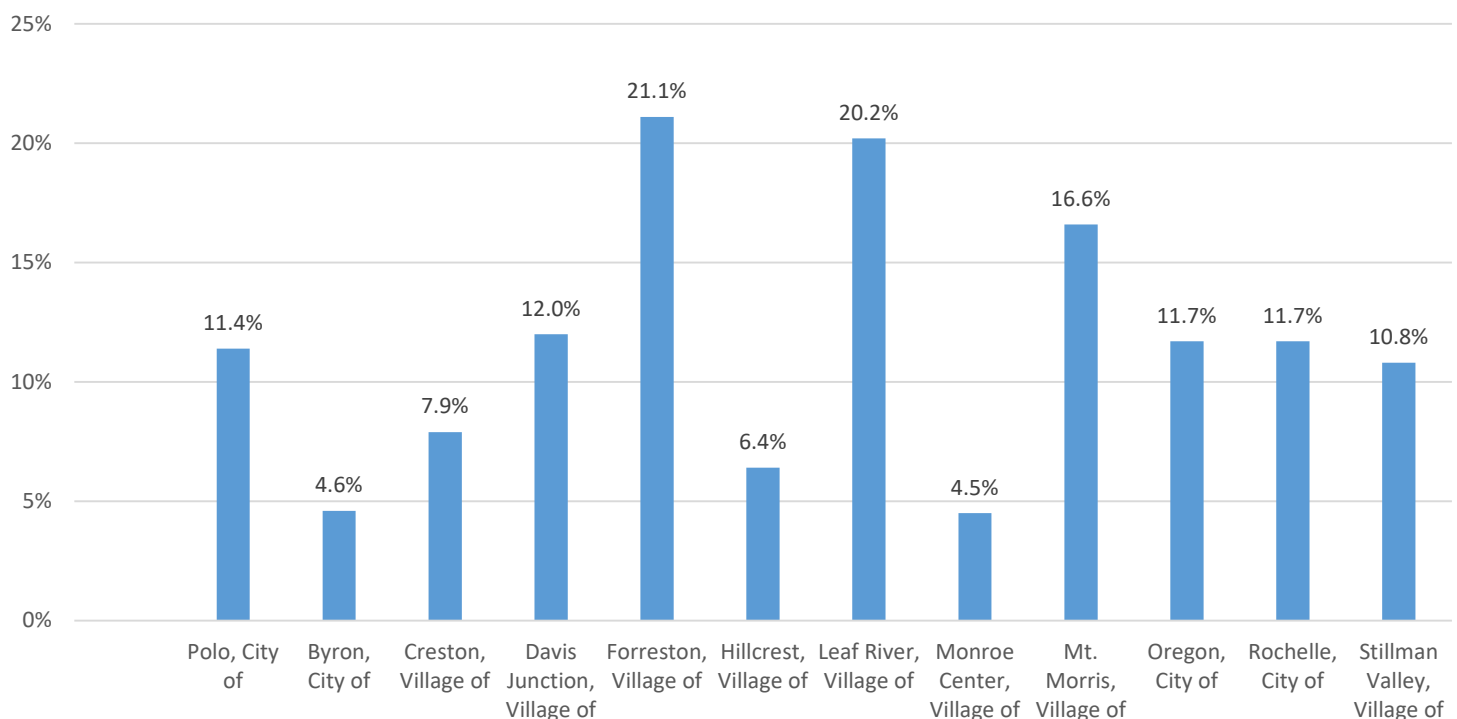
Employment, Income, & Travel

Polo's estimated unemployment rate of 11.4% is high, although some communities in Ogle County have higher rates (21.1% in Forreston and 20.2% in Leaf River).

| Employment, Income, Poverty, and Travel - Ogle County | Unemployment Rate | Median Household Income | Per Capita Income | Families Below Poverty Level Past 12 Months | Mean Travel Time to Work |
|---|-------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|---|--------------------------|
| Polo, City of | 11.4% | \$47,361 | \$25,881 | 7.2% | 24.1 minutes |
| Byron, City of | 4.6% | \$54,148 | \$27,178 | 5.6% | 24 minutes |
| Creston, Village of | 7.9% | \$50,250 | \$22,291 | 6.0% | 22.3 minutes |
| Davis Junction, Village of | 12.0% | \$66,667 | \$21,191 | 4.0% | 34 minutes |
| Forreston, Village of | 21.1% | \$40,809 | \$19,774 | 12.0% | 24 minutes |
| Hillcrest, Village of | 6.4% | \$63,958 | \$23,979 | 7.6% | 19.2 minutes |
| Leaf River, Village of | 20.2% | \$34,375 | \$17,676 | 16.0% | 23.3 minutes |
| Monroe Center, Village of | 4.5% | \$68,571 | \$24,886 | 0.0% | 29.8 minutes |
| Mt. Morris, Village of | 16.6% | \$40,145 | \$23,241 | 16.5% | 20.2 minutes |
| Oregon, City of | 11.7% | \$45,491 | \$24,905 | 9.8% | 25 minutes |
| Rochelle, City of | 11.7% | \$41,535 | \$21,169 | 16.4% | 19.2 minutes |
| Stillman Valley, Village of | 10.8% | \$59,750 | \$26,828 | 5.0% | 23 minutes |

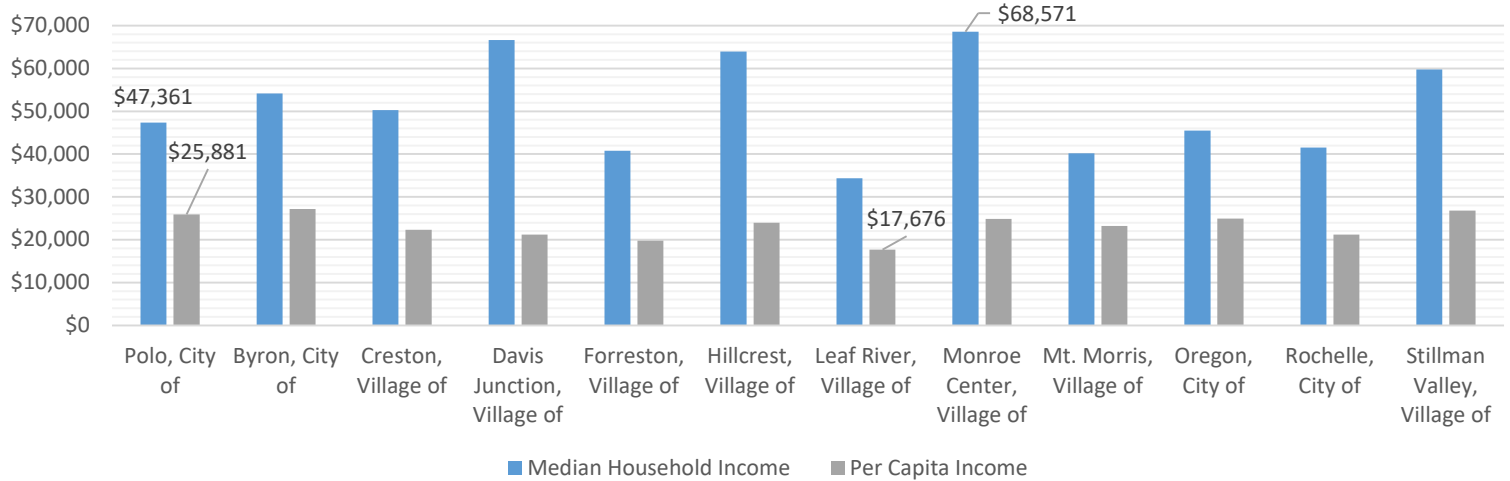
Source: ACS 2013, Adeline removed

Unemployment Rate by Ogle County Municipality (ACS 2013)



Source: ACS 2013, Adeline removed

Median Household and Per Capita Income by Ogle County Municipality (ACS 2013)

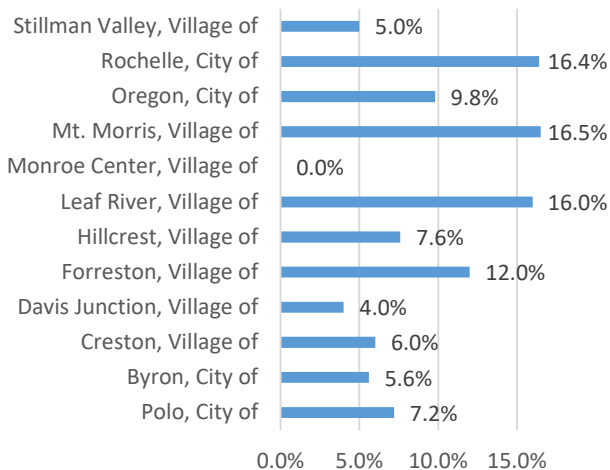


Source: ACS 2013, Adeline removed

At \$47,361, the estimated median household income for Polo households places the city roughly in the middle of the pack when compared with other Ogle County communities; the per capita (person) income estimate for Polo is \$25,881- placing it near the top.

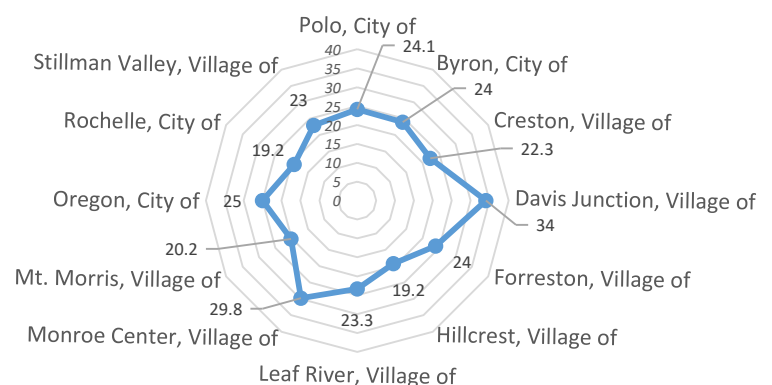
Polo's poverty estimate of 7.2% is comparatively low. Travel time estimates for residents are similar to those experienced by residents in other Ogle County communities. Polo's is 24.1 minutes.

Families Below Poverty Level Past 12 Months (ACS 2013)



Source: ACS 2013, Adeline removed

Mean Travel Time to Work in Miles (ACS 2013)



Source: ACS 2013, Adeline removed

1. Issues & Opportunities, cont'd.

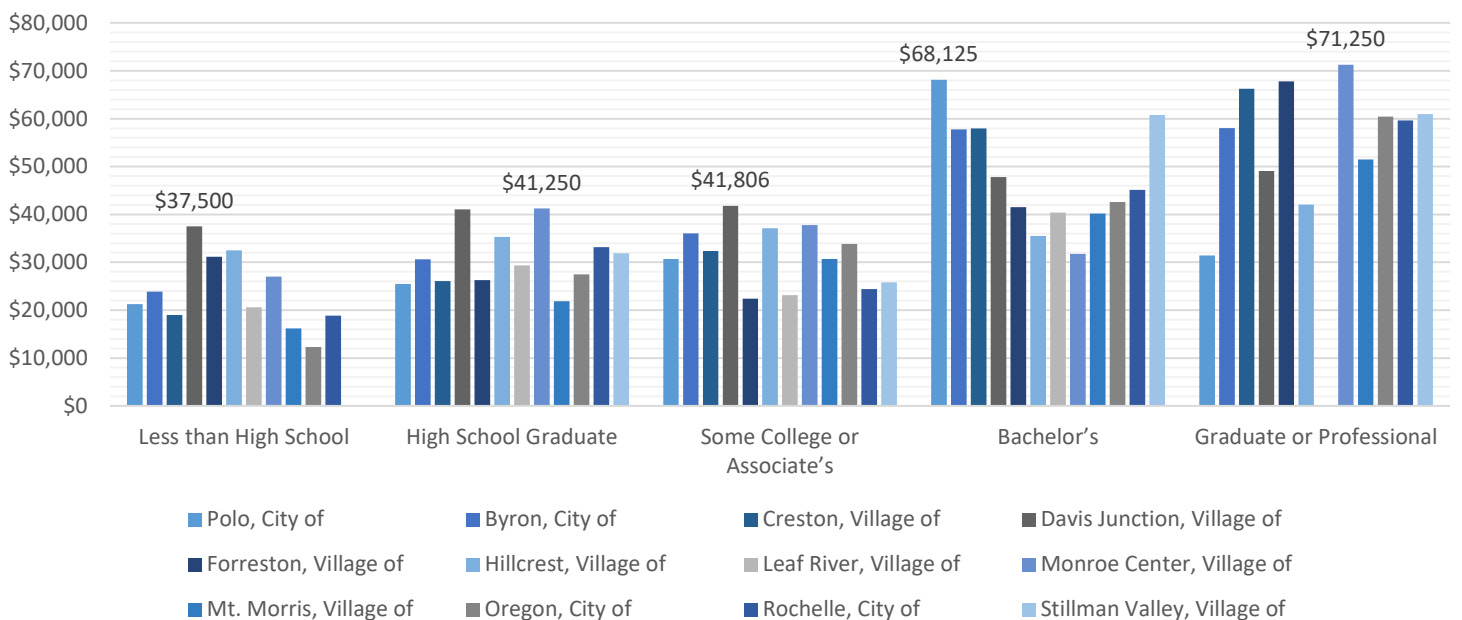
Employment, Income, & Travel

| Employment by Sector - City of Polo | | |
|--|--|---|
| Civilian employed population 16 years and over 995 | Management, business, and financial occupations 115 | Computer, engineering, and science occupations 37 |
| Education, legal, community service, arts, and media occupations 45 | Healthcare practitioner and technical occupations 42 | Healthcare support occupations 46 |
| Protective service occupations 40 | Food preparation and serving related occupations 28 | Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance occupations 74 |
| Personal care and service occupations 42 | Sales and related occupations 115 | Office and administrative support occupations 141 |
| Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations 7 | Construction and extraction occupations 64 | Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations 53 |
| Production occupations 56 | Transportation occupations 61 | Material moving occupations 29 |

Source: ACS 2013, Adeline removed

2013 ACS estimates place "Office and Administrative Support" as the top employment sector for Polo residents. Those with a Bachelor's degree are estimated to earn more than their counterparts in neighboring Ogle County communities. Those with less than a Bachelor's are estimated to have far lower earnings, with median incomes ranging between approximately \$20,000 and \$30,000 per year.

Median Earnings by Ogle County Municipality (ACS 2013)



Source: ACS 2013, Adeline removed

Business & Workforce - Top Employers

Employers are listed in alphabetical order. Most businesses appearing have at least 5 employees; some were reported by North Central Illinois Works (NCI Works) as of winter 2014-2015. Some businesses may not appear on this list; reasons include employers being headquartered elsewhere, being counted towards another community's workforce total, incomplete and/or old data, etc.

- Bergy's Automotive
- Birkey's Farm Store
- Bocker Grain
- Buffalo Township
- Burkardt Enterprises
- Casey's
- Cedar Forest Products Company
- CGH
- Charley's Snyder Pharmacy
- Hardware
- City of Polo
- Corporation
- Dolgencorp
- Edgewood Golf Course
- Express Lane Gas & Food Mart
- First State Bank of Shannon-Polo-Lake Carroll
- Fulrath Construction
- Insurance Management Corp
- Knie Appliance & TV
- KSB
- Legacy Prints
- Mason Family Restaurant
- National Bus Trader
- New View Healing Ministries
- Pinecricer Café
- PNC
- Polo Animal Hospital
- Polo Cooperative Association
- Polo CUSD #222
- Polo Economic Development
- Polo Historical Society
- Polo Public Library
- Polo Rehabilitation & Health Care Center
- Polo Sub Stop
- Polo Volunteer Fire Department
- Rock River Christian Camp
- Rose Second Hand
- Singley Construction
- Steve Sorenson
- Subway
- The Dogwood Inn
- United States Postal Service
- Xena International
- York International Corporation

ELEMENTS

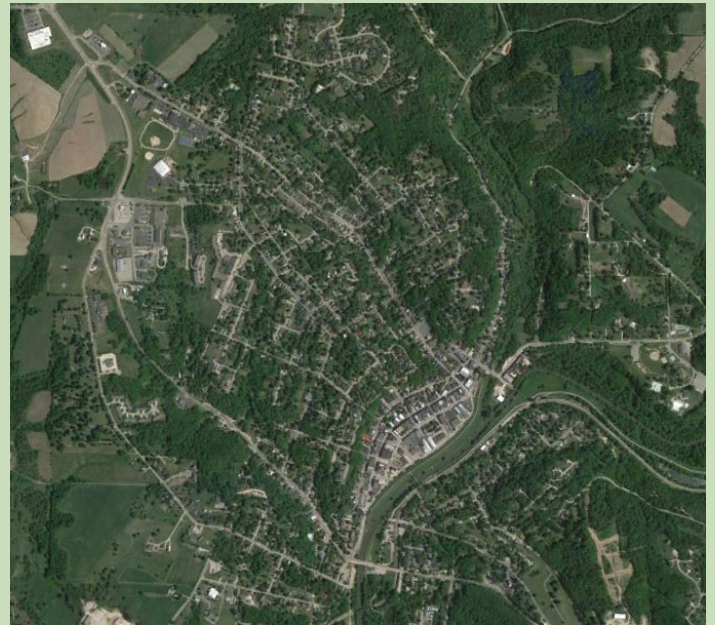
20

1. Issues & Opportunities, cont'd.

Comparable Municipalities



Polo, IL



Galena, IL

Comparable Municipalities

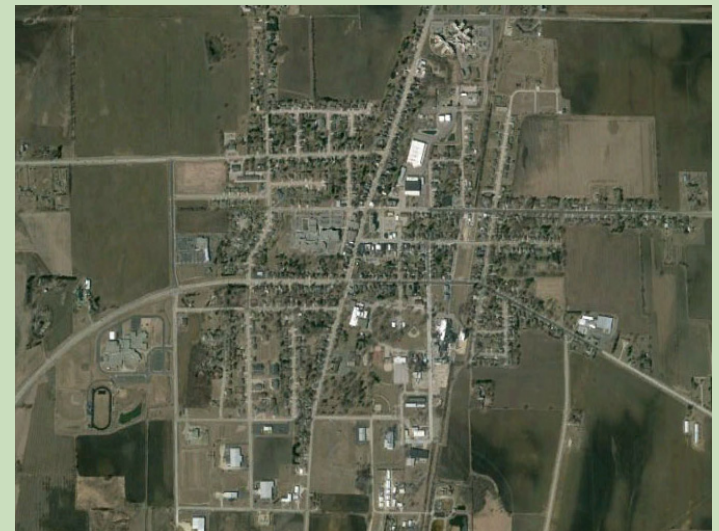
| Municipality | Population (DEC 10 DP DPDP1) | Median Age (DEC 10 DP DPDP1) | Housing Units (ACS 13 5YR DP05) | Median Household Income (ACS 13 5YR S1901) | Median List Price (Zillow - 10/2014) | Mean Travel Time (ACS 13 5YR S0801) | % High School Graduates or Greater (ACS 13 5YR S1501) | % Individuals Below Poverty Level (ACS 13 5YR S1701) |
|----------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|--|---|--|--|--|
| Polo, City of | 2,355 | 41.4 | 1,091 | \$49,519 | \$92,500 | 24.1 minutes | 90.70% | 11.40% |
| Eagle Grove, IA | 3,583 | 41 | 1,649 | \$44,081 | n/a | 16.1 minutes | 79.50% | 12.20% |
| Madrid, IA | 2,543 | 40.2 | 1,138 | \$49,500 | \$192,500 | 24.2 minutes | 89.50% | 8.10% |
| Juneau, WI | 2,814 | 38 | 924 | \$43,313 | \$149,900 | 20.5 minutes | 85.80% | 14.80% |
| New Glarus, WI | 2,172 | 40.5 | 948 | \$56,800 | \$154,900 | 28.9 minutes | 90.70% | 6.50% |
| Galena, IL | 3,429 | 48.1 | 1,853 | \$47,009 | \$195,000 | 14.3 minutes | 89.40% | 12.90% |

Comparable Municipalities

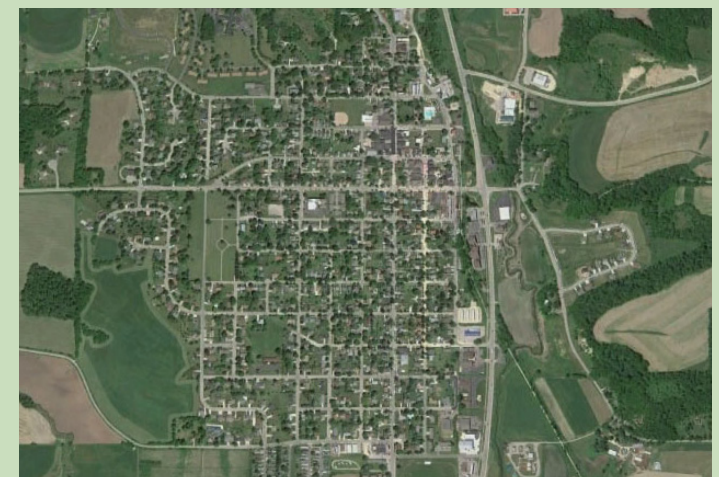
| Municipality | Original Incorp | Size | Population Density |
|----------------------|-----------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| Polo, City of | 1857 | 1.36 sq mi | 1731.62 ppl/sq mi |
| Eagle Grove, IA | 1882 | 4.04 sq mi | 886.88 ppl/sq mi |
| Madrid, IA | 1883 | 1.19 sq mi | 2136.9 ppl/sq mi |
| Juneau, WI | 1865 | 1.68 sq mi | 1675 ppl/sq mi |
| New Glarus, WI | 1901 | 1.78 sq mi | 1220.22 ppl/sq mi |
| Galena, IL | 1835 | 4.35 sq mi | 788.28 ppl/sq mi |



Madrid, IA



Juneau, WI



New Glarus, WI



Eagle Grove, IA

1. Issues & Opportunities, cont'd.

Responses for the SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) Analysis were collected during a community visioning session that included members of the Planning for Polo Steering Committee. Participants were asked to contribute as a group and individually. Points were later refined with additional input and editing.

Strengths

- Community spirit
- Community volunteers
- Emergency response
- Fiber optics
- Healthcare availability
- Historical society
- Library
- Parks
- Pharmacy
- Polo Area Community Theatre
- Pools
- Religious institutions
- Restaurants
- Schools and school pride
- Senior center
- Service organizations
- Tax Increment Financing (TIF)
- United State Post Office
- Wastewater treatment plant
- Water tower
- White Pines State Park

Weaknesses

- Abandoned and poorly cared for properties
- Aging homes
- Decreasing tax revenues
- Deteriorating downtown buildings
- Distance from entertainment and shopping
- Few places of employment
- Lack of appealing jobs
- Lack of assisted living
- Lack of land for commercial use
- Limited access to services
- Limited funding for economic development
- No capital improvement plan
- No directory of local services
- No formal day care
- No grocery store
- Population decline and stagnation
- Significant distance from interstate
- Youth brain drain

Opportunities

- Available buildings (for business, multi-family, etc.)
- Blackhawk Waterways Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Central location (with respect to Freeport, eastern Ogle County, and the Sauk Valley area, etc.)
- Community colleges
- Grant offerings
- Infrastructure capacity
- K-12 capacity
- Low property taxes
- Railroad spurs
- Remote employment
- Senior housing
- Tourism
- Weddings
- White Pines State Park

Threats

- Aging population
- Big box and online retail competition
- Declining home values
- Diminishing incomes
- Drugs
- Equalized assessed value/property valuation
- Illinois taxes
- Man-made and natural hazards, including nuclear plant
- Out-migration
- Wage stagnation

The city's new water tower, completed in 2005

2. Land Use & Natural Resources

Land Use and Natural Resources Element (Objectives & Policies): *The purpose of this element is to translate the vision statement into physical terms; provide a general pattern for the location, distribution, and characteristics of future land uses over a 20-year period; and serve as the element of the comprehensive plan upon which all other elements are based. The land use element must be in text and map form. It must include supporting studies on population, the local economy, natural resources, and an inventory of existing land uses (20 ILCS 662/25)(a)(2)*

OBJECTIVE LU-1: Set land use guidelines and identify areas suitable for development and redevelopment

| Policy | Due Date | | | Continuously or As Needed |
|--|----------|---------|--------|------------------------------|
| | <1 Yrs | 1-3 Yrs | 3+ Yrs | |
| LU-1.1- Review development proposals to ensure consistency with the future land use map and comprehensive plan | | | | • |
| LU-1.2- Preserve high-quality farmland; identify using the high-quality farmland map | | | | • |
| LU-1.3- Encourage development on parcels land-locked by adjacent like uses (assuming development is consistent with the future land use map) | | | | • |
| LU-1.4- Preference infill development; identify using the vacant and developable parcels map | | | | • |
| LU-1.5- Generally discourage greenfield development, especially proposals that demand new infrastructure and/or services or include substantial costs not addressed by impact fees | | | | • |
| LU-1.6- Establish a planning commission and appoint commissioners | • | | | • |
| LU-1.7- Establish a development review process and point system to rate development proposals | | • | | |
| LU-1.8- Update land use, zoning, and other maps as necessary | | | | • |
| LU-1.9- Revisit municipal ordinances- including the city's subdivision ordinance- to ensure consistency with the future land use map and comprehensive plan | | • | | |

continued...

| Policy | Due Date | | | Continuously or As Needed |
|---|----------|---------|--------|------------------------------|
| | <1 Yrs | 1-3 Yrs | 3+ Yrs | |
| LU-1.10- Initiate parcel re-zoning when opportunities are present; maintain consistency with the future land use map and comprehensive plan | | | | ● |

OBJECTIVE LU-2: Balance residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, and other land uses

| | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|---|
| LU-2.1- Consider design standards for residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, and other types of development | | ● | | |
| LU-2.2- Assess impacts on tax base, public infrastructure, emergency services, and other considerations when evaluating development proposals | | | | ● |
| LU-2.3- Communicate with regional, state, and federal officials regarding potential institutional uses | | | | ● |
| LU-2.4- Review and/or establish preferred land use ratios | | ● | | |

OBJECTIVE LU-3: Review city and neighboring jurisdictions' land use plans, especially when evaluating development proposals

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|---|
| LU-3.1- Partner with Ogle County officials to ensure that future land uses within Polo's 1.5 mile extra-territorial jurisdictional authority are consistent with the city's future land use plan | | | | ● |
| LU-3.2- Resolve any map or plan differences between Polo and Ogle County plans | | | | ● |

2. Land Use & Natural Resources, cont'd.

OBJECTIVE LU-4: Develop and implement revitalization strategies

| Policy | Due Date | | | Continuously or As Needed |
|--|----------|---------|--------|------------------------------|
| | <1 Yrs | 1-3 Yrs | 3+ Yrs | |
| LU-4.1- Evaluate the impact of business parks, mixed-uses zones, and other development along the downtown, IL-26, and Pines Road corridor | | | | ● |
| LU-4.2- Develop and implement a revitalization strategy for the downtown area, including downtown-specific zoning, parking, signage, and design guidelines | | ● | | |

OBJECTIVE LU-5: Address stormwater, runoff, and ecologically sensitive areas

| | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|---|
| LU-5.1- Prohibit development with respect to: wetlands, floodplains, sensitive environmental habitat, excessive slopes, poor drainage, other natural constraints, etc. | | | | ● |
| LU-5.2- Establish and enforce minimum stormwater runoff standards; adopt and/or modify and adopt the Ogle County stormwater runoff ordinance | | ● | | |
| LU-5.3- Define water detention and retention requirements for new and existing development | | ● | | |
| LU-5.4- Require developers to maintain or improve the rate and quality of runoff | | | | ● |
| LU-5.5- Require developers to upgrade a planned development site if the site pre-development fails to meet minimum runoff standards | | | | ● |
| LU-5.6 - Identify locations where riparian (water) buffers may be appropriate; encourage land owners to incorporate riparian buffers and other runoff control measures | | | ● | |

OBJECTIVE LU-6: Utilize buffers and screening to minimize potential land use conflicts

| Policy | Due Date | | | Continuously or As Needed |
|---|----------|---------|--------|------------------------------|
| | <1 Yrs | 1-3 Yrs | 3+ Yrs | |
| LU-6.1- Insist on buffers between residential and industrial uses, residential and commercial uses, and different densities of residential uses | | | | ● |
| LU-6.2- Consider buffers in the form of easements, setbacks, landscaping, fencing, lighting controls, noise barriers, etc. | | | | ● |

OBJECTIVE LU-7: Maintain the city's livestock/animal control ordinance

| | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|---|
| LU-7.1- Review developing trends and approaches to residential and commercial farming that can be incorporated into the city's livestock/animal control ordinance | | | | ● |
|---|--|--|--|---|

OBJECTIVE LU-8: Encourage tree planting, landscaping, and beautification

| | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|---|
| LU-8.1- Encourage landowners to incorporate landscaping and vegetation that complements existing land uses and enhances the built and natural environment | | | | ● |
| LU-8.2- Promote the use native vegetation or suitable substitutes | | | | ● |
| LU-8.3- Avoid planting/manage vegetation that interferes with public utilities, public safety access, rights-of-way, and lines-of-sight | | | | ● |
| LU-8.4- Establish a local tree-planting, landscaping, and beautification plan | | ● | | |
| LU-8.5- Create a document of approved trees/vegetation and/or a list of requirements for planting along/in the public right-of-way | | ● | | |

ELEMENTS

3. Transportation

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Transportation Element (Objectives & Policies): *The purpose of this element is to consider all relevant modes of transportation, including mass transit, air, water, rail, automobile, bicycle, and pedestrian modes of transportation; accommodate special needs; establish the framework for the acquisition, preservation, and protection of existing and future rights-of-way; and incorporate transportation performance measures. (20 ILCS 662/25)(a)(3)*

OBJECTIVE TRA-1: Evaluate existing transportation infrastructure, ordinances, and standards

| Policy | Due Date | | | Continuously or As Needed |
|--|----------|---------|--------|---------------------------|
| | <1 Yrs | 1-3 Yrs | 3+ Yrs | |
| TRA-1.1- Observe and record traffic patterns | | ● | | ● |
| TRA-1.2- Assess access to and along major transportation corridors, including IL-26 and Pines Road | | ● | | |
| TRA-1.3- Assess pedestrian and bicyclist safety | | ● | | |
| TRA-1.4- Review community-wide public safety access | | ● | | |
| TRA-1.5- Inventory parking availability; distinguish between public and private parking | | ● | | |
| TRA-1.6- Review parking ordinances | | ● | | |

OBJECTIVE TRA-2: Maintain a roadway evaluation program to aid in budgeting and scheduling for construction

| | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|---|
| TRA-2.1- Evaluate local roads and note substandard design elements | | ● | | |
| TRA-2.2- Review signage and pavement markings | | ● | | |
| TRA-2.3- Address issues of accessibility, sighting, alignment, drainage, slopes, right-of-way encroachment, etc. | | | | ● |

OBJECTIVE TRA-3: Implement standards for aesthetics and design

| Policy | Due Date | | | Continuously or As Needed |
|---|----------|---------|--------|------------------------------|
| | <1 Yrs | 1-3 Yrs | 3+ Yrs | |
| TRA-3.1- Insist on curb and gutter improvements where appropriate | | | | ● |
| TRA-3.2- Review bioswail (ditch) and retention basin effectiveness, in addition to or in place of curb and gutter | | | | ● |
| TRA-3.3- Ensure adequate right-of-way for sidewalks, bicycle paths, and/or multi-use trails | | | | ● |
| TRA-3.4- Create adequately sized shoulders for public safety, while converting excess roadway/ pavement into green space for landscaping | | | | ● |
| TRA-3.5- Design/retrofit transportation networks using state, federal, and National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) standards | | | | ● |
| TRA-3.6- Design/retrofit transportation networks according to Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards | | | | ● |
| TRA-3.7- Improve neighborhood walkability; connect sidewalks to existing/planned residential development and existing/planned services | | | | ● |
| TRA-3.8- Preference street grids and through-streets; prohibit new cul-de-sac development | | | | ● |
| TRA-3.9- Improve access to and appearance of local streets and alleys | | | | ● |
| TRA-3.10- Incorporate traffic calming measures where necessary, particularly in the downtown area, residential neighborhoods, IL-26, and Pines Road | | | ● | |
| TRA-3.11- Develop uniform lighting and landscaping standards | | ● | | |
| TRA-3.12- Require down-directed lighting along public right of way and on public property; incentivize adoption by homes and businesses | | | | ● |

3. Transportation, cont'd.

OBJECTIVE TRA-4: Enhance bicycle transportation and multi-use trails

| Policy | Due Date | | | Continuously or As Needed |
|---|----------|---------|--------|------------------------------|
| | <1 Yrs | 1-3 Yrs | 3+ Yrs | |
| TRA-4.1- Plan for and designate bicycle routes that connect local points of interest to the Grand Illinois Trail and other regional trail systems | | ● | | |
| TRA-4.2- Add and update signage and pavement markings to identify bicycle routes and multi-use trails | | ● | | |
| TRA-4.3- Extend bicycle routes and multi-use trails by purchasing land and/or acquiring easements according to established plans | | | ● | |
| TRA-4.4- Improve user facilities and amenities, especially at trailheads | | | ● | |
| TRA-4.5- Provide opportunities for motorized recreational vehicles, including ATVs and snowmobiles | | | | ● |

OBJECTIVE TRA-5: Ensure mobility among seniors and special needs populations

| | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|---|
| TRA-5.1- Promote public transportation access in conjunction with neighboring communities and the Lee-Ogle Transportation System (LOTS) | | | | ● |
|---|--|--|--|---|

OBJECTIVE TRA-6: Collaborate on transportation planning projects

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|---|
| TRA-6.1- Forward capital improvement plans to Ogle County and relevant agencies | | | | ● |
| TRA-6.2- When feasible, issue joint requests for proposals/qualifications/information/etc. and share resources to reduce costs, improve services, and/or improve the bidding process | | | | ● |



A one-lane underpass and railroad bridge near Polo

4. Community Facilities

Community Facilities Element (Objectives & Policies): *The purpose of this element is to provide community facilities; establish levels of service; ensure that facilities are provided as needed; and coordinate with other units of local government that provide the needed facilities. (20 ILCS 662/25)(a)(4)*

OBJECTIVE CF-1: Identify long-term capital improvement projects

| Policy | Due Date | | | Continuously or As Needed |
|--|----------|---------|--------|---------------------------|
| | <1 Yrs | 1-3 Yrs | 3+ Yrs | |
| CF-1.1- Create a capital improvement plan (CIP); document asset and/or infrastructure age, condition, etc. | ● | | | |
| CF-1.2- Quantify fire flow capacity | | | ● | |
| CF-1.3- Model water and sewer system | | | ● | |
| CF-1.4- Target compliance with Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GSB) Statement #34 | | | | ● |

OBJECTIVE CF-2: Maintain/extend water and sewer services, consistent with the city's future land use plan

| | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|---|
| CF-2.1- Prioritize potential water and sewer system extensions within Polo's 1.5 mile extra-territorial jurisdictional authority | | ● | | |
| CF-2.2- Avoid extending service to areas that are inconsistent with the future land use map and comprehensive plan | | | | ● |
| CF-2.3- Require developers to pay for service extensions | | | | ● |
| CF-2.4- Require city design approval on all water and sewer projects | | | | ● |
| CF-2.5- Prioritize contiguous development, unless specific arrangements are made with a developer to offset costs associated with construction and ongoing maintenance with respect to city services | | | | ● |

continued...

| Policy | Due Date | | | Continuously or As Needed |
|---|----------|---------|--------|------------------------------|
| | <1 Yrs | 1-3 Yrs | 3+ Yrs | |
| CF-2.6- Prioritize the repair and extension of infrastructure and utilities, from critical to non-essential | | | | ● |

OBJECTIVE CF-3: Maintain and extend the city's roadways and sidewalks within defined planning areas, consistent with the city's future land use plan

| | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|---|
| CF-3.1- Require developers to pay for streets and sidewalks that link new development to existing transportation, water, and sewer networks | | | | ● |
| CF-3.2- Require developers to seek city design approval and meet minimum quality standards for new sidewalks | | | | ● |
| CF-3.3- Require developers to design with ADA accessibility standards in mind | | | | ● |
| CF-3.4- Preference grids and through-streets that provide optimal ingress and egress versus cul-de-sac development and dead-end streets | | | | ● |
| CF-3.5- Discourage residential development that connects directly to arterials and collectors | | | | ● |

OBJECTIVE CF-4: Decommission assets that require costly maintenance and have out-lived their useful service life

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|--|
| CF-4.1- Identify infrastructure and/or facilities for decommissioning | ● | | | |
| CF-4.2- Identify grant funding and loans for infrastructure and/or facility decommissioning | | ● | | |

4. Community Facilities, cont'd.

OBJECTIVE CF-5: Review and mitigate the impact of development (or decline) on local and regional entities

| Policy | Due Date | | | Continuously or As Needed |
|---|----------|---------|--------|------------------------------|
| | <1 Yrs | 1-3 Yrs | 3+ Yrs | |
| CF-5.1- Perform comprehensive economic impact analysis on major development proposals | | | | • |
| CF-5.2- Report development proposals to city departments, school district officials, public safety agencies, and other stakeholders to obtain feedback regarding service levels | | | | • |

OBJECTIVE CF-6: Develop and maintain parks and recreational facilities

| | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|---|
| CF-6.1- Continue to invest in existing parks, playfields, and/or open spaces | | | | • |
| CF-6.2- Ensure access- including walkability and ADA compliance- to and within parks, playfields, and/or open spaces with respect to new and existing residential development | | | | • |
| CF-6.3- Apply Illinois Parks and Recreation Association standards | | | | • |

OBJECTIVE CF-7: Evaluate vehicle and equipment needs

| | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|--|
| CF-7.1- Inventory public works and police/fire/EMS vehicles and equipment | | • | | |
| CF-7.2- Adopt replacement plans for public works and police/fire/EMS vehicles and equipment | | • | | |

OBJECTIVE CF-8: Coordinate the location of private infrastructure

| Policy | Due Date | | | Continuously or As Needed |
|--|----------|---------|--------|------------------------------|
| | <1 Yrs | 1-3 Yrs | 3+ Yrs | |
| CF-8.1- Map public and private infrastructure, including electric, gas, and telecommunications | | | | ● |

OBJECTIVE CF-9: Share facilities and resources with neighboring, overlapping, and other appropriate jurisdictions

| | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|---|
| CF-9.1- Establish intergovernmental agreements that encourage resources sharing and consortium purchasing | | | | ● |
| CF-9.2- Designate short/medium-term staging grounds and shelters for mass casualty events | ● | | | |

OBJECTIVE CF-10: Improve tie-ins to White Pines State Park and other recreational and tourism facilities

| | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|---|
| CF-10.1- Establish a tourism working group, consisting of tourism, government, business, and other stakeholders to support collaborative planning in the greater Polo area | | ● | | |
| CF-10.2- Coordinate tourism marketing initiatives between stakeholders | | | | ● |
| CF-10.3- Coordinate tourism signage initiatives between stakeholders | | | | ● |

5. Telecommunications

Telecommunications Element (Objectives & Policies): *The purpose of this element is to coordinate telecommunications initiatives; assess short-term and long-term needs, especially regarding economic development; determine the existing telecommunications services of telecommunications providers; encourage investment in the most advanced technologies; and establishes a framework for providing reasonable access to public rights-of-way. (20 ILCS 662/25)(a)(5)*

TEL-1: Ensure that residents and businesses have access to affordable, reliable, high-speed telecommunications services

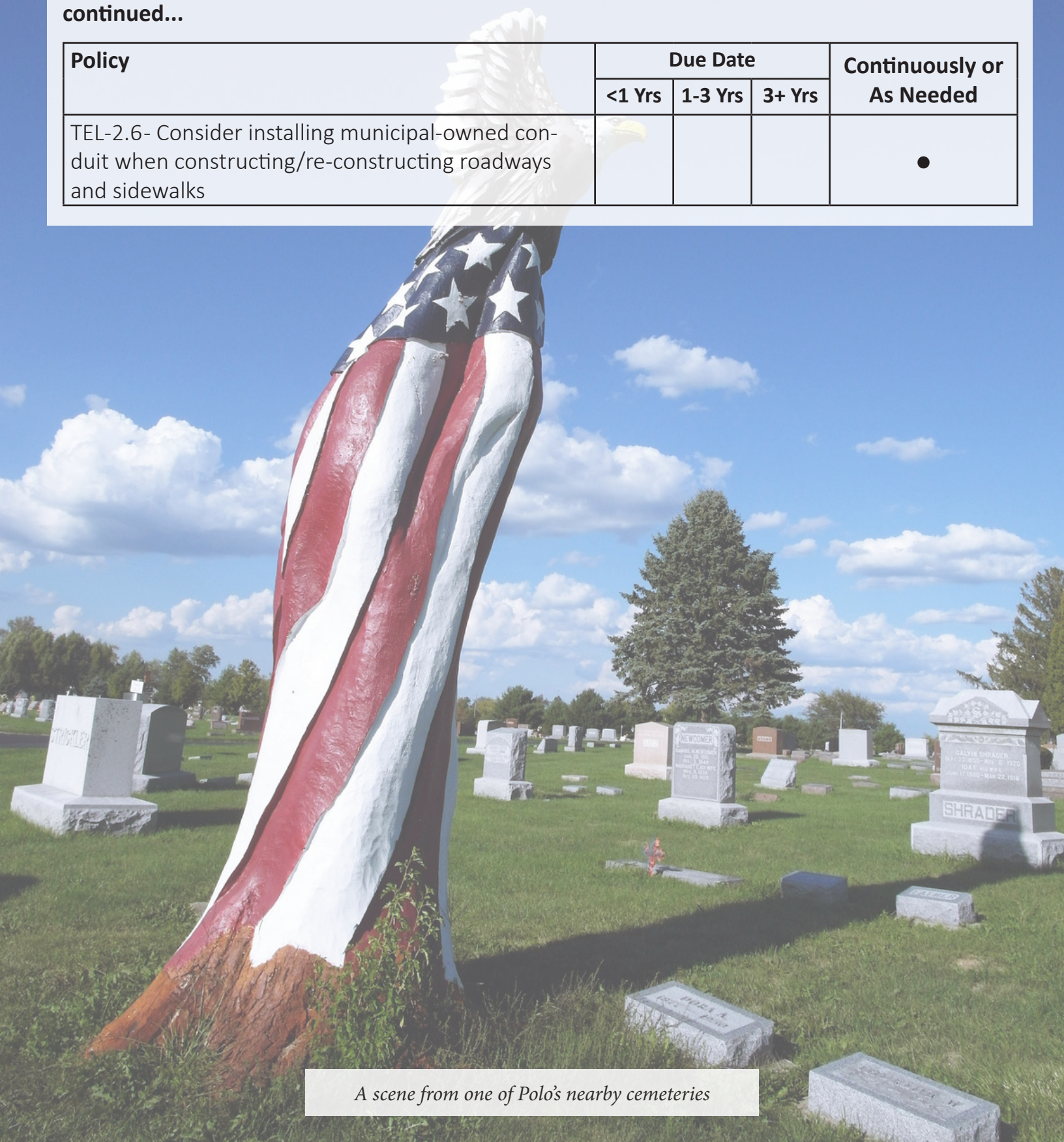
| Policy | Due Date | | | Continuously or As Needed |
|--|----------|---------|--------|------------------------------|
| | <1 Yrs | 1-3 Yrs | 3+ Yrs | |
| TEL-1.1- Encourage Internet competition, cable, cellular, and other telecommunications competition | | | | • |
| TEL-1.2- Conduct a telecommunications needs assessment; research should address residential and business needs, as well as the advantages/disadvantages of municipal Wi-Fi deployments | | | • | |

TEL-2: Support orderly, prioritized construction of telecommunications infrastructure

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|---|
| TEL-2.1- Create and adopt a master telecommunications ordinance that complies with state and federal statutes; regulate tower siting, right-of-way availability, and other aspects of telecommunications | | | • | |
| TEL-2.2- Identify telecommunications infrastructure in the public right-of-way | | | • | |
| TEL-2.3- Map telecommunications infrastructure and maintain up-to-date GIS layers | | | • | • |
| TEL-2.4- Require developers to identify adequate right-of-way for telecommunications infrastructure | | | | • |
| TEL-2.5- Plan public infrastructure projects in such a way that solicits input from telecommunications stakeholders and includes the possibility of jointly scheduled construction projects | | | | • |

continued...

| Policy | Due Date | | | Continuously or As Needed |
|---|----------|---------|--------|------------------------------|
| | <1 Yrs | 1-3 Yrs | 3+ Yrs | |
| TEL-2.6- Consider installing municipal-owned conduit when constructing/re-constructing roadways and sidewalks | | | | ● |



A scene from one of Polo's nearby cemeteries

ELEMENTS

6. Housing

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Housing Element (Objectives & Policies): *The purpose of this element is to document the present and future needs for housing within the jurisdiction of the local government, including affordable housing and special needs housing; take into account the housing needs of a larger region; identify barriers to the production of housing, including affordable housing; assess the condition of the local housing stock; and develop strategies, programs, and other actions to address the needs for a range of housing options. (20 ILCS 662/25)(a)(6)*

OBJECTIVE: H-1 - Identify ideal locations for residential development

| Policy | Due Date | | | Continuously or As Needed |
|--|----------|---------|--------|------------------------------|
| | <1 Yrs | 1-3 Yrs | 3+ Yrs | |
| H-1.1- Target areas adjacent to existing single-family or multi-family development and transportation, water, sewer, and utility systems | | | | ● |

OBJECTIVE: H-2 - Encourage orderly housing development in line with land use regulations

| | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|---|
| H-2.1- Perform a community-wide housing needs assessment; record housing characteristics (include: age, size, historical style, other characteristics) | | | ● | |
| H-2.2- Encourage upkeep and support sales of existing homes | | | | ● |
| H-2.3- Evaluate vacant and developable (and under-developed) lots for infill opportunities | | | ● | |
| H-2.4- Determine the impacts of new single-family and multi-family development on transportation, water, sewer, and utility systems, as well as education, public safety, other critical services | | | | ● |
| H-2.5- Maintain the availability of productive soils by limiting new housing (and other types of development) on high-quality farmland | | | | ● |
| H-2.6- Establish mixed-use or overlay zones that permit both residential and retail uses on single parcels, especially in the downtown area | | | ● | |

OBJECTIVE: H-3 - Support new and existing homeowners and renters

| Policy | Due Date | | | Continuously or As Needed |
|--|----------|---------|--------|------------------------------|
| | <1 Yrs | 1-3 Yrs | 3+ Yrs | |
| H-3.1- Encourage investment in mixed-income, low-income, senior, and assisted living housing | | | | ● |
| H-3.2- Publicize homeowner and renter assistance/energy efficiency programs | | | | ● |
| H-3.3- Determine the feasibility of new senior and special needs multi-family and/or mixed-use housing | | ● | | |
| H-3.4- Create a public database of housing resources that includes certified contractors, landlords, and vendors | | ● | | |
| H-3.5- Identify properties for reuse and reinvestment | | ● | | |

OBJECTIVE: H-4 - Set standards for multi-family residential

| | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|--|
| H-4.1- Establish design guidelines for multi-family residential | | ● | | |
| H-4.2- Establish minimum standards for buffers and screening, address noise, runoff, light nuisance, and other issues | | ● | | |
| H-4.3- Require adequate traffic circulation and public safety access | | ● | | |

OBJECTIVE: H-5 - Ensure access and connectivity to businesses and community facilities

| | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|---|
| H-5.1- Require developers to include sidewalks in master-planned, subdivision, and other housing developments | | | | ● |
| H-5.2- Discourage cul-de-sac development | | | | ● |
| H-5.3- Incorporate parks, playfields, and/or open spaces into new single-family and multi-family developments | | | | ● |

ELEMENTS

6. Housing, cont'd.

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OBJECTIVE: H-6 - Assist with housing upkeep and demolition

| Policy | Due Date | | | Continuously or As Needed |
|---|----------|---------|--------|------------------------------|
| | <1 Yrs | 1-3 Yrs | 3+ Yrs | |
| H-6.1- Identify potential buildings and homes that require rehabilitation and/or structural reinforcement | | ● | | |
| H-6.2- Establish and maintain a demolition fund for condemned, structurally deficient housing | | | ● | ● |
| H-6.3- Encourage landowners to seek tax credits for historic preservation | | | | ● |





*The Barber House in Polo, IL, included on the
National Register of Historic Places*

7. Economic Development

Economic Development Element (Objectives & Policies): *The purpose of this element is to coordinate local economic development initiatives with those of the State; ensure that adequate economic development opportunities are available; identify the strategic competitive advantages of the community and the surrounding region; assess the community's strengths and weaknesses with respect to attracting and retaining business and industry; and define the municipality's and county's role. (20 ILCS 662/25)(a)(7)*

OBJECTIVE ED-1: Develop a comprehensive approach to incentives

| Policy | Due Date | | | Continuously or As Needed |
|--|----------|---------|--------|------------------------------|
| | <1 Yrs | 1-3 Yrs | 3+ Yrs | |
| ED-1.1- Offer incentives with prescriptive requirements to new and existing businesses (including: grants, loans, tax increment financing (TIF), and other incentives) | | | | ● |
| ED-1.2- Establish performance-based incentives that advance comprehensive plan goals | | ● | | |
| ED-1.3- Create an incentive application and review process | | ● | | |
| ED-1.4- Establish a point system for dispersing TIF and other incentives; permit additional incentives for projects that exceed baseline requirements | | ● | | |
| ED-1.5- Issue TIF and other incentives only when proposals pass the development review process | | | | ● |
| ED-1.6- Issue TIF and other incentives only when business plans and a list of development goals is supplied by the developer | | | | ● |
| ED-1.7- Establish clawbacks for TIF and other incentives and monitor development progress | | ● | | |
| ED-1.8- Avoid incentives related to free and/or reduced cost water/sewer connections | | | | ● |
| ED-1.9- Encourage brownfield and infill development | | | | ● |

OBJECTIVE ED-2: Promote compatible industrial, commercial, and retail uses within the city

| Policy | Due Date | | | Continuously or As Needed |
|---|----------|---------|--------|------------------------------|
| | <1 Yrs | 1-3 Yrs | 3+ Yrs | |
| ED-2.1- Establish geographic areas of focus with respect to economic development | ● | | | |
| ED-2.2- Recruit certain types of development, including ag-industrial, retail, tourism, institutional, senior and special needs housing, and multi-family housing | | | | ● |
| ED-2.3- Conduct a retail sales analysis | | | ● | |
| ED-2.4- Work with the Burlington Northern to study rail spur opportunities with respect to access, expansion, and investment | | | ● | |

OBJECTIVE ED-3: Establish a community-wide marketing plan

| | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|---|
| ED-3.1- Create a strategy for community and economic development marketing and fundraising | | ● | | |
| ED-3.2- Coordinate marketing platforms to ensure brand uniformity | | | | ● |
| ED-3.3- Incorporate beautification, health care, historic preservation, and telecommunications elements into marketing plans | | | | ● |

OBJECTIVE ED-4: Increase benefits from regional tourism

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|---|
| ED-4.1- Coordinate with tourism stakeholders and neighboring communities to increase inter-city/inter-county visitor circulation | | | | ● |
| ED-4.2- Establish unique events geared towards outsiders that generate buzz and attract visitors | | | | ● |
| ED-4.3- Recruit new leaders and volunteers | | | | ● |

7. Economic Development, cont'd.

OBJECTIVE ED-5: Help retain local businesses

| Policy | Due Date | | | Continuously or As Needed |
|---|----------|---------|--------|------------------------------|
| | <1 Yrs | 1-3 Yrs | 3+ Yrs | |
| ED-5.1- Create a community-wide business retention plan | | ● | | |
| ED-5.2- Maintain communications with regional and state economic development officials and liaisons | | | | ● |
| ED-5.3- Award incentives based on established criteria and retention goals | | | | ● |
| ED-5.4- Encourage initiatives that support workforce development, including apprenticeship and re-training programs | | | | ● |
| ED-5.4- Initiate a local employer needs study to better understand businesses needs, wants, and concerns. Study local labor force needs, wants, and concerns as well. | | ● | | |

OBJECTIVE ED-6: Encourage preservation and revitalization efforts

| | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|---|
| ED-6.1- Create a historic preservation plan | | | ● | |
| ED-6.2- Create a downtown revitalization plan | | | ● | |
| ED-6.3- Review splitting commercial zoning into highway, downtown, and general commercial zones | | | ● | |
| ED-6.4- Identify historic preservation corridors and districts | | ● | | |
| ED-6.5- Develop design standards for historic corridors and districts | | ● | | |
| ED-6.6- Develop a community-wide parking plan | | | ● | |
| ED-6.7- Establish stakeholder buy-in before implementing and enforcing design standards | | | | ● |
| ED-6.8- Update zoning ordinances to allow mixed and institutional uses | | | ● | |
| ED-6.9- Consider adjacent land uses when reviewing development proposals | | | | ● |

OBJECTIVE ED-7: Develop a strategy to fund/support economic development initiatives

| Policy | Due Date | | | Continuously or As Needed |
|---|----------|---------|--------|------------------------------|
| | <1 Yrs | 1-3 Yrs | 3+ Yrs | |
| ED-7.1- Maintain the city clerk's office as the general point-of-contact for economic development questions and record-keeping | | | | • |
| ED-7.2- Maintain the Polo Economic Development Corporation (PEDC) as the community's official economic development corporation | | | | • |
| ED-7.3- Provide PEDC the authority to negotiate – within predetermined limits – with developers | | | | • |
| ED-7.4- Build and maintain relationships between the PEDC, chamber of commerce, plan commission (if applicable), and city council | | | | • |

*The historic Buffalo Grove Lime Kiln,
just west of Polo city limits*

ELEMENTS

8. Natural Resources

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Natural Resources Element (Objectives Policies): *The purpose of this element is to identify and define the natural resources in the community with respect to water, land, flora, and fauna; identify the land and water areas in relation to these resources; assess the relative importance of these areas to the needs of the resources; and identify mitigation efforts that are needed to protect these resources. (20 ILCS 662/25)(a)(8)*

OBJECTIVE NR-1: Preserve natural resources when pursuing development opportunities

| Policy | Due Date | | | Continuously or As Needed |
|---|----------|---------|--------|---------------------------|
| | <1 Yrs | 1-3 Yrs | 3+ Yrs | |
| NR-1.1- Identify important natural resources and/or habitats | | | ● | |
| NR-1.2- Minimize and/or mitigate environmental impacts when converting less intense land uses to more intense land uses | | | | ● |
| NR-1.3- Adopt erosion control and storm water runoff standards | | ● | | |

OBJECTIVE NR-2: Preserve and enhance local views, especially of unique or historic landscapes

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|---|
| NR-2.1- Preserve open spaces, scenic areas, and scenic/historic views (viewsheds) | | | | ● |
| NR-2.2- Mitigate or minimize development impacts on open spaces, scenic areas, and viewsheds | | | | ● |
| NR-2.3- Take advantage of green spaces and wooded areas when planning bicycle paths | | | | ● |

OBJECTIVE NR-3: Pursue energy efficiency measures

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|---|
| NR-3.1- Incorporate energy efficient lighting and HVAC systems; replace inefficient equipment | | | | ● |
| NR-3.2- Explore alternative energy sources for demonstration or practical use at public facilities | | | | ● |

OBJECTIVE NR-4: Encourage tree and vegetation planting

| Policy | Due Date | | | Continuously or As Needed |
|---|----------|---------|--------|------------------------------|
| | <1 Yrs | 1-3 Yrs | 3+ Yrs | |
| NR-4.1- Encourage landowners to incorporate landscaping and vegetation that complements existing land uses and enhances the built and natural environment | | | | ● |
| NR-4.2- Promote the use of native vegetation or suitable substitutes | | | | ● |
| NR-4.3- Avoid planting/manage vegetation that interferes with public utilities, public safety access, rights-of-way, and lines-of-sight | | | | ● |
| NR-4.4- Incorporate planters along public medians and right-of-way | | | | ● |
| NR-4.5- Convert excess roadway/pavement into green space for landscaping | | | | ● |
| NR-4.6- Use greenways and riparian buffers as natural drainage ways | | | | ● |
| NR-4.7- Consider pursuing Tree City USA recognition | | | | ● |

9. Public Participation & Communication

Public Participation Element (Objectives & Policies): *This element must include a process for engaging the community in outreach; the development of a sense of community; a consensus building process; and a public education strategy. (20 ILCS 662/25)(a)(9)*

The 2014-2024 Planning for Polo steering committee – which included public and private sector representatives – met throughout 2014 and 2015. Initial meetings featured visioning and goal setting exercises. Smaller, three to five person work groups, consisting of steering committee members, met in June 2014 to review specific comprehensive plan elements. Agendas were posted and public attendance was encouraged for all meetings. Implementation included a public review period, followed by a presentation to the Polo City Council for plan approval.

The steering committee was particularly interested in encouraging expanded local business activity and shopping. Desirable projects included attracting investment in a new and/or redeveloped grocery store/supermarket. There was also interest in balanced and controlled housing growth; even so, members of the steering committee expressed desire to attract new mixed-use/multi-family housing units for senior citizens. Participants also indicated that they wished to see increased focus on tourism to support local commerce and livelihoods.

A community survey was also created and disseminated as part of the process. Opportunities to complete the survey were promoted in the local media, city hall, public library, and the Planning for Polo website. Surveys were accessible through Google Forms online and distributed as paper handouts at various locations, including at Polo City Hall, Polo Public Library, the Senior Center, the Polo School District (to both students and teachers), and various churches.

Process Timeline



SC = Steering Committee, WG = Work Group, PR = Public Review

Incentives

Incentives can be powerful, effective tools in economic development. But they must be managed deliberately, even-handedly, and with deference to a community's comprehensive plan. To this end, officials must flesh out what situations are ideal for the disbursement of incentives (including, but not limited to, tax increment financing, grants and loans, and technical assistance). The following suggests basic criteria for development assessment and incentive allocation. In general, all development proposals should meet and/or exceed set bare-minimums to qualify.

Provide incentives for industrial or institutional uses that meet some or all of the following:

- *Uses that create a minimum of X, full-time jobs
- *Uses that create jobs at or above Ogle County's median personal income (use 2010 Census)
- *Uses that improve a property's equalized assessed value (EAV) by at least X%
- *Uses that rehabilitate, restore, or repair an existing structures
- *Uses that occupy vacant lots, buildings, or brownfield parcels
- *Plans that mitigate traffic, noise, pollution, etc.
- *Plans that exceed approved design standards
- *Plans that mitigate or compensate for increased water/sewer demand

Provide incentives for commercial or retail uses that meet some or all of the following:

- *Uses that improve a property's EAV by at least X%
- *Uses that generate significant sales tax revenue (at least \$X/year)
- *Uses that occupy vacant lots, buildings, or brownfield parcels
- *Uses that rehabilitate, restore, or repair an existing structure
- *Uses that generate increased vehicular and pedestrian flows in the downtown area
- *Uses that utilize unique approaches to developing a customer base
- *Plans that exceed approved design standards

Provide incentives for multi-dwelling units (geared towards special needs, mixed income, and seniors) that meet some or all of the following:

- *Uses that improve a property's EAV by at least X%
- *Uses that occupy vacant lots, buildings, or brownfield parcels
- *Uses that rehabilitate, restore, or repair an existing structure
- *Plans that exceed approved design standards

*Providing incentives for single-family residential and certain types of warehousing/storage are not recommended, unless **sidewalks, bicycle paths, etc., to existing transportation networks***

Marketing

Local officials should consider marketing Polo's amenities and resources, whether to encourage visitors to tour the community or to promote the city to entities seeking investment and/or relocation opportunities. Any approach should include buy-in from government, businesses, and other stakeholders. Ideally, tourism campaigns would feed into regional efforts, while also highlighting Polo's unique sites, history, culture, and events.

Items to prompt discussion or include in marketing literature:

- *"Thirty-Six Hours in Polo" visitor guide
- *1-page development guide to Polo
- *1-page incentives guide
- *Available properties and buildings
- *Community and workforce profiles
- *Community facilities
- *Cultural and recreational amenities
- *Demographics and economic conditions
- *Economic development/tourism contacts
- *Emergency services and safety overview
- *Fiber optics and telecommunications availability
- *Incentives and financing
- *Infrastructure maps
- *Other forms of commercial transportation access, including railroads and rail road spurs
- *School system data
- *Special events programming
- *Tax rates and fees
- *Traffic counts and truck routes
- *Utility capacities and rates
- *Other suitable, supporting materials...

MAPS INCLUDED

Demographics

- *2000-2010 Regional Population Change
- *Regional Median Age

Land Use

- *Future Land Use- 1.5 Mile Planning Boundary
- *Important & Prime Farmland
- *Existing Land Use
- *Landcover
- *Existing Municipal Zoning
- *Existing County Zoning
- *Vacant Parcels

Transportation

- *Functional Road Classification
- *Annual Average Daily Traffic
 - Total
 - Trucks

Community Facilities

- *Local & Regional Parks & Protected Areas
- *Community Facilities
- *Current/Future Storm
- *Current/Future Wastewater
- *Current/Future Water

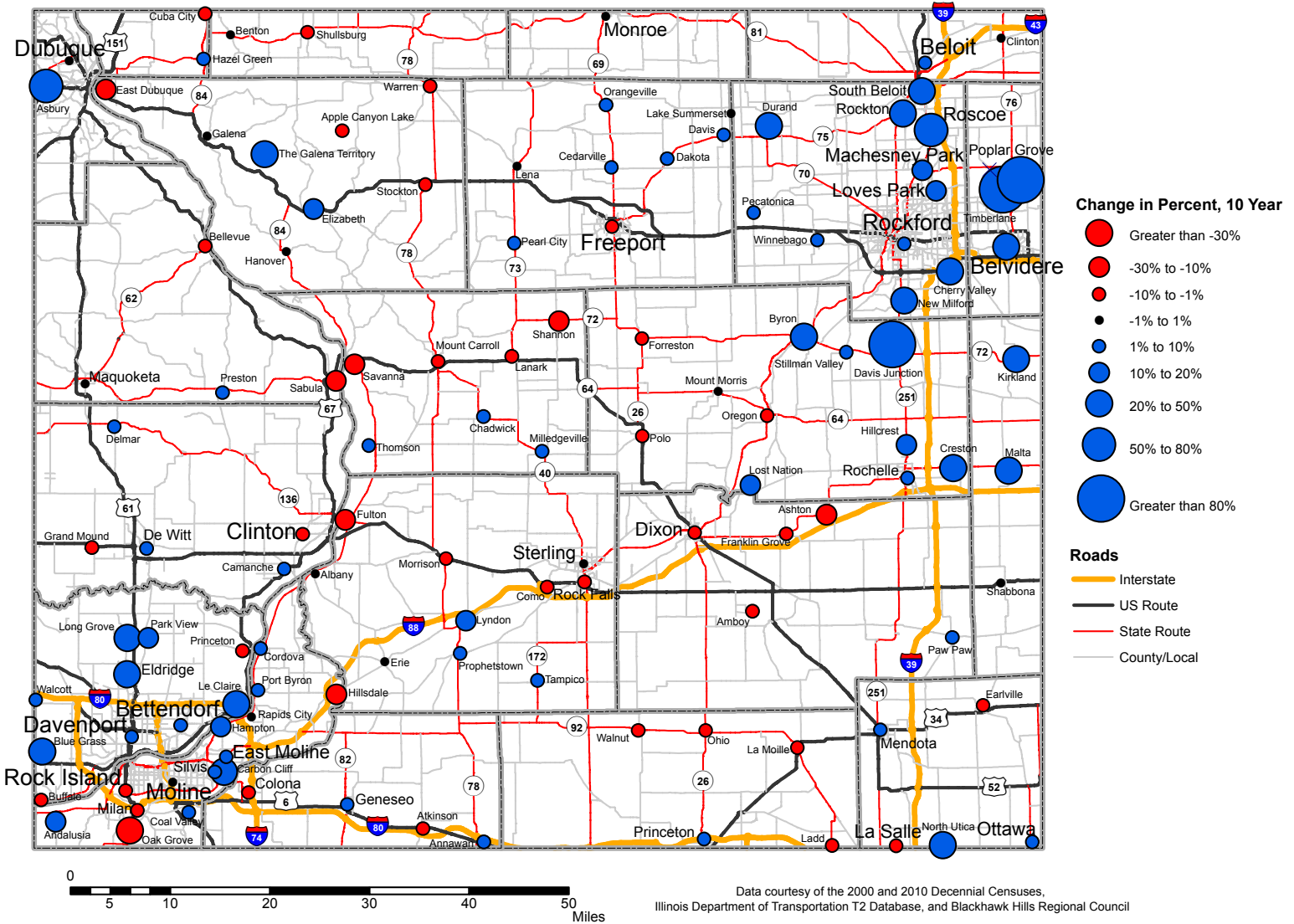
Housing

- *Housing Age

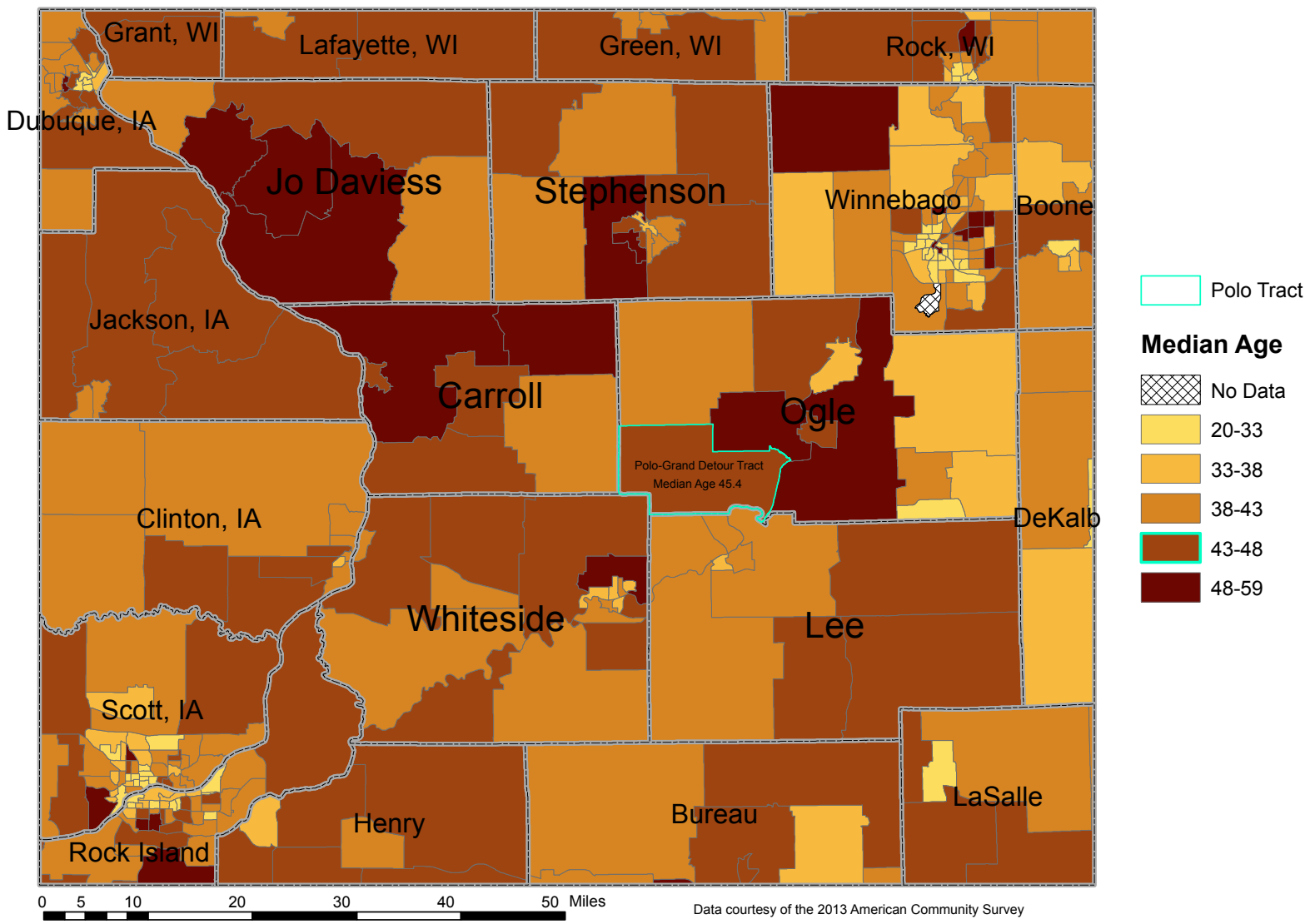
Economic Development

- *Tax Increment Financing District

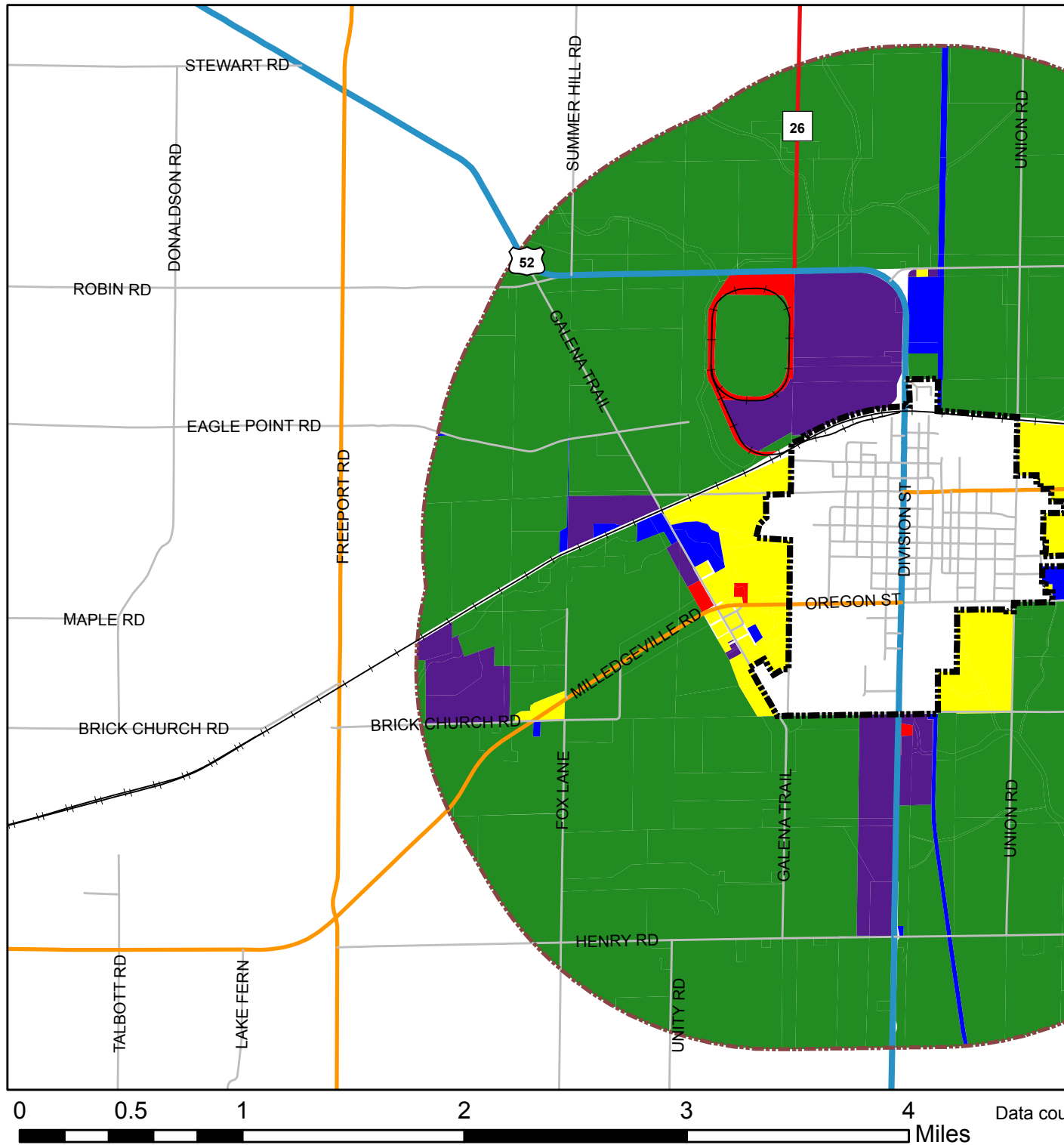
2000-2010 Regional Population Change

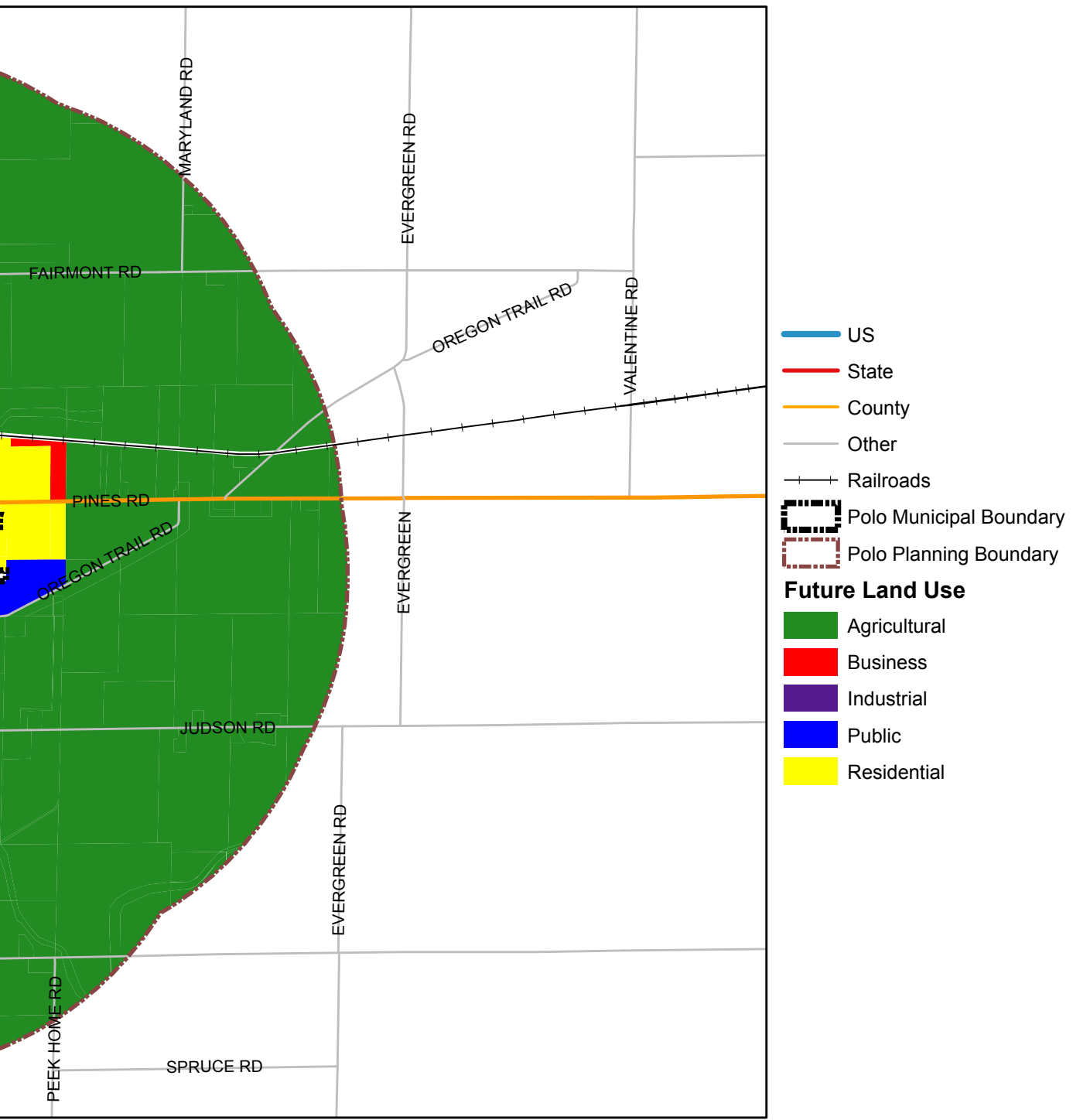


Regional Median Age by Census Tract



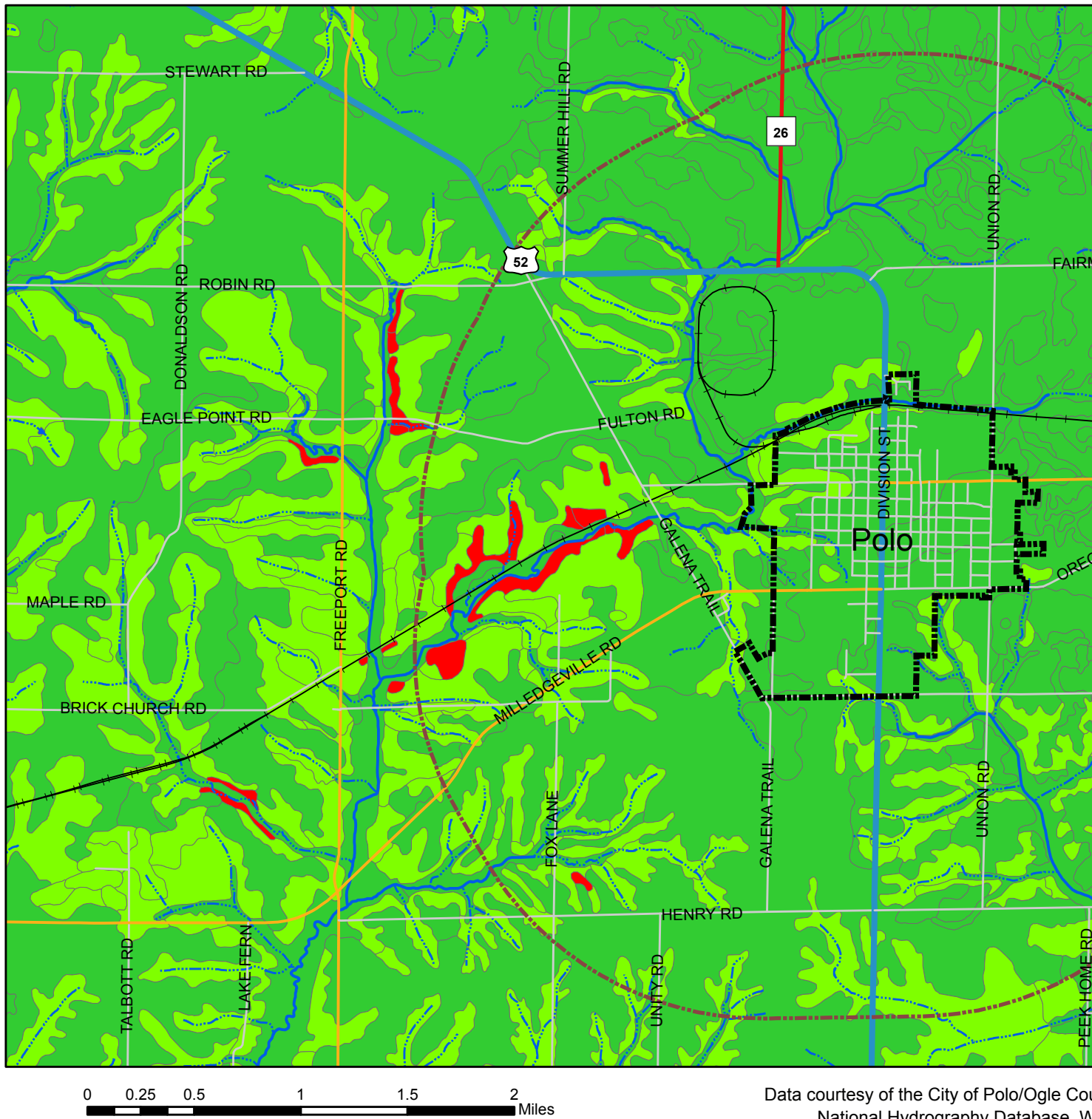
Future Land Use - 1.5 Mile Planning Boundary - Polo Area

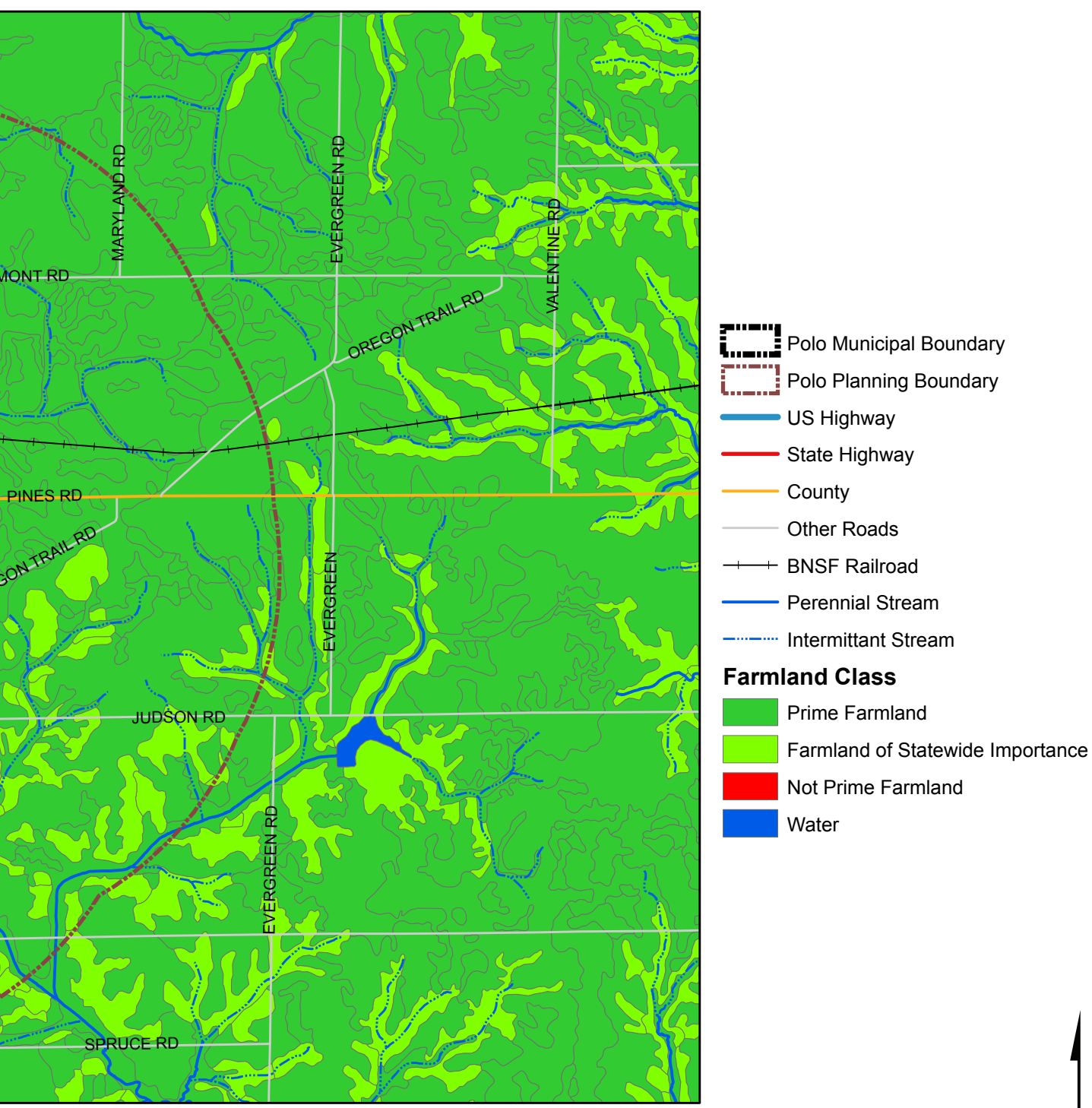




Courtesy of the City of Polo/Ogle County GIS, Illinois Department of Transportation T2 Database, and Blackhawk Hills Regional Council

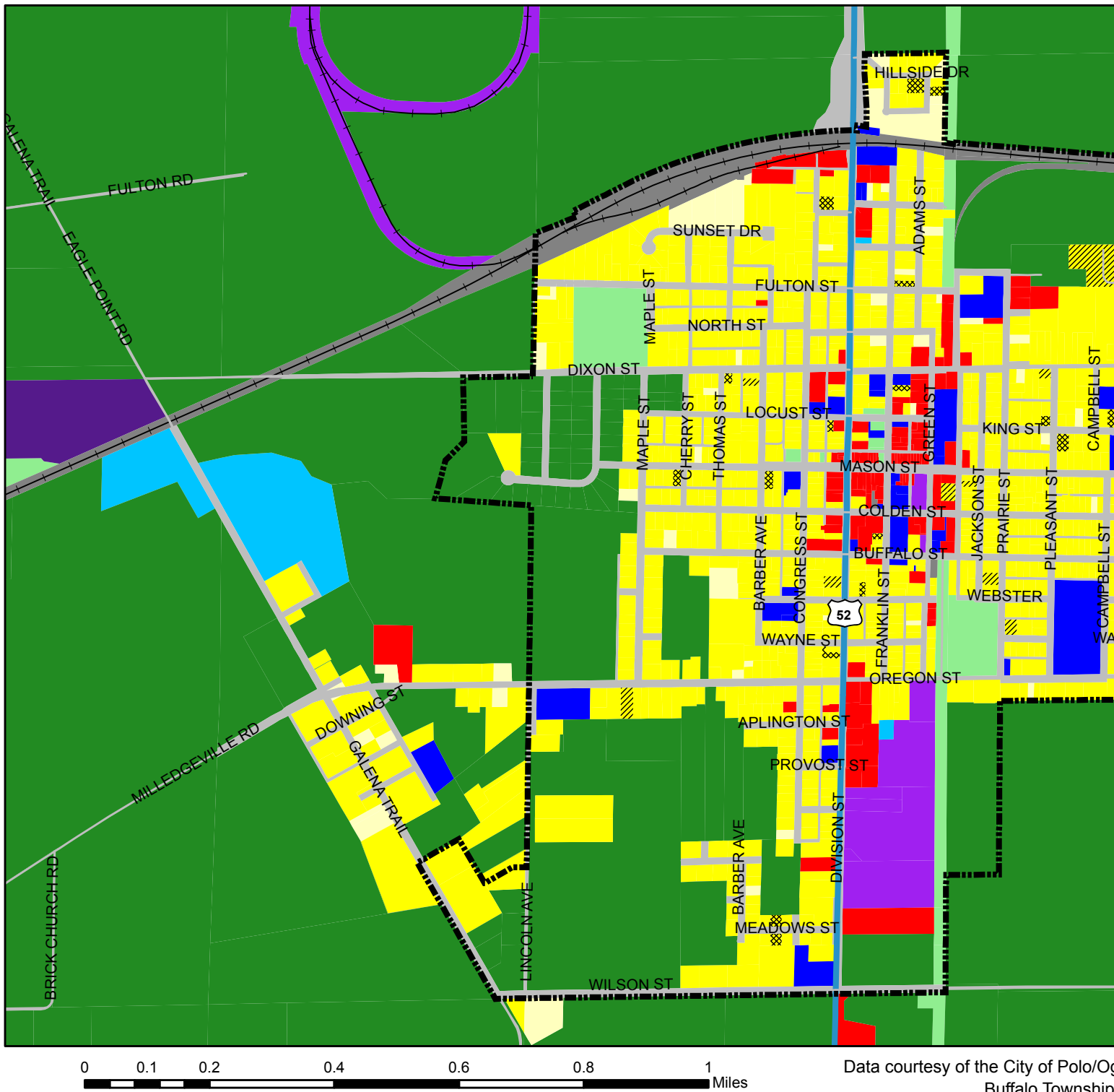
Important & Prime Farmland - Polo Area



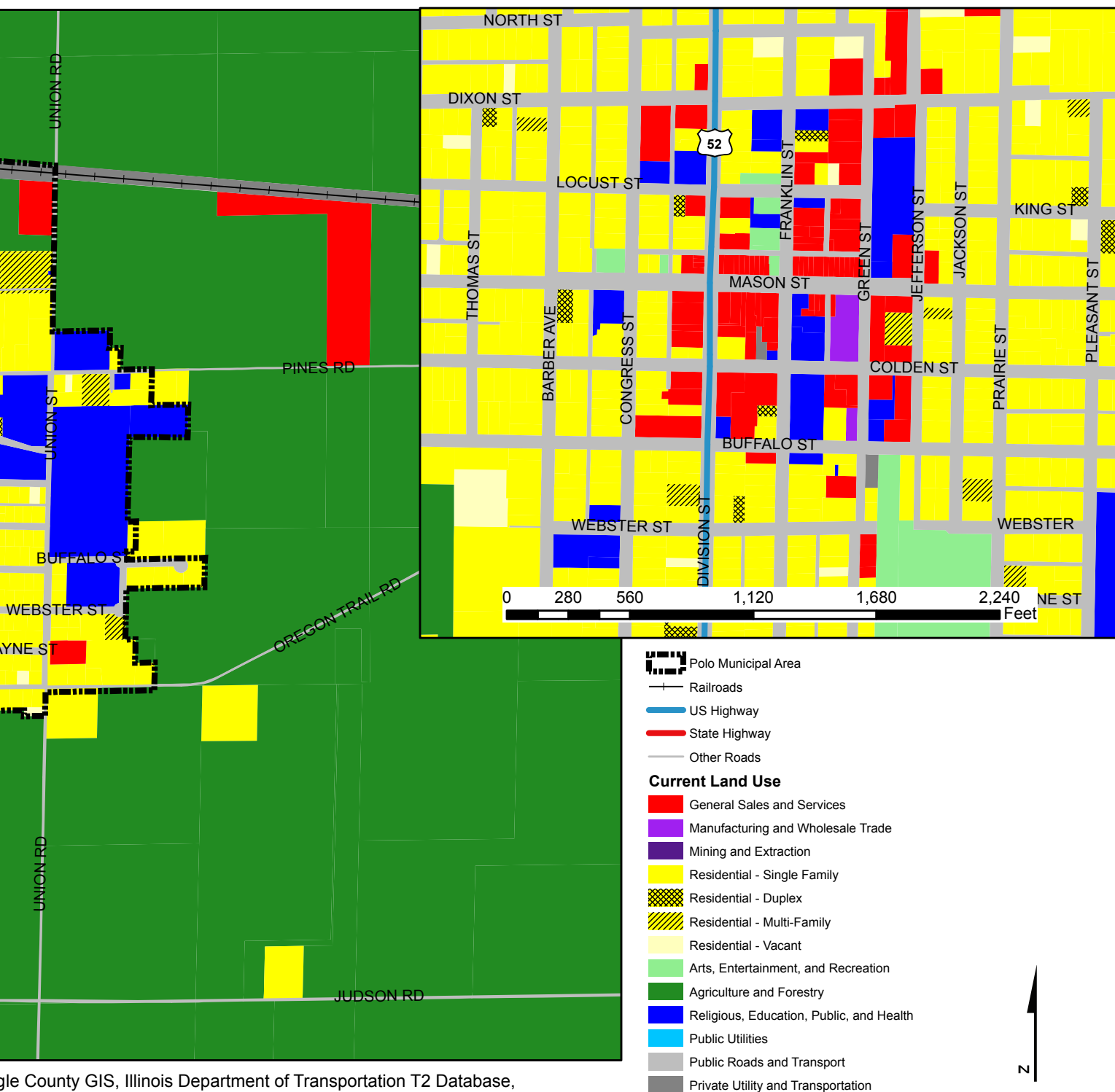


County GIS, Illinois Department of Transportation T2 Database, Web Soil Survey, and Blackhawk Hills Regional Council

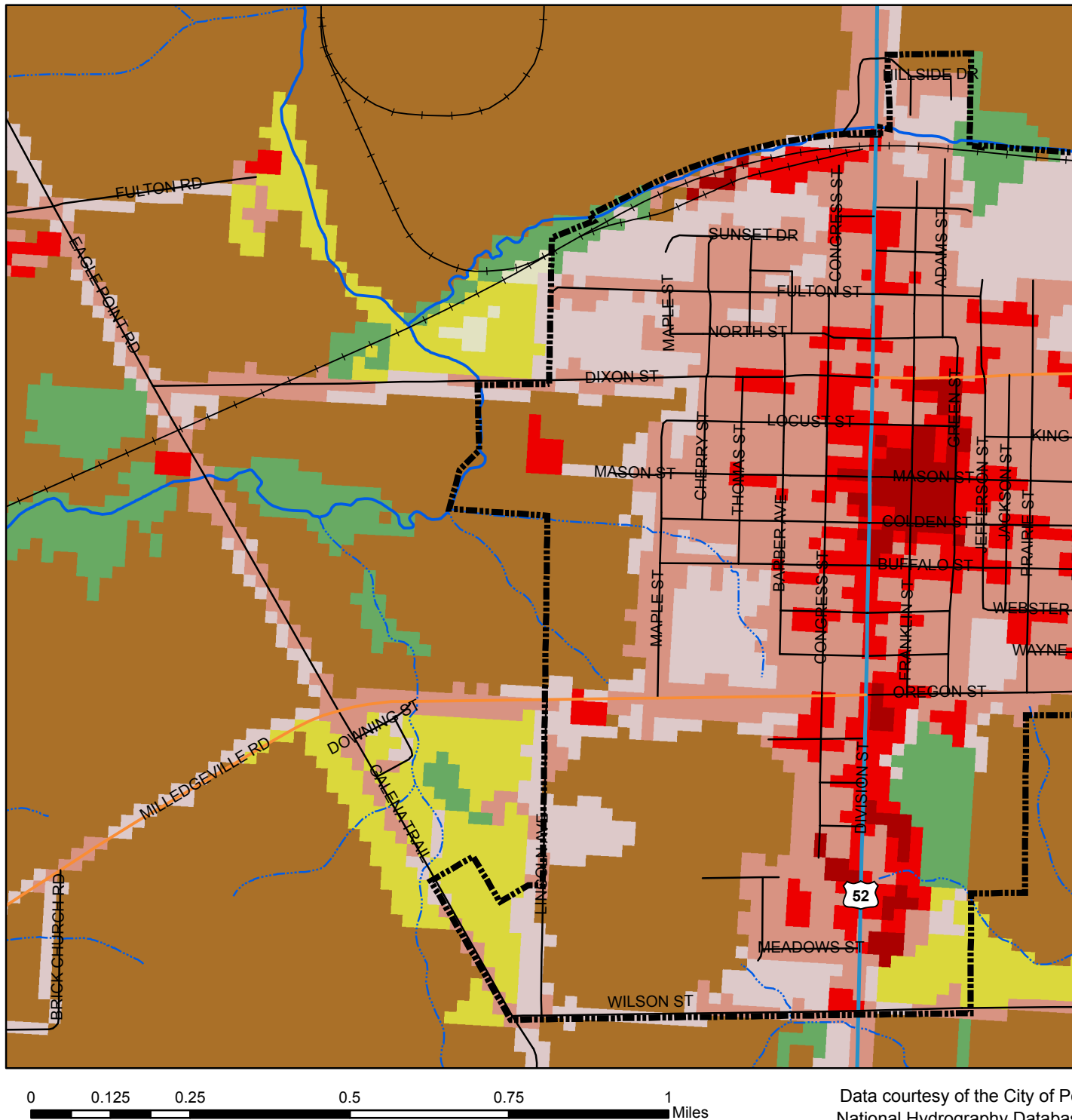
Existing Land Use - City of Polo

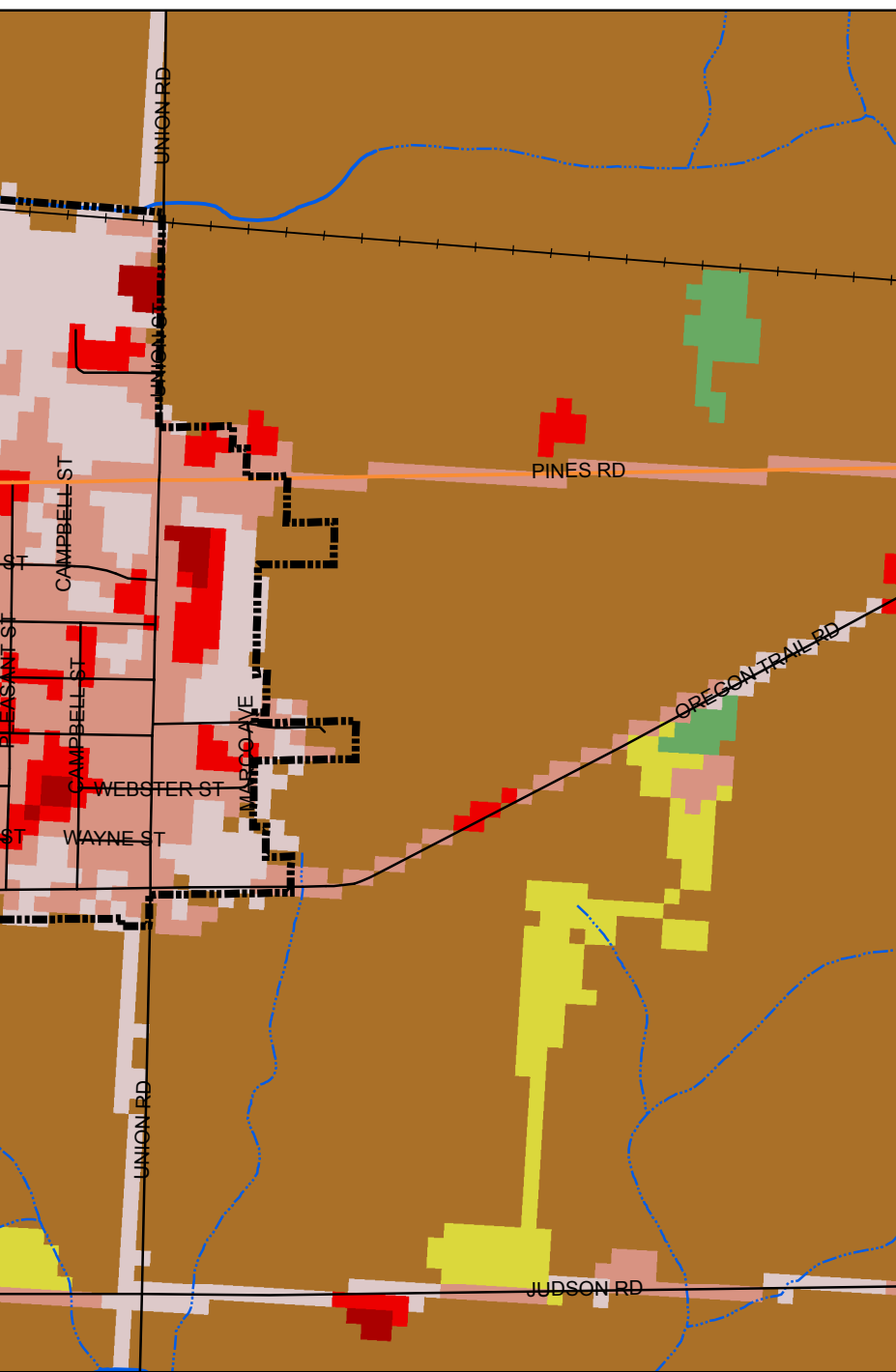


Downtown Area in Detail



Landcover - Polo Area





Polo Municipal Boundary

US Highway

State Highway

County Road

Local Road

BNSF Railroad

Perennial Stream

Intermittent Stream

NLCD Land Cover Class

Barren Land

Cultivated Crops

Deciduous Forest

Developed, High Intensity

Developed, Low Intensity

Developed, Medium Intensity

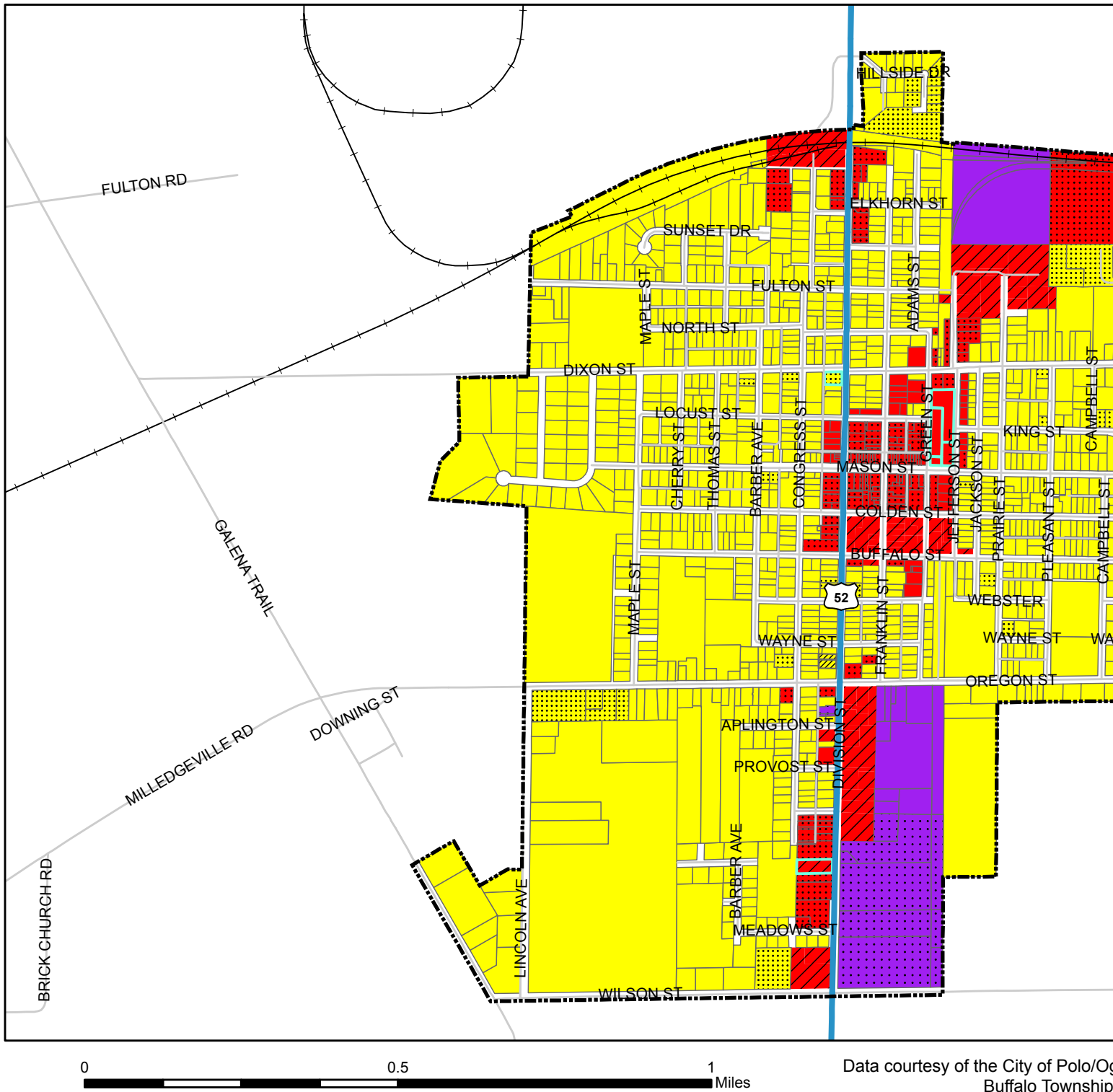
Developed, Open Space

Hay/Pasture

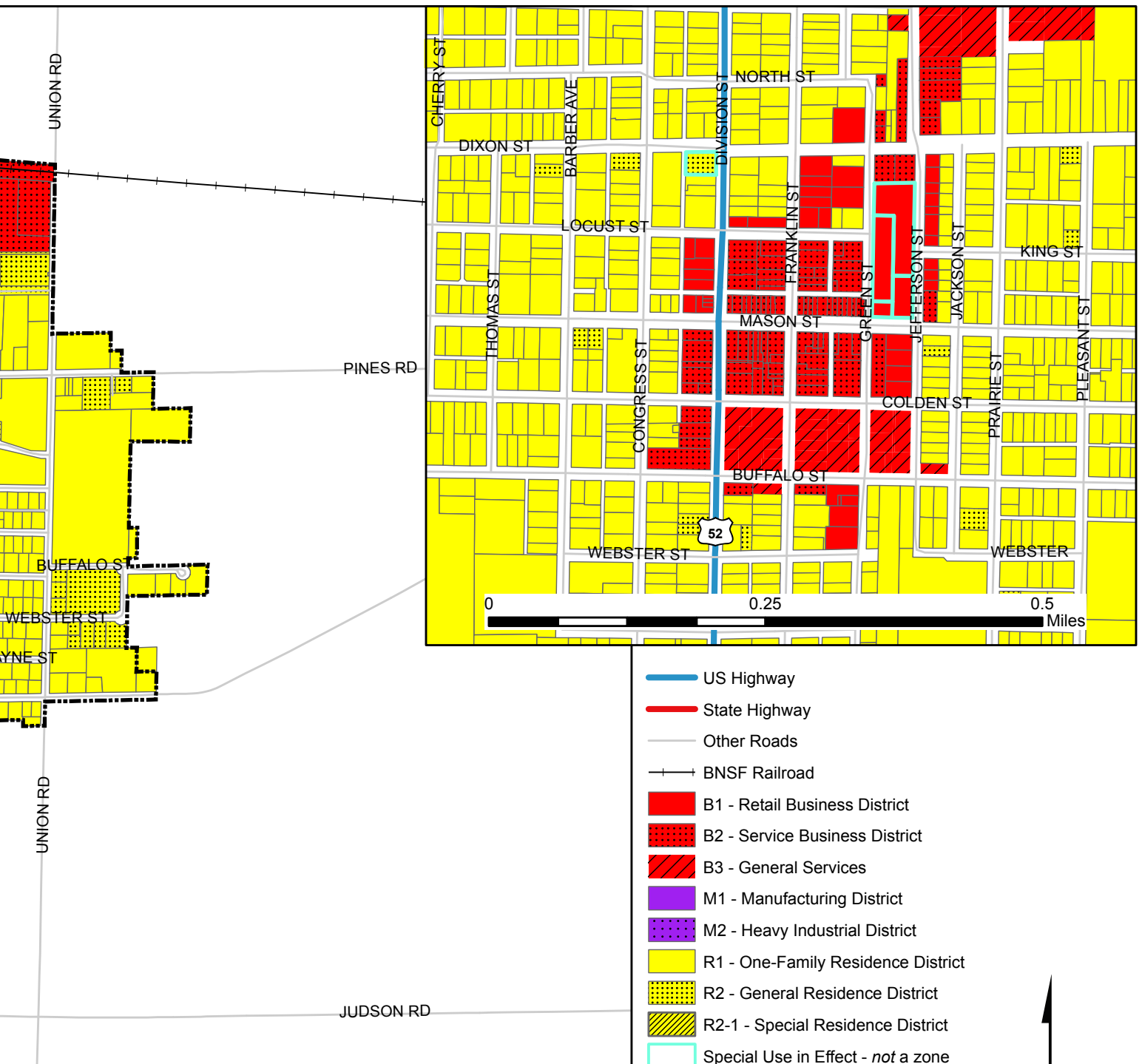
Herbaceous

Open Water

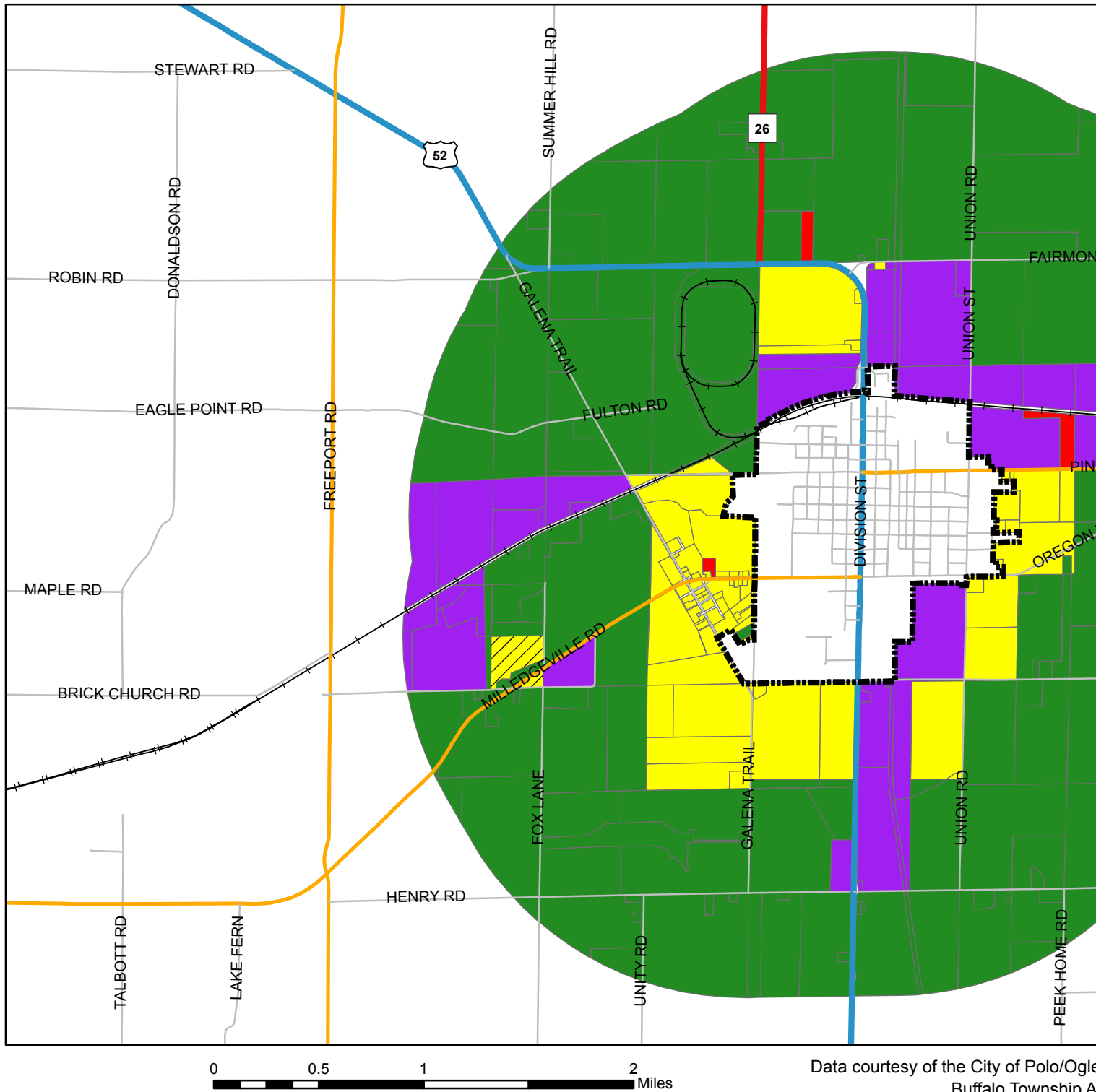
Existing Municipal Zoning - City of Polo

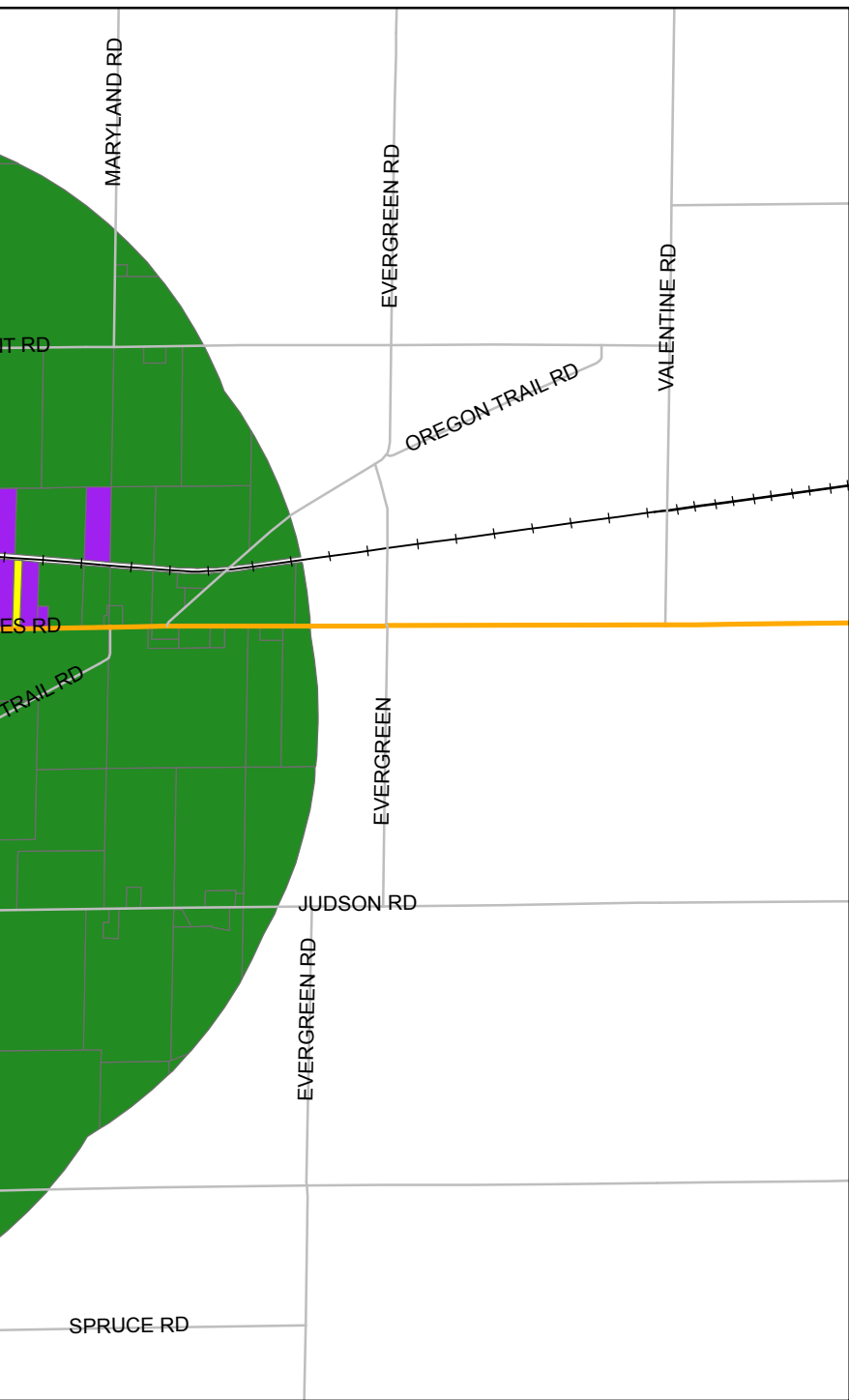








Downtown Area in Detail








Existing County Zoning - 1.5 Mile Planning Boundary - Polo Area



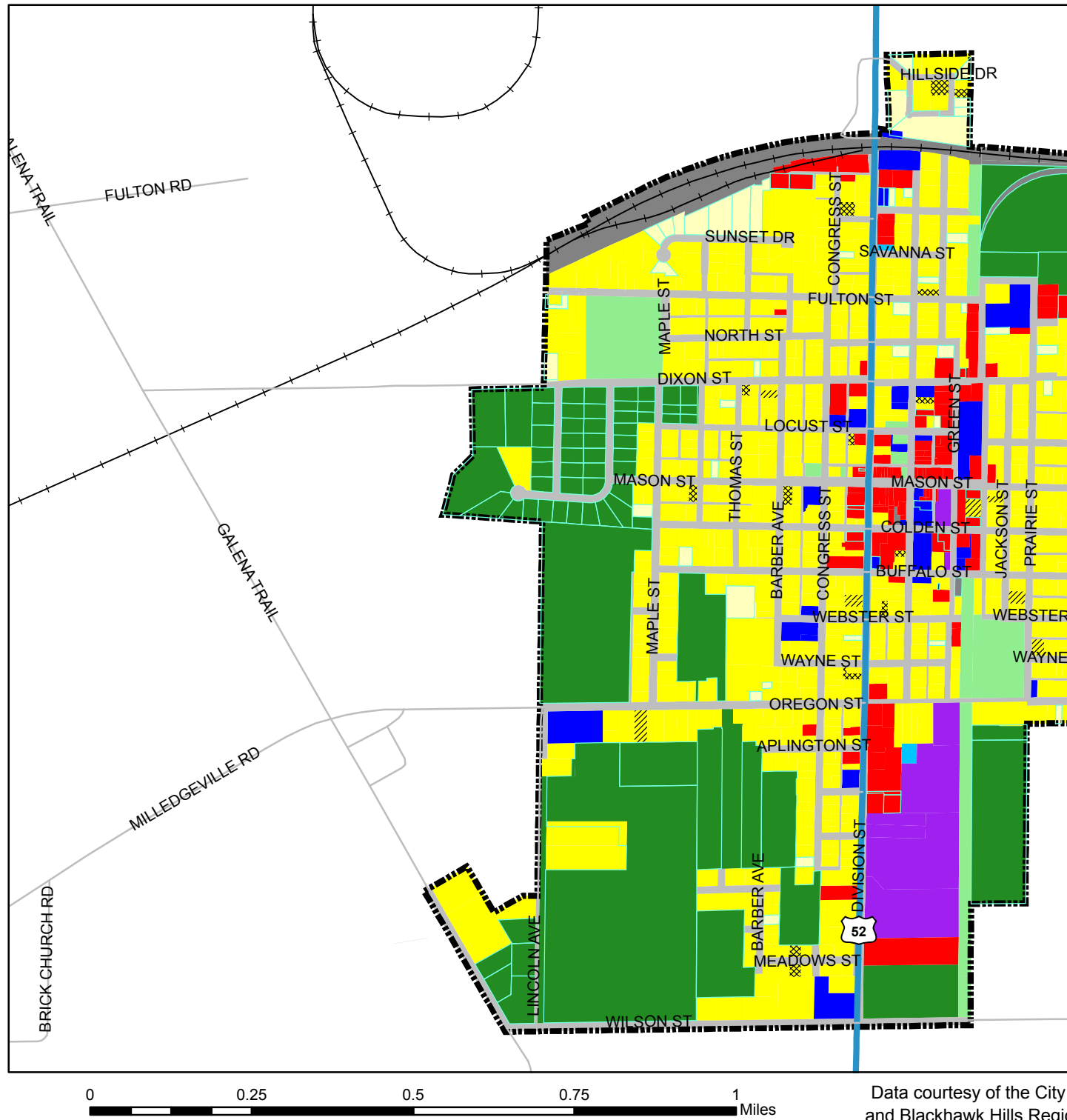


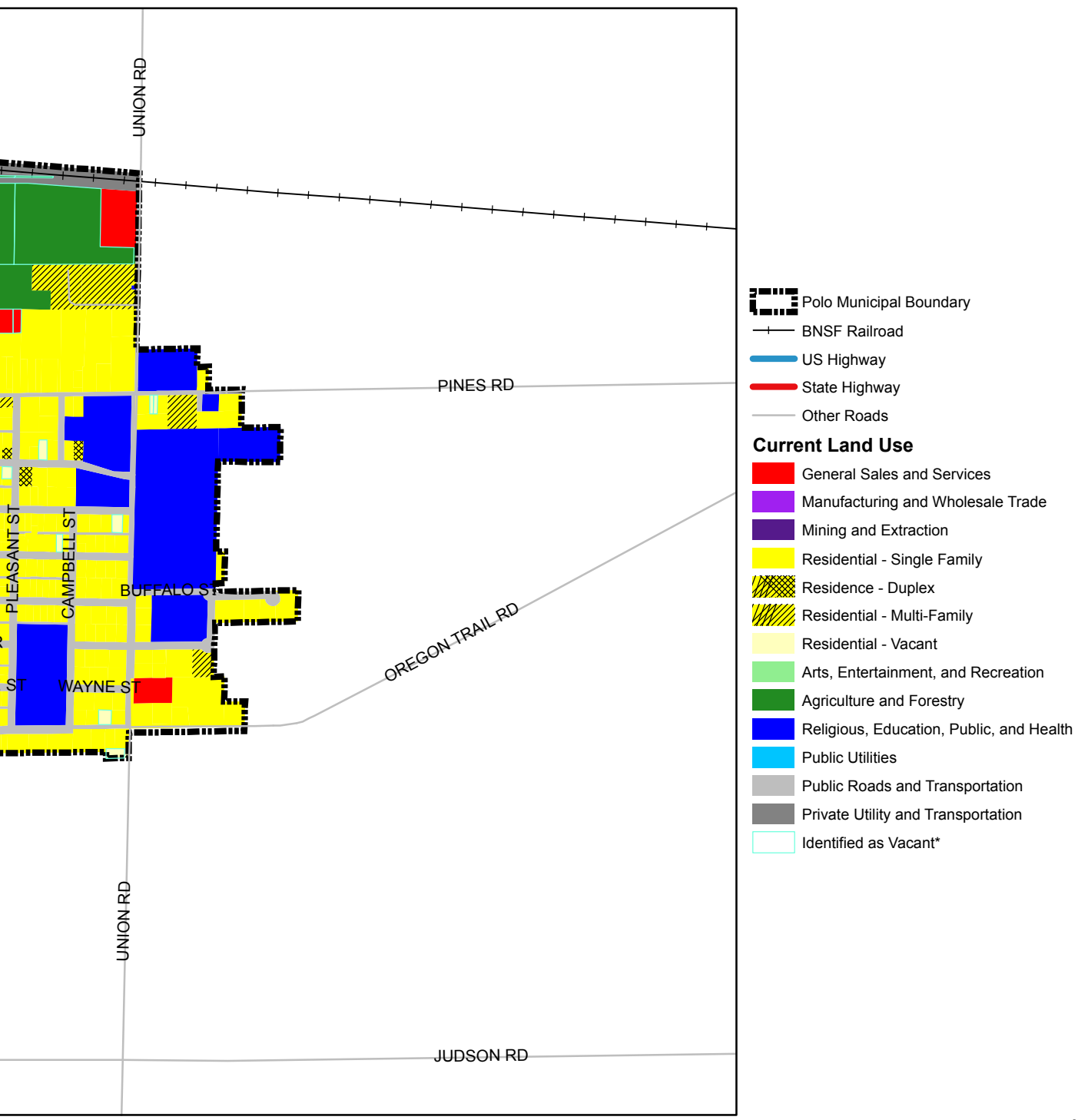
-  Municipal Boundary
-  US Highway
-  State Highway
-  County Road
-  Local Road
-  Railroad

County Zoning

-  County AG-1
-  County B-1
-  County I-1
-  County R-1 Rural Residence
-  County R-2 Single Family

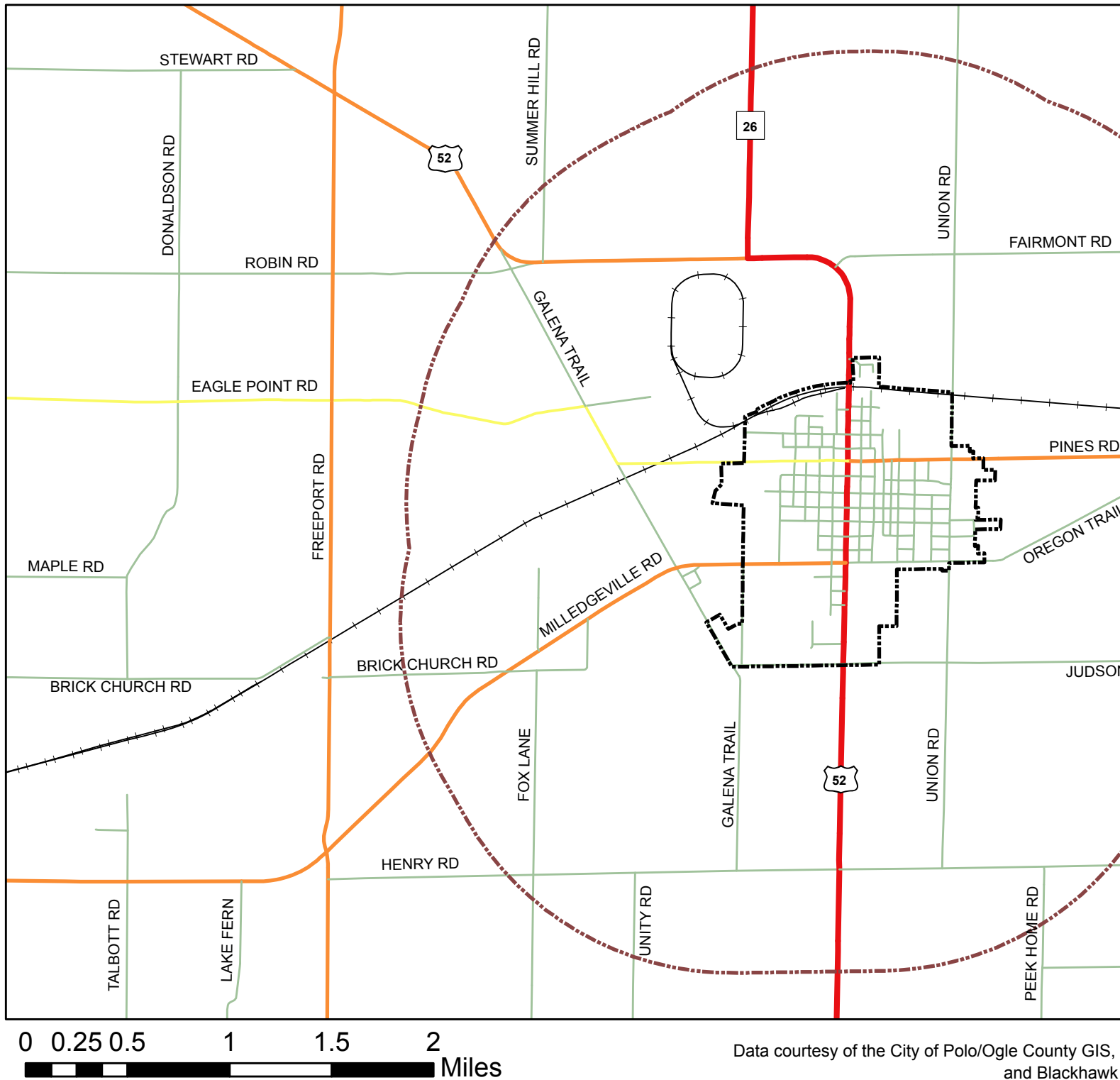
Vacant Parcels with Existing Land Use* - City of Polo

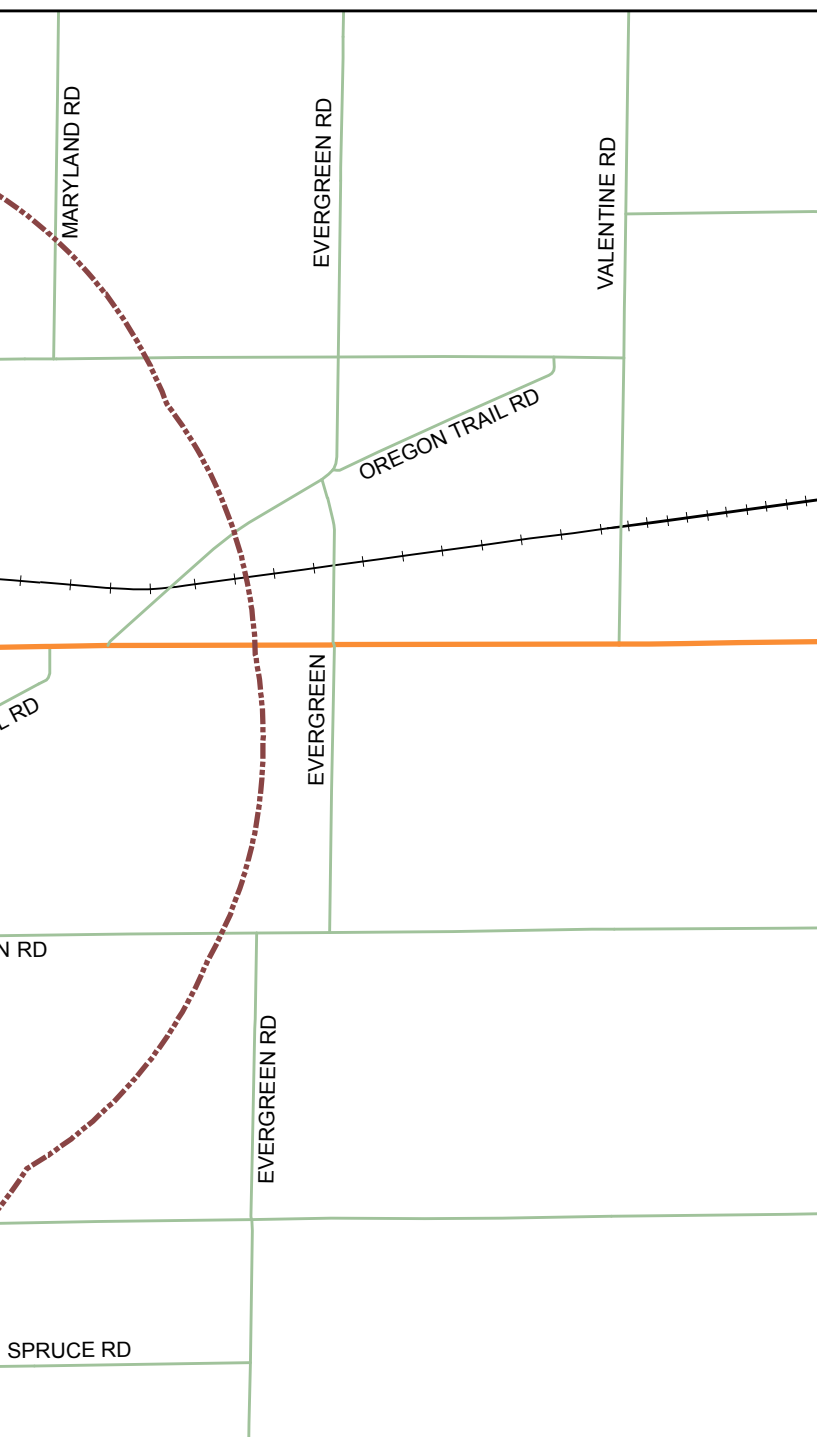






of Polo/Ogle County GIS, Illinois Department of Transportation T2 Database,
onal Council. *Vacant Property as identified by Ogle County Assessor's Office






Functional Road Classification - Polo Area



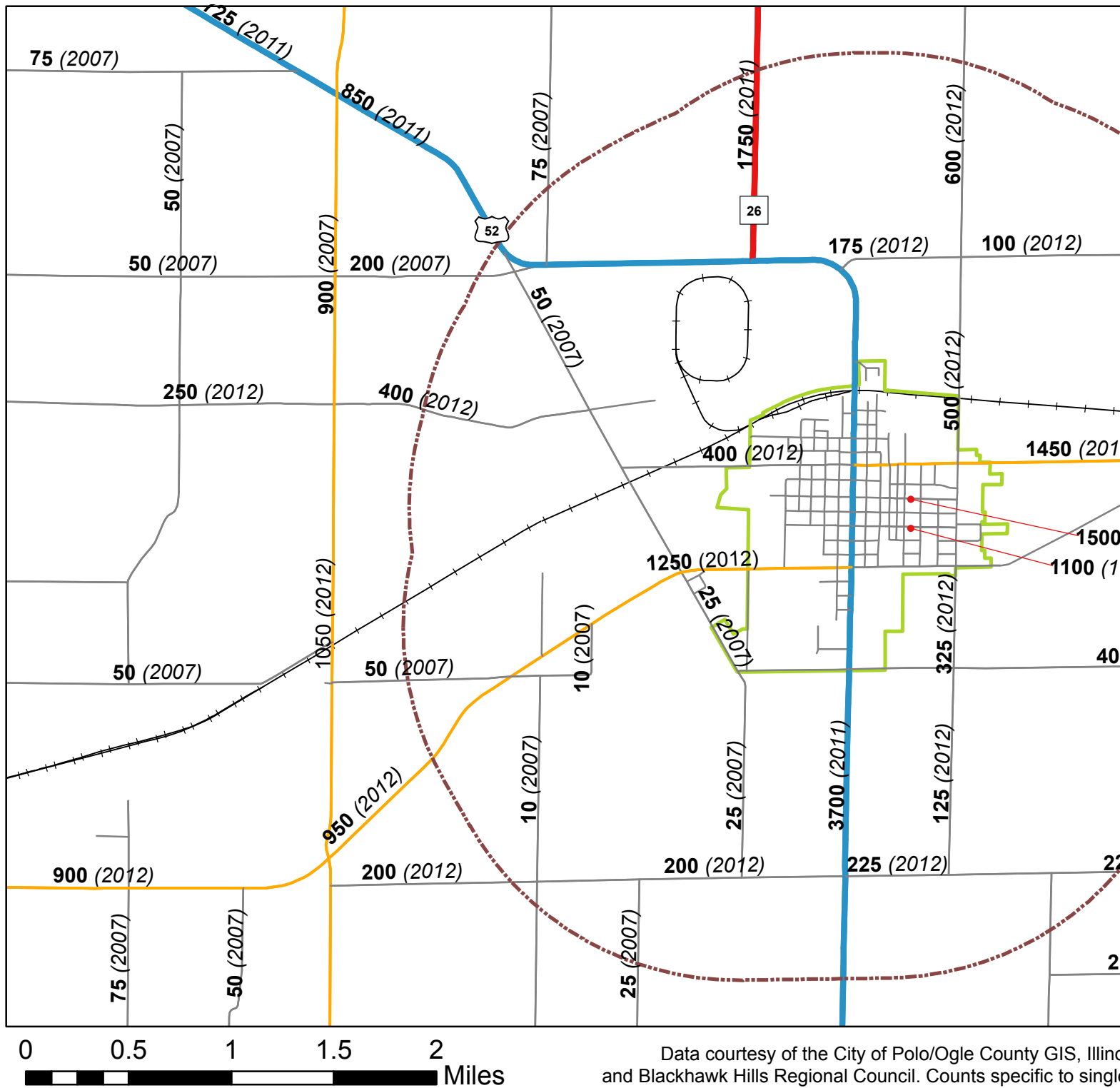


-  Polo Municipal Jurisdiction
-  Polo Municipal Area

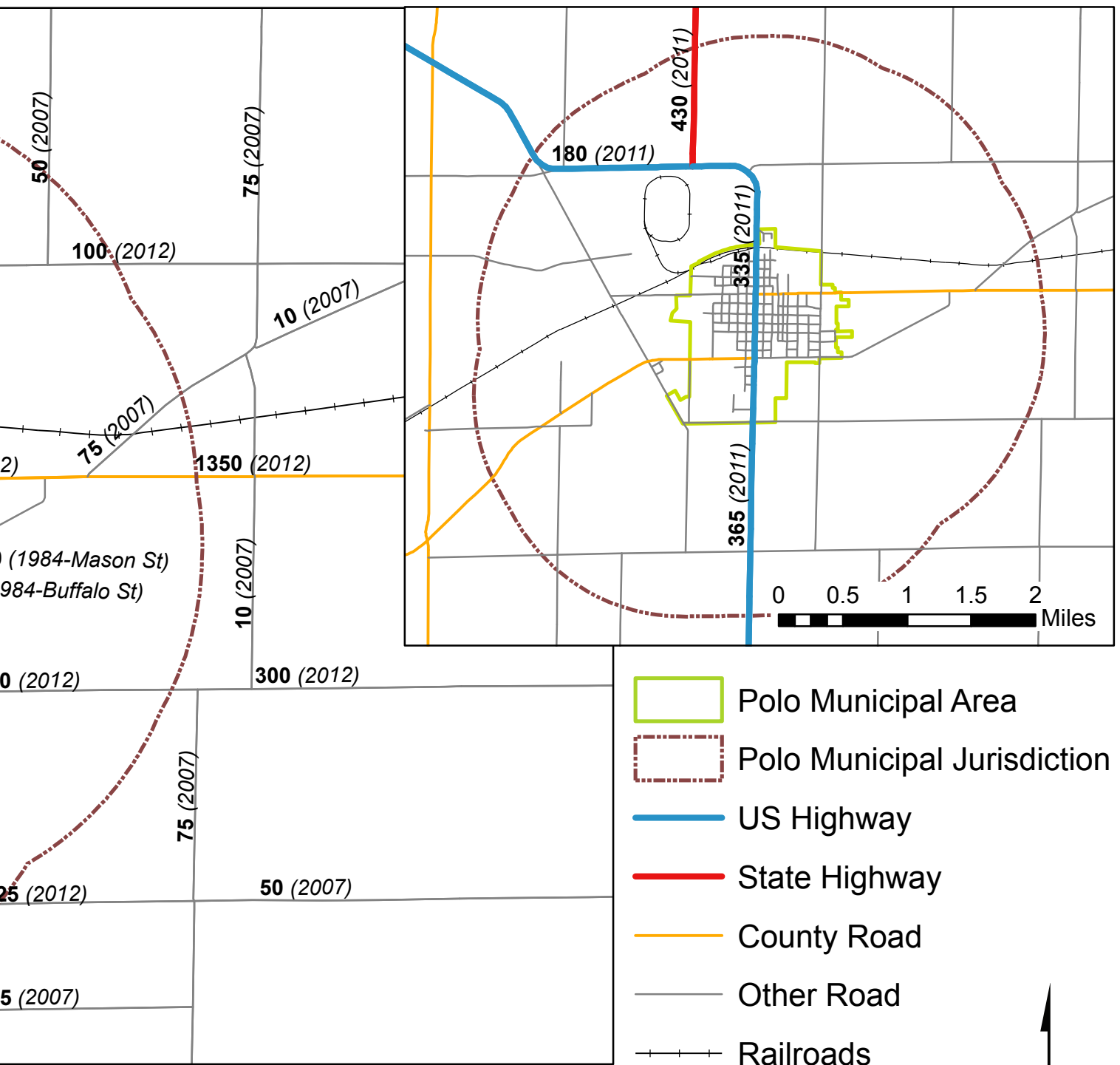
Area Roads

-  Local Road or Street
-  Minor Collector
-  Major Collector
-  Other Principal Arterial
-  Railroads

Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) - Total - Polo Area

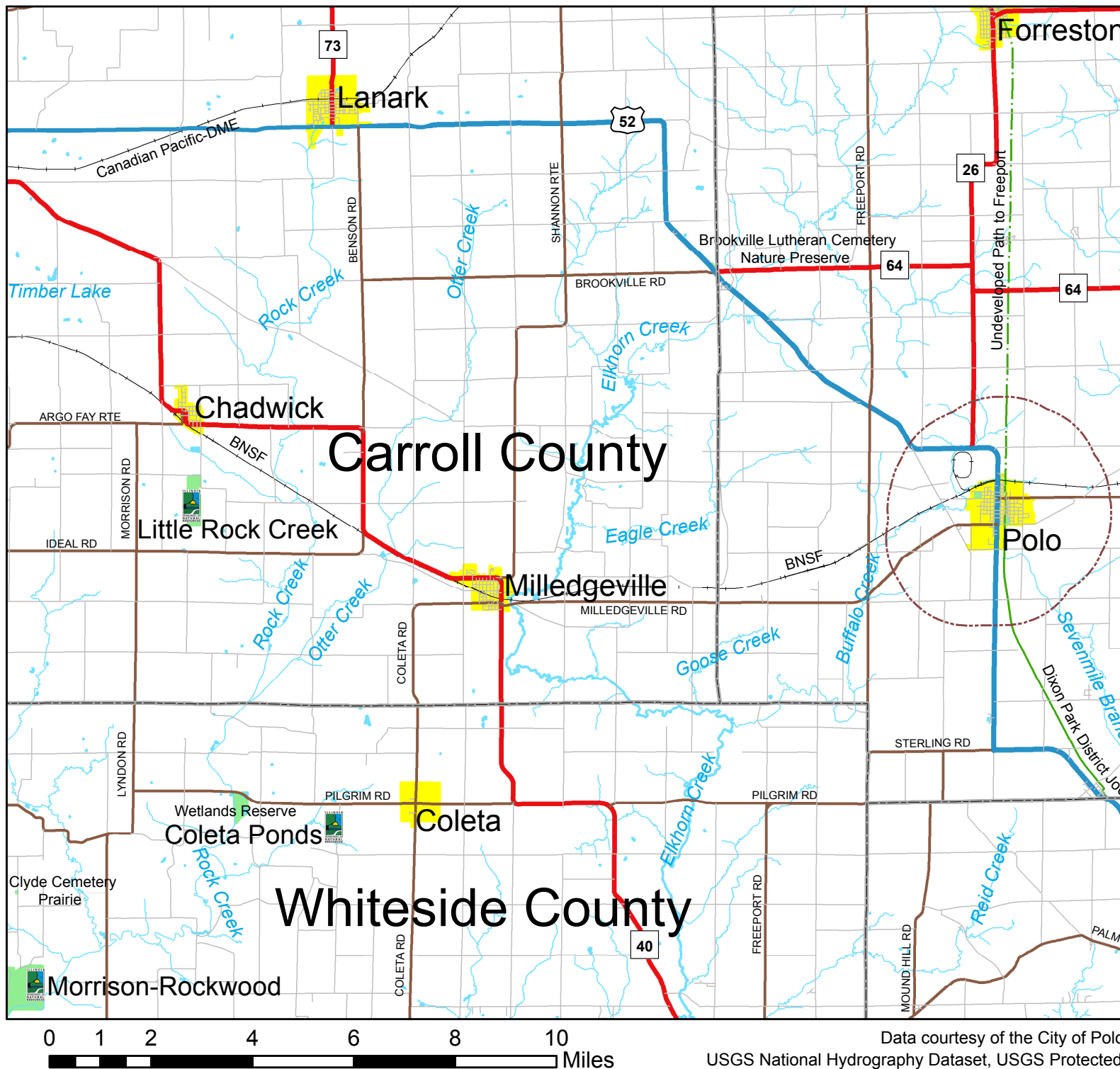


AADT - Trucks - Polo Area



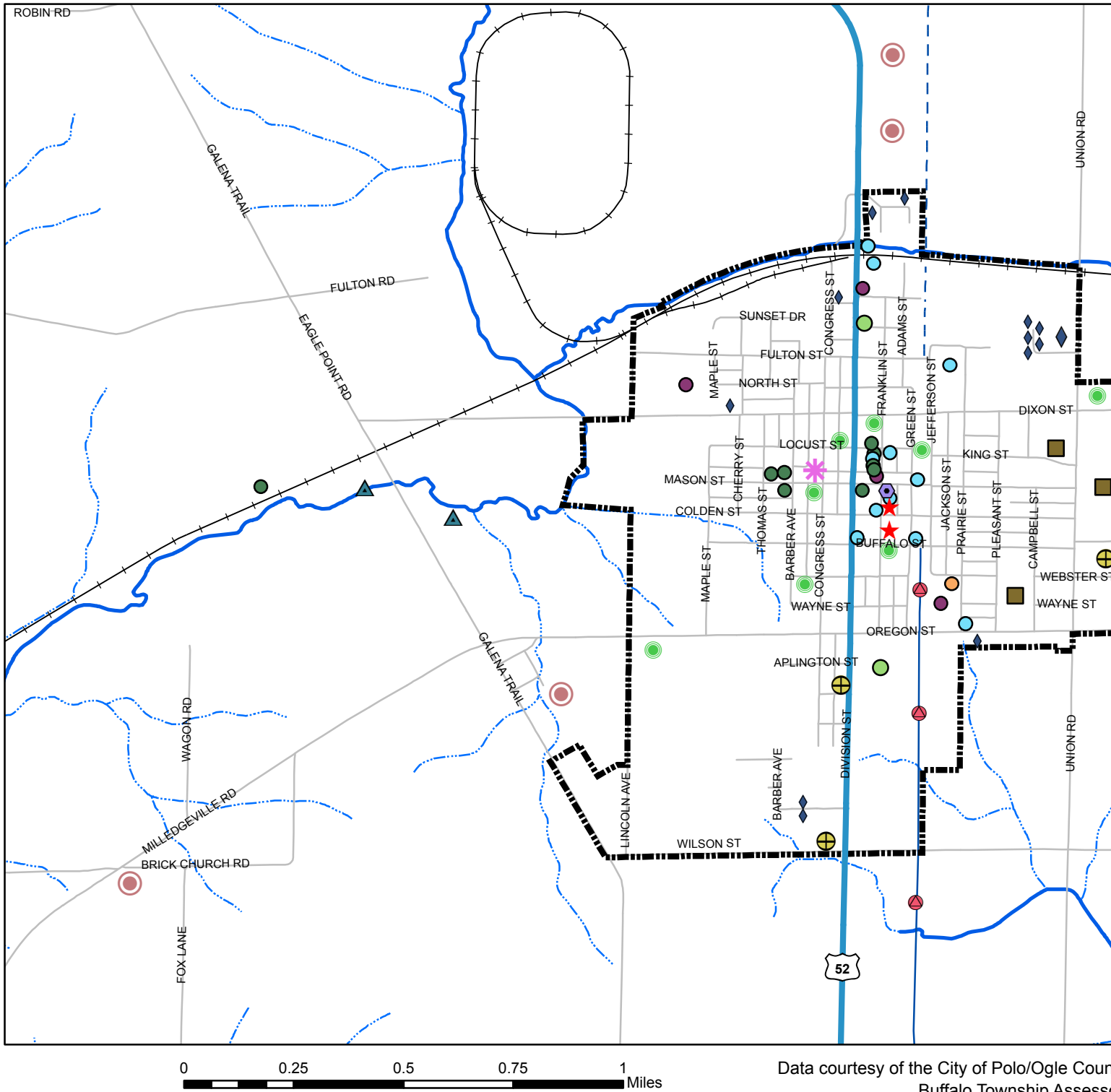
Illinois Department of Transportation T2 Database (2012),
the road segments. Number in parenthesis indicate year studied

Local & Regional Parks & Protected Areas - Polo Region

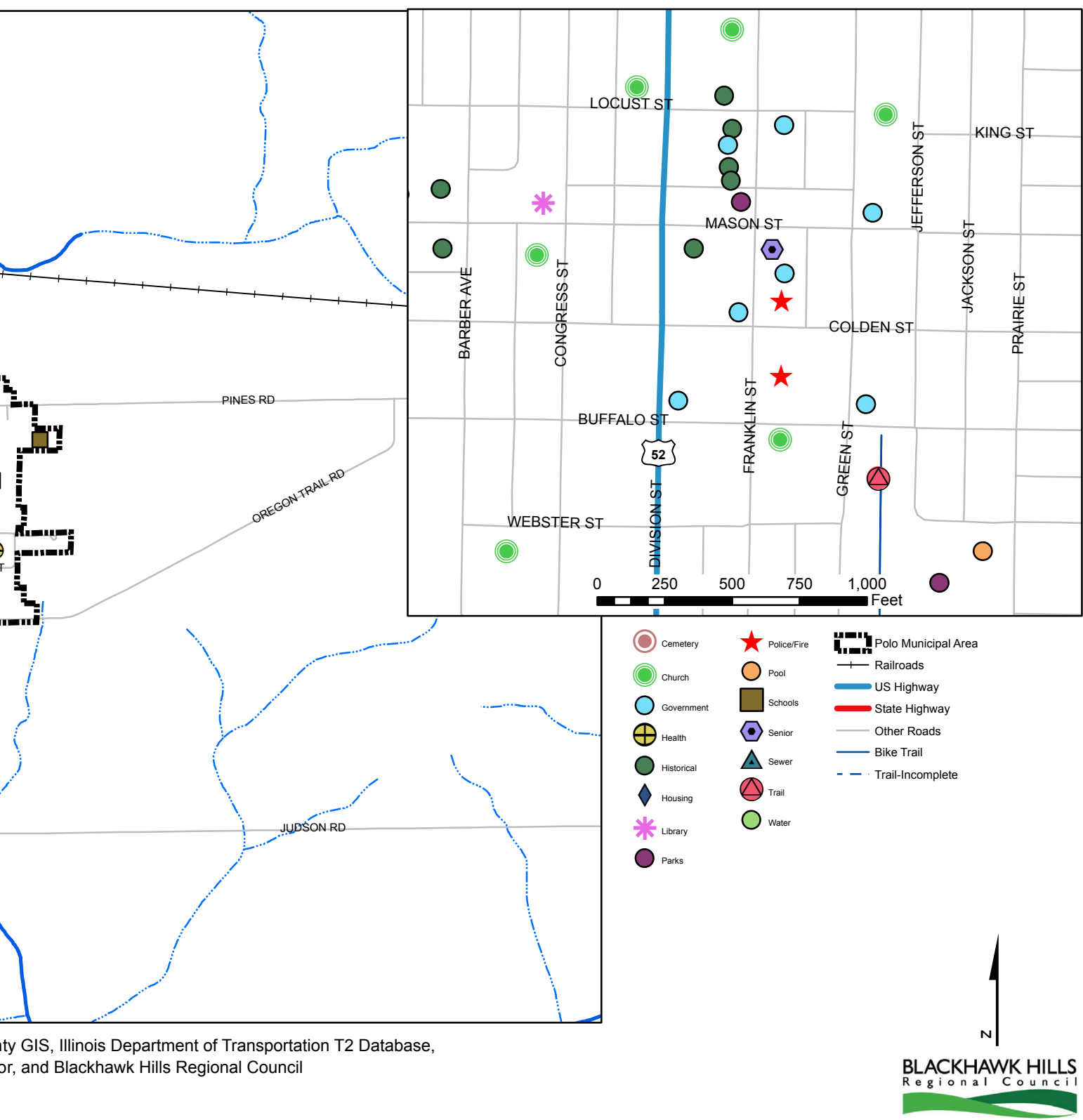




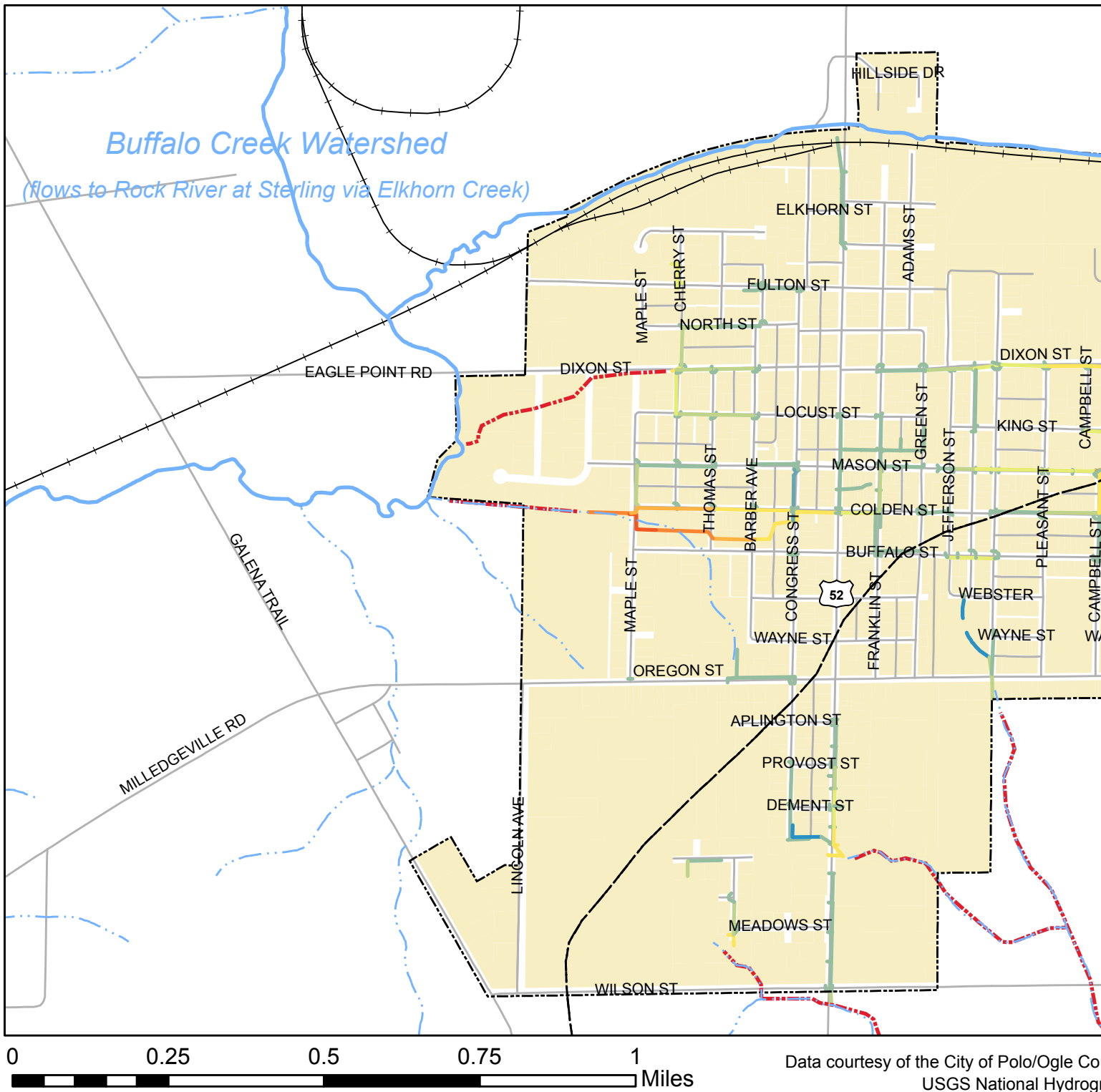
Community Facilities - Polo Area



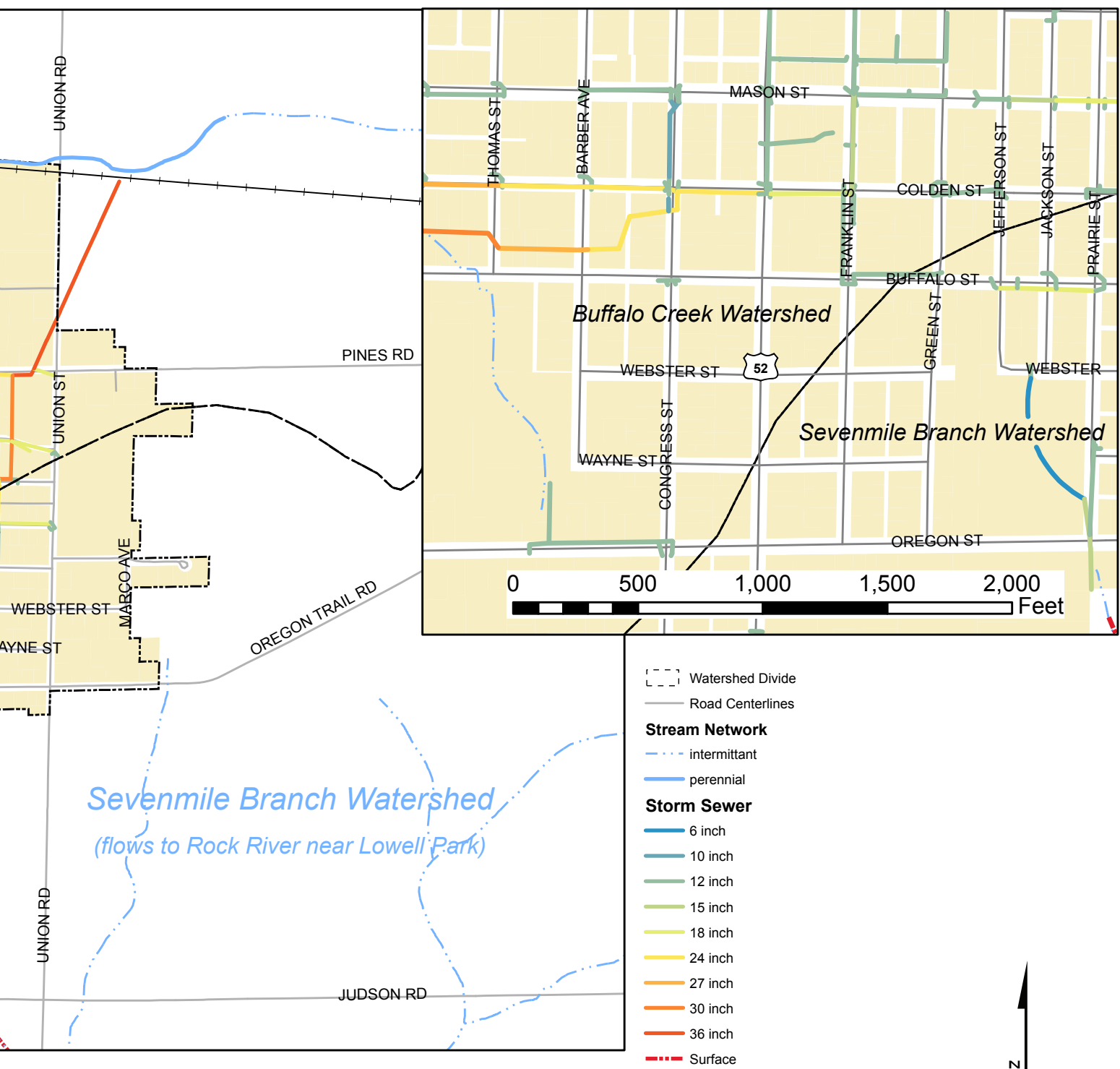
Downtown Detail



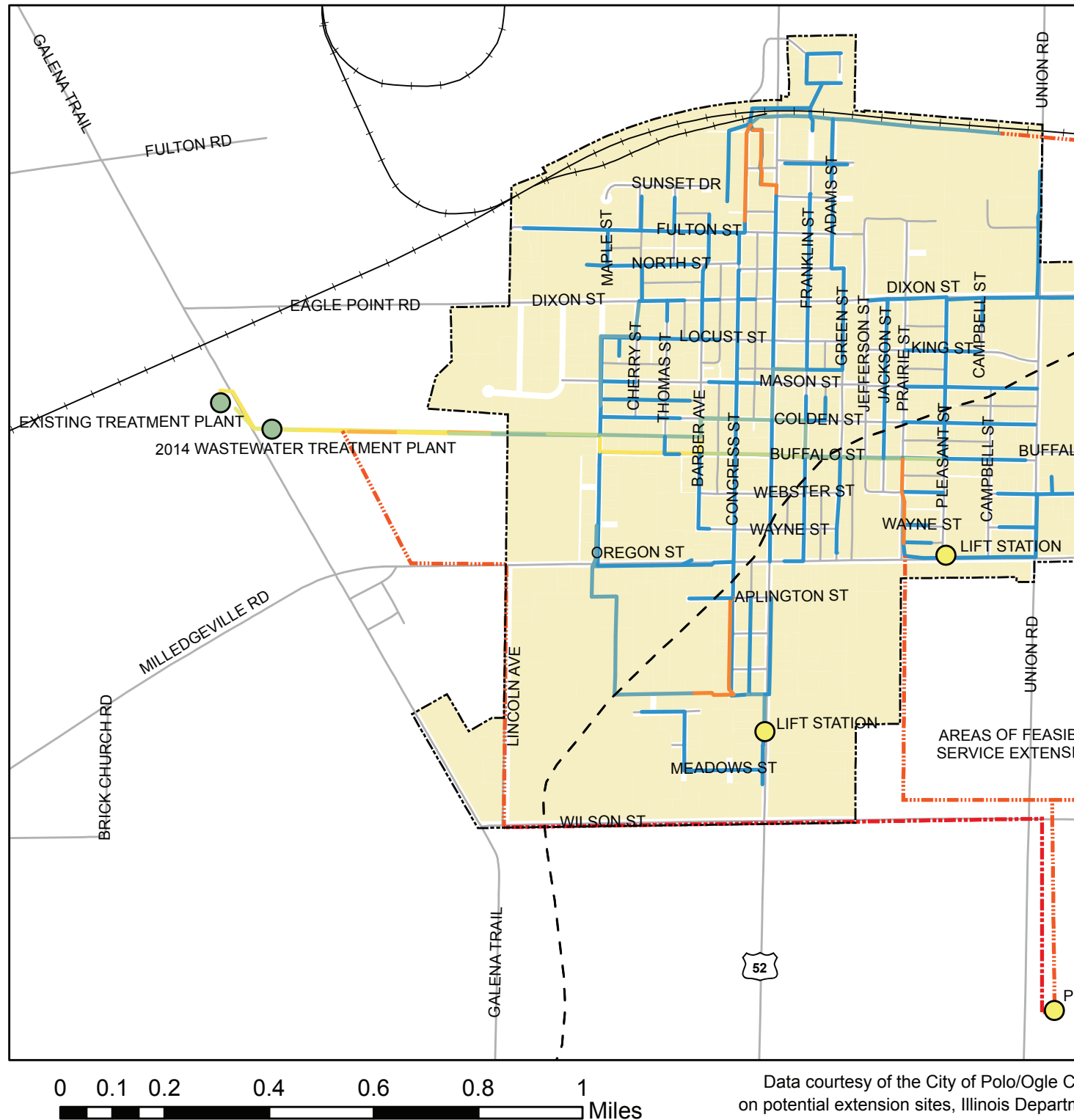
Current/Future Storm Sewer - City of Polo

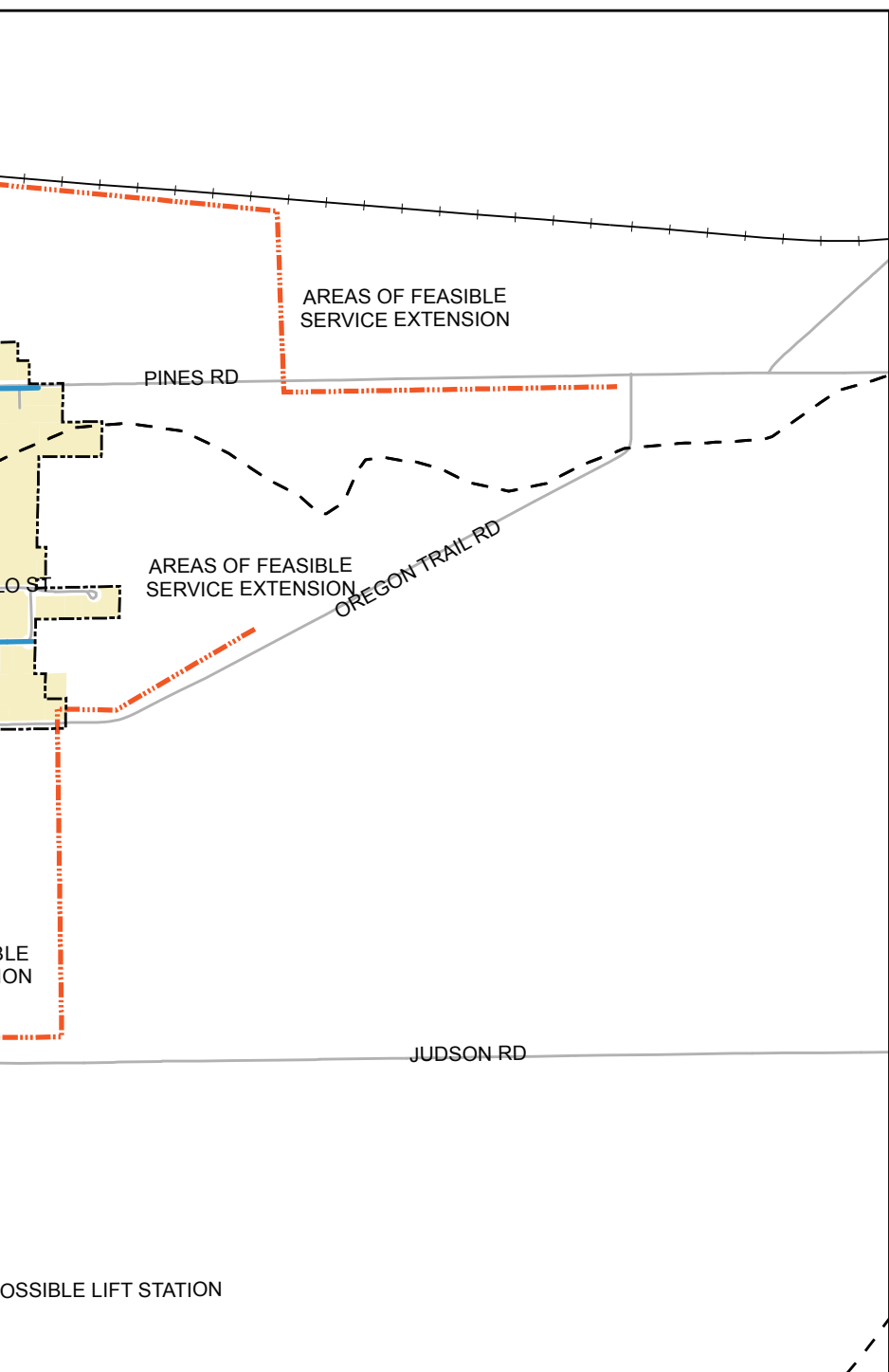


US 52 S - 4,900' Industrial Extension



Current/Future Wastewater Sewer - City of Polo





- Watershed Divide
- Road Centerlines

Sewer Facilities

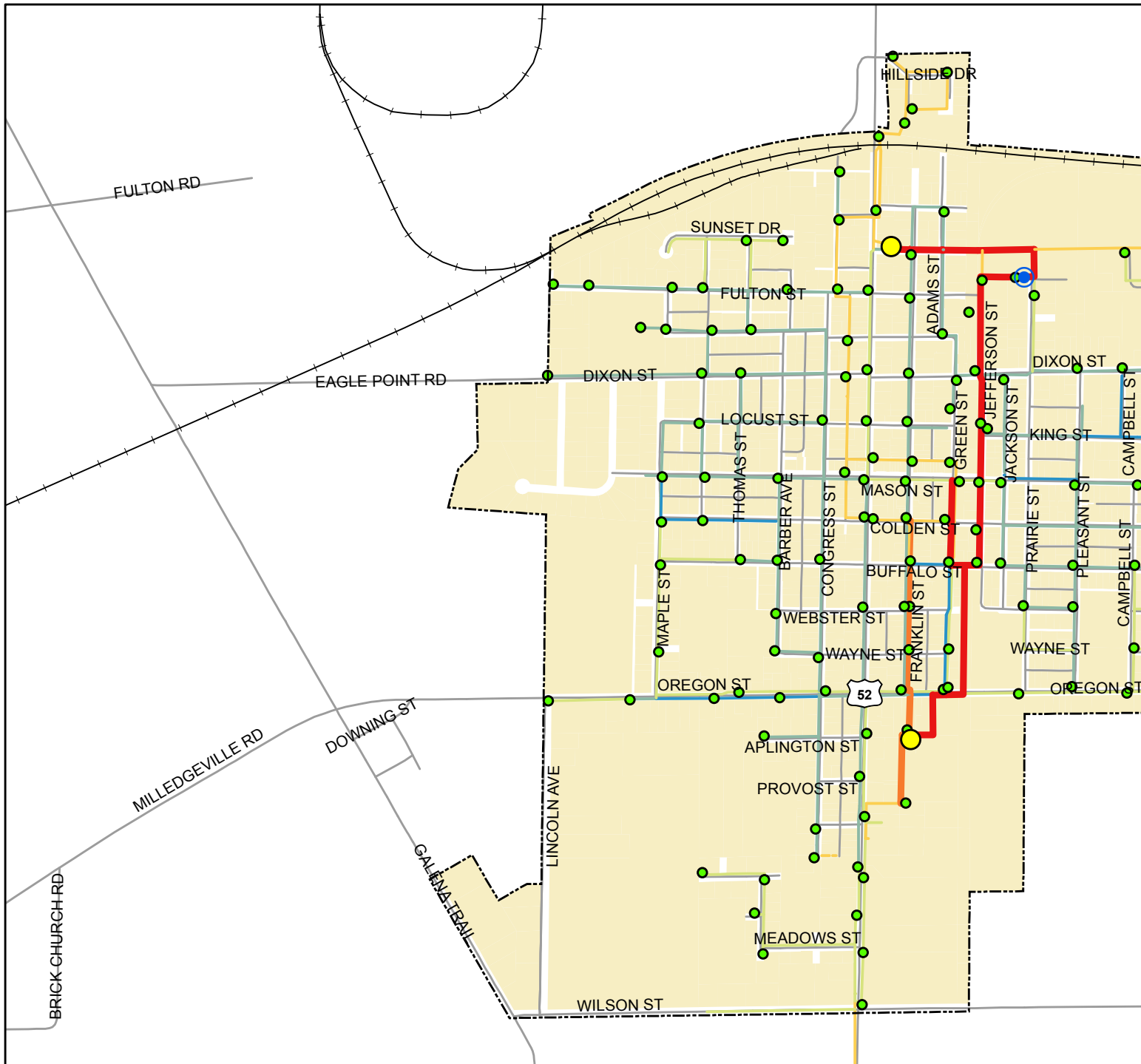
- Lift Station
- Treatment Plants

Sanitary Sewer

- Sanitary Sewer, 8 in
- Sanitary Sewer, 10 in
- Sanitary Sewer, 12 in
- Sanitary Sewer, 15 in
- Sanitary Sewer, 16 in
- Sanitary Sewer, 18 in
- Sanitary Sewer, 21 in
- Forcemain
- Proposed Extensions
- Proposed Forcemain

County GIS, 2002 Polo Comprehensive Plan (Willett Hofman & Associates)
ment of Transportation T2 Database, and Blackhawk Hills Regional Council.
were found feasible but may not correspond with comprehensive plan goals

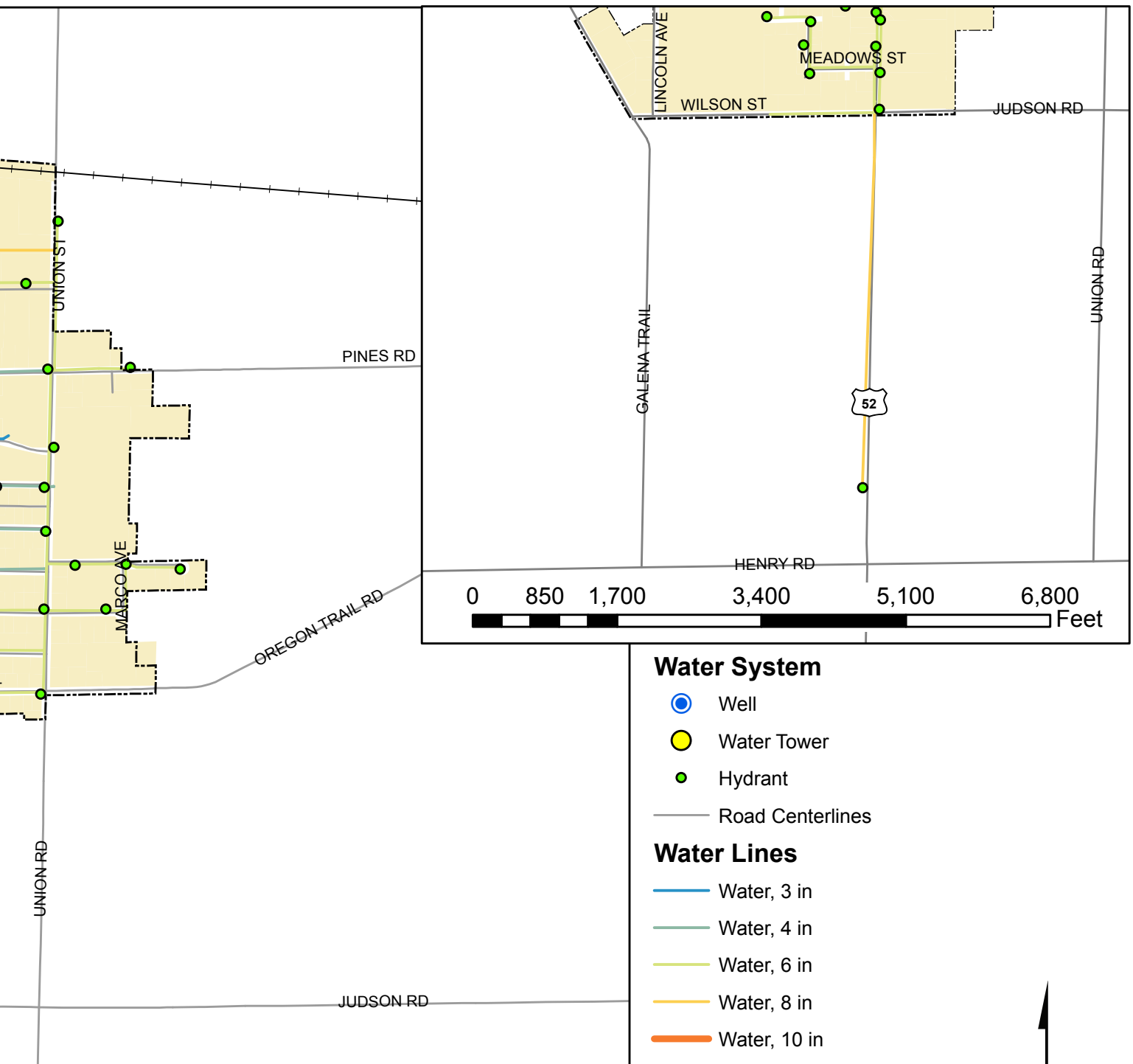
Current/Future Water - City of Polo



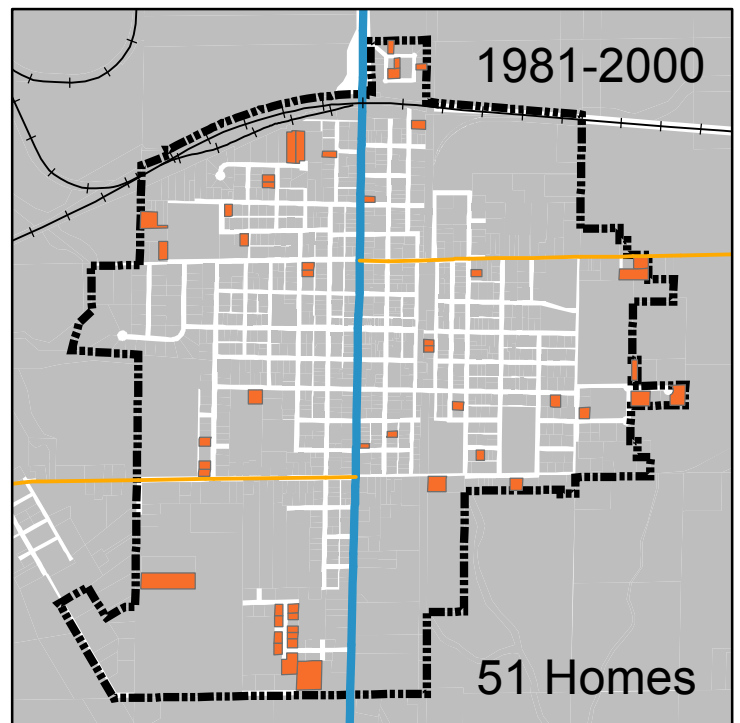
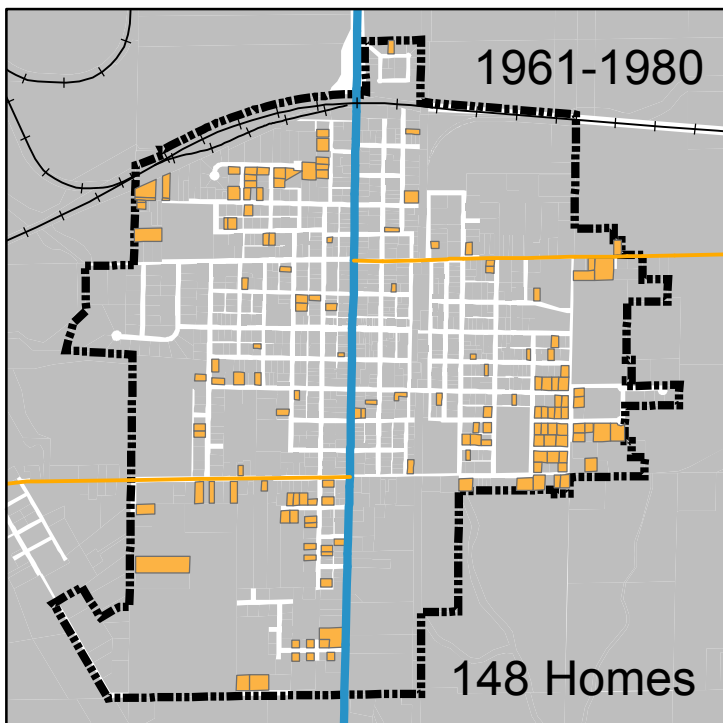
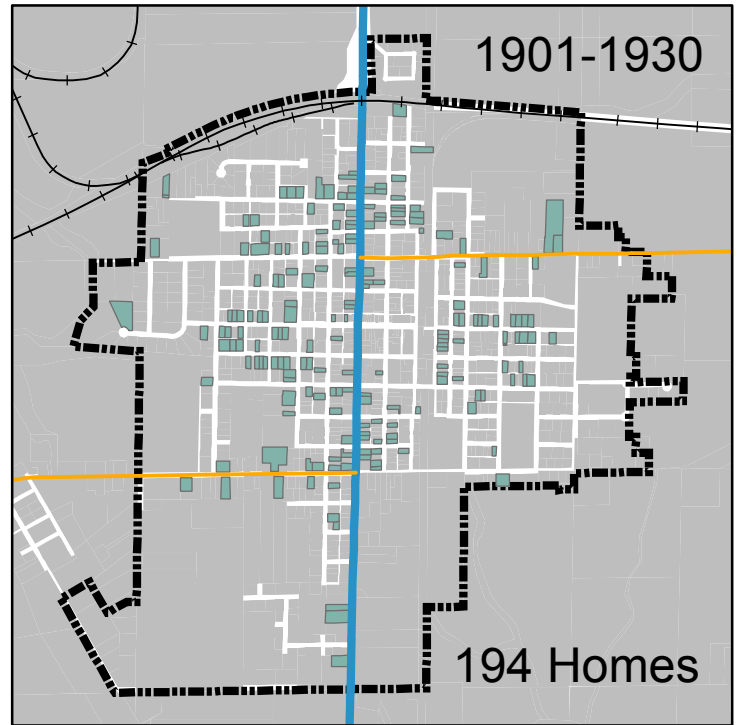
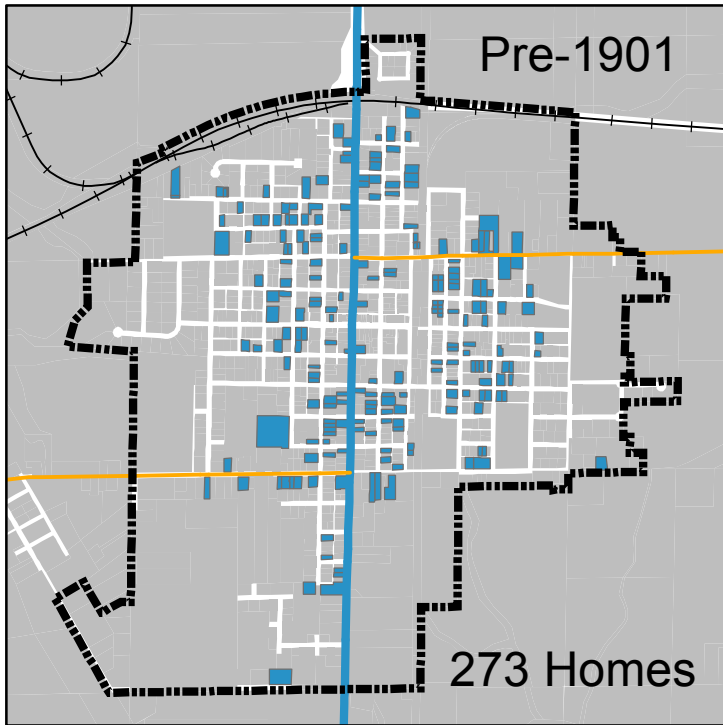
0 0.125 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 Miles

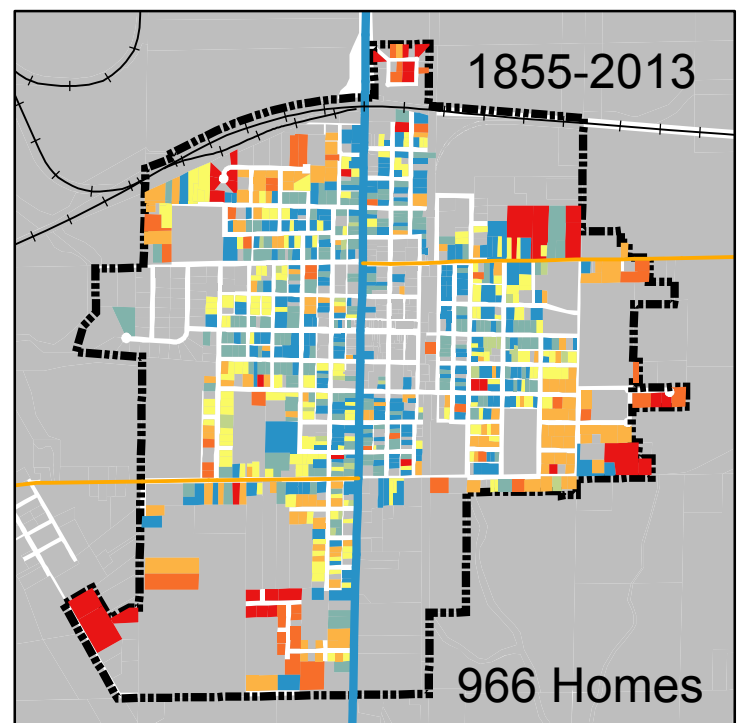
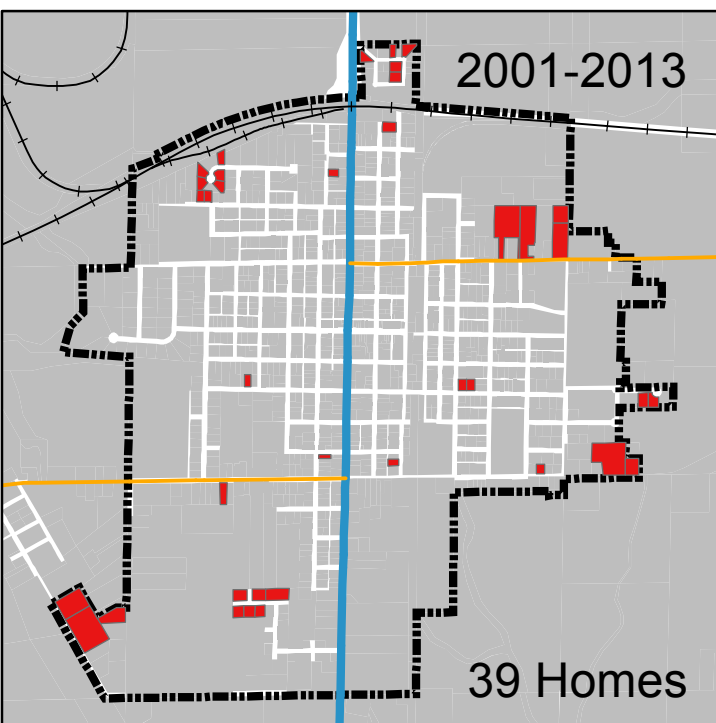
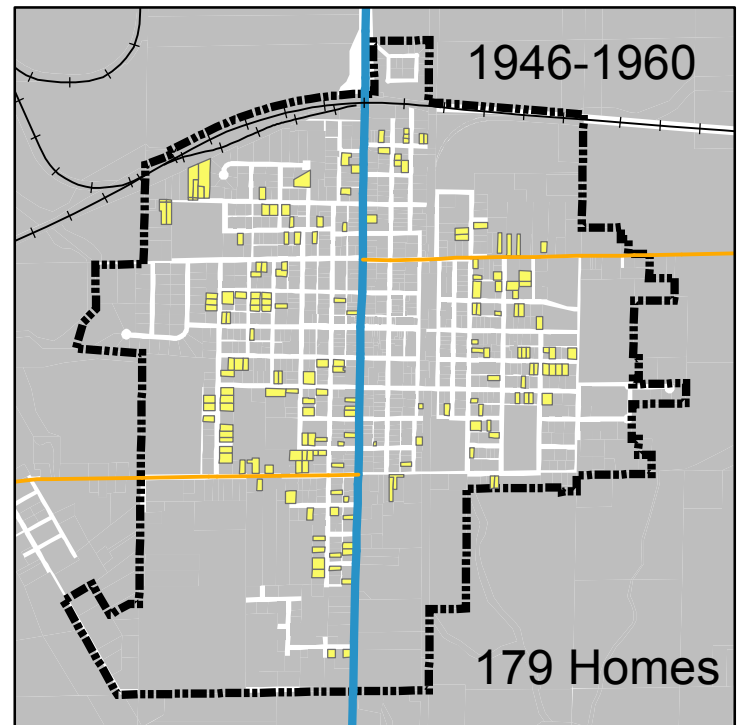
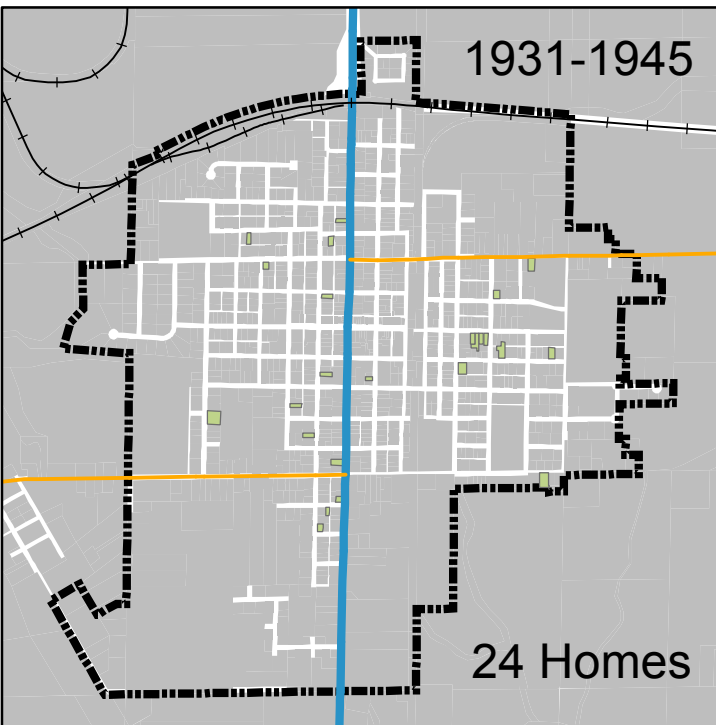
Data courtesy of the City of Polo/Ogle County
Illinois Department of Transportation

US 52 S - 4,900' Industrial Extension



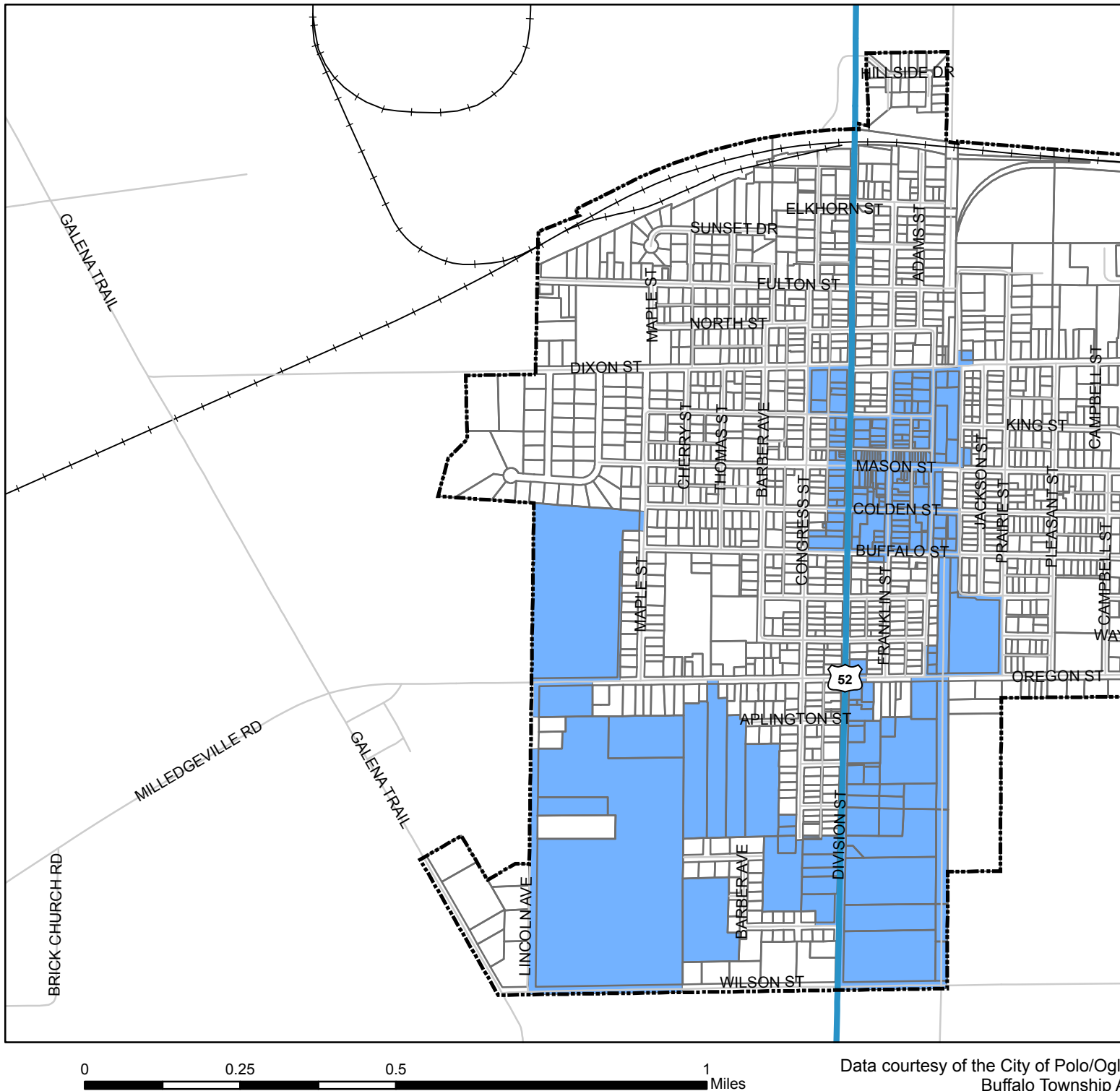
Housing Age - City of Polo





Regional Council. Street grid is current; some streets illustrated did not exist in all time periods

Polo Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District - City of Polo



Downtown Detail of TIF District
















APPENDIX A-1:










Existing Land Use & Zoning Legend

86

EXISTING LAND USE MAP COLORS

| Land Use | Map Color | Description |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|
| <i>General Sales and Services</i> |  | Red |
| <i>Manufacturing and Wholesale Trade</i> |  | Purple |
| <i>Mining and Extraction</i> |  | Dark Purple |
| <i>Residence/Single Family</i> |  | Yellow |
| <i>Residential Duplex</i> |  | Yellow with Diamond Cross-Hatching |
| <i>Residential Multi-Family</i> |  | Yellow with Diagonal Cross-Hatching |
| <i>Residential/Vacant</i> |  | Light Yellow |
| <i>Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation</i> |  | Light Green |
| <i>Agriculture and Forestry</i> |  | Green |
| <i>Religious, Education, Public, and Health</i> |  | Blue |
| <i>Public Utilities</i> |  | Light Blue |
| <i>Roads and Transport</i> |  | Light Gray |
| <i>Private Utility and Transportation</i> |  | Gray |

ZONING MAP COLORS

| Zoning | Map Color | Description |
|--|---|-------------------------------------|
| <i>Residential</i> | | |
| R1- One-Family Residence District |  | Yellow |
| R2- General Residence District |  | Yellow with Dot Cross-Hatching |
| R2.1- Special Residence District |  | Yellow with Diagonal Cross-Hatching |
| <i>Commercial</i> | | |
| B1- Retail Business District |  | Red |
| B2- Services Business District |  | Red with Dot Cross-Hatching |
| B3- General Services |  | Red with Diagonal Cross-Hatching |
| <i>Manufacturing</i> | | |
| M1- Manufacturing District |  | Purple |
| M2- Heavy Industrial District |  | Purple with Dot Cross-Hatching |
| <i>Other</i> | | |
| Special Use in Effect (<i>not</i> a zone) |  | Light Blue (outline only) |



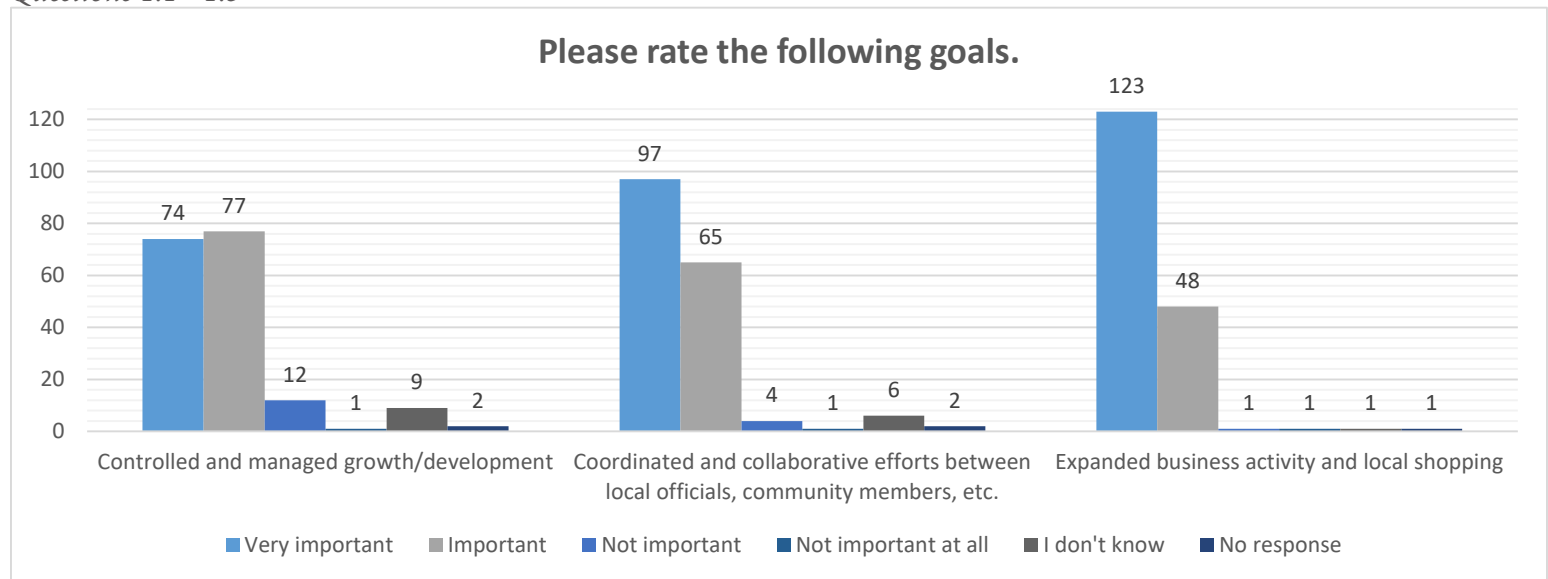
*Polo's Odd Fellows Lodge, recognized on the
National Register of Historic Places*

APPENDIX A-2: Survey

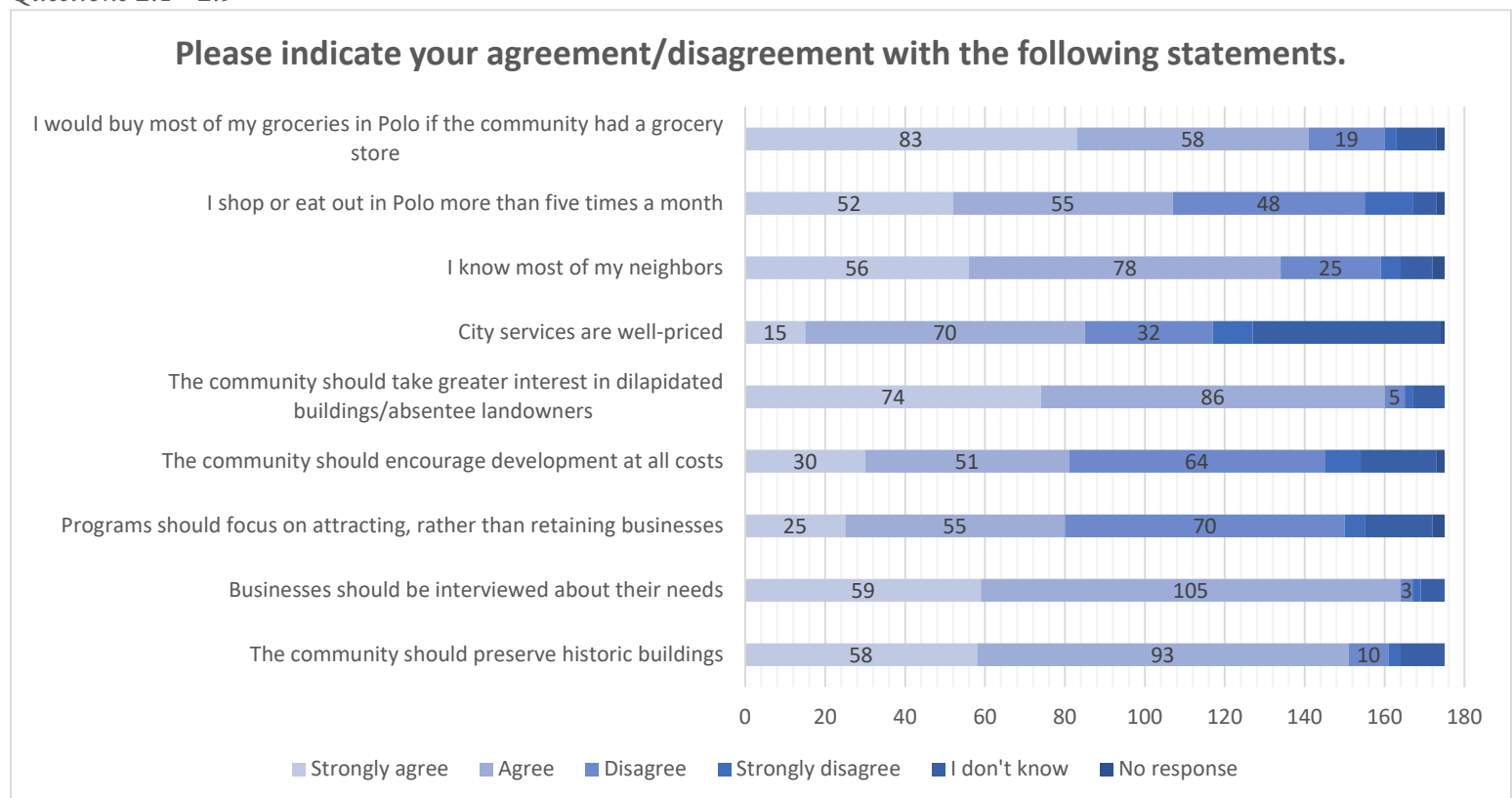
88

Planning for Polo survey responses presented here are either complete or in summary form. Those in summary form (open response-type questions) were simplified and/or categorized to assist presentation. Not all questions are included, although raw data is available for review (and would be worth reviewing, especially for unique or useful ideas). Please note that not all respondents chose to answer every question; some provided multiple responses.

Questions 1.1 - 1.3

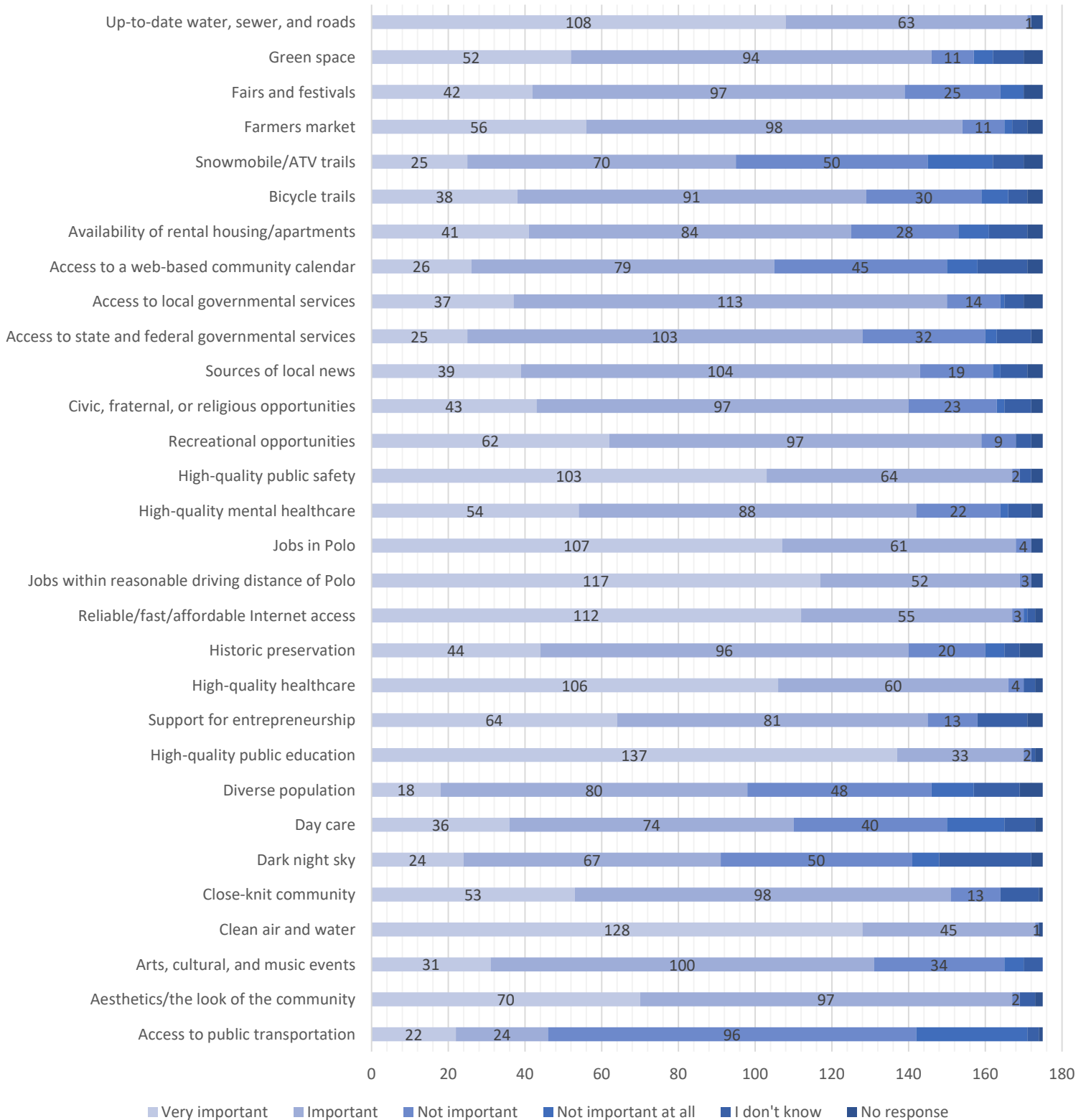


Questions 2.1 - 2.9



Questions 3.1 - 3.30

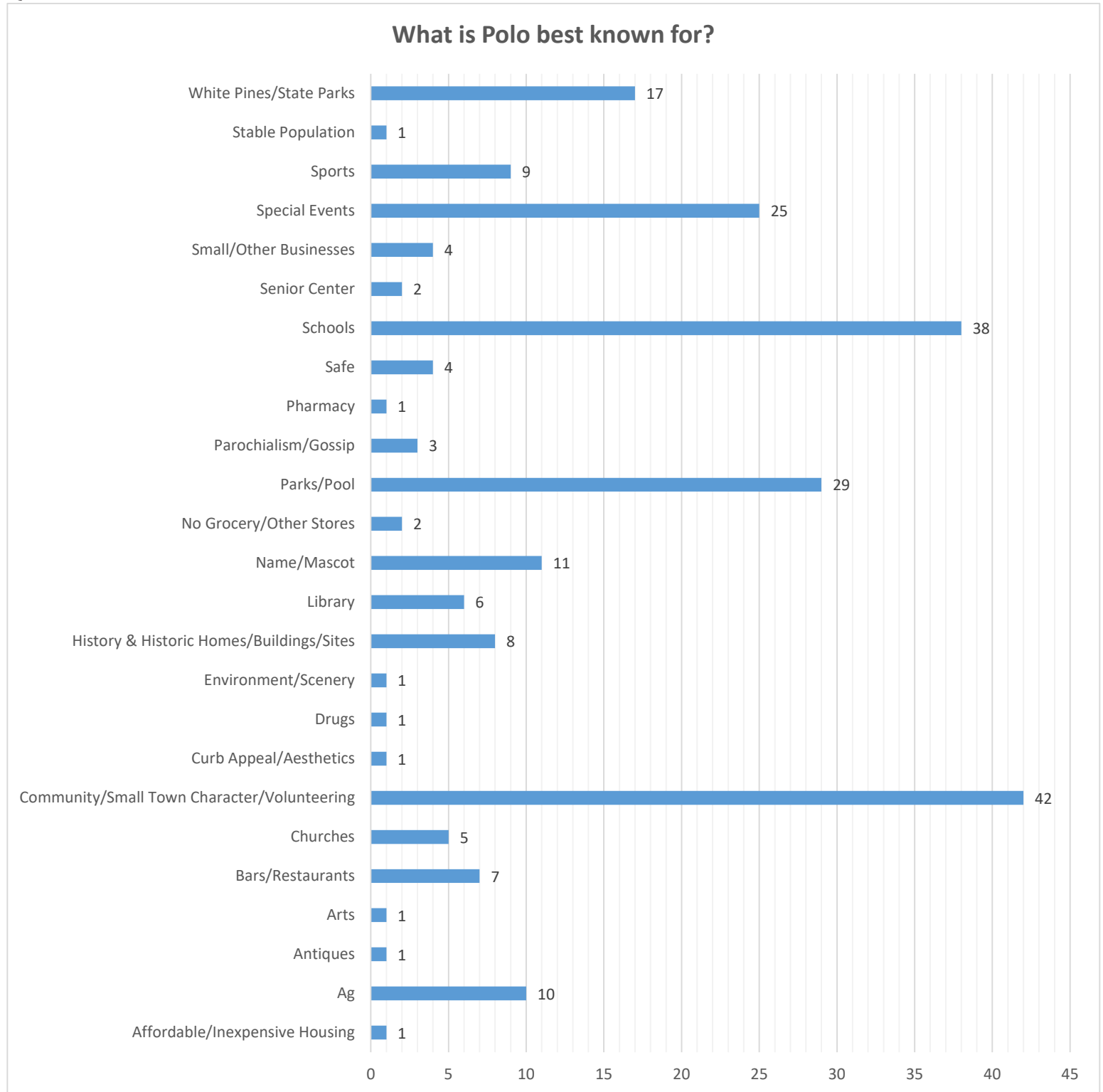
How important are the following to you?



APPENDIX A-2: Public Feedback, cont'd.

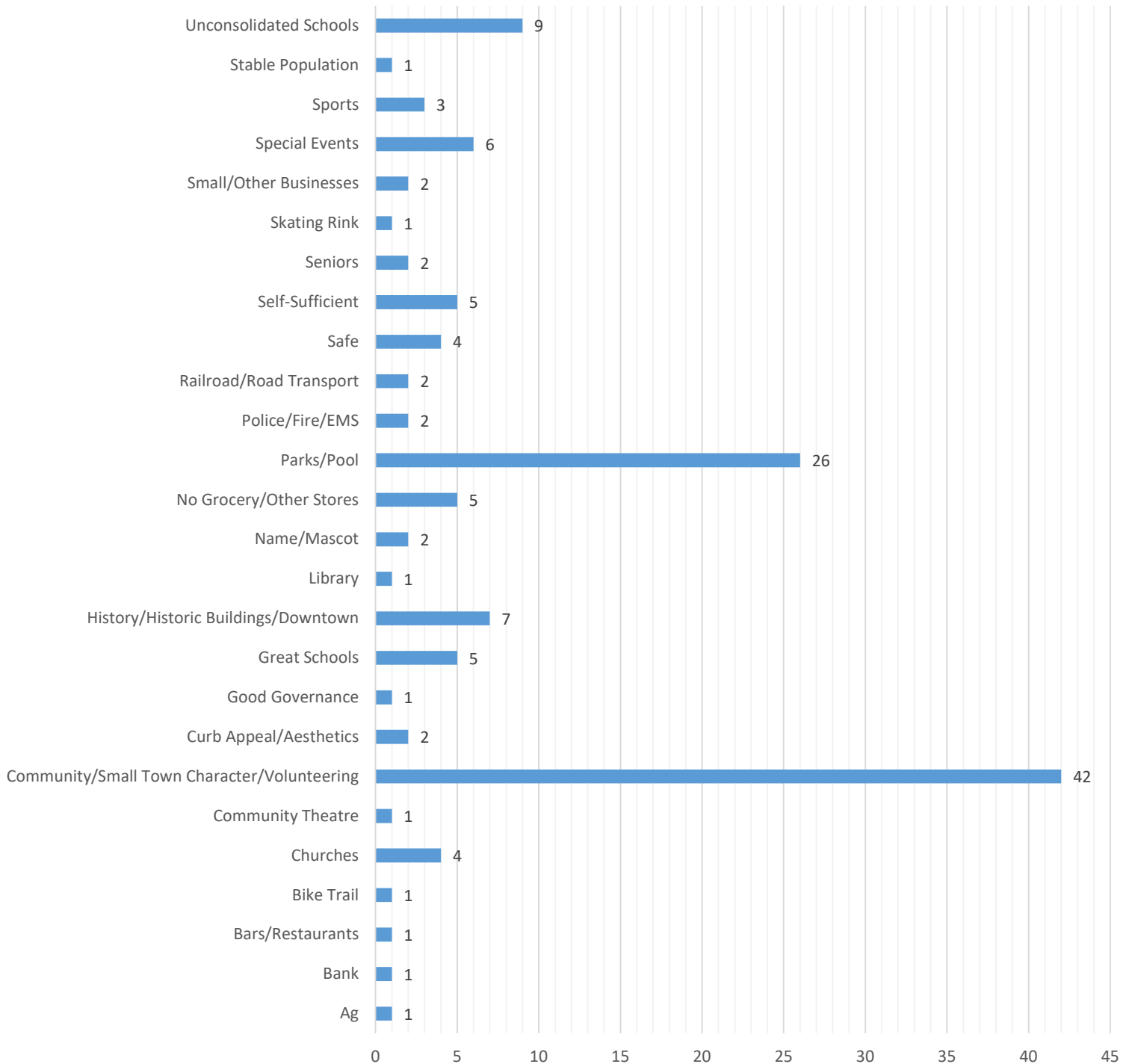
90

Question 4.1



Question 4.2

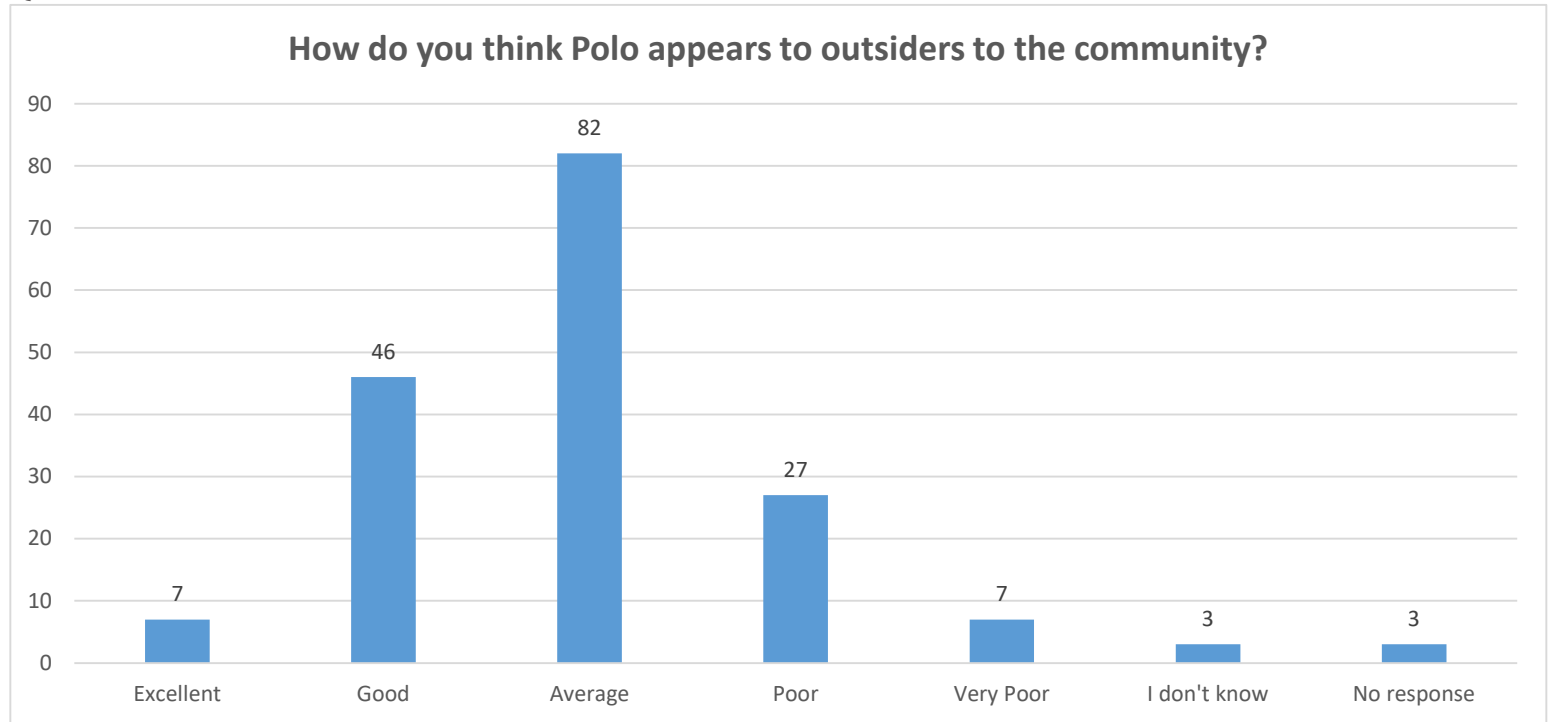
How is Polo unique compared with other communities?



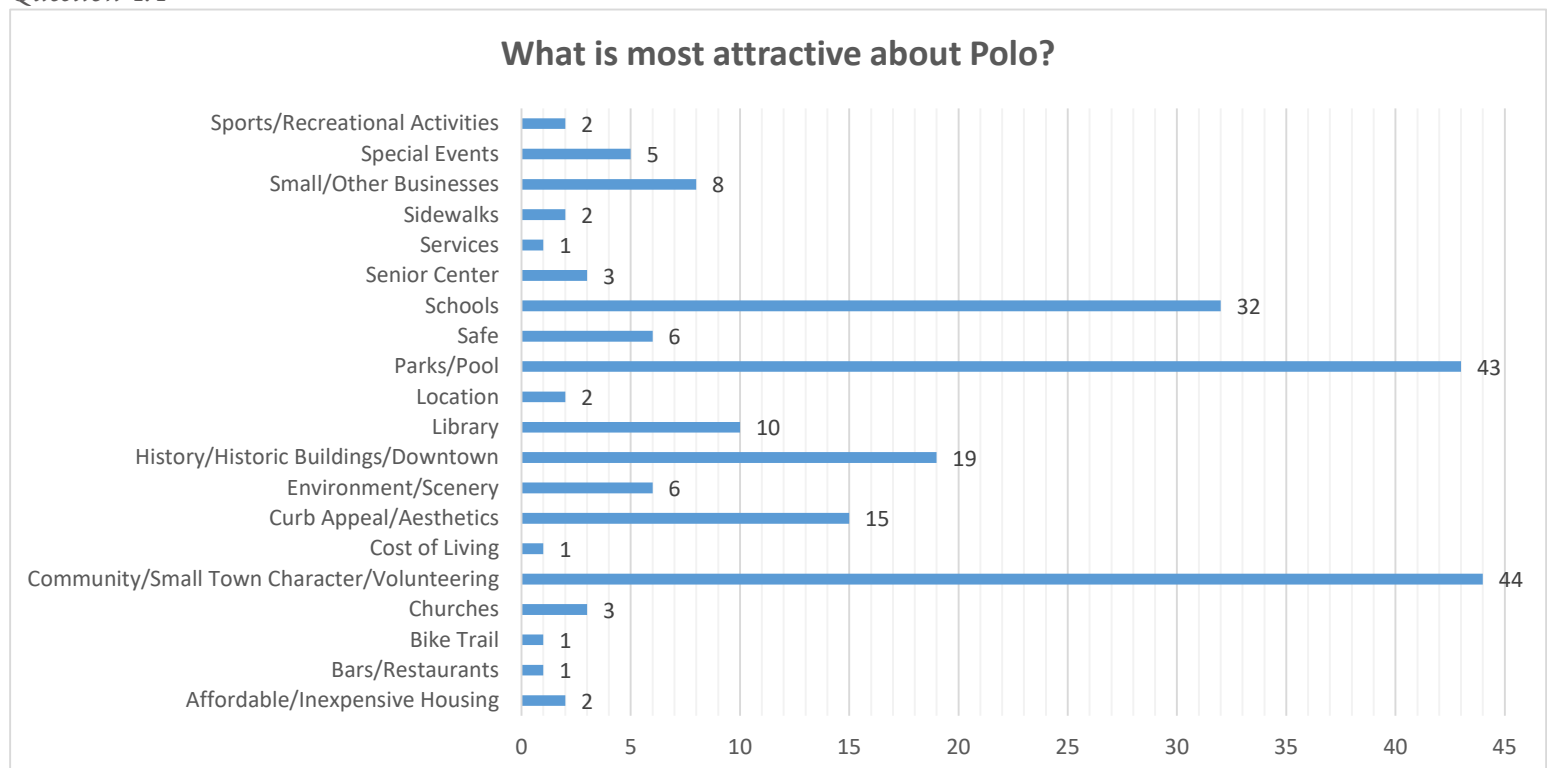
APPENDIX A-2: Public Feedback, cont'd.

92

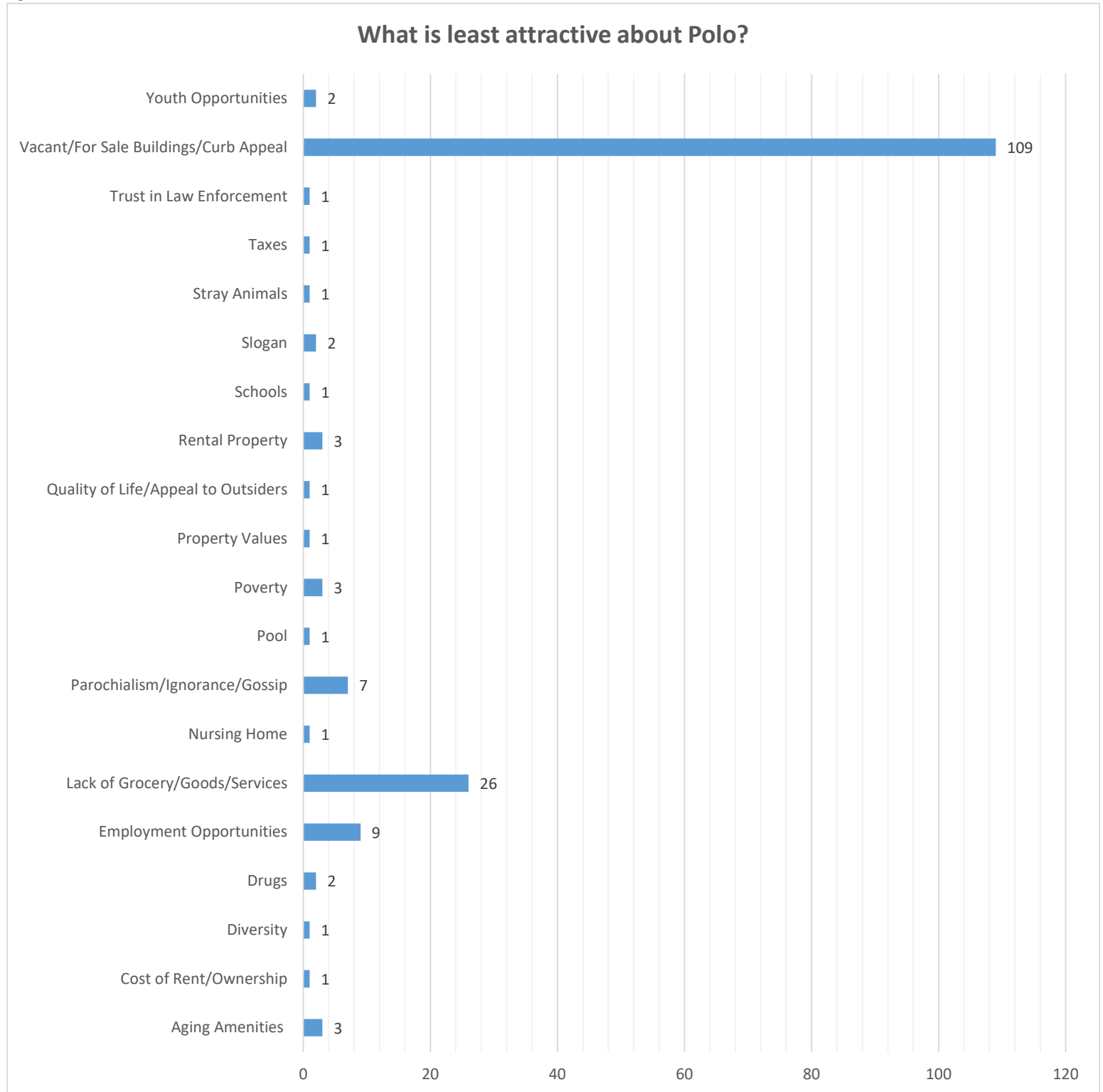
Question 4.3



Question 4.4



Question 4.5

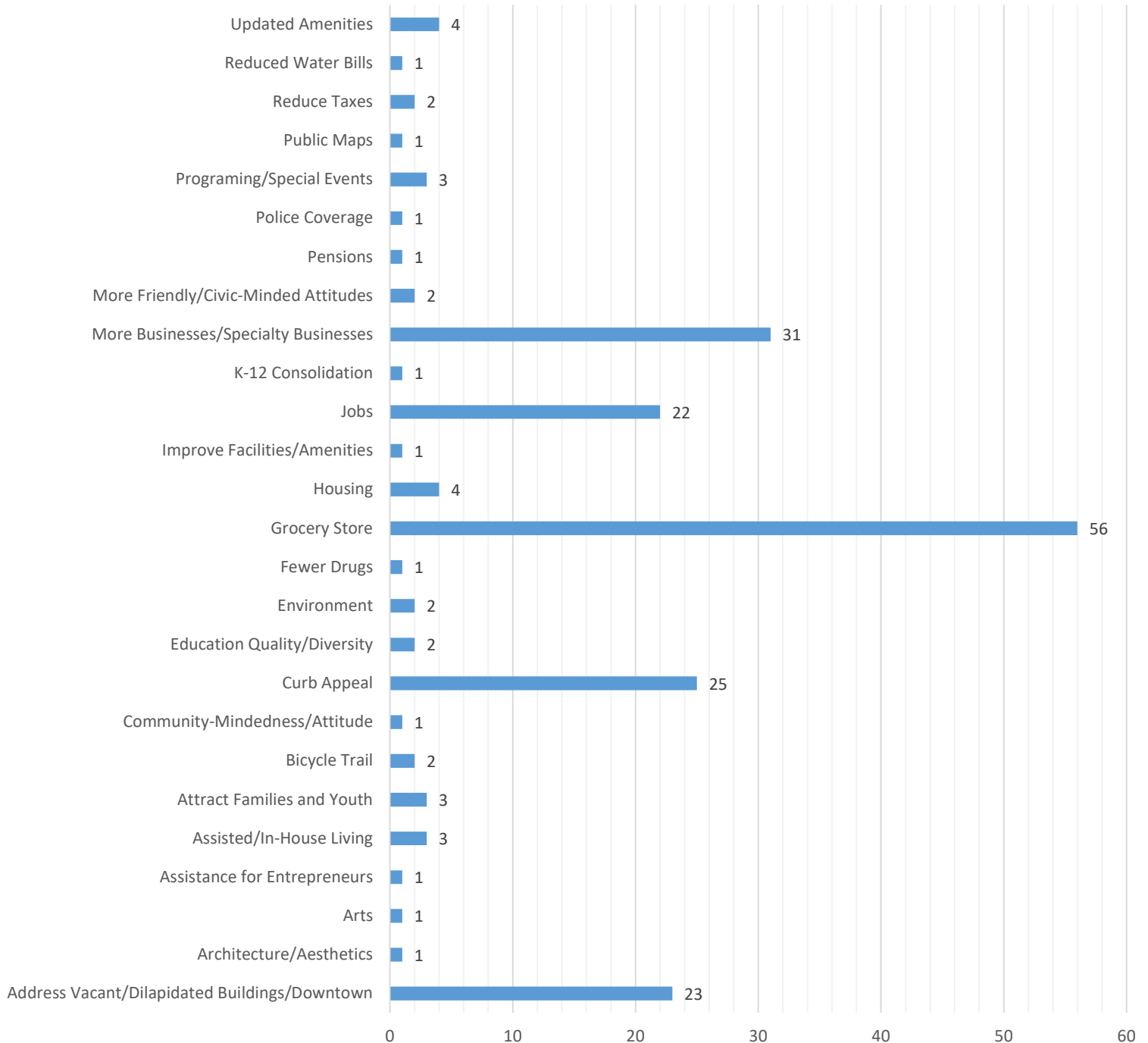


APPENDIX A-2: Public Feedback, cont'd.

94

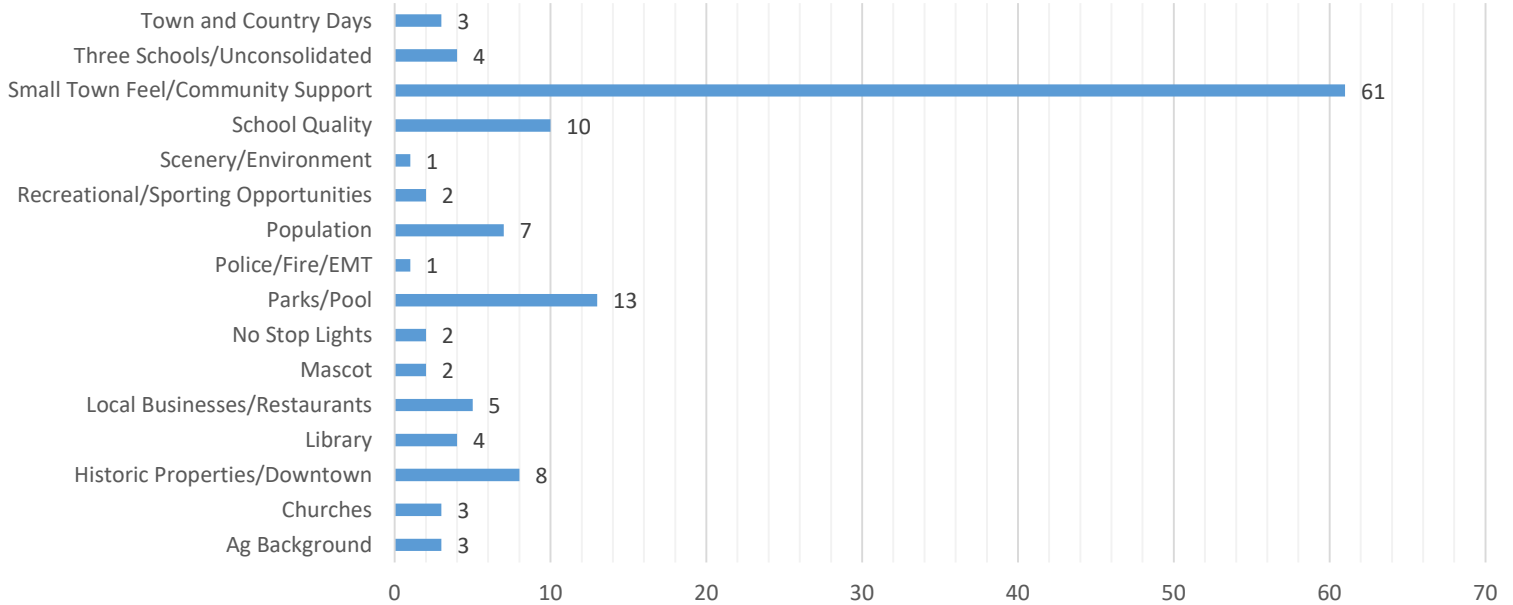
Question 4.6

What one thing would make Polo a more attractive community to live and work in?



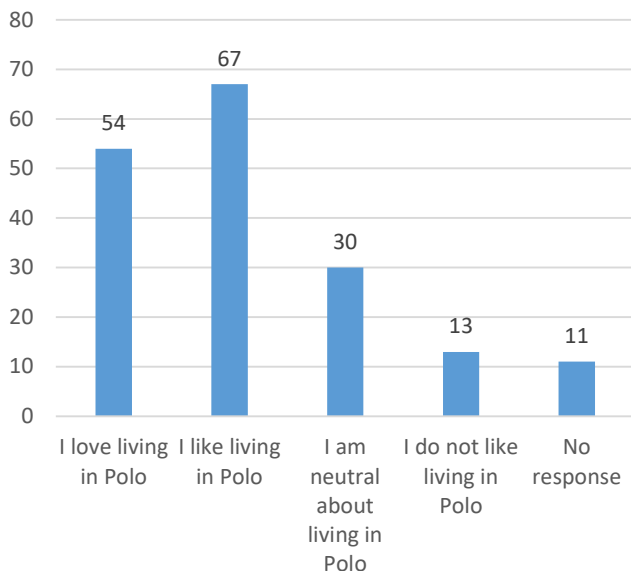
Question 4.7

What one thing would you never want to change about Polo?



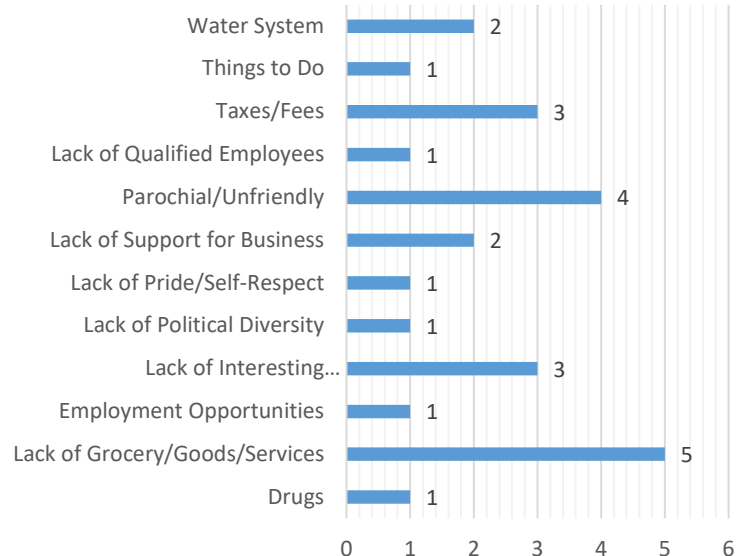
Question 4.8

If you live in Polo, what is your general level of satisfaction?



Question 4.9

If you do not like living in Polo, please indicate why.

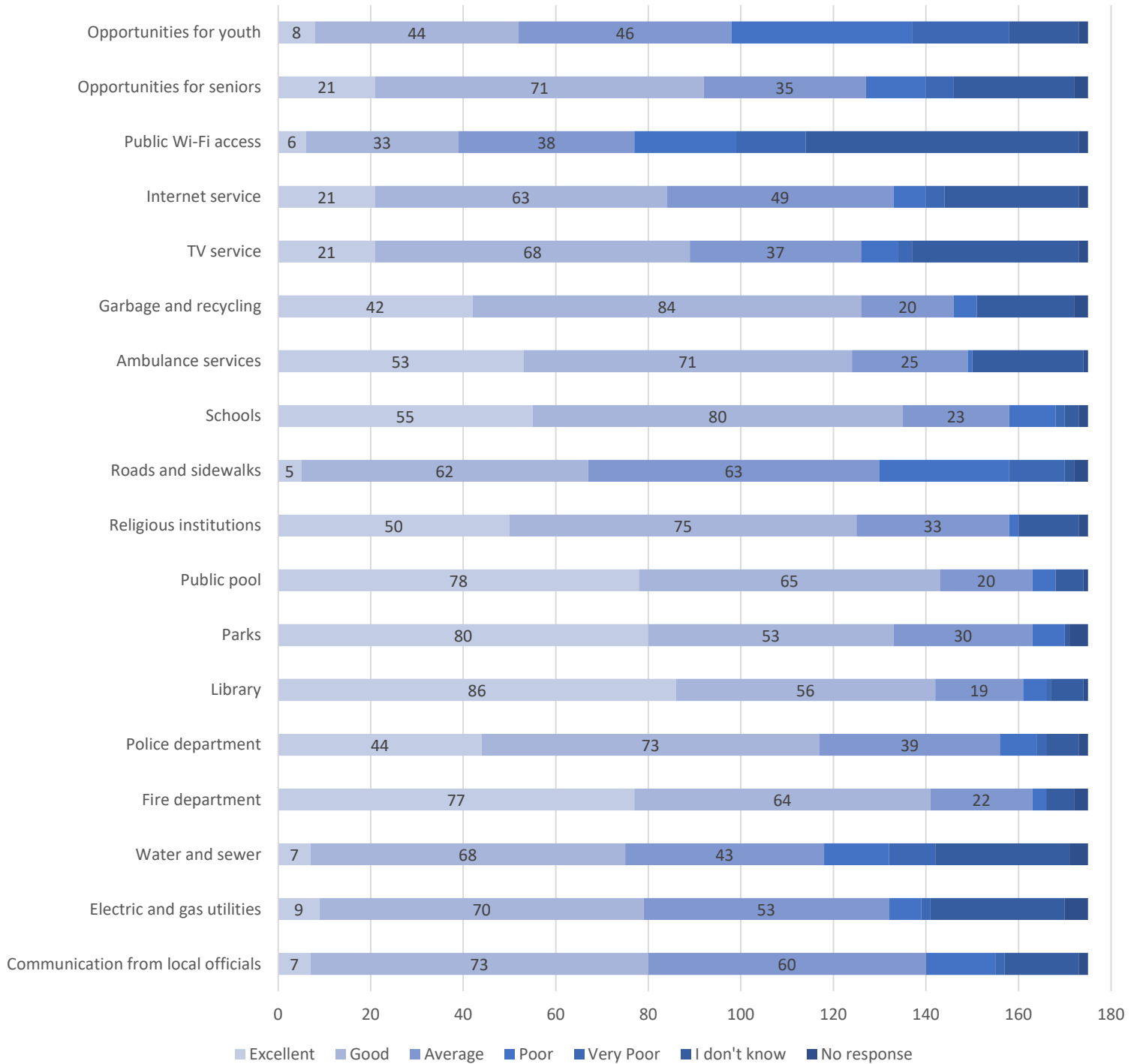


APPENDIX A-2: Public Feedback, cont'd.

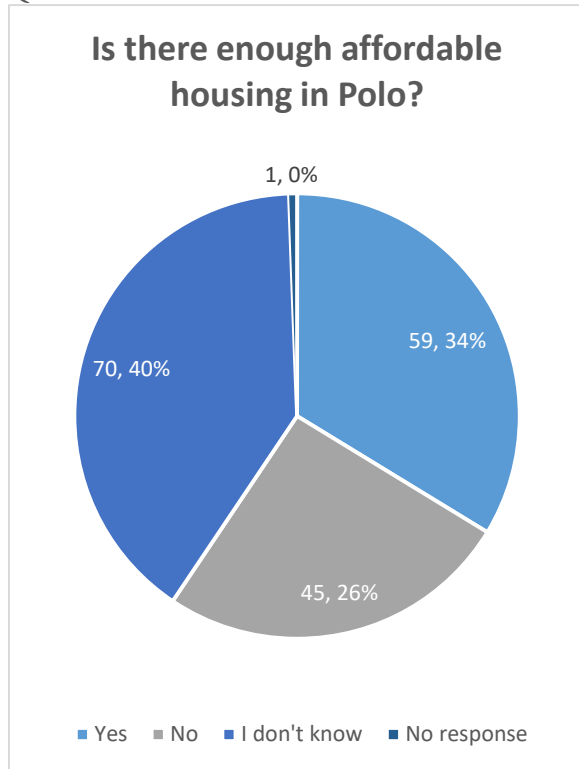
96

Question 5.1 - 5.18

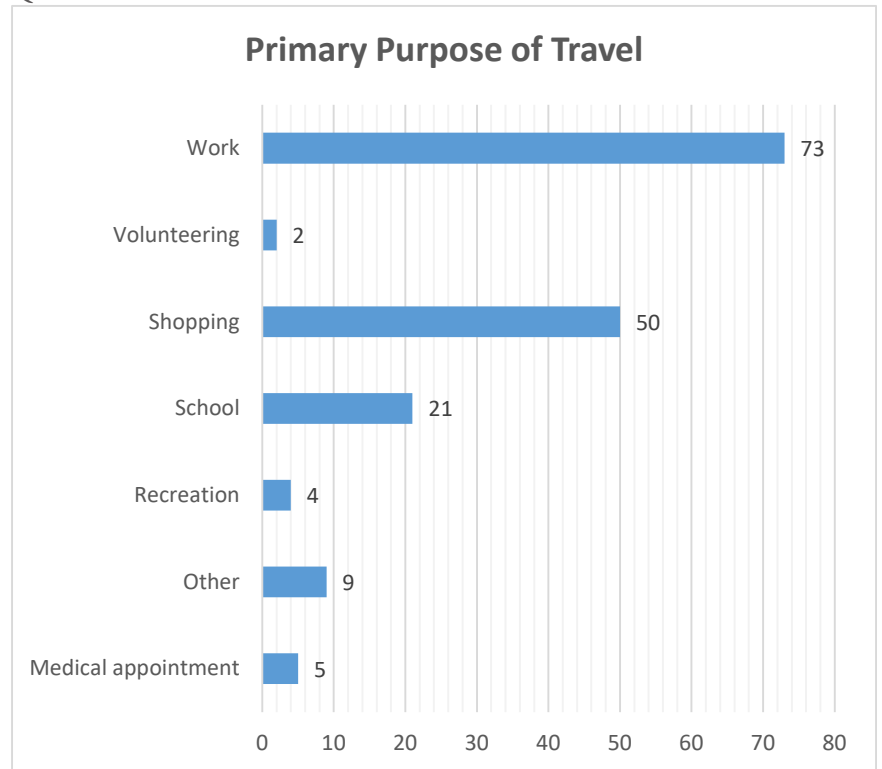
How would you rate the following in Polo?



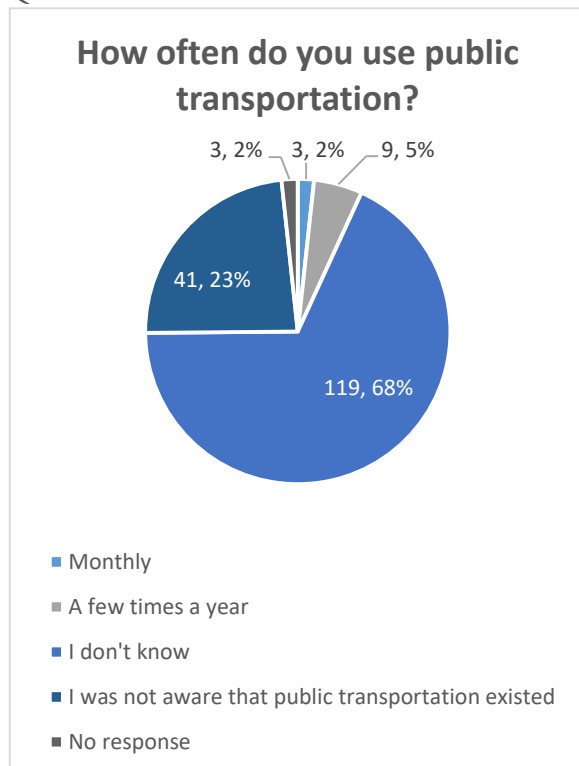
Question 6.1



Question 7.1



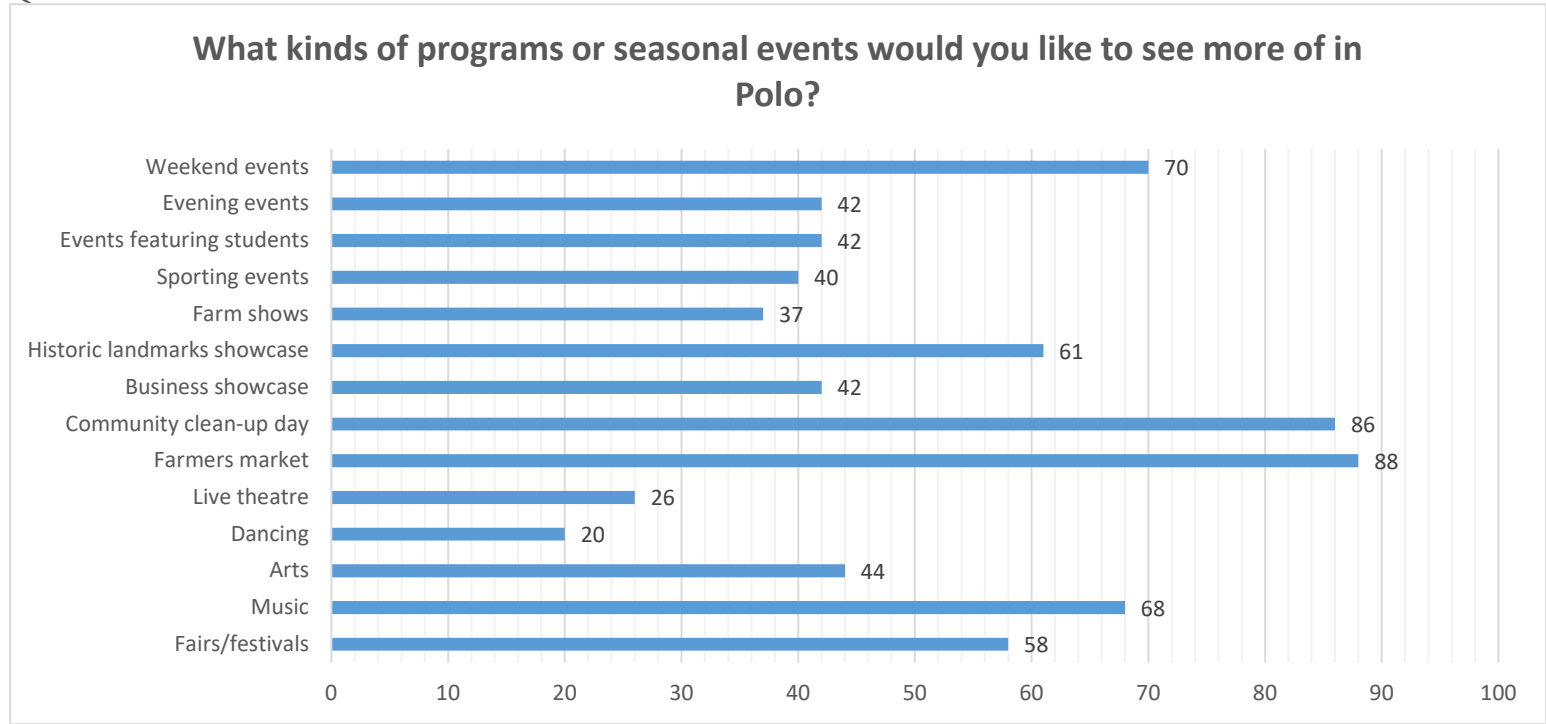
Question 7.2



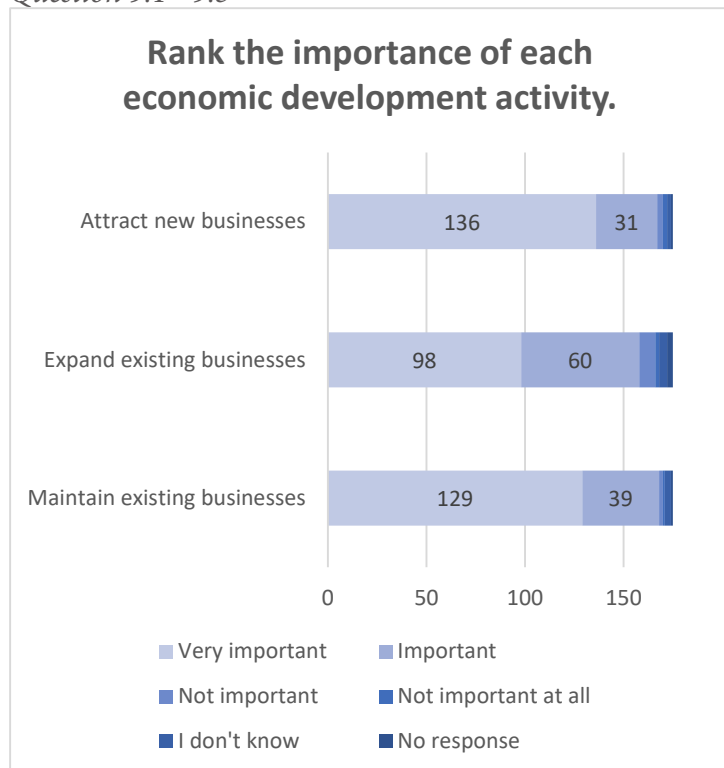
APPENDIX A-2: Public Feedback, cont'd.

98

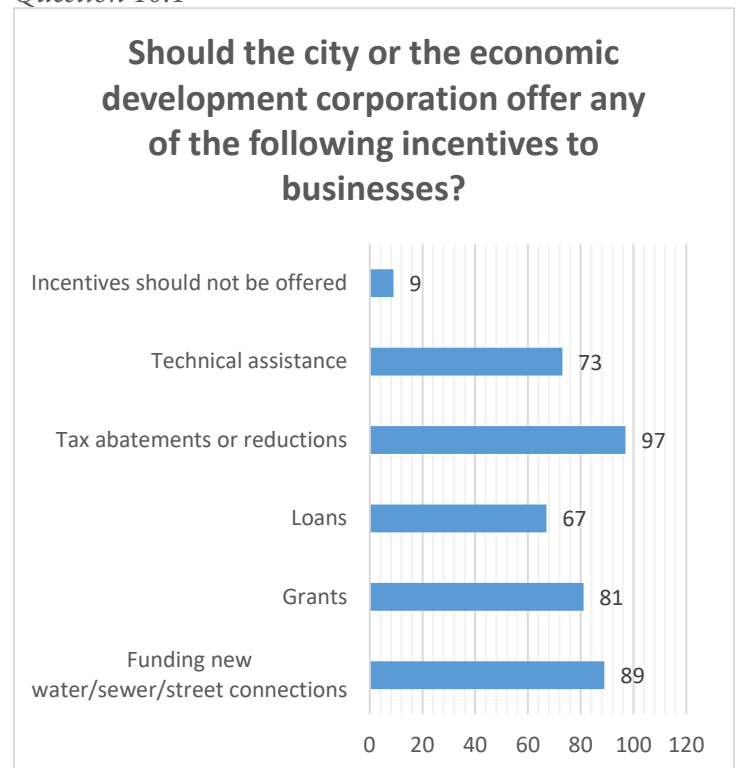
Question 8.1



Question 9.1 - 9.3

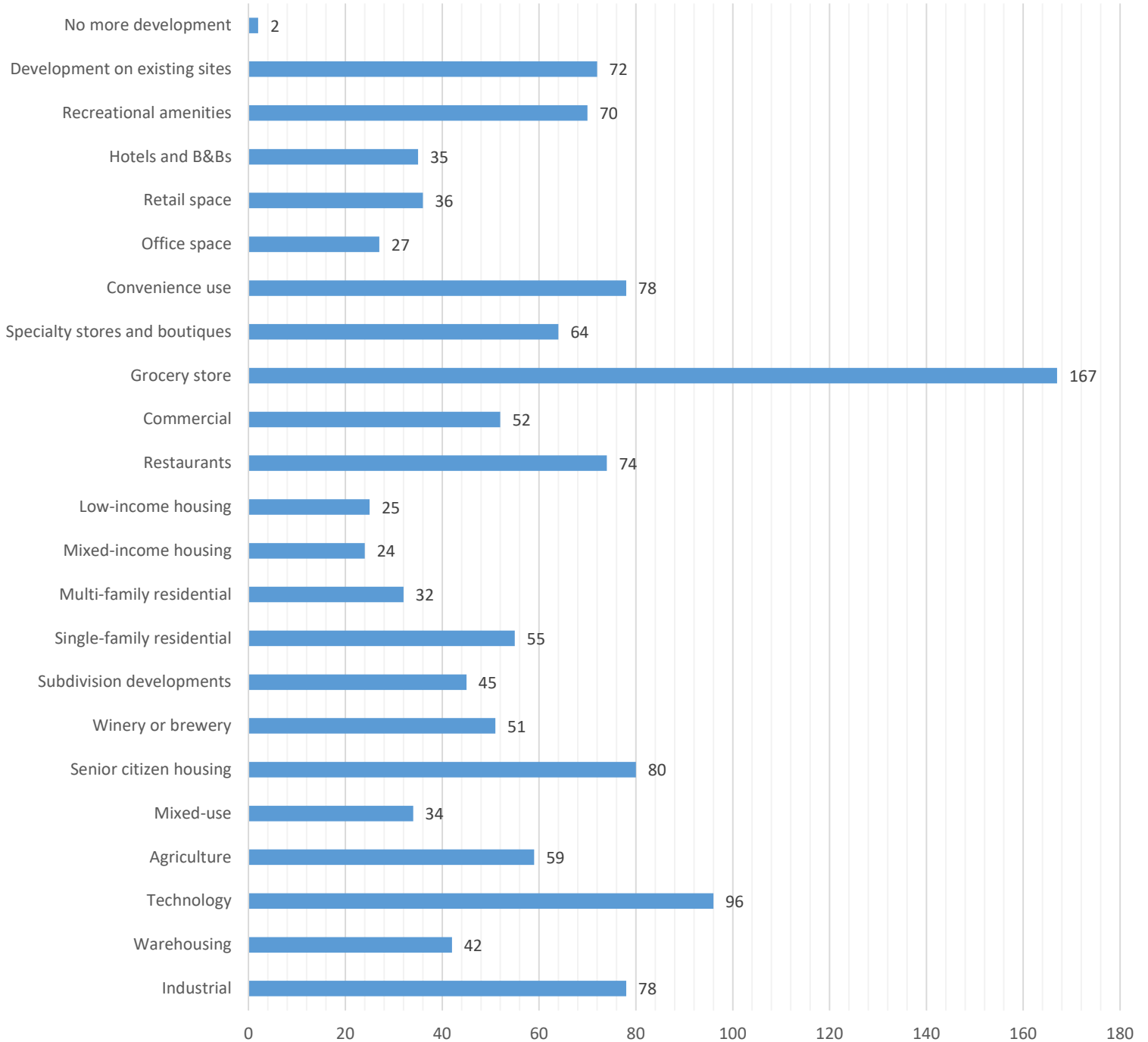


Question 10.1



Question 11.1

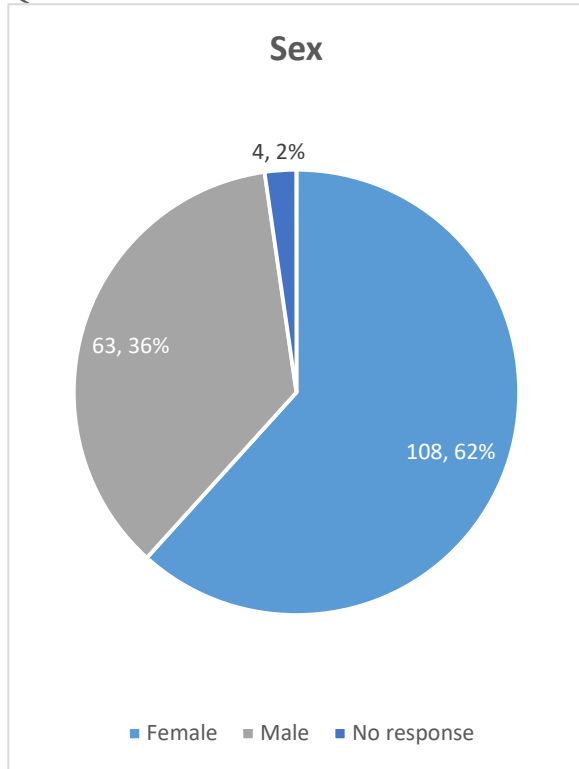
What types of development would you like to see in Polo over the next ten years?



APPENDIX A-2: Public Feedback, cont'd.

100

Question 12.1

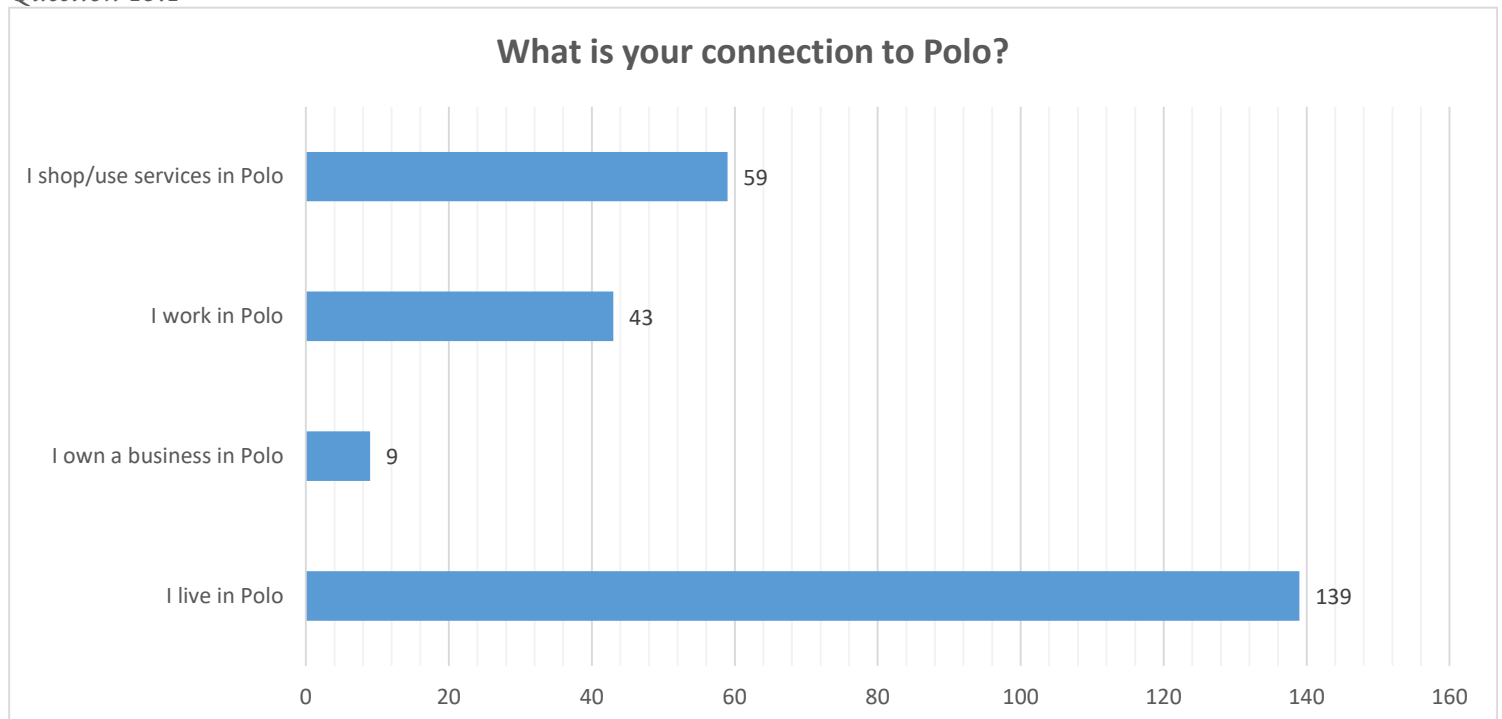


A majority of Planning for Polo survey respondents were female (please note: as illustrated, not all survey respondents indicated their sex). Census figures indicate that there are more women than men in the community, although proportionately more females participated in the survey with respect to the actual population.

In addition, the average age of the survey respondent was approximately 46 years old. Median age was calculated at 49 years old. Survey respondents ranged from between 12 years old to 89 years old (please note: not all survey respondents indicated their age).

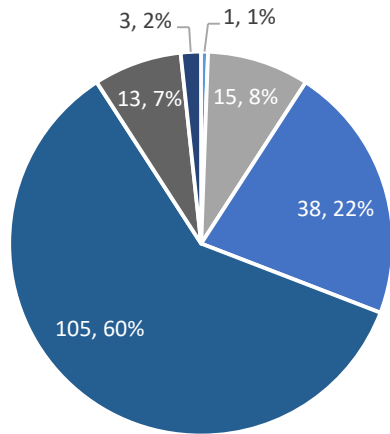
Ages 20 to 29 are probably the least well-represented age group in the survey and arguably an important demographic to obtain data from with respect to future planning and programming efforts.

Question 13.1



Question 14.1

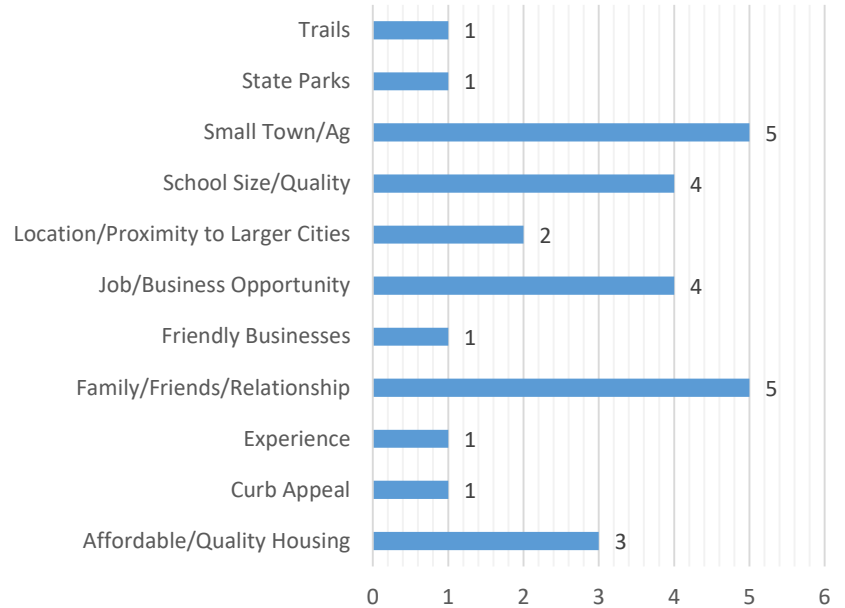
How many years have you lived in Polo?



■ Less than 1 year ■ 1 - 5 years
 ■ 6 - 15 years ■ 16+ years
 ■ I don't live in Polo ■ No response

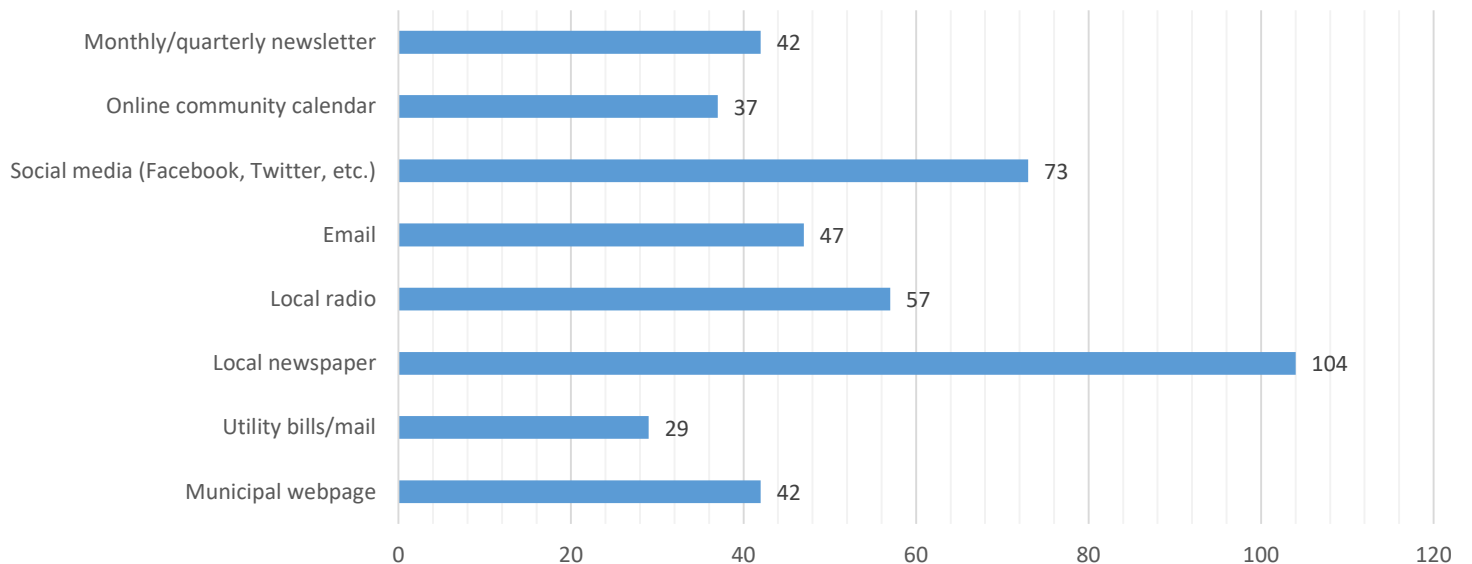
Question 14.2

If you are new to and live in Polo, why did you move here?



Question 17.1

What is the best means of receiving information about events and initiatives in Polo?



APPENDIX A-3: Historic Sites & Preservation

| Name | Type | Level | Listing | Address |
|--|---------------|-------------|---------|--------------------------------------|
| Buffalo Grove Lime Kiln | Structure | Federal | 2002 | Galena Trail Rd |
| Bryant H. and Lucie Barber House | Building | Federal | 1993 | 103 N Barber Ave |
| Polo Public Library | Building | Federal | 1995 | 302 W Mason St |
| Henry D. Barber House | Building | Federal | 1974 | 410 W Mason St |
| John McGrath House | Building | Federal | 1996 | 403 W Mason St |
| Polo Independent Order of Odd Fellows Lodge #197 | Building | Federal | 2004 | 117 W Mason St |
| Buffalo Town Hall | Building | Local/State | n/a | 117 N Franklin Ave |
| Aplington House / Lincoln in Polo | Building/Site | Local/State | 1973 | 123 N Franklin Ave |
| Boles Trail | Trail/Road | Local/State | 1964 | E of W Oregon Trail Rd / US 52 |
| Buffalo Grove | Site | Local/State | 1964 | Galena Trail Rd / W Milledgeville Rd |
| Burns House / Blackhawk Waterways | Building | Local/State | n/a | 201 N Franklin Ave |
| Campbell Law Office | Building | Local/State | n/a | 111 N Franklin Ave |
| Galena Road | Trail/Road | Local/State | 1964 | 1.5 miles S US 52 / Henry Rd |
| Henry School | Building | Local/State | n/a | 3963 S IL Rte 26 |
| Indian Ambush | Site | Local/State | n/a | Eagle Pt Rd |
| Polo Historical Society | Building | Local/State | n/a | 113 N Franklin Ave |

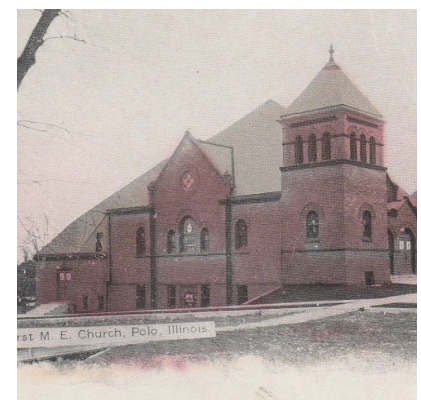
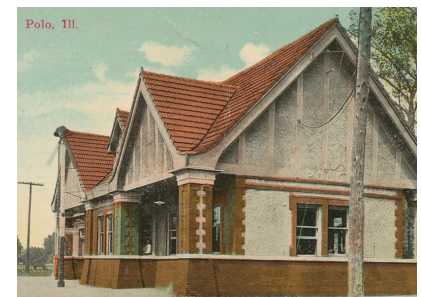
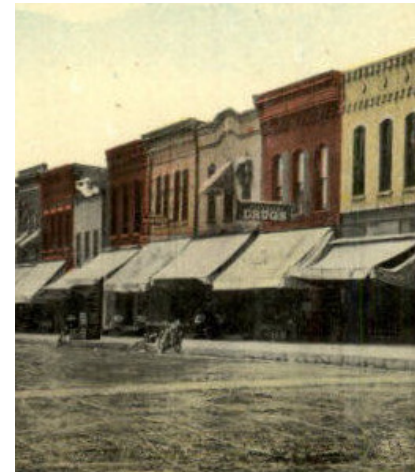
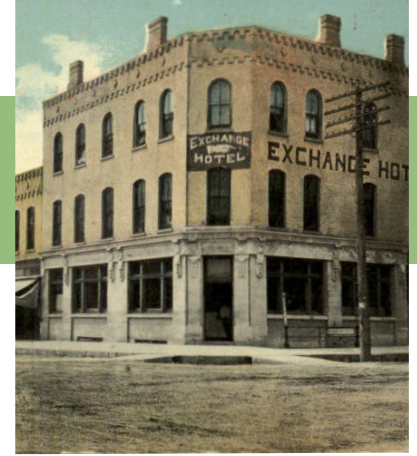
Historic Preservation

“The historic buildings and houses [say] to me this is a town that has been around a long time and intends to be around a long time more.” - Survey Respondent

The greater Polo area is home to numerous local, state, and federal historic places. In addition to these officially designated places, there are other buildings and sites potentially worthy of local preservation focus. Among these are buildings that, if lost, may never readily be replicated and would contribute to the overall degradation of Polo’s unique character.

The community should consider adding a historic preservation element to the comprehensive plan, as well as adopting ordinances in support of local efforts. Furthermore, it may be prudent to designate historic corridors, especially in the downtown and Mason street area. Consideration should be given to universal wayfinding, lighting, facade improvements, and other historic elements that would improve aesthetics, marketability, and property values.

While preservation efforts can be costly, owners and public entities may be able to take advantage of public and grant incentives for improvements. Moreover, the community may find itself in a position to market certain locations for mixed-income and senior or special needs housing. Proprieties may also be found suitable for mixed-use enterprises.



Polo images, from top to bottom: the former Exchange Hotel, downtown Mason Street, the former train depot, the Methodist church, and the former bank

