

# The City of Lead Comprehensive Plan



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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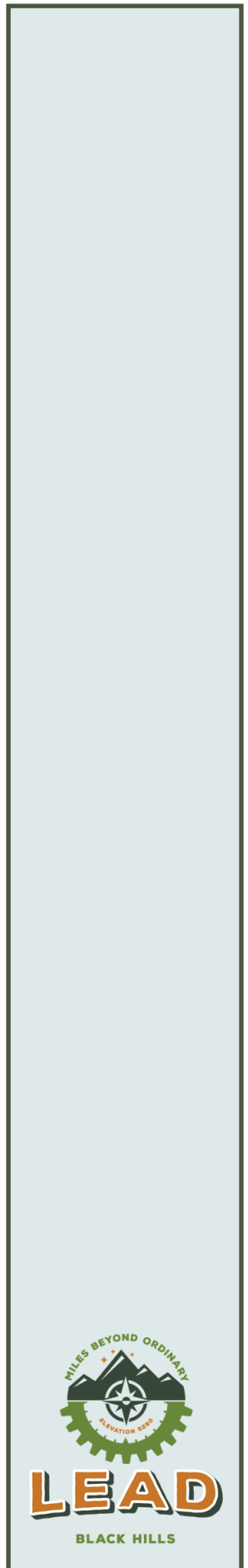
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# WELCOME TO THE LEAD COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The City of Lead Comprehensive Plan serves as a long-range guide that outlines strategies for the city's growth and development over the next 10-20 years. This strategic framework is designed to achieve the community's vision, aiming to create a more certain future for residents and visitors.

Through detailed analysis and active community engagement, the plan seeks to maintain Lead's unique character while accommodating growth and development. As part of this process, other planning documents were referenced including the Comprehensive Plan 2004 and 2017 Revision, Lawrence County Comprehensive Plan, Lawrence County Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan 2019, Lawrence County Community Wildfire Protection Plan 2022, Deadwood/Lead Housing Study 2016, Deadwood Comprehensive Plan, and City of Lead Ordinances. The enabling legislation for comprehensive city planning is laid out in South Dakota Codified Law Chapter 11-6.



Photo credit: Stephen Kenny, Sanford Underground Research Facility

## South Dakota Codified Law Chapter 11-6:

*For the purpose of promoting the health, safety, and general welfare of the municipality... Municipalities shall, as soon as possible, make, adopt, amend, extend, add to or carry out a general municipal plan of development, such plan to be referred to as the comprehensive plan.*

- SDCL § 11-6-2

## What is a Comprehensive Plan?

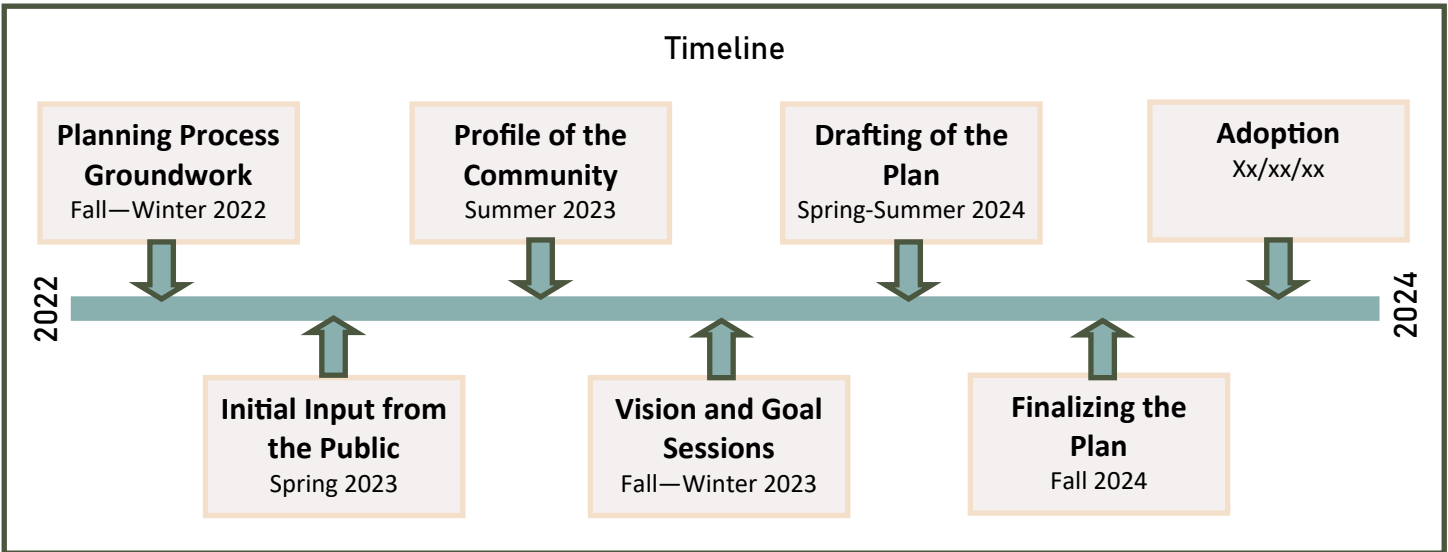
### What it is....

- A document used to guide long-term development and growth
- A framework for making decisions about land use, infrastructure, and community services
  - A tool to work toward a shared vision and goals
  - Developed through community input and engagement

### What it is not...

- Not a legally binding document but informs zoning regulations and other ordinances
  - Not a static plan, it should be updated regularly to reflect changing conditions
- Not a detailed plan for individual projects, it provides guidance for future development

# THE PROCESS



In early 2022, the City of Lead decided to move forward with updating the City’s Comprehensive Plan. The City of Lead’s Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2004 and an addendum was later added in 2017. Lead contracted with the Black Hills Council of Local Governments to assist in the plan update.

In August of 2022, work began on the plan update, including going over the purpose of comprehensive planning and the process for completing the plan update. As part of the process, a project website was also created and regularly updated to help keep the community informed on the process and upcoming meetings. Two meetings were held in the fall and winter of 2022 to discuss the city’s achievements since the last comprehensive plan update. Some major improvements included the update of the Manuel Brother’s Park including a splash pad, skating park, and pickle ball court. Lead also completed several street projects including the re-build of Mill St. and Houston Street.

At the start of 2023, the Comprehensive Plan Survey was drafted and open from March 16 , 2023 to May 31, 2023. A total of 481 responses were received. The community survey allowed the community to voice their opinions of Lead.



In the spring of 2023, Community Stakeholder meetings were held. At these meetings, members of the public were given the opportunity to share their opinions on challenges and opportunities in Lead. In total, 40 people attended these meetings. To help analyze past and present demographic conditions and trends in Lead, the community profile was completed in the fall of 2023.

In the fall of 2023, the next round of public input meetings were held. These meetings were focused on understanding the vision for the future of Lead. Participants were asked to think about community accomplishments in Lead in the next ten years. As part of the future vision for Lead, attendees shared their opinions on the future land uses.

In the winter of 2023, work began on the Lead Comprehensive Vision Statement and drafting of the plan. The Planning and Zoning Commission and the Lead Comprehensive Plan Commission worked on through the drafting process. The first complete draft of the plan was presented to the public for review and public meetings were held in the fall of 2024 to receive the public comments.

Following the public meetings, Lead Planning and Zoning and Comprehensive Planning Commissions updated the draft accordingly. On **January 28, 2025** the Planning and Zoning Commission held a public hearing and recommended the document to the Lead City Commission for adoption. The City Commission held a public hearing for adoption and formally adopted the Lead Comprehensive Plan on **DATE**.



April 2023, Community Meeting

### Small changes to make Lead even better...

- West Lead Cemetery maintenance
- Neighborhood clean-up
- Main St. fence adjusted/removed to not block entrances to businesses
- Improve garbage pickup
- Repair sidewalks
- Trail connection (Walt Green to Homestake)
- Repair city stairs
- Bring car show back
- Murals around town/on retaining walls
- Recycling bins for plastic, glass, metal
- Update city website
- Shelter by skatepark
- Fix up homes (paint, fencing, yard work)
- Bike racks around town
- History story boards
- Repaint signs at the park
- Repair potholes
- Enforce regulations
- Youth sports activities

Selection of results from Community Meetings

### Lead LOOKS and FEELS...

Unique  
Energized  
Attractive  
Walkable  
Outdoorsy  
Prospering businesses  
Historic yet modern

### Lead IS...

Welcoming, sustainable, safe  
Balancing mix of old and new  
Recreation in the Black Hills  
Growing  
One of a kind place  
Attractive for new businesses  
A place for families

### Lead HAS...

Inviting Main Street  
Great schools  
Lots of amenities  
A mixture of housing options  
Completed infrastructure goals  
Improved downtown parking  
Hiking and biking trails

Selection of results from Visioning Meetings

# THIS IS LEAD

Lead, South Dakota, is a small town shaped by its spirit of exploration, rich mining history, cutting-edge scientific endeavors, and opportunities presented by the Black Hills. Lead was named after the mining term ‘an outcropping of gold-bearing ore’.<sup>1</sup>

## Lead: Past and Present

The City of Lead was founded on July 10, 1876, and was formally incorporated in 1897. During the 1876 gold rush, miners and fortune seekers began to migrate to the area. One of the earliest mining enterprises, Homestake Mining Company, was established during that period.<sup>2</sup>

The Homestake Mine was the largest, deepest gold mine in the Western Hemisphere. In its day, it was known as the richest 100 square miles on earth, producing over 41 million ounces of gold and 9 million ounces of silver.<sup>3</sup> The mine contributed significantly to the growth and development of Lead, bringing in thousands of people from all over the world to work at the mine. By 1880, more than half of the residents in Lead were foreign-born and began forming large ethnic neighborhoods.<sup>4</sup>

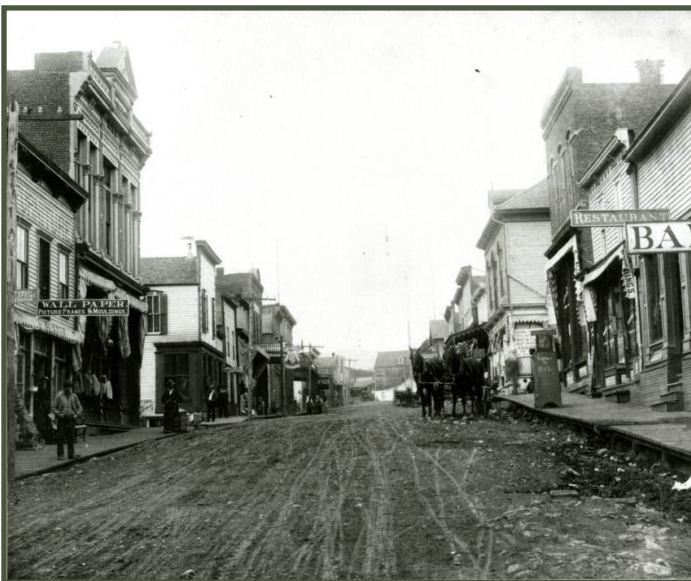


Photo Courtesy: Black Hills Mining Museum



Photo Credit: Stephen Kenny, Sanford Underground Research

Lead retains its historical charm while embracing modern amenities. Following the closure of the Homestake Mine in 2002, efforts were made to repurpose the site for scientific research. The Sanford Underground Research Facility has since become a leading center for scientific discovery. Similar to Homestake, the research facility attracts a global community of researchers and their families to the area.

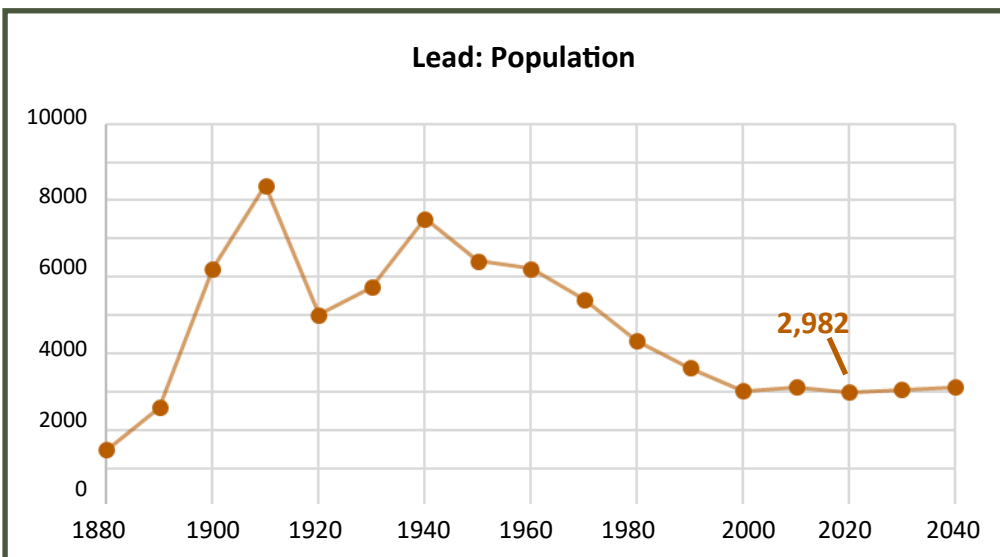
Today, Lead is home to roughly 2,982 residents and is known for its strong sense of community and welcoming atmosphere.<sup>5</sup> Lead also boasts many cultural and recreational opportunities, which help to showcase its unique blend of history, arts, and natural beauty.

The future of Lead’s thriving community lies in the hands of its youth. The Lead-Deadwood District’s school serves as an important pillar of the community, inspiring the next generation in education, leadership, and community engagement. The district’s middle school and high school are located in Lead, contributing to the city’s educational and cultural landscape.

## Community Profile

The Lead community profile is a collection of demographic data used to provide an overview on current conditions in Lead. This data was used to assist in the creation of this plan and guide future planning efforts. To provide a thorough comparison in Lead, both Lawrence County and the state of South Dakota were also included in some sections. In an attempt to provide the most accurate data the following sources were used: the U.S. Census Bureau’s Decennial Census (DEC), the American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates, Lightcast (labor market analytics and economic data), ERSI, the Lead-Deadwood Economic Development Corporation, and the City of Lead.

\*note: Due to Lead’s smaller population size, data presented is likely to have large margin of error (amount of error for an estimate).



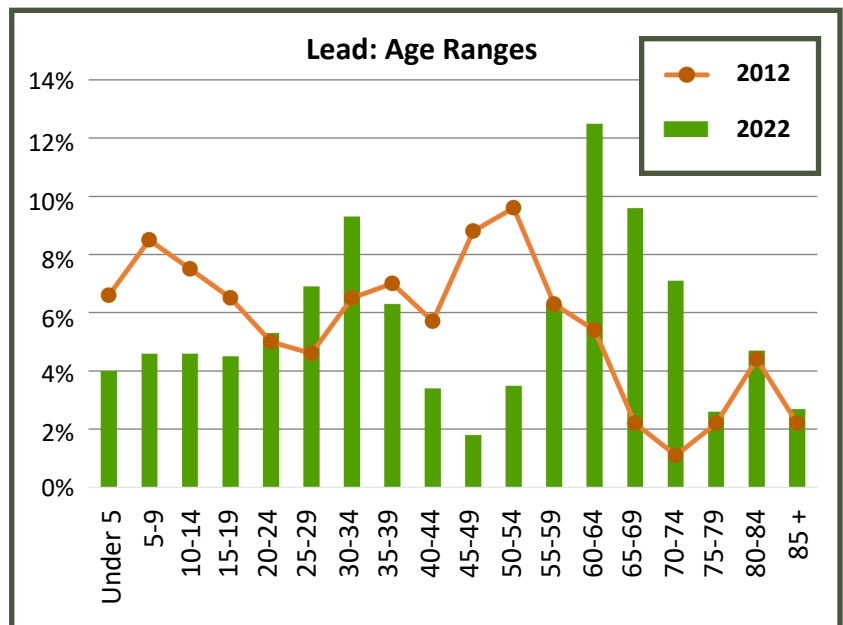
Source: DEC 1880-2020

Median Age			
	Lead	Lawrence County	South Dakota
2012	38.8	41.2	37.1
2022	45.5	43.0	37.5
% Change	17.3%	4.4%	1.1%

Source: ACS 2022

Lead’s population quickly grew from 1880 to 1910, falling in 1920. From 1940 to 2000, the population continued to decrease. Since 2000, the population has remained relatively steady. This trend is expected to continue, with a potential 1%-2% growth rate.

From 2012 to 2022, the median age in Lead has increased. There has been a noticeable decline in those under 19 and between 40-54, while those aged 25-34 and 60-70 have increased.



Source: ACS 2012 & 2022



## Households

Lead: Average Household Size	
2012	2.38
2022	2.06
Change	(-)13.4%

Source: ACS 2012- 2022

**1,451**

Total Households (2022)

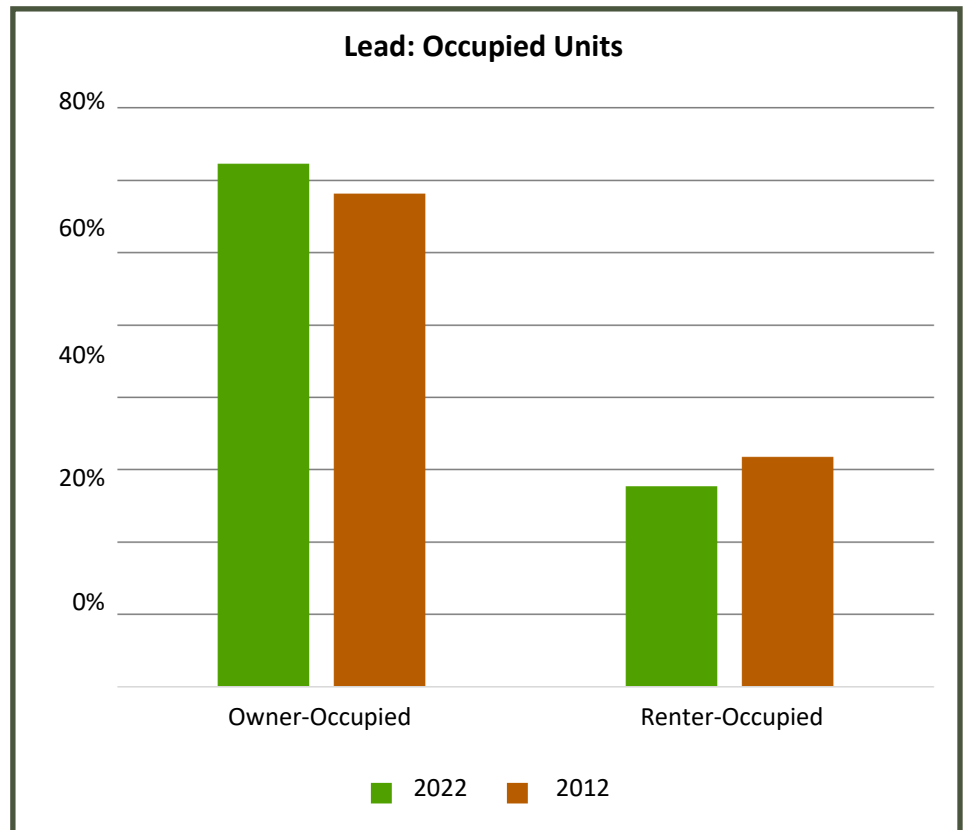
Source: ACS 2022

Lead's housing occupancy and vacancy percentage are comparable to Lawrence County. The occupancy types, both owner and renter, have remained relatively stable, with owner-occupied increasing only a few percentage points, and renter-occupied decreasing slightly.

Lead has seen an increase of 11.6% in the total number of households from 2012-2022, while the average household size has slightly decreased. The percentage of households with one or more members under the age of 18 has decreased, while households with one or more members age 60 and up has increased. Slightly over one-fifth of households in Lead are aged 65 or older living alone.

Housing Occupancy			
	Lead	Lawrence County	South Dakota
Occupied	81.2%	80.8%	89.1%
Vacant	18.8%	19.2%	10.9%

Source: DEC 2020

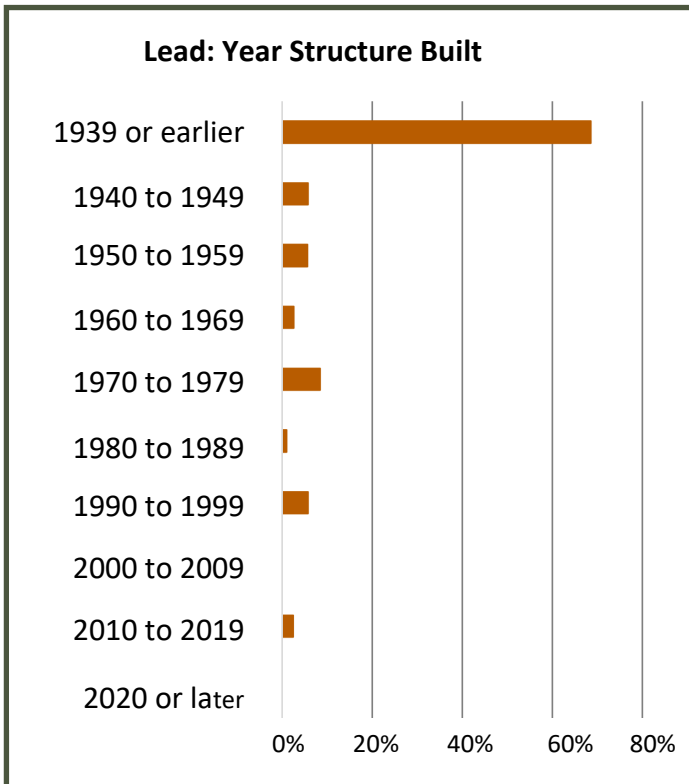


Source: ACS 2012-2022

Lead: Household Type			
	2012	2022	Percent Change
Households with one or more aged 18 or under	32.2%	13.6%	(-)57.8%
Households with one or more aged 60 or over	30.9%	59.5%	(+)92.6%
Households with 65 or older living alone	12.5%	21.8%	(+)74.4%

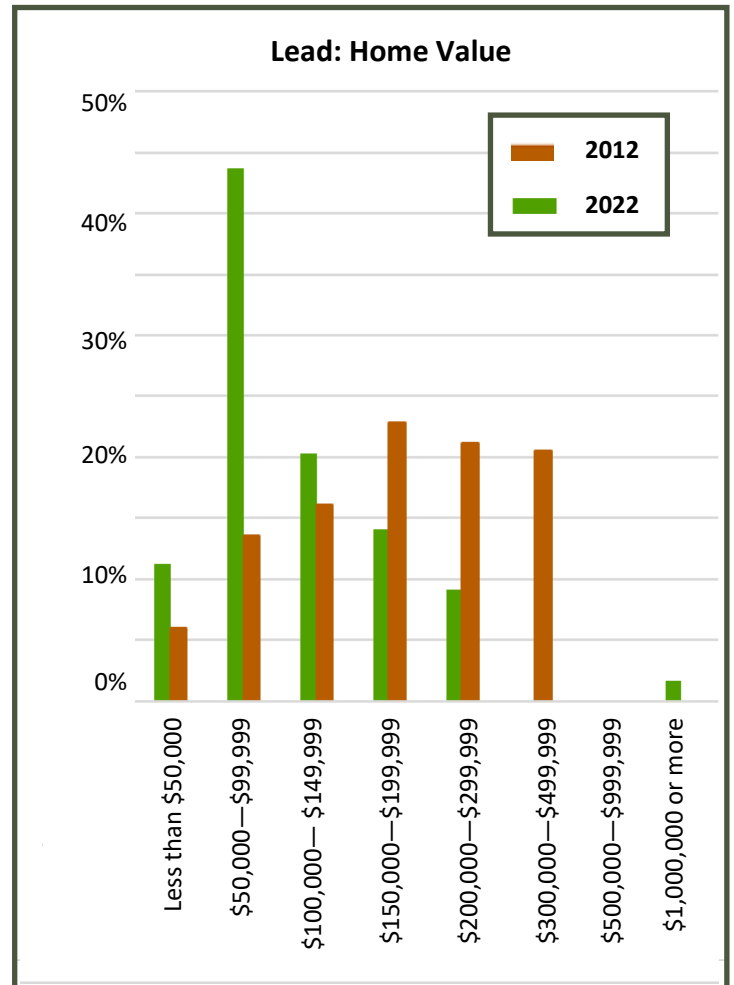
Source: ACS 2012- 2022

## Housing



Source: ACS 2022

Median Home Value 2022		
Lead	Lawrence County	South Dakota
\$169,800	\$267,900	\$219,500



Source: ACS 2012-2022

Lead is a historical town, with 69% of homes in the city having been built prior to 1940. Only 2.5% of the total homes built in Lead were constructed in 2000 or later. The value of homes in Lead has risen from 2012 to 2022. While the city has experienced a 79.9% increase in home values, Lead's home values are still lower when compared to Lawrence County and South Dakota.

From 2012 to 2022, Lead's experienced a decrease in the percentage of households with only one vehicle available but an increase of those with two and over. Additionally, there was a slight increase in those households with no vehicles available.

Lead: Vehicles Available				
	No vehicles	1 vehicle	2 vehicles	3 or more vehicles
<b>2012</b>	4.6%	33.9%	34.2%	27.3%
<b>2022</b>	5.5%	22.3%	43.0%	29.2%
<b>Percent Change</b>	(+)19.6%	(-)34.2	(+)25.7%	(+)6.96%

Lead: Median Home Value	
<b>2012</b>	\$94,400
<b>2022</b>	\$169,800
<b>Percent Change</b>	(+)79.9%

Source: ACS 2012- 2022

Source: ACS 2012- 2022

## Industry & Economy

Lead Industry Overview (2023)		
Standard Industrial Classification	Businesses	Employees
Agriculture & Mining	3%	4%
Construction	5%	4%
Manufacturing	2%	2%
Transportation	2%	4%
Communication	0%	0%
Utility	1%	0%
Wholesale Trade	1%	1%
Retail Trade	20%	28%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	6%	4%
Services	47%	47%
Government	7%	5%
Unclassified	7%	1%

Source: ESRI 2023

Nearly half of Lead's businesses are classified under the services industry, followed by 20% in retail. Lead's top employers data is also reflective of those listed under the top 5 largest industries. Is it important to note that the top employers and industries are based on Lead's zip code 57754, which would encompass areas outside of city limits.

Of Lead's population 16 years and over, 65.4% is in the workforce. This percentage slightly decreased from 2012 to 2022.

A significant amount of the population works outside of the city. This is indicated by the mean travel time of 22.4 minutes to work for Lead's employed population.

Lead: Labor Force		
2012	2020	Percent Change
68.8%	65.4%	(-)4.9%

Source: ACS 2022

## Lead—Top Employers (2023)

Coeur Wharf  
Sanford Underground Research Facility  
Lead-Deadwood School District

includes data from zip code 57754

Source: Lead-Deadwood Economic Development Corp.

## Top 5 Largest Industries (by jobs) in Lead and Surrounding Area.

1. Mining, Quarrying, Oil & Gas Extraction
2. Professional, Scientific, Technical
3. Arts, Entertainment, Recreation
4. Accommodation & Food Service
5. Construction

Source: Lightcast \*includes data from zip code 57754

**22.4 minutes**

Mean Travel Time to Work

Source: ACS 2022

Lead: Place of Work	
Worked in Place of Residence	21.6%
Worked Outside Place of Residence	78.4%

Source: ACS 2022

Median Household Income 2022		
Lead	Lawrence County	South Dakota
\$54,555	\$62,997	\$69,457

Source: ACS 2022

Lead: Median Income		
2012	2022	Percent Change
\$41,444	\$54,555	(+)31.6%

Source: ACS 2022

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## COMMUNITY VISION

Public input received during the comprehensive planning process was used to help craft the collected vision of the future of Lead. This vision statement is intended to be a reflection of the thoughts, values, and priorities shared by a majority of the community. The recommendations provided in this plan guide the City of Lead toward achieving this vision.

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“Lead is a resilient, thriving and unique community embracing revitalization and connectedness.”



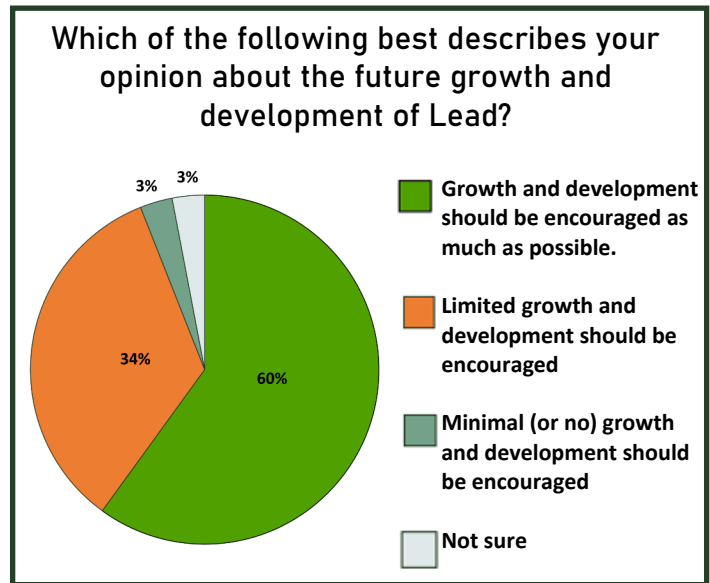
# GROWTH AND LAND USE

Land-use planning plays an important role in guiding how land is developed and used, which affect the overall well-being and functionality of a community. Planning helps to promote efficient resource management, compatible land uses, and the preservation of natural and cultural assets.

## Growth & Development

Lead's current land use patterns are reflective of its historic mining heritage and natural surroundings. Some areas of the city still show prominent features from mining operations, including industrial facilities and the Open Cut which resides on the north-central part of the city. Much of Lead's commercial uses are along US Highway 14A and US Highway 85. US Highway 85 also serves as the city's main street, where Historic Downtown is located. Residential areas span from these highways, often to steep hillsides and winding roadways. Additionally, Lead has several parks, open spaces, and trails located throughout the community.

When considering where and how to grow, Lead is somewhat limited. As Lead looks to the future, the community expressed the desire to see growth and development, with 94% of respondents showing some support and 60% in favor of encouraging growth and development as much as possible. Since 2000, Lead's population has remained relatively unchanged with roughly 3,000 people. In the next ten years, it is possible Lead could see around a 2% increase in population based on regional population trends. However, this prediction is highly reliant on factors such as housing availability and affordability, economic opportunities, infrastructure, and amenities.



When considering growth and development, it is important to consider the types of development needed in a community. Different development types, such as residential, commercial, and recreational, play an important role in shaping the community. Input showed a strong interest in expanding residential areas and local commercial that serves residential needs. Additionally, the community wants to see more parking areas throughout town, recreational uses, and some tourism-oriented commercial.

## Growth Costs

Lead's geology and topography create some unique challenges in determining where and how to develop, especially with higher costs often required for construction in this type of environment. To address these challenges, careful planning and execution of development projects are essential. Incorporating cost-effective strategies such as encouraging shared infrastructure costs with developers, encouraging phased development, focusing on identified growth areas, and encouraging infill development can help balance growth and cost. The City of Lead should integrate these strategies to effectively manage development costs and lessen the financial burden on taxpayers while addressing the unique challenges posed by Lead's natural landscape.

## Planning for Growth

With new development, it is essential to ensure an area is equipped with infrastructure such as utilities, roads, and public services. Consideration should also be given to ensure new development does not create additional strain on existing infrastructure and services. As growth and development is considered, the City of Lead should ensure infrastructure and services can accommodate increased demand while maintaining high performance and reliability.

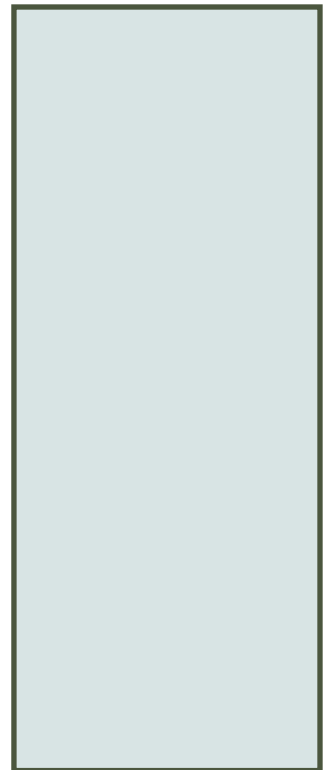
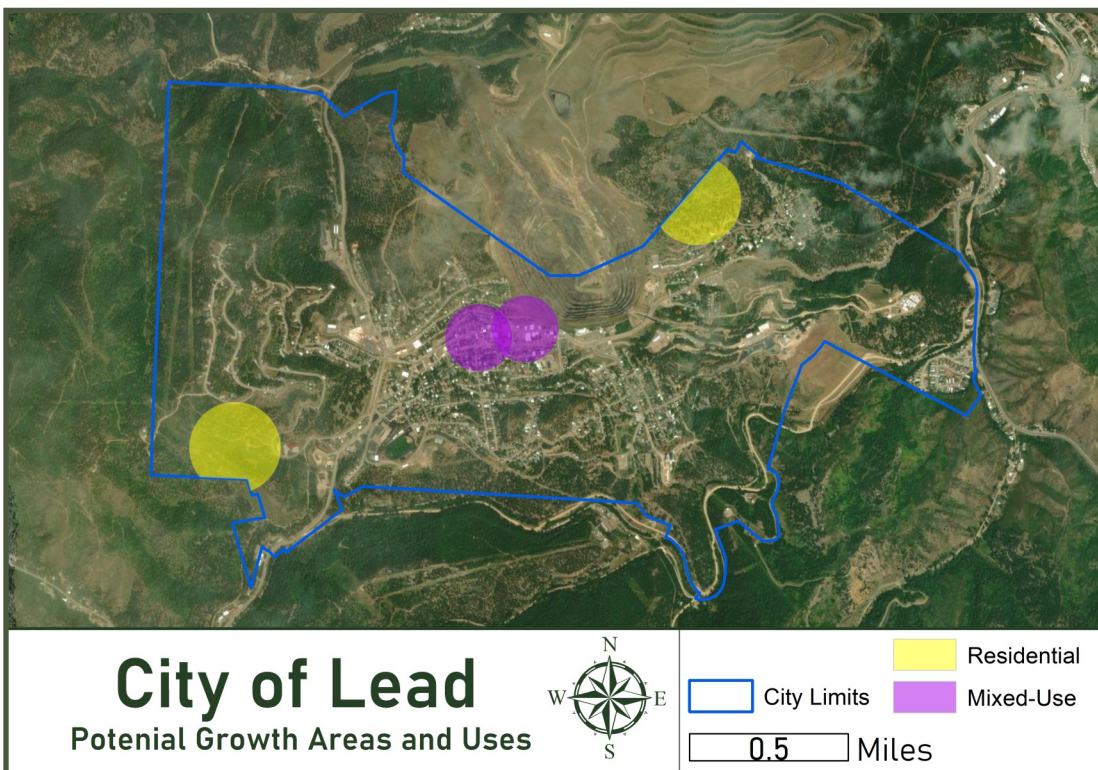
With new residential development, it is also important to recognize the importance of considering recreational areas and open spaces in development plans. Recreational spaces offer opportunities for relaxation, recreation, and social interaction, while open spaces can help to preserve environmentally sensitive areas and preserve land for future uses. While planning for new development, the City of Lead should encourage the inclusion of these types of spaces to enhance community well-being and environmental protection.

## Inward Growth

With limited outward growth options, most of Lead's growth and development should be focused inside city limits. Lead is a historical town with established neighborhoods. Key locations and suggested land uses were identified in part through community input. Within its current boundaries, the City of Lead should focus new development in the identified potential growth areas.

Through the planning process a few key locations were identified for growth. Much of the commercial and industrial land uses would continue to focus along major roadways 85 and 14A. Downtown Lead would encourage the development of mixed-uses, which could serve as both commercial and residential.

New or extended residential growth and development would be focused in two primary locations, the southwest corner of Lead and the northeast, the identified growth area would be an expansion northward to the Washington neighborhood. It is important to note that during the planning process the area in the north, east of 14A was marked to potential residential growth, the area may not be suitable for this type of development.



## Mixed-Use Development

Community feedback showed a strong interest in the downtown area. Feedback showed support for continued commercial uses and the incorporation of mixed-use development. Mixed-use can be viewed as the stacking or combining of different uses within the same building.

A city's downtown area serves as a central hub where residents and visitors come together to shop, dine, socialize, and engage in cultural activities. The downtown is generally thought of as having two sections, Historic Downtown and upper Main Street. The overall downtown located along West Main Street features a blend of historical buildings, community amenities, local businesses, and residential spaces. The upper Main Street location is a strong mix of residential properties on the north side of the street and primarily commercial properties on the south side of the street.

As part of the downtown resurgence, the City of Lead should highly encourage mixed-use developments to create a lively, pedestrian-friendly environment, promote economic growth, and utilize land strategically. Further, expanding the Historic Downtown area beyond West Main Street toward Julius Street and Gwinn Street presents an opportunity to enhance Lead's downtown. A broader footprint allows the inclusion of a wider variety of businesses, cultural venues, and mixed-use development. The City of Lead should pursue this expansion to enhance the Historic Downtown appeal and support economic and social growth.

When considering mixed uses, it is important to consider the increased parking demands with multiple uses per structure. This is especially important with combined commercial and residential space, as residents, customers, and employees may compete over parking. This is especially a concern in Lead, which has limited parking throughout the city. The City of Lead should promote the development of shared parking facilities within mixed-use areas to optimize space usage and alleviate parking competition among different user groups.

## Historic Character

With growth and development, it is important to consider a community's character. Public feedback revealed overall support for growth and development. While Lead should be encouraged to grow, it is also equally important to balance this with preserving the community's character. Historic areas play a significant role in defining the community's identity. The City of Lead should encourage the preservation of buildings with historical significance through adaptive reuse. This would allow for the incorporation of historical buildings into modern uses while preserving their architectural integrity and historical significance to the community.



## Outward Growth

Lead faces some restrictions with its ability to expand its city limits. The city is bordered by Deadwood and Central City, which limits space for annexation and development. Additionally, large areas of land bordering Lead are managed by the Bureau of Land Management.

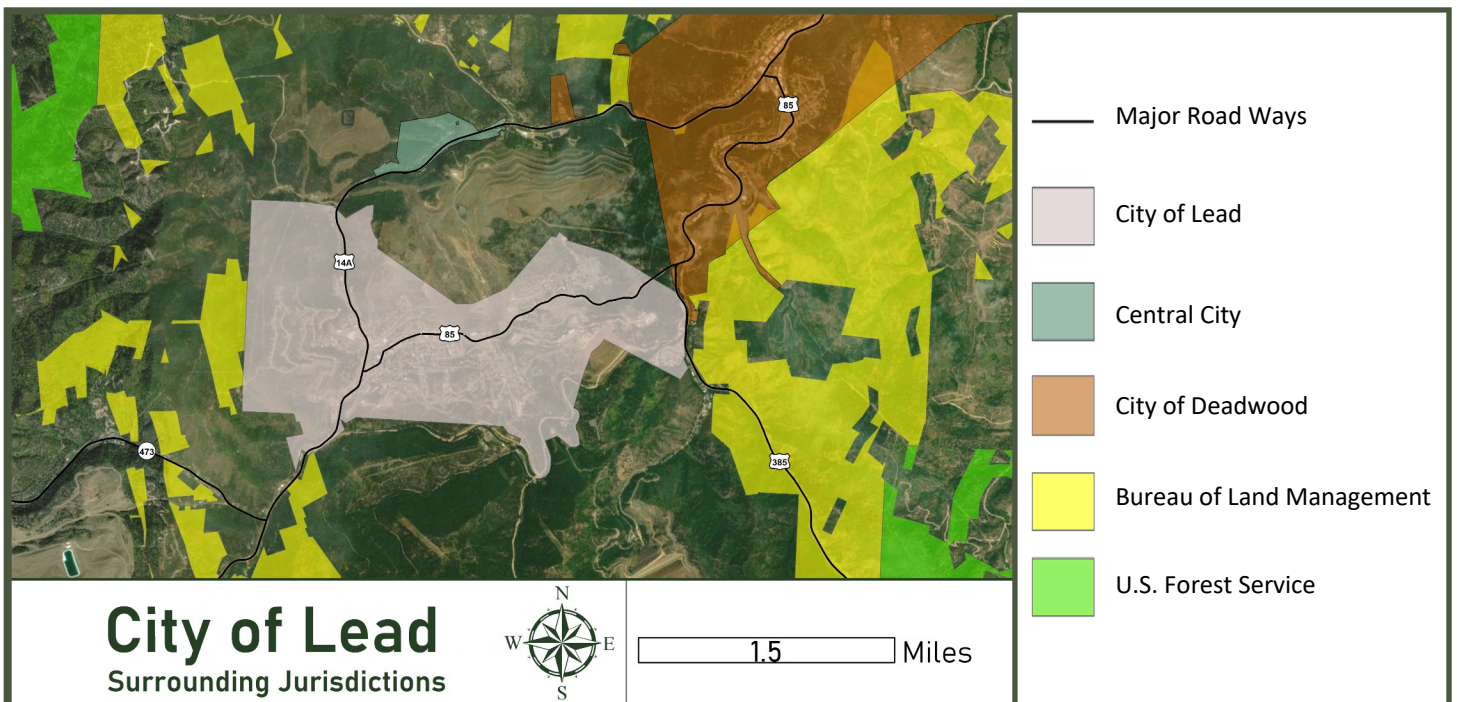
With these constraints, the most feasible location to see growth and development would be along the U.S. Highway 14 corridor to the southwest of Lead. This region was noted as a growth area through public input and could potentially support a mix of industrial, commercial, and residential uses.

When considering growth beyond current city limits, it is important to align expansion with the broader community needs and interests. To optimize resource use and ensure cost-effective development, the City of Lead should direct outward growth toward the southwest. Concentrating efforts on this region will help to optimize infrastructure investments and city services, creating more manageable and economical development. The City of Lead should also make efforts to engage with stakeholders in the southwest area and the public to ensure growth is beneficial and mutually agreed upon.



## Boundary Adjustments

Modern technology has discovered a few locations where land parcels sit partially within and outside of city limits. The split across different parcels in Lead is most likely the result of historical boundary changes. While this is not an uncommon occurrence, especially in historical towns, there are challenges that can occur, such as parcels being placed under different regulations. To help create more cohesive and efficient land management, the City of Lead should coordinate boundary adjustments through the annexation of city-owned properties and reassignment of remaining parcels to the appropriate jurisdiction.





## Strategic Land Utilization

In addition to these key areas for new growth, infill development is also an approach to maximize the use of existing infrastructure and land usage. This type of development involves repurposing underutilized or vacant properties existing within city limits. This method would help to optimize land use and reduce the need to expand outward. To help maintain the town's unique character and efficiently address growth needs, Lead should prioritize and encourage infill projects by developing a strategy to identify suitable sites based on their proximity to existing infrastructure. Focusing on these types of areas allows for more efficiency and reduces needs for costly expansions of utilities and services.

## Emergency Planning

To help enhance community resilience and safety, land use planning should integrate public safety considerations. Lead currently works with Lawrence County's Officer of Emergency Management and has membership in the County's Local Emergency Planning Commission. Lead also has historically participated in and adopts the Lawrence County Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan, which is updated every five years. This plan helps to identify risks and vulnerabilities to natural hazards in the community. Part of this plan also includes mitigation strategies, which Lead works to implement when feasible. To help protect against the loss of life, property, and infrastructure from hazards, the City of Lead should continue to actively participate in emergency planning and organizations.

Wildfire risk is an important aspect of land-use planning due to the region's susceptibility to wildfire. The area's geography and vegetation contribute to Lead's wildfire risk. In 2024, Lead had an 82% higher risk of wildfire than other communities in the US.<sup>1</sup> To help mitigate potential threats, Lead should encourage the use of fire-resistant materials and promote community awareness of Firewise practices.

## City Ordinances

A key aspect of land-use planning is promoting compatible land uses, to help promote safety, property values, and maintain residents' quality of life. While considering growth, it is important to consider potential negative impacts that can occur. Zoning and subdivision ordinances help in guiding efficient and compatible development patterns. Lead has various ordinances that help promote compatibility including zoning, subdivision, flood damage prevention, short-term rentals, and trailer courts and mobile homes. In 2023, Lead began work on a comprehensive review of ordinances and policies. The City of Lead should continue to regularly review and update city ordinances to align with the comprehensive plan, other city planning documents, and reflect current conditions.

FireWise USA Take Action Checklist	
<b>Clear</b>	Clear ignitable material such as needles and leaves from roof, gutters, eaves, porches and decks.
<b>Repair</b>	Repair any loose or missing roof shingles/tiles and caulk any gaps or openings on roof edges.
<b>Cover</b>	Cover exterior attic vents and install metal wire mesh (1/8 inch or smaller) to under-eave and soffit vents.
<b>Relocate</b>	Relocate items kept under decks or porches; swap out vegetation in these areas for rock or gravel.
<b>Replace</b>	Replace mulch with hardscaping, including rock, gravel or stone
<b>Remove</b>	Remove ignitable features within 30 feet of all structures including firewood piles, portable propane tanks and dry and dead vegetation.
<b>Protect</b>	Protect water dry grass and shrubs, trim brown vegetation and dispose of yard waste.
<b>Prune</b>	Prune low hanging branches (6-10 feet for taller trees, 1/3 of tree height for smaller trees); remove any tall grasses, vines and shrubs from under trees.
<b>Contact</b>	Contact neighbors and create a plan to address shared wildfire safety concerns together.








Source: Firewise USA Program Toolkit 2022<sup>2</sup>

## Lead's Future Land Use Map

The City of Lead Future Land Use Map was designed as a planning tool that outlines the long-term vision for land use and development. Unlike zoning maps, which are designed to represent the city's zoning ordinance, this map presents an expansive vision for future land development. While these two types of maps may appear similar, they portray different information and serve distinct purposes. Though the Future Land Use Map lacks legal enforceability, it should be used as a tool to help inform land use regulations and policies.

Future Land Use Map vs. Zoning Map	
<b>Future Land Use Map</b>	
A <b>planning tool</b> that illustrates the proposed uses of land, and used to help guide future development and encourage compatible land uses.	
<b>Zoning Map</b>	
A <b>regulatory tool</b> that outlines specific zones or districts, detailing regulations on building types and land uses. It enforces rules that land development aligns with the city's zoning laws and policies.	

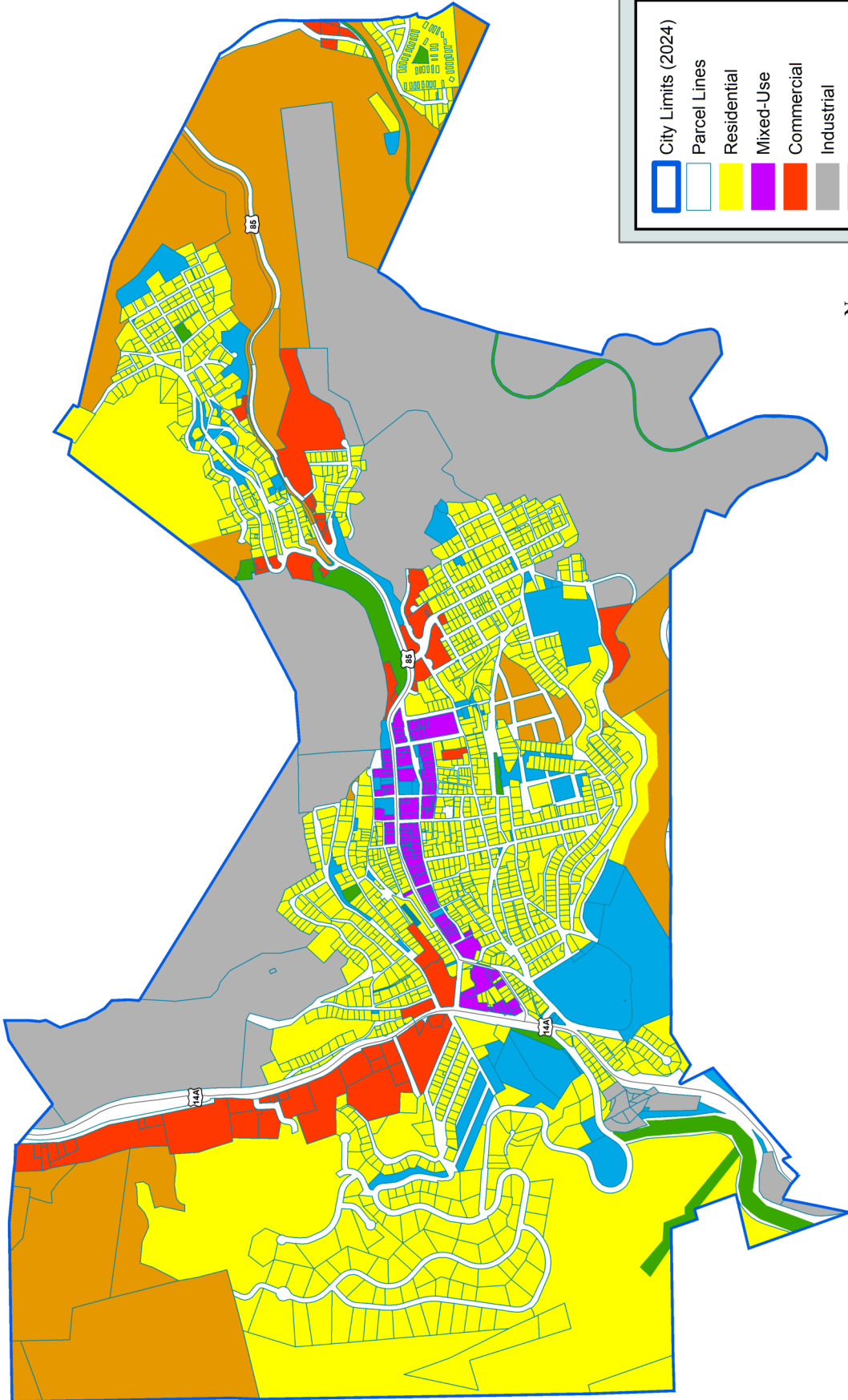
The City of Lead Future Land Use Map was created using various resources including tax parcels, aerial photography, existing land uses and infrastructure, environmental characteristics, community feedback, and other relevant considerations. A general description of the land use classifications is provided. A larger version of this map will be housed and available for public viewing at Lead City Hall.

City of Lead Future Land Use Map Land Use Classification Definitions		
Color	Use Type	Definition
	<b>Residential</b>	Aimed toward providing living spaces for individuals or families, such as single-family dwellings, multi-family dwellings, manufactured homes.
	<b>Mixed-use</b>	Combines various functions within a single area or building that coexist as multifunctional space, such as retail, office space, residential units, entertainment venues, restaurants, cultural facilities.
	<b>Commercial</b>	Aimed at supporting economic activities and consumer needs, such as retail stores, offices, restaurants, service shops, cultural facilities, hotels, and campgrounds.
	<b>Industrial</b>	Focusing on production and logistics, such as warehouses, processing, assembly, light manufacturing, storage, mining, and distribution of goods.
	<b>Parks &amp; Rec</b>	Intended for recreational activities and community engagement, such as parks, playgrounds, sport fields, trails.
	<b>Open Space</b>	Intended for undeveloped areas that are identified for preservation of natural resources, areas unsuitable for development, or reserved for future land uses exceeding this plan.
	<b>Civic</b>	Aimed at serving as public or semi-public facilities, such as government offices, city owned land, educational facilities, police and fire stations, and libraries.

# CITY OF LEAD FUTURE LAND USE MAP

## City of Lead Future Land Use Map

**Draft**



City Limits (2024)	Parcel Lines
Residential	Mixed-Use
Commercial	Industrial
Parks & Rec	Open Space
Civic	



# GROWTH AND LAND USE

**GOAL 1:** Lead will ensure compatible land use by supporting balanced development that addresses diverse needs, enhances community well-being, and integrates various land uses effectively.

**Action 1.1:** Encourage mixed-use developments in the downtown area.

**Action 1.2:** Develop a strategy to identify and prioritize suitable infill sites with existing infrastructure.

**Action 1.3:** Coordinate boundary adjustments by annexing properties owned by the City of Lead and work with the appropriate jurisdictions to explore reallocation of remaining parcels for more cohesive and efficient land management.

**Action 1.4:** Concentrate Lead's growth and development inside city limits, focusing specifically on the identified key area.

**Action 1.5:** Promote the development of shared parking facilities in mixed-use areas to optimize space usage and reduce parking competition among different user groups.

**Action 1.6:** Encourage the adaptive reuse of historically significant buildings to maintain their historical integrity and preserve the community character.

**Action 1.7:** Integrate cost-effective strategies to manage development costs and help reduce cost burdens on taxpayers.

**Action 1.8:** Plan for growth by making sure infrastructure and services can support increased demand while upholding their performance and reliability.

**Action 1.9:** Expand the Historic Downtown area beyond West Main St toward Julius St. and Gwinn St. to enhance Lead's historic appeal, diversify businesses, and support economic and social growth.

**Action 1.10:** Direct growth toward the southwest to optimize resource use and ensure cost-effective development.

**Action 1.11:** Work with stakeholders and residents in the southwest part of Lead to ensure that outward growth is both beneficial and widely supported.

**Action 1.12:** Continue participating in emergency planning and organizations to protect against the loss of life, property, and infrastructure from hazards.

**Action 1.13:** Continue to review and update city ordinances regularly to align with the comprehensive plan and reflect current conditions.

**Action 1.14:** Promote the inclusion of open spaces and park and recreation areas in new development plans to boost community well-being and environmental protection.

**Action 1.15:** Encourage the use of fire-resistant materials and Firewise practices.

\*Actions are organized by the priorities highlighted through community feedback.

# HOUSING

Lead’s unique character, rich history, and surrounding natural landscape make it an appealing place to live. A majority of survey respondents expressed a desire to see growth and development in Lead. The ability of a community to grow and develop is closely linked with housing stock availability, affordability, and condition. Housing also plays an important role in shaping the overall character and livability of a community.

## Affordability

Housing affordability is a challenge in Lead and has been noted as a top concern by the community. While housing affordability challenges are affecting many communities across the nation, Lead faces specific factors that contribute to these issues. Housing supply not meeting demand can be attributed to limited availability of buildable lots, high costs for construction, and geological constraints. Much of Lead’s existing housing stock is aging, requiring maintenance and modernization, which can be costly.

### Housing Cost-Burdened

*A household is considered “housing cost-burdened” when more than 30% of gross income is spent on housing costs.<sup>1</sup>*

The gap between income levels and housing values in Lead is also a challenge for residents. From 2012 to 2022, Lead saw an increase in the median home values of 80%, while median household incomes have only risen by 32%.<sup>2;3</sup> In 2022, 29% of households in Lead were considered housing-cost burdened, which is an increase from 2012 when 27% of were considered housing-cost burdened.<sup>4</sup>

### Survey Results: Top 5 biggest challenges related to housing in Lead.

1. Affordability/cost of existing housing
2. Overall availability of housing for year-round residents
3. Quality or condition of housing
4. Vacation home rentals
5. Availability of buildable lots for new construction

Lead Community Survey 2023

Rising competition for housing also contributes to housing unaffordability. From 2012 to 2022, the total number of new households, 151, was higher than the total number of new housing units, 132.<sup>5</sup> In 2020, Lead and Lawrence County saw an 81% occupancy rate, being both lower than South Dakota with 89%.<sup>6</sup>

Home Values and Income		
	Median Home Value	Median Household Income
2012	\$54,555	\$41,444
2022	\$169,800	\$54,555
Percent Change	(+)80%	(+)30%

Source: ACS 2012/2022

## Workforce Housing

Workforce housing is closely linked to economic development, as it ensures essential workers can afford to live near their places of employment. Challenges with housing affordability and availability often force workers to either commute long distances or live in substandard accommodations. Employers may have trouble recruiting essential workers to the area if they have no place to live. The City of Lead should explore options to support projects targeted toward both year-round and seasonal workforce housing. Lead should also consider implementing policies to encourage developers to include workforce housing units in new residential projects.

## Existing Housing Stock

A large portion of Lead's housing was built prior to 1940.<sup>6</sup> Aging housing stock often requires extensive renovations and upgrades to meeting modern living standards. Renovation of older properties can be costly, making such actions inaccessible to households with limited financial means. To help assist residents, the City of Lead currently offers a municipal tax rebate for new construction or rehabilitation/improvement to residential and commercial properties meeting certain requirements. The City of Lead should continue to encourage rehabilitation and improvements through tax rebates and explore methods of outreach to promote the existing rehabilitation program.

### Survey Results:

#### Top 5 most desired housing in Lead

1. Single-family residences
2. Affordable housing
3. Apartments
4. Townhomes/condominiums/duplexes
5. Senior housing

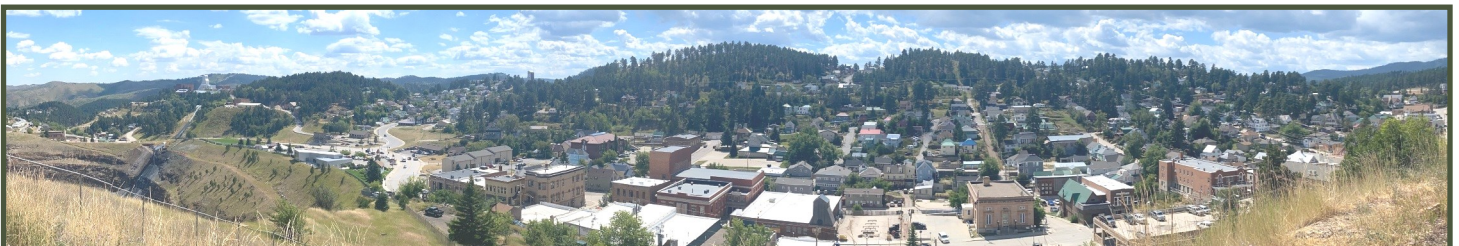
Lead Community Survey 2023

A concern voiced from community feedback was while tax incentives can help alleviate some of the financial burden, the overall costs of rehabilitation may still be too high for many residents. Other potential funding assistance may be available for qualifying homes in the historical district. The City of Lead should collaborate with all housing agencies providing services in the Lead area including but not limited to Deadwood Lead Economic Development Corporation and South Dakota Housing to explore and promote other potential financial assistance programs.

Lead's mountainous terrain poses challenges to new housing construction or rehabilitation of existing housing stock. Fewer options for suitable land for development can drive up land costs and make large scale development more difficult. These factors have the potential to make the cost of construction more expensive in Lead versus other less mountainous areas in South Dakota.

Infill development can help develop and redevelop underutilized sites within the city. This can help maximize land use efficiency, reduce the need to find new land for development, and preserve the community's character. Infill development in most areas is a more affordable option in part due to existing infrastructure in developed areas. Lead has areas with potential for infill development. The City of Lead should encourage infill development to optimize existing space and strengthen cohesion and appeal of neighborhoods. Lead should also conduct an assessment to identify vacant or underutilized properties that could be repurposed for new development.

Infill development can also play a role in removing dilapidated structures. Removing dilapidated structures can mitigate the potential health and safety issues they may cause, while also providing open lots for new construction. Property owners may have limited financial resources for such an undertaking. Lead works to offer bulk trash pickup one week a year, typically in the spring. The City of Lead should explore incentives to help cover costs such as labor, equipment, or removal fees to encourage the removal of dilapidated structures in Lead.



## Mixed Uses

During community meetings, many participants expressed the desire to see mixed uses encouraged in the downtown area. Suggestions included having shared commercial, residential, and parking within the same structure. This type of use was also suggested for Lead in the *Deadwood/Lead Housing Study 2022*. Utilizing mixed use could help to maximize land efficiency allowing for more opportunities for residential development.

## Short-Term Rentals

Short-term rentals and their potential impact on housing in Lead were mentioned throughout the planning process. The community survey showed 25% of respondents felt short-term rentals are one of the biggest challenges facing housing in Lead. Community input also showed that while some respondents had expressed the desire to see some limitations placed on short-term rentals, other respondents felt the limitations were not necessary. In 2023, Lead limited the number of short-term rentals to 7.5% of residential units. As of October 2024, there were approximately 84 permits utilizing 77% of the allowance. The City of Lead should continue to monitor impacts, positive or negative, from short-term rentals to determine if changes are needed to the current percentage or limitations.

## Senior Housing

Lead has been experiencing an increase in residents 60 and older. As the aging population grows, the community may struggle keeping pace with demand for affordable and accessible housing tailored for senior populations. The *Deadwood/Lead Housing Study 2022* suggests the development of an additional 10-12 assisted living units and 22-26 senior units with light services. However, in 2023, the only facility offering senior housing services for both Lead and Deadwood announced its closure. Following recommendations from the housing study, the City of Lead should explore options for a senior care facility.

## Housing Study

In 2022, the *Deadwood/Lead Housing Study* was updated. This study, done through the Deadwood Lead Economic Development Corporation, analyzes the overall housing needs in both the cities of Lead and Deadwood. The study provides an analysis of current conditions and recommendations for future needs. It was designed to help address various aspects of housing, including affordability, availability, and quality. The City of Lead should continue to implement recommendations provided by this study.



Residents 65+ living alone			
	2012	2022	Percent Change
Lead	12.5%	21.8%	74.4%
Deadwood	13.0%	34.7%	166.9%

# Lead/Deadwood Area Housing Study 2022 Update

\*Recommendations are based on both the cities of Lead and Deadwood\*

<b>Rental Housing Development</b>	
1.	Develop 46 to 54 general occupancy market rate rental units
2.	Develop 52 to 56 general occupancy tax credit/moderate rent/affordable workforce rental housing units
3.	Develop 14 to 16 subsidized rental housing units
4.	Promote the development/conversion of 14 to 16 affordable market rate rental housing units
5.	Develop 10 to 12 additional senior with services (assisted living) units
6.	Develop 22 to 26 senior independent/light services market rate units
7.	Develop a downtown mixed-use commercial/housing project in Lead and Deadwood
8.	Continue to utilize the Housing Choice Voucher Program
<b>Home Ownership</b>	
1.	Continue to utilize and promote all programs that assist with home ownership
<b>Single Family Housing Development</b>	
1.	Lot availability and development
2.	Strategies to encourage residential lot sales and new home construction in Lead/Deadwood
3.	Promote twin home/town home/villa development for seniors/empty nesters
4.	Coordinate housing agencies and nonprofit groups to construct affordable housing
5.	Development of owner-occupancy work force housing
<b>Housing Rehabilitation</b>	
1.	Promote rental housing rehabilitation
2.	Promote owner-occupied housing rehabilitation efforts
3.	Develop a neighborhood revitalization program
4.	Develop a rental inspection and registration program
<b>Other Housing Incentives</b>	
1.	Promote commercial rehabilitation and development
2.	Develop home ownership and new construction marketing programs and strategies
3.	Encourage employer involvement in housing
4.	Develop a plan and a coordinated effort among housing agencies



# HOUSING

**GOAL 2: Lead will develop a diverse housing market meeting residents' needs while preserving the city's historic character and enhancing overall community well-being.**

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**Action 2.1:** Identify and implement solutions to support projects focused on year-round and seasonal workforce housing.

**Action 2.2:** Continue to track and assess the impacts of short-term rentals on the community and adjust regulations or limitations as needed based on observed impacts.

**Action 2.3:** Work with the Deadwood Lead Economic Development Corporation and South Dakota Housing to identify and promote additional financial assistance programs for housing development and improvement.

**Action 2.4:** Implement policies and incentives to encourage infill development that optimizes existing space and strengthens neighborhood cohesion and appeal.

**Action 2.5:** Utilize mixed-use development to maximize opportunities for residential development and enhance land efficiency.

**Action 2.6:** Explore and offer incentives to cover costs related to labor, equipment, or removal fees to facilitate the removal of dilapidated structures.

**Action 2.7:** Continue offering tax rebates for property rehabilitation and improvement.

**Action 2.8:** Implement the recommendations of the *Lead/Deadwood Housing Study*.

**Action 2.9:** Explore options for a senior care facility.

**Action 2.10:** Enhance outreach and education efforts to promote existing rehabilitation programs.

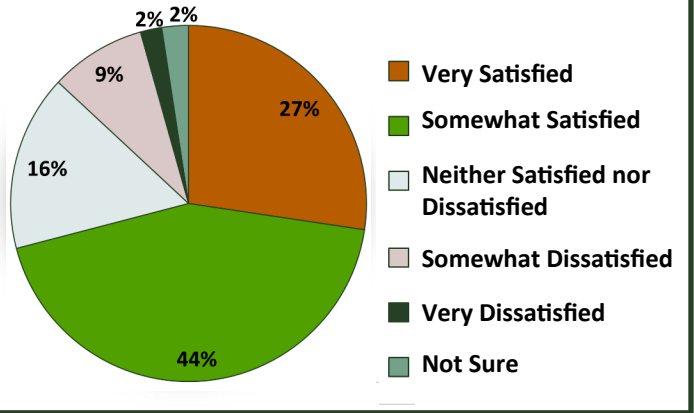
# PARKS & RECREATION

Having access to parks and recreational opportunities helps promote healthy lifestyles and creates stronger communities. Being located in the Black Hills provides residents and visitors various recreational opportunities in and around the city. Lead has numerous recreational opportunities located nearby, including the Black Hills National Forest, various motorized and non-motorized trail networks, the George S. Mickelson Trail, and the Terry Peak Ski Area.

## Parks

A majority of the community is very or somewhat satisfied with Lead's existing parks and recreational facilities. Popular comments received included updating existing park facilities, adding more trail systems, summer and winter programs, and winter activities/facilities. One highly requested recreational facility is a community pool. However, the construction and future operation and maintenance of this type of facility is currently cost prohibitive.

How satisfied are you with Lead's existing parks & recreational facilities?



It is recommended that people should have safe access to quality parks or greenspace within a ten minute, or roughly half a mile, walk from their place of residence.<sup>1</sup> Lead has eight city parks and one privately owned park open to the public, ensuring that most residents and visitors have access to a park within close proximity. A majority of the developed areas in Lead have access to a city park within a half mile, with exception being the northwestern section of Lead in the northern part of the Hearst Subdivision.



## Public Parks

1. Centennial Park
2. Dog Park
3. Manuel Brothers Park
4. Mile High Park
5. Par Course Park
6. Prospect Park
7. Washington Park
8. Walt Green Park
9. Gold Run Park

**City of Lead**  
Park Coverage



1/2 Mile Park Coverage  
0.5 Miles



While there was some interest in adding new parks to the city, a majority of input indicated a need for updates and continued maintenance of existing parks. Since the last Comprehensive Plan update, a master plan for the Manual Brothers Park was developed. Improvements executed from this plan include a new skate park, paved walking path, and a splash pad. Lead’s Par Course Park is also at the beginning stages of renovation, primarily focusing on new playground equipment.



**Small Changes/Improvements**

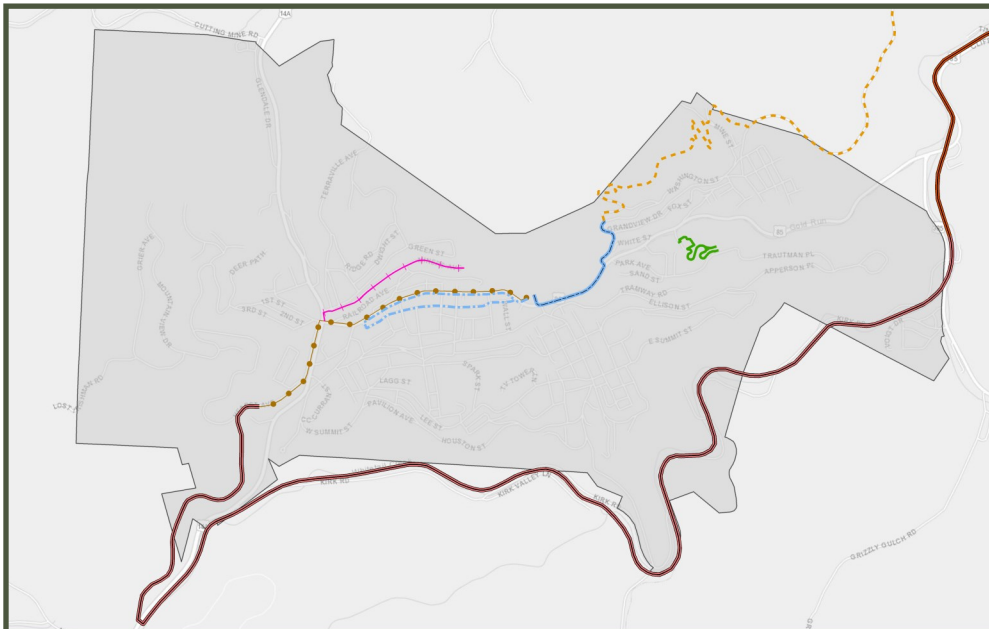
- Shade shelter and trees
- Sledding hill
- Bike racks around town
- Dog waste stations
- Repaint signs at the park
- Trash bins
- More youth sport activities
- More landscaping

Selection of results from Community Meetings 2023

To ensure the community has access to quality park facilities, a continued effort should be made to update and maintain all the city’s parks. Some comments suggested maintenance and updates including periodic replacement of older playground equipment, shaded seating areas, more signage, and restrooms. To help promote safe and clean parks, regular upkeep and maintenance is needed. The City of Lead should be encouraged to collaborate with Lead City Beautification, local businesses and other non-profit organizations for park improvements and maintenance. Lead should also explore options for creating a citywide Master Parks Plan to help identify key areas of focus, funding options, and timelines.



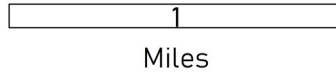
A concern on park updates and development was the potential loss of open green spaces that are utilized for various recreational opportunities. The City of Lead should consider the need for open spaces in the park systems for uses such as sporting fields.



### Trails

- Gold Run Interpretive Trail
- Homestake Trail (Deadwood)
- Homestake Trail (Alternative)
- Lead Historic Main St. Trail
- Lead Overlook Trail
- Mickelson Trail
- Urban Art Walk

## City of Lead Trails (2024)



### Trails

The community currently has the Homestake Trail which runs from Lead to Deadwood. This 5.7 mile trail is used primarily for hiking and mountain biking. A new trail is in the early stages of development to connect the Walt Green trailhead to the Mickelson Trail. Additionally, the city has several urban trails. While Lead does not currently maintain or build trails, there are several local trail groups in the Black Hills area who work closely with local governments in the creation of recreational trails.

Community members expressed their desire to see more recreational trails for both hiking and biking in Lead. There is also potential to continue working with local trail groups to develop a looping trail system in Lead that would eventually connect to other regional trails. A Master Trails plan should be considered to optimize recreational trails in Lead.

*“Trails can bring a wide range of benefits to communities, including increased business, higher property value, improved public health, and higher quality of life”<sup>1</sup>*

### Programs

The City of Lead does not currently host or manage summer programs. A majority of the summer programs are managed through a variety of community groups or the school district. During the planning process, feedback showed many in the community hoped to see an increase in summer programs. This could include programs with both higher and lower activity levels to accommodate all age ranges. A work group was formed between the cities of Deadwood and Lead aimed toward providing a comprehensive list of recreational programs offered in the area. The City of Lead should continue collaborative efforts to support summer programs that promote the health and well-being of the citizens of Lead.

## Winter Activities

Lead is known as the Mile High City, which brings cold and snowy winters. A safe and established sledding hill and ice rink were the two items most requested by the community. These types of facilities would increase the recreational opportunities for the community and provide safe spaces in the winter months. When considering updating or expanding park facilities, Lead should consider winter recreational opportunities, including the potential of dual season facilities. Collaborative efforts between the City of Lead, local community groups and the school district should be encouraged to help develop and host engaging winter activities such as:

- Snowmobile trails
- Cross-county snowshoeing/skiing
- Downhill skiing
- Sledding
- Ice Skating

The Handley Center serves as the community's main indoor recreational center providing a track, exercise equipment, studios, and a basketball court. The center also provides a space for activities such as basketball tournaments and roller-skating nights. The center is accessible to the public with a membership fee. The facility is currently owned and operated by a non-profit and receives funding subsidies from the City.



Community feedback showed hopes of seeing updates to the facility and equipment. Due to the limited indoor recreational options in Lead, the City of Lead should work closely with the facility to encourage updates meet the recreational needs of the community, explore the feasibility of partnership agreements, and promote community engagement and input.



# PARKS & RECREATION

**GOAL 3:** Lead will advance its park and recreational facilities by expanding access to recreational areas, offering diverse activity options, and ensuring high-quality amenities to support community health and engagement.

**Action 3.1:** Explore ongoing collaboration with local trails groups toward the development of a looping trail system in Lead.

**Action 3.2:** Continue collaboration efforts with the City of Deadwood to support diverse summer programs in the area.

**Action 3.3:** Pursue the implementation of a Master Trails Plan to establish a comprehensive network of recreational trails in the city.

**Action 3.4:** Explore enhancements to indoor recreational options in Lead through potential partnerships and encouraging community participation in the process.

**Action 3.5:** Collaborate with community groups, businesses, and non-profits for fundraising and volunteer efforts aimed at park maintenance and upgrades to enhance public parks in Lead.

**Action 3.6:** Consider the need for open space for recreational uses when developing or upgrading park facilities.

**Action 3.7:** Encourage partnerships and collaboration with community organizations and the school district to enhance summer and winter programs.

**Action 3.8:** Support the incorporation of winter recreational activities into park updates to expand community recreational opportunities.

**Action 3.9:** Develop a city-wide master plan for all of Lead's parks for coordinated and strategic improvements to meet the diverse recreational needs of the community.

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic development is an important component of the overall prosperity and quality of life within a community. Lead’s economic landscape is closely linked to its historic foundation. Historically, Lead’s economy was centered around mining. However, on December 31, 2001, Homestake Mining Company announced the closure of mining operations in Lead, prompting a significant economic transition. Since this time, Lead has been working to stabilize and diversify the local economy.

## Industries

Lead’s economic structure is predominantly centered around a two key industries - services and retail trade. The services classification, which represents slightly less than half of the businesses in Lead, refers to establishments primarily engaged in services rather than production of goods. The second highest industry was retail trade. This classification encompasses businesses that sell goods for personal or household consumption.

### Types of Businesses classified under ‘services’

- Hotels & Lodging
- Automotive Services
- Movies & Amusements
- Health Services
- Legal Services
- Education Institutions & Libraries
- Other Services

Source: ESRI Business Summary 2023

A diverse range of industries is important for a resilient local economy. Different types of businesses contribute uniquely to the local economy, creating a balanced environment that helps support the needs and interests of the community. The community survey showed the most desired business types in Lead included entertainment, retail, childcare, recreational/wellness, and cultural and educational.

### Top 5 Largest Industries (by jobs) in Lead and Surrounding Area.

1. Mining, Quarrying, Oil & Gas Extraction
2. Professional, Scientific, Technical
3. Arts, Entertainment, Recreation
4. Accommodation & Food Service
5. Construction

Source: Lightcast 2023 (includes data from zip code 57754)

### Targeted Business Types to Consider

Sporting goods  
Specialized health services  
Salons  
Educational facilities  
Financial or legal services  
Pet services

### Lead Industry Overview (2023)

Standard Industrial Classification	Businesses	Employees
Agriculture & Mining	3%	4%
Construction	5%	4%
Manufacturing	2%	2%
Transportation	2%	4%
Communication	0%	0%
Utility	1%	0%
Wholesale Trade	1%	1%
Retail Trade	20%	28%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	6%	4%
Services	47%	47%
Government	7%	5%
Unclassified	7%	1%

Source: ESRI Business Summary 2023

Lead currently has opportunities to attract businesses seeking smaller office spaces with short-term leases. This type of business, which would usually include start-ups, small enterprises, or temporary projects, often requires spaces with flexibility and cost savings. Promoting these types of spaces can help Lead attract businesses to the area, which helps to fill vacant properties and boost the local economy.

Feedback during the planning process showed a desire to see more dining options in Lead, including fast food options. Lead has a few dining options and one major chain. Historically, the city has seen several chains leave the area. It is believed this is primarily due to the difficulty attracting workers. Given historic difficulties, attracting chain restaurants to the area may be challenging.

Lead has potential opportunities for economic advancement through industrial resurgence. The Industrial sector is a reflection of the city’s founding industry. Businesses such as light manufacturing can help to enhance job creation and create a more balanced local economy. Lead may also have future potential to grow in the industrial sector, with the potential return of mining to the area.

After the departure of Homestake, the mine transitioned to the Sanford Underground Research Facility (SURF), which is included in the services classification. SURF is the deepest underground laboratory in the United States. Based on a 2022 economic impact study, it is anticipated SURF will create 1,200 jobs in South Dakota in the next decade.<sup>1</sup> Recognizing the efforts in advancing compelling research and the role that SURF plays in job creation, the City of Lead should continue to partner with and support the Sanford Underground Research Laboratory.

A diverse range of industries is essential for a resilient local economy. Supporting industries and businesses with local needs and interests can help to both create jobs and enhance the community’s overall well-being. The Lead of City should support and encourage businesses that serve local economic needs and support local interests.

When considering economic diversification, Lead also has opportunity to attract visitors into the area. Nearby attractions such as Terry Peak, Black Hills National Forest, Spearfish Canyon, and nearby Deadwood, bring visitors into the area. Lead has a few key foundations which serve as important draws to tourism, including the Historic Homestake Opera House, Black Hills Mining Museum, and the Homestake Visitor Center. These places offer local residents and visitors a chance to connect with Lead’s rich history and appreciate its unique charm. Lead should continue to strengthen partnerships with local businesses and the Chamber of Commerce to promote Lead’s history and charm to attract visitors to the area.

**Workforce**

Historically a major mining center, Lead has evolved into a bedroom community, with many residents commuting to jobs outside of their place of residence. Data shows that the median travel time to work for 50% of residents is between 10-24 minutes, which supports the claim that residents are employed in the nearby cities of Deadwood, Sturgis, and Spearfish.

In contrast, employers in Lead are seeing trends where many of their employees live in neighboring communities. It is believed this may be partially due to difficulties finding housing. This shortage of workforce housing impacts the employer’s ability to attract and retain staff, which can affect overall business operations and growth.

<b>Lead: Commuting Characteristics</b>	
Working in place of residence	21.6%
Worked outside of place of residence	78.4%

Source: ACS 2022

In an effort to enhance Lead’s attractiveness for businesses and workers, the City of Lead should collaborate with economic development groups to boost local employment opportunities and support businesses operations. Lead should also continue to explore solutions to improve housing availability and affordability, complementing strategies discussed in the Housing chapter.



## Childcare

Childcare is an ongoing challenge in the area. Public input revealed 35% of respondents felt childcare was a needed service in the community as it relates to economic growth and development in Lead. Many families in the area have limited options in Lead and the surrounding communities. Challenges include a lack of reliable, affordable, and available space. Lack of childcare facilities can impact employers desire to locate to the area, as they may have difficulty recruiting workers who rely on these services. Lead currently has no licensed or regulated childcare providers. Lead should continue to work with economic development groups to explore options to address the concern, such as public-private partnerships or incentive programs. Similarly, Lead should work on providing education and information to residents who need such facilities.

## Historic Downtown

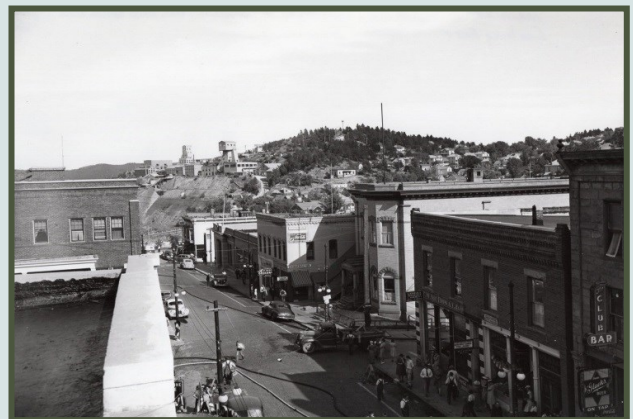
Lead's Historic Downtown was mentioned throughout the planning process as a potential focus area for economic growth and development. Suggestions provided through public input sessions include attracting year-round businesses, improving aesthetics and signage, and encouraging an overall downtown resurgence. The Historic Downtown area is confronted with several challenges, including the high costs of renovations, expensive rental rates, difficulties in accessing businesses, and limited parking options.

To help address these challenges, the City of Lead should consider the development of a downtown resurgence plan. Strategies to help highlight Lead's Historic Downtown appeal may include a façade program, accessibility enhancements, or additional incentives to businesses. Collaboration with local stakeholders, business owners, residents, and economic development organizations is needed to ensure the initiatives are well-coordinated and reflect the needs and goals of the community.

The Historic Downtown area is primarily composed of historical structures, with the oldest dating back to 1878. These structures are an important part of the community's history and unique character. Most of these buildings are privately owned. The historical nature of the structures in this area often requires costly updates to meet modern business needs. These additional costs can become a financial barrier for many small businesses and startups. Similarly, high rental costs for commercial spaces can place strain on potential tenants' budgets. To help maintain the Historic Downtown's charm and history, Lead should support efforts to preserve and repurpose Historic Downtown structures. To help these efforts, Lead should also explore expanding on and promoting various historical preservation incentives and funding options.

### *History of Lead's Historic Downtown*

In 1900, the original downtown was destroyed by fire. Starting in 1920, after 20 years of rebuilding, and continuing over the two following decades, the city began experiencing issues with subsidence. The impacted area, now the Open Cut, was the original site of much of Lead's downtown. As a result of the subsidence, much of the downtown area was either forced to be removed or relocated. Today, Lead's Historic Downtown resides on West Main Street.



Photos Courtesy: Black Hills Mining Museum

## **Economic Growth Partners**

As Lead works to enhance its economic vitality and sustainability, creating and encouraging a supportive environment for business development, growth, and retention is important. On a local level, Lead has membership with the Deadwood-Lead Economic Development Corporation which strives to promote economic growth and development and job creation in the communities of Central City, Deadwood and Lead.<sup>2</sup> Lead also works closely with the Lead Area Chamber of Commerce. This organization promotes Lead through resources and education, offering materials on tourism and relocation, supporting business growth and development, and organizing events.<sup>3</sup> State and federal partners also provide various programs to assist with economic growth, such as the South Dakota Governor's Office of Economic Development and the US Economic Development Administration.

The City of Lead should continue to work closely with local, state, and federal economic development organizations to attract and promote the growth, development, and retention of businesses in Lead. These partnerships can provide valuable insights and resources about emerging trends and opportunities. Lead should also support economic development projects that align with local, state, and federal priorities to achieve broader strategic goals.

## **Attracting Businesses**

Attracting businesses involves addressing some key factors such as land availability, infrastructure, and community needs. Offering strategically located sites with established infrastructure is essential for attracting new businesses to the area. It is equally important to align economic strategies with local interests and regional and national economic goals. These factors can help to build a thriving economy.

One of the largest obstacles in attracting businesses in Lead is the lack of flat land suitable for development. The high costs associated with site preparation can discourage new commercial and industrial development. Lead should work to identify suitable underutilized or unconventional spaces and

repurpose them for site-ready commercial and industrial uses. Efforts can be done by conducting detailed site evaluations for potential commercial and industrial development, assessing factors such as topography, accessibility, and proximity to transportation networks and infrastructure. By addressing these needs, Lead can create a more attractive environment for investment, development, and economic growth.

## **Incentives and Programs**

Challenges in attracting and expanding businesses in Lead include limited land availability, concerns about parking and accessibility, insufficient infrastructure, and high costs associated with construction or rental. There are a few local incentive programs available to help encourage growth and development. Lead currently has a tax rebate for building construction and property improvements, which was established to help encourage new construction and rehabilitation/improvements of existing buildings. The rebate is only applicable to municipal property taxes. Lead has also offered Tax Increment Financing (TIFF) on a case by case basis.

In addition to the local programs, Lawrence County has an incentive program through the County's Revolving Loan Fund, aimed at start-up and expansion for businesses in Lawrence County.<sup>4</sup> Other funding through grants and loans are available on state and federal levels.

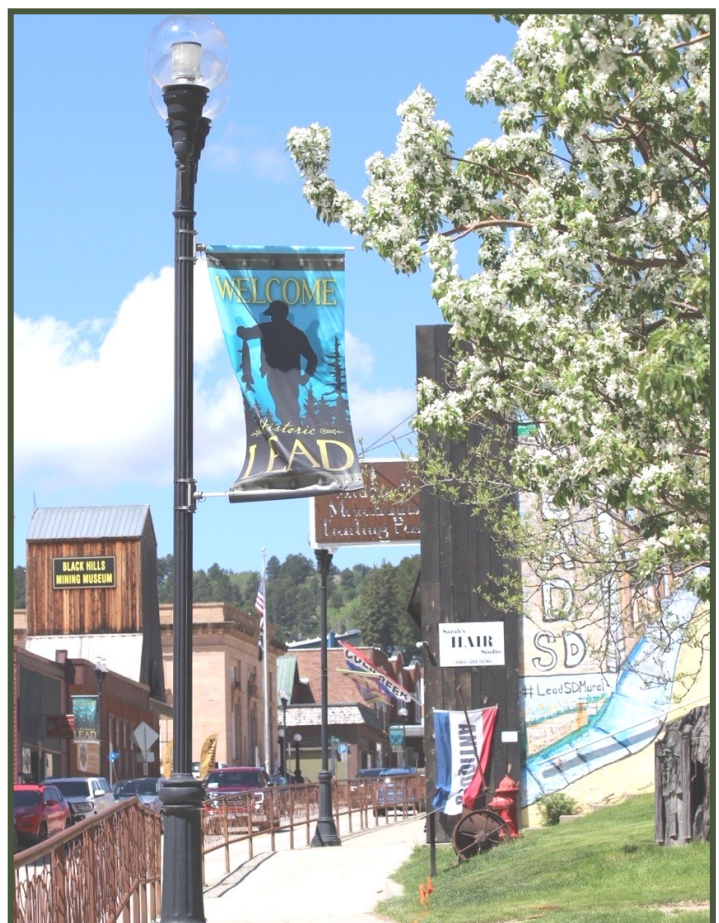
Education is a big part of attracting and expanding development in Lead. While there are various programs, many potential and current businesses and homeowners are unaware of them. The City of Lead should create a plan to provide information to the public on these incentive programs.

During public input, it was expressed that government officials and staff themselves may not be familiar or fully updated on some of these incentive programs. Lead should work on creating a training plan for municipal leaders and staff to ensure they are informed and capable of effectively supporting business growth and development in Lead. To help in educating not only internally but publicly, the City of Lead should arrange for periodic presentations to enhance understanding and promote effective utilization of economic development resources. This may include presentations from knowledgeable local, state, and federal stakeholders.

### Events

The City of Lead often works in collaboration with local organizations and businesses in providing community events. The Lead Area Chamber of Commerce also plays a vital role in promoting Lead, including the listing of upcoming events. Public feedback indicated the desire for more events for the community and to help attract visitors to Lead. The City of Lead should continue collaborating with local partners and the Chamber of Commerce to explore opportunities to increase the number of events in Lead.

To help spotlight Lead's local businesses and Historic Downtown, the City of Lead should support events that showcase the area's amenities and unique charms. Being supportive of events that highlight local merchants and cultural attractions can help create a lively and engaging atmosphere on Main Street and attract visitors to Lead.



# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**GOAL 4:** Lead will advance economic growth with a supportive environment for businesses, enhancing job opportunities for residents and revitalizing central areas to strengthen community character and connection.

**Action 4.1:** Explore housing solutions to improve affordability and availability, supporting local workforce stability.

**Action 4.2:** Maintain downtown’s historical appeal by facilitating the preservation of historic buildings and expanding on and promoting additional preservation incentives and funding options.

**Action 4.3:** Explore strategies to address childcare needs, such as public-private partnerships or incentive programs.

**Action 4.4:** Continue working closely with local, regional, and state economic development organizations to attract, promote, and retain businesses in Lead.

**Action 4.5:** Identify suitable underutilized or unconventional spaces and repurpose them for site-ready commercial and industrial uses.

**Action 4.6:** Expand public event opportunities in Lead by working closely with local partners and the Chamber of Commerce.

**Action 4.7:** Continue collaborating with the Sanford Underground Research Facility (SURF) to advance research and job creation in the city.

**Action 4.8:** Collaborate with economic development groups to enhance workforce opportunities and support business operations.

**Action 4.9:** Develop a Historic Downtown resurgence strategy, collaborate with community stakeholders to ensure alignment with community needs and goals.

**Action 4.10:** Create a plan to effectively communicate information about incentive programs to the public, ensuring that residents and businesses are aware of available opportunities.

**Action 4.11:** Develop a training plan for municipal leaders and staff to ensure they are well-informed about business growth programs.

**Action 4.12:** Encourage initiatives that feature Lead’s local businesses and historic downtown, emphasizing its distinctive characteristics and attractions.

**Action 4.13:** Support and encourage businesses that serve local economic needs and advance local interests.

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**Action 4.14:** Support efforts to increase awareness of childcare options by providing information on available resources and services to residents and employers.

**Action 4.15:** Support economic development projects that align with local, state, and federal priorities to achieve broader strategic objectives.

**Action 4.16:** Evaluate commercial sites with development potential and provide findings to attract business and investor interest.

**Action 4.17:** Coordinate periodic presentations to increase knowledge and support the efficient utilization of economic development resources.

**Action 4.18:** Continue partnerships with local businesses and the Lead Chamber of Commerce to highlight the city's charm and history to draw more visitors to the area.

# TRANSPORTATION

Transportation systems play a vital role in ensuring the functionality and prosperity of any city. A well-designed and efficient transportation network is important for facilitating the movement of people, supporting economic development, and improving the quality of life for residents and daily commuters.

Lead's connectivity is largely supported by US Highway 85 and 14A, which serve as important routes for both local commuters and visitors to the area. In 2023, Highway 85 ranged from 3,900-4,900 average daily traffic counts in Lead, while 14A ranged from 4,700 to 7,700.<sup>1</sup> Highway 85, also referred to as Main Street, is the primary route for downtown Lead. This highway serves as the main arterial for northeastern and southeastern areas of the city and eventually connects to Deadwood. Highway 14A, another major arterial, links the western parts of Lead and connects with Central City to the north and the popular tourist destinations Terry Peak and Spearfish Canyon to the south.

Shaped by its history and mountainous terrain, Lead's transportation systems face unique challenges. The city's narrow streets and steep grades complicate the integration of bike lanes and sidewalks, widening of streets, and creation of parking. These complications often require careful design to ensure safety and accessibility. Many of the older neighborhoods may be restricted in their ability to update or add infrastructure. Transportation concerns voiced by the community focused on street improvements, parking, and public infrastructure. The topic of street maintenance is discussed in the Facilities & Services section of this plan.

## Top 5 topics for improving transportation in Lead:

Improving City Streets  
More Residential Parking  
More Downtown Parking  
Adding/Improving Pedestrian Infrastructure  
More Public Transportation

Lead Community Survey 2023

## Parking

Availability of parking is a pressing concern in Lead, with difficulties experienced in both residential and downtown areas. Like many historical mountain towns, Lead has several older neighborhoods with narrow streets complicating vehicle congestion and parking availability. This also makes finding a convenient parking area near one's residence more difficult when a driveway space is not available to a household. This challenge becomes even more pronounced during winter months, with snow accumulation and snow plowing.

When comparing data from 2012 to 2022, there was a notable shift in vehicle availability per household in Lead. Over this period, there has been a significant increase in households with two or more vehicles, and a decrease in households with only one vehicle. With a rise in households owning multi-vehicles, the demand for parking spaces will likely increase. There was also a slight increase in the number of households without a vehicle, potentially indicating a preference or necessity for alternative transportation methods. Lead currently has ordinances which address on-street parking. As ordinances are updated, the City should ensure alignment with other city ordinances and plans to minimize conflicts between different regulations, creating a cohesive approach to planning and traffic management.

Downtown parking was also an area of concern. Lead offers a few off-street parking options primarily located around the historic downtown area. The rest of parking downtown consists of on-street parking. All of Lead’s city-owned public parking is free to use, with the exception being leased parking at the parking garage.

One of the challenges that arises with parking in Historic Downtown is supply and demand of parking. Public feedback also expressed the challenge businesses face attracting customers with limited parking options. The Historic Downtown area currently is utilized for both commercial and residential uses. Mixed-use development can create competition over parking demands between residents, employees, and visitors. The City should consider multifunctional parking facilities serving different functions, including both public and reserved parking.

To help alleviate parking concerns, Lead should also conduct a parking inventory and assessment. This could help identify underutilized spaces and areas with inefficient parking layouts throughout the community, helping not only downtown parking but also residential parking throughout town. The City should also encourage parking layouts that maximize space efficiency. These strategies could help create parking spaces within existing infrastructure by optimizing space allocation and layout.

### Sidewalks

Pedestrian infrastructure plays a critical role in the connectivity of a community. It creates safe and efficient transportation alternatives and facilitates movement. Cities with limited pedestrian-friendly infrastructure and public transportation create a higher reliance on personal vehicle ownership. Lead’s layout and topography may not always accommodate standards for sidewalks and bike lanes. Many of the older neighborhoods may be restricted in their ability to update or add pedestrian infrastructure.



In Lead, the presence and maintenance of sidewalks can vary significantly from neighborhood to neighborhood. Sidewalks serve as important arteries allowing individuals access through the community. Upkeep of sidewalks is the responsibility of the property owner. Sidewalk concerns include condition and upkeep, including timely snow removal. Lead currently keeps record of sidewalk conditions and is working on updating this information.

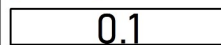


## City of Lead

### Downtown Public Parking



 Downtown Parking (City Owned)

 0.1 Miles



Efforts to add or upgrade sidewalks should aim to improve accessibility and connectivity throughout the community. Pursuing grant funding is one possible strategy for developing new sidewalks or upgrading existing infrastructure to enhance community mobility. The Transportation Alternatives Program through South Dakota Department of Transportation is a potential funding source for sidewalks. The City should actively seek grant opportunities for sidewalk improvements.

To enhance pedestrian safety, accessibility and connectivity, the City should consider conducting a walkability study to identify key improvements and enhance overall pedestrian movement. This would be important to help identify safe routes for high-use areas such as schools. Additionally, the City should focus on identifying and prioritizing key pedestrian routes, such as sidewalks, crosswalks, and staircases, with Americans Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance where possible.

### Stairways

Lead also has numerous stairways that help to connect different levels within the city. Historically, the city-owned stairs were used primarily by residents going to and from work at the Homestake mine. There are currently three sets of city-owned and maintained stairways which span from Railroad Ave. to Ridge Rd. The remaining stairways in the city are privately owned. Public input showed a desire for better upkeep of stairways. The City should budget for and work with local organizations to update city-owned stairways, ensuring they are both safe and visually appealing.

### Crosswalks

Another important element of pedestrian infrastructure is crosswalks. Crosswalks help to provide pedestrian safety, improve accessibility, manage traffic flows, and create an overall pedestrian-friendly environment. Public feedback highlighted a desire to see more crosswalks throughout the city and better upkeep of existing ones. Key areas of concern include crossings near the school and along Main Street. Especially in the Historic Downtown area, proper maintenance and adequate crosswalks can help to stimulate foot traffic and support positive economic development. The City of Lead should continuously assess locations where crosswalks are needed, ensuring they are visible and well-maintained. Additionally, the City should collaborate with South Dakota Department of Transportation on roads under their jurisdiction to guarantee safe pedestrian crossings.







### **Bike Infrastructure**

Bike infrastructure is another means of enhancing non-vehicular mobility. While the community showed a slight interest in adding more bike-friendly infrastructure, comments also mentioned the hope of more bike-friendly trails with connections to recreational trails. Some concerns were voiced about the potential increase of congestion and logistical challenges on Lead’s already narrow roads. The city’s unique street and neighborhood design may also complicate the addition of dedicated bike lanes and could impact parking availability. To address these issues, the City should explore ways to identify and improve urban routes that are more suitable for cycling and possible connections to recreational trails.

Several requests mentioned the installation of bike racks around town. This would help to make cycling a more convenient option for residents and a step toward a more bike-friendly environment. The City should work to include more bike infrastructure, such as bike racks placed strategically around town, to make cycling more convenient and accessible.

### **Safe Routes to Schools**

The city of Lead is home to the Lead-Deadwood Middle School and High School. Having safe routes that reduce the risk of accidents and encourage an environment for walking or biking is essential for ensuring the well-being of students traveling to school. Lead should conduct an assessment of existing school routes to help identify areas of improvement, such as new signage or crosswalks.

### **Public Transportation**

Public transportation can help enhance mobility and reduce issues related to limited parking availability. Lead has few options for public transportation or rideshare services. The primary service in the area is a private non-profit Prairie Hills Transit, which currently provides transportation throughout the Black Hills.

Throughout the planning process, many people expressed the desire to see public transportation services that connect the communities of Lead, Deadwood, and Central City. This would provide transportation alternatives for residents of Lead and the surrounding communities, easing the burden on transportation networks and parking.

#### ***Deadwood Comprehensive Plan 2018: Strategies***

*Analyze the feasibility of establishing a public transportation service into local neighborhoods and to Lead and Central City.*

Deadwood’s 2018 comprehensive plan notes the possibility of expanding its current public transportation network into surrounding communities, if feasible. Acknowledging the high costs associated with operating and maintaining public transportation, Lead should be encouraged to collaborate with neighboring communities. Together, they can explore feasible solutions to work toward regionalization of public transportation between Lead, Deadwood, and Central City.

# TRANSPORTATION

## **GOAL 5: Lead will establish a cohesive multi-modal transportation system to better connect and support diverse travel and parking needs within the city.**

**Action 5.1:** Collaborate with neighboring communities to explore and implement regional solutions for public transportation between Lead, Deadwood, and Central City.

**Action 5.2:** Promote and implement parking layouts that are designed to maximize space efficiency and accommodate diverse parking needs.

**Action 5.3:** Conduct a parking inventory and assessment to address and mitigate parking concerns in Lead.

**Action 5.4:** Identify and prioritize key pedestrian routes, including sidewalks, crosswalks, and staircases, ensuring ADA compliance where possible.

**Action 5.5:** Secure funding and engage with local organizations to upgrade city-owned stairways, focusing on safety and aesthetics.

**Action 5.6:** Conduct a walkability study to identify key improvements and enhance overall pedestrian movement in the city.

**Action 5.7:** Explore methods to identify and enhance urban routes for cycling and develop potential connections to recreational trails.

**Action 5.8:** Review and update ordinances to ensure alignment with other city regulations and plans, minimizing conflicts and creating a cohesive approach to planning and traffic management.

**Action 5.9:** Evaluate multifunctional parking facilities that accommodate both public and reserved parking needs.

**Action 5.10:** Identify and secure grant funding focused on sidewalk enhancements.

**Action 5.11:** Conduct an assessment of existing school routes to identify areas for improvement on safety for students.

**Action 5.12:** Continuously monitor and improve crosswalk areas to ensure they are both visible and well-maintained.

**Action 5.13:** Work closely with the South Dakota Department of Transportation on roads under their jurisdiction to ensure safe pedestrian crossings.

**Action 5.14:** Increase the number of strategically placed bike racks around town to improve cycling convenience and accessibility.

# FACILITIES & SERVICES

A city's facilities and services are essential to any community as they help shape its livability and functionality. The availability and quality of amenities and infrastructure including utilities, emergency services, schools, roads, and public facilities are vital for supporting and enhancing the community. Lead has a mix of facilities and services that are owned and operated by either the City or private entities. The community input indicated residents felt most services provided were generally good. Some top-rated services included snow removal, law enforcement, library services, and emergency services. Areas noted that could be improved were street maintenance, nuisance enforcement, and public notification.

## Street Maintenance

Street maintenance is important for ensuring safe and reliable transportation and preserving the city's infrastructure. The City of Lead manages over 25 miles of streets, which includes repairs, cleaning, and snow removal. Throughout the planning process, street maintenance was identified as a key area in need of improvement around the city. A major concern was overall road condition, particularly the prevalence of potholes throughout town. Factors such as moisture, temperatures, and freeze-thaw cycles contribute significantly to these conditions.

Due to Lead's climate and typically heavy snowfall, the City's utility department primarily focuses on road repairs during the spring, summer, and fall months. The City's Facilities Plan outlines timelines and potential funding for major street updates and repairs. To further enhance road maintenance, the City should continue to conduct regular inspection to identify potential problem areas with city streets. Establishing a platform or process for the community to report road issues could help create more efficient identification and resolution of minor street issues.

## City Facilities

- City Hall
- Hearst Library
- City Street Shop
- Twin City Animal Shelter\*

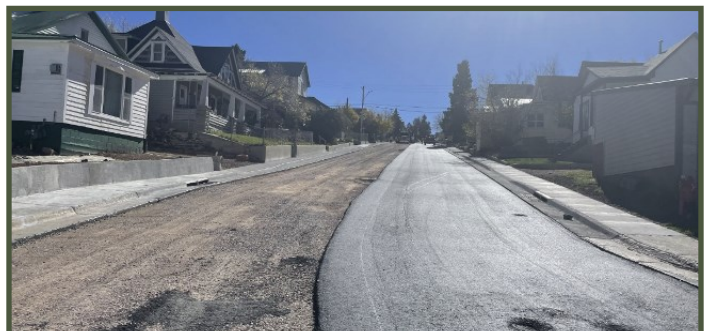
\*Facility is located on City Property

Overall, snow removal services received positive feedback from the community. The City has a Snowfall Event Plan, which outlines priority areas. This plan is provided on the City's website and posted on social media prior to and during snowfall events.

*"Snow removal is excellent!  
Hard job and they do it well"*

Community Survey 2023

One ongoing challenge is finding appropriate locations and ensuring availability for snow dump sites. Lead should continue to evaluate the need and potential location for snow dump sites for efficient snow management throughout the winter season. Factors such as accessibility and capacity should also be carefully considered for each potential site.



## **Water and Sewer Infrastructure**

Lead's water is treated and supplied by the Lead-Deadwood Sanitary District. The district serves the communities of Lead, Deadwood, and Central City. Similarly, Lead's sewage is treated by the sanitary district. The sanitary district expressed that they currently have the ability to accommodate increased demand for growth and development. With the surrounding communities sharing resources, it is important that the city works closely with the Lead Deadwood Sanitary District to ensure adequate services when planning future growth and development.

A challenge facing Lead is its aging infrastructure. Historically, Lead's water, sewer, and stormwater infrastructure was owned and maintained by the Homestake Mining Company. In 1994, Lead took over the current water distribution system, which has piping that is 75 to 100 years old. The City has continued to work toward updating distribution lines. The City utilizes its Facilities Plan to identify project timelines and potential funding. The Facilities Plan outlines projects geared toward sanitary sewer replacement, storm sewer separation, waterline replacement, and street updates. The City should continue to follow the Facilities Plan for infrastructure updates and regularly review and revise the plan.

In 2023, the Environmental Protection Agency announced new rules requiring the replacement of lead water pipes with copper. When the City inherited the water system, documentation on the piping was limited. The City is currently responsible for main line piping to the curb stop, while residents are responsible from the curb stop to their homes. The City should explore means of identifying city-owned lead pipes. Should lead pipes be identified, feasible options for replacement should be explored. The City should also encourage residents to test and report lead pipes in their homes to help identify locations of lead pipes in Lead.

## **City Street Shop**

Lead currently has one city shop, which houses a majority of the city's municipal vehicles and equipment used for properly administering city services and ensuring facilities are properly maintained, functional, and safe for public use. The current shop sits on private property owned by the Sanford Underground Research Facility (SURF). Lead has an agreement with SURF to ensure a one year notice is given to the City when the current shop must be vacated. The City should continue seeking a new location for the city shop. The City should also plan financially and pursue grants for the costs associated with potentially purchasing land and building or refitting a building to serve as the city shop.

## **Library**

The Hearst Library, established in 1894, is operated and maintained by the City of Lead. The library provides residents with access to audiobooks, digital books, movies, children's literature, bestselling novels, and more. In addition to books and media, the library also offers various programming services including children's story times, classes, and book clubs. The public survey showed an overall positive rating for the library. One of the challenges facing the library is bringing the building into compliance with the American's with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards. Lead continues to budget yearly toward new projects to help bring the library up to code. The City should continue to make efforts toward bringing the library building into ADA compliance. In addition to these ongoing efforts, the City should also explore the potential for relocating the library if that becomes a viable option for meeting ADA standards more effectively.

## Utility Lines

Lead has a wide network of overhead utility lines, managed by several different utility companies. Overhead lines are visually intrusive and prone to damage from weather events. Lead also has several areas with dead lines, which no longer provide services. Burial of utility lines is often cost prohibitive. This is especially true in Lead, due to rock types and topography. Lead should encourage the burial of powerlines in the city when feasible.

## Lighting

City lighting maintenance is shared between the City of Lead and Black Hills Energy. Metal poles, primarily located along Main Street, are the responsibility of the City, while wooden poles are the responsibility of Black Hills Energy. Overall, street lighting in Lead was viewed positively. However, some feedback noted streetlights that were out for extended periods of time. Lead works closely with Black Hills Energy to repair streetlights. Additional comments expressed concern about light pollution. To help reduce the impact of light pollution, the City should encourage the use of dark sky-friendly practices.

## Retaining Walls

Lead is a mountain town, developed on uneven terrain. This challenging landscape comes with some unique infrastructure challenges, wherein a majority of the city's development is reliant on retaining walls to protect property from landslides and ground shifting. These walls are a mix of public and private ownership and have not been inventoried or assessed in recent years. Many of these walls also hold up or are placed in front of critical public infrastructure. To help identify and prioritize repairs and replacement needs, Lead should conduct a city-wide survey to identify ownership of retaining walls. Additionally, the City should clearly define ownership and responsibilities of retaining walls in Lead to help maintain and protect critical infrastructure.

## Small-scale Improvements

During the community meetings, participants were asked to provide suggestions for small-scale projects for Lead. The City has been actively working on the following suggestions and should continue these efforts:

- Trim and maintain vegetation
- Add trees, flowers, and landscaping around town
- Add lighting and benches
- Maintain guardrails along city streets
- Enforce city ordinances
- Repaint signs at the park
- Clean up the cemetery

## Aesthetics

Aesthetics play an important role in creating a sense of pride in the community. Clean and well-maintained surroundings help to enhance the quality of life, increase property values, and attract visitors. Community aesthetics were a concern voiced throughout the planning process. Feedback included suggestions ranging from small-scale improvements to larger more costly projects.

Local organizations and businesses work with the City to help improve aesthetics around town. Lead should continue partnering with these groups to enhance the community's appearance and ensure a well-kept and maintained environment.

City ordinances and code enforcement also play an important role in the overall aesthetics of the community. Lead currently has ordinances in place designed to help address nuisances within the city. In 2024, the City began reviewing and revising the city ordinances. The City should continue to regularly review and update city ordinances.

## Emergency Services

Community input revealed Lead to be a safe community, with favorable ratings for both safety and emergency services. The City has its own police department staffed with full-time and part-time personnel. Other emergency services are not city – owned, but are essential for public safety and well-being. Lead is in close proximity to emergency health services through the Monument Health Lead-Deadwood Hospital, located in Deadwood. The facility provides emergency services as well as inpatient and outpatient care. Fire protection is provided by the Lead Volunteer Fire Department, which is a taxing district. The City should continue to collaborate with emergency services and explore opportunities for improving coordination and resource sharing.



## Schools

The Lead-Deadwood Middle School and High School are located within the city. While the City of Lead does not own or operate the public schools, they are an important aspect of the community. These facilities help to provide valuable education and extracurricular opportunities for the city's youth. They also play an important role in strengthening community connections and enhancing the community's overall appeal. Lead should continue to work closely with the school system to help support the needs of the city's youth.

## Onboarding

To help ensure smooth governance and operational efficiency, onboarding and continued education of city elected and appointed officials and city staff are crucial. Developing and implementing an onboarding process can help introduce new officials and staff to their roles, responsibilities, and organizational structure. This can also equip them with the necessary tools and knowledge for their duties. This process could include a training on city policies, procedures, and ordinances as well as an explanation of job duties. Ongoing education further supports development by keeping officials and staff informed about new regulations, best practices, and emerging issues. The City should develop a plan for onboarding and continued education processes to help enhance decision-making, improve delivery of services, and create a team with tools to address community needs more effectively.

## Communication

Reliable and available communication is important in engaging with the community, disseminating information, and encouraging community involvement. The City of Lead currently utilizes a city website and Facebook page to help provide information to the public. The City also uses CodeRED alerting system to alert subscribers of emergencies, warnings, and important city updates. Public input received throughout the planning process revealed the desire to see the city explore more means of communication, including regular updates of the city's website, branching out to other forms of social media, monthly newsletters, and an event calendar. The City should continue improving communication, including maintaining and updating its online presence and exploring other viable options to ensure accessibility for all residents. The City should also explore opportunities to collaborate with surrounding communities to enhance regional information and sharing community engagement.

# FACILITIES & SERVICES

**Goal 6: Lead will improve the quality and efficiency of city facilities and services to better meet the needs of the community and promote resilient development.**

**Action 6.1:** Consider implementing a street maintenance fee to enhance infrastructure upkeep.

**Action 6.2:** Establish partnerships with neighboring communities to improve regional information sharing and strengthen community engagement efforts.

**Action 6.3:** Identify a new location for the City Street Shop and explore financial options and grants for acquiring land and constructing or refurbishing the building.

**Action 6.4:** Advocate for the strategic burial of powerlines in the city, aiming to improve visual appeal and infrastructure resilience wherever possible and practical.

**Action 6.5:** Promote the use of dark sky-friendly practices throughout the city.

**Action 6.6:** Enhance communication efforts by regularly updating its online presence and exploring additional channels to ensure all residents have accessible information.

**Action 6.7:** Continue conducting regular inspections to identify potential problem areas with city streets.

**Action 6.8:** Continue efforts to bring the library building into ADA compliance and explore the option of relocation if it offers a more efficient means of achieving compliance.

**Action 6.9:** Review and revise city ordinances to address nuisances effectively, continuing the ongoing regular updates and improvements as needed.

**Action 6.10:** Coordinate with the school system to continue and improve support for the city's youth.

**Action 6.11:** Evaluate the need and potential locations for snow dump sites to ensure efficient winter snow management, considering factors such as accessibility and capacity for each site.

**Action 6.12:** Continue utilizing the City's Facilities Plan for infrastructure updates, and review and revise it on a regular basis.

**Action 6.13:** Identify city-owned lead pipes and explore feasible replacement options for any identified lead pipes.

**Action 6.14:** Promote testing and reporting of lead pipes by residents to aid in locating lead pipes in the community.

**Action 6.15:** Work with emergency services and explore opportunities to enhance coordination and resource sharing.

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# FACILITIES & SERVICES

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**Action 6.16:** Develop a platform for community reporting to improve the resolution of minor infrastructure issues.

**Action 6.17:** Explore the development of a structured onboarding process and ongoing education program to enhance decision-making and improve service delivery.

**Action 6.18:** Conduct a city-wide survey to identify ownership and assess the condition for repairs or replacement.

**Action 6.19:** Establish ownership and responsibility guidelines for retaining walls.



# IMPLEMENTATION

The Lead Comprehensive Plan is intended to be used by the City of Lead when making decisions on investment in the community. The collective vision and corresponding goals and action items outlined in this plan should serve as a guide for the community's future growth and development. To achieve the community's future vision for Lead, specific regulations and programs will presumably need to be altered or implemented.

The implementation of specific projects and priorities outlined in this plan will be determined at the discretion of the Lead City Commission. Decisions may be influenced by future financial, social, and environmental conditions, staff availability, the urgency of other city projects, and other relevant factors.

This comprehensive plan is a dynamic and adaptable document. Regular evaluation and monitoring are crucial for both implementing its recommendations and assessing its effectiveness. The Lead Planning Commission and Lead City Commission will review the goals and strategies outlined in the plan annually to ensure progress toward the vision. Additionally, the City of Lead will conduct a thorough review and evaluation of the comprehensive plan every five years.

Any modifications to this comprehensive plan, including its goals and actions, require a formal amendment based on sufficient evidence of necessity. Proposed amendments must undergo the same review process and procedures as the original requirements for the adoption of the plan. The major review process will involve notifying the public and gathering comments on the plan's contents. If approved, any changes will be incorporated into the updated plan document.

## Monitoring & Evaluation

### Annually

Regular Evaluation & Monitoring

### Every Five Years

Major Review & Evaluation



# SOURCES

## Chapters

### This is Lead:

- 1: *History of Lead*. Lead Historical Preservation. 2024. Accessed 6.18.2024 < <https://leadhistoricpreservation.org/about-lead/history-of-lead>>.
- 2: *ibid. History of Lead*.
- 3: *ibid. History of Lead*.
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- 5: U.S. Census Bureau. 2024. Race [data table for 2020]. 2024. Decennial Census (P1).

### Growth and Land Use:

- 1: Wildfire Risk to Communities. Lead, SD. 2024. USDA Forest Service. Accessed 6.18.2024. <<https://wildfirerisk.org/explore/overview/46/46081/4600036220/>>.
2. *Firewise USA program tool kit: Band Together*. 2022. Firewise USA. National Fire Protection Association. Brochure.

### Housing:

- 1: *Measuring Housing Affordability: Housing Cost Ratios and Burden*. April 8 2024. U.S. Census Bureau. 2024. <<https://www.census.gov/data/academy/webinars/2024/>>.
- 2: U.S. Census Bureau. 2024. Selected Housing Characteristics [data table for 2012 & 2022]. 2024: American Community Survey 5-year estimates (DP04).
- 3: U.S. Census Bureau. 2024. Selected Economic Characteristics [data table for 2012 & 2022]. 2024: American Community Survey 5-year estimates (DP03).
- 4: *ibid*: U.S. Census Bureau. 2024. Selected Housing Characteristics [data table for 2012 & 2022].
- 5: *ibid*: U.S. Census Bureau. 2024. Selected Housing Characteristics [data table for 2012 & 2022].
- 6: U.S. Census Bureau. 2024. Occupancy Status [data table for 2020]. 2024. Decennial Census (H1).
- 7: *ibid*: U.S. Census Bureau. 2024. Selected Housing Characteristics [data table for 2012 & 2022].

### Parks & Recreation:

- 1: Lawson, Megan. *Trails and the Benefits to Your Community*. January 5, 2016. Headwaters Economics. 2024.

### Economic Development:

- 1: Sanford Underground Research Facility. *SURF's Impacts: Economic Impacts*. Accessed 6.18.2024. <<https://sanfordlab.org/surfs-impacts>>.
- 2: Deadwood Lead Economic Development Corporation. Accessed 8.20.2024. <<https://www.deadwoodleadedc.com/>>.
- 3: Lead Area Chamber of Commerce. Accessed 8.20.2024. <<https://www.leadmethere.org/>>.
- 4: *Ibid*: Deadwood Lead Economic Development Corporation.

### Transportation:

- 1: South Dakota Department of Transportation. Traffic Data [interactive map], 2023. South Dakota DOT Traffic Data 2023. Access: 6.12.2024. <<https://dot.sd.gov/transportation/highways/traffic>>

# APPENDIX 1

## Growth and Land Use:

**GOAL 1: Lead will ensure compatible land use by supporting balanced development that addresses diverse needs, enhances community well-being, and integrates various land uses effectively.**

Action Item	
<b>Action 1.1</b>	Encourage mixed-use developments in the downtown area.
<b>Action 1.2</b>	Develop a strategy to identify and prioritize suitable infill sites with existing infrastructure.
<b>Action 1.3</b>	Coordinate boundary adjustments by annexing properties owned by the City of Lead and work with the appropriate jurisdictions to explore reallocation of remaining parcels for more cohesive and efficient land management.
<b>Action 1.4:</b>	Concentrate Lead’s growth and development inside city limits, focusing specifically on the identified key area.
<b>Action 1.5</b>	Promote the development of shared parking facilities in mixed-use areas to optimize space usage and reduce parking competition among different user groups.
<b>Action 1.6</b>	Encourage the adaptive reuse of historically significant buildings to maintain their historical integrity and preserve the community character.
<b>Action 1.7</b>	Integrate cost-effective strategies to manage development costs and help reduce cost burdens on taxpayers.
<b>Action 1.8</b>	Plan for growth by making sure infrastructure and services can support increased demand while upholding their performance and reliability.
<b>Action 1.9</b>	Expand the Historic Downtown area beyond West Main St toward Julius St. and Gwinn St. to enhance Lead’s historic appeal, diversify businesses, and support economic and social growth.
<b>Action 1.10</b>	Direct growth toward the southwest to optimize resource use and ensure cost-effective development.
<b>Action 1.11</b>	Work with stakeholders and residents in the southwest part of Lead to ensure that outward growth is both beneficial and widely supported.
<b>Action 1.12</b>	Continue participating in emergency planning and organizations to protect against the loss of life, property, and infrastructure from hazards.
<b>Action 1.13</b>	Continue to review and update city ordinances regularly to align with the comprehensive plan and reflect current conditions.
<b>Action 1.14</b>	Promote the inclusion of open spaces and park and recreation areas in new development plans to boost community well-being and environmental protection.
<b>Action 1.15</b>	Encourage the use of fire-resistant materials and Firewise practices.

# APPENDIX 1

## Housing:

**GOAL 2: Lead will develop a diverse housing market meeting residents' needs while preserving the city's historic character and enhancing overall community well-being.**

Action Item	
<b>Action 2.1</b>	Identify and implement solutions to support projects focused on year-round and seasonal workforce housing.
<b>Action 2.2</b>	Continue to track and assess the impacts of short-term rentals on the community and adjust regulations or limitations as needed based on observed impacts.
<b>Action 2.3</b>	Work with the Deadwood Lead Economic Development Corporation and South Dakota Housing to identify and promote additional financial assistance programs for housing development and improvement.
<b>Action 2.4:</b>	Implement policies and incentives to encourage infill development that optimizes existing space and strengthens neighborhood cohesion and appeal.
<b>Action 2.5</b>	Utilize mixed-use development to maximize opportunities for residential development and enhance land efficiency.
<b>Action 2.6</b>	Explore and offer incentives to cover costs related to labor, equipment, or removal fees to facilitate the removal of dilapidated structures.
<b>Action 2.7</b>	Continue offering tax rebates for property rehabilitation and improvement.
<b>Action 2.8</b>	Implement the recommendations of the <i>Lead/Deadwood Housing Study</i> .
<b>Action 2.9</b>	Explore options for a senior care facility.
<b>Action 2.10</b>	Enhance outreach and education efforts to promote existing rehabilitation programs.

# APPENDIX 1

## Parks & Recreation:

**GOAL 3: Lead will advance its parks and recreational facilities by expanding access to recreational areas, offering diverse activity options, and ensuring high-quality amenities to support community health and engagement.**

Action Item	
<b>Action 3.1</b>	Explore ongoing collaboration with local trails groups toward the development of a looping trail system in Lead.
<b>Action 3.2</b>	Continue collaboration efforts with the City of Deadwood to support diverse summer programs in the area.
<b>Action 3.3</b>	Pursue the implementation of a Master Trails Plan to establish a comprehensive network of recreational trails in the city.
<b>Action 3.4:</b>	Explore enhancements to indoor recreational options in Lead through potential partnerships and encouraging community participation in the process.
<b>Action 3.5</b>	Collaborate with community groups, businesses, and non-profits for fundraising and volunteer efforts aimed at park maintenance and upgrades to enhance public parks in Lead.
<b>Action 3.6</b>	Consider the need for open space uses when developing or upgrading park facilities.
<b>Action 3.7</b>	Encourage partnerships and collaboration with community organizations and the school district to enhance summer and winter programs.
<b>Action 3.8</b>	Support the incorporation of winter recreational activities into park updates to expand community recreational opportunities.
<b>Action 3.9</b>	Develop a city-wide master plan for all of Lead’s parks for coordinated and strategic improvements to meet the diverse recreational needs of the community.

# APPENDIX 1

## Economic Development:

**GOAL 4:** Lead will advance economic growth with a supportive environment for businesses, enhancing job opportunities for residents and revitalizing central areas to strengthen community character and connection.

Action Item	
<b>Action 4.1</b>	Explore housing solutions to improve affordability and availability, supporting local workforce stability.
<b>Action 4.2</b>	Maintain downtown’s historical appeal by facilitating the preservation of historic buildings and expanding on and promoting additional preservation incentives and funding options.
<b>Action 4.3</b>	Explore strategies to address childcare needs, such as public-private partnerships or incentive programs.
<b>Action 4.4:</b>	Continue working closely with local, regional, and state economic development organizations to attract, promote, and retain businesses in Lead.
<b>Action 4.5</b>	Identify suitable underutilized or unconventional spaces and repurpose them for site-ready commercial and industrial uses.
<b>Action 4.6</b>	Expand public event opportunities in Lead by working closely with local partners and the Chamber of Commerce.
<b>Action 4.7</b>	Continue collaborating with the Sanford Underground Research Facility (SURF) to advance research and job creation in the city.
<b>Action 4.8</b>	Collaborate with economic development groups to enhance workforce opportunities and support business operations.
<b>Action 4.9</b>	Develop a Historic Downtown resurgence strategy, collaborate with community stakeholders to ensure alignment with community needs and goals.
<b>Action 4.10</b>	Create a plan to effectively communicate information about incentive programs to the public, ensuring that residents and businesses are aware of available opportunities.
<b>Action 4.11</b>	Develop a training plan for municipal leaders and staff to ensure they are well-informed about business growth programs.
<b>Action 4.12</b>	Encourage initiatives that feature Lead’s local businesses and historic downtown, emphasizing its distinctive characteristics and attractions.
<b>Action 4.13</b>	Support and encourage businesses that serve local economic needs and advance local interests.
<b>Action 4.14</b>	Support efforts to increase awareness of childcare options by providing information on available resources and services to residents and employers.
<b>Action 4.15</b>	Support economic development projects that align with local, state, and federal priorities to achieve broader strategic objectives.
<b>Action 4.16</b>	Evaluate commercial sites with development potential and provide findings to attract business and investor interest.
<b>Action 4.17</b>	Coordinate periodic presentations to increase knowledge and support the efficient utilization of economic development resources.
<b>Action 4.18:</b>	Continue partnering with local businesses and the Lead Chamber of Commerce to highlight the city’s charm and history to draw more visitors to the area.

# APPENDIX 1

## Transportation:

**GOAL 5: Lead will establish a cohesive multi-modal transportation system to better connect and support diverse travel and parking needs within the city.**

Action Item	
<b>Action 5.1</b>	Collaborate with neighboring communities to explore and implement regional solutions for public transportation between Lead, Deadwood, and Central City.
<b>Action 5.2</b>	Promote and implement parking layouts that are designed to maximize space efficiency and accommodate diverse parking needs.
<b>Action 5.3</b>	Conduct a parking inventory and assessment to address and mitigate parking concerns in Lead.
<b>Action 5.4:</b>	Identify and prioritize key pedestrian routes, including sidewalks, crosswalks, and staircases, ensuring ADA compliance where possible.
<b>Action 5.5</b>	Secure funding and engage with local organizations to upgrade city-owned stairways, focusing on safety and aesthetics.
<b>Action 5.6</b>	Conduct a walkability study to identify key improvements and enhance overall pedestrian movement in the city.
<b>Action 5.7</b>	Explore methods to identify and enhance urban routes for cycling and develop potential connections to recreational trails.
<b>Action 5.8</b>	Review and update ordinances to ensure alignment with other city regulations and plans, minimizing conflicts and creating a cohesive approach to planning and traffic management.
<b>Action 5.9</b>	Evaluate multifunctional parking facilities that accommodate both public and reserved parking needs.
<b>Action 5.10</b>	Identify and secure grant funding focused on sidewalk enhancements.
<b>Action 5.11</b>	Conduct an assessment of existing school routes to identify areas for improvement on safety for students.
<b>Action 5.12</b>	Continuously monitor and improve crosswalk areas to ensure they are both visible and well-maintained.
<b>Action 5.13</b>	Work closely with the South Dakota Department of Transportation on roads under their jurisdiction to ensure safe pedestrian crossings.
<b>Action 5.14</b>	Increase the number of strategically placed bike racks around town to improve cycling convenience and accessibility.

# APPENDIX 1

## Facilities & Services:

**GOAL 6: Lead will improve the quality and efficiency of city facilities and services to better meet the needs of the community and promote resilient development.**

Action Item	
<b>Action 6.1</b>	Consider implementing a street maintenance fee to enhance infrastructure upkeep.
<b>Action 6.2</b>	Establish partnerships with neighboring communities to improve regional information sharing and strengthen community engagement efforts.
<b>Action 6.3</b>	Identify a new location for the City Street Shop and explore financial options and grants for acquiring land and constructing or refurbishing the building.
<b>Action 6.4:</b>	Advocate for the strategic burial of powerlines in the city, aiming to improve visual appeal and infrastructure resilience wherever possible and practical.
<b>Action 6.5</b>	Promote the use of dark sky-friendly practices throughout the city.
<b>Action 6.6</b>	Enhance communication efforts by regularly updating its online presence and exploring additional channels to ensure all residents have accessible information.
<b>Action 6.7</b>	Continue conducting regular inspections to identify potential problem areas with city streets.
<b>Action 6.8</b>	Continue efforts to bring the library building into ADA compliance and explore the option of relocation if it offers a more efficient means of achieving compliance.
<b>Action 6.9</b>	Review and revise city ordinances to address nuisances effectively, continuing the ongoing regular updates and improvements as needed.
<b>Action 6.10</b>	Coordinate with the school system to continue and improve support for the city's youth.
<b>Action 6.11</b>	Evaluate the need and potential locations for snow dump sites to ensure efficient winter snow management, considering factors such as accessibility and capacity for each site.
<b>Action 6.12</b>	Continue utilizing the City's Facilities Plan for infrastructure updates, and review and revise it on a regular basis.
<b>Action 6.13</b>	Identify city-owned lead pipes and explore feasible replacement options for any identified lead pipes.
<b>Action 6.14</b>	Promote testing and reporting of lead pipes by residents to aid in locating lead pipes in the community.
<b>Action 6.15</b>	Work with emergency services and explore opportunities to enhance coordination and resource sharing.
<b>Action 6.16</b>	Develop a platform for community reporting to improve the resolution of minor infrastructure issues.
<b>Action 6.17</b>	Explore the development of a structured onboarding process and ongoing education program to enhance decision-making and improve service delivery.
<b>Action 6.18:</b>	Conduct a city-wide survey to identify ownership and assess the condition for repairs or replacement.
<b>Action 6.19:</b>	Establish ownership and responsibility guidelines for retaining walls.