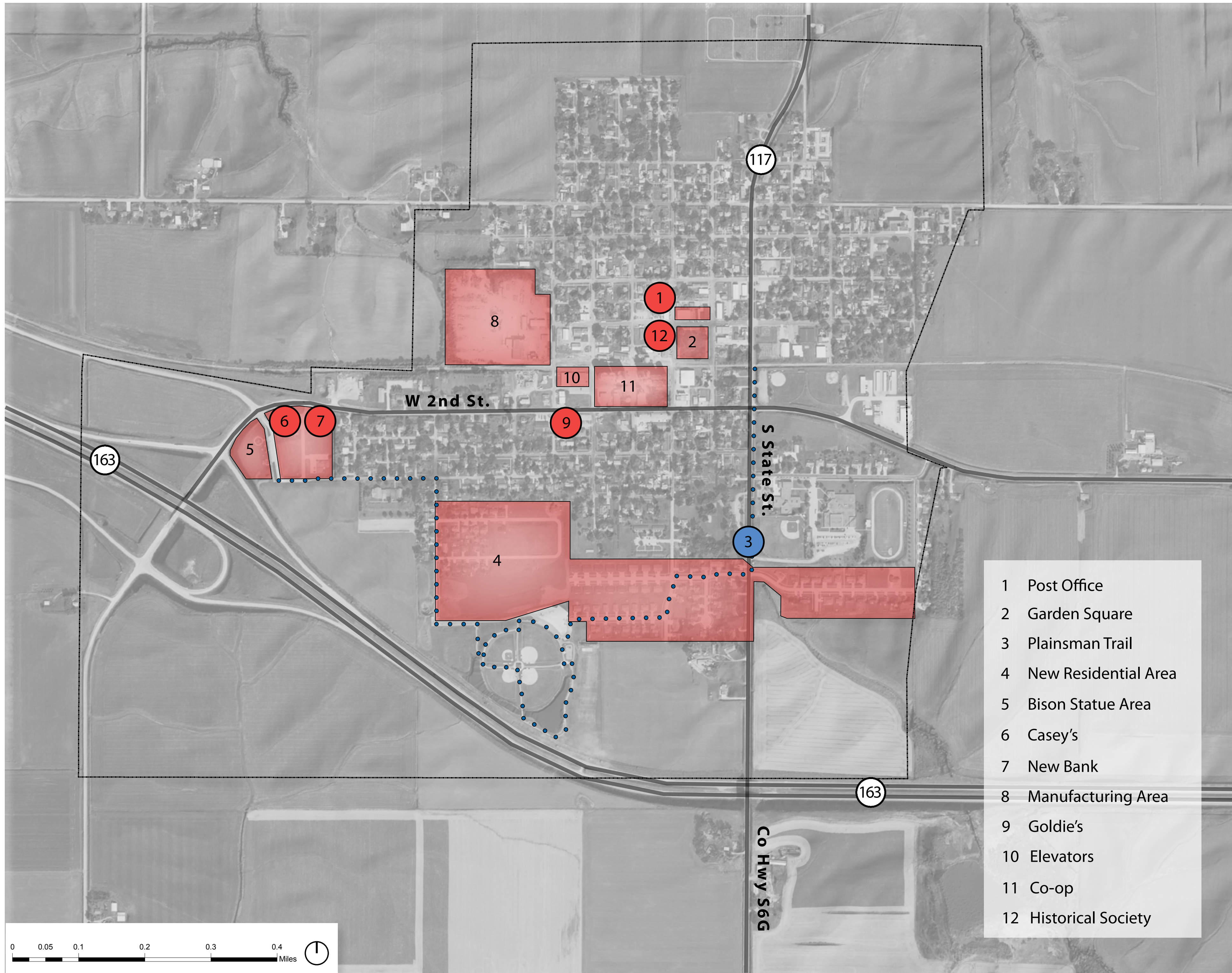




Building facades on Main St. Source: Danny Pritchard



Heartland Co-op. Source: Danny Pritchard



Garden Square. Source: Danny Pritchard

Prairie City has a rich history, beginning with its founding in 1856 by James Elliot. The town was originally named after its founder but was later renamed because there was already a community named Elliot in the state. The community was well known as the creation site and original manufacturing location for the Downtown Potato Digger. The Historical Society (12) contains a number of remnants relating to this apparatus. The first railroad came through the community in 1866. The railroad lines are still in operation today, though trains only serve the Co-op (11) located near the Town Square (2).

The community of Prairie City is now known for its location to the Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge. With land acquired by the Fish and Wildlife Service in 1990, the refuge now has a herd of 75 bison and 25 elk. Also within its land holdings are remnants of degraded native prairie, which the refuge is hoping to augment through prairie restoration efforts across much of the wildlife refuge.

Motorists driving along Highway 163 will note a large metal bison sculpture (5) in the new development on the west edge of town. Located near Casey's (6) and a new building for the local bank (7), this sculpture serves as wayfinding for the Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge and as a trailhead for the Plainsman Trail (3) in town. Prairie City is also home to Goldie's Ice Cream Shoppe, a local restaurant which draws clientele from across the region.

Prairie City

Special Places Mapping | 1. Civic Pride and History